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A BEHAVIORAL AND PHENOMENOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF AUDIENCE REACTIONS TO COMIC PERFORMANCE

A Thesis

Presented for the

Master of Arts

Degree

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Charles Edward Swanson

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine how audience members react behaviorally and phenomenologically to comic performances. To evaluate the individual audience members listening to comic audiotape recordings, data were collected by means of direct observations of Ss' attending behavior and a thought-sampling procedure. There were a total of 57 individuals, divided into 12 different groups based upon the factors of Company (Friends/Strangers), Gender (male, female, mixed), Order (first, second), and Comedian (Cosby, Pryor).

For the behavioral data, correlations were computed between all possible pairs of categories, to evaluate natural clusters of audience reactions. These differences were evaluated statistically for both the behavioral and thought-sampling data using a four-factor analysis of variance. Results of the behavioral data indicate that the frequency with which an individual audience member laughs at a particular comic performance depends upon a number of factors, both singly and in combination. Results of the self-report data, indicate that Company and Comedian factors strongly influence how audience members react to the comic performances. The degree to which self-report and

behavioral codings yield a similar picture of audience reactions indicate that total agreement values yielded an average of 63% and that Comedian and Company factors influence this dissociation between behavior and self-report. Finally, the overall pattern of results suggests that both comedian and audience effects strongly affect what audience members do and experience in regard to the comedians under both friends and strangers context.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

Introduction

Standup comedy requires the performing artist to be in contact with his or her audience much more so than is true for other types of stage presentation. Not only do audience members pay attention to the comedian and laugh, smile, and applaud, as they do in response to other performers: they also frequently interact (i.e., "heckle") and are interacted with (i.e., "put-down") by the comedian. Their laughter, or lack of it, often serves to direct the comedian to remarks that either are critical of himself or, more likely, of the audience as well as to specific new topics likely to produce laughter. In addition to performer-audience interactions of this type, members of a comic audience interact with one another, either by talking or by other nonverbal gestures, communicating reactions as diverse as: "Did you get it?" or "Isn't that funny?" and so on. Taking all of these factors into account suggests that the way in which an individual responds to a comic performance depends at least as much upon a complex pattern of personal and social factors

current in the audience situation as upon the comic material itself. This study focused on exploring such factors.

Purpose of the Study

The present study was conducted in order to evaluate what audience members both are aware of and do when listening to a comedian who encourages the listener to "transcend" the present situation and one who makes the present situation of importance because they attack the audience, talk primarily about taboo topics, or some combination of the two. In this study, Bill Cosby was selected as representative of the first category and Richard Pryor as representative of the second.

Definitions

Terminology employed in this study included:

1. Behavioral States:

a. On-target-behavior, a judgment made by an observer indicating that audience member was listening to the tape.

b. Off-target-behavior, a judgment made by an observer indicating that audience member was not listening to the tape.

2. Behavioral Events:

a. Smile--corners of mouth upturned without accompanying sound or chest upheaval.

b. Laugh--similar to smile with the additional requirement of either accompanying sound or chest upheavals.

c. Lowering the head--considered only if the chin comes very close to or touches the chest such that the face becomes barely visible.

d. Turning the head--requirement of a full 90° or better turn.

e. Hand to Head--any contact such as touching, rubbing, or grooming the head, excluding the face and neck.

f. Hand to face--hand contact to face or neck.

g. Hand to trunk--hand contact to the trunk of the body below the neck and above the waist, excluding the hands and arms.

h. Hand to hand and arm--includes arm-folding, hand clasping, or any other contact including one hand to the other hand or arm.

i. Looking around--includes looking off to the side, floor, ceiling, or scanning of the environment.

j. Talking--self explanatory.

k. Sitting still without moving--self explanatory.

3. On-target Self Report--a coding used if the statement written by an individual audience member indicated that

he or she was listening to the tape, was relating present material to other aspects of his or her life; was forming opinions, evaluations or ideas about the material; or was listening passively to the materials. All on-target items were coded into three more specific categories:

a. Routine Focused--statements that reflected or used words referring to the events in the comic's routine; e.g., "I was thinking of a guy begging his woman not to leave," "I was aware of a woman being pregnant."

b. Suggested by Routine--statements that reflected or used words referring to the subject or to something related to the present subject; e.g., "I was wondering what I would do in that situation," "I was thinking of when my friends do drugs."

c. Comedian Focused--statements that referred directly to the comedian; e.g., "I was imaging Cosby on Stage," "I don't like Pryor's language," "Cosby makes funny sounds," "I was thinking of Pryor begging his woman not to leave," "I was thinking of Cosby talking to his wife."

4. Off-target Self Report--a coding used if statement written by an audience member indicates that he or she was not listening to the tape. All off-target items were coded into five more specific categories:

a. Other People--includes statements observing or thinking about some other person either in the present situation or in some other situation.

b. Time--includes statements about something earlier or later today, something in more distant future, and/or wondering how much time is left.

c. Body/Self--includes statements about feeling hungry, thinking of food, feeling sleepy, fighting sleep, feeling the need to go to the bathroom, etc.

d. Mood--includes statements referring to being bored, excited, sad, happy, etc.

e. Environment--statements referring to something in the environment (decore, a sound, a smell, etc.) or to the experimental event itself, i.e., waiting for an interruption.

5. Interactional Factors:

a. Company--two divisions of subjects. The types included: Friends (all subjects had to be acquainted with one another before meeting for the experiment), and Strangers (all subjects were not acquainted with one another before the experiment).

b. Gender--division of subjects based on the gender type of the audience members in the group. The types included: male (all male subjects in the group), female

(all female subjects in the group), and mixed (both male and female subjects present in the group).

c. Order--the order in which each comedian was presented to the audience whether first or second.

d. Comedian--Cosby, Pryor, referring to Bill Cosby and Richard Pryor, respectively.

Participants

Participants were secured on either a volunteer basis or for additional course credit. All were undergraduate students in introductory psychology classes at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. There were a total of 57 individuals; 29 who listened to the comedians in the order Cosby-Pryor and 28 who listened in the order Pryor-Cosby. These two main categories were broken down further into a Friends category and a Strangers category. There were 14 friends and 15 strangers who listened to the tapes in a Cosby-Pryor order; 13 friends and 15 strangers listened in the order Pryor-Cosby.

Setting and Apparatus

The experimental room was designed to provide a comfortable and relaxing setting. The room was carpeted and

had posters on the walls. Six chairs formed an ellipse thereby permitting all subjects to face one another. One centrally located microphone was suspended from the ceiling to pick up the laughter and speech of audience members. Two video cameras were placed in the room such that each camera focused on three of the chairs. Situated at the opening of the ellipse were two audio speakers.

A videotape recorder, television monitor, and an audiotape player were located in an adjacent control room. The audiotape player presented 30 minutes of the comic material to be piped into the experimental room. From their tapes Bill Cosby's Greatest Hits and Richard Pryor's Greatest Hits, respectively, 13 minute segments of Cosby and 17 minute segments of Pryor were selected. The Cosby routines included "Driving in San Francisco," "The Apple," "Babies," "The Waterbottle," "Street Football," and a segment of "Buck, Buck." The Pryor routines included "Cocaine," "When Your Woman Leaves You," and "Mudbone." All tapes were continuous with four interruptions. These interruptions occurred approximately at the 3, 6, 10, and 13 minute interval mark for Cosby, and at the 4, 8, 12, and 17 minute mark for Pryor.

Procedure

Groups of subjects (4-6 per group) were asked to come to a waiting room outside the audience listening room. Each subject who agreed to participate in the experiment did so by signing a Consent Form (Appendix A). When each group had assembled, they were led into the experimental room and allowed to sit anywhere they chose. The group was told that this was to be an experiment dealing with humor and they would be videotaped. All participants were read a standard set of instructions (Appendix B).

All subjects were then given two-page packets consisting of a self-report form and a questionnaire, with the self-report form first (Appendix C). On the self-report form, the following instructions were printed: "The tape will be interrupted at pre-selected time intervals. When the signal is given, write down exactly what you were aware of before the interruption occurred. Write this in the corresponding time interval blank." Following these instructions were four blank lines corresponding to each of the four interruptions. Each subject was given two such packets, one for each comedian presented.

Each interruption on the audiotape began with the reading of the following instructions: "This is time interval N; please write down exactly what you were aware of just

before the interruption occurred." When the observer in the control room saw that all participants had finished writing their responses on the self-report form, the comedy routine was started again exactly where it had been stopped before the interruption. The time interval taken for writing a self-report was approximately 2 to 3 minutes. Following the presentation of each comedian, all subjects filled out a questionnaire which inquired about previous exposure to the routine, the comedian, as well as the person's feelings toward the specific comedian or comic routine.

