



Notre Dame Institute for
ADVANCED STUDY

The Impact of Laughter and Humor in History and Today's Digitized World

“The Anthropological Evolution of Laughter and Humor”

Thursday, April 7, 2016 – Morning Session (9:00 to 10:30 a.m.)

Moderator



Ilana Gershon is Associate Professor in the Department of Anthropology at Indiana University; she is also currently a fellow at Notre Dame Institute for Advanced Study. Her intellectual interests include linguistic anthropology, science studies, media studies, legal anthropology, anthropology of democracy, and anthropology of work. She is interested in how new media affects highly charged social tasks, such as breaking up or hiring in the United States. Her current research addresses how new media affects hiring in the contemporary U.S. workplace. She is the author of *The Breakup 2.0: Disconnecting over New Media* (2010), *No Family Is an Island: Cultural Expertise among Samoans in Diaspora* (2012), and *A World of Work: Imagined Manuals for Real Jobs* (forthcoming). She

has also published, and edited special issues on topics ranging from ignorance, reflexivity, media ideologies, to the “newness” of new media. Professor Gershon received a fellowship at Stanford University’s Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences and a New Zealand Society fellowship at Birkbeck College’s Center for New Zealand Studies. She has also been awarded grants from the National Science Foundation, the Social Science Research Council and the Wenner-Gren Foundation.

Presenters

Susan D. Blum is Professor of Anthropology at the University of Notre Dame. She is also a Fellow of the Liu Institute for Asia and Asian Studies, the Kellogg Institute for International Studies, and the Institute for Educational Initiatives. Professor Blum focuses on questions about the nature of the self and its relation to language, meaning, and society. Her areas of specialty are cultural, linguistic, and psychological anthropology; childhood and higher education; applied morality; deception and truth; multilingualism; person and self; ethnicity, nationalism and identity; food; anthropological theory; China and the United States; and cross-cultural comparison. She is the author of monographs focused on the context of ethnic and national identity in China (*Portraits of “Primitives”*: Ordering



Human Kinds in the Chinese Nation (2001) and *China Off-Center: Mapping the Margins of the Middle Kingdom* (2002, co-edited with Lionel M. Jensen)), deception and truth in China and across cultures (*Lies that Bind: Chinese Truth, Other Truths* (2007)), and plagiarism among U.S. college students (*My Word! Plagiarism and College Culture* (2009)). Her most recent works are “*I Love Learning; I Hate School*”: *An Anthropology of College* (2016), and *Making Sense of Language: Readings in Culture and Communication* (3rd ed., 2016).



Agustín Fuentes is Professor and Chairperson of the Department of Anthropology at the University of Notre Dame. His current research foci include cooperation and bonding in human evolution, ethnoprimateology and multispecies anthropology, evolutionary theory, and public perceptions of, and interdisciplinary approaches to, human nature(s). He is the author of *Core Concepts in Biological Anthropology* (2006); *Evolution of Human Behavior* (2009); *Biological Anthropology: Concepts and Connections*, 2nd ed. (2011); and *Race, Monogamy and Other Lies They Told You: Busting Myths About Human Nature* (2012). He is also editor or co-editor of nine works including *Primates in Perspective*, 2nd ed. (with C. Campbell, K.C. MacKinnon, S. Bearder, and R. Stumpf, 2011), *Monkeys on the Edge: Ecology and Management of Long-Tailed Macaques and their Interface with Humans* (with M.D. Gumert and L. Jones-Engel, 2011), and *Ancestral Landscapes in Human Evolution Culture, Childrearing and Social Wellbeing* (with D. Narvaez, K. Valentino, J.J. McKenna, and P. Gray, 2014). His work has been supported by grants from the John Templeton Foundation, the National Geographic Society, the Andrew Mellon Foundation, the Society for Research in Child Development, and the National Science Foundation. In 2012-2013, Professor Fuentes was awarded a fellowship at the Center for Theological Inquiry, Princeton, New Jersey, for its 2012-2013 “Inquiry on Evolution and Human Nature.”