A STUDY OF THE RELATIONSHIP
BETWEEN THE SENSE OF HUMOR AND
INTELLIGENCE AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS

A SENIOR HONORS THESIS
INTERDEPARTMENTAL 499
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
for the degree
BACHELOR OF ARTS IN EDUCATION
by
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BALL STATE TEACHERS COLLEGE
MUNCIE, INDIANA
MAY, 1964
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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am very grateful for the cooperation given by Drs. Mildred O. Ballou, Louise W. Gates, and James G. Hunt for administering the humor tests to their classes during valuable class time. Their interest and help have been most generous.

To my advisor, Dr. Robert H. Koenker, I am especially grateful. Without his advice and ability to smooth the way in particular during the early phases of the study, it might not have reached completion. A special "thank you" goes to Dr. Koenker's office staff who have helped with much of the clerical work involved in the study.
I. PROBLEM

The problem of this study was to determine the nature of the relationship between sense of humor and intelligence among college students. An interest in discovering the presence or absence of such a relationship arose from personal, subjective observation of the variance in reactions of college students to verbal and pictoral humor. To support or disprove the apparent keener humor perception of students possessing greater intellectual ability was the motivating factor which gave rise to this study.

As research in this area began, a second part to the problem evolved: to find an instrument which would measure sense of humor and to determine the most humorous response to each item contained in it in order to establish the criteria upon which the subjects' responses to the test items could be evaluated.

A third part to the problem emerged from the original problem as a secondary purpose of the study. This was to ascertain if there was any shift in sense of humor among students in early and later stages of college education.

In its final form the three parts of the problem were organized as described in the following statements. Part One consisted of determining the most humorous answers to the items in the chosen humor test as the basis for evaluating the sense of humor of the subjects. In Part Two the sense of humor of Freshmen, Juniors, and graduate students was compared. Part Three involved correlating the humor test scores and intelligence test scores of the graduate student group.
The manner in which the parts of the problem were handled is explained in more detail in the Method. To the best of the writer's knowledge no direct comparison of the sense of humor and intelligence of college students has been made or developed in a manner similar to that of this study.
II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The literature dealing with the sense of humor, per se, is quite extensive since humor has been defined, dissected, and experimented upon in numerous and varied ways. The majority of experimental work has dealt with the sense of humor in its relationship to factors of personality and to perception ability. Although a number of articles have touched upon the relationship between intelligence and the sense of humor, no article or experimental research was found to deal exclusively, or - indeed - even very specifically and directly, with the relationship between these two factors.

At least from the time of Aristotle, people have speculated about the nature of humor. There have been as many conclusions as there have been writers on the subject, not to mention considerable disagreement and contradiction.¹

In one of the most recent pieces of literature on the subject of humor, Overlade offers the theory that "the humor experience is the perception or discovery of an only-alluded-to meaning or interpretation."² This idea of humor as dependent on perception, or - as some refer to it - insight, is proposed by a number of writers. However, while Overlade refers to what might be termed verbal or semantic insight, the others associate humor with a sort of philosophical insight into life.


²Ibid., p. vi.
Allport considers the sense of humor to be a characteristic of a cultivated and mature person and to be bound up subtly with insight and objectivity about self. Sidis states this relationship to insight in another way: "True humor in its highest stages seems the infinite depth of the soul in the very failure, faults, defects, and imperfections." This rather philosophical definition of humor is reiterated by George Meredith (as quoted by Allport) when he says that humor is "the ability to laugh at the things one loves, and still to love them." Leacock exalts the sense of humor even more: "Humor, at its highest, is a part of the interpretation of life."

The thoughts of these people on the meaning of humor assign the sense of humor an important role in the individual's attitude toward life. This idea may be summed up in Schwamm's definition of humor as "a knowledge of the fact that each of us plays a relatively small part in the general scheme of things and that frequently we accept our role rather absurdly." As quoted by Overlade, in differentiating between mature and immature laughter, Samuel S. Seward, in The Paradox of the Ludicrous, associates the former with "the sense of the ludicrous." Schopenhauer is 

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5Allport, op. cit., p. 223.


credited with purporting the cause of laughter to be "the sudden perception of incongruity between a concept and the real objects which have been thought through in some relation."9

Not only has humor been explained as an introspective characteristic, i.e., insight, but also as a medium of social expression.10 In a similar vein is Freud's defining humor as an imperfect means of expressing and fulfilling inhibited desires and of releasing the accompanying tension, according to a quote by Levine. It is Levine, also, who scoffs at the idea of varying degrees of a sense of humor being peculiar to different nationalities or classes of people. He believes the sense of humor varies on an individual basis as it reflects "deep-seated aspects of personality and emotional development."11

The various forms humor may take have come under the consideration of several authors. Laughter, wit, and ridicule have been used synonymously with the word humor as well as in distinguishing between various levels of humor. One definition of a form of humor relates back to Overlade's theory when it suggests that one form is "that wit that takes delight in playing with thought and word, a form indulged in chiefly by certain intellectual groups."12 Here again we find humor being coupled with comprehension of word meanings and knowledge, which help make one


12Harms, op. cit., p. 353.
cognizant of allusions. Yet another author distinguishes between true
humor and the merely comic. According to Allport, true humor is possessed
only by the truly mature individual. But a sense of the comic is held
by almost all people and consists of enjoyment of puns, absurdities, horse-
play and the like.13 Analogous to this is Seward’s division of laughter,
previously mentioned, in which he associates mature laughter with "the
sense of the ludicrous" and "perception of incongruity" and immature
laughter with "the playful spirit."14