A total of 12 groups of participants was tested. Six groups were presented comedians in the order: Cosby, then Pryor. The other six groups were presented comedians in the order Pryor, then Cosby. Both sets of six groups consisted of a 3 Friends group and 3 Strangers groups. For both friends and strangers conditions, two groups were entirely male, two female, and two contained male and female audience members.

CHAPTER II

RELATED LITERATURE

Standup comedy encompasses a wide range of interactional factors. The comedian must be in contact with an audience much more than for other types of stage presentations. In drama, the audience is more of an objective viewer to events taking place on stage. In stand-up comedy however, the audience not only pays attention to the comedian, but also frequently interacts with and are interacted with, by the comedian. Unlike a dramatic event in which the dialogue and action are set, the comedian is able to select from a ride range of topics based upon the audience reaction, their laughter, or lack of. Taking these factors into account suggests that the way in which an individual responds to a comic performance depends on a complex pattern in the audience situation and upon the comic material itself.

The first experiment to suggest such a complicated pattern of interaction was reported by Murphy and Pollio (1975) in regard to comedians Bill Cosby and Don Rickles. To test group effects, they formed groups of friends and strangers, videotaped them, and played them comedy routines performed by Cosby and Rickles. The results indicated

little differences in terms of laughter and smiling, and interpersonal behaviors when comedians were listened to in a group of friends. There were great differences in both classes of reaction when Cosby and Pryor were listened to in an audience of strangers. Under this condition, audience members who were strangers seemed to laugh and smile, and move very little in response to Rickles, while they did laugh, smile and move in response to Cosby with little differences from audience members who were friends and listened to Cosby.

Additional empirical support demonstrating the powerful effects social factors exert on audience response can be found in the literature. Chapman (1974, 1983) studied 7 and 8 year old children who listened to humorous material under a number of conditions: alone, with a nonlistening companion, and a companion who also listened to the same material. His results indicated there were effects due to the social aspect of the situation, in that the young children laughed more with a companion than when alone, whether or not the companion was able to hear the material.

It is now clear that others do have a social facilitation effect upon humor and many other situations. Chapman (1983) found that facilitation effects were greater when small groups were increased in size from two to four, but an increase from four to six groups members produced no further

effect. This fact was taken into account with the present study; all groups in the experimental design had a minimum of four subjects each.

In addition to the effect of company, conditions of friendship and gender have also been shown to be contributing factors to laughter at comic performance (Foot & Chapman, 1976; Foot, Chapman, & Smith, 1977; Chapman, 1983). In these studies the social responsiveness of children in interactive humor situations were investigated. Children listened to (or viewed) humorous records (or films) under various conditions: in the presence of friends and strangers, in the presence of children of the same or different gender, and in the presence of one or more adults. Friendship was shown to have an overwhelming effect across all conditions. Children laughed, smiled, looked, and talked significantly more with a friend than with a stranger companion. Additionally, some gender differences were found. Girls laughed and smiled more in the presence of a boy than in the presence of other girls. However, boys' laughter and smiling were generally unaffected by the gender of the companion. The effect of the presence of an adult upon responsiveness of children was less clear in that some adults increased laughter and smiling while others decreased.

Chapman and Foot (1976) reached much the same conclusion as Murphy and Pollio (1975): reactions to humorous materials are dependent at least as much upon the social contexts in which they are encountered as on the specific nature of the comic material. Murphy and Pollio (1975), however, also addressed the issue of the ways in which comic performances were experienced in the contrasting social contexts of friends and strangers. Their approach concerned an analysis of the comic worlds of Bill Cosby and Don Rickles. Cosby creates a world of the nice guy, bringing up adventures of being a child; which allows the audience member to "transcend" the present situation and thus experience an imaginary world where audience composition would have little effect. On the other hand, Rickles perpetuates a world of hostility, in which failure, incompetence, and inferiority are focal points, which keeps the audience member in the "here-and-now" of his or her experience, where friends or stranger audience composition would make a difference.

Studies in the past have explored subjective ratings of humorous material and their effects (Chapman, 1975; LaFave, 1972). In Chapman's (1974) study of 7 and 8 year old children, he found not only that the children who rated the recording as most funny tended to be the ones who laughed and smiled the most, but also that with increases in the

companion's laughter, subjects rated the material as funnier.

In addition to subjective ratings of funniness, previous research has not been found in which an individual's subjective experiences of humor were evaluated. A number of techniques, however, have been developed to assess stream of consciousness experiences (Pope & Singer, 1979). As Hurlbert (1979) has noted, these procedures may be divided into those which are retrospective in nature or those that are concurrent with the experience in question. Klinger (1978) has identified five procedures for obtaining reports of inner experience: questionnaires, such as the Imaginal Process Inventory (Singer & Antrobus, 1970); thinking out loud (Klinger, 1974); event recording (Pope, 1977), and thought sampling using both ratings and descriptive self-reports (Hurlbert, 1979, 1980, 1984; Pollio, 1984).

Singer's (1975) retrospective method uses a number of self-descriptive statements, which the subject is asked to respond to, using a scale of how true or characteristic the statement is of him or her, in order to characterize daydreaming patterns. This method is limited in that descriptions do not refer to any one particular thought, but rather generalize the person's experience. Hurlbert (1984) has noted that in delayed ratings, there is likely to be an

exaggeration or inflation in certain aspects of the experience recalled.

Klinger (1974) has used the think-out loud method extensively. This method requires the subject to speak continuously as he or she is thinking. However, Pope (1977) has found this method to have a number of disadvantages. Many subjects find this difficult to do, because providing out-loud continuous reports interferes with the natural flow of thought.

In event recording, subjects indicate nonverbally when a certain event occurs. Pope (1978) asked subjects to move a press-key whenever their thoughts shifted to a new topic, and compared this method with the think-out loud procedure. He found that shifts in thought occurred much more frequently in the key-press method. This method unfortunately offers very little in terms of the subject's experience because it sacrifices the richness of narrative and verbal reports for the operational definition of consciousness in terms of a press-key.

In the thought-sampling method, one can either rate one's inner experience at a given instance or give a narrative description. The method of thought-sampling which asks subjects to rate their inner experience by indicating on a scale the presence or absence of thoughts is not only

difficult on an instant by instant basis, but once again lacks the richness of narrative descriptions.

In the narrative thought-sampling method (Hurlbert, 1979, 1980; Pollio, 1984), subjects are interrupted at unspecified times and asked to report what they were thinking just before the interruption. This instant description enables subjects to report what they were aware of just before the interruption, and at the same time provides the experimenter with a relatively unobtrusive and flexible procedure. The possibility of the subject forgetting or exaggerating certain aspects of the experience are decreased, while at the same time minimizes the interruption of one's conscious flow of experience.

In the context of comic performance, the descriptive thought-sampling procedure is more useful than retrospective procedures, since it allows for an on-going evaluation of personal experience in the situation of interest. For this reason, the present study evaluated the experience of individual audience members listening to comic records by means of a thought-sampling procedure.

In the analysis of the descriptive thought-sampling data collected from the subjects for this study, the self report protocols were coded and evaluated on the basis of a series of categories comparable to those developed and used by Pollio (1984) in his study of what students think about

in college lecture classes. For his study, a bell was sounded several times during a lecture, after which the students were asked to write down on a piece of paper what they were aware of before the bell rang. Following this thought-sampling procedure, statements were coded into one of two categories: on-target or off-target, to determine whether an individual's self-report items were related or unrelated to the teaching event. The off-target statements were coded further into one of eight separate categories: other focused, time focused, body/self focused, fantasy focused, activity focused, mood focused, environment event, or experiment event.

At the same time, individual participants in this study of humor were observed with a series of behavioral scales comparable to those developed and used by Murphy and Pollio (1975). These scales included categories of laughing, smiling, lowering and turning the head, and various hand movements some being hand to head, hand to body, and hand to face.

These thought-sampling and behavioral data collecting methods enable the investigator to approach the question of what individual audience members are aware of and do while listening to a comic performance. They also allow for an evaluation of the social situation, the comic and his material as these are experienced by the audience member.

CHAPTER III

SPECIFIC PROCEDURES

The present study consisted of behavioral and self-report data collected for all audience members.

Behavior Rating Procedures

Before it was possible to examine the effects of group composition on responses to humor, it was necessary to develop behavior rating categories. The final set of categories consisted of two types of categories: one to code the individual's current attentional state: on or off-target, and a second to code the occurrence of 11 specific behaviors. These behaviors included the humor-related categories of laughing and smiling as well as the following set of 9 more general responses: lowering the head; turning the head; putting one's hand to one's head, one's face, one's trunk, one's hand or arm; looking around; talking; and sitting without moving. Each behavior category was observed and recorded during a series of 30 second sampling intervals.

