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We analyze the intertwinings of jocular and sarcastic transactions with solidary and authority relationships to demonstrate both how those transactions are contextualized by extant relationships and how they modify and affirm relationships. Jocularity is most commonly contextualized by solidary relationships and in turn invites or affirms solidary relationships. Sarcasm may be contextualized by either a solidary or authority relationship. Sarcastic transactions are commonly produced to comment on actions regarded as violations of extant relationships. We conclude that jocularity and sarcasm are significant forms of social action that are routinely used by people with robust relationships to affirm and modify social relationships.

JOCULARITY, SARCASM, AND RELATIONSHIPS
An Empirical Study

MARK A. SECKMAN
CARL J. COUCH

SPECIFICATION OF THE INTERTWININGS between forms of social actions and forms of social relationships is one of the more complex tasks confronting social scientists. People frequently produce composite social acts; furthermore, on many occasions, composite acts are contextualized by multilayered relationships. For example, when a foreman and an on-line employee, who are also brothers, convene at work, they normally activate an authority relationship that is also informed by their kin relationship—they have a multilayered relationship. As the encounter unfolds they may relate solely instrumentally as one issues directives and the other abides by the directives; or they may exchange sarcastic barbs about their relationship as one issues directives and the other abides by the directives. In the latter instance they produce a composite social act.

We use ethnographic data acquired in a factory to offer an analysis of the intertwinings of two forms of social actions—jocularity and sarcasm—with two forms of social relationships—solidarity and authority. Jocularity and sarcasm are produced in many different social relationships. On occasion, even strangers may be jocular and exchange sarcastic barbs. But in this statement, we limit our analysis to jocular and sarcastic acts produced within solidary and authority relationships.

Almost three decades ago, Coser (1960: 81) called for social scientists to conceptualize humor as a distinctive form of social action and analyzed the intertwinings of humor and social relationships. Since then, social scientists have completed many studies of humor. Several of these studies have attempted to specify the nature of humor (Davis, 1979; Fine, 1984); others have analyzed the consequences of humor for individuals (Flaherty, 1984; Stebbins, 1979). But very few studies of humor completed subsequent to Coser's work have conceptualized it as a social act. Most students of humor conceptualize it as an activity produced by one individual that is responded to by another. Of those students who have conceptualized humor as a social act, most have restricted their attention to jocularity (Emerson, 1969; Lynch, 1982; Pogrebin and Poole, 1988).

Consistent with the formulation offered by Coser, we conceptualize jocularity and sarcasm as social acts. But in contrast to Coser, who conceptualized humor as a monolithic phenomenon, we conceptualize jocularity and sarcasm as two distinctive forms of social acts. Jocularity is affiliative (Emerson, 1969); or as Coser (1960: 81) noted, when people laugh together "social barriers, such as those of status, temporarily are lowered." Mutual laughter is not merely a response, it also communicates unity. In contrast, sarcasm communicates social distance. At the minimum it calls for someone—self or other—to distance himself or herself from some other or some activity. "Sarcasm is derived from the Greek sarkazein, to speak bitterly—literally, to tear flesh" (Ball, 1981: 149).[1] "Sarcasm may profitably be viewed, in Simmel's famous phrase,

as a societal form irrespective of content" (Ball, 1981: 147). Strictly speaking, Ball incorrectly formulated the problem. It is true that sarcasm is not bonded by any particular discursive symbols. But the construction of a sarcastic transaction, as is also the case for a jocular one, is contingent on mutual under- standing of expressive symbols. The assertion: "That's neat" may validate a joke, be a sarcastic comment, both or neither, depending on the expressive symbols accompanying the dis- course.

The completion of both forms of social acts requires that at least two people establish mutual understanding of an expres- sive symbol. For example, the target of a sarcastic act may not detect the bitter tone of voice that accompanies a state- ment. Other times, listeners fail to understand that a state- ment was offered as a joke. The failure to establish mutual understanding of expressive symbols is usually apparent from the subsequent response of the other(s). When mutual under- standing of expressive symbols is not achieved, social ambi- guity is the consequence instead of mutual understanding.

Few students of humor have acknowledged Ball's call for a distinction between jocularity and sarcasm.[2] But several have implicitly acknowledged the differences between jocular acts calling for affiliation and bitter acts calling for distance. Coser (1960: 85), for example, noted that some humorous transac- tions are "aggressive." Pogrebin and Poole (1988: 194) made similar observations in their study of interaction between po- lice and supervisory personnel. They note how "jocular ag- gression is used to address the larger issue of the new sergeant's attempts to supervise shift officers." In both of these instances it seems jocular aggression refers to sarcastic transactions.