Still others have thought of humor as developing into higher and
higher forms as the individual matures and develops in other ways. It
is through this line of reasoning that Sidis contends that, "The highest
point reached by laughter is intimately related with the highest intel-
lectual, aesthetic, and moral development."15

Yet another variation of this theme is the idea that as the indi-
vidual matures, his sense of humor becomes more bound up with language
and thought, and, therefore - to some extent - one’s sense of humor can
be "educated."16 Once again a connection between humor, verbal ability,
and knowledge is intimated. This theory is further substantiated in Wil-
son’s study of young children which concluded that the highest stage in
the development of humor is the perception of (1) violation of convention,

13Allport, op. cit., pp. 222-23.

14Seward, op. cit., p. 11 (quoted by Overdale, op. cit., p. 22).

15Sidis, op. cit., p. 293.

16J. J. Peters, "Humor and the Superior Student," Peabody Journal
of Education, XXXVII, January, 1960, p. 230 (citing Arnold Gesell and
Frances L. Ilg, Child Development, New York: Harper and Brothers, 1949,
p. 285.)
(2) play on words, (3) comparisons with indirect allusions, (4) absurdities as humorous.17

Much of the literature has suggested that humor is related to the ability to perceive, to recognize certain ideas, allusions, or incongruities. Peters has summed this up well: "Humor is a reflection of wit which requires a high degree of mental alertness and quickness in perception. In humor, the person uses his sharpness of discernment to perceive ludicrousness and incongruity."18

Thus begins to appear some suggestion of the idea that humor may be related to or dependent upon certain mental abilities, certain factors of intelligence. Several pieces of research indicate this correlation directly through results of a testing situation.

Comparing scores on his humor test with ACE intelligence scores for some of his subjects, Overlade found a correlation significant at the .05 level.19 Here once more we see stated the possible connection between humor, knowledge, and perception. This idea of perception in humor manifests itself again in Ames' findings that "The ability to perceive the comic correlates very highly with intelligence at this age (from three to six years) as is true of all other ages."20

Eysenck found evidence to indicate that the sense of humor is not


18Peters, op. cit., p. 229.

19Overlade, op. cit., p. 92.

only correlated with but also affected by intelligence, as well as by temperament, neurotic disorders, age, and sex.  

Justin found a low but positive correlation between laughter responses and intelligence in young children, but a correlation that decreased with age. Bird found a positive correlation of .39 between success in a humor test and her subjects' I.Q.'s. Though she does not indicate by what means she arrived at this conclusion, Raley states that there is high agreement on the relation of intelligence and academic standing to sense of humor. The presence of a positive correlation is substantiated again when Gibson reports that in psychological tests conducted at Purdue University, persons who rated high in sense-of-humor tests also tended to make high intelligence test scores, and he states his own belief in the probability of a relationship between better-than-average sense of humor and higher intelligence.

Despite this substantial amount of evidence to indicate a positive correlation between sense of humor and intelligence, others who have done research on this subject have found little or no correlation. Raley writes that Gregg, in his study of three-year-olds, found a negative correlation between laughter and intelligence, but he believed there would be a high

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24 Raley, op. cit., p. 21.

correlation between humor and intelligence. Unfortunately Raley failed to quote Gregg's definition of laughter as opposed to humor. For that reason, not much of real significance can be drawn from Gregg's belief.26

In his review of experiments on humor, Perl concluded that there was no close connection between degree of intelligence and appreciation of humor in general, but that a preference for certain types of jokes did seem partially dependent upon intelligence.27 Cattell and Luborsky found that only division-superiority joke preferences correlated highly enough with intelligence that they could cautiously admit to the possibility of some relationship between at least this type of humor and intelligence.28

After subdividing humor into six types, Kambouroupoulou discovered no relationship between academic ability and personal and impersonal types of humor. But she did find a correlation with enjoyment of nonsense jokes, defining nonsense as incongruity of ideas.29

As cited in some previously mentioned literature, again this appeal of the absurd, the nonsensical, to those of above average intelligence is noted. Justin also found that those of higher I.Q. made more responses to incongruous humor situations, as did older children.30 That the more


intelligent a child is, the more likely he is to be entertained by absurdities, was also found in Brumbaugh's study of children at the intermediate level. Her definition of absurdities included such things as nonsense stories, slapstick humor, ridiculous antics, grotesque clothing, and unusual mannerisms.31

Further studies, mainly on superior students, indicate varying degrees of correlation between intelligence and the sense of humor. Kenderdine's experiment with preschool children gives a slight indication that those children with high I.Q.'s laughed more frequently.32 In Terman's classic study of gifted children, he found their sense of humor superior to that of the control group - according to teacher ratings.33 Peters goes one step further and says that sense of humor may be another factor worth considering in the study of the superior student.34 Another indication of the relationship between humor and intelligence is derived from Vernon's experimental evidence which showed that those who are good judges of self are characterized by high intelligence and a sense of humor.35 Allport states his belief in such a correlation very strongly when he says, "To achieve a sense of humor as well as insight requires a high level of intelligence. It is only the most intelligent who prefer their humor objective and realistic."36

