

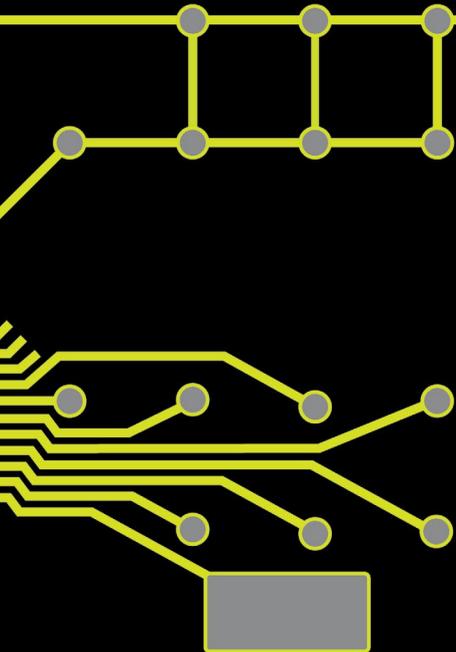
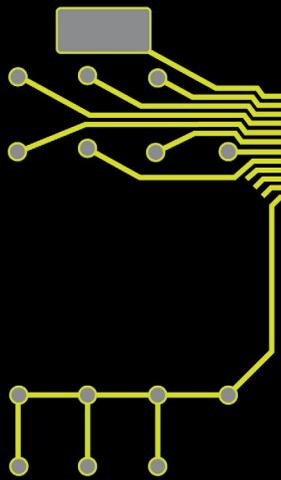
DIGITAL HUMOR THEORY

Michael J. Silber

SILBER

DIGITAL HUMOR THEORY

PRAATT INSTITUTE



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DIGITAL HUMOR THEORY

MICHAEL J. SILBER

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MICHAEL J. SILBER

Received and approved:

Thesis Advisor Thomas Klinkowstein May 2013

Chairperson Jeffrey Bellantoni May 2013

M.S. Candidate Michael J. Silber May 2013

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ARGUMENT

>>> **Abstract**

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MEME >>> **ANNOYED PICARD**

ABSTRACT >>>

This thesis proposes a new **Digital Humor Theory (DHT)**, which describes how digital communications present distinct opportunities for intentional and unintentional humor. I explore existing humor theories and interpret how they apply to contemporary digital communications. My discussion of the digital experience will focus on Internet-connected software-mediated devices, such as personal computers, laptops, and smartphones. These devices are interactive tools driven by each individual user and are portals into the vast pool of information that is the Internet. Other media, such as television and film, do exhibit some of the described humor phenomena, but these formats are primarily static and pre-set, requiring only passive engagement. An odd sequence of television advertisements may create humor through incongruity, but the linear structure of a commercial break has become conventional and unexciting, offering few surprises. The digital experience is more dynamic. It is varied in structure, and is individually driven, presenting increased opportunities for incongruity, surprise, and the delight of humor.

The digital experience constitutes a range of information delivery systems, which differ from those in the classic universe —“the real world.” As we navigate the screen world, we perceive incongruent fragments of written, verbal, and visual information in rapid succession. Our online engagement is defined by “Continuous Partial Attention,” an alert but divided simultaneous focus on many information sources, predicated on the desire to remain actively connected at all times. Continuous Partial Attention exaggerates syncretic processing, a view and interpretation of the whole, which supersedes the discrete analysis of individual parts. As our minds seek to organize visual information, incongruent fragments can become fused in nonsensical, absurd ways. Digital Humor Theory seeks to explain how this form of information-overload has the potential to amuse us, and this thesis suggests methods for experimentation and explores possible design applications.

DIGITAL HUMOR THEORY (DHT) suggests that digital communications enhance opportunities for humor.

- 1. The scanning behavior** associated with digital media and “Continuous Partial Attention”¹ disrupts visual hierarchies, promoting syncretic/undifferentiated processing of information. This accelerated scanning generates humorous incongruities and also heightens user stress, creating a need for Release Humor.
- 2. Human-Computer Interactions (HCIs)** demonstrate the complexity and nuance of human-to-human communications. Conversations with and through machines are prone to error, frustration, and often amusement. Humorous incongruities arise and superiority humor emerges as we take pleasure in the mistakes, misunderstandings, and limitations of software and machines.
- 3. Digital media is malleable**, widely available, and easily shareable, altering our notions of ownership and challenging how we define originality and creativity. The artist/designer now assumes the dual role of creator-producer with the audience serving as an active and responsive collaborator. As we pursue knowledge through a flexible but unpredictable medium, we have formed a digital culture that celebrates humorous absurdity.

HYPOTHESIS

Humor emerges from the incongruities of the digital experience.

Digital platforms generate unintended juxtapositions and encourage interventions that reward users with feelings of mirth.

This hypothesis suggests that the scanning behavior associated with digital media promotes syncretic thinking and celebrates humorous absurdities. Digital Humor Theory can begin to explain how such behaviors alter the way we think, and how we experience humor in our new digital culture. ■

BACKGROUND

- >>> **Understanding Humor**
- >>> **Memory and Influence**
- >>> **Existing Humor Theories**

MEME >>> **TOM SELLECK**
WATERFALL SANDWICH



UNDERSTANDING HUMOR >>>

“Nothing in man is more serious than his sense of humor; it is the sign that he wants all the truth.”²

—Mark Van Doren

The human mind craves growth and understanding. We want to know how things work, and when we lack understanding we hypothesize and experiment in pursuit of answers. Humor arises as we make mistakes in judgment or action along the way. Mistakes are part of our learning process, and we have evolved to acknowledge and take pleasure in these harmless gaps of understanding.³

The study of humor is a multi-disciplinary exploration of psychology, sociology, human behavior, and neurology. Humor is under-explained, though it has fascinated some of the greatest minds in history: Aristotle, Socrates, Darwin, and Freud, to name a few. There is no formula for humor, no simple explanation for why it exists, and yet it persists as a resolutely human trait.⁴ Humans possess a self-reflexive consciousness, enabling our unique interpretation of the world around us. We consider how objects and events relate to each other and to ourselves. As we interpret our surroundings, process information, and search for understanding, we are intermittently rewarded with the joy of humor. Our intellectual and emotional pleasures motivate us to continue searching and interpreting in pursuit of knowledge.

Humor in its essence is a form of cognitive art, a representation of the human mind with all its intricacies and quirks. It is a process subject to taste, existing knowledge, and is specific to each individual. Our sense of humor is part of our personality and our identity, a trait that makes us each unique. Humor is an interpretive act, a synthesis of perception, memory, thinking, emotion, and appreciation.⁵

No individual humor theory is able explain how humor is created, why it exists, and the exact cognitive factors that create a humor response, but, each argument provides insight into these questions. This thesis will examine how existing humor theories specifically apply to perception and cognition within the digital experience, advocating for a new “Digital Humor Theory” (DHT). ■

MEMORY AND INFLUENCE >>>

“A sense of humor is part of the art of leadership, of getting along with people, of getting things done.”⁶

—Dwight D. Eisenhower

Humor is extremely important to our daily lives. Yet because it involves a wide range of scientific disciplines, it has eluded comprehensive understanding. We know from experience that humor is an important and influential trait in interpersonal relationships, politics, and in shaping our behavior as social beings and as consumers. Humor has also been shown to enhance memory and recall, making it a powerful tool in advertising.

Researcher Keith A. Carlson investigated the correlation between humor and memory. Previous studies suggested that distinctiveness, bizarreness, or incongruity could alone enhance memory recall, while others theorized that the “semantic search” and mental processing involved in resolving *any* incongruity, humorous or non-humorous, gave it a memory advantage.⁷ Carlson’s experiments compared incongruity-resolution in non-humorous inspirational material to incongruity-resolution of humorous material (Note: Carlson’s use of “incongruity-resolution” does not refer to the Incongruity-Resolution Theory of Humor).