The failure to make a distinction between jocularity and sar- casm probably stems from the fact that the two forms of social action are frequently combined to produce a composite act and that both acts are evocative. Many "humorous" acts elicit merriment and affiliation as well as distress and social dis- tance. For example, if a member of a group in the presence of an outsider makes a bitter comment, such as, "That's beyond

the comprehension of us pinheads," it may elicit merriment and affiliation from the members of the group *and* elicit distress and distance from the outsider. Pogrebin and Poole (1988) offered several examples of sarcastic comments about outsiders in the presence of the outsiders that elicited laughter among the in-group and informed the outsider that he had acted in an untoward manner. Sarcasm per se is not jocular (Ball, 1981: 149).

Social relationships are constructed by social acts; in turn, social relationships contextualize social acts. When a social relationship is "in place" subsequent social acts affirm, modify, and occasionally terminate social relationships. Unless relationships are affirmed by social acts they attenuate. For example, when a solidary relationship is not affirmed by those who compose its reconvening and acting in an affiliative manner the relationship dissipates. Similarly, as those with a solidary relationship complete social encounters, the nature of the relationship may be modified. Most modifications are of little significance, but occasionally relationships are cataclysmically transformed or even terminated in a social encounter.

Social relationships provide transsituational constancy. But no relationship is static. The employer-employee relationship that prevails between a given employer and employee today is not the same as it was last year, or, perhaps even that of last week. Each particular boss-employee relationship undergoes modification as those who populate the relationship convene, complete social encounters, and extend their shared past. Social relationships are in a constant state of becoming, transforming, and devolving (Hall, 1987: 15). Constancy is always somewhat problematic.

Solidary and authority relationships frame many social encounters. A given relationship may, of course, contain elements of both solidarity and authority, but many relationships are almost "pure" solidarity, whereas others are almost "pure" authority. Solidary relationships are symmetrical, whereas authority ones are asymmetrical.

A robust solidary relationship is in place when a plurality of people have a shared past infused with mutually affiliative ac-

tion, regard themselves as a social unit (have a collective identity), interact as equals, and take it for granted that they will continue their association with each other indefinitely (Sehested, 1975). Some solidary relationships, such as those between two life-long friends, are robust; other solidary relationships, such as that between two new acquaintances who have just discovered they have a mutual interest, are incipient; the new acquaintances may or may not develop a robust solidary relationship.

An enduring authority relationship is in place when members of a collectivity mutually differentiate themselves by agreeing that one of them is to guide and supervise the actions of the other(s), are differentially accountable to one another, and project a distal future of continuing to relate asymmetrically (Miller, 1986; Weiland, 1975). The degree of differentiation may be slight or extreme. The teenager selected to captain the playground's volleyball team has a temporary and restricted authority relationship with his teammates; the general and private have an enduring and extensive authority relationship. The relationship between foremen and workers occupies a position between these extremes.

PROCEDURES

Seckman began making observations of negotiations among workers and between workers and foremen to refine and elaborate the negotiated order paradigm (Strauss, 1978). He focused his observations on negotiations in two different contexts. Whereas Glaser and Strauss (1967: 49-55) have called for the observation and analysis of social processes in two different groups, he attempted to observe negotiations in two different forms of relationships—solidary versus authority—at the same site, a factory. He had been employed at the factory for one year before undertaking the study. Couch supervised the research.

Shortly after the study was underway Seckman reported that negotiations among workers and between workers and foremen were uncommon. Couch first insisted that workers

and foremen negotiated, but Seckman insisted that negotiating was uncommon; that only rarely did workers negotiate among themselves or with foremen. We discussed the inconsistencies between what was expected and what was observed in a series of conferences.

In these conferences Couch continued to insist that relationships had to be negotiated from time to time; that relationships had to be "worked at" in order to endure. Seckman agreed that relationships were on many occasions "worked at," but insisted that they were seldom negotiated in the way implied by Strauss (1978) and Sink and Couch (1986). In one of these conferences, in response to the inquiry, "Well, how do they do relationship work?" Seckman answered, "They do it by horsing around."

