FINAL REPORT OF A
CROSS VALIDATION AND CONSTRUCT VALIDATION STUDY OF THE
FROMAN ASSESSED RISIBILITY CLASSIFICATION EXAM
AS CORRELATED WITH OTHER HUMOR MEASURES

Richard Froman, Principal Investigator

Morehead State University, Department of Psychology
Major Objectives

The major objective of this research was to test the validity of a sense of humor measure previously developed by the principal investigator. This objective was met by testing a new sample taken from the same population as the first sample and correlating scores on various existing sense of humor tests with scores on the new humor test: the Froman Assessed Risibility Classification Exam.

Literature Review

A variety of tests have been devised by humor researchers to operationalize the concept of sense of humor. Most of these are created and designed specifically to examine the hypotheses of individual research projects. These idiosyncratic dependent measures (which usually consist of a list of jokes or cartoons compiled by the researcher) are too numerous to list, much less to describe, but their proliferation suggests a major problem plaguing humor research. The problem is that there are great variations in the operationalization of the concept of sense of humor. A diversity of operationalizations is not necessarily a problem but, in this case, most of these various measures have not been used enough to be standardized or checked for reliability or validity. Although many tests have been developed, few have been used by researchers other than the original developers. The most common type of humor test, by far, is the assessment of humor appreciation. However, tests
have also been developed to assess humor production, humor preferences, humor interpretation, humor achievement, and the use of humor in various situations. The only types of tests of concern to the proposed research project are humor appreciation tests and situational use tests.

HUMOR APPRECIATION TESTS

The first recorded psychological test of humor appreciation was Almack's *Sense of Humor Test* (published in 1928) which is described by Stump (1939). It consisted of 90 jokes and 12 humorous drawings. The items were judged by those taking the test as "very funny", "fairly funny", or "not humorous at all". The unique aspect of this test was the method used to score it. A key was provided based on the responses of people referred to as "competent judges". The closer the respondent's judgments were to those of the judges, the better their sense of humor was assumed to be. Since that time, sense of humor has come to be seen as a relativistic personality trait which may differ from person to person on the basis of certain qualitative variables. It is no longer in vogue to try to determine how individuals compare to an arbitrarily defined standard of the perfect sense of humor. Even if some people could be proven to have an objectively better sense of humor than others, it is not likely that such a test would be very popular. As Leacock (1961) has observed, "a sense of humor is a highly valued personality trait and people are unwilling
to admit a lack of sense of humor regardless of what other vices they may admit."

**CONTENT-BASED TESTS.** Cattell and Luborsky (1947) developed what came to be known as the IPAT (Institute for Personality and Ability Testing) Humor Test. Entering 100 items into a cluster analysis, they found 13 content-based clusters which were shown to be reliable in a test-retest procedure. In addition to the content-based scales, cluster analysis also revealed five personality clusters: Good-natured Self-assertion, Rebellious Dominance, Easy-going Sensuality vs. Sex-repressed Aggressiveness, Resigned Derision and Urbane Sophistication. This was the first humor appreciation test to measure personality variables on the basis of appreciation for various types of humorous content. Yarnold and Berkeley (1954) later performed another cluster analysis which resulted in a more parsimonious set of seven content-based categories.

The Antioch Humor Test was developed by Mindess, Miller, Turek, Bender and Corbin (1986) to test an individual's appreciation of 10 kinds of humor. These 10 content categories are sexual humor, humor degrading to women, humor degrading to men, hostile humor, ethnic humor, sick humor, scatological humor, nonsense humor, social satire, and philosophical humor. The authors provide statements describing the personality traits common to those whose enjoyment of each kind of humor is low, moderately high or extremely high. For example, people who are low in the enjoyment of sexual humor are
described as being "prim and proper. They may be severely repressed and easily embarrassed. They probably maintain conventional moral standards and are apt to be more judgmental than easygoing" (p. 198).

These content-based scales can assess attitudes toward various subject matter areas in a relatively nonthreatening manner. They have, as a result, been designed and used quite often as diagnostic tools. Both of the tests described in this section attempt to use the assessment of sense of humor as a means of measuring more traditional personality traits. It is difficult to find a test that measures humor as a personality trait worthy of assessment as a distinct and important feature of adult functioning.

FUNCTION-BASED TESTS. Other researchers have constructed tests based on the functions of humor. Byrne, Terrill and McReynolds (1961) developed a 64-item cartoon humor appreciation test based on four categories of humor: sexual, hostile, ridiculing and nonsensical. Although these categories could be considered content-based, the test is used to functionally determine the amount of drive operating in each of these four content areas.

O'Connell (1962) developed the Wit and Humor Appreciation Test (WHAT) in order to investigate the functional Freudian distinctions between humor, hostile (tendentious) wit and nonsense (innocent) wit. The test is composed of 30 items, 10 from each of the categories. It was found that humor is adaptive and is used by
well-adjusted persons while hostile wit is used by less adjusted persons. Split-half measures of internal consistency were computed for all three scales. On a college student sample, humor achieved a .77 reliability coefficient while nonsense wit was .84 and hostile wit was .61. A one-week test-retest reliability assessment on a sample of male schizophrenics revealed coefficients of .88 for nonsense, .83 for humor and .80 for hostile wit. This is one of the few tests that reports reliability results.

