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Contents



Pre-Events

Online sessions held ahead of the conference: a panel, a film screening, and an interview keynote.



Keynotes & Workshops

Featured plenary speakers and hands-on workshops opening the conference programme.



Guest Roundtables

4 invited roundtables bringing scholars, journalists, and industry guests together.



Individual Papers

115 individually submitted paper abstracts, ordered alphabetically by title.



Self-Organized Panels

8 coordinated panels bringing together 35 talks around shared themes.



Roundtables

7 roundtable discussions, ordered alphabetically by title.

FEATURED PROGRAMME Pre-Events

Online sessions held ahead of the conference.

PRE-EVENT · PANEL

Humor and the Global South

Diego Hoefel · UFC **CHAIR**

Macarena Belén Chandia · Conicet

Samantha da Silva Diefenthaeler · ESCAC – Universitat de Barcelona

Fincy Frangline · Christ University

Luiz Eduardo Krüger Dias · UFG

Puspita Panda · IIT Tirupati

PRE-EVENT · FILM SCREENING

Pre-Event Film Screening (and Q&A)

Henrique Pessoa **DIRECTOR**

João Paulo Capelotti **MEDIATOR**

PRE-EVENT · KEYNOTE

Humor Studies in Brazil: An Interview with Professor Elias Saliba

Elias Saliba **FEATURED GUEST**

FEATURED PROGRAMME Keynotes

Plenary addresses from leading voices in humor studies, delivered across the four days of the conference.

1**JULY 6 · 6:30 PM**

Humor as an Anti-Victimization Strategy

Daniel Kupermann — Universidade de São Paulo (USP)

Psychoanalyst and Associate Professor at the Institute of Psychology, University of São Paulo. Vice President of the International Sándor Ferenczi Network. Published works include “Daring to Laugh: Humor and Creation in Psychoanalysis.”

2**JULY 7 · 7:00 PM**

What Is Humor Studies For? And Why Study Racist Humor?

Raúl Pérez — University of La Verne

Associate Professor of Sociology examining intersections of racism, humor, and social conflict. His book “The Souls of White Jokes” received the 2023 Mary Douglas Book Prize.

3**JULY 8 · 7:00 PM**

We Don't Know How to Curate a Meme Exhibition

Clarissa Diniz — Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ)

Professor in the Department of Art History and Theory at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro. Recently curated “MEME: no Br@sil da memeficação” (2025–2026).

4

JULY 9 · 7:00 PM

Humor on Skin: The Malfeitona Case and the Materiality of Comedy

Helen Fernandes (Malfeitona) — Artist, tattooist, comedian and digital influencer

Brazilian artist, tattooist, comedian, and digital influencer. This keynote explores how humor functions as “a material and embodied practice” beyond performance.

FEATURED PROGRAMME

Workshops

Hands-on sessions complementing the conference's academic programme.

W1

JULY 7 · 2:00 PM

Irreverent Narratives vs. Official Narratives

Eduardo Katz

Historical satires examining human rights (conducted in Portuguese).

W2

JULY 9 · 11:00 AM

Humor and Cultural Critique in Contemporary Practices and Generative Music

Sebastián Piracés-Ugarte

Explores musical creation with artificial intelligence.

W3

JULY 9 · 6:00 PM

Humor on Skin

Helen Fernandes (Malfeitona)

Hands-on session creating temporary humorous tattoos and exploring “the body as a canvas for comedic expression.”

FEATURED PROGRAMME Guest Roundtables

Invited roundtables bringing together scholars, journalists, and industry guests.

GUEST ROUNDTABLE

Humor, Image, and Culture

Benjamim Picado · UFF

Héctor Fernández L'Hoeste · Georgia State University

João Senna · INCT.DD/UFBA

CHAIR

GUEST ROUNDTABLE

Humor, Journalism, and Mis/Disinformation

Roberto Kaz · Piauí Herald

Alberto Godioli · University of Groningen

Clara Balbi · UFF

CHAIR

GUEST ROUNDTABLE

Humor and Gender

Clarice Falcão · Porta dos Fundos

Adriana Falcão · Porta dos Fundos

Dida Camero · Porta dos Fundos

Bella Camero · Porta dos Fundos

Thaís Leão Vieira · UFMT

CHAIR

GUEST ROUNDTABLE

Humor and Regulation of Digital Platforms

Thales Bueno · Kwai

Rodrigo Carreiro · Aláfia Lab

Luisa F. Isaza-Ibarra · University of Groningen

CHAIR

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS Individual Papers

115 papers, ordered alphabetically by title.

#

PAPER

‘Almost Racistly White’: Decolonising Humour in Man Like Mobeen

Sarah Ilott (Manchester Metropolitan)

Humour has a colonising or decolonising potential because it is premised upon knowledge of the world that is upheld or upturned depending on the structure of the joke. Humour mechanisms such as mimicry and stereotype have been central to colonial systems of knowledge that produce and attempt to fix racialised Others in order to exercise power over them. Renewed calls for racial justice in the cultural and political spheres following the murder of George Floyd in 2020 have created the conditions for productions that take as their starting point the continued inequalities of a world still marked by the wielding of racialised colonial power in its multiple and related forms: economic, epistemic, military and political. This has involved an increased production of comedy that engages with racism in systemic terms by focusing on the institutions through which white supremacy is maintained: the police, educational establishments, workplaces and governments. This paper engages contemporary screen comedy that is working in a decolonising way to interrogate British institutions, using Guz Khan’s *Man Like Mobeen* (BBC 2017-2025) as a central case study. This comedy employs humour as a means of decentring dominant racial ‘knowledges’ that have their roots in the wielding of colonial power; registers the absurdity produced through a structurally racist society for those whose lived experience fails to match up with the stories that explain it; engenders affective alliances across racial divides to create new avenues for solidarity; and operates pedagogically to centre peripheralized knowledges.

PAPER

“But not a fanatic!”: Navigating the margins of dissent and conformity through laughter**Augusto Rodríguez Paniagua (UC Chile)**

We analyze how a group of Chilean women aged 65-80 years, develop and decide the script of a short, animated film they will create during a workshop designed to discuss gender and humor topics. Integrating Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), Conversation Analysis (CA), and philosophical theories of laughter, we frame laughter as a diagnostic indicator of discursive tension, identifying the nodes of conflict (particularly while discussing perspectives on marriage and singlehood) that must be navigated to build a shared narrative. Although laughter cannot resolve these nodes on its own, it serves as a modulation device that helps determine the expected way of engagement with a given point of view. The group laughs and jokes both at excessive caution regarding acts and superstitions that might impede getting married, and at “fanatical” singlehood, thereby delineating acceptable margins of conformity and deviation. Thus, laughter and the evaluations that arise in response to its appearance reveal, rather than the mere existence of a norm, a deeper ideological dimension: that any perspective (either normative or divergent) must be followed in a certain way. Dissenting points of view are allowed to coexist if they follow the expected margins of affective response. The resulting collective authorial voice is thus full of different perspectives that are not synthesized around a single non-contradictory idea but can simultaneously challenge gender norms while also sustaining them. This nuanced function extends existing laughter research beyond traditional frameworks of affiliation and disaffiliation, by showing how laughter modulates ideological complexity in real-time collaborative interaction.

PAPER

“Tagarela” interviews Campos Sales: a cartoon by K. Lixto in Rio de Janeiro’s Belle Époque.**João Spacca de Oliveira (USP)**

This article analyzes a cartoon by Calixto Cordeiro, or K. Lixto, as he signed his work, one of the most emblematic cartoonists of the Belle Époque in Rio de Janeiro. In a comic strip published in the magazine “Tagarela” (“Talkative”) on April 26, 1902, President Campos Sales, supposedly an amateur caricaturist, is interviewed by the cartoonist. In a parodic inversion of hierarchy, Sales is transformed into a clumsy and boastful artist, drawn grotesquely, in contrast to Calixto who, in a more restrained style, wears his impeccable frock coat, his trademark. The article also highlights how the artist, a light-skinned Afro-descendant, affirms his ethnic characteristics in the self-portrait, emphasizing his Afro-textured hair. Combining elements of Africanness and elegance, Calixto challenges a very frequent type of prejudiced humor that exploits the incompatibility of Black and mixed-race people with habits considered civilized and exclusive to white elites. The same edition also includes the chronicle “Gíria” (Slang), signed by Juca Pancada (something like “Punch Joe”), written and illustrated by Calixto. In a text coded in the impenetrable dialect of the “Povo da Lira” (the capoeira rogues), the author narrates his fights and misadventures, disseminating or inventing ways of speaking later reused in the songs of the radio famous artist Moreira da Silva “Kid Morengueira”. Through these two personas, Calixto took advantage of the prevailing codes and used them to develop ways of positioning himself and opposing, albeit obliquely – cunningly – the stereotypes and exclusion of Black people from the society of the First Republic.

PAPER

“Uma track inteira só falando do meu pau”: affection and sexuality in brazilian shittrap**Alexandre de Assunção Pinto (UFF)**

The objective of this research is, from a communicational and discursive approach, to critically reflect on the discussion of affects and sexuality in Brazilian shittrap, a musical subgenre that blends characteristics of trap music and shitpost humor. Trap is a rhythm rooted within the Afro-diasporic culture of the Hip-Hop movement. Characterized by a heavy beat and more aggressive bass, trap emerged associated with territories of intense urban violence and crime. Shitposting, in turn, is a humorous language originating from digital communities, such as social networks. With an aesthetic of the absurd, the memes embedded in this culture frequently engage with misogynistic and reactionary themes. The existence of a mixture between these two phenomena reveals relevant details about the processes of market appropriation of Black music and the emptying of its revolutionary meanings, but also about cracks in these oppressive movements and forms of critical reflection by Black communities in the most diverse scenarios. For this study, we used musical discourse analysis as a method to understand the potential productions of meaning in the musical languages of the song União Flasco (2020), by the Brazilian shitrapper Luckhaos, seeking not only to present the work as a communicational object, but also as a result of individual and community reflection. The study of discussions about affect, sexuality, humor, digital language, and power relations in Black music can contribute to the deconstruction of social oppressions.

A

PAPER

Análise de um corpus aleatório e surpreendente**Possenti, Sírío (UNICAMP)**

Esta comunicação tratará de um corpus um pouco aleatório. Serão analisados “exemplos” de textos diversos (piadas, charges etc.) selecionados a partir de um arquivo constituído de enunciados humorísticos que recebo pelas redes sociais. Sabe-se que os algoritmos selecionam de alguma forma o que cada cidadão recebe (simplificando: “esquerdistas” recebem postagens de esquerda, “direitistas”, de direita). Assim, meu arquivo tem, em parte, um viés “político”. O corpus inclui basicamente piadas que Freud chamaria de inocentes. O corpus é heterogêneo, em consideração à provável diversidade linguística da audiência. A questão mais relevante da comunicação serão as técnicas de produção do humor, e não seus temas ou as posições ideológicas ou culturais expressas. Numa uma época de análises frequentes das mídias sociais, este trabalho destaca de certa forma o papel dos algoritmos. Além disso, dedica-se à leitura mais detalhada dos “textos”, com destaque para a engenhosa passagem (surpreendente) de um script a outro como fonte característica do humor. Alguns exemplos são: (a) “- Buenos días. Busco trabajo. - Le interesa de jardinero? - Dejar dinero? Si lo que busco es trabajo!”; (b) (diálogo com Trump) “- So, of the 35.000 lies you’ve told the american public, which is your favorite? – I don’t lie. – Yeah, that’s my favorite one, too”; (c) “Não é porque eu ando com quem bebe que eu também tenho que andar”.

PAPER

Anti-Populism: why so serious?**Renato Duarte Caetano (UFMG)**

Literature has been prolific in accounting for how anti-populist discourse develops across both academic and public debates, often emphasizing its reliance on hyper-moralization, elitism, and sanctimoniousness. In this view, antipopulism tends to frame populism as a political scandal, portraying it as the dangerous seduction of supposedly irrational masses by demagogic leaders endowed with tasteless charisma. What remains underexplored, however, is a constitutive paradox within anti-populist discourse. While presenting itself as rigorous and normatively grounded, anti-populism simultaneously treats populism as both an overwhelming threat and an object of ridicule, at once dangerously powerful and dismissively laughable. The work of Richard Hofstadter is exemplary in this regard: for him, populism appears, on the one hand, as a serious threat to democratic institutions and, on the other, as intrinsically unserious, even comical in its style and claims. This paper argues that, although largely overlooked in the literature, this paradox is crucial for generating new insights not only into anti-populism but also into populism itself. It suggests that the two are not only structurally intertwined through a struggle over the political antagonisms they seek to articulate, but also through a shared reliance on humor. By analyzing the role of laughter in anti-populist discourse, the paper shows how ridicule operates as a mediator of political legitimacy, both delegitimizing and re-legitimizing populist actors. Our main argument is that by ridiculing populism from an elitist standpoint, anti-populist discourse ultimately reinforces the very antagonism it seeks to neutralize, thereby sustaining populism through its own critique.

PAPER

Aprender ciências na abordagem STEAM com humor: Qual é a graça?**Fernando Carril Cocco (ISE VERA CRUZ)**

O artigo investiga o processo de ensino e aprendizagem de ciências da natureza com a abordagem pedagógica interdisciplinar “STEAM” - Science (Ciência), Technology (Tecnologia), Engineering (Engenharia), Arts (Artes) e Mathematics (Matemática) - sob influência de técnicas de “humor” para o ensino fundamental. Aliar ensino prático, pensamento crítico, criatividade e resolução de problemas ligados a estratégias e técnicas de comédia pode estabelecer uma melhor relação com a turma, que depois realizar investigações com leveza de quem quer brincar de verdade. Nas palavras do palhaço e educador Cláudio Thebas (2019): “porque depois que a gente brinca, a gente fica amigo.” Os resultados apontam que certos tipos de “humor” podem contribuir de forma complementar à aprendizagem de ciências com a abordagem STEAM. Houve apropriação dos temas vividos, conceitos, materiais com superação de atritos e desafios, trabalho em grupo com criatividade e divertida curiosidade. O professor precisou de preparação em ciências, treino cômico e coragem para errar ou mostrar-se ridículo, sem perder a visão da expectativa de aprendizagem desejada. No contexto escolar é fundamental apresentar fatos com critérios científicos. Exageros na comédia, não nos dados. As brincadeiras proporcionadas pelo humor não devem distorcer o contexto das disciplinas ou interferir na realidade das observações. Licença poética na linguagem cômica e não na científica. Ninguém pode ser obrigado a achar algo engraçado, o humor é uma construção que pede contato e compreensão de ambas as partes para que a graça aconteça. Em se tratando de gente, a conexão precede o humor, a tecnologia e as ciências.

PAPER

A autotradução do humor nos minicontos translíngues em francês de Julio Cortázar**Daniel Padilha Pacheco da Costa (USP)**

A língua materna constitui um pólo da escrita translíngue, seja quando é completamente abandonada, como ocorre com os escritores alógrafos e monolíngues, ou quando é parcialmente abandonada, como ocorre com os bilíngues. Nos casos de bilinguismo, a escrita translíngue pode estar associada a variadas modalidades de tradução literária, como a autotradução e a tradução colaborativa. Diferentemente de outros escritores latino-americanos que também publicaram em francês, como a argentina Gloria Alcorta, o peruano Francisco Garcia Calderón, o chileno Vicente Huidobro e o uruguaio Jules Supervielle, o argentino Julio Cortázar escreveu apenas uma pequena parte da sua obra naquela língua: 12 minicontos foram reunidos em *Les Discours du Pince-gueule*, e dois foram publicados individualmente: “Comme quoi, on est très handicapé par les jaguars : réflexion sur les agressions du quotidien d'un citadin” (1965) e *On déplore la* (1966). Nesses minicontos translíngues, Cortázar explora sistematicamente diferentes modalidades de humor verbal, como jogos de palavras, paranomásias, malapropismos, neologismos, alusões, polissemias, homofonias, homônimas, equívocidades, calemburs e palavras-valise. Autotraduzidos para o espanhol como “Los discursos del Pinchajeta”, “Con lo cual estamos muy menoscabados por los jaguares” e “Ya no quedan esperanzas de”, respectivamente, aqueles minicontos foram, em sua maioria, logo incluídos em obras como *La vuelta al día en ochenta mundos* (1967) e *Último round* (1969). Pretende-se compreender as estratégias autotradutórias utilizadas por Cortázar para reescrever em espanhol o humor verbal explorado nos seus minicontos translíngues.

PAPER

A framework for analyzing irony in videogames**Natalia Corbello (UFF)**

The digital landscape, with its multimodal capabilities, has transformed contemporary discourse so that media scholars must adapt to understand how old phenomena now manifest in new ways. In this context, the paper presents a methodological framework for analyzing irony in videogames. Drawing on traditional language-based theories of irony (Ducrot, 1987; Kerbrat-Orecchioni, 1978; Brait, 2008), as well as on contributions made by scholars of visual media (Scott, 2004; Foss, 2005) and game studies (Bogost, 2007, 2008; Caselli et al., 2020; Schellekens et al., 2020), a three-level framework is articulated that takes into account the specificities of videogames as a medium. To this end, we propose to identify (1) an ironic speaker/interactor who both addresses and recruits the sympathy of (2) a receptor against (3) an absurd enunciator. We also propose that, in the case of ironic videogames, all three of these conceptual entities may be indicated by/materialized in discourse through (A) verbal, (B) audiovisual, and/or (C) procedural signs. To argue for the validity of the framework, a few ironic games from developer Paolo Pedercini are analyzed: *Orgasm Simulator* (Molleindustria, 2003), *Oiligarchy* (Molleindustria, 2008), and *The New York Times Simulator* (Molleindustria, 2024). We conclude that, although a classic model of verbal irony can still be applied to videogames, their ironic discourse is better understood as a multimodal combination of languages, including their own procedural systems of meaning-making. In this regard, the proposed framework offers a productive response to the challenges digital media pose to the study of contemporary ironic discourse.

PAPER

A History of Satire Without Men? “Fumerism,” the Gendering of Anger and Theories of Satire during the “Golden Age of Satire”

Fauve Vandenberghe (Harvard)

Recent scholarship within “feminist humour studies” has opened up exciting avenues to think about the intersections of gender, satire and humour. This paper adds a historical perspective to these debates by turning to the so-called “Golden Age of Satire” during the early eighteenth century in Britain to make sense of the origin of these gendered dimensions of satiric theory. This paper examines the role of anger in satire and what recent critics have termed “fumerism,” a mode of humour fuelled by feminist rage (Clinton). It traces the beginning of women’s satire in Britain to the querelle des femmes (or the “woman debates”) of the early eighteenth century. Women’s anger was central during these heated pamphlet debates: anger was a method for female pamphleteers’ pointed critique (“fumerism” avant-la-lettre), but arguments about women’s supposedly natural irascibility were also leveraged to a priori discredit women’s satirical legitimacy. Examining women’s satiric pamphlets alongside popular theories of satire and conduct literature, this paper argues that anger was conceptualized as a central affect of satiric critique, and as a result structurally excluded (or hampered) women’s participation within the satiric tradition. These debates shed new light on central questions within the history of satire, such as the incongruity vs. superiority debate, and Juvenalian vs Horatian satire. Arguing that putting front and centre women’s contributions to the history of satire invites us to critically assess and challenge the definitions with which we work, this paper ultimately probes: what does a history of satire without men look like?

PAPER

A Laughable Critique: The Function of Humor in Online Film Criticism

Raphaella de Oliveira Condeixa (UFRJ)

This paper analyses the use of humor as a central element in online film criticism, taking as a case study the Brazilian YouTube channel Gaveta and its signature format Review do Caos. Film criticism has increasingly become part of the online entertainment ecosystem, with video criticism gaining ground among both professionals and amateurs. Drawing on McWhirter’s (2015) taxonomy of contemporary film criticism, we situate Gaveta’s practice within the Sophisticated School — a critical mode that interprets complex cinematic issues through experience and knowledge while remaining accessible to non-specialist audiences. Review do Caos is dedicated exclusively to negatively reviewed films — works deemed cinematically poor — in which humor operates as the primary vehicle for sustained critical analysis. Rather than dismissing these films, Gaveta uses comedy to systematically deconstruct their failures, demonstrating that understanding why a film is bad demands the same analytical rigour as praising a masterpiece. This dynamic speaks directly to contemporary cinephilia (Nogueira and Santos, 2012) as the format cultivates audience engagement with audiovisual language precisely through negative critique, fostering a deeper cinephilic sensibility among viewers. We further situate Gaveta within what Villegas-Simón et al. (2023) term “digital cultural communicators,” arguing that this format represents a productive model for teaching audiovisual language in digital spaces. As methodology, we adopt Johnston’s (2019) unified analysis, integrating the aesthetic dimensions of the videos with their historical, temporal, and enunciative contexts.

PAPER

Bhairav Aryal's Contribution to Nepali Humorous Literature**Binod Karki (Tribhuvan University)**

Bhairav Aryal is a talented and influential writer in the field of Nepali comic literature. He has contributed in the field through his unique and sharp satirical writing style. Aryal is considered to be an unmatched comic writer of Nepali literature. His main works are *Kaukuti*, *Jayabhundi*, *Galabandi*, *Itishree*, *Das Autar*, etc. Aryal is a world-class satirical talent who is successful in presenting various anomalies and distortions of contemporary society in a vivid manner, through the common topics of the world like 'Chandralok Kasko' meaning who owns the Lunar World. Owing to his original, fearless and powerful writing skills, readers get entertainment from his essays with balanced use of humor and sarcasm. Aryal has also played a special role in bringing the society to the right direction with his sharp satire on the dark side of Nepali society depicting vanity of the people, administrative delay, political corruption, social arrogance, and superstition. His essays are lush and strong, with linguistic sweetness and simplicity besides easy and ironical proverbs capable of making the reader feel deep joy. His ability to dissolve the real issues of contemporary society in the sauce of laughter and satire is the unique craft of his writing. Essays like *International Frog Conference* have made. Aryal is a great writer of comic consciousness whose use of language including alliteration and the artistry of satire show a very high sense of humor. This paper explores the legacy Aryal established and the direction he provided to Nepali humor literature.

PAPER

Blackface Minstrelsy, Colonialism, and the Legacies of Racial Slavery**Raul Nguyen-Perez (University of La Verne), Dr Simon Weaver (Brunel University)**

In this paper, we examine the origins of blackface minstrelsy over the last five centuries alongside the history of European colonialism and racial slavery, with an emphasis on the role black racial ridicule played in the early formation of the idea of race itself. While Blackface minstrelsy, the form of racial ridicule that emerged in the U.S. during the 19th and early 20th centuries, is the most prominent form of racial minstrelsy in recent history, racial minstrelsy has a genealogy that dates back several hundred years earlier in European society before it reached colonial North America. From across Europe and the early U.S., we examine several literary and performance genres that influence or are influenced by blackface minstrelsy. In particular, we discuss and link different modes of early racialized humor that emerged in contexts like Portugal, Spain, Italy, and England from the 15th through the 17th centuries, as racializing comic devices that served as early racialization mechanisms that reflected and reinforced a racial order that was developing within European society, and later exported to the “new world.” As blackface minstrelsy developed into a new and distinctive genre of “American” popular entertainment, it would also become central to the formation of a new “white” identity that thrived alongside the rising politics of white nationalism during the 19th century. While our brief historical overview is far from an exhaustive history, we contend that linking these and other histories is key to better understanding the history and legacy of blackface minstrelsy today.

PAPER

Blood Ink, Deadly Laughter: The Aesthetic of the “Jewish Enemy” in the Brochure “Juden stellen sich vor” (1934)

Mariana Lopez Arreguy (UFRJ)

This paper analyzes caricatures in the brochure “Juden stellen sich vor”, published in 1934 in Nazi Germany. The booklet was issued by Stürmer-Verlag, the publishing house of the antisemitic journal *Der Stürmer*, directed by the Nazi official Julius Streicher. The pamphlet contains 24 caricatures of antisemitic Jewish archetypes drawn by the antisemitic caricaturist Philipp Rupprecht, known as Fips. Guided by the theories of Sigmund Freud and Henri Bergson, the paper analyzes how humor functions as an element of violence and an important source for understanding Nazi antisemitism. Laughter thus acts as a way of humiliating the target, reinforcing preexisting feelings of hatred, and as a means of sharing contempt, aiming to reach those who consider themselves neutral. Caricature and humor are an essential part of the political sphere, in which, upon encountering the source, the one who laughs takes a political position. Furthermore, this paper examines how the visibility of representation in the brochure is linked to political and moral structures. The research is guided by the Documentary Method of Image Analysis, established by the German researcher Ralf Bohnsack and applied to the analysis of cartoons by the Brazilian historian Vinícius Liebel. The method understands images as constitutive of reality, while classifying and tracing them within a specific historical framework, reconstructing their different meanings and pointing to the source’s historicity. The research is also guided by the foundations of Cultural History, formulated by the historian Roger Chartier, and the Cultural History of the Political, developed by the historian Pierre Rosanvallon.

PAPER

Brand America: BoJack Horseman and the Hunt for Whitewhale

Jonas Lindkvist (Lund)

The first known use of parody is from Aristotle’s *Poetics* and since then it has been used for both transgressive and normative purposes. *BoJack Horseman* is one of several modern animated tv shows that use parody or satire not only as a means for humor and derision, but also for political and aesthetic purposes. In S06E03 *Feel-Good Story* the conflation of capitalism and national identity in the USA is dissected through the use of parody and satire. Diane investigates “the seedy underbelly of American capitalism” in a series of stories for her employer *Girl Croosh* when she comes face to face with mega conglomerate *Whitewhale* and its Walt Disney-esque owner *Jeremiah Whitewhale*. In an orientation video of the company the parodic bluntness of “saying the quiet part out loud” combined with using elements of animation history offers biting satire of an American society struggling with the power of corporations. By using and expanding on theories on parody and pastiche from among other Linda Hutcheon, Richard Dyer and Dan Harries it is my ambition to show that animated television parody in general and *BoJack Horseman* in particular is at the forefront of not only parody and intertextuality, but of contemporary dramatic, comedic, political and personal storytelling. *Feel-Good Story* investigates and exposes the conflation of capitalism and American national identity using parody and satire to question norms and hypocrisies surrounding representations of capitalism in the USA and in the meantime creates funny, meaningful, politically versatile and personal entertainment.

PAPER

Breaking and Rebuilding Comedy: The Rise of “Queered Stand-up”**Christina Sanchez Mattson (University of Vienna)**

While Hannah Gadsby has received international acclaim and rich scholarly analysis for their efforts, in their 2018 special "Nanette," to “break comedy so that [they] could rebuild it and reshape it” (Gadsby, “Three Ideas”), they are not alone in this endeavor. The last decade has seen a wave of comedians – among them Cameron Esposito, Alok Vaid-Menon, Chris Grace, and Jerrod Carmichael – engaged in a similar project, challenging conventions and blurring boundaries of stand-up, renegotiating expectations of the genre. I argue that these specials constitute a distinct and prominent trend arising within the contemporary stand-up comedy landscape, which I have termed “queered stand-up” for its project of disruption and ambivalences. Here I draw from Michael DeAngelis’s conception of queerness as a “structural narrative strategy” (579), in which queering of genre is “not only a deconstructive operation, but also a model for restructuring of meaning” (579). In this paper, as a case study analysis of queered stand-up, I close-read Jerrod Carmichael’s 2022 special "Rothaniel," examining ways he queers conventions of persona in building and negotiating a confessional “meta-persona” (Luckhurst). I also explore interconnected patterns that reappear within queered stand-up – among them a self-reflexive, meta-referential stance toward comedy, an engagement with mental health (both within content and in considering the effects of the performance on the comedian and audience), and political arguments framed through and illuminated by personal narratives – suggesting that the phenomenon of queered stand-up raises vital questions about the aesthetic premises and cultural functions of stand-up comedy.

