

Humor and social distance in elementary school children¹

LAWRENCE W. SHERMAN

Abstract

A hypothesis based on social facilitation theory tested the proposition that humor facilitates social attraction. Three separate intact classrooms (ns = 24, 25, and 22) of fourth graders responded to two different Likertlike peer rating surveys, one measuring interpersonal perceptions of humorousness and the other, classroom social distance. The study replicates the author's earlier research confirming the differential influence of children's genders in rating each other's humorousness and classroom social distance. Differences between same- and cross-gender ratings are examined for two dependent measures, (1) interpersonal humor perceptions and (2) social distance. Statistical interactions between the genders of the raters and the children whom they rated were examined using a complex within- and between-subjects ANOVA design. Consistently among both genders, children who were rated as more humorous were also perceived as less socially distant. The findings also confirmed earlier research indicating that children of the same gender rate each other as less socially distant as well as more humorous than do children of the opposite gender. A model-fitting procedure (EQS) was used to statistically confirm an a priori model in which social distance was predicted to be a function of interpersonal perceptions of humor and the genders of both the raters and the children whom they rated. This model was also compared with another model which less efficiently predicted humor perceptions as a function of social distance. Implications for positively influencing classroom sociometric structures are also discussed.

"Laughter is the closest distance between two people."
Giacomo Leopardi

One common phrase used to describe, introduce, laud, and sometimes even eulogize people is, "S/he has (had) a good sense of humor!" The sentiment of this phrase is most usually a positive one. In other words, it is better to have a good sense of humor than not to have one. Exactly what it is to have a good sense of humor is many times lost in the details of papers presented at humor conferences, and the present study is not one which will attempt to answer that question. However, the mere fact that humor is seen to be such an important and positive attribute might suggest that, from a psychological and perhaps even an evolutionary (Darwin 1955) viewpoint, it has some socially functional value. Theoretically, the hypothesis of this paper is that humor does have a social-psychological function, which is to reduce social distance among people. As an interpersonal communication behavior, humor facilitates social interaction. Chapman's (1983) review of social interaction in and social facilitation of humor and laughter describes several factors being associated with the social facilitation of laughter, including the gender, age, and sexual mix of the group (same- and cross-gender dyads), friendly vs. strange company, and age mix of groups (see Chapman 1973 for some earlier views on the social facilitation of laughter). He presents a relationship between social status and humor which suggests a model in which all the aforementioned variables would be predictors or determinants of humor, rather than humor being predictive of friendliness, social status, etc. While Chapman has not formally presented this model, the present author only infers from Chapman's writings that his model would predict humor from social status. A recent study by Masten (1986) suggests that humor may well influence or affect peer relations and subsequent peer reputations. Masten's (1986) study also suggests that underlying general cognitive abilities (individual-difference measures) may account for the strength in relationship between children's sense of humor and peer status. Contrary to a model predicting humor from social status and in support of Masten's position, the hypothesis of the present study is that humor in the form of interpersonal humor perceptions is predictive of social status and friendship preferences.

Earlier examination of the above hypothesis that humor facilitates social interaction included longitudinal and cross-sectional developmental analyses (Sherman and Wolf 1984; Sherman 1985a, 1985b) of the relationship between measures of children's interpersonal perceptions of humorousness and social desirability: a statistically significant ($p < .01$) association ($r = -.71$, $n = 164$) between these two measures was deter-