The goal of the present study was to determine if the act of resolving an incongruity, the experience of generating a solution, explained the advantaged recall for humorous material.⁸

Carlson’s findings indicate that perceived humor, not incongruity resolution, enhances recall. His study does not explain why humor is memorable, but his research does pinpoint its significance. As a possible explanation, Carlson refers to the work of Sven-Ake Christianson and Martin A. Safer, whose theories suggest that emotional content (including humor) may achieve privileged selection during processing and therefore be more memorable.⁹

Hurley, Dennet, and Adams’ research similarly focuses on the emotionality of humor and its impact on cognitive processing, as they examine the possible adaptive explanations for the existence of humor. They argue that the brain is a rational-logical structure, but that its

functions are governed by our emotions. Our emotions are informed by memory and declare pleasure and pain, thus motivating, reinforcing, or discouraging certain behaviors. Emotions give valence to a situation, either positive or negative, allowing snap decisions when conditions are otherwise neutral.¹⁰ Humor is the unbounded delight that we experience as the result of certain positive stimulus. Humor is so pleasurable that we seek it in many forms and actively attempt to elicit a humor response from others.¹¹ Hurley, Dennet, and Adams proceed a step further, characterizing humor as an addiction:

When we find humor in a situation we feel compelled to share it... If there is not enough comedy in our daily lives, we turn to our televisions and let professional comedians fill the gap... Like music, alcohol, tobacco, caffeine, and chocolate, humor is a modern human addiction.¹²

While our pursuit, creation, and endless consumption of humor may constitute an addiction, it seems difficult to characterize this as negative. Humor has the power to diffuse tense situations, encourage social bonding, and promote an overall enjoyment of life. If humor is indeed a growing addiction, perhaps it is a positive one.

Our obsession with humor shapes the way we communicate, especially in terms of Internet communications and social sharing. Richard Dawkins coined the term “meme” in his 1976 book, *The Selfish Gene*. He was attempting to label a “unit of cultural transmission, or a unit of imitation.”¹³ Dawkins understood that the spread of ideas resembles the replication of genes or the spread of a virus.¹⁴

Examples of memes are tunes, ideas, catch-phrases, clothes fashions, ways of making pots or of building arches. Just as genes propagate themselves in the gene pool by leaping from body to body via sperms or eggs, so memes propagate themselves in the meme pool by leaping from brain to brain via a process which, in the broad sense, can be called imitation.¹⁵

Not all memes are humor based, but the Internet meme is an excellent medium for conveying a funny idea or drawing silly comparisons between previously unrelated things. The explosion of the Internet meme is testament to both our desire for rapid information and our hunger for laughs. Memes quickly and powerfully convey a message, feeling, or idea but are often criticized for their triviality. The viral nature of memes makes them attractive to content providers, seeking



Senator Marco Rubio sips from a water bottle during his his February 12, 2013 Republican response to President Obama's State of the Union address.

broader audiences. Yet, those providers face the difficult task of weighing the informative value of their content against its potential for going viral. At times, the distinction between news reporting and entertainment becomes blurred.

The twenty-four hour news cycle has brought heightened scrutiny to our political leaders, while the Internet presents increased opportunities to point criticism and seek influence through humor. In her Associated Press column, “Our Collective Obsession with the Trivial,” Liz Sidoti laments how Twitter and social media users latch on to frivolous clips and sound bites, subverting important political discussion.¹⁶ Her column specifically notes Senator Marco Rubio's now infamous sip of water during his February 12, 2013 Republican response to President Obama's State of the Union address, Clint Eastwood's Republican National Convention performance, which included an extended conversation with an empty chair, and President Obama's often quoted “you didn't build that” line.¹⁷ Sidoti quotes political consultant Eric Dezenall, who explains,

We're seizing on the tiny because our brains can't really do the work of processing every little piece of information we get. At the same time, the Internet and the explosion of other media are fueling this focus on the small... This is something that is a combination of what's hard-wired into the brain... multiplied by a system that we don't control.¹⁸



Top: Clint Eastwood speaking to a chair, during the Republican National Convention.
Bottom: President Barack Obama delivers the line “you didn’t build that,” during a speech in Roanoke, Virginia on July 13, 2012.

Sidoti’s solution to this perceived problem is to ask that Twitter users hold their snarkiness and “shut up” as an “investment in our future.”¹⁹ Sidoti’s suggestion is naive and misdirected. Simply put, these incidents are funny, so why wouldn’t we talk about them? Although these captured moments may seem trivial, at their purest level, they transcend political partisanship and point to the humanness of our leaders. When these moments are magnified and modified to generate humor, they represent a form of cultural commentary, a response to the political system and the nature of contemporary media. All forms of media are now subject to memefication, as the meme simply provides the smallest and fastest unit of replication and transmission of an idea.

Political satire is nothing new and the popularity of shows like *The Daily Show*, *The Colbert Report*, and *Politically Incorrect* attest to its appeal. It is fair to suggest that news outlets should focus on substantive issues, but it’s unwise to fault the masses for using every communication tool at their disposal to expose the fallacies and posturing of our political leaders. Social media allows the people to keep their government and the news media in-check. At times, it is the snarky comments and Youtube mashups, which more accurately and convincingly report the truth behind a story. In short, humor represents who we are as people and who we are together as a society. Humor serves as a critical weapon to combat the untruths and misinformation that we are bombarded with on a daily basis. ■

EXISTING HUMOR THEORIES >>>

Incongruity-Resolution Theory (I-R)

Incongruity Theory or Incongruity-Resolution Theory (I-R) states that humor occurs when an incongruity arises and is then resolved. “Incongruity” is only loosely defined, but can include ambiguity, logical impossibility, irrelevance/non-sequitur, or inappropriateness. Kant, Kierkegaard, and Aristotle are all linked with Incongruity Theory.²⁰

In everything that is to excite a lively convulsive laugh there must be something absurd (in which the understanding, therefore, can find no satisfaction). Laughter is an affection arising from the sudden transformation of a strained expectation into nothing.

—Kant Critique of Judgement (1790)²¹

An incongruity must not only be detected, but also resolved by reason for there to be humor. The incongruity exists between the setup of a narrative and the punch line. The resolution happens when the mind, following a logical rule, finds a way to make the punch line follow from the setup, and when the resolution is discovered, we laugh.

—Mathew M. Hurley describes the work of Suls (1972)²²

Essentially, incongruity theory suggests that when something seems out of place (an incongruity), we seek a way to understand it within context, and when we do find an explanation (a resolution), we sometimes experience the joy of humor. This resolution is a moment of clarity and can be manifest as an “aha” or “eureka” moment.²³

Critics of the theory fault the argument for its broad classification of “incongruity.” Additionally, not all incongruities or absurdities are interpreted as humorous and not all humor involves incongruity. Yet Incongruity-Resolution remains the dominant humor theory and provides a valid starting point for the exploration of unexpected humor that arises as part of the digital experience.

Superiority Theory

Superiority theory states that humor occurs when one's sense of status is enhanced in light of someone else's mistakes. Another person is embarrassed, humiliated, and becomes the butt of a joke, as our own ego is boosted.²⁴ That person is perceived as inferior and we take pleasure in our feeling of supremacy. Thomas Hobbes, the predominant superiority theorist, described the feeling as a "sudden glory." Aristotle similarly described humor as a recognition of the contrasts between a noble and ignoble state.²⁵

Play Theory

Play theory is a biological theory suggesting that humor is linked with the "Duchenne" laughter that occurs during tickling, and is an extension of animal play. "Duchenne laughter" is spontaneous and unfettered expression of joy, while non-Duchenne laughter is socially constructed.²⁶ Play theorists note that some apes have been known to exhibit laughter-like noises amid play.²⁷ Charles Darwin was an early observer of this connection, calling laughter "a tickling of the mind."²⁸

Release Theory

Release theory describes humor as the sudden joyful relief that occurs when the tension of suppressed or repressed energy is relieved. This tension can take the form of nervous energy, as indicated by Herbert Spencer, or of sexual energy, as described by Sigmund Freud.²⁹

Surprise Theory

Surprise theory argues that humor is created when a sudden occurrence transpires, which contradicts our expectations.³⁰ Surprise theory describes a general element that can create humor and therefore exists as a partial theory. Surprise is a condition suggested within Incongruity-Resolution Theory, Superiority Theory, and Release Theory. As Hurley, Dennet, and Adams Jr. state, Descartes claimed that humor was "a mixture of joy and shock."³¹

Mechanical Humor Theory

Henri Bergson's Mechanical Humor Theory combines aspects of Superiority Theory and Incongruity Theory, suggesting that humor acts as a "social corrective."

Humor is the solution to rigidity... If one's behavior is inelastic, laughter from others reminds one of this and acts as a pressure to cause one to behave more adaptively.³²

Benign Violation Theory (BVT)

The benign-violation hypothesis suggests that three conditions are jointly necessary and sufficient for eliciting humor: A situation must be appraised as a violation, a situation must be appraised as benign, and these two appraisals must occur simultaneously.³³

Peter McGraw and Caleb Warren, the authors of Benign Violation Theory, are contemporary researchers seeking a specific definition and understanding of humor. Like many researchers and theoreticians before them, they find Incongruity-Resolution Theory too vague and all-encompassing to be truly descriptive.³⁴



Violent slapstick humor, as exhibited in *The Three Stooges*, provides a strong example of Benign Violation Theory.

