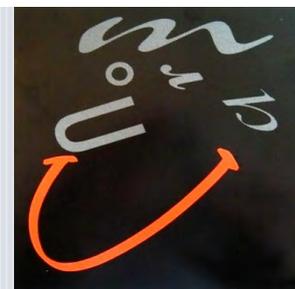


The Humour Studies Digest

Australasian Humour Studies Network ([AHSN](#))

April 2016



23rd AHSN Conference - Update

Hold the dates!

The 23rd Conference of the Australasian Humour Studies Network (AHSN) will take place from 1-3 February 2017 at the School of Mines Ballarat (SMB) campus of Federation University Australia, host of the conference.

The conference theme will be Humour: Here and There; Then and Now. This is intended to recognise that when differing cultures collide—as occurred in Ballarat during its foundation in 1837 and the gold rush era of the 1850s—there is often both tragedy and humour.

A Call for Papers and Workshops will be announced in May, together with details of the submission and review process. Look for details in future issues of free e-Newsletter –

The Humour Studies Digest

<http://mailman.ucc.usyd.edu.au/mailman/listinfo/ahsn-members>

Enquires

For early enquiries, please contact the following:

General conference enquiries:

Ms. Sarah Doonan

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sarah.doonan@federation.edu.au

Academic enquiries:

Dr. Angus McLachlan

Conference Convenor, FUA.
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THIS EDITION

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Dr. Angus McLachlan
AHSN 2017 Conference Convenor

About the Conference

Proposals are welcome for papers from the broad range of humour studies, from those that bear on historical, cultural, and political aspects, through those that pertain to social and psychological features, to those that emerge from sociolinguistic and pragmatic analyses. Humour studies range across many disciplines and this conference works to foster dialogue between adherents to all specialisations.

Post-graduate students researching humour-related topics are specially invited to present on their work-in-progress, and there will be some scholarships to assist postgraduate attendance. It is also hoped to continue the recent tradition of inviting Keynotes Speakers to address the conference.

For information on the venue, travel and accommodation options, see stories below and at - <http://sydney.edu.au/humourstudies/events/index.shtml>

Venue: The SMB Campus of Federation University of Australia

The School of Mines Ballarat (SMB) Campus of Federation University Australia is situated at the end of Lydiard Street, one of the city's two main thoroughfares. Aficionados of the ABC's *The Dr Blake Mysteries* who traverse the 750 metres of Lydiard Street between Ballarat Station and the Campus will recognise quite a number of the buildings used in the series. The Campus itself comprises a number of historic buildings, including the old Ballarat gaol—as befits Australia's third oldest tertiary institution (no irony intended).

Transport

From Melbourne Airport (Tullamarine)

There is an Airport Shuttle Bus that serves Ballarat every 90 to 120 minutes. The journey takes about 90 minutes, costs \$34 single or \$64 return, and arrives at Ballarat Station.

An alternative means of transport is to take the SkyBus from Tullamarine Airport to Melbourne's Southern Cross Station and then take the train to Ballarat. The bus leaves every 10 minutes, takes about 20 minutes, and costs \$19 one way.

Driving from Tullamarine to Ballarat can be achieved entirely by freeway and takes about 80 minutes.

From Melbourne City Centre

Trains run about every hour between Melbourne's Southern Cross Station and Ballarat and take on average 85 minutes. A peak single ticket at time of posting costs \$20, and an off-peak \$14 single, but be aware that the journey requires a Myki card that costs an additional \$6. A Myki card can also be used for local buses in Ballarat and transport in Melbourne. For information on obtaining a Myki, visit: <http://ptv.vic.gov.au/tickets/myki/buying-your-myki/>

Driving from Melbourne CBD to Ballarat takes about 90 minutes. The M1 freeway can be joined at Southbank, close to the city centre, but access to the M1 from east and west of the city may involve short sections of toll road.

Local Transport – Getting to the Conference Venue

The campus lies 400 metres south of the city's second main thoroughfare, Sturt Street, along which most

local buses run. There is no bus stop nearer to the campus than those in and adjacent to Sturt Street.

It is hoped to arrange parking on the campus for conference attendees as there is only short term parking in the immediate vicinity.

Accommodation in Ballarat

Within a kilometre of the School of Mines Ballarat (SMB) campus there are a dozen hotels and motels.

At the cheaper end, Reid's Guest House (Lydiard Street), the Mid-City Motor Inn (Doveton Street) and Barkly Motor Lodge (Main Road) all have rooms under \$125 per night.