mined. Children between the ages of 8 and 13 who had the least social distance among their classroom peers also had the highest-rated sense of humor. Children who were perceived by their peers as lacking in a sense of humor tended also to have the greatest social distance among their classroom peers. This correlation was also shown to be influenced by two additional variables: (1) gender and (2) age. Sherman (1985a) presented analyses which demonstrated the statistically significant ($p < .01$) moderating influences of gender and age on the relationship between humorousness and social acceptance. Differential same- and cross-gender as well as same- and cross-age ratings were shown to influence this relationship, especially in age-heterogeneous classrooms. The analyses of overall humor ratings, regardless of the attributes of the raters, obtained a significant interaction between age and gender of rated children; however, males were consistently perceived as more humorous than females at all age levels. Taken at face value, this earlier study tended to confirm Ziv's (1984) previous findings that males are perceived as being more humorous than females. However, when we examined their same- and cross-gender ratings, we did not find any significant gender differences, only age differences, and always a significant difference between same- and cross-gender humor ratings. Ziv's (1984) sample consisted primarily of adolescent Israeli subjects. Our study (Sherman and Wolf 1984; Sherman 1985a) was done with younger subjects in a somewhat unique age-heterogeneous behavior setting. A reciprocal pattern of social preference found in the earlier study (Sherman and Wolf 1984) may be evidence of the children's awareness of a distinct social code: girls should prefer girls for friends, and boys should prefer boys. In a similar fashion, there may exist some enmity between children of different ages. Perhaps each gender and age group also utilized a stereotypic kind of humor (sexist and ageist in content) which assists in maintaining this separation. The earlier analyses support this conclusion, especially in behavior settings where intergroup competition might be involved (mixed-aged classrooms). While older children appeared more positively receptive to the opposite gender's humor than younger children, the two sexes clearly appreciate the humor and prefer the friendship of their own gender. Ziv (1984: 157-160) suggests an explanation concerning "sex-role expectations." Although developmental trends indicate that older children are perceived as more humorous as well as less socially distant than younger children, it is believed that this pattern was confounded by the effects of different behavior settings (age-heterogeneous vs. age-homogeneous settings). The

earlier studies did not resolve this confoundment but certainly offered a word of caution with regard to the several statistically significant variables which may influence children's inter- and intrapersonal perceptions and appreciation of each other's humorousness, as well as their friendship preferences. Other variables found to be correlated with children's sense of humor include internal locus of control and communication apprehension or shyness (Sherman and Wolf 1984).

The late Henri Tajfel's (1982) social-categorization theory, as well as the criticisms of that theory by the Polish social psychologist, Janos Reykowski (1982), were used to explain the differential gender and age-group effects in the analysis of humor and social distance. Tajfel (1982) has described four key constructs which are associated with intergroup behavior: (1) social categorization, (2) social identity, (3) social comparisons, and (4) positive group distinctiveness. If one assumes that people socially create a network of various cognitive categories (social categorization) and attempt to define their own membership within those categories (social identity), as well as evaluate the characteristics which are assigned to various positions within those categories (social comparison), then perhaps one relevant dimension among those evaluative categories might indeed be a sense of humor. Reykowski (1982) takes issue with the categorical nature of Tajfel's model and suggests a more continuous manner of measurement, similar to the social distance and humor ratings utilized in this study. It is believed that the earlier (Sherman 1985a) relationships and confirmations of hypotheses derived from Tajfel's theory tended to confirm the validity of his perspective concerning inter- and intragroup behaviors. In their earlier study, "Context and ethnic humor in intergroup relations," Bourhis et al. (1977) present evidence demonstrating the influence of intergroup relations upon the perceptions and appreciation of ethnic humor. Martineau's (1972) sociologically and anthropologically based model implies that while humor may facilitate social relations, it may also aggravate interpersonal friction, and herein lies a second function of humor: in disparaging an out-group, humor may provide the medium of expression which creates cohesion and is the bonding agent for the in-group.

Criticism of our earlier examinations of the relationship between perceptions of humor as related to social distance have focused on the uniqueness of the laboratory setting and the sample of children which we used. The present study was an attempt to replicate and generalize our earlier findings to regular public-school settings. Because of limitations of

time and expense, the present study focused on age-homogeneous classrooms at approximately one single age level, nine-year-olds, and thus did not examine differential age-group influences. However, same- and cross-gender influences were definitely a focus of the present study. In addition, we were interested in using relatively new statistical procedures (see *Child Development* 1987), which allowed us to examine and statistically test how well our obtained data fit two models: (1) a model in which social distance measures would be predictive of humor perceptions and (2) a model in which we suggest that humor perceptions are predictive of social distance.

