

# The Humorous Times

Newsletter of the International Society for Humor Studies

Summer 2016

Volume 29, Issue 3

## Association News

### 28th Conference of the International Society for Humor Studies

From Eric Weitz, 2016 ISHS Conference Convener

The 28th Conference of the International Society for Humor Studies was held at Trinity College Dublin, in Dublin, Ireland, from June 27 to July 1. Under a widest possible interpretation of the theme, 'Humor as Embodied Practice', the conference welcomed approximately 180 participants from forty different countries, with 150 presentations including papers, workshops and poster sessions.

Following a few preliminary remarks by conference host, Eric Weitz, the proceedings were opened on the afternoon of Monday, June 27th, with a welcome from the Conference Fool, Little John Nee, an Irish storyteller, musician, writer and clown, whose song, 'The World Brings Fools Together', served as the conference tag line. Newly elected ISHS President Delia Carmela Chiaro then delivered her first presidential address on translation as a humorous device. A specially organized session, titled Interdisciplinary Huddles, which sought to stir discussion from diverse theoretical/practical orientations in small groups ran opposite a practical workshop on 'Foolish Therapy'. An evening wine reception was held in Trinity's famous Long Room among vaulted ceilings and ancient library holdings, with a formal welcome by Jane Ohlmyer, Director of the Trinity Long Room Hub research center. This was followed by a screening of Andrew Stott's new short documentary, *Cold Snow Losers: Open Mic at the Edge of America*, which he introduced from Buffalo, NY, via Skype, due to a last-minute onset of gastroenteritis.

Tuesday began with a special panel, 'Exploring Comedy as Embodied Practice', courtesy of the Centre for Comedy Studies Research (CCSR), Brunel University London. Parallel paper panels began in earnest, with three such sessions convening Tuesday through Thursday and one final session on Friday morning. In the afternoon special-speaker slot, Jessica Milner Davis (University of Sydney) delivered the first keynote address on the subject of 'Humor and Comic Characterization'. Tuesday's evening activity took the form of an Irish Comedy Pub Crawl, hosted by Andrew Stanley, visiting three venues, each with embedded comic.

Wednesday began with a panel featuring papers delivered by the winners of this year's ISHS Graduate Student Awards, Kate Fox (University of Leeds), 'Humitas: When humor makes things happen and the serious and the humorous operate in the same frame' and Elisa Gironzetti (Texas A&M-Commerce), 'Expressive and

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### Next Issue

The next *Humorous Times* is due in November 2016. Items for the November issue should be sent to [ishs@hnu.edu](mailto:ishs@hnu.edu).



Convener Eric Weitz,  
ISHS President Delia  
Chiaro, and 2016  
Lifetime Achievement  
Recipient Rod Martin

Communicative Smiling in Conversation’; and winner of the Don and Alleen Nilsen Young Scholars Award, Sonja Heintz (University of Zurich), ‘Seven dimensions of everyday humor behaviors and their relationships with personality, humor styles, and subjective well-being’. The afternoon special speaker was Victor Raskin (Purdue University), with a Special Plenary Paper, titled, ‘On funny reasoning’. The Conference Banquet took place in Trinity’s Main Dining Hall, with Rod A. Martin (University of Western Ontario) receiving his just desserts by being honored with the 2016 ISHS Lifetime Achievement Award. The Limerick Contest, hosted by Patrice Oppliger (Boston University), saw awards go to Cornelia Cody (University of Maryland) for best retold limerick, and Edward Still (University of Oxford) for best original limerick; Delia Chiaro (University of Bologna) received an honorable mention.

On Thursday morning the plenary panel was titled, ‘Humor and Social Media’, and arose from contributions to a special issue for the European Journal of Humour Research. The afternoon special slot was host to a Special Practitioners Panel, titled, ‘Scientists Who Moonlight as Comedians’, with speakers Jessamyn Fairfield (Physics), Niamh Shaw (Microbiology) and Maria Boyle (Engineering) in a session chaired by Sven Svebak (Norwegian University of Science and Technology). The evening activity was the first of two performances, either of which delegates could attend, entitled, *Laughter in Our Bones: A Comic Cultural Buffet*, a promenade staging in the Samuel Beckett Theatre of eight culture-specific skits rendered by performers born in and outside Ireland, all of whom now reside on the island.



Niamh Shaw, Jessamyn Fairfield,  
and Maria Boyle

The event, which included Chinese, Nigerian, Indian, U.S., west of Ireland, border counties, and 1916 Dublin city, was emceed by Little John Nee. Friday afternoon delegates heard two more special speakers, the first, Des MacHale (University College Cork), who spoke on, ‘The Irish Bull: A Uniquely Irish Contribution to Humor’; the second was actress, writer and Trinity graduate, Pauline McLynn, who spoke on many things including her beloved Mrs. Doyle character from Ireland’s all-time favorite television series, *Father Ted*, and a bizarrely comic game played by her family during her childhood in Co. Sligo. The conference closed with the Annual Meeting of Members, with a presentation in advance of next year’s 2017 conference in Montréal, Quebec by Christelle Paré. It was announced that the 2018 conference will take place in Tallinn, Estonia.



Pauline McLynn

### ***Reflections from the 2016 ISHS Conference***

This year’s conference was my first as an ex-subject of the EU. In fact, I arrived at Trinity College 48 hours after Brexit, at 2 am after extensive airport madness. And much of the chatter during coffee breaks was precisely about that. Would Holland follow? What about EU grants in common? Erasmus programs. But leaving aside Fraurevoir, Italexit, Outsria, Czech-out and Dumpmark, what a great conference it was. It kicked off with a splendid performance by Little John Nee and continued with a number of excellent plenaries and sessions. The conference managed to hit exactly the right balance between papers pertaining to the more “exact” sciences and those from the more “liberal” arts. I for one learnt a lot. As for the Limerick contest, great stuff. Well done Eric! – ***Delia Chiaro, University of Bologna, Italy***

I would like to thank you for the well-organized ISHS 2016 annual humor conference in Dublin. It was a real pleasure not only due to the beautiful college and the academic level of the lectures, but mainly because of the friendly hospitality that you and your staff demonstrated. You gave us three important ingredients that should be in every well done conference: food, fun, and a warm Reception. And last but not least, the effort that you invested in the theatre evening is much more than anybody can expect. – ***Arie Sover, Ashkelon Academic College, Israel***

I had a wonderful time at the conference. Rigorous and friendly organization? Check! A fascinating spectrum of thought-provoking and inspiring papers on humor? Check! Guinness? Check! Result? Academic nirvana! – ***Edward Still, Oxford University, United Kingdom***

# Announcing the 29th Conference of the International Society for Humor Studies

*University of Quebec, Montreal, July 10 to 14, 2017*

*From Jean-Marie LaFortune, Christelle Paré,  
and Élias Rizkallah, 2017 ISHS Conference Organizers*

The *Université du Québec à Montréal*, in collaboration with the *Observatoire de l'humour*, is proud to host the 2017 International Society for Humor Studies Conference from July 10 to July 14, 2017 in *La belle province* of Quebec, more precisely in downtown Montréal. The *Université du Québec à Montréal* (UQAM) is a public French-language university of international influence. The quality of its programs, its research in social issues and its innovations in the creative arts are the foundation stones of its reputation. Located in the heart of the Quartier des spectacles, an international centre for artistic creation, UQAM offers not only conferences venues of international standards, but also the opportunity to access within minutes, with a short walk, a large diversity of cultural activities, venues, shows, etc. The neighbourhood is vibrant with students, visitors, and locals, and has many restaurants and cafés for all budgets and all types of taste.

