

# The Minimum Wager

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*place a small bet on your better self*

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A Legacy Passage:                      On Censorship

by John Milton from *Areopagitica* (1644)

...When a man writes to the world, he summons up all his reason and deliberation to assist him. He searches, meditates, is industrious, and likely consults and confers with his judicious friends, after all which done he takes himself to be inform'd in what he writes as well as any that writ before him. If in this the most consummate act of his fidelity and ripeness, no former proof of his abilities can bring him to that state of maturity as not to be still mistrusted and suspected, unless he carry all his considerate diligence, all his midnight watchings and expense of *Palladian* oil, to the hasty view of an unlesured licenser, perhaps much his younger, perhaps far his inferior in judgment, perhaps one who never knew the labor of book-writing, and if he be not repulsed or slighted, must appear in print like a puny with his guardian and his censor's hand on the back of his title to be his bail and surety, that he is no idiot or seducer, it cannot be but a dishonor and derogation to the author, to the book, to the privilege and dignity of Learning.

... How can a man teach with authority, which is the life of teaching, how can he be a Doctor in his book as he ought to be, or else had better be silent, whenas all he teaches, all he delivers, is but under the tuition, under the correction of his patriarchal licenser to blot or alter what precisely accords not with the hidebound humor which he calls his



# What Were They (the Supreme Court) Thinking?

## Religion and the United States Supreme Court

### Part II: the Conversation Changes, Bringing us to Cakes and Websites

Last month, I described the early history of religion cases before the Court, leading to the moment when Originalism, the use of history to decide legal cases, was fermenting as an argument in cases involving religion. At the same time that was happening, another kind of analysis arose. In *Capitol Square Review v. Pinette* (1995), the Court held that the KKK must be allowed to put up a cross in a public forum as a matter of Freedom of Speech. The same considerations decided *Good News Club v. Mulford Central School* (2001). In that case a school was ordered to allow meetings on religion in its facility because it had allowed meetings on non-religious matters. The First Amendment's limitation on governmental power to interfere with the Free Exercise of religion had, in effect, acquired some extra oomph from the First Amendment's Freedom of Speech clause. Not only must the government not interfere with the Free Exercise of religion, but it must also, more generally, keep its hands off speech, even if that speech happens to be about religion.

Congress entered the fray in 1993 with the passage of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA). This law required the Court to apply a "strict scrutiny test" to Free Exercise cases, meaning that expressions of religion must be treated with the highest legal level of deference. In addition, the law states that: "government shall not substantially burden a person's exercise of religion even if the burden results from a rule of general applicability . . ." There is an exception to this general rule if a "compelling government interest" requires the burden. One major consequence of the RFRA is that a person with a strong religious belief may raise it as a defense against having to obey federal laws that would burden that belief. An area in which the new law made a clear difference is in Native American religion cases. For example, a Court prior to the passage of the RFRA considered whether drug laws could be applied against the use of peyote in Native American religious ceremonies and held that they could under a *Reynolds* analysis that the government could punish action regardless of belief. After the RFRA the balance changed. In *Gonzales v. O Santa Esperita* (2006), the Court held that the government could not punish the use of hallucinatory drugs which

were part of a religious practice even though that use could be punished in any other context.

Whether because of conservative-type Originalism being pushed by the newly appointed conservative members of the present Court, or Freedom of Speech considerations, or the RFRA, this Court has recently been increasingly friendly to religion-based challenges to law. In 2018, the Court decided in *Masterpiece Cake Shop v. Colorado Civil Rights Commission* that a baker with strong religious views against gay marriage could not constitutionally be forced to use his expressive talents in making a wedding cake for a gay couple. The Court acknowledged that Colorado has a governmental interest in “protect[ing] gay persons in acquiring products and services on the same terms and conditions as are offered to other members of the public,” but it held that because in this particular case some members of the Civil Rights Commission had been actively hostile to the religious views of the baker, the Commission’s regulation requiring non-discriminatory service was unconstitutional.