Svebak (1975) developed a humor test that took a unique approach to the measurement of humor appreciation. Whereas most humor appreciation tests use joke or cartoon funniness ratings to develop an index of appreciation, the Sense of Humor Questionnaire asks respondents questions concerning three dimensions of humor appreciation. Svebak asserts that humor appreciation is based on these three dimensions: habitual sensitivity to humorous messages (Meta-Message Sensitivity subscale), habitual tendency to dislike humorous role and comic situations (Liking of Humor subscale), and defensive strategems against emotional impulses (Emotional Expressiveness subscale). The first dimension is considered to be laughter-activating while the last two are laughter-inhibiting. This self-report questionnaire probes these three dimensions by asking how sensitive respondents believe they are to humorous messages, how much they dislike humorous roles and comic situations, and how they defend against emotional impulsivity.
Lefcourt and Martin (1986) found that internal consistency coefficients for the Meta-Message Sensitivity and Liking of Humor subscales ranged from .60 to .75 while the internal consistency of the Emotional Expressiveness subscale was generally below .20. Thus they analyzed only the results of the first two subscales in their research and treated them as separate measures since the correlation between the two subscales was generally less than .50. In cross-validational studies, the Meta-Message Sensitivity subscale was found to be correlated with self-esteem in females, peer ratings of the ability to find humor in situations and humorousness of an original humor narrative created, on an impromptu basis, for an anxiety-provoking film. The Liking of Humor subscale was found to correlate with peer ratings of ability to find humor in situations, the number of witty comments in a spontaneous monologue by males, humorousness of an original humor narrative created for an anxiety-provoking film and the number of witty responses to a creativity test for males.

Another test that is not dependent on humor ratings of comic material was created by Ziv (1979). It assesses humor appreciation by measuring agreement with various statements. Ziv (1984) lists the following examples of such items: "When others laugh, I generally join the general laughter", "I find many situations funny" and "comparing myself with my friends, I enjoy more the jokes I hear" (p. 112). As Lefcourt and Martin, who used Svebak's test extensively, have noted, this type of test
is less likely to become quickly outdated because it does not involve rating humor which is notorious for the speed with which it goes in and out of fashion. Although such measures seem to be more vulnerable to self-reported social desirability biases, Lefcourt and Martin have found no correlation between the SHQ and the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale (Crowne & Marlowe, 1960).

Although function-based tests can also be used as diagnostic tools, most of the designers of such tests seem more interested in validating the functions humor is hypothesized to perform. Despite this tendency, these tests can be used as measures of various function-related aspects of the sense of humor and scores obtained from the tests can be correlated with other measures of personality.

**TECHNIQUE-BASED TESTS.** Eysenck (1942) developed a three-part test that was originally based upon a technique taxonomy but factor analysis later determined there were three underlying dimensions to the test: sexual/nonsexual, complex/simple and personal/impersonal. The first part of the test consists of jokes originally used in a study by Landis and Ross (1933). There are seven types of jokes: quantity (exaggeration or understatement), incongruity (incompatible things), unexpected (surprises), truth (projection of oneself into cartoon situation), superiority (inadequacy of others), repression (of sexual or fearful thoughts), and ridiculous (nonsense) humor. The second part of the test consists of cartoons selected
by Eysenck to correspond to the same seven categories. The third part of the test consists of cartoons which make ludicrous comparisons between things that are similar in many ways but also very different. Although this was designed as a technique-based test, and can be interpreted as such, Eysenck allowed the factor analysis solution to supercede the original design so no results were reported on the basis of the technique distinctions.

Hehl and Ruch (1985) constructed a technique-based sense of humor test to investigate the connection between sense of humor and other personality variables. The 3W-D-K Sense of Humor Inventory (referring to its three-dimensional properties) is based on a taxonomy of humor including incongruity-resolution, nonsense and sexual humor. They found significant correlations between ratings on these scales and various personality measures. Although these tests are suggestive of the potential of the technique-based tests to correlate with other personality variables, little progress has been made toward developing such tests. Eysenck's test has never fully exploited the potential of its technique-based taxonomy and Hehl and Ruch's taxonomy, while it has produced results, seems extremely limited in comparison to all of the known techniques for eliciting humor.

UNIDIMENSIONAL TESTS. Some tests have been developed to measure humor appreciation as a unidimensional trait. An early sense of humor test designed by Roback (1943) contained six cartoons and 10 jokes to be rated for humor. There is nothing in the description of the test to
indicate that these jokes and cartoons are representative of any dimensions except humor. The point of such a scale is to provide a general measure of the level of enjoyment derived from humorous stimuli.

The Mirth Response Test (MRT) was constructed by Redlich, Levine and Sohler (1951) to investigate the relationship between personality and humor. Although it was not constructed with particular dimensions in mind, certain response patterns were interpreted as being indicative of various types of pathology. This test was originally composed of 36 cartoons but it was later condensed to 31 and finally to the 20 cartoons used by Levine and Abelson (1959). They used the test to measure the vulnerability of psychiatric patients to disturbing cartoons by having psychiatrists rate the cartoons for disturbing qualities and then having patients rate them for humor.

The general procedure of the MRT is conducted in three parts. Respondents first enjoy the cartoons at their own pace. The experimenter notes the respondents' expressions as they turn over each card on which a cartoon is printed. In the second phase, the respondents are instructed to sort the cartoons into three piles: those they like, those they dislike and those to which they feel indifferent. In the third step, they are instructed to put the cards in the order of the five they liked the most and the least.

A humor test designed by Pennypacker and Thysell (1958) consisted of 84 cartoons to be rated for
funniness. The 84 cartoons were not preselected for their value in representing any particular taxonomy but 35 of them were found, after testing, to be predictive of certain clinical types. Three distinct response patterns were identified which were predictively associated with three groups: a normal sample, an alcoholic sample and a psychotic sample. Although significant diagnostic relationships were found between the test result and the actual clinical types, this test does not seem to have been used by any other researchers.

