

HUMOR
AND ITS EFFECTIVE USE
IN SPEAKING - I.

Have a
HAPPY
day!



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G
"IN FUN"
Audience

CHARLES W. JARVIS

HUMOR - THEORIES - SURPRISE.

THERE IS SOME SIMILARITY BETWEEN THE SURPRISE THEORY AND THE INCONGRUITY THEORY IN THAT BOTH INVOLVE AN INSTANTANEOUS BREAK UP OF THE ROUTINE COURSE OF THOUGHT OR ACTION.

HOLIDAY INN ADS: "SURPRISE!"

A SURPRISE, A SUDDENNESS, SHOCK, UNEXPECTEDNESS.

THIS MAY NOT BE A THEORY IN ITSELF, BUT IS UNDOUBTEDLY AN ESSENTIAL ELEMENT OF MOST ALL HUMOR.

THERE MUST BE SURPRISE.

THE SURPRISE MAY NOT BE SUFFICIENT ITSELF FOR LAUGHTER, BUT IT IS AN ELEMENT OF HUMOR.

IF THERE IS NO SURPRISE --

-- THE JOKE DOES NOT 'GO'.

-- THE JOKE FALLS SHORT.

-- PEOPLE WILL GET A REPUTATION FOR NOT BEING ABLE TO TELL JOKES.

-- FALLS 'FLAT'.

SURPRISE IS THE ELEMENT OF THE HUMOR PROCESS WHICH KEEPS A PERSON FROM ENJOYING THE SAME JOKE MORE THAN ONCE.

IT IS LIKE A PRACTICAL JOKE. ONCE THAT P.J. HAS BEEN 'PULLED' ON YOU, YOU KNOW THE OUTCOME AND THE RESULT IS THAT IT IS NOT FUNNY TO YOU ANYMORE.

THE MIND CANNOT BE TRICKED MORE THAN ONCE BY THAT SAME PARTICULAR PROCESS. MOST JOKES ARE TRICKS ON THE MIND.

(OVER)

THE PROCESS IS A SUDDEN FRUSTRATION OF A STRAINED EXPECTATION. THE THOUGHT PROCESS IS DE-RAILED AND SIDE-TRACKED. HUMOR RESULTS.

THERE HAS BEEN A TRICK ON THE MIND BY THE SURPRISE.

"TELEGRAPHING" THE PUNCH LINE.

EXAMPLE: HAVE I TOLD YOU THE ONE ABOUT THE BIRD WHO FINALLY DIED BECAUSE HIS OWNER BOUGHT HIM EVERYTHING BUT BIRDSEED?

No, TELL ME.

FALLS FLAT, BECAUSE HE HAS ALREADY TOLD HIM...THE PUNCH LINE, THE NUB, THE TWIST, HAS BEEN TELEGRAPHED AHEAD AND THERE IS NO TRICK, NO TRAINWRECK.

THIS IS WHY SOME PEOPLE SAY, "I JUST CAN'T TELL A JOKE."

WHAT THEY REALLY MEAN IS THAT THEY CAN'T TELL IT WELL.

ANYONE CAN TELL A JOKE. THEY MAY TELL IT PITIFULLY, BUT THEY CAN TELL IT -- WHY? FOR A JOKE DEPENDS UPON SURPRISE FOR THE HUMOR -- THAT ALONE, THE TWIST, THE SUDDEN TWIST. ANYONE CAN PROVIDE THAT BY SAYING THE WORDS, BUT THEY MAY NOT SAY THEM WELL ENOUGH.

SOMEONE HAS SAID, "MAN IS THE ONLY ANIMAL THAT CAN BE SKINNED MORE THAN ONCE, BUT NOT BY THE SAME MAN."

HAD TO SHOOT 69 THAT NEXT DAY TO BEAT HIM.
(GOLF IN BRADY)

MINK FARM STORY -- "HOW MANY SKINS DO YOU GET FROM EACH MINK?"

THIS ELEMENT OF SURPRISE IS WHY PEOPLE DO NOT LIKE TO HEAR A STORY THE SECOND TIME.

"I HAVE HEARD THAT ONE."

"STOP ME IF YOU HAVE HEARD IT." (DOES HE OR SHE REALLY MEAN THIS?)

THE EGO FACTOR MAKES A PERSON DEMAND THAT THEY NOT BE FOOLED A SECOND TIME.

Do NOT EXPLAIN A JOKE! WHY?

BECAUSE THEY MAY HAVE GOTTEN IT THE FIRST TIME AND IT JUST WASN'T FUNNY.

BLOW TO THEIR EGO.

NOW, A QUESTION THAT IS APPROPRIATE AT THIS TIME:

WHY IS IT THAT PEOPLE LIKE TO HEAR SONGS, 'THEIR SONG' A SECOND TIME?

WHY IS IT THAT PEOPLE LIKE TO HEAR CERTAIN STORIES A SECOND TIME?

PEOPLE WHO COME UP TO ME AND SAY, "I BROUGHT SOME GUESTS, HAD TOLD THEM ABOUT YOU, THEY CAME WITH ME, I WANTED THEM TO HEAR THE 'NIGHTGOWN' STORY, AND YOU DIDN'T TELL IT. NOW, TELL IT TO 'EM." (HE'S RATHER PEEVED THAT I DIDN'T TELL 'EM)

OTHERS: BUMBLEBEE, GOSSIP, JOE NAMATH, FISH HOOK, X-RAY...FAVORITE STORIES.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE? WELL, THE FACT IS THAT THESE ARE NOT 'JOKES' AND DO NOT DEPEND UPON THE SUDDENNESS, THE SURPRISE, FOR THEIR HUMOR. THEY DEPEND (FORGIVE ME, PLEASE) ON ARTISTRY, THE TALENT OF TELLING THEM RIGHT, THE MANNER OF TELLING BEING THE HUMOROUS FACTOR PRIMARILY.

Laughter, Smiles, Smiling.

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LAUGHTER: LAUGH: DEFINITION

DEFINITION -- TO SHOW MIRTH, JOY OR SCORN WITH
A SMILE, CHUCKLE, OR EXPLOSIVE
SOUND.

"TO LAUGH AT" -- IMPLIES DERISION OR SCORN.

"HE IS AN OBJECT OF SCORN AND IS NOT
TO BE PITIED BUT TO BE LAUGHED AT."

USUALLY ACCOMPANIES THE HUMOROUS EXPERIENCE.
FOR THIS REASON THE TWO TERMS 'HUMOROUS' AND
'LAUGHABLE' ARE USED INTERCHANGEABLY AND ARE
DIFFICULT TO DISTINGUISH.

LAUGHTER -- MOST OFTEN DESCRIBED AS THE OVERT
EXPRESSION OF HUMOR -- AN INDICATOR THAT
THE PERSON IS IN AN AMUSED FRAME OF MIND
OR IS EXPERIENCING SOMETHING AS 'FUNNY.'

LAUGHTER - UNIVERSAL

MARCEL MARCEAU, "THE MASTER OF MIME"

"I THINK SO.

I HAVE PERFORMED IN MANY COUNTRIES AROUND THE WORLD AND I HAVE LEARNED ONE THING: WHEN A MAN IS LAUGHING, YOU CANNOT TELL IF HE IS LAUGHING IN FRENCH, ENGLISH, GERMAN, OR ANY LANGUAGE. MIME, SINCE IT USES NO WORDS, IS TRULY THE UNIVERSAL ART."

THIS WAS HIS RESPONSE TO THE QUESTION:
"IS YOUR HUMOR UNIVERSAL?"

HUMOR - Laughter - the Bible.

Job: 5-22 "Thou shalt laugh at destruction and famine."

Psa.: 2.49: "He that shall sit in Heaven shall laugh:"

Ecc. 3.4: "A time to weep, and a time to laugh."

Psa. 126.2: "Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with shouts of joy; then they said among the nations, 'The Lord has done great thing for them.'"

The above are all positive with regard to laughter. And yet Bible scholars say that there is no humor in the Bible; well, maybe no humor, but there is admonition for humor, for laughter. Perhaps they have given credence only to such as the following:

Ecc. 7.3: "Sorrow is better than laughter; for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better."

Some may heed that and that alone; I feel sorry for them; sounds as though it might have been written by some Puritan, right before a dunking, or a witching--burning some poor laughter at the stake, someone who might have laughed at services, no doubt. Like when the reader said, "...and he tied his ass to a tree and walked forty miles to Jerusalem." Now, you can hardly keep from smiling at that, right? Maybe they did not attach any risqué meaning to that word back then, but maybe that wicked person did--and smiled. That was the end of her, no doubt.

Laughter as a matter of scorn, as a sign that a person will get his, a comeuppance:

Psa. 37:12 and 13 "The wicked plotteth against the just, and gnasheth upon him with his teeth. The Lord shall laugh at him; for he seeth that his day is coming."

And this, when the author of the psalm is enjoying thinking of the fall of his enemies:

Psa. 59:7-8 "Behold, they belch out with their mouth. Swords are in their lips; for who, say they, doth hear?"

But thou, O Lord, shalt laugh at them; thou shalt have all the nations in derision."

And again, in scorn, the Lord says that they will suffer for not heeding Him and He will laugh:

Proverbs 1:26 "I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh."

The next verse explains that fear:

"When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish come upon you."

This is the reason that Mark Twain finally had to give up any belief in Man's religion--the religion he believed that Man had made up. He could not envision such a mocking, vengeful God, the God of the Old Testament, a fierce, wrathful God, killing his children, and their children, killing little ones who had done no wrong, who visited sins of the fathers on the crimeless, the guiltless.

The people writing this portion of the Bible must have been crazy with hate, seething with poisonous thoughts against the nations, the people who had wronged them.

Remember that Jonah wanted God to kill all the Nenevites, even after they had repented. He was peeved with God that He did not strike them dead. There are several instances of this in the Bible. Pity. This is the same sort of false reasoning that led to the Inquisition and to the witch burnings of Salem.

"laugh" in the Bible	18	times.
"laughed" " "	13	"
"laughter" " "	7	"
"laughing" " "	1	time.
"laugheth" " "	1	"

Most of the times, these words, as used in the Bible, means mocking, mockery, and scorn, as in "you shall laugh at your enemies."

Only on a very few occasions did it mean a period of merriment...e.g., Bildad, the Shuhite, talking to Job, saying the Lord will fill his mouth with laughter.

And of course, when Sara laughed..listening to the Lord tell Abraham they would have a child. And the Lord asked, "Why did Sara laugh..? She claimed she did not... but she did

LAUGH, LAUGHTER - Bible References:

In any good concordance, one can find the source of the word, "laugh" or any of its derivatives, i.e., "laughed," "laugheth," "laughing," and "laughter."

It is simple, though time consuming to look up these instances where the word or the derivative of the word is used. Therefore, I will here list the numbers of times the word or derivatives are used and the reader can look them up...or up them look...if we don't want to end a sentence in a preposition and incur the wrath of the English teachers.

"laugh"-----18 times.

"laughed"-----13 "

"laugheth"---- 1 "

"laughing"---- 1 "

"laughter"---- 7 "

Total: 40 times.

Even though the Man we Christians worship was a very pleasant social guest on many occasions, there is no mention that He laughed, or even smiled. As a humorous speaker I have pointed this out many times as strange, for God in His omniscience gave each of us a sense of humor (in my opinion, at this time--as a friend of mine, Jack Davis, now deceased, used to say all the time in his excellent seminar, "Before I Became So Well-Adjusted." He figured he might change at any minute if someone offered more logical, reasonable argument). I have dared to say that Jesus loved Mary, Martha, and Lazarus very much, so much that he went to Bethany often to visit them. I maintain it was probably because he was so sick of all those sour saints. We have lots of those today. This brought to print, "Some people are so Heavenly on earth they are no earthly good." I don't know who said this first, but I like it and have seen and experienced a few of these folks in my various positions on church committees and church boards. Spare me from any others, please. They are parts of the reasons I have become disenchanted with organized religion. Probably they were raised by puritanistic parents who admonished their levity by saying sternly, "Look, Son,

(over)

"Life is nothing to laugh at. Life is in dead earnest."
We people who love to laugh and love to make people
laugh shrink from such admonitions and say these folks
are wrong, that if indeed life is in dead earnest, it is
humor which is dead.

These people of strict, deadly serious parents,
suffer through life by not being able to laugh, to
take life's thrusts and parries, to change according
to life's vicissitudes. We change as we grow older, and
we had better be able to adjust. Probably one of the
most difficult assignments of maturity is sometimes to
say, "Momma was wrong!" or "Daddy was wrong!" A great
deal of this happens in psychiatrists' or psychologists'
offices. Tsk, tsk.

LAUGHTER: QUOTES.

FREUD - "JOKES AND THEIR RELATION TO THE UNCONSCIOUS" -- FOOTNOTE, P. 146.

"There is no action that is more commonplace or that has been more widely studied than laughter. There is none that has succeeded more in exciting the curiosity both of ordinary people and of philosophers. There is none on which more observations have been collected and more theories built. But at the same time there is none that remains more unexplained. It would be tempting to say with the skeptics that we must be content to laugh and not try to know why we laugh, since it may be that reflection kills laughter..."

NOTE: "...IT MAY BE THAT REFLECTION KILLS LAUGHTER." (DANGER OF REFLECTION.)

GORKY: "LENIN WOULD LAUGH WILL THE TEARS CAME, TILL HE CHOKED WITH LAUGHTER."

"LENIN LOVED TO LAUGH."

"TO LAUGH LIKE THIS ONE MUST HAVE THE SOUNDEST AND HEALTHIEST OF MINDS."

PLATO - "PERSONS OF WORTH SHOULD NOT BE REPRESENTED AS OVERCOME BY LAUGHTER."

COMMENT: I CAN UNDERSTAND THIS IN THAT THE PERSON WHO IS OVERCOME BY LAUGHTER RESEMBLES SOMEONE WHO IS NOT IN CONTROL OF HIMSELF, WHO MIGHT BE IN GREAT PAIN, WHO MIGHT BE SUFFERING A SEIZURE.

IF WE WERE TO WATCH THE T.V. PICTURE OF A PERSON OVERCOME WITH LAUGHTER, WITH THE SOUND OFF WE MIGHT THINK THAT PERSON IS CRITICALLY ILL. EVEN WITH SOUND ON: GURGLING, CHOKING, GASPING NOISES. (OVER)

LAUGHTER -- NEED FOR -- QUOTES:

ABRAHAM LINCOLN -- "WITH THE FEARFUL STRAIN THAT IS ON ME DAY AND NIGHT, IF I DID NOT LAUGH I SHOULD DIE."

MARK TWAIN -- "LAUGHTER IS THE ONE REALLY EFFECTIVE WEAPON THE HUMAN RACE HAS."

H. W. BEECHER -- "A MAN WITHOUT MIRTH IS LIKE A WAGON WITHOUT SPRINGS: HE IS JOLTED DISAGREEABLY BY EVERY PEBBLE IN THE ROAD."

SEBASTIAN CHAMFORT, FRENCH AUTHOR --- "THE MOST THOROUGHLY WASTED OF ALL DAYS IS THAT ON WHICH ONE HAS NOT LAUGHED."

ETHEL BARRYMORE -- "YOU GROW UP THE DAY YOU HAVE THE FIRST REAL LAUGH AT YOURSELF."

BIBLE REFERENCES:

JOB 5:22 - THOU SHALT LAUGH AT DESTRUCTION AND FAMINE.

PSA. 2:4 - HE THAT SHALL SIT IN HEAVEN SHALL LAUGH.

ECC. 3:4 - A TIME TO WEEP AND A TIME TO LAUGH.

PSA. 126:2 - THEN OUR MOUTH FILLED WITH LAUGHTER.

ECC. 7:3 - SORROW IS BETTER THAN LAUGHTER; FOR BY THE SADNESS OF THE COUNTENANCE THE HEART IS MADE BETTER. (SOME PEOPLE READ THIS AND NO MORE, HEEDING THIS ALONE.)

LAUGHTER -- NEED FOR (CONT)

QUOTES AFTER THE PRESENTATIONS: (EVERY HUMOROUS SPEAKER HAS HAD PEOPLE COME UP AND SAY SUCH)

"I NEEDED THAT."

"I STARTED NOT TO COME. I HAVE BEEN SO DISILLUSIONED WITH LIFE, BUT I CAME AND AM SO GLAD. I NEEDED TO LAUGH...AND ESPECIALLY AT MYSELF AND MY PROBLEMS. THEY ARE REALLY INSIGNIFICANT."

JUNE BENEFIELD -- WRITER, SAYS IN HER BOOK, "LAUGHING TO KEEP FROM CRYING"

"I WAS TOTALLY INCOMPETENT AS A WIFE-MOMMY. LIKE ALL FEMALES IN TROUBLE, I CRIED A LOT. I SOON LEARNED THAT THE WOMAN WHO CRIES CRIES ALONE, BUT THE WHOLE WORLD SMILES WITH THE ONE WHO DEVELOPS LAUGH WRINKLES BY HER EYES."

BENNETT CERF, IN THE FOREWORD OF HIS BUMPER CROP - VOL. I:

"THE GOOD DOCTOR KNOWS THAT LAUGHTER IS THE BEST MEDICINE FOR WEARY BONES AND THAT THE VERY SOUND OF IT IS REASSURING AND HEALING. THERE IS NOTHING LIKE A HEARTY LAUGH TO CLEAR THE ATMOSPHERE - OR - TO DEFLATE WINDBAGS AND PHONIES!

TELL A FUNNY STORY ON EVERY OCCASION AND TELL IT WELL -- AS WELL AS YOU KNOW HOW. PEOPLE WILL REMEMBER YOUR JOKES AND FORGET YOUR SPEECHES.

MONUMENTS ARE BUILT OVER SOLEMN ASSES, BUT PEOPLE REMEMBER IN THEIR HEARTS THE MEN WHO MADE THEM LAUGH. (OVER)

CARRY YOUR SUNSHINE WITH YOU AND THERE WILL BE FEWER DARK PLACES IN YOUR LIFE. IN OTHER WORDS, LET A SMILE BE YOUR UMBRELLA. YOU'LL GET WET FROM TIME TO TIME, BUT YOU WON'T GIVE A DARN. ">*

*VALIUM -- SECRETARIES.

OLD JOKE -- "...STILL WET MY PANTS, BUT I JUST DON'T GIVE A DAMN."

RELIEF FROM TENSIONS THEORY -- HOW MANY OF THE ABOVE QUOTES REFER TO IT WITHOUT NAMING SUCH A THEORY.

GREAT GIFT -- THE GIFT OF LAUGHTER -- TO HANDLE THOSE PROBLEMS FOR WHICH THERE IS NO OTHER SOLUTION.

FOR THIS, IF FOR NO OTHER REASON, THE PERSON WHO MAKES PEOPLE LAUGH IS DOING SOMETHING WORTHWHILE "NOT ONLY TO HIMSELF BUT TO OTHERS." (DR. GLASSER'S DEFINITION OF NEEDS.)

LAUGHTER - QUOTES:

"A LAUGH IS WORTH A HUNDRED GROANS IN ANY MARKET."

- LAMB.

Josh Billings (1818-85) was a native of the Berkshire Hills of western Massachusetts and a humorist—a particular favorite of Abraham Lincoln's, in fact—known for his thick beard and his use of his own style of phonetic spelling. "Anatomikally considered," he wrote, "laffing iz the sensation ov pheeling good all over, and showing it principally in one spot. Morally considered, it iz the next best thing tew the 10 commandments. . . . Theoretikally considered, it kan out-argy all the logik in existence. . . . Pyroteknikally considered, it is the fire-works of the soul. . . ."

"Life at the Top -- T.V. Modeling" - article in T.V. Guide, quotes cover girl Kelly Emberg, famous model, one of the feature people of the article:

"There are times I don't even feel pretty. I guess I get hired so often because of my personality. People tell me I laugh a lot and it shows on film."

LAUGHTER: DESCRIPTION

STRANGE BEHAVIOR -- COMPLICATED.

USUALLY PROVOKED BY HUMOR, BUT
OTHER CONDITIONS CAN PROVOKE LAUGHTER:

TRIUMPH, CONTEMPT, RELIEF, TICKLING.

(DEMONSTRATE EACH OF THESE)

HUMOR CAN BE ENJOYED WITHOUT LAUGHTER,
BUT LAUGHTER IS NEVER FAR OFF.

LAUGHTER PATTERN:

EMERGES EARLY IN LIFE -- DURING THE
FIRST FEW MONTHS OF LIFE.

LIKELY TO BE PRECEDED BY THE SMILE.
(MORE ABOUT THE SMILE LATER.)

CAN BE EVOKED AS A COMPLETE UNIT BY
STIMULATION OF THE ANTERIOR GLOBUS
PALLIDUS DURING NEUROSURGERY.

Globus - ball or sphere-shaped

Anterior - the forward part

Globus pallidus - the pale interior
or the lenticular nucleus.

Lenticular - shaped like a lens.

(in this case, pertaining to the
lenticular nucleus)

Nucleus - a spheroid body within a
cell, forming the essential and
vital part, containing the nuclein.

(and we all know what nuclein is
so I needn't go into that.)

Lenticular nucleus - the part of the
corpus striatum external to the
third ventricle.

Nuf sed?

(OVER)

SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE:

REMARKEDLY AMENABLE TO SOCIAL FACILITATION.

INFLUENTIAL IN INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS...BUT CAN OCCUR IN A SOLITARY INDIVIDUAL SO IT IS DOUBTFUL THAT ITS PRIME SIGNIFICANCE IS A SOCIAL ONE.

DISTINGUISHABLE COMPONENTS:(ISN'T THIS EXCITING!)

1. WIDENING OF THE MOUTH.
2. PULLING UP OF THE CORNERS OF THE MOUTH.
3. UNUSUAL RESPIRATORY PATTERN...SHORT AND BROKEN EXPIRATIONS...WITH PROLONGED INSPIRATIONS(DON ENNIS AS DESCRIBED PREVIOUSLY)

FRY(1969): "THE PRIMARY COMPONENT OF LAUGHTER IS AN ABRUPT, STRONG EXPIRATION AT THE BEGINNING FOLLOWED BY A SERIES OF EXPIRATORY-INSPIRATORY MICROCYCLES SUPERIMPOSED UPON THE LARGER EXPIRATORY MOVEMENTS."
(WOULD ANYONE CARE TO DEMONSTRATE THIS?)

(IT WOULD BE MOST APPRECIATED -- FOR I DON'T KNOW IF I CAN SURVIVE TRYING IT AGAIN -- LAST TIME I HURT MYSELF.)

4. OPENING OF THE MOUTH AND A BARING OF THE TEETH, SHARED WITH A GRIN AND THE SNARL.
5. GENERALIZED TREMOR, A QUAKING WITH LAUGHTER, AMOUNTING AT TIMES TO CONVULSION.

LAUGHTER: DESCRIPTION (CONT.)

DEARBORN (1900) DESCRIBED THE LAUGH PATTERN:

Clonic spasms of the diaphragm in number ordinarily about eighteen perhaps, and contraction of most of the muscles of the face. The upper side of the mouth and its corners are drawn upward. The upper eyelid is elevated, as are also, to some extent, the brows, the skin over the glabella, and the upper lip, while the skin at the outer canthi of the eyes is characteristically puckered. The nostrils are moderately dilated and drawn upward, the tongue slightly extended, and the cheeks distended and drawn somewhat upward; in persons with the pinna muscles largely developed, the pinnae tend to incline forwards. The lower jaw vibrates or is somewhat withdrawn (doubtless to afford all possible air to the distending lungs) and the head, in extreme laughter, is thrown backward; the trunk is straightened even to the beginning of bending backward, until (and this usually happens soon), fatigue-pain in the diaphragm and accessory abdominal muscles causes a marked proper flexion of the trunk for its relief. The whole arterial vascular system is dilated, with consequent blushing from the effect on the dermal capillaries of the face and neck, and at times the scalp and hands. From this same cause in the main the eyes often slightly bulge forwards and the lachrymal gland becomes active, ordinarily to a degree only to cause a 'brightening' of the eyes, but often to such an extent that the tears overflow entirely their proper channels.

Clonic -- alternating contractions and partial relaxations.

Glabella -- the smooth prominence between the eyebrows.

Pinnal--adjective - pinna muscles -- muscles of the ear.

Pinnae -- plural -- 'wings' -- the part of the ear lying outside the head.

Dermal -- relating to the skin.

(OVER)

ARMSTRONG(1928) ADDED TO THAT DESCRIPTION
'SERIES OF INCOHERENT AND SHOCKING
NOISES'

ONE CAN SEE THAT IN A DESCRIPTION OF THIS
LAUGHING, IT IS NEARLY THE SAME AS A PERSON
WHO IS CRITICALLY ILL....PERHAPS HAVING
A FIT....

THIS DESCRIPTION COULD APPLY TO A PERSON
WHO WE COULD SURMISE IS NOT ENJOYING HIMSELF
AT ALL...IF WE JUST HAPPENDED UPON HIM...
AND DID NOT KNOW THE SOURCE OF THE HUMOR.

WE MIGHT THINK HE OUGHT TO BE LOCKED UP...
FOR OUR SAFETY...OR AT LEAST, TO KEEP HIM
FROM HURTING HIMSELF.

DISERENS(1926) ILLUSTRATED THE MANY SIDES
OF LAUGHTER WHEN HE DESCRIBED IT:

"A COMPLEX FORM OF BEHAVIOR, UNLEARNED
YET HIGHLY SUSCEPTIBLE TO CONDITIONING
IN THE PRESENCE OF PSYCHIC STIMULI. IT
IS AT ONCE A BIOLOGICAL MECHANISM OF
ADJUSTMENT, A PHYSIOLOGICAL SAFETY-VALVE,
A PSYCHOLOGICAL EXHILARANT AND A REGU-
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ADJUSTMENT, A PHYSIOLOGICAL SAFETY-VALVE,
A PSYCHOLOGICAL EXHILARANT, AND A REGU-
LATOR OF SOCIAL RELATIONS."

LAUGHTER -- JOSH BILLINGS ON LAUGHTER.

Anatomically considered, laughint iz the sensation of feeling good all over and showing it in one spot.

laughing iz just as natural to come to the surface as a rat is to come out of his hole when he wants to.

You can't keep it back by swallowing anymore than you can the hiccups.

Genuine laughing is the vent of the soul, the nostrils of the heart, and it is just as necessary for health and happiness as spring water is for a trout.

I say laugh every good chance you git, but don't laugh unless you feel like it, for there ain't nothing in this world more hearty than a good, honest laugh, nor nothing more hollow than a heartless one.

When you do laugh, open your mouth wide enough for the noise to get out without squeling, throw your head back as though you was going to be shaved, hold onto your false hair with both hands and then laugh till your soul gets thoroughly rested.

LAUGHTER - TYPES:

TITTER -- "A NERVOUS TITTER RAN THROUGH
THE AUDIENCE." (DID ANYONE CATCH HIM?)

GIGGLE

BELLY LAUGH

CHUCKLE

ROAR

KNEE-SLAPPER

TEAR-BRINGER

TABLE-SLAPPER

NAPKIN-HIDER

LAUGHTER - RAUCOUS, ROLLICKING, ROLLING

VIOLENT!

TRIGGERED BY SOMETHING -- ANYTHING.

HITS OUR FUNNYBONE.

USUALLY WITH A FRIEND OR GROUP.

START TO SMILE, THEN GIGGLE, THEN LAUGH:

ROLL ON THE FLOOR.

HOLD OUR SIDES, ACTUALLY HURTING.

MAKES NOISES OF ALL KINDS:

 SNUFFING, SNIFFING

 GURGLING, CHOKING

DIAPHRAGM FLUTTERS

NOSES RUN, EYES WATER...

THINK: "WE'D BETTER STOP THIS OR WE'RE
GOING TO BE SICK. (PHYSICAL EXHAUSTION

TRIGGERED AGAIN -- BY LOOKING AT OTHERS.

 SAYING WHATEVER STARTED IT THE FIRST
 TIME (OR DOING WHATEVER)

HIT EACH OTHER...FALL ON EACH OTHER...HOLD
ONTO THE OTHERS...

CAN'T STOP TILL SEPARATED:

 "GET AWAY FROM ME, I CAN'T STAND
 ANYMORE OF THIS!"

LAUGHS: DESCRIPTION OF SOME INDIVIDUAL LAUGHS.

ZAPPE - EXPLOSIVE - LOUD - PEOPLE THINK SOMEONE
IS GOING TO FIGHT!

DON ENNIS - NO NOISE AT FIRST - THEN AN IN-
SUCKING OF THE BREATH.

ARKANSAS MAN - SAME AS DON, BUT MUCH MORE
ACTIVE - AND THEN, LOUD AS THE INSUCKING
STAGE ACTIVATES.

ROSWELL, N. M. LADY -- HIGH C
MADE A MISTAKE: "...HIT A NERVE HERE."

GENE AND I - UNCONTROLLABLE
ELIZABETH TAYLOR - BETTY AND MAXINE
DOUGHNUTS -- BEEVILLE

DR. CLEVELAND - FISH-HOOK STORY
HEAD UNDER NAPKIN.
PEEKING OUT TO LOOK AT THOSE TEETH.

Charley Willey - easy audience

Joe Griffith

LAUGHTER -- AN ACT OF DISPLEASURE?

MANY OF THE EARLY THEORIES OF LAUGHTER HOLD THAT WHAT APPEARS TO BE PLEASURABLE, OR WHAT IS EXPERIENCED AS PLEASURE IS ACTUALLY DISPLEASURE CONVERTED SOMEHOW BY THE HUMOR PROCESS.

NIETZSCHE (FREDRICH WILHELM, 1844-1900 GERMAN PHILOSOPHER) -- "MAN ALONE SUFFERS SO EXCRUCIATINGLY IN THE WORLD THAT HE WAS COMPELLED TO INVENT LAUGHTER."

SOME THEORISTS STRESS THE DISTRESSING, ANNOYING, DISAGREEABLE, AND TRAGIC FOUNDATIONS OF THE AMUSING.

LAUGHTER - Nervous laughter.

Surely you have heard the giggling of teenagers, especially the girls. You positively have if you have one--or have had one yourself. No one can explain it; they just have the giggles; it covers embarrassment, and is constant.

Someone said it, and I have forgotten just who, but they did say it, "When two emotions are fighting for control of you, the easiest way out of the situation is to laugh." Laughter wins out most of the time over embarrassment.

This brings us to a favorite pun here among my group in San Marcos. A man--deceased now--used to love to pinch women in the mammary regions, when he got a bit tipsy at the parties. Invariably, when this happened, the girls would warn each other: "The nervous titter is loose again." He went to his grave as the "Nervous Titter."

Laughter can be dangerous, also. There are so many people who are sensitive that they may think you are laughing at them; remember, they already think everyone is, for they are conscious of their shortcomings (in their own minds.) Chances are no one is paying them any attention. It seems the height of conceit that we think people are watching us all the time, but we do. Chances are very good we could pick our nose on the airliner and no one would see us, but when you have to do it (I never have) you squinch down in the seat, turn your head to the bulkhead and act as though you are trying to pull a thread out of the seat or your coat which you have raised to your face. This can be highly embarrassing if you are actually caught in the act by someone who spotted you as they were turning the page of "Barron's". Then, you have to act as though you have lost a finger in a pickle slicer (as the old story goes) and you must remain the rest of the trip conscious of the fact that he spotted you and is looking for your whole finger to see if you were lying. The best place for this is the laboratory, but it was occupied at the time you could not resist, right?

People are not looking at us; we just imagine they are. It is pomposity. We all are guilty of it. This thought was registered by Earl Nightingale, who comes up with some beauties. I saw Earl the other day when I was

in Albuquerque doing a rally with him, and I wish he would read and quote some stuff about diets and exercise. He desperately needs to hear some of that himself. For a man who has motivated so many over so many years to let himself go as he has, it is a shame. He had on a beautiful suit, but on that frame it looked like burlap.

Anyway, Earl said, "Those of us who worry about what other people think of us would not do so if we only realized how seldom they do." To me this is part of the prescription for happiness. You cannot be happy if the thought is constantly present that people are watching you. This is the height of something, isn't it, that we would think we are the object of conversation in every group, but believe me, there are people who go through that sort of hell every time they spot someone laughing in a restaurant. "They are laughing at me."

Dr. Tim La Haye, in his great talk (on cassette) about "Depression" tells of such an experience when he was enjoying the company of his wife and another couple. They were having a great time there in the restaurant when a young man came to their table and asked, "Pardon me, but were you laughing at me?" Dr. La Haye said, "Why, son, we never have even met you." He said, "Oh, yes, that's right." And walked off. Pitiful.

More tragic is what was in the newspaper today and is similar but with a hideous ending. The headlines: "Teen stabbed after friendly reunion." A sixteen year old girl and her friends were there in the bus station laughing because they were "delighted they had had an enjoyable weekend." Patrick Werner, 34, address unknown, later arrested by the police, rushed over, stabbed the young lady in the back three times. Investigators quoted him as saying he thought she and her companions were laughing at him.

Maybe he never did laugh when he was a boy. Maybe his parents told him not to laugh, that life was in "dead earnest." Remember, when life is in dead earnest, it is humor which is dead. Maybe he never had friends with which to giggle. Probably not or he would have understood the joy of a good weekend over which one could celebrate and laugh with their companions.

If I were you, I would not laugh uproariously on the New York subway. It could be dangerous.

LAUGHTER -- AS A GROSS INDICATOR OF HUMOR.

SMILE -- INSTEAD OF A LAUGH.

ONE CAN BE AMUSED AND NOT LAUGH, NOT EVEN SMILE -- ESPECIALLY WHEN ALONE.*

*This is significant, for it will be discussed later, when we talk of arranging the seating of the audience for a serious or a humorous program. Laughter, we say, is contagious, so we should take advantage of that when we plan a humorous meeting.

CAN BE SUPPRESSED** OR FEIGNED***

** AUSTIN, TX - VENETIAN BLIND DEALERS.

*** WHEN YOUR SWEETHEART WANTS TO IMPRESS YOU...ACKNOWLEDGING HOW VERY WITTY YOU ARE.

ALSO, WHEN THE BOSS TELLS A JOKE THAT IS NOT FUNNY.

ALSO, WHEN SPEAKERS ARE TOLD OLD WORN-OUT, STALE JOKES THEY HAVE HEARD HUNDREDS OF TIMES, BUT DO NOT WANT TO HURT THE FEELINGS OF THE PEOPLE WHO INSIST ON DOING THIS.

CAN BE FORTHCOMING AS A REACTION TO ANY SORT OF EMOTIONAL STATE.

APPARENTLY WE LAUGH AT ANYTHING AND AT EVERYTHING.

MANY OF THE SITUATIONS WE LAUGH ABOUT, WHEN VIEWED OBJECTIVELY, ARE NOT FUNNY, BUT ARE DISTURBING OR TRAGIC. THIS WILL BE ELABORATED WHEN WE DISCUSS HUMOR AS "A PAINFUL THING TOLD PLAYFULLY."

HUMOR - Laughter -- a Victory Cry.

No doubt about it: laughter is a victory cry. When the sabre tooth tiger was stalking around the cave, the fire keeping him from entering and eating all the cringing inhabitants (they did not have a scoped rifle, .343 or whatever, or even an elephant from which to shoot him; we had not reached the day of the Sportsman yet) finally gave up and went to find a rabbit or some other creature that had no fire, the head caveman turned to the others and laughed. They knew what this meant right away: "Og is out of his gourd." Then, someway, he grunted or signalled to them that the Sabretooth was gone, and he laughed. They did not know what he was doing but he screwed up his mouth, just as he did when he cried, but joyous noises came out. How do I know this; take it from me, they knew, and they did the same thing. This was the victory cry; the enemy was no longer a threat.

This is the same feeling we get when the bank account balances the first time, the very first time. Or when you jog a mile the first time, without stopping. You threw your hands up and yelled, but you laughed, right? I did. That was due to the fact that I had never jogged, much less run, a mile at one time in my life. In high school I ran the 100 yard dash, the 220 yard dash, and the short relays. The coach put me lead-off on the medley relay one time; I had to run the 880 yard lap, and I thought they would have to come back and get me. I paced myself rather poorly; ran a helluva good 220, then my legs turned to stove pipes. I was a terrible sight the last fifty yards; people, including my mother, turned away, not wanting to watch the finish, if I ever did. Beecher Huff came back and grabbed the baton and I fell into the arms of the only friend I had left, Boobie Rhode. They told me I was yellow all over, except for my pimples on my back; they were purple. I did not care what color they were; I wanted to breathe, that's all. The coach did not need my services again, for anything.