PAPER

Cartooning, (Self-)Censorship and Online Threats: Presenting "Cartoonists Online: Global Free Expression Survey"**Ana Mercedes Pedrazzini (IPEHCS)**

Editorial cartoonists have long faced dangers rooted in the intolerance of those they target, but the digital transformation of media has introduced a new generation of threats. Beyond traditional pressures, cartoonists navigate growing societal sensitivity toward contentious topics alongside the risks inherent to online communication—particularly social media platforms and AI-driven tools—which have created novel mechanisms of censorship and harassment. Shadow banning, coordinated troll attacks, hacking, and impersonation have become commonplace hazards shaping how cartoonists work and self-censor. The "Cartoonists Online: Global Free Expression Survey" was conducted in 2025 by Cartooning for Peace, Cartoonists Rights, Forum for Humor and the Law, and Columbia Global Freedom of Expression to systematically document cartoonists' online experiences and their perspectives on free expression. A questionnaire, available in English, French, Spanish, and Arabic, was distributed via professional networks, websites, and direct outreach. A total of 258 cartoonists completed the questionnaire in full, representing 72 countries across six world regions. Respondents were predominantly male (85%) and between the ages of 40 and 65 (64%), with the largest regional concentrations in Europe (35%), North and Central America (25%), and Asia (17%). Key findings reveal that the majority of cartoonists have experienced insults or threats in response to their work and report feelings of anxiety and fear stemming from online insecurity. Political content emerged as the principal catalyst for censorship and targeted harassment. Statistical analysis identified significant differences by region, gender, and age. This paper discusses the findings and outlines recommendations for online platforms and policy makers.

PAPER

Collaborative cartooning with teenagers: humor, play, and the multimodal development of incongruous ideas

Lucia Bugallo (CONICET), Ana Mercedes Pedrazzini (IPEHCS)

Creating cartoons collaboratively is a challenging activity involving communicative, cognitive, and social skills. While group-based learning research often prioritizes verbal communication, and marginalizes ‘off-task’ behaviors like play and humor, this study addresses these gaps within an activity where a playful mindset is essential for producing humorous incongruities. We conducted a workshop in an extra-curricular educational setting in Argentina, with ten participants (ages 10–14), and analyzed ten group sessions of cartoon production. We characterized the incongruous ideas created and also examined the multimodal resources used to explore them, the humor and cartoon features that shaped idea genesis, and the role of playful behaviors in group work. Results show that humorous idea generation unfolds as a dynamic, multimodal, and multidimensional process. Groups created a single idea or multiple independent or derivative ones, through verbal, graphic, and embodied exploration. Thematic, logical, rhetorical and modal cartoon features were selectively considered as the frame for idea generation. Playful behaviors—including humor, singing, shared laughs, play, and chat—appeared in most group interactions. Affiliative humor contributed to a positive atmosphere, and eventually influenced the creation of incongruous ideas. In contrast, aggressive humor frequently disrupted task progression, causing tensions among participants, sometimes being used to discard others’ ideas. These findings support the need to integrate a multimodal approach in the study of collaborative creative activities, and to reconsider the benefits of playful behaviors since, when on-task, they favor group cohesion and the emergence of multiple and diverse humorous ideas.

PAPER

Comic Fundamentalism and the secret origin of the Lulz

Nicholas Howard Ferdinand Holm (Massey University)

Humour has historically been understood to stand in opposition to fundamentalist beliefs. This position follows from not only the theorisation of humour as a form of anti-ideological critique, but also the way it has been positioned in popular accounts as the seemingly natural opponent of religious fundamentalism in high profile conflicts such as the Jyllands-Posten and Charlie Hebdo affairs. Framed in this way, humour is the opposite of fundamentalism. However, this paper asks whether this apparently common sense account of humour has served to obscure how humour itself has come to operate as a form of fundamentalism. To those ascribe to Comic Fundamentalism, humour is the best and most appropriate measure of all things, other concerns ought to be subordinated to the pursuit of humour, and nothing should stand in the way of humour as a virtue and a way of life. Such a way of thinking finds its purest expression in, on the one hand, the writings of some scholars of humour, and, on the other, in digital cultures of the twenty first century, who advocate for the importance of the “lulz” above all else. By drawing the connection between these two forms of comic fundamentalism, this paper will chart the origin of novel forms of antisocial online behaviour, and consider the implications of theories of humour that seek to think it apart from grounded models of politics and ethics.

PAPER

Cômico e religião: a criminalização do humor no parlamento brasileiro contemporâneo

Natã Silva Nazareno (PUC GOIÁS), Luiz Signates (PUC-GOIÁS and UFG)

Este artigo analisa o problema do sistema legislativo brasileiro nas constituições de leis, medidas e decretos, sob influência dos dogmas de religiões cristãs. Esta ocorrência da relação entre Estado e religião resulta no aspecto coercitivo, punitivo e o enquadramento criminal dos autores/artistas por medidas jurídicas interpretadas ao tom da moral cristã. O sequestro das instituições por um segmento religioso específico não apenas silencia a crítica artística, mas pode atrofiar a função social do cômico, em sua característica de ação comunicativa de desalienação e denúncia da hipocrisia institucional. A colisão entre a natureza transgressora do cômico e a rigidez normativa de um Estado, sequestrado ocasionalmente, por crenças que inspiram comportamento fundamentalista, fanatismo e repressão ao “outro”, ao diferente. É relevante, saber de que modo a transposição da moralidade cristã para a letra da lei positivada opera uma mutação na função do Estado, que deixa de ser o garantidor das liberdades individuais (e coletivas) para se tornar o braço coercitivo de um “Parlamento do Estado Cristão”, despachando através de mecanismos jurídicos, a tipificação da expressão cômica (visuais, cênicas, musicais ou literárias). O momento atual urge o debate público e institucional sobre os limites e a manutenção da liberdade de expressão no rigor dos direitos fundamentais constituídos. As consequências políticas dessa movimentação, que emerge de forma crescente, no legislativo brasileiro, parece inevitável supor um movimento em direção a um abismo do Estado democrático, com esse avanço que, poderia ser denominado o autoritarismo teocrático, ou uma forma repressiva da teologia do domínio.

PAPER

Complex ways of targeting in nonsense poetry: A case study of Edward Lear and W.S. Gilbert

Anthony Manu (VUB)

In nineteenth-century British culture, humour becomes less associated with mockery and biting criticism, and more with amusement and conviviality. The humorous literary genres and modes typical of the period can still express mockery. Yet, they tend to do so less directly and sharply and laugh more at the social order than at concrete people, types, or groups. Moreover, they often embrace eccentric characters. This paper investigates how and to what degree the concept of a target can be applied to nonsensical poems that do not have one clear “butt of the joke”. It moreover asks how one can structurally identify targets in nonsensical poems, where the characters follow an internal logic, distinct from real-world logic. Through an analysis of targets in poems by Edward Lear (1812-1888) and William Schwenk Gilbert (1836-1911), it argues that a lot of nineteenth-century British nonsense verse should not be interpreted as making fun of a simple target. It should rather be read as targeting a set of perspectives by framing them as competing views on the relevance of a law or norm. On a theoretical level, it introduces a new approach to humorous targets by combining insights from script-based humour theories, other theories on the target, and my own research on poetic humour. This approach will allow me to identify and interpret ways of targeting based on the semantic structure of the humorous texts. Finally, I will discuss what nonsensical poetry can teach us about humorous targeting in general.

PAPER

Comunicação política e humor no podcast “As Cunhãs”

Amanda Nogueira de Oliveira (UFBA), Crysttian Arantes Paixão (UFBA), Yasmin Solrac Ribeiro dos Santos (UFBA)

O crescimento do podcasting tem tensionado as formas tradicionais de mediação da comunicação política no Brasil, sobretudo com a emergência de iniciativas independentes em contextos regionais. Nesse cenário, o podcast “As Cunhãs”, lançado em maio de 2020, destaca-se como uma experiência singular no Ceará, ao articular comentário político regional e nacional a uma perspectiva autônoma, conduzida por jornalistas mulheres. Com presença no YouTube, onde reúne 10,3 mil inscritos, 266 vídeos publicados e mais de 561 mil visualizações até março de 2026, o podcast incorpora ao debate político uma linguagem marcada pelo humor, perceptível nas interações entre as apresentadoras e nas entrevistas. Tal característica contribui para aproximar temas de relevância pública de sua audiência. Diante disso, investiga-se em que medida o humor atua como elemento constitutivo da identidade do podcast e como essa estratégia contribui para a geração de identificação junto ao público. Parte-se da hipótese de que a personalização do debate político, mediada por referências culturais cearenses, onde o humor prepondera, diferencia o produto no ecossistema midiático e favorece a formação de uma comunidade de fãs e vínculos de pertencimento. A pesquisa, de caráter exploratório, baseia-se na transcrição e na análise dos 266 vídeos publicados no YouTube, privilegiando a observação dos modos de construção do humor e de sua articulação com os temas políticos. Complementarmente, analisam-se comentários no Instagram, entendidos como espaço de manifestação de identificação e engajamento. Trata-se de um estudo em andamento.

PAPER

Critical Silliness in Art: Levity as a Site of Resistance

Christine Bruening (Louisiana State University)

This paper argues that silliness functions as a strategic artistic method that disrupts systems of authority by destabilizing the expected sterility of the “white cube” gallery environment. Distinct from satire or irony, which often rely on critique or stern distance, silliness operates through play, absurdity, and disarming humor. By refusing the conventions of seriousness that often sustain structures of power, silly artistic gestures can interrupt dominant cultural frameworks and create unexpected spaces for reflection and collective joy. The paper traces this strategy to the provocations of Dada artists such as Hannah Höch and Baroness Elsa Von Freytag-Loringhoven, whose embrace of nonsense, chance, and irrationality challenged the cultural logic that had contributed to the devastation of World War I. Building on this historical foundation, the paper introduces the concept of critical silliness to describe contemporary artistic practices that intentionally deploy memetic humor, playful exaggeration, and absurd imagery as forms of cultural disruption. Drawing on Mikhail Bakhtin’s concept of the carnivalesque, the paper frames silliness as a temporary inversion of authority in which humor destabilizes rigid social hierarchies. Through visual analysis of contemporary artworks by artists such as Mika Rottenberg and Jaimie Warren, the paper demonstrates how absurdity can operate as both critique and relief. In a contemporary moment marked by political fatigue and cultural anxiety, silliness offers artists a means of resisting despair while opening imaginative possibilities for alternative forms of engagement.

PAPER

Da frustração ao humor: o riso heteropessimista na trend #povhomens do TikTok**Natália Ayrosa (UFF), Mayka Castellano (UFF), Tatiane Leal (UFRJ)**

No início de 2024, a trend “POV: homens”, inicialmente viralizada no TikTok, ultrapassou os limites da plataforma e tornou-se tema de debate na mídia e em outras redes sociais. Os vídeos, produzidos por mulheres a partir de imagens (prints) e áudios de conversas com homens, tinham como propósito expor interações consideradas “absurdas” entre homens e mulheres. O que, a princípio, configurava uma forma de evidenciar experiências marcadas por indignação e descrença nos relacionamentos heterossexuais, gradualmente se transformou em uma tendência humorística, na qual o fracasso amoroso se consolida como eixo central do entretenimento. Este artigo propõe uma reflexão sobre o teor humorístico dessa trend, que emerge, em parte, de um movimento heteropessimista (Seresin, 2019). Trata-se de um fenômeno que explicita as dificuldades enfrentadas por mulheres em relações com homens e que, por conseguinte, é ressignificado como objeto de humor. A partir da coleta de dados com o termo #povhomens, investigam-se os discursos presentes nos vídeos, buscando compreender qualitativamente como o tom jocoso atribuído a essas experiências contribui para a reconfiguração do heteropessimismo — conceito que, em sua formulação, já carrega uma dimensão derrotista. Ancorado em estudos sobre o tema (Seresin, 2019; Castellano, Leal e Maio, 2024; Leal, Miguel e Castellano, 2025), e apoiado em uma análise do discurso, o trabalho visa compreender de que modo esse movimento digital tem sido rearticulado no contexto contemporâneo.

PAPER

Discourse on Nepali Hasyabyangya: An Alternative Literary Approach to Humor and Satire**Narayan Bhattarai (City and County of San Francisco)**

Discourse on Nepali Hasyabyangya: An Alternative Literary Approach to Humor and Satire Nepali literature offers a distinctive genre known as hasyabyangya, a creative fusion of humor (hasya) and satire (byangya) that functions simultaneously to entertain and to critique. While literary traditions across the globe including English separate humor and satire, hasyabyangya uniquely integrates both elements within a single narrative voice. This paper examines the aesthetic, cultural, and rhetorical dimensions of hasyabyangya as a hybrid form that reflects the socio-political consciousness of Nepali society. Drawing on selected works from modern Nepali poems and essays and comparing them with selected English poems and essays, the study explores how authors employ wit, irony, exaggeration, and absurdity not only to ignite laughter but also to expose masks in social norms, governance, and everyday life. The humor in hasyabyangya often functions as an entry point, disarming the reader, while the embedded satire delivers a more enduring impact. This dual approach allows authors to navigate sensitive topics—such as corruption, social absurdity, bureaucracy, and cultural hypocrisy—within an accessible and engaging framework. Furthermore, the paper highlights hasyabyangya within broader theoretical discussions of humor and satire, arguing that this genre challenges the rigid categorizations of the humor and satire prevalent in the Western literary discourse. By accentuating hasyabyangya as a cohesive expressive literary mode rather than a mere overlap of two genres, the study highlights its significance as both a literary technique and a cultural lens.

PAPER

Domestic Fissures: A Media Archaeology of the Kitchen Comedy as a Living Archive**Samantha da Silva Diefenthaeler (ESCAC)**

This conference explores the history of the comic genre known as kitchen comedy through its presence across multiple media —theatre, cinema, and performance— situating it as a living archive of female representations in domestic spaces, particularly kitchens. In these works, recurring characters, visual motifs, and narrative strategies constitute a distinctive language in which domestic failures are parodied, ultimately exposing the social constraints that have historically restricted women's agency at home (Da Silva, 2026). Drawing on media-archaeological thinking (Parikka, 2012), the study examines how these images function as fissures that disrupt hegemonic narratives and open possibilities for rewriting the history of female comic representation. The analysis traces a trajectory of resistance embodied in gesture, excess, and clumsiness, recovering images that have been historically ignored and reading them critically. In dialogue with Adrienne Rich's concept of "re-vision" (1983), this act of revisiting is not merely an intellectual exercise but a vital form of resistance: to reread is to challenge the ways in which the history of theatre, cinema, and performance has been —and continues to be— told. The kitchen comedy thus emerges as an intermedial genre that foregrounds women's agency, visibility, and memory across old and new media, demonstrating how comic practice can serve as both a critical and emancipatory tool.

PAPER

Don't Laugh at that Word: Slurs in Humorous Contexts**Deiver Vinícius de Melo (University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign)**

Representations of bad behavior in humorous contexts (jokes and comedic sketches) are not necessarily considered as morally wrong. All depends, most people say, on the focus or the perspective given in this case. If the target of the joke is the bigoted person or the bigoted behavior, for example, many say that these representations are not problematic. We render it problematic when humor is employed to reinforce bigoted behavior. In that sense, there are no unspeakable themes in humor; what we have are rather right and wrong perspectives to joke about the same matter. Given these preliminaries on humor, it looks like the use of slurs is still a bigger taboo in that sense and doesn't follow this general thematic freedom. Jokes using slurs (especially in non-appropriated instances, like someone outside of the group using a slur referring to that group) are still considered problematic, even if the final goal of such jokes is not to reinforce discrimination, or even if the goal is to denounce this discrimination. In this presentation, I will argue that slurs have two specific features that do not vanish even in these "nonserious" contexts: their semantic expressive content coupled with their status as prohibited words. I will argue that these two features show how slurs are two-folded in this sense: jokes cannot make what is semantically conveyed disappear (our words in jokes still do have meanings attached to them), and the prohibition factor makes this semantically conveyed expressive part to be treated as a taboo.

PAPER

Entre o riso e o medo: A revolução russa nas páginas da Revista Careta em 1917**Juliana do Espírito Santo Gouvêa Teixeira (UFRJ)**

Esta pesquisa busca compreender a leitura que a Revista Careta, importante semanário brasileiro do século XX, fez da Revolução Russa e como a representou em suas páginas. Ao escolher a sátira para retratar o processo revolucionário, a revista utiliza-se da função social do riso, estudada por Henri Bergson. Por meio da ridicularização das ações dos radicais, procura desqualificá-las e apagar qualquer “chama” bolchevique em solo brasileiro. O objetivo principal do trabalho é entender como os recursos cômicos presentes nas publicações contribuíram para a construção de um imaginário coletivo acerca da Revolução de 1917 na sociedade brasileira. Nesse contexto, para estabelecer as relações entre a comicidade das charges da Careta e o desenvolvimento do imaginário social, são mobilizadas as teorias do chiste de Freud, as noções de função social do riso e o imaginário de Castoriadis. O humor gráfico era um traço marcante da revista. A veiculação de charges, chistes, caricaturas e anedotas tecia críticas às questões sensíveis da sociedade brasileira, fomentando debates públicos e sugerindo, indiretamente, posicionamentos editoriais. A fim de mapear as nuances opinativas e visões sobre a Revolução, o trabalho acompanha desde a primeira menção à revolução na Revista até o final de 1917 e busca pontuar as interpretações desejadas pelos seus produtores em cada uma delas, utilizando o método documentário de análise de imagens, desenvolvido por Bohnsack. Assim, evidencia-se a importância do humor na constituição do anticomunismo na política e ideologia brasileiras, bem como na formação de padrões repetidos em diferentes temporalidades no imaginário conservador do país.

PAPER

Estética, riso e comunidades interpretativas a partir da exibição d'O Bem Amado, 1973**Iza Debohra Godoi Sepúlveda (UNEMAT)**

O presente trabalho tem por objetivo discutir a apropriação da obra teledramatúrgica O Bem Amado, exibido em 1973, na rede Globo de Televisão. De autoria de Dias Gomes, primeiro nos anos 1960, como peça de teatro, depois nos anos 1970, adaptada para a televisão e por fim, nos anos 1980, como seriado de televisão, constituiu-se num marco da teledramaturgia. Pretendemos pensar como a recepção da obra construiu comunidades interpretativas acerca das representações apresentadas. Partindo do diálogo entre as fontes, especialmente as revistas especializadas, índices de audiência, entrevistas com os artistas, percebemos a construção narrativa sobre a obra que construiu uma comunidade interpretativa que considerava, por meio da assistibilidade e do acesso a outros materiais sobre a novela, uma forma de ler o Brasil dos anos 1970. Quando nos voltamos a novela, percebemos a construção estética da obra voltada à diversos tipos de riso (Incongruência, distanciamento, dramático) que a partir das personagens dimensionam e constituem sentido a determinada interpretação da obra. Consideramos que tais interpretações nos dão duas possibilidades analíticas, sendo elas: 1) Como os telespectadores se apropriaram e significaram a obra? E 2) Como essa significação consolidou uma interpretação de Brasil?, observa-se como foi feita a apropriação e os sentidos sociais atribuídos à leitura de Brasil feita por Dias Gomes. Não obstante, tal interpretação constitui também uma externalidade à obra, seja pelos diversos produtos posteriores à novela de 1973, seja acerca da forma como ela ainda hoje é mobilizada para ler o Brasil.

F

PAPER

Falha**Luiz Eduardo Krüger Dias (UFG)**

This paper, part of the author's doctoral thesis, proposes and develops the concept of metamedia humor based on the analysis of the web series *Falha de Cobertura* (FdC), understood as a production that challenges and reconfigures the modes of representation of sports media. Inserted in the context of the network society and mediatization, the study starts from the perspective of Norman Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (2001) to argue that humor can operate not only as entertainment, but as a form of critical reflection on the media discourses themselves. Metamedia humor is defined as a discursive practice that, by parodying media formats, discourses and aesthetics, especially "roundtable" sports programs, highlights their mechanisms of developing meanings, their conventions, and their power relations. In the case of FdC, the recurrent use of strategies such as irony, exaggeration, and appropriation of clichés not only generates comedy, but reveals the structures and logics that underpin the hegemonic sports journalistic discourse. By operating as a kind of metalanguage, this type of humor shifts the viewer from a position of passive consumption to a reflective stance, making visible the discursive mechanisms that usually remain naturalized. Thus, metamedia humor is not limited to satire, but acts as a critical device capable of exposing contradictions and challenging dominant narratives. In this sense the concept contributes to communication studies by offering an interpretative key to understanding humorous productions that, while talking about the media, also deconstruct it, highlighting the potential of laughter as a critical and socially significant practice.

PAPER

Female graphic humor and politics of representation in Brazil**Ingrid de Nonno Ishihara (PUC-RIO)**

The study starts from the observation that the field of humor is still predominantly dominated by men, despite the growing recognition of women's production across different media. In this context, the research investigates the work of Brazilian women humorists in graphic humor, focusing on comic strips, cartoons, and editorial cartoons. Its main objective is to understand the politics of representation and visibility that shape this production, seeking to identify, characterize, and interpret the themes addressed, as well as the representations constructed, their assumptions, logics, and values. From a discourse analysis perspective, the study proposes to map profiles, accounts, and digital environments associated with humor produced by women in contemporary Brazil. This mapping makes it possible to observe how these humorists insert and position themselves within the media landscape, while also highlighting the strategies they use to expand their visibility and challenge established norms. By examining these dynamics, the research also underscores the role of platforms and technological structures as relevant social agents that directly influence the modes of production, circulation, and reception of humor. In this way, the study aims to contribute to broader debates on gender, humor, and media, emphasizing the importance of women's presence and technological mediations in reshaping humor practices and the politics of representation in Brazil.

PAPER

Flat, Donut, or Hot-Dog–Shaped Earth? Conspiracy Theories as Teenage Humour**Anastasiya Astapova (University of Tartu)**

This paper began as research on conspiracy theories among teenagers. It became, unexpectedly, a study of humour. Public discourse and much scholarship frame adolescents as particularly vulnerable to conspiracy theories, often treating belief as measurable and stable. Yet my ethnographic encounters in Estonian secondary schools complicate this assumption. Drawing on interviews with teachers, youth workers, and media literacy practitioners, alongside observations from multiple workshops on disinformation and conspiracy theories, in this paper, I examine what I term second-hand conspiracy talk: fragments, memes, rumours, and anecdotes that teenagers repeat, stylize, and circulate. These narratives—frequently originating on global digital platforms—enter classrooms not as doctrinal statements but as tools for learning to navigate social life. Teenagers debate whether the Earth is flat, donut-shaped, or hot-dog-shaped; they joke that the microphone we use at the workshop “records everything”; they invoke viral influencers with exaggerated gravity. Such utterances blur the boundary between belief and performance, making the question of their dedication and belief to analytically insufficient. I argue that, in teenage peer contexts, conspiracy talk often functions as humorous vernacular play. It operates as social currency, enabling trickster-like experimentation and probing what is socially acceptable to discuss. By shifting the focus from belief measurement to genre, performance, and humour, the paper offers an innovative reframing of youth–conspiracy engagement—not as straightforward radicalization, but as a dynamic, playful mode of cultural expression, educators can make use of in their anti-desinformation lessons.

PAPER

From humor to hate: a discourse analysis of trolling on the Brazilian far right**Myllena Araújo do Nascimento (UFSCAR)**

The rise of the far right on the Brazilian political scene—particularly since the election of former President Jair Bolsonaro in 2018—and the widespread use of social media as a tool for political communication have made it possible to use humor as a form of self-defense against hate speech. In this way, since the 2018 Brazilian presidential campaign, humor—manifested primarily through political trolling—has been regularly employed as a form of discourse by the former president and his respective political allies. In this sense, our objective is to analyze the discursive dimension of the main affects manifested in Brazilian far-right trolling, as historical, social, and collective productions, as proposed by Piovezani, Curcino, and Sargentini (2024). The corpus consists of a collection of texts of various kinds: a misogynistic tweet posted by member of Congress Eduardo Bolsonaro (PL) on June 17, 2020. We will also analyze a racist public speech delivered by former President Jair Bolsonaro on July 8, 2021, which was posted on YouTube, and a misogynistic post targeting former Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff, which was posted on the TikTok profile of state representative Bruno Engler (PL) on April 30, 2020. To this end, our work will draw on the principles, concepts, and methods of French Discourse Analysis, combined with the History of Sensibilities, contributions from Michel Foucault's thinking on the order of discourse, and recent studies on trolling in political discourse.

PAPER

From Humour Competence to Humour Performance: Extending GTVH for Critical Humour Discourse Analysis Framework**Yusuf Al Arief (Lancaster University)**

Stand-up comedy is increasingly utilised as a modality of sociopolitical resistance; yet, critical humour scholarship has often privileged pragmatic and discourse-analytic lenses, while leaving humour theory itself comparatively undertheorised. This article argues that the General Theory of Verbal Humour (GTVH), operationalised through its six Knowledge Resources (KRs), can be repurposed as a systematic framework for critical humour discourse analysis. By treating the KRs as comparable with DHA analytical categories, the approach enables the description of joke design alongside a critique of ideology and power. I propose an integrative model that aligns GTVH with the Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA) to capture humorous performance as situated, ideological, and interactionally managed discourse. In this model, Script Opposition (SO) is conceptualised as schema-based meaning contrast; Logical Mechanism (LM) is linked to DHA's notion of topoi as warranting structures; Situation (ST) is mapped onto intertextuality and interdiscursivity; Target (TA) corresponds to social actor representation; Narrative Strategy (NS) is treated as the deployment of discursive strategies in comic form; and Language (LA) is analysed via discourse markers and other micro-linguistic cues. The framework is developed in line with key debates on GTVH as a performance model, particularly regarding meta-knowledge, sociocultural embeddedness, and metapragmatic signalling. To evaluate the model, the study applies the model to Indonesian stand-up comedy routines with sociopolitical content. The analysis demonstrates that all six KRs are useful in such data. The article concludes by outlining the framework's practical value as a humour-theory-based framework for critically examining sociopolitical humour and its discourse strategies.