Some humor tests are unidimensional, not because of any theoretical assumption made by the researcher about the nature of humor, but because of a lack of methodological rigor. Babad (1974) constructed a humor test consisting of 36 cartoons and jokes to be rated on a seven-point funniness scale that was totally lacking theoretical underpinnings. Babad evidently chose the humor stimuli at random instead of using any of the pre-existing humor tests which were based on a meaningful taxonomy. He found no relationship between his sense of humor measure and various personality traits and, on that basis, concluded that humor tests are invalid. The only conclusion that can be supported by these results is that an overall humor score, obtained from this particular test, may not be useful in predicting the diverse personality traits measured by Babad. It cannot be assumed that a taxonomy-based humor test (or even a carefully developed unitary measure) could not make meaningful distinctions among personality traits.
Murstein and Brust (1985) developed a unidimensional humor test which they used very creatively. They asked dating couples to individually rate cartoons, comic strips and jokes for funniness in addition to taking Rubin’s Liking and Loving Scales and directly expressing their feelings of liking and loving for each other and their intentions concerning marriage. The humor ratings were judged for similarity between the two persons in each couple and similarity in humor responses was correlated with the other measures. Similarity in humor ratings was found to be correlated with all measures of liking and loving as well as being predictive of those who stated an intention to marry their dating partner. Although this test was constructed without regard to dimensions of humor, it is quite possible that the similarity ratings reflect the similar feelings of the partners toward humor of various types.

SITUATIONAL USE TESTS

Tests of a person’s situational use of humor investigate the various life situations in which humor is used by individuals. These tests include those used to assess the degree to which humor is used to cope with negative stress. While other tests focus on assessing in a laboratory setting the degree to which a person can theoretically enjoy humor, situational use questionnaires suggest the degree to which people experience humor in their everyday lives.

The situational use tests that have been tested to the greatest degree for reliability and validity (by the
tests' authors alone) are the Situational Humor Response Questionnaire (SHRQ) and the Coping Humor Scale (CHS) (Lefcourt & Martin, 1986). The SHRQ is a multiple-choice questionnaire designed to elicit responses indicative of the degree to which humor is experienced in the respondent's regular daily activities. For example, one item begins with the statement, "If you arrived at a party and found that someone else was wearing a piece of clothing identical to yours..." (p. 24). This statement was followed by five possible responses ranging from not being particularly amused to laughing heartily. The internal consistency of the SHRQ ranges from .70 to .85. Test-retest reliability is approximately .70 and item-total correlations for individual items range from .25 to .55.

Lefcourt and Martin's (1986) Coping Humor Scale is "designed specifically to assess the degree to which individuals make use of humor in coping with stressful events they encounter in their lives" (p. 28). The test consists of seven statements to which the respondents indicate their degree of agreement. For example, one item states, "I often lose my sense of humor when I'm having problems". The internal consistency of this scale is in the .60 to .70 range.

The SHRQ and the Coping Humor Scale have also been evaluated in terms of validity. The SHRQ has been significantly correlated with the Vigor scale on the Profile of Mood States (POMS), laughter duration and frequency during an interview, peer ratings, Rosenberg's
Self-esteem Scale, the number of witty comments in a requested monologue (males only), the ability to produce a humorous narrative in response to an anxiety-provoking film and humorous answers on a creativity test. The Coping Humor Scale has received validational support by being correlated with peer ratings and the ability to produce a humorous narrative in response to an anxiety-producing film.

Other situational use tests have not been validated. Tooper (1986) developed a test of what she called the Humor Quotient (HQ). It consisted of 10 items evaluating the degree to which humor is experienced by the respondent in various situations. A high score is interpreted as being indicative of someone who has a good sense of humor and can use it to his or her advantage. However, the test is intended to be diagnostic and the score is not expected to be immutable. Those obtaining a low score are encouraged to carefully examine the areas of their lives in which they do not exhibit humor and attempt to remedy the situation. However, there is no statistical justification provided to support the test’s reliability or validity. It was developed in the applied atmosphere of a classroom setting and is used to provoke thought about individual humor responses to various situations. This is probably an appropriate use for such a test but it is not of much help to researchers who need a reliable and valid test to measure the situational use of humor. It is fortunate that Lefcourt and Martin’s tests seem to adequately satisfy that need.
Hester's exploratory humor assessment scale (HUMA), as described by Denton (1987), includes items designed to assess the situational use of humor. For example, one item asks the respondent to "Give an example of how you have used humor throughout your life, and in the past month" (p. 43). This test is designed to ultimately provide a foundation for using humor as a therapeutic intervention but, since it is still in the exploratory stage, it also has not been tested for reliability or validity.

There are many possible applications of situational use tests. They can be used as an assessment tool in the investigation of the effect of humor on various stressful situations including physical disability and marriage (as Lefcourt & Martin, 1986, have done). They can also be used to facilitate thought-provoking discussions of the many uses of humor in everyday life as Tooper has done. Eventually such tests may form the foundation for facilitating interventions to improve the quality of life for people who do not naturally see things from a humorous perspective. Finally, such tests may be useful in future investigations of the effects of the humorous perspective on physical health.

THE FROMAN ASSESSED RISIBILITY CLASSIFICATION EXAM (FARCE)

Froman (1989) has developed a technique-based instrument for assessing an individual's sense of humor. The FARCE is based upon a taxonomy of the following six categories of humorous stimuli: Humorous Aggression, Audience Knowledge, Contrast, Exaggeration, Repetition, and Taboo. (See Appendix for a complete definition of.
each of these categories.) This test is composed of 12 cartoons, two representatives of each humor category. A score for each subscale is obtained by adding the humor enjoyment ratings of both items composing each subscale.

Test-retest reliabilities range from .26 to .87 for individual items. Overall test-retest reliabilities range from .60 to .65. Correlations between the two items on each scale (similar to internal consistency measures of reliability) range from near zero to .44. Separate norms have been developed for both males and females on each subscale of the test (see Appendix).

Separate forms have been created for each gender on the basis of preliminary findings of gender differences in classification of humor. Although it is expected that the FARCE will eventually be lengthened, in order to increase the reliability of each of the individual subscales, it is important, at this preliminary stage to ascertain the validity of the instrument as it is currently composed.

METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES IN TESTING

There are enough methodological issues concerning test construction to fill an entire book (and there are many such books). However, there are also certain methodological issues that apply particularly to humor tests. These issues include providing information concerning reliability and validity and norms and standardization.

