



The well-known comedian George Orwell said “The aim of a joke is not to degrade the human being but to remind him he’s already degraded.” Okay, that’s one explanation. But gagsters like Sigmund Freud, Immanuel Kant and Thomas Hobbes all had theories about humor, which means jokes are Really Important, not just a way to make someone snort up their milk.

From Henny Youngman’s one-liners to the epically filthy “The Aristocrats,” every joke ever told shows how comedy works, using the same basic components as all art forms: tension and resolution, pattern recognition, misdirection and surprise. For jokes, the big difference is they’re small, so it’s easier to see what makes them tick and why they make us laugh.

Topics covered in this multimedia presentation include the Rule of 3 (Why are things funnier in threes? Really, why? I mean, why?); is humor inherently hostile?; how jokes are related to Japanese haiku poetry; why jokes make you smarter; dirty jokes that aren’t dirty; and the Official Funniest Joke In The World.

*Among David Misch’s TV and movie credits are the Emmy-nominated “Mork & Mindy,” the Emmy-losing “Duckman,” the Emmy-engorged “Saturday Night Live,” and the Emmy-ineligible “The Muppets Take Manhattan.” He’s the author of “Funny: The Book” and “A Beginner’s Guide To Corruption,” and is also a playwright, songwriter, blogger, teacher and recovered stand-up comic, and has spoken at Yale, Columbia, the Smithsonian, Oxford, CineStudioParis, University of Sydney (Australia), VIEW Cinema Conference (Torino, Italy), Raindance Film Festival (London), Austin Film Festival, American Film Institute, Disney, DreamWorks, Sony, Lucasfilm, Midwest Popular Culture Association, USC and UCLA. Too much more at [davidmisch.com](http://davidmisch.com).*