DIGITAL HUMOR THEORY (DHT)

>>> **DHT Overview**

>>> **1A. Visual Perception,
Scanning, & Syncretism**

>>> **1B. Continuous Partial Attention,
Synaesthetic Media, & Serendipity**

>>> **2. Human-Computer
Interaction & Humor**

>>> **3. Digitization &
Digital Culture**



MEME >>> **MEME GRUMPY CAT**

DHT OVERVIEW >>>

Humor can be created or perceived as a result of Incongruity-Resolution, Release, Surprise, Superiority, and Benign Violation. Digital Humor Theory suggests that our perception and processing of digital communications can enhance these contributing factors, offering increased opportunities for humor.

- 1** The scanning behavior associated with digital media and “Continuous Partial Attention” disrupts visual hierarchies, promoting syncretic/undifferentiated processing of information. This accelerated scanning generates humorous incongruities and also heightens user stress, creating a need for Release Humor.
- 2** Human-Computer Interactions (HCIs) demonstrate the complexity and nuance of human-to-human communications. Conversations with and through machines are prone to error, frustration, and often amusement. Humorous incongruities arise and superiority humor emerges as we take pleasure in the mistakes, misunderstandings, and limitations of software and machines.
- 3** Digital media is malleable, widely available, and easily shareable, altering our notions of ownership and challenging how we define originality and creativity. The artist/designer now assumes the dual role of creator-producer with the audience serving as an active and responsive collaborator. As we pursue knowledge through a flexible but unpredictable medium, we have formed a digital culture that celebrates humorous absurdity.

1A. VISUAL PERCEPTION, SCANNING, & SYNCRETISM >>>

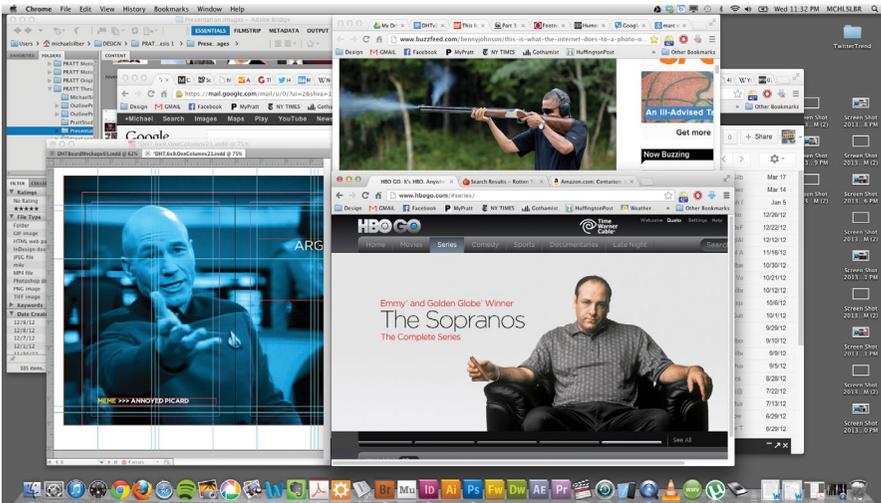
The screen world presents a flattened, and often disordered, hierarchy of information, causing distortions and errors in visual perception. Surprises, serendipity, and incongruity humor emerge as a result of these distortions. In his book *Ways of Seeing*, John Berger explains how visual perception is not a static experience; instead we read our all of the elements of our environment together.

We never look at just one thing; we are always looking at the relation between things and ourselves. our vision is continually active, continually moving, continually holding things in a circle around itself, constituting what is present to us as we are.³⁵

The same concept holds true within the screen world, and the enhanced speed and universal flatness of information exaggerates these tendencies. The classic universe presents a more distinct hierarchy of information, which includes the full range of sensory input. The screen world is mostly limited to visual and auditory information, and typically visual information is displayed within the confines of a browser window.

When we view multiple unrelated information sources simultaneously or in rapid succession, we create new and unintended associations. The digital experience is extremely rapid and expansive, and our minds are flooded with information that we must rapidly sort, analyze, and process. In our rush to consume text and imagery, we shift attention from one item to the next. During this process, incongruous fragments of information linger in our consciousness. As Berger explains, “The meaning of an image is changed according to what one sees immediately beside it or what comes immediately after it.”³⁶ Berger’s argument applies not only to imagery, but also to written and auditory information, where we have a tendency to mentally fuse one item with the next. These pairings allow comparison and juxtaposition, and can result in humorous absurdity.

Many forms of digital media are enthymematic, requiring the viewer to fill in the gaps, and also syncretistic, requiring an overall understanding of the whole and relationship of its unique parts, rather than a separate analysis of each part. Our scanning of digital information requires undifferentiated processing and encourages a “plastic” syncretic understanding. We quickly absorb basic information, gaining a general view of everything



Top: The above visual pun utilizes our tendency toward quick visual scanning and the syncretic processing of undifferentiated information. We are accustomed to the phrase "nothing really matters" and upon viewing the image we acquire the dual-meaning.

Bottom: The digital experience involves viewing multiple sources of information and imagery simultaneously. As we view these fragments together, new meanings and unintended associations are created.

we're seeing, rather than a specific refined understanding of each individual element. The digital experience and new media in general has dissolved our traditional notions of time, narrative, object, and linear structure. As Manovich explains,

*Many new media objects do not tell stories; they don't have beginning or end... Instead, they are collections of individual items, where every item has the same significance as any other.*³⁷

The digital experience can be viewed through this same lens. When viewing a computer screen, or engaging with devices, we simultaneously receive an array of disparate information, both on-screen and in our surrounding environment. Each piece may be separate to some degree, but we invariably form a perception of the whole, drawing parts together and creating new meanings. At times, these new meanings elicit humor because of their incongruity.

In *The Hidden Order of Art*, Anton Ehrenzweig attempts to analyze the psychology of creative work, learning, and perceptual development. His analysis illuminates our process of visual scanning, and although his writing focused on children's art and modern painting of the time, the same principles can be applied to the digital experience and new media art. He describes how gestalt psychology fails to explain our process of unconscious scanning and advocates that syncretistic vision allows for understanding of "undifferentiated" material, a view that is more "plastic" and therefore attuned with nature and its imperfections. As an example, Ehrenzweig explains that to recognize a friend with only a mere glimpse, as he/she walks out of sight, requires an overall syncretic view to register their gait and overall appearance.³⁸ Gestalt psychology relies on geometric shapes and patterns that do not adequately explain the phenomenon. Ehrenzweig describes that,

*The growth of new images in art and of new concepts in science is nourished by the conflict between two opposing structural principles. The analysis of abstract gestalt elements pitted against the syncretistic grasp of the total object, focusing on detail against complex scanning, fragmentation against wholeness, differentiation against dedifferentiation.*³⁹

The perception of incongruity within the digital experience is perhaps an example of both the conflict and unity of these opposing processing methods, as we scan through information. Meanwhile, "new media" intentionally explores the boundaries of our cognitive processing. ■

1B. CONTINUOUS PARTIAL ATTENTION, SYNAESTHETIC MEDIA, & SERENDIPITY >>>

Linda Stone argues that the digital era has brought about a new form of perceptual awareness, which she labels “Continuous Partial Attention.”⁴⁰ She notes our desire to remain connected to the network, to be “live” and to not “miss” anything. To be connected is to have a place in the world, to have importance, while to be disconnected is to not exist.⁴¹ We maintain a sustained alertness that involves persistent scanning of various forms of information. “Continuous Partial Attention” accelerates visual scanning, generates Incongruities, and heightens stress – creating a need for relief/release humor.⁴²

While writing this thesis, I am seated in a quiet studio space, attempting to seclude myself from unwanted distractions and the temptation of activities that could divert my attention elsewhere. But even within this context, if I glance off this document to the neighboring browser window, I am met with twenty-five open web-page tabs, material that I habitually monitor throughout the day. These tabs include my email, chat messenger, task list, calendar, social networks, professional networks, news interests, technology updates, design/art inspirations, humor outlets, and the local weather forecast. I feel a wave of anxiety wash over me in merely listing these sources of amusement, social connectedness, and info-tainment, and yet it requires a surprising level of self-control for me to maintain focus and write productively without periodically checking scanning through these sites.

Stone describes the potential for over-stimulation and stress inducement, which creates a false crisis-mode that compromises our thinking and decision-making capabilities.⁴³ It is my contention that our scanning behavior and lack of focus on one central object of attention enhances opportunity for the creation of mental mismatches and incongruity humor. Within this confused anxious mental state, we are more likely to find humor in unintentionally muddled information and to purposefully seek out humor as source of relief.

