2018 ISHS Election Results
From Martin Lampert, ISHS Executive Secretary-Treasurer

In Fall 2017, the Society held its biannual Board elections through the internet service, Qualtrics. With 131 valid returned ballots, Władysław Chlopicki (Jagiellonian University, Kraków, Poland) received the majority of the votes cast for ISHS President. He will serve as ISHS President through December 31, 2019. Sammy Basu (Willamette University, Oregon, USA) and Will Noonan (University of Burgundy, France) were elected as ISHS Board Members-at-Large and will serve through December 2021. We thank Delia Chiaro for her service as ISHS President for 2016 and 2017. She will remain on the Board as the Immediate Past President. We also thank Goh Abe (Kagawa University, Japan), Christian Hempelmann (Texas A & M University-Commerce), and Larry Ventis (College of William and Mary, Virginia, USA) for their service as ISHS Board members from January 2014 through December 2017. Our best wishes to the new ISHS President and Board members.

Message from the New President
From Władysław Chlopicki, Jagiellonian University, Kraków, Poland

It is with great honor and satisfaction that I have received the news of my election as 2018-19 President of the International Society of Humor Studies from our Executive Secretary, Professor Martin Lampert. I would like to express my gratitude to all the members who voted for me and counted on my service to the Society. My sincere thanks go to the previous President, Professor Delia Chiaro, who had seen us through the two preceding successful years.

I have been with ISHS even before its existence, and I assisted with its birth in 1989. From 1989 to 2012, I participated in 20 ISHS Conferences, and in 2012, I convened the 24th ISHS Conference in my native Kraków. To recognize the Society’s coming of age, we threw a great party in the Carpathian Foothills to honor it. Over the last decade, Society members have contributed, not only to the Society’s Journal, HUMOR, but to notable projects, including The Primer of Humor Research (2008) and the wonderful two volume set, The Encyclopedia of Humor Studies (2013). As a proud parent, the Society has also seen the birth of several scholarly children, including The European Journal of Humour Research, and its Hebrew sister, The Israeli Journal of Humour Research. More recently, we have seen the birth of the brilliantly called Risu and another humor studies sibling, Studying Humour–International Journal, growing totally apart and unsupervised under the Italian sky. I am afraid to open the fridge … but there is hunger in the world, and when there is demand there is supply too. In the face of the upheavals and squabbles of the contemporary society, the need for humor and laughter grows every day, and each new conference, journal and publication initiative is most welcome!
The upcoming ISHS Conference in Tallinn, Estonia marks the 30th conference by count, and reflects the remarkable rise in humor studies. This year’s meeting, ably organized by Dr. Liisi Laineste, will see an astonishing gathering of nearly 300 ISHS members, acquaintances, and friends (one could exclaim, “300 for the 30th Conference,” following the Communist classics). This meeting also brings together humor research of quality and breadth from many disciplines, but to my parental eye, what makes me extraordinarily happy is to see the large number of young scholars who will take part in a pre-conference doctoral seminar as well as present papers at the Conference. The future of humor research looks quite bright! I rejoice in the past milestones, celebrate current accomplishments, and in my new role as ISHS President, see a promising path forward for humor studies.

Message from the Past President
From Delia Chiaro, University of Bologna, Italy
The past two years in which I have had both the honour and the pleasure to serve as President of the International Society of Humour Studies have passed all too quickly. It seems in fact, that just as I am beginning to learn the ropes, my mandate is over – boo hoo! My Presidency has been a short and sweet bout of great fun and my thanks go to every single member of our society but I am especially grateful to our indefatigable multitasking secretary Martin Lampert.

I delivered my first Presidential address at the wonderful Dublin conference, the spirit of which not even the referendum from which Brexit had triumphed a few days earlier, managed to dampen. I delivered my second address further afield, in Montreal. I would like to thank both conference organizers for all the hard work and energy they put into these events to ensure that they ran as smoothly and successfully as they did.