You meet a goal, and you laugh. Anyone who has ever done a jogging program, and met goal after goal, when they are conditioning their bodies, to get to that wonderful point where they can take in the oxygen, use it to advantage, and not tire, oh, folks, that is great! If a person talking about goals would get into some program such as that they would certainly know about goals. They they could talk about it with authority. Better though to talk about making a million dollars: "How did I make my million? Well, now lemme see, you sent me \$10 to find out how, and then lots

of others did too. It just mounts up, and soon, there it was, a million." Like the old joke about the guy who started the bank. You don't remember that? Well, have some speaker tell you; they all know that one, and in fact, that may be the only one they know. But, milliliters of oxygen per kilogram of body weight per minute--you understand that and you really know something of value. You will be able to run like a gazelle, or jog--does a gazelle ever jog? I know a cheeta never jogs; you would never find a self-respecting cheeta jogging; they are the fastest animals in the world; they do not jog. They flash right by you, or you'd better hope they do flash by you, and not grab you somewhere like in the groin.

Or you laugh, either when the cheeta goes by you, chasing something else, or you laugh when you see your old girl friend, the one who threw you over, and she's fat, and ugly. And better still, the guy for whom she threw you over--he's fatter, and uglier. Life dealt them a heavy hand, and you couldn't be happier. You hold a straight face at the reunion, but when you get alone, you laugh so hard you have to hold your sides you're hurting so much, but as with that type of laughter, it feels so good...hurts yet feels good. Strange. We don't know all about that yet. But it does happen. What you don't know is that they waited to get out of your sight to laugh also, at you. That's the game. Like we say in talks, "Look at the person across from you, there at the table. If he or she is looking back at you, laughing, you know who's ugly. And that, Friend, is a victory cry. They feel they are better off, someway, looks, brains, someway, but it makes them feel good, and the result is laughter.

God allowed us that. And he gave us plenty of opportunity for he made a lot of ugly people. You and me, for instance. You don't know it, but I have laughed at you lots of times.

LAUGHTER: ANIMALS - OR - HUMANS ONLY?

TWO GREAT GIFTS: REASON - POWER TO THINK...AND
LAUGHTER - POWER TO LAUGH.

STRICTLY A HUMAN AFFAIR - OR - DO WE SHARE THIS
WITH ANIMALS, THE HIGHER MAMMALS?

THERE IS NO DISAGREEMENT THAT MEN AND WOMEN
(HOMO SAPIENS) ALONE TELL JOKES AND ENGAGE
IN MORE SUBTLE WITTICISMS.

THE HYENA -- YELPS.

THE JACKASS -- BRAYS.

DATA NOT IN YET ON THE PORPOISES!

KOESTLER(1964) CONTENDED THAT LAUGHTER CAN
ARISE ONLY IN A BIOLOGICALLY SECURE
SPECIES WITH INTELLECTUAL AUTONOMY.

WALSH(1928) SAW LAUGHTER AS NECESSARY,
ESSENTIAL TO THE 'UPRIGHT' HUMAN
BECAUSE HE AND SHE IS SO POORLY
ENGINEERED THAT HE/SHE NEEDS THE
ACCOMPANYING DIAPHRAGM MOVEMENT TO
MASSAGE THE VITAL ORGANS.

HAZLITT(1778 TO 1830 ENGLISH ESSAYIST)

"MAN IS THE ONLY ANIMAL THAT LAUGHS
AND WEEPS, FOR HE IS THE ONLY ANIMAL
THAT IS STUCK WITH THE DIFFERENCE BE-
TWEEN WHAT THINGS ARE AND WHAT THEY
OUGHT TO BE."

IS THIS INCONGRUITY?

"OPEN WIDE, PLEASE -- AND LAUGH" -- TWO GIFTS.
POWER TO REASON AND POWER TO LAUGH.

LAUGHTER -- CHILDREN

URGE APPEARS EARLY:

BABIES SMILE...

THEN COO...

THEN CHUCKLE...WHEN PLEASED...

THEN LAUGH..IF TICKLED...BY RIGHT PERSON.

SCHOOL AGE:

BY THIS TIME, CHILDREN LAUGH AT THINGS
HE OR SHE HEARS OR SEES.

BEFORE SCHOOL AGE...LAUGH AT MOST ANYTHING...
AS LONG AS 'IN FUN,

NOISE...NONSENSE....ETC.

CHRISTIAN SPILLER FOSTER -- OBSERVATIONS.

REAL BOY! EXUBERANT!

LAUGHS ALL THE TIME...AT NONSENSE...

AT GRANDPARENTS...FACES...

AT PARENTS...

AT FUNNY NOISES...

AT THE DOG...

AS HE RUNS IN CIRCLES...

WHEN HE FALLS DOWN...AS LONG AS NOT
REALLY HURT.

OUTDOORS...LAUGHS AS HE RUNS NOWHERE IN
PARTICULAR....(OVER)

WANTED TO GO OUT SO BADLY!

MOTHER: "No!"

FINALLY "Yes"...VICTORY!!!!!! LAUGHS..

WHEN HE GOT OUTSIDE...LAUGHS...VICTORY!!!

HITS THE DOG -- LAUGHS -- VICTORY!!!

CHRISTIAN SPILLER AND I: AT PLAY -- 'IN FUN'

SCARY FACES -- HE LAUGHS.

THROW HIM UP IN THE AIR -- LAUGHS...BUT SOMETIMES IS SCARED, IF NOT SHOWN AHEAD OF TIME THAT ALL IS WELL, AND WE ARE IN FUN.

THROW HIM TOWARD MOTHER, DRAW HIM BACK, AND HE LAUGHS.

TICKLE HIM, HE LAUGHS, BUT NOT SOMETIMES, WHEN HUNGRY, SLEEPY, TIRED, ETC.

TRIES TO RUN ME DOWN WITH LAWNMOWER AND I RUSH OUT OF THE WAY, AND HE LAUGHS... REAL HARD LAUGHTER, HAS TO STOP AND REST FOR JUST A SECOND OR TWO, THEN CONTINUES... GREAT FUN...A GRAND TIME...BUT

IF I LET HIM HIT MY FOOT...NOT PULL IT OUT OF THE WAY, IT IS NOT AS MUCH FUN...UNLESS

I HOLLER -- AS IF IT HURT ME...

IF I DO THIS, HE LAUGHS UPROARIOUSLY....

IF I ACT AS THOUGH REALLY HURT, HE QUILTS LAUGHING AND TRIES TO TELL ME HE IS SORRY....THEN WE START AGAIN.

if hitting hand pull away

TICKLING:

DEFINITION: TO PROVOKE TO LAUGHTER OR MERRIMENT.

MOTHER -- TICKLES BABY

-- BABY, AT FIRST, TURNS UP THE MOUTH
AT THE CORNERS, AS IF TO GET AWAY
FROM THE IRRITANT.

-- LATER, ABOUT SIX WEEKS, WILL SMILE
AND MAKE NOISES OF LAUGHTER.

-- MUST BE 'IN FUN.'

MUST BE SOMEONE THE BABY
FEELS SAFE WITH TO BE TICKLED
AGREEABLY.

IF NOT, BABY WILL CRY.

-- IF NOT 'IN FUN' (IN THE MOOD) -- TIRED,
RESTLESS, HUNGRY, ETC...BABY WILL NOT
RESPOND TO TICKLING...AND MOTHER WILL
LAUGH.

IGNORANT MOTHER -- NOT REALIZING
THAT THE BABY, IN ORDER TO ENJOY
THE TICKLING, MUST BE 'IN FUN.'

PHYSICAL TICKLING:

FOREPLAY TO SEX.

AFTER SEX, IS PAINFUL -- NOT FUN.

NOT 'IN THE MOOD.'

ALL THE HEADACHES JOKES...

GORILLA - ZOO - "TELL HIM ABOUT
YOUR HEADACHES."

BILL MORROW -- WET HIS PANTS.

(OVER)

MENTAL TICKLING:

CAN BE TICKLED MENTALLY....

TO PLEASE....TO MAKE LAUGH...TO PROVOKE
TO LAUGHTER...

PHYSICAL TICKLING -- TO STIMULATE THE
SURFACE NERVES SO AS TO PROVOKE LAUGHTER.

ONE CANNOT TICKLE ONESELF AND ELICIT A
LAUGHTER RESPONSE OR ANYTHING RESEMBLING
THE EXPERIENCE OR BEING TICKLED BY SOMEONE
OR SOMETHING ELSE.

NOT JUST ANYONE CAN DO THE TICKLING AND
ELICIT THE LAUGHTER.

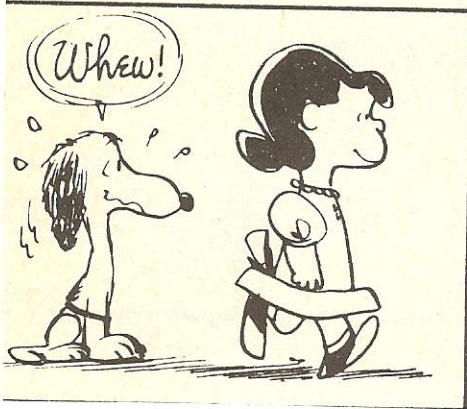
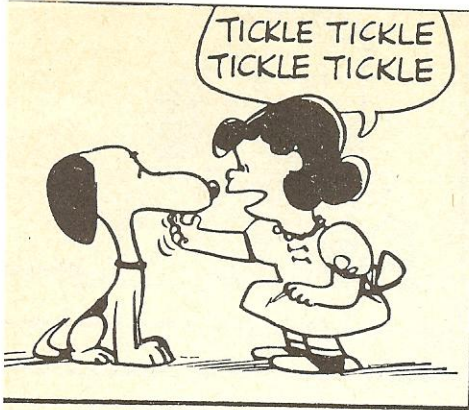
THE TICKLING MUST BE DONE BY A
FRIENDLY SOURCE AND IN A PLAYFUL
MANNER OR THE REACTION WILL BE ONE
OF SHOCK, FEAR, OR ANGER.

(OLD STORY OF THE ZOOKEEPER AND THE
TWO ELDERLY LADIES WHO TICKLED THE
GIRAFFE: "WELL, TICKLE ME THE SAME
WAY 'CAUSE I GOT TO CATCH HIM!")

(QUESTION: WHY 'ELDERLY LADIES'?

WHY A GIRAFFE?

TICKLING:



LAUGHTER -- NON-HUMOROUS CAUSES.

NERVOUSNESS

LAUGHING GAS(NITROUS OXIDE)

HIGH SPIRITS...FEELING OF GLADNESS...JOY

PLAY

TICKLING

RELEASE FROM RESTRAINT

VICTORY -- "A HA!" Firefight - Indian Major(Viet Nam)

Jogging - Football

RELIEF FROM PAIN OR STRAIN

DEFENSE MECHANISM OF "LAUGHING IT OFF."

MAKE-BELIEVE(ACTING)

LAUGHTER - CONDITIONING.

LAUGH AT TIMING.

BOB HOPE - WALKS ON - THEY LAUGH.

- CAN SAY, "WELL, HERE WE ARE IN DALLAS"
AND THEY LAUGH.

- THEY LAUGH ANYTIME HE PAUSES.

AUDIENCES - THE PEOPLE WHO GET TO GO IN TO
WATCH THE COMEDY FILMED, TAPED, ARE
LIKE TRAINED SEALS.

THEY LAUGH WHEN THEY KNOW IT IS NEEDED.

THEY KNOW HOW TO LAUGH AND HOW LONG TO LAUGH.

THEY ARE PICKED DUE TO THE ABILITY TO LAUGH
AND ESPECIALLY IF THEY ARE GOOD, DIFFERENT
LAUGHERS.

IN SEVERAL SHOWS YOU CAN HEAR THE SAME
SHRILL LAUGH...DISTINCTIVE LAUGHTER.

PAID?

STUDIO AUDIENCES ROAR, THEN SUDDENLY THEY
CLAM UP WAITING FOR THE NEXT JOKE. THEY
MIGHT NOT EVEN BE ENJOYING THE JOKES, THEY
JUST LAUGH ON CUE, DOING THEIR DUTY.

CANNED LAUGHTER - PHYLLIS DILLER

- BOB HOPE

- DIFFERENT SHOWS.

CANNED LAUGHTER - GRAPH.

REAL LAUGHTER - GRAPH.

LAUGHTER - Therapeutic Effect.

Definition of "therapeutic" -- according to Dorland's "The American Illustrative Medical Dictionary":

Pertaining to therapeutics or the art of healing.
Curative.

Medical authorities now grant that laughter is therapeutic, curative, not just good for the body ailments, but is in some cases, curative. For instance, for depression.

Laughter is powerful medicine. Regular doses of it not only prolong your life, but they make life more interesting, more worth living.

Effects:

1. Lessens the pulse rate
2. Reduces tension
3. Promotes good health - physical and mental.

Right intake of laughter.

Moments of concentrated euphoria. At what other times do you feel better than after a good laugh?

Not only feels good, but is good for you.

Laughter as a tension-reducing mechanism:

World War II - despite mud, weariness, death, danger, commanders considered the situation under control if the GIs under their command found in all of this something to laugh about.

Bill Mauldin's cartoons - exemplified this.

Kamikazes - Jarvis, on the bridge of the Langley.

Laughter is the only sensible reaction, sometimes, to the everyday misfortunes that otherwise might cause great stress.

E.B. White, humorist for The New Yorker Magazine:

Humor is a final emotion, like breaking into tears. A thing gets so bad and you feel so terrible that at last you go to pieces and it's funny.

We have all suffered situations such as this, right

"What else can happen?"

Old joke: waiter spilled the soup on the person, then, the entree. Passed by again. "No dessert?"

Abraham Lincoln: "I laugh because I must not cry."

Dr. Berlyne attributed laughter to relief from anxiety, triumph, agreement, sudden comprehension, embarrassment, and scorn. In all of these situations, laughter is connected with relief from a sort of tension.

Laughter is the victory cry when the tension is relieved: after the mile run, after the marathon, after the 2.0 mile run I make every other day(I do not enjoy it much except during the last 400 yards when I feel I have it made, and am looking forward to that wonderful tasting Budweiser, and at the end, when I let out my victory cry - Ha!)(I tease Dr. Cooper about this: When I was the speaker for his Aerobics Banquet, I said, looking his way, "You may not like this, you being a teetotaler, but the last 400 yards I am looking forward to that beer." And the audience applauded and yelled, 'Right on!' I nudged him and said, "They are not all with you on this." He, being the wonderful person he is, laughed.)

Laughter helps discharge the tension that we store in our minds emotinally and in our muscles physically. Studies have revealed there is release of both physical and psychological tension when we laugh.

The benefits of laughter are long lasting.

People should arrange their lives, organize their lives so they can get an amount of laughter each day.

People will come up to me and say, "I needed that." One lady said, "I started not to come; my husband died just two weeks ago, and I just haven't felt like getting out; I've been terribly despondent. But, Dr. Jarvis, some people who have heard you before said you would do me good, and so I came. I am so glad I was here tonight and it did me so much good to hear you and to laugh."

Think that is not a spiritual reward?

Think that is not doing 'something worthwhile, not only for yourself but for someone else' as Dr. Bill Glasser says is absolutely essential if we are to fulfill our needs.

This is what Dr. Hans Selye, the father of Stress Medicine, says is necessary: that a person be not egotistic, but egoistic, doing something for others and feeling good about it.

More therapeutic effects:

4. Heartbeat goes down. The heartbeat of people watching comedy films was significantly lower than the heartbeat of people listening to dull, dry lectures. For this reason I suggest you stay away from biochemistry professors and President Carter.

University of Texas Dental School Students at San Antonio--their reactions are conditioned reactions to dull instructors.

Think how many hours of dull lectures they have sat through by the time they graduate!

5. Laughter clears the lungs of carbon dioxide.

6. Laughter produces an increase in the flow of adrenaline flowing through the bloodstream.

Comments from Psychiatrists:

1. Dr. Fry, Stanford University School of Medicine: "Experience with laughter as an adjunct to medical treatment suggests its power as a physical therapeutic agent."

2. "Laughter is good for both body and mind.

It eliminates nervous tension, which upsets body functions, and it clears the mind of annoyances and resentments. It leaves a feeling of well-being, of personal satisfaction, and of contentment.

3. Again, Dr. Fry: "Laughter is a pleasant, beneficial tonic--an exercise you can do sitting down. It is stimulating, but nevertheless relaxing."

(I say that laughter is a massage from the inside out.)

One researcher summed it up by concluding that laughter "reduces health-sapping tensions and relaxes the tissues as well as exercising the most vital organs. Laughter, even when forced, results in a beneficial effect on us, both mentally and physically."

Laughter livens up the very serious talk. I tell audiences sometimes as an opening statement that I "would like to talk to you about the 'Prognosis of Osseous Implants in the Ascending Border of the Ramus of the Mandible.' I really would like to--but I don't know anything about that at all." This brings a laugh. So many speeches could be made better by a little levity, a tad of jocose material, during the serious content, but unless it is done with good style, it is a detractor.

The physical aspects, benefits of humor, were brought to our attention recently by a new book by a very courageous layman, Norman Cousins, former editor of The Saturday Review. He suffered from a terminal disease (according to the doctors, from a collagen disease. His s. of h. is evident in the way he described it, "I was coming unstuck." He had one chance in 500. No specialist had heard or witnessed a recovery from this complex condition. Cousins decided not to go along with the prognosis; like other courageous people have done and proved the doctors wrong.

Many a doctor has looked at a former patient with chagrin, saying, there he is again. The patient, looking at the doctor, and the patient smiling, is thinking, "There's the S.O.B. who told me twenty years ago I was going to die."

Many cases like this have happened: Dr. Norman Vincent Peale, at the recent National Speakers Association opening session, keynoted the convention by relating stories of Positive Mental Attitude, the premise being that to our subconscious an imagined experience is as good as a real one, the effect is the same. He told of one man who was told he had incurable cancer. This man refused to believe it and told himself over and over, in concentrated sessions, where he would grab his head and imagine the cells withering and finally disappearing; he would concentrate on this a couple of times a day, and later the doctors could find no trace of the disease.

Norman Cousins asked himself, "Is it possible that love, hope, faith, laughter, confidence, and the will to live have therapeutic value?" He began treatment under an understanding, cooperative doctor. He moved out of the hospital to a motel--where he could get some rest; he started massive doses of Vitamin C (ascorbic acid--this being the belief of Dr. Linus Pauling) and laughter. He hired a nurse, checked into the hospital, asked his friend, Allen Funt, to send some of the classics of the "Candid Camera" series television show.

"It worked," he said, when he found that "ten minutes of genuine belly laughter had an anesthetic effect which would give me at least two hours of pain-free sleep."

"How scientific," he asked, "was it to believe that laughter--as well as the positive emotions in general--was affecting my body chemistry for the better?" "If laughter did in fact have a salutary effect on the body's chemistry, it seemed at least theoretically likely that it would enhance the system's ability to fight the inflammation."

They took blood sedimentation-rate readings just before as well as several hours after the laughter episodes. Each time there was a drop of at least five points. The drop itself was not substantial, but it held and was cumulative. "I was greatly elated by the discovery that there is a physiologic basis for the ancient theory that laughter is good medicine."

Doctors consider Cousins as a single, dramatic example of what seems to be the healing effect of laughter. From Cousins' article in the New England Journal of

Medicine there came a flood of letters from doctors who said they believe in the healing powers of a positive outlook and laughter in particular.

Dr. Denton Cooley, the famous heart surgeon of Houston, with international fame, recently spot-lighted on the television hit series, "60 Minutes", told me himself, after hearing me give one of my presentations "The patient who has lost the will to laugh has lost the will to live." Another thing he said which boosted my ego considerably was, "Tonight you proved to me and others here that one does not have to use dirty humor to make people laugh--and laugh heartily."

More than 1,000 doctors answered the article and the overwhelming majority endorsed the mind-over-matter concept subscribed to by Mr. Cousins. Dr. John Swinton of Pennsylvania State University, endorsed the notion of a compound of love, laughter, and willpower as tomorrow's proven cure. He said, "Science now admits that depression is physically debilitating and most of us know instinctively that despair is sinful."

Several doctors wrote that positive emotions "prime the body's own natural drugstore in ways not yet understood." Dr. Robert Thompson of California wrote: "While I think I appreciate the pharmacological principles more than I did five years ago, I am even more impressed with the skillful encouragement of whatever it takes to turn on the body's own defense/healing mechanism."

Dr. Gerald Looney of the UCLA School of Medicine said he is convinced that the conscious development of one's positive emotions enhances the body's intrinsic drugstore in its endocrine glands and its constant search for homeostasis so that it produces more complicated and comprehensive chemotherapy than is available at any medical center in the world.

Cousins may have experienced the same beneficial results had he smiled or "laughed inside." A research team at Yale that laughter is not simply what we do when we are happy; it is an integral part of happiness itself

Dr. Gary Schwartz discovered a "feedback" relationship between the brain and the muscles that "helps tell the brain it is having a good time."

Yale studies may help to explain earlier research findings, which indicated that merely laughing inside did not result in the same mental and physical benefits as a good hearty laugh. The evidence indicates that you cannot smile and frown at the same time; you cannot be happy and sad at the same moment. "It is very difficult to take things seriously when you're smiling." Future research may show that putting on a happy face will help produce a happy state of mind.

(I know this is true for I do this when a little depressed. I have stepped in front of the mirror and said, "What are you so down-in-the-dumps for? Put on a happy face, you clown, you! You are so fortunate; think of all the people who would like to be in your place today! Now, give us a big smile."

The same thing happens when I am tired of jogging. After about a mile, when it would be so easy to quit, I smile, saying, "You realize of course, that a lot of people would love to be out here doing this today. But some of these people are in prison, in hospitals, some are immobile with disease, and some are just too lazy. They would like to do this, but haven't got the guts. "That's wrong," I say to myself, "they have got guts--lots of guts, pounds and pounds of fat right there hanging out in front, in back. Can you see them? Compared to them you are a string bean. Now smile, and finish this run. People say 'I've never seen a jogger smiling. Let's show them one.'" Then, every car that passes I wave to them and smile. Makes some of them think, "He seems to be having a good time but it makes some of them hate me--I am people oriented enough to know that." One guy hollered, "I hate reformed, lazy people." One fellow yelled, "Are you chasing a girl or running from one." I took that as a very good-natured remark for that roly-poly professor now passes me and gives me a 'thumbs-up' sign. At least, I think it is his thumb.)

Psychotherapeutical benefits of laughter:

Being explored as well as the traditional forms of medicine. The most common symptom of the psychological patient is depression. It is due to bottled-up anger (thought to be the major cause of depression). Dr. Greenwald of the United States International University in

San Diego says that laughter is incompatible with depression. And he adds, "It is much more fun."

He then adds something we speakers say all the time, that, "Many of the differences between the unhappy, neurotic person and the happy person stem from how is not that the latter have no problems, but they choose to deal with their problems." He said, "I once asked a woman how she managed to be so happy, and she said, 'Well, at a certain point in my life, I decided I could laugh or I could cry. I chose to laugh.'"

One of my best friends died a few years ago; she simply sunk into depression and gave up on life. At the end of her life her husband was having to carry her several times a day to the bathroom; she could not walk. I began to notice that June was depressed, angry, unhappy--so much so that I could not be demonstrably happy around her or it would make her peeved, if not openly hostile. She said to me once, "Why are you so damned happy all the time; why are you happy and I am not?" I began to avoid her as did all of her former friends; they and I became distant for there is nothing you can do for that sort of person. Like the alcoholic, that sort of person must help themselves

My mother was the same way. Around other people she had a marvelous personality; you would think she never had any problems; she was the best 'put-on' I have ever known. But she was the opposite with her children--my brother and me. She constantly brought up her past hurts, thus making herself angry. I told her, "Mother, why do you insist on hurting yourself?" She would counter with, "Well, can't I talk to my own son?!" "Yes," I would reply, "but let's talk about happy things; you are making yourself sick." She lost all her friends, one by one, her real close friends for she had a terrible temper and finally would explode at them and tell them to "go to hell!" Then, she would get more depressed. Twice I found her unconscious from overdoses of drugs. My brother handled the relationship a bit differently: he simply stayed away; he didn't see her but five or six times in approximately thirty-five years. She and he did not get along at all; at least, I could tolerate her, but it was not pleasant; I was never anxious to see her.

Dr. Greenwald is trying to get more of his fellow psychiatrists to develop their own sense of humor. "If they would, they wouldn't have to use so many pills." He says there is nothing more tension-relieving, nothing that helps more to relieve anxiety, than humor.

Humor also helps in another way, a more subtle way. It always involves a certain amount of insight and helps us to see new ways of coping. Dr. Fry says, "Humor is a brainteaser; it stirs up the cerebral neurons. Whether in the form of jokes or cartoons or skits or repartee or slapstick or funny songs, whether it is intricate or simple--whatever, humor momentarily poses a riddle for the brain." Humor, he says, gets you to thinking about elements of life in new ways; it develops new insights; it calls to your attention new factors in an experience or situation that you hadn't previously noticed before.

True. The humorist sees things differently. After all, humor is defined as "a painful thing told playfully," and "tragedy separated by time and space." The humorist, the true humorist, not just the joketeller, sees the problems of life in a different way from the average person and will give the tragic situation a twist and it comes out funny. But it is not funny; it is painful or tragic.

Dr. Walter O'Connell, director of the drug rehabilitation center at the VA hospital in Houston believes that this use of humor to gain perspective on one's problems explains why "the sense of humor separates those who are winners, those who are happy contributors to life, from the miserable, the angry, and the hospitalized mental patient." He has written numerous articles on the use of humor on the drug patients and has concluded that the ability to laugh at "paradoxical and self-defeating behavior" is crucial for any one's successful adaptation to life. He refers to a joke by Harry Golden, whereby Mr. Golden started speaking of the size of the sun, then expanded to the Milky Way, which has billions of suns, many of whom are thousands of times larger than our sun. Millions of suns have whole planetary systems and in comparison the Milky Way is minute. At least 100 million galaxies are within telescopic range, and billions of galaxies are part of the universe. "If you think of all this," Mr. Golden says, "why worry about your wife burning the toast?"

I use a quote from Edward G. Robinson who said that the only way to survive Hollywood and stardom is when you

begin in the slightest to take yourself seriously, you should smile--and when you began to take yourself more seriously, you should laugh outloud.

Ethel Barrymore said, "One takes his or her greatest step toward maturity when he or she first learns to laugh at themselves."

Do it. Go to the encyclopedia and read about our galaxy system. I did, after I read this article about humor and its therapeutic effect. I only read about the sun, and yet, I began to understand better Mark Twain's view of Man. How pompous, Mark stated, is it that Man think of himself as created in God's image! Mark considered Man so insignificant in God's sight when we think of all God has to worry about, if He worries at all.

When you think of God that way, it becomes humorous that golfers will refer to a putt as a "miracle" putt and say, "God was with me today." I really prefer to think that God, with all the other problems in our known world even, is not too concerned with a down-hill, left-to-right breaking putt. Besides, the pros make about three of those out of ten, and that's no miracle; that's the result of practice.

One wag told of two visitors to Rome, who viewing the Pope pontificating to the crowd. He 'crossed' himself and one of the men asked the other, "What's he doing there?" "I believe," answered the first, "he's going to try a field goal." Isn't it ridiculous for a coach to say, "God was with us today?" Makes one wonder why God was so mad at that other coach. Oh well, if that helps, fine. Maybe it will save the other coach's life if he thinks that God simple was not for him that day. Maybe next time God will let him and his team win. If he and the players pray before the game and cross themselves.

I have talked to the Veterans of World War I, at their conventions. Imagine how old the average veteran of WWI is! 1919--say they had to be at least 18 years of age; that would make each of them now at least 79. And they did laugh. They were in good spirits, in play, in the mood, at fun. They were a great audience. Makes me relate everything written here about the therapeutic effects of laughter to those people, for didn't the writer report: "He who laughs lasts, laughs loudest?" Or was it "longest." Anyway, let's shorten that a bit and say, "He who laughs, lasts."

HUMOR - Laughter - Therapeutic.

"The doctors are at it again. Every other week they come up with something that is harmful to Mr. and Mrs. John Q. Public. If it isn't cholesterol, it's smog. Now they tell us to stop laughing. A scientist at Stanford University says laughing can be hazardous to your health. He claims laughter disrupts normal breathing and can contribute to strokes in people who are susceptible. He also points out that there is no literature detailing the massive muscular activity associated with laughter and we have much to learn in this area.

"I have always believed that laughter was good for people and now this. Any comment?"

This letter was written to Ann Landers. The writer was evidently referring to Dr. Fry, of Stanford, who had just written an article on laughter and humor. The doctor was here quoted out of context; had the writer gone on, the letter would have given the part wherein Dr. Frye certainly recommended laughter as therapeutic: "Experience with laughter as an adjunct to medical treatment suggests its power as a physical therapeutic agent. Laughter is a pleasant, beneficial tonic--an exercise you can do sitting down. It is stimulating but nonetheless relaxing."

Don't ask me why the writer did not quote more of the article. Chances are that she or he did not read the article; someone might have told them about it, or perhaps they were so turned off they did not finish the article. Such letters do the authors no justice; they imply just the opposite the author says in the whole treatment.

Laughter, by many measurements, by many scientists, is therapeutic. There is too much evidence to dispute this fact.

The November, 1979, issue of Science Digest cites several studies in which laughter produced beneficial physical and mental results. A hearty laugh benefits the lungs and clears the respiratory system, the researchers said, and also provides a healthy emotional outlet, discharges superfluous energy, combats boredom and alleviates social pressures.

Truly, a person can laugh himself to health. It is the only exercise some people get.

Laughter is the best possible therapy for our well-being both spiritually and physically. I doubt that there's a better preventive medicine for coping with the trauma and stress of these difficult times - Walter Richter.

Laughter has great curative powers - Norman Cousins.

LAUGHTER - THE ABILITY TO MAKE PEOPLE LAUGH.

WONDERFUL TALENT!

SPIRITUAL REWARD!

THEY NEED TO LAUGH!

COMMENTS AFTER THE TALKS.

JEFF WILLIAMS: "I DON'T CARE WHAT YOU'RE DOING NOW. IF YOU CAN MAKE PEOPLE LAUGH, YOU GET OUT OF WHAT YOU'RE DOING AND DO THIS. THERE ARE JUST NOT ENOUGH FOLKS IN THIS WORLD WHO CAN MAKE PEOPLE LAUGH -- AND THE PEOPLE DO SO DESPERATELY NEED TO LAUGH."

MARION RATHBURN: "IF YOU GIVE UP ONE OR THE OTHER..."

PROGRAM CHAIRMAN: "WE APPRECIATE DR. JARVIS GIVING UP HIS PROFESSION OF DENTISTRY FOR THIS ONE..."

DOING SOMETHING I'D DO FREE...

"YOU MEAN HE IS GETTING PAID...!"

LAUGHTER - Intensity - Produced by the artist.

Dr. Charley Willey, one of my very best friends, and excellent speaker, took one of my tapes and evaluated it for me, so the following report on that tape is his work and not mine. I have a bent toward braggadoccio all right, but these are his words, not mine.

He played the tape four times, listening for content and the quality, but he was amazed at the amount of laughter on the tape. Also, he was impressed by the fact that the audience was a bit slow at first, then they began to react better until about the middle of the talk when they were really a marvelous audience. He said, "I just want to say that that tape in itself is a study in how to develop the rapport between a speaker and his audience. It starts out reasonably slowly and when that thing is over you have that audience laughing at things that were not essentially that funny. And the building of that rapport is one of the beautiful things in that tape. I have never heard a finer relationship between a speaker and an audience than you had at the end of that tape--and it is such contrast to the way it started. Why, I suppose that type of progression is the type of thing we all should be looking for as we sharpen our skills in this business."

Now, those are fine words, and refreshingly encouraging to my soul! God bless Charley Willey! I get carried away with such letters, pardon me. That sort of comment is relished for it reflects a scholarly attitude toward the profession. Not many people would discern the meaning of what Charley heard on that tape. More about this under "SPEAKING - Audience - 'In fun'". This was the American Dehydration Association at beautiful Monterey, California. They were in a fairly good mood to start with, but as with any of my audiences the first time, they don't know me at all, they have heard that I am pretty good, but they are listening to see if I live up to my billing. Then, they start laughing and finally they are "in fun" to the extent that most anything I say is funny to them and they respond accordingly. This is what the humorous speaker must do, must condition them himself/herself if they are not already in the "in fun" attitude you need for a very successful program. Bob Hope does not have that problem; the people who come to hear ^{him} expect to laugh, and the minute he walks out on the stage and says, "Well, here I am in Houston," they howl with glee and really he has not said anything funny at all. It is conditioning to which they are reacting. He has that reputation; they expect him to

be funny and they expect to laugh. More, as I said, about this in "SPEAKING - Audience - 'in fun'" but I had to say that much now.

This was a great audience, but not at first; I had to do my own building. That is the very point Charley is referring to--the laughter built up all the way through the presentation, and it was not long until I could have them laughing at a twitch of the eyebrow, a shaking of the head. These are the nuances of speaking, and are not learned except over a long period of time by repeated presentations, experience.

Now, to the laughter. Charley, on subsequent playings of the tape, began to be fascinated by the amount of laughter. Being a humorous speaker himself, he would be interested in the laughter, but he noticed with this tape that there was an uncommonly amount of laughter and noticed the different types of laughs. He took a stop watch and began to calculate the laughs; he gave the laughs three ratings: belly laughs, strong laughs, and chuckles. He admitted it is sometimes hard to differentiate between a belly laugh and a strong laugh. He counted thirty-six heavy belly laughs, sixty-two strong laughs, and seventy-seven little chuckles. He was lavish in his praise and my natural modesty(?) prevents me from actually quoting his words here, but he said that if a speaker gets sixty-two laughs from any forty-five minute program, he or she is really doing well, but to get this many belly laughs, plus the others is something else. I appreciate this, of course, for it represented what I have referred to above: a conditioning of the audience. It represents a calculated, programmed beginning, self-deprecation to make them like me more than they did when I was introduced, then a slow commentary about them and their problems, done with humor--clean humor--to make them accept the message, which incidentally, if they were to stop and think about it too much, ~~was~~ ^{would be for} a bit painful, for I was telling them in effect that they are their problem. But I was saying, "We" and that makes it palatable.

Charley wrote:

~~He said~~ "There were shades of intensity on those chuckles. Some of those might have been considered by someone else as being strong laughs. But all in all, there were nine minutes and twenty-nine seconds sustained laughter on the tape. Every time the laughter would come on I would punch the watch and then shut it off at the end of the laugh. Now, any time you can get ten minutes

of sustained laughter in that length of program, in that kind of speech, you are really turning them on! I'll challenge anyone to get up on their feet and get that reaction from any kind of an audience. That is, my friend, superb!"

Nice words to hear, and I plan to leave him a little something in my will for saying ~~these~~ ^{them}, but this was a good audience to start ^{with} and an excellent one by the time I got halfway through the presentation.

I don't consider this the best audience I have had concerning the laughter and intensity of the laughter. Anyone who has talked for Tupperware and AmWay is spoiled; those audiences are unreal. They are hyped up to start with, and they appreciate any humor, especially that dealing with the factors of salesmanship and success, patriotism, etc. These audiences will spoil you with their enthusiasm and response; you won't believe that you could be that good, and I imagine we never are. They are carried away with the spirit of the convention; they are ~~filled~~ ^{revealed} ⁱⁿ with the carnival atmosphere of the meeting: bands have been playing, banners are everywhere, the people have been given a chance to parade across the stage by sales groups, and the air is crackling with excitement. Then, you walk out, and you would think that you are Bob Hope. These people give busboys a standing ovation, so don't get carried away with the moment, for you have to go talk to other groups, remember?