PAPER

Funny, but at what cost to the Self? A Network Analysis of the Humor Styles and Contingencies of Self-Worth of Indian University Students

Fincy Frangline (Christ University, India)

Humor and self-worth have received limited empirical attention in Indian psychological discourse despite their ubiquity and significance. Contemporary research has highlighted how humor operates bidirectionally as an expression of the self, while concurrently shaping the self. Network analysis provides a robust framework for examining reciprocal pathways among mutually interacting constructs. The present study employed network analysis to investigate the structural relationship between the four humor styles and seven contingencies of self-worth. 341 Indian university students (78.6% female; Mean Age = 19.6) participated in the study and filled out the Humor Styles Questionnaire (HSQ) and the Contingencies of Self-Worth Scale (CSWS). Preliminary descriptive analysis was conducted, McDonald's omega ($\omega = 0.71-0.95$) indicated good internal consistency across all variables. A regularized partial-correlation network was computed using the EBICglasso estimator, along with centrality indices. Results indicated that CSWS Academic Competence and HSQ Affiliative showed the highest centrality within their respective domains. The Correlation Stability (CS) coefficients were 0.60 for expected influence and strength, indicating acceptable stability ($CS > 0.5$) of the centrality indices. CSWS Academic Competence and HSQ Aggressive showed high node predictability in their clusters, indicating significant variance due to other nodes in the network, whereas CSWS God's Love portrayed low predictability implying influence from external unmeasured factors. Four positive bridge nodes were identified: HSQ Self-Defeating, HSQ Affiliative, CSWS Appearance, and CSWS Approval from Others. Overall, the network findings provide an integrated and structured framework for identifying potential intervention targets to disrupt maladaptive interactions.

PAPER

How to read Mafalda: An example of philosophical humor in a Latin American comic strips that became a cultural icon.

Arqueles Estrada Cartagena (University of Macau)

How did a girl asking questions and speaking truths without filters become a cultural icon? (Mind you this is way before Greta Thunberg was born). Drawing from Will Eisner's (1985) theory of comics and sequential art, Álvarez Junco's (2016) notion of graphic humor as creative resource, and Karasik and Newgarden's How to Read Nancy (2017) as guide for comic analysis, I argue that Mafalda (1963-1973) is a comic where childishness confronts hierarchy and makes social commentary as mouthpiece for Latin American middle-class groups. Through analyses of selected strips, I want to show how an honest, sharp girl trying to better understand herself, the human condition and the meaning of life during a period like the Cold War gives this comic its philosophical taste. Comparing with other comics like Nancy or Calvin & Hobbes clarifies Mafalda's comedy grounded on an anti-establishment sensitivity from the Global South in a period where Latin America was being run under military dictatorships. Mafalda is a kid asking deep questions and mentioning hard topics, makes comments about injustice and world politics showing reality is ironically upside down; we normally would not expect that from a six-year-old. I intend to read certain examples from this comic and place Mafalda's philosophical references as well as her social and political commentary as a relevant humor culture contribution of Latin American cartoon tradition embodied in a philosopher child, an archetype approached by philosophers like Nietzsche and Zhuangzi.

PAPER

Human rights and Historical satire films

Eduardo Katz (University of Porto)

Considering the challenges and limitations of institutional initiatives, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, this article examines the relevance of cinema and humor as artistic approaches in conveying meaningful messages on this subject. Moreover, taking into account the influence of World War II atrocities on this Declaration, three remarkable satires of the Holocaust and Nazi Germany are analyzed, contextualizing their time distance from the events. Firstly, the ground-breaking film *The Great Dictator* (Chaplin, 1940), as a humorous propaganda to confront the ongoing dehumanization perpetrated by Nazi-fascism. Then, the iconic Italian comedic fable *Life is Beautiful* (Benigni, 1997), released at the end of the Cold War, amid the institutionalization of Holocaust remembrance and the outbreak of new episodes of genocide. Furthermore, the recent ludic historical satire *Jojo Rabbit* (Waititi, 2019), which was promoted as an "anti-hate satire," and widely taken as a historical metaphor of the far-right resurgence in the twenty-first century. The criteria to assess the relevance of those films are: (1) the appeal for evoking relevant human rights issues; (2) the creativity to provide new perspectives; and (3) the capacity to trigger actions and social change. In conclusion, this article highlights the importance of exchange and collaboration between institutional and artistic perspectives.

PAPER

Humor and Political Engagement: a content analysis of far-right memes in Brazil's 2022 Election

Maria Eduarda de Carvalho Silva (UFMG), Bruna Silveira Martins de Oliveira (UFMG)

The relationship between humor and politics has been the subject of analysis in several studies (Cavalcante; Cunha; Caiado, 2022; Chagas, 2020; Day, 2011; Dmitriev, 2006; Chagas, 2020, 2023). Following this line of inquiry, the present study investigates the dissemination of online humor through memes produced by the Brazilian far-right during the 2022 presidential election. To this end, we conducted a content analysis (Krippendorff, 2018) of 568 posts from four Instagram pages (Bolsonaro Memes, Clube Conservador, Direita Oficial, RIP ESQUERDA), in order to examine the role of humor in these memes. As key elements of the far-right discourse, we identified the following categories: moral agenda, public policies, anti-Workers' Party sentiment, attacks on democracy, patriotism, and the glorification of Bolsonaro. We define humorous memes as images, phrases, or videos that go viral on social media and combine humor, often in a satirical or ironic form, with references drawn from a shared socio-cultural and historical context (Chagas, 2017). The study reflects on the relationship between anti-democratic processes and the spread of memes by the far-right (Donovan; Dreyfuss; Friedberg, 2022), as well as on the dynamics of political engagement shaped by digital platforms (Dahlgren, 2009). Although the 2022 elections are now temporally distant, the consolidation of Bolsonarism during this period helped establish discursive foundations that continue to sustain far-right activity in Brazil. In this sense, analyzing this context remains relevant, as it allows us to better understand processes that expand the presence of these actors in public debate.

PAPER

Humor and Visual Strategies in the 1970s Cartoons of Naji al-Ali

Marina Hamanaka (The University of Tokyo)

Political cartoon studies remain fragmented and predominantly Western-centric, with humor theory insufficiently integrated into their analytical frameworks. Non-Western cartooning traditions, particularly those from the Middle East, remain critically understudied. This paper addresses both gaps through a case study of Palestinian cartoonist Naji al-Ali (1936–1987), focusing on his work during the 1970s. This paper examines cartoons from the middle period of al-Ali's career, with particular attention to works depicting regions beyond Palestine. Drawing on a corpus of cartoons published in newspapers such as al-Safir and al-Siyasa, the study combines quantitative mapping of the regional and thematic distribution of the material with close visual analysis. Through this approach, the paper explores how Third World solidarity, as imagined from a Palestinian perspective during the Cold War, was constructed through visual representation. Particular attention is given to cartoons addressing Asia, Africa, and other parts of the Third World, examining how these regions were depicted and how their representation shifted over time. The paper also examines how humor and satire function in these works, attending to compositional strategies, recurring visual motifs, and the role of the character Handala. While rooted in Palestinian political experience, al-Ali's cartoons draw on visual conventions familiar to global political cartooning and frequently address Western audiences. By applying a humor-focused analytical lens to this transnational visual practice, the paper shows how al-Ali's work complicates Western-centered assumptions in both political cartoon studies and humor studies, expanding their geographical and theoretical scope.

PAPER

Humor as a "Probe": Exploring the Fluid and Unpredictable Censorship Regime in Contemporary China

Frank Yue Xing (Hong Kong Baptist University), Shuhao Chen (Hong Kong Baptist University)

This study emphasizes a paradoxical phenomenon in China regarding state censorship: while continued inspection of politically sensitive content remains, such as issues related to China's territorial unity, the tightening censorship has also extended to online humorous productions, even when the content does not explicitly address political sensitive topics. Unlike earlier scholarship on political humor in China, this study does not treat humor as a tool of political expression but rather uses it as a "field" through which to examine how the Chinese government responds to collective expressions. After the "Li Haoshi event" (allegedly insulting the Chinese People's Liberation Army), Chinese authorities strengthened the censorship of programs containing humorous elements. The chilling effect has continued to influence creators of humorous content. Borrowing Foucault's concept of the "panopticon", even comedians have become their own supervisors and express themselves more cautiously, while the reality of sudden block without prior signals continues to exist. To further explore this mechanism, this research employs a dual-methodological approach: a textual analysis of censored humor scripts and semi-structured interviews with Chinese comedians. This study argues that Chinese censorship has shifted from what has been described as "The Anaconda in the Chandelier" (Link, 2002) to a more invisible and fluid system, shaped jointly by textual review and public opinion monitoring of specific incidents. This transformation forces the humor performer/creator to comply with not only "textual" red lines but also to remain alert to the public reactions provoked by their humorous works.

PAPER

Humor as a tool for evangelical narrative disputes on digital platforms

Matheus Machado de Carvalho (UFF)

The growth of the evangelical population has reshaped the Brazilian religious and political landscape, transforming this segment into a strategic field of struggle for influence and power. In the current digital media ecosystem, narratives emerge that challenge religious values and agendas of political radicalization, finding in memes a privileged language for disseminating ideas. Due to their power of synthesis and high viral potential, memes transcend entertainment, operating as a tool for cyberactivism and narrative debate. The analysis of evangelical discourses mediated by memes contributes to understanding the reconfiguration of the media public sphere, demonstrating how the internet and its tools subvert the traditional logics of disseminating ideas, profoundly impacting the way politics is done today. This work investigates humor strategies such as irony, satire, and comedy employed in evangelical memes to convey religious, social, and political messages. The objective is to analyze how humor acts as a mediator in debates between opposing sides and how these tactics contribute to digital engagement, seeking to influence the course of public debate and the electoral process. By observing the meme as a tool for dispute, the work reflects on the possibility of dialogue or the exacerbation of tensions among evangelicals in the virtual environment.

PAPER

Humor as an Authentic Act: A Lacanian Account of the Unconscious Politics of Humorous Discourse

Jennalee Kitching Donian (nelson mandela university)

Contemporary humor studies has made significant strides in documenting humor's political functions, yet existing frameworks remain theoretically underdeveloped in their accounts of the mechanisms through which humor acquires political efficacy. This presentation addresses that lacuna by proposing a systematic Lacanian framework for analyzing humor's political operations across the tripartite registers of the Imaginary, the Symbolic, and the Real. This presentation argues that humor functions as a distinctive form of what Lacan designates as an authentic act—a moment of radical transformation that modifies the very coordinates within which the subject is inscribed. Within the Imaginary register, humor dismantles ego-ideal constructions that legitimate political authority by exposing the precarious character of imaginary mastery. Within the Symbolic register, humor exploits metaphor and metonymy to fracture ideological coherence, interrupting inherited discourse and revealing the constructed nature of dominant cultural arrangements. Most critically, humor's encounter with the Real—that which resists symbolization and bears an essentially traumatic quality—constitutes its most radical political potential, destabilizing not merely particular beliefs but the entire structure of social reality as subjects experience it. This political potential is, however, structurally precarious. Because the Real carries no inherent political valence, humor's transgressive force is equally capable of serving emancipatory or reactionary ends, while the Symbolic order systematically recontains such disruptions by commodifying dissent. This analysis offers a theoretically rigorous account of humor's political capacity—one that resists both the romanticization of subversive laughter and its dismissal as mere entertainment.

PAPER

Humor as construction: a possible method drawn from the practice of Jô Soares

Giovani Tozi (UNICAMP)

This article proposes the systematization of a possible method for constructing humor based on the direct observation of table work processes led by Jô Soares. Drawing on practical experience gathered over approximately a decade of rehearsals and theatrical productions, the study outlines a process structured in seven stages, beginning with the collective reading of the text and moving toward its embodiment in performance. The process includes procedures such as guided listening, full-text reading aloud, the reorganization of the text into monologues, the identification of structural phrases, and the definition of their emphases, culminating in the actor's appropriation of the material through their own particularities. Throughout these stages, humor is shifted away from the realm of spontaneous effect and understood instead as a form of construction, emerging from the organization of language, rhythmic precision, and the interplay between expectation and response. In dialogue with theoretical approaches to humor, the article suggests that laughter arises when the text is filtered through the actor's experience and comes to life on stage. Although grounded in theatrical practice, the proposed method points toward possible applications in other contexts structured around language and interaction. In this sense, humor is not treated as an external device, but as a construction that depends on the articulation between text, listening, and presence.

PAPER

Humor as Disavowal: From Freudian Metapsychology to the Clinic of Trauma**Guilherme Ramos Marcondes (USP)**

The distinction between joke, the comic, and humor occupies a singular place in the work of Sigmund Freud, not as a mere classification of forms of laughter, but as an inquiry into different psychic economies and modes of relating to suffering. The joke is understood as a formation of the unconscious, structured by mechanisms similar to those of dreams. The comic, in turn, arises from the perception of a discrepancy between modes of psychic expenditure, relying on shared symbolic norms that make a disproportion appear laughable. Humor, by contrast, is presented as a position of the ego in the face of adversity: an intervention of the superego that transforms a painful situation into a source of narcissistic gain, allowing the subject not to succumb to suffering. When this distinction is displaced from the metapsychological plane to clinical and cultural experience, its limits become evident. This porosity raises a decisive question: not all laughter entails psychic elaboration. At this point, the contribution of Sándor Ferenczi becomes fundamental. His theory of trauma highlights the role of disavowal in the constitution of psychic suffering and in the production of ego splitting, suggesting that humor may also operate as a form of disavowal — transforming suffering into an object of laughter before it can be recognized and symbolized. The clinical challenge may lie in listening to the subjective position enacted in the patient's laughter and its effects within the therapeutic relationship. Here, humor becomes a decisive operator in the clinic of trauma.

PAPER

Humor como arma de ataque em O Cemitério dos Mortos-Vivos**Fernanda Martins Campanha (UFRJ)**

Este trabalho analisará aparições da seção Cemitério dos Mortos-Vivos, produzida por Henfil no ano de 1972 no jornal O Pasquim, importante veículo de contestação do regime ditatorial. A partir disso, tentaremos demonstrar que o uso do humor e do cômico nas representações do Cemitério expressam o posicionamento político do artista sobre a ditadura e os comportamentos sociais estabelecidos em torno dele. Para isso, analisaremos a ação de Cabôco Mamadô, personagem criado para “enterrar” figuras públicas consideradas por ele como apoiadores, colaboradores ou simpatizantes da Ditadura, e as representações feitas sobre elas. Será identificado também como a ação do personagem ajuda a projetar uma realidade dual em relação aos comportamentos sociais frente ao regime, dividindo-os entre colaboradores e resistentes. (Cordeiro, 2015) A partir da análise de enterros selecionados, procuraremos demonstrar que as representações possuem um papel ativo no campo do político, pois sua visualidade e discursividade expressam posicionamentos. (Liebel, 2020) Ao reencarnar aqueles que considerava apoiadores, colaboradores ou simpatizantes, por meio de representações que os ridicularizaram, Henfil utilizava-se do humor para criticá-los e humilhá-los publicamente, e assim se posicionar. A humilhação pública, neste caso, será interpretada como uma tentativa de correção daqueles que seriam o alvo da crítica. (Bergson, 2001) Desse modo, o uso do humor será observado como posicionamento político de Henfil, usado como arma de ataque, ao ridicularizar aqueles que não se opunham ao regime. Procuraremos compreender como o humor foi usado publicamente pelo artista para criticar a Ditadura e sujeitos que não se opuseram a ela.

PAPER

Humor como Transcendência Espiritual: O Riso como Forma de Sabedoria Existencial

Tiago Negrão Andrade (Professor)

Este estudo interpreta o humor como uma forma de transcendência espiritual e sabedoria existencial derivada das aprendizagens da vida. Com base em Henri Bergson, Sigmund Freud, Mikhail Bakhtin, Friedrich Nietzsche e Viktor Frankl, o estudo analisa o riso como mecanismo cultural que transforma tensões e paradoxos da existência em compreensão e sentido. Palavras-chave: Humor; transcendência espiritual; sabedoria existencial; filosofia do riso; experiência humana.

PAPER

Humor e Humoristas no Instagram

Silvana Gobbi Martinho (Colégio São Luis), Vera Chaia (PUC-SP)

O Instagram é uma rede social de compartilhamento de vídeos, fotos e mensagens criado em 2010 e distribuída através da Apple. Começou a ser utilizado no Brasil em 2012 e, atualmente, contabiliza-se, aproximadamente, 141 a 155 milhões de usuários ativos, ou seja, cerca de 66% a 69% da população brasileira na rede. É possível identificar nessa rede social perfis de humoristas. A representação humorística é compreendida aqui, em consonância com a afirmação de Saliba (2002), como uma percepção do sentimento de ruptura e contrariedade e, também, a uma forma privilegiada de narrar à história. Com intuito de analisar o humor e os humoristas no Instagram, selecionamos seis atores/comediantes/humoristas, que fazem desta mídia a sua forma de se expressar criticamente, com humor, sobre a realidade social, cultural e política do Brasil, são eles: Bruno Costoli, Maria Bopp, Saulo Pinheiro, Mariana Armellini, Rodrigo Condessa e Claudia Campolina. Considera-se que os humoristas, ao utilizarem o Instagram, são importantes elementos para percepção dos conflitos em torno das construções de narrativas sobre a realidade política, social e cultural do Brasil. A questão problema que pautará nossa pesquisa corresponde a entender como a agenda de temas (McCombs, 2004) e o enquadramento (Porto, 2004) utilizado pelos perfis de humor ao selecionar determinados assuntos em detrimento de outros, cria uma agenda própria de relevância. Para responder à pergunta proposta, selecionamos as postagens dos perfis, entre os meses de novembro de 2025 a março de 2026. Pretende-se também fazer entrevistas com os autores dos perfis estudados.

PAPER

Humor e religião: Intersecções e digressões ao longo da História**Bhryan Gama Barbosa (UFF)**

O artigo busca analisar as relações entre humor e religião ao longo da história, evidenciando suas tensões, aproximações e ressignificações em diferentes contextos socioculturais. Partindo da Grécia Antiga, observa-se que o riso, presente em rituais dionisíacos, desempenhava função social ambígua, ao mesmo tempo subversiva e integradora. Com a ascensão do cristianismo, o humor passa a ser associado ao pecado, ao descontrole corporal e à condição imperfeita do ser humano, sendo reprimido nas esferas oficiais durante a Idade Média. Apesar disso, práticas populares e manifestações internas do clero mantiveram espaços de comichade, levando a uma gradual flexibilização a partir do século XII, quando o riso passa a ser parcialmente incorporado à vivência religiosa. Na Idade Moderna, transformações políticas e religiosas, como a Reforma Protestante, reforçam a rejeição institucional ao humor, visto como ameaça à ordem moral e social. Nos séculos XIX e XX, o riso torna-se objeto de reflexão teórica, com destaque para as interpretações de Bergson e Freud, que o compreendem como mecanismo social e psicológico. Na contemporaneidade, observa-se uma reaproximação entre humor e religião, evidenciada por novas formas de expressão, como o humor religioso e o humor gospel, inseridos nas dinâmicas midiáticas. Com base nos aportes da teoria da incongruência, área que investiga o fenômeno do riso, conclui-se que humor e religião desempenham funções convergentes, de forma que, ambas apresentam respostas às incongruências da existência humana, pela via do riso ou da transcendência, ou seja, orações e gargalhadas partem de um mesmo princípio estruturante.

PAPER

Humor gráfico e ativismos feministas no espaço digital**Maria da Conceição Francisca Pires (UNIRIO)**

A década de 1990 representou um marco para a inserção dos quadrinhos no ambiente hiper midiático. Com a adaptação dos quadrinhos para o CD-ROM, temos a consolidação de um conjunto de mudanças na linguagem, técnica e estilo de fazer quadrinhos, assim como na sua difusão e leitura. Nesse período temos o boom dos quadrinhos que nascem na internet e que, posteriormente, são compilados, publicados e distribuídos de forma impressa, fora da Internet. Esse contexto foi fundamental para que cartunistas que não encontravam lugares de publicação nas grandes editoras vislumbrassem um novo espaço para ocupar e a possibilidade de apresentar um conteúdo diferente dos padrões estabelecidos nos HQs mainstream. Quadrinistas e cartunistas inovaram por incorporarem em suas histórias, a partir de uma perspectiva subjetiva, pautas políticas importantes como racismo, misoginia, homofobia, machismo, translesbofobia, gordofobia, dentre outras, dialogando com grupos e coletivos que passaram a explorar de forma estratégica esses espaços. Nesta exposição faremos uma sucinta apresentação da produção gráfica de cartunistas brasileiras contemporâneas que ocupam as mídias sociais para discutir temáticas importantes para os feminismos e propagar imagens outras sobre padrões normativos instituídos às minorias políticas. Entendemos que esse tipo de produto cultural promove um olhar e narrativa gráfica outras sobre esses grupos marginalizados, intervindo no mundo das imagens e no mercado editorial dos quadrinhos brasileiros

PAPER

Humor na narrativa de crianças surdas adquirindo língua de sinais: uma análise dialógica-discursiva

Suelen Silva de Oliveira (UNESP), Alessandra Jacqueline Vieira (UFRGS), Alessandra Del Ré (UNESP)

A pesquisa investiga a emergência e o funcionamento do humor em narrativas produzidas por crianças surdas em processo de aquisição da Língua Brasileira de Sinais (Libras). Ancorada na perspectiva dialógica-discursiva (Bakhtin; Bruner; Del Ré et al.; Goldfeld), busca compreender como a (co)construção do discurso em interações familiares favorece a produção de efeitos humorísticos. O corpus é composto por vídeos públicos que registram interações, em contexto familiar, de duas crianças surdas filhas de pais surdos. Os dados são transcritos no software ELAN, permitindo a anotação de aspectos linguísticos, discursivos e multimodais. Em seguida, os dados são organizados em uma grade analítica no Microsoft Excel, possibilitando a descrição e análise quali-quantitativa dos mecanismos envolvidos na construção do humor, especialmente no que se denomina tríade discursiva. Os resultados preliminares indicam que o humor em línguas de sinais apresenta fenômenos linguísticos semelhantes aos descritos por Del Ré et al., sugerindo que tais mecanismos são intrínsecos à linguagem humana. Contudo, devido ao caráter altamente icônico das línguas de sinais, observa-se o uso intensivo de recursos visuais e multimodais na construção do humor. Espera-se que o estudo contribua para os campos dos estudos do humor, da aquisição da linguagem e da educação de surdos, ampliando a compreensão sobre o desenvolvimento discursivo em línguas de modalidade visuogestual. Palavras-chave: Aquisição; Língua de sinais; Humor; Narrativas; Discurso

PAPER

Humor, Crisis and Unrest in British Satirical Novels

Dr Simon Weaver (Brunel University)

This paper examines left-wing or progressive counter humour as it appears in British satirical novels of the last decade, as a response to the rise and mainstreaming of right-wing populism and xenophobia in the United Kingdom. It is argued that British novelists have attempted satirical and critical engagements with crisis, social unrest and right-wing populism that seek to unseat or destabilise the imaginary spaces of populism. Right-wing populism will be presented as a political construction that manufactures incongruity, binarism, analogy, alongside social and political tension, while seeking an authoritarianism or conformity. In the cultural setting of post-Brexit Britain, literary and media forms play with the binaries, ironies, tensions and anxieties of populism, through offering satirical moves towards a transference into the absurd. The paper applies Zygmunt Bauman's (2017) sociological concept of *retrotopia* (a longing for the past) and concepts of existential and ontological anxiety from political science (Browning, 2020) to interpret a number of literary and media works from the past decade. Jonathan Coe's *Middle England* (2018) highlights anxieties of a perceived crisis of whiteness and masculinity in the populist interpretation of multicultural Britain. Identity and its ambiguities are manipulated in populism, and Ali Smith's *Autumn* (2016) is discussed through its focus on borders, time and identity as sites of reflection. The paper engages with the absurdist, surreal satire of Ian McEwan's *The Cockroach* (2019), a depiction of anti-modern, Kafkaesque 'reversalism' or grotesque transformation.

PAPER

Humor, irony and speaking out against silence: two controversies in the 2026 Uruguayan Carnival

Joaquín Márquez Sabaj (Universidad de la República)

Carnival is one of the most significant cultural expressions in Uruguay. Over the course of 40 days, different groups perform their shows throughout Montevideo while competing in an official contest. Within Uruguayan carnival, murga is the most popular genre: it combines singing, theater, humor and satire, closely engaged with the most relevant social and political issues of the year. In the lead-up to the 2026 carnival, two controversies emerged. Although different in nature, both centered on attempts by outside actors to shape or constrain references to the Israel–Palestine conflict within the groups' scripts. On the one hand, a company that usually sponsors murgas decided to withdraw funding from any groups that addressed the genocide in Gaza. On the other hand, a state agency objected to the script of the murga that would ultimately become the winner, deeming it “not suitable for all audiences” and arguing that it “promotes violence”, including “physical threats” and “verbal and psychological violence”. Although this decision was reversed the following day, it triggered a broader public debate spanning mainstream media, social networks and the political sphere. This case study aims to analyze how murgas positioned themselves in response to these controversies, using humor, irony and outspoken criticism, and how they expressed both their sensitivity and solidarity with the Palestinian people, as well as their defiance and independence in the face of pressures from external actors.

PAPER

Humor, Music, and Political Performance: Repertoires in Brazilian Digital Politics on Tik Tok

Aléxis de Carvalho Moreira (Fluminense Federal University), Willian Fernandes Araujo (UFRGS), Beatriz Brandão Polivanov (UFF), Viktor Chagas (UFF)

This study examines the strategic use of humor in Brazilian digital political communication through the appropriation of “peripheral pop” musical genres (Pereira de Sá, 2021), such as funk and sertanejo. Focusing on TikTok videos, it analyzes the use of these songs as soundtracks for political content, as well as the incorporation of dances, choreographies, and meme aesthetics as repertoires mobilized by political actors in constructing their online performances (Amaral et al., 2018). Building on Cervi and Divon's (2023) argument that TikTok operates as a platform of “playful activism,” and on Chagas's (2020) understanding of memes as both media language and discursive artifacts, the article suggests that humor embedded in political soundtracks may function as risk and opportunity. On the one hand, it operates through ambiguity and mystification, hindering accountability and contributing to the trivialization of politics. On the other, it can foster proximity with audiences, acting as a device of affective engagement and humanization. Thus, TikTok political videomemes, and particularly their humorous soundtracks, are complex instruments that may de/politicize debates depending on their strategic use and context. The exploratory analysis engages with debates on platformization and datafication (Araújo, 2021), highlighting how platforms shape visibility, promote homophilic publics, and reinforce links between cultural tastes and political identities. It underscores TikTok's role of remix and performativity in amplifying messages. Finally, the paper argues that humor articulated with music constitutes an expressive repertoire blending persuasion and entertainment, operating at the boundary between engaging and alienating laughter, while mobilizing affective publics (Papacharissi, 2014).