INFORMATION ON RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY. A cursory review of the previous sections detailing the various tests leads one to the conclusion that very few test
developers are concerned with providing statistical verification of their tests' reliability and validity. Lefcourt and Martin (1986) are one of the few exceptions to this rule. The scope of the problem can be seen to be even greater when it is noted that most studies claiming to measure humor favor the use of idiosyncratically constructed measures that make no attempt to be reliable or valid. The external validity of these measures will continue to be questioned as long as these tests are used only by their creators.

INFORMATION ON NORMS AND STANDARDIZATION. No humor test provides a complete set of norms and standardization information against which individuals may be compared. This may be due to the feeling that one's sense of humor should not be labeled normal or abnormal. While this is a valid concern, the lack of normative information prevents individuals from learning in what ways their sense of humor is unique and different from the average person. In cases in which sex or age differences have been found in test results, age- and sex-based norms should be provided.

GOALS OF THE CURRENT RESEARCH

The current study attempted to obtain evidence of the validity of a new sense of humor test by correlating it with other sense of humor tests that have been tested for reliability and validity. The test was also cross-validated by being administered to a different sample of the original population. The Froman Assessed Risibility Classification Exam was completed by subjects
who also completed Svebak's Sense of Humor Questionnaire (SHQ) and Martin and Lefcourt's Situational Humor Response Questionnaire (SHRQ) and Coping Humor Scale (CHS). Correlations were calculated between subscales of the former and all of the other tests. Such correlations provide a basis for measuring the validity of the FARCE.

Method

Subjects and Procedures

Ninety-eight participants (37 males and 61 females) were recruited from Introductory Psychology classes at Morehead State University with the incentive of extra credit for participation. Subjects were scheduled in small groups to preclude the effects of contagious laughter resulting from the testing materials. Participants were greeted and tested by two undergraduate research assistants who conducted the experimental sessions. Participants were informed that they would be filling out some questionnaires and informed of their rights as experimental participants, including the right to terminate their participation at any time. The humor tests were administered in the following order: the test to be validated (the FARCE), the SHRQ, the SHQ and the CHS (see the Appendix). After the completion of all of the tests, subjects were debriefed concerning the purposes of the study, given the opportunity to receive their personal test results and the experimental findings before being released. After the data analysis, both individual results and project findings were mailed to participants (see Appendix).
Materials

The FARCE is a test designed to measure appreciation of the six basic types of humor: Aggression, Audience Knowledge, Contrast, Emotion, Exaggeration and Taboo (see Appendix for definitions of the six categories). The SHRQ is designed to measure what type of situations an individual finds humorous, in what situations a person finds humor appropriate and how important humor is to an individual. The SHRQ consists of two separate scales measuring two different aspects of sense of humor. The first scale measures how well an individual picks up humor in everyday life. The second scale measures how much an individual likes comedians and humor. The CHS measures the degree to which an individual uses humor to cope with stressful situations in everyday life. The psychometric properties of these tests were described in the literature review.

Results and Discussion

The data of two of the original 98 subjects was not analyzed due to irregularities in completing their forms that suggested a misunderstanding of the scales used. The data from the remaining 96 subjects (60 females and 36 males) was analyzed in order to develop norms for the FARCE and correlate FARCE subscores with the other tests.

The norms developed for the FARCE are listed (along with the norms for the other tests) on the "Personal Humor Survey Results" form in the Appendix. Each subject was given their individual score placed in the context of these norms.
The norms of the FARCE revealed some interesting relationships. As would be expected from sex differences in aggressive behavior, males reported enjoying aggressive humor significantly more than females did. Males preferred Exaggeration followed, in order, by Aggression, Taboo, Emotion, Audience Knowledge and Contrast. Females also enjoyed Exaggeration the most followed by Contrast, Audience Knowledge, Taboo, Emotion and Aggression. Contrast was least preferred for males and second most preferred for females while Aggression was least preferred for females and second most preferred for males. Although there were no significant differences among the male ratings of the six categories, females liked Exaggeration humor significantly more than either Emotion or Aggression. Female enjoyment of Emotion humor may have been diminished due to the tendency of females to empathize with the feelings of others more than males.

The great majority of the subscales of the FARCE were found to be significantly correlated. The only subscales not significantly correlated are Aggression and Contrast, Aggression and Taboo and Emotion and Audience Knowledge. One of the goals of future research will be to expand the scales so that those intercorrelations will be insignificant.

Some of the subscales of the FARCE were shown to correlate with some of the other humor tests. Aggression is correlated with Metamessage Sensitivity ($r = .24, p < .05$) and the CHS ($r = .22, p < .05$). This suggests that those who
enjoy aggressive humor are also most sensitive to humorous messages and most likely to use humor in coping with stress. Audience Knowledge is related to Liking of Humor ($r = .25, \ p < .05$) suggesting that those that enjoy Audience Knowledge humor also enjoy comedians and humor in general. Taboo is correlated with CHS ($r = .24, \ p < .05$) suggesting that those that enjoy Taboo humor are more likely to use humor to cope with stress. Exaggeration is correlated with CHS ($r = .20, \ p < .05$) suggesting that those that enjoy Exaggeration humor are more likely to use humor to cope with stress. Overall, enjoyment of Aggression, Taboo and Exaggeration are correlated with using humor to cope with stress. It is possible, that these types of humor may provide the best material for combatting stress.

The SHRO, the Metamessage Sensitivity subscale, the Liking of Humor subscale, and the CHS were all completely intercorrelated (all $p < .05$).

These findings suggest a three-step approach to using humor to cope with stress. First, the person must be sensitive enough to humor cues to recognize humor in the environment. Second, this increased sensitivity leads to seeing more everyday situations as humorous. Third, this ability to see humor in everyday situations tends to be associated with the use of humor to cope with stress.

In addition, the current study has also added somewhat to our knowledge of this process. First, enjoyment of Aggression, Taboo and Exaggeration humor types are related to the degree to which humor is used to
cope with stress.