Subsequently, Seckman began to make observations of instances of "horsing around" that had relationship implications. It soon became apparent that much of the "relationship work" was accomplished through humor. The analytic distinction between jocularity and sarcasm emerged as observations continued, the data were examined, and prior studies of humor were consulted. Seckman continued to make observations of jocular and sarcastic transactions for eight months after we reconceptualized the problem. Seckman terminated his employment at the factory at that time.

The factory produced business forms. It employed about 450 workers in three shifts. A little over 100 employees worked during the shift from which our data were obtained. Most of the work was routinized, but the printing instruments were dismantled and reset after each run. The duration of runs ranged from three hours to two weeks. The factory was not an assembly line operation, but during a run each press was, in a sense, its own assembly line. There was considerable interaction among on-line operators and supportive personnel and between production workers and foremen while the presses were operating. During down time—the dismantling and resetting of the printing components—the variety and intensity of the interaction increased. Each set-up had a degree of novelty.

The observations were made to acquire ethnographic data that could be brought to bear on the generic issue of the intertwinings between social acts and social relationships. They were not made to complete an ethnographic survey of a particular factory. The following observations and analyses are offered, not as a statement about this factory or about factory work in general; instead they are offered to indicate how ethnographic material can be used to formulate general propositions about how forms of social actions intertwine with forms of social relationships (Prus, 1987; Simmel, 1950; Zerubavel, 1980).

SOLIDARY RELATIONSHIPS

The shared categorical identities of workers provided a potential foundation for the construction of solidary relationships, but they did not, ipso facto, establish a solidary relationship. People can establish a solidary relationship only by responding and acting in unison. The construction of a shared past in which the interactants are mutually affiliative is the first step toward becoming a viable member of the extant solidary network. In this factory, jocular transactions practiced by old-timers and new employees frequently functioned to incorporate new employees into the extant solidary networks.

An example of how jocularity can operate to incorporate a new employee was touched off by a minor catastrophe. While two workers, a new employee and an old-timer, were transferring waste sludge from one barrel to another, a hose burst. The old employee was showered with gallons of sludge. The old employee swore, laughed, and made a self-directed sarcastic comment; the new employee did not laugh at either the event or the comment offered by the old employee. She appeared bewildered. Subsequently the event was jocularly recounted by a third employee in the presence of several others, including the employee showered with sludge and the new employee. All heartily laughed. The new employee was quizzed as to why her response was so noncommittal when the original event occurred. She said that she did not know

what to do. However, in the context where others responded to a recounting of the event with laughter, she also expressed merriment.

All new employees faced the same dilemma that this person did. Until they accumulated a shared past with old employees they were uncertain about both their relationship with fellow workers and what was regarded as acceptable behavior in novel situations.

On occasion new employees attempted to push themselves into the solidary network by initiating jocular transactions. Such efforts seldom contributed to the new employee becoming incorporated. An extreme example of this occurred when a new employee provided the punch line for a joke told by an old employee. The new employee was subsequently called into account by two other workers. His account that he knew the punch line was not honored. One of the old employees asserted, "We know the punch lines to half his jokes too, but we let him finish them."

A potential member of an established solidary network must walk a fine line between being sufficiently appreciative of the jocularity offered by others and initiating jocular transactions. The acknowledgment of a newcomer as part of the established solidary network was usually accomplished incrementally as the newcomer demonstrated competence in his work, expressed his appreciation of the jocularity of the old-timers, and became aware that he had been granted tentative acceptance. Then with the properly timed joke he could validate his membership in the solidary network. On one occasion that was accomplished dramatically.

It became "common knowledge" that a new employee was a homosexual. His fellow workers made jokes and exchanged sarcastic comments among themselves about the man's homosexuality. (He subsequently stated that he presumed that he was the brunt of jokes behind his back.) In the meantime he demonstrated his competency and was probationally accepted by other members of his work team. He limited his participation in extra-curricular activities. A dramatic transformation

of his relationship with his fellow workers occurred when one worker called on another for help by demanding, "Get over here you cocksucker." The homosexual worker, whose presence was unknown to the one asking for help, poked his head around the corner and with a smile on his face said "You called?" All in hearing broke into laughter.

This transaction had far more consequences than producing ephemeral merriment. It was a watershed point in the relationship between the homosexual and the other members of that work team. It transformed a pretense awareness context (Glaser and Strauss, 1964) and a spoiled identity (Goffman, 1963) into an open awareness context and an acceptable identity. Those transformations were necessary before this worker could establish a robust solidary relationship with his fellow workers. Subsequently his fellow workers invited him to drink beer with them and to parties. He brought his lover with him to the next Christmas party.