UQAM's location also provide the opportunity to easily travel throughout the city of Montréal using the public transportation system, mainly the subway (Metro). Visitors can walk through Chinatown, the Old City of Montréal, get to the Olympic Stadium or go shopping on Ste. Catherine's Street in less than 10 minutes using the Metro. And, of course, we have to mention the fact that the Canadian dollar is really low right now. This way, Montréal will be a cheaper destination for our Europeans and American colleagues that will enjoy as much fun and learning for a lower cost. Another attractive element is the fact that the conference will be happening at the beginning of the English program of the Just for Laughs festival... which will be taken place just a few feet from l'UQAM! The organizing committee is already planning exciting activities with the festival's administrators.

We have negotiated two agreements with venues within a 15 minute walk distance from UQAM. We felt the need to block a number of rooms to make sure that all ISHS visitors will be able to find a room for their stay while Montreal is buzzing with activities:

*Les Gouverneurs Place Dupuis*: \$189.99 CAN per night for standard room  
American breakfast buffet included; parking (\$21.00 CAN per day) not included.

Delta Montréal: \$201.00 CAN per night  
Breakfast and parking (\$26.00 CAN per day) not included.

We have a number of rooms blocked with *Les Gouverneurs*. In both cases, participants are strongly encouraged to make reservations as soon as possible, preferably before January 2017, to make sure they will have a room to stay. When it comes to on-campus housing, we made reservations at the *Résidences de l'Ouest*. Current 2016 prices range from \$53 CAN (Single room) to \$144 (Double Studio) Bathrooms in the dorms are shared, as are common spaces for informal interaction, but studios offer private bathroom and kitchenette. Wireless internet service is included for guests in campus housing. For the needs of our visitors, to make sure that most of them will be able to use campus housing, we have blocked off 50 studios (with double bed @ \$63.75/night) and 25 double rooms (that include a kitchenette @ \$67.15/night). A minimum of a 100 guests could reserve in advance and will be guarantee a place to stay during the conference. Please note that there is no air conditioning at the residences.

Registration fees will be payable online (by credit card) through the conference website. Early registration of \$250 for ISHS members and \$300 for non-members will be possible through March 1, 2017. We also plan to offer \$100 early registration fee for students to enable local and international graduate students to take part in the event. After March 1, the registration will be \$300, \$350, \$150 and \$175, respectively. The registration fees will include:

- The Opening cocktail (bites and one drink)
- The Closing banquet (complete buffet and two bottles of wine by table of eight)
- Coffee breaks (coffee, tea, snacks)
- The attendee "survival kit" (program, maps, references for attractions, festivals, etc.)

The summer of 2017 in Montreal will be extremely busy, fun and interesting, as the city will be celebrating its 375th anniversary. We strongly recommend that ISHS visitors and members plan their trip in advance to make sure they obtain the best deals and opportunities. To assist our members and visitors, the website, as well as the calls for papers and panels, will be launched by mid-October at the very latest. We can't wait to see you in Montreal, the "funniest city on earth" ... according to Just for Laughs!

## Recent Event

### The 2016 Taboo Conference

*Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona, Spain, September 20-21, 2016*

The 3rd Taboo Conference was held at the Universitat Pompeu Fabra in Barcelona, Spain from September 20 to 21, 2016. The theme of the Conference was *Taboo Humour: Language, Culture, Society, and the Media*. For more information, write to [thetabooconference@gmail.com](mailto:thetabooconference@gmail.com) or visit the Conference website at <https://portal.upf.edu/web/taco>.

## Call for Book Submissions

### The Language of Humor: Jokes, Caricature, & Slapstick

*From Arie Sover, Editor, Ashkelon Academic College and the Open University of Israel*

You are cordially invited to submit a chapter proposal for a new edited humor research book, which will focus on the language of humor across three humor categories: jokes, caricatures and slapstick. Jokes are usually told orally, but are also expressed in writing; caricatures involves graphic drawings; and slapstick is expressed in body language. Indeed, the three genres use a different language of expression, but they are all part of the humor family. Each has a rich history. Jokes are the outcome of popular humor that has developed almost in every community, and a long history of thousands of years. Caricatures first appeared formally in Italy at end of the 16th century, but showed early signs in ancient Egyptian culture as well as in classical Greek and Roman cultures. Slapstick became familiar in the era of silent movies of the early 20th century and in later sound films. However, slapstick has earlier origins, including circus acts of the late 18th and 19th century, clowns shows of medieval fairs, and the ancient Greek and Roman theatre.

This book intends to decipher the language of humor across the genres of jokes, caricature, and slapstick to enrich the knowledge with regard to each, and to contribute to humor research in generally. You are invited to choose one of the three subject areas and to submit a 300 word abstract and a short professional biography to the book editor, Arie Sover at [ariesover@gmail.com](mailto:ariesover@gmail.com) by October 15, 2016. The book editor will review all submissions by November 15, 2016, and the publisher will make final decisions on acceptance by December 15, 2016. All proposals must be written in English. Authors for whom English is not their first language should let an editor review their proposals before submission.

Researchers of accepted papers will receive a timeline for the submission of their completed articles, which should not exceed 8,000 words including references. All articles will be peer reviewed. For more information, contact Arie Sover at [ariesover@gmail.com](mailto:ariesover@gmail.com)

## Book Reviews

### Tourism and Humour

**Philip L. Pearce & Anja Pabel. (2015). *Tourism and humour* (Aspects of Tourism series, 68). Bristol, UK: Channel View Publications. 167 pp. ISBN: 978-1-84541-508-2.**

*Reviewed by Heather Crawford, Charles Sturt University*

Philip Pearce and Anja Pabel supply in this volume a new avenue for researching humor and its use in everyday life, drawing on their extensive knowledge of the literature and of the application of humor in an industry that adds more than \$7 trillion to the global economy each year. Intended for university students in tourism and humor researchers in tourism and associated disciplines, its core premise is that the use of humor adds value to the tourism experience, enhancing brand reputation and economic value for tourism operators and authorities.

The book is loosely arranged around the stages of contact between visitors and tourism operators, from pre-travel to onsite and post-travel. A conceptual model is developed through the examination of a wide range of theories, methodologies, and examples that encapsulate the authors' perspective on their subject.

Although the nascent state of humor and tourism makes a degree of self-citing inevitable, the discussions are well researched, drawing on the literature of a variety of disciplines in social science and business. The style is accessible, combining academic rigor with humor. In addition to examples of humor in tourism settings, the authors also incorporate humor into the discussion as an aide-mémoire.