Method

Sample

Three intact fourth-grade classrooms of approximately equal size were used in this study. The mean ages of the children were approximately 9.6 years old. While these were coeducational classrooms, gender distribution in the three classrooms was not balanced. For later analytic purposes, gender was coded as follows: 1 = male and 0 = female. Only 9 of the subjects in the first classroom ($n = 24$) were female, 14 in the second classroom ($n = 25$) were female, and 11 in the third classroom ($n = 25$) were female. The classrooms might be considered a sample of convenience (nonrandom) from a midwestern, suburban, predominantly middle-class public-school system near Cincinnati, Ohio. All children in the respective classrooms participated in the study. All measurements took place during the spring semester, in April. Thus, with regard to propinquity, the children should have been sufficiently familiar with each other, having been in these self-contained classrooms for nearly three-quarters of the school year. The two rating surveys were administered at two different times, three weeks apart.

Instrumentation

Social distance. During the spring semester, sociometric measures in the form of ratings were obtained in the children's classrooms (see Sherman 1984; Asher and Hymel 1981; Kane and Lawler 1978; see also Miller and Gentry 1980 for further discussion of these techniques). The scale allowed

each child within any particular classroom to both give and receive from every child a rating on a 1-to-5 continuum. The rating continuum was anchored from (1) "Would like to have her/him as one of my best friends," to (5) "Wish she/he weren't in our room." Theoretically, the mean social-distance scores, a continuous measure, could range from 1 to 5, and relatively low scores (1) would indicate less social distance, while relatively high scores (5) would indicate greater social distance. The ratings could then be analyzed contingent upon the gender of both the raters and the ratees, so that a separate same- and cross-gender mean rating could be determined.

Humor rating. In a fashion quite similar to the social-distance rating described above, the children were asked to rate each other with regard to how humorous they perceived one another to be. They were instructed as follows:

I want to find out how funny people are. By funny I don't mean funny-looking or dumb or just plain silly, I mean a person has a good sense of humor, tells good jokes, makes people laugh, and can laugh at other's jokes. Put a check mark in the column that best describes each one of your classmates on this list.

The list consisted of an alpha/vertical list of children in the classroom, and the horizontal rows consisted of the five-point continuum of humor categories ranging from (1) "Not funny at all," to (5) "Very funny!" The children's mean same- and cross-gender humor ratings were then determined.

Design and analysis. Two different types of analyses were performed. The first was designed to answer the question, "are there differences between humor and social distance ratings received by children of the same or opposite gender?" This was accomplished by using a two-way repeated-measures ANOVA design where same- and cross-gender ratings were treated as a repeated-measures within-subjects factor and gender of the children receiving the ratings was treated as a between-subjects factor. This design was applied to both the social distance and the humor ratings. The second design was correlational and asked, "what is the relationship between children's humor ratings and their social distance ratings? Is their a 'best fit' model which would predict children's same- and cross-gender social-distance ratings from their genders and same- and cross-gender humor ratings which they received from their peers?" Both an a priori

path-analytical model and a chi-square goodness-of-fit test were examined. While gender of rater was not hypothesized to be significantly related to either same- or cross-gender humor ratings, it was predicted to be related to cross-gender social distance ratings, with females rating males as more socially distant than males' ratings of females: a positive correlation. Also, same-gender humor ratings were hypothesized to be significantly ($p < .05$) and inversely related to same-gender social-distance ratings, and cross-gender humor ratings were likewise hypothesized to be significantly ($p < .05$) and inversely related to cross-gender social-distance ratings. The answers to these later questions and hypotheses were determined through the use of Bentler's (1985) EQS structural-equations procedures. It is believed that Bentler's (1985) strategy had a superior solution to these data than the better-known LISREL strategy (Joreskog and Sorbom 1984).

Results

After obtaining the children's humor and social-distance ratings, their same- and cross-gender ratings for both scales were determined. Thus, each child had four separate ratings, one set of two humor ratings (both a same- and a cross-gender rating) and a set of two social-distance ratings (both a same- and a cross-gender rating). The same/cross-gender ratings then constituted repeated measures in a mixed within- and between-subjects ANOVA design. Gender of rater was considered as a between-subjects factor. Table 1 presents two separate two-way within/between-subjects ANOVAs, one for the social-distance ratings and the other for the humor ratings. A statistically significant ($p < .02$) interaction between gender of rater and same/cross-gender ratings was obtained for the social-distance measure ($F(1,72) = 5.71$). As can be seen in Table 2, while same-gender social-distance means are not significantly different between males and females, cross-gender ratings which males received from females were significantly higher (greater social distance) than the cross-gender ratings which females received from males. Nevertheless, cross-gender ratings were significantly ($p < .001$) higher than same-gender social-distance ratings, thus indicating less social distance among children of the same gender. Only the same/cross-gender main effect was statistically significant ($p < .001$) for the humor ratings ($F(1,72) = 73.78$). Same-gender humor ratings were significantly higher (more humor) than cross-gender ratings.

