

The Humorous Times

Newsletter of the International Society for Humor Studies

Winter 2009

Ralph Mueller, Editor

Volume 22, Issue 1

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ISHS Conference



The 21st Conference of the International Society for Humor Studies *Long Beach, California, June 17-20, 2009*

Do not miss the deadline for proposals on March 1, 2009 for the upcoming 21st Conference of the International Society for Humor Studies. Scholars, professionals, and students are invited to submit 250 word proposals for papers, posters, and colloquia, and panels related to humor research. More information on registration and paper submissions as well as the conference agenda, accommodation and transportation options, and lists of local activities can be found at

www.ISHS2009.com

All prospective paper presenters must register for the entire conference and pay registration fees at the time that they submit their proposal. Presentations should be planned according to the following guidelines:

- Colloquia and panels should be designed for 75 minute sessions with up to four presenters.
- Individual papers should be planned for 15 minute presentations.
- Poster sessions will run for 75 minutes, and each poster will have a 4 by 5 foot space for presentation.

If you have questions about submissions, you can contact Conference Convener Amy Bippus at ISHS2009@yahoo.com.

2009 Conference Awards and Scholarships

In 2006, the ISHS Executive Board established Scholarly Contribution and Graduate Student Awards to acknowledge individuals presenting notable humor research at ISHS Conferences. These awards include stipends to cover Conference fees, and up to four awards may be given annually, depending on available funding. Scholarly Contribution Awards (SCA) are intended to honor individuals who have made outstanding contributions to humor research through high quality publications, conference presentations, and other scholarly activities. SCA recipients present their research in a Conference plenary session. Any ISHS member may submit SCA nominations to the ISHS Awards Committee.

All ISHS graduate student members, planning to attend the 2009 ISHS Conference in Long Beach, are eligible to apply for a Graduate Student Award (GSA). As part of their conference application, interested students must submit (1) a letter of intent to compete for a GSA, (2) a description of their research program within humor studies, (3) a presentation proposal, and (4) all required registration materials and fees. GSA recipients present their work at a special session of the annual conference and receive (1) a certificate of achievement, (2) a stipend to reimburse their Conference registration fees, and (3) waived fees to selected ISHS-endorsed seminars and workshops.



For more ISHS news, visit us on the web at www.humorstudies.org.

International Summer School



Ninth International Summer School and Symposium on Humor and Laughter *Granada, Spain, June 29 to July 4 2009*

The 9th International Summer School and Symposium on Humour and Laughter will take place in Granada, Spain from June 29 to July 4. Dr. Hugo Carretero Dios from the University of Granada and his team will be the local organizers. More information can be found on the Internet: <http://www.humoursummerschool.org/09/>.

As in past years, the aims and objectives of the 2009 Summer School will be to ensure that both new research students, just beginning their research careers, and already-trained researchers, considering a first research project on humor, will enter the field with a strong foundation in existing theoretical and methodological issues.

Upcoming Events

Association for Applied and Therapeutic Humor Conference

Las Vegas, Nevada, USA, April 2–5, 2009

The Association for Applied and Therapeutic Humor will celebrate its twenty-second year with a conference on *Healthy Humor: Hitting the Wellness Jackpot!* The 2009 AATH Conference has special registration incentives for ISHS members! CE units are also available for nurses, social workers, psychologists, teachers and HR professionals. For further information, please visit the web on <http://www.aath.org/conference.htm>.

Deus Ridens: The Redemptive Power of Humor in Religion

University of Antwerp, Belgium, April 20–21 2009

At the start of the third millennium, religion once again became an extremely important topic in societal debates. Unfortunately, the disintegrating aspects of religion are emphasized. There are also more constructive aspects of religion. Humor, for example, always played a very important role in all religions. Though the importance of humor both in and for religions is recognized, it has been rarely studied in a scholarly context. In collaboration with various institutions, the University Centre Saint-Ignatius Antwerp (cf. www.ucsia.org) is organizing an interdisciplinary workshop with international scholars, including ISHS members, on the importance of humor in and on religion. Additional information on the Deus Ridens workshop can be found on the Internet: http://www.ua.ac.be/download.aspx?c=*UCSIAENG2&n=73203&ct=68594&e=193841.

From Language to Mind 3

Tartu, Estonia, September 10-11, 2009

The Department of Folkloristics at the Estonian Literary Museum announces an international academic interdisciplinary conference organized on the occasion of the 70th birthday of academician Arvo Krikmann. Throughout his career, Arvo Krikmann has been interested in the origin, historiography and textology of Estonian and Baltic-Finnic short forms of folklore. The organizers welcome contributions on Papers presenting new and original research on the following topics:

1. Minor genres of folklore (proverbs, phraseological expressions, riddles);
2. Theories of figurative speech;
3. Folk humor and humor theories.

Online registration is encouraged: <http://www.folklore.ee/rl/fo/konve/2009/kriq70/>; working languages are English and Russian. Deadline for registration and abstracts: March 15, 2009; notification of the paper's acceptance: April 15, 2009

1st International Conference on Humour in Conventional and Unconventional Politics (ICHCUP)

Dunarea de Jos University of Galati, Romania, 6-8 November, 2009

The first ICHCUP welcomes contributions on humor in political speeches, humor in political campaigning and political conferences, humor in parliamentary debates, humor and democracy, humor and leadership, military humor, humor in totalitarian societies, humor in wartime, political humor in the media, translation and political humor. In order to meet these objectives, the organizers invite contributions from both linguistic and related non-linguistic disciplines such as political studies, sociology, philosophy, media studies, cultural studies and psychology.

