

# The Humorous Times

Newsletter of the International Society for Humor Studies

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Ralph Mueller, Editor

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## Letter from the Editor

Dear Colleagues:

In this issue of the ISHS newsletter, you will notice that the *Recent Publications* section has been considerably revised. *The Humorous Times* will no longer announce individual journal articles; however, the newsletter will continue to inform you about special journal issues in humor studies and new books related to humor research. ISHS will continue to inform you on recent humor-related articles, but through ISHS Historian Don Nilsen's bibliography mailings and the bibliographies provided on the ISHS website.

Our hope is to devote more Newsletter space to the many workshops and symposia planned within humor studies as well as to the professional activities of our members. I would especially like to invite you to write a short piece about your recent accomplishments in humor studies—i.e., about a new research program or discovery, a notable dissertation, or even a special award for your work. The ISHS Newsletter is the perfect place to let your colleagues know of your achievements.

To those members attending the 2007 ISHS Conference in Newport, Rhode Island, I would also like to extend my best to you as you make your final preparations on your presentations. Do not lose your temper over time-consuming PowerPoint bugs or missing Word files, and just enjoy a great Conference!

Ralph Mueller, Newsletter Editor

## 2007 ISHS Conference and Association News

### Nineteenth International Society for Humor Studies Conference

*Salve Regina University, Newport, Rhode Island, June 28 to July 1, 2007*

This year's ISHS Conference begins on June 28 with a Welcome Reception in Salve Regina's Ochre Court. The program will include special addresses from ISHS President Rod Martin and from Bob Mankoff, Cartoon Editor for the *New Yorker Magazine*. It will also have a special session on *Peace Humor*, and over 30 paper sessions including colloquia on teaching, humor in the media, humor and politics, and Borat! You can view the entire program information on the ISHS website at <http://www.humorstudies.org>. You can also find registration information on the Conference website at [www.salve.edu/humor](http://www.salve.edu/humor).

If you have not made your Conference travel arrangements, the time to do so is now! For international travelers, gateway cities are Boston, New York, and Newark. From these cities one can take a train or bus to Providence, Rhode Island. From Providence it is easy to get to Newport via water taxi, shuttle or bus. For travel within the USA, Rhode Island's international airport is designated, Providence (PVD). It is serviced by most major carriers including Air Canada and Southwest Airlines. Additional travel information can be found on line at <http://explore.salve.edu/admission/visiting/directions.cfm> and at <http://www.gonewport.com/>.

### Letter from Margaret Mathias, 2007 Conference Convenor

Dear Colleagues:

At the end of June, we will gather along the magnificent ocean cliffs of Newport for the 19th annual ISHS Conference. Please try to arrive early on Thursday, June 28, 2007 so that you can enjoy the area. Check in at the Roger's Athletic Center, leave your bags and either rest or explore Newport knowing that the next three days will be stimulating and educational.

A general theme throughout the program is cultural and ethnic humor. The first plenary session gets right to the heart of the matter in a lively panel discussion. Of special notice are two guest speakers, one Bob Mankoff, Cartoon Editor of the *New Yorker Magazine* and the other, Dr. William P. Haas, sculptor, author, and former college president.

You can count on many excellent paper presentations, colloquia and workshops. So look forward to important humor research, entertainment, delicious food and a gracious welcome from the staff at Salve Regina University.

Margaret Mathias, Conference Convenor

### **Annual Meeting of Members**

ISHS's Annual Meeting of Members will take place from 4:30 to 6:00 on Sunday, July 1 at our 2007 Conference. This meeting is the Society's official business forum, and all ISHS members are encouraged to attend. The meeting will include a review of the Society's 2006 Annual Report, a financial update, and a presentation on the 2008 ISHS Conference in Alcalá de Henares, Spain.

### **Graduate Student Award Recipients**

The ISHS Executive Board has selected Gil Greengross (University of New Mexico), Julia Hans (University of Massachusetts at Amherst), and Ryota Nomura (Kyushu University) to receive this year's ISHS Graduate Student Awards. GSAs acknowledge students, who have conducted notable humor research, and are granted to student applicants based on their Conference paper proposals and their overall research programs in humor studies. This year's GSA recipients will each receive a certificate of merit and a \$250 stipend, and will present their research in special forums at this year's Conference in Newport, Rhode Island.

## **Upcoming Events**

### **Laughing Matters:**

#### **An International Conference Exploring Humor, Health and Learning**

*Liverpool, United Kingdom, June 18, 2007*

The Comedy Trust will host this international conference on humor, happiness, and health, to coincide with the Liverpool Comedy Festival in June 2007. The conference will look at the relationships between humor and well-being, especially in the contexts of laughter therapy and the uses of humor in health care and education. Delegates will be able to engage not only with professionals in their own field of study, but also with comedy professionals and critics. For more information, you can contact The Comedy Trust by telephone at 0870 443 0955 or by email at [conference@liverpoolcomedyfestival.com](mailto:conference@liverpoolcomedyfestival.com). A detailed Conference program can be found on the web at <http://www.liverpoolcomedyfestival.co.uk/comedyfestival/Archive/Conference.htm>.