For each individual audience member, 21 different, 30-second intervals were assessed. These were clustered

around each of the four self-report interruptions, such that the 90 second interval preceding and following each interruption was scored, except for the fourth interruption, where only the 90 second period preceding the interval was scored since the performance ended with that interruption.

All state and event ratings, for all intervals and for all participants, were done by two independent observers viewing videotapes of the various groups. Raters scored event behaviors of all subjects on the Observation Recording Form (Appendix D). The form consisted of a set of 18 dependent variables. Of the 18 behaviors, 7 occurred 2 or fewer times across all conditions, and thus were determined not to be significant for this study. These behaviors included: smiling at another person, vocalization, hand-to-face head low, yawning, touching others, checking watch, and bouncing leg.

Prior to the actual recording of data, both raters senior undergraduate psychology majors, were trained to reach at least an 80% agreement level with the investigator, and with each other on practice tapes of audience reactions not used in the present study. Only event scorings which there was 100% agreement between both raters, were used for this study.

Self-Report Rating Procedures

Before it was possible to examine the self-report statements, a coding system had to be developed. The present self-reporting coding system consists of two types of categories: on-target and off-target. All on-target items were coded into three more specific categories: Routine-focused, Suggested by Routine, and Comedian Focused. There were five off-target categories. These included Other People, Time, Body/Self, Mood, and Present Environment.

There were eight self-reports for each participant: four in response to Cosby and four in response to Pryor. All protocols were scored on a Self-Report Coding Form (Appendix E). Since some self-reports contained more than a single statement, a procedure was developed to take this into account. If one (or both) statements for any given interruption was completely on-target or completely off-target, it was given a value of 1.0 on-target or 1.0 off-target. If the statements had two elements and one was on-target and the other was off-target, the statement was coded as .5 on-target and .5 off-target. The use of this metric meant that no individual could have a value of greater than 4.0 for any comedian. All subsequent analyses use this procedure for dealing with the various self-reports. (For sample Self-Reports Protocols and Codings see Appendix F.)

Reliability for this coding system was assessed in the following way: after all protocols had been scored by a single highly trained rater, a six month interval was allowed to pass, and the same rater then rescored all 456 self-reports. Results of this procedure produced a 94% agreement value across both ratings for the major categories of on- and off-target, an 89% agreement value for the three specific subcodings comprising the on-target group, and an overall average 79% value for the five off-target categories.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to evaluate what audience members both are aware of and do when listening to comedians. The results are divided into three major sections: The first section presents behavioral data, the second presents self-report data, and the third presents a comparison of results produced by both procedures.

Behavioral Data

Each of the 57 participants' behavior was coded into 11 different categories. Since the behavioral responses occurred a different number of times, a summary set of values for behaviors occurring across all four factors (Comedian, Company, Gender, Order) was computed as shown in Table 1.

Of the 11 specific behaviors, the following set of six was deemed most useful for the purpose of analysis: smiling (frequency = 217), laughing (N = 145), lowering head (N = 77), hand to head (N = 35), hand to face (N = 126), and talking. Of the five remaining categories four occurred 30 or fewer times across all conditions whereas sitting still

Table 1

Summary Set of Mean Values for Behaviors Occurring Across All Conditions

Behavioral category	Sum
Smiling	217
Laughing	145
Lowering head	77
Turning head	11
Hand to head	35
Hand to face	126
Hand to body	9
Hand to hand or arm	29
Looking	6
Talking	30
Sitting without moving	384

occurred over 380 times. The final category, sitting still, was also considered both because of its high frequency, and because it seemed to define an inactive counterpart to all the remaining categories.

To reduce the specific number of categories to be examined and to analyze clusters of audience responses, correlations were computed between all possible pairs of categories. These correlations were performed separately for total responses per category for comedians Bill Cosby and Richard Pryor (Tables 2 and 3), respectively.

Of the 55 correlations contained in Table 2, for comedian Bill Cosby, 8 are significant at $p < .05$. Of these correlations, one was between smiling and laughing ($r = .31$), and three additional correlations all negative involved category 11 (sitting still). In addition, category 4 (turning head) correlated positively with category 10 (talking). All remaining correlations involved categories 5, 6, 7, and 8 and therefore concerned a hand movement of one sort or another.

Of the 55 correlations contained in Table 3, for comedian Richard Pryor, 12 are significant at $p < .05$. Of these correlations, one was between smiling and laughing ($r = .47$). Five additional negative correlations involved category 11 (sitting still). In addition, laughing correlated with category 6 (hand to face) ($r = .34$).

Table 2

Intercorrelations Between Pairs of Behavioral Categories as Function of Comedian Bill Cosby

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Smiling	1.00	.31*	-.26	-.13	-.09	-.15	-.08	.07	-.01	.00	-.09
2. Laughing		1.00	-.13	.11	.02	.03	-.10	-.12	-.01	.10	-.31*
3. Lower head			1.00	-.11	.03	-.05	-.17	-.03	.23	-.05	-.14
4. Turn head				1.00	-.02	.09	.00	.12	.06	.36*	-.10
5. Hand to head					1.00	.13	-.13	.27*	-.07	.09	-.02
6. Hand to face						1.00	.53*	.26*	.13	.17	-.48*
7. Hand to body							1.00	.00	.24	-.11	-.12
8. Hand to hand								1.00	.10	-.04	-.31*
9. Looking away									1.00	-.12	-.21
10. Talking										1.00	-.05
11. Not moving											1.00

*r = .26; p < .05.

Table 3

Intercorrelations Between Pairs of Behavioral Categories as Function of Comedian Richard Pryor

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Smiling	1.00	.47*	-.02	.06	-.15	.09	-.10	.16	-.17	.03	-.30*
2. Laughing		1.00	-.14	-.06	.02	.34*	-.10	.12	-.19	-.08	-.45*
3. Lower head			1.00	-.09	.05	.09	-.17	.03	.30*	.23	-.16
4. Turn head				1.00	.17	.00	.12	.07	.40*	.13	-.13
5. Hand to head					1.00	.45*	.16	.23	.11	.14	-.24
6. Hand to face						1.00	.17	.40*	-.06	-.04	-.40*
7. Hand to body							1.00	.11	.14	-.14	-.25
8. Hand to hand								1.00	-.12	.30*	-.26*
9. Looking away									1.00	-.06	-.50*
10. Talking										1.00	.04
11. Not moving											1.00

*r = .26; p < .05.

Categories 3 (lower head) and 4 (turn head) both correlated positively with category 9 (looking away). Of the three remaining correlations, categories 5, 6, 8 were concerned with hand movements, with the exception of category 8 (hand to hand) which also correlated with category 10 (talking).

Using the correlations performed separately for comedians Bill Cosby and Richard Pryor, there were differences in the patterns yielded by each comedian. One noteworthy difference concerned category 4 (turning the head). For Cosby, category 4 correlated positively ($\underline{r}$ = .36) with category 10 (talking) and not at all ($\underline{r}$ = .06) with category 9 (looking away). These values were reversed for Pryor, where categories 4 and 9 yielded a correlation of $\underline{r}$ = .40, while categories 4 and 10 yield one of $\underline{r}$ = .13. For Pryor, category 3 (lowering head) also correlated positively ($\underline{r}$ = .30) with category 9 (looking away). What these results suggest is that when Cosby audience members turned their heads it was to speak with another member of the audience; and when Pryor audience members lowered or turned their head it was to turn away from each other or to look off to the side.

Another noteworthy difference observed comedians. For Pryor, category 2 (laughing) correlated positively ($\underline{r}$ = .34) with category 6 (hand to face), while for Cosby, the same correlation was not significant ($\underline{r}$ = .03). These results

suggest that when Pryor audience members laughed, that they also put their hand to their face. This behavior seems best understood as an embarrassed gesture or concealment of laughter in response to the comedian Richard Pryor. For Cosby, it seems to be either a self-touching or more general movement response.

On the basis of these results, it seems possible to organize the various behavioral categories into there major groupings: one involving the responses of laughing and smiling; a second involving the social responses of talking, looking around, lowering and turning the head; and the third involving various movements of the hand, with the exception of the behavioral response hand to face, which can be both a social response and/or self-touching response.

Table 4 presents the mean values for the seven most frequent behavioral categories as a function of comedian and social condition. This table includes the primary humor responses of laughing and smiling; the primary social responses of lowering head, talking, and the response of hand to face which seems to involve both the social aspect and that of a general movement response; and the primary movement responses of hand to head and sitting still.