Table 1. *Two two-way within-subjects ANOVAs of same-and cross-gender (repeated measures) social-distance and humor rating means by gender*

Source	df	MSe	F	p
Social distance analysis				
A (gender)	1	6.33	10.25	.002
error	72	.62		
B (cross/same raters)	1	58.72	169.35	.001
A by B interaction	1	1.98	5.71	.02
error	72	.35		
Humor analysis				
A (gender)	1	.60	.69	ns
error	72	.87		
B (cross/same raters)	1	15.29	73.78	.001
A by B interaction	1	.54	2.58	.11
error	72	.21		

Table 2. *Same- and cross-gender mean social-distance and humor ratings by gender*

Variables Gender of rated child	Type of rating Humor		Social distance	
	Gender of rater		Gender of rater	
	same	cross	same	cross
Female	2.89	2.12	1.88	2.91
Male	2.89	2.37	2.06	3.56

The next step in our analyses was to intercorrelate same- and cross-gender humor and social-distance ratings as well as gender of rater with each other. The social-distance and humor scores entered into this correlational analysis were mean ratings for each subject, given by other subjects of either the same gender or the opposite gender in their respective classrooms. These zero-order Pearson correlations are presented in Table 3. It is interesting to note that while there is a weak positive relationship between same- and cross-gender social-distance ratings ($r = .31, p < .05$), this same type of relationship for the humor ratings, same- and cross-gender humor, is much stronger ($r = .61, p < .001$). The later finding by itself might be interpreted as a measure of the reliability of our humor scale ratings. Also, same-gender humor and social-distance ratings obtained the predicted inverse relationship ($r = -.63, p < .001$). Cross-gender humor ratings were weakly and inversely related to same-gender social-distance ratings ($r = -.30, p < .05$)

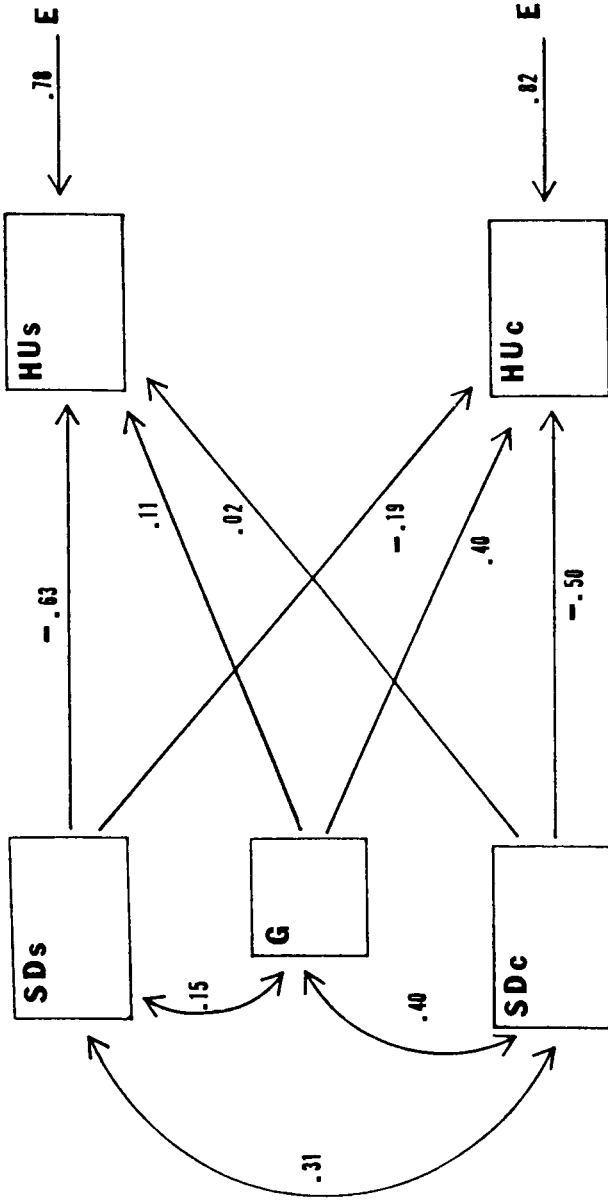
Table 3. Intercorrelation matrix of same- and cross-gender social-distance and humor ratings ($n = 74$)