This might be a good indicator for you. Measure the laughter in one of your taped presentations. What kind of laughs are you getting? How long each laugh? What is the laugh per minute ratio? Are they laughing when you are telling your stories--or are they waiting to laugh? What classification would you give your type of presentation based upon the reaction of the audience?

My speaker friend and colleague, Zig Ziglar, does not expect belly laughs. He uses humor to keep the audience alert and listening. He said, "Charles, you can put a watch on me and I will be using jokes every nine to eleven minutes, just like clockwork."

That is the motivational speaker and how he uses humor. The humorous speaker must have much more humor than that and must have a variety of humor. So, you must evaluate you and your performances:

What kind of speaker are you?

What percentage of laughter do you have compared to the amount of message?

What kind of laughs are you getting with your humor?

What intensity of laughter?

The different kinds of laughs? At what point in your presentation do you have them, the members of the audience, extremely attentive, eager to hear your next word, eager to laugh?

What is the total amount of laughter, the time?

Now, how can you improve what you are doing to the extent that you will be in demand, that you will be on the controlling end of the Supply vs. Demand situation? How about an evaluation sheet? Are you ready to hear an evaluation of your presentations by each member of the audience? Is it time you asked someone such as Charley Willey or me to listen to a tape, and evaluate it for you, to time the laughter, to rate the laughter for the types of laughs, the intensity, and the effectiveness of the buildup, the arousal of the audience to a fever pitch?

I want to thank Charley Willey for being a friend and evaluating the tape for me, for his kind words, but wait a minute. They were not all soothing words for he corrected me on a point and I appreciate it. After all, our friends are those who will tell us our faults, besides giving us accolades. We don't need sycophants; we need evaluators. He told me I was misusing the word "braggadocio." And I was. I checked it in the dictionary and the word is a noun and there I was using it as an adjective and adverb. So I changed it, as you noticed, in this chapter: "...bent toward braggadocio." That's using it as a noun, right?

I want to here thank Dave Yoho also. If it were not for him, I would have never known what "penultimate" means. But, if I did use it, who would recognize it for what it means, except Dave, Bill Buckley, and me?

HUMOR - Laughter - The Artist.

The production of laughter--to make people laugh, is one of the great joys of my life. I relish this talent; I thank God for it. To see the folks regaled with laughter when they so desperately need to laugh--this is a joy. More than that, it is a spiritual reward in my life.

I know what Pat O'Brien meant when he was interviewed and upon being asked by the reporter, "Why he did this--travel around the country when he didn't have to?"

"People tell me when I'm on the road, 'You don't need this; why don't you stay home and enjoy yourself?' Well, I do need it. There is some altruism involved; you're bringing enjoyment to people who need it. But it's selfish, too--there is a lot of fun in making people laugh."

Amen, Brother! I love it. As I tell my audiences close to the end of my presentations, after they have laughed so heartily: "I have loved it here tonight. I appreciate your laughing. I haven't seen one person here who has not laughed. Everynow and then you see one--some hatchet-faced old biddy, some granite-faced old grump, sitting out there, thinking to themselves: 'Let's see you make me laugh, Buster!' Well, you can't make a person like that laugh; they are dedicated grumps and you can't make 'em laugh. Josh Billings knew that one hundred years ago: "The hardest thing in the comic lecturing business is to try to make those folks laugh that God never intended to laugh in the first place. But you have, and I thank you, and you ought to pat yourself on the back. Laughter is good for what ails you; I just wish everyone was aware of the beneficial effects of laughter--physical and psychological effects. I am doing something here I would do free if I had to, but don't get that around--'cause I have a good thing going here."

I am fulfilling that part of my life that must be fulfilled to be happy. Dr. Glasser says that if a person is not happy, he or she is not living responsibly. Amen. He then goes on in REALITY THERAPY and says that to live responsibly one must fulfill their needs. We then have to read a few pages more to find what the author means by "needs." Finally we discover that our needs are two-fold:

1. To love and be loved.
2. To do something worthwhile--not only to yourself but to someone else.

I am getting that spiritual reward in my life by this responsible living: I am loved and I love, and I am doing something for a living that is worthwhile, very worthwhile, to me and to someone else. They, everyone, needs to laugh. That is my purpose when I get that microphone: to render a program which makes them laugh, but also makes them think too. I can do it either way: make them laugh and think, or make them only laugh. I can make them think too, but if I did that only I would not be invited as much as I am, for we have speakers who can do that much better than I can.

In dentistry the frustration is that (1) the dentist is not loved, and (2) the dentist is doing something very worthwhile but there is no spiritual reward for most of the patients are unaware of the benefits of marvelous dentistry; they want the dentist to 'get in and get out.' This frustration results sometimes in despondency, not just depression, but despondency and sometimes life seems so unworthwhile, so frustrating that the dentist takes his or her life. The suicide rate is high in dentistry. In my talk, "LIFE AS A DENTIST CAN BE FILLING" I comment on this and illustrate the frustrations with humor's paintbrush. What did we say humor is? A "Painful Thing Told Playfully." Right on! The pain is not all on the patient's end of the drill; it is drilled into the dentist all the time that the patient does not care enough about his or her oral health. They so desperately need to realize that they are responsible for their teeth, their oral health. I am sure that part of the humor I exhibited in the dental office was to insure my stability, emotionally; I might have gone bananas had I not had a wonderful sense of humor which allowed me to vent my frustrations on the patients. I had them laughing in that office and when a person laughs they relax, and when they relax, the dentist relaxes. If the dentist is a teacher also, the patient is made to realize that dentistry--excellent dentistry--has its benefits and the worst thing to do is to hurry the work, to 'get in and get out.' I made this very clear to my people; I took advantage of my knowledge of E.A.--emotional appeal--to punch the right button on those patients, to make them cognizant that they must get the proper care, that I could provide that care, but over half the problem was their attitude toward their responsibility for their oral health. The frustration results from the inability of the average dentist to communicate with people; he or she was taught about 'things' not people; but they work on people.

The person who can make people laugh will be popular, and will be the center of attention. People love to laugh, it helps them, they feel better when they laugh, and after they laugh. They want to be around a person who they think will make them laugh. Who said, "The people will remember in their hearts the folks who made them laugh." I think that regardless of the weather the funeral of a person who made people laugh will have great numbers of thankful friends and acquaintances; his or her passing will be a great loss to them.

It is spiritually rewarding to have people come up and say, "I needed that." "They told me you'd be funny and I need some laughs in my life; I have had too much tragedy lately; I can't thank you enough for what you did tonight." "My husband just passed away two weeks ago, Dr. Jarvis, and my friends just made me come tonight; I didn't want to come; it didn't seem right somehow to come to a program scheduled to be humorous, but it helped me, and I think my husband would want that. God bless you. May you continue to do this for a long, long time. Heaven knows we all need it."

I could go on and list the comments people have told me all across this nation. Believe me, Folks, I did not hear that as a dentist, but do all the time as a speaker. One lady said, "You are dispensing the best type of medicine there is." One of my classmates, Marion Rathburn, said, "Charles, if you give up one or the other, I hope you'll give up dentistry." I replied, "You've seen my dentistry, haven't you?" "Yes, and you and I both know you're a fine dentist, but we can all do dentistry, but we can't make people laugh--and they do so need to laugh. You, I believe can render a much better service at making them laugh than you can with your dentistry."

He's right: very few people can make the folks laugh. I mean really laugh, to the point whereby they are made well, or better. Deep laughter, that stirs up their insides, that gets the juices flowing, that provides a massage from the inside out, that produces a therapeutic effect.

As Jeff Williams told me years ago, God bless him: "If you can do this, you do this. You get out of whatever you're doing and you do this. The people need you if you can make them laugh. They need to laugh. Laughter is God's aspirin to cure the ills of reality. Do this, Charles."

SMILE: DEFINITION AND GENERAL REMARKS.

WEBSTER'S DICTIONARY:

TO HAVE, PRODUCE, OR EXHIBIT A SMILE (VB.)

TO LOOK OR REGARD WITH AMUSEMENT OR RIDICULE.

A CHANGE OF FACIAL EXPRESSION IN WHICH THE EYES BRIGHTEN AND THE CORNERS OF THE MOUTH TURN SLIGHTLY UPWARD AND WHICH EXPRESSES ESP. AMUSEMENT, PLEASURE, APPROVAL, OR SOMETIMES SCORN.

DEMONSTRATE A SMILE:

AMUSEMENT.

RIDICULE.

SCORN.

"MOST SMILES ARE STARTED BY ANOTHER SMILE."
- GOOD READING.

HOW MUCH IS A SMILE WORTH?

LITTLE BOY, STRUCK BY ELECTRIC WIRE - HIS FACE PARALYZED, ASKED BY HIS LAWYER TO FACE THE JURY AND SMILE.

AWARDED \$25,000 BY THAT JURY WHEN THEY STUDIED THE QUESTION POSED BY THE LAWYER, "IF A SMILE IS WORTH \$25,000 WHEN YOU'VE GOT IT, HOW MUCH IS IT WORTH WHEN YOU'VE LOST THE POWER TO GIVE ONE?"

REALLY, IT WAS SAID THAT A SMILE IS WORTH A LOT OF MONEY. HE SAID, "HOW MUCH IS IT WORTH WHEN YOU'VE LOST IT?"

SMILING: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SMILING AND LAUGHING.

SMILE -- A WEAK LAUGH.

-- AN INCIPIENT LAUGH. (COMMENCING)

-- AFTERMATH OF LAUGHTER AS THE PERSON BEGINS TO RELAX.

JARVIS, AT FIRST HUMOR SEMINAR: "A REACTION OF ONE HUMORIST TO ANOTHER, WHEN THE SECOND HAS JUST SAID SOMETHING GREAT." (SMILE)

SMILE -- EVIDENT IN BABY BEFORE LAUGHTER.

McDOUGALL (1922) SAID THAT 'THE SMILE IS BEAUTIFUL BUT THE LAUGH IS UGLY.'

THE LAUGH RELIEVES US FROM DEPRESSION.
THE SMILE IS THE NATURAL EXPRESSION OF THE SATISFACTION THAT ACCOMPANIES THE RELIEF OR ATTAINMENT OF SUCCESS IN STRIVING.

THE SMILE AND LAUGHTER REPRESENT DIFFERENT INTENSITIES OF THE SAME RESPONSE.

SOME OF THE AUDIENCE WILL BE HIGHLY AMUSED, SOME SLIGHTLY.

SMILE MAY BE A REAL GUFFAW TO SOME (PERHAPS RAISED IN VERY STRICT HOME, PURITAN, ETC.)

LADY IN CAPE GIRARDEAU (BANKERS' MEETING)

(OVER)

A LAUGH MAY GROW OUT OF A SMILE, FADE INTO A SMILE, OR BE REPLACED BY A SMILE.

THERE ARE MANY SITUATIONS IN WHICH SMILES OCCUR BUT WHERE LAUGHTER WOULD BE INAPPROPRIATE. THERE ARE FEW, IF ANY, SITUATIONS WHERE THE OPPOSITE WOULD BE TRUE.

THE LAUGH AND THE SMILE ARE DISTINCT BUT NOT INDEPENDENT. (PERHAPS THE SMILE CAN BE REGARDED AS ONE ELEMENT OF THE LAUGHTER PATTERN WHICH FREQUENTLY APPEARS BY ITSELF.)

SMILE -- SOCIAL VALUE

MUCH HAS BEEN MADE OF THE IMPORTANCE OF THE SMILE AS TO SOCIAL VALUE (SOCIAL STIMULUS)

SALESPERSONS -- ". . . SHOE SHINE, DIRTY JOKE, AND A SMILE." (THOSE DAYS ARE GONE!)

MARTIAN, TO THE JUKEBOX: "PERHAPS IF YOU WOULD SMILE A LITTLE MORE, YOU WOULDN'T BE OVER HERE BY YOURSELF." (DESCRIBE THE MARTIAN SO AUDIENCE WILL RELATE THE TWO)

THE SMILE IS VERY IMPORTANT IN CEMENTING THE RELATIONSHIP OF MOTHER AND CHILD.

THE BABY GRIMACES FROM THE FIRST DAY OF LIFE WITH SMILES FOLLOWING BY A MONTH OR TWO.

BABIES SEEM TO SMILE WITHOUT REASON BUT SMILES CAN BE ELICITED BY MILD, AUDITORY STIMULI.

LOUD STIMULI ELICIT DISTRESS INSTEAD.

(NOVICE SPEAKERS TAKE NOTE!)

(DO NOT TALK LOUD FOR EFFECT;
LOUD TALK SCARES PEOPLE.)

SMILE WHEN FIRST TAKING THE MICROPHONE...
BEFORE YOU SAY ANYTHING:

SOME OF THE AUDIENCE WILL SMILE.

OTHERS MIGHT THINK: "WHAT THE HELL IS HE SMILING ABOUT," "DOESN'T HE LOOK STUPID UP THERE SMILING."

THEN, LET THEM IN ON WHY YOU'RE SMILING.

ADLAI STEVENSON: "A FUNNY THING HAPPENED TO ME ON THE WAY TO THE WHITE HOUSE." (MIGHTY APPLAUSE!)

SMILING: TYPES OF SMILES

GRIN

SMIRK

SNEER

"MONA LISA SMILE" -- BAD TEETH?

'THERE ARE SMILES THAT MAKE US HAPPY,
THERE ARE SMILES THAT MAKE US BLUE,
THERE ARE SMILES THAT STEAL AWAY THE SADNESS
AS THE SUNBEAMS STEAL AWAY THE DEW.

THERE ARE SMILES THAT HAVE A TENDER MEANING
THAT THE EYES OF LOVE ALONE MAY SEE,
BUT THE SMILES THAT FILL MY HEART
WITH GLADNESS,
ARE THE SMILES THAT YOU GIVE TO ME.'

POEM USED IN "PRESCRIPTION FOR THE HAPPY LIFE"

"IF YOU CAN SMILE WHEN THINGS GO WRONG,
AND SAY IT DOESN'T MATTER,
IF YOU CAN LAUGH OFF CARES AND WOES,
AND TROUBLE MAKES YOU FATTER,
IF YOU CAN KEEP A CHEERFUL HEART
WHEN ALL AROUND ARE BLUE,
THEN HAVE YOUR HEAD EXAMINED, BUD,
THERE'S SOMETHING WRONG WITH YOU!"

- I THINK I WROTE THIS, BUT I
COULD BE WRONG. I CLAIM IT.

(OVER)

FLASH THOSE TEETH! THEY MAY BE THE ONLY
THINGS YOU HAVE LEFT THAT DON'T WRINKLE.

SMILE -- VALUE OF (MONEY)

STORY OF THE LITTLE BOY WHO LOST HIS SMILE:

DENTISTRY

COURT CASE

PLAINTIFF'S ATTORNEY:

"SON, FACE THE AUDIENCE AND SMILE."

AWARD -- \$20,000

MORAL POINT: "IF A SMILE IS WORTH \$20,000
AFTER IT'S LOST, HOW MUCH IS
IT WORTH WHEN YOU'VE GOT IT?"

SMILE

Sometimes I speak, but no one hears.
Sometimes I cry and no one cares.
Sometimes I smile and everyone smiles.
In all languages, the smile has only
one definition. Its magic has changed
empty hearts and made them refill with
new life. How does such a small gesture
hold such strong magical powers?
As a medicine it can cure all that ails
your heart. As a protector it can
shield your heart against life's pains.
It can give you new strength in a time
of weakness. It makes friends of enemies;
opens closed doors, and it makes the
roughest roads become smooth. Its
beauty is unmatched by any of God's
creations. One small smile can paint
a million pictures and speak a million
words. It can buy more than money,
and its dividends never cease to draw
new interest. Its true value can never
be recorded or saved, only shared. You
can profit from this wealth with only
a small investment. So when you speak
and no one hears; or when you cry and no
one cares, smile and you will be RICH!

Johnny Ripps

LAUGHTER - Value of.

Norman Cousins - Donahue Show

"Anatomy of an Illness, as perceived by the patient"

Og Mandino: "The Greatest Salesman in the World"(book)

"I will laugh at the world.

No living creature can laugh except Man.

Trees may bleed when they are wounded, and beasts in the field will cry in pain and hunger, yet only I have the gift of laughter and it is mine to use when I choose.

Henceforth, I will cultivate the habit of laughter.

I will smile and my digestion will improve.

I will chuckle and my burdens will be lightened.

I will laugh and my life will be lengthened for this is the great secret of long life and now it is mine.

I will laugh at the world."

Examples of sections of this.

"I will laugh at the world."

Comedian - Comic - Humorist - Humorous Speaker

Foibles of the people.

The pompous, the self-important, the ignorant, the pitiful, the incongruous--talking one way and living another--the contemptible, the self-righteous, the philanderer, and mostly, ourselves.

"No living creature can laugh except Man."

The hyena yelps, the jackass brays.

God, in His munificence, and His omniscience, knew we would need this precious gift of a tension-releasing device. (over)

"..whenever I choose."

Some never seem to laugh.

China...Russia

Hatchet-faced ol' biddy, granite-faced
ol' grump

Josh Billings

Erma Bombeck

"...cultivate the habit of laughter."

Work at it...seeing the funny, even in the
painful.

"That's funny when you look at it that way."

In everything serious, there is an element,
if the person is 'in fun,' that is humorous.

In everything humorous, there is an element,
if the person is not 'in fun,' that is
painful.

Humor is a painful thing, told playfully.

Humor is tragedy, separated by time and space.

Speakers - "What is there painful back in
your experience...that you can tell playfully?"

Razor - watermelon - overcoat(knife in it)

Herb True - mud, dirt, snow, sled, cousin.

Redd Foxx - East St. Louis - Grandfather -
crutches - trying to kill a groundhog.
Grandmother - at stove, in case somepen
comes. Highway - see what had been run
over. Sail off anything we couldn't eat.
(Pictured it in our minds)

Bill Cosby - the ghetto - cock roaches, taking
his to the garbage. "Kill it!" one leg mis-
sing...crawling away, dusty...looking for a
nice place to go die, starving to death.

Richard Pryor - a comedy genius, able to picture in your minds the terrible situations of bigotry and hate.

Also, his childhood. Weasel, Leroy, Herman

Slavery: Martians landed: "...done landed on Mr. Gilmore's property."

Animals - attach to them human characteristics: rabbits, lions, cheetahs.

Girl friends: jail, "I never did like your mama."

Jarvis: Introduced once by a fellow who first read that bit of Og's book, then said, "Please make welcome, not a practitioner of dentistry, but a practitioner of Happiness, Dr. Jarvis."

I appreciated that. Great.

The ability to make someone laugh.

"...digestion will improve." Right on.

"...burdens will be lightened." Amen

"...my life will be lengthened." I do believe it helps.

My lipids are way high.

Cholesterol count	- high
Triglycerides	- high
HDL	- low
Total lipid count	- high

Offset by my ability to laugh -- and especially at myself.

World War I veterans:

"He who laughs last, laughs loudest."

"He who laughs, lasts."

Dr. Denton Cooley - "The person who has lost the will to laugh has lost the will to live."

Bible: "...merry countenance."

"...cheereth the bones."

Jarvis:

Created equal?

Football - "You were yellow."

- first team - Captain.

Texas A. and M. - hazing

Naval Academy - hazing - 37th in conduct

Rebellious - Mark Twain

Josh Billings

Will Rogers

Pilot:

Compass and mirror

Burbank - emergency

"Bail out"

World War II:

Kamikazes

"CARRIERS THAT WAY!"

Dentistry:

Chinese Water Torture

Dental stories.

Doing something I would do free - but don't get that around.

Laugh at anything and anyone.

3 critical letters

Billy Sol Estes witness.

L.B.J. - dog - baby brother

Difficult to be a humorous speaker:

Audience smart as the speaker.

Understand the difference between a Comic,
Comedian, and Humorist.

P. A. System - Jokes - Wit - Humor

Doberman

Better if it has a point, a nub, a switch.

Bumblebee

Who is being laughed at? Authority figure.

Sensitive people:

I.B.M. - band - churches

"Don't make 'em think..."

Ethel Barrymore

Edward G. Robinson

Laugh at self - measure of s. of h.

"He sent me to you."

"...install that phone."

Ugly early. Quit laughing.

Then, laugh with others:

Hair - Mother - Grandmother

"...lovable."

Marry right - Fat/short/ugly

Illustrate point: Big man/little woman

Show people that we must not be sensitive:

The Rev. Tim LaHaye

He - she - God

Polish gentleman

Pat and Mike, Chin and Chan, Abie and Ikie,
Rastus and Mandy - gone.

"Frito Bandito"

"Speecy, spicey meat balls."

Baptist Section.(Italians, etc.)

"Laugh and the world laughs with you...cry and you
cry alone."

One of the greatest gifts you have ever been given.

Inner jogging - a massage from the inside out.

"I ache all over."

"..had to grit my teeth to keep from laughing."

The man who wrote me about sharks and dentists.

"...and I thank you."

SENSE OF HUMOR:

DEFINITIONS AND QUOTES

GENERAL INFORMATION

LACK OF,

AMERICAN VS. BRITISH

AMERICAN SENSE OF HUMOR

HUMOR APPRECIATION

EVALUATION

MAX EASTMAN'S FOURTH LAW

"HAIR TRIGGER SENSE OF THE COMIC"

LEARNED? - OR - INHERITED?

YOUR BACKGROUND AND MINE

ABILITY TO LAUGH AT YOURSELF

POLITICIANS

SPORTS

SERVICE

THERAPEUTIC VALUE



© Ros Hill

ON SATURDAY HE CREATED THE STARS

What topic does this art illustrate? Faith, Golf? A Sense of Humor?

Ros Hill is an artist in my home town, San Marcos, Texas and this piece of his art, showing his sense of humor was used on the cover of an art magazine.

SENSE OF HUMOR - DEFINITION AND QUOTES:

DEFINITION - AN AWARENESS OF WHAT IS FUNNY.

ESAR'S - THE FEELING THAT MAKES YOU LAUGH AT YOUR FRIEND'S MISFORTUNES.

THE INSTINCT THAT TELLS YOU WHAT NOT TO LAUGH AT.

WHAT MAKES YOU LAUGH AT SOMETHING THAT WOULD MAKE YOU MAD IF IT HAPPENED TO YOU.

"THERE ARE TWO INSULTS THAT NO HUMAN WILL ENDURE: (1) THE ASSERTION THAT HE HAS NO SENSE OF HUMOR AND (2) THE DOUBLY IMPERTINENT ASSERTION THAT HE HAS NEVER KNOWN TROUBLE."

- SINCLAIR LEWIS

"THE SENSE OF HUMOR IS THE OIL OF LIFE'S ENGINE. WITHOUT IT, THE MACHINERY CREAKS AND GROANS. NO LOT IS SO HARD, NO ASPECT OF THINGS IS SO GRIM, BUT IT RELAXES BEFORE A HEARTY LAUGH."

- G. S. MERRIAM

"ALL GOOD ACTIVITIES WHICH ENCOURAGE PEOPLE TO LEARN HOW TO LIVE WITH ONE ANOTHER PLEASANTLY AND TO DEVELOP A SENSE OF HUMOR IMPROVE LIVING."

- LEONARD CARMICHAEL.

"MAN WILL CONFESS TO TREASON, MURDER, ARSON, FALSE TEETH OR A WIG, BUT HOW MANY OF THEM WILL OWN UP TO A LACK OF HUMOR?"

- FRANK COLBY.

(OVER)

"THE SENSE OF HUMOUR IS THE JUST BALANCE OF ALL THE FACULTIES OF MAN, THE BEST SECURITY AGAINST THE PRIDE OF KNOWLEDGE AND THE CONCEITS OF THE IMAGINATION, THE STRONGEST INDUCEMENT TO SUBMIT WITH A WISE AND PIOUS PATIENCE TO THE VICISSITUDES OF HUMAN EXISTENCE."

- THOMAS HOOD

FRANK & ERNEST

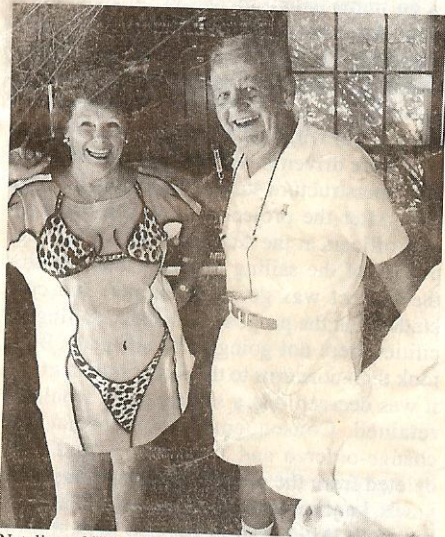
UNEMPLOYMENT OFFICE

K 72

I LOST MY JOB
AS A MAPMAKER
IN ARIZONA
BECAUSE I HAD
NO SENSE OF YUMA.

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THAMES 12-8



Natalie and Keith O'Keefe, Splash Party

Wouldn't you admit that this lady has a good sense of humor in that she allows others to laugh at her? She is at a "Splash Party" for the United States Naval Academy Class of '44.

SENSE OF HUMOR - GENERAL INFORMATION ~~ABOUT~~.

EVERYONE PRIDES HIMSELF/HERSELF ON HAVING ONE.

HARVARD UNIVERSITY STUDY

LESS THAN 2% RATED THEMSELVES
BELOW AVERAGE.

WOULD RATHER CONFESS TO A STREAK OF
LARCENY.

MEN AND WOMEN DIFFER ON WHAT IS FUNNY:

MEN SEEM TO FAVOR HOSTILE OR SARCASTIC WIT,
HUMOR THAT IS AGGRESSIVE.

WOMEN SEEM TO PREFER WIT THAT IS FUN,
AMUSEMENT, NONSENSE WIT, OUTLANDISH WIT.

ATTRACTIVENESS AND HUMOR:

200 YOUNG WOMEN .. UNIVERSITY OF LONDON
STUDY.

RATED THEMSELVES ON ATTRACTIVENESS.

MORE ATTRACTIVE YOUNG LADIES TENDED TO
REGARD RISQUE JOKES AS LESS FUNNY THAN
THOSE WHO RATED THEMSELVES LOW IN ATTRACTIVE-
NESS.

THE STUDY SUGGESTED THAT THAT THE ATTRAC-
TIVE YOUNG LADY WILL GIVE A LOWER RATING
TO RISQUE HUMOR BECAUSE SHE IS TIRED OF
BEING A SEX OBJECT.

VOTING AND SENSE OF HUMOR:

CONSERVATIVES - DO NOT LIKE RIBALD HUMOR.

LIBERALS - LIKE RIBALD, COARSE, INDECENT.

(OVER)

MARRIAGE:

BETTER YOUR SENSE OF HUMOR, THE BETTER
YOUR CHANCE OF ACHIEVING A HAPPY,
LASTING MARRIAGE.

PROVIDED YOUR PARTNER HAS A SENSE
OF HUMOR ALSO.

LAUGH TOGETHER - THAT'S THE KEY.

WOOD'S PAINTING OF THE FARMER AND WIFE.

PEOPLE WHO HAVE FORGOTTEN HOW TO LAUGH
HAVE FORGOTTEN HOW TO LOVE.

DEPRESSION:

PEOPLE WHO HAVE LOST THEIR SENSE OF HUMOR
ARE IN DEPRESSION.

CHIEF SIGN OF DEPRESSION.

FACILITATES RETENTION:

STUDENTS - INTRIGUED BY ADVICE THAT IS
OFFERED IN A HUMOROUS MANNER.

LEARNING - ASSOCIATION WITH HUMOR.

MUCH MORE EFFECTIVE THAN THE SEE-HERE-NOW
APPROACH.

MEMORY:

MAKE IT MOVE!
MAKE IT BIGGER! MORE! (EXAGGERATE)
MAKE IT FUNNY!

ABILITY TO PRODUCE WIT AND HUMOR:

NOT CLOSELY ASSOCIATED WITH SENSE OF HUMOR.

JUST BECAUSE A PERSON APPRECIATES HUMOR IS

NO INDICATION THAT HE/SHE WILL BE ABLE TO
CREATE IT.

ROSS KING

CHARLEY WALDRIP

DON ENNIS

HARLEY ~~LACHELIN~~ *Laechelir*

"KIDDING ON THE SQUARE"

IF A PERSON SAYS SOMETHING IN A JOKING
WAY, HE OR SHE REALLY MEANS WHAT THEY ARE
SAYING, AND THEY ARE 'KIDDING ON THE SQUARE.'

"IN EVERY JEST THERE IS A LITTLE TRUTH."

"I WAS ONLY JOKING." (OH YEAH?)

"WHAT'S THE MATTER; CAN'T YOU TAKE A JOKE?"

HUMOR SERVES TO EXPRESS FEELINGS WE CANNOT
EXPRESS DIRECTLY BECAUSE WE DON'T WANT TO
RISK FACING THE CONSEQUENCES.

JOKES ABOUT MARRIAGE, THE GOV'T, ETC.

The ventriloquist's dummy.

SENSE OF HUMOR - RELATIVE - PERSONAL:

MOST WRITERS WILL FINALLY ADMIT THAT
IT ALL DEPENDS UPON WHAT IS FUNNY TO THEM.

THE INTELLECTUAL WHO MIGHT LOVE PUNS WILL
SEE NOTHING FUNNY AT ALL IN THE RISQUE HUMOR
OF THE TRUCK DRIVERS. (PLEASE DO NOT BE
SENSITIVE HERE... I KNOW THAT THERE ARE SOME
VERY INTELLECTUAL TRUCK DRIVERS... AND SOME
VERY RISQUE INTELLECTUALS.)

(OVER)

(4)

THE VERY PERSONAL SENSE OF HUMOR IS REALIZED WHEN ONE STARTS ASKING PEOPLE: "WHO IS YOUR FAVORITE COMEDIAN?" - OR - "WHAT KIND OF HUMOR DO YOU LIKE?"

A COMEDIAN'S NAME IS MENTIONED.

IMMEDIATELY SOMEONE SAYS, "I DON'T THINK SHE IS FUNNY AT ALL."

OR THEY MIGHT AGREE.

CHOCOLATE AND VANILLA.

"HE IS NOT FUNNY." THEY WILL USUALLY NOT SAY "HE IS NOT FUNNY TO ME." THEY WILL STRICTLY LABEL THE MAN AS UNFUNNY.

GEORGE GOBEL: (MY OFFICE)

"GEORGE GOBEL? HE AIN'T WORTH A DAMN!"

"BEEN MAKING A LIVING AT IT FOR YEARS."

"DON'T MATTER. HE'S NOT WORTH A DAMN!"

A husband is living proof that a woman can take a joke.

Sense of humor - most humorous speakers have a talk woven around the value of a s. of h. and they should. These talented people should illustrate with humor the value of humor and that it is a gift from a munificent God who knew that we would have problems we could not solve.

The s. of h. as I judge it, after thirty years of studying humor and the psychology of humor, is not the ability to laugh, or the ability to provoke laughter. Rather it is the ability to laugh at yourself. Anyone can laugh at other people. It is the world's past-time--laughing at other people. Will Rogers said a long time ago, "America is blessed with a good sense of humor but we like to laugh at other people." Amen, Brother Will, we do. 95% of this country's humor is based upon laughing at other people; the sitcoms on T.V. teach our children to laugh at everyone but themselves, when in reality they are never going to achieve emotional statis until they learn to laugh at their own

foibles. I have a good sense of humor; I must, for I have been making a living at speaking humorously since 1961. There has been much change in the United States in the time of my speaking career: no longer can I tell any jokes about women. If I do, some feminist, not knowing me at all, will write on the evaluation form of the convention, "Hates women." I love women; my wife is one, and we've only been married forty-three years, the hard way--that's one man and one woman. Strange, but I tell jokes about myself, have to, and have to at the first, before I tell any about anyone else, and still after the audience has laughed uproariously at my expense, if I tell one joke about Maxine, some woman in the audience will be incensed about it and think I am a misogynist. "Misogynist"--I used that word the other day at the golf course, after our match, while we were imbibing and enjoying talking about each other's ridiculous shots--none of our own, of course. This is a game, a word game, started long ago, with C. J. Adare, a great golfer and great person, with whom I kid a lot. His is the simple vocabulary, efficient within the bounds of his job and his friends. But, I used the word "ambivalent" one day when we were discussing a certain issue. I said, "I'm ambivalent about that." My friend Kimmel looked at my buddy, Myrt, quizzically at first, with those furrowed eyebrows, then smiled and said to Myrt, "I am, too." That started the game. Every now and then I will pull a new word on them and this pleases them, for they know I am not doing this maliciously, but to tease. A word like "irascible" or "ineffible" does not get past them for in our conversations they are always waiting for such opportunities to chide me about my feigned superciliousness. Now, there's a word they would not understand. The other day I used the word, "oleaganeous," and C. J. immediately challenged me, "Now, Jarv, that ain't a word." His wife, Vickie, threw a challenge at me not long ago and said, "Jarv, what does misogomy mean? She was very disappointed when I knew and it would have been better had I not known, or at least, pretended to have not known. C. J. is fast, verbally fast. He is an extremely strong man, a big man, muscular and can hit the golf ball a mile. He flew a par-five green the other day on his second shot, just blew the ball right over the green with an eight-iron. Exasperated, I yelled at him, "My gosh, C. J., haven't you ever heard of finessing a club?!" "No," he fired back, "but I've heard of Vanessa Williams." Fast!

HUMOR - A Gift?

All during my career as a humorous speaker people have come up after I have entertained and they have said, "It must be wonderful to have a gift like that." That used to vex me a little and I would add the information concerning how hard I worked at this speaking and entertaining. "Yes, but you will have to admit it is a gift; not everyone, not anyone I know, can do it like you do." That is complimentary, but one does not like to have his hard work passed up so lightly. We like for others to know how we have slaved and struggled. That is one of the two things a human will not admit: that he or she has not known trouble and problems, that they had it easy; the other, of course, is that they do not have a sense of humor

When you consider the top of any profession or vocation, especially sports, there is always at that top a person who "has a gift" for it. Mark Spitz had that "gift" but no one knows except him and his coach at Indiana just how many long hours he was in the water, how many years he took to develop his talent. There, I said it, didn't I? His talent. He had it innately, I will admit that, and I will admit that all my life I have loved to tell stories, I have loved being the center of attention, loved being the one whom the others laughed with, and at. But Mark Spitz, in discussing another star of the swim meets, Randy Gowins of Auburn, said, "He has a feel for the water; he grabs the water better than the others."

Having held three Humor Workshops by this time, I will have to admit I cannot teach people to be funny. The ones who try the hardest, they make the audience squirm, not laugh. I watch them struggle to be funny; they should be Social Directors on a cruise ship: "O.K., Folks, now we are going to have a lot of fun, get ready to laugh, for now is the time for 'Simon Says'." Disgusting. They remind me of the little train, going up hill, saying, "I think I can, I think I can." Nothing wrong with dedicated effort, but in humor, if you ain't got it, it shows, and we call it laboring, and it makes audiences squirm and is not funny; it is pathetic. At first the audience is embarrassed for the person, then starts laughing at those feeble efforts. "But seriously, Folks..." Ad nauseum.

The gift, if there is a gift, is timing. Timing is difficult to define. See "HUMOR - Timing." But that is the gift and very few have it. It can be developed, but it has to be there in the first place, to develop. It can

be sharpened, by experience, but it has to be there and be very good to start for if it is not, one does not get a chance to continue, to get the exposure to sharpen the timing.

To me, that's the gift. I came to this conclusion only after many years, twenty-two up to this time, of appearing before thousands of audiences, all kinds. It was a hard decision to make, for it implies that I did not have to work at it all that hard; it was a gift and it came to me naturally. All the time before this, I thought it was my hard work, that getting up at three and four o'clock, that perusing the joke books, that studying. And all the time it was a gift, but a gift that had to be honed and developed. But nevertheless, a gift.

My mother knew it all the time. She said I got it from her. A modest woman--and naturally a modest son.

I think I got it from my daddy, but I never told her that.

SENSE OF HUMOR: Gift

VALUE OF A SENSE OF HUMOR.

A BIT ABOUT HUMOR.

A PAINFUL THING TOLD PLAYFULLY.

ADVERSITY

THIS COUNTRY - FOUNDED AND NUTURED...