A case raising similar issues was argued before the Court in late 2022. In *303 Creative LLC v. Elenis*, a website designer has asked the Court to rule that she is exempt in her business because of her religious beliefs from obeying Colorado laws prohibiting discrimination against gays. During oral argument the Justices often challenged each other using hypothetical situations. Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson wanted to know whether a person could claim religious reasons for refusing to provide services to Black people, like a White Santa refusing to be photographed with Black children? Justice Alito countered: Can a Black Santa refuse to take a picture with a White child in a KKK outfit? This got a nervous titter from a courtroom filled with lawyers who instinctively laugh whenever a judge makes a joke. Alito was then reminded that the KKK is not a constitutionally protected class.

Most observers of that oral argument came away convinced that the majority conservative Justices will deliver a decision in favor of the web designer. If so, it will broaden the *Masterpiece Cake Shop* ruling and establish that the trend of the Court is to hold that laws requiring non-discrimination against gay people cannot constitutionally be enforced against those who hold religious beliefs against homosexuality. The liberal Justices’ questions about whether this exception to the enforcement of non-discrimination laws applies to other beliefs that can be claimed to be religious – most notably and explosively racist and anti-abortion beliefs – remain wide open.

This likely trend of the Court troubles many because it flirts with undermining the *Reynolds* statement that religious beliefs cannot be allowed to become more powerful than the government’s authority to maintain good order, which includes equality under

law. "Government could exist only in name under such circumstances," the *Reynolds* court warned. Human beings are so made that we are capable of believing, sincerely, a great many extreme things. If our government cannot restrain our actions on those beliefs, the society itself is in danger. Religion will have become a loophole in law.

How does sincere and strong religious belief live within a democratic society? Democracy asks of us that we tolerate each other's beliefs, whether religious or political, and that we accept results of the political process when it delivers outcomes that are contrary to our own beliefs. For many religious people this attitude *is* acceptable as an expression of loving forbearance toward our fellow citizens, even if erring, or, alternatively, under an approach to faith that precludes the kind of militant certainties that support discrimination against others. If someone pretends to actually know something that is not known, like, for example, the moment when human life begins, that person is not engaged in faith, but in self-delusion. There will always be citizens, however, who understand their personal faith as requiring an embrace of those supposed certainties, and who think it a betrayal of faith to be forced to act on the beliefs of others protected through the political process. No doubt it feels principled and noble to defend felt certainties, no matter how wrong they appear to fellow citizens. It's hard to know how to resolve this.

by Martha Franks

A Scientific Note:          Handedness: A Mystery

Part 1: Gathering Evidence

When we think of "handedness," we of course think of hands. We know most people are right-handed. There is an analogous characteristic in many types of twining plants. Most plants that twine (that is, climb by wrapping around an object) share a preferred twining direction.

In 2007, three Australian scientists (Edwards, Moles, and Franks) examined the direction in plant twining--not just in the southern hemisphere, but on a global scale. The plants they studied were spread across 17 sites in 9 countries, and spanned 65° of latitude in both hemispheres. These scientists tested three different hypotheses:

- 1) that twining direction was random,
- 2) that twining direction was determined by the tip of the growing plant following the movement of the sun across the sky (different in the northern and southern hemispheres),
- 3) that twining direction was determined by the Coriolis effect.

After studying 1,485 twining stems, they found that 92% twined in right-handed helices (counter-clockwise when viewed from above). Subsequent to this finding, the authors rejected all three of their original hypotheses, and instead concluded: "The predominance of right-handed helical growth in climbing plants cannot be explained by hypotheses attempting to link plant growth behavior and global location." These Australian researchers were not the first to discover the glaring predominance of right-handedness in twining plants, but they were the first to completely rule out a locational cause.

Charles Darwin was fascinated by plant behaviors, including twining. He experimented with 40 different twining species and noticed that right-handed twining clearly predominates: 27 species twined rightward, 13 twined leftward. When publishing his results in 1865, he wrote that it was very rare for two species within the same genus to twine in opposite directions. He hadn't come upon any at all in his research, but he predicted that the phenomenon could exist. In fact, it does occur--in the genus *Wisteria*. The Chinese wisteria (*Wisteria sinensis*) was introduced to Britain in 1816, and by the 1830s it was very popular among English gardeners. Darwin himself mentions this species of wisteria, so most likely he had specimens of it. *Wisteria sinensis* twines in the common right-handed direction. But interestingly, a left-handed twining wisteria does exist--the *Wisteria floribunda*. This species was introduced from Japan into Europe via the Netherlands in the 1870s, only a few years after Darwin's 1865 publication of *On the Movements and Habits of Climbing Plants*. To my knowledge, *Wisteria* is the only genus to have both right-handed twining and left-handed twining species.