However, the most significant event of my mandate was the passing of a great scholar, and a good friend to many of us, Christie Davies. I feel so privileged to have been able to spend time with him first in Montreal and then in Reading during what were to be his last weeks on planet earth. I am extremely proud of being part of the committee that set up the Christie Davies Award for young scholars working in the area of humour in society. The fact that Christie’s widow, Janetta Davies, is part of this committee makes the significance of the award extra special to his close friends. Last, but not least, I now hand the baton over to the capable hands of Władysław Chlopicki, and wish him all the very best of luck throughout his mandate.

30th Conference
of the International Society for Humor Studies
Tallinn University, Tallinn Estonia, June 25–29, 2018

From Liisi Laineste, Conference Convener, Estonia Literary Museum
The 2018 ISHS Conference will be held from June 25 to June 29, 2018, at Tallinn University in Tallinn, Estonia, with over 250 delegates from 48 different countries presenting across 78 different sessions. Conference activities will begin on Monday, June 25, with a pre-conference doctoral seminar with workshops led by Jessica Milner Davis, Jennifer Hofmann, Giselinde Kuipers, Tom Ford, and current ISHS President Władysław Chlopicki. These workshops welcome participants who have had little prior exposure to humor studies and who would like to engage in future humor research. From June 26 to 29, each conference day will include plenary addresses, breakout sessions, and special panels on topics ranging from current trends in psychology, to the humor of disgust, to a reconsideration of the politics of humor, to a discussion of the Estonian novel, The Man who Spoke Snakish (Andrus Kivirähk 2007). On Thursday, June 28, the Conference will convene at Vihula manor, in a setting 70 kilometers from Tallinn. The day will feature a full-day panel, honoring the work of Christie Davies, culminating in the presentation of the Christie Davies Award. On Friday, June 29, the schedule will include a special film program, organized by Carlo Cubero, featuring comedy documentaries and a meeting with the films’ directors. The Conference will conclude on Friday evening with the Annual Meeting of ISHS Members. For those who cannot attend the Conference, the June 26, 27, and 29 plenary sessions as well as the June 28 panel in honor of Christie Davies can be view via a live feed on the Conference Facebook page at ISHS2018.

For additional registration, program, travel, and accommodation information, visit the Conference website at https://www.folklore.ee/ishs2018/ or the Conference on Facebook at ISHS2018.
The 18th International Summer School and Symposium on Humour and Laughter will be held at the University of Wolverhampton, Telford, United Kingdom from July 2 to July 7, 2018. Josie Boutonnet and Tracey Platt are the local organizers. For information, visit the summer school website at http://humoursummerschool.org/18/.

Twelfth Annual Conference of the Lighthearted Philosophers’ Society

Santa Barbara City College, Santa Barbara, California, October 12-13, 2018

The Lighthearted Philosophers’ Society will hold its annual conference in Santa Barbara, California. The deadline for submissions is June 15 with acceptance notifications send by July 15. Details on how to register and submit papers for the conference can be found at https://philevents.org/event/show/41366. For additional conference information, you can write to the conference organizers at lighthearted.philosophers@gmail.com.

Book Review

Tomber en Humour


Reviewed by John Parkin, University of Bristol

After a two-and-a-half page preface penned by Martin Petit that borders on the facetious, Isabelle Ménard's avant-propos promises us twelve contributions, all by Québécois practitioners of humour, which present a warts-and-all analysis of their profession and their role and experiences within it. Her intention is to reinforce the artistic status of that profession and to confirm her (dubious) assertion that humorists are "de grands artistes" (p. 13). Without exception?

Her first contributor, Kim Lévesque-Lizotte, a fellow-pupil from Montréal's École Nationale de l'Humour (ENH), makes interesting comments on the problems and reactions confronting a female stand-up comedian, and particularly an attractive one which Ménard asserts that she is. These include professional rivalry, sexist presuppositions, spite, and self-justification via disparagement, all of which have persuaded her to cease performing (one hopes temporarily). Her final point is to encourage other female comics to emulate men in their audacity, overcoming in the process a conditioned desire to please.