The book begins with an exploration of the psychological and physiological aspects of laughter and their link to humor appreciation. Laughter is seen primarily as a visible/audible expression of humor appreciation that rewards the creator of humor. Superiority theory, incongruity theory, and relief theory are assessed, following Martin's (2007) belief that every humorous communication reflects one of these three theories, but the authors also evaluate less well known constructs such as Wyer and Collins' (1992) two-schema approach. They develop a conceptual map linking tourism with humor whose complexity illustrates the myriad elements that must obtain for humor to produce value for initiator and audience. Their purpose is to investigate the potential value of humor for tourists, and the added value that their appreciation of the humor brings to the tourism operator's brand.

Humor is frequently used as an attention-getting device in communication (e.g. Weinberger and Gulas 1992), Pearce and Pabel link prior research on attention with the concept of mindfulness, or "enhanced attention to and awareness of current experience or reality" (p. 29). Appropriate humor is seen as a trigger for positive emotions, causing tourists to neglect their electronic devices and immerse themselves in the tourism experience, a process that the authors believe positively affects their mood and responses.

Attention is also linked to memory, and thus the text turns to an examination of humor in tourism promotion and its effects on tourists' choice of destinations and activities. Several successful promotional campaigns are analyzed for their humor content and its effectiveness in increasing attention and recall. Air New Zealand's string of humorous in-flight safety videos is one example which successfully secures the attention of even experienced travelers. A few minutes of light-hearted yet focused attention may enhance concentration on the moment, thereby enriching the travel experience.

Arrival at a destination or activity offers potential for humor within the onsite experience. Pearce and Pabel explore humor's effects on both tourists and the tourism operator's personnel. Significant from the human resources perspective is Bryman's (2004) view that human endeavor in the experience economy must include emotional, aesthetic, and performative elements. The authors assess how tourism employees apply each as an essential component of their job. Laughter is seen as indicating a positive response to that job. The authors recommend that employers recognize the need for a facilitative and supportive environment in which employees can undertake "humor labor" successfully.

The experience of this humor labor is seen by the authors as a co-creation process between personnel and visitors in which each actor's awareness is heightened and their engagement increased. Engagement is a leading indicator of customer satisfaction, as it creates increased value for the visitor that may transfer into value for the operator through positive reviews or repeat business.

Tourists commonly share the high and low points of their experience with friends, family, and even strangers, and the anecdotes that gain the most attention often include humor. The authors explore the topic of storytelling and the use of humor by professional and amateur travel writers, offering excellent analyses of both longer stories and blog posts, and using various coding schemas. Their analysis displays the complexity evident in any humor study, as categories of humor type were found to overlap rather than being mutually exclusive: more than one type of humor may be evident within the same story. This chapter on post-travel stories extends the scope of the book by covering the entire travel experience, but its applied value for tourism operators and their employees has been underestimated. Future research could examine how humor in the onsite experience influences the use of humor in post-travel publicity.

Appropriateness of humor style and content is a recurring theme, and the authors seek to explain negative and failed humor. One chapter offers a cursory discussion of potentially negative reactions to humor in multicultural contexts, but the exploration rejects the possibility of a universal humor, despite such examples as appeared in the earlier discussion of tourism promotion.

The authors use primary research effectively to supply broad guidelines for avoiding failed humor. These include checking for the appropriateness of humor content, considering the disadvantages of using humor, assessing whether the humor could be misinterpreted or cause offence, and identifying inappropriate settings for humor such as memorial sites. To reduce the possibility of humor failure, personnel should either use more self-deprecating humor or lessen their humor when unsure of its appropriateness. One section with great potential benefit for tourism students and practitioners concerns the limits of humor, offering clear advice on how to determine appropriate content. The “Mother Rule” asks whether one would use particular humor content when speaking to one’s mother, or someone else’s more conservative mother. Similarly the “Whisper Rule” indicates that if one feels the need to lower the voice when sharing a humorous item, then it is likely inappropriate for broader company.

The final section of the book offers innovative avenues for future research in tourism settings. One such area would center on the impact of technology within tourism. Much remains to be discovered about the links between tourist and home social circles, which remain intact during travel and allow comments and reviews to be shared immediately, often using humor to gain attention.

Cross-cultural research on humor in tourism also needs investigation, specifically the search for commonalities rather than mere differences. The authors concentrate here on humor in English-speaking contexts, rather neglecting the often multicultural nature of tourist groups and tourism personnel. This is a somewhat surprising omission considering their use of primary research from Australia, to which 6.7 million international visitors come each year.

Pearce and Pabel have produced an excellent foundation for students and scholars of humor and tourism. Their conceptual model has strong roots in theory and a variety of research traditions. Despite the clear Australian or at least Anglophone bias within its primary research, the book contributes to the growth of a body of knowledge of great potential value for tourists and tourism operators.

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- Wyer, Robert S. and James E. Collins (1992). "A theory of humor elicitation," *Psychological Review*, 99 (4), 663-88.

## Catalan Cartoons: A Cultural and Political History

Rhiannon McGlade. (2016). *Catalan cartoons: A cultural and political history*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press. 272 pp. ISBN: 9781783168040.

*Reviewed by Eduard Abelenda, University of Barcelona, and Lucila Mallart, University of Nottingham*

Cartoons provide historians with an augmented understanding of social experience, and a rich tradition of satirical cartoons has been developed in Catalonia during the twentieth century. Through their exploration of the multifaceted relationship between satire and social context the discussions within the present book show the value of the Catalan case as a contribution to a number of debates in humor studies. Rhiannon McGlade devotes her research to the role of political cartoons in cultural studies with a particular interest in the Catalan tradition. Overall this is a readable and chronologically comprehensive book, ranging from 1898 to 1982, and the first to analyze the history of Catalan cartooning from a cultural and cognitive perspective while taking humor theory into account. Although description outweighs theoretical discussion of the chosen case studies, the book is an innovative and sound introduction to the history of Catalan cartooning.

McGlade begins her study with an Introduction presenting several broad theories of humor that she applies as tools of analysis throughout the book. While some of these, such as superiority or relief-release theories, appear frequently in the analysis, incongruity theories, for instance Gestalt theories or The General Theory of Verbal Humor, could have been employed more consistently. The introduction also deals with the Catalan context by presenting previous research published in Catalan by authors like Jaume Capdevila and

Lluís Solà. There is also a discussion of the main Catalan cartoonists of the twentieth century, who have been chosen as representatives of a continuous cartooning tradition.

One of the main threads that McGlade finds throughout the Catalan cartooning history is the strengthening of in-group solidarity in opposition to the out-group, often exemplified by the different identities and colliding interests of Barcelona and Madrid. This thread can be traced from the late nineteenth century, with the loss of the Spanish colonies, well into the Transition to Democracy and the debate over the 1979 Catalan Statute of Autonomy. However it could also be argued that during Franco's dictatorship the in-group/out-group opposition had often less to do with Catalan identity than with the distinction between ordinary people and the dictatorship's elite. This would be the case of the postwar cartoon anti-hero Carpanta, who suffered from an insatiable hunger.

