

## Editorial

Lydia Amir\*

This issue of the *Israeli Journal of Humor Research: An International Journal* holds studies of various forms of humor ranging from amiable laughter to satire, spanning English, American, Filipino and Jewish humor. It includes historical and literary approaches, psychological-empirical and sociolinguistic studies, song analysis of a contemporary Folk Jewish album and an interdisciplinary explanation of Jewish humor across the ages. It also includes a defense of satire, and a criticism of this defense in the first symposium that this journal has ever published. In four articles, one symposium and one book review, this issue manages to address the paradox of humor, its versatile capacity to do good as well as evil, and its close connection not only to personal character but also to epochs and circumstances that emphasize one aspect of it at the expense of the other.

We begin by a close analysis of the eighteenth-century's change of attitude toward laughter. In "An Eighteenth-Century Pivot: Theorizing Amiable Laughter and Comic Belles Lettres," James E. Caron argues that Joseph Addison and Richard Steele's views of an amiable laughter engendered new conceptualizations of *humor*, *humorist*, *satire*, and *satirist*. As these continue to shape discussions about all manner of comic artifacts, their pronouncements are worth close scrutiny to unravel the radicality of the new aesthetic, *comic belles lettres*, that they established. The revolution that this represent both for literary production and philosophical speculation can be best evaluated in relation to the classical theoretical tradition about comic art and comic laughter. It can also be duly appreciated if the particular stages through which that revision developed are charted in some detail.

The eighteenth-century enriched our notion of humor. Inheriting a more diverse typology of humor styles that we used to have, we may inquire into their correlation with psychological well-being and collective action. This is what Rozel S. Balmores-Paulino enterprises in "The Correlation of Humor Styles with Psychological Well-Being and Collective Action among Filipino University Students." She investigates the correlation of four humor styles with psychological well-being and collective action among 539 Filipino university students. Using a survey that included various questionnaires and scales, the results she found reveal that benevolent humor

\* Tufts University; lydamir@mail.com

styles, i.e., affiliative and self-enhancing humor styles are positively correlated with psychological well-being dimensions; and malevolent humor styles (aggressive and self-defeating humor styles) are negatively associated with indicators of psychological health. Benevolent humor style, and in particular, affiliative humor appears to be inversely correlated with hostile forms of collective action, while malevolent humor style is positively associated with direct and hostile forms of collective behaviors. She argues that these statistically significant correlations, albeit weak, offer support to the relationship of humor with psychological well-being as well as with collective action. And, she concludes that these results redound to the imminent paradox of humor's nature.

Uri Orbach, an Israeli author who has penned a bestselling religious-secular lexicon, *My Grandfather Was a Rabbi* (2002), makes ample use of satire. In the sociolinguistic study that Bat-Zion Yemini-Amrani undertakes in "Satire in the Work of Uri Orbach," she shows that satirical writing can contribute to bridging between the religious and the secular. She selected 18 out of 550 vastly differing headwords which shed light on customs and experiences in various areas of life and through all life cycles as lived by Israel's religious population, and collected headwords according to variables such as status, age and gender. The six satire features used most by Orbach, inflation, exaggeration, parody, juxtaposition, absurdity, and camouflage indicate Orbach's way of criticizing both the religious and the secular, and clarify his goal to bringing them closer and to educate them to constructive communication and mutual respect.

Mathematics education researcher (songwriter, musician and poet) Lawrence (Larry) M. Lesser analyses a 2020 album of original Jewish music that contains only nonliturgical songs, several of them strategically using humor or playfulness. In "The Use of Humor on a Contemporary Folk Jewish Album," he shows how the context of entertainment, education and their intersection can enlighten the nature and the role of the songs he wrote.

Satire is again the focus of attention in the symposium on Al Gini and Abraham Singer's *The Sanity of Satire: Surviving Politics One Joke at a Time* (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2020). Organized by Steven Gimbel under the auspices of the International Association for the Philosophy of Humor, the symposium took place online at the Pacific meeting of the APA earlier this year. Three additional critics joined Gimbel, Sammy Basu, James E. Caron, and Sam Welbaum. Their criticisms, revised after the authors' initial response, are published here with the authors' amended response.

Finally, Arie Sover, the Founder of this journal, has published this year an extensive study of Jewish humor, whose ground-breaking approach has not been lost on Arthur Asa Berger, the reviewer of *Jewish Humor: An Outcome of Jewish Wisdom, Historical Experience, and Survival* (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2021).

I hope that you will enjoy this festive issue of the journal, published in the Jewish New Year in Israel.

Lydia Amir

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