PEOPLE WHO TAKE THEMSELVES TOO SERIOUSLY

THE HUMORIST IS THE PERSON WHO CAN SEE THINGS AS THEY ARE AND AS THEY COULD BE...AND SHOULD BE. BUT WHO CAN TAKE THE PAINFUL TRUTH, GIVE IT A TWIST AND MAKE IT FUNNY...HUMOROUS.

AS LONG AS THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO TAKE THEMSELVES TOO SERIOUSLY, THERE WILL BE HUMOR.

HUMOR - A GIFT FROM THE MAKER, FROM GOD.

- A RELIEF, A RELEASE MECHANISM.

- A PALLIATIVE.

- "GOD'S ASPIRIN TO CURE THE ILLS OF REALITY." - JEFF WILLIAMS.

DECEMBER 27, 1978

Wednesday

I GIVE THANKS FOR MY GOD-GIVEN SENSE OF HUMOR.

**Sense of
Humor**

One of our Daily Word friends asked recently that we say something about the importance of a sense of humor. She went on to say that a sense of humor had saved her in many situations.

A sense of humor is certainly a God-given asset, something for which to give thanks. A sense of humor helps us to look on the happy side of things, to find more reasons to enjoy life. With a sense of humor we do not take ourselves or life so seriously that we become frustrated and unhappy when things seem to go awry. We are able to take things in our stride, to give life the light touch.

A sense of humor can be a blessing to us and to those around us. Even the greatest of souls, those whom we call saints, at times need a sense of humor.

We are sure that most of you can think of many times when a sense of humor saved your day. Let a sense of humor brighten this day.

A cheerful heart has a continual feast.—Prov. 15:15.

SENSE OF HUMOR.

General

SOME PEOPLE HAVE A MARVELOUS S. OF H. AND SOME PITIFUL. THIS DEPENDS MOSTLY UPON THEIR UPBRINGING. THEY ARE NOT BORN WITH A REAL GOOD SENSE OF HUMOR; IT HAS TO BE DEVELOPED, BUT IF STIFLED EARLY, IT MAY NEVER DEVELOP.

EXAMPLE OF GOOD SENSE OF HUMOR: ROGER STAUBACH, AT THE S. AND D. OYSTER CO. IN DALLAS. HERB STORY, THE OWNER, AND MY GOOD FRIEND TOLD ME OF THE TIME THAT S. AND HIS BUDDY WERE IN LINE WAITING TO GO IN AND BE SERVED. HERB WAS TAKING NAMES, MAKING SURE OF THE ORDER OF SEATING. HE PASSED BY S. AND HIS BUDDY. THE FRIEND OF S'S SAID, "WAIT A MINUTE. YOU MISSED US." HERB: "I KNOW HIM. (POINTING AT S.) STAUBACH POINTED TO HIMSELF AND SAID, "CRAIG MORTON?"

I LOVE HUMOR SUCH AS THAT.

ALSO NICK BUENCONTI, IN THE LIGHT BEER AD, WHERE THE FELLOW COMES BY, RECOGNIZES NICK AS SOME CELEBRITY AND IS TRYING TO CALL HIS NAME. NICK HELPS HIM: "NICK BUENCONTI." THE FELLOW SAYS, "NO, THAT'S NOT IT."

USE OF S. OF H. - ME AT THE SAT A/P. THE LADY, (LADY?) MAD AT THE AGENT, WALKED OFF IN A HUFF, LEAVING THE AGENT NEARLY READY TO SHUCK THE WHOLE THING. I WALKED UP NEXT, ASKED "ANY MORE OF THESE GOOD, EASY JOBS LIKE YOURS AVAILABLE?" HE JERKED UP, SAID, "WHAT'S YOUR JOB?" I ANSWERED "I'M A DENTIST." "OH," HE MUSED, "WELL, I WOULDN'T RADE WITH YOU; I'VE TAKEN MY KIDS TO THE DENTIST -- AND I WOULDN'T HAVE YOUR JOB."

(HE FELT BETTER. THIS IS AN EXAMPLE OF THE TENSION-RELIEVING ROLE OF HUMOR.)

SENSE OF HUMOR - THE SIXTH SENSE.

General

Number of writers have described the Sense of Humor as the "Sixth Sense."*

Dr. Herb True - "Your Sixth Sense" (tape/record)

Earl Nightingale, in his condensation of Hill's book THINK AND GROW RICH, says, "your sixth sense can be described as that sense through which your infinite intelligence may and will communicate."

Only can be used after mastery of the other twelve steps.

Function of the subconscious mind referred to as the "Creative Imagination."

It is the receiving set through which ideas flash through the mind. These flashes are sometimes called "hunches" or "inspirations."

Cannot be described to another person who has not mastered the other principles because that person has no knowledge or experience to serve as points of reference.

HUMOR - Sense of Humor.

The term 'sense of humor' is used to denote a person's ability to discern what is funny. Of course, funny is different to each person: some like George Gobel, some hate George Gobel, some are indifferent to George Gobel, some don't know who George Gobel is, some think he will win whatever they think he is running for, and some I have asked say, "What's he doing that makes you ask that question?" Some like Fred Allen's type of humor, if they know what type of humor Fred Allen had at his disposal. Some like Sid Caesar. When asked, "Who is your favorite comedian," some say, "Well, I can tell you who I don't like-- and that is Don Rickles." This has happened to me lots of times; they don't like Don Rickles for he is the caustic type. I like Don Rickles and know from talking to the people who work in Vegas that he is a kind, serious man, good to his fellowman and woman, but on the stage he really cuts 'em up!

Funny is funny to you, right? You know what you like. So to you, you have a marvelous sense of humor. But if you are Polish, perhaps you don't like Polish jokes; if you're Black, you can do without the jokes about Blacks, and you probably don't like Richard Pryor saying 'Nigger'. That's not funny to me, either, but it is to lots of Blacks. If you think not, it is due to the shock of your sensibilities, and due to the fact that you have not listened to his tapes where his audience, mostly Blacks, roared. You haven't seen his movies, especially the movie which was simply him in concert at Long Beach. He must have used that word--which Redd calls "The Big N" at least 100 times.

One of my close friends says that the sense of humor depends upon what a person thinks of as funny. "What is funny to me," he said. "For instance, it is reputed that Heinrich Himmler laughed uproariously as the Jewish prisoners were shot and they were falling into the lime pit." He continued, "I imagine to most of us that would only be moderately amusing."

If you laughed at that, shame on you. The Jewish people reading that certainly did not laugh. Especially the older Jewish people who still bear tattoos on their arms, the victims of the Holocaust. But, some people laugh at that; I have tested them; some snicker and try

to cover up their snickering, feeling that it is terrible to laugh at that remark, which agreed is simply caustic and unfeeling. They are laughing for they are somewhat embarrassed, and are not proud for laughing. It is the same reaction one gets from a very lewd joke or word from a comedian. Pryor says some outlandish things; people laugh, but try to cover up. "My gosh," they think; I mustn't let _____ see me laugh at that!" They laugh at Buddy Hackett's vulgar presentation, but leave not feeling proud for having laughed; in fact, they think less of Buddy Hackett for making them laugh; their self-esteem has been lowered; it is his fault, not theirs. Remember: people do not blame themselves ordinarily; they blame anyone else.

In my speaking career I have seen very few people who do not laugh. Oh, there have been some. In every audience there is some hatchet-faced old biddy, or some granite-faced old grump out there sayin to themselves, "Let's see you make me laugh, Brother!" Well, you can't make them laugh. Josh Billings, over a hundred years ago, said, "The hardest thing in the comic lecturing business is to try to make those folks laugh that God never intended to laugh in the first place." (He didn't spell the words this way; he lived in an era which laughed at incorrect spelling: *phunny phellow, iz, wuz, etc.*) As other forms of humor, the incorrect spelling and the funny psuedonymns peaked in interest, served their purpose and passed out of existence. Josh was right, and still is, wherever he is. I imagine he has not changed. He, Mark Twain, and Petroleum Nasby used to tour together on the Lyceum Circuit and I am sure they sat around in saloons or hotels after the night's performances and discussed not only material but the members of each audience.

Six hundred bankers and their wives were at Cape Girardeau for a district bankers' meeting; this was back in the early sixties and I was fairly new on the speaking circuit. Sitting about a third of the way back in the audience was a lady, a portly lady, well-upholstered is a better euphenism. "Portly" might do for a man; for a woman, "well-upholstered" is much better. Although the audience roared with laughter at my presentation this particular lady did not even smile. I shot my best at her, looked right at her and let her have it. No hits. She sat stocily through the whole performance; I was perplexed by her resistance. However, this lady rushed up

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to the front of the hall afterwards, was about the third person up there she rushed up so fast, and grabbed my hand and said, "That was wonderful!" I wanted to ask her why she didn't laugh, why she did not even giggle. But too many people were gathered around and I did not want to embarrass her or me. I had noticed her hat; it was one of those big ones which usually are worn in church to bother the people sitting behind the wearer, but this one was significantly unusual: it had a surry fringe on it. I assumed the woman was not laughing for she could not see me, and a lot of humor, from someone other than a joketeller, depends upon seeing the performer. From that moment on I have not worried about people not laughing; perhaps they are laughing on the inside; perhaps they are so interested in what they are hearing that their attention keeps them from laughing, knowing that the uninhibited laughter misses part of the next sentence or bit of material. (That's why you should only see Bob Hope's movies on T.V., in your living room or den, or at a drive-in theater. He fires the one-liners so fast that your neighbors will be laughing and you won't be able to catch the next one.)

By this time, the material has been proven. If I can get their attention at the start, if the emcee has not worn them down, if the P.A. is strong enough, they will laugh, but not all of them. No one can hope that every single one of a thousand will laugh at all the humor. They might not catch it--or it may not be funny--*to them.*

People used to laugh at the "Little Willie" jokes; they were not jokes, of course; they were bits of verse. They were bits of cruelty, not longer in favor with the public except as examples of items no longer in favor. They were extremely funny when in favor a few decades ago and everyone was making them up and dispensing them to their friends. They are history now as are the "Knock Knocks" and the stuttering, stammering, tongue-tied, hunch-back, cruelty types. The "Knock Knocks" will come back occasionally, but the others are gone, hopefully. They are told only in small, intimate groups, close friends.

After being on the speaking circuit as a humorous speaker, after having visited with thousands of people all over the country, after having studied hundreds of books, I have decided that a sense of humor is not simply the ability to laugh; it is the ability to see the humor in something that may be painful. Someone said, "In everything humorous in nature, there is an element whereby, if

a person is not sufficiently 'in fun' it would be painful." And "In everything serious, there is an element whereby if a person is sufficiently 'in fun' it is humorous." I'll give Max Eastman credit for that--not that he'd mind--he's dead--but I think it was he who said it. He did not say it exactly that way, for the sufficiently was not in the original as I read it. I put the suffienctly in there. Some things are so painful that only the very much 'in fun' person can see the humor. There are situations which are extremely painful and only those with a marvelous sense of humor--marvelous, outstanding, excellent--adjectives beyond those even if I could think of them--superlative perhaps--sense of humor can discern the funny elements in those painful situations. You might not see it as funny at all; you might be 'turned off' by anyone who would dare see it as funny; you would be judging them, and you cannot do that, for you do not, cannot view it as they do. At those extremely painful times, that person undergoing the pain, needs--hear me--NEEDS to have it expressed to him or her as humorous. Let me illustrate.

When Richard Pryor nearly died from immolation, when he suffered the terrible flames which nearly extinguished his life, when he was recovering and was suffering from his burns(one of the most painful of all injuries, Redd Foxx wrote him: "I knew you were looking for me, but I didn't expect you to send up smoke signals!" Pryor probably laughed heartily. He understood and would have sent a similar message to Redd had it been the other way around. Others would consider that as calloused. This type of comment, to comedians, to humorous speakers, represents the person with the unusual appreciation of the gift of humor: to handle the problems one cannot solve easily if at all.

Totie Fields handled hers; they could not be solved. Stricken with diabetes, a disease which lowers a person's resistance to other diseases, had a mastectomy, an eye operation, and right before the doctors took off her leg, said, "You have two legs and one sense of humor; better to lose a leg." Marvelous! Simply chokes me up.

I watched Totie on the Mike Douglas Show; it was one of her last appearances; she was undergoing chemo-therapy at that time. As a humorist person myself, and a student of humor, and a believer--that it is a gift from God to handle problems we can't solve--I was struck by her use of that precious gift as she talked of her sickness and reactions to the chemo-therapy. She said that she was very

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nauseous, that she was 'throwing up all over the place, every place.' But she was making public appearances and her agent had scheduled many of them for the particular day she was talking about. She said that the Silver Shadow Rolls-Royce would deposit her at one hotel, she would go in, appear, and go out, get back in the Rolls and go to another appearance. She said, "Mike, there is no place to throw up in a hotel lobby, so I used those nice, handy ash trays, the big ones, with the sand, in which the hotel has stamped their name or logo." The audience roared. But, she added, "When I got back in the Rolls, it started coming up again. Now, you just don't throw up in a Silver Shadow Rolls, Mike. I wondered what-in-the-world I would do, but hadn't too much time to think so I just threw up in my Gucci purse." The women in the audience moaned; not many of them had seen a Gucci purse, much less were they able to afford one, and if they could afford one, the thought of vomiting in one was a bit too much for them. "Then," Totie said, "I quickly snapped it shut--and immediately had another problem." With her wonderful sense of timing, she let the audience catch up with her. Of course she had a problem: what to do with it? "What could I do with it, Mike?" She suddenly got that look of victory on her face: "Ah had, luck was with me, Mike; we passed right by a country club which did not allow Jews. I had the driver turn in and I dumped it right on the steps of the front door." GREAT!

The audience applauded. Maybe not all of them, for in the group might have been a racist, a Jew-hater, and to that person that might not have been funny. So be it, you can't please everyone.

When her comedian friends, realizing that she was not going to be with them long, wanted to have a tribute to her, what did they have? A Roast, of course. Did they say syrupy-sweet compliments. No, that would have destroyed Totie. They let her have it, both barrels--and she understood, and roared with them, beat on the table, wiped her eyes with her napkin. "O.K., it's Totie's turn; let's get her up on her foot." Calloused? If you think so, your sense of humor is lacking in depth. That's why you're not a comedian.

When Ray Monsalvatge (rhymes with "Tonsil-scratchy") was so ill with congestive heart failure that he was at death's door many times, when he had just come out of the intensive care ward, had been put in a private room

which had a telephone, I phoned him. Now, Ray and I were good, close friends; our friendship was based upon our relationship as speaking colleagues and fellow members of Speakers Associates, a group of professional Speakers to which one has to be invited by his peers, the invitation be awarded as a result of peer acceptance as a real pro. His presentations were marvelous, psychological, about interpersonal relations and also memory. His tape, "A MEMORY SYSTEM WHICH WORKS" is one of the best memory tapes ever and you should obtain it if you are interested in a better memory or learning technique. In that tape is a system of learning by using the phonetic alphabet, a system of associating words to numbers--one to ten being "hat, hen, ham, hair, hill, hedge, hook, hive, hoop, toes." Then, so on, on to one hundred and twenty five, it being "Nile". I still revere his memory when I jog; every time my left foot hits I say one of those words signifying a certain number, until I have gone through the phonetic alphabet for that day, then I repeat it the next time I jog. "Hat, hen, ham..."

He also did the Time Magazine stunt, not really a stunt, but a wondrous example of memory. In his presentations, he would pass out the current Time Magazine. He would tear it into pages, and then have people help him pass it out to the audience, distributing the pages. He would then ask the members to call out a number of their page--and he would tell them what is one the page. A memorable act, one which deserved and received applause every time he did it. Ray is not the only one who performed this act; several now do it and have done it for years. Ray Guerke (rhymes with "Car-Key" does it also) and many others, but it is memorable; you will never forget it or the person who performs it once you experience it. It is done by associating a certain page with a certain word of the phonetic alphabet mentioned previously. This daily ritual--my remembering Ray Monsalvatge as I jog is my tribute to him as a close friend, now passed on.

When he answered the phone that day, fresh from the intensive care ward, he was very weak; I could tell that from his voice as he spoke. "Hello." "Hello, Ray." "Is that you, Charles? How nice of you to call. How are you?" "That's now the reason I called, Ray, to tell you how I am; I called to ask how you are." Very faintly, he said, "I am fine, Charles; the doctors say I am going to be all right." "Oh Hell!" I replied. "Are

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you sure, Ray? I already have your stuff memorized: 'hat, hen, ham, hair, hill, hedge--all of it--the Time Magazine stuff, too. Are you sure the doctors haven't made a mistake?"

"He nearly died laughing" would not an appropriate statement here, but he did laugh--and he appreciated my humor. He did say, "Who in the world would have said that but you, Charles? Wonderful!"

Believe me, it may be difficult for you who are reading this to understand but he did immediately catch the humor in the statements, in the acted dejection, in the query as to the effectiveness of the doctors, etc. And it helped him; he told me so. He recovered from this application of humor and went home for awhile until his terminal illness took him away from us. He was a wonderful, kind man and I miss him.

Ray laughed long and hard at that humor; other people might say it was inappropriate, but he appreciated it and so would Norman Cousins who has just written his best-seller: "ANATOMY OF AN ILLNESS AS PERCEIVED BY THE PATIENT" which describes his moving out of the hospital, getting away from all but one doctor, one who had a marvelous sense of humor, and listening to, and viewing movies of the Marx Brothers, W.C. Fields, Amos and Andy, etc. He knows the therapeutic benefits of humor, of laughter. He realizes that the Lord gave us a marvelous gift, the sense of humor. It is good for us to laugh; I call it a massage from inside out.

Robert Henry, fellow speaker and friend, from Auburn, Alabama, a Falstaffian type, robust and of big frame, with a stout laugh, has a marvelous sense of humor. Recently at the National Speakers Association's Convention there was one workshop dealing with the various unforeseen events that might happen during a talk and what to do in case of them. About ten minutes into the session, Bob Jansen, another member of NSA, went into a slump, feigning a heart attack victim. Naturally, we all went for it; we ran, some of us, to his need. Robert ran over also, but was 'onto' the practical joke, and shouted at Bob: "Bob, I want your engagements." We knew then it was a joke, an act, and we, the ones with a good sense of humor, appreciated it. However, with retrospect, something bad could have happened; someone with a feint heart could have suffered a real heart attack as a result of sympathetic shock, but it was a calculated risk and the program chair-

man, Doc Blakely, took it. He informed the audience of the joke and said that they really did not mean it to be a joke, but a sample of what can happen. And it can--for W. C. Newberry, of San Marcos, fellow speaker, has had it happen twice: had two men in the audience have heart attacks and die when he was talking.

I tell people when they ask me, "Have you ever had anyone die during one of your engagements, Dr. Jarvis?" I tell 'em, "Sure, I have died--many times. I have also died on the golf course; in fact, during one speech to the Country Club dinner one evening, I told the audience that if the Board of Directors would allow it, I would like to be buried right by #18 for I have died there many times."

Your sense of humor may be wonderfully developed. Hurrah for you! Congratulations to you and your parents. Evidently they did not rein you in to tight when you were one to six years of age; they allowed your s. of h. to develop properly. If not, you are in for lots of jolts during your life.

Remember what Ethel Barrymore said: "One takes a giant step toward maturity when he(he) first learns to laugh at himself."(herself)*

*I put that 'she' and 'herself' in. Seems that a lady such as Ethel Barrymore would have known better.

Is the sense of humor the ability to laugh? Perhaps, but some say a chimpanzee laughs, and idiots laugh; I have heard some of them, right here in San Marcos, Texas.

To me, the measurement of the sense of humor is based upon the ability of one to laugh at themselves. It is easy to laugh at others, but difficult to laugh at yourself. Wonder if Don Rickles, who is just excellent at poking fun at everyone, can laugh at himself, for instance, at the silly way he combs his hair to pretend he has some. Starts from about an inch over his left ear and combs it across his head, those few strands looking a bit pathetic. Lots of men do this and why I don't know. Better for your self-esteem and your ego to believe that men who are bald are virile (and that's another damned lie!)(if you don't believe me, ask my wife)

A great part of my routines is making fun of me; then I say, "Now, you have really laughed and I appreciate it, but you have been laughing at me; now, let's see if you can laugh at you?"

Then I go on to make fun of everyone, but first I had to make fun of me; people respect you if you can do that--laugh at yourself. How about your defects? You mean you don't have any? Ask one of your critics to tell you a few of yours. You have them; you just never have faced them.

It's easy with me: I am a short, bald-headed, egocentric, with flat feet. Used to be pudgy but now I am thin. Used to talk about my bod, but now I talk about my thin bod, and make fun of the "pleasantly plump" folks.

In this morning paper, in the "Show World" section, there is an article about Itzhak Perlman, widely acclaimed as the world's leading violinist. He has won four Grammy Awards this year alone. He is a marvelous violinist, and was featured on "Sixty Minutes" and in that program I recognized his wonderful sense of humor. He says the violin is a klutz instrument, and gives the player a rash from the way you have to hold it. But to me, the real Perlman sense of humor comes out when he is asked what, if any,

are his "unfulfilled ambitions"? "I would like to play center for the Knicks. The trouble is I'm too short and have a problem with my knees, but a lot of basketball players have problems with their knees."

That's wonderful, but you don't get it, do you? I should have set you up for it. Perlman had polio as a child and has been on crutches since that time. It used to really make him mad when critics would headline his playing as "Crippled Violinist Plays Concerto." Now, he wishes they would mention it, but they don't, now that he is world-known. "Now, they never mention it and I want them to. I think it is important to identify myself not only as a violinist but as one who has a disability." He is one of the most prestigious spokesmen for the disabled since Helen Keller. He is a very happy person; one can discern that from his appearances and from his apartment life when seen on "Sixty Minutes." You cannot hide a sense of humor; it bounds out every so often. Itzhak Perlman's is tuned as is his violin: perfectly.

To me a person really matures a great deal when he or she can make fun of themselves and not just everyone else. Can you? Ethel Barrymore said, "A person takes a giant step toward maturity when he or she first learns to laugh at themselves."

Too much of my programs are me making fun of me; I didn't say that right. What I mean is that I don't have space or time here to tell you the many instances where I get tremendous laughter by this means. When I look at the audience and say, "Do you think I wanted to look like this?" they laugh. I did that at the National Speakers Association's convention in New Orleans last year (1980) and they roared. You would have had to be there to catch the expression of disgust I had on my face. Then, I went on to describe my defects, just a few of them. "I wanted hair--and I blame my mother for that. 'Mother, how about the hair? I wanted hair, Mother. You didn't choose right it's your fault, Mother. You should have chosen better; should have gone out only with people who had hair, whose family had hair, both sides of the family. No use taking chances. Daddy's side, Mother, you know Daddy didn't have hair; surely you could tell even then he was not a hairy person. How about his uncles? Bald as a gourd and his father, all his brothers--all of them, slick as a frog." Etc. The crowd roars.

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When I talk to young people I tell them, "I wasn't always this good-looking. I was better looking back then. Imagine. This, better looking. True. I was voted "Most Handsome Boy" in my senior year in high school. Course, Brady, Texas didn't have too many good looking boys then. I wish you could see my annual picture, the one in the Brady Bulldog Annual. Scrumptious. I love to get it out every now and then, kiss it. Hair and everything. I have changed. I took that 8" X 10" photo of me in the annual and held it up by my face at our reunion--our fortieth reunion. My classmates immediately started laughing, perhaps due to the contrast, and perhaps due partially to the pitiful look on my face. I said, 'Anno Domini has laid a heavy hand on this boy's life, you can see that.' I have changed.' Even back then I had problems: you can see from this photo that my hair had already started leaving the premises. At eighteen! A barber in Brady told me that good news, 'I do believe you are the youngest boy I have ever known who is getting bald.' What a thrill that he told me that! I didn't know it, did I? He died the other day and I was glad. He deserved to die. And pimples, here they are covered up. You classmates know I had pimples; I remember how you used to tell me about them. 'Charles, looks like you got lots of pimples this year.' I loved you for that; glad I can thank you now for those comforting words." Etc. It really breaks them up. People love to hear such.

But, remember that I was very sensitive back then. When people did mention my pimples it was as though they had run me through with a sword; it hurt that much. At least the pimples passed and that was delightful, but by that time, I was worried about the hair. You know I am an extroverted guy, right? Here is something you don't know: when I was first getting bald-headed, it hurt me so that I did not look in a mirror without my head covered. Shaved for two years with something on my head. Isn't that silly, but it does give you an indication of how sensitive people are, and how easily they can be hurt when attention is focused on that sensitive area of their lives.

Donald Stewart said that they called him "Duck Lip" and that it hurt, but he found that he could call himself "Duck Lip" before they did and somehow that took the sting out of it, and then--here is the important part--he could turn his humor on them.

Start considering what you laugh at. Are you able only to laugh at other people? What kind of humor do you like best? Is it the derisive type where another is belittled and you feel better somehow because they feel worse? Can you laugh at you? If you can't, you are in trouble, for believe me, one of these days you will need to.

If you can't, you may go through life with a persecution complex. The greatest fighter of a persecution complex is the sense of humor, after you realize that you are your problem.

Think about it.

SENSE OF HUMOR - THE ABILITY TO LAUGH AT ONE'S
SELF (YOURSELF)

Measure of

MAKE FUN OF YOURSELF AND THEN YOU CAN LAUGH
AT OTHERS.

LAUGH FIRST, AT YOU, THEN THEM.

IF YOU CANNOT LAUGH AT YOURSELF, YOU MIGHT AS
WELL GO LIE DOWN ON THE PSYCHIATRIST'S COUCH
FOR YOU ARE GOING TO MAKE IT EVENTUALLY.

THEY DON'T NEED THE BUSINESS.

WORKING ON EACH OTHER.

"HELLO" - WONDER WHAT HE MEANT BY THAT?

NEVER HAVE MET A PSYCHIATRIST THAT DIDN'T
NEED ONE!

ERMA BOMBECK

ETHEL BARRYMOORE

WILL ROGERS

ME:

"...UGLY EARLY."

"...AND HE QUIT LAUGHING."

"HE SENT ME TO YOU."

TWO JEWISH LADIES - MIAMI, FL.

"...YOU WOULDN'T RECOVER."

SENSE OF HUMOR - *Use of - mistakes.* GETTING INTO TROUBLE WITH IT.

PREACHER - PRIMARY TROUBLE.

COMPENSATING INTROVERT...TRYING TO BE POPULAR..
TRYING TO BE FUNNY WHEN HE RUBBED PEOPLE THE
WRONG WAY WITH THE HUMOR.

"HOW IN THE WORLD DID AN UGLY GIRL LIKE
YOU GET ANYONE TO PROPOSE TO HER?"

"WELL, I SEE YOU FINALLY GOT A JOB EQUAL
TO YOUR INTELLIGENCE."

COMMENT: IF YOU ARE JOKING WITH A GIRL
ABOUT UGLINESS, YOU'D BETTER BE TALKING
TO A BEAUTY. YOU DO NOT TELL AN UGLY GIRL
SHE IS UGLY; YOU TELL SOMEONE ELSE THAT
THAT GIRL IS UGLY.

REDD FOXX - TALKING OF HIS WIFE: "GET
UP AND SING SOMETHING!"

"YOUNG, SINGLE MEN, MARRY AN UGLY WOMAN.
THEN, WHEN SHE LEAVES YOU, YOU'LL BE
HAPPY."

Sense of humor - your (background and mine):

How you were raised - strict up-bringing - or -

Did your parents teach you to laugh?

Especially, did they teach you to laugh -
at yourself?

Your contemporaries:

A laughing group...or...

Strictly serious.

My background:

Matter of genetics?

Father - happy man.
- loved by all.
- my buddy.
- wonderful personality.
- talented man - musician - singer
- minstrel man.
- McDonald Melody Boys
- died when I was nine.

Mother - loved jokes.
- wonderful personality.
- happy around people other than
her family.
- jealous, to an extreme.
- persecution complex.
- loved to laugh...interesting?

Brother - eccentric - a lovable eccentric.
- troubles with Mother
- getting along with her.
- left home soon as possible.
- not 'close'
- couldn't stand each other long.
- seven visits in thirty-five years
- "most egotistical goddamned
woman I have ever known."
- love - like - had to explain it
to Mother.

(over)

- party - "you not invited"
- married? No, lived with a woman..

Strange man:

Genius - eccentric genius.
- electronics.

Abrupt - with certain types of people
(who deserve it!)

- Doctors:

"Oh, have I been here before?"

"...I won't if you won't."

Sense of humor - wonderful!

- different however.
- joke - Hebrew
- devastating sarcasm, if necessary.

Mother - "fat" episode.

- He and I - our relationship
-not close, but friendly.
- won't argue with him.
- "God is a big doll..."
- "Bible is a bunch of trash."
- Snoopy - leaf - frog
- larva stage of wire coathanger.

Great grandfather - 21 children - their names.

Grandfather - bald as a gourd!
- "Part it in the middle."

Sense of Humor: Warped

My brother: "I realize that I have a warped sense of humor. My Italian guide who showed me through Rome said: "I lika you -- you crazy!" Recently I had to leave a Wagnerian opera at the Met cause I suddenly realized that I was watching a fat broad with horns on her head screaming YO TO HOTO HO TO while standing on a mountain top with gas flames snapping at her butt. I went into the corridor for a while to avoid annoying the other opera patrons with hysterical laughter."

Lady in my office: "Dr. Jarvis, I am no jokester."

In most every audience, there is one of those hatchet-faced biddies, arms folded, up-straight, sternly challenging you to make her laugh. She's thinking: "Let's see you make me laugh!" Well, no one could make her laugh. She hasn't laughed since her honeymoon. This is the very type of person I speak of when I say that some husbands shouldn't fear hell too much -- if you live with a bidy like that for twenty or twenty five years, you'd probably look forward to the trip! Anything to get out of the house!

Man, at Boulder, Colo., who wrote to the Secretary of the Boulder Knife and Fork Club where I was to appear (during the Viet NameWar):

"I will not attend this month's meeting. Not that I have anything against the speaker - Dr. Jarvis. It's just that I donnot believe in attending anything of a humorous nature while there's a war on."

First, he ended a sentence with a preposition. Dr. McFarland, eminent speaker, in his book ELOQUENCE IN PUBLIC SPEAKING, says "Your sentence structure should be the proudest thing you are of."

Second, I felt sorry for his wife. Poor thing! Having to live with that negat all her life! Like being beaten to death with a wet noodle. (over)

Third, I knew this man had never been in the service.

World War I - doughboys - trenches.
World War II - Guadalcanal, Iwo Jima, Tarawa, etc.
Viet Nam - bamboo cages

Me - on the carrier - Kamikaze attacks.

"Carriers that way!"

Lady in my office: "Dr. Jarvis, I am no jokester.

In most every audience, there is one of those patchy-faced biddies, arms folded, un-straight, sternly challenging you to make her laugh. She's thinking: "Let's see you make me laugh!" Well, no one could make her laugh. She hasn't laughed since her honeymoon. This is the very type of person I speak of when I say that some husbands shouldn't fear hell too much -- if you live with a biddy like that for twenty or twenty five years, you'd probably look forward to the trip! Anything to get out of the house!

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Sense of humor - ability to laugh at yourself.

measure of

God pity the homo-dryasdustiens! (those who
are not able to laugh at themselves)

Sense of humor - one of the only antidotes to
this serious, problem-filled life.

Speaking Technique - make fun of self first.

You can then hit the audience, but you
have softened the blow.

They like you better if you can take
a joke.

"He sent me to you."

"...just here to install that phone."

Sense of humor - ability to laugh at yourself:

Follows general discussion of Sense of Humor and
Whatever happened to funny?

Pity people who cannot laugh at themselves!

Comedians who have made a living laughing at
themselves:

Totie Fields
Jimmy Durante
Fat Jack Leonard
Phyllis Diller

Jack Benny - did not laugh at self, but
let you laugh at him and his
eccentricities.

Ethnic groups - their spokemen and spokepersons:*

Jewish - Myron Cohen
- Red Buttons - at the Catskills
- Not Groucho!(he resented this!)

Black - Red Foxx
- Bill Cosby
- Godfrey Cambridge
- Dick Gregory

*They can do it - not you!

You /would have to be on the inside.

They will roar at Myron Cohen using
the Jewish dialect, but you cannot
do this....they would resent it....

Not any longer "at play"

Remember: your child would not laugh
if someone he or she did not
know tried to tickle her or
him.

(over)

Examples:

All sorts of examples for Jewish humor....

Get any Myron Cohen album or book....

Joan Riversz- speaking of Jewish mothers wanting their daughters to get married.

"Chicken soup" jokes

Sammy Davis - "Get off the bus!"

Richard Pryor - his album: "IS IT SOMETHING ISSAID?"

His use of words such as "Nigger"

Your using them! Never!

When he usès them, the audience convulses.

But, some don't like it! He hears from them, believe me!

I have talked to them bout him.

Resent the vulgarity and the references to the black as anything but respectful.

That audience, that night, when you followed him, would deeply resent your doing the same thing - FOR YOU ARE NOT BLACK - NOT ONE OF THEM.

Example: Pryor talking about the Vietnamese learning to say "Nigger"

"If you get your ass kicked you'll know you made it!"

Dick Gregory:

(4)

Very serious about Blacks and Black power.

Yet his humor is full of references to black as source of humor.

"Painful experiences told playfully"

Examples:

First astronaut - black - "just turned white when they found out what they were going to do with him."

Bus stories - riding in the back of the bus - "Not stupid, just thankful for sitting in the rear. You ain't heard of anyone being hurt much in the back of the bus, is you?"

Sports - likes baseball best.

- "the only game where a black man wave a bat at a white man and not start no riot."

His early childhood - "lots of kids - ~~se~~pt on the bottom of a pile of ten kids in the same bed....warmest place cause of the warm urine seeping down all night on you."

1. Painful - told playfully.
2. Exaggeration - "all night" ???

Sense of humor - ability to laugh at self(cont)

Jarvis - talks full of this. (5)

- at myself - my bald head - my being short - my sexual prowess - my not being equal - pimples, etc.

Bob Murphey - his arm.

- Texas Press Association - when I first met him.
- "Never got past the grand jury."
- "When did you see my mother last?"
- "No, Son, we can't use you. Now, the enemy might."
- makes himself the butt of most of his political jokes:

"Go ahead, Mr. Murphey, take another piece; why, them chickens is dying faster'n we can eat them."

"Lookit there, he drinks the same way Pa does."

(stories about his out prospecting for votes... rural people)

Lady in Wewoka - her leg

- "don't burn my leg."
- "Don't look down at it; it looks better'n the other one."
- "...cured my athlete's foot."

SENSE OF HUMOR - LEARNED? INHERITED?

MOST AUTHORITIES SAY "PROBABLY NOT LEARNED."

CANNOT BE LEARNED.

MUST BE EVIDENCED AT HOME IN EARLY YEARS.

IF A PERSON IS RAISED IN A STRICT HOME WHERE THINGS ARE IN 'DEAD EARNEST' HUMOR IS THE THING THAT IS DEAD.

PURITAN HOME. SOMBER PARENTS. SOMBER CHILDREN.

MAX EASTMAN:

Cannot be learned in the sense that it is endowed, it is native.

But a great deal can be done to limber its action in people who have been brought up to associate all real merit with seriousness.

You cannot teach them to feel the comic feeling, but you can teach them to allow their reflex centers to have a little free play.

(Here, he is referring to Bechterev and the 'inhibition of the cerebral cortex'...the mere absence of inhibition')

If Bechterev is right there ought to be some hope for those whom the Lord never intended should laugh.

(Josh Billings - "never intended should laff.")

"DO NO HARM!"(allow cerebral cortex to be free)

Let the artist perform in the best environment.

See "Do's and Don'ts" for information about this: How to set up the meeting, How the Artist is his/her own worst enemy."

See "In Fun" - the audience.

See "In Fun" - the artist. (over)

QUESTION: HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW YOURSELF?

HOW IS YOUR SENSE OF HUMOR?

WHAT KIND OF PARENTS DID YOU HAVE?

PARENTS - STRAIT-LACED:

GROW UP TO BE IRS AGENTS.