#### **The East Carolina Humor Festival & Conference**

*Greenville, North Carolina, USA, November 1 to 3, 2007*

Humor as an art form rarely attracts the serious attention it deserves. East Carolina University intends to correct this omission with an inaugural humor festival and academic conference. The three-day event will feature a performance festival that includes everything from stand-up and improv comedy to joke contests and silly songs, plus an academic conference in which scholars explore humor in literature, dance, film, theater, therapy, and art. The festival provides a rare opportunity for performers, scholars, and students to interact and enjoy humor in all of its forms.

The conference invites scholarly papers/presentations (15-20 minutes each) that address areas of interests such as European Humor after the fall of Communism, Humor and the Renaissance, Political Comedy and Television, Humor and Healing, Political Cartoons, Television Humor, Humor and Music, Humor and History, Humor in the South, Satire and Social Change, Humor and Film, Humor and Dance, Humor and Theater, Humor in the Middle Ages, Ethnic Humor, Humor in Sports. Submit a 300 word abstract and a one-page CV by August 15, 2007. For more information please visit <http://www.ecu.edu/humor>.

## At Whom are We Laughing: Humor in Romance Language Literatures

Hofstra University, Long Island, New York, April 10 to 12, 2008

The Hofstra Cultural Center will hold a conference on Humor in Romance Languages Literature from Thursday, April 10 to Saturday, April 12, 2008. Zenia S. DaSilva, Professor of Spanish, and Gregory M. Pell, Assistant Professor of Italian, will host this conference that will look at literary humor within seven different language paradigms (Catalan, French, Galician, Italian, Portuguese, Romanian, and Spanish) to explore the traditions of literary humor across social and geographical boundaries. Scholars who wish to present at this Conference should send a letter of intent, a vita, and a two page abstract of their proposed presentation to the Conference organizers, either by e-mail to [hofculctr@hofstra.edu](mailto:hofculctr@hofstra.edu) or by post to Conference on Humor, Hofstra Cultural Center, 200 Hofstra University, Hempstead, NY 11549-2000, USA. Additional information is available on the web at [http://www.hofstra.edu/CampusL/Culture/Culture\\_Humor.cfm](http://www.hofstra.edu/CampusL/Culture/Culture_Humor.cfm).

## Announcements

### Humorology: A Forum for Student Researchers

Gil Greengross from the University of New Mexico has developed an online forum for students from all disciplines who are interested in the study of humor. This online discussion group, located at <http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/Humorology/> is intended to help students who are starting out in humor research. Questions and discussions on humor-related topics, from any perspective, are welcomed.

### 2008 AATH Book Awards

#### Deadline for submission November 15, 2007

The AATH Book Awards will honor authors of books published between January 1 and December 31, 2007, which further the mission of AATH "to advance the understanding and application of humor and laughter for their positive benefits." For more award information, visit [http://www.aath.org/book\\_award.htm](http://www.aath.org/book_award.htm).

## Humor in the News

### Mount Cleese

The New Zealand city Palmerston North has paid its tribute to the British comedian John Cleese by naming its local tip after him. Cleese, famous for being a member of the Monty Python comedy group as well as for appearing in the TV comedy, *Fawlty Towers*, and the movie, *A Fish Called Wanda*, quipped that Palmerston North was the "suicide capital of New Zealand." Rumor goes that John Cleese added: "If you wish to kill yourself but lack the courage to, I think a visit to Palmerston North will do the trick."

## Recent Book Publications

Diana Popa & Salvatore Attardo, Eds. (2007). *New Approaches to the Linguistics of Humour*. Galati: Dunarea de Jos Univ Press, 229 pages. / ISBN: 9 789 738 937 253

This book presents new approaches to the linguistics of humor, but it does so by taking an interdisciplinary perspective. Contributions include: B. Priego-Valverde: Self-disparaging humor in conversations; V. Tsakona: Towards a revised typology of humorous texts and humorous lines; R. Müller: The Interplay of Metaphor and Humor, T. Howell: Two Cognitive Approaches to Humorous Narratives; C. Bucaria: Top 10 signs your humor has been subtitled: The case of the Late Show with David Letterman; D. Brzozowska: Jokes, identity, and ethnicity; D. Popa: Humor and the Celebration of Life in the Merry Cemetery of S pân a; I. Cutica: The neuropsychology of irony and verbal humor; P. Hamrick: Notes on some cognitive mechanisms of humor; J. Garmendia: To make as if to say: A pragmatic approach to irony; J. Taylor, P. Klinov, L. Mazlack: A description logic based approach to computational humor; C. Hempelmann & A. Sampson: Visual Puns and Verbal Puns; A. Mitchell: Ancient Greek visual puns: a case study in visual humor. An interview with Victor Raskin and a rejoinder by Salvatore Attardo examine the current state of the linguistics of humor.

**Correction.** In the last issue we wrote that Till Weingärtner's book on Manzai had more than 500 pages. This is not correct. Here the correct reference: Till Weingärtner (2006). *Manzai. Eine japanische Form der Stand-up-Comedy*. 108pp. € 9.90 / ISBN 978-3-89129-826-8. Our apologies to Till for extending his book to epic length.

## Contributions and Submissions

Next issue is due in late Summer 2007. Please send information, contributions and announcements to [ralph.mueller@unifr.ch](mailto:ralph.mueller@unifr.ch).