

**14<sup>th</sup> International Summer School and Symposium on Humour and  
Laughter: Theory, Research and Applications**  
**University of Sheffield**  
**United Kingdom**

The 14<sup>th</sup> International Summer School and Symposium on Humour and Laughter was held in Sheffield, United Kingdom, in conjunction with the University of Zurich, from July 14-19, 2014 (see: <http://www.humoursummerschool.org/14/>).

Dr Elena Hoicka from the University of Sheffield in cooperation with the Advisory Board organised the Summer School. The course was intended to be of benefit to both research students and more experienced researchers considering conducting research in the field of humour and laughter.

This year the teaching faculty comprised ten speakers. This allowed us to have a greater diversity in the topics covered. Lectures were given by: Professor, Dr. Christie Davies (University of Reading, UK), Dr. Elena Hoicka (University of Sheffield, UK), Dr Sharon Lockyer (Brunel University, UK), Dr. Jessica Milner Davis (University of Sydney, Australia), Professor, Dr. Gina Mireault (Johnson State College, USA), Dr. Graeme Ritchie (University of Aberdeen, UK), Professor Willibald Ruch (University of Zurich, Switzerland) , Dr Natalia Skradol (University of Sheffield, UK), Professor Daniel Weiss (University of Zurich, Switzerland), and Dr Alessandro Valitutti (University College Dublin, Ireland).

The programme aimed to provide an overview of the interdisciplinary nature of humour research, by considering theory and empirical evidence, addressing special research issues, discussing methodology and evaluation of research findings to date, and also to consider some of the applications of humour and laughter.

**Meet the Lecturer** sessions, where participants could sign up for a one-to-one discussion with a lecturer of his/her choice where two consecutive time-slots were made available daily.

Representative sessions addressed the following topics:

- Testing hypotheses about jokes; the ubiquitous jokes about Stupidity
- The appearance and evolution of the disaster Joke
- The importance of history in the understanding of ethnic jokes: Jokes about the French, the Italians and the Australians
- Jokes and social classes
- Children's understanding of humour: cognitive and socio cognitive perspectives
- Children's generation of jokes
- Critical perspectives on stand-up comedy
- Comic constructions of disability
- Humour in pranks and hoaxes: The failed(?) Australian radio prank and other cases
- The fool and topsy-turvydom: Comic heritage from the middle ages
- Laughter: Time, freedom and Henri Bergson's theory of the comic

- Can't take a joke? The etymology and practice of "piss-taking"
- In the beginning: Smiling, laughter and the emergence of humor in infancy
- What's so funny? Infant humor as a social process
- An overview of humour research
- Incongruity-based theories of humour
- The methodology of testing humour theories
- The role of language in humour
- Comic styles from Schmidt-Hidding until now: How many can we distinguish?
- The new view on gelotophobia
- Obscene verses turned politically correct: Stalinist fake-lore
- The fate of garden gnomes in National Socialism: An unintended joke of Nazism
- Humour in a frustrated Parliament: the case of the Russian State Duma
- The sense of humour of those in power: President Putin's record of verbal aggression
- Introduction to computational humour
- Playful dissection of humorous machines

This year, 36 participants attended the Summer School. The student body consisted of undergraduates, postgraduate and postdoctoral researchers, and university faculty members, as well as professionals (comedians). These participants came from Australia, Brazil, Denmark, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Norway, Poland, Russia, Slovakia, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey, the UK, and the USA. Academic disciplines represented included Cultural studies, Psychology, History, Methodology, Computer Science, Linguistics, Sociology, and Political Science. The variety of participants' experiences was reflected in the debate engendered by many of the sessions.

The increasingly popular Summer School Symposium took place on Thursday, and the poster session took place on Tuesday, and they featured presentations of the participants' planned or finished research, or ideas on how to implement and use humour in applied settings. The presentations comprised the following short talks and posters:

*Short Talks in the order of presentation:*

The psychometric properties of the Slovak version of PhoPhiKat-45 (Preliminary results)  
*Presenter: Róbert Durka*

Are men funnier than women, or do we just think they are? A cross-cultural exploration  
*Presenter: Jade Hooper & Sam Roberts*

Patterns and features of “pick-up lines” as a form of humorous language in contemporary Philippine society  
*Presenter: Dr. John Ivan V. Palagar*

Humor and law: A Brazilian perspective  
*Presenter: João Paulo Capelotti*

A funny way of going about it: Organisations addressing the marginalisation of women in the live comedy industry

*Presenter: Ellie Tomsett*

Children's perceptions of other children's humour

*Presenter: Lucy James*

Humor as a means for persuasion: Strategies, functions and effects

*Presenter: Mette Møller*

The challenge of humour in simultaneous interpreting

*Presenter: Miss Maria José Espinoza Saavedra*

More than just a laugh? The role of humour in senior management sensemaking

*Presenter: Winston Kwon*

The fear of being laughed at (Gelotophobia) and Schizophrenia

*Presenter: Ekaterina Stefanenko*

Humor as an anti-plagiarism tool in English for specific purposes

*Presenter: Danuta Furspaniak*

Humour-based online positive psychology: A placebo-controlled study on the long-term effects on well-being

*Presenter: Sara Wellenzohn*

20 are too plenty, nine are just fine – proposing a short form of the *Picture-Geloph*

*Presenter: Richard Bruntsch*

*Posters:*

Funny patient care: Young nurses' style of humor and self-esteem of impact

*Presenter: Pelin Karata\_Hantal, Süleyman Ümit\_enocak, Orkun Erkayiran, Fatma Demirkiran, Filiz Adana*

Pre-registration healthcare students' negotiation of humour in the clinical setting: A proposed

mixed methods study

*Presenter: Deborah Flynn*

“Both the mother and the baby”: An analysis of Brazil’s most controversial humor case

*Presenter: João Paulo Capelotti*

Humour styles in younger children

*Presenter: Lucy James*

The participants made time for social events. The social program included a wine reception on Monday. On Wednesday afternoon there was a hike around the Peak

District, and a pub meal in the evening. On Thursday evening the closing dinner was held at the Milestone.

The University of Sheffield, supported the Summer School. Without their support the Summer School would not have been possible. Also, Mouton de Gruyter sponsored prizes for the best presentation awards, which were won by Jade Hooper, Sara Wellenzohn, and Lucy James.

The *International Summer School and Symposium on Humour and Laughter* was organised for the first time by Willibald Ruch in 2001 (Queen's University, Belfast).

### **Next years...**

The next International Summer School and Symposium on Humour and Laughter will be hosted by Dr. Alyona Ivanova and Dr Sergei Troitckii in July 2015, and will be held in St. Petersburg, Russia.

The Summer School Advisory Board would like extend a big thank-you to all those who applied to host the next year's Summer School. The Summer School could not exist without this on-going support from willing local organisers. If you would like to be considered for one of the following years- information on how to apply can also be found in a PDF on <http://humoursummerschool.org/contact.html>... We look forward to hearing from all you prospective hosts!

As in all previous years, the International Society for Humour Studies (ISHS) endorsed the 2014 Summer School.

Dr Elena Hoicka