33Arnold Terman, Genetic Studies of Genius, I, Stanford University Press, 1925 (Overlade, op. cit., p. 20).
34Peters, op. cit., p. 229.
36Allport, op. cit., p. 224.
Raley sums up the general consensus of opinion on the nature of humor and the opinions of those who believe there is a positive correlation with intelligence when she reasons, in view of Allport's relating humor to insight, that humor "must depend essentially upon intellectual factors; that is upon a profound acquaintance with the world of things and events and upon an unusual and keen appreciation of the subtleties of life."\(^{37}\)

In at least this much literature about the sense of humor a few themes about humor have been reiterated again and again. One is the relationship of the sense of humor to insight and perception ability. Another is the association of the highest forms of humor with perception of incongruity and absurdity - whether in verbal form or in life itself. An indication of the appeal of nonsense, absurdity, and incongruity to those of above average intelligence was noted repeatedly, also. Lastly, the indication of a belief of the majority of the writers in a positive correlation between the sense of humor and intelligence was undeniably present in the literature reviewed.

Though the literature reviewed indicated that most of the writers felt there is some relationship between sense of humor and intelligence, the only data to support this hypothesis have been more or less incidentally found through research on other aspects of humor. The problem of this study, therefore, is a more direct attempt to determine the nature of the relationship between sense of humor and intelligence.

III. METHOD

A. Establishment of the Most Humorous Response to Each Item in the Humor Test.

In order to conduct a study of the relationship between sense of humor and intelligence and to compare the sense of humor of Freshmen, Juniors, and graduate students, the first task was to decide upon the means of measuring the sense of humor. The analysis of literature dealing with the sense of humor yielded a few references to verbal tests measuring humor, and of this scant selection the writer was able to locate only three of these tests. It was from among these three that the humor test used in this study was chosen: (1) samples from the test used by Justin L. Weiss in his doctoral dissertation "An Experimental Study of the Psychodynamics of Humor,"¹ (2) IPAT Humor Test of Personality,² and (3) the variation of the IPAT Humor Test used by Overlade in his doctoral dissertation "Humor Perception as Abstraction Ability."³

Overlade’s test seemed to be the most compatible with the purpose for which the measurement of the sense of humor was intended in this study. Forty-seven of the fifty items in his test were accepted as suitable for


use in this study and with these particular subjects. The writer's advisor received permission from Dr. Overlade to use the test for this study. The test was then administered to a section of Psychology 121, General Psychology, taught by Dr. James G. Hunt, a section of Education 327.1, Educational Psychology, and a section of Education 423, Psychology of Childhood, both taught by Dr. Mildred O. Ballou. These three psychology classes were selected because they provided a readily-available cross-section of students with regard to variety of academic interest areas as well as to years in college. Thirty-five Freshmen, five Sophomores, thirty-six Juniors, twenty-one Seniors, and two graduate students composed the total group of ninety-nine subjects who participated in the process of determining the most humorous ending for each joke item.

The subjects were to tank the four possible endings for each joke item (See Appendix A) by a rating of one through four, with the ending considered most humorous receiving a rating of one and the least humorous ending receiving a rating of four. The total ranking of each possible ending of each joke item was then compiled to determine the one most humorous ending for each item. The ending having the smallest number of total points would, consequently, be rated most humorous. These results are shown in Appendix A.

For the actual study it was decided to evaluate the responses to the joke items in the following manner: The subjects were to mark only the one response of the four possible responses which they thought most humorous. If the response given a rating of one by the standardization group was chosen, four points were scored. If the response rated second was chosen, three points were given for that response; two points if the third-rated response was chosen; one point for the response rated least
humorous by standardization group. In this manner the greater number of total points scored by the subject, the higher the sense of humor rating of that subject.

The following information was requested of the subjects in the study: sex, classification, and whether or not the subject intended to become a teacher. In time permitted, the humor test scores would be analyzed in terms of sex of the subject and the factor of a teaching or non-teaching professional goal.

B. Comparison of Humor Test Scores of Freshmen, Juniors, and Graduate Students.

A section of Psychology 121, General Psychology, taught by Dr. Louise W. Gates, was selected as the group of freshman subjects in the study. The juniors in the study were in an Education 327.1, Educational Psychology, class taught by Dr. James G. Hunt. An Education 502, Statistical Methods in Educational and Psychological Research, taught by Dr. Robert H. Koenker provided the graduate students in the study. There were twenty-six freshmen, twenty-nine juniors, and thirty-three graduate students (eight doctoral candidates and twenty-five masters candidates). Only these three classifications were selected due to the time factor involved in evaluating each test paper. These three particular classifications were chosen because they represented the broadest span of college years.

The mean score of the humor test papers of each of these three groups was found, and the three mean scores were compared by use of Fisher's "t" Test,4 in order to determine if there was any significant

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shift in the sense of humor of college students as they advanced through their college career.

C. Determination of the Relationship Between the Humor Test Scores and Intelligence Test Scores of a Group of Graduate Students.