To evaluate these differences statistically, a 4-factor analysis of variance was used in which the major factors were Company (Friends/Strangers); Gender (male, female,

Table 4

Mean Values for the Seven Most Frequent Behaviors as a Function of Comedian and Social Condition

	Cosby		Pryor	
Behavioral category	Friends	Strangers	Friends	Strangers
Smiling	9.48	8.77	10.40	7.56
Laughing	7.27	4.15	9.38	3.35
Lowering head	2.83	2.97	3.53	3.45
Talking	3.27	0.00	1.63	0.00
Hand to face	7.33	4.40	5.48	3.84
Hand to head	1.71	1.08	2.17	.96
Sitting still	15.15	16.46	15.36	17.41

mixed), Order (first, second), and Comedian (Cosby, Pryor). The first three factors, Company, Gender, and Order, as well as their interactions were treated as between subjects effects. The final factor, Comedian, was treated as a within subjects effect, as were all interactions involving this factor. These results for the behavioral categories: hand to head, sitting still, hand to face, talking, lowering head, smiling, and laughing are presented in Tables 5-11, respectively.

Looking at the behavioral category hand to head (Table 5), it seems clear that the major difference concerned the factor Company ($p < .01$), where friend audiences produced significantly more of this behavior than strangers. Although Gender produced significant effects (in the order female, mixed, male), there were no further interactions nor any significant Comedian effects.

The case for the behavior sitting still (Table 6), which may be considered a compliment to the hand to head behavior, revealed only one significant Comedian effect that involving the interaction of Comedian X Gender X Company ($p < .01$). In addition, there were significant Company effects, that is strangers sat still more frequently than friends ($p < .01$); as well as interaction effects involving the factors Gender X Order ($p < .01$) as well as the interaction of Company X Gender X Order ($p < .05$).

Table 5

Analysis of Variance for the Behavioral Category: Hand to Head for All Factors and Interactions

Source	DF	SS	F-value	PR > F
Company	1	31.98	11.36	0.0015*
Gender	2	27.09	4.81	0.0128*
Order	1	0.48	0.17	0.6818
Comedian	1	0.56	0.25	0.6167
Company X Gender	2	4.76	0.85	0.4358
Company X Order	1	1.63	0.58	0.4498
Gender X Order	2	1.91	0.34	0.7139
Company X Comedian	1	2.18	0.99	0.3260
Gender X Comedian	2	0.76	0.17	0.8433
Order X Comedian	1	4.67	2.11	0.1530
Company X Gender X Order	2	7.11	1.26	0.2927
Company X Gender X Comedian	2	3.25	0.73	0.4852
Company X Order X Comedian	1	1.39	0.63	0.4309
Gender X Order X Comedian	2	2.99	0.68	0.5133
Company X Gender X Order X Comedian	2	2.19	0.50	0.6118

*Statistically significant ($p < .05$).

Table 6

Analysis of Variance for the Behavioral Category: Sitting Still for All Factors and Interactions

Source	DF	SS	F-value	PR > F
Company	1	77.60	7.45	0.0090*
Gender	2	38.09	1.83	0.1725
Order	1	9.20	0.88	0.3525
Comedian	1	7.89	2.39	0.1292
Company X Gender	2	25.21	1.21	0.3077
Company X Order	1	6.99	0.67	0.4170
Gender X Order	2	156.68	7.52	0.0015*
Company X Comedian	1	1.26	0.38	0.5404
Gender X Comedian	2	8.12	1.23	0.3023
Order X Comedian	1	5.18	1.57	0.2170
Company X Gender X Order	2	102.64	4.93	0.0116*
Company X Gender X Comedian	2	52.78	7.99	0.0011*
Company X Order X Comedian	1	4.21	1.27	0.2650
Gender X Order X Comedian	2	16.50	2.50	0.0937
Company X Gender X Order X Comedian	2	10.45	1.58	0.2168

*Statistically significant ($p < .05$).

Table 7

Analysis of Variance for the Behavioral Category: Hand to Face for All Factors and Interactions

Source	DF	SS	F-value	PR > F
Company	1	145.17	5.60	0.0223*
Gender	2	5.06	0.10	0.9073
Order	1	30.36	1.17	0.2849
Comedian	1	42.98	8.96	0.0045*
Company X Gender	2	24.09	0.46	0.6314
Company X Order	1	47.64	1.84	0.1820
Gender X Order	2	94.47	1.82	0.1735
Company X Comedian	1	12.65	2.64	0.1115
Gender X Comedian	2	0.66	0.07	0.9337
Order X Comedian	1	48.08	10.02	0.0028*
Company X Gender X Order	2	88.85	1.71	0.1918
Company X Gender X Comedian	2	76.42	7.96	0.0011*
Company X Order X Comedian	1	1.43	0.30	0.5869
Gender X Order X Comedian	2	12.89	1.34	0.2713
Company X Gender X Order X Comedian	2	13.40	1.40	0.2580

*Statistically significant ($p < .05$).

Table 8

Analysis of Variance for the Behavioral Category: Talking for All Factors and Interactions

Source	DF	SS	F-value	PR > F
Company	1	150.53	28.09	0.0001*
Gender	2	66.69	6.22	0.0041*
Order	1	35.74	6.67	0.0131*
Comedian	1	12.67	3.10	0.0851
Company X Gender	2	82.18	7.67	0.0014*
Company X Order	1	37.21	6.94	0.0115*
Gender X Order	2	25.57	2.39	0.1036
Company X Comedian	1	13.27	3.25	0.0782
Gender X Comedian	2	43.25	5.29	0.0086*
Order X Comedian	1	0.01	0.00	0.9610
Company X Gender X Order	2	23.89	2.23	0.1194
Company X Gender X Comedian	2	54.64	6.69	0.0028*
Company X Order X Comedian	1	0.00	0.00	0.9973
Gender X Order X Comedian	2	0.10	0.01	0.9874
Company X Gender X Order X Comedian	2	0.01	0.00	0.9985

*Statistically significant ($p < .05$).

Table 9

Analysis of Variance for the Behavioral Category: Lowering Head for All Factors and Interactions

Source	DF	SS	F-value	PR > F
Company	1	0.35	0.02	0.8817
Gender	2	49.47	1.57	0.2193
Order	1	1.00	0.06	0.8022
Comedian	1	6.39	1.68	0.2021
Company X Gender	2	20.68	0.66	0.5237
Company X Order	1	56.36	3.58	0.0650
Gender X Order	2	23.39	0.74	0.4818
Company X Comedian	1	0.38	0.10	0.7550
Gender X Comedian	2	14.70	1.93	0.1577
Order X Comedian	1	4.10	1.08	0.3053
Company X Gender X Order	2	11.20	0.36	0.7030
Company X Gender X Comedian	2	16.20	2.12	0.1316
Company X Order X Comedian	1	2.19	0.57	0.4531
Gender X Order X Comedian	2	1.38	0.18	0.8352
Company X Gender X Order X Comedian	2	33.03	4.33	0.0191*

*Statistically significant ($p < .05$).

Table 10

Analysis of Variance for the Behavioral Category: Smiling for All Factors and Interactions

Source	DF	SS	F-value	PR > F
Company	1	21.52	0.53	0.4684
Gender	2	231.21	2.87	0.0670
Order	1	45.01	1.12	0.2959
Comedian	1	3.17	0.29	0.5937
Company X Gender	2	88.89	1.10	0.3403
Company X Order	1	10.30	0.26	0.6155
Gender X Order	2	62.83	0.78	0.4643
Company X Comedian	1	28.20	2.57	0.1158
Gender X Comedian	2	99.95	4.56	0.0158*
Order X Comedian	1	65.83	6.00	0.0182*
Company X Gender X Order	2	82.07	1.02	0.3690
Company X Gender X Comedian	2	22.77	1.04	0.3625
Company X Order X Comedian	1	32.28	2.94	0.0931
Gender X Order X Comedian	2	7.88	0.36	0.7003
Company X Gender X Order X Comedian	2	33.21	1.51	0.2310

*Statistically significant ($p < .05$).