Jocular transactions between workers that affirmed extant solidarities were pervasive. Many were so fleeting that they seemed insignificant. A typical example of jocularity contextualized by a solidary relationship that affirmed a relationship is the following between a male and a female who were close friends both at and outside of work. The female worker was walking past the male worker just as he dropped a piece of freshly cut metal. They made eye contact.

WA: This fucker is too hot.
WB: Piss on it.

Reciprocating smiles preceded and accompanied the verbal exchange. The female worker laughed and with a brief pause continued on; the male worker quietly chuckled as he turned his attention to his machine. Many similar exchanges were accompanied by smiles, mild laughter, and reciprocating nods and shrugs. Furthermore, when they occurred in the presence of others they usually elicited smiles, chuckles, eye contact, and head nodding. These transactions affirm extant solidary relationships. The two people who produced the fore-

going transaction both validated their solidary relationship and provided a bit of merriment for themselves and their audience.

All relationships attenuate if they are not reaffirmed. The re-affirmation of a solidary relationship requires the production of social action that informs the parties to the relationship that their relationship is still viable. Jokes that elicit mutual merri-ment are one form of social action that affirms extant solidary relationships.

The intensity of sarcastic transactions among those with a solidary relationship observed ranged from mild put-downs to those that rendered problematic the other's humanity. Only a few instances of biting sarcasm were observed between peo-ple with a solidary relationship.

But self-directed sarcastic comments were common. When a worker failed to complete a task as intended, such as properly adjusting a machine, she or he often offered a self-directed sarcastic comment. Most such comments were nothing more than, "Nice job, George." In many instances those in hearing made no overt response. Responses to self-directed sarcastic comments usually were only a glance, smile, or nod. None-theless these self-reflexive acts (Mead, 1934: 200-209) were significant. They informed others that one recognized his or her error and adopted a collective standpoint when assessing one's own actions.

Most sarcastic comments directed at fellow workers were only mildly biting and the targets typically acknowledged their legitimacy by offering an account (Lutfiyya and Miller, 1986; Scott and Lyman, 1968). The accounts were nearly always honored. A typical transaction of this sort occurred when one worker dropped a tool. A second worker commented, "Nice job, Joe." The first worker responded, "I couldn't of done it without you bumping my arm." Followed by, "Yeh, I know."

The few instances of biting sarcasm between workers with a solidary relationship observed were contextualized by an immediate past wherein one member of the relationship had violated what the other presumed to be taken-for-granted di-mensions of their relationship. An extreme example was the

following exchange, which occurred after one worker had informed management about another worker's infraction of the company's rules.

Worker A approached worker B with a stern demeanor and an agitated glare. They made eye contact as A approached B, which B quickly broke.

> WA: Doesn't it make you feel good when you report others for fucking off. [Delivered with a biting tone of voice while glaring at WB; WB made eye contact and again quickly broke it.]
> WB: Fuck you, I'm here to work. [Looked down at his machine and began tinkering with it.]
> WA: [Continued to glare at worker B.] No! Fuck you! You fun loving son of a bitch! [The "fuck you" was delivered as a challenge, the "fun loving" was sarcastic.]

The target of this sarcastic comment, who had been a member of the solidary network, was excluded from the solidary network as this transaction and its antecedents became common knowledge on the floor. In this instance the target made no attempt to become reintegrated and became a social isolate.

AUTHORITY RELATIONSHIPS

Jocular transactions between workers and bosses occurred with some frequency, but they were far less common that jocularity among workers. Furthermore, unless the worker and supervisor had at least a pseudo solidary relationship, the across-authority-lines instances of jocularity were usually initiated by the authority. But jocularity initiated by superordinates often failed to elicit mutual merriment. In one instance a worker related to his fellow workers how he had charged a number of items on his credit card but as yet had received no billings. A foreman who was a bystander commented, "Shit, I could use a couple pair of jeans, some work pants . . . " while laughing. The worker responded with a curt laugh and turned away. The other workers also turned away. That transaction affirmed the solidary network of the workers and informed the foreman that he was not a viable member of it.

About an hour later two of the workers who had a friendly relationship with the foreman went out of their way to strike up a conversation with him. Apparently these two workers thought their friendly relationship with the foreman had been threatened by the foregoing transaction.