The first chapter examines several themes treated in major humor magazines of the period 1898-1931, such as *La Campana de Gràcia*, *Papitu* or *Cu-cut*. The themes are selected as case studies because of the attention they attracted in their original milieu. Some of the cartoons chosen are very well known, like 'Al frontón Condal' – which caused a violent military reaction – while others have been found by the author. One of the novelties of McGlade's study resides in the fact that she not only uses cartoons to illustrate or better understand certain historical events, but also focusses on the cartoons themselves, the way they create humor and their relation to their socio-cultural contexts.

Catalan cartoons become in this book a focus of enquiry in their own right. McGlade extracts interesting reflections from each theme, although more could have been said on how the study of cartoons contributes to recent debates on the development of modern Hispanic visual cultures as discussed in the works of Jordana Mendelson or Jo Labanyi. With 'Al frontó Condal' she is able to show the impact of the Catalan satirical press on political life. Some themes, like 'The vilification of Alejandro Lerroux', are discussed in the first chapter and then reexamined later on. Following this, McGlade discusses whether the satirical press could have had a long-term impact on the ultimate dismissal of the politician Alejandro Lerroux.

The second chapter is devoted to cartooning during the Second Spanish Republic and the Civil War (1931-1939). The wartime period implied a political polarization that caused significant changes in Catalan satire, and McGlade shows how satirical magazines were transformed into propaganda tools in favor of the left. The author maintains that cartoon humor was used to support the existing belief system and eliminate grey areas in order to simplify ideas and identities.

Censorship is one of the main topics discussed in the book. It figures in the first chapter but comes to prominence during the Francoist regime (1939-1975), which is discussed in chapters 3 and 4. During periods of strict press control a dialogue between the censor and the cartoonist was established. The different press laws that regulated censorship are crucial to an understanding of the fate and practice of cartoonists, editors and magazines. McGlade identifies three different contexts in which a cartoonist trained before the Civil War could keep working: the clandestine press, the press in exile, and children's magazines. The first two media could and certainly did mock Franco directly, but cartoons from children's magazines or, later on, entertainment magazines aimed at adults, were subject to the control of the censor and had to be subtler. This thorough study of cartoons for children and their insertion into a broader tradition of social critique in Catalan cartooning is one of the strengths of the present study.

In fact McGlade claims that, while the literature on cartooning highlights the discontinuity that the Civil War represented, the transmission of knowledge from older cartoonists to the younger ones, and the subtle presence of critique allow one to argue for a continuing Catalan tradition under a different idiom. During the transition to democracy (1975-1982), discussed in chapter 5, old press laws continued and self-censorship was also applied, but freedom of expression reinstigated violence with the bombing of the headquarters of the magazine *El Pàpus*.

Overall, *Catalan Cartoons* is a stimulating book that will be interesting for specialists in cartoon humor and Catalan studies, but also for those who wish to read an entertaining introduction to the Catalan cultural and political history of the twentieth century. One of its key merits is its broad chronological span. Some may find this a weakness, but that claim is refuted by its sound multidisciplinary discussion that contextualizes cartoons through the avatars of Catalan political history. McGlade's study is the first to offer such a broad vision of the Catalan cartooning tradition from a consistent scholarly point of view.

## American Comic Poetry

Jeff Morgan. (2015). *American comic poetry: History, techniques and modern masters*. Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland. 187 pp. ISBN 978-0-7864-9984-7.

*Reviewed by Lawrence E. Mintz, Emeritus, University of Maryland*

Violets are blue/Roses are red/I'm writing this review/tho' poetry's dead. No matter. As E. B. White famously observed, the study of comedy necessarily involves dead subjects and is of interest only to "pure scientific minds." Jeff Morgan, the author of *American Comic Poetry* does not have a completely pure scientific mind, since he is clearly enamored of his subject matter, but he uses lab tools including textual explication, stylistics and an organizing theory, that of Marcel Gutwirth, which he applies to his chosen examples. It is not entirely clear whether he chose the examples to illuminate and advance the theory, or vice versa, nor is it entirely convincing that each poet represents each of the three strands of the theory (i.e. humor as functional, psychological, and intellectual), but by the time one finishes reading the book, both the theory and its representation by the poets chosen are clear enough.

But first there must be the epic roll call, a survey of comic poetry in the American past. This is always a good idea, just about required, but Morgan spends almost as many pages setting up the connections with the past as he does in focusing on his actual at hand subject. He does this at least in part to lend dignity and importance to his subject, so reaching back to Native American tales (he might have also included the stand-up comedy routines of shamans at rituals), Franklin, Barlow, Lowell, and Holmes, followed by longer, deeper accounts of Dorothy Parker and Ogden Nash. To elevate his chosen endeavor he reveres, rightly, Mark Twain, the greatest humorist our culture has produced (Twain himself awarded a shelf life of twenty years to the best humor). He also tosses around some theory mavens including Aristotle, Freud, Bergson, and Paul McGee (Paul is a friend so I hope he will forgive my zeugma here). In addition, later in the book, he cites Christie Davies, but refers to him as she, and if there is some sort of gender transformation going on here, it has escaped me during the almost four decades I have known that brilliant, unsurpassed sociologist and humor theorist, emeritus at the University of Reading. No big deal, of course.

Morgan is, as noted above, an enthusiast, and he tosses around the title "comic genius" liberally. Perhaps only Twain deserves that designation (I have argued elsewhere that Twain and Chaplin were the only true geniuses of American humor, but I would respect arguments for a few others, not necessarily though for every poet under Morgan's scrutiny). Another, bigger problem, is that of laughter. Throughout the book the author talks about laughing both on reading comic poetic texts and on hearing them read, and he unreservedly asserts that the audience generally laughs in both circumstances. Almost all the research that has been done on laughter suggests that it is a social phenomenon, not necessarily associated with comic or humorous stimuli, almost never experienced by a solitary individual. I have spent almost a half century studying humor and have rarely laughed when alone, whether reading, listening to recorded comedy, watching film or in any other way engaged. That may be my failing. It is often asserted that folks who study comedy lack a sense of humor. In any case I cannot and will not challenge Professor Morgan's ability to laugh at just about any of the poetry he discusses, but I will challenge that it is the universal response.

Morgan also overstates the power of humor, particularly comic poetry, to "serve as a social corrective" or "to change our level of cultural sensitivity." Would that it were so. I would then buy the best microphone system on the market and spend my remaining years blasting comic poetry at political rallies and other appropriate events where radical attitude adjustment is called for. He also decries the lack of academic attention paid to comic poetry, which he attributes to comedy's low place in the critical esteem ladder, but I would give at least equal weight to poetry's having lost its general audience almost entirely and its intellectual audience considerably. Poetry is and has been for some time an internal club enterprise, by and for poets and for people who give awards and grants to those arts that have no popular support and can only survive because we know they are "good for us." Morgan declares, in his Conclusion, "these are poets who can bring poetry back to the masses." Wistful thinking.