In the mid-range, The Provincial Hotel, The George Hotel and the Ansonia, all on Lydiard Street, and the Best Western (Bakery Hill), have rooms in the \$150 to \$170 bracket.

At the top end, Craig's Hotel and Quality Inn Heritage, both on Lydiard Street, start at about \$200 per night.

NB: Book Early

While there is ample accommodation, many of the better priced rooms will be booked well in advance, particularly towards the end of the conference week when there are several other events being held in Ballarat. If you have any notion of staying on to enjoy Ballarat's attractions after the conference, it would be advisable to book early.

We look forward to seeing as many of you as possible in Ballarat next year.



SMB Campus of Federation University of Australia

Google Maps reference -

<https://goo.gl/maps/97sT1go2ch72>

AHSN Members Presenting at 28th Conference of the International Society for Humor Studies, Trinity College Dublin, June 2016

Sarah Silverman, Public Conscience of the 'Chosen People'

Debra Aarons and Marc Mierowsky

An article in *The Atlantic* magazine (May 2015) by Megan Garber entitled, "How Comedians Became Public Intellectuals," echoed a frequent claim: that stand-up comedy is, at its core, cultural criticism. In the USA, particularly, there is a renewed interest in investigating this idea as a serious academic pursuit. We focus on Sarah Silverman, who has seized upon the hypocrisies and contradictions inherent in American attitudes towards religion, sex and political culture. Premised on the setup that she is just an innocent Jewish girl, she skewers both mainstream and, specifically, Jewish, cultural attitudes and practices. We examine Silverman's contribution to promoting consciousness and activism in the development of a progressive public by analysing her stand-up comedy, social media presence, and her public service announcements for progressive political causes. We focus, particularly, on the way she has targeted an imagined Jewish audience.

Drawing on previous work (Aarons & Mierowsky, 2014) tracing the arc of outrageousness and licence in Jewish comedy as social criticism, we situate Silverman within a robust tradition of ranters, ravers, and kvetchers, amongst them Lenny Bruce, Philip Roth, Jon Stewart, and Roseanne Barr. We address Silverman's general critique of religion and believers and examine how it is directed at two separate but overlapping publics—the wider public audience—and a more narrowly-focused target 'the chosen people'. We concentrate on the attack on her imagined Jewish audience, 'the chosen people'. This ironic usage is intended to activate the Jewish conscience, as well as delivering a kick in the collective balls of that audience.

We argue that what makes Silverman more than a campaigner and a lobbyist, is her genius in turning her biting critique inwards, focusing on 'the chosen people'. This changing perspective makes public those insular aspects of Jewish community and identity that embody powerful, ignorant and entitled behaviour.

Our primary purpose in this presentation then, is to show how Silverman's ironic use of 'the chosen people' serves to highlight the many different hypocrisies—religious, cultural and political—she exposes. Her role as a public intellectual and cultural critic is most evident in her relentless mockery of this public.

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Crooked Mick of the Speewah: An Australian spin on tall tales

Bruce Findlay, AHSN, Psychology, Swinburne University of Technology

Towards the end of the 19th century a series of tall tales first appeared in written form in Australia, though they had been circulating orally for some 30 years. They typically dealt with experiences in the "outback," that is, far away from the big cities of the coast. The anecdotes were supposedly aimed at "new chums" to the bush and seemed to be designed to see how much exaggeration, and outright lies, the new chums could be persuaded to believe. Many of these yarns, or tall tales, concerned Crooked Mick, a larger than life figure, who came from the Speewah, a property somewhere west of the sunset, where the crows fly backwards to keep the dust out of their eyes. Like Paul Bunyan, Crooked Mick's American counterpart, Crooked Mick's superhuman feats were described to astound the newcomer or

take down a boaster, since no matter what anyone said they could do, Crooked Mick could do it better and faster. This presentation will introduce Crooked Mick and other tall tales; compare him to Paul Bunyan; speculate on why they were so popular at that particular time; and discuss where these anecdotes fit into theories of humour.

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Oscillating between Irony and Sincerity: An analysis of parody on Twitter

Michael Meany, AHSN, University of Newcastle

This paper provides an analysis of the use of parody on Twitter from a metamodern perspective. As a form of comedy, parody is an intentionally constructed form of communication typified by the techniques of exaggeration, facetiousness, irony and satire (Berger 1997, p. 4). It depends on the audience and the author holding a shared knowledge of target of the parody. This sharing opens up the possibility for the incongruously paired meanings, the meaning of the original and the meaning of the parody, to generate the affect of amusement.