Since the FARCE is not directly designed to measure any of the concepts measured by the other instruments, it was not expected that there would be a great number of correlations. However, the correlations between Aggression, Taboo, Exaggeration and the CHS shed new light on the types of humor involved in coping with stress. Further research is needed to strengthen the FARCE by lengthening the six scales and decreasing the correlations between them.

Significance of the Research

Sense of humor, as a distinct personality trait, has been largely ignored by psychologists in their study of normal functioning. Those psychologists who have studied the sense of humor variable have, for the most part, used idiosyncratically devised tests which are of little or no use to other researchers. In addition, most of these tests have not even been published so that other researchers could have access to them.

The current research continues the process of developing a test of known reliability and validity which can be used to assess sense of humor as an identifiable personality trait. The test will also be made available to researchers and clinicians to facilitate the further study of personality variables related to sense of humor. If sense of humor can be measured and delineated on the basis of the subscales of this test, the experimental study of sense of humor as well as the clinical investigation of such a trait will be enhanced.
Eventually this test may be used to measure humor preferences and how they correlate with other personality variables.

Utilization of Project Findings

This work will be submitted for presentation to an upcoming international humor conference in order to reach as many researchers and clinicians as possible. It is also expected that the test, including normative information and reliability and validity coefficients, will eventually be published and disseminated to the widest possible audience of humor researchers and those interested in the application of humor testing to clinical practice.

REFERENCES


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APPENDIX
FROMAN
ASSESSED
RISIBILITY
CLASSIFICATION
EXAM

Test Booklet

Form M
Instructions

The answers you provide on this test will be scored to produce a risibility profile which will describe your individual sense of humor. Although you may discuss this with anyone you wish, please keep the test itself confidential. Do not discuss or describe any of the items on the test so that others can take the test later without being familiar with the items.

When you are instructed to begin, turn to page 1, look at the comic, read the caption if there is one, and take the time to fully enjoy the humor of the comic. There is no time limit on this test. Take as much time as you need to understand and enjoy the comic. Do not return to a comic after turning the page.

After you read and understand the comic, fill in the blank corresponding to a number from 1 to 7 on the answer sheet indicating how funny you think the comic is. The scale explaining these numbers will be found at the bottom of this page. Please be as accurate as possible since there is no right or wrong answer. The more accurately you reflect your judgments, the more insight you will obtain into your unique sense of humor. If, after a reasonable time, you still do not understand a particular comic, leave that item blank on your answer sheet and go on to the next comic.

After finishing the test, make sure that you have provided all of the information requested and have given a response for every item. If, at this point, you find that you have not responded to an item, turn to this item, read the comic and rate it.

Thank you very much for your cooperation in taking this test. The answers you provide will not only be useful to you but will also be used to provide standards against which to measure others who take the test in the future.

HUMOR SCALE

Not Funny 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Funny
Dang!! Why do I always have to sit next to some weirdo?
The morning dew sparkled on Bill's web. The decoys were in place, his fly call was poised, and luck was in the air.
"Well, okay, Frank... Maybe it IS just the wind."
Carrots of the evening

Hey, Celery!
"Looks like the bank's been hit again. Well, no hurry—we'll take the big horse."
"Now wait just a minute here... How are we supposed to know you're the REAL Angel of Death?"
"Freeze! ... Okay, now ... Who's the brains of this outfit?"
"And next, for show and tell, Bobby Henderson says he has something he found on the beach last summer..."
"And I've only one thing to say about all these complaints I've been hearing about... venison!"
"Hello, I'm Clarence Jones from Bill's office and ... Oh! Hey! Mistletoe!"
After 23 uneventful years at the zoo’s snakehouse, curator Ernie Schwartz has a cumulative attack of the willies.
FROMAN
ASSESSED
RISIBILITY
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Test Booklet

Form F
Instructions

The answers you provide on this test will be scored to produce a risibility profile which will describe your individual sense of humor. Although you may discuss this with anyone you wish, please keep the test itself confidential. Do not discuss or describe any of the items on the test so that others can take the test later without being familiar with the items.

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Thank you very much for your cooperation in taking this test. The answers you provide will not only be useful to you but will also be used to provide standards against which to measure others who take the test in the future.

HUMOR SCALE

Not Funny 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Funny
"My next guest, on the monitor behind me, is an organized crime informant. To protect his identity, we've placed him in a darkened studio—so let's go to him now."
Roger screws up.
Excuse me, Zeek, but I have to go over to the neighbor's yard for a few minutes... be right back.

Yo! We got any magazines?
"To the death, Carlson! Hang on to the death!"
Carrots of the evening

Hey, Celery.
"Now wait just a minute here... How are we supposed to know you're the REAL Angel of Death?"
"Freeze!...Okay, now...Who's the brains of this outfit?"
"And I've only one thing to say about all these complaints I've been hearing about... venison!"
"It's still hungry... and I've been stuffing worms into it all day."
After 23 uneventful years at the zoo's snakehouse, curator Ernie Schwartz has a cumulative attack of the willies.
Dear Humor Study Participant:

This report is in response to your request for information concerning the outcome of the study on humor in which you participated during the Spring semester at Morehead State University.

As you know, the purpose of the study was to determine the relationship, if any, between the newly developed Froman Assessed Risibility Classification Exemplars (FARCE) and other humor tests which have been independently validated. Since the FARCE is divided into male and female forms and is designed to measure six different types of humor, many separate correlations had to be calculated.

Although further analyses will probably be performed before final conclusions are drawn, preliminary analyses have suggested some interesting findings. As would be expected from sex differences in aggressive behavior, males enjoyed aggressive humor significantly more than females did. The order of enjoyment of the categories was also interesting. Males enjoyed Exaggeration most followed, in order, by Aggression, Taboo, Emotion, Audience Knowledge, and Contrast. Females also enjoyed Exaggeration most followed by Contrast, Audience Knowledge, Taboo, Emotion and Aggression. Contrast and Aggression switched places in the rankings of males and females. Contrast was least preferred for males and second most preferred for females while Aggression was least preferred for females and second most preferred for males. Although there were no significant differences among male ratings for the six categories, females liked Exaggeration humor significantly more than either Emotion or Aggression. Female enjoyment of motion humor may have been diminished due to the tendency of females to empathize with the feelings of others more than males.