Synaesthetic media contributes to over-stimulation and can further enhance the effects of continuous partial attention. John A. Waterworth suggests that interactive media are more visceral than cognitive.⁴⁴ As such, information is displayed and conveyed with a focus on feeling and emotional response. These “synaesthetic media” are designed to enhance and reshape sensation.⁴⁵ Waterworth argues that Human-Computer Interaction (HCI) has developed toward a focus on rich sensory experience as opposed to “cognitive ergonomics.”⁴⁶

My claim is that most computer artifacts now in interactive use function not as cognitive tools (tools that help the user process information better) but as sensual enhancers-essentially, as perceptual artifacts-and that this trend will become progressively more pronounced.⁴⁷

What is felt during interaction takes precedence over what is understood. This prioritization enhances synaesthetic enjoyment and creative potential, but also promotes an environment of competing unprocessed information. Waterworth discusses the development of HCI and the benefits of designing toward synaesthetic media, which he argues promotes creativity.⁴⁸ In his paper, “Creativity and Sensation: The Case for Synaesthetic Media,” Waterworth concludes,

To me, the purpose of our new technology is to broaden our channels of sensation (and communication), allowing us to experience reality more fully and making us more creative in the face of life’s challenges. I think it is plausible to suggest that progress toward this goal may depend more on technologically expanded sensual experience than on computer-supported reason.⁴⁹

Waterworth’s discussion describes the complexity of HCIs and the richness in perception and sensation they inspire, but his characterization also suggests an increased potential for boundary confusion. Synaesthetic media, as described, may induce feelings of wonderment and unexpected glee, experienced as humor. These media may also increase instances of confusion, leading to humorous incongruity. When we consider the impact of engaging with multiple rich synaesthetic media simultaneously or in rapid succession, this confusion may be amplified. Confusion in this form is not inherently negative, as it can lead to positive resolutions and serendipitous meaning-making.

Many forms of digital media encourage serendipitous experience, which includes humor as a subset. Rung-Huei Liang’s “Designing for Unexpected Encounters with Digital Products: Case Studies of Serendipity as Felt Experience” directly corresponds with my own assertions, if we interpret humor as a specific form of serendipity. Serendipity is defined as a process of “meaning-making,” and the “phenomenon of spontaneously understanding unexpected things, including time, space, people, and its contents.”⁵⁰ Liang argues that serendipity is comprised of “meaningful unexpectedness” and that serendipity exists as a result of the “improvisational nature of interaction.”⁵¹ Liang explains that within digital interaction systems, “random mechanisms are often employed to enrich the user experience of digital products.”⁵² A distinction is made between the machine’s capability to disseminate information in random order and the human capability of perceiving connectedness and meaning amid the chaos.

[The] two phases of serendipity involve, one, finding unexpected information and, two, making an intellectual leap of understanding... we examine serendipity as an unexpectedness-generating and meaning-making experience, with the former quality resulting from technology mediation and the latter depending on the human factor.⁵³

I assert that humor constitutes a specific form of serendipity, a feeling of euphoria that can be experienced as a result of “spontaneously understanding unexpected things.” In the below excerpt, Liang’s analysis closely resembles a discussion of incongruity resolution theory.

Very little attention has been given specifically to the perspective of viewing serendipity as an experiential quality that highlights the momentary understanding of unrelated things.⁵⁵

Liang advocates for interaction systems that are specifically designed to facilitate serendipity within our daily lives, as a means to promote human creativity.⁵⁶ I support this pursuit, but focus more specifically on serendipitous *humor* to encourage creativity. Liang notes that serendipitous phenomena are underappreciated, underexplored, and are ripe for further study and experimentation. The author also importantly posits that systems can be designed to encourage serendipity, but that these phenomena are unpredictable, fleeting, and unique to each individual.⁵⁷ DHT suggests that serendipitous moments of meaning-making create humor in the digital experience, as we establish connections between unrelated things. ■



Human-computer interaction and fear of machines is a common subject in science fiction television and film. **Top Left:** *Lost In Space*. **Right:** *2001 A Space Odyssey*. **Left:** *Terminator 2: Judgment Day*. **Bottom:** *Star Trek: Generations*.

2. HUMAN-COMPUTER INTERACTION & HUMOR >>>

*"As President, I believe that robotics can inspire young people to pursue science and engineering. And I also want to keep an eye on those robots, in case they try anything."*⁵⁸

—Barack Obama, November 23, 2009

The intimidating power and complexity of computers can incite fear and distrust of technology. Superiority and Relief theories explain why we sometimes find amusement in the limitations and failures of machines. Human-computer interaction and the resulting errors in communication have been the subject of Internet artists since the late 1990s. In her book *Internet Art*, Rachel Greene chronicles the development and early history of net art projects like Jodi.org's "<http://404.jodi.org>."⁵⁹ Greene explains the prevailing themes of Jodi.org's work,

*Confusion and technical breakdown often characterize the experience of using computers and the net... a relationship in which routines of misunderstanding, breakdown and disappointment are typical and standard.*⁶⁰

Although technological capabilities have changed drastically since the 1990s, so too have our expectations and our reliance on these machines.

The rapid advancement of computers and technology inspire both awe and concern. Computers have historically been viewed as cold, empty vessels with powerful capabilities, arousing fear and apprehension. We fear that new technologies will render our skills obsolete and cause us to lose our jobs. We worry that machines will become self-aware and rise up to destroy their human captors. And we wonder how new technologies will become integrated with our bodies and change what it means to be "human." These concerns challenge our sense of purpose and force us to reconsider our place in the world, creating feelings of tension and a sense of inferiority. As a result, when we observe computer error we may experience a relief of tension and we can begin to regain a sense of superiority.

Apple's Siri, "a humble personal assistant,"⁶¹ represents a landmark advancement in mainstream human-computer interaction and seems to portend future uses of artificial intelligence. Siri is a software program that recognizes speech and executes search operations, but unlike Google's products, Siri has her own voice and "personality."⁶² When Siri misunderstands a query, her spoken answers provide humor by virtue of their incongruity. It is also enjoyable to passionately berate and ridicule Siri, because unlike a human, she peculiarly maintains an unwavering flatness in tone, regardless of the topic in discussion. The designers and programmers who developed Siri intentionally gave her a "dry wit."⁶³ Both her intentional jokes and her many errors in understanding are voiced with the same un-expressive tone, allowing the user to be seamlessly entertained by both. Speaking to Siri is both amusing and eerie, since she has personality, but is decidedly a machine. Siri is reminiscent of Stanley Kubrick's HAL,⁶⁴ stirring both feelings of awe and irksome worry of an impending robot apocalypse. At present, Siri's errors outweigh her 'intelligence,' encouraging feelings of superiority and absurdist amusement.

Human-Computer Interaction and predictive computing have become common within the digital experience, leading to mistakes, surprises, and delightful incongruities. Some notable sources of unintentionally amusing communications include: ad placement juxtapositions, image search results, autocorrect/autocomplete/T9 mistakes, "the Cupertino effect," and video adjacencies. The Cupertino effect describes an error in "search and replace" corrections by word processors. The name of the phenomena is derived from an early example when the word "cooperation" was wrongly replaced with the word "Cupertino," the California headquarters of Apple Computers.⁶⁵ Naming this type of error suggests the commonality of these mistakes. A well-known example of the Cupertino effect occurred when an Associated Press story was rewritten and posted on the website of The American Family Association, where the headline read "Homosexual eases into 100 Final at Olympic Trials."⁶⁶ The story was referring to Olympic athlete Tyson Gay, but The American Family Association, a conservative Christian group, used an automated word-processing filter, which replaced all instances of the word "gay" with the word "homosexual." The intended meaning of the entire article was disrupted and made humorous by this mistake. Similarly, in 1990 the Fresno Bee ran a story, which declared that new taxes would help put Massachusetts "Back in the African American," rather than "back in the black."⁶⁷ In another example, Reuters ran a story in October of 2006 about honey bees, "Queen Elizabeth has ten times the lifespan of workers

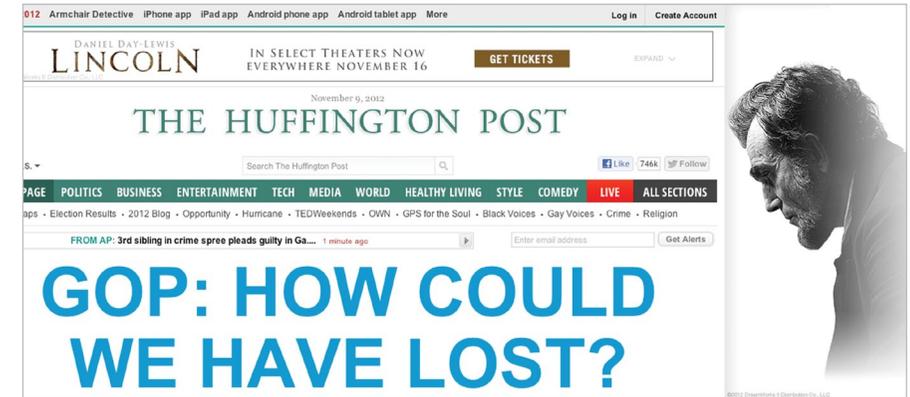


An example of "the Cupertino effect."