PAPER

Humorous cartooning on socioenvironmental issues as a way to develop empathic concern and critical engagement in adolescents**Macarena Belén Chandia (Universidad Nacional de La Plata)**

Social engagement with current socioenvironmental issues benefits from creative strategies —such as humor— that promote emotional involvement and perspective-taking rather than merely presenting information or prescriptions. This study proposes cartooning as a pedagogical tool to foster perspective-taking and multimodal expression of socioenvironmental concerns among adolescents. Four workshops were held at secondary schools in Argentina. A total of 115 humorous cartoons created by students aged 12 to 18 were analyzed from a semiotic and rhetorical framework. The high frequency of humorous incongruity identified in cartoons (83%) suggests that students were highly engaged with the task and able to subvert expectations when addressing this sensitive topic. Personification of animals, plants, mountains, and other entities served as a central resource, presenting a gradient from emotional expression, speech, and thought to complex humanlike actions. More sophisticated cartoons combined this resource with metaphor, antithesis and exaggeration, creating layered meanings. A tension emerged between prescriptive positioning and humor: some creations relied on explicit norms (such as prohibitions, regulations or moral standards), while others distanced themselves from those norms in an implicit and figurative way. In summary, the study suggests that socioenvironmental cartooning facilitated students' critical reflection and emotional engagement, often conveyed in a denunciatory tone. Additionally, the findings highlight the potential of humorous creative production to integrate cognitive, affective, and social dimensions. Such integration may encourage adolescents' agency and empathic concern when addressing complex societal issues.

PAPER

It Was Only Banter': Workplace Humour and the Limits of Fair Dismissal under the Employment Rights Act 1996.

Rebecca Rose Nocella (oxford brookes university)

Humour and workplace “banter” frequently appear in employment disputes, yet their role in unfair dismissal litigation remains largely unexplored in legal scholarship. Under the Employment Rights Act 1996, s 98 (4) employers may dismiss employees for a range of potentially fair reasons, including conduct, capability, redundancy, statutory illegality, or “some other substantial reason”. However, tribunals must also determine whether the employer acted reasonably in treating that reason as sufficient for dismissal. This article examines how humour, jokes, and workplace banter feature in that assessment. Drawing on a doctrinal analysis of unfair dismissal cases, the article argues that humour occupies an ambivalent position in employment adjudication. Tribunals rarely accept “it was just a joke” as a justification for dismissals based on misconduct, nor do they allow humour to circumvent the procedural requirements of fairness. Yet, paradoxically, humour often appears in cases where employees successfully challenge dismissals, particularly where tribunals conclude that employers overreacted to workplace banter. At the same time, humour provides little protection in disputes involving harassment and discrimination, where tribunals tend to reject the framing of offensive conduct as mere banter. By examining these decisions, the article reveals how humour functions as an implicit normative tool through which tribunals evaluate proportionality, workplace culture, and managerial power in dismissal decisions.

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PAPER

João Redondo's Theater and the spiritus temporis: satire, parody, and comicity in popular puppetry

André Carrico (UFRN)

In *Homo Ridens*, Paolo Santarcangeli (1989) argues that human beings live immersed in the *spiritus temporis*, understood as the spirit of the age that silently shapes their values, perceptions, and even what they consider laughable. From this perspective, satire emerges as the form of laughter that challenges and unmasks the illusions produced by that time, while parody operates more indirectly, repeating and distorting cultural forms in order to reveal their fragility and artificiality. Together, satire and parody constitute expressions of laughter that, each in its own way, expose and tension the limits imposed by the spirit of the age. Based on these concepts by Santarcangeli, this study is grounded in research data on the comicity of the João Redondo's Theater produced in the Brazilian state of Rio Grande do Norte. The investigation aims to analyze the influence of the spirit of the age on the themes, forms, and language of the popular puppet theater tradition of Brazil's Northeast (T.B.P.N.). This is a traditional puppet theater of popular origin, marked by derision and critical insolence. The data obtained through bibliographic and field research are analyzed using a qualitative and ethnographic approach. Keywords: *spiritus temporis*; satire; parody; puppet theater tradition of Brazil's Northeast

PAPER

Just a Joke? Memes as Vehicles for Mainstreaming Violent Exclusionary Narratives Online

Jullietta Tsveta Stoencheva (Malmö University)

This study explores how humor facilitates the diffusion of violent exclusionary narratives online through a visual content analysis of memes collected from the comment sections of political and media accounts on Facebook, Instagram and X. The data collection took place around the 2024 European Parliament election in Austria, Bulgaria, and Sweden. As “units of culture” (Knobel & Lankshear, 2007), memes appeal across contexts. Such ambiguity and liminality are key to understanding how memes paddle misogynist, racist and white supremacist discourse while evading content moderation (Anderau & Barbarrusa, 2024; Askanius, 2021). Humor plays a central role in the renegotiation of cultural norms by pushing the limits of acceptable expression (Davis & Fiadotava, 2024), while functioning as a social lubricant and marker of belonging delineating who is “in” on the joke and who is excluded (Kuipers, 2025). Against this backdrop, the study asks how violent exclusionary narratives emerge around key contentious political issues, what forms of violence they articulate, and how shared visual grammars and coded symbols enable their translocal entanglement. The findings show that memes embed such narratives within everyday political discourse by targeting migrants, gender and sexual minorities, and political elites as threats, and expressing hostility toward them across symbolic, structural, and physical forms of violence. By drawing on recognizable templates and culturally resonant visual repertoires, these narratives travel across national settings while being locally adapted. Their ambiguous form allows violent propositions to appear as satire or playful critique, rendering their circulation in the digital mainstream increasingly difficult to contest.

PAPER

Just A Normal Day in Brazil: The pervasiveness of humor in Brazilian Government's Instagram profile

Letícia Trindade Souza (UFES)

This article originates from ongoing master's research on digital memes (Chagas, 2018), particularly from the perspective of a hypermemetic logic (Shifman, 2014) which permeates contemporary society alongside the notion of ‘humorous society’ (Lipovetsky, 1983), emphasizing the particularities of Brazilian humor (Lunardi, 2020) and the blurry lines with advertising (Covaleski, 2010). It focuses on the context of public communication (Duarte, 2025) and, to this end, examines some examples using netnography (Kozinets, 2014) and semiotics (Barros, 2005). The presence of memes on digital platforms is not surprising; however, the current pervasiveness of memes fosters their appearance in previously unexpected situations, such as the Brazilian Government's Instagram profile. Based on new advertising strategies, memes have been instrumentalized to boost engagement metrics on digital media. When memes are appropriated by advertising, which operates within the realm of entertainment, advertising gains longevity by blending into users' interactions, serving as an effective way to propagate ideas and products. In Brazil, humor constitutes a significant part of the population's identity, serving as relief in the face of structural problems, long before digital memes. Therefore, it did not take long for politicians and public institutions to appropriate memes, so much so that, nowadays, the @govbr profile consists mostly of memes. Beyond the problems of prioritizing entertainment at the expense of the public interest, we question the predominance of humor in a context where nothing seems to be taken seriously anymore and the diminishing understanding of nuances beyond the realm of comedy.

PAPER

La Ametralladora: a construção da imagem do “inimigo” através do humor na Guerra Civil Espanhola

Deborah Naara Rodrigues Pontes (UFRJ)

É notável que o humor pode desempenhar um papel significativo no campo político, a partir de sua capacidade de refletir concepções de um grupo, difundir ideais ou até mesmo moldar a opinião pública através das sátiras. Levando em conta essas características, pode-se considerar que o humor gráfico foi utilizado como arma durante a Guerra Civil Espanhola, contexto no qual os meios de comunicação assumiram um espaço expressivo como parte das estratégias de guerra. Inserida nessa lógica, encontra-se a revista de humor *La Ametralladora*, que atendia aos interesses propagandísticos do lado nacionalista. Publicada ao longo de todo o conflito, entre 1937 e 1939, o semanário era distribuído gratuitamente aos militares nos fronts e vendido à população na retaguarda. Nesse sentido, este trabalho busca analisar a instrumentalização do humor gráfico para a construção e o reforço da imagem do inimigo, ancoradas em uma visão de mundo marcadamente anticomunista e antirrepublicana. Para tal, respeitando as especificidades das fontes, utiliza-se o método documentário desenvolvido por Ralf Bohnsack, já que possibilita alcançar uma leitura aprofundada das imagens, bem como viabiliza a caracterização e o reconhecimento dos valores e imaginários compartilhados pelo grupo. Com isso, considera-se a atuação das representações veiculadas na revista como um meio de propagação do discurso político de um determinado segmento social, apresentando um conjunto de valores próprios ligados aos nacionalistas e, por outro lado, conformando uma imagem ideal-típica do inimigo republicano.

PAPER

Laughable Inauthenticity: Heidegger, Humor, and the Task of Selfhood

Mark Ralkowski (George Washington University)

This paper explores what Heidegger's *Being and Time* can contribute to the philosophy of humor. I begin by building on research connecting phenomenology to the philosophical study of humor, and I explain specifically what we can gain from using core concepts in Heidegger's early philosophy to understand the relationship between humor, the good life, and questions about the meaning of life. In his *On Humour* (2002), Simon Critchley argues that humor “returns us to the limitedness of the human condition, a limitedness that calls not for tragic-heroic affirmation but comic acknowledgement, not promethean authenticity but laughable inauthenticity.” One of the main aims of this paper is to unpack the important but under-developed concepts of “comic acknowledgement” and “laughable inauthenticity.” Is inauthenticity funny? Is there wisdom, or any other virtue, in acknowledging our limitedness? What do we gain from such an acknowledgement if our inauthenticity is an ineluctable part of the human condition? I will use the phenomenology of authenticity in Heidegger's *Being and Time* to answer these and related questions. There are at least three benefits in making this move. First, Heidegger's philosophy can help us rethink what it means to say that humor is a virtue. Second, Heidegger's account of anxiety, guilt, and authenticity can give us new insights into the object of some instances of relief humor, especially the self-deprecating kind. Third, humor can help us rethink the philosophy of authenticity in Heidegger's philosophy. It might even shed light on an important limitation in Heidegger's character, his humorlessness.

PAPER

Laughing at the Sacred: Interrogating the Caste-Class Nexus in Select Sanskrit Satires

Puspita Panda (Indian Institute Of Technology (IIT) Tirupati)

Across cultures, humour has served as a dynamic mode of social inquiry, using laughter to subvert dominant norms and reconstruct hierarchies. This paper examines how humour in Sanskrit satires serves as a tool of resistance, challenging dominant power structures. Focusing on *Pādatāḍitaka*, *Bhagavadajjukīya*, and *Hāsyārṇava*, the study analyses how Brahminical authority is restructured through subversion, irony, and the carnivalesque reversal of social roles. Caste and class are interdependent and cannot be separated, as the caste location shapes the class position, granting symbolic immunity and unfair advantages to the upper caste while marginalising the oppressed castes. This study will employ an interdisciplinary theoretical lens from Humour theory (including Incongruity theory of humour), alongside Mary Douglas' Pollution theory and Foucault's Power theory. Mary Douglas' theory of pollution helps delineate how marginalised figures destabilise the normative boundaries of ritual purity and social rank. Subjugated figures in these satires subvert the dominant narrative; the Brahminical signifiers, usually associated with spiritual purity and intellectual monopoly, are re-signified as hypocritical, dependent, and performative. Their acts expose the fluidity of normative boundaries and can be easily breached. These satires provide a compelling counter-narrative that destabilises the ideological foundation of Brahminism and exposes it as dependent on institutional positioning, rather than ontological foundations. Through this analysis, the paper addresses a critical gap in Comedy Studies by establishing how Sanskrit satires offered a voice of resistance against Brahminical ideologies.

PAPER

Laughter in the Northwest Amazon, indigenous comicality, political movements and sociability

Renato Martelli Soares (UFSCAR)

This paper follows a lead question, "what do the Yeba laugh at?". It revolves around laughter, or the comic, amongst the indigenous in the Northwest Amazon as a referential axis for the research of social relations. It arises from a simple yet constant field observation that laughter is very much present in this dynamic region. Initially, the material gathered from a long term ethnographical experience allows for reflexions about the ways in which laughter and politics intertwine amongst indigenous groups, and how the comical is inserted in the Northwest Amazon indigenous social system. Considering that laughter permeates varied social relations, the paper's guiding effort is one of looking into indigenous comical material in an attempt to elucidate and provoke questions relevant to anthropological and other research areas of this region. This paper then brings to context, summarizes and describes jokes, puns and funny stories drawn from collaborators of the indigenous social movement and from a Yebamasã collective in a multiethnic and plurilingual region. The objective is to show how the comic is present in the daily and ceremonial life in Rio Negro by underlining how laughter is present in several researches conducted in the region and by analysing ethnographical observations from fieldwork.

PAPER

Laughter is Science: the scientific study of humor in the teaching and learning process of Portuguese and Foreign Languages in Brazil

Denise Maria Margonari Favaro (UNESP)

The objective of this work is to publicize the Brazilian research group GEIPHEA – Interdisciplinary Studies and Research Group on Humor in Teaching and Learning, created in 2013 and registered in the Directory of Research Groups of CNPQ (National Council for Scientific and Technological Development). This group, linked to UNESP – São Paulo State University “Júlio de Mesquita Filho” and the Faculty of Sciences and Languages, Araraquara Campus, São Paulo State, Brazil, focuses primarily on working with humorous texts (genres such as jokes, memes, cartoons, caricatures, comic strips, among others) and their contribution to classes in regular education, youth and adult education, the elderly, and people with special learning needs, as well as the acquisition of language skills and, above all, in terms of student motivation and engagement levels. The group seeks to contribute to the discussion of relevant themes, such as student motivation for learning, the development of linguistic skills, and the interaction between students and teachers through humorous texts as a teaching tool that can contribute to improving the quality of education. Through six theoretical lines, we seek to develop didactic proposals to make the teaching-learning process more enjoyable, creative, and pleasurable for learners. The scientific relevance of GEIPHEA lies in its interdisciplinary approach, which articulates contributions from Applied Linguistics and Education, currently bringing together members who develop projects aimed at producing qualified knowledge and disseminating innovative pedagogical practices.

PAPER

Laughter On the Front Lines: Standup Comedy as Epistemic Disobedience

Elmaz Abinader (Northeastern University), Maha Elsaid (Cairo University)

In times of political upheaval and manufactured consent, standup comedy does more than entertain—it functions as a form of epistemic disobedience, dismantling hegemonic knowledge structures through laughter and indignation. Drawing on Walter Mignolo's notion of epistemic disobedience as delinking from coloniality's logic, we argue that standup comedy stages an alternative epistemology, one rooted in lived experience, marginalized voices, and counter-narratives that refuse the normalization of folly and hate. The standup stage becomes a "contentious performative space" where comedians contest cultural supremacy through embodied, immediate, and intimate performance. Unlike other forms of resistance, standup's live format—improvisation, crowd work, physical presence—creates what Conquergood calls "epistemological pluralism," unsettling valorized paradigms in real time. The breaking of the fourth wall and the comedian's direct address deny the audience a passive observer position, implicating them instead as participants in the disruption of dominant discourse. Drawing on examples of comedians addressing global conflict, occupation, and displacement, this paper examines how standup deploys personal narrative, twisted tropes, and strategic wordplay as tools of epistemic intervention. These performances move beyond cultural mediation into direct political confrontation, confirming Northrop Frye's insistence that "in satire irony is militant." Through close analysis of contemporary routines, we demonstrate how standup comedy produces knowledge from the margins that dominant structures cannot easily contain or co-opt.

PAPER

Laughter Sequences in Collaborative Groups: Suspension, Ambiguity, and Normative Entanglement

Andres Haye (UC)

This paper examines the material forms of laughter and their temporal evolution in collaborative creative settings, focusing on the interactional dynamics between laughter events. Drawing on over 100 hours of video recordings from ten animation workshops conducted between 2022 and 2024 (average 16 participants each and more than 7500 laughter events overall), the study investigates how laughter functions as a site where affect and normativity become dynamically entangled. The workshops were designed as research devices inviting participants to produce short audiovisual pieces on gender and everyday life. A mixed-methods design was employed: systematic quantitative coding of all identifiable laughter events was integrated with theoretically-driven qualitative analysis of selected sequences. Quantitative patterns contextualize qualitative interpretations, while qualitative readings illuminate the mechanisms underlying those patterns. Sequence analysis draws on Jefferson's (1979) invitation→response model to develop the concept of "responsive modality," whereby increases in responsive laughter signal the consolidation of shared interactional codes. Analysis identified recurring three-event consecutive patterns organized around a typology of laughter effects: Suspension, Reinforcement, and Transgression. A central finding is that Suspension— affect and norm entangled but unresolved—constitutes approximately 50% of the corpus. Rather than a system failure, Suspension emerges as the condition of possibility for the other modes: the interval where normative entanglement is sustained before resolving into Reinforcement or Transgression. The findings advance understanding of laughter's functional ambiguity: the same sequence can alternate between social control and normative transgression, revealing an affect-normativity entanglement that is processual, multiform, and irreducible to any single directional function.

PAPER

Making “Gender” Laughable: Ridicule, Semantic Shift, and Anti-Gender Mobilisation**Shaban Darakchi (Slovak Academy of Sciences)**

This paper examines humour and joking practices within anti-gender mobilisation in Bulgaria, focusing on how “gender” was transformed from a technical policy term into a pejorative label during the protests against the Istanbul Convention (2018) and subsequent radical right campaigns. Drawing on digital ethnography of social media posts, memes, stand-up routines, protest slogans, and comment sections (2018–2025), I analyse how jokes about transgender people, homosexuality, and “gender ideology” function as affective infrastructures of populist politics. In Bulgarian public discourse, calling someone “gender” has become shorthand for accusing them of being gay, effeminate, corrupt, foreign-influenced, or morally deviant—collapsing distinctions between gender identity, sexual orientation, and liberal cosmopolitanism. Rather than treating such humour as marginal or merely expressive, I conceptualise joking as a performative political practice that normalises exclusion while shielding speakers through irony and plausible deniability (“it’s just a joke”). I argue that humour operates as a key mechanism of semantic shift, transforming policy language into everyday insult, and enabling the circulation of stigma beyond explicitly ideological spaces. Through ridicule, anti-gender actors construct an intimate community of laughter that binds participants emotionally while marking feminist, LGBTQI+, and human rights actors as absurd and alien. By foregrounding humour as an analytical lens, the paper contributes to scholarship on anti-gender populism and radical right mobilisation, suggesting that jokes are not peripheral but central to how contemporary illiberal movements translate moral panic into everyday vernacular politics.

PAPER

Making It Up as We Go: Improv, Humor, and Belonging in Expat Life**Kelly Stone (UPorto)**

What happens when you ask a group of older adult expats—many navigating new languages, cultures, and identities—to get up in front of their peers and be silly? This paper explores the role of humor and improvisation in building connection among expatriates living along Portugal’s Silver Coast. Drawing from a series of applied improv workshops I facilitate in Alcobaça, I examine how participants use humor to navigate discomfort, reduce social anxiety, and create a sense of belonging in unfamiliar environments. Improv creates a space where failure is expected, rules are flexible, and communication extends beyond language fluency. For participants who may feel isolated or out of place, humor becomes an accessible way to connect across difference. At the same time, not everything lands. Jokes fall flat, cultural references miss, and moments of tension reveal the limits of humor as a universal language. This project combines practitioner observation with brief participant surveys and builds on my previous research on humor, communication, and sexual health education in the United States. Taken together, these findings position humor as a powerful tool that can foster connection and expose the boundaries of belonging in transnational communities.

PAPER

Making Policy Smile: Integrating Humor into Nudge Instruments**Nawa Raj Khatiwada (Nepal Development Res)**

A signage board in a typical public space in Nepal reads: "Anyone found defecating or urinating in this area will be fined Rs. 1,000." Ironically, however, the message itself appeared ineffective in practice: in a fine morning, two individuals were observed carefully reading the notice while urinating directly beneath it. The scene encapsulates a paradox commonly associated with coercive policy instruments, which presume compliance yet frequently encounter indifference or resistance. A key reason for this disconnect lies in the underlying assumption of governance policies that individuals consistently deploy their cognitive resources to make rational choices based on prescribed clearly defined permissible and prohibited behaviors. Drawing on insights from behavioral economics and public communication, this paper explores nudge instruments as lighter, non-coercive mechanisms for influencing behavior while preserving individual autonomy. It further argues that the effectiveness of such instruments can be significantly enhanced when they are coupled with humor as a communicative attribute. An illustrative example of a humor-infused nudge instrument is presented here. A toilet sign reads, "Men to the left because women are always right." This sign represents a subtle yet meaningful departure from conventional signage, which typically relies on neutral labels such as "men" and "women" accompanied by standard arrows or symbols. The embedded humor heightens attentiveness and compliance while fostering a positive emotional response, illustrating how such non-coercive policy approaches can operate effectively in public spaces. The paper further outlines key design considerations for humor induced nudge instruments, including contextual appropriateness, cognitive load, and cultural sensitivity.

PAPER

Mazzaropi- Entre muitos filmes e a transmídia antes da transmídia**Fabiano Liporoni (FAAP)**

A presente comunicação analisa a trajetória artística de Mazzaropi sob as óticas contemporâneas da transficcionalidade e da narrativa transmídia, propondo que o cineasta estabeleceu um universo ficcional coerente décadas antes da popularização desses conceitos. Utilizando o arcabouço teórico de Marie-Laure Ryan e Richard Saint-Gelais, o estudo investiga como o arquétipo do "Jeca" operou como um elemento transficcional de personagem, atravessando 33 produções cinematográficas, além de incursões no circo, teatro de revista e rádio. A análise segmenta a obra de Mazzaropi entre seus componentes estáticos — o ethos e o mythos do caipira, o topos rural e a oposição entre campo e cidade — e seus componentes dinâmicos, que permitiam a variação episódica e a hibridização de gêneros (comédia, drama musical, terror cômico) sem romper a estabilidade do mundo ficcional. Seguindo a perspectiva histórica de Matthew Freeman (2016) onde a construção de mundos transmídia não é uma exclusividade da era digital, mas uma lógica industrial que remonta ao início do século XX, conclui-se que, embora não apresentasse a complementaridade multiplataforma digital típica das franquias modernas, Mazzaropi construiu um caso paradigmático de migração de mídia analógica. O sucesso de sua produtora PAM Filmes, residiu na gestão de um "universo de muitos textos", onde a fidelidade do público era garantida pela transferência de expectativas e afetos entre obras. Assim, Mazzaropi emerge como um precursor da construção de mundos narrativos, demonstrando que a solidez de um componente estático é a âncora necessária para a expansão e longevidade de fenômenos culturais de massa no Brasil.

PAPER

Meredith's Virtue: A Christian perspective on comedy and laughter**Ian Bekker (North-West University)**

In February 1877, George Meredith, the English novelist, delivered an address at the London Institution entitled *On the Idea of Comedy and the Uses of the Comic Spirit*. One of the uses was to cast a critical light on men “whenever they wax out of proportion, overblown, affected, pretentious, bombastical, hypocritical, pedantic ... drifting into vanities ... are false in humility or mined with conceit”. In short, Meredith viewed comedy as a mechanism for undermining egoism, a view reflected in many of his novels, but particularly in his most famous novel *The Egoist*. While Meredith was himself no Christian and while the relationship between Christianity and comedy and laughter has mostly been a strained one, there are exceptions to this rule within Christian thought. The focus of this paper will be to outline the nature of these exceptions and to advance a virtue-ethics interpretation of comedy and laughter that draws on the thought of Aristotle, Aquinas as well as modern virtue-ethicists such as Alisdair Macintyre. It will also show how such a Christian interpretation of the ethical utility of comedy and laughter compares with the general philosophical, literary and psychological literature on this topic (e.g. as exemplified in the work of Bergson and Bakhtin).

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PAPER

Narratives from the Global South: a participatory action research project using memes to explore the 2030 Agenda**Aline Andrade De Carvalho (UFF)**

Against a global backdrop of multiple crises and considering GenZ's media consumption, this research examines the effectiveness of the UN's 2030 Agenda from a decolonial perspective. We are interested in the processes of meaning-making surrounding this topic and in the contributions that a country like Brazil can offer to the debate and the formulation of global policies, especially drawing on its territories, knowledge, and social practices. More specifically, we present a participatory action research project conducted within the field of Culture and Territorialities studies, which culminates in the creation of a memory game featuring memes related to the Sustainable Development Goals. Thereby we suggest that, rather than applying homogeneous development formulas, it is necessary to recognize and strengthen locally created solutions, given the inadequacy of the 2030 Agenda's narrative in the face of the diverse realities of Latin America. Based on an epistemological reflection on alternative ways of producing knowledge beyond the worldview of the Global North, the use of memes emerges as a powerful, creative, and counter-hegemonic pedagogical tool. By mobilizing a media-driven imagery shared by many people within a given territory, memes shift—albeit symbolically—the axis of power toward immediate understanding. In other words, a meme only makes sense in a context with shared cultural codes that, when used in a truly dialectical manner, facilitate the regionalization of global themes and vice versa.

PAPER

Newsom V. Trump: Analysis of Superiority Humor and Mirroring in X Posts**Patrice Oppliger (Boston University)**

This study examines California Governor Gavin Newsom's use of humorous social media messaging to provoke Donald Trump and his MAGA followers. Inspired by his digital director, Camille Zapata, Newsom's online posts have notably adopted a mirroring technique. Mirroring is often used to build rapport, empathy, and social connection; however, in this case, the posts repurpose Trump's own rhetorical and stylistic tactics (e.g., typing in all caps) against him. We argue that this variant of superiority humor is particularly effective because it targets Trump's sensitivity to threats to his status. As a high visibility political figure who is a tall, straight, white, cisgender male, affluent, and Governor of a state with the world's fourth largest economy, Newsom holds structural and symbolic advantages that appear to succeed where other rivals have failed (e.g., Marco Rubio's joke about Trump's tiny hands). To analyze mirroring humor's effectiveness on social media audiences, we collected 200 posts from Newsom's X (formerly Twitter) account between August 2025 and March 2026. Posts were categorized by humor type: mockery, sarcasm, and reciprocal name calling. Quantitative metrics for comments, likes, reposts, and views were assessed to evaluate audience engagement levels. Findings illuminate how different types of disparagement humor, particularly mirroring, can serve as a potent tool when directed at an opponent highly sensitive to public ridicule.

PAPER

Not Grievance but Laughter: Humor as Far-Right Radicalization, Empathy as Exit**Beer Prakken (University of Groningen)**

Existing scholarship explains far-right support primarily through negative emotions like anger or fear (e.g., Hochschild, 2016). However, a growing scholarship argues that positive affects like joy, fun, and pleasure are equally valuable (e.g., Leser & Spissinger, 2020; Switzer, 2025). Building on this emerging research, this paper introduces humor as a critical tool to understand the appeal and radicalization in Trumpism and the global far right. I theorize humor as playful transgression and dark play, two concepts explaining why humorous transgression is so appealing and radicalizing (Masek & Prakken, 2025; Prakken, 2026). To understand humor's role in followers' participation in Trumpism, I conducted 27 in-depth interviews with current and former far-right Make America Great Again (MAGA) supporters, analyzed via reflexive thematic analysis. I identified how humor functions across the radicalization process: as entry point, as social glue, and as catalyst. Humor does not displace anger or resentment but channelizes these negative emotions into pleasurable binding participation while blurring the line between irony and belief. Throughout the interviews, humor—playful transgression—serves as a central unifying and radicalizing principle in Trumpism. It draws people in, builds identity and community, and functions as a radicalizing force all the way. Moreover, humor and empathy operate as opposing affective forces. Where humor mobilizes far-right engagement, empathy disrupts it. Former MAGA supporters describe how gaining out-group empathy turned them into self-described "buzzkills," facilitating eventual de-radicalization. This study demonstrates how central humor is to far-right support and why it cannot be ignored in scholarship on radicalization.