The virtue of the book is that it does make one want to read and as possible hear Billy Collins, Denise Duhamel, Campbell McGrath, Thomas Lux and Tony Hoagland. The author does enough to establish their value and the worthwhileness of applying the categories of intellectual, functional, and psychological to

their work. One might quibble with how functional and for that matter how satiric some of the poems really are, when they strike me, anyway, as observational. The poet has a good eye and an ability to expose and deconstruct what s/he observes with an economy of words not found in other arts.

Well, other than singer/songwriters who really should be included in a study of comic poetry? Are any of these comic poets better than Tom Lehrer and Mark Russell? Do any of them have the popular appeal of the parodies of Weird Al Yankovic? Poetry needs some medication and tender loving care. I would prescribe widening the lens to include song lyrics, rap, and public rhetoric.

Roses are red/violet are blue/so is the back cover of this book.

## **The Comedians: Drunks, Thieves, Scoundrels, and the History of American Comedy**

**Kliph Nesterhoff. (2015). *The Comedians: drunks, thieves, scoundrels, and the history of American comedy*. New York: Grove Press. 432 pp. ISBN 9780802123985.**

*Reviewed by Larry Mintz, University of Maryland*

The author has set himself a difficult if not impossible task in that his book is intended to be a history that will satisfy scholars and at the same time supply a readable, enjoyable story for the general public. It has some merit in both causes, but it will not make it with scholars, since for the most part it lacks social and cultural analysis, while entirely ignoring theory and omitting any references to the scholarly literature dealing with humor, comedy, the popular arts and entertainments or standup comedy per se. (This reviewer prefers the term “performance comedy” as broad enough to encompass skit comedy, television and film humor, and other genres that employ standup within their scope.)

It is, however, truly a history, containing well-researched, voluminous detail, a chronological structure and a factual, inclusive tone that seeks a certain legitimacy going beyond the entertaining popular chronicles and coffee-table books that dominate the popular press in its efforts to handle entertainment comedy. The research, however, is almost entirely anecdotal or else drawn from journalistic sources, which, to be fair, comprise virtually all that is available to the historian while yet proving fruitful in furnishing insights that are to be gleaned in no other way. The book serves as a history of performance comedy in a traditional, non-academic definition of that term, and as such it is both valuable and respectable. As for the aim of satisfying the general public, it is perhaps too detailed and inclusive for the casual curious reader, but perfect for the aficionado. Hence those of us with a deep and abiding interest in performance comedy will like this book immensely and be glad to have it on our shelves. Some of the anecdotes may be less relevant than others, but so what? The accounts of gangster influence in the comedy business, of the drug and alcohol problems of many comics, and the analysis of the business end of the business are all interesting to read.

The first chapters do little more than rehearse familiar facts about vaudeville, burlesque, radio, and theatrical performance comedy, but after that it gets much more juicy. The author provides specific details somewhat less well known, even if the general notion of mob connections to nightclub comedy and so forth are widely accepted and acknowledged. As the chronology moves on to surveying performance comedy, it never lags or ceases to deliver interesting reading, again with the proviso that one starts with a considerable interest in and enthusiasm for the narrative. This reviewer’s biggest complaint is that there is scarcely any socio-cultural commentary, analysis or explanation, even on topics like the problems of racism that complicate the booking and appreciation of black performers, or the gender prejudices facing female comics. These issues are barely linked to what was going on in the US at the time, just as the shift from joke telling to modernist personal monologues and then to post-modernist, absurdist comedy which popular comedy absorbed from other, more belletristic forms just doesn’t get explored; and that is what, at least for scholars, comprises the real meat of the subject. The author gives us the what, when and where, some of the how, but almost none of the why.

The promotional literature for the book makes the claim that it “explores the ways that comics have reflected, shaped, and changed American culture.” No, not really; but it does provide a lot of raw material with which someone with the tools for such social and cultural analysis can do so. And we can be grateful for that.

## Brevity is the Soul of Wit

Yan Brailowsky, ed. (2015). *Brevity is the soul of wit*. Special issue of *Angles: French perspectives on the Anglophone world*. Société des Anglicistes de l'Enseignement Supérieur. Published July 25 at <http://angles.edel.univ-poitiers.fr/index.php?id=82>.

Reviewed by Christelle Paré, Centre for Comedy Studies, Brunel University London

When a new journal comes into existence, it is always tempting to explore what fresh perspective it has to offer to the academic community. *Angles: French Perspectives on the Anglophone World* is an interdisciplinary journal, with a double-blind peer-review process, that is freely available on the web, which means no subscription fees or membership are required. The journal encourages “the use of different modes of expression: text, image, video, podcast, hyperlinks” (*Angles* 2015: unpaginated), combining all the modes of expression possible from digital media. This is its trademark. An example of this fresh approach is guest editor Yan Brailowsky’s video introduction to the issue on “brevity is the soul of wit.” The video editing is fun, dynamic, easy to follow, and makes the reader want to dive into this first issue.

That being said, the inventive structure of *Angles* does not always come with content quality. A meticulous reader will notice a fair number of typos. While everyone makes typos once in a while, I have never noticed so many in a peer-reviewed journal. Better attention to detail would have been appreciated, especially since this is the very first issue of a journal that is striving to make “cutting-edge research freely available” (*Angles* 2015: unpaginated) and claims to have the same standards as other distinguished journals. I do not believe that open access equates with lack of thoroughness.

Some articles in this issue fail to reach the scientific standards expected in journals. One of them is a perspective on humor and morality in American sitcoms by Shannon Wells-Lassagne. The author uses very few academic references. The ones she does refer to are pertinent but not the most cited ones in this field. She offers few details about her chosen methodology and rarely justifies her preferences.

One notable element in the issue is the “Graphic Interlude,” which presents a selection of photographs that illustrate the theme of brevity as the soul of wit. This exercise is out of the ordinary and interesting, even if the level of wit is not the same in all the pictures. Nonetheless, I commend the initiative.

The issue also contains some very impressive works. Probably the most noteworthy piece is found in the *Varia* section: “Things are going to change: Genre hybridization in *Shaun of the Dead*” by Jean-François Baillon and Nicolas Labarre. Written in the form of a comic strip, this article is the most surprising and atypical piece of scientific communication that I have ever seen, and possibly the most enjoyable. It examines the interactions between elements of the romantic comedy and zombie genres in the film *Shaun of the Dead* (2004). The comic strip format presents the different arguments in a more effective way than citation, as found in more traditional articles. I could follow the entire analysis easily even though I had not seen the movie. A good journal article facilitates understanding for the reader, and I have to admit that I enjoyed the authors’ innovative approach. Although we learn very little about the authors’ methodology or the theoretical framework behind this work, the whole experience convinced me of its pertinence.