Further, this duality of meaning extends to the authors of Twitter posts who are only identified via their @UserName account settings. "Twitter affords a platform for condensed yet potentially rich and variably public or private performances of the self" (Papacharissi 2012, p. 1989). These constructions of the self run the gamut from the sincere to the ironic. The @UserName account itself is a construction that embodies the practice of comedy, albeit in a potentially anonymous and disembodied manner.

The crucial feature of metamodernism is the concept of oscillation. The cultural products of our metamodern times are typified by their ability to incorporate aspects of both modernism (sincerity) and post-modernism (irony) in a manner that can transcend both. Metamodernism, as described by Vermeulen and van den Akker, appears to best capture the interplay of modernist and post-modernist aesthetics. "Metamodernism should be situated epistemologically with (post) modernism, ontologically between (post) modernism, and historically beyond (post) modernism [sic]" (Vermeulen & van den Akker 2010).

The paper concludes by arguing that in the practice of parody on Twitter and in the construction of self by Twitter, authors oscillate between the sincere and the ironic. It is the oscillation between meanings, rather than the fixed resolution of incongruity, that generates the humour.

References

- Berger, AA 1997, *The art of comedy writing*, Transaction Publishers, New Brunswick, N.J.
- Papacharissi, Z 2012, 'Without You, I'm Nothing: Performances of the Self on Twitter', *International Journal of Communication*, vol. 6, pp. 1989–2006.
- Vermeulen, T & van den Akker, R 2010, 'Notes on metamodernism', *Journal of Aesthetics and Culture*, vol. 2, no. 10.

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Humour and Comic Characterization: Revaluing Aristotle and Bergson

Jessica Milner Davis, AHSN, Letters, Art and Media, University of Sydney

Aristotle in his *Poetics* defines both the tragic and the comic as "modes of imitation". Of course what is imitated differs significantly between the two: plots and actions, errors and mistakes, but also the people who create them. Aristotle's view that, unlike tragedy, comedy concerns itself with "lower persons" may be a sweeping generalization but it does recognize a tradition that was of long-established even at his own time and which is certainly not yet overthrown. This associates certain recognizable comic "types" (or stereotypes) with humour and laughter. What is this nexus between

humour and comic character and how might it relate to contemporary humour theory?

The idea that the comic is embedded in some particular representations of human character was also recognized by Henri Bergson (*Le Rire*, 1901). He distinguished between the comedy (humour in today's broader parlance) to be found in words, that which is found in situations and movements and that in human character. His analyses of examples taken from the popular stage of his time (turn of the century Paris) identified a common link to all four categories: the trope of rigidity whereby what is mechanical opposes itself to the flexible and the living. He described how this operates in comic characters who spark laughter from their audiences, often without uttering a word on stage.

For theatre practitioners, this notion makes extraordinarily good sense since it corresponds to the reality that confronts an actor whether in theatre, stand-up, film or television. Some characters simply ARE funny, and audiences welcome them as such. Contemporary humour theory tends to overlook comic characterization as a source of what is humorous, privileging verbal patterning, transgressive themes such as sex, stupidity, ridicule and so on and the general concepts of superiority and incongruity).

In this paper, I want to argue for the reinstatement of the notion of comic character as central even to a verbal joke, let alone a visual or enacted one. Since the theme of this conference is "Humour and its embodiment", my argument seems timely. I will focus on examples selected not from performed comedy but from humorous narrative and interpersonal exchange, seeking to show how the embedded images of humans doing and saying things are central to conveying the humour.

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"Un voyage excentrique": Creative Writing and Humour in Cycling Publications in France and Britain, 1890-1940

Will Noonan, AHSN, University of Burgundy

Over nine issues from October 1911 to April 1912, French magazine *Le Cyclotouriste* serialised writer Léo Pol's "Voyage excentrique", recounting an eight-day adventure by bicycle from the western to the eastern extremities of central Paris. Covering a total distance of just over ten kilometres (and following almost exactly the path of the Porte Maillot – Porte de Vincennes Métro line that had opened some ten years previously), Pol's narrative can be understood both as a parody of the popular genre of bicycle travelogues, and as a variation on the theme of whimsical reflections on cycling that can be dated at least as far back as Mark Twain's 1884 manuscript "Taming the bicycle". The series can also be placed in a context of whimsical travel narratives ranging from Xavier de Maistre's "Voyage autour de ma chambre" (1790) to near-contemporary (and avid cyclist) Alfred Jarry's *Gestes et opinions du Docteur Faustroll, Pataphysicien* (1911), whose surreal "Voyage from Paris to Paris by sea" may have inspired Pol himself.