The ability to twine clearly evolved independently several times. Plant species that twine left-handed aren't numerous, but even so there is no evidence that left-handed twining has caused them any harm. Honeysuckles (genus *Lonicera*) are left-handed twiners; there are about 180 species of honeysuckle, which are tenacious and robust despite twining leftward against the norm. There seems to be no strength advantage gained from twining either right or left.

Darwin studied adaptations. He searched for reasons why plants and animals turned out the way they are, and his research was focused on the *mechanical* processes of behaviors. So, although Darwin himself did not voice the following question, we can: why is there a predilection for a right-handed spiral? The research of Edwards, Moles, and Franks referenced above points to greater than 90% preponderance of right-handed twining in plant species worldwide. It is astonishing for there to be such an over-abundance of one trait when we can find no adaptive advantage for it. If it were random, it would be 50-50; a split of 90-10 has to have a strong reason behind it, but what is it?

When we humans think of right-handedness we think of our own handedness: "I am right-handed;" "I am left-handed;" "I am ambidextrous." Among humans, the prevalence of right-handedness over left-handedness is noticeably pronounced. About 75-95% of humans identify as right-handed. The remainder are almost entirely left-handed, with only a small, indeterminate number of people being ambidextrous and even fewer being mixed-handed (changing hand preference depending on the task). More precise percentages are elusive, however, due in part to the lack of a standard empirical definition of measuring handedness.

Currently the most common standard used to assess human handedness is the Edinburgh Handedness Inventory. Researchers using it administer a defined survey to a group of individuals and then are able to compare the results to the population at large. One would think that such a commonly used tool would enable better precision than the 20% spread calculated for right-handed people ("75-95%"); however, different researchers use the Edinburgh Handedness Inventory differently, leading to confusing and inconsistent results. For example, an individual tested in one group may be identified as left-handed, yet that same individual in another study may be classified as ambidextrous.

The Edinburgh Handedness Inventory is just one of a handful of tools that researchers use, but the other surveys and inventories share the same unreliability in their results. Unlike the obvious, visible direction that a plant twines, handedness in people is difficult to determine. This may be partly due to social biases in some cultures *preferring* right-handedness. In many cultures (especially historically), left-handedness is viewed as a misfortune or an evil. By way of an example, in English the word "right" also means "correct", and we use the word "sinister" to mean "evil", which in its original Latin meant "left" *and* "unlucky". Moral and qualitative overtones such as

these exist in many cultures, and they contribute to the failure of standard empirical measures of handedness to work consistently.

Complicating matters even further, the opposite preference also happens nowadays in certain western countries. After a long history of cultural suppression and oppression, left-handedness and ambidexterity are sometimes thought to confer a special, above-run-of-the-mill quality upon a person. In the United States this is in part attributable to the public's interest in sports. Left-handers have an advantage when facing off against right-handers in many sports settings. Generally, this is assumed to be because right-handed players have played against left-handers less frequently, thus their skills for doing so are less developed. Professional sports do have more than their fair share of left-handed athletes. In baseball, for instance, Babe Ruth, Ty Cobb, and Shoeless Joe Jackson were all left-handed, as Martina Navratilova, Rod Laver, Rafael Nadal, John McEnroe, and Jimmy Connors were in tennis. Even in soccer, where hands are not involved in the main action, left-handedness does come into play, conferring a facility with either foot, as evidenced by lefties Pelé and David Beckham.

Though scientists have not yet been able to determine the precise percentages of left and right handedness in society, there is some evidence for a genetic influence for handedness. It is, however, non-Mendelian, and geneticists cannot agree on the exact process. For example, if two left-handed people have a child, the chance that their child will also be left-handed is only about 1 in 4, which does not conform to a simple dominant/recessive relationship for the less frequent trait. This figure is supported by a large study of twins from 25,732 families which indicated that the inheritability of handedness is roughly 24% (Medland *et al*, 2009).