If you prefer a more traditional type of journal article, and are curious about linguistics and literature, I suggest Yasna Bozhkova’s “‘The Language of the Future’ and the Crisis of Modernity: Mina Loy’s ‘Aphorism on Futurism.’” Bozhkova discusses the poet Mina Loy’s reflection on language. The article is clearly and carefully argued, even for a neophyte in linguistics such as myself. It is not the type of article where you will find a great dose of humor, but it is a well-explained exploration of an author’s language quest.

Another fascinating article is Axel Nesme’s, “Condensation and Displacement in the Poetry of Lorine Niedecker.” This article exemplifies the overall quality of *Angles*: interesting analysis, captivating subject, but too many typos and sometimes unsatisfactory support content. I did appreciate the fact that the author constantly bases her findings on references, although some supporting arguments and illustrations were much stronger than others.

Conversely, Raphaël Ricaud’s “John L. Brown’s Epistolary Wit. The Difficult Art of Practicing Public Diplomacy” left me quite dissatisfied. Ricaud explores the use of wit and humor in the correspondence of John L. Brown, United States cultural *attaché* in Brussels, Rome and Mexico City during the Cold War. While Ricaud’s expertise regarding the inner workings of American diplomacy seems flawless, I am

uncomfortable with his premise that wit is opposed to the “serious business” of diplomacy (Paragraph 5), creating the impression that wit and humor do not have a rightful place in this context. Just as Raymond Williams said that “culture is ordinary,” I strongly believe that humor is ordinary as well; it can thrive everywhere, regardless of social status, country, or time period. Decades of research have shown that humor can be found in the most sinister and serious contexts, and the combination of humor and politics is now a very trendy research topic. So, we should not be surprised that a cultural *attaché* used his sense of humor to “seriously” convince and entertain.

All in all, *Angles: French Perspectives on the Anglophone World* brings academia a new and effective form of scholarly communication and proves that the traditional scholarly article model can be reconsidered. With a stronger commitment to rigorous theoretical frameworks, well-described methodologies, and improved editing, *Angles* will be seen as a high quality research journal.

### Reference

Williams, R. (1958/2001). “Culture is ordinary.” In *The Raymond Williams Reader*, J. Higgins, ed., 10-24. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.

## Humour: Les Mots et les Choses

Will Noonan, ed. (2015). *Humour: les mots et les choses. Humoresques* vol. 14. 146 pp. ISBN: 978-2-913698321.

Reviewed by John Parkin, University of Bristol

Acknowledging a certain debt to Foucault in his mistrust of any claim to universal belief systems, Noonan introduces this volume by noting the terminological confusion (*les mots*) that still vitiates humour studies, and the ever-widening range of materials and disciplines (*les choses*) that researchers have investigated, particularly over the last thirty to forty years. In the first chapter proper, one oddly ignored by his prefatory piece, Nelly Feuerhahn then considers *humour noir* (or is it *humeur noire*: p. 26?) in the work of the French cartoonist Soulas, noting his uneasiness concerning the ephemerality of political satire, including his own, and his self-characterising as *humoriste* rather than *humoristique*: terminological confusion once more? But then the final illustration that Feuerhahn supplies of his work states aptly that “les gens sûrs d’eux sont tous des cons” (those sure of themselves are all saps) (p.29).

Ralf Lohse proceeds more theoretically, by first noting the insufficiency of any current claim to a universal approach to humour. Such proposals (*les mots*) incorporate *petitio principii* which prevents them from explaining all humorous situations and events (*les choses*): for instance, incongruity theory fails to the extent that it does not make clear why certain incongruities are unhumorous. Hence, until a reliable and reversible link has been established between phenomenon and analysis (as in a joke and its explanation), any *théorie du comique* will remain speculative rather than scientific. Despite such reservations (not to mention a seemingly ungrammatical quotation on p. 48) María Dolores Vivero García and Patrick Charaudeau combine in an attempt to provide precise definitions of such categories of humour (e.g. parody, irony, sarcasm) as have thus far proved problematic. While doing so they also note the importance of complicity (*connivence*) between humorist and audience and in addition what is perhaps a dependent factor, namely the possible indefinability of the former’s creative process. *Les mots* are thus instruments to use in research, not fixed categories that determine its results.

The complex notion of irony returns in Marie Panter’s consideration of the various interpretations of Quixote proposed by scholars and authors such as Hegel, Hugo, Lukács and Flaubert, whose Emma Bovary, Bouvard and Pécuchet are the Don’s later avatars. More recently Bakhtin and Kundera privilege Cervantes to a similar degree, seeing him as the initiator of the modern novel (though some might question Bakhtin’s perception of a “monde sans dieu”: p. 66). Panter ends by suggesting a possible revival of Romantic and idealistic readings of his masterpiece.

Cécile Sorin returns to the vexed issue of definition, in her case concerning the terms *parodie* and *pastiche* and in particular their problematic connexion with *le comique*, something she examines particularly via the theories of, again, Bakhtin, plus Genette, Baudrillard, Hutcheon and Jameson, though one does regret the paucity of examples which might have clarified her approach and distinctions. Concentrating specifically on Mérimée’s short stories, Marie Odile Oger-Fares returns yet again to irony,

arguing, somewhat questionably, that, as opposed to the communal, hearty laughter, the ironist is customarily a solitary individual who most often targets himself. However the point seems to be radically contradicted later in her piece when we hear that “le rieur s’affirme contre, l’ironiste admet appartenir à (une communauté [...] une époque)” (p. 95: the laughter opposes, the ironist avows his belonging to (a community [...] an era), and it is never fully clear how committed Mérimée or his narrator are to the process of self-mockery. Nevertheless, Oger-Fares might find her approach echoed somewhat in Bérengère Moricheau-Airaud’s treatment of the complexities of Proustian humour, one of which is seen to be “l’ironie [...] qui se moquerait d’elle-même” (p. 106: irony which mocks itself). Otherwise, and unsurprisingly, the subtle pluridimensionality of Proust’s work has defied reduction and definition in this as in so many areas; the point is made by reference to a large number of previous treatments of “le rire de Proust”, among which one of the most stimulating is Moricheau-Airaud’s own depiction of the protagonist and his narrator as combining the roles of white clown and Auguste clown. Frédéric-Charles Baitinger turns to Georges Bataille in an attempt to assess and justify the latter’s claim that laughter was the cornerstone of his philosophy, to the extent that it is a manifestation of human sovereignty, one of Bataille’s key concepts and a feature that completely defies laughter as understood by Bergson, for whom it is an expression of superiority. Instead Bataille sees laughter as essentially self-transcendent, containing the particular quality of a joy that enables one to defy the anomalies and terrors of human existence.