Next comes another former ENH pupil, Martin Perizzolo, who raises the enduring question of how humour coexists with the message a humorist may have in mind. To concentrate too much on satire can be to restrict oneself, perhaps egotistically, to a small set of admirers, though he still seeks to be socially relevant in a comedy intended as both "drôle et parlant" (funny and meaningful), a balance not easy to define or sustain.

The third chapter is by Korine Côté, described by Ménard with customary hyperbole as "l'incarnation même de ce qu'est une humoriste", and who undertakes to recount and examine the insecurities and mood-swings that have accompanied her career in stand-up, particularly in the context of self-doubt, fatigue, and failed jokes and routines. Audience reaction is of course a crucial element in assessing one's success, but when it comes via an ever more intrusive range of social media, she seeks, laudably enough, to go off-line so as to compartmentalise her professional role within a life which offers much more.

Louis T. (real name Louis Tremblay and another product of the École Nationale de l'Humour) supplies the next section where he revives the issue of tendentious humour ("l’humour engagé") seen to impose on the comic a duty to inform himself about his subject-matter and then to educate his audience via a satiric denunciation of society's failings ("travers"). No joke is in fact innocent (Freud please note); they all bear a
political message, a point he seems later to contradict. However his aim as satirist is not merely to ridicule but rather to sow seeds of doubt in his targets so that they realise how laughable is their own position.

The fifth contributor, Neev, a musician turned comedian, recounts the chance whereby he achieved his first outstanding success on stage followed by his realising the need for hard work in creating his own material and improving his technique. After that comes Mélanie Couture, relating her move into humour after five years spent working with victims of conjugal violence: quite a change! Her piece reads as uncommonly self-admiring, but given the sexist prejudices still evident in her field, that can be understood. Then Fabien Cloutier offers up a prose-poem loosely connected with the theme of humour's purpose - *L'humour ça sert à rien* (humour is useless) - and whose inconclusiveness at least makes it an easy read.

Pierre-Bruno Rivard returns to the problems that inevitably infect a comedian's career, and which for him included self-doubt (once more), an impoverished life-style which in fact dated back to childhood, and even stress-related alcoholism, though they seem amply compensated by the delights of pleasing an audience, particularly one that unites in laughter at a particular joke. That reaction conceals a specific danger, however, for humour should, he says, both disturb and chafe (*"déranger et écorcher"*), qualities which, curiously enough, can reinforce the bond between a comedian and his public. Jay Du Temple (real name Jérémy Du Temple-Quirion) is the ninth participant, a young comedian who chooses as particular subject his need to establish an individual voice (symbolised one feels by an individual and incongruous mode of attire) whilst also avoiding the temptations of professional envy and rancour at others' success. Nadine Massie follows him with a chapter entitled "Gagner sa vie en humour" where she outlines the work patterns of a professional script- (and indeed ghost-) writer who also appears in stand-up, her original preferred medium. The interesting point is that while aware of not enjoying either the reputation or wealth of others, she retains a contentedness with and a commitment to her chosen métier.

Didier Lambert proceeds with a similar piece in that he also concentrates on the satisfaction rather than the fame that his profession as humoriste has afforded him, while stressing that he was originally trained in improv and never attended the École whose name reappears so frequently in the book. His style he describes as deliberately provocative rather than comforting, and his technique as dependent on a rupturing of taboos accompanied by a self-mockery that helps disarm a public potentially threatened by his material. Nevertheless, he concludes, obviously enough, that that material will not please everyone. The twelfth and final item is by the Algerian Mehdi Bousaidan and comprises an anecdote drawn from his growing up in the Algerian War when the laughter stimulated by his mother and shared by her children helped them all overcome the trauma of finding their home under shell-fire and their village the site of a battle between armed forces: proof for him of the potential of laughter to confront and disempower reality.

Ménard herself concludes the volume by reflecting on what it means to be a professional humorist rather than a mere funny man (or woman), a quality that demands devotion rather than mere inclination. However to see this feature as intrinsic to the nature of the Québécois is surely to go too far. Hers is not the only community rich in humorous talents which sit alongside the ability to not take itself too seriously (*"ne pas toujours se prendre au sérieux"*): p. 235). Such generalisations apart, one is certainly struck by the number and variety of talents here on display, and while humour theorists might look for a deeper examination of those talents and their development, practitioners of humour will surely be both encouraged and reassured by the candid self-analysis that their Canadian counterparts have undertaken to share with them.