Variables	SDs	SDc	HUs	HUc	Gender
SDs	1.00				
SDc	.31	1.00			
HUs	-.63	-.18	1.00		
HUc	-.30	-.40	.61	1.00	
Gender	.14	.40	.00	.17	1.00
Means	1.98	3.27	2.90	2.26	.54
Standard deviation	.65	.80	.72	.75	.50

as well as to their counterpart, the cross-gender social-distance ratings ($r = -.40, p < .01$). The only measure significantly related to the gender of the raters was cross-gender social distance ($r = .40, p < .01$).

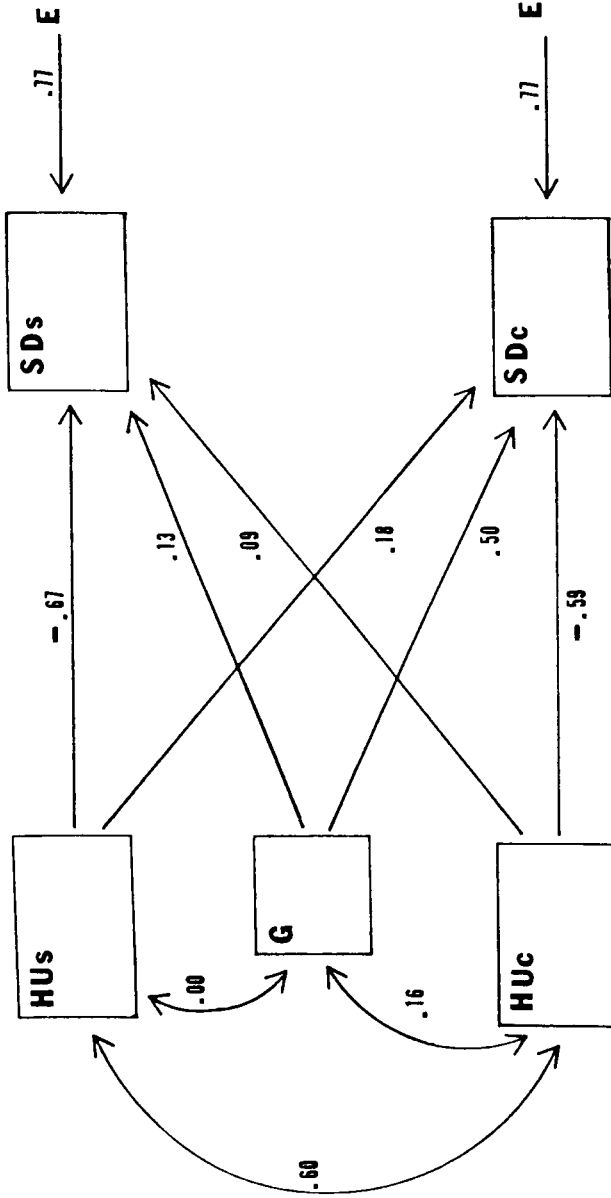
Confirmation and testing for a best-fit model of the relationship between humor and social distance was accomplished using Bentler's (1985) EQS best-fit modeling procedures. Two models were tested. The first model was based on Chapman's (1983) discussion in which we assumed that same- and cross-gender humor ratings were dependent measures and same- and cross-gender social-distance ratings and gender of rater were independent measures; that is, humor is predicted by social distance. Figure 1 displays a path analysis of this model. It is not believed that this model fits the data very well. A significant chi-square goodness-of-fit index was obtained ($\chi^2(4) = 34.462, p < .001$) indicating a significant deviation from the specified model. For these analyses, a significant chi-square value indicates a lack of fit; that is, significant deviation from the specified model. The Bentler-Bonett normed-fit index was only .71, indicating substantial unaccountable variation. The next model (see Figure 2) tested assumed that same- and cross-gender social-distance ratings were dependent variables and that same- and cross-gender humor ratings as well as gender of rater were independent variables predicting social distance. This model made more sense to us in that we assumed that a child's sense of humor was a social facilitator. Indeed, this model fit our data much more efficiently. The chi-square goodness-of-fit test was not statistically significant ($\chi^2(4) = 7.14, p < .12$), indicating that the data did fit this model. The Bentler-Bonett normed-fit index was .94, indicating substantially more variance accounted for and thus much greater congruency between this second model's specifications than between