and lays up to 2,000 eggs a day." In this case, the words "the queen" were automatically replaced with "Queen Elizabeth."⁶⁸

Autocorrect and T9, telephone text messaging corrections, are a frequent source of humorous mistakes. Perhaps the harried nature of telephone communications is to blame, as these interactions are often made while distracted and on-the-go. It is also notable that telephone/smartphone screens are small in size and typing with thumbs remains clumsy. A friend shared a recent example of an autocomplete mistake. He sent a text message to his father about a tennis match, stating, "Federer-Murray in London on ESPN2 right now, FYI." His father, a noted economist sent the accidental response (see next page), "Thanks we are at war in Poland." His intended response was the very different, "Thanks we are at Walden Pond." Such instances of autocorrect hilarity are increasingly common. The website "damnyouautocorrect.com" provides a large gallery of user-submitted telephone text messages, displaying these mistakes.

Google autocomplete and other similar predictive software functions are an excellent source for unintended humor. Google Voice provides a speech recognition service that translates voicemail-to-text, sometimes with absurd results. The service is effective and useful in determining the subject of a phone call and its potential urgency, but the transcriptions are glaringly inaccurate. Words are misidentified, while sentence structure and syntax are disrupted. As an example, my father would never say,



The front page of The Huffington Post, November 9, 2012.

“hey, man” as a greeting to me, and yet in a recent transcription that was Google’s best guess. Keywords and the overall meaning of the voicemail are effectively transmitted, but most messages arrive as a garbled mess. In response to Google’s autocomplete function, Sampsa Nuotio and Raisa Omaheimo developed a project called “Google Poetics.” They collect screenshots of Google’s autocomplete in action and emphasize the cultural insight and artistic appreciation that can be gathered from these captures. Many of these investigations are inherently funny. As they explain on their website, “The combination of these suggestions can be funny, absurd, dadaistic - and sometimes even deeply moving.”⁶⁹

In my experience, randomized ad placements provide a similar source of incongruity and humor. As much as we attempt to ignore these bright and flashing advertisements, they remain unavoidable. Shortly after the United States Presidential Election, I observed an amusingly odd ad placement on The Huffington Post. The headline for the front-page story read “GOP: How Could We Have Lost?”⁷⁰ A large advertisement for the film “Lincoln” ran adjacent to this headline, showing the republican ex-president in profile (pictured above). I naturally read these two pieces of information together, making it seem as if Lincoln himself was voicing the headline and lamenting the GOP loss in the presidential election. While this close thematic pairing of political news and political film advertising demonstrates intentional ad targeting, the meaning that I inadvertently generated was unintended by both the advertiser and The Huffington Post. In other, more common, instances ad placements create humor through their absurd juxtaposition, rather than their symmetry.



On December 13, 2012, NewNowNext reported on a notable example of ad placement juxtaposition that occurred near their office in Times Square.⁷¹ An electronic billboard was intermittently flashing between advertisements for the Mormon Church and Manhunt Mobile, a gay-friendly date-finder for the iPhone (pictured left). The mormon.org advertisement stated “Christmas is for Worship” and “What does Christmas mean to you,” while featuring images of a young doe-eyed girl looking upward and praying. The Manhunt Mobile advertisements showed shirtless men looking at smartphones and playfully embracing each other.⁷² These diametrically opposed advertisements appeared sequentially on the same electronic billboard. It is unclear whether this juxtaposition was purely the result of an automated system or if an unscrupulous jokester intervened to assure the ad pairing. It is clear, however, that the digital platform provides a means for these laughable occurrences. And in this case, the sequential flashing of the two advertisements resembled the familiar structure of film or television narrative.

Our fear of new and unfamiliar technologies results in an initial resistance, but subsides as the advancement takes root in our culture. We have learned to embrace personal computers, smartphones, digital technologies, and the Internet as powerful communications tools in which to exhibit our most human traits. As Paul Saffo explains in “The Place of Originality in the Information Age,”

Our response to a given new technology typically repeats a pattern of initial resistance, followed by uneasy accommodation and eventual acquiescence. Ultimately, we achieve a seemingly irreversible integration of the new technology into our creative lives, as once-offensive tools become seamless extensions of artistic reach and creativity.⁷³

With the accelerated pace of technology, we must now adapt to accept continual change. Our task is to see the potential in each technological development. We must quiet our initial fears, frustration, and distrust, and instead embrace the humor in our misunderstandings. These misunderstandings offer insight into our own behavior and the nature of HCIs, exposing new avenues for creative exploration and ideas for next-generation user-interfaces. ■

3. DIGITIZATION & DIGITAL CULTURE >>>

Computers have come a long way, from Claude Shannon's application of boolean algebra as a logic processing circuit in 1937 to today's experiments in artificial intelligence⁷⁴ augmented reality, EEG (brainwave) sensitive devices, and machine-body integration that could change the nature of what it means to be human. Our daily lives are becoming increasingly computer-mediated, especially with regard to our systems of communication, socialization, and interpersonal connectedness. As Michael Malone writes in *The Guardian of All Things*, "Technological change brings cultural change—and ultimately creates philosophical change."⁷⁵

As a child of the 1980's, I have observed as computers transitioned from an industrial tool to novelty item for sophisticated hobbyists to ubiquitous household item to a pocket-sized life-partner. As Lev Manovich explains,

*In the 1990's, when the new role of a computer as a Universal Media Machine became apparent, already computerized societies went into a digitizing craze. All existing books and videotapes, photographs and audio recordings started to be fed into computers at an ever increasing rate.*⁷⁶

The digitization of knowledge and communications has astounding cultural significance, perhaps leaping beyond the importance of the Gutenberg press. Gutenberg's movable type enabled reliable information sharing beyond a single human lifetime, allowing new generations to build on the knowledge of the past.⁷⁷ Digitization suggests unbounded access to all recorded information and a world of "infinite recall."⁷⁸ Paul Saffo observed this cultural shift as information became arranged in a trackable/sortable "continuum," a digital network of connected ideas and information.⁷⁹ He prescribed a change in our conception of "creativity" and "originality," suggesting that we acknowledge and celebrate the many connections between new ideas and past creations.⁸⁰ Saffo suggests that these connections have always existed, but that digitization makes the links more transparent.⁸¹

If we understand the Internet as an enormous database—a resource of information; art can emerge as we develop new methods of interacting with that database. Originality and creativity can be derived, not only



The White House released a photo of President Obama shooting clay targets at Camp David, MD., on Saturday, August 4, 2012, along with the following statement: "The photograph may not be manipulated in any way and may not be used in commercial or political materials, advertisements, emails, products, promotions that in any way suggests approval or endorsement of the President, the First Family, or the White House." Clearly, those instructions were ignored by the online community.

from adding new content to the database, but also from drawing new connections between previously unrelated content.

In general, creating a work in new media can be understood as the construction of an interface to a database...With new media, the content of the work and the interface become separate. It is therefore possible to create different interfaces to the same material.⁸²

The new creativity is a collaborative process between the authors of existing content in the database, new authors reinterpreting that content, and the users who interact with and expand on it, creating further iterations of new involvement and understanding.

We are able to create something new and unique through the clever combination of existing digital materials, just as Paul Saffo identified with his description of the "digital continuum."⁸³ Digital information not only presents accidental incongruities, but has also proven to be an excellent medium for creating intentional incongruity humor. As Saffo foresaw, this traceable digital continuum of information dispels any notion that an individual can "create within a vacuum" and make something "truly original." Instead, we are contributors, adding links to a chain of connected ideas.⁸⁴ Intentionally pairing two pieces of incongruous material offers new meaning and is in itself a creative act.