"I AM NO FUNSTER." (LADY IN MY OFFICE)

IRS AGENT:

"DR. JARVIS, THIS IS HARDLY A
JOKING MATTER." ("...THOUGHT YOU WERE
JOKING.")

SENSE OF HUMOR - "SEEING" THE TRAINWRECK.

THEY MUST SEE IT, BUT MAY NOT BE
ABLE TO.

"I DON'T GET IT."

"I DON'T SEE IT."

"I DON'T GET THE POINT."

"I DON'T SEE WHAT YOU MEAN."

THE TRUTH IS: THEY DON'T SEE IT.

MIND IS NOT IMAGINATIVE ENOUGH.

CEREBRAL CORTEX AFFECTED BY PARENTAL
INFLUENCE...HELD BACK...HELD DOWN...
INHIBITED.

EXAMPLE: MUSICIAN WHO HIT A SOUR NOTE.

"PARDON ME, SIR, I PLAYED A FLY."

3

WHAT DID HE MEAN?

QUESTION: DOES THE PERSON WHO DOES NOT CATCH THIS PRIMARILY NOT CATCH IT DUE TO LACK OF SENSE OF HUMOR OR COULD IT BE DUE TO LACK OF KNOWLEDGE OF MUSIC AND NOTES?

TEACH SENSE OF HUMOR:

CAN IT BE TAUGHT?

CAN IT BE EMPHASIZED TO THE EXTENT THAT A PURITAN SOUL CAN BE RELEASED FROM THE SHACKLES THAT BIND HIS OR HER SENSE OF HUMOR?

GEORGE Q. LEWIS - ELBERON, N.J.

THE "LAUGHING AMERICAN"

MEMO TO ALL COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY PRESIDENTS.

"HUMOR-IZING" - A NEW CONCEPT IN ED.

SOLD AT LEAST ONE. NEW YORK'S SCHOOL FOR SOCIAL RESEARCH.

HOPES TO SIGN UP MANY MORE.

COURSE:

THE ART OF LAUGHMAKING
THE ART OF HAPPIER LIVING
HOW TO GET THE MOST OUT OF LIFE
HOW TO HAVE FUN WITH YOUR LIFE - THE
REST OF YOUR LIFE
LAUGH AT LIFE
PUT HUMOR TO GOOD USE
PUT YOUR HAPPY MUSCLES TO WORK
WIGGLE YOUR MIND, TWIST YOUR FUNNYBONE

(OVER)

4

H-U-M-O-R: HELPS US MAINTAIN OUR REASON.*

*THE WRITER OF THE ARTICLE ABOUT MR. LEWIS' COURSE SAID ABOUT THE LAST TOPIC: "and with the sure instinct of a comic who suspects his timing may be off, Mr. Lewis underlines the initial letters of that dictum to make sure that we get the joke."

QUESTION: WHAT DOES THIS SHOW YOU ABOUT THAT WRITER?

RESENTMENT.

DOES NOT SAY SO, BUT IMPLIES IT.

IMPLIED: "LOOK, GEORGE, WE GET IT. YOU DON'T HAVE TO UNDERLINE IT. WE ARE NOT STUPID. YOU ARE NOT THE ONLY ONE WHO GETS IT."

SENSE OF HUMOR - LACK OF.

"ONE OF THE MEANEST THINGS IN THE COMIK LEKTRING EMPLOYMENT THAT A MAN HAZ TO DO IS TEW TRY AND MAKE THAT LARGE CLASS OV HIZ AUJIENCE LAFF WHOM THE LORD NEVER INTENDED SHOULD LAFF."

- JOSH BILLINGS

(HE WENT ON TO SAY THAT THIS CLASS OF PEOPLE IS LIKE THE CLASS OF PEOPLE WHO NEVER GET MAD, WHO DON'T KNOW WHAT FEAR IS, ETC.)

"GOD BLESSED AMERICA WITH A SENSE OF HUMOR, BUT WE LIKE TO LAUGH AT THE OTHER FELLOW."

- WILL ROGERS.

SOME HAVE IT -- AND SOME DO NOT.

SEEMS THAT MOST OF THOSE WHO DO NOT HAVE BEEN COMING TO MY APPEARANCES.

CAVETT ROBERT - "...TREE FULL OF OWLS."

Gove: "...eat their young."

HATCHET-FACED OLD BIDDY:

ARMS CROSSED, ETC. - "LET'S SEE YOU MAKE ME LAUGH, BUSTER!"

YOU CAN'T MAKE HER LAUGH; SHE HASN'T LAUGHED SINCE HER HONEYMOON!

WAY TO DEAL WITH HER: COMPLIMENT AUDIENCE ON THEIR LAUGHING. "...NO ONE HERE NOT LAUGHING. WONDERFUL. USUALLY IN EVERY AUDIENCE THERE IS ONE HATCHET-FACED, OLD BIDDY..." (SHE WILL START SNICKERING AT LEAST CAUSE SHE DOES NOT WANT PEOPLE POINTING, SAYING, "LOOK THERE; HE MISSED ONE.")

(OVER)

HUMOR - Sense of - Lack of.

If, as I think it should be measured, a sense of humor is the ability to laugh at oneself (after all, we can all laugh at the other person, right?) we are in sad shape.

Read the article below. The writer is correct in that constantly the papers are bombarded with letters of indignation about the person's profession being maligned.

Writers have no sense of humor

"letters to editor"

There are many serious things that one should get indignant — even angry — about. It is rather serious, however, that you get and print so many letters revealing the writer to be utterly devoid of a sense of humor or a tolerance for satire. Such letters have been pointed at Mariotti, Sargent, Kelley and especially Kelso, who seems to have a special knack of rubbing sensitive parts. They have dealt with Aggie jokes, the pope, Republicans, baseball and insurance pushers, for example.

One of the best things about the *American Statesman* these days is that you can get a chuckle elsewhere than on the comic page. We were all happier and better adjusted when we could get a belly-laugh out of an ethnic or religious joke or a put-down of an individual or group without donning the robes of the immaculate and inviolable saint, organizing a demonstration.

"... so heavenly on earth..."

JIM ASHBURNE
5602 Shady Oak

The last part, where I wrote a note about "There are some people so heavenly on earth that they are no earthly good," that was brought to mind by this article in that I remembered that group of elderly, Catholic ladies at the Cape Girardeau Knife and Fork Club...they sat in a group...about twenty of them... from the retirement home run by the Catholics...they were right in front of the dais..how would you like to speak to a sight like that?! Anyway, they were great, and laughed like mad--at everything but the Catholic stories--they loved the Baptist stuff.

See Humor - Sensitive.

SENSE OF HUMOR - AMERICAN Vs. BRITISH

VERY HUMOROUS PEOPLE -- LAUGH AT ANYTHING

ENGLISH VIEW -- THOUGHT OF US AS COUNTRY BUMPKINS

FRANKLIN AND ARTEMUS WARD -- EXCEPTIONS

DICKENS -- VISITED AMERICA TWICE -- IN 1842 AND 1868 -- WROTE: "AMERICANS ARE NOT A HUMOROUS PEOPLE, AND THEIR TEMPERAMENT ALWAYS IMPRESSED ME AS BEING OF A DULL AND GLOOMY NATURE."

THIS WAS THE VIEW OF THE ENGLISH PEOPLE TOWARD AMERICANS AT THAT TIME.

OSCAR WILDE -- HELD THAT VIEW.

BERNARD SHAW -- SAID THAT THE 100 PERCENT AMERICAN IS 99 PERCENT IDIOT AND FOUND US AN UNFUNNY FOLK UP TO HIS DEATH IN 1950.

STEADY STREAM OF AMERICANS ABROAD, THE COMEDIANS BROADCASTS, THE BOOKS AND PLAYS, GRADUALLY CANCELLED THIS VIEWPOINT.

THE BRITISH NOW THINK OUR SENSE OF HUMOR IS SUPERIOR TO ANYONE BUT THEIRS.

WE THINK OURS IS SUPERIOR TO ANYONE'S AND USE THE MARRIED ANECDOTE TO STRESS THE VIEW THAT THE BRITISH SENSE OF HUMOR IS INFERIOR.

SENSE OF HUMOR -- AMERICAN HUMOR

AMERICANS -- SPIRIT OF PLAYFULNESS

LAUGH AT ALL TYPES OF HUMOR.

DO NOT FEEL RESTRAINED AT ALL.

NATURALLY EXUBERANT PEOPLE (EXUBERANT PEOPLE ARE PLAYFUL.)

LOVE TO LAUGH AT AUTHORITY:

WILL LAUGH AT LEADERS.

CONTRASTED TO EUROPEANS WHO ARE UNDER A DICTATORSHIP OR ROYALTY.

LOVE THIS TYPE OF HUMOR -- LAUGHING AT STATION, POSITION, AUTHORITY...

CAME TO THIS COUNTRY TO ESCAPE OPPRESSION -- NOW LAUGH AT IT... INHERITED.

*Bunker - pompous - married
knowledge*

LAUGH AT ALL KINDS OF HUMOR:

EXAGGERATION -- "...LOOKED LIKE HE'D BEEN SORTING OUT WILDCATS."

"...DISORGANIZED AS A BUCKET OF WORMS."

"...SLOW AS A SNAIL WITH PARALYSIS."

UNDERSTATEMENT -- MARK TWAIN

"...DRAGON...ATE CATTLE AND MEN IMPARTIALLY...UNPOPULAR."

Heinrich Himmler. (Fol)

PUNS -- "DON'T PUN." AND THEY PUN EVERYTHING!

NONSENSE -- LOVE IT! ALL KINDS. (OVER)

INCONGRUITIES -- APPRECIATE INCONGRUITIES.

TOO MUCHNESS... JIMMY DURANTE'S NOSE. (2)

TOO LITTLENESS... ANDY GUMP'S CHIN.

TOO MUCHNESS (FAT PEOPLE)

ESPECIALLY THOSE WHO MADE FUN
OF THEMSELVES:

FAT JACK LEONARD -- "HELL, MAN,
I'VE LOST YOU!"

TOTIE FIELDS -- HER DIETS.

ED HARDING'S EARS

REBELLIOUS SPIRIT -- DON'T DO THIS (OR THAT)

IF TOLD NOT TO LOOK IN, THEY LOOK IN!

IF TOLD THAT PUNS ARE LOW HUMOR, WE
PUN EVERYTHING.

IF TOLD NOT TO USE DOUBLE NEGATIVES,
WE SAY, "NOW DON'T YOU NEVER MIND; DON'T
YOU FRET NONE ABOUT IT; IT DON'T MATTER
HARDLY NONE AT ALL."

OR: "I KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN. I CAN'T
EVEN HARDLY STAND THEM DOUBLE
NEGATIVES -- MUCH LESS THEM
TRIPLES."

IF TOLD TO USE GOOD GRAMMAR, WE SAY
"HOW CAN I; YOU NEVER LEARNED ME NONE."

IF TOLD NOT TO END SENTENCES WITH
PREPOSITIONS, WE SAY, "WHAT DID YOU
BRING ME THAT BOOK UP HERE TO BE READ
OUT OF FOR?"

OR -- "YOUR SENTENCE STRUCTURE SHOULD
BE THE PROUDEST THING YOU ARE OF"

SLAPSTICK -- SILENT MOVIE ERA

KEYSTONE COPS

CHARLIE CHAPLIN, BUSTER KEATON

VAUDEVILLE COMEDIANS, GAGS, PRATFALLS,
PHYSICAL HUMOR.

CARTOONS:

MICKEY MOUSE - DONALD DUCK - CHIPMUNKS

TOM AND JERRIE - ROADRUNNER - DAFFY DUCK

GIMMICK SHOWS:

"I DREAM OF JEANNIE"

"THE FLYING NUN"

TOPICAL HUMOR:

BOB HOPE

PRESIDENTS AND THE CONGRESS

T. V. HUMOR - WHATEVER IS HOT AND CURRENT!

CELEBRITIES - IN THE NEWS AT THE MOMENT.

DRUNK CONGRESSMAN.

MISTRESS OF CONGRESSMAN.

JOHNNY CARSON MONOLOGUES - TWO WRITERS.

SITUATION SHOWS:

"SANFORD AND SON" "ALL IN THE FAMILY"

"MAUDE" "DOC" "CHICO AND THE MAN"

"THE JEFFERSONS" "MASH" (OVER)

INSULT HUMOR:

(4)

"IN" NOW.

NOT ACCEPTED FEW YEARS AGO.

SEE "TYPES OF HUMOR -- INSULT HUMOR"

Florence & Jefferson.

SENSE OF HUMOR - EVALUATION.

RELATIVE:

1. PEOPLE WHO LAUGH AT YOU WHEN YOUR GOLF SHOT GOES INTO THE SAND TRAP.
2. REAL GOOD SENSE OF HUMOR: WHEN YOU LAUGH AT THEIR SHOT GOING INTO SAND TRAP.
3. NO SENSE OF HUMOR: WHEN THEY DO NOT LAUGH WITH YOU WHEN THEIR SHOT GOES INTO SAND TRAP.

BILL GOVE - GOLFER:

SAND TRAP - OTHERS ON THE GREEN

YOU HIT THE PIN - BALL GOES INTO CUP

NO ONE BUT YOU IS EXULTANT.

NO SENSE OF HUMOR: WHEN THEY DON'T LAUGH AT YOUR JOKE.

POOR JOKE-TELLER: PERSON WHO CANNOT MAKE YOU LAUGH AT THEIR JOKE.

SENSE OF HUMOR -- HUMOR APPRECIATION:

LYNN ASHBY, COLUMNIST:

Under the heading of Science Marches On, G. H. Askenasy, a researcher, has given a Humor Appreciation Test to various Americans, which includes telling them jokes. Askenasy has determined that, of all the groups tested, alcoholics scored the highest. In descending order, the rest were:

Teen-aged girls

Clinical psychologists

Stutterers

Persons on skid row

Businessmen

League of Women Voters

Paraplegics

Military Officers

Male students

Female students

Cartoonists

The very lowest score of the entire lot, by a landslide, belonged to feminists.

SENSE OF HUMOR - MAX EASTMAN'S FOURTH LAW.

"...THOSE NOT RICHLY ENDOWED WITH HUMOR MANAGE TO FEEL A VERY COMIC FEELING ONLY WHEN WITHIN, OR BEHIND, OR BEYOND, OR SUGGESTED BY, THE PLAYFULLY UNPLEASANT THING, THERE IS A PLEASANT ONE. ONLY THEN DO THEY LAUGH UPROARIOUSLY LIKE PLAYING CHILDREN. AND THEY CALL THIS COMPLICATED THING OR COMBINATION OF THINGS AT WHICH THEY LAUGH, A JOKE."

"THE FAILURE TO HAVE A SENSE OF HUMOR IS A PERSON'S FAILURE OF THE ABILITY TO DISCERN THIS PLAYFUL THING IN ITS RELATIONSHIP TO THE UNPLEASANT."

"I CAN'T SEE WHERE THAT'S FUNNY AT ALL."

ATTEMPT TO EXPLAIN.

PERSON, STILL REFUSING TO SEE IT: "WELL, IT IS NOT FUNNY TO ME."

SENSE OF HUMOR - "HAIR TRIGGER SENSE OF COMIC"

EASTMAN - HIS QUOTE - SAYS THAT PEOPLE ARE BORN OR SEEM TO BE BORN WITH THIS, JUST AS OTHERS ARE BORN WITH A SHORT-FUSED TEMPER, A SENSE OF FRIGHT, ETC.

PEOPLE WHO DON'T HAVE THIS - AND TRY TO "ACQUIRE" IT.

HE(EASTMAN) SAYS SOME PEOPLE SEEM TO ACQUIRE A HABIT OF CRACKING JOKES OR LITTLE NEGLIGIBLE JOCKLES ALL DAY LONG, AND DOUBLING THEIR PRODUCTION AT NIGHT BY PARALYZING THEIR INHIBITIONS WITH ALCOHOL.

THEIR TALK IS MORE LIKE A DISEASE THAN A CONTRIBUTION. HE SAYS, "SOME GO ON ALL THEIR LIFE MAKING WISECRACKS, LAUGHING INTERMITTENTLY, WITH OCCASIONAL INTERMISSIONS FOR A FUNERAL, OR A SHIPWRECK(HERE, EASTMAN, A HUMORIST HIMSELF, RESORTS TO EXAGGERATION TO MAKE US SMILE) IT IS THE MOST TERRIBLE DISEASE IN THE WORLD, BECAUSE ITS VICTIMS AREN'T THOSE WHO GET IT, BUT EVERYBODY ELSE."

(COMMENT: TRUE.

DO YOU KNOW ANY OF THESE FOLKS?
PEOPLE WHO HAVE TO TELL YOU A
JOKE AT THE DROP OF A SYLLABLE?

LIKE CONCEIT - "STRANGE DISEASE:
MAKES EVERYONE BUT THE VICTIM
SICK, HE OR SHE NEVER KNOWS
THEY'VE GOT IT."

BORING: "THE TRUE BORE NEVER KNOWS
HE OR SHE IS BORING ANYONE."

EASTMAN GOES ON TO SAY THAT IT IS NOT A WONDERFUL SENSE OF HUMOR THAT ALLOWS THESE PEOPLE TO ACT AS THEY DO, BUT IT IS A FALSE

(OVER)

SENSE OF RECOGNITION (MY WORDS) THAT CAUSE THEM TO DO THIS -- GETTING ATTENTION BY CRACKING JOKES INCESSANTLY, ERRONEOUSLY ASSUMING THAT THE ATTENTION IS A DELIGHT TO OTHERS. HE SUFFERS INFLAMMATION OF THE EGO.

"A REAL SENSE OF HUMOR," EASTMAN STATES, "WOULD PUT AN END TO THEIR 'APE-LIKE CHATTER' AS QUICKLY AS A CLUB. (ONE GETS THE IDEA HERE THAT EASTMAN WOULD PREFER A GOOD APPLICATION OF THE LATTER.)

REMEMBER, EASTMAN SAYS, THAT BABIES MUST BE TICKLED BY A FRIEND, THEY MUST ENJOY IT, THEY MUST BE IN THE MOOD, THEY MUST BE SOCIALLY ADJUSTED. THUS, BABIES, AND PEOPLE, LOVE TO BE TICKLED, BUT BY PEOPLE WHOM THEY ENJOY.

THIS PERSON, THIS TYPE OF PERSON, IS NOT ENJOYED. YOU HATE TO SEE HIM OR HER COMING TOWARD YOU. YOU KNOW WHAT IS COMING. THE LATEST JOKE IS ABOUT TO BE TOLD BY A REAL JOKE.

REMEMBER, THERE IS ONLY ONE REASON PEOPLE SHOULD LISTEN TO YOU: THEY SHOULD BENEFIT BY WHAT YOU SAY.

IN THIS CASE, THERE IS NO BENEFIT, ONLY DISGUST AND ANGER. THEY FEEL LIKE SHOUTING: "GET THE HELL OUT OF HERE AND LEAVE US ALONE!"

THE ONLY REASON PEOPLE TOLERATE THIS PERSON IS THEIR SENSE OF PROPRIETY, NOT HUMOR.

SENSE OF HUMOR - MAINTAINING.

EDWARD G. ROBINSON:

What you have to do in our profession is maintain your sense of humor. When you feel yourself starting to get serious, that's when you should start smiling. When you get more serious, break out laughing. That's the only way to keep your sanity.

HE MENTIONED ONE ACTOR, OF LONG AGO, WHO WON SOME AWARDS AND BECAME SO DIGNIFIED THAT HE LOST TOUCH WITH REALITY.

EDWARD G. ROBINSON CONTINUED HIS CAREER, REFUSING TO BE IMPRESSED WITH HOLLYWOOD OR HIMSELF.

MANY OTHERS, WHO COULDN'T DO JUST THAT -- ENDED UP BY KILLING THEMSELVES:

JOHN GARFIELD
MARILYN MONROE
ROBERT WALKER
ERNEST HEMMINWAY
CAROL LANDIS

HUMOR - Sense of humor - Politics.

Paul Newman introduced his candidate for President of the United States in the 1984 election to a New York crowd, then withdrew to the wings of the stage, but the audience could still see him. Indeed, they followed him with their eyes, for he was the star they came to see, not necessarily Fritz Mondale. Newman took off his coat, after simply loosening his tie. As he loosened his tie, a murmur arose among the women in the room; then the actor took off his coat--they, the women, applauded.

Mondale, bewildered by this applause, for he was blistering Reagan, and his remarks did not call for any accolades or applause, turned around, stared at Newman for a minute, and then with a broad grin, said, "Please stop stripping, Newman, so I can get on with this speech." Then, he removed his own coat and tossed it into Newman's lap. It brought down the house. It also showed a truism in politics: a sense of humor is one of the most valuable traits a candidate can have. If used correctly, it can enforce a political point, charm the press and the public, and disarm critics.

Reagan, in his debates with Carter, kept on with one phrase: "There you go again." His repetition with this degrading put-down, illustrating Carter's exaggeration and misuse of facts, brought laughter, and made Carter lose credibility.

"It makes a candidate human," said Robert Neuman, former Communications Director of the Democratic National Committee. It also helps a losing candidate to laugh when he/she would rather be crying.

Almost any kind of humor will do, but the self-deprecating humor usually goes over best. People like candidates who can poke fun at themselves, yet not do it so much that they look like clowns or fools. This must be a plus, not a minus. They shouldn't reveal, with humor, anything that might take away from their credibility. They should make jokes at their own expense, showing they can take a joke and thus are human, a good guy. The worst kind of humor is the sarcastic, barbed-with-contempt humor against an opponent, told at the opponent's expense, making that person look ridiculous. This shows the audience that the candidate has little empathy, and a vitriolic streak.

SENSE OF HUMOR -- POLITICIANS -- POLITICS

HAVE TO HAVE! ASSAILED FROM ALL SIDES!

HUBERT HUMPHREY -- EXCELLENT - DEAN MARTIN ROAST

BARRY GOLDWATER -- EXCELLENT - DEAN MARTIN ROAST

CAN BE JUDGED ON WHETHER ABLE TO LAUGH AT SELF.

NIXON -- A VERY SERIOUS MAN

CARTER -- SMILES A LOT

-- TRUST? A MAN WHO SMILES LIKE THAT?

-- SENSE OF HUMOR? DURING WHOLE CAMPAIGN,
ONLY ONE STORY - \$50.00?

LYNDON JOHNSON -- "EARTHY"-- CRUDE - GROSS

DID NOT KNOW HIM.

PROBABLY WOULD HAVE LIKED HIM.

GROSS HUMOR -- STILL MAKES PEOPLE LAUGH.

FEW FOUR LETTER WORDS..USED IN STORIES.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN -- EXCELLENT, BUT CALLED A

'BUFFOON' -- A CLOWN...

ADLAI STEVENSON - ERUDITE - INTELLECTUAL --

VERY GOOD SENSE OF HUMOR

REPORTER: "...CAN'T TELL WHETHER HE IS
RUNNING FOR THE WHITE HOUSE OR
THE ROXY." (OVER)

"...BE SOLEMN AS AN ASS."

STEVE ALLEN - "GOOD OLD STEVE -- GETTING FUNNIER EVERY YEAR."

THE DEBATES:

HUMOR IS NOT ALLOWED IN DEBATES.

DOLE -- ONLY ONE WHO USED IT.

MONDALE -- "...THE FORD DOLE..."

HURT DOLE'S IMAGE -- HATCHET MAN

USE OF SARCASM

IRONY, BUT INTENDED TO WOUND

"WE'LL LET HIM HAVE THE PLAYBOY VOTE."

ME? FORD'S TURN: "WAIT A MINUTE -- IT CAN'T BE MY TURN; MR. CARTER HAS NOT ANSWERED THE QUESTION THAT YOU ASKED HIM."

JOHN KENNEDY -- EXCELLENT SENSE OF HUMOR.

REALIZED HOW NECESSARY HUMOR WAS...AS A RELIEF.

TED SORENSON - GRIDIRON DINNER.

"...WE NEED ALL THE HUMOR WE'VE GOT FOR OUR TALKS."

SENSE OF HUMOR -- VALUE -- IN SPORTS

SPORTS -- ALL TYPES -- COMPETITION -- FANS, ETC.

FOOTBALL:

ROYAL: "YOU GOTTA DANCE WITH WHO BRUNG YA'."

JOHN MCKAY -- TAMPA BAY: (0 - 14)

"WITHOUT A SENSE OF HUMOR, FOOTBALL
CAN BE UNBEARABLE." (QUOTED AT USC)

"I'M NEVER FUNNY WHEN I'M LOSING."

WENT TO TAMPA BAY AS THE FUNNIEST COACH
IN THE UNITED STATES.

16 SEASONS AT USC
WON 127 GAMES
PRODUCED 40 ALL-AMERICANS
FOUR NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

WHEN ASKED WHETHER HE EVER THOUGHT HE
WOULD BE HUNG IN EFFIGY: "OF COURSE NOT.
BEFORE EACH SEASON I SEND OUT MY ASS'T
COACHES TO BUY UP ALL THE ROPE."

ON HOW HE WOULD COUNSEL HIS SON IF HIS
SON EVER WANTED TO ATTEND STANFORD, NOT
MCKAY'S FAVORITE SCHOOL: "IF IT WAS A
CHOICE BETWEEN STANFORD AND RED CHINA
I WOULD TELL HIM: 'GOOD LUCK IN PEKING.'"

ABOUT HIS SEASON (LOSING 0 AND 14):
"I TOLD MY PLAYERS TO HAVE FUN AND THEY
TOOK ME LITERALLY."

ABOUT THE STRENGTH OF ONE OF HIS PLAYERS,
DAVE PEAR, A DEFENSIVE TACKLE WHO WAS
NAMED THE TEAM'S MOST VALUABLE PLAYER:
"THAT PEAR'LL LIFT THE MORTGAGE RIGHT
OFF YOUR HOUSE."

MCKAY'S SENSE OF HUMOR FAILED HIM A
COUPLE OF TIMES; WHEN HE LOST HIS NINTH

STRAIGHT GAME -- WITH DENVER -- MCKAY
FILLED THE AIR WITH BLUE REMARKS ABOUT
THE OPPOSING COACH, JOHN RALSTON. THIS
SURPRISED EVERYONE BECAUSE HIS, MCKAY'S
PHILOSOPHY HAS ALWAYS BEEN "WIN OR LOSE,
DO IT WITH DIGNITY." THE OTHER TIME
WAS AFTER THE MIAMI DOLPHINS HAD BEATEN
THE TAMPA BAY BUCCANEERS IN AN EXHI-
BITION GAME AND THERE WAS MUCH VERBAL
CRITICISM. MCKAY RETALIATED WITH HIS
DEFINITION OF AN IDIOT: "SOMEONE, WHO
WHEN HE OPENS HIS MOUTH, SAYS 'BOO.'"

SENSE OF HUMOR - THE SERVICE.

READERS' DIGEST - LIFE IN THE SERVICE - FEATURE.

BOULDER, COLO. MAN

WORLD WAR I - DOUGHBOYS - TRENCHES

- CONVENTION, OKLA. CITY - VETERANS
OF WWI - LAUGH BAG.

WORLD WAR II - "THE BIG WAR"

- MARINES

- GUADALCANAL, IWO JIMA, TARAWA

- ME - ON THE BRIDGE - KAMIKAZES.

- "BAIL OUT"

- ALLERGIC TO FLAMING GASOLINE.

KOREA, VIET NAM:

PRISONERS OF WAR

MAJOR GENERAL FLYNN

CHARLIE PLUMB

"CARRIERS THAT WAY!"

THIS COUNTRY WAS FOUNDED AND MADE STRONG BY
A GROUP OF HARDY PEOPLE. THEY CAME OVER HERE,
THE REJECTED SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF A HARD LAND,
EXPECTING TO FIND IT BETTER, EXPECTING TO FIND
A LAND OF "MILK AND HONEY." BUT THEY DIDN'T.

(OVER)

WHAT DID THEY FIND? A LAND OF HARDSHIP, PROBLEMS
PESTILENCE AND ADVERSITY.

IT WAS THE SAME WITH THE PIONEERS WHO MOVED
WEST. IT WAS ROUGH-GOING. THEY EXPECTED TO
FIND IT BETTER. THEY FOUND IT HARD AND SOMETIMES
WISHED THEY WERE BACK.

WHAT KEPT THEM GOING? COURAGE. RESOLUTE
SPIRIT? YES, BUT ALSO A SENSE OF HUMOR HELPED
THEM.

THE ABILITY TO DISCERN THE PLAYFUL IN THE
UNPLEASANT. THIS KEPT THEM GOING IN THE FACE
OF ADVERSITY. THEY LAUGHED AND THEN THEY
HANDLED THE PROBLEM. IF THE PROBLEMS WERE
INSOLUBLE, THEY JUST LAUGHED.

STORIES OF THIS TYPE OF COURAGE ARE NUMEROUS.
THE BEST KNOWN AND MOST REPEATED IS "...ONLY
WHEN I LAUGH." -- THE STORY OF THE FRONTIERSMAN
WHO WITH TWENTY ARROWS STUCK IN HIM, CRAWLED ALL
THE WAY TO THE FORT.)

SENSE OF HUMOR - THERAPEUTIC.

VOL. 11 - PAGE 25 OF "DIRECT LINE"

HARVEY MINDESS, PSYCHOLOGIST AND PROFESSOR
AT UCLA -

- LAUGHTER AND LIBERATION

PROFESSOR MINDESS:

Everyone seems to realize that a sense of humor is most important and that it is one of our most valuable faculties.

Thinkers simple and profound declare the ability to see the funny side of things and to laugh at ourselves and our troubles is an asset of the greatest magnitude. It can help us contend with adversity, derive greater joy out of living, and maintain our sanity. Yet no one seems to know how to cultivate it.

(He then goes on to say that the kind of sense of humor to which he is referring is not the kind that enjoys jokes and comic routines; for "delightful as they may be, they are contrived and superficial, bearing about the same relation to therapeutic humor as pretty pictures to real art. The kind of sense of humor that can help us maintain our sanity moves beyond jokes, beyond wit, beyond laughter itself. It must constitute a frame of mind, a point of view, a deep-going, far-reaching attitude to life."

He states that a person who has this sort of sense of humor has a group of qualities characteristic of this frame of mind:

Flexibility - a willingness to examine every issue and every side of of every issue and every side of every side.

(over)

Spontaneity - an ability to leap from one mood or mode of thought to another.

Unconventionality - freedom from the values of the times, the place, and the profession of which he or she is a part.

Shrewdness - a refusal to believe that anyone, least of all himself, is what he or she seems to be.

Playfulness - a grasp of life as a game, a tragicomic game that nobody wins but that does not have to be won to be enjoyed.

Humility - an ability to shrug off the insufficiency of his or her ultimate wisdom, the meaninglessness of his or her profoundest thoughts.

SENSE OF HUMOR - THERAPEUTIC EFFECT - QUOTES.

JEFF WILLIAMS: "A SENSE OF HUMOR IS GOD'S ASPIRIN TO CURE THE ILLS OF REALITY."

ALICE G. WINTERS, IN "MOTHER OF THE BRIDE":
"A WISE MAN SAID, 'THE MAN WHO HAS LOST HIS SENSE OF HUMOR RIDES THROUGH LIFE IN A WAGON WITHOUT SPRINGS. HE FEELS EVERY JOLT AND ROCK.'"

WEEKEND, A BRITISH PUBLICATION:

"THE BETTER ADJUSTED YOU ARE, THE MORE READILY YOU WILL RESPOND TO HUMOR IN JOKES, CARTOONS, AND ALSO EVERYDAY SITUATIONS. MALADJUSTED PEOPLE SHOW A FAR GREATER TENDENCY TO MISS THE POINT OF A JOKE OR FUNNY REMARK AND TO TAKE THINGS SERIOUSLY WHICH ARE MEANT TO BE FUNNY. THE ABILITY TO GET A LAUGH OUT OF EVERYDAY SITUATIONS IS A SAFETY VALVE WHICH WILL RID YOU OF TENSIONS WHICH OTHERWISE MIGHT DAMAGE YOUR HEALTH."

Aid in maintaining sanity:

After the tornado in Wichita Falls, and after any tornado, or flood, or other disaster, you will find signs of a sense of humor. At times such as these, when one's home is gone, and lives are wrecked, what can one do but kill one's self, or survive it. And a s. of h. helps tremendously in surviving it. IN Wichita Falls, signs such as "Gone With the Wind" and "Open for Business" appeared in the yards of homes which were remnants of the former residences. Perhaps just one wall was standing as was evident in one of the newspaper photos, but on that wall in spray paint someone with a marvelous sense of humor had sprayed: "One helluva party. Be back next week."

Dr. Hall, a dentist, in Wichita Falls, relates how the phone rang as he and his family were on the way to the closet, which, incidentally, was the only thing left

standing of Dr. Hall's home. His sixteen year old daughter answered the phone, and said, "I can't talk; we're having a tornado."

65 yr. old blind vendor was seriously injured when a hit-and-run driver smashed into his newsstand, but is adamant about continuing to work. He plans to reopen after his release from the hospital. "I want to go back to work; I don't want to be on the public dole." His friends, many of them, have volunteered to do carpentry work for him; they urge him to reopen his Northwest Side newsstand. He is now (Sept. 7, 1981) in the hospital in Chicago with a broken right arm, eight fractured ribs, a partially collapsed right lung and what he called a "slightly bruised heart." He added, "In other words, I am in a mess, but as long as I don't lose my sense of humor, I have got the whole world."

SENSE OF HUMOR - THERAPEUTIC EFFECT -
ANN LANDERS COLUMN.

LETTER TO 'DEAR ANN LANDERS':

The doctors are at it again. Every week they come up with something that is harmful to Mr. and Mrs. John Q. Public. If it isn't cholesterol, it is smog.

Now they tell us to stop laughing. A scientist at Stanford says laughing can be hazardous to our health. He claims laughter disrupts normal breathing and can contribute to strokes in people who are susceptible. He also points out that there is no literature detailing the massive muscular activity associated with laughter and that we have much to learn in this area.

ANN LANDERS' ANSWER:

My experts say go ahead and laugh -- that is, if you can find anything to laugh about these days. (And P.S., pass it on, will ya'?)

DR. WILLIAM F. FRY, JR., THE SCIENTIST FROM STANFORD UNIVERSITY, A PSYCHIATRIST, CLAIMS HE WAS MISQUOTED, THEN THE MISQUOTE WAS PASSED ALONG TO ANN LANDERS.

HIS REPLY: (to Ann Landers column)

"Don't believe it. I was misquoted. Please inform your readers of my deeply held conviction that laughter and mirth and humor are invaluable and ought to be encouraged in every way. A sense of humor is a precious part of life and should be prized and enjoyed."

(Therapeutic)

In their book, "Type A Behavior and Your Heart," Dr. Myron Friedman and Dr. Ray H. Rosenman, emphasize that "your basic security does not depend upon, nor can it be safeguarded by, the opinions of your friends and associates; it depends upon your own precise awareness not only of your positive qualities and capacities but also your inadequacies. Facing up to the latter may well increase your sense of security rather than diminish it."

They go on to insist that you have an unbiased picture of yourself, become less dependent upon the opinion of other persons, and far less inclined toward a frenzied career of acquiring more and more numbers...the only real hope for such security, they say, lies in frank self-evaluations.

In a subsequent listing of things you must do to accomplish the above, the authors, in step #2 cite:

"2. You must examine your sense of humor to determine how it has served you. Is it chiefly a repository for jokes and anecdotes? Or does it function--as it should to help you perceive your own occasionally ludicrous aspects?"

Interesting, isn't it? Especially to those who never realized they were ludicrous; they only look ludicrous to those others who perceive their ludicrousness; then never thought of themselves in this manner. Same as those who say, "My fault?! I wasn't planning for any of it to be my fault! What's the matter? You crazy or something?"

(I like that word awareness. To me, that is the key to self-evaluation: knowing where and in what we fail. For instance, in any learning process, we must first reveal to ourselves, confess to ourselves, that we are ignorant, and know the difference between being ignorant and stupid. Do you know the difference? Every looked up the two words? Look them up. It will help your awareness.)