Isolde Lecostey concludes the book with a re-examination of black humor as treated (or not) by André Breton who in his preface to his *Anthologie* flouts the need for a definition of his subject, a gesture seen as deliberately provocative towards his reader and one expressed equally by Breton’s only identifying his subject in negative terms: *humour noir* is neither stupidity, nor cynicism (*le scepticisme*), nor shallow jesting (*plaisanterie*), nor above all sentimentality. It remains a moot point whether, as a result of such posturing, Breton’s reader is defeated (“vaincu”: p. 138) even before embarking on the *Anthologie* proper, for throughout these articles we have consistently faced the problem of imposing *les mots* on *les choses*: is this not merely another manifestation of the issue? What Lecostey supplies, however, is a brief analysis of an eminently black short story by Roland Topor, winner in 1961 of the Grand Prix de l’Humour Noir, and one which defies rational responses while tempting his public into a reading experience where anxiety, joy, horror and fascination are only some of their possible responses. I shall certainly go on to read it, while also recommending this apparently penultimate number of *Humoresques* to all interested readers.

## Enjeux du Jeu de Mots

Angelika Zirker & Esme Winter-Froemel, eds. (2015). *Enjeux du jeu de mots. The Dynamics of Wordplay, 2*. Berlin: De Gruyter. vi + 311 pp. ISBN 978-3-11-040657-3

Reviewed by John Parkin, University of Bristol

This is the second of two books opening De Gruyter’s series on *The Dynamics of Wordplay* and it draws on material from the same Tübingen conference of 2013 that fed into volume 1 (*Wordplay and Metalinguistic/Metadiscursive Reflection*). Accordingly, in an introduction covering both tomes, the editors stress the wide range of disciplines and activities on which the various papers drew, plus the obvious variety of contexts (publicity, literature, joking, etc.) in which puns can operate, and not always with comic intent.

Alain Rabatel then offers an analysis of different forms of *contrepèteries* (roughly spoonerisms), noting how frequently, though not always, these depend on a scatological decoding (is this more typical of French examples than others?). While he endeavours not to over-complicate his subject (see p. 45), one may find difficulty in navigating between the *contrepèterie*, be it in absentia or in praesentia, cumulative or substitutive, and the *calembour*, the *isolexisme*, and the *antimétathèse*, to name but three. Nevertheless his association of wordplay with a carnivalisation of language and a rupturing of taboos remains thoroughly sound, even if it is more appropriate to French traditions than others.

Pauline Beaucé examines the use of wordplay (*jeux de mots*) in the popular theatre of the French 18<sup>th</sup> century, and particularly in its struggle with established institutions, for instance the *Comédie Française*, where valuable weaponry resided within the songs and dialogue of the *opéra comique*. In parodying the titles, authors, and actors acceptable to the authorities, this counter-culture found both a new relationship

with its public and a useful way of challenging officialdom. Still on theatre, Patricia Oster analyses how Marivaux applied wordplay in works that are renowned for their subtle dialogues, before she passes to a modern film adaptation of the playwright where contemporary idioms such as chat slang and back slang (*tchatche* and *verlan*) provided a similarly inventive linguistic medium. Remaining within the literary zone, Laélia Véron examines the seemingly unpromising subject of Balzacian wit, noting how its emergence, particularly in the *Scènes de la vie parisienne*, reflects important changes in society and indeed humour in a post-Revolutionary France where the witty riposte, while remaining superficially polite, was in fact significantly socialised to a point where its militant implications could gain prominence. The fact may well be underlined by an omnipresent narrator anxious to guide his reader, but that process seems much more ingeniously conducted than has been argued. Balzac often frees that same reader by refusing to clarify the meaning of his characters' repartees, or indeed to endorse their quality, and in certain novels and characters he can be read as lauding a *vieil esprit français* uncorrupted by modern changes. Julia Genz embarks on a potentially fascinating subject, namely the development of a literary culture within Luxembourg where her chosen writer, Roger Manderscheid, seeks to emancipate himself linguistically from the German identity so pressing imposed on his country during World War II. Especially interesting is the fact that, having written a plurilingual trilogy that reflected his country's linguistic environment, he himself translated its third volume into German, but a German deliberately coloured by his own Luxembourgish dialect. Meanwhile it is via linguistic variety, readable as Bakhtinian polyphony, that he develops the personality of his protagonist, diglossically named both Christian and Chrëscht.

Federica di Blasio then examines linguistic creativity in Georges Perec's *La Disparition*, a novel which famously excludes all use of the letter e. She notes in particular the textual allusions and jokes that the author makes concerning his own project. Considering the near impossible task undertaken by various translators of the novel, and while playing somewhat fast and loose with her own French, Di Blasio illustrates various associated problems and the ingenious solutions applied particularly by the Italian Piero Falchetta and the English translator (one of four!) John Lee.

Marc Blancher turns his attention to crime fiction (*le roman policier*) noting how American writers such as Dashiell Hammett have influenced the style of French authors such as Blancher himself, particularly in their use of slang, metaphor and, again, wordplay: hence such modern titles as *Poulpe fiction* or his own *Tod in Toulouse* (cf. *Der Tod in Venedig*). Such jokes and winks by author to reader imply the freedom that both enjoy, while facilitating a humorous comment on the text exhibiting them.

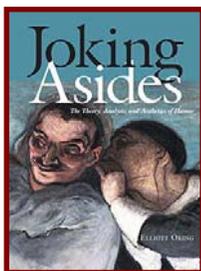
Focusing exclusively on language, Jean-François Sablayrolles investigates comic neologisms, beginning with *mots-valises* (i.e. portmanteau words) such as *maastrichteur* (which combined the famous treaty with the notion of trickery), involuntary (or deliberate) errors such as *mec plus ultra* ("a special guy," *mec* being standard slang for man), distorted phrases like serial father (cf. serial seducer), and grammatical irregularities like "j'allerai" (a deformation to which no English oral examiner is a stranger). These forms generate humour via an incongruity often associated with comical behaviour such as the Don Juan complex or such pedantry as would describe a committed cyclist as a velocipaedophile. Neologisms can be affiliative, as in publicity slogans, or adversarial, as in political campaigning; they can be momentary, as in lapses of concentration, or permanent, as in writers such as Rabelais; and they remain a field rich in promise for researchers.

Michelle Lecolle supplies a searching linguistic analysis of *jeux de mots*, while Syliva Jaki limits her subject matter to lexical substitution, as in "x was one of the great zeros of the 20<sup>th</sup> century" or the newspaper headline "Noam Chomsky Superstar". In the process Jaki re-examines the notion of incongruity in particular as applied in Raskin's semantic script theory. Then Marc Blancher returns in the final chapter with a stimulating analysis of wordplay in the *Astérix* albums whose rich patterns of comical allusion work best when text and image are closely integrated, an achievement which utterly belies the modest pronouncements of their creator René Goscinny.

All in all a wide-ranging series of studies, all well researched, but which indicate many open avenues for others to pursue.