Kirby Ferguson of Frog Design similarly declares that "everything is a remix" in his new video series of the same title. Ferguson applies his argument to music, film, and literature, demonstrating that the "remix" is not unique to digital media.⁸⁵ He defines the process of remixing as follows: "To combine or edit existing materials to produce something new."⁸⁶ Ferguson chronicles early examples of music sampling, following the iconic bass line of The Sugar Hill Gang's *Rapper's Delight* (which was itself sampled from Chic's *Good Times*) to Grandmaster Flash's *The Adventures of Grandmaster Flash* to Daft Punk's *Around the World*. He describes William S. Burroughs' use of cut-up techniques, remixing pieces of text, to produce his book *The Soft Machine* in 1961.⁸⁷ Ferguson explains that the film industry relies on "sequels, remakes, and adaptations," developing storylines and plot structures that align with preset genres and subgenres.⁸⁸ These films are then presented as "new." Today, digitized content allows images, video, text and everything in between to be remixed with basic tools and shared globally online.⁸⁹ In his TED talk, Ferguson argues that ALL creativity involves appropriation.⁹⁰ In an interview with Ben Lillie, Ferguson explains, "We're all copying and

transforming and combining—that’s really all that we can do. You can’t get something from nothing. You can’t just summon it out of the air.”⁹¹ Ferguson makes the case that the creative process requires the recycling of existing content and that it always has.

Copying, transforming, and combining are not new processes,⁹² but the methodology is ideally suited to digital media creativity. Digitized content is uniquely accessible and easy to reproduce, manipulate, and rebroadcast. Indeed, as evidenced by meme generators, YouTube mashups, and humor blogs like “Tom Selleck Waterfall Sandwich,” and “Nic Cage as Everyone,” this digital creativity is in full swing. Artists and amateur hobbyists unabashedly appropriate content, creating clever image-recombinations and re-editing found footage, often in pursuit of humor. The originality of a concept takes precedence over the authorship of the digital components therein. Many new media devices follow a similar ethos, with “originality” being defined by the uniqueness of an interface. The preponderance of digital image manipulation has altered our valuing of the “realness” of digital content.

It is notable that much of this humor maintains an adolescent tone. I would argue that this tone is prevalent for a number of reasons:

1. Any novice can create crude Photoshop juxtapositions to present an idea.
2. We instantly recognize blatant incongruities, making them well suited for the speed of digital scanning.
3. Exaggerated absurdities can transcend the boundaries of age, gender, and culture.
4. Juvenile humor, which is so easily understood and universal, may simply be more innately enjoyable than “clever” humor. These factors begin to explain why we gravitate toward funny videos of animals and babies and the growing popularity of Internet memes.

I contend that the popularity of “fail blog” and other disturbing/offensive humor can be partially explained by McGraw and Warren’s Benign Violation Theory (BVT). The ubiquity of special effects in film and of image and video manipulations online, have blurred our distinction between fantasy and reality. We are able to laugh at violent and offensive material online, because we view digital content as fake or at least far removed from our own reality. Although the content may violate our moral



Senator Jason Rapert’s Twitter page caused a stir, because his image background inadvertently displayed the word “rape.”

codes, our sense of right and wrong, seeing it online makes it seem more “benign.” Benign Violation Theory suggests three conditions that allow a violation to be classified as “benign” and therefore humorous:

*(a) the presence of an alternative norm suggesting that the situation is acceptable, (b) weak commitment to the violated norm, and (c) psychological distance from the violation.*⁹³

I believe that users view digital information with a heightened level of skepticism and detachment, which increases their “psychological distance” from any perceived violations. The boundary between reality and special effects has completely disintegrated, allowing the viewer to interpret all digital information as fabricated, enhanced, or modified. If we observe digital information with detached skepticism – as fantasy, we are able to remove the moral standards that exist in the “real world.” This widens the spectrum of “benign” violations and broadens the opportunity for humor in digital media.

Engagement with the screen world is predominantly a private and individual exploration. For the most part, the user is unbounded by the social constraints of a group. Each person may have access to the same database of content but he or she can actively and shamelessly select material that is uniquely attuned to his or her taste. If watching drunk people injure themselves or animals acting like humans brings you joy, then you are free to seek out, create, and share that content. It is worth

noting that we may achieve feelings of superiority when viewing the mistakes of others (Superiority Theory) and/or documenting and laughing at these mistakes may function as a social corrective (Mechanical Humor Theory). However, in the age of Youtube and “Internet fame,” it is difficult to determine whether there is a value difference between “laughing at” and “laughing with” someone. Ultimately, the distinction between notoriety and fame seems to have diminished in the digital age. Icons of popular culture seem less concerned with whether they are loved or hated as long as they are simply known. A person who is known has an audience and those with an audience can reap financial rewards. This reevaluation indicates the benefits of all types of fame and suggests that within today’s digital culture, humor may not function as a social corrective as argued by Mechanical Humor Theory.

Our individual discovery of information within the digital environment allows us to gain new knowledge or simply entertain and amuse ourselves. In *The Language of New Media*, Lev Manovich provides an in-depth look at the relationships between databases, narratives, and the role of new media. He states,

As a cultural form, database represents the world as a list of items and it refuses to order this list. In contrast, a narrative creates a cause-and-effect trajectory of seemingly unordered items (events). Therefore, database and narrative are natural enemies. Competing for the same territory of human culture, each claims an exclusive right to make meaning out of the world...In general, creating a work in new media can be understood as the construction of an interface to a database.⁹⁴

Manovich argues that an individual’s process of traversing the Internet does not constitute a narrative. He argues,

If the user simply accesses different elements, one after another, in a usually random order, there is no reason to assume that these elements will form a narrative at all. Indeed, why should an arbitrary sequence of database records, constructed by the user, result in ‘a series of connected events caused or experienced by actors’?⁹⁵

While I understand Manovich’s claim, I believe his argument is flawed. It is my view that the user, consciously or unconsciously, constructs an internal narrative as they travel from one webpage, website, or video to the next. One piece of information can activate a new thought, emotion,

or memory of past experience and trigger the user’s next move. Manovich fails to acknowledge the intentionality of the individual’s actions when he suggests that they are made “in a usually random order.”⁹⁶ Each digital experience is not an “arbitrary sequence of database records,”⁹⁷ but in fact a string of related events motivated by an individual’s mental processes. I would further suggest that hardly any “action” is truly arbitrary. Additionally, Manovich fails to recognize that some elements of digital media may not only be viewed in sequence, but can appear simultaneously. In such instances, it seems unavoidable that this information would be processed together, establishing connections or contrasts between previously unrelated materials. Yes, there are elements of chance and randomness involved with each digital experience, but the user’s mental processing actively seeks structure and logic between seemingly unrelated things. Perhaps my disagreement is merely semantic, but I’d call each experience an “internal narrative.”

In the digital realm, where such a wide array of information is accessible, it is no surprise that misunderstandings and unintended meanings occur so frequently. It seems fitting that the expansion of digitization and the ubiquity of computers and structured machine logic would conversely give rise to a digital culture that embraces the creative potential of absurdity. ■

IMPLEMENTATION

>>> **PROJECT 1: Hi Carolyn**

>>> **PROJECT 2: March TrendGIFs**

>>> **Conclusion**

**MEME >>> SKEPTICAL
3RD WORLD KID**



PROJECT 1: HI CAROLYN >>>

I have been a subscriber to Google Voice for several years. The service offers text transcriptions of incoming voicemail messages. The process of transcribing voicemail to text is extremely complex, especially considering callers' varying speech patterns and pronunciations, and the interference of ambient noise. As one would expect, the process is imperfect, yielding transcriptions that add layers of nonsense and incongruity to the original meaning. Through ongoing use of the service, I have received many absurd messages. I have also enjoyed the odd misunderstandings that occur when I communicate with Siri on my iPhone. I designed an experiment to incorporate both Siri and Google Voice.

PROCESS

1. I recorded the audio of Siri reading a selection of text.
2. I placed a call to myself and played the Siri audio recording into my Google Voice voicemail.
3. I instructed Siri to read the new Google Voice transcription, including any errors and recorded a new audio clip.
4. I placed a call to myself and played the new Siri audio recording back into my Google Voice voicemail.

>>> I repeated these steps for fifty iterations.