Table 11

Analysis of Variance for the Behavioral Category: Laughing for All Factors and Interactions

Source	DF	SS	F-value	PR > F
Company	1	494.10	15.75	0.0003*
Gender	2	868.99	13.85	0.0001*
Order	1	195.88	6.24	0.0162*
Comedian	1	7.89	1.15	0.2898
Company X Gender	2	366.35	5.84	0.0056*
Company X Order	1	9.99	0.32	0.5753
Gender X Order	2	266.47	4.25	0.0204*
Company X Comedian	1	78.95	11.47	0.0015*
Gender X Comedian	2	347.56	25.26	0.0001*
Order X Comedian	1	28.73	4.17	0.0469*
Company X Gender X Order	2	160.13	2.55	0.0891
Company X Gender X Comedian	2	69.90	5.08	0.0103*
Company X Order X Comedian	1	11.48	1.67	0.2031
Gender X Order X Comedian	2	80.34	5.84	0.0056*
Company X Gender X Order X Comedian	2	139.51	10.14	0.0002*

*Statistically significant ($p < .05$).

Turning now to the category hand to face (Table 7), indicates a difference in the number of responses to Cosby and Pryor ($F = 8.96$; $p < .01$) as well as in terms of whether the comedians were listened to in the context of friends and strangers ($F = 5.60$; $p < .05$). Further results revealed that order interacted significantly with comedian ($F = 10.02$; $p < .01$), and the higher order interaction Company X Gender X Comedian was also significant ($p < .01$). To provide some indication as to what these interactions might mean, the highest mean value for the behavior hand to face was produced by a group of friends listening to Bill Cosby whereas the second highest value was for a group of friends listening to Richard Pryor. These first order results suggest that the hand to face gesture occurred more frequently under conditions where the individual was most comfortable; Cosby first and Pryor second with friends. As might be expected the smallest mean value for stranger groups occurred for individuals listening to Richard Pryor.

A behavioral category producing much less equivocal results concerned the behavior of talking (Table 8). Although the frequency of this behavior was not high, it did indicate that members of friends audiences talked to one another more frequently than did members of strangers audiences ($F = 28.9$; $p < .001$), and that mixed Gender audiences of friends talked more than the all female and all

male audiences ($F = 6.22$; $p < .01$). Further results revealed that Gender interacted significantly with Comedian ($F = 5.29$; $p < 01$), as also was the case with the interaction Company X Gender X Comedian ($F = 6.69$; $p < .01$). Although there were other higher order interactions involving Company, Gender, and Order that were significant, results for this category suggest that members of friends group talked to one another more frequently than members of strangers groups. It also reveals that such talking was more frequent for audiences of mixed Gender of friends than for all female and all male groups of friends, and such talking was more frequent when listening to Cosby than to Pryor.

Although mean values provided by the category lowering head (Table 9), suggest that Pryor audiences engaged in this behavior more frequently than Cosby audiences, statistical analysis did not produce an unequivocal confirmation for this impression. The only significant effect for this category was the higher order interaction among all four factors Company X Gender X Order X Comedian ($F = 4.33$; $p < .05$).

Results for the behavior of smiling (Table 10) revealed only two significant effects, both interactions: Gender X Comedian ($F = 4.56$; $p < .05$) and Order X Comedian ($F = 6.00$; $p < .05$). Basically these interactions indicate that mixed

Gender groups showed no difference between Cosby and Pryor, but that all male audience groups smiled significantly more frequently than did all female groups to Pryor and Cosby. The Order X Comedian effect indicated no difference for Pryor whether he was listened to first or second, but there was a profound increase in smiling for Cosby when his routine followed Pryor rather than preceding him.

Because results for laughing behavior are so crucial for present purposes, a more complete breakdown was needed (Table 12). Examination of the data presented and the 4-factor analysis of variance found in Table 11, reveals significant Company ($F = 15.75$; $p < .001$), Gender ($F = 13.85$; $p < .001$) and Order ($F = 6.24$; $p < .05$) effects, as well as significant interactions between Company X Gender ($F = 5.84$; $p < .01$) and Gender X Order ($F = 4.25$; $p < .05$). More important for present purposes however are results involving Comedian effects. Although there were no overall Comedian effects ($F = 1.15$; $p < .05$), there were significant effects for Company X Comedian ($F = 11.47$; $p < .01$), Gender X Comedian ($F = 25.26$; $p < .001$) and Order X Comedian ($F = 4.17$; $p < .05$). In addition the following interactions also were significant: Company X Gender X Comedian, Gender X Order X Comedian, and Company X Gender X Order X Comedian.

The overall effect conveyed both by present results, is that the frequency with which an individual audience member

Table 12

Mean Values for the Behavior of Laughter as a Function of All Conditions: Comedian, Company, Gender, and Order

		Cosby Order		Pryor Order	
Social setting	Gender	1	2	1	2
Friends	Male	3.60	17.50	22.75	15.80
	Female	5.20	4.80	1.20	4.80
	Mixed	9.25	3.25	8.00	3.75
Strangers	Male	3.60	6.25	9.00	4.20
	Female	2.00	8.40	1.60	2.20
	Mixed	1.80	2.83	.67	2.40

laughs at a particular comic performance depends on an enormous number of factors, both singly and in combination. Interpretation of some of the results reveals that friends laugh more than strangers, all male groups laugh more than the all female and mixed groups, and there is an increase in laughing when the comedian Richard Pryor precedes Bill Cosby, especially for all male groups whether they are friends or not. In fact, about the only feature of the present set of situations that did not on its own affect audience laughter was whether the comedian was Bill Cosby or Richard Pryor.

Self-Report Data

Each participant was interrupted four times during the performance of each comedian yielding eight narrative self-report statements per person. These statements were coded into two major categories: on-target and off-target. The category of on-target was further divided into three mutually exclusive groups: focused on routine, focused on comedian, and focused on events suggested by the routine. Off-target self-reports were subcoded into five mutually exclusive categories: other people, time, body, mood, and present environment.

The mean values for self-report protocols were coded on the basis of the two major and eight minor categories as found in Table 13. These values indicate that an audience of friends were more on-target than strangers in terms of self-report statements, and that audiences listening to Bill Cosby had more on-target statements than audience members listening to Richard Pryor. To evaluate possible Gender differences, Table 14 has been provided to show the mean values for the on-target self-report categories as a function of Social, Gender, and Comedian conditions. These values suggest that all male audience members were more on-target than all female or mixed groups.

A four-factor analysis of variance was performed on the present results to evaluate these differences statistically. As may be remembered, Company, Gender, and Order, as well as their interactions were treated as between-subject effects. Comedians, as well as all of the various higher-order interactions involving this factor were treated as within-subject effects. The results for the self-report categories--total on-target, routine focused, comedian focused, and suggested by routine are presented in Tables 15-18, respectively.

Looking at the category of Total on-target (Table 15), it seems clear that both Comedian ($\underline{F} = 39.43$; $\underline{p} < .001$) and Company ($\underline{F} = 5.94$; $\underline{p} < .02$) produced significant effects.

Table 13

Mean Values for Various Self-Report Categories for Different Comedian and Social Conditions

	Cosby		Pryor	
Self-report categories	Friends	Strangers	Friends	Strangers
On-Target				
Routine focused	1.23	.84	1.17	.62
Comedian focused	.77	1.00	1.29	1.20
Suggested by routine	1.56	1.44	.56	.64
Total	3.56 (88%)	3.28 (82%)	3.02 (76%)	2.46 (62%)
Off-Target				
Other	.12	.26	.40	.54
Time	.02	.04	.18	.23
Body	.22	.12	.23	.31
Mood	.00	.09	.07	.09
Environment	.08	.20	.10	.37
Total	.44	.72	.98	1.54

Table 14

Mean Values for the Total On-Target Self-Report Category as a Function of Social, Gender, and Comedian Conditions

		Cosby	Pryor
Social setting	Gender	Total on-target	Total on-target
Friends	Male	3.75	3.42
	Female	3.50	2.50
	Mixed	3.44	3.13
Strangers	Male	3.70	3.10
	Female	3.00	2.55
	Mixed	3.14	1.74

Table 15

Analysis of Variance for the Self-Report Category Total On-Target for All Factors and Interactions

Source	DF	SS	F-value	PR > F
Company	1	4.76	5.94	0.0188*
Gender	2	8.02	5.01	0.0109*
Order	1	4.12	5.14	0.0282*
Comedian	1	13.69	39.43	0.0001*
Company X Gender	2	3.19	1.99	0.1484
Company X Order	1	0.04	0.05	0.8197
Gender X Order	2	0.56	0.35	0.7051
Company X Comedian	1	0.25	0.73	0.3975
Gender X Comedian	2	0.74	1.06	0.3535
Order X Comedian	1	1.69	4.88	0.0323*
Company X Gender X Order	2	7.52	4.70	0.0140*
Company X Gender X Comedian	2	3.14	4.53	0.0162*
Company X Order X Comedian	1	0.55	1.58	0.2158
Gender X Order X Comedian	2	2.78	4.01	0.0249*
Company X Gender X Order X Comedian	2	0.92	1.33	0.2759

*Statistically significant ($p < .05$).