On page 298 of the same book, the authors state:

"Luckily, the behavior pattern of most Type A persons is not crippled beyond repair. Most still retain, to some degree, a sense of humor; this is a priceless aid to recovery. Another is sheer courage. It takes courage (and a sense of humor) to look back critically at

the person you are today. It takes courage to look back at one's career and brand an error as an error." (Also, it will provide a good laugh, if you have a sense of humor.)

(When I look back at my life, I am amazed at my pomposity and my many defects. When I started speaking, I made up a brochure and put on it, after "Humorist," "Philosopher." That put me right up there with Plato and Socrates. Today I can laugh at that, but then, it was serious. So serious it was ludicrous. A newspaper man brought me back down to earth in N.C.: "...really a bunch of homilies." Ever look up the word "Homily." No wonder the man came up to me one time and said, "I didn't like your preaching to me.")

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"IN FUN" -- THRESHOLD FOR LAUGHTER.

LAUGHTER IS NOT EASILY PRODUCED.

THE THRESHOLD FOR LAUGHTER DOES NOT SEEM TO BE ESPECIALLY LOW, EXCEPT WHERE THERE IS SOCIAL FACILITATION OR IN EXCEPTIONALLY GIGGLY INDIVIDUALS.

GIGGLY INDIVIDUALS -- KNOW ANY?

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"IN FUN"

"AT PLAY" "IN THE MOOD"

AN ATTITUDE THAT IS NECESSARY TO HUMOR.

MAX EASTMAN:

THE FIRST LAW OF HUMOR -- THAT THINGS CAN
BE FUNNY ONLY WHEN WE ARE IN FUN.

WE CAN BE ONLY HALF 'IN FUN' AND THINGS
WILL STILL BE FUNNY.

BUT WHEN NOT IN FUN AT ALL -- WHEN IN
'DEAD EARNEST,' HUMOR IS THE THING WHICH
IS DEAD.

A MOOD -- A SENSE OF PLAY -- IS ESSENTIAL
IF PEOPLE ARE TO ENJOY THEMSELVES.

NOT ONLY THE PERFORMER, BUT
THE AUDIENCE

BOTH THE PERFORMER AND THE AUDIENCE MUST BE
IN AN ATTITUDE OF PLAY...A MOOD...OF 'AT PLAY'
OR 'IN FUN.'

THIS CONCERNS EVERYONE CONNECTED WITH THE
PROGRAM! (AND EVERYTHING)

PROGRAM COMMITTEE

EMCEE

INVOCATOR

ANNOUNCEMENTS

MUSIC

MEAL

NOTHING MUST OCCUR WHICH WOULD PRODUCE OTHER THAN AN "IN FUN" MOOD.

AT LEAST: "DO NO HARM!"

THE AUDIENCE, WHETHER ONE OR A THOUSAND, MUST BE HEIGHTENED TO AND MAINTAINED AT A HIGH 'IN FUN' MOOD...AND KEPT THERE.

EVERYTHING WHICH OCCURS MUST BE FOCUSED ON THIS OBJECTIVE: THAT THEY, THE AUDIENCE, WILL HAVE A GOOD TIME.

REMEMBER:

1. THE OBJECTIVE OF THE MEETING. IF IT IS TO ENTERTAIN, TO HAVE A GOOD TIME, TO TREAT THIS GROUP OF PEOPLE TO A GRAND, ENTERTAINING EVENING, THEN ALL THE PLANNING AND EVENTUAL ACTIONS MUST BE TOWARD THAT GOAL.
2. IF NOT ALREADY IN A FESTIVE MOOD, YOU MUST MOTIVATE THEM TO THAT MOOD.
3. ONCE IN THAT MOOD, NOTHING MUST HAPPEN WHICH WILL DAMPEN THEIR SPIRITS.
4. THEY SHOULD LEAVE STILL IN THAT MOOD.. AND THINKING BACK ON WHAT A GLORIOUS, ENTERTAINING EVENING THEY HAVE JUST EXPERIENCED.
5. LAUGHTER IS AN OUTWARD MANIFESTATION OF AN INNER STATE OF MIND. IF YOU WANT PEOPLE TO LAUGH, THEIR INNER STATE OF MIND MUST BE JOCLAR, A MOOD OF 'AT PLAY,' 'IN FUN' -- A MOOD OF ACCEPTANCE OF YOUR LAUGH-CREATING MECHANICS.

"IN FUN" - CHILDREN

IF IN FUN, THEY ENJOY ALMOST ANYTHING.

"PEEP-EYE"

MORE NOISE, THE BETTER - HE AND AARON THOMAS

AS LONG AS IT DOES SPOIL THE "IN FUN"
ATMOSPHERE.

YELLING, BEATING ON PANS, THROWING SAND,
DEAFENING NOISE, YELLING, KNOCKING EACH
OTHER DOWN, MAKING FACES, TICKLING, ..

PLAYING WITH CHRISTIAN SPILLER:

THROW HIM UP...

CATCH HIM...

YELLING...

MAKING FACES

NOT "IN FUN"

SLEEPY, HUNGRY, TIRED...

PARENTS AND GRANDPARENTS SHOULD RECOGNIZE
THIS, BUT DON'T.

HUMOR - "In fun" - the Child out to play.

(this is the type I will be using from now on. The Orator type takes up too much space and besides, I will probably be able to read this in my old age, with a magnifying glass.)

The other day a program chairman wrote to me after my appearance at his Rotary Club of Kansas City Ladies' Day Program(my second appearance there):

Tom Haggai, Charles Plumb, and I (Joe Gilbert) were talking about you and decided that the reason you are able to be so funny is that you still have the little boy in you.

This is true. I told Maxine about Joe's letter and she said, "He's right." I agree. Not that I am not a very serious person for I am at times, but I am able to "let my Child out to play." A person has to do that to be funny and to enjoy fun.

Dr. Harris of "I'M O.K.; YOU'RE O.K." fame says we are all three people: the Parent, the Adult, and the Child. The Child is all of us loves to laugh, depending upon whether our childhood was full of laughs and whether we were allowed to laugh during our first few years. The Adult knows the Child must be let out to play every now and then and woe to him that has a blocked-out Child.

Typical of the Parent-Contaminated Adult with a Blocked-Out Child is the man who is duty-dominated, always working late at the office, all business, impatient with family members who want to plan a skiing trip or a picnic to the woods. It is as if, at some point in his childhood, he was so utterly quashed by serious, stern, duty-bound parents that he found the only safe way to proceed through life was to turn his Child off completely, or to block it out. He had found, through experience, that every time he let it out there was trouble: "Go to your room"; "Children should be seen and not heard"; "How many times must I tell you..."; "Grow up!" If this little person also was rewarded for perfect conformity, diligent effort, compliance, and doing exactly as he was told, the path of wisdom appeared to be total conformity to the Parent and total blocking out of childlike impulses.

This type of person has very little happiness recorded in his Child. He probably never will be able to let his happy Child out, because he has very little happy Child.

Thank the good Lord there are not too many types of these folks in my audiences! I have had a few, but not many. Every now and then you see some person sitting out there, looking disinterested, never smiling, much less laughing out loud. The rest of the audience can be cracking up and there they sit looking like the wall, fading into the woodwork. I used to worry about them. Now, I don't. I handle this situation by saying, "I appreciate your laughing. I have not seen one soul here who has not been laughing. And I appreciate that. I had enough of those nonlaughers in the dental office. Every now and then in an audience you see one hatchet-faced old biddy or one granite-faced old grump, sitting there, challenging the speaker, 'Brother, let's see you make me laugh!' Well, you can't make them laugh; no one can make them laugh. Josh Billings, one hundred years ago said, 'The hardest thing in the comic lecturing business is to try to make those people laugh that God never intended to laugh in the first place.'" Then, that usually does it; the person who has not been laughing will usually smile at least because he or she certainly does not want anyone else in the audience pointing them out and saying, "Looka there, he missed one!"

A little child, raised in a puritanistic environment where laughter was suppressed, where the Child never learned to play, had a hard time. This sort of person later can be strong enough to overcome this by saying that his Parent is wrong(that is hard to say) and that "Momma and Papa were stupid!" His Adult has got to take over and change him if at all possible. The least he must do if he to live a happy life at all is to let some psychiatrist help him to realize that his position is not amenable with a happy marriage, is not fair to his wife and children, and he must not try to block out the Child in others, and especially his wife and children.

He can, with his Adult, establish a value of being loving or of preserving his family. He will not change the nature of his Parent or create a happy Child which is not within him, but he can achieve the insight which makes it possible to build a satisfactory life in the present.

I'm O.K - You're O.K.

Avon Books

959 Eighth Avenue

New York, New York 10019

Mark Twain loved to let the Child out. He thoroughly enjoyed playing with his three lovely daughters and acted out plays with them, told them ghost stories (he especially liked to scare them with "The Golden Arm" when at the end he would jump and shout, "You have it!" and the kids would squeak with fear and delight. Mark Twain's lovely wife, Livy, called him Youth, that in itself indicative of the Child out to play. His was an everlasting quest for merriment; he loved to be with Dean Howells and laugh. Read "My Mark Twain" by W. Dean Howells; it is so chuck full of his reverence for his best friend, so full of the days of revelry between the two of them. Mark Twain's delight with dressing up in his Oxford robe and his finally deciding in his later years that white suede would be his adornment all the rest of his days; these traits were evidence of the Child at play. His practical jokes, even the disastrous Whittier Speech, his most famous, along with the one honoring General Grant, manifested his love for the merriment of spirit he exhibited continuously. He could not be serious long; at such times of extreme vexation his wit would emerge: "One runs so short of curse words at these times." He and I have a lot in common in this regard; I know it and am proud to be kin to him in this aspect of life.

Remember, when a person is in dead earnest, it is humor which is dead. The blocked-out Child is not dead, but simply is not present, was never allowed by its Parent to go out and play. Sad, isn't it?

"IN FUN" - YOUTH

RADIO TO EAR - DEAFENING

MUSIC:

"IF THAT DON'T BRING RAIN, NOTHING WILL."

"IF WE DID THAT, THEY'D WORM US."

REALISTICALLY, IF THEY THINK ABOUT IT,
THE NOISE IS ABOVE A TRAUMATIC LEVEL.

IF "IN FUN" WILL LAUGH AT ANYTHING:

PAMELA - GIGGLING

"WILL YOU PLEASE STOP GIGGLING?"

WETS HER PANTS!

Humor, according to Eastman, can only be enjoyed when in an attitude of "in fun" and this attitude is mostly enjoyed by children.

Adults retain, he says, to a certain degree this in fun attitude of children, and to the degree that they do retain it, they can enjoy laughter.

To enjoy laughter, therefore, we have to go back into a phase of our life similar to that of childhood, when things were funny, sometimes regardless of them being painful, if we stopped and analyzed our play.

If a person is able to enjoy humor, we say that his or her Child is out to play. To be a child again is the secret of happiness, some have said. Everyone would like to go back (if they had a happy childhood) to those care-free days, when we romped and laughed so much, ignorant of all that lay ahead of us, ignorant of our future responsibilities. When we did not think about the worries of the time to come; we were only playing, and occupied our time in that pursuit: to enjoy ourselves.

The in fun attitude must be established if we are to enjoy ourselves. We must be in a 'carnival' atmosphere; remember what fun you had at the carnival the first time.

People say that I am able to make people laugh for I "have a lot of the little boy still in me." They are right; I can let that little boy out to play, and he is out most of the time. That's the very reason that I think I am able to enjoy the moment, to pass off the cares, to make light of the painful, even the painful, and to discern the humorous in the serious situation.

HUMOR -- APPRECIATION OF. *"In Fun"*

THE AUDIENCE MUST APPRECIATE THE HUMOR.

MORE IMPORTANT, THE AUDIENCE MUST BE CAPABLE
OF APPRECIATING THE HUMOR.

"IF A PERSON DESIRES TO BE A HUMORIST, IT IS
NECESSARY THAT THE PEOPLE AROUND HIM SHALL BE
AT LEAST AS WISE AS HE IS, OTHERWISE HIS HUMOR
WILL NOT BE COMPREHENDED." -- JAMES STEPHENS,
IN THE DEMIGODS.

(JAMES STEPHENS -- IRISH POET AND NOVELIST,
1882 - 1950)

"DO NOT CAST YOUR PEARLS BEFORE SWINE."

"IN FUN" -- THE AUDIENCE MUST BE "IN FUN"

AUDIENCE -- CAN BE ONE -- OR A THOUSAND.

-- STILL MUST BE "IN FUN"

-- WILL VARY WITH THE INDIVIDUALS

PREJUDICES.

EMOTIONS

ATTITUDES OF THE MOMENT.

THERE IS A GREAT DEMAND FOR THE HUMOROUS
SPEAKER -- THE PERSON WHO WITH CLEAN HUMOR CAN
MAKE FOLKS LAUGH AND YET MAKE THEM TAKE THE
MESSAGE HOME WITH THEM. THEY, THE AUDIENCE, DO
APPRECIATE BEING MADE TO LAUGH; FEW CAN DO IT.
IT IS A RARE COMMODITY, HUMOR. JOKES ARE NOT
RARE; THE HUMOROUS STORY IS RARE. (OVER)

IT ALL GOES BACK TO BEING EASILY REPLACED. BILL COSBY IS NOT EASILY REPLACED. I HOPE I AM NOT EITHER, ALTHOUGH SOME AUDIENCES SEEM TO HAVE DONE MARVELOUSLY WITHOUT ME. I KEEP THINKING THAT THEY JUST HAVEN'T WISED UP TO THE FACT THAT THERE ARE NOT TOO MANY HUMORISTS AROUND TODAY WHO CAN PLEASE THEIR AUDIENCES AND MAKE THE PROGRAM CHAIRPERSON A HERO OR HEROINE FOR THEM HAVING BEEN THERE.

AT THE J. CHANDLER PETERSON COMPANIES' WEALTH MANAGEMENT SEMINAR RECENTLY HELD AT THE ANATOLE HOTEL IN DALLAS, I PICKED UP MANY IDEAS ABOUT WEALTH AND ITS PROCUREMENT AND MANAGEMENT. THE ONE STATEMENT WHICH HIT HOME TO ME THE MOST WAS THIS ONE:

The successful manager of wealth must capture the distortions in the economy by being a supplier of the scarce commodities.

THAT WORD "COMMODITY" -- WHAT IS THAT? WEBSTER'S SAYS, "SOMETHING VALUABLE," "ECONOMIC GOOD".

TO ME, THAT'S HUMOR. IT IS A RARE COMMODITY, IS IT NOT? THEREFORE, IF I AM TO ATTAIN WEALTH IN THIS LIFE, ECONOMIC WEALTH, I HAVE A COMMODITY THAT IS RARE AND MARKETABLE. IT IS CERTAINLY SCARCE. HOW SUCCESSFUL I BECOME AT THE MARKETING DEPENDS UPON MY AWARENESS AND ACTION. I WILL WORK ON THIS THE NEXT YEAR TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THIS BASIC NEW PRINCIPLE.

SEE WHAT ONE PICKS UP WHEN HE OR SHE ATTENDS CONVENTIONS? THIS ONE FACT MAY MOTIVATE ME TO THE EXTENT THAT I WILL BE RICH ONE DAY AND ALSO MAY HAND THESE RICHES ON TO MY DAUGHTER AND GRANDCHILDREN. IF THAT HAPPENS, I HOPE IT WON'T SPOIL THEM. I WILL TRY TO MAKE SURE IT DOES NOT DO THAT.

GETS ONE'S MIND WHIRLING THOUGH: SHOULD I PUT OUT MORE TAPES AND RECORDS? HOW ABOUT MORE HUMOR WORKSHOPS? HOW ABOUT A HUMOR NEWSLETTER? THE OPPORTUNITIES SEEM VERY GOOD.

"IN FUN" -- THE AUDIENCE.

DR. HOWARD POLLIO, WHO IS A STUDENT OF HUMOR, AND WHO HAS BEEN STUDYING THAT SUBJECT FOR YEARS CONDUCTED SOME SOME SCIENTIFIC EXPERIMENTS CONCERNING LAUGHTER AMONG CERTAIN GROUPS.

HE FOUND THAT HUMOR IS A VERY SERIOUS SUBJECT, NOT EASY TO ANALYZE. HE FOUND THAT THE RESPONSE OF THE AUDIENCE DEPENDS A GREAT DEAL ON THE MIND OF THE LAUGHERS, HIS ENVIRONMENT, AND HIS COMPANY.

HE FOUND IN MOVIE HOUSES WHERE HUMOROUS SHOWS WERE PLAYING, THE AUDIENCE AT 8 PM DID NOT LAUGH IN THE SAME WAY AS DID THE 10 PM AUDIENCE.

HE TRIED EXPERIMENTS ON HIS LABORATORY PERSONNEL AND THEN ON RANDOM SELECTED INDIVIDUALS. HE GOT AN UNEXPECTED RESPONSE:

HE FOUND THAT COMIC ROUTINES WHICH CONVULSED THE LABORATORY PERSONNEL HAD LITTLE EFFECT ON THE RANDOM SELECT GROUP. WHY? THIS WAS ABRASIVE MATERIAL -- DON RICKLES. THIS SUGGESTED TO HIM THAT STRANGERS WOULD NOT LAUGH AT ABRASIVE COMIC MATERIAL UNTIL THEY GOT TO KNOW EACH OTHER BETTER AND COULD THUS FEEL MORE RELAXED IN EACH OTHER'S COMPANY.

HE THEN GOT GROUPS OF HIS FRIENDS TO LISTEN TO BILL COSBY AND DON RICKLES -- ONE CAUSTIC COMIC AND ONE BENIGN. RICKLES IS THE PUT-DOWN ARTIST, VERY ABRASIVE, VITRIOLIC. COSBY THE GOOD GUY, TALKING ABOUT HIMSELF AS A NICE GUY REMINISCING ABOUT HIS CHILDHOOD MISADVENTURES. THE SAME MATERIAL WAS THEN PERFORMED FOR GROUPS OF STRANGERS.

RESULTS: THE GROUPS OF FRIENDS AND STRANGERS SHOWED ONLY SLIGHT DIFFERENCES IN THEIR REACTIONS WHEN LISTENING TO COSBY BUT WIDE DIFFERENCES WHEN LISTENING TO RICKLES.

WHEN THEY LISTENED TO RICKLES(ON TAPE) THE AUDIENCE REMAINED QUIET, IMMOBILE, AND DID NOT LAUGH.

WHEN THEY LISTENED TO COSBY THEY MOVED AND LAUGHED A GREAT DEAL. (OVER)

ONE OF THE MAIN DIFFERENCES OF COURSE IS IN THE PERFORMERS: ONE IS A COMIC AND ONE IS A HUMORIST. COMICS FOCUS ON THE IMMEDIATE SITUATION AND HUMORISTS LEADS HIS AUDIENCE TO EXPERIENCES OUTSIDE THE PRESENT MOMENT.

THE AUDIENCE, AMONG STRANGERS, ARE AFRAID OF BEING LAUGHED AT. THE FRIENDS HAVE A STRONGER STRUCTURE AND DO NOT HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT ACCEPTANCE (AS MUCH.)

DR. POLLIO CONCLUDED IN THIS NEW YORK TIMES ARTICLE:

"We've found that the meaning of humor to an audience and their reaction to it depends almost entirely on the context of the audience -- the type of person he is, the kind of environment he's in, and the person or persons he's with.

I ENJOYED THIS ARTICLE SENT TO ME BY MY FRIEND, WALTER "ZANEY" BLANEY, MAGICIAN AND ENTERTAINER FROM HOUSTON. PEOPLE ARE NICE TO SEND ME SO MANY SUCH ARTICLES AND I GAIN A GREAT DEAL FROM THEM. I AM LOOKING FORWARD TO MEETING DR. POLLIO.

I WOULD SAY ABOUT THIS SORT OF THING THAT IF ONE KNOWS ALL OF THIS -- THAT THE AUDIENCE MUST BE FRIENDLY AND COMPATIBLE -- THEN, IT WOULD BEHOOVE THE WHOLE SITUATION TO PUT THEM AS MUCH KNOWN TO EACH OTHER AS POSSIBLE. INTERPLAY PRIOR TO THE EXPOSURE TO THE ENTERTAINER: HAND-CLAPPING ROUTINES, AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION, REMINDING THEM OF THEIR LIKE CHARACTERISTICS, GETTING THEM INTO THE ACT, ESTABLISHING A CARNIVAL-LIKE ATMOSPHERE WHERE EVERYONE IS VOCAL, PARTICIPATING, ETC.

THIS WOULD BE PUTTING THEM INTO AN "IN FUN" MOOD, WHERE THEY COULD THEN ENJOY ANY TYPE OF HUMOR AND NOT WORRY ABOUT THEIR NEIGHBOR'S ACCEPTANCE OF THEM.

IF YOU HAVE HEARD RICKLES AT LAS VEGAS, YOU KNOW THAT HE DOES GET TREMENDOUS RESPONSE. HE PUTS THE AUDIENCE IN AN "IN FUN" MOOD AHEAD OF HIS APPEARANCE BY HAVING PRECEDING ARTISTS, ETC.

"IN FUN" -- THE AUDIENCE.

REMEMBER: LOW THRESHOLD...FACILITATION...
GIGGLY INDIVIDUALS.

SPOT SOME GIGGLY INDIVIDUALS:

"WISH I COULD TAKE YOU WITH ME..."

LADY...ROSWELL, N.M....HIT HIGH C!

TONIGHT SHOW -- JOHNNY CARSON

HAND-CLAPPING, FESTIVAL, CARNIVAL ATTITUDE.

MUSIC --- DOC SEVERNSON AND HIS ORCHESTRA.

ED MACMAHON -- JOKES

APPLAUSE SIGN

SPEAKER -- ALONE -- AND SOMETIMES HANDICAPPED!

BY EMCEE

BY ENVIRONMENT

BY ATTITUDES OF HOSTILITY

BY COCKTAIL PARTY TOO LONG.

COMPARISON OF WHAT JOHNNY CARSON HAS AND WHAT
I HAD -- AT ARLINGTON, TEXAS...

-- MAYOR VANDERGRIF -- EMCEE

-- "...ALL I GOT IS THE MAYOR..."

-- "...HIT ME WITH HIS PURSE...NOT FOR YOU."

DO ANYTHING THAT WILL GET THEM IN A GOOD MOOD.

ONCE IN THAT MOOD, DO NO HARM.

"IN FUN" - THE AUDIENCE:

STEWART HARRAL: "MIRTH DEMANDS A MOOD."

AUDIENCE MUST BE "IN FUN"

IF NOT AT FIRST "IN FUN" THEY MUST BE MANIPULATED INTO THIS MOOD.

JOHNNY CARSON SHOW:

WAITING IN LINE.

FINALLY GOT IN - VICTORY! (LAUGHING)

MUSIC, MERRIMENT, HAND-CLAPPING

DOC - ED - ETC.

APPLAUSE SIGN

"HERE'S JOHNNY"

DICK CAVETT:

"O.K., HERE HE COMES; NOW LET'S HEAR IT;
LET'S SHOW HIM A LOT OF LOVE."

CONVENTION: "IN FUN"?

HOW HAS THE CONVENTION BEEN GOING?

IS THE AUDIENCE "UP" OR "DOWN"?

WEATHER - MIAMI - COLD - BOSTON -
"MIGHT HAS WELL HAVE STAYED HOME."

EMOTIONAL ATTITUDE OF THE GROUP.

HOW ABOUT THE PROGRAMS PRIOR TO YOURS?

(OVER)

MUST GUARD AGAINST ANYTHING THAT WILL TAKE
THE AUDIENCE FROM THE "IN FUN" ATTITUDE:

TEMPERATURE.

ARRANGEMENT OF THE ROOM.

FOOD

DRINK:

COCKTAIL HOUR

DRUNKS.

REPORTS

INCOMING OFFICERS SPEECHES:

37 MINUTES!

"HOW LONG DID I TAKE? FIVE MINUTES?"

FIRE

HEART ATTACKS

WORLD WAR I VETERANS - "LAUGH BAG" - INVO-
CATION - COULDN'T STOP IT.

EXAMPLES:

AUSTIN VENETIAN BLIND DEALERS.

SAN ANGELO COOPERATIVE

LAS VEGAS, BEST WESTERN

DRUNKS - RAY STANISH

BUTTE, MONTANA

EACH AUDIENCE IS DIFFERENT:

JOHNNY: "YOU SHOULD HAVE BEEN HERE LAST
NIGHT." (DEAD CHICKEN, ETC.)

"IN FUN" - THE AUDIENCE.

DENTAL GROUP AT PHOENIX COUNTRY CLUB.

RISER TOO FAR FROM THE AUDIENCE.

AUDIENCE - NO WARM-UP

- WARMED UP LATER, BY ME.

PLAY FIRST PART, THEN A LATER PART, FOR
EXAMPLE IN HUMOR WORKSHOP.

HUMOR - "IN FUN" - THE AUDIENCE.

THE AUDIENCE AT PHOENIX COUNTRY CLUB, THE DENTISTS.

HOW I HAD TO HAD THE RISER MOVED.

HOW I HAD TO HAVE THE VOLUME ON THE PA SYSTEM TURNED UP (TILL IT SQUEALS, THEN TURN IT DOWN A HAIR)

HOW THEY DID NOT RESPOND SO WELL AT FIRST.

NO GOOD INTRODUCTION.

NO WARM-UP (I HAD TO WARM THEM UP)

"AT LEAST DO NO HARM"

NUMEROUS OTHER OCCASIONS WHERE I HAVE HAD TO UNDO THE HARM DONE BY THE EMCEE.

CAVETT'S EXPERIENCE AT DULUTH.

HOW THEY RESPONDED LATER.

PLAY PART OF THE TAPE FOR HUMOR WORKSHOP AUDIENCE. COMPARE THE FORMER WITH THE LATTER.

TELL HOW I EDITED THE TALK, THE REMARKS I MADE. "THIS IS NO GOOD." THEN, LATER, "THIS IS ALL RIGHT." "VERY GOOD"
"START WITH 'RUB, DON'T BLOT.'" (WAY I USE SUCH NOTES.)

"IN FUN" - THE AUDIENCE (CONT)

CAVETT: DULUTH - "...LIKE A TREE FULL OF OWLS."

BILL GOVE: "...EAT THEIR YOUNG."

"...READY FOR A HANGING."

GOOD AUDIENCES:

TECHNICAL ALL DAY.

"BOY, AM I READY TO LAUGH A LITTLE.

WARNING: THE PERFORMER MUST DO NOTHING HERSELF
OR HIMSELF WHICH WILL GET THE AUDIENCE
OUT OF "IN FUN"

(SEE THE PERFORMER)

"IN FUN" - BECOMING PLAYFUL. IN A MOOD OF PLAY.

IT IS NECESSARY THAT ONE BE , OR BECOME PLAYFUL,
IN ORDER TO PERCEIVE ANYTHING AS FUNNY.

IN EVERYTHING WE PERCEIVE AS FUNNY THERE IS AN
ELEMENT WHICH, IF WE WERE SERIOUS AND SUFFICIENTLY
SENSITIVE, AND SUFFICIENTLY CONCERNED, WOULD BE
UNPLEASANT.

THIS IS TRUE AND ABSOLUTE.

THIS IS A PRINCIPLE (ROY HATTEN)

CRUELTY JOKES:

STUTTERING
STAMMERING
TONGUE-TIED STORIES
CRIPPLED STORIES (YOU THINK THESE ARE
NOT FUNNY. LISTEN TO RICHARD PRYOR
TALK ABOUT STEPPING ON THE BLIND MAN.
LET ME TELL THE STORY ABOUT CRIPPLED
CHARLIE" OR LET DEMPSEY SERUR TELL
YOU ABOUT SYDNEY ROSS. THESE ARE
FUNNY IN THAT THEY WILL MAKE YOU
LAUGH, BUT YOU WILL NOT FEEL GOOD
ABOUT LAUGHING AT THEM.)
FAT PEOPLE - "FAT ALBERT"
CROSS-EYES - RICHARD PRYOR - TALKING
ABOUT "CROSS-EYED JUNIOR"
BEN TURPIN. WOULD NOT BE AS ACCEPTED
TODAY, FOR WE ARE MORE HUMANITARIAN
TODAY AND DO NOT LIKE TO LAUGH AT SUCH
HUMOR. WE LAUGH, BUT WE ARE NOT PROUD
FOR LAUGHING.

IN ANY UNPLEASANTNESS, THERE IS AN ELEMENT,
WHICH, IF WE ARE PLAYFUL AND NOT SENSITIVE AND
NOT CONCERNED, MIGHT BE THOUGHT FUNNY.

I GO A LITTLE FURTHER THAN THAT. WE CAN BE
VERY CONCERNED, BUT STILL IT MIGHT BE FUNNY.
IN SOME CASES, IT WOULD HAVE TO BE FUNNY.
BUT, UNLESS YOU HAVE A MARVELOUS, NOT SIMPLY
AN AVERAGE, SENSE OF HUMOR, YOU WOULD NOT
PERCEIVE THIS AS FUNNY. (OVER)

EXAMPLES OF THE LATTER PRINCIPLE:

KAMIKAZES

"BAIL OUT."

"CARRIERS THAT WAY!"

DEATH JOKES:

"...AT THE WRONG FUNERAL."

DEATH STORIES:

RICHARD PRYOR: "WE ARE GATHERED HERE TODAY... AND IF YOU THINK WE ARE BURYING YOU WITH ALL THOSE DIAMONDS AND STUFF ON..."

MAXINE: "WHAT IF I DIE FIRST?"

TORTURE:

CHARLIE PLUMB - "SMILE -- YOU'RE ON CANDID CAMERA."

EXAMPLES OF PEOPLE NOT "IN FUN":

"I AM NO FUNSTER." (DENTAL PATIENT)

HATCHET-FACED OLD BIDDY.

LADY, WHO CRIED ALL THE WAY TROUGH MY PRESENTATION AT HOUSTON.

WHAT HAD HAPPENED?

ARGUEMENT? HUSBAND?

GROUP AT SAN ANGELO - CO-OP - FIRED THEIR MANAGER FOR STEALING.

MAN -- CAME UP AND EXPOSED HIM TO THEM.. THEN, I HAD TO BE FUNNY.

BEST WESTERN, BEST EASTERN CONVENTION, LAS VEGAS -- FIRED THEIR EXEC. V.P. -- WOULD NOT LET HIM ATTEND THE CONVENTION, ETC.

The tape of the COEX '81 talk which I gave to the food manufacturers group at the Fontainebleau Hotel, Miami Beach, Feb. 24, 1981, demonstrates the resistance of an audience to a speaker at the first of his/her performance. This audience was tired; they had had a whole day of lectures and slide shows. The afternoon performance, at which I was present for a portion of it, was very heavy and was predicated on the idea that the future for the food business was going to be so competitive and full of frustrations that it would be the equivalent of war, and the person lecturing to the group used war, combat tactics, and other facets of the war strategy to illustrate his slide presentation. These people desperately needed to laugh that night; they did not need to be bombarded anymore; they needed a respite from the trenches.

This sort of set-up makes it difficult for a speaker to entertain, especially right from the start, when he or she might have an introduction from a person who has never heard the speaker, and who wants to get out of sharing the blame in case the speaker is not up to standards.

(Play the first of the talk for the Humor Workshop audience to illustrate the introduction.)

(Then, play my remarks--and the response to my remarks.)

(Then, skip over to the middle of the talk, and finally to the end of the talk, where they gave me a tremendous, standing ovation.)

I had wonderful letters from these people, especially the president and the chairman of the board. I will get perhaps fifty talks from the members of the audience who were there that night.

A few points for consideration:

1. The group was not warmed up.

I am not Johnny Carson.
There is no warm-up man like Ed McMahon
There is no Doc Severenson and band.

2. The audience was tired.

Had a heavy program.

All day program; they had not had much relaxation.

Lot of stress in the business and they had been reminded "You are in a war" and you had better be ready for it!

3. The members of the audience, except for three (that I know of) had never heard me.

I wandered around through the crowd before the banquet, during the cocktail party, and no one recognized me, stop me to remark about my speaking to them that night, etc.

4. The man who introduced me said, "...supposed to be a four-star speaker..."

As if, "Don't blame me if he's not."

As to tell them, "I don't want to share the blame here; I have never heard this fellow."

Notice the laughter after I have used a bit of self-deprecation.....

Notice the reaction to the "...great exhortations..." and to any pun...the reaction after I say, "...of course, in the dental profession that's known as false identification."

This is a good example of "working up the audience"--meaning working them into an "in fun" attitude when they are not at first.

This audience was aroused with the curve slanted steadily upward to a great, enthusiastic group! This is the spiritual reward for me in speaking: to take this sort of sitting-on-their-hands-attitude audience and work them into a good one.

Redd Foxx says things like, "Thanks for that round of looks." "Thanks for that sitting ovation."

"IN FUN" - EMOTIONS:

HOW THE HUMOR IS ACCEPTED DEPENDS UPON THE EMOTIONAL LEVEL BETWEEN THE SENDER AND THE RECEIVER.

HUMOR MAY BE BLOCKED OUT EMOTIONALLY.

"MENTAL BLOCKS"

THE RECEIVER JUST MAY NOT LIKE YOU!

NO WAY TO GET THEM TO LAUGH.

LINUS: "LOOK AT THIS CARTOON, LUCY, AND TELL ME IF YOU THINK IT IS FUNNY."

LUCY: "WH DREW IT?"

LINUS: "I DREW IT."

LUCY: "THEN, I DON'T THINK IT'S FUNNY."

LINUS: "BIG SISTERS ARE THE CRAB GRASS IN THE LAWN OF LIFE."

REMEMBER THE BABY?

THE MOTHER MAY BE ABLE TO MAKE IT LAUGH.

YOU MAY NOT.

THE MOTHER WILL BE ABLE TO MAKE A BABY LAUGH EIGHTEEN TIMES MORE THAN A STRANGER.

WHAT IS THE EMOTIONAL TENOR OF THE AUDIENCE AT THE TIME YOU GET UP TO MAKE YOUR PRESENTATION

? ? ? ? ? ? ?

(NEXT PAGE)

EXAMPLES OF PEOPLE, NOT "IN FUN"(CONT.)

CONVENTION NEGLECT:

VENETIAN BLIND DEALERS - AUSTIN.

TOO HOT.

TOO COLD.

FOOD TERRIBLE.

PITIFUL SERVICE - ELY, NEVADA - 2HRS, 15 MIN.

TOO MANY SPEAKERS, WORN OUT AUDIENCE:

TWENTY-FIRST SPEAKER...SAN ANTONIO.PTA

MIAMI BEACH - 8 SPEAKERS - MARILYN
VANDERBUR

WAITRESS ON FIRE - SAN FRANCISCO.

HEART ATTACK - SOMEONE IN AUDIENCE DIES.

W. C. NEWBERRY - HAD IT HAPPEN TWICE.

PEOPLE - WITH NO SENSE OF HUMOR:

PURITAN - PARENT DOMINATED CHILDHOOD, TAUGHT
THAT LIFE IS IN DEAD EARNEST.

"WHEN IN 'DEAD EARNEST' IT IS THE HUMOR
THAT IS DEAD."

NORMAN ROCKWELL PAINTING.

"TREE FULL OF OWLS" - CAVETT ROBERT.

HARD-WORKING, NO TIME FOR FUN... "THERE'S WORK
TO BE DONE, TO BE DONE, TO BE DONE..."

DR. HENRY JOHNSON: "IF YOU KEEP YOUR NOSE TO
THE GRINDSTONE ROUGH..."

"IN FUN" - SENSITIVITY - PRESS GROUP.

OCCASION - WHITE HOUSE CORRESPONDENTS ASS'N
DINNER.

1800 GUESTS.

"ALREADY DISAPPOINTED"

PRESIDENT NOT THERE.

NOR PRESIDENT'S WIFE.

NOR THE VICE PRESIDENT.

PRESIDENT SPENT THE WEEKEND AT CAMP DAVID,
THE PRESIDENTIAL RETREAT IN THE MARYLAND
MOUNTAINS.

"TOO EXHAUSTED TO ATTEND."

PEOPLE PRESENT WERE DISAPPOINTED, NOT IN AN
"IN FUN" ATTITUDE.

THE STAND-IN, WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY
JODY POWELL TALKED IN THE PRESIDENT'S ABSENCE.