Taking this "Voyage excentrique" as a starting point, this paper seeks to explore the relationship between play, humour and the use of literary tropes in early twentieth-century cycling narratives, focusing specifically on texts framed as travelogue (rather than fiction, technical articles or opinion pieces) published in French and British publications including *Le Cyclotouriste*, *Cycling* and others. It will be argued that humour played an important role in the cycling press in in both countries, not just in the construction of entertaining narratives, but also in negotiating the evolving relationship between the increasingly democratic activity of cycling and its applications in transport, racing, touring, leisure and culture at large. While much of the humour they contain can be categorised as "simply" joyful or whimsical, cycling publications of the period thus also provide a window into the anxieties associated with broader social change.

The examples discussed are drawn from the 2014-16 digital humanities research project "Jeux cyclistes

dans la littérature, la presse et la publicité, 1890-1940" funded by the Regional Council of Burgundy, preliminary findings of which were reported at the ISHS2014 conference at the University of Utrecht.

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Comic Effect and the Abstraction of Violence in Literary Comedy Narratives

Marty Murphy, AHSN, Writing and Society Research Centre, Western Sydney University

In comedy, how are characters protected from pain and suffering of any consequence? Comic characters heal and recover faster than is humanly possible, but comic signals may surround the violent event even when characters really get hurt, causing Bergson's "momentary anaesthesia of the heart" (1911) that allows the reader to laugh.

In this presentation I ask how diminished empathy is created in works of literary comedy narrative so that the reader may laugh at fictional violence without concern for the characters involved? In his classic work "An Essay on the meaning of the Comic", Bergson's conclusion was that we laugh at "the momentary transformation of a person into a thing" (1911), which suggests an objectification of character at work in the moment of comic conflict. Using case studies of literary comedy narrative by John Kennedy Toole, Ian McEwan, and George Saunders, I argue that comic effect is achieved around the violent event when its description removes the injured character with comic distance. The violent act is focused as a series of impacts to the character's body parts and in a sense, the character is separated from the injury. And using Silvan Tomkins' Affect Theory of Personality, I will describe how the comic character's response to pain and injury is necessarily shallow so that the viewer or reader may experience the comic effect.

Reference

- Bergson, Henri. 1911 [1901]. "The Comic in general—The Comic Element in Forms and Expansive Force of the Comic." *An Essay on the Meaning of the Comic*. Trans. Cloudesley Brereton and Fred Rothwell. London: Macmillan.

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A Panel on "Humours of the Past", organized by Hannah Burrows, University of Aberdeen, and Daniel Derrin, University of Durham (both former AHSN members), includes:

"A Kingdom of Hearty Laughing Subjects": [Self-]Fashioning Humour in Eighteenth-century English Metafiction

Will Noonan, AHSN, University of Burgundy

Focusing on representations of humour and laughter in eighteenth-century English novels, this paper forms part of a wider project exploring the problems of and methodologies for studying humour from different historical and cultural contexts. While claims to be able to understand and interpret past humour with any degree of authority have traditionally, and justifiably, been greeted with scepticism, this paper argues that important insights can be gained from literary (or other) texts that stage the process of, and attitudes toward, laughter and humour.

The tradition of self-conscious, reflexive or metafictional narratives (dating back to antiquity, though often treated as an explicitly "postmodern" phenomenon) provides a particularly interesting case in point for the study of past humour. Not only (to paraphrase Genette) do such narratives tend to be perceived as either humorous or fantastical, but through their very structure also often stage the

process of textual production and interpretation, including the representation and reception of jokes, puns, repartee, double entendres, pratfalls and other humorous phenomena. For Stephen Greenblatt and other New Historicists, this process may be seen as a form of textual “self-fashioning” that can (at the cost of substituting textual interpretation for tangible evidence) help to chart the circulation of what they term “social energy”.