With the standardization of the humor test completed, the next step was to decide how to measure the intelligence of the subjects in the actual study. It was decided to administer the SRA Non-Verbal Form\(^5\) (see Appendix A) to the subjects of the study during the same class period in which the humor test would be administered. The SRA Non-Verbal form was chosen because it provided a quick, uncomplicated, yet fairly accurate uniform measurement of intelligence and surmounted the obstacle of attempting to obtain such information from college records. By administering both tests during the same class period, the scores on each could be matched by assigning to each subject a number which he would write on both his humor test and intelligence test. In this way the names of the subjects need not be known. The relationship between intelligence and sense of humor was determined by correlating the scores made by the graduate students on these two variables by means of Pearson Product Moment Correlation.\(^6\)

\(^5\)Robert N. McMurty, Ph.D., and Joseph E. King, Ph.D., SRA Non-Verbal Form (Form AH), Science Research Associates, Inc., Chicago, 1947.

\(^6\)Koenker, op. cit., p. 55.
IV. FINDINGS

After the scores of the graduate students on both the humor test and the SRA Non-Verbal form were obtained and the respective scores were paired by means of the number that had been assigned each subject, the Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to determine the degree of relationship between the subject's score on the humor test and his score on the SRA Non-Verbal Form.

The formula for the Pearson Product Moment Correlation is as follows:

\[ r = \frac{\sum xy}{\sqrt{(\sum x^2)(\sum y^2)}} \]

where \( \sum x^2 \) is the sum of the squares of the deviations of the subjects' scores from the mean score on the humor test, and \( \sum y^2 \) is the sum of the squares of the deviations of the subjects' scores from the mean score on the Non-Verbal Form, and \( \sum xy \) is the sum of the products of the deviations of the subjects' scores on both tests. (The values obtained for these variables are listed in Appendix C.)

Application of the formula for the Pearson Product Moment Correlation yielded a correlation of .02 between the humor test scores and SRA Non-Verbal Form. This result indicates that in this study no significant relationship was found between sense of humor and intelligence as measured by the two instruments used in this study.

When the humor test scores of the freshmen, juniors, and graduate students had been obtained, the Fisher "t" test was used to ascertain

\[ ^1\text{Koenker, op. cit., p. 87.} \]
if there were any shift in the sense of humor from freshmen to juniors to graduate students.

The following formula was used:

\[ t = \frac{M_1 - M_2}{\sqrt{\frac{\sum x^2 + \sum y^2}{N_1 + N_2}(N_1 + N_2 - 2)(\frac{1}{N_1} + \frac{1}{N_2})}} \]

where \( M_1 \) and \( M_2 \) represent the respective mean scores of the two groups of subjects being compared, where \( \sum x^2 \) and \( \sum y^2 \) are the respective sums of the squares of the deviations of the subjects' scores from the mean of their respective groups, and where \( N_1 \) and \( N_2 \) indicate the number of subjects in the respective groups. The mean scores on the humor test were as follows: freshmen, 149.1; juniors, 150.4; and graduate students, 153.0.

The three groups of subjects were compared two at a time: freshmen and juniors, juniors and graduate students, and freshmen and graduate students. (The variables and results are shown in Appendix B.) The "t" value between the freshman and junior mean scores was .3430 which was less than the .01 level of significance (2.660) and, therefore, not significant. When the mean scores of the juniors and graduate students were compared, the "t" value was .7580, also less than the .01 level, indicating no significant difference in sense of humor between juniors and graduate students. Comparison of the humor test scores of freshmen and graduate students yielded a "t" value of 1.066, which again indicated no significant difference or appreciable shift in the sense of humor of freshmen as opposed to that of graduate students.

\[^2\text{Koenker, op. cit., p. 55.}\]
In general, then, the findings indicate no significant relationship between sense of humor and intelligence and no significant difference in sense of humor between college freshmen, juniors, and graduate students.
V. CONCLUSIONS

This study showed that there was no relationship between sense of humor and intelligence for graduate students, and no difference between freshmen, juniors, and graduate students in mean sense of humor. The correlation obtained in this study was only .02 (see Appendix C), and a correlation of about .33 or greater would be necessary in order to conclude that a significant relationship exists between intelligence and sense of humor.\footnote{Koenker, op. cit., p. 146.}

The comparison of the collective humor test scores of the group of freshman subjects, the group of juniors, and the group of graduate students by means of the Fisher "t" test showed no appreciable difference between the mean sense of humor of either of the three groups when compared with each of the other two groups. The statistics obtained in this part of the study indicated that the sense of humor of college freshmen is on par with that of juniors and of graduate students. Therefore, no significant change in one's sense of humor is evident as one progresses through the years of college as measured by the test used in this study. There was a very slight but insignificant increase in the mean score on the humor test from the freshman to the junior group and from the junior to the graduate group.
VI. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Curiosity about the supposedly keener humor perception of students possessing greater intellectual ability gave rise to the problem of this study, which was to determine the nature of the relationship between sense of humor and intelligence among college students. Two secondary problems grew out of this main problem. One secondary problem was to find an instrument which would measure sense of humor and which could be adapted to the purposes of this study; the other was to ascertain if there was any shift in sense of humor among students in early and later stages of college education.

In seeking to find what information on humor and intelligence was available, it was discovered that no direct study of the relationship of these two factors had been made. Literature on sense of humor, mainly treated as a factor of personality, proved ample, but tests to determine sense of humor were few. A majority of the studies dealing with the sense of humor contained an incidental observation by the author to the effect that there seemed to be an indication of a positive relationship between sense of humor and intelligence, yet the writer could not locate any studies which attempted to prove or disprove this observation. Therefore, to the best of the writer's knowledge, this is the first study to deal directly and specifically with the relationship between sense of humor and intelligence.