**Africans in English Caricature 1769-1819**


Reviewed by Edward Freeman, Paris

The campaign, beginning in the late eighteenth century and continuing long after, to banish first the trade in black African slaves, then the (mis-)use of transatlantic slave labour, and finally slave status altogether was a long and arduous one. In Great Britain it was headed notably by William Wilberforce and his Philanthropist associates Zachary Macaulay, James Stephen and John Stoddart, who were all the target of venomous attacks from the slave-trading and -owning lobbies in the Caribbean and Britain. All of this, and much else besides relating to the fate and published image of Africans in cartoons, is the subject of this excellent, scholarly and
beautifully illustrated book. It has its roots in Dr Odumosu’s PhD thesis and his subsequent research stretching back over many years in numerous university and museum archives in “the UK, Denmark, Sweden, US, West Africa, and the Caribbean” (p.8). His pleasure in occasionally unearthing unique and previously unknown prints in dusty folders in these places (e.g. "hidden in the folios at the Yale Center for British Art") is palpable and clearly justified. This is a thoroughly comprehensive work, supported by a scholarly apparatus that could not be more complete. The bibliography is immense, and there are no fewer than 778 (!) endnotes to chapters, many of them excellently informative mini-essays in their own right.

The illustrated material of the work is a corpus of some seventy black and white or coloured engravings (including a small number of paintings) and a similar number of enlarged details from the same. The main caricaturists are the Cruickshanks father and son, Rowlandson, Gillray and Dent, and a considerable number of "Anons". More than a few of the illustrations (e.g. Hogarth) are in fact from before the initial date chosen by the author, as well as being not at all English (e.g. Lavater, Leonardo da Vinci) or caricatures (e.g. Raphael, Rubens), but that does not matter. A more interesting point is that some of the portraits of Africans are not in any way satirical. Chapter One, entitled ‘The Overdressed Slave: Servants, Pets and "Mungo" Macaronis’ includes a fine painting by William Jones, *The Black Boy* (Victoria Art Gallery, Bath), in which an extremely handsome black youth in an elegant uniform holds a tray of fruit. He smiles with no evident complex; this is *his* portrait and he does not seem to mind. One would perhaps have liked Dr Odumosu to decode this picture a little more fully.

Elsewhere too, Africans, whether servants indoors or bystanders in street scenes, are marginal figures, dressed decently or even extremely well: they are just anonymous black persons among a crowd of English natives and gazing, sometimes in shared amazement, at their masters. The latter may be dressed as ludicrous fops, bursting obscenely from out of their clothes and wigs, and sometimes behaving badly (including the future King William IV). In possibly the most famous satirical print of all, Marryat and Cruickshank’s immense ‘New Union Club’ (1819), anonymous as well as identifiable black people at a celebratory banquet of Rabelaisian proportions join gleefully in the bad behaviour (drunkenness, vomiting and under the table lechery) but their features are not more brutally drawn than those of their English comrades in the liberation cause. That is not to say that the book does not include caricatures of Africans of a hideously racist nature, more often of women than of men. Regardless of race Odumosu is generally too kind; he calls the obese women "buxom" and does not comment on the Englishwomen who are scrawny and hag-like. Lascivious, tyrannical and variously racist, the English natives come in for all the satirical flicks of the burin wielded by Cruickshank, Gillray and Rowlandson.

Here is the place to discuss the title of this book as well as the cover illustration, a wonderfully ambiguous work. It is a detail from *Spectators at a Print-Shop* (1772) showing a young Englishwoman taking a dish of tea at breakfast. She is wearing astonishing headgear, folds of lace coming down over her eyes and right down the sides of her face to reveal only her nose and mouth ("obscenely" in the opinion of the author). A small black boy in an elegant uniform looks at her in amazement. He holds a copper kettle ("invested with lewd associations", re-dixit author). This and the (labial?) framing of her face create a "sexual subtext that would not have been lost on the viewer" (p.22).