While the interpretation of self-conscious narratives offers a potentially useful tool for understanding and comparing humour from a wide range of contexts, this paper will focus on the representation of laughter and humour in Eighteenth-century English metafiction, and principally Laurence Sterne’s *Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman* (1759-68). Best known for its rampant digressions, Sterne’s narrative is also characterised by frequent reflections on laughter, ranging from its relationship to “humorous” melancholy to jokes performed or told, at the expense or with the collusion of, a staged, implied – and arguably real, historical or contemporary – reader. While much scholarship has tended to examine *Tristram Shandy* with reference to the emerging genre of the novel the novel, its reflections on laughter also make it a key source for studying the emerging concept of “humour”, a term that came to be understood in its modern sense within a few decades of Sterne’s writing.

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16th International Summer School and Symposium on Humour and Laughter – Earlybird Registration Open till 15 May

The 16th International Summer School and Symposium on Humour and Laughter will take place in Braşov, Romania, from 4-9 July 2016. The deadline for early registration is 15 May with registration continuing until 31 May. To register and for further information, please visit the Summer School website: <http://humoursummerschool.org/16/>

Humour-oriented research students from all disciplines are welcome to attend and may present on their own work and receive feedback from the international faculty which includes AHSN member, Dr Jessica Milner Davis.

Local Organisers: Dr. Stanca MADA and Dr. Razvan SAFTOIU

Course Director: Prof. Dr Willibald Ruch, Psychology, University of Zurich

Enquiries: E: organiser16@humoursummerschool.org

AHSN Members in the Media

AHSN members Dr Debra Aarons (Linguistics, UNSW) and Rodney Marks (corporate comedian) were recently interviewed by Sam Downing for his *ninemsn* blog, “Pickle”, on the tricky subject of dad jokes (lame jokes). The full interview is at:

<http://pickle.ninemsn.com.au/2016/03/02/16/03/dad-jokes>

Members' New Publications

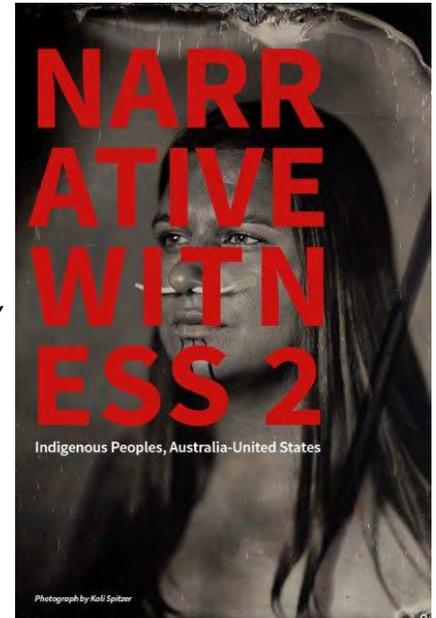
AHSN member [Angelina Hurley](#) (Ph D in creative writing and humour from UTS) has had one of her narratives published in the on-line journal of The [International Writing Program](#) (IWP), a unique conduit for the world's literatures that connects well-established writers from around the globe. IWP brings international literature into classrooms, introduces American writers to other cultures through reading tours, and serves as a clearinghouse for literary news and a wealth of archival and pedagogical materials. Their site, *Collections from the IWP Experience*, showcases the creative work developed through its [Distance Learning](#), [Between the Lines](#), and [Fall Residency](#) Programs. Funding for the IWP is provided by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs at the U.S. Department of State.

Angelina's story, "My Inheritance of Humour", is included in: "Narrative Witness 2 - Indigenous Peoples, Australia and New Zealand" and she writes, she's "so excited my story is published alongside these amazing international artist and writers. The official launch took place on 15th March and her story can be read at:

<http://www.iwpcollections.org/nw2-angelina-hurley>

The complete contents is at:

<http://www.iwpcollections.org/nw2#nw2-title>

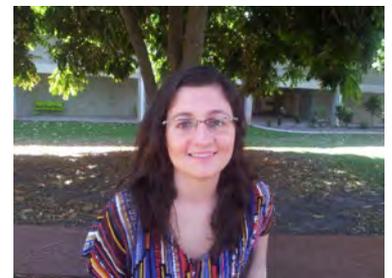


[Sarah Cosentino](#), with S. Sessa, A. Takanishi published Quantitative laughter detection, measurement, and classification – A critical survey in the *IEEE Reviews in Biomedical Engineering*. Vol. PP, Issue 99. DOI: 10.1109/RBME.2016.2527638