The main conference sessions will involve 40 minute talks (30 minutes + 10 minutes for discussions) and poster presentations. Contributions can focus on results from completed as well as ongoing research, with an emphasis on novel approaches, methods, ideas, and perspectives. Presentations should describe original, unpublished work. The number of submissions is restricted to one single-authored submission and one submission in co-authorship. Selected papers will appear in a printed volume.

The deadline for submitting abstracts is May 30th, 2009. Abstracts of 350-500 words should be sent to politicalhumconfr@email.com. Acceptances will be sent out by June 15th, 2009.

Member News and Humor in the News

Humor Research Site has Moved

From Willibald Ruch and Ursula Beermann, University of Zurich

Ursula Beermann and Willibald Ruch inform us that their *Humor Research* site (formally under <http://www.uni-duesseldorf.de/WWW/MathNat/Ruch/humor.html>) has moved. The new URL is

<http://www.humorresearch.org/>

If you wish us to remove, update, or add any information or link, please contact us the webmaster Ursula Beermann (u.beermann@psychologie.uzh.ch). In the future, the *Humor Research* site will also serve as a platform for the announcement of (online) studies or current research projects.

Call for Papers on Humor and Politics

From Diana E. Popa, Dunarea de Jos University of Galati, Romania, and Villy Tsakona, University of Ioannina, Greece

Diana E. Popa and Villy Tsakona are editing a peer reviewed volume on humor in politics and are currently accepting original papers (not published or accepted for publication elsewhere) concerned with this topic. Submissions should combine research and practice or relevant applications, as well as empirical studies detailing their usefulness to the specific topic.

Technically, papers that can be classified as belonging to any social sciences are accepted for review and potentially publishing. In addition to scholars within humor research, we invite those as yet unfamiliar with (or wary of) humor research to enter the discussion (including Linguistics with all its inherent subfields, Semiotics, Political Studies, Sociology, Philosophy, Media Studies, Cultural Studies, Psychology).

Potential contributors please contact the editors with a brief summary of the proposed article by April 15, 2009; submission of papers: September 15, 2009. Manuscripts may be 5,000-8,000 words. Correspondence concerning this call for papers (and more detailed instructions for authors) should be addressed to helen_anaid@hotmail.com and/or villytsa@otenet.gr.

Humor Gráfico on www.fgua.es

From Juan García, Fundación General Universidad de Alcalá

Juan García, one of the conveners of the 20th ISHS conference, and Raquel Alcalde, inform us that a new website for the General Foundation for the University of Alcalá (www.fgua.es) has become available and will include information about the activities of the department of humor gráfico.

Awards for Humorous Writing

ISHS Board Member Lorene Birden reports that Poemeleon, an online journal of poetry and essays on poetics, has published a special Humor Issue (Winter 2008-9; III,2); cf. <http://www.poemeleon.org/walterlabcover>.

In addition, Lorene points out another prize for humorous verses: The Percy French Prize for humorous verse is handed out at Strokestown Poetry Festival in Ireland (<http://www.strokestownpoetry.org/>).

New Books on Humor

The Primer of Humor Research. Ed. by Raskin, Victor. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 2008. (Humor Research [HR] 8); € 98.00 / US\$ 137.00; ISBN 978-3-11-018616-1

The book is intended to provide a definitive view of the field of humor research for both beginning and established scholars in a variety of fields who are developing an interest in humor and need to familiarize themselves with the available body of knowledge. Each chapter of the book is devoted to an important aspect of humor research or to a disciplinary approach to the field, and each is written by the leading expert or emerging scholar in that area.

Ermida, Isabel: *The Language of Comic Narratives. Humor Construction in Short Stories*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 2008 (Humor Research [HR] 9); € 98.00 / US\$ 137.00; ISBN 978-3-11-020514-5

The book offers a comprehensive account of how humor works in short stories, by presenting a model of narrative comedy that is pragmatically as well as semantically, grammatically and stylistically informed. It is the first study to combine a sequential analysis of the comic short story with a hierarchical one, merging together horizontal and vertical narratological perspectives in a systematic way. The book covers the main areas of linguistic analysis and is deliberately interdisciplinary, using input from philosophy, sociology and psychology so as to touch upon the nature, motivations and functions of humor as a cognitive phenomenon in a social context.

Ewald Hecker: *Die Physiologie und Psychologie des Lachens. Ein Beitrag zur experimentellen Psychologie für Naturforscher, Philosophen und gebildete Laien [1873]*. Ed. by Karl Pfeifer. <http://www.gutenberg.org/etext/27205>.

Karl Pfeifer's edition of Ewald Hecker's influential book on the physiology and psychology of laughter and humor makes a valuable historical source available for researchers everywhere. Hecker's monograph is important for the development of the modern psychology of humour, as he initiated a new perspective on the psychology of humour that includes clinical studies and psychological observation. Hecker's research was subsequently further elaborated by Emil Kraepelin and provided thereby the theoretical foundation of Sigmund Freud's *The Joke and Its Relation to the Unconscious*.

Contributions and Submissions

The next issue of the *Humorous Times* is due in Spring 2009. Please send information, contributions and announcements to ralph.mueller@unifr.ch.