

The UK comedy guide

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system



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The science of comedy

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Author

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Posted: Thu Nov 22, 2007 8:49 am Post subject: The science of comedy

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Joined: 17 Oct 2007
Posts: 222
Location: Rack 3, U40

Why we laugh at things...

Quote:

Laughter is the brain's way of learning from its mistakes, according to researchers trying to develop a computer with a sense of humour.

Most comedy stems from a gap between what the observer expects to happen, and what actually does. Scientists say that's because the mind has evolved to quickly interpret a situation based on sketchy information, and humour arises when it corrects itself when the full picture comes to light

Physicist Igor Suslov at the Kapitza Institute for Physical Problems in Moscow has now devised a mathematical model based on that idea, which he said could help develop a machine with a simulated sense of humour.

In this week's New Scientist, he says: 'The nature of the processing algorithm makes mistakes inevitable,' adding that the biological function of a laugh is to 'make brain operations more efficient'.

He based his studies on gag such as the father telling off his son: 'Do you know what happens to liars when they die?' Johnny: 'Yes sir, they lie still.' The joke comes about because the listener's brain settles on one meaning of 'lie', then spots an error and corrects itself.

This also explains why jokes don't work if you already know, or can spot, the punchline, and why timing is crucial.

However, Suslov admits his theory is incomplete, since people don't always laugh when they misinterpret something ambiguous.

http://www.chortle.co.uk/news/2007/11/22/6068/the_science_of_comedy


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john elson

 Posted: Thu Nov 22, 2007 10:48 am Post subject:

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Joined: 20 Nov 2007
Posts: 109
Location: peterborough

a laugh as we all know, is a barking noise that comes out of a hole in your face , anywhere else and your in trouble.

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Moran_fan

 Posted: Thu Nov 22, 2007 1:24 pm Post subject:

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Joined: 01 Mar 2006
Posts: 155
Location: South

That theory is discussed in 'the naked jape' I think.


<http://www.myspace.com/hazelshumour>

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·
NutbushTity

 Posted: Thu Nov 22, 2007 3:36 pm Post subject: At Last A Full House!

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Joined: 11 Apr 2006
Posts: 108
Location: Earth (If not now eventually)

Why we laugh at things...

Quote:

Physicist Igor Suslov at the Kapitza Institute for Physical Problems in Moscow has now devised a mathematical model based on that idea, which he said could help develop a machine with a simulated sense of humour. Unquote:

**Will these machines replace a live audience?
Will they still be paying an entrance fee?
At last a full house! (and i don't even play Bingo or Poker)**

David Tannen


"Just a thought, do we have to bring our own oil can?"

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Askin

 Posted: Fri Nov 23, 2007 8:28 pm Post subject: Why we laugh at things?

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Joined: 23 Nov 2007

Posts: 1

Location: Stockholm, Sweden

Being a humour writer, I read a lot of articles related to humour. This article, is perhaps the most interesting and the most clever article I have read on this topic.

Askin Ozcan

Author of WISDOM IN SMILE, THE SECOND VENICE, SMALL MIRACLES, STOCKHOLM STORIES, LIGHTNING AND A BOUQUET OF ROSES

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