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From New AHSN Post-Graduate Member – Nicole Crowe

I am a creative writing PhD candidate conducting practice-led research into the intersection between life writing and humour studies. I am in the first year of my candidature at James Cook University's Townsville campus. As part of my thesis I am writing a memoir about my family and childhood growing up on Magnetic Island in Far North Queensland, and am interested in humour in Australian memoir, and how humour can be used as a strategy to responsibly represent living family members and the regional community of Magnetic Island. This exegetical component of my thesis will include critical analyses of two exemplary texts, *The Family Law* (2010), by Benjamin Law and Clive James' *Unreliable Memoirs* (1980), examining the ways in which they use techniques of humour to address the problematics of representing family, childhood, and region responsibility, and how those techniques can be applied to creative practice.



Call for Papers for Special Issue

Media and Communication (ISSN: 2183-2439), edited by Epp Lauk, is preparing yet another thematic issue, this time focusing on “New Media Joking”.

Articles for this publication will be edited by the following Academic Editors:

- Ian Wilkie (University of Salford)
- Tim Miles (Loughborough University)
- Deadline for Full Papers: 31 May 2016
- Expected Issue Release: August 2016

Details on the expected thematic content of this issue can be found at:

<http://cogitatiopress.com/ojs/index.php/mediaandcommunication/pages/view/nextissues-newmediajoking>

Please find more information on the journal's policies in the following link:

<http://cogitatiopress.com/ojs/index.php/mediaandcommunication/pages/view/forauthors>

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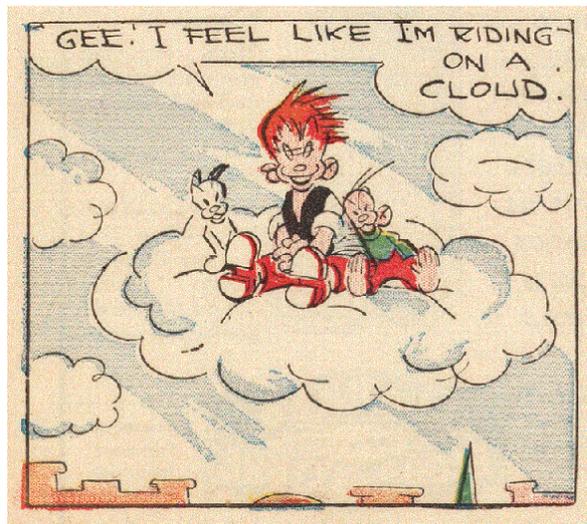
www.cogitatiopress.com/mediaandcommunication

'It's a Gas!' Dentistry & Cartoons:

Exhibition and Seminar, University of Melbourne

Exhibition: 9 May 2016 - 3 September 2016, at the Medical History Museum, University of Melbourne, (L2, Brownless Biomedical Library) and the Melbourne Brain Centre Auditorium (Kenneth Myer Building, Royal Parade, Parkville)

'It's a gas!' is a common expression meaning 'it's hilarious' or 'it's funny'. The origin of this phrase might be the effect of nitrous oxide (commonly referred to as 'laughing gas') on one's behaviour. Nitrous oxide gas was first synthesised by the English chemist Joseph Priestley in 1772, and first used to anaesthetise a dental patient in 1844. Anaesthetics transformed dentistry, bringing significant improvements to patients' wellbeing, and changing the way dentists could work. But people still fear the dentist, and this noble and essential profession continues to be the brunt of many jokes. This ambivalence is reflected in a rich history of cartoons and prints on the subject. The forthcoming exhibition *It's a gas* will trace the history of dentistry through illustrations and cartoons dating from



Credit: James 'Jimmy' Charles Bancks (Australian, 1889–1952), *Ginger Meggs*, 1941 (detail), cover page of supplement to *The Mail* (Adelaide), 27 September 1941, colour halftone, 42.0 × 30.0 cm, Private collection.

the 17th century to now. Themes illustrated in these works include fear, relief, pain and vanity. Items on display will come from private and public collections, including the University of Melbourne's Henry Forman Atkinson Dental Museum, Medical History Museum and Baillieu Library Print Collection, as well as the National Gallery of Victoria and State Library Victoria.

