Linguistics 102, Language and Humor, F13
Tu Th 4-5:30, 130 Tappan

Prof. Jeff Heath (Linguistics), jheath@umich.edu, cell 734 972-7150
Lorch Hall 418
office hour Tu 1-2, We 11:30-12:30, or catch me after class

textbook: Haiman, Talk is Cheap (other readings on CTools or online)

9/3 Tu organization

9/5 Th satirical writing
    Swift, A Modest Proposal
    satirical newspapers (The Onion, Mich Every-Three Weekly)

9/10 Tu sarcasm & irony I
    Haiman 12-60
    satire homework due

9/12 Th sarcasm & irony II
    Haiman 61-127

9/17 Tu jokes, laughter
    Haiman 128-37
    Saki, "The open window"
    Meyer, "How the brain laughs"

9/19 Th captioned cartoons versus jokes
    selected blogs by Mankoff
    selected N Yorker cartoons

9/24 Tu comedy sketch workshop

9/26 Th improv workshop
cartoon homework due Friday

10/1 Tu practical jokes, senior pranks, hazing
    Haiman 138-92
    selected videos

10/3 Th standup comedy and ventriloquism
    Lenny Bruce (excerpts)
    selected videos

10/8 Tu circus clowns and Native American sacred clowns
    Towson, Clowns (excerpts)
    Ray, "Contrary behavior" pp. 75-80 and 84-86
    selected videos
    Gacy
tragic clowns (literary/operatic)
medical clowns

10/10 Th evil geniuses, dictators and criminals (artistic/comic? super-serious?)
Shakespearean villains (Iago in Othello, Aaron in Titus Andronicus)
Idi Amin
the Joker (Jack Nicholson versus Heath Ledger)

[10/15 Tu study break]

10/17 Th images of death and the devil
Goethe, Faust (excerpts)
Milton, Paradise Lost (excerpts)
Grim Reaper images in film (Seventh Seal, Monty Python, etc.)
cross-dressing homework due

10/22 Tu gallows humor
death row jokes
Shakespeare: Macbeth and Hamlet (excerpts)
cockpit recordings

10/24 Th anti-languages
liminal stage in ritual
criminal and urban-youth registers
Halliday, "Anti-languages"
Labov, "Rules for ritual insults"

10/29 Tu vandalism, terrorism
selected videos

10/31 Th (Halloween!)
carnaval
Parker, "Bodies, pleasures, and passions" (excerpts)
Ken Hale, "A note on a Walbiri tradition of antonymy:

11/5 Tu joking relationships
Radcliffe-Brown, "On joking relationships"
Sykes, "The joking relationship in an industrial setting"

11/7 Th transgression and travesty
transgressive art
surrealism
Bunuel/Dali, Chien andalou
Mary Daly, Gyn/Ecology (excerpts)

11/12 Tu humor and religion
Christian and Jewish humor
iconoclasm and blasphemy
Muslim response to Satanic Verses, Danish cartoons
cultural homework due
11/14 Th  comedy and social change
           standup excerpts (Dick Gregory, Richard Pryor, Bill Hicks)
           Jenkins, Subversive Laughter (excerpts)

11/19 Tu  humor in advertising
           selected print ads and videos

11/21 Th  advertising creative workshop

11/26 Tu  humor in politics
           presidential speeches
           campaign ads and stump speeches
           group advertising projects due

11/28 Th  Thanksgiving

12/3 Tu   tricksters
           selected Native American trickster tales

12/5 Th   conversational analysis of joking
           Norrick, Conversational Joking (excerpts)

12/10 Tu  finale: improv and roast

12/16    term paper (10-12 page) due

grades   term paper 25%
           homeworks 50%
           participation and performance 25%