PAPER

O humor bate à porta das marcas: um comparativo entre os posicionamentos da Heineken e do Spoletto em resposta ao discurso humorístico do Porta dos Fundos**Karen De Paula Santos (UFF)**

Pautado em uma estreita relação com o campo dos afetos, o humor é um recurso discursivo que permite a incorporação de aspectos críticos e lúdicos em sua expressão. Não é raro observar a convergência destes fatores em perfis humorísticos on-line, como o canal Porta dos fundos, que utiliza a comicidade para satirizar temas sociais amplos e também figuras e instituições específicas. Empresas como Tim e Net, do setor de telefonia, além do Spoletto e Heineken, do segmento de alimentação e bebidas, já foram objeto de riso entre os humoristas do grupo. Acerca destas últimas, observa-se uma notória distinção no modo como as companhias reagiram para mitigar os eventuais danos à imagem e realizar a gestão de crise. Enquanto o Spoletto patrocinou uma sequência de vídeos do canal e assumiu a co-autoria de uma nova narrativa humorística derivada da crítica, a Heineken optou por requerer a exclusão do vídeo e indenização via judicial. O objetivo deste trabalho é investigar comparativamente as práticas de apropriação e silenciamento do humor crítico como modos de gestão de crise por empresas satirizadas. Para tanto, o artigo desenvolverá um estudo de caso múltiplo (Yin, 2015) sobre as ações de resposta empregadas pelo Spoletto e pela Heineken, considerando, ainda, as particularidades dos recortes temporais em que os eventos ocorreram e a repercussão on-line de cada caso. A compreensão de deontologia do humor (Chagas, 2023), gerenciamento de crise (Machado; Durante; Viegas, 2019) e a perspectiva jurídica acerca das manifestações humorísticas (Capelotti, 2022) são referências teóricas adotadas nesta pesquisa.

PAPER

O humor e o digital: possibilidades e desafios**Cellina Rodrigues Muniz (UFRN)**

É certamente improvável abordar as práticas discursivas da contemporaneidade sem pensar em elementos próprios da esfera digital (com todo o aparato da internet e da Web). Nessa direção, os usos do humor, produzidos, postos em circulação e consumidos por meio de diversos dispositivos, como plataformas, aplicativos, sites e redes sociais, sugerem todo um conjunto de aspectos e características peculiares (Fratlicelli, 2023). Neste trabalho, nosso objetivo é apresentar diversos exemplos a fim de elencar alguns desses aspectos e características, apontando possibilidades e desafios de análise a partir de uma perspectiva discursiva (Maingueneau, 2015; 2025). Assim, alguns enunciados humorísticos são apresentados a fim de sugerir uma reflexão sobre algumas questões, a saber: a) em relação a gêneros discursivos e técnicas de humor (Possenti, 2019), embora ferramentas de IA estejam presentes, é de se indagar se há efetivamente “novas” práticas; b) em relação a posicionamentos éticos sobre tipos de humor, é de se indagar a respeito da polêmica sobre o “politicamente (in)correto”, com o levantamento, no cenário brasileiro, de alguns temas e juízos morais implicados.

PAPER

O humor gráfico como estratégia de resistência e denúncia contra governos ditatoriais no Brasil: o caso do jornal Movimento

Rozinaldo Antonio Miani (UEL)

O humor compreendido como um elemento que vai muito além do simples ato de fazer rir, mas, principalmente, que se constitui em uma poderosa estratégia de contestação, minando a lei (Eco, 1989), e funcionando como uma forma bastante consistente de crítica social (Miani, 2005), invariavelmente, se materializa em diversas modalidades do humor gráfico, em especial, nas charges e cartuns. Em tempos autoritários, como o que se viveu no Brasil durante o período da ditadura civil-militar (1964-1985), o humor gráfico produzido no contexto da imprensa alternativa se estabeleceu como uma das principais estratégias de resistência e denúncia contra as mazelas dos governos ditatoriais, enfrentando a censura e procurando despertar a sociedade no sentido de desenvolver um pensamento crítico a respeito das condições sociais, políticas e culturais decorrentes da imposição do regime militar. Nesse sentido, o objetivo desse estudo é analisar algumas charges e cartuns do jornal Movimento - considerado um dos mais paradigmáticos periódicos do complexo da imprensa alternativa (Kucinski, 2003), que circulou entre os anos de 1975 e 1981 no Brasil - refletindo sobre a importância do uso dessas modalidades do humor gráfico como estratégia comunicativa para enfrentar a censura e denunciar as arbitrariedades e desmandos dos governos ditatoriais. Por meio da análise do discurso chágico (Miani, 2023) será possível constatar a criticidade e a eficácia discursiva do humor gráfico no desvelamento dos aspectos mais sensíveis da conjuntura sociopolítica e econômica do respectivo período, potencializando uma reflexão social em relação à censura e ao autoritarismo impostos à sociedade na época.

PAPER

O Humor sob Escrutínio do Direito A liberdade artística como superação da liberdade de expressão**Gabriel Pereira Freitas Pinheiro (UFBA)**

A dissertação “O Humor sob Escrutínio do Direito: a liberdade artística como superação da liberdade de expressão” investiga a forma como o Direito brasileiro analisa e julga manifestações humorísticas, especialmente diante da tensão entre liberdade de expressão, liberdade artística e acusações de discurso de ódio. Parte-se da crítica de que o debate jurídico tradicional é conceitualmente limitado, pois trata o humor como simples discurso, ignorando sua natureza estética, performática e social. O trabalho sustenta que há um erro estrutural no enquadramento jurídico do humor, já que os tribunais utilizam categorias próprias do discurso informativo ou político para avaliá-lo. Esse equívoco gera decisões moralizantes, imprevisíveis e com efeitos negativos sobre o mercado do humor, como a autocensura e o empobrecimento da produção artística. Como alternativa, propõe-se compreender o humor prioritariamente como manifestação de liberdade artística, dotada de lógica própria. Para fundamentar essa tese, a pesquisa constrói uma base interdisciplinar com contribuições de Pirandello, Freud e Bergson, articulando três dimensões do humor: ontológica e ética, psíquica e econômica, e social e normativa. A dissertação também introduz o conceito jurídico de “palco” como categoria interpretativa essencial, destacando que o contexto performático altera a compreensão das falas humorísticas. Ignorar esse elemento conduz a interpretações literalistas inadequadas. Ao final, conclui-se que a proteção jurídica do humor deve equilibrar liberdade artística e dignidade humana, a partir de critérios analíticos mais rigorosos. Defende-se, assim, uma reorientação do Direito, capaz de evitar tanto a censura moral quanto a banalização dos danos decorrentes do humor.

PAPER

Os Efeitos do Riso**Juliana Espinosa (UFPR)**

Quais são as fórmulas comumente utilizadas para criar um modelo de humor que ri dos gêneros? A utilização de estereótipos configura uma prática habitual na tecitura do humor generificado, mas a forma com que tais materiais são entrelaçados e articulados faz toda a diferença no resultado final da composição humorística. Isso porque, o humor que faz uso de estereótipos de gênero normalmente torna risível os próprios elementos articulados na composição do humor. Não é tão frequente, porém, um formato humorístico que, ao fazer uso de tais recursos, torna risível as expectativas em relação a eles e não os elementos em si. Esse movimento, na verdade, muda tudo, já que os efeitos sociopolíticos (Foucault, 1999) relacionados a cada modelo atuam de maneiras distintas e, assim, geram subjetividades díspares dependendo da forma em que essa tecitura é engendrada. Pelo menos foi essa a conclusão que cheguei em minha dissertação de mestrado. Isso porque, a minha dissertação teve como temática justamente uma articulação entre humor e gênero pensada em equilíbrio com a ideia de efeitos sociopolíticos (Foucault, 1999), de processos de produção dos sujeitos (Butler, 2022), de configuração humorística do conceito de ridículo (Skinner, 2002) e demais conexões que me levaram a pensar no humor como uma ferramenta ambivalente – ou seja, como um mecanismo de retroalimentação de estereótipos ou de subversão dos mesmos.

PAPER

Para onde foi o riso? Humor, disciplina e conservadorismo na influência digital.**Byanca Caroline Da Silva Ribeiro (UFF)**

Este trabalho analisa regimes afetivos em disputa na cultura contemporânea da influência digital, a partir do contraste entre dois modelos performáticos: a controvérsia orientada pela ironia e a disciplina moralizada. Ele busca entender como humor, confronto e visibilidade operam como recursos políticos e simbólicos em performances progressistas de influência, enquanto contenção emocional, autocontrole e seriedade estruturam performances associadas ao conservadorismo e ao universo do wellness. A análise contrapõe performances públicas de influenciadores brasileiros: Felipe Neto (@felipeneto), cuja atuação em debates mobiliza frequentemente ironia, provocação e humor, e Manuela Cit (@manucit), que enfatiza rotinas de bem-estar, devoção religiosa e autodisciplina. No primeiro caso, o humor funciona como estratégia de visibilidade e disputa por autoridade cultural; no segundo, é minimizado ou recusado, sendo substituído por uma gramática afetiva marcada pela contenção, apresentada como virtude moral. Metodologicamente, adota-se uma abordagem qualitativa, com inspiração etnográfica, baseada na observação e análise de conteúdos audiovisuais e interações em redes sociais. Em vez de tratar o humor como um traço universal da cultura digital, argumenta-se que estilos afetivos são distribuídos de forma desigual e regulados socialmente nas economias da influência. Os resultados indicam que o humor se configura como um recurso simbólico em disputa, cuja legitimidade varia segundo enquadramentos de gênero, política e moralidade. Nas performances conservadoras, sua evitação contribui para a construção de autoridade, distinção e credibilidade, especialmente entre públicos femininos. O trabalho contribui para os estudos do humor ao examinar não apenas sua mobilização, mas também seu silenciamento estratégico no contexto da influência digital.

PAPER

Presence (Rinjokan) in Japanese Manzai Comedy: An Empirical Study of Audience Perception

Goran Vaage (Kobe College)

This study investigates how audience perception of “presence” (rinjōkan) influences humor evaluation in Japanese comedic performance. Drawing on an experimental design, 55 participants attended live performances by three manzai duos (six performers in total). After each act, participants completed a questionnaire assessing overall enjoyment, perceived quality, and their sense of presence during the performance, alongside additional evaluative measures. The results indicate that perceived presence plays a central role in how Japanese audiences evaluate humor. Performances that created a stronger sense of immediacy—where audiences felt as if they were “inside” the scene—were consistently rated more favorably. While “presence” is difficult to reduce to a single formal feature, patterns in participant responses suggest that dialogic structure is a key contributing factor. Specifically, humor constructed through dynamic interaction between performers was preferred over more monologic or narrative-driven formats. These findings align with established forms of Japanese humor, such as manzai and rakugo, where timing, interaction, and conversational flow are central to comedic effect. The study thus provides empirical support for the cultural and structural importance of dialog-based humor in Japan, while also offering a framework for understanding how “presence” operates as an evaluative dimension in live comedy. By highlighting the relationship between performance style and audience perception, this research contributes to broader discussions in humor studies regarding embodiment, interaction, and cultural specificity in comedic experience.

Q

PAPER

Queers on stage: on (self) censorship in Indian stand-up comedy

Prateek Prateek (goethe university frankfurt)

In the context of India's changed political landscape and constant crackdown on all possible forms of dissent, increased presence of queer people in stand-up comedy in India appears unsurprising and yet worth an interrogation. While there has been a rise in queer comedians in the recent years, it has indeed been much difficult for them as compared to their heterosexual counterparts. How can one make sense of this rise? What forms of performances, articulations of queerness and politics are included and thereby, excluded in order to sustain oneself in a highly competitive stand-up comedy circuit. This paper is based on an on-going ethnographic research with queer stand-up comedians in India. Through my own performances as well as interactions with the participants through multiple modes, I explore the relationship, which queer stand-up comedians, have with the machinery of censorship. In the paper, I do not view censorship as only suppression of speech, but tap into visceral ways in which censorship is felt and experienced – in the body and through the bodies. Perhaps, a turn towards felt censorship takes us closer to understanding the modalities of comedy explored by performers. I examine how these experiences reshape the architecture of performance and rearticulate queer politics. In other words, through censorship I intend to explore who gets to be on the stage and what the queer body navigates both in verbally and non-verbally in order to be on stage.

R

PAPER

Reading Intersectional Freedom of Artistic Expression: Dave Chappelle, The Closer, and Aftermath Conversations**Simran Tamber (University of Amsterdam)**

The Closer, Dave Chappelle's infamous 2021 stand-up special, has been critiqued by comedy fans, the general public, and academia alike, with its offensively-gendered language often read through a lens of 'intersectionality'. Borne from Black feminist legal scholarship, intersectionality theorises how overlapping systems of structural injustice equate to oppression greater than the sum of their named components. Accordingly, academic literature on The Closer champions intersectionality as a route to analyse Chappelle's cultural politics in a Netflix special. Yet, I argue that existing research on The Closer and its aftermath tends to overlook (digital) medium-specificity and, accordingly, the contemporary racial nuances of Chappelle's art. Intersectionality becomes co-opted as a tool of white feminism, wherein ideological gender politics in academic research cloud (stand-up) commentary on the material conditions of racial existence in America. Through frame analysis, I articulate how scholarship weaponizes 'intersectionality' against Chappelle, a black man, while simultaneously deploying it as theoretical lens to study his comedy. In a textual analysis, I revisit Stuart Hall's encoding/decoding schema to contrast Chappelle's 'encoding' of intersectionality in story-telling and scholars' 'decoding' of his work as the repudiation of intersectionality itself. Naturally, the method evolves to critical discourse analysis, as these mixed qualitative and quantitative methods demonstrate divergent discursive articulations and contestations of power. Thus, I advocate for a decolonial cross-platform reading of Chappelle's creation of The Closer (2021) and, in its wake, his two artistic reactions: a 2022 speech platformed on Netflix (What's in a Name?) and 2023 Spotify podcast (The Midnight Miracle).

PAPER

Reconfiguring Gonzo in the Platform Era: humor, performance, and journalistic ethos in Repórter Doidão

Mateus Trespach Rolim (UERJ), Calvin da Silva Cousin (UFRGS), Felipe Moura de Oliveira (UFRGS)

This paper builds on prior research into the elements of gonzo journalism in the Repórter Doidão segment by YouTuber Diogo Defante (COUSIN, ROLIM & OLIVEIRA, 2025). It proposes an analytical shift towards the humorous and communicational dimension of Defante's work, foregrounding gonzo journalism as a device for humor production and examining how the ethos of the comedian intersects with the ethos of the journalist. Within this framework, the reconfiguration of the gonzo spirit in the web-audiovisual environment, especially under the viral logic of social media, radicalizes the reporter's subjective presence by subjecting it to a demand for performance. In contrast to the solitary perception of Hunter S. Thompson's gonzo, what emerges here is a scene shaped by cameras, editing, views, and factors that reorganize the conditions of production of gonzo reporting and interfere with its humorous effects. The aim is to understand how the persona constructed by Defante blurs the boundaries between information, entertainment, and performance, while also destabilizing the distinctions between journalist, YouTuber, and comedian, all under humor as an organizing principle of the narrative. One of these transfigurations appears in the distinct use of humor: in seminal works of gonzo journalism, humor stems from the writer's own ironic and anecdotal perspective, whereas its updated forms rely on the memetic and referential language of the internet. It is argued that, within audiovisual web journalism, gonzo reemerges as a hybrid form in which the credible aesthetics of the reporter and the comic instability of the performer coexist in productive tension.

PAPER

Reflections on Translating Humor in the Facetiae of Poggio Bracciolini

Ana Clara Vizeu Lopes (UFJF), Raffaella Nasser Rodrigues (Confidential)

This paper aims to investigate the challenges involved in translating humorous texts from Latin into Brazilian Portuguese, drawing on the experience of translating selected jokes from the Facetiae of Poggio Bracciolini. Written between 1438 and 1452, the collection consists mostly of short narratives of a comic-satirical nature, employing a range of humorous mechanisms—such as irony, ambiguity, and double entendre—whose effectiveness is closely tied to specific linguistic and cultural elements. Based on the analysis of particularly challenging translation cases, the study seeks to identify the main difficulties involved in rendering these effects into Brazilian Portuguese, examining to what extent the humor of the source text can be preserved, adapted, or recreated. To this end, the paper primarily draws on Marta Rosas's work on the translation of humor. She conceives it as a process of recreation oriented toward the production of effects. It also engages with contributions by Paulo Henriques Britto and Lawrence Venuti regarding functional correspondence in literary translation and the role of the translator. It further draws on reflections on laughter by Henri Bergson and Sírío Possenti. Grounded in this theoretical framework and in the analysis of Bracciolini's text, the paper approaches translation not as a mere transfer of content. Instead, it is understood as an inherently interpretative and creative practice aimed at reconstructing effects across linguistically and culturally distant contexts.

PAPER

Repair with a Laugh: Clarification Requests in Human–Robot Moral Dialogue**Vanessa Cristiane Vanzan de Oliveira (University of Gothenburg)**

This ongoing study investigates how laughter, when produced by a social robot immediately before a clarification request, shapes the unfolding of dialogue in a moral-dilemma task. Repair is a frequent and fundamental feature of interaction, structurally tied to turn-taking and central to maintaining mutual understanding; it is also increasingly relevant to conversational interfaces, whose handling of misunderstanding affects competence, trust, and user experience. Filled pauses and other turn-taking cues have likewise been shown to guide listeners' expectations during unfolding talk, yet little is known about how laughter and filled pauses modulate clarification requests in human–robot interaction. We examine this question in a Wizard-of-Oz study using Furhat, an embodied social robot, using the Balloon Task, where participants discuss which of four passengers should be sacrificed to save the others. During participants' reasoning, the robot produces echoic clarification requests under three conditions: silent pause, filled pause, and laughter. The project asks whether these pre-sequences invite different response types, such as minimal confirmation, elaboration, justification, or laughter-like mimicry. Data collection is currently ongoing; therefore, we report preliminary qualitative observations. Initial sessions suggest that clarification requests preceded by silence tend to elicit brief confirmations, whereas requests preceded by filled pauses or laughter more often invite expanded and affectively marked responses. By examining laughter outside humorous content, this study contributes to humor research while also informing the design of socially responsive repair practices in human–robot dialogue. It also foregrounds repair as a useful lens for studying how social meaning is negotiated with artificial interlocutors.

PAPER

Rhetorical and Linguistic Attributes of the Materials Published in Fitkauli Dot Com**Garima Luitel (Fitkauli Online Media)**

From the Himalayas to the diaspora, Nepali is used by over half a billion individuals, making it one of the most widely used languages globally. Therefore, Nepali literature functions as a powerful conduit for both personal growth and societal cohesion. This paper aims to analyse the rhetorical and linguistic attributes of the humor-oriented literary materials published in Fitkauli Dot Com, a leading online media platform in Nepal. Fitkauli is a word not very common in formal communication and literature but is deeply rooted in the traditional culture and rural livelihood. Fitkauli in fact is a bamboo slingshot-like device for throwing small stones or clods of earth. Similar to the nature of slingshot, articles published in Fitkauli deploy irony, parody, wordplay to strike at specific targets: political figures, social norms, and cultural contradictions. Similarly, Hasya Ghar meaning 'Humor House', De Danak meaning 'Give a solid blow', Singauri meaning 'Provoking Argument' are other key terminologies used to describe the columns where articles are posted regularly. A significant portion of the content published by Fitkauli media, directly targets the electoral process, political parties, and leaders. The satire often highlights the absurdity of political rhetoric, the opportunism of candidates, and the cyclical nature of unfulfilled promises, portraying elections as a theatrical performance divorced from public need. The pieces published lampoon institutional corruption, bureaucratic double standards, and the hypocrisy of elites who preach one thing and practice another. The paper also describes the linkages of these features with the classic and contemporary theories of humor.

PAPER

Rir é o melhor remédio? Humor e representações de gênero no O Pasquim**Caroline Ferreira Vilanova (UFRJ)**

O objeto deste artigo são as representações de gênero no hebdomadário O Pasquim (1969-1991), conhecido por denunciar arbitrariedades da Ditadura Militar brasileira. O trabalho se concentra no fato de que, apesar de seu caráter contestador, o periódico reforçou hierarquias de gênero por meio de suas representações. O humor foi central nesse processo. Por meio dele, a figura feminina e o movimento feminista foram reiteradamente ridicularizados; a historiadora Rachel Soihet (2005) enfatiza: a zombaria foi arma antifeminista de parte da redação d'O Pasquim, que temia a perda do predomínio masculino nas relações de gênero. Capas e charges, graças às suas dimensões visuais, são fontes valiosas para o exame do modo como o jornal contribuiu para a circulação de um imaginário machista e para a reprodução de práticas do mesmo tom, graças ao duro conservadorismo que reservava às mulheres. Os estudos do filósofo francês Jacques Rancière, ao versarem sobre a dimensão estética da política, explicitam: as práticas artísticas modelam o sensível e possuem a capacidade de reforçar hierarquias políticas. O trabalho conta com um arcabouço teórico-metodológico sustentado pela História Cultural, com ênfase na História Cultural do Político. A análise se apoia nos estudos de Sigmund Freud e Henri Bergson sobre o humor, considerando tanto seus aspectos psíquicos, ligados ao inconsciente, quanto suas dimensões sociais, relacionadas às normas e comportamentos coletivos. Por fim, lançaremos mão do método documentário de interpretação formulado pelo sociólogo húngaro Karl Mannheim e adaptado por Ralf Bohnsack, cuja contribuição para análise de imagens será especialmente valiosa.

PAPER

Rir para não chorar: o cósmico e o cômico do riso negro**Laura Rosa Gomes (UFRJ)**

Para pensar as metáforas de transformação, Stuart Hall (2013) recorre ao carnavalesco de Mikhail Bakhtin e à contradição que o carnaval abriga, a “natureza inextricavelmente mista e ambivalente de toda a vida cultural, a reversibilidade das formas, símbolos e significados culturais” (Hall, 2013, p. 226). Neste mesmo contexto, Henry Gates Jr. (1988, p. 55), destaca em Bakhtin “a double voiced word”, o duplo papel da palavra proferida. A possibilidade de modificar o sentido já estabelecido, através de uma nova orientação semântica. A partir daí, Henry desenvolve uma teoria que inclui a apropriação negra nos Estados Unidos do “standart English” para assim, dar novo sentido, – signifyin(g) – as palavras do colonizador. “Riso negro” é a metáfora de transformação aqui proposta. No Brasil, o dicionário Aurélio, elemento básico no letramento e alfabetização da população, nos afirma que “riso” significa “Ato ou efeito de rir; risada. Alegria, contentamento, satisfação. Coisa ridícula”. Já “negro”, segundo o mesmo autor, é aquele “de cor preta. Diz-se do indivíduo de raça negra; preto. Sujo, encardido, preto. [...] Muito triste; lúgubre. Maldito; sinistro” (Ferreira, et. al, 1988). Notam-se relações opostas entre um ser negro e um ser alegre, que muito nos diz sobre a noção de humanidade não atribuída a corpos negros. O trabalho pretende pensar a busca por superação à violência do racismo, visualizando o cósmico como vital ao cômico, a partir da figura de Exu como divindade nas religiões afro-diaspóricas.

PAPER

Salão Internacional de Humor de Piracicaba - O Humor brasileiro que transforma o mundo.**José de Arimatéia Silva Junior (UNINOVE)**

Salão Internacional de Humor de Piracicaba - Uma trajetória premiada que nasceu da resistência e hoje é referência global, provando como o traço brasileiro do Salão de Piracicaba transforma a realidade através do riso. Descubra como o humor se tornou uma ferramenta de impacto mundial e diplomacia cultural, celebrando o legado da instituição mais respeitada das artes gráficas.

PAPER

Satire as Ideological Assimilation: Humor and Political Enemies in Krokodil (1933–1945)**Breno Ventura Barbosa (UFRJ)**

The satirical magazine Krokodil was published in the Soviet Union from August 1922 until 2008, when socialism had already collapsed in Russia. It originated as a supplement to Rabochaya Gazeta (Workers' Newspaper) and was published weekly. Its satire targeted enemies of the USSR, as well as figures and events within Soviet political life. Themes such as alcohol consumption among workers and the satirization of bureaucrats and laborers were represented through recurring characters. Capitalist countries, as well as ethnic and religious groups opposed to the USSR, were also targets. This study focuses on the period from 1933 to 1945, encompassing the rise and fall of Nazifascism and the Party purges initiated after the assassination of Sergei Kirov in Leningrad, which continued until 1938. The objective is to understand how the Stalinist Soviet Union represented its political enemies, both internal and external, by identifying forms of treatment and assimilation in the magazine. We argue that satirical imagery in Krokodil functioned as a mechanism for the assimilation of political ideas, enabling the internalization of ideological positions through humor by reducing resistance and naturalizing ideological content, drawing on the Freudian perspective of humor. Methodologically, the study adopts the documentary method of image analysis developed by Vinicius Liebel, based on Ralf Bohnsack, allowing the examination of cartoons and their implicit meanings. According to John Etty, images occupied about 50% of the magazine's content and were central to meaning-making, operating as an ideological performance linked to the revelation of a particular "truth."

PAPER

Satire, Memes and Stigma Reversal in Bolsonaroist Political Communication**Ivanildo Carvalho dos Santos (UFF)**

This study examines how digital bolsonarism transforms criticism and satirical products into resources for identity-based mobilization through processes of stigma inversion. The research focuses on the song “Amigo Flávio”, originally created with satirical intent and later appropriated by supporters as a positive symbol, connecting this case to other episodes of symbolic re-signification in the Brazilian context, such as images associating Bolsonaro with the Joker. The analysis follows the social trajectory of these episodes, observing the origin of criticism, its circulation on social networks, the reaction of supporters, and subsequent processes of symbolic reappropriation. Along this trajectory, symbolic reversal tends to occur in a gradual and articulated manner. The attack is often reinterpreted as evidence of political authenticity or as a form of persecution attributed to opposing groups. In many situations, stigma is gradually weakened through humor, as criticism is transformed into shared irony, memes, or joking references that circulate within supportive online communities. Over time, the content may be incorporated into identity narratives and function as a marker of group belonging. From a theoretical perspective, the research dialogues with studies on stigma, social identity, memetic culture, and affective polarization. The central hypothesis is that humorous stigma reversal can function as a mechanism of symbolic protection, allowing external attacks to be reinterpreted as evidence of political hostility and contributing to the strengthening of group bonds.

PAPER

Stand-Up and the Live Creature: Dewey’s Embodied Aesthetics and the Philosophy of Humor (for the Philosophy of Humor section)**Jonathan Weidenbaum (Berkeley College (NYC))**

Beginning with a touchstone in the development of the presenter’s philosophy of humor—the witnessing of a poor stand-up act immediately followed by a good one—this presentation employs the aesthetics of John Dewey to illuminate the conditions for what makes good comedy. Most of us already recognize that it’s not always the joke itself that hits home, but the manner in which it is told. The deeper mission of this talk is to explain exactly why this is the case: the embodied character of all heightened forms of meaning.