Seminar: For alumni and friends on 25/05/2016, 5:00 PM to 8:30 PM, at the Medical History Museum. Call (03) 8344 1448 or register online at:

http://alumni.online.unimelb.edu.au/s/1182/match/wide.aspx?sid=1182&gid=1&pgid=8595&content_id=6251&utm_source=eNewsApril16&utm_medium=edm&utm_campaign=GAS



5th International Conference - Pairing Food, Wine and Humour

Linguistics, Literature, Literary Criticism, Stylistics, Translation, Culture, History, Anthropology, Art

DIJON (Burgundy, FRANCE) 26-28 October 2016

Dis-moi ce que tu manges : je te dirai ce que tu es.

[Tell me what you eat: I'll tell you who you are]

(Jean Anthelme Brillat-Savarin, Physiologie du goût, 1825)

Dis-moi de quoi tu ris, et je te dirai qui tu es.

[Tell me what you laugh at, and I'll tell you who you are]

(Marcel Pagnol, Notes sur le rire, 1947)

Much like the social aspects of eating and drinking, laughter and humour are often held to be part of what makes us human, as universal human practices occurring across times, places and cultures. Yet this very universality is also part of what makes the study of humour so complex, since so much of how, and why, we laugh, and what we laugh at, and with, is embedded in an intricate web of cultural, individual and even biological preferences. Humour is, in other words, both a social activity and a matter of taste, capable of excluding and harming people, as well as bringing them together.

With the theme "Eat, drink and be merry: Pairing food, wine and humour", held on campus at the University of Burgundy in Dijon, the future site of the Cité Internationale de la Gastronomie et du Vin, this conference aims to explore, both in theory and practice, the social and celebratory aspects of laughter and humour. It will focus particularly on the ways in which laughter and humour and the increasingly important field of humour studies intersect with the practices of eating and drinking, food and foodways, festive celebrations, and other forms of merriment. The combination of humour, food and wine conjures up images both of civilised refinement and wit – the stuff of a thousand treatises on good manners – and the grotesque excesses of Bakhtin's "lower bodily stratum" represented in texts ranging from Rabelais' Gargantua and Pantagruel to Marco Ferreri's film La Grande Bouffe. Between these extremes, the multiple connections between food, wine, humour and social behaviour offer fertile grounds for approaches drawing on a wide range of methodologies and disciplines.

The organisers would like to invite proposals for papers on topics at the intersection of food, wine, merriment, and humour studies, addressing questions that might include, but are by no means limited to, the following:

- Are eating, drinking and being merry inherently complementary? What happens when food and wine do not lead to merriment?
- What can we tell about someone by the way they laugh, or what they eat? Can the study of humour inform the study of food and wine, and vice versa?
- How can we study the practices of eating, drinking and laughing, across time, space and culture? Does the study of humour pose similar problems to the study of eating and drinking?
- How are wine and intoxication, and hilarity and humour, related?
- Can our disgust at eating and drinking something unexpected or unpalatable be a source of humour? Can humour act as a defence mechanism against such visceral reactions?
- Is playing with food funny, and in what contexts?
- What are the limits (literal or metaphorical) of food and drink? Can slipping on a banana peel count as food-related humour?

If you would like to present a paper, please submit your proposal by May 15, 2016, to the Organising Committee, at the following address: humourindijon@gmail.com

- Please include the following information:
- Full Name; Professional affiliation (University, Faculty and Department, if any);
- Status (Full, Associate or Assistant Professor, M.A. or Ph.D. Student, etc.);
- Mailing address; E-mail address; Phone number.
- Please provide a title for your proposal, with a summary of up to 250 words.

Abstracts should be submitted as MS Word file attachments, or in Open Office text format.

Presentation time: 20 minutes, followed by 10 minutes of discussion.

The organisers reserve the right to refuse any proposal deemed incomplete or unrelated to the theme.

Participants will be notified by mid-June. After the conference, the proceedings will be published online by the University of Thessaloniki in a special issue of *Studying Humour-International Journal*.

Presentations in all languages are accepted, but no translation/interpretation facilities will be provided.

Academic committee for the Fifth International Humour Conference.

- Sofia Gavriilidis (Aristotle University of Thessaloniki) Founder member
- Daniela Marcheschi (Fondazione Nazionale Carlo Collodi, Italy) Founder member
- Luisa Marinho Antunes (University of Madeira, Portugal) Founder member
- William Louw (University of Zimbabwe)
- José Eduardo Franco (Universidade Aberta/CLEPUL, Lisboa),
- Gandolfo Cascio (University of Utrecht)

The Humour Studies Digest

The Australasian Humour Studies Network (AHSN)

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