Clearly this is a work that ought to have more than a little interest for humour theorists. That said, it must perhaps be regretted that the author’s prompting in that direction tends towards the minimal. The subtitle *Black Jokes, White Humour* is a snappy one, but it is not until page 117 that we are fed a clue as to the choice of that particular noun-and-adjective word order: apparently a "Black Joke" was a reference to a popular comic song about a woman’s vagina, which perhaps helps at last to explain the coded message of the front cover. There are one or two references to a carnival atmosphere in the riotous scenes, but nothing that shows awareness of Bakhtinian theory. And in a sense, why should it? The book is what it intends to be, a vast store of visual source material for historians of the ending of slavery, coinciding with the revolutions in France and Saint-Domingue, future Haiti; as such it supplies an extremely valuable contribution to scholarship on which the author must be congratulated. Some of the caricatures are appallingly racist, others are uncontroversially comic. The latter may be a mine of material for humour theorists, but they will have to do their own digging.
Humorous Discourse

From the Publisher: This book attempts to discuss selected but thorny issues of humor research that form the major stumbling blocks as well as challenges in humor studies at large and thus merit insightful discussion. Any discourse is action, so the text-creation process is always set in a non-verbal context, built of a social and communicative situation, and against the background of relevant culture. On the other hand, humor scholars claim that humorous discourse has its special, essential features that distinguish it from other discourses. The pragmatic solution to the issue of potential circularity of humor defined in terms of discourse and discourse in terms of humor seems only feasible, and thus there is a need to discuss the structure and mechanisms of humorous texts and humorous performances. The chapters in the present volume, contributed by leading scholars in the field of humor studies, address the issues from various theoretical perspectives, from contextual semantics through General Theory of Verbal Humor, cognitive linguistics, discourse studies, sociolinguistics, to Ontological Semantic Theory of Humor, providing an excellent overview of the field to novices and experts alike.

The Dynamics of Interactional Humor

From the Publisher: This book deals with the construction of diverse forms of humor in everyday oral, written, and mediatized interactions. It sheds light on the differences and, most importantly, the similarities in the production of interactional humor in face-to-face and various technology-mediated forms of communication, including scripted and non-scripted situations. The chapters analyze humor-related issues in such genres as spontaneous conversations, broadcast dialogues, storytelling, media blogs, bilingual conversations, stand-up comedy, TV documentaries, drama series, family sitcoms, Facebook posts, and internet memes. The individual authors trace how speakers collaboratively circulate, reconstruct, and (re)frame either personal or public accounts of reality, aiming—among other things—to produce and/or reproduce humor. The book draws on a variety of up-to-date approaches and methodologies, and will appeal to scholars in discourse analysis, conversation analysis, interactional sociolinguistics, pragmatics, ethnography of communication, and social semiotics.

Not All Claps and Cheers: Humor in Business and Society Relationships

From the Publisher: Not All Claps and Cheers: Humor in Business and Society Relationships is an original research anthology that considers different angles from which to address the use of humor by individuals, groups and business actors in their interactions within, around, and across organizations—that is, at the interfaces of business and society. Accordingly, the research anthology is organized in four sections—"Humor, Business and Society," "From Business to Business: Humor’s Use and Roles in Activist Movements," "From Business to Society: Humor’s Use and Roles in Marketing, Corporate Communications, and Public Relations," and "Society within Business: Humor’s Use and Roles in the Workplace and in Organizations." This ground-breaking research anthology draws on material from marketing, communications, human resources and stakeholder theory to throw light on this poorly understood facet of human business behavior.
Recent Articles in Humor Studies

The Humorous Times announces recent articles from HUMOR: International Journal of Humor Research and by researchers who publish elsewhere within humor studies. The following list, compiled by the ISHS Executive Secretary, includes articles published since December 2017, in particular articles from two special journal issues in memorium for Christie Davies (HUMOR 31.1 and European Journal for Humor Studies 5.4) and a festschrift for Paul McGhee (HUMOR 31.2). If you have a recent publication, let us know. We will include it in a future newsletter.


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