Among the few available instruments measuring sense of humor, the one chosen as most easily adaptable to the purposes of this study was
Overlade's adaptation of Cattell and Luborsky's IPAT Humor Test of Personality in his doctoral dissertation. The test was given to students from the four college undergraduate years to determine the "correct" or most humorous answers, which would then determine the scoring of the test when administered in the actual study.

Overlade's humor test and the SRA Non-Verbal Form were next given to a group of graduate students to set up the comparison from which the correlation between intelligence and sense of humor was made. The Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to ascertain the degree of relationship, which proved to be insignificant with a correlation of only .02.

The humor test was also given to a class of freshmen and a class of juniors to obtain scores of subjects from a broad spread of years in college. The mean score of the freshman group was 149.1; of the juniors, 150.4; and of the graduate students, 153.0. By means of the Fisher "t" test, the mean score of each group was compared with each of the other two means. There was no significant difference found between any of the three groups and, consequently, there was no significant shift in sense of humor through the college years as measured by the instrument used in this study. There was a slight but insignificant shift in the mean scores from the freshman to the junior to the graduate group.

The results, although not conclusive, suggest possibilities for future studies in this area. The use of a better intelligence test might

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1 Overlade, op. cit.
2 McMurry, op. cit.
3 Koenker, op. cit., p. 55.
4 Koenker, op. cit., p. 87.
yield different results when compared with sense of humor. A group of subjects of average intelligence might be compared with a group of subjects having above-average intelligence on sense of humor. A longitudinal study of a group of subjects might be conducted to discover if there is a shift in sense of humor over the years. It is possible much larger groups at various age levels, when given the humor test, would yield a mean score showing a more significant difference between different age groups or years in college. Sense of humor might also be studied as it relates to academic achievement, teaching ability, total personality, or any one of many other variables. The present study is only a beginning in this area of the relationship between sense of humor and intelligence and should serve as a springboard for more intensive research.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


The following Humor Test appears in the form in which it was given to the subjects for the ranking of the four possible endings. The number to the left of each ending indicates the total number of points given by the ninety-nine subjects to that ending. The ending having the least number of points indicates the one most often chosen as most humorous. In the actual study the subjects were directed to select only the ending they considered most humorous of the four possible endings.

A copy of the SRA Non-Verbal Form intelligence test is inserted after the Humor Test.

HUMOR TEST*

Circle class standing: Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, Senior, Graduate

Check: _____Male _____Female Are you planning on being a teacher?____

This is a test which measures your sense of humor. There are 47 jokes on the pages which follow. Each joke is unfinished and has four possible endings from which you will select the most humorous. Please indicate the most humorous responses as follows:

1. Most humorous
2. Next most humorous
3. Next most humorous
4. Least humorous

*Taken from "Humor Perception as Abstraction Ability," unpublished Doctor's Dissertation, Purdue University, 1954, Author, Dan C. Overlake.
(1) Friend: "They say you can usually tell a girl's character by her clothes."

Traveler:

336 "That may be, but I wouldn't stake my life on it."
209 "Nonsense, girls must have more character than that."
227 "Then they're all characters."
228 "what about the girls in Miami?"

(2) "Oh, Lemuel, you're just awful. You sit there reading your newspaper and not paying any attention to me. You don't treat me the way you used to. You don't love me any more."

"Nonsense, Cynthia! I love you more than ever. I worship the ground you walk on. Your every wish will be my command. ---

250 It's just that I want to see how the Dodgers made out."
295 But can't you see I'm busy?"
233 If you don't command often."
222 Now for Gawsh sakes, shut up and let me read the funnies."

(3) "I'm losing my punch,"

254 the fighter said as he got up off the canvas.
158 she said as she left the cocktail party in a hurry.
309 he said as he knocked the punching bag from its moorings.
259 she said as the puppet slipped from her hand.

(4) "Do you have a fairy godmother?"

304 "If I do, she's not treating me right."
276 "I refuse to answer that on the grounds of possible self-incrimination."
125 "No, but I have an uncle I'm not so sure about."
285 "No, but I have a little elf who shines my shoes."

(5) Boy: "Tell me, do you really like conceited men as well as the other kind?"

Girl:

193 "Yes, you're just my type."
271 "I don't want the other kind; I want you."
194 "what other kind?"
332 "Every bit as well - but no better."

(6) Mrs. Vanderdam was giving a bridge party when the patter of tiny feet was heard from the head of the stair. "Hush," she said softly. "The children are going to give their good-night message. It always gives me such a sentimental feeling to hear them." There was a moment of silence, then shrilly:

296 "Hi, Yo, Silver!"
222 "Mamma, save me some beer!"
272 "Will you old bags quiet down so we can get some sleep."
200 "Mamma, Percy found a bedbug."
(7) Father (reproving his son and heir for greediness): "Jimmie, you're a pig. Do you know what a pig is?"

Jimmie:
199 "Yes, Papa. It's ham, bacon, and pork chops walking around on its knuckles."
267 "No, Papa. But maybe you could show me."
198 "Yes, Papa. A pig is a hog's little boy."
316 "Sure. It's nothing but fat with a flat nose at one end and a curly tail at the other."

(8) By melting down vessels of pewter,
A mouse made a rude sort of scooter;
But he never gave rides
To anticipant brides
206 because he was practically neuter.
232 for he thought, "A scooter won't suit'er."
243 "Cause he thought a scooter was cuter."
289 This pewter to scooter commuter.