1. THEY WERE NOT AMUSED AS HE POKED FUN
AT THE JOURNALISTS' SACRED COWS.
2. CHIDED THEM FOR WINNING AWARDS FOR THEIR
STORIES ON BERT LANCE.
3. "HE (THE PRESIDENT) SELDOM HAS AN OPPORTUNITY
TO DINE WITH AN INSTITUTION HELD IN LOWER
PUBLIC ESTEEM."
4. "...TIME DOES NOT PERMIT ME TO SAY ALL THE
THINGS WE FIND REGRETTABLE ABOUT WHITE
HOUSE CORRESPONDENTS."

POWELL EXPRESSED SURPRISE THAT THE CORRESPONDENTS
AND GUESTS DID NOT LAUGH ALONG WITH HIM.

(OVER)

"NOW YOU KNOW WHAT IT FEELS LIKE FROM OUR SIDE. WE GET THAT KIND OF JOKING ALL THE TIME."

QUESTION: WOULD THEY HAVE LAUGHED HAD THE PRESIDENT SAID THE SAME THINGS?

PERHAPS.

DEPENDS UPON HOW HE SAID THEM...AND THE BODY LANGUAGE.

"SMILE WHEN YOU SAY THAT, PARDNER."

IF SOMEWAY, HE LET THEM KNOW THAT HE WAS IN AN ATTITUDE OF "IN FUN."

"IN FUN" - AUDIENCE - INDIVIDUALS IN THE AUDIENCE

WOMAN - HOUSTON - CRIED ALL WAY THROUGH MY TALK.

WOMAN - AT CAPE GIRARDEAU

WOMAN - MONTGOMERY, ALA.

HECKLERS

COMPENSATING INTROVERTS

DRUNKS - MAN - WOMAN - ANNAPOLIS: "NOT ME, BABY."

"HATCHET-FACED OLD BIDDY"

WOMAN - AUSTIN - "WHAT MAKES YOU THINK
YOU'RE FUNNY?"

- RED LIGHT

- JACKIE KENNEDY - REPUBLICAN BEAUTY SHOP



Beyond Laughter
Humor and the Subconscious

Martin Grotjahn, M.D.

McGraw-Hill Book Company
New York Toronto London

INTRODUCTION

Sigmund Freud
and the Psychoanalysis of Jokes

Sigmund Freud published his first analytic studies of hysteria together with Joseph Breuer shortly before the turn of the century (1895). A few years later, in 1900, followed his history-making book, "The Interpretation of Dreams" and one year later came "The Psychopathology of Everyday Life" (1901). These books belong now to the literary property of mankind. They have established Freud as a scientist, psychologist, and man of letters. They have given the basis for the development of the new science of psychoanalysis as we know it today.

Freud's "Jokes and Their Relation to the Unconscious" appeared four years after "The Psychopathology of Everyday Life," in the year 1905. During this year Freud brought out two other major works: the "Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality," and his famous "Fragment of an Analysis of a Case of Hysteria" (1905, the so-called "Dora Case"). The order of their creation in Freud's mind is somewhat uncertain, as it was his habit to delay publication for a long time.

The years from 1895 to 1905 were years of professional isolation in Freud's life. He took alone the first scientific "journey to the end of night" into the unconscious and brought home the first specimens as proof of the existence of the unconscious. No psychoanalytic society existed, no journals were published, and psychoanalytic findings and theories were greeted with hostility and defensive ridicule.

Freud conceived the idea of writing his book about jokes while working on his most important book, "The Interpretation of Dreams." In his autobiography Freud calls "Jokes and Their Relation to the Unconscious" a by-product and twin brother of "The Interpretation of Dreams," where Freud first refers to his interest in wit:

"In waking reality I have little claim to be regarded as a wit. If my dreams seem amusing, that is not on my account, but on account of the peculiar psychological conditions under which dreams are constructed; and the fact is intimately connected with the theory of jokes and the comic. Dreams become ingenious and amusing because the direct and easiest pathway to the expression of their thoughts is barred: they are forced into being so. The reader can convince himself that my patients' dreams seem at least as full of jokes and puns as my own, or even fuller."

Freud added in a later edition (1909):

"Nevertheless this objection led me to compare the technique of jokes with the dream work; and the results are to be found in the book which I published on 'Jokes and Their Relation to the Unconscious.' "

The first reader of the dream book was Freud's friend and analyst-by-correspondence, Wilhelm Fliess, whom Freud during this time of isolation occasionally called "my one-man public." In a letter written on September 11, 1899, Freud mentions the amusing and often witty nature of dream interpretation:

"The matter about dreams I believe to be unassailable; what I dislike about it is the style. I was quite unable to express myself with noble simplicity, but lapsed into a facetious, circumlocutory straining after the picturesque. I know that, but the part of me that knows it and appraises it is unfortunately not the part that is productive.

"It is certainly true that the dreamer is too ingenious and amusing, but it is not my fault, and I cannot be reproached with it. All dreamers are insufferably witty, and they have to be, because they are under pressure, and the direct way is barred to them. If you think so, I shall insert a remark to that effect somewhere. The ostensible wit of all unconscious processes is closely connected with the theory of jokes and humour."

It is more difficult for the readers of our time to see the person of Freud in his book on jokes than in the dream book. Often a dream example shows Freud's unconscious, his hopes, his fears, his struggles, his love, his hatred, his humanity, and his almost superhuman search to find the secrets of the unconscious. While learning much about dreams, we are learning much about Freud. In the book on jokes we meet Freud as a storyteller and a lover of jokes.

This delightful aspect of Freud's personality brings him closer to us, even if it is not necessarily a meeting with the "demon" of his unconscious, as he himself called it and as it is revealed in his self-analysis.

Ernest Jones reports in the second volume of his outstanding book, "The Life and Work of Sigmund Freud," that only 1,050 copies of the book, "Jokes and Their Relation to the Unconscious," were printed in the year 1905. It was reprinted three times, in 1912, 1921, and 1925, without major changes. Its translation has always offered special difficulties because of the frequent illustrations making use of a play on words that is often untranslatable. Jones also points out that the book belongs to Freud's creative period in the early 1890s when he was thinking about "The Interpretation of Dreams" and the Dora case as well as the "Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality." Jones, too, noticed that the book on jokes is not the one that found the greatest popular acclaim. In his opinion its reading requires too much concentration. So far as he can ascertain the book was reviewed once, and then no further notice was taken of it either by the public or by the academic periodicals. Only much later did it gain attention. Jones concludes: "The field covered is the one that has been least explored subsequently by other psychoanalysts."

The book on jokes constitutes Freud's major contribution to the analytic interpretation of esthetics. He starts with a short introduction, revealing how little insight into the psychology of laughter the philosophers and esthetes

have given us. He then describes the technique of jokes in order to give a basis for later analytic understanding of the funny.

THE TECHNIQUE OF JOKES

As an example of a joke to be analyzed, Freud quotes Heinrich Heine's precious character, Hirsch-Hyacynth, who concludes his boasting about a visit with his rich relative Baron Rothschild: "And as true as I pray that the Lord may grant me all good things, I sat next to Solomon Rothschild, who treated me just as if I were his equal, quite *famillionaire*." This remark condenses the opinion that Rothschild treated the little man as familiarly as a millionaire could. The witty character of the remark does not lie in its thoughtful content but in its formulation. In the newly coined word, "famillionaire," a combination of two words was used and an increase in verbal hitting power was gained. The wit's form and technique, not its content, causes laughter. That Rothschild behaved familiarly, considering that he is a millionaire, and therefore always condescending, is witty only if it is put in that one word, "famillionaire." The condensation and the coinage of a new word cause laughter.

Condensations are often used with modification, as in Freud's second example of a jest: Describing a trip with a friend, a lady says, "I was driving with him tête-à-bête."

A witty effect may be reached not only by the combina-

tion of two words, but also by the combination of two thoughts or sayings: "His vanity is one of his four heels of Achilles."

Condensation of words or thoughts helps to make wit brief, and brevity is essential for the effective joke. But a laconism is not in itself a joke. Here Freud comes close to the discovery of an important detail in the psychology of jokes: the importance of surprise and shock. It was left to Theodor Reik to emphasize this point in his psychoanalytic studies of wit and to relate the understanding of jokes to the element of shock.

Dream and wit disguise their hidden, unconscious tendencies in the double meanings of words. As an example, Freud quotes the ambiguous remark of an officer, during the time of the Dreyfus scandal, about a girl of special popularity: "This girl reminds me of Dreyfus. The Army does not believe in her innocence."

Wit aims at an economy of expression, but the brevity must have a specific character in order to bring about laughter. So much effort is put into the construction of wit that it reminded Freud of a housewife who crosses half the town to save some pennies in a cheaper store far away. The enjoyment of having saved a few pennies is out of proportion to the effort. Similarly, the enjoyment of the economy of expression in wit is out of proportion to the laughter. Economy of expression is essential for wit, but it is not the reason for the laughter.

Carrying his investigation further, Freud tells the story

of two Jews meeting at the bathhouse. One asks the other, "Did you take a bath?" "Why," answers the other, "is one missing?"

Freud, in his affectionate preference for Jewish jokes, continues with a similar story: A rich Jew who has just given some money to a poor relative meets him in a coffee house eating salmon with mayonnaise. The poor man defends himself against the accusation of his rich benefactor, who blames him for wasting his money, with the words, "When I have no money, I can't eat salmon with mayonnaise. When I have money, I must not eat it. Well, then, when shall I eat it?"

In these stories the trick of displacement from the essential to the unessential detail is employed. The emphasis is shifted from "bath" to "taken"; from wasting borrowed money to the moral right to eat fish. Why is such a displacement experienced as witty? Freud leaves the question unanswered for the time being. He continues with an analysis of nonsense as a form of wit.

Nonsense can easily be transformed into a witticism, as, for instance, in Freud's story about the little Jewish soldier who was advised by his commanding officer: "Ike, you are out of place here. Why don't you buy your own cannon and make yourself independent?"

Freud's second example of nonsense wit is a somewhat melancholy quotation perhaps significant for his philosophy of life: "Never to be born would be best for mortal man, but this happens only to a very few."

By these illustrations Freud uncovers "the sense in the nonsense," as for instance in the case of the Jewish soldier with his own cannon. The officer invites an exaggeration of the man's behavior to the point of absurdity; by doing so he also gives a sudden and deep insight into the paradox of war and into the genuine human longing for individuality.

The deeply melancholy implication of Freud's second example about the millions of little people who would prefer never to have been born at all uncovers the hopelessness and quiet despair of so many. By camouflaging this despair beneath the mantle of illogical nonsense, the quotation denies the human tragedy and states with resignation and reassurance: After all, it does not matter. Freud's intention at this point of his reasoning is only to show another technique common to wit and dreams. In this case, it is a technique of making sense by using nonsense and gaining pleasure while doing so.

Jokes which represent sophisticated but faulty thinking are related to the nonsense technique. Freud gives numerous examples of this sort of joke. One is quoted here because knowledge of Freud's favorite Jewish jokes sheds light on Freud's character:

In the temple of Cracow sits the great Rabbi R., and suddenly he cries, "The great Rabbi L. just now died in Lemberg." Some time later it is learned that nobody has died in Lemberg and that Rabbi L. enjoys the best of

health. One of Rabbi R.'s faithful disciples concludes: "Never mind! To look from Cracow to Lemberg was a miraculous feat anyhow."

It gives the reader of Freud's book a feeling of frustration to read all these illustrations of wit and then to have pointed out to him only the technical detail of the wit. Nothing is said about the great inner truth of the preceding story, for instance: the return to infantile levels of pleasure—in this case the stubborn clinging to a telepathic feat—the enviable denial of the disturbing reality, and the final victory of narcissism. Also, the light which this joke, as a Jewish joke, throws on the special question of Jewish wit remains undisclosed by Freud. The bitter, death-wishing hatred of one rabbi for the other is not mentioned at all. In Freud's methodical advance in his search for the relation of the joke to the unconscious he proceeded slowly and deliberately. He first clarified the technique of jokes, and everything else had to wait its turn. He did not discuss the unconscious, aggressive, hostile tendencies of wit in the first half of his book. He demonstrated only the different aspects of technique. He followed a similar strategy in the structure and organization of his book about dream interpretation. But an understanding of the formal aspects of dreams contributes much to their understanding; whereas an investigation of the technique of wit leaves the unconscious aggressive motive of laughter untouched and the reader dissatisfied and suspended between questions.

THE UNCONSCIOUS TENDENCIES OF JOKES

Freud starts his investigation of the tendencies of jokes with the analysis of "abstract" or "harmless" wit, which is supposed to be without tendency. It is difficult for Freud to find a good specimen, and he is apologetic about some of the jokes he presents. His best example, even if not a good one, follows: "He was surprised that there were two holes cut in the pelts of cats just where the eyes were located." It seems rather dubious that there is no unconscious aggressive tendency hidden in this joke. It seems to express considerable aggressiveness against somebody's stupidity.

The existence of harmless wit is of theoretical importance to Freud. If such wit exists, and if it is enjoyable, calling forth as much laughter as does wit with a disguised aggressive tendency, then the pleasure of wit can be based, not on tendency, but on technique. Freud actually draws this conclusion, which remains, however, a theoretical demand; as Kant postulates a "thing as such," so Freud postulates "wit as such." He cannot produce in evidence even one good example. The sophisticated reader will note aggressive trends in every witticism. There is no doubt in Freud's mind however, that irresistible laughter rarely follows "harmless" wit but is usually connected with tendency wit.

Increasing demands for repression through the ages have

changed aggression from assault into wit. Where we would have struck a person in earlier times, we restrict our hostility now and often repress it entirely. Aggressive wit gives us a new way of admitting dangerous aggression to our consciousness—but it has to be done in cleverly disguised form. The first person, the one who makes the joke or perceives the idea, attacks the second person, the butt of the joke. The wish to attack is temporarily repressed, pushed down into the unconscious where it is disguised by the wit work. In order to test whether the work of disguising the aggressive tendency was successful, the first person has to tell his witticism to a third person. The one who has conceived the joke cannot himself laugh, because he is too close to the original aggression and the feeling of guilt about it. The third person, to whom the witticism is told, is only a listener and judges only the disguise of the underlying aggression. This third person becomes guilty only in so far as he is a witness of the aggression but not a participant. He is safely removed from guilt. When the third person, to whom the joke is told, reacts with laughter, the first person, who had originally conceived the witticism, may join him in the laughter with relief: the disguise has succeeded. Hostile jokes lift repressions and open up otherwise inaccessible sources of pleasure.

How much aggression may be packed into a few words becomes clear in one of Freud's examples: Emperor Augustus, noticing a remarkable resemblance between himself

and a stranger in the crowd, asked: "Was your mother ever in my house?" and received the answer: "No, but my father was."

Aggressive tendencies in the examples quoted by Freud seem to be directed with special intensity against wives or brides, a little less frequently against bridegrooms and parents. There are many examples too, in which the aggressive tendencies are directed toward authorities and institutions—again with special frequency against marriage as an institution. Illustrating the change of aggressive wit into cynicism, Freud quotes from "Entries in the Album of Prince Carnival": "A wife is like an umbrella. At worst, one may also take a taxicab."

The Jewish joke often turns aggression against the Jew himself, as in Freud's illustration: A rich Jew, having been deeply moved by the sorrowful story of his poor relative, rings the bell and says to his servant, "Throw him out of the house, he is breaking my heart." Freud dryly comments that even to be rich is not a pleasure for a Jew.

PLEASURE MECHANISM AND PSYCHOGENESIS

Knowledge of the technique and the tendency of wit does not explain fully the pleasure of humor. The sources are known, but the unconscious reasons for laughter are still to be explained.

The examples of aggressive wit have shown how the wit technique overcomes inner resistance and removes

inhibition by camouflaging the original aggression in a clever way, using methods of disguise similar to those used in dream symbolization. The disguise of the original aggressive tendency facilitates the expression of this aggression. As pointed out in the previous section, the successful camouflage is tested by telling the joke to a listener, who is supposed to "get the point." The disguise leaves the aggression barely recognizable. Under these conditions, psychic energy is saved from repression. This reservoir of dammed-up energy is suddenly released and discharged in laughter. As Freud says, "The resultant pleasure corresponds to the economy of psychic expenditure."

Aggressive wit is a streamlined outlet of stimulated, then inhibited, and finally released aggressive energy. An aggressive idea is aroused, then suppressed and removed from consciousness to unconsciousness. There it is disguised and may enter consciousness again. If the disguise is successful, the aggression passes the censor, escapes further repression, and may be consciously enjoyed. The sudden release of energy no longer needed for repression is laughed off. In addition, infantile pleasures such as exhibitionism, nonsense, and play on words are reactivated and help to disguise the aggression. They are welcome and they increase the pleasure, but they are by-products of the wit mechanisms. Wit always represents these two different forms of pleasure.

Any joke is judged according to the efficiency of the disguise. The humorous has a double-edged character and

can easily change from pleasurable to displeasing. In "mis-fired" witticisms the disguise slips and allows the tendency to show; then the censor punishes, and feelings of embarrassment, shame, disgust, or guilt result.

To summarize, wit begins with an intention to injure, which our culture requires us to repress. The expression of this inhibited aggression is connected with a play on words or similar infantile mechanism; the wit work begins. The original aggressive tendency is left for a moment to the "primary process" of the unconscious. The wish to injure, the repression of intended aggression, the combination of this aggressive tendency with the reactivation of infantile pleasures, and its disguise constitute the wit work. The better the disguise, the better the joke.

The pleasure in a play with words and nonsense serves to remove suppression and repression. The true pleasure in wit has therefore two different sources or components: release pleasure and play pleasure. Energy is freed from repression; satisfaction is gained and released in the final laughter. A play with words alone does not make a person laugh often or loud. It soon loses its value. The chief source of pleasure in wit is the release of inhibition or of repression.

Dream work is quite similar to wit work: A day residual sinks down into the depths of the unconscious, where it is associatively connected with an instinctive wish which waits for an opportunity to break through into consciousness for satisfaction. The dream then takes form in the

unconscious. The dream tendency, heavily censored, undergoes disguise and symbolization in order to pass the censorship of the preconscious. Only then is the dream hallucinated to become a pictorial adventure. The perception of this hallucination takes place in that part of the consciousness which is still functioning during sleep.

The dream is based, economically speaking, upon various forces: the wish to sleep; the libidinous interest in the residues of the day; the strength of the urge to satisfy the unconscious wish; the opposing powers of the censorship which insist upon disguise and symbolization.

Wit work—taking place in the person who conceives the wit—is almost identical with dream work in its essential parts: A foreconscious thought, usually of aggressive nature, perhaps an intended injury, is repressed into the unconscious and left for a moment to unconscious elaboration; symbolically disguised it will reappear in consciousness. The aggression does not reappear, as in dreams, in the form of a hallucinated wish fulfillment; it appears as formulated thought with the changes the preconscious has made in it. During this disguise by the primary process, old childhood pleasures attach themselves to the witty thought. This wit work is thus similar to dream work.

Finally, Freud states the difference between wit and dream. After all, a dream is not witty, even if the unmasking of its secret wish fulfillment sometimes provokes laughter. The dream is an asocial psychic product, incomprehensible to the conscious part of the dreamer. Wit, on

the contrary, is a highly social process. It requires two persons at the least, usually three, including the victim against whom the aggression of the joke is directed. In spite of the disguise which safeguards the guilt-free enjoyment of the aggression, the hostile intent must remain intelligible. This means that the listener must be able to perceive the disguised aggressive tendency and must be stimulated by it, but must also simultaneously be protected against any kind of guilt feeling. Wit balances on the thin margin of disguise and revelation like a highly skilled acrobat. The dream remains a wish, fulfilled through hallucination. Freud says with his characteristic brevity: "The dream serves preponderantly to guard against pain, while wit serves to acquire pleasure; in these two aims all our psychic activities meet."

DIFFERENT FORMS OF THE COMIC

The comic is different from wit in many respects. The comic is not exclusively bound to the word; wit is. The comic may be found in situations, in action, or in behavior; it may be the result of observation and interpretation.

The naive is a good illustration of the special aspects of the comic. Naïveté occurs when a person unintentionally puts himself outside and beyond inhibition. The naive person will not feel guilty and will cause no guilt feelings in the onlooker because the effect is unintentional. If the

naïveté is intentional, it loses its charm and provokes indignation instead of laughter.

The comic is found, as a rule, in people—in their movements, shapes, actions, appearances, habits, character traits. It is usually unintentional, though it is possible to accentuate comic features or to make oneself intentionally comic for other people's amusement. In the comic situation the victim is usually deprived of authority and dignity. This gives the onlooker a feeling of superiority.

The caricature is a variation of the comic. It aims at the unmasking and degradation of a person of authority or fame. A favorite method is the overemphasis of one feature, making it so prominent that it can no longer be overlooked. As a rule, the caricaturist or cartoonist feels this aggressive tendency keenly. In addition to using overemphasis of detail to degrade, he also seeks to gain power over the victim of his aggression by old, abandoned, infantile methods. As in primitive societies, where the witch creates a doll and uses it, by magic, to gain power over the person the doll represents, so the caricaturist hopes unconsciously to regain this magical power in his cartoon and to destroy his enemy with it.

Pleasure in the comic arises from a more or less conscious comparison between the onlooker's perfection and the other person's obvious imperfection. Freud formulated the psychodynamics of comic pleasure with the words: "He does it this way—I do it differently—he does it just as I did it when I was a child."

In the comic we usually find an element of imitation. In real life nothing should repeat itself. A person should have his own identity, and if somebody is able to imitate this identity, to reproduce a highly cherished individuality, he submits the victim of imitation to a severe aggression. In convincing imitation, the person imitated suddenly loses his identity—which feels even worse than losing one's shadow.

ON HUMOR

The enjoyment of the comic cannot develop when pain, sorrow, unhappiness, worry, or anxiety are too easily activated. In such a case all energy is needed for alarm or action, and no energy can be spared for release in laughter. When a person has just escaped a pogrom he will find it difficult to enjoy a slapstick movie. Anxiety must be mastered and controlled before reference to it may be enjoyed in the comic situation or in humor.

Humor originates when painful emotions are stimulated and an attempt at suppression is initiated but proves to be unnecessary. Several of Freud's examples are taken from the grim field of *Galgenhumor* (gallows humor). The criminal, on being led to his execution on a Monday, remarks: "Yes, this week is beginning well." Listening to this remark, pity for the condemned man is initiated. The indifference or stoicism of the man saves the expenditure of emotional energy—in this case, pity. The condemned man

says, in effect: I am too big and strong to have this execution affect me painfully; and the person listening to the story can save the energy that would be required for the suppression or avoidance of painful affects and may laugh.

In comic pleasure, the enjoyment is gained by comparing the unnecessary, infantile expenditure with the superior, more streamlined performance of the grown-up; in humor, the ego of the mature and stable person compares the emotion of the humorous situation with the anxiety and fear stimulated by the grim setting of the execution. The comparison is followed by a reassuring feeling of power and strength. In the case of the condemned man, the ego triumphantly proves that not even an execution can break the spirit of a strong man.

A similar feeling of power and strength in the midst of misery was expressed by Oscar Wilde when he was standing handcuffed in the pouring rain and indignantly protested: "If this is how Her Majesty treats her prisoners, she does not deserve to have any."

Summarizing, Freud concludes in the last paragraph of "Jokes and Their Relation to the Unconscious": "Now that we have reduced the mechanism of humoristic pleasure to a formula analogous to the formula of comic pleasure and of wit, we are at the end of our task. It has seemed to us that the pleasure of wit originates from an economy of expenditure in inhibition, of the comic from an economy of expenditure in thought, and of humor from an economy of expenditure in feeling. All three modes of activity of our

psychic apparatus derive pleasure from economy. All three methods strive to bring back from the psychic activity a pleasure which has really been lost in the development of this activity. For the euphoria which we are thus striving to obtain is nothing but the state of a bygone time, in which we were wont to defray our psychic work with slight expenditure. It is the state of our childhood in which we did not know the comic, were incapable of wit, and did not need humor to make us happy."

FREUD'S LATER CONTRIBUTION TO THE PSYCHOANALYTIC
PROBLEM OF HUMOR

As early as 1905, Freud had used the word "ego" in the discussion of humor, anticipating his later metapsychologic system of ego, id, and superego. He continued the application of ego psychology to the problem of humor almost twenty-five years later. In this paper on humor, which Freud finally published in 1928, he pointed out that the saving of emotional expenditure alone does not explain the greatness of humor, its majestic beauty, and its strength. Humor is not resigned; humor is a triumphant joy and represents the victory of the pleasure principle. The ego, usually forced to submit to or modify the pleasure-seeking drives to the demands of reality, resolutely turns away from reality and enjoys uninhibited and guilt-free narcissistic existence. This uninhibited narcissism, this triumph over reality, this victory of the seemingly

invulnerable ego, gives a feeling of strength. Laughter may occur, but usually a smile suffices.

In the humorous attitude, the superego relates itself to the ego like a good parent to a child: lenient, understanding, forgiving, kind. Wit utilizes infantile pleasure in order to release aggressive tendencies; in humor, the saving of emotion reactivates a joyful narcissistic state during which the superego treats the ego with kindness and not with the usual sternness. Many years after Freud's paper, Edmund Bergler showed convincingly that the superego is forced to this kind attitude in order to avoid a complete break with the ego.

ABOUT THE JEWISH JOKE

During the more than fifty years since Freud published his book on jokes, analysts have continued to exhibit a lively interest in further research into the relationship between wit and the unconscious.

Theodor Reik, Freud's pupil, friend, and biographer, is credited with stimulating Freud's interest in wit. Reik first noticed that Freud's few students frequently laughed when they began to understand the meaning of symbols in dreams. Wondering about this, he continued Freud's analysis of the unconscious dynamics of wit, the similarities of dream work and wit work, and the common nature of the primary process in both.

First of all, Reik discovered one important oversight in

Freud's wit analysis: the release of repressing energy must happen suddenly. It must be felt as a shock or surprise. The witticism gets its hitting power from its brevity. The listener reacts with a doubly motivated shock of surprise: he is shocked by the freedom of form in the esthetic disguise of wit; and he is simultaneously shocked by the tendency of the wit, which, owing to its disguise, is expressed without guilt feeling.

Through many years of analyzing, writing, and storytelling, Reik kept his analytic interest in and his fondness, almost tenderness, for the sadness of the Jewish joke. According to him, no other people on earth, whether in the past or the present time, has taken itself so mercilessly as the butt of its own jokes as the Jewish people. It almost seems as if the Jewish joke in its unbelievable superiority shows the cruel enemy how to be hostile and still remain human. The Jewish joke is only a masochistic mask; it is by no means a sign of a masochistic perversion. The Jewish joke constitutes victory by defeat. The persecuted Jew who makes himself the butt of the joke deflects his dangerous hostility away from the persecutors onto himself. The result is not defeat or surrender but victory and greatness.

While listening to the following joke one can almost see how a witty Jewish man carefully and cautiously takes a sharp dagger out of his enemy's hands, sharpens it so that it can split a hair in mid-air, polishes it so that it shines brightly, stabs himself with it, then returns it gallantly to

the anti-Semite with the silent reproach: Now see whether you can do it half so well. Here is the story:

A number of Jews were debating whose synagogue was the most progressive one. One man said that in his synagogue they kept an ash tray near the Torah so that not even the reader would need to stop smoking. The second man took over and claimed:

“We are much more progressive. At Yom Kippur we serve sandwiches—ham sandwiches, that is.”

While everybody was considering this piece of progress, a third man ended all further competition with his statement:

“We are so progressive that we have a neon sign on top of our synagogue: ‘Closed because of the Holy Days.’” With one sweeping statement he neatly finished Judaism.

It is significant of the sharpness and analytic alertness of the Jewish mind that the anti-Semitic nature of the Jewish joke was recognized and made the point of the following joke:

One speaker within a group of friends had complained that the telling of Jewish jokes ought to be stopped, because in them the Jewish man seems to identify with the enemy, delivers to him new material for his anti-Semitism, and puts himself in an undignified, submissive position. After some thoughtful silence, one of the best storytellers in the group started to tell a new joke with the words: “Two Chinamen came out of a synagogue on their way to a Bar Mitzvah—” There he was interrupted and never

could finish the story because of the laughter of recognition. In a witty form, the incorrigible spirit of the Jewish joke had won, asserting itself and repeating its strong message: That's what we are—and we do *not* change, come what may.

The fact that Jewish jokes outwit the anti-Semitic Gentile implies that they are better told by Jews. Otherwise they quickly pass the thin line between enjoyment and tactlessness, displeasure, disgust, and hostile reaction to aggression.

Another type of the Jewish joke contains devastating aggression disguised by restrained, almost humble, modesty, as, for instance, when the little Jew sits in his coffee-house and dreams about the time to come after the war against Hitler is won:

“I will sit in my coffeehouse and will read the *Berliner Zeitung*, and under my arm I will hold the *Wiener Zeitung* which I may study later. Hitler will come. He will point at the *Wiener Zeitung* and will ask: ‘Are you reading it or may I see it?’ And I will look up—and I will say: ‘No, you may not.’”

The Jewish joke seems to be directed against the self or the enlarged self as represented by one's people. Weakness is shown with obvious enjoyment and a feeling of liberation and relief: Look who is laughing!

In these jokes, there is seldom a serious promise to change the offending situation or to meet the demands of the enemy. All contain a kind of melancholy resigna-

tion and occasionally a stubborn pledge: This is the way we are and will be as long as we are Jewish.

Many Jewish jokes illustrate the deep human truth that suffering may cause laughter too:

An old Jew had realized that his time to die had arrived. His family was collecting around his bed. Suddenly he broke into laughter and finally confessed: "Would I laugh, if I pass away into the hereafter and there, too, is nothing!"

Aggression turned against the self seems to be an essential feature of the truly Jewish joke. It is as if the Jew tells his enemies: You do not need to attack us. We can do that ourselves—and even better. But we can take it and we will come out all right. We know our weakness and in a way we are proud of it.

To the sharpness of Jewish wit, the greatness of humor is added in a rare combination.

THE LAUGHTER OF THE HOMERIC GODS AND THE ABSENCE OF LAUGHTER IN THE BIBLE

The psychologic "necessity for irreverence" in us, which according to psychoanalytic interpretation is the essential unconscious motive in the enjoyment of humor, may explain the strange fact that the Bible is so devoid of humor and laughter. The sacred biblical text is in this unlike the "Iliad" and the "Odyssey," where "an unextinguished laughter shakes the skies." When Hephaistos caught his

wife Aphrodite in the arms of Ares and trapped them in his net, he called on all the gods to witness the scandal. They all rushed to see:

*But modesty withheld the goddess train.
All heaven beholds, imprison'd as they lie,
And unextinguish'd laughter shakes the sky.*

Again the gods laugh when the young Hermes smilingly confesses that he would not mind being caught that way—even if the net were three times as strong and even if all the gods and goddesses looked on; the love of Aphrodite would be worth it.

There are a few examples in the Old Testament which may strike the reader of Holy Writ as humorous or even as funny. In the first book of Kings (18:30), the prophet Elijah taunts the priests of Baal with the impotence of their god so skillfully and so efficiently, and all his miracles speak so clearly for his side, that the story is quite amusing; but the initial enjoyment is dissolved quickly in the cruelty of the next verse (18:40) when Elijah says: "Seize the prophets of Baal; let not a man of them escape.' So they seized them, and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon and slew them there."

The prophet Elisha, disciple of Elijah, tempts us to smile again in the second book of Kings (2:23, 24):

"But while he was going up on the way, some little boys came out of a city and jeered at him, and said, 'Go up, you baldhead; go up, baldhead.' When he turned around

and saw them, he cursed them in the name of the Lord."

Again the outcome of this humorous incident of little irreverent boys teasing a holy but bald man is too bitter for our contemporary sense of humor: "Then two she-bears came out of a wood and mangled forty-two of the boys."

There is a hidden, grimly humorous implication in the book of Esther, when Haman was hanged on the gallows which he had built so carefully and confidently for Mordecai. Some may smile, too, at the story of the sleeping Eutychus (Acts 20:7). Sitting in the window while Paul preached a long sermon lasting until midnight, he fell asleep and fell three stories. He was believed dead, but this time everything went well: "They took the boy home alive and were greatly comforted."

Sarah, the wife of Abraham, is perhaps the only person in the Bible who laughs. When the angel of the Lord announced that she would bear a child to Abraham, "Sarah laughed within herself, saying, 'After I am waxed old shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?'" Later, being afraid, Sarah denied that she laughed and said: "I laughed not"; for she was afraid. And he (the Lord) said, 'Nay; but thou didst laugh.'" When the child is finally born and Abraham is over one hundred years old, Sarah names the child Isaac, which means "the laughing one," because he was conceived in his parents' old age. And Sarah said: "God hath made me to laugh so that all that hear will laugh with me." (Genesis 21:6.)

It is possible that a reference to laughter has been lost in the Bible, in the Book of Genesis (9: 18-26). Noah, being the first husbandman, planted a vineyard, drank from his wine, and became drunk. While he was lying uncovered in his tent, Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father. In the usual translation (King James and the Revised Version) the sentence continues, "and told his two brethren without" (meaning outside of the tent). The original text implies that the proper translation may be "and laughingly told his two brethren." After they heard what Ham told them, Shem and Japheth took a garment, laid it upon their shoulders, and went backward to cover their father so that they would not see his nakedness. When Noah awoke from his stupor, he "knew what his younger son had done unto him. And he said: 'Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren.'"

In some sources of Jewish folklore, as, for example, in the Babylonian Talmud commentaries, it is implied that Ham did more to Noah than simply look at him—that he may have castrated him and then triumphantly told his brothers what he had done. We shall see that this version of the story about Noah and his sons contains the original conflict which in disguised form is the motif from which comedy developed as a new form of art in later stages of history.

The story which, to my taste and feeling, is truly humorous and concerns moments of rebellious irreverence

against the wisdom of the great prophets is found in the Book of Numbers (22:21-34). When the angel of the Lord blocks the road of the great, wise prophet Balaam, the wise man does not recognize him, but his faithful ass does. The ass—and it is a she-ass—stands still as if rooted to the ground until the angel frees the way. A second time the angel appears, and this time the ass, beaten by its master—who still sees less with his eyes than the dumb ass—crushes the foot of Balaam against a stone wall. When the faithful ass a third time sees the angel of the Lord in front of her, she lies down on the road and Balaam cannot move. In his rage he beats her, but the angel of the Lord gives the dumb creature the power of voice; then, and only then, does the wise man finally see what the ass in her dumbness had seen long before.

Then there is the famous commentary on an orderly world, in the Book of Ecclesiastes (3:1-4):

*For everything there is an appointed time;
And there is a time for every purpose under the heavens:
A time to be born, and a time to die;
A time for planting, and a time for uprooting;
A time to slay, and a time to heal;
A time to tear down, and a time to rebuild;
A time to weep, and a time to laugh. . . .*

Outside the Holy Book, but definitely within Hebrew thought, the necessity of irreverence breaks through in many examples. In the following story from the Talmud,

Baba Mezhiah expresses the unauthoritarian, humanist side of Judaism, already established in the first centuries of the Christian era:

Some famous rabbinical scholars disagreed with Rabbi Eliezar's views about a point of ritual law. Rabbi Eliezar said:

"If the law is as I think it is, then this tree shall let us know." Whereupon the tree jumped from its place a hundred yards. But his colleagues were not convinced: "One does not prove anything from a tree."

So he said, "If I am right, then this brook shall let us know." Whereupon the brook ran upstream. Again his colleagues were not silenced.

So he said, "If the law is as I think, then the walls of this house will tell." Whereupon the walls began to fall.

But Rabbi Joshua shouted at the walls and said, "If scholars argue a point of law, what business have you to fall?"

So the walls fell no further out of respect for Rabbi Joshua, but out of respect for Rabbi Eliezar they did not straighten up either.

Finally Rabbi Eliezar appealed to heaven: "If the law is as I think, they shall tell us from heaven."

Whereupon a voice answered: "The law is as Rabbi Eliezar says it is."

Then Rabbi Joshua got up and said, "It is written in the Bible: the law is not in heaven. Since the Torah has been given on Mount Sinai we no longer pay attention to voices

from heaven because it is written: You make your decision according to the majority opinion."