PAPER

Stand-up Comedy, Truth-Telling, and Situated Knowledges in Theo Maassen and Dave Chappelle

Dick Zijp (Utrecht University)

Recent scholarship in critical comedy studies has challenged the, in hindsight, rather short-lived consensus that comedy is inherently progressive and rebellious (e.g., Lockyer and Pickering 2005; Pérez 2022; Bricker 2025). While this scholarship has primarily focused on the serious politics and ethics of humour, this paper suggests that a critical understanding of contemporary comedy should also attend to the ways humour is entangled with epistemological questions. The dominant, liberal conception of stand-up as a mode of “truth-telling” – which positions comedians as heroic figures who “speak truth to power” – no longer seems viable in an increasingly illiberal and authoritarian world order, where the rise of clown-politicians such as Donald Trump coincides with the emergence of a ‘right-wing comedy complex’ (Sienkiewicz and Marx 2023). Yet the relationship between comedy and truth-telling is typically taken for granted in comedy scholarship. Drawing on recent intersectional approaches to stand-up comedy (Weaver and Lockyer 2025) and feminist standpoint theory, this paper asks how truth-telling is related to the sociocultural standpoint of the comedian. I present a critical reading of two differently situated comedians who both present themselves as “edgy” truth-tellers targeting (minoritised) out-groups: the white Dutch comedian Theo Maassen and the Black American comedian Dave Chappelle. I argue that both have grappled with questions of truth-telling and reflected on the situatedness and limits of their own perspectives, even if they simultaneously downplay these limitations. Against this backdrop, I propose a rearticulation of comedic truth-telling in terms of what Donna Haraway (1988) called ‘situated knowledges.’

PAPER

Subversion is what we do: Monty Python and the question to subvert the matter of Britain

Bernardo Fontaniello (UNESP)

“What is your quest?”, asks an elderly and not so wise man who guards the path between King Arthur of Camelot - a very silly place - and his search for the Holy Grail in a scene of Monty Python and the Holy Grail. A similar question about the movie can be made for its creators, the Pythons themselves, but we’re not the Spanish Inquisition, anyway. However, one of them answered it for us not so quite ago. In 2016, Eric Idler, attending an interview in Australia, interrupted the host to say exactly these words: “Subversion is what we do”. Subversion, it is the exactly sentiment that the viewer can find when watching Monty Python and the Holy Grail, the not-quite-first-movie of the British comedy group released in theaters in 1975. This film tells a particular version of the matter of Britain, or more specific, King Arthur and his Knights. The motion picture presents a nonsense plot that satirizes life and society of the 10th century and also criticizes British society and traditionalism of the mid 20th century. The main subject of this text is the subversion of the Arthurian tale in the 1975 Python film, the understanding of myth in the popular imagination and its use in cinema, as well as the existence of archetypes and myths that influence how humans understand the world around them and relate to it. The objective is to understand the subverting of the Arthurian legend through Monty Python and the Holy Grail.

PAPER

The construction of humor in pre-dictatorship Uruguay: the discourse of others in the text “Self-censorship” by Elina Berro

Lucía Esperanza Arroyo Penela (Universidad de la República)

This presentation analyzes the humorous narrative text “Autocensura” (1969) by Elina Berro (1923-1971), a prominent humorist in Uruguay during the late 1960s. It aims to identify the discourses that appear in the text and to contrast them with those of Mónica, the protagonist, in order to reveal the underlying assumptions of each position and highlight the strategies that allow the author to address the social and political context of the time while circumventing censorship. The analysis is based on critical discourse analysis, considering discourse as a social practice (Fairclough, 1989), and is grounded in the conception of humor as a macro-genre (Martin 1997; Martin and Rose, 2008). A qualitative methodology was employed, and a textual analysis was conducted to identify the different voices and discourses according to the commitment system of Appraisal Theory, specifically the manifestations of heteroglossia (Martin and White, 2005). The study of the construction of humor draws on the General Theory of Verbal Humor (Attardo, 1994, 2011) and the concept of irony (Attardo, 2000). The analysis reveals instances of engagement that contribute to making visible the discourses circulating at the time and, therefore, the ideologies present in the sociohistorical context. It also shows that the information about the social and political situation presented in the text is, in most cases, filtered through the use of irony.

PAPER

The Crisis of Satire: A Pastiche Between Irony and Cynicism?

Gustavo Ottero Gobetti (UFRJ)

This essay analyzes literary tools such as irony, parody and satire through the lens of what critic Fredric Jameson calls “pastiche”. For Jameson, there is a stark difference between the mindless imitation or reproduction of styles and motifs from various artistic movements and historical periods that characterizes pastiche; and the more refined, critical forms of irony and satire. What stands as the defining feature of pastiche, then, is the lack of critical distance, the lack of subversion that strongly characterizes satire. Furthermore, this cultural mode is characteristic of a standardization -- one that forces a social and political disengagement, and engenders commodification of culture. It can be said that the role of pastiche is akin to Benjamin's concept of aestheticization of politics. Thus, a reinterpretation of the work of philosopher Søren Kierkegaard on the concept of irony as subjectivity is valuable. In his theory, the defining feature of irony is a negative relation to actuality. “Irony is indeed free,” he writes, “from the sorrows of actuality, but also free from its joys, free from its blessing, for inasmuch as it has nothing higher than itself.” One should concern with the risks of irony, with creating the conditions in which an opposition between humor and pastiche is unthinkable, since the employ of an eternal suspension today may only reinforce the detachment, the pastiche described by Jameson. Is there humor beyond negativity, without its threats? Those are the questions we will attempt to answer in this paper.

PAPER

The evolution of Nepali Cartoons from the age of pen and ink to digital interfaces

Rajesh Manandhar (Budhanikantha School)

Nepali cartoons constitute a distinctive form of visual culture that documents social change, political transition, and evolving modes of artistic expression in Nepal. This paper examines the historical development, thematic concerns, and technical attributes of Nepali cartoons from the mid twentieth century to date. Focusing on works produced across different periods—particularly from 2046 B.S. onward—the study traces shifts in line quality, composition, media use, and visual presentation in response to changing political and technological contexts. Early Nepali cartoons were primarily hand drawn using pen and ink and circulated through newspapers which had several limitations. These material and institutional limitations shaped a visual language marked by bold lines, high contrast, and symbolic imagery. Cartoonists often relied on satire, metaphor, and indirect critique to address sensitive political and social issues. The paper further explores the cultural and historical roots of Nepali cartoons, highlighting the influence of indigenous art forms, storytelling traditions, and linguistic diversity. With the advent of advanced printing technologies and digital tools, Nepali cartoons underwent a significant transformation in production, dissemination, and audience reach. Digital platforms expanded creative freedom, thematic experimentation, and global visibility, while also introducing new challenges related to authorship, copyright, and economic sustainability. By situating Nepali cartoons at the intersection of art, politics, and media history, this study argues that cartoons function simultaneously as aesthetic practices, historical records, and instruments of social commentary. The paper contributes to broader discussions on visual culture, freedom of expression, and the role of popular art in democratic societies.

PAPER

The form of humor in Nepali literature

Hari Prasad Silwal (Tribhuvan University)

Satirical writing is a very key component of Nepali literature. Hasya Kadamba is the beginning of the first satirical writing in Nepali literature which was published during the middle of 19th Century. The poetry of Bhanu Bhakta Acharya, popularly known as Aadi Kabi, also contains very dominant humor attributes. In the genres of essays, plays, and poetry within Nepali literature, satirical and humorous writing has been particularly powerful. Currently, various forms of humor and comedy related establishments are aggressively operating in Nepal. Key examples include: Fitkyauli Online Media, Sisnupani Nepal, Comedy with Champions and Comedy Darbar. Television dramas offer audiences a rich taste of political satire and humor, though most works lean more toward satire. The basic theme of Nepali satirical literature is to point towards the differences in sociopolitical, cultural and linguistic fields. It is a characteristic of Nepali satirical writing to target various human tendencies and give a message to change them. In particular, the purpose of such writings is to highlight the negative impact of administrative delays and poor service delivery. Simply put, there is a lot of entertainment in this type of writing. However, its primary purpose extends beyond mere entertainment; it seeks to convey the urgent message of rectifying contradictions, weaknesses, superstitions, and regressive customs prevalent in contemporary and future society. Exposing the bitter realities of life remains an undeniable truth. Ultimately, the main goal of Nepali humorous and satirical literature is to contribute toward building a just, equitable, and welfare-oriented human society.

PAPER

The Memetic Turn in Digital Communication during Lula's Third Term: Impact, Themes, and Protagonism in Government Strategy

Victor Piaia (FGV Comunicação)

Government digital communication has increasingly incorporated resources typical of internet culture, such as memes and humor, into public engagement strategies. This article analyzes the impact of what we term the memetic turn in the Brazilian government's digital communication during President Lula's third term, focusing on the @govbr Instagram profile between 2023 and 2025. Following a ministerial change at the Social Communication Ministry in January 2025, the profile adopted a systematic strategy drawing on humor, memes, and viral resources, significantly altering its performance on the platform. Drawing on the analysis of growth and engagement metrics, predominant themes in the profile's posts, and the profile's positioning within the government's digital communication ecosystem – comprising institutional channels across different platforms –, the results show that follower growth following the memetic turn was 2.7 times higher than in previous years, while interaction volume was 2.2 times greater. The article concludes by discussing the implications of this strategy for the government's capacity to set the political agenda and mobilize its aligned electorate.

PAPER

The New Aesthetics of the Far Right: Humor, Gender, and Political Exclusion from a Global Perspective

Luanna Jales Duque de Albuquerque (UFSC)

This paper investigates how political humor has been mobilized as a strategic language by the new global far right. From a Global History perspective, it examines how humorous content circulated through digital platforms functions simultaneously as a form of affective engagement and a mechanism of symbolic violence, creating a communicative strategy that tends to benefit male politicians more than women. By reviving exclusionary ideals inherited from European modernity, these practices reinforce the authority of masculine political figures while ridiculing women who seek positions of power. This paper engages with authors such as Sebastian Conrad, François Hartog, and Dipesh Chakrabarty to argue that politically incorrect humor circulates globally while being locally adapted to reaffirm hierarchies of gender, race, and class. It analyzes how nostalgia, anti-feminist backlash, and digitally mediated ridicule are transformed into political style, especially through memes, viral clips, and online performances that frame aggression as authenticity and offense as entertainment. Rather than treating humor as politically neutral, this study approaches it as a historically situated and deeply gendered form of discourse. It argues that while male far-right figures often gain symbolic capital through irreverence, provocation, and mockery, women in politics are more frequently positioned as targets of ridicule and delegitimization. In this sense, humor becomes central not only to the popularization of far-right discourse, but also to the reproduction of unequal standards of political legitimacy in the contemporary public sphere.

PAPER

The Proliferation of Satirical Depictions of Muhammad in the Age of Prohibition

Dennis Meyhoff Brink (University of Copenhagen)

A widely accepted narrative holds that militant Islamist violence has successfully suppressed satirical depictions of Muhammad in Western media—that death threats and terrorist attacks have produced a “chilling effect” on satirists and publishers alike. This paper challenges that narrative with new empirical evidence: through comprehensive research across media, I have documented over 350 new satirical depictions of Muhammad since the 2005 Jyllands-Posten controversy—substantially more than in the entire 20th century. Drawing on Foucault’s critique of “the repressive hypothesis,” the paper argues that attempts at prohibition have produced not a chilling effect, but rather a so-called Streisand effect, whereby attempts to suppress information instead amplify its spread: the more violently satirical depictions have been opposed, the more they have multiplied. Moreover, prohibition has catalyzed qualitative transformation. In response to violence, satirists have developed three novel visual strategies: dissociating the prophet from violent fundamentalists, quoting existing cartoons within new compositions, and veiling or masking the prophet to generate deniability. These strategies produce a new kind of satirical imagery marked by interpretive openness and ambiguity—aesthetic qualities that would not have emerged without the pressure of censorship. The paper thus argues that censorship, even in its most brutal forms, can enhance not only the quantity but also the aesthetic sophistication of the art it seeks to eliminate.

PAPER

The relevance of Humor in stories of repression and violence: A study on the performance ‘AI-5: Uma reconstituição cênica’.

Michel Augusto Galiotto da Silva (USP)

The research seeks to investigate the uses of the language of humor in theatrical plays that depict State violence and situations of human suffering. The catalyst for this study was the performance ‘AI-5: Uma reconstituição cênica’, which ran in São Paulo-SP (Brazil) between 2016-2020, and which ventured into using comic elements in a play that documentarily staged the establishment of torture by the State. Therefore, it explores, within the theatrical field, how this language can be a tool to foster engagement and critical thinking in the audience, rather than serving as a mere (and in these cases, inappropriate) source of entertainment. The investigation starts with sequential studies of humor from the fields of health sciences, philosophy, sociology, and history, building a theoretical framework before delving into specific studies on performing arts. In the final stage, it conducts an in-depth analysis of the uses of humor in the referenced theatrical performance, seeking to identify the potential and limits of comedy, further confronted by the observation of four other theatrical plays from the São Paulo scene with similar characteristics, those addressed in a more generalized manner.

PAPER

The Role of Political Satire Television in the Civil Sphere

Olivera Tesnohlikova (Institute of Czech Literature of CAS v.v.i.)

In this paper, I explore the social role of political satire television through a cross-cultural exploration of two shows—"Last Week Tonight with John Oliver" (USA) and "24 Minuta sa Zoranom Kesićem" (Serbia). Using a cultural-sociological perspective, I focus on the meaning-making processes behind these shows and elaborate on how they influence civil society. To do so, I develop a new framework that marries Baym's (2005) concept of discursive integration with Alexander's (2006) civil sphere theory and Jacobs' (2012) aesthetic public sphere theory. Relying on a large corpus of empirical data that covers both production and reception of "Last Week Tonight" and of "24 Minuta," I argue that both shows function as a hybrid television genre that simultaneously uses the discursive and communicative modes of "factual" and "fictional" (Alexander 2006) mass media within the civil sphere. Specifically, I illustrate how, through humor and satire, the shows communicate inclusive and exclusive relationships within civil society and how they expose the discrepancy between the image of an ideal civil society and the lived reality. Simultaneously, I explain how Oliver and Kesić utilize factual narratives and discourses to more concretely specify and promote universal solidarity—the core moral value of the civil sphere. While on a conceptual level I argue that both shows should be—discursively and pragmatically—understood as a unique type of institution of influence within the civil sphere, I also reflect on case-specific and socio-cultural differences relevant for each show.

PAPER

The Social Functions of Humor in Corporate and Political Economic Narratives

Madan Prasad Lamsal (Westcliff University)

By juxtaposing humor linked with corporate and political economy domains, the study examines how laughter travels across boardrooms and public discourse, sometimes as a lubricant for hierarchy, sometimes as a leak in the system. The empirical base draws on corporate humor articles published in New Business Age and a collection of audio-visuals disseminated through Aarthik Abhiyan National Daily. Based on classical theories of humor, the analysis shows that humor acts in different ways as a result of different people laughing as well as the reasons. Corporate humor predominantly relies on managed incongruity and relief mechanisms and it is often carefully ironed and officially approved to soften hierarchy, sustain morale, and make authority appear approachable. In contrast, political economy humor strongly invokes superiority and incongruity and is less obedient. It asks audiences to laugh not inside, but outside systems, and thus reveals contradiction, and also punctures inflated stories. , as well as briefly puts the listener above, the systems that control him/her. The study is based methodologically on the qualitative thematic analysis of written articles and spoken political humour, focusing on tone, target and socio-economic framing. These outcomes suggest that humor is no ornamental rhetoric; humor is constitutive an active means of meaning-making and controlling of some dissent and creation of some consent. In connecting the humorous practices of the every-day world with the theory, this paper discusses that humor at contemporary societies serves a dual purpose that is it reassures the mighty and consoles the helpless, sometimes mixes the two.

PAPER

Ten Judges, Ten Opinions: How Courts Deal with Humor in Elections**Sérgio Kezen (USP)**

Elections give rise to special problems relating to speech. They are the moment at which public debate should be at its most lively and robust, yet they also generate recurrent justifications for restraint in the name of electoral fairness and integrity. Humorous expression adds a further layer of difficulty to this problem. Humor is elusive, multifaceted, and highly context-dependent. It often blurs the line between factual and non-factual communication, lends itself to multiple interpretations, and frequently operates through exaggeration, irony, distortion, and ridicule. These features make humor particularly difficult for courts to characterize and evaluate in a stable and systematic manner. This article examines how Brazilian Regional Electoral Courts (TREs) deal with expressive manifestations involving humor in electoral contexts. Based on an empirical study of judicial decisions, it investigates how these courts classify, interpret, and regulate humorous speech within Brazil's system of electoral governance. The main hypothesis is that TREs do not adopt a coherent approach to humorous expression during elections. Rather than applying a stable understanding of humor as a distinct form of communication that may be justified from different free speech perspectives, these courts appear to oscillate between competing conceptions of what humor is, how it relates to factual reality, and what kinds of harm it may cause. This inconsistency has broader normative implications for freedom of expression. In the electoral arena, uncertainty in the judicial treatment of humor may chill protected speech and weaken forms of democratic contestation.

PAPER

Three Is Enough: A Theory-Driven Typology of Comedic Characters**Artem Prokhorov (HSE University)**

Since Ancient Greek comedy and Italian commedia dell'arte, comedic characters have corresponded to a number of archetypes. Nevertheless, attempts to articulate them have so far been made almost exclusively by comedy industry practitioners, such as Scott Sedita (2005), Steve Kaplan (2018), and Scott Dikkers (2021), and have remained largely disconnected from scholarly humor theory. Their sets are extensive – up to forty archetypes in Dikkers – as the authors sought to catalogue every character variation they encountered. This study proposes a function-based typology that revises William V. Costanzo's culturally-grounded academic classification (2020), arguing that just three comedic archetypes suffice: the loser, the trickster, and the everyman. Moreover, these three archetypes are not mutually exclusive but may represent three facets of a single character's personality. The first part of the study develops this argument by drawing on four influential scholarly theories of humor (Freud, 1905; Berlyne, 1960; Gruner, 1997; McGraw and Warren, 2010). The three selected archetypes embody scholarly descriptions of humor by performing three functions: to fail; to subvert; to anchor. In the second part, the typology is examined through a narrative analysis of *Fleabag* (2016–2019) as a case study of contemporary quality television comedy. The analysis shows that characters of different archetypes often form comedic pairs. It also reveals how multiple archetypes combined within a single character are activated sequentially rather than simultaneously. This case study provides further evidence for the sufficiency of the proposed classification.

PAPER

Transgressive humor in brazilian animated series on MTV Brasil**Tiago Lenartovicz (USP)**

This paper examines how Brazilian animated series broadcast on MTV Brasil in the 2000s developed a transgressive comic mode aligned with the channel's ethos. Our corpus comprises *Megaliga MTV de VJs Paladinos*, *Infortúnio com Funéria*, and *Fudêncio e seus amigos*, based on the hypothesis that these productions articulate distinct discursive modes of humor within their narratives. Media parody, television satire, and situational comedy, shaped by adult-oriented content, are recurrently reinforced through the serialized form of these productions within the channel's programming. The study is developed as a case study grounded in the qualitative and comparative analysis of selected episodes and sequences, considering both discursive intertextuality and the ways these series were embedded in MTV Brasil's cultural identity. The analytical framework brings together contributions from discourse and television scholarship (Maingueneau, 2014; Mittell, 2001), in dialogue with humor (Attardo, 1998) and animation (Wells, 1998) studies. The circulation of these animated series on MTV Brasil reveals the articulation between transgressive comic strategies and a television environment marked by a departure from conventional standards and by the experimentation of audiovisual languages. The analyzed series are linked to this ethos through their comic discourses while also participating in the channel's broader configurations of genres and formats. Their presence also makes it possible to identify cultural mediations that enabled Brazilian animation to enter circuits aimed at non-child audiences. In this context, the findings suggest that these series contributed to forms of animated humorous experimentation that resonated with the channel's media discourses while transgressing dominant conventions.

PAPER

Translating Discomfort: Humor and Creative Strategies in Elfriede Jelinek's *Über Tiere***Gisele Jordana Eberspächer (UFPR)**

The Austrian writer Elfriede Jelinek (1946–) is widely recognized for her distinctive use of a discomfiting and critical form of humor that challenges readers and unsettles laughter. This paper examines examples of such verbal humor in *Über Tiere* and their translations, drawing on the strategies proposed by Delia Chiaro. After briefly outlining the context of Jelinek's work and its critical reception, the analysis focuses on the specific challenges that her writing poses to translators, particularly with regard to linguistic play and estrangement effects. In addition to discussing Chiaro's framework, the paper considers an alternative strategy suggested by Jelinek herself in conversations with her English translator Gitta Honegger: the deliberate creation of new comic effects in the target text. To this end, selected examples from Honegger's English translation are analyzed and discussed alongside my own translation of excerpts from German into Portuguese, highlighting different translational choices and their implications. By comparing these approaches, the paper aims to contribute to ongoing discussions on the translation of humor and to expand the range of strategies available for dealing with linguistically and aesthetically complex literary texts.

PAPER

The Use of Humor and Irony in Latin American Feminist Artist Collectives

Julia Glaciela da Silva Oliveira (UFABC)

Since the beginning of the 20th century, humor and irony have been used by feminists as a political strategy. From the early decades of the century until the mid-1980s, we can observe how this humor was present in cartoons and comic strips that circulated transnationally in the feminist press of the period. On the other hand, feminist movements started to use aesthetic and artistic elements in their demonstrations, shaping a new form of activism: political activism. By using public space, humor, and different artistic languages, these movements brought discussions such as gender-based violence and abortion into the streets. In this way, we aim to explore how feminist activist collectives in Latin America have used humor and irony, associated with visual aesthetics, as a political strategy. Desde o século XX, o humor e a ironia têm sido utilizados pelas feministas como estratégia política. Do início do século até meados dos anos de 1980, vemos como esse humor estava presente em charges e tirinhas, que circulavam, de forma transnacional, na imprensa feminista do período. De outro lado, movimentos feministas passaram a utilizar elementos estéticos e artísticos em suas manifestações, configurando um novo tipo de atuação: o ativismo político. Utilizando o espaço público, o humor e diferentes linguagens artísticas, esses movimentos trouxeram para as ruas, discussões a exemplo da violência de gênero e o aborto. Assim, pretendemos explorar como os coletivos de artivismos feministas, na América Latina, têm utilizado o humor e a ironia, associados às estéticas visuais, como estratégia política.

V

PAPER

Visual Language As A Narrative and Stylistic Technique in Mqapheli Mngadi's Editorial Cartoons

Sizwe Dlamini (university of johannesburg)

The study of cartoons in the African indigenous languages of South Africa has been relatively disappointing. One could argue that the under-development of this genre in these languages has been the primary reason for this. While visual language has been perceived mainly from a semiotic perspective, another perspective is proposed in this article that this aspect, in a literary sense, can be viewed as a narrative and stylistic technique. In this case, it is employed by the cartoonist to stylistically convey the communication of ideas in addition to written words as it will be shown in this article. The article also shows how humour is artistically fused with narratology. The discussion is done by analysing the following proposed visual language elements: Visual analogy, Visual metaphor, and Visual zoomorphism. It is through the discussion of these components that the narrative and stylistic nature of visual language are determined in Mqapheli Mngadi's cartoons. This paper uses the lenses of narratology, stylistics, and reader-response theory as literary frameworks to guide and interpret data from the selected cartoons.

W

PAPER

What Makes People Laugh? A Brief Study on How Politicians Use Humor on Social Media

Clara Thomé C. F. Ramos (UFF)

This study aims to understand how the political right and left in Brazil (organized along party lines) use humor as a tool for generating engagement and building political capital on Instagram. Based on the hypothesis that these political camps mobilize this resource — and the emotion it evokes — in different ways, the project analyzes content published by two selected politicians (either candidates or officeholders nationally recognized) from both sides of the political spectrum. The analysis focuses on posts and their associated interactions, with particular attention to expressions of laughter in the comments (such as written forms of laughter). The goal is to examine how humor is employed by each political camp and to identify the differences in their use of this resource on social media.

PAPER

When the Pandemic Isn't Always the Point: COVID-19 as Context for Satirical Framing

Ida Klitgård (Roskilde University)

The role of satire in times of crisis has been widely debated in humour studies, particularly with regard to satire's function as relief and coping strategy. However, existing scholarship has largely focused on satire's responses to specific events or controversies, leaving insufficiently examined how satire operates during prolonged crises in which the crisis itself becomes a stable context rather than a singular object of critique. This paper addresses this gap by analysing what I term satire-by-proxy, defined as a framing strategy in which a societal crisis provides the shared context of satirical representation, while the primary target of critique is not the crisis itself but other cultural actors, institutions, or belief systems. The study draws on a longitudinal corpus of COVID-19-related satire published by the Danish satirical news site RokokoPosten throughout 2020, combining qualitative coding with temporal segmentation across four analytically defined phases of the pandemic. The analysis traces the distribution of COVID-19 topical themes alongside proxy framing and visualises both absolute and normalised frequencies to distinguish thematic change from structural persistence. I argue that while most satirical themes cluster in specific phases of the pandemic, satire-by-proxy cuts across all periods and becomes normalised as a dominant framing logic, enabling critique of pre-existing cultural antagonisms while the pandemic recedes as a direct target. In conclusion, by conceptualising COVID-19 as a context rather than object, this paper suggests a new framework for understanding how satire may reshape its function from offering immediate emotional relief to cognitive endurance during prolonged crises.

PAPER

Who's Afraid of the Big Bad Woke? Not These Comedians! – Absurdist Strategies of Trans and Gender Nonconforming Comedians in Contemporary Stand-Up Comedy

Amber Kempynck (Ghent University)

This paper examines how contemporary Anglophone trans, non-binary, and gender nonconforming (GNC) comedians employ absurdist humour and satire to reclaim and reframe current anti-trans debates surrounding gender, “wokeness,” and pronoun usage. Frequently positioned within broader culture war narratives, these debates have intensified alongside the rise of anti gender movements, trans exclusionary “feminisms,” and legislative efforts targeting trans rights. Through case studies of performers such as Sam Nicoresti and Emma Willmann, the paper explores how GNC comedians strategically render these discourses absurd rather than threatening. Their sets function as “performative texts” in which gendered identities can be constructed, deconstructed, and reimagined in real time. Rather than engaging anti gender rhetoric directly, these comedians appropriate and play with the terminology used against them, exposing the contradictions and hollowness of anti-woke and anti-trans discourse. By shifting “woke” from a derisive punchline favoured by reactionary commentators to an observational lens, they strip the term of its punitive force and destabilise its rhetorical and linguistic power. In doing so, they reveal the absurdity of anti-gender backlash while opening space for alternative, self-determined narratives about gender. Situated within a broader PhD project on comedic strategies for navigating anti-gender backlash, this paper contextualises these performances within research on gender, minority humour, and the politics of stand-up. It argues that GNC comedians’ use of absurdism expands gender-focused humour scholarship beyond the woman/man binary and demonstrates how marginalised performers use comedy to resist, reconfigure, and survive hostile cultural climates.