We also know that handedness can be influenced and changed to a certain degree by both social and cultural forces: for instance, in many cultures children are forced to switch to using their right hand for writing. Additionally, some more restrictive societies show less left-handedness in their populations than more permissible ones, because in those societies the two hands have very different roles. Under Sharia law and certain other types of religious-legal practices, a thief's right hand is cut off for stealing. Communal eating practices involve reaching into a common dish with one's right hand (the left hand being used for "sanitary offices"). Without a right hand, the thief must rely upon the community from which he stole to feed him. We have, moreover, evidence from the archeological record that right-handed dominance dates far back in human history. Stenciled hands at Argentina's Cueva de las Manos are

made up of 90% left hands, 10% right, which makes sense if the artists used their dominant hand to stencil their other hand. These hands were painted in several bursts of artistic fervor, dating as far back as 7,300 BC up until 700 AD.

by Janette Fischer



### Cueva de las Manos, Argentina

Darwin, C. (1865) On the movements and habits of climbing plants. *Journal of the Linnean Society (Botany)*

Edwards, W., Moles, A.T., and Franks, P. (2007) The global trend in plant twining direction. *Global Ecology and Biogeography*.

Medland, S.E, *et al.* (2009) Genetic influences on handedness: Data from 25,732 Australian and Dutch twin families. *Neuropsychologia*.

Part 2: Handedness: A Mystery, The Search for a Theory will be continued in the May issue of *The Minimum Wager*.

## Another Poem:

### *Hands*

Inside a cave in a narrow canyon near Tassajara  
The vault of a rock is painted with hands,  
A multitude of hands in the twilight, a cloud of men's palms,  
no more,  
No other picture. There's no one to say  
Whether the brown shy quiet people who are dead intended  
Religion or magic, or made their tracings  
In the idleness of art, but over the division of years these careful  
Signs-manual are now like a sealed message  
Saying: "Look; we also were human; we had hands, not paws.  
All hail  
You people with the cleverer hands, our supplanters  
In the beautiful country; enjoy her a season, her beauty,  
and come down  
And be supplanted; for you also are human."

by Robinson Jeffers

## Film Review: *Lawrence of Arabia* (1962)

Director: David Lean

Writers: Robert Bolt, Michael Wilson

Cinematography: F.A. Young

Is T.E. Lawrence in search of a place to call home or in search of himself? Or both? Can one have a home with no sense of self? What about the reverse? These questions haunt every minute of David Lean's majestic and exquisite 1962 epic *Lawrence of Arabia*.

T.E. Lawrence (Peter O'Toole) begins as a misfit in the British army. "We can't all be lion tamers," he says a moment before tripping over a table of drinks. By the intermission he has united a small army of Arab tribes and taken Aqaba, a city key to the British campaign. In so doing, he promised Arabia to the Arabs – a promise the British leaders resent and the Arab leaders find more a burden than a gift. By the end of the picture, the British and Arab leaders have outmaneuvered Lawrence. They have plotted to divide the whole region between the British and French powers, and they expel Lawrence from Arabia.

Like the warring disunited tribes of Arabia, Lawrence is at war with himself. In an early scene his sloppy salute to a general earns him a reprimand. "It's my manner, sir...it looks insubordinate, but it isn't really," says Lawrence. The general responds, "I can't make out if you're bloody bad-mannered or just half-witted." "I have the same problem, sir," says Lawrence. When lighting a cigarette for a fellow soldier, he lets the match burn his hand. He doesn't so much as flinch. When the soldier tries it himself he complains of the pain and asks Lawrence what the trick is. "The trick, William Potter, is not minding that it hurts." This remarkable scene reveals that Lawrence is made of different stuff than his fellow British officers; he is completely unintelligible to them. When he first meets Prince Feisal (Alec Guinness) the Prince asks him: "You are loyal to England, are you not?" Lawrence replies, "To England and to other things." Feisal responds: "To England *and* Arabia? Is that possible?" Though we may try to imagine what "other things" Lawrence is loyal to, there is no definite answer, and it clarifies Lawrence's conundrum. He cannot find himself because he is lost between loyalties and identities.