Many years later Rabbi Nathan met the prophet Elijah and asked the prophet, "What did God Himself say when we had this discussion?"

The prophet answered, "God smiled and said, My children have won."

Notes

For Sigmund Freud's work on the relation between jokes and the unconscious, see the Bibliography at the end of the book. His most important book on this subject was originally translated by A. A. Brill in 1905 under the title "Wit and Its Relation to the Unconscious." In the most recent translation (Standard Edition, vol. 8) the title is given as "Jokes and Their Relation to the Unconscious."

The letters to Wilhelm Fliess are quoted from Freud's "The Origins of Psychoanalysis: Letters, Drafts and Notes to Wilhelm Fliess (1887-1902)."

The history of the period in Freud's life during which he wrote the Fliess letters and prepared the books on dream interpretations and on jokes is told in detail by Ernest Jones (1953, 1955), who is the unchallenged expert on the history of psychoanalysis and the life of Sigmund Freud.

Freud started his work on jokes with a review of the books by Henri Bergson and Herbert Spencer.

Theodor Reik has contributed psychoanalytic studies of jokes in several of his books (1948, 1952). Thirty years earlier he had published his thoughts in the German psychoanalytic journals of that time. Among the other early Freud followers, Sandor Ferenczi (1913, 1926) must be mentioned.

The metapsychology of wit and the comic has been studied by Ernst Kris (1940, 1952). The same author has especially advanced our knowledge of caricature and the comic (1936, 1938). Other important advances in the development of our psychoanalytic understanding have been made by Edmund Bergler (1937, 1952), by Sandor Feldman, and by Ludwig Eidelberg. See also Martin Grotjahn (1947a), Alfred von Winterstein, J. Obrdlek, and Ernest Harms.

The analytic specialists in the understanding of Jewish humor are represented by Theodor Reik (1940, 1954), Edouard Hirschmann, and Erich Fromm.

The contrast between the Homeric laughter of the gods and the deadly seriousness of the biblical religions has been discussed by Alfred Whitehead and Lucien Price, as recorded by Price.

Only a few analytic experts have tried their hand at the difficult task of combining the psychoanalytic approach with the esthetic point of view; among them are Anton Ehrenzweig, Gregory Bateson, and Harry B. Lee.

1

The Sense of Humor and Its Relation to Character and Sex

Wit is related to aggression, hostility, and sadism; humor is related to depression, narcissism, and masochism. Wit finds its psychomotor expression in laughter; humor, in the smile.

Laughter is loud because it calls for company. The smile is silent, sad, sublime, and may blossom forth unwitnessed. A laugh unheard embarrasses; a smile unseen is even more beautiful than one which is smiled to be seen.

Laughter occurs when libido is released from repressed aggression. Under certain circumstances, such release can occur without witty disguise. Cruel laughter is proof of this point.

Repressed laughter stemming from aggression which is not allowed to break through from the unconscious because it is too daring or not sufficiently disguised may cause a psychosomatic symptom, probably a headache. The headache personality is as a rule found in an intelligent but aggressive individual who inhibits severely the expression

of his hostility. He appears to be cool, calm, and collected, but underneath he is torn by strong hostile feelings. Migraine patients are frequently witty. They find a temporary release for their intense hostility in cold, sharp, cutting remarks and witticisms. As Reik expressed it, "A thought murder a day keeps the doctor away."

A sense of humor is a character trait that helps to identify a particular type of person. The practical joker, the tease, the kidder, the mimic, the clown, the cynic, the wit and the humorist, the optimist and his twin brother, the pessimist—all belong to the large family of people who struggle to find a permissible outlet for their aggression.

THE KIDDER

The term "to kid" means to treat somebody like a child—"kid" being an almost universal vernacular for a little child. Like teasing, kidding contains elements of cruelty. The kidder uses his advantage of superior experience, knowledge, or authority to assume a pseudo-authoritarian, powerful, and hostile attitude toward the victim. The threat is pretended, not realized.

The inveterate kidder expresses his own conflict with authority (usually with his parents) and projects it onto his victim. He enacts through his kidding a psychotherapeutic drama. The kidder imitates his father torturing his "kid," who is in a position of humiliation and passive endurance. The kidder hopes through his repeated perform-

ance to find the final answer to an old anxiety. He behaves like a soldier who has broken down in combat and must now return to the traumatic battle scene in every nightmare. He reenacts the horrors of battle while sleeping. He tries in his dream to master his anxiety. If the anxiety cannot be mastered, the dream will turn into a nightmare and final awakening. By playing the actively teasing father, the kidder hopes to eliminate the hurt he carries in his heart from his childhood, when he had to take the kidding. He can dish it out but he cannot take it.

Kidding often begins with sniping at some bodily defect or imperfection. It has a further tendency to become patterned and repetitive. In an established group it can develop into a routine, as, for instance, in the locker room of the golf club where there is one bald-headed victim. If the victim does not react with the patience of a Job, he will hear the final taunt: "Come on! I'm only kidding"—as if that were an excuse.

Kidding is almost a masculine prerogative, and homosexuality is a favorite topic. According to unwritten rules, homosexuality may not be mentioned directly; kidding allows only hints as a substitute for the witty disguise. An accusation is not kidding. Here, more than anywhere else, the incorrigible kidder betrays with his kidding a sore spot within himself. The kidder who specializes in homosexual patterns gains two advantages for himself: first, he suspects others of what he himself may be guilty of and in this way externalizes an internal conflict; second, by joking and

kidding about homosexuality within a masculine group, he experiences a certain amount of permissible, socially acceptable satisfaction. In other words, the repressed homosexual trend returns only thinly disguised in the form of kidding. Because the disguise in all kidding is usually incomplete and artless, we consider it as a lower, primitive form of having fun.

There is one character type genuinely incapable of kidding. This practice of his American cousins appears to the British gentleman a matter of outright insult. As such it is unforgivable and cannot be accepted with hilarity. The gentleman has learned from early childhood on to chain his aggression with the help of faultless good manners, come what may. No outlet for underlying hostility is allowed in any form. A psychiatrist would diagnose this character type as belonging to the obsessive-compulsive personality. Such a man is balanced only when he freezes all emotions, especially his hostile reactions, with rigidly polite behavior. He moves like a medieval knight in heavy armor, not able to unbend.

In our time a woman is not supposed to be a kidder and rarely is. She will seldom enjoy kidding another woman. If she feels hostile, there are more feminine ways to express herself. For instance, she may be a tease, and she may tease a man for good reasons. The aroused man is the potent man. The kittenish woman is the charmingly hostile woman. If she feels undilutedly hostile, she has her own methods of

disguise. She may needle her sisters, more or less gently, but draw blood nevertheless.

In general, women are not less hostile than men. But our contemporary culture brings pressure on them to use different forms of expressing or disguising their hostility. The women of our contemporary scene have to be careful, because any show of aggression, open or disguised, is taken by every man in our competitive culture as a challenge, as a matter of fact a sexual challenge, to which he has to rise. Actually, this reaction belongs to a biologic level of communication between the sexes. The female cat, when in heat, will scratch the tomcat, who immediately gets the point and reacts accordingly. The hen pecks the rooster for the same purpose. The human male of our time is supposed to resent this aggression as humiliating and unbecoming to his dignity.

Let me repeat that we are talking here only about the ways and means of expressing or inhibiting hostility, not about the strength of aggressive and hostile tendencies. These are probably as strong in the unconscious of women as they are in men; only the ways of showing and expressing them are different. There are times in the life of every woman, no matter how mature she feels and how little need she has to demonstrate her superiority to her male mate, when she insists on showing her power. The mature woman is secure in her superiority and will not even ask for equal rights, which would only rob her of her superior position.

But occasionally even the charming woman will show the man that something can happen to him which cannot happen to her. Thus she may use the threat of castration to illustrate the difference between male and female. With our Oedipus situation as it is, the man always has to fight his fears. The normal woman has overcome this fear and therefore has gained greater reserves for an inner security on which she may draw in times of need. The woman is always potent. If she is frigid, she may learn to hide this fact, or she may choose to make the man responsible for it. After all, he has clearly visible the instruments with which to satisfy her.

The man reacts to this challenge with a fantasy which is deeply engraved in his unconscious. It is a wish to be potent always, on all occasions. This is perfectly symbolized in the story of Samson. He is the ideal of men: all-powerful, always strong, never tired. Realistically, of course, Samson meets his downfall when he delivers himself into the hands of Delilah. She symbolizes the woman who knows his secret. In a manner of speaking, the woman has it in her power to bring the strength of Samson down, to bow his head, to make him collapse until she permits him to rise again. But by that time he will have enslaved himself.

Perhaps typical of the highly developed female art of gentle castration in symbolic form is the following story:

A couple, married for a number of years, celebrated their anniversary with a dignified and restful week end in the desert. Early Sunday morning, the husband was awak-

ened by the rising sun; he could not resist the temptation to get up and take a walk before it became too hot. He left the house silently without waking his wife. He crossed a dry river bed, walked over a hill, and found himself in one of those little desert valleys which seem to have been there for millions of years and look even now as if they had never been entered by man. For a few days every year these valleys are covered with flowers as if for no other reason than to praise the Lord, and this was one of those days. Even the cactus was blooming, beautiful and without shame. The man was elated and overwhelmed by great admiration and love for all this beauty. He chose a flower and picked it. He took it home to show to his wife. In need of a vase, he put it in a cocktail glass. He filled the glass with fresh water and admired the flower in all its purposeless beauty and innocence.

When his wife opened her eyes, he showed it to her. "Look what I found and brought you."

Said she, with her ever-so-slight hangover, "Best use you ever made of that glass."

This is what a psychoanalyst as a rule would call a castrating remark. It left the man crestfallen. As always, the woman felt most innocent. How was she supposed to know what went on in him?

If the tables should ever turn against the kidder and somebody respond to him aggressively, a near-catastrophe may occur. The prescribed response to kidding is to kid back but for heaven's sake to do it in a jovial mood. If this

precaution is not taken and harmless kidding is turned into insulting aggression, all the earlier anxiety will be quickly reactivated and an unpleasant situation will occur. As a rule, the habitual kidder is sensitive because his kidding shows approximately the point of his weakness. It would be most dangerous, for instance, to call the latent-homosexual kidder by his right name and to challenge him. He would not need to kid if he could embrace manifest homosexuality as a perversion. He will rear up like a wounded lion and repeat: "I was only kidding."

THE PRACTICAL JOKER

The practical joker is a twin brother of the kidder—only worse. He is the eternal adolescent who indulges in a dangerous pastime. The practical joke represents a primitive form of the funny which often is so cruel and so thinly disguised in its hostility that the sensitive or esthetically minded person can hardly enjoy it. The practical joke is a dangerous performance, a realization of the sadistic and often cruel tendency which underlies the creation of wit. It lacks symbolization, elaboration, or disguise; by using not words but aim-inhibited action, it stands less than halfway between an intended aggression and its witty, verbal expression. The practical joke is so close to uninhibited and unrepressed cruelty that one needs a robust conscience and a lax censorship as protection against a reaction of guilt.

The practical joker also needs a victim who good-humoredly accepts the assigned role—usually in the hope of later revenge. Anyone who does not take it in good grace may lose group status, may not be considered a “good fellow,” and he may not get his chance for revenge the next time.

Only one tolerable practical joke will be recounted here: When I was a medical officer in the United States Army, I once went to sleep in my chair after a night interrupted by frequent emergency calls. In my exhaustion I slept deeply and peacefully. (This is not against the rules, for being on duty is different from being on guard. Sleeping is allowed.) I did not notice the change of guard and the arrival of the commanding officer and medical staff at daybreak. The commanding officer, a practical joker of the worst kind, in my opinion a sadist at heart, decided to give me a hotfoot. During the preparation, I must have noticed something and awoke gradually. Without giving myself away, I observed the strange performance. Slowly, a tenth of an inch at a time, I lowered my foot so that the commanding officer had to bend over, then had to go down on his knees, and finally had to lie down on the floor to complete his preparations. In the meantime, the entire medical staff had silently collected to watch the peculiar show and its complications. When all had been done and the match was about to be lighted, I turned to the commanding officer with the innocent eyes of a child awakened from sleep and said, with all the respectful concern I could

muster: "What *are* you doing there on the floor, Colonel?" The intended aggression was turned against the aggressor and fully enjoyed by everybody—with the possible exception of the frustrated colonel.

A most shocking version of a practical joke was played once when I was returning from New York to Los Angeles. The plane was crowded with professional entertainers, flying west to work in their movie studios. One of these extremely gifted fellows appeared from the forward cabin playing the role of a drunken pilot, unbalanced in his gait, apologizing for falling all over passengers, pretending to be helplessly trying to maintain his dignity, confusedly consulting his map, and making absolutely clear that he had lost his way and did not know whether he was twenty-five thousand feet above Kansas or Canada. Sad-eyed, he finally looked through the window as if hoping to find the answer there, like a lost motorist looking for a filling station. Everybody was laughing hilariously by then. To add to his trouble, he discovered that the motors were also having trouble and that engine number three wasn't turning over. His fellow passengers followed his glance through the window. He was right. There we were, high above the Rockies, with a motionless propeller on the right and one of the motors obviously dead. Our laughter froze to momentary horror, and everyone needed a double take to find realistic orientation again. From the skillful play of the drunken pilot the scene suddenly shifted and a realistic threat was keenly felt. A playful threat: Your pilot is

drunk, was suddenly replaced by a rude awakening: Our engines are not working properly. We soon realized that three engines were still enough to bring us home safely; but it left me with an insight that the performing clown must have been a sadist at heart to tell us in this way about the unpleasant situation we found ourselves in.

A practical joke tends to deteriorate into a disaster or accident because of its poorly disguised aggression which breaks through and asserts itself beyond control. If a witticism fails in its disguise and the intended insult or aggression breaks through, we are not physically endangered but we react with embarrassment, may become hostile, and resent the tactlessness. The situation of the deteriorated practical joke is more dangerous. As the word "practical" implies, the intended aggression is not verbal but physical and realistic. The disguise and inhibition, therefore, are not mental or verbal but have to be realistic; the practical joke takes place on the level of action, the witticism on the level of thought.

PROFILE OF THE WIT AS A PERSONALITY TYPE

There is, of course, no such thing as a well-defined type of person known as "the wit." If a profile of such a personality type is attempted, we have to deal with an abstraction. We actually mean the sort of person to whom witty remarks come easily—almost compulsively, as by inner necessity. People in this category are, so it seems, witty

not by choice but by destiny. They are, as a rule, pleasant only when we read about them in their biographies or in movie-fan magazines. If encountered in real life as opposed to Hollywood life, they are hard to accept and hard to live with. It is preferable to see them in groups, whether in the European coffeehouse, the Hollywood studio, or wherever men of their sort assemble. In a group their hard-driving aggressiveness and their unrelenting sadism are better distributed and the innocent bystander gets hurt less often.

The wit as such is hostile, often with a skillful, artful, highly developed, sophisticated meanness and viciousness. He nurses and polishes his meanness like Narcissus himself seeking to sparkle with brilliance in the mirror. The wit does not "give a sucker an even break." He himself feels better within a group of friends, which sets certain limits for his almost compulsive hostility. Within these limits he can move with relative freedom. But he does need some restraint, which the group standard sets for him; otherwise he would become afraid of what he might do in his chronic rage. He is an angry man in search of a victim. He knows that he easily tires people by constantly kindling their hostility, necessitating a new repressive effort, and then releasing it through laughter in order to repeat the performance again. He behaves like a man who plays with sparklers but never lights a warming fire. This becomes exhausting and tiring, finally annoying and displeasing. It is as fatiguing as reading a collection of witticisms in a book

of gags or looking at one of those annual collections of the year's best cartoons. They may have been collected with unimpeachably good taste, and they actually may be outstanding; still, due to the dynamics of stimulated, repressed, and released hostility, they will tire, exhaust, annoy, and finally actually cause intense discomfort and painful boredom.

The wit is the person with an irrepressible tendency to make witty remarks. It is his way of releasing his hostility. Without it, he probably would blow his top or get a migraine attack. He also may show a rare sense for comic situations which would remain unnoticed by the average person. He shows a strong erotization of word and language. He uses words, which he loves, like pebbles to throw at unsuspecting people. His temperament is cool, intelligent, hostile, sharp, quick, alert, always ready to strike. (The Germans have a special word, meaning just this, for the wit—*Schlagfertig*.) He uses his talent as a weapon, whether with the help of a poison pen or the poisoned spoken word. He frequently turns out to be an assassin of the language, turning his aggression against his own love object. Many witty people are famous for their voluntary or involuntary distortion of the English language, as, for instance, when a well-known Hollywood producer demands "an empty horse" and wants to "make it three times more gallop" when it moves too slowly for his needs; or when he talks about "cheesecream," meaning something related to "cheesecake" publicity.

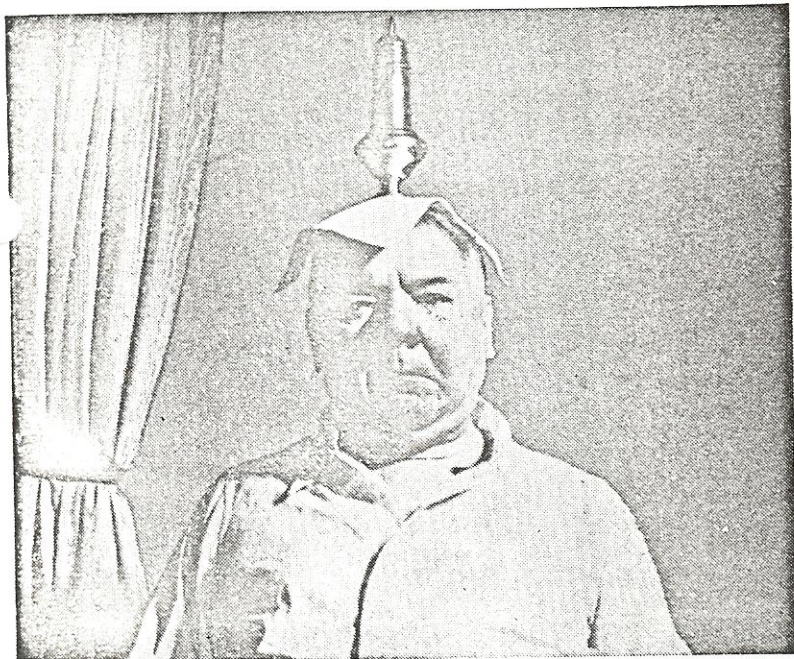
In contrast to his success as a public entertainer, the wit in private life and personal contact is often admired and enjoyed to only a limited extent; rarely is he loved warmly and then only when he stops being witty. He is too hostile and too defensive in his interpersonal relations. He attacks; he lets nobody really come close to him. He fascinates and he charms, but finally alienates people. He makes them stare at his brilliance, but it will blind them. They feel overpowered by him, rendered helpless in laughter, or, as the analyst might say, castrated. Wit can kill.

People are not even sure of the witty person's opinions, because he may change his stand for the sake of a wisecrack. He may prefer the word to the idea, the applause to being convincing. Because he is afraid of people, he will attack them, insult them in a sophisticated way and keep them at arm's length. To be witty is a good defense against close contact with friend or foe, but it makes it possible to remain within a group and never lose contact completely. The wit may remain without real friends, but he cannot exist alone. He needs the constant admiration or forgiveness of his friends to show that his defenses against the underlying hostility are still intact. Without them, he would collapse.

The unhappy face of the lonely wit or entertainer is, for my feeling, best expressed in W. C. Fields portraying the quite unwitty dignity of Queen Victoria. Fields always looked, when he was most funny, as if he hoped his unseen enemy would react to him with something of a cardiac

disturbance of which he would ask hopefully: "Nothing trifling, I hope?"

Something else can be noted when studying witty men at close range: how sick at heart most of them are underneath their witty defenses. They are hostile, lonely, often unloving and unloved; they feel near to tears and suffering; often they avoid disaster only by drinking, which leads to new complications. They repeat the tragedy of the little boy who feels unloved, becomes defensive and hostile,



W. C. Fields as Queen Victoria. (By Will Connell. By permission of Will Connell from the book "W. C. Fields: His Follies and Fortunes" by Robert Lewis Taylor. Copyright 1949, Doubleday & Company, Inc.)

erotizes his language, and becomes impudent. The life stories of many great clowns give a wealth of clinical evidence of a truly tragic development. It is not funny to be funny. For many clowns, "comedy is no laughing matter." Nobody can play with the spirit of incompletely controlled hostility without getting burned himself. Nobody can try to live outside of a group of friends and enemies and still feel that he belongs somewhere. Because of the witty disguise of his hostility, he will find temporary shelter within a group of admirers—but this is an unsatisfactory solution. Admiration is not love.

Impudence and quick counterattack are the wit's strength. A striking example: When an admiring lady spotted Groucho Marx in a Chicago hotel at breakfast, she rushed up to him and asked in breathless excitement: "Are you Harpo Marx?" Without batting an eye, he answered with indignation: "No—are you?" Rarely has so much insult been expressed in so few words.

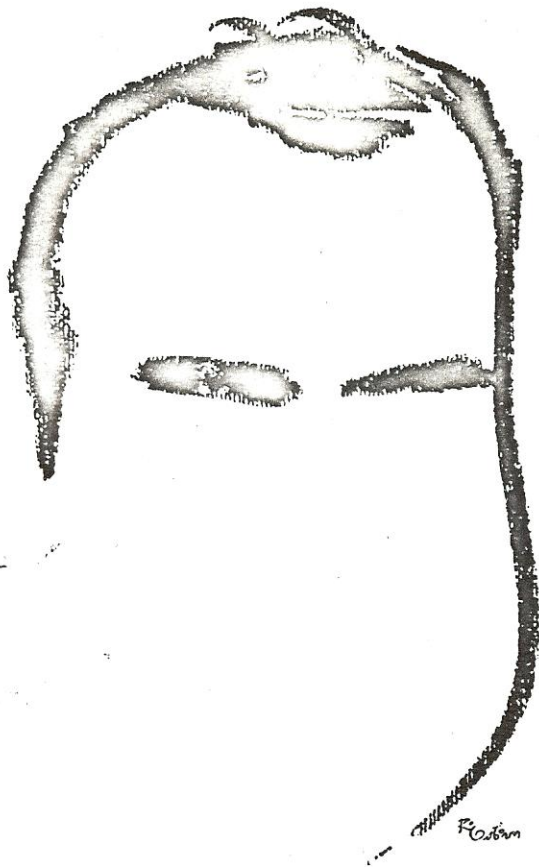
When one of our loveliest movie queens was asked by an inquiring reporter whether she had any children, her answer, to all the assembled representatives of the press, is supposed to have been: "Yes. Six. All colored." This shocking response sounds like an aggression by the actress against herself. This is partly true, and it mellows somewhat the fact that in the few words of her challenging answer are many other hostile trends rolled into one neat package.

A special variation of the wit may be seen in the caricaturist. What the wit expresses in language and word, the caricaturist expresses with his pencil and his drawings. To take a person's likeness, to lift the features off his face, so to speak, and put them down on paper, is already an offense against our most cherished possession, our individuality as expressed in our face. A little distortion, furthermore, and we feel ridiculed, often insulted. We get indignant that our friends may enjoy the similarity and the grotesque exaggeration of the caricature.

One recent caricature of Vice President Richard Nixon, drawn with extreme economy, is still recognizable immediately. The caricature carries the aggressive implication that the essential features of this face can be expressed with but a few lines.

The caricaturist gains from his activity the same sort of infantile pleasure that the wit gains from play on words, as, for instance, in the examples of assassination of language. While observing his victim and putting his features down on paper, the caricaturist, in a regression to infantile "magic," also enjoys a feeling of power over his victim. For him the drawing takes the place of the person who now is given into his hands—he has re-created the person on paper and put him under his power. He feels somewhat like the gypsy who makes an image of the unfaithful lover and then sticks needles through its heart, expecting to hurt the real person.

BEYOND LAUGHTER



Caricature of Richard Nixon. (By *Robert Osborn*. Copyright 1955 by *Harper & Brothers*. Reprinted by permission of *Robert Osborn and Harper's Magazine*.)

A SENSE OF HUMOR: TO HAVE OR NOT TO HAVE IT

Not to have a sense of humor is considered a severe handicap, and people defend themselves against this accusation as they would against an insult. Humor implies strength, maturity, superiority in the face of danger and calamity; it symbolizes victory and triumph over defeat. The humorist is a hero, and he is human, too. He recognizes reality, usually as bad, but then behaves as if it does not matter, as if it does not concern him.

People without a sense of humor are suspected of being rigid, unbending, inhibited, and repressed; they cannot allow themselves to be kind or tolerant to the child within themselves. Their ego has submitted to the cruel, often tyrannical, rule of the superego. Queen Victoria of England supposedly was such a person. It is not known that she ever made a joke; on the contrary, she is famous for her remark: "We are *not* amused." Perhaps she had a negative sense of humor: she knew when something was *not* funny. She came close to some insight when she once remarked: "Mr. Gladstone addresses me as if I were a public meeting."

The apparent lack of humor in mother figures like Queen Victoria does not necessarily rest on accurate observation. We are easily inclined to overlook a sense of humor in mother figures because we repeat with them an old childhood disappointment. Because children may get punished when they expect praise, they conclude that their mother does not understand them—does not have a sense of

humor. Mother never forgives enough. The masculine orientation of our time allows the woman to be humorous but not witty, since the latter means, in our chauvinistic unconscious, to be masculine.

The woman of today is supposed to be warm, understanding, charming, attractive, passive, and accepting. She may show a sense of humor in her later years as a sign of maternal maturity; but she had better not show her wit too obviously if she is young and intelligent, for she will scare the contemporary male, who is easily frightened in his masculinity. She is permitted to have a sense of humor because it is an indication of her kindness. Wit is decidedly a sign not of gentle love, but of disguised hostility.

Women are traditionally supposed to be incapable of even retelling a joke. This, of course, is true only for the woman who submits to the socially conditioned demands of our time. It reminds me of primitive tribes of the South Pacific in which the language of the men is taboo for the women. They never speak it, but under the influence of Sodium Amytal or other narcosis, they betray a perfect knowledge of the forbidden language.

The woman has as much natural intelligence, hostility, and tendency to enjoy wit as her male counterpart. But if she is clever, she will not show it. Only when the temptation to follow her masculine protest is greater than her caution will she shine in the bright light of her brilliant wit. She will then appear charming only to the man who

is unafraid of her because he has overcome his insecurity toward women. If a woman's masculine protest is strong enough, she may even rush in where men fear to tread. Female students of medicine, lady bosses of editorial staffs, advertising executives, and other types of successful male impersonators are as skillful as any man in inventing and retelling jokes.

The "true woman" of our time may try and may fail. She then behaves as if she tried to whistle, for which she is anatomically as well suited as the man. When she fails, she will fail because she suddenly becomes aware of having trespassed on a terrain customarily taboo to her. The underlying aggression, even in its witty disguise, will be inhibited, repressed, and the joke will be spoiled.

An illustration of a typical "female" misunderstanding of a joke is the following:

A good, kind lady, charming, attractive in her ways, with a great sense of humor and intelligence, beloved by her friends, was frequently teased because of her inability to retell jokes. Because of the teasing of her friends, she developed an ambition to tell jokes well. One day she listened to the old story about a Chinese executioner who was so skillful that his victims sometimes did not know what had happened to them: he swung his sword once and decapitated them. One time, however, the head did not come off after the blade slipped through the neck of a prisoner, who addressed the executioner with the words, "Sir, you forgot me." The executioner, with superiority,

laughed at him and said: "Nod!"—implying, of course, as the end of the cruel story, that then the head fell off.

A few weeks later the lady tried to tell this joke as follows:

"A Chinese executioner lined up his prisoners whom he was going to decapitate. As they were all standing there, he told them to nod their heads. End of story. I must have forgotten something."

OPTIMISM, PESSIMISM, AND REALISM IN THEIR
RELATION TO HUMOR AND SEX

The optimist disregards the existence of painful reality or at least tries to improve the situation by steeping it in rosy colors. He is content with the present and confidently expects happiness and pleasure from the future. He clings to his early, infantile life of wish fulfillment. He cherishes the happy disposition of a contented child who knows that Mother will always be there and will take care of him as surely as the sun will shine again. For the realist it is again and again surprising—and sometimes annoying—to see how often the untiring optimist persuades or seduces reality to "come across," to be kind to him, to take over the role of Mother Fortune and smile kindly at him. Optimists live as if life offers them a drink or a breast to nurse from. They often look like satisfied babies. They are trusting children who expect some powerful mother to step forth in the future to feed them. "Everything will be all right" is their

slogan. They are the noble characters who never learn from bad experience. They will smile when the realist frowns.

In analyzing them, a desperate depression often is found underneath the optimistic show of good cheer. They constantly belittle themselves and need the all-powerful mother to come to their rescue. They are almost psychotic in their unrealistic belief that they will settle all doubt and despair with faith and hope as their miracle. Their optimistic delusion may be a leftover from early life when the child does not distinguish between "I" and "you," the inner and outer worlds, but firmly believes in the omnipotence of his thoughts and wishes. The optimist gives the world a chance to repeat the miracle of the kind, life-giving mother. He re-creates the old childhood megalomania.

The humorist has chosen a more difficult and complicated assignment than the optimist who clings to an old childhood illusion come hell or high water. The humorist is similar to the depressive in so far as he resignedly accepts the fact that the good mother left him when he was expelled from the childhood paradise. But in contrast to the depressive, he does not spend his life in grief and mourning about the milk which was spilled a long time ago; he does something about it. He resolutely takes over the role of the good mother and himself plays it to the hilt for his own benefit. He is friendly and kind to himself and tries to develop a similarly tolerant and humorous attitude toward others. The grief over the loss of the good mother shows

occasionally in the sadness of the humorist, who always seems to smile through tears.

The sense of humor or an optimistic attitude often develops in girls at a time when they are denying their fear of being sexually inferior to men and when they cannot accept the difference between boy and girl. Then they try to believe in miracles: What I do not have I may get later, in one form or another. The final and most favorable outcome of such castration anxiety in women may be the peculiar realism of the woman, closely akin to moderate realistic optimism and confidence. It represents a final working through to resigned acceptance: I have been castrated, nothing can happen to me any more, I am going to make the best of it.

In later life, especially after such women become mothers, they will see that their lot is not that of the castrate but that they have something which is possibly superior to anything a man has to offer. They once defended themselves against their castration anxiety with the optimistic feeling that nothing really bad could happen any more; they have been through it, and that is that. They actually have worked out a deeper and more important conflict than that connected with genital sexuality. They have finally come to a peaceful adjustment of the original conflict concerning their disappointment with their mothers, who, they felt, treated them unfairly compared with their brothers.

A woman's development is perhaps more difficult in

our time than that of a man because of her repetition of the trauma of weaning and of losing the mother; having to leave the Garden of Eden in early childhood is repeated once more when the girl considers herself underprivileged if she compares her body with that of the boy. Old childhood fears are reactivated in the girl when bloody events like menstruation in puberty and later defloration seem to prove the reality of the threat of castration. The happy outcome of all these trials and tribulations in the development of the female is reached when the girl finally becomes a mother herself and develops in her relation toward her children a mature attitude toward herself and the mother within her. She has become by then a realist through her experience and a humorist through her love.

As a rule, and for good analytic reasons, women are both less optimistic and less pessimistic than men. They are much more realistic. They have faced reality, and after some struggle they have finally accepted it. It was not easy. Their mothers did not help much, but they finally reached the level of realistic adjustment by themselves (assuming that they are not among the great number who get stuck in neurosis or immaturity). Seemingly they accepted the male verdict that they were originally designed to be men but never made the grade and never received the mark of distinction.

Women are not more neurotic than men; they only show neurosis more clearly. Men can escape into business and work, which give them a convenient outlet for all

kinds of neurotic tendencies. The woman's life revolves around human relationships, in which neurotic tendencies show up with pitiless, painful clarity.

The strangely realistic orientation of the woman shows best in little things. While a young man is still wondering how to go about kissing his girl for the first time, she has probably long been thinking about the linoleum in the kitchen after their marriage. When a woman drives her car through a red light and sees a policeman, he is for her just another man in uniform; the fact that she has broken a traffic rule may not change her reaction. If a man sees a policeman, he will react very differently. The policeman becomes, in the mind of the man, the image of all kinds of threats; his realistic function becomes negligible.

Men have trouble facing reality because it is so difficult for their unconscious to accept the fact that women seem to them simultaneously inferior and superior; that they do not have what men have and that they are still not castrated; that they have so little to show compared with men, yet so much to give; that they can create life, while men have relatively little to do with it. How do they do it?

Our primitive unconscious just does not allow us to see it. If we would let ourselves see it, we men would have to go a step further and admit the inferior creative role of the male, Mother Nature's afterthought. Where the woman creates new life, men try to satisfy their creativity in many lesser ways.

A woman needs illusion only until she recognizes her length. She must face men in their silliness, in their competitiveness, in their defensiveness. To do that she needs a quiet superiority; in other words, she needs a sense of humor. She needs it to keep from laughing her head off at men.

Compared with woman's role in creating life, the man's role is that of a drone. He can never forget this, and he will always defend himself against this insight. The drone anxiety of the male is the reason why he must try to demonstrate a superiority he does not have. He must postulate and assume that the woman is envious of him, or, as a psychoanalyst would say, that the neurotic woman fears from penis envy. The woman must overcome her shock at finding that the man, or the little boy, has something which she does not have, but she has a good chance to overcome this envy. Because of her creative superiority, the woman can serenely and smilingly accept her supposed inferiority; she knows better. Man has always been borne by her, and in his unconscious she will always represent his mother. Man will therefore fight for his freedom from her. She, however, will have an easier task. She will have to fight her mother less, because she may become a mother herself. Wit is his; humor is hers.

The mature woman smiles tolerantly and pretends to accept the male's false claim to superiority over her. She agrees to accept it because every time the man approaches her sexually she can show her superiority. She is always

ready; he must get ready. She may watch, while he must perform. For the man the sexual act is a test, an examination, a performance. If the woman so chooses, she may watch the performance and still perform. The man needs cooperation; so to speak, he needs a helping hand. The man is dependent; either he can do it or he cannot do it. The woman is always potentially potent, the man is always potentially impotent. While the woman longs for intercourse, the man performs a kind of "extracourse." Where the man discovered love through sex, the woman discovered sex through love. These are the great differences between the sexes.

A sense of humor is a sign of maturity, a sign of sublimation, a sign of love. The woman has a greater chance to achieve her level of maturity than the man. Even though her part is more difficult, she gets there more frequently.

The young woman's calm, realistic self-reliance in contrast to the young man's tense, alert search for self-assurance were made strikingly clear to me a few years ago. In order to acquaint myself with normal young Americans and to compare the troubles and conflicts of late adolescence with the typical psychiatric problems of old age, I decided to join a group of college students who took long hikes under the sponsorship of their college. A teacher was in charge, and approximately ten young women and as many young men were participating. I tagged along as an interested observer. We passed a nudist camp on one

of our hikes and quite naturally the conversation turned with some animation to nudism. When we were nearing the gates, I could not resist asking teasingly and testingly, "Why don't we visit the camp?" It was clearly understood that while we were in Rome we would have to do as the Romans did. After some discussion a vote was taken, and all the girls—unanimously!—voted in favor of a visit. All the boys—just as unanimously!—voted against it. We continued on our hike around the camp and into the mountains.

I must add here an embarrassing confession. I had worked for almost thirty years in psychiatry and psychoanalysis and considered myself as qualified and experienced, intuitive and understanding an analyst as they come. But I was completely baffled by this vote and behavior. The unanimous vote, the clear-cut line of separation between the sexes, even the No of the boys instead of acceptance of an adventure, was unexpected and inexplicable to me for a long time. The daring readiness of the young women was also a surprise. At that time I did not know that a woman feels most innocent when she is daring. I realized only later that a woman has little to hide in such an experiment; that she is protected by nature in the role of onlooker, while all men react on such an occasion as if they are taking a test which is highly unfair and one in which they can only fail.

There is hardly anything more mortifying for a young man than to be laughed at. Laughter may make him im-