(9) Boasting of the farms in the Dakotas, a native said: "We have some farms out that way that are pretty good sized. I've seen a man on one of our big farms start out in the spring and plow a straight furrow 'til fall. Then he harvested back. And that is not all. It is the usual thing to send young married couples out to milk the cows,
300 and they come back 20 years later."
223 and the milk is always sour before they can get it back."
316 and their children come back with the milk."

(10) Mother: "Come, Lonnie, don't be a little savage; kiss the lady."
Lonnie: "No, she's a naughty lady. --
262 If you want to kiss her, go ahead. I'd rather be a savage."
261 She already kissed Papa."
305 Besides, kissing brings out the beast in us savages."
162 If I kiss her, she may give me a slap just as she did Papa."

(11) The Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra had played in a small New England town, the first experience of the kind for many of the inhabitants. Next day some of the old times gathered 'round the stove in the General Store and expressed their opinions. The comments of one of the oldest inhabitants was: "All I got to say is,
201 it was a danged long way to bring that big bass drum only to bang it wunst."
264 I'd like to see the eyes of them fiddlers if they could watch Jeb Blazlow play standing on his head."
280 I don't see how them guys can play and read at the same time."
251 If you want to hear real music, you ought to hear Zeke Pritchit's three-tone milk bucket."
(12) Kind neighbor (to a little boy eating an apple): "Look out for the worms, Sonny."

Billy: "When I eat an apple, ---
113 ___ the worms have to look out for themselves."
161 ___ it's the half worms that bother me."
312 ___ I don't worry about the worm."
374 ___ I'm very careful about the worms."

(13) There was a young person called Smarty, who sent out his cards for a party; So exclusive and few Were the friends that he knew
125 ___ That no one was present but Smarty. 312 ___ That they danced, drank, and laughed loud and hearty. 275 ___ That the party went on a Safari. 239 ___ There was Arty, and Marty, and Smarty.

(14) "God, you have a lovely figure."
274 ___ "Look, but don't touch!"
190 ___ "Oh, let's not go all over that again."
223 ___ "Why, grandfather, what big eyes you have!"
293 ___ "I admire your taste."

(15) Little Tommy: "Sister May must be able to see in the dark."
His Mother: "Why do you think so?"
Tommy: "Because last night when she was sitting with Mr. Steady in the living room
212 ___ I heard her say, 'Why Rufus, you haven't shaved.'"
280 ___ she turned out the light and said, 'Let's play postoffice.'"
256 ___ I heard him say, 'The light of your eyes is as bright as the upper beam on a Greyhound bus.'"
202 ___ I asked her what they were doing and she said that I should leave them alone, that they were reading the paper."

(16) "I hear you have a little sister."
"Yes," answered the small boy.
"Do you like her?"
"I wish it was a boy, 'cause then I could play marbles, baseball and other games with her."
"Then why don't you exchange her for a brother?"
"Can't," was the answer --
270 ___ "It's against the rules."
113 ___ "It's too late now. We've used her four days."
380 ___ "If we got a brother, he might not like baseball anyway."
236 ___ "They were all out of little boys."

(17) "Why do you prefer Wagner?"
222 ___ "He's the only composer whose name I can pronounce."
269 ___ "Because he composed about the only kind of music one can hear above the conversation."
251 ___ "I don't but I thought you did."
239 ___ "Who's he?"
(18) "Momma," asked little Mary, "If I get married, will I have a husband like Daddy?"

"Yes, dear."

"And if I don't get married, will I be an old maid, like Aunt Agatha?"

"Yes, dear."

*I think I'd rather be an old maid."

*I'd rather have a husband like Aunt Agatha."

"If you were me, which would you do?"

"Momma, it sure is a hard world for us women, isn't it?"

(19) A party of tourists in Arizona came upon an Indian brave riding a pony. A heavily burdened squaw walked beside him.

"Why doesn't she ride?"

*She rather walk."

*She need exercise."

*Ride make squaw lazy."

*She got no pony."

(20) Several little boys conversing:

First little boy, "See this mark on my back; it's because my mother ate strawberries before I was born."

Second little boy: "This mark on my hand is because my mother was frightened by a mouse."

Third little boy (in deep, slow voice): "When I was born, my mother cracked a phonograph record, and ever since, I've talked like this."

*and now people think I'm cracked."

*but I'm not superstitious - superstitious - superstitious."

*and I have trouble turning around."

(21) Lecturer: "Of course, you all know what the inside of a corpuscle is like."

Chairman:

*Of course, it's like a boil - only bigger."

*I'm sure we do, but would you like for me to send out for a couple?"

*Most of us do, but you'd better explain it for the benefit of them as have never been inside one."

*I understand that it is very much like the outside - only smaller."

(22) A distinguished visitor to an insane asylum went to the telephone and found difficulty in getting his connection. Exasperated, he shouted to the operator: "Look here, girl, do you know who I am?"

"No," was the reply, --

*But then you don't know who I am either."

*Not exactly."

*Napoleon?"

*But I know where you are."

"If I get married, will I have a husband like Daddy?"

"Yes, dear."

"And if I don't get married, will I be an old maid, like Aunt Agatha?"

"Yes, dear."

*I think I'd rather be an old maid."

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*But then you don't know who I am either."

*Not exactly."

*Napoleon?"

