

8th International Summer School and Symposium on Humour and Laughter: Theory, Research and Applications

23-28 June, 2008

"Dunarea de Jos" University of Galați, Romania

The 8th International Humour Summer School and Symposium was held in Galați, Romania and was hosted by "Dunarea de Jos" University of Galați, Romania from June 23-28, 2008 (details are to be found on <http://humoursummerschool.org/08/>). The event was kindly supported by Galați City Hall and Galați City Council. The sponsors of the event were Vega Hotel, Zona Libera Galați, Administratia Pietelor Galați. The Humour Summer School is endorsed by the International Society for Humor Studies (ISHS).

The Organizing & Programme Committee for the 2008 Humour Summer School was made up of Prof. Dr Willibald Ruch, University of Zurich, Dr Graeme Ritchie, University of Aberdeen, Dr Diana Elena Popa, "Dunarea de Jos" University of Galați.

Just as in previous Humour Summer Schools, research students and experienced researchers considering or conducting research in the field of humour and laughter gathered together to exchange ideas, discuss methodology and evaluate the research findings to date.

Lectures were given by Dr Dorota Brzozowska (Opole University), Prof. Dr Christie Davies (University of Reading), Dr Jessica Milner Davis (University of Sydney), Dr Christian Hempelmann (Hakia Inc), Dr Giseline Kuipers (University of Amsterdam), Dr Diana Popa "Dunarea de Jos" University of Galați, Dr Graeme Ritchie (University of Aberdeen), Prof. Dr Willibald Ruch (University of Zürich), Andrea Samson (University of Fribourg). **Meet the Lecturer** sessions were part of this year's programme: participants could sign up for one-to-one discussions with the lecturers of their choice. Below there is a detailed list of the topics addressed on the Summer School:

- Jokes about women: gender, nationality and sexuality
- Humour in foreign language teaching
- Political jokes and humour in totalitarian societies
- How are jokes transformed when they move between countries and cultures
- Ethnic jokes about sex
- Exploring satire, a traditional "Style of Humour"
- Experiencing humour: a conceptual model of interpersonal transaction
- European farce as the life-blood of the theatre
- Meaning for humour researchers
- Is incongruity that is resolved humour?
- Analyzing texts with the General Theory of Verbal Humour. Why and how?
- Social differences in sense of humour (and how to study them)
- Humour and social theory
- The cultural industry of humour
- Translating the language of humour: language vs. culture
- An overview of humour research
- Computational humour
- The methodology of testing humour theory
- The structure of puns
- Smiling and laughter: typology, structure and dynamics
- Who is fearing humour and laughter: new insights into Gelotophobia
- Enjoyment of humour and pain tolerance
- Unresolved issues in terminology and classification in humour research

- Theory of mind, empathy and humour
- Psychological humour theories

The Summer School was attended by 22 participants (undergraduate, postgraduate and academics). Participants came from: Belgium (1), Estonia (1), Finland (2), France (1), Hong Kong (2), Italy (1), Israel (1), Romania (10), Spain (1), Switzerland (2). Academic disciplines represented included Linguistics, Literary Studies and Education Sciences, Psychology and Neurosciences.

The Symposium part of the 2008 Humour Summer School had a record number of presentations (17) and therefore took place on Thursday and Saturday. The presentations comprised the following:

- Jean Askenasy: *Neuroscience facing laughter*
- Corina Dobrotă: *Remarks on the mechanisms of internet humour*
- Alina Ganea: *Jokes as evidential markers*
- Anca Gâță: *A metalinguistic oerspective on the issue of humour in scientific discourse and in ordinary speech*
- Claudia Harzer: *Emotion, personality, humour production, thought action repertoire, and affectivity*
- Sammy Ho: *An examination of humour as moderator of the relationships between social support and well-being*
- Tuija Huuki & Sari Manninem: *Humour as status-related activity among school boys*
- Liisi Laineste: *Targets of Estonian ethnic jokes (1880 – 2008)*
- Benjamin Leung: *Humour comprehension and appreciation in intercultural communication: an exploratory study*
- Mariana Neagu: *On the (un)translability of puns*
- Carmen Popescu: *'You're not allowed to laugh!' Activity type and foreign language classroom humour*
- Floriana Popescu: *Humorous elements in Colin White and Laurie Boucke's **The UnDutchables***
- Gabriela Scripnic: *Triggering humour by the stable vs. free collocation interplay in text messages*
- Hugo Stuer: *Weeping and laughter*
- Alessandro Valitutti, Carlo Strapparava & Oliviero Stock: *Lexical selection in pun generation*
- Marco Weber: *A twin study on humour appreciation: The importance of separating structure and content*
- Ping Xiao: *Humour in advertising*

Bids to host the Summer School and Symposium in future years are currently being accepted and are encouraged. Details are available at the summer school website:

<http://humoursummerschool.org/contact.html>

People interested should contact Willibald Ruch (w.ruch@psychologie.uzh.ch). A panel of previous Summer School conveners form an advisory board and will help with details.

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