Table 16

Analysis of Variance for the Self-Report Subcategory Routine Focused for All Factors and Interactions

Source	DF	SS	F-value	PR > F
Company	1	6.97	10.08	0.0027*
Gender	2	3.01	2.18	0.1252
Order	1	1.62	2.34	0.1331
Comedian	1	0.88	1.88	0.1768
Company X Gender	2	5.27	3.80	0.0297*
Company X Order	1	0.99	1.44	0.2358
Gender X Order	2	3.47	2.51	0.0927
Company X Comedian	1	0.11	0.23	0.6304
Gender X Comedian	2	0.12	0.13	0.8821
Order X Comedian	1	0.18	0.40	0.5323
Company X Gender X Order	2	0.86	0.62	0.5437
Company X Gender X Comedian	2	2.73	2.93	0.0637
Company X Order X Comedian	1	0.13	0.28	0.5966
Gender X Order X Comedian	2	1.10	1.18	0.3163
Company X Gender X Order X Comedian	2	0.13	0.14	0.8677

*Statistically significant ($p < .05$).

Table 17

Analysis of Variance for the Self-Report Subcategory Comedian Focused for All Factors and Interactions

Source	DF	SS	F-value	PR > F
Company	1	0.42	0.44	0.5082
Gender	2	1.61	0.86	0.4309
Order	1	0.03	0.03	0.8643
Comedian	1	4.05	8.16	0.0065*
Company X Gender	2	3.24	1.72	0.1901
Company X Order	1	0.12	0.12	0.7276
Gender X Order	2	2.87	1.52	0.2291
Company X Comedian	1	1.06	2.14	0.1508
Gender X Comedian	2	3.13	3.15	0.0525
Order X Comedian	1	1.22	2.46	0.1237
Company X Gender X Order	2	0.60	0.32	0.7272
Company X Gender X Comedian	2	0.19	0.19	0.8243
Company X Order X Comedian	1	0.04	0.08	0.7784
Gender X Order X Comedian	2	0.98	0.98	0.3819
Company X Gender X Order X Comedian	2	2.87	2.89	0.0659

*Statistically significant ($p < .05$).

Table 18

Analysis of Variance for the Self-Report Subcategory Suggested by Routine for All Factors and Interactions

Source	DF	SS	F-value	PR > F
Company	1	0.03	0.04	0.8515
Gender	2	1.61	0.82	0.4484
Order	1	0.35	0.35	0.5553
Comedian	1	22.82	38.47	0.0001*
Company X Gender	2	15.98	8.11	0.0010*
Company X Order	1	0.75	0.76	0.3881
Gender X Order	2	1.07	0.54	0.5847
Company X Comedian	1	0.74	1.24	0.2712
Gender X Comedian	2	0.92	0.78	0.4657
Order X Comedian	1	0.39	0.66	0.4213
Company X Gender X Order	2	5.68	2.88	0.0665
Company X Gender X Comedian	2	4.65	3.92	0.0268*
Company X Order X Comedian	1	0.82	1.38	0.2467
Gender X Order X Comedian	2	1.07	0.91	0.4118
Company X Gender X Order X Comedian	2	1.96	1.65	0.2029

*Statistically significant ($p < .05$).

There also were significant first-order effects for Gender ($F = 5.01$; $p < .02$) and Order ($F = 5.14$; $p < .05$) as well as significant higher effects for the interaction of Company X Gender X Order ($F = 4.88$; $p < .05$). Significant higher-order effects were found for Company X Gender X Comedian ($F = 4.53$; $p < .02$) and Gender X Order X Comedian ($F = 4.01$; $p < .03$). These results suggest that audience members were on-target more frequently when with friends than with strangers, and when listening to Bill Cosby than when listening to Pryor. It also reveals all male groups were more on-target than audiences of all female and mixed groups.

An examination of the three subcategories comprising the overall coding of a statement as on-target revealed that for the subcategory of Routine-focused (Table 16), the difference between friends and strangers was significant ($F = 10.08$; $p < .01$) as was its interaction with Gender ($F = 3.80$; $p < .03$). The second on-target category Comedian-focused (Table 17), yielded only one significant factor which was Comedian ($F = 8.16$; $p < .01$). This result indicated a stronger tendency for audience members to focus on Pryor than on Cosby. In the examination of the final on-target category Suggested-by-routine (Table 18) revealed a reverse effect: that this category tended to be stronger for audience member listening to Cosby than to Pryor

(F = 38.47; p < .001). In addition, the Company X Gender (F = 8.11; p < .01) and Company X Gender X Comedian interactions (F = 3.92; p < .03) were significant indicating that female and mixed audience groups tended to provide for more codings of Suggested-by-routine for Cosby than for Pryor.

Data for the five subcategories comprising Total off-target self-reports were much less numerous than for the three on-target categories. For this reason, only those statistical results which were significant will be noted.

An examination of the first off-target category, Others, revealed only two significant effects, Comedian (F = 10.98; p < .01) and the higher order interaction Company X Gender X Order (F = 5.67; p < .01), with Pryor audience members providing self-reports concerned with others more frequently than was the case for members of Cosby audiences. A similar result was found with the off-target category, Time, where there were also Comedian effects (F = 10.94; p < .01), with Pryor audience members providing more self-reports concerned with this category. The only significant effect for the category Body concerned Gender (F = 4.03; p < .03), with female and mixed groups yielding significantly more off-target codings in this category than was true for all male groups. For the category mood, all values were low, and only yielded one

marginal effect Order ($F = 4.46$; $p < .05$). Finally, off-target self-reports having a focus on the environment revealed Company effects ($F = 7.87$; $p < .01$) such that strangers provided self-reports concerned with the environment more frequently than was the case for friends.

Results of the self-report data indicate that audience members were on-target more frequently with friends than with strangers, and when listening to Cosby than when listening to Pryor. For Cosby, self-reports indicated that audience members tended to focus on ideas and images suggested by the routine. For Pryor self-reports indicated that audience members tended to focus on Pryor, the person and comedian. In terms of off-target categories, Other was the major category for three of the four groups: Cosby-strangers, Pryor-friends, and Pryor-strangers. While for the group Cosby-friends, the most frequent off-target category was Body. Although the off-routine category of Body was large for the other groups, members of stranger groups tended to be off-target more frequently by focusing on the immediate environment.

Comparison of Behavioral and Self-Report Codings

Judgments of behavioral state were evaluated only for the 30-second period immediately preceding each

interruption, such that disagreements in behavior judgments were allowed to be on/off; that is when one rater scored the person as on-target and the other rater scored the person as off-target. This procedure allowed for comparison, on an instance by instance basis, of the degree to which self-report and behavioral codings yield a comparable picture of audience reactions. Thus, each of the eight specific self-report interruptions for each participant was located and related to the behavioral state (on- or off-target) of the same individual. Since this study had 57 subjects and eight concordance judgments between behavioral states and self-report statements for each participant, there were a total of 456 judgments.

Table 19 presents values relevant to the two-way classification analysis in which the three column headings: on, on/off, and off refer to the self-report codings; and in which the three row headings: on, on/off, and off refer to the behavioral state codings. One should first notice that 16% of the self-reports were scored as both on- and off-target, as there were usually two separate statements for each report. Of the 456 total judgments, 10% fell into the category where behavioral judgments were also scored as on- and off-target. In a table of this sort, concordant values between self-report and behavioral codings are defined by diagonal entries. An examination of these values

Table 19

Concordance Between On- and Off-Target Behavioral and Self-Report Codings

Behavioral codings	Self-report codings				
	On	On/Off	Off	Sum	%
On	262	58	44	364	80%
On/Off	29	7	10	46	10%
Off	21	8	17	46	10%
Sum	312	73	71	456	100%
%	68%	16%	16%	100%	

indicates that about 63% (286/456) were coded into these three cells. Complete disagreements, that is where one categorization was coded as on-target and the other as off-target comprised 65 of the 456 judgments yielding a value of 14%. Of these 65 disagreements, by far the largest number (44) involved cases in which the behavioral coding was on-target and the self-report coding was off-target. Marginal totals provide some indication as why this is the case: whereas 80% of all behavioral state ratings were coded as on-target, only 68% of the self-reports were coded as such.

Separate 3 X 3 concordance tables of this type were computed for comedians Bill Cosby and Richard Pryor (Tables 20 and 21), respectively. These results indicated that of the 228 items coded for both comedians, members of Cosby audiences yielded 71% total agreement score (161/228) and members of Pryor audiences yielded a 55% total agreement score (125/228). For Cosby groups, only 11% of entries fell into total-disagree category; for Pryor groups 18% were coded as such. Behavioral codings that were scored as on-target were 84% Cosby and 76% for Pryor, comparable on-target self-report values were 79% Cosby and 58% for Pryor.