Figure 1. Model 1 EQS path analysis predicting same- and cross-gender humor ratings from same- and cross-gender social-distance ratings and gender of rater



Key: G = gender of rater; HU = humor rating; SD = social-distance rating; s = same-gender; c = cross-gender; E = standardized error. Chi-square goodness of fit = 34.46, $df = 4$, $p < .001$. Bentler-Bonett normed fit index = .72. Coefficients next to double-headed lines are correlations. Coefficients next to single-headed lines are standardized regression weights.

Figure 2. Model 2 EQS path analysis predicting same- and cross-gender social-distance ratings from same- and cross-gender humor ratings and gender of rater



Key: G = gender of rater; HU = humor rating; SD = social-distance rating; s = same-gender; c = cross-gender; E = standardized error. Chi-square goodness of fit = 7.14, $df = 4$, $p < .13$. Bentler-Bonett normed fit index = .94. Coefficients next to double-headed lines are correlations. Coefficients next to single-headed lines are standardized regression weights.

those of the first model, where humor is predicted to be a function of social status.

Conclusions

In summary, a replication of an earlier study was accomplished on 74 fourth graders in three separate classrooms. They responded to both a social-distance and a humor rating scale. The ratings were reconfigured into same- and cross-gender ratings on both measures. The data support Tajfel's (1982) and Reykowski's (1982) views regarding social motivation and intergroup conflict. Differences in gender of raters and the same- and cross-gender social-distance and humor ratings were examined. Same-gender social-distance ratings were significantly lower than cross-gender ratings. Likewise, same-gender humor ratings were greater than cross-gender ratings. These findings are quite similar to those reported earlier (Sherman and Wolf 1984; Sherman 1985a, 1985b). Thus, we would conclude that our earlier findings can be generalized to regular public-school environments.

In addition, a test of two predictive models was examined, one suggesting that humor is a function of social status and the other suggesting that social status is a function of humor. The model predicting humor from social-distance perceptions was not nearly as good a fit to our data as the model predicting social distance from humor ratings. If humor is a social facilitating behavior, its function might be to bring people closer together. If this is so, then humor ratings should be inversely related to social distance: that is, children who are perceived as having a greater sense of humor should have less social distance among their classroom peers and thus appear to be more popular than peers who are perceived to lack a sense of humor. Our data fit this second model better than the one which we interpret to be Chapman's (1983). However, it must be pointed out that failure to reject our hypothesis does not necessarily prove that humor causes social distance. There may be other variables (traits) which could also account for this relationship. Our earlier study in the laboratory school (Sherman and Wolf 1984) did suggest other independent variables predictive of humor, including communication apprehension (shyness) and internal locus of control. Nevertheless, it is believed that the present study supports the notion that humor facilitates social interactions and is congruent with Masten's

(1986) earlier conclusion suggesting that a sense of humor as a basic social competence was predictive of social acceptance, and the lack of a sense of humor was related to social isolation and rejection. It might be noted here that Masten's (1986) measures of behavioral competence (social competence) were based on teachers' ratings of children rather than children's ratings of each other. It is believed that the present study's design would be a more ecologically valid indication of children's perceptions and subsequent social preferences.