There were many correlations found between each of the six scales of the FARCE and all of the other scales. Those presented here are only those correlations which were found to be significant for both males and females. Some of the six scales of the FARCE were found to be correlated with one another. This is believed to be due to the fact, in most cases, that each scale is only two items long at this point and some of the items contain elements of more than one scale. It is expected that when many pure examples of each category are isolated, the scales will not be correlated. The following correlations were found between subscales of the FARCE: Aggression with Emotion, Contrast with Taboo, Contrast with Exaggeration, Emotion with Audience Knowledge, Emotion with Taboo, Emotion with Exaggeration and Taboo with Exaggeration. In most of these cases, there seem to be elements of both categories in the items used in the categories.

The only subscale of the FARCE shown to correlate with any of the other humor tests for both males and females was Exaggeration. This scale was correlated with the CHS. This suggests that enjoyment of Exaggeration is related to the degree to which people use humor to cope with stress. It may be that Exaggeration is the most useful type of humor for dealing with stress and, therefore, those who enjoy this type
of humor, are better able to cope with stress by using humor. Aggression was found to be related to the CHS for males only indicating that males may be able to use aggressive humor in coping with stress.

The SHRQ is correlated with Metamessage Sensitivity. This means that those who are most sensitive to humor in their lives tend to find humor in more situations than those who are not sensitive to it. The SHRQ is also correlated with the CHS which means that those who are most sensitive to humor in their lives tend to use humor more often to cope with stress. In addition, Metamessage Sensitivity was related to the CHS which indicates that those who are sensitive to humorous cues in their environment are more likely to use humor in coping with stress.

The two scales of the SHRQ, the Metamessage Sensitivity and Liking of Humor, were found to be correlated with one another. This suggests that those who are most sensitive to humor cues will also like humor more than those who are not as sensitive.

The self-rating of likelihood of being amused in various situations was found to be correlated with Metamessage Sensitivity and the CHS. This suggests that those who rate themselves as likely to laugh in many situations are more sensitive to humor cues and are more likely to use humor to cope with stress.

These findings suggest a three step approach to using humor to cope with stress. First, the person must be sensitive enough to humor cues to recognize humor in the environment. Second, this increased sensitivity to humor leads to seeing more everyday situations as humorous. Third, this ability to see humor in everyday situations tends to be associated with the use of humor to cope with stress.

In addition, the current study has also added somewhat to our knowledge of this process. First, for both males and females, enjoyment of Exaggeration humor is related to the degree to which humor is used to cope with stress. Second, males, but not females, who enjoy aggressive humor, also tend to use humor to cope with stress.

Since the FARCE is not directly designed to measure any of the concepts measured by the other instruments, it was not necessarily expected that there would be a great number of correlations. In fact, since it is believed that the FARCE measures humor in a different way, it was expected that there would be little correlation. However, the correlations between Exaggerations and the CHS and male Aggression and the CHS shed new light on what types of humor are involved in coping with stress. Further research is needed to strengthen the FARCE by lengthening the six scales and decreasing the correlations between them.

Thank you once again for your participation in this study. If you have any comments or further questions about this study or its results, please contact me at the following address: Rick Froman UFO 874 MSU Morehead, KY 40351.

Thank you,

Dr. Richard L. Froman, Jr.
August 4, 1989

Dear Humor Study Participant:

These are your personal test results from the psychological study of humor in which you participated during the Spring semester of 1989 at Morehead State University. As the principal investigator on this project, I would like to thank you once again for your important contribution to this study. I hope these results will add to your enjoyment of your experience in this study. I am sorry these results took so long to reach you but they were not analyzed until recently due to my schedule and complications in the computer analysis process.

Please find enclosed the Personal Humor Survey Results sheet, the Six Categories of Humor, and the percentiles for both males and females. Your raw scores on each test are listed on the Personal Humor Survey Results sheet. Under your name, the first test scores given are from the Fronan Assessed Risibility Classification Exemplars (FARCE). This test involved rating 12 comics on their funniness (the higher the score, the funnier you thought it was). The 12 comics consisted of two examples of each of the six types of humor. These types are explained on the page titled, "Six Categories of Humor". The FARCE was designed to measure your appreciation of the six kinds of humor. On your results sheet, AGGR is Aggression, CONT is Contrast, RMOT is Emotion, KNOW is Audience Knowledge, TBOO is Taboo and XAGN is Exaggeration. Reading from left to right on your results sheet, you will find your score on each part of the FARCE. The average score of others on the test and the 95% range are also included. All averages and ranges are based only on the scores of participants of your own sex.

The 95% range is the range in which 95% of the participants in the study (of your sex) scored. For example, if the 95% range is 4–13, 95% of the people in the study scored between 4 and 13. If your score is less than 4 or higher than 13, you know that your responses were different than 95% of those who took the test. Differing from the average on a scale is not positive or negative or good or bad. It simply means that you are quite unique in your appreciation or lack of appreciation for that type of humor. No further information is provided for your scores on the FARCE because there is still much work to be done on the FARCE to make it a valid instrument. Therefore, you should not place much value on the scores you obtained on this test.

The second test score listed on the results sheet is the Situational Humor Response Questionnaire (SHRQ). The SHRQ is designed to measure the degree to which you find humor in your everyday life. A high score indicates that you find many situations in your life humorous while a low score indicates that, although you may find some situations funny, many everyday occurrences do not amuse you. The results sheet lists your score on the SHRQ, the average score and the 95% range. You can also determine your percentile ranking on the SHRQ by finding your score on the percentile sheet and noting the percentile listed to the right of your score. Male percentiles are listed on the top half of the
sheet and female percentiles are on the bottom half of the sheet. Your percentile indicates the percentage of test takers who had a lower score than you did. For example, if your percentile is 40th, this means that your score is higher than 40% of those who took the test.