Table 20

Concordance Between Behavioral and Self-Report Codings for Comedian Bill Cosby

	Self-report codings				
Behavioral codings	On	On/Off	Off	Sum	%
On	155	22	14	191	84%
On/Off	15	3	3	21	9%
Off	10	3	3	16	7%
Sum	180	28	20	228	100%
%	79%	12%	9%	100%	

Table 21

Concordance Between Behavioral and Self-Report Codings for Comedian Richard Pryor

	Self-report codings				
Behavioral codings	On	On/Off	Off	Sum	%
On	107	36	30	173	76%
On/Off	14	4	7	25	11%
Off	11	5	14	30	13%
Sum	132	45	51	228	100%
%	58%	20%	22%	100%	

The same sort of concordance tables were computed for the Company conditions of Friends and Strangers (Tables 22 and 23). The results indicated similar on-target values for both: 67% total agreement (145/216) for friends and 59% total agreement (141/240) for strangers. Total disagree values were 14% for both friends (31/216) and strangers (34/240). Behavioral on-target values were 77% for friends and 82% for strangers, while there was more of a difference concerning the percentage of self-report on-target values which were 77% for friends and 60% for strangers.

The major findings of this set of analyses is that the total agreement values between behavioral and self-report codings never exceeded 71% and fell as low as 55% yielding an average of 63%. Complete disagreement values ranged from 18% to 11% with an overall mean of 14%. By far, the largest difference was between comedians being coded as on-target behaviorally and in terms of self-report. For Cosby the relevant value was 68% (155/228); the comparable value for Pryor was 47% (107/228). These values were observed despite the fact that total behavioral states were coded as on-target 84% for Cosby and 76% for Pryor. These results indicate that audience members listening to Pryor more often looked as if they were listening to the performance than would seem to be indicated by self-report protocols. Thus the dissociation between behavior and self-report was

Table 22

Concordance Between Behavioral and Self-Report Codings for Friends Groups

	Self-report codings				
Behavioral codings	On	On/Off	Off	Sum	%
On	135	16	16	167	77%
On/Off	17	1	4	22	10%
Off	15	3	9	27	13%
Sum	167	20	29	216	100%
%	77%	9%	14%	100%	

Table 23

Concordance Between Behavioral and Self-Report Codings for Stranger Groups

	Self-report codings				
Behavioral codings	On	On/Off	Off	Sum	%
On	127	42	28	197	82%
On/Off	12	6	6	24	10%
Off	6	5	8	19	8%
Sum	145	53	42	240	100%
%	60%	22%	18%	100%	

greater for audience members listening to Pryor than audience members listening to Cosby.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

This study employed phenomenological and behavioral techniques in order to investigate what audience members are aware of and do while listening to comic performances. There were a total of 57 individuals divided into 12 separate groups. Six groups were presented the comedians in the order Cosby, then Pryor, the remaining six groups were presented comedians in the order Pryor, then Cosby. Both sets of six groups consisted of three friends groups and three strangers groups. For both friends and strangers conditions, two groups were entirely male, two female, and two contained male and female audience members. These factors were controlled to test for Company, Gender, Order, and Comedian effects in the behavioral and self-report data collected for all audience members.

Of the behaviors coded, the following set was most useful for the purpose of analysis: smiling, laughing, lowering head, talking, hand to face, hand to head, and sitting still. A number of significant differences were found: friends laughed and talked more than strangers, male groups laughed more than the all female and mixed groups,

and the gesture hand to face occurred more in friend groups than in stranger groups.

For the self-report data the following set of categories were used: on-target and its subcategories of Routine focused, Comedian focused, and Suggested by routine; and off-target with its subcategories of Others, Time, Body, Mood, and present Environment. Results indicated audience members were on-target more frequently with friends than with strangers, and when listening to Cosby than when listening to Pryor. For Cosby, self-reports indicated that audience members tended to focus on ideas suggested by the routine. For Pryor, audience members tended to focus more on the comedian in the present situation. Others was a major category, as was the Body, in off-target reports, and members of stranger groups tended to be off-target more frequently by focusing on the immediate environment.

A comparison of behavioral and self-report codings yield some interesting findings. Only 68% of the self-reports were coded as on-target, while 80% of the behavior states were coded as such, and the total agreement between behavioral and self-report codings yielded an average value of 63%. Differences also were found, when comparing the values for agreement between being both on-target behaviorally and in terms of self-reports, which were 68% for Cosby and 47% for Pryor. These results

indicate that audience members listening to Pryor looked more attentive than their self-reports suggest.

There seem to be two different perspectives that can be taken in regard to a person's reactions to a particular stage performance: one is the observable aspect of other people's physical or verbal behavior, and the second is the nonobservable side of others indicating their thoughts and feelings. The natural science of psychology employs empirical methods and techniques that require whatever is being studied, must be observable, measurable, and agreed upon by more than a single observer. Since an individual's experience is unique and not observable in the usual sense, behavior and experience have been viewed as separate aspects within psychology supporting the dualism of the mind/body split.

Using a phenomenological method such as the self-report technique, allows one to discover some of the aspects of experience in which people are viewed not as objects, but as "beings-in-the-world." In this study the third person or observable side of others was assessed in terms of a behavioral record, while the first person or nonobservable side of others was assessed in terms of self-report protocols. Considering self-report and behavioral data in this way is not meant to suggest separate and independent events, but rather two different perspectives on the same

event. The combination of objective and subjective data, allow one to determine whether or not the two perspectives agree with one another; not which one is more significant or reliable than the other. It seems a richer way of understanding can be gained if one approaches phenomena in a behavioral and phenomenological manner.

The results of this study indicate that of the self-reports coded, 68% of the statements were placed in the on-target category. There was considerably less concordance between behavioral and self-report measures. To some these figures may seem low, however in Pollio's (1984) study of what students are aware of in college lectures, students self-report statements were only on-target about 60% of the time. Thus the results of this study of humor do not seem out of line, if self-reports are thought of as presenting the subjective experience, and if behavioral records are viewed as presenting the objective perspective. In comparing the concordance between behavioral and self-report measures for the comedians Bill Cosby and Richard Pryor, results indicate that Pryor audiences are more likely to yield considerably less concordance. While an individual may personally find the comic material by Pryor difficult to deal with, and not pay attention to it, his or her behavior tends to stay oriented toward the performance such that the person will appear on-target to others. These results

suggest that there are greater constraints on overt behavior than on personal experience.

When the self-report data were examined under the various conditions of the experiment, Pryor (friend and strangers) groups not only tended to report that they were most aware of the comedian, but that when off-target they were more aware of other people and/or the present environment itself. Cosby (friend) subjects, on the other hand were most aware of ideas and situations suggested by the routine, and when off-target were more aware of their body. Cosby (stranger) groups, while most aware of ideas and situations suggested by the routine, also tended to produce a greater number of off-target self-reports concerned with others and/or the present environment, than was true for the Cosby (friends) groups.

These results suggest that comedians Bill Cosby and Richard Pryor tend to create different worlds in which the comic performances are experienced. Cosby tends to take the audience members to his imaginary world of childhood and adult adventures, which allows the person to "transcend" the present situation and to experience an imaginary, nonthreatening situation. Statements were frequently found in subjects' self-reports, indicating that Cosby subjects related the material presented by Cosby to their own lives. Pryor audience members were more on-target, however, to his

performance, and thus were more likely than Cosby audience members to focus on the performer and less on other contexts. Pryor makes figural a world of hostility and conflict which keeps audience members in the present situation or in the "here-and-now" of their experience. Pryor, the comedian himself is at issue in his humor; for Cosby, the unfolding nature of the material is salient.

As Murphy and Pollio (1975) noted, Cosby may be characterized as a story-teller type of comedian for whom some context other than the present one is developed and described. While Pryor sometimes tells stories, audience members stay much more in contact with the present situation. It seems possible to compare Pryor's style of humor with that of the Koyemci clowns found in the American Indian Zuni tribe, and other cultures where the clowns are often priests (Charles, 1945; Apte, 1983, 1985). In the Zuni tribe, the clown/priests are allowed, in the context of certain religious festivals, to act physically and talk in an obscene and taboo manner. Although Koyemci clowns behave in a taboo manner, the performer and performance in the festival are socially and religiously sanctioned. While Pryor is no priest, his humor does represent a continuation of this comic tradition where sacred/profane issues can be brought into the open, allowing the comedian and the audience to temporarily become free of the moral restraints

of society. As for the Koyemci clowns, Pryor's performance is also sanctioned by society, since his behavior is allowed only because he is a professional comedian.