His puzzlement reverberates among the Arabs, who struggle to grasp the concept of being Arabian. In the tent of Auda Abu Tayi (Anthony Quinn), Lawrence tells of his plan to unite the Arabs. The ever prideful and wise Auda lists the tribes of people he knows, but says even he has not heard of the Arabs. The idea is so foreign to him he cannot conceive of it despite the plain meaning of the words themselves. Arabia for the Arabs is as baffling to the Arabs as Lawrence is to Lawrence.

Why is internal peace and unity for Lawrence and external peace and unity for the Arabs so elusive? "There is nothing in the desert" says Prince Feisal, "and no man needs nothing." Yet Lawrence, as Feisal points out, believes he can find himself in Arabia. I'm reminded of Roger Ebert's review of *The Assassination of Jesse James by the Coward Robert Ford*: "It was photographed in the wide-open spaces of western Canada, where the land is so empty, it creates a vacuum demanding that men become legends."

That movie seems a direct descendant of *Lawrence of Arabia*. In *Lawrence*, F.A. Young's cinematography captures the enormous vistas and unreachable horizons of Arabia, and poetically visualizes the film's themes. It seems impossible for anything to hide or obstruct one's goals in such a place. And yet Sherif Ali (played by the wonderful Omar Sharif) suddenly appears as a mirage on the horizon. His identity is unclear until he is close enough to kill Lawrence's guide with a single rifle shot.

After taking Aqaba, Lawrence journeys to the Suez canal in order to return to British headquarters and report on his victory. He despairs when the village he finds is abandoned, but is then startled by the sound of the horn on an enormous steamship. In the movie's most surreal image, the smoke stacks of the ship poke up from behind an unmoving mountain of sand as they glide past Lawrence. The desert may be full of nothing, but it can conceal anything, even when it's out in the open.

by Scott Hannan

## Small Gems Recent and Remembered:

### *The Dead* (1907) by James Joyce

A few days ago I re-read and discussed with a small gathering of friends James Joyce's story *The Dead*. Though I am a sincere appreciator of his later monumental creations, the fifty pages of this story have for me one quality that his *Portrait*, his *Ulysses*, and *Finnegan's Wake* do not – a perfection and common beauty suffused by but not overborne by his later idiosyncratic virtuosity. The story can, I think, be compared to the compulsory set figures as they were formerly performed in Olympic figure skating, slow precise patterns in continuous balance out of which the astounding gravity-defying individual performances which then followed were (and still are) woven.

Joyce wrote *The Dead* when he was 25 years old, five years into his life-long exile from Ireland, from the Catholic faith, and from English speaking society. The story is about Ireland, Catholicism, and English as a language. In these pages Joyce achieves the first full realization of his own aspirational phrase: "sympathetic detachment."

There are a dozen carefully attended to characters, some more central to the narrative, some less so, but all unforgettable in their situated humanity. Each holds a place in the Irish life, the religious ways, and the speech-world of Dublin except Mr. Browne, who is the one guest at this annual Christmas season dinner-dance who is "of the other persuasion," i.e. he is a Protestant. His miscues and tone-deafness to others are harmless, but reveal the lived nuances through which all the others move.

The first sentence, "Lily, the caretaker's daughter, was literally run off her feet," establishes in one deft stroke the good humor and bustle with which the narrative begins. The central figure is Gabriel Conroy, a three-ingredient composite (so the scholars tell us) of one of Joyce's friends, Joyce's own father, and Joyce himself. And there are three episodes, one for each of these facets of Gabriel, involving him in interactions first in the entry hall with Lily, a working-class girl, then during a social dance with Miss Ivors, a fellow teacher and Gaelic culture enthusiast, and finally with his wife Gretta when they are alone afterwards in their hotel room.