The third test score on the sheet is the Self-Rating of Situational Humor. These were individual items taken from the end of the SHRQ in which you indicated the importance of sense of humor in your choice of friends, your self-rated likelihood of being amused in many situations, and the degree to which your humor depends on the situation. A high score on each of these three items means that 1. sense of humor is important to your choice of friends, 2. you are likely to be amused in many situations and 3. your humor does not depend on the situation. Each of these items includes your score, the average score and the 95% range.

The fourth test score on the results sheet is the Sense of Humor Questionnaire (SHQ). This scale is divided into two subscales: Metamessage Sensitivity and Liking of Humor. The Metamessage Sensitivity subscale is designed to measure how sensitive you are to humorous cues in jokes and in everyday life. A high score indicates a high level of sensitivity to humor cues. The Liking of Humor subscale measures how much you like comedians and humor in general. A high score indicates a high degree of liking for humor. Your scores on both subscales are listed on the results sheet along with the average and the 95% range. You can also find your percentile for each score on the percentile sheet.

The final test score on the results sheet is the Coping Humor Scale (CHS). The CHS measures the degree to which you use humor to cope with stressful situations in your life. A high score on this scale indicates that you often use humor to cope with problems in your everyday life. The results sheet indicates your score on the CHS as well as the average score and the 95% range. You can also determine your percentile by finding your score on the percentile sheet.

At this point, the FARCE is in an extremely experimental stage of development and should not yet be accepted as valid. The SHRQ can indicate your ability to find humor in everyday life. The self-ratings should not be surprising since the questions were very straightforward and obvious in their intent. The Metamessage Sensitivity subscale of the SHQ indicates how sensitive you are to humor in your life while the Liking of Humor subscale of the SHQ indicates how much you like humor and comedians. The CHS indicates how much you use your sensitivity to humor in everyday situations to help you cope with stress.

Research has found that humor can be useful in coping with stress. However, it has not been shown that people can be trained to use humor to cope or can decide to develop their sense of humor. At this point, these test scores can be taken as a rough indication of many aspects of your sense of humor but it is not the final word. If any of these scores surprise you, use that as a starting point for exploring humor in your life. You may, indeed, know yourself much better than the tests do but the tests can, at least, be used to provoke you to think about your sense of humor.

Once again, I would like to emphasize that your scores have been, and will continue to be, kept confidential. If you have any questions or comments about the tests or your results, please contact me at the following address: Rick Froman UFO 874 MSU Morehead, KY 40351.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Dr. Richard L. Froman, Jr.
PERSONAL HUMOR SURVEY RESULTS

For:

FROMAN ASSESSED RISIBILITY CLASSIFICATION EXEMPLARS (FARCE)
(note: all six scales range from a possible minimum of 2 to a possible maximum of 14)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>95% range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AGR</td>
<td>9.36</td>
<td>4-14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONT</td>
<td>7.81</td>
<td>2-14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EVCT</td>
<td>9.11</td>
<td>4-14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KNOW</td>
<td>8.31</td>
<td>4-13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TBOO</td>
<td>9.19</td>
<td>4-14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XAGN</td>
<td>9.64</td>
<td>3-14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SITUATIONAL HUMOR RESPONSE QUESTIONNAIRE (SHRQ)
(note: scale ranges from a possible minimum of 21 to a possible maximum of 105)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SHRQ</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>95% range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>60.72</td>
<td>46-75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SELF-RATINGS OF SITUATIONAL HUMOR (subscales of the SHRQ)
(note: all three scales range from a possible minimum of 1 to a possible maximum of 5)

| Importance of Sense of Humor When Choosing Friends | Average 3.69 | 95% range 3-4 |
| Likelihood of Being Amused in Various Situations  | Average 3.78 | 95% range 3-5 |
| Degree to Which Your Humor Depends on the Situation | Average 3.08 | 95% range 2-5 |

SENSE OF HUMOR QUESTIONNAIRE (SHQ)
(note: both scales range from a possible minimum of 7 to a possible maximum of 28)

| Metamessage Sensitivity | Average 21.34 | 95% range 16-26 |
| Liking of Humor         | Average 19.25 | 95% range 12-26 |

COPING HUMOR SCALE (CHS)
(note: both scales range from a possible minimum of 7 to a possible maximum of 28)

| CHS | Average 20.81 | 95% range 14-27 |

Comments:
PERSONAL HUMOR SURVEY RESULTS

For: 

FROMAN ASSESSED RISIBILITY CLASSIFICATION EXEMPLARS (FARCE)
(note: all six scales range from a possible minimum of 2 to a possible maximum of 14)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>95% range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AGGR</td>
<td>7.61</td>
<td>2-13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONT</td>
<td>8.93</td>
<td>4-13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EMOT</td>
<td>7.80</td>
<td>2-13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KNOW</td>
<td>8.81</td>
<td>4-14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEOO</td>
<td>8.75</td>
<td>4-14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XAGN</td>
<td>9.90</td>
<td>5-14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SITUATIONAL HUMOR RESPONSE QUESTIONNAIRE (SHRQ)
(note: scale ranges from a possible minimum of 21 to a possible maximum of 105)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SHRQ</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>95% range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>61.24</td>
<td>46-76</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SELF-RATINGS OF SITUATIONAL HUMOR (subscales of the SHRQ)
(note: all three scales range from a possible minimum of 1 to a possible maximum of 5)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Importance of Sense of Humor When Choosing Friends</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>95% range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>3-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likelihood of Being Amused in Various Situations</td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>3.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree to Which Your Humor Depends on the Situation</td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>3.07</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SENSE OF HUMOR QUESTIONNAIRE (SHQ)
(note: both scales range from a possible minimum of 7 to a possible maximum of 28)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metamessage Sensitivity</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>95% range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>20.56</td>
<td>16-26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liking of Humor</td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>20.78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