*But I know where you are."
(23) Butch: "That was a good picture of your pop that your ma showed me. But why did it only show his head?"
Scarface:
156 "The rest of the picture stuck to the postoffice wall."
31h "She wanted to cut off the number."
257 "That's 'cause she had the electric chair taken out."
323 "What did you expect - movies?"

(24) Love is laughable. In fact,
236 "it's too funny for words."
189 "it's killing me."
281 "it's a laugh a minute."
261 "it's just two silly."

(25) He: "Pardon me, but you look like Helen Green."
328 "Well, I'm not, Mac, so shove off."
273 "That line is older than the Mason-Dixon."
159 "So what? I look worse in pink."
220 "Yes, and you look like Boris Karloff."

(26) Tired Salesman (sitting in the barber chair): "Give me a shave."
Barber: "You're too low in the chair, will you sit up, please?"
Tired Salesman:
17h "Heck, give me a haircut, then."
251 "What's the matter - you standing in a hole?"
305 "Well, Jack me up, boy - jack me up."
250 "Wouldn't it be easier on both of us if you'd sit down?"

(27) A farmer was losing his patience and temper trying to drive two mules into a field, when the local parson came by and said, "Don't speak like that to those dumb animals."
Farmer: "You are just the man I want to see."
Parson: "And why?"
Farmer:
182 "Tell me how did Noah get these into the Ark?"
299 "'Cause these animals are dumber than sin!"
296 "Maybe you'll know how to speak to them."
213 "Because I'm about to send these animals to their Creator."

(28) Man is a delightful little worm who squirms about until he is 23 and then
28h the worm turns.
172 he gets hooked.
198 some chicken gets him.
336 he squirms about some more.

(29) "My roommate fell downstairs last night with about two pints of gin."
"Did he spill any?"
323 "No, he was carrying it in a sponge."
161 "No, he kept his mouth closed."
239 "Yes, and he got some glass in his tongue while cleaning it up."
267 "He broke both arms but he didn't spill a drop."
(30) Politician: "I'm pleased to see such a dense crowd here tonight."
Voice:
256 "Hurry up and get finished. There's to be a wrestling
match here as soon as you get done."
231 "You'd better talk fast - it's getting less dense by
the minute."
244 "Don't be too pleased. It ain't all dense."
259 "You should have seen it before some got away."

(31) To discover whether an ostrich is a male or female, tell a joke.
If he laughs, it's a male.
301 If it doesn't laugh, it's a female.
2h7 If she laughs, it's a female.
276 If she smiles, it's a female.
1h6 If he pretends not to catch on, it's a female.

(32) "Oh, pshaw, I left my watch upstairs."
"That's alright, it'll run down."
288 "No, it won't. It'll take the elevator."
310 "It will if I don't go get it."
199 "It'd be the first time it ran when it should."
173 "No, it won't. It's a winding stairway."

(33) Instructor (examining a class): "Who drove the Israelites out of
Egypt? -- You!" he said, pointing to a small boy in the corner.
Boy (trembling):
3h2 "What'd I do?"
197 "'Twasn't me, Sir, I only come back from the country
last week."
2h1 "I - I - I bet it was the Democrats!"
210 "Nobody drove 'em - they had to walk all the way."

(34) "How did you get your kid sister to find so many fishing worms for
you?" asked Bobby.
"Oh, it's easy," said Tommy --
235 "She'll dig worms for me today if I'll play dolls with
her tomorrow."
102 "Out of every ten she digs up, I let her have one to
eat."
288 "I told her I'd write her a check for $100 if she got
me 50 worms."
295 "I told her that I'd let her put them on the hook."

(35) Operator: "Number, please?"
Drunk (in phone booth):
189 "Number, hell, I want my peanuts."
219 "Lady, if I was any number I couldn't feel a thing."
33h4 "I want to talk to George."
218 "Guess!"
Adam and Eve were naming the animals of the earth when a hippopotamus strolled past. "Well, darling," said Adam, "What are we going to call that?"
"I know," said Eve, "Let's call it a hippopotamus."
"But why?" asked Adam.

"Look," said Eve, "Do I ask you where you got your rhinoceros?"
"Well," said Eve, "Look at the size of those hips!"
"Alphabetically," said Eve, "the last one was an elephant."
"Well," said Eve, "It looks more like a hippopotamus than anything we've named so far."

"Is this a lawyer's office ma'am?"
"What do you think it is, a Turkish bath?"
"I couldn't tell - what with all the hot air either way."
"I'll wait and see whether you hand me a pen or a towel."
"It won't matter -- I stand to lose either way."
"How don't get all steamed up!"

"I promise you," he said with mock severity, "The next time you contradict me, I'm going to kiss you."
"Really?" she cried.
"I'd better be careful what I say," she replied.
"But I didn't contradict you," she cried.
"Oh, no, you're not!" she cried.

"Just to think," said the tourist, "I came all the way out to Texas just to see your wonderful sunset."
"Well, that's a mighty far piece just to find daylight," replied the native.
"Well, take a good look. The next show ain't till tomorrow night," replied the native.
"Someone's been foolin' ye, stranger. It ain't mine," replied the native.
"That's nothing; think how for the sun come just to see Texas," replied the native.

First Kangaroo: "I'm so irritated with Junior."
Second Kangaroo: "Why, dearie, I thought he was such a good child."
First Kangaroo:
"Yes, but he tosses and turns so all night."
"Yes, but he insists on bringing his friends home to play."
"Yes, but he will eat crackers in bed."
"Yes, but he can't sit still a moment."