Since the behavioral results provided in the study by Murphy and Pollio (1975) acted as a basis for this present study, a comparison seems in order. In general, behavioral results were comparable across both studies; members of friends audiences generally exhibited more behavior of all types, including laughter and smiling, than was true of stranger audiences. In the original experiment, there were no differences for Cosby audiences in laughter and smiling across the Friends/Stranger condition. In the present study, however, such differences did occur; Cosby (friend) groups laughed and smiled more than the Cosby (stranger) groups. The similarity of results across both experiments suggests that both comedian and audience factors strongly affect how individual audience members behave towards a story-teller and taboo-content comedian under both friends and strangers context. Although the Murphy and Pollio (1975) study did not consider the effect of gender, the present study found gender to be significant such that all male groups laughed more than the all female or mixed groups. With the use of both behavioral and self-report techniques to study humor, data and results of this study indicate that the factors of Company, Gender, Order, and

Comedian strongly influence what audience members are aware of and do while listening to comic performances.

A field theory of humor, such as that described by Pollio (1983), would seem to provide a useful approach to the understanding of humor. In this theory, the humorous event is represented by a figure/ground relationship in which social traditions and restraints, as well as the individual, the comedian, the immediate situation, and the responses of laughing and smiling act as a ground or field of events in which humor emerges. For this theory, laughing and smiling have different meanings for the individual and the other person(s) in the situation. The bodily experience of laughter provides temporary freedom from the constraining forces of others, time, and one's own body, all of which normally ground oneself in the world where society defines what is taboo and what is acceptable. It is in terms of humor that what a person experiences and does are interrelated events that are continually being affected by and are affecting the sociopersonal world in which that person and we live.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

CONSENT FORM

CONSENT FORM

In this experiment, we are interested in your experience of and reactions to certain contemporary comedians as heard on audiotape. You will receive extra credit for your participation in accordance with the agreement you made with your classroom instructor. Participation is voluntary and not a course requirement.

If at any time you feel uncomfortable or for any reason decide to end your participation in this experiment, please feel free to do so with no penalties and/or loss of credit. The experiment will be recorded on videotape, which will be available only to the research team and at professional conferences. If you request the recording be erased, we will comply with your request. Also, be advised that the experiment may last for about one hour. You may ask questions at any time.

I have read the above and consent to participate in this experiment.

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Psychology Instructor: _____

If you are under 18, please have one of your parents or guardians sign this form.

Parent's Name : _____

Phone: _____

Dr. Howard Pollio
Project Director

APPENDIX B

INSTRUCTIONS

Instructions

In this experiment we are interested in learning about the various reactions people have to different types of comedians. You will be listening to tapes presenting a performance of two different comedians, Richard Pryor and Bill Cosby. What I want you to do during the course of this experiment is to give me your reactions, or thoughts, either about the tape or about anything else you might be experiencing, as you listen to Cosby and Pryor. At random times we will stop the tapes, and ask you to write down your experiences on this piece of paper. For purposes of this experiment I would like you to write anything you were aware of at the time the tape was stopped. Since we are interested in your own, quite individual, experiences, try to write down whatever it was you were aware of just before the tape was interrupted.

There obviously are no "right" or "wrong" answers; just write down what you were experiencing when the tape stopped. These performances may contain material which may be offensive to some people. If at anytime you feel uncomfortable, please feel free to leave. We also stress that your names will not be used and the only people shown these recordings are the experimenters and audiences at professional psychological conferences. Remember, anything you were aware of before the interruption is perfectly alright, so please try to write it down as clearly as possible. Do you have any questions?

APPENDIX C

SELF-REPORT FORM AND QUESTIONNAIRE

Date: _____

NAME: _____

The tape will be interrupted at pre-selected time intervals. When the signal is given, write down exactly what you were aware of just before the interruption occurred. Write this information in the corresponding time-interval blank. Remember anything you were thinking about is perfectly acceptable, so please be accurate.

Time interval 1: _____

_____

_____

_____

Time interval 2: _____

_____

_____

_____

Time interval 3: _____

_____

_____

_____

Time interval 4: _____

_____

_____

_____

Date: _____

Name: _____

1. Have you ever heard this specific routine before? If Yes, could you tell us briefly under what circumstances?

2. Have you ever seen this performer before; that is, live, on TV, in a movie, etc.? If the answer is Yes, could you tell us under what circumstances?

3. Is there anything else you feel we ought to know about your feelings toward this specific comedian or comic routine? If the answer is Yes, please write the information in the space below.

APPENDIX D

OBSERVATION RECORDING FORM

Seat: _____ Date _____ M T W R F Day Start _____ End _____ Total:

Tape # _____ Observer _____

1. FM Stranger
2. ML Stranger
3. MX Stranger
4. FM Friend
5. ML Friend
6. MX Friend

Comedian _____ # _____

States/Events	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	E	%		
Smile																								
Sm. At An. Person																								
Laugh																								
Lowering Head																								
Turning head																								
Vocalization																								
Hand to head																								
Hand to face																								
Hand to Trunk																								
HA to HA and Arm																								
HA to FA, HD Low																								
Yawning																								
Looking																								
Talking																								
Touching																								
Sit WO Move.																								
Checking Watch																								
Bouncing Leg																								

COMMENTS: _____

APPENDIX E

SELF-REPORT CODING FORM

GROUP _____ COMEDIANS _____

SUBJECT 1 2 3 4 5 6
D E F A B C

INTERUPTION _____			_____		
	TARGET On	Off		TARGET On	Off
1. a) _____	___	___	1. a) _____	___	___
b) _____	___	___	b) _____	___	___
2. a) _____	___	___	2. a) _____	___	___
b) _____	___	___	b) _____	___	___
3. a) _____	___	___	3. a) _____	___	___
b) _____	___	___	b) _____	___	___
4. a) _____	___	___	4. a) _____	___	___
b) _____	___	___	b) _____	___	___

APPENDIX F

SAMPLE SELF-REPORT PROTOCOLS AND CODINGS

Date: _____

NAME: A

The tape will be interrupted at pre-selected time intervals. When the signal is given, write down exactly what you were aware of just before the interruption occurred. Write this information in the corresponding time-interval blank. Remember anything you were thinking about is perfectly acceptable, so please be accurate.

Time interval 1: About driving a stick shift car & experiences I had when first learning to drive it. Rolling backwards when stopped at a hill

Time interval 2: how the woman must feel being the one that gets pregnant & carries the baby.

Time interval 3: This reminds me of when I was little & did the same thing of drinking out of the bottle or carton when no one else was around.

Time interval 4: I was thinking about games we used to play in our neighborhood when I was young.

Cosby

Date: _____

NAME: A

The tape will be interrupted at pre-selected time intervals. When the signal is given, write down exactly what you were aware of just before the interruption occurred. Write this information in the corresponding time-interval blank. Remember anything you were thinking about is perfectly acceptable, so please be accurate.

Time interval 1: Last weekend when people I was with decided to snort coke. I watched how they lined it all up & snorted it. Also I could picture black people having their dicks.

Time interval 2: Trying to figure out if the man was going to get the girl to stay & if he really wanted her to.

Time interval 3: I was thinking about how in Mississippi people drive about 5 miles per hour on those roads with tractors & when you get behind one it is very irritating.

Time interval 4: my grandfather once tried to give my cousin a bowl cut haircut That's ~~was~~ what I was thinking about

Pryor

GROUP Sitemate; Acquainted COMEDIANS Cosby / Pryor

SUBJECT 1 2 3 (4) 5 6
D E F (A) B C

INTERUPTION Cosby	TARGET On	TARGET Off	Pryor	TARGET On	TARGET Off
1. a) Suggested by routine	1.0	—	1. a) Suggested by routine	.5	—
b)	—	—	b) Routine focused	.5	—
2. a) Routine focused	1.0	—	2. a) Routine focused	1.0	—
b)	—	—	b)	—	—
3. a) Suggested by routine	1.0	—	3. a) Suggested by routine	1.0	—
b)	—	—	b)	—	—
4. a) Suggested by routine	1.0	—	4. a) Suggested by routine	1.0	—
b)	—	—	b)	—	—

VITA

Charles Edward Swanson was born in Kingsport, Tennessee, on November 14, 1963. In September 1982 he entered the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, and in August 1985 he received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Chemistry with a minor in Psychology. In September 1986 he reentered the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, to work toward a Master of Arts degree in psychology, which was awarded in May 1989.