COPING HUMOR SCALE (CHS)
(note: both scales range from a possible minimum of 7 to a possible maximum of 28)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHS</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>95% range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>20.39</td>
<td>14-27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comments:
### Male Percentiles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SHRQ</th>
<th>Metamessage Sensitivity</th>
<th>Liking of Humor</th>
<th>CHS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Score</td>
<td>Score</td>
<td>Score</td>
<td>Score</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentile</td>
<td>Percentile</td>
<td>Percentile</td>
<td>Percentile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>≤ 49</td>
<td>below 10th</td>
<td>≤ 13 below 10th</td>
<td>≤ 16 below 10th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-53</td>
<td>10th</td>
<td>14-15 10th</td>
<td>17 10th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54-56</td>
<td>20th</td>
<td>16 20th</td>
<td>18 20th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57</td>
<td>30th</td>
<td>17 30th</td>
<td>19 30th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>40th</td>
<td>18 40th</td>
<td>20 40th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-62</td>
<td>50th</td>
<td>19-20 50th</td>
<td>21 50th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63-64</td>
<td>60th</td>
<td>21 60th</td>
<td>22 60th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65-66</td>
<td>70th</td>
<td>22 70th</td>
<td>23-24 70th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67-72</td>
<td>80th</td>
<td>23 80th</td>
<td>25 90th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73</td>
<td>90th</td>
<td>24 90th</td>
<td>≥ 26 above 90th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>≥ 74</td>
<td>above 90th</td>
<td>≥ 25 above 90th</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Female Percentiles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SHRQ</th>
<th>Metamessage Sensitivity</th>
<th>Liking of Humor</th>
<th>CHS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Score</td>
<td>Score</td>
<td>Score</td>
<td>Score</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentile</td>
<td>Percentile</td>
<td>Percentile</td>
<td>Percentile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>≤ 50</td>
<td>below 10th</td>
<td>≤ 16 below 10th</td>
<td>≤ 15 below 10th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-52</td>
<td>10th</td>
<td>17 10th</td>
<td>16-17 10th</td>
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<td>53-56</td>
<td>20th</td>
<td>18 20th</td>
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<tr>
<td>57-58</td>
<td>30th</td>
<td>19 30th</td>
<td>19 30th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59-60</td>
<td>40th</td>
<td>20 40th</td>
<td>20 40th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61-62</td>
<td>50th</td>
<td>21 50th</td>
<td>21 60th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63-65</td>
<td>60th</td>
<td>22 60th</td>
<td>22-24 80th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66-67</td>
<td>70th</td>
<td>23 80th</td>
<td>25 90th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>68-72</td>
<td>80th</td>
<td>24 90th</td>
<td>≥ 26 above 90th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73</td>
<td>90th</td>
<td>≥ 25 above 90th</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>≥ 74</td>
<td>above 90th</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PERSONALITY STUDY

Your participation in this project is voluntary. You may choose to terminate your participation in this project at any time. Although the results of this project may be published, no individual’s data will be identified. As in all psychological investigations conducted at Morehead State University, all data are treated as confidential. By writing your name on this form, you are consenting to participate in this Personality Study.

Please provide the following information.

Name ____________________________________________

Local Address ___________________________________

Name of your Psy 154 instructor ________________________ (to insure extra-credit)

Circle the appropriate alternatives

Your gender: Female Male

Your class standing: Frosh Soph Junior Senior Grad Other

Your age in years and months: Yrs___ Mos___

Your major _______________________________________

Since this Personality Study is a continuing project, we would greatly appreciate your cooperation in insuring that future participants will react to the project without prior information about these tests. This can only be done if people who have already participated in the study do not talk about the tests with others. The scientific worth of the project depends on your cooperation.

A brief summary of your personal test results will be mailed to you. If you would like to know the general results of the study, please address an envelope to your permanent address before you leave.

Thank you for your cooperation and participation!
Table 1

SIX CATEGORIES OF HUMOR

* AGGRESSION - Both verbal and physical aggressive acts which involve either physical contact with a person in an intentionally aggressive manner or verbal aggression. Includes racial insults, personal put downs and physical attacks.

* AUDIENCE KNOWLEDGE - Anything which causes the audience to feel that they know more than the character. Includes misunderstandings between characters, audience expectations of an imminent confrontation, audience realization of the truth being hidden by a statement with a double meaning (double entendre), a secret signal from one character to another, audience knowledge of a character's true motivation which is unknown to other characters, one character being fooled by another, an action that is significant to the audience but not to at least one of the characters, mispronunciations and slips of the tongue.

* CONTRAST - All types of physical and verbal contrasts (i.e., silly with serious, expected image with actual image). Includes puns, metaphors, colloquialisms involving ridiculous comparisons, switches (from what was obviously being implied to what actually happened), reversals (of roles or attitudes or any other kind of turnabout), illogical statements, surprises (plot twists), non sequiturs, actions opposite of words, animals or machines being treated like humans or vice versa.

* EMOTION - All emotions exhibited by the characters. Includes embarrassment, nervous laughter, apprehension, anxiety, self-abasement, bewilderment, crying, disgust, contagious laughter, and exasperation.

* EXAGGERATION/UNDERSTATEMENT - Any physical or verbal exaggeration. Includes exclamations, unintentional physical contact, accidentally breaking, dropping or hitting things, being hit by something, making a misstep or pratfall, any overexpenditure of energy, a physical reference to a verbalization, mechanization of human action, delay in response, use of rhythm, sarcasm, understatement, statement of the obvious, and any humor arising from an exaggerated characterization.

* TABOO - Anything that is considered off-limits in ordinary conversation. Includes any scatological references, references to any body parts or body functions, gallows humor, sexual humor or any humor involving reference to any other socially taboo topic.