

## ANNOUNCEMENT OF CONFERENCE AND CALL FOR PAPERS

### Humour, History, and Methodology: A Multidisciplinary and Trans-Professional Enquiry

Durham University – 26-28 July, 2017



The Humours of the Past (HOP) Network brings together researchers and practitioners with a mutual stake in understanding, interpreting and communicating humour of various kinds from particular times and cultural contexts. The study of humour as an approach to history, and history as an approach to humour, are developing areas of enquiry. However, there has been relatively little cross-disciplinary reflection on the methods researchers use to identify and understand humour from the past, and on what may be similar across disparate cultural materials.

Furthermore, academic researchers have had only limited opportunities to discuss their modes of enquiry with practitioners who also have a professional stake in interpreting humour from the past, such as actors, directors, curators, and translators. To this end, HOP is holding a conference at Durham University, 26-28 July 2017 to encourage researchers and practitioners to share approaches. In addition to individual papers, there will be three roundtable discussions, exploring the verbal, visual and performative 'translation' of historical humour to contemporary audiences.

We now invite submissions of abstracts of not more than 300 words for 20-minute papers addressing, in their own way, the methodological issues that must be taken into account when studying humour from a particular past. Relevant topics might include:

- case studies of productive (or, unproductive) ways of identifying and/or theorising humour in a specific historical context
- the history and intellectual context of particular humour theories
- reflections on the uses and limits of particular theories of humour with respect to different historical periods
- studies of words for 'humour' and related phenomena in specific linguistic and temporal contexts
- the particular challenges of 'translating' verbal, visual, or performative humour for contemporary audiences
- historical case studies of humour censorship as a way into historical-cultural preoccupations
- the comparative value of studies of contemporary humour and comedy for considering more distant historical material
- investigations of the traditions of longstanding 'laughable' tropes (as applied to race, nationality, gender etc)
- studies of historical humour from particular theoretical vantage points, e.g. history of emotions, medical humanities, or theories of cultural value/ideology
- cross-temporal and/or cross-cultural comparisons of 'humour' and of humour theory
- case studies of successful inter- or cross-disciplinary projects involving historical humour

Please submit abstracts (300 words max) to [humoursofthepast@gmail.com](mailto:humoursofthepast@gmail.com) by 1 February 2017. We particularly welcome submissions of coherent panels of 3 linked papers. For further information about the network, see: <https://humoursofthepast.wordpress.com/> and follow us on Twitter @historichumour.

Organisers:

Daniel Derrin (Durham University)

Hannah Burrows (University of Aberdeen)



Arts & Humanities  
Research Council