"If looks could kill, I would assassinate you with a glance."
"If looks could kill -- it would be suicide for you to use a mirror."
"You'd be an orphan."
"I'd want to be on your side in the next war."
"you'd be sure death."
"Man overboard," shouted the young sailor on his first voyage. Amid great confusion, the ship was stopped. The sailor stepped up to the captain, saluted, and said: "I'm sorry, Sir. I made a mistake when I said, 'Man overboard.'" "Thank God!" said the Captain, signalling for full steam ahead. "For a minute I thought I'd made a mistake." "Yeah," explained the sailor. "It was a dame." "But the next mistake you make there'll be no mistake." "You knew what happened to the last guy who cried, 'Wolf!'"

Two little boys stood on a corner. A little girl passed by. Said one: "Her neck's dirty." Said the other: "You're telling me!" "Her does?" "It sure is." "It always is."

"These shoes are too narrow and too pointed," said the customer. "Oh," said the salesman, "But they are wearing narrow, pointed shoes this season." "That may be," answered the suffering gentleman, -- "They are, but I am not!" "And crutches next season!" "But you can't fit a square peg in a round hole." "But unfortunately, I am still wearing last season's feet."

A traveler in the Blue Ridge Mountains was compelled by circumstances to spend the night in a remote farmhouse. In the morning he was awakened by a small boy of the family who said, "Ma says will you please get up -- it's your turn to do the chores." "The cow wants back into her room." "She wants the sheet for a tablecloth." "She thinks you're a traveling salesman."

Mamma had been showing little Freddy a picture of martyrs being thrown to the lions. The talked to him very solemnly about it, trying to make him feel what a terrible thing it was. Then she asked him what he thought about the picture. "Oh, it's very sad, Mamma," said Freddy, -- "Just look at that poor lion over in the corner; he isn't getting any." "But how do you suppose they felt about it?" "But maybe the lions were very hungry." "But it all happened such a long time ago that there's no need to get carried away by it all."
(147) "If I refuse to be your wife," she whispered dramatically, "will you really commit suicide?"

166 "That," he said grandly, "has been my usual procedure."

344 "Why not? You're only young once!"

213 "No, but that ought to read well in your diary!"

230 "Of course not! I'd die before I'd do that."
APPENDIX B

Comparison of Humor Test Scores of Freshmen, Juniors, and Graduate Students by Means of the Fisher "t" Test.

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\[ M: \quad 149.1 \quad M: \quad 150.4 \quad M: \quad 153.0 \]
\[ N_1: \quad 26 \quad N_2: \quad 29 \quad N_2: \quad 33 \]
\[ \sum x^2: \quad 5315.86 \quad \sum x^2: \quad 5112.84 \quad \sum x^2: \quad 5797.00 \]

("t" tests are shown on next two pages.)
Comparison of Freshman and Junior Humor Test Mean Scores.

\[ t^* = \frac{M_1 - M_2}{\sqrt{(\sum x^2 + \sum y^2)(N_1 + N_2)}} \]

\[ t = \frac{150.1 - 149.1}{\sqrt{(5112.84 + 5315.86)(55)}} \]

\[ t = \frac{1.3}{\sqrt{11.35}} = \frac{1.3}{3.39} = .3430 \]

d.f. = 60 \quad .01 = 2.660 \quad .05 = 2.000

Since the "t" value (.3430) is less than .01 level (2.660), the difference between means is insignificant and due to chance. Therefore, there is no difference in sense of humor between freshmen and juniors as measured by the test used in this study.

Comparison of Freshmen and Graduate Humor Test Mean Scores.

\[ t = \frac{3.9}{\sqrt{(5797 + 5315.86)(52)}} \]

\[ t = \frac{3.9}{\sqrt{13.41}} = \frac{3.9}{3.66} = 1.066 \]

d.f. = 60 \quad .01 = 2.660 \quad .05 = 2.000

Since the "t" value (1.066) is less than .01 level (2.660), the difference between means is insignificant and due to chance. Therefore, there is no difference in sense of humor between freshmen and graduate students as measured by the test used in this study.

*Koenker, op. cit., p. 87.*
Comparison of Junior and Graduate Humor Test Mean Scores.

\[ t = \frac{2.6}{\sqrt{\frac{(5797 + 5112.64)(62)}{60}(97)}} \]

\[ t = \frac{2.6}{\sqrt{11.78}} = \frac{2.6}{3.43} = .7580 \]

d.f. = 60  .01 = 2.660  .05 = 2.000

Since the "t" value (.7850) is less than .01 level (2.660), the difference between means is insignificant and due to chance. Therefore, there is no difference in sense of humor between juniors and graduate students as measured by the test used in this study.
APPENDIX C

The Scores of the Graduate Students on the Humor Test and the SRA Non-Verbal Form with the Calculations Needed in the Pearson Product Moment Correlation.

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\[ r^* \approx \frac{\Sigma xy}{\sqrt{\Sigma x^2 \cdot \Sigma y^2}} = \frac{151.40}{\sqrt{(7769.88)(5797.00)}} = \frac{151.40}{\sqrt{45041994.36}} \]

\[ r^* \approx .02 \text{ (no relationship)} \]

*Koenker, op. cit., p. 55.*