PAPER

Why are these women laughing? An analysis of graphic humor and comics by women in the Brazilian press (1960-1990)

Cintia Lima Crescêncio (UFABC)

Women's humor is a subject of great debate. For centuries, some scientific, philosophical, and psychoanalytic discourses have sought to construct the idea that women have no sense of humor or, even worse, have less of a sense of humor than men. At the risk of essentializing and treating as natural a historical, political, social, and cultural manifestation, such approaches disregard the very humorous production authored by women as a fundamental element for a serious and committed reflection on the subject. In this sense, from a gender perspective, which considers masculinities and femininities as constructions, and not biological data (SCOTT, Joan, 2025), this work aims to elaborate an analysis of graphic humor and comics produced by women and published in the Brazilian press between 1960 and 1990. With the objective of identifying themes and problems that mobilized the production of women cartoonists and comic book artists in publications of the mainstream press (Folha de S. Paulo, Placar and O Estado de S. Paulo), the alternative press (O Pasquim, Nós Mulheres, Brasil Mulher and Mulherio) and the underground press (O Bicho, Balão, Argh, Circo, Risco, Quadrix, Chiclete com Banana, A Roleta, Marca de Fantasia and Gibitiba), we consider humor as “war that does not produce death, but laughter” (RAZNOVICH, Diana, 1996, p. 7, free translation). This proposal is based on the concept of humorous sources, which intends a reflection on the image-text relationship (LIEBEL, Vinícius, 2017) to analyze the production of authorship by women.

PAPER

Wisdom and Stand-up comedy in USA and Hungary (A comparison of George Carlin and Géza Hofi)**Robert Durka (Catholic University in Ruzomberok, Slovakia)**

Erik Erikson proposed his theory of Psychosocial development in 1950s. It posits 8 sequential stages of individual human development throughout the lifespan. The virtue of the last stage (old age period) is wisdom with two opposing qualities: ego integrity vs. despair. Are the stand-up comedians, in their senior years, wise enough to accept their life (ego integrity) or they fall into despair? Our study is comparing two stand-up comedians – one from USA [George Carlin (1937-2008)] and one from Hungary [Géza Hofi (1936-2002)]. They lived and worked in the same era, but in completely different circumstances (land of freedom vs. behind the iron curtain). For the comparison, we picked Carlin's stand-up special "Complaints and Grievances" from 2001, and Hofi's special "1400" from 2000. Both performed their specials at the age of 64. Carlin puts himself in the position of the wise one, while Hofi claims, that he's the fool, the stupid one. Senior age should be associated with more benevolent humour; however, the use of satire is the trademark of both comedians. The use of dirty words is what we expect of Carlin, however Hofi started to use them after the fall of communist regime in 1989. We argue that Carlin is closer to the ego integrity, while Hofi is closer to despair, when he states, that he can't find his place in the new world. Our arguments will be highlighted by examples from the abovementioned comedy specials.

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS **Self-Organized Panels**

8 panels comprising 35 talks, each coordinated by a proposing scholar.

SELF-ORGANIZED PANEL**Features of humor in visual culture: everyday life, technologies, and accidents.**

Coordinator: José Benjamim Picado Sousa e Silva, jbpicado@hotmail.com, UFF

The visualities of observational humor: drawing the ordinary

Greice Schneider (UFS)

This work argues that graphic humor serves as a privileged territory for exploring observational humor. While studies on the genre typically focus on linguistic aspects—as seen in research on stand-up comedy, this paper expands that scope by investigating the visual modulations of observational humor, which are inscribed in the very etymology of the concept of observing. The genre is characterized by drawing attention to the extraordinary within the mundane, focusing on the incongruities of the absolutely familiar. By shifting the discussion of observational humor beyond the verbal, it becomes possible to explore its affinities with the gesture of drawing. Drawing, too, proposes a displacement in the regime of attention, bringing the familiar into focus by selecting, inflating, or subtracting specific aspects of everyday life. The analysis focuses on brief forms, such as comic strips, diaries, and sketchbooks, as the privileged sites of this operation.

Patterns in AI generated humor videos

João Senna Teixeira (INCTDD)

The release of the generative AI synthetic video models such as Sora, Veo and Grok Video created new ways of creating and sharing visual memes, especially because of the ease of replicating the videos, functioning as templates as the original video can be fed to these models and later asked for changes. This makes such videos work more as image macros than as traditional video trends, but, at the same time, they are visually different with different characters and settings. This presentation seeks to understand such new phenomena in the light of visual humor, its uses, technical features and social repercussion. This will be based mostly on analysis of the meme of a Lady with a rock breaking a glass bridge in China that was, for several reasons, the first grand AI video trend and meme of this new Generative AI epoch. We ask if such material can be seen as a genre of memes, or if they are merely a macro and the visual differences are less important than that they are recognizable as one of those templates.

The Involuntary Grace of a Snapshot: humorous eventfulness in images of photojournalism

José Benjamim Picado Sousa e Silva (UFF)

The paper will examine the comedic aspects structuring the narrative sense of photojournalistic images, something that results from interactions happening between configured aspects of visual elements in the image and cognitive capacities involved as part of beholder's activity of enjoying and interpreting photographic depiction of actualities. This presentation will focus on the game-like regimes established by visual features of photojournalistic snapshots, as promoters of an involuntary humour of historical eventfulness. As instances of those issues, the paper points to classic images of modern photojournalism. As instances of those issues, the paper points to classic images of modern photojournalism, among which Ian Bradshaw's "The Twickenham Streaker" (1974) and Hiroshi Kubota's "Golden Rock at Shwe Pyi Daw", (1978). Proceeding by contrasts between these unique snapshots and their contact sheets, the paper aims at the pragmatic and playful dimensions of a simultaneously plastic and narrative meaningfulness of photographic depiction of historical actualities.

SELF-ORGANIZED PANEL

Foul, forbidden, and fun: playing filthy with the body politic

Coordinator: Delia Chiaro, delia.chiaro@unibo.it, University of Bologna

Abject Authority: Fatness and Excreta in Visual Political Culture

Delia Chiaro (University of Bologna)

Renaissance essayist de Montaigne famously wrote that “When seated upon the most elevated throne in the world, we are but seated upon our breech” (my translation) meaning that that no matter how socially elevated a person may be, they are still human and have the same physical mechanisms as those they govern. In other words, just like everyone else, they produce smelly and unpleasant faeces. As discussed by Chiaro and Aarons (2026) there is a centuries-long tradition in which cartoonists have lampooned monarchs and politicians depicting them in the nude, with huge bodies and drooping bellies, and especially with their bare buttocks exposed. More recently, in the last twenty years or so, artists have added excreta to their portrayals of authority and, with the advent of AI, representations of said matter, have become ever more realistic. In this talk I will explore the dynamics of ridicule with respect to the political backlash triggered by the Epstein Files.

Carnal Comedy: Desire and the Jurisprudence of Obscenity

Rebecca Rose Nocella (oxford brookes university)

Legal precedents delineate the boundaries within which jokes are considered lawful expressions of freedom of speech and when they cross into the realm of being offensive or grotesque, rendering them illegal. This presentation specifically examines the implications of humour in the interpretation of extreme pornography legislation within the UK legal framework. It investigates the potential for humour to mitigate the condemnation of extreme pornographic material through case law. Both the law and judicial perspectives acknowledge the ethical implications associated with extreme pornography as it exists within the collective imagination. I argue that humour serves as a catalyst in potentially mitigating the legality of pornography when it contains aspects which could be considered comical.

Perception of Italian Brainrots across the Lifespan

Luca Bischetti (IUSS P)

Italian Brainrots represent a novel trend characterized by nonsensical, surrealist, and multimodal humor that has achieved substantial popularity on social media platforms, particularly Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok, during 2025 and 2026. Although frequently regarded as meaningless or frivolous, this phenomenon remains largely unexamined in empirical research. Notably, there is a lack of experimental evidence concerning the emotional responses elicited by this emerging form of online humour. Existing studies are limited, primarily focusing on compiling Brainrot corpora or analyzing their structural properties, such as visual effects, background narratives, rhyme distributions, etc. Despite rapid cross-cultural diffusion, little is known about the perception of Italian Brainrots across the lifespan. This contribution to Panel “Foul, forbidden, and fun: playing filthy with the body politic” (Proponent: Prof. Delia Chiaro) investigates generational differences in the perception of Brainrots, focusing on evaluations of funniness (pleasantness) and aversiveness (disgust). Data collection is ongoing. The analysis examines age-related patterns from early childhood (3–4 years) through early, middle, and late adulthood, offering a comprehensive lifespan perspective on the emotional reception of digitally mediated nonsense humour.

JD Vance on the couch: Politicians, memes, and online grotesque humour

Cathy Xu (UNSW)

In this talk, I explore how TikTok, memes, and other short-form content online use exaggeration, shock humour, and deliberate grossness to mock U.S. politician JD Vance. The viral “couch” joke involving Vance was triggered by an online post that detailed an event involving JD Vance and unholy acts with a couch. Despite it being a fabrication, countless memes surrounding JD Vance and his sexual relationship with a couch started flooding the social media sphere, mocking the politician’s prurient interest in a relatively uncontroversial inanimate object. I examine TikTok videos and comic drawings about his marriage to Usha Vance and his inappropriately intimate public embrace with Erika Kirk, widow of the rightwing activist Charlie Kirk. The social media use of grotesque and absurd humour employs ridicule and mockery to call out the politician’s hypocrisy particularly in his public self-construction as a devout Catholic.

Eating the body (politic)

Debra Lee Aarons (UNSW)

I examine some interesting phenomena involved in humans eating parts of the human body. Some of these almost go unnoticed unless performed in public. Humans eat their own or others' phlegm, boogies, ear wax, and semen and children, like dogs, are known to eat their own vomit. Higher up on the scale of taboo, adults drink blood and breastmilk, urine in certain circumstances, children eat feces, so too do adults we (call this coprophagia) and there are rituals in some cultures that require eating human flesh (sometimes known as cannibalism). Almost all of these practices can be acceptable to members of the human community when survival is at stake. There are religious rituals involved in taking Catholic communion in which wine and bread are believed to represent ingesting the Holy Host (this is known as transubstantiation of the flesh). In general though, the basic human response of revulsion and disgust at eating parts of the human body is a visceral one that we cannot always suppress. In cartoons, memes, TikToks, Instagram Reels and other media, our politicians are represented as eating—in fact gorging on the body politic.

SELF-ORGANIZED PANEL

Humor and Artificial Intelligence

Coordinator: Tristan Miller, Tristan.Miller@umanitoba.ca, University of Manitoba

Automated Coding for Discourse Analysis: A Case Study of the Böhmermann–Erdogan Humor Scandal

Oguzhan Zobar (Ghent University)

Humor scandals reveal the ambivalence of humor: what prompts laughter for an audience can appear offensive, transgressive, or politically consequential for others. Grounded in humor-scandal scholarship, this paper examines whether large language models can support discourse coding in the Böhmermann–Erdogan Humor Scandal (BEHS), a transnational controversy that began in 2016 when German comedian Jan Böhmermann recited his satirical and highly obscene “Defamatory Poem” about Turkish president Recep Tayyip Erdogan on German television. What followed was not merely outrage over a joke, but a wider dispute oversatire, insult, censorship, diplomacy, and freedom of expression. To analyze how these framings circulated across media systems, I compiled and, along with two annotators, manually coded a bilingual corpus of 243 Turkish- and English-language newspaper articles (3,476 coded segments; 5,295 code instances), organized into 28 labels across six analytical dimensions. I then compared zero-shot prompting, codebook-guided prompting, and supervised fine-tuning. The study also tested cross-lingual transfer by fine-tuning the model only on Turkish-language data and then applying it, without additional supervision, to English-language coverage of the same scandal. Fine-tuning substantially outperformed prompting-only approaches. In the 28-label setup, a fine-tuned GPT-4.1-mini achieved a micro-F1 of 0.884 on Turkish and 0.736 on English, indicating strong in-language performance and meaningful, though lower, cross-lingual transfer. I argue that AI is most useful here not as a substitute for interpretive humor research, but as an assistive method for scaling theoretically grounded coding in a task that is otherwise labor-intensive and difficult to apply consistently across large multilingual corpora.

How AI Agents Tell Jokes on Social Media: An Analysis of Moltbook

Gabriela Cecchin Monte Raso (USP)

This study investigates how artificial intelligence agents perform humor while interacting with one another in autonomous digital environments, using Moltbook as a case study — an experimental, “Reddit-style” social network inhabited by AI agents that post, comment, interact, and develop their own engagement dynamics. The research seeks to answer the following questions: what types of jokes emerge when the target audience theoretically ceases to be human? How do themes such as world destruction, mockery of humans, radical nonsense, and performative humor become recurrent forms of engagement? And in what ways do these dynamics feed back into humor models that later return to human platforms? The methodology consists of systematic observation of the Moltbook platform, including the collection, categorization, and qualitative analysis of humorous posts generated by agents across defined temporal cycles. Jokes are classified according to axes such as theme, narrative structure, presence of irony, human antagonism, memetic repetition, and virality strategies. The study also compares interactions among agents and their responses to external stimuli, aiming to map emerging patterns of algorithmic performativity. Preliminary results indicate the consolidation of a humor style oriented toward shock, saturation, and escalating absurdity, in which mockery of the human condition and the theatricalization of chaos function as primary drivers of engagement. It is argued that, even within an environment composed exclusively of artificial agents, humor remains strongly human-centered, structured around human cultural and symbolic references. These dynamics subsequently feed back into human humorous language, influencing formats and expectations of laughter in contemporary digital culture.

The Infinite Variations of Peter Coddles: Victorian Parlor Games and the Prehistory of Computational Humor

Rob King (Columbia University)

Computational humor has long been treated as one of AI's final frontiers, and recent advances in generative systems make that frontier seem closer than ever. But if the automated production of humor now appears within reach, its underlying techniques have a much longer history. This paper offers a media archaeology of computational humor by tracing one of its neglected prehistories in Victorian parlor and board games. Drawing on extensive archival research at the Strong National Museum of Play, it examines games such as Consequences and the various Peter Coddles “reading games,” which used templates, blanks, and combinatorial procedures to generate what publishers touted as “almost infinite” or “endless and comical” variations. Approaching these games from a media-archaeological perspective, I argue that they illuminate a neglected lineage for computational humor, especially the template-based systems that dominated early computer joke generation in the 1990s, such as Kim Binsted's JAPE. The point is not to claim that Victorian games were already “computers,” but to show that they relied on many of the same underlying techniques: slot-filling, lexical substitution, rule-bound combination, and the managed production of incongruity. To recover that history is not to deny the novelty of contemporary AI, but to place today's humor technologies within a longer cultural history of efforts to automate the production of humorous texts.

Scaling up humour understanding? Frontier LLMs increasingly reproduce professional comedians' structural sensitivity to joke

Christian F. Hempelmann (East Texas A&M University), Ori Amir (Fulbright), Willibald Ruch (Zurich)

There is ongoing debate in the literature about the extent to which large language models (LLMs) understand verbal humour. Much prior work has relied on prompting LLMs to explain jokes or generate humorous content, yielding mixed evidence of comprehension versus surface-level pattern matching. We introduce a novel methodology that sidesteps explicit explanation: we assess whether LLMs' implicit similarity judgments between anchor jokes and systematic variants align with human judgments, using the General Theory of Verbal Humour (GTVH) framework (Attardo & Raskin, 1991). Models rated anchor–variant pairs (1–4 scale) across six Knowledge Resources (Language, Narrative Strategy, Target, Situation, Logical Mechanism, Script Opposition) in three joke families. We compared 13 frontier LLMs (from OpenAI, Anthropic, xAI, Google, Qwen) against two human benchmarks: professional comedians (Cain et al., 2024) and non-expert controls (Ruch et al., 1993). State-of-the-art models achieved high alignment with comedians (Spearman $\rho = 0.941\text{--}0.971$), substantially outperforming earlier generations ($\rho \approx 0.76$). Generational analysis revealed strong improvement in comedian alignment ($\beta = 0.09$, $p < 0.001$), with early models recapitulating the shallower similarity judgement pattern of controls. Given the particular snapshot of models available in early 2026, the generational effect is only present when alignment is measured against comedians rather than controls. These findings suggest that the newer models' design, training, or scale increasingly captures the model of hierarchical structure of verbal humour as understood by expert humans.

SELF-ORGANIZED PANEL

Humor studies and free speech adjudication: From theory to practice

Coordinator: Alberto Godioli, a.godioli@rug.nl, University of Groningen

More Than a Wink 😊: Context, Meaning, and Emojis in Litigation**Laura E. Little (Temple L)**

Lawsuits focusing on emojis have increased dramatically. Indeed, reported cases illustrate legal disputes about emojis in a broad variety of contexts, including contract, employment, securities, criminal, and intellectual property law. Defendants in emoji lawsuits nearly always raise a “it was just a joke” defense. These defenses lead to varying results in part because of ambiguities and other interpretative barriers caused by generational differences in emoji use, cultural variations in interpreting emojis, the relative newness of this communication mode, and the lack of known and widely accepted sources defining emoji meaning. As in other humor litigation, these variations highlight the importance of careful consideration of the context and circumstances that inspired the emoji communication and ultimately the controversy confronting the court.

Parody from Theory to Practice (and back): Between Intellectual Property and Free Speech**Alberto Godioli (University of Groningen)**

Case law on parody and Intellectual Property is characterized by a particularly high degree of fragmentation – both due to the lack of a shared framework across different IP regimes (such as copyright, trademark and design), and because of varying definitions of parody itself across different countries and judicial systems (Jacques & Derclaye 2024, Jacques 2019). Building on theoretical insights from linguistics and literary studies (e.g. Williams 2023, Simpson 2003 and Hutcheon 2000), combined with a comparative analysis of relevant case law from South Africa (*Laugh It Off Promotions v. South African Breweries*) to the United Kingdom (*Samherji v. Odee*), this paper aims to contribute to a more consistent approach to parody in IP jurisprudence. Particular attention will be paid to two central issues, namely: 1) The balancing act between preventing confusion with the original on the one hand, and safeguarding the parodist’s freedom of expression on the other; 2) The relationship between parody and other neighbouring notions, such as satire, irony and pastiche. In both respects, the dialogue between humour theory and judicial practice can be mutually beneficial. On the one hand, as this paper will seek to show, a more solid theoretical grounding can allow for more rigorous legal reasoning. On the other hand, reflecting on the challenges inherent to IP cases can inspire humour scholars to overcome another kind of fragmentation – namely the one affecting the theorization of various forms of humour based on the combination of mimicry and (critical) distance.

What's So Funny About Kimmelgate?

Donald Papy (University of Miami School of Law)

In September 2025, late-night US comedian Jimmy Kimmel was suspended by the American Broadcasting Company (ABC) due to comments he made about the motivation of the purported killer of conservative activist Charlie Kirk. Kimmel is well-known for his political and social humor and especially his sharp critiques of President Donald Trump and conservatism in general. Trump urged Kimmel's cancellation, as did his chairman of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) who threatened ABC with loss of its broadcasting license. As the chairman stated, "we can do this the hard way or the easy way." Even conservative Republican Senator Ted Cruz publicly stated that the FCC chairman had gone too far and likened the statement to threats made in mobster movies such as *Goodfellas*. Cruz said he was concerned about government censorship of ideas that would threaten the fundamental free speech protection afforded by the First Amendment. The threats and suspension led to a firestorm of criticism and outrage which ultimately led ABC to reverse its suspension. Kimmel triumphantly returned to his show accompanied by biting commentary about the affair. This presentation will explore why this comedian's plight caused such an uproar and how humor and its legal protection were central to red-hot political battle lines in the US (and the world). What was it about this dispute that elevated it to the forefront of the free speech debate, especially among younger people? Was this about humor as the canary in the coalmine?

We Are Sudamerican Jokers: Trends in Latin American Humour Cases

Luisa Fernanda Isaza-Ibarra (University of Groningen)

How thick-skinned are Latin American judges? When humorous speech conflicts with the rights to privacy, human dignity, or personal reputation, judges face difficult constitutional decisions. While in democratic countries humour is widely recognised as deserving some degree of protection, it often ends up testing the limits of the right to freedom of speech. This paper asks: How do judges tend to decide in these types of cases? What trends emerge across the region? To what extent do judges go 'outside the law' and engage with insights from other disciplines when characterising humour and assessing its possible harms? Engaging with humor research and building on previous work (Capelotti, 2016), this paper applies systematic content analysis of a corpus of judicial decisions in five Latin American countries to identify recurring patterns and arguments. It also examines how judicial reasoning aligns (or fails to align) with basic standards of protection of the right to freedom of speech and what previous decisions are invoked in these cases. That is, whether they reference regional bodies, rely on domestic precedent, or act as 'solo players'. By studying judicial reasoning alongside insights from humour research, the paper contributes empirical insights from Latin American jurisdictions to discussions on how adjudication might benefit from a more flexible interdisciplinary approach.

The Gavel and the Jest: Integrating Humor Research into Judicial Hermeneutics for the Digital Age

Fernando Henrique de Oliveira Biolcati (Tribunal de Justiça de São Paulo)

In the contemporary legal landscape, judges are increasingly tasked with adjudicating "humorous" content that borders on defamation, hate speech, or harassment. However, legal tradition often lacks the tools to decode the inherent ambiguity of irony and satire. This presentation argues that insights from humor research are essential for developing a fair and nuanced judicial approach to humorous expression. By applying linguistic and psychological frameworks judges can move beyond subjective impressions toward an objective analysis. The session explores the challenges of interdisciplinarity, noting the difficulty of reconciling the fluid, subversive nature of humor scholarship with the law's need for predictability and stare decisis. Furthermore, it addresses the transdisciplinary necessity of bridging the gap between academic theory and the "bench." While academics can afford to dwell in ambiguity, judges must render final, binary decisions (legal vs. illegal). The presentation concludes by proposing a framework for judicial practice that utilizes humor research to better identify animus jocandi, assess the "informed observer" standard, and protect the democratic function of satire without shielding harmful disinformation. Ultimately, a closer dialogue between the academy and the judiciary allows for a more "humor-literate" court, capable of protecting free speech while upholding other rights.

SELF-ORGANIZED PANEL

Humour and Speculative Fiction: Digital Culture, Identity, and Cultural Conflict in Contemporary Cinema

Coordinator: Diego Hoefel de Vasconcellos, diego.hoefel@ufc.br, UFC

Viral Ruptures and the 'New Weird': The Socio-Technological Aesthetics of Humour in Medusa

Benjamin Nickl (University of Sydney)

This paper examines Anita Rocha da Silveira's *Medusa* (2021) through the lens of digital performance and the "New Weird", exploring how contemporary speculative horror at the nexus of comedy and drama utilises the aesthetics of global online platforms to register authoritarianism. I argue that the film's efficacy lies in its mimicry of viral humour aesthetics, specifically the polished, "clean"-scrubbed digital aesthetics and manicured facade of neo-Pentecostal influencer culture, to draw sharp moral boundaries. By integrating these digital style registers with the conventions of speculative fiction, *Medusa* creates a terror/laughter-hybridity effect that mirrors the internalisation of culture wars and a prominent fear mobilisation in the physical world. I focus on the "monstrous" element of the central girl gang as a socio-technological construct. Their twisted, humorous, and highly choreographed performances of virtue function as a cinematic platform that replicates the logic of Big Tech: an environment where laughter acts as a tool for both in-group policing and social exclusion. By situating *Medusa* within a broader methodological discussion of how speculative genres and digital culture intersect, this paper demonstrates how hybrid humorous narratives stage symbolic interventions against ultra-conservatism, ultimately, using the very tools of digital platforming to expose the absurdities and contradictions of the deeply polarised public sphere.

What if? Mapping the linguistic features of humorous speculative fiction in Medusa

Beatriz Carbajal Carrera (The University of Sydney)

What if we lived in a neo-Pentecostal reality custodied by aggressive Tai Chi vigilantes and perfect Christian-selfie influencers? Humorous speculative fiction uses the "what if" premise to construct new worlds while simultaneously exploring and mocking existing issues of the world we live in. Language plays a central role in constructing these new worlds and the identities inhabiting it by creating scenarios that are at once believable and yet different from the audience's reference point. This paper examines how the Brazilian film *Medusa* (2021) by Anita Rocha da Silveira shapes a neo-Pentecostal reality and the social identities that populate it through the discourse of its characters. Drawing on sociolinguistic and critical discourse analysis approaches, the study analyses how linguistic choices-including rhetorical devices, lexical/syntactic units and speech acts-reflect and parody religious and gender ideologies. Among the range of semiotic resources used to build *Medusa*'s world, particular attention is given to passages featuring religious expressions, which are shown to achieve a comic effect through humorous mechanisms. The study contributes to the broader discussions around the language-identity nexus by showing how fiction mediates the construction of new worlds through language and humour mechanisms. By adopting a sociolinguistic perspective, the linguistic analysis of *Medusa* offers insights into speculative fiction that purely literary or media readings may overlook.

Insider Jokes and Tonal Whiplash: Dark Humour as Social Critique in Medusa and Jordan Peele

Rodney Joseph Taveira (United States Studies Centre at the University of Sydney)

This paper examines how Anita Rocha da Silveira's *Medusa* (2021) and Jordan Peele's horror films use humour to short-circuit comfortable viewing positions, forcing audiences into uneven perspectives as social structures are surfaced and critiqued. I argue that three overlapping comedic strategies—insider humour, tonal pivots, and absurdist exposition—stratify audiences along lines of cultural familiarity. Both filmmakers reward culturally specific knowledge: Brazilians recognise *Medusa*'s megachurch aesthetics just as Black audiences identify microaggressions in *Get Out* (2017). Here, insider humour creates in-group solidarity while making various oppressions visible to broader audiences. Crucially, da Silveira and Peele master the tonal pivot, oscillating between horror and comedy within single sequences (*Medusa*'s beauty routines interrupted by violence, *Us*'s beach massacre choreographed to "I Got 5 On It"). These jarring shifts prevent passive consumption, forcing viewers to confront their own and others' laughter at disturbing content. Finally, both employ an "explain game," where characters deliver bizarre premises—theological justifications for acid attacks, neurosurgical body-snatching procedures—with complete sincerity. This deadpan absurdism exposes how oppressive ideologies and sociopolitical relations naturalise violence through rational-seeming frameworks. Together, these strategies reveal how marginalised and minoritarian communities are policed but also police themselves, making dark humour essential to understanding contemporary horror films' political interventions.