## Recent Publications

### Joking Asides: The Theory, Analysis, and Aesthetics of Humor



Elliott Oring. (2016). *Joking asides: The theory, analysis, and aesthetics of humor*. Boulder, CO: Utah State University Press, 268 pp., ISBN-13: 978-1-60732-491-1. Paper: USD 34.95; Ebook: USD 27.95

**From the Publisher:** Nothing in the understanding of humor is as simple as it might seem. In *Joking Asides*, Elliott Oring confronts the problems of humor, analyzing the key contemporary approaches to its study and addressing controversial topics with new empirical data and insights. A folklorist drawn to the study of humor, Oring developed his formulation of "appropriate incongruity" as a frame to understand what jokes must do to produce humor. He tests appropriate incongruity against other major positions in the field, including the general theory of verbal humor, conceptual integration theory, benign violation theory, and false-belief theory. Oring draws on the work of scholars from several disciplines—anthropology, folklore, philosophy, psychology, linguistics, and literature—to ask basic questions about the construction and evolution of jokes, untangle the matter of who the actual targets of a joke might be, and characterize the artistic qualities of jokes and joke performances.

Although Oring guides the reader through a forest of jokes and joke genres, this is not a joke book. A major work from a major scholar, *Joking Asides* is a rigorous exploration of theoretical approaches to jokes and their functions and is filled with disquieting questions, penetrating criticisms, and original observations. Written in a clear and accessible style, this book will prove valuable to any scholar or student who takes matters of jokes and joking seriously.

*ISHS Members receive a 15% discount on this title from the publisher with the promo code, ISHSORING2016 at <http://upcolorado.com>.*

### Psychological Investigations of Humor and Laughter Honoring the Research Contributions of Professor Rod Martin



Nicholas Kuipers (Ed.). (2016). *Psychological investigations of humor and laughter honoring the research contributions of Professor Rod Martin. Special Issue of Europe's Journal of Psychology* (Vol. 12). Available at <http://ejop.psychopen.eu>

**From the Editor:** In summer 2016, Professor Rod Martin retired from his position as a clinical psychology faculty member at the University of Western Ontario. In a distinguished career which spanned over 30 years, Professor Martin published a large number of high impact research articles, chapters, and scholarly books on humor and laughter. In recognition of his research accomplishments, *Europe's Journal of Psychology* (EJOP) recently published a special issue on psychological research on humor and laughter. The August 2016 issue of EJOP contains an opening commentary by the guest editor, Dr. Nick Kuiper, that highlights Dr. Martin's most significant humor publications. This issue also contains an in-depth interview with Professor Martin, as well as a number of new research studies that build upon his humor styles model. Over the past three decades Dr. Martin has made substantial theoretical and research contributions to many prominent themes in the humor research domain, including the relationships between humor and physical health, humor and psychological well-being, and humor and psychopathology. Professor Martin's legacy is very strong, and this special issue provides a tribute to these scholarly research contributions.

#### Articles in the Special Issue

##### Editorial

Kuiper, N.A. (2016). Psychological investigations of humor and laughter: Honoring the research contributions of Professor Rod Martin. *Europe's Journal of Psychology*, 12, 312-319.

##### Research Reports

DiDonato, T., & Jakubiak, B. (2016). Strategically funny: Romantic motives affect humor style in relationship initiation. *Europe's Journal of Psychology*, 12, 390-405.

- Ford, T.E., Lappi, S.K., & Holden, C.J. (2016). Personality, humor styles and happiness: Happy people have positive humor styles. *Europe's Journal of Psychology, 12*, 320-337.
- Fox, C.L., Hunter, S.C., & Jones, S.E. (2016). Longitudinal associations between humor styles and psychosocial adjustment in adolescence. *Europe's Journal of Psychology, 12*, 377-389.
- Hahn & Campbell (2016). Birds of a feather laugh together: An investigation of humor styles similarity in married couples. *Europe's Journal of Psychology, 12*, 406-419.
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- James, L. & Fox, C.L. (2016). Children's understanding of self-focused humor styles. *Europe's Journal of Psychology, 12*, 420-433.
- Rnic, K., Dozois, D. & Martin, R. (2016). Cognitive distortions, humor styles and depression. *Europe's Journal of Psychology, 12*, 348-362.
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- Svebak, S. (2016). Consequences of laughter upon trunk compression and cortical activation: Linear and polynomial relations. *Europe's Journal of Psychology, 12*, 456-472.
- Ziegler-Hill, V. McCabe, G. & Vrabell, J. (2016). The dark side of humor: DSM-5 pathological personality traits and humor styles. *Europe's Journal of Psychology, 12*, 363-376.

### Theoretical Contributions

- Berger, A. (2016). Three holy men get haircuts: The semiotic analysis of a joke. *Europe's Journal of Psychology, 12*, 489-497.
- Dionigi, A., & Canestrari, C. (2016). Clowning in health-care settings: The point of view of adults. *Europe's Journal of Psychology, 12*, 473-488.

### Interview

- Martin, R.A., & Kuiper, N.A. (2016). Three decades investigating humor and laughter: An interview with Professor Rod Martin. *Europe's Journal of Psychology, 12*, 489-512.

## 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 for the online ISHS bibliographies, includes humor studies articles published since May 2016. If you have a recent publication, let us know. We will include it in a future newsletter.

- Abedinifard, M. (2016). Structural functions of the targeted joke: Iranian modernity and the Qazvini man as predatory homosexual. *Humor: International Journal of Humor Research, 29*, 337-357. doi: 10.1515/humor-2016-0008
- Abedinifard, M. (2016). Ridicule, gender hegemony, and the disciplinary function of mainstream gender humour. *Social Semiotics, 26*(3), 234-249. doi: 10.1080/10350330.2015.1134817
- Aldredge, M. (2016). The comic frame: The affective labor of laughter and inequalities. *Symbolic Interaction, 39*(2), 333-335. doi: 10.1002/symb.204
- Barrett, T. (2016). Friendships between men across sexual orientation: The management of sexual difference through humour. *Journal of Sociology, 52*(2), 355-370. doi: 10.1177/1440783314562413
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- Browne, A. L. (2016). Can people talk together about their practices? Focus groups, humour and the sensitive dynamics of everyday life. *Area, 48*(2), 198-205. doi: 10.1111/area.12250
- Bui, P., Kalpidou, M., DeVito, L., & Greene, T. (2016). The effects of empathy on disparagement humor. *Psi Chi Journal of Psychological Research, 21*(2), 119-126.
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- D'errico, F., & Poggi, I. (2016). "The bitter laughter." When parody is a moral and affective priming in political persuasion. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 1-14. doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2016.01144
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- El Khachab, C. (2016). Living in darkness: Internet humour and the politics of Egypt's electricity infrastructure. *Anthropology Today*, 32(4), 21-24. doi: 10.1111/1467-8322.12268
- Ellsworth, M. (2016). Wearing God: Clothing, laughter, fire, and other overlooked ways of meeting God. *Anglican Theological Review*, 98(3), 615-616.
- Eriksen, A. Ø. (2016). A taxonomy of humor in instrumental music. *Journal of Musicological Research*, 35(3), 233-263. doi: 10.1080/01411896.2016.1193418
- Esseily, R., Rat-Fischer, L., Somogyi, E., O'Regan, K. J., & Fagard, J. (2016). Humour production may enhance observational learning of a new tool-use action in 18-month-old infants. *Cognition & Emotion*, 30(4), 817-825. doi: 10.1080/02699931.2015.1036840
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