We, like Coser, observed that authorities initiated "humorous" transactions more often than subordinates did. Some sarcastic transactions across authority lines were interlaced with jocularity, but the primary thrust of most of them was sarcastic. These sarcastic transactions appeared to be similar to the "humorous aggressions" from superordinates to subordinates noted by Coser. In Coser's and our study it seems "humorous aggression" or sarcasm was an effort to affirm the presumption that the asymmetric relationship between foreman and worker rested on firm grounds. Foremen frequently made sarcastic comments to workers when their performances failed to meet anticipated standards.

However, whereas Coser reported that she did not observe a single instance of "aggressive humor" by a subordinate where a superordinate was the target, we observed many instances of sarcasm from workers to foremen. Frequently, a sarcastic comment from a foreman to a worker elicited a retort in kind. In a typical instance, a worker called upon the foreman for aid when his press malfunctioned. The foreman asked, "How can one guy have so many problems in one night?" The worker glared at the press and asserted, "It's not me, it's the goddamn press!" The foreman responded, "Yep, it's always the machine's fault." The foreman worked on the machine while the worker watched. The machine began to function. The worker commented, "Well, son of a bitch, there is a god."

Although it was not a common occurrence, on occasion a worker initiated a sarcastic transaction with a foreman. The following example occurred between a long-time employee and a newly appointed foreman. The worker came to the plant on a Saturday morning to work overtime and observed that the foreman had on rubber knee pads worn when laying linoleum. Workers frequently worked on Saturday, but foremen

seldom appeared on Saturday. The worker and foreman made eye contact, smiled, and greeted each other. Then the following unfolded:

> W: Is Johnson [the plant manager] in the plant today?
> F: No. Why? [Puzzled expression.]
> W: I noticed you had your knee pads on, I thought maybe you were up there dirtying your knees for him. [The implication was that the foreman was currying favor with the manager.]
> F: [While laughing and shaking his head] "Fuck you, you little son of a bitch! You ain't working any more goddamn Saturdays!"

They went their separate ways chuckling.

The foregoing transaction was in the presence of a janitor. As the worker and foreman parted the janitor said to the worker, "I can't believe you said that. He's your boss." The worker responded, "No, he's just Bruce." This worker and foreman had an extended shared past that included partying together.

Nearly all of the worker-initiated sarcastic transactions between workers and foremen implicitly called for an egalitarian relationship, implied that the foreman had overstepped his authority, or that he had "misused" his authority. Pogrebin and Poole (1988) also reported that subordinates initiated "aggressive humor" directed at superordinates. Their and our observations suggest that Coser's failure to observe "humorous aggression" from subordinates to superordinates reflects a difference in the nature of the authority relationships that prevail in mental health teams as opposed to the authority relationships that prevail in police departments and among factory workers and foremen.

Occasionally self-directed sarcastic comments were offered in encounters between foremen and workers. However, they were far less common than self-directed sarcasm among workers. When they were offered, they took much the same form as those produced in encounters populated only with workers. Again they served to inform others that the person making the comment adopted a collective standpoint when assessing his or her own actions.

CONCLUSIONS

As noted earlier, this study was undertaken to refine and elaborate the negotiated order paradigm. We presumed that relationship work would be completed within both solidary and authority relationships via negotiating, but that the negotiating would take a different form in the two sets of relationships. Some instances of negotiating were observed, but as observations continued, it became apparent that most of the relationship work was not accomplished by negotiating. These workers and foremen seldom talked with one another about their relationships, yet they routinely produced transactions that had consequences for their relationships.

It may well be, as Strauss (1978) has claimed, that studies of negotiations will (1) provide an understanding of how social orders are constructed and (2) provide a procedure for the specification of the fundamental features of social order. But we advance the general proposition that the negotiated order paradigm is inadequate for the analysis and explanation of how social relationships (orders) are maintained. Our observations suggest that much relationship work within mature relationships is completed by evocative transactions, not by negotiating. One might argue that these evocative transactions are a form of negotiating. But if the concept of negotiating is used that broadly it almost becomes equivalent with social interaction and loses its analytic power.[3]

The social acts implied and referred to by the term *negotiating* differ in several ways from relationship-centered jocularity and sarcasm. Three of the ways the two forms of transactions differ are (1) negotiating is most commonly accomplished via talk (in the universe of discourse), whereas jocularity and sarcasm are accomplished through expressive symbols, (2) negotiating usually is a future-centered activity, whereas jocularity and sarcasm are a present-centered activity, and (3) as Strauss (1978) has noted, negotiating is "time out" behavior, whereas most relationship-centered jocularity and sarcasm is interwoven with the ongoing flow of action.