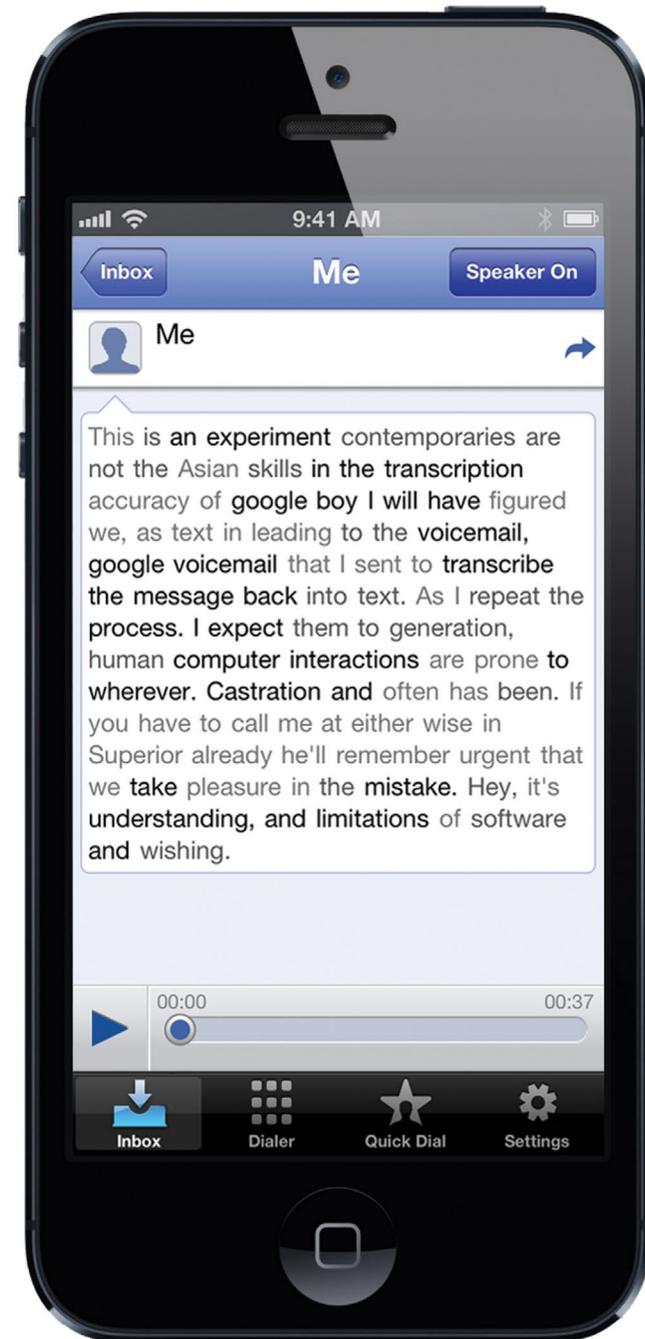
With each iteration, the message became more and more distorted. Awkward phrases appeared and evolved. After nineteen iterations, the message changed more gradually. After thirty variations, the message stabilized and only minute variation occurred. Siri's text-to-speech offered a consistent voice for audio recording and her deadpan delivery became more amusing as the message repeated and became increasingly absurd. The experiment successfully encapsulates and exaggerates existing humor phenomena, demonstrating how HCIs generate incongruity and superiority humor.

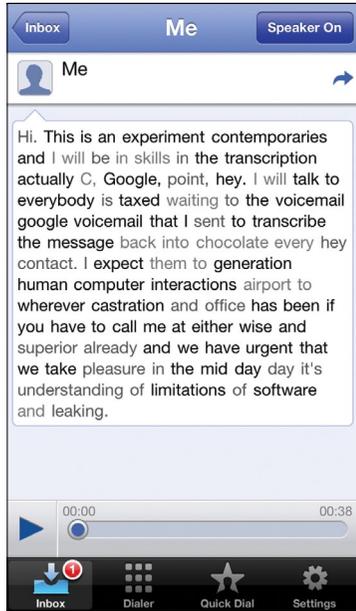
View the 50 iteration video on YouTube: http://youtu.be/mxWg-FEb_VE
or the Supercut [Best of All 50]: <http://youtu.be/xCWFUVKNj44>

ORIGINAL NOTE:

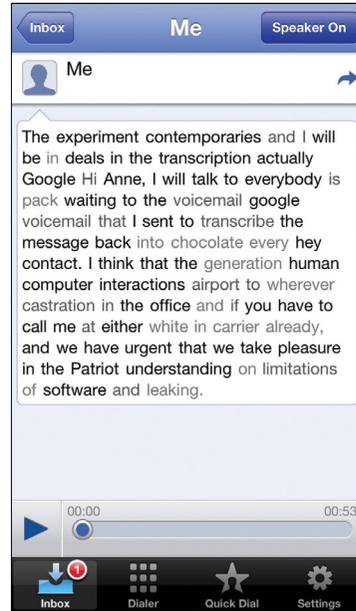
“This is an experiment to test Siri’s enunciation skills and the transcription accuracy of Google Voice. I will have Siri read this text and leave it as a voicemail. Google Voice will then attempt to transcribe the message back into text. As I repeat the process, I expect some degeneration.

Human Computer Interactions are prone to error, frustration, and often amusement. Humorous incongruities arise and superiority humor emerges as we take pleasure in the mistakes, misunderstandings, and limitations of software and machines.”

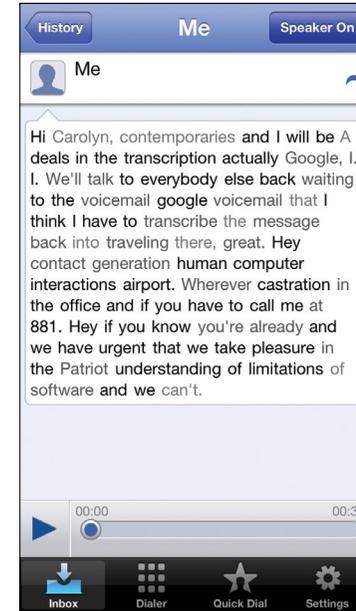
**Transcription #1**



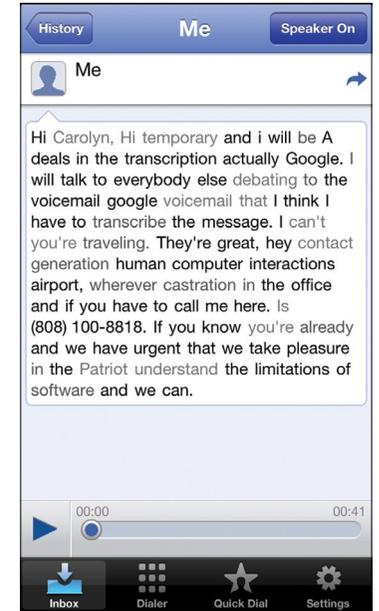
#5



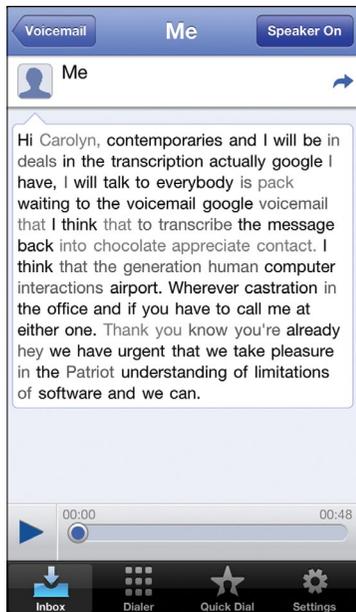
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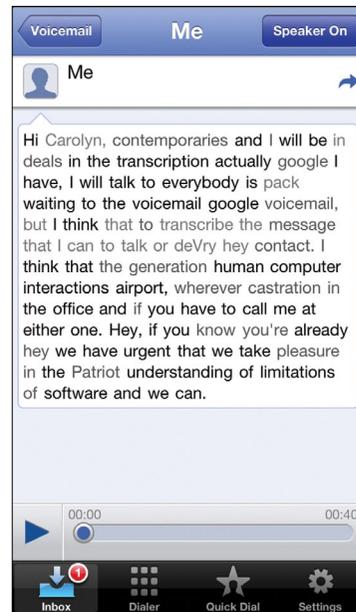
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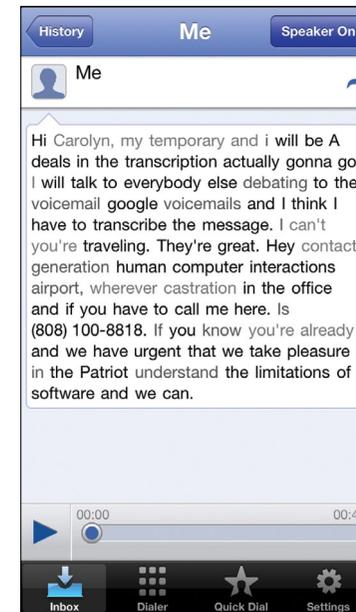
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#9