In our earlier studies, we concluded that a sense of humor may be a basic social competency. It is quite surprising that among the recent wealth of studies on children's friendships and social relations (for example, Foot et al. 1980; Wine and Smye 1981; Schneider et al. 1985), very few studies focus on humor perceptions or behaviors, and, if they do, it is usually only a minor point in passing (for example, Cole et al. 1982; Cole and Kupersmidt 1983; Dodge 1983; Sherman and Burgess 1985). Masten's (1986) conclusions and recommendations for future research have noted this observation as well. This situation is quite surprising in that suggestions as to the importance of humor in classroom settings have been recognized as important in classroom mental hygiene ever since Redl and Wattenberg's (1959) classic work, *Mental Hygiene in Teaching*. The present author's earlier concerns for the social-psychological as well as ecological significance of children's classroom humor (Sherman 1975) was strongly influenced by Redl and Wattenberg (1959). Hill's (1988) handbook for teachers is one example of more recent acknowledgement of the importance of humor in the classroom. From our previous analyses as well as the one presented here, humorous children appear to be more desirable and have less social distance among their peers than children who are not perceived of as having a sense of humor. It may be much more fun to be around a person with a good sense of humor than one who does not possess this commodity. Gender appears to be an important factor in this relationship between perceived sense of humor and social attraction. Among fourth graders, children of the same gender are seen as both more humorous and more socially desirable than children of the opposite gender. While the present study does not address specific differences in male and female humor, this is an area of future research which probably should be pursued. Our earlier (Sherman and Wolf 1984; Sherman 1985a, 1985b) cautions concerning the moderating influences of gender on perceived social distance and humor were further strengthened by the present study. Nevertheless, classroom sociometric techniques

must take intergroup social-categorization factors into consideration. While Masten's (1986) study primarily investigated individual-difference measurements, the present study was primarily interested in intrapersonal perceptions. In this respect, it is believed that the present study complements and confirms Masten's (1986) earlier findings. Also, while several past strategies have been reported for intervening and helping lonely and rejected children to become more accepted by their classroom peers (for example, Asher et al. 1977; Wine and Smye 1981; Luftig 1987), none focus upon the training of humorousness in children who appear to be on the periphery of classroom sociometric structures. Perhaps a sense of humor is just as basic a social competency as knowing when to say "please" or "thank you." Those who have mastered the skills of humorousness, both its production and its appreciation, may be more attractive to and accepted by their classroom peers.

Miami University, Oxford, OH

Note

1. I would like to thank Ms. Kim Thornberry for assistance in obtaining the data for this study, Dr. Richard Hofmann for his statistical expertise and aid in establishing the EQS model-fitting analysis, and the Deans of the Graduate School and the School of Education and Allied Professions of Miami University for their support of this study. Requests for reprints should be sent to Lawrence W. Sherman, Associate Professor, Department of Educational Psychology, Miami University, Oxford, Ohio 45056.

References

- Asher, S. R., and S. Hymel
1981 Children's social competence in peer relations: sociometric and behavioral assessment. In Wine, J., and M. Smye (eds.), *Social Competence*. New York: Guilford, 125-157.
- Asher, S. R., S. L. Oden, and J. M. Gottman
1977 Children's friendships in school settings. In Katz, L. G. (ed.), *Current Topics in Childhood Education*, vol. 1. Norwood, N. J.: Ablex, 33-61.
- Bentler, P. M.
1985 *Theory and Implementation of EQS, a Structural Equations Program: Manual for Program (Version 2.0)*. Los Angeles, Calif.: University of California BMDP Statistical Software.