The negotiated order paradigm has what Stone (1962) has referred to as a discursive bias. It implicitly, if not explicitly,

presumes that relationship work is accomplished via talk (Berger and Luckmann, 1967; Scheff, 1968; Strauss, 1978).[4] We do not deny that on many occasions people create and reshape their social relationships by talking about them—by negotiating. But we suggest that much relationship work, especially the incorporation of new members into an extant social order, the affirmation of extant relationships, and the control of minor deviations, is accomplished via expressive symbols, not discursive ones. Members of mature social relationships frequently complete relationship work by communicating with one another via what Leitchy (1975) has called the universe of touch.

Negotiating is future-centered activity in that the question that implicitly structures negotiations is: How are we to relate to one another in the future? Negotiators recognize that they have mutually recognized differences on how they should relate to one another. They also project a collective future and attempt to agree how they are to relate in that future. In contrast, relationship-centered evocative transactions are primarily present-centered. In jocular and sarcastic transactions a "comment" is made via expressive symbols on the current situation. In many instances the comment has implications for the future, but the future is not addressed as it is when people negotiate.

Negotiating may be interwoven with other forms of social action, but, generally speaking, negotiations of any consequence involve people taking "time-out" while they work on their relationship. In contrast, relationship-centered evocative transactions are produced within the ongoing flow of action. For example, when sarcasm is effective, "The status quo is preserved" (Pogrebin and Poole, 1988: 206) without taking "time-out" to shore up the social order. If sarcasm fails, then ostracism, expulsion, or degradation ceremonies (Ball, 1981: 150) may be instituted, or time-out may be taken while the relationship is negotiated. On occasion, relationship-centered jocularity and sarcasm get "out of hand" and becomes time-out behavior, but "time-outness" is not a distinguishing feature of relationship-centered jocularity and sarcasm.

For these reasons, we suggest that an analytic distinction be made between relationship work accomplished by evocative transactions and relationship work accomplished by negotiating. We propose that the term *negotiating* be used only to refer to those transactions wherein interactants explicitly address the issue of how they are to relate to one another in the future. The term *evocative relationship work* might be used to refer to the phenomena addressed in this statement.

Evocative relationship work is so much a part of routine encounters contextualized by mature social relationships that the interlinkages between them and the encompassing relationships are a part of the taken-for-granted world of many social units. In mature relationships, the interlinkages between relationship-centered evocative transactions and forms of social relationships are seldom given reflective attention. They often are habitual (in common parlance "instinctive") assessments of the actions of self and other(s) that are nested within a taken-for-granted social world. Often these acts are "touched off" by a nonordinary event. When a nonordinary event occurs, those with a mature relationship frequently use expressive symbols to comment on the relationship in question. These comments—jocular and sarcastic acts—inform all about the parameters of the social relationships. They also spice up our mundane world (Faulkner, 1979; Gross, 1979).

Superficially jocular and sarcastic transactions appear nonconsequential, but it is by producing such activities that important relationship work is accomplished. They are not the only way that social relationships are constructed, maintained, and modified, but they are one of the least disruptive procedures for accomplishing those objectives. They are "nonserious" acts that have serious consequences.

NOTES

1. One reviewer for the *Journal* observed that Ball was only partially correct about the derivation of sarcasm. He or she noted that the term is "from the Greek

'sarkasmos'—bitter laugh—which in turn, is from the Greek 'sarkazein'—literally to tear flesh like dogs."

2. None of the articles on humor that the authors examined referenced Ball's statement on sarcasm.

3. Strauss, as is the case for most others who have analyzed negotiations, offers neither a substantive nor formal definition of negotiating. Strauss begins his book on negotiations by listing 13 "synonyms" of negotiations, none of which are truly synonyms. In other parts of his book he refers to negotiations as "ways of getting things accomplished" and as "time out behavior." Most other statements on negotiations are as lacking in conceptual clarity as is Strauss's statement.

4. The negotiated order paradigm is not the only one that has a discourse bias. The ethnomethodologists who attend to social relationships have a similar bias. For example, Maynard and Zimmerman (1984: 302) have noted, "'relationship' (is) something that is subject to ongoing, step-by-step management within talk between persons." Of course, much relationship work is managed "within" talk. But often it is not the talk per se that manages relationships.

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