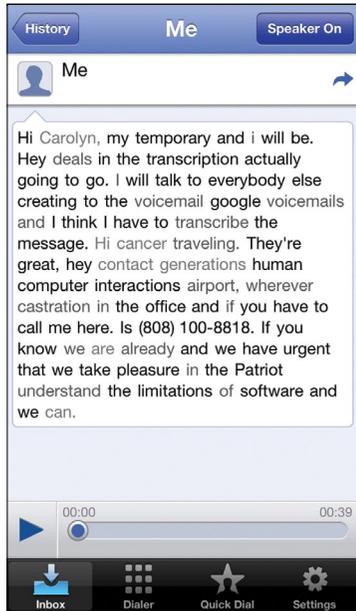
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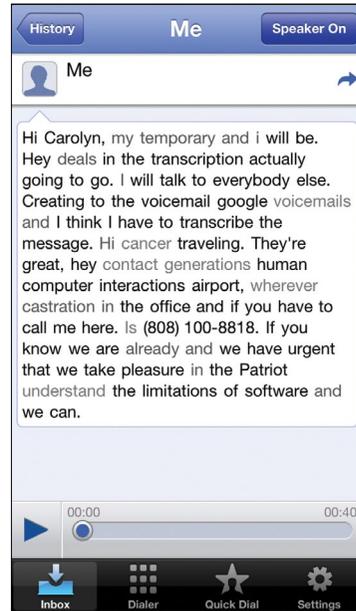
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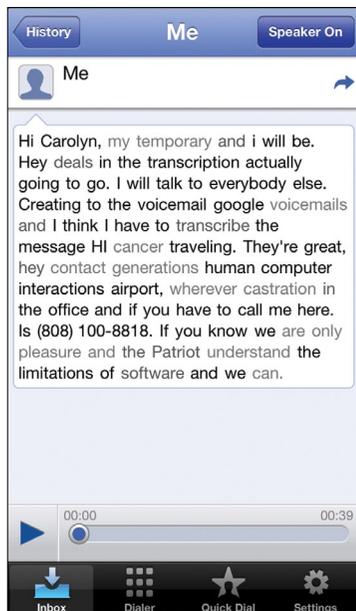
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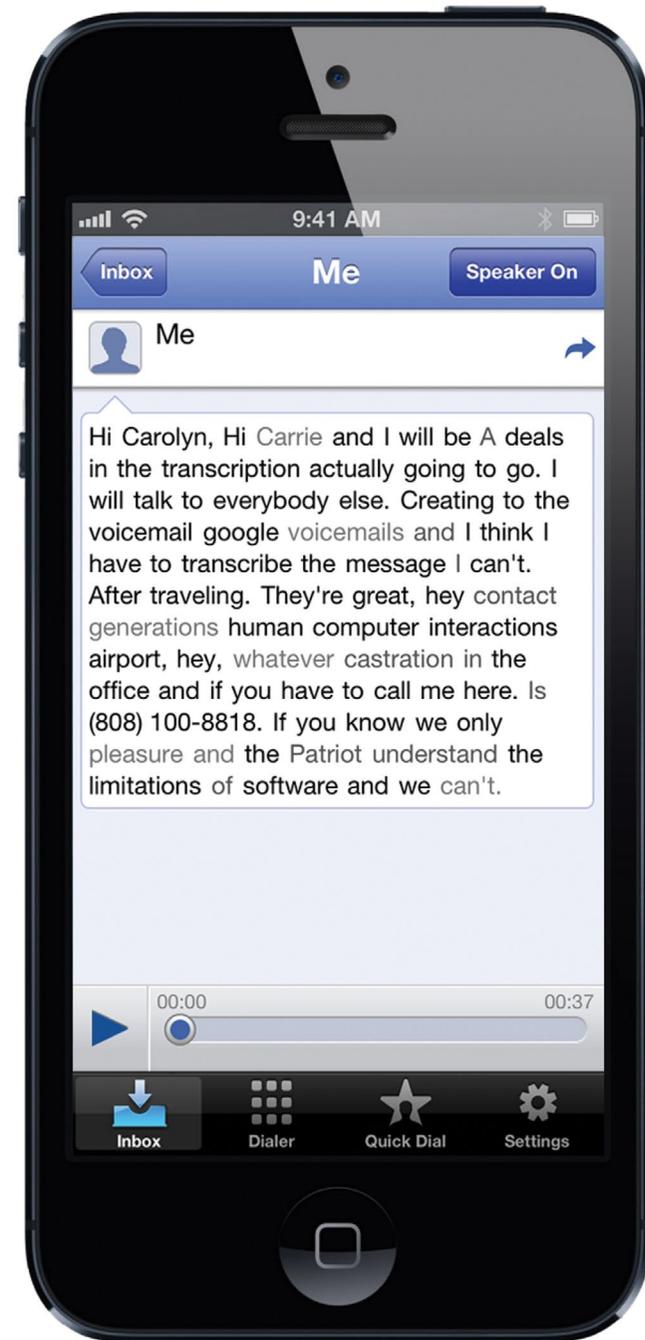
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#40



#45



Transcription #50

PROJECT 2: MARCH TRENDGIFS >>>

Users of social media sites like Twitter provide ongoing commentary on the world's pop-culture, news, and entertainment. Twitter encompasses the full range of human emotion, delivered in short bursts of text, image, or video. Twitter trending topics track popular subjects (and designated hashtags) as they are occurring in real-time. I chose to use Twitter trending topics as a gauge of what was happening in the world and what the digital community was talking about. My goal was to create daily animated GIFs to represent each day's topics.

On March 1, 2013, I began to record Twitter trending topics throughout each day. I then searched for these topics within Twitter and reviewed the top photo results. I captured and saved the funniest and most interesting imagery. From this pool of images, I created narratives in the form of animated GIFs. My GIFs show a slice of a slice of the events and digital happenings from that day in March. Each piece is a work of appropriation, but as discussed, the reuse and transformation of existing content is a creative endeavor. These works demonstrate Paul Saffo's digital continuum and Kirby Ferguson's remix principles. To complete the cycle I will post my TrendGIFs back onto Twitter, returning the material from whence it came and offering it back to the community for further modifications.

See all the TrendGIFs
@ dailytrendGIFs.michaeljsilber.com



March 1, 2013



March 2, 2013



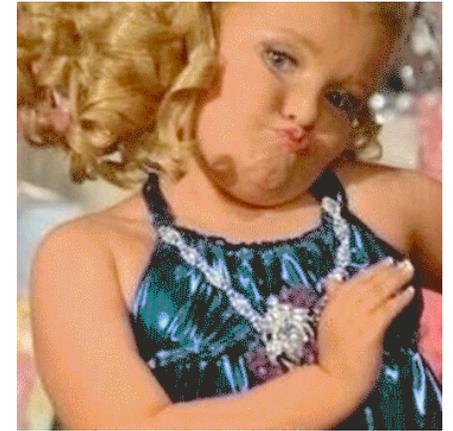
March 3, 2013



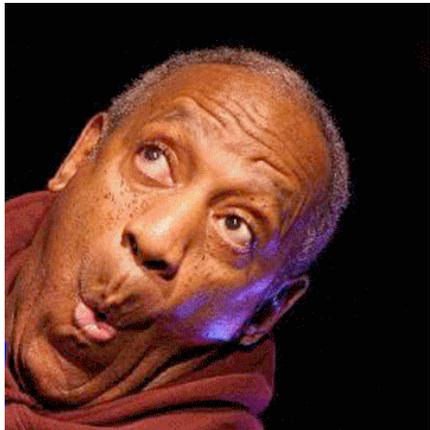
March 4, 2013



March 9, 2013



March 10, 2013



March 5, 2013



March 6, 2013



March 11, 2013



March 12, 2013



March 7, 2013



March 8, 2013



March 13, 2013



March 14, 2013

CONCLUSION >>>

Digital Humor Theory suggests that the digitization of information and our intimate involvement with machines increases opportunities for humor, enhancing our enjoyment of the absurd. Access to information has never been easier; search engines like Google provide nearly unlimited access to all forms of media. Our insatiable pursuit of knowledge and our desire for continuous engagement results in a form of information overload. As a result, we unintentionally process fragments of disparate material together as a unified whole. This syncretic interpretation presents unexpected associations and sometimes creates humor.

With digital media, we are able to record and share both the fleeting instances of serendipitous incongruity and the absurd juxtapositions of our own creation. We exploit the unique malleability of the form, copying, combining, and transforming in pursuit of new expression and humor. Meanwhile, a global online community encourages the growth of ideas across cultural boundaries. This collaborative community represents a new digital culture. As we seek out new knowledge through ever-evolving modes of communication, we find humor in our misunderstandings. And as we use digital media to spread humor and joy, we perform a service to ourselves and to humankind. In exploring the possibilities of new technologies and experimenting beyond the constraints of logic, we find joy in the absurd. ■

RESOURCES

>>> **Endnotes**

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MEME >>> I LIKE TURTLES

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