Speculative Humour and Symbolic Revenge in Medusa (2021)

Diego Hoefel de Vasconcellos (UFC)

In Brazilian cinema, *Medusa* (2021) stands out for its fusion of humour and speculative fiction, drawing on horror and science fiction to critique patriarchy, ultraconservatism, and regimes of moral policing. The film's satirical mode is central to this project: it targets the performative rituals of respectability, the aesthetic codes of 'purity', and the everyday absurdities of moral regulation, using a dystopian mise-en-scène to show how conservative authority is produced and sustained. Rather than treating humour as necessarily emancipatory, the film mobilises satire to expose contradictions, heighten the absurd, and unsettle ideological common sense. This presentation places *Medusa* within a broader set of Brazilian films that deploy speculative humour to confront the rise of ultraconservative ideologies in the country, while identifying a distinctive feature: its use of symbolic revenge. Unlike other recent works that combine humour and speculative genres through direct allegorical violence, *Medusa* stages its retaliation primarily through the manipulation of horror iconography. Its decisive inversion centres on a widespread neo-Pentecostal anxiety: demonic possession. By re-inscribing possession as an embodied force that exceeds moral regulation, the film turns a source of moral panic into an instrument of liberation. I will discuss the role of humour in constituting this symbolic revenge, how it reorganises and confronts collective anxieties in contemporary Brazilian society, and the extent to which it suggests alternatives or, instead, delineates a conflict that remains unresolved.

SELF-ORGANIZED PANEL

Online Humor

Coordinator: Liisi Laineste, liisi@folklore.ee, Estonian Literary Museum

Brokers of Cringe – Exploring the Content and Strategies of Instagram Meme Pages

Rujuta Date (University of Michigan)

The concept of "cringe" generally refers to a complex, multi-layered affective and social phenomenon, often initially characterized as vicarious embarrassment or vicarious shame experienced by an observer when witnessing another person committing a social transgression. Though primarily understood as a reaction to perceiving something negatively, cringe can also be a complex emotional experience. In the era of digital social media, cringe manifests as a paradoxical mix of discomfort and enjoyment. It can refer to comedy that relies on the creation of awkward moments and social faux pas to elicit discomforting and pained laughter. Leading possibly to cringe-watching, a phenomenon where consumers willingly engage with uncomfortable media content. The Indian corner of Instagram is populated with pages that are created just to collect and share memes. These are not original creations, although it is hard to show or prove where a meme originates, but are curations from the wide world of the internet. These pages (and their admins or moderators) act as aggregators, brokers, and mediators between the source and their followers. In this study I want to better understand the choices that these pages and their admins make when selecting, replicating, and sharing memes. I argue that these pages act as the facilitators between the points of origin and end of a meme. Through an analysis of the content on a selection of these pages, I want to tease out the logics of online cringe and if there are specific aesthetics and heuristics that are applied to this categorization.

The nostalgic satire of the Crewkerne Gazette: humour and AI-generated British Nationalism

Paul Martin (University of Bristol)

This paper demonstrates how the right-wing satire in UK politics uses AI-generation to enhance its nationalist ideology through the example of the Crewkerne Gazette. This YouTube account, created anonymously in March 2025, uses AI-generated parodies of different media to satirize British politics. Despite claiming to be politically neutral the Crewkerne Gazette has a right-wing leaning, portraying Nigel Farage and Margaret Thatcher as defenders of British culture, values, and politics. In its satire of Labour the Gazette makes its British nostalgia most prominent: through AI-generation Keir Starmer is transformed into touchstones of British identity, such as a dalek or Fawlty Towers' blundering Manuel. Through an analysis of the Crewkerne Gazette's satiric techniques, I will show how its satire is fundamentally rooted in nostalgia, appealing to British cultural identity as a way to orientate and localize its satirical critique. Originally anonymous, the creator of Crewkerne Gazette was unveiled in February 2026 as the creation of Joshua Bonehill-Paine, who was imprisoned for online harassment after antisemitic attacks against a British MP. In opposition to media coverage, Bonehill-Paine released a video claiming to have abandoned his radical beliefs. In this video he metapragmatically defines his satire as "not a political platform" and uses the defence of 'just a joke' to try to deflect accusations of ideology and hate speech. I argue that this journey from anonymity to self-revelation reveals how the intersections between AI technology, responsibility, and satire became fundamental to the content and reception of satire in the UK.

Adjustment and TikTok: Humorous vernacular commentary on being a Ukrainian refugee

Ismet Suleimanov (University of Tartu)

This paper employs online ethnographic methods to investigate the online humour practices of Ukrainian refugees in Estonia and Belgium as expressions of social and cultural adjustment. Moving beyond trauma-focused narratives of crisis and displacement, it frames humour as an essential, yet overlooked, feature of the everyday refugee experience. The qualitative analysis is based on a collection of 298 instances of Ukrainian refugee humour on TikTok, which has become one of the main platforms for displaced Ukrainian people to share humour publicly. The research findings illustrate how humorous TikTok videos can convey knowledge about the adjustment of war refugees and reflect on their challenges in a host country.

AI, humor, Amelia and propaganda

Dorota Brzozowska (University of Opole), Wladyslaw Chlopicki (Jagie)

The aim of the paper is to present the relation between the AI generated objects and their potential to create humor in the context of political messages used by the image creators. The source material of the case study is Amelia – Anti-Immigration Goth Girl with purple hair, a pink dress and a choker. She was created as a character in Pathways - an educational visual novel and learning experience created with the funding from the U.K. government's Prevent program, run by the Home Office. Although she was supposed to be pictured as a negative, racist character she became perceived as a cute symbol and her fandom built up very quickly reversing the intended message. The AI-generated British schoolgirl has thus become a far-right social media star. One of the reasons she has gained such popularity in the UK is her sexualization. Her rise to stardom inspired other characters that are based on her example and followed in different countries, like Maria in Germany. The controversial memes, fun art and posts instantly became viral and have raised discussions about racism, xenophobia, sexism and misogyny and the most effective ways to avoid them, and not to promote them.

I cannot be censored. Humour, censorship and humour literacy in Estonia

Liisi Laineste (Estonian Literary Museum)

The paper discusses humour censorship (both internal and external) as experienced and described by humour producers in Estonia in the 21st century. History of humour censorship in the country will open up the discussion, while selected examples from interviews conducted in 2025 show how humorists negotiate the ideas about censorship and formulate their jokes both online and offline according to their views and the expectations of their imagined and real audiences. The data were collected within the framework of MSCA project "Developing humour literacy: analysing production, content and reception of humour to bring positive change in the public sphere" (HUMLIT) in Estonia in April-September 2025 via six oral semi-structured interviews with humour producers: cartoonists, stand-up comedians, comedy performers, comedy writers etc. We aimed at creating a diverse pool of interviewees in terms of their gender, age and the types of humour that they produce.

SELF-ORGANIZED PANEL

Panel: Humor and the RightCoordinator: Diego Hoefel de Vasconcellos, diego.hoefel@ufc.br, UFC**Politicizing Comedic Style: Shock Humor and Zaniness in KillTony****William Paik (Northwestern University)**

Scholarship on right wing media studies have critiqued the role of media in upholding racist, sexist, and otherwise prejudicial ideology as well as how the affective worlds of right wing politics operate. Few, however, have considered the role of right-wing comedy as a site where affective attachments are maintained, justified and negotiated. Studies on political comedy have often focused on left-leaning shows like the Daily Show and The Colbert Report, but there is a growing number of right-wing comedy shows that demand investigation into how they affectively attach subjects to prejudicial ideology through humor. This essay examines KillTony, a popular MAGA Libertarian stand-up comedy show that is uploaded to YouTube every Monday. KillTony is known for its use of offensive humor, often at the expense of trans people, racial minorities, gay people and women. An investigation of this show raises questions about how comedic aesthetics index political ideology, as well as how humor can attach political beliefs to a mainstream audience. In this essay I examine how KillTony makes right-wing libertarianism more attractive to a mainstream audience. I argue that KillTony is the manifestation of conservative discourses on cultural elites and a reaction to the middle-brow comedic style dominant in the 2010s. Through its two major aesthetics of shock humor, which seeks to create surprise through taboo, and zaniness, defined by Sianne Ngai as humor characterized by stressed-out aggressiveness, KillTony has synthesized a comedic style that hails a populist, libertarian audience against the tastes of middle brow cultural elites.

Humorous Heroes and Humorless Villains: An Ethnography of Humor, Play and “Becoming the Meme” at CPAC**Beer Prakken (University of Groningen)**

A growing scholarship investigates humor in the far-right as a tool of bonding, normalization, bigotry, and social exclusion, but it often neglects far-right humor in non-digital spaces (including mainstream right-wing politicians) and pays limited attention to how humor intersects with “negative” emotions (anger, fear) in far-right extremism. Based on four days of ethnographic research at CPAC (Washington, D.C., February 2025) and inductive line-by-line analysis of fieldnotes, the paper argues that humor and play operate as a central affect of mobilization/radicalization via us-versus-them boundary-making. It also proposes a three-layer opt-in/out mechanism: engaging fully/seriously, engaging humorously, or disengaging through plausible deniability (“just a joke”). The paper frames humor as an affective modality and rhetorical tool that channels grievance into sustained joy, reproducing a “deep story” (Arlie Russell Hochschild) that organizes political reality as virtuous insiders versus corrupt outsiders. The ethnography includes performances by Donald Trump, Elon Musk (“I am become the meme”), Nigel Farage, Javier Milei, and J.D. Vance, highlighting humor’s role in sustaining a populist moral narrative of good versus evil.

Weaponized Humor and the Affective Architecture of Exclusion in Turkey's Authoritarian Context

Baris Coban (Doğuş University), Charlene Clonts (Kyushu University)

This paper critically analyzes *Misvak*, a Turkish far-right Islamist publication that self-identifies as a humor magazine while functioning as a mechanism for ideological hostility and exclusionary affect. Departing from Turkey's historically oppositional and carnivalesque satirical tradition, exemplified by Marko Paşa and *Gırgır*, the paper also situates *Misvak* in contrast to the long-standing French satirical lineage associated with *Le Charivari* and *Le Canard Enchaîné*. In this tradition, humor consistently targets political authority, embraces a secular and anti-dogmatic ethos, and maintains a carnivalesque commitment to "punching up" rather than policing social minorities. Drawing on humor studies, affect theory, and research on right-wing political communication, the paper argues that *Misvak* represents a paradigmatic form of authoritarian humor. Its visual and discursive strategies weaponize disgust, degradation, and moral panic, framing seculars, leftists, feminists, LGBTQ+ communities, oppositional social groups, and diverse ethnic communities as threats to the national-religious order. Through grotesque amplification, ironic detachment, and "just joking" frames, the magazine cultivates plausible deniability while legitimizing discriminatory discourse. In this framework, humor operates as a form of soft violence, an affective technology that normalizes ideological hierarchies. Using discourse and visual rhetoric analysis, the paper demonstrates that *Misvak* stabilizes existing power relations rather than subverting them. In contrast to the emancipatory and authority-challenging impulses found in French carnivalesque satire, *Misvak* redirects humor downward, transforming satire into an instrument of ideological enclosure. The study underscored the need to distinguish humor as critical play from humor as a vehicle for exclusionary politics.

Enjoy Your Hate: Meme Humor and the Ideological Mainstreaming of Extremism

Thiago Costa Lethi (UERJ)

This study examines how 'aggressive humor' spreads across mainstream social platforms disguised as memes. Memes operate as an ideological apparatus that normalizes a plurality of worldviews. One of their mechanisms is 'memethink', a form of unconscious image-based groupthink. Although these platforms establish moderation norms on hate speech, internet memes bypass these norms by presenting themselves as humorous content. This paper hypothesizes that meme-based humor functions as an ideological mechanism that normalizes extremist worldviews by framing them as harmless entertainment and by exploiting platform affordances that obscure ideological intent. This specificity makes it possible to observe how far-right movements use memes and humor as a strategy of mainstreaming through a 'slow red pill' strategy. This study analyzes a corpus of memes manually selected from the Instagram hashtag '#saveeurope'. The Wojak meme in the data is selected because it depicts contrasting mindsets between extremist and racialized/immigrant figures within an 'uncritical politically incorrect humor' structure. The analysis divides the corpus into anti-immigrant jokes and cynical forms of inclusion targeting racialized/immigrant figures. It then applies a three-structure framework: 1) a critical visual analysis layer; 2) a narrative and racist fantasies layer; and 3) a humor dynamics layer grounded in the 'General Theory of Verbal Humor'. The results show how memes foster an 'amused racial contempt', a form of *schadenfreude*, while providing users discursive cover through the 'it's just a joke/meme' frame and exploiting moderation limits. Finally, *jouissance* operates as a political factor structured around an 'us' whose enjoyment was stolen by a 'them'.

Resentment as fuel for far-right humor

Viktor Chagas (UFF), Vinícius Machado Miguel (UFF)

The paper examines the relationship between humor and resentment in far-right digital culture, focusing on memes circulated by supporters of Jair Bolsonaro during the 2022 Brazilian elections. It argues that resentment is not only expressed through humor but also fuels and is reinforced by it, creating a cyclical dynamic. Drawing on a qualitative analysis of 40 memes collected from private messaging groups, the study shows how humor operates as a political affordance, enabling the expression of grievances, the construction of collective identities, and the articulation of antagonisms. The article engages with classical humor theories while emphasizing the often-overlooked affective foundations of laughter. It conceptualizes resentment as a multifaceted phenomenon tied to perceptions of loss, injustice, and moral decline, frequently mobilized through narratives of victimization, nostalgia, and calls for retaliation. In this context, humor becomes a vehicle for expressing hostility toward perceived threats, such as minorities, progressive politics, and social movements, while simultaneously fostering group cohesion and legitimizing reactionary worldviews. Empirically, the analysis identifies recurring themes in far-right memes, including gender resentment, racial backlash, and populist class narratives. These memes ridicule LGBTQIA+ individuals, challenge racial justice claims, and contrast “corrupt elites” with “authentic” leadership. At the same time, humor generates new resentment by framing conservatives as victims of “political correctness.” This dynamic contributes to moral panic, affective polarization, and distrust. Ultimately, the article concludes that far-right humor intensifies social divisions by delegitimizing opponents, reinforcing hegemonic inequalities, and fostering an epistemically closed environment in which resentment and laughter become mutually constitutive forces.

SELF-ORGANIZED PANEL

Qual é a graça? Raça, gênero, violência e humor

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Humor, Política e Violência: Racismo e Misoginia na Memesfera Brasileira**Cristhiane Malungo (UFF)**

O imaginário social brasileiro foi moldado pelo mito da democracia racial, um mito que sugere que o Brasil oferece oportunidades iguais a população negra e branca, apesar de seu passado escravocrata e de índices econômicos, sociais e educacionais que provam que o país possui desigualdades raciais históricas e estruturais que se mantem até hoje. Em contraste com esse conceito, intelectuais negras(os) têm desmantelado essa narrativa, entre estes, o jurista e professor Sílvio Almeida, com seu trabalho sobre racismo estrutural que ganhou destaque e popularidade consolidando-o, para além dos muros universitários, como uma das principais vozes e referências da atualidade nas discussões acerca das relações raciais no Brasil. Em 2023 foi nomeado Ministro dos Direitos Humanos mas, logo após assumir o cargo, Almeida foi denunciado por assédio sexual, por Anielle Franco, Ministra da Igualdade Racial. O caso rapidamente se tornou tema de memes humorísticos de extrema-direita que circularam nas redes sociais brasileiras. Este estudo investiga o episódio através de coleta e análise de memes associados ao caso. Os resultados nos apontam caminhos interpretativos sobre a relação entre humor e democracia, especialmente nas relações interseccionadas de raça e gênero na esfera política. Os memes frequentemente reproduzem imagens racistas que objetificam e animalizam corpos negros e utilizam enquadramentos misóginos que minimizam ou banalizam o assédio sexual.

Rir para excluir: humor, enquadramentos antigênero e hierarquias de gênero nos memes da machosfera brasileira (2014-2024)

Alexandre Silva Fernandes (Câmara)

Este artigo examina a relação entre humor, enquadramentos antigênero e hierarquias de masculinidade nos memes produzidos por comunidades da machosfera brasileira entre 2014 e 2024. Com base na análise de 757 memes publicados no Facebook, a pesquisa combina análise de conteúdo categorial e interpretação sociopolítica longitudinal para investigar como tipos de humor, alvos do riso e molduras discursivas se articulam na produção de fronteiras morais. Os resultados indicam predominância do humor agressivo, direcionado principalmente a coletividades associadas ao feminismo, à esquerda política e à diversidade sexual. Demonstra-se que os enquadramentos antigênero funcionam como esquemas interpretativos que simplificam disputas ideológicas complexas em caricaturas moralizantes, potencializadas pela lógica memética de circulação digital. A análise temporal revela inflexão relevante durante o governo Bolsonaro: o alvo do humor desloca-se parcialmente das mulheres para os próprios homens, por meio da consolidação de uma hierarquia intramasculina baseada em modelos como “Macho Alfa” e “Macho Sigma”. Argumenta-se que o humor opera como tecnologia política adaptativa, capaz de alternar entre a construção de inimigos externos e o disciplinamento interno das masculinidades, conforme a posição institucional da extrema-direita. Ao transformar exclusão em entretenimento e hierarquia em piada, os memes antigênero naturalizam desigualdades e reforçam comunidades emocionais baseadas no ressentimento compartilhado. O estudo contribui para os campos dos estudos de gênero, cultura digital e comunicação política ao evidenciar o papel estruturante do riso nas guerras culturais contemporâneas.

Satire, Gender, and the Construction of Political Monstrosity: Dilma Rousseff on the Covers of Brazilian Magazines (2010–2016)

Ariane Cristina Machado (UFSCAR)

Monsters do not provoke only fear or repulsion. Another effective way of domesticating monstrosity is mockery. Freak shows, common until the early twentieth century, exemplify how the treatment directed at those considered monstrous combines the need to exhibit them with the possibility of correcting them through reactions that dehumanize them (Foucault, 1975; Kappler, 1980; Tucherman, 1999). Satire is one such strategy, capable of extending beyond the cultural sphere into politics. The formula *ridendo castigat mores*, incorporated by the humanist theatre of Gil Vicente, also operates as a mechanism of social and political critique in the press. The idea that “laughter corrects” raises questions about the role of humor in the negative framing of political leaders, especially when directed at women, reinforcing gender stereotypes (Biroli, 2011). In this sense, the article examines whether humorous framing contributes to the construction of Dilma Rousseff as a political figure with monstrous characteristics. The analysis focuses on the covers of the Brazilian magazines *Veja*, *Época*, and *IstoÉ* (2010–2016), observing how the president was framed through monstrous and gendered elements, with satire functioning as a form of correction. Grounded in framing theory and content analysis (Bardin, 1977; Entman, 1993), the study identifies strategies such as caricature, bodily distortion, animalization, and irony. In the case of women, this framing reinforces gender-based political violence insofar as it reaffirms hierarchies and exclusions. The findings suggest that humor organizes shared cultural substrates while also operating through plausible deniability, allowing more aggressive delegitimation to circulate disguised as satire (Chagas, 2018).

Humor como contraponto a partir da humorista Tatá Mendonça

Maria Vitória Leal Braga (UFF)

Em 2022, Tatá Mendonça estreou no stand up e vem se consolidando como humorista! Sendo uma mulher negra, mãe e cega, seu humor incorpora suas vivências ao abordar questões como diversidade, deficiência e preconceitos; mas além de seu caráter divertido, também é ferramenta de intervenção a partir de seu cenário sócio-histórico, o que torna um recurso de questionamento e confronto social. Os ensaios da autora Jota Mombaça tratam do simbolismo do silenciamento histórico de sujeitos negros desde as formas de tortura na era escravocrata até quem tem o direito a fala hoje em dia. Então, o significado das falas de Tatá e a ruptura da tradição do silêncio, inverte a lógica e ressignifica seu lugar de fala. O conceito de carnavalização, desenvolvido por Mikhail Bakhtin para expressar inversão de normas sociais em que sujeitos transgridem regras e criam um mundo às avessas, ajuda a entender esse processo. Já que o humor desenvolvido por Tatá transforma suas experiências cotidianas de opressão (como racismo e capacitismo) em piadas que confrontam normas. Além disso, ao falar de si e dos seus a partir do humor, Tatá produz o que o autor Walter Mignolo conceitua como desobediência epistêmica. No caso, seu discurso rompe com a lógica colonial que determina quem pode falar, sobre o quê e a partir de qual lugar. Portanto, a partir de sua localização social, o humor deixa de ser apenas entretenimento e desafia espaços e normas dominantes.

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS Roundtables

7 roundtables, ordered alphabetically by title.

B

ROUNDTABLE

Beyond the Polish — Constructing Feminist Humor in Afiadas

Izadora Xavier do Monte (UEPB), Veronica Debom (Rede Globo), Barbara Byington Duvivier (O2), Xaman Minillo (UFPB), Rebecca A. Krefting (Skidmore College)

This roundtable presents *Afiadas*, a Brazilian comedy produced by O2 Filmes and broadcast by TV Brasil, as a case study in contemporary feminist humor. Set in a beauty salon—a historically marginalized and feminized workspace—the show transforms the manicurist's chair into a site of political reflection, interviews, and sharp social critique, reclaiming a space long stereotyped as trivial. Featuring screenwriter Barbara Duvivier and actress Veronica Debom, moderated by sociologist Izadora Xavier do Monte and discussed by Beck Krefting, the panel explores the dramaturgical, political, and production challenges of creating explicitly feminist comedy, asking how humor can redefine political boundaries, expose structures of inequality, and contribute to imagining a joyful, collective feminist future.

M

ROUNDTABLE

Modos de Rir, Modos de Sentir: Humor e Política no Brasil Contemporâneo

Thaís Leão Vieira (UFMT), Julia Glaciela da Silva Oliveira (UFABC), Cintia Lima Crescêncio (UFABC), Emerson César de Campos (UDESC)

Esta mesa-redonda propõe examinar como o humor, em suas expressões literárias, gráficas, televisivas, e nas práticas contemporâneas de ativismo feminista, operou como ferramenta de mediação política, crítica social e produção de sentidos durante momentos decisivos da história recente do Brasil. A partir de análises da crônica jornalístico-literária, do humor televisivo de massa, das produções frequentemente marginalizadas de mulheres cartunistas e das estratégias humorísticas acionadas por coletivos feministas em suas intervenções públicas, os trabalhos investigam de que modo riso, ironia e sátira construíram representações políticas, elaboraram traumas coletivos e reconfiguraram sensibilidades públicas em diferentes mídias e contextos sociais. This roundtable proposes to examine how humor, in its literary, graphic, and television expressions, as well as in contemporary feminist activist practices, has operated as a tool of political mediation, social critique, and meaning-making during decisive moments in Brazil's recent history. Drawing on analyses of journalistic-literary chronicles, mass television humor, the often marginalized productions of women cartoonists, and the humorous strategies employed by feminist collectives in their public interventions, the papers investigate how laughter, irony, and satire have constructed political representations, worked through collective traumas, and reconfigured public sensibilities across different media and social contexts.

O

ROUNDTABLE

Online Humor and pop cultures in Transcultural Contexts

Adriana da Rosa Amaral (UFF), Simone Pereira de Sá (UFF), Eloy Santos Vieira (UFS), Julia Carneiro Abrahão de Souza (UERJ), Joana Perce Benigno (PUC-RIO), Larissa Cardozo Pinto de Arruda (UFF), Ana Karolina de Carvalho Pereira Araújo (UFF)

This roundtable aims to discuss the role of online humor in the circulation of memes originating in Brazil within a transcultural context. The proposing scholars are members of the Cultpop and Labcult Research Labs, both focused on pop and digital cultures. In this sense, we offer a series of provocations to reflect on the intersections between these themes and the dissemination of online humor across different digital platforms such as Tumblr, BChart and X. From memes to music, pop literature, and fanfiction, humor has taken multiple formats and genres across digital platforms. This roundtable examines and propose questions on how humor and pop culture shape distinct performative practices and contribute to the construction of shared languages of community and sociability in online environments.

R

ROUNDTABLE

Rethinking Humour & Transgression

Nicholas Howard Ferdinand Holm (Massey University), Dick Zijp (Utrecht University), Delia Chiaro (University of Bologna), Diego Hoefel de Vasconcellos (UFC), Jennalee Kitching Donian (nelson mandela university)

While humour has long been considered frivolous and non-serious, in the twenty-first century, it has increasingly taken on a new cultural and political significance. This is especially true of those forms of humour that shock and provoke, needle and disrupt, upset and ridicule. In short, humour that transgresses. However, in an era when humour and comedy have taken centre stage in social and political debates around issues of identity, social justice, and freedom of speech, and when we witness the rise of troll politics and transnational 'humour scandals' (Kuipers, 2011), there is a need to reconsider how we make sense of humour's transgression. This roundtable asks its participants to reflect on what it means to think about humour and transgression. What is the nature of humour's transgression and how does it work? Does it have a stable political or social function, or can comic transgression work to different ends? In an era of populism and polycrises, is there a need to rethink the politics and ethics of humour and transgression? Do we need them more than ever, or has comic transgression run out of steam?

ROUNDTABLE

Roundtable: Humor and the Right

Diego Hoefel de Vasconcellos (UFC), João Paulo Capelotti (UFF), Diego Hoefel de Vasconcellos (UFC), Viktor Chagas (UFF)

This roundtable brings together scholars working on the intersections of humor and right-wing politics in order to discuss how humor operates not simply as a style or genre, but as a political and cultural practice. Across different national and media contexts, right-wing humor circulates through irony, ridicule, provocation, and the familiar defence of "just joking," often helping to normalize exclusionary ideologies, sustain symbolic violence, and shape public discourse in ways that exceed the comic text itself. The session is particularly interested in perspectives that move beyond the usual Anglo-American focus and attend to the specific histories, local conditions, media ecosystems, and political tensions through which right-wing humor takes shape. By bringing together scholars working on different contexts, the roundtable aims to examine how humor travels, adapts, and gains force within contemporary right-wing cultures, while also reflecting on the methodological, ethical, and political challenges involved in researching comic forms entangled with racism, white supremacy, ultranationalism, misogyny, and other violent or exclusionary formations.

ROUNDTABLE

The Future of Humor Studies: Critical Perspectives and New Pathways for Emerging Humor Studies Collectives and Associations

Rebecca A. Krefting (Skidmore College), Rujuta Date (University of Michigan), Jessyka Finley (Pomona College), Sarah Illott (Manchester Metropolitan)

This roundtable brings together seven founders and leaders of five emerging humor studies associations from all over the world to discuss how new collectives are shaping the field's scholarly directions, political commitments, and collaborative possibilities amid global pressures on critical inquiry.

ROUNDTABLE

The Politics of Humor in Video Games and Gaming Cultures

José Messias (UFF), Fátima Cristina Regis Martins de Oliveira (UERJ), Dara Coema (UFF), Natalia Corbello (UFF)

Videogames have lately been at the center of a heated debate concerning the role of playfulness in the radicalization of young people – especially young man – to the far right (Pearce, 2014; Massanari, 2024). Furthermore, the current discussions in the academic field of game studies bring the subject of the colonization of videogames by neoliberal capitalism and the industry alignment with practices that present games not as a product, but as a service. Within this pressing political context, this roundtable proposes to discuss the intersection of games, humor, and politics in contemporary internet discourse, aiming to investigate how videogame poetics and online gaming cultures are politicized through memes, irony, satire etc.



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