- Bourhis, R., N. Gadfield, and H. Tajfel
 1977 Context and ethnic humour in intergroup relations. In Chapman, A., and H. Foot (eds.), *It's a Funny Thing, Humour*. London: Pergamon, 261–266.
- Chapman, A. J.
 1973 Social facilitation of laughter in children. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology* 9, 528–541.
 1983 Humor and laughter in social interaction and some implications for humor research. In McGhee, P., and A. J. Goldstein (eds.), *Handbook of Humor Research*. New York: Springer, 125–157.
 1987 Special section on structural equation modeling. *Child Development* 58(1), 1–175.
- Coie, J. D., K. A. Dodge, and H. Coppotelli
 1982 Dimensions and types of social status: a cross-age perspective. *Developmental Psychology* 18(4), 557–570.
- Coie, J. D., and J. B. Kupersmidt
 1983 A behavioral analysis of emerging social status in boys' groups. *Child Development* 54, 1400–1416.
- Darwin, C.
 1955 *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals*. New York: Philosophical Library.
- Dodge, K. A.
 1983 Behavioral antecedents of peer social status. *Child Development* 54, 1386–1399.
- Foot, H. C., A. J. Chapman, and J. R. Smith (eds.)
 1980 *Friendship and Social Relations in Children*. New York: John Wiley & Sons.
- Hill, D. J.
 1988 *Humor in the Classroom: A Handbook for Teachers*. Springfield, Il.: Thomas.
- Kane, J., and E. Lawler
 1978 Methods of peer assessment. *Psychological Bulletin* 85, 555–586.
- Joreskog, K. G., and D. Sorbom
 1984 *LISREL VI, Analysis of Linear Structural Relationships by the Method of Maximum Likelihood, Users Guide*, 3rd ed. Mooresville, Id.: Scientific Software.
- Luftig, R. L.
 1987 Children's loneliness, perceived ease in making friends and estimated social adequacy: development and social metacognition. *Child Study Journal* 17(1), 35–53.
- Martineau, W.
 1972 A model of the social functions of humor. In Goldstein, J., and P. McGhee (eds.), *The Psychology of Humor*. New York: Academic Press, 101–128.
- Masten, A. S.
 1986 Humor and competence in school-aged children. *Child Development* 57, 461–473.
- Miller, N., and K. Gentry
 1980 Sociometric indices of children's interaction in the school setting. In Foot, H., A. Chapman, and A. J. Smith (eds.), *Friendship and Social Relations in Children*. New York: Wiley, 145–177.
- Redl, F., and W. W. Wattenberg
 1959 *Mental Hygiene in Teaching*, 2nd ed. New York: Harcourt, Brace and World.

Reykowski, J.

1982 Social motivation. *Annual Review of Psychology* 33, 123–154.

Schneider, B. H., K. H. Rubin, and J. E. Ledingham (eds.)

1985 *Children's Peer Relations: Issues in Assessment and Intervention*. New York: Springer.

Sherman, L. W.

1975 An ecological study of glee in small groups of preschool children. *Child Development* 46(1), 53–61.

X 1984 Social distance perceptions of elementary school children in age-heterogeneous and -homogeneous classroom settings. *Perceptual and Motor Skills* 58, 395–409.

1985a Humour and social distance ratings among elementary school children: some differential sex and age patterns. In MacHale, D. (ed.), *Fifth International Conference on Humour Book of Abstracts*, ERIC document ED 263–976. Dublin: Boole.

1985b Humor and social distance. *Perceptual and Motor Skills* 61, 1274.

Sherman, L. W., and D. E. Burgess

1985 Social distance and behavioral attributes of developmentally handicapped and normal children. *Perceptual and Motor Skills* 61, 1223–1233.

Sherman, L. W., and A. Wolf

1984 Intrapersonal perceptions of shyness and humor as related to interpersonal perceptions of social distance and humorosity. Paper presentation to the 4th International Congress on Humor, Tel Aviv, Israel. ERIC document ED 249 459.

Tajfel, H.

1982 Social psychology of intergroup relations. *Annual Review of Psychology* 33, 1–39.

Wine, J. D., and M. E. Smye (eds.)

1981 *Social Competence*. New York: Guilford.

Ziv, A.

1984 *Personality and Sense of Humor*. New York: Springer.

CONTENTS

The importance of tendency: an extension of Freud's concept of tendentious humor <i>Don L. F. Nilsen</i>	335	BOOK REVIEWS	
Trends in European humor research: toward a text model <i>Salvatore Attardo</i>	349	Ellen B. Basso, <i>In Favor of Deceit: A Study of Tricksters in an Amazonian Society</i> <i>Munro S. Edmonson</i>	405
Close enough for jazz: humor and jazz reality <i>Frank A. Salamone</i>	371	Carolyn S. Brown, <i>The Tall Tale in American Folklore and Literature</i> <i>Ronald L. Baker</i>	408
Humor and social distance in elementary school children <i>Lawrence W. Sherman</i>	389	Avner Ziv (ed.), <i>Jewish Humor</i> <i>Stanley Brandes</i>	411
		NEWSLETTER	415
		Contents Vol. 1 (1988)	453
		Publications received	457
		Readers	461