Each of these encounters ends in a moment of chagrin for Gabriel – socially with Lily, professionally with Miss Ivors, and personally with Gretta. Each woman confronts Gabriel with something completely unexpected and painful over which he cannot prevail. He is relegated to being 'generous,' which he is. His generous gestures allow these awkward and for him humiliating moments to be suspended in ever larger contexts. Lily moves from the small downstairs entryway to the upstairs apartment

where she has a key role in serving Gabriel and the other guests their festive holiday meal. Miss Ivors gladly removes herself from the scene of the party into the snowy night outside before the meal is even served, and Gretta, after walking and riding in a horse-drawn cab through the snowy night back to their hotel, loses herself in her memory of a delicate young boy with a beautiful singing voice who, she thinks, died for her sake.

In the culminating sentence, his wife asleep beside him, Gabriel's "soul swooned slowly as he heard the snow falling faintly through the universe and faintly falling, like the descent of their last end, upon all the living and the dead." Just as the words in this last sentence mirror each other, so also the living and the dead mirror each other.

Gabriel's after-dinner speech to the assembled guests is in praise of the essential and distinctive Irish trait of hospitality. It is, he says, endangered by modernity, and this annual Epiphany dinner-dance keeps the tradition alive for one more precious year. In the last moments of his consciousness and his own epiphany, led through and past his failings of the evening by his abashed generosity, Gabriel achieves the ultimate act of hospitality in which the living and the dead hold silent converse.

by Phil LeCuyer

Light Touches: Five old men walk into a bar

to talk about *On Laughter*, by Henri Bergson. Trouble ensues.

Four of my friends and I have an irregular discussion group. Our conversations are interesting, but I wouldn't characterize them as lively or even remotely comedic. Tom proposed that we read something 'fun' for a change. Bergson's long-form essay *On Laughter* was suggested. I was concerned because as a group, we are conspicuously unfunny. I was also concerned that, as Mark Twain said, "Explaining humor is a lot like dissecting a frog; you learn a lot in the process, but in the end you kill it."

Henri Bergson was an influential French philosopher writing in the early part of the last century. In 1930 he received a Nobel Prize for his work. Bergson was the first prominent philosopher since antiquity to write seriously on the subject of comedy. His essays *On Laughter* were first published in 1900, and are not an easy read. They are dense with references to classic French theater and lines well-known to Bergson's

audience of the day, but not to me. Luckily, Rob knows a professional comedian who joined us. We gathered by Zoom – the 21<sup>st</sup> century equivalent of the neighborhood bar (unfortunately) – and entertained each other by quoting our favorite comics and comedy sketches to see if Bergson’s ideas held water. It turned out to be fun.

Bergson posits two specific ideas about comedy that I found intriguing. First, he observes that comedy helps us overcome “rigidity” in our thinking. Thoughts and actions that appear to be mechanical or rigid, like absentmindedness, are funny. Second, he observes that “a comic effect is obtained whenever we pretend to take literally an expression which was used figuratively.” This sets up a rigid expectation that is then resolved in a surprising, unexpected way.

David was reminded of this joke:

“It’s not how many times you fall down, it’s how many times you get up!”

“Sir, that’s not how the field sobriety test works.”

The comedian plays on our rigid thinking. We initially conjure the image of a man spouting platitudes about persistence, maybe a blowhard like Polonius in *Hamlet*. But then the comic switches the category on us. The image we’ve got in our minds is all wrong. It’s an officer talking to a drunk who keeps falling down when he should be standing upright and capable of driving! Almost every joke or humorous story I know can be explained as exposing a rigidity in our thinking by means of a clever category shift from literal to figurative or vice versa. “Ever seen an elephant in a cherry tree? Good hiding place, isn’t it!”

If Bergson’s category shift is what brings about laughter, what is its purpose? For him comedy is a profoundly social experience both in its shared nature (“*laughter appears to stand in need of an echo*”) and in the way that it is deeply corrective of our social relationships: “...it is the business of laughter to repress any separatist tendency, its function is to convert rigidity into plasticity, to readapt the individual to the whole...”

Bergson makes this most remarkable statement about laughter and its role in society:

*“...the more society improves, the more plastic is the adaptability it obtains from its members; while the greater the tendency towards increasing stability below, the more does it force to the surface the disturbing elements inseparable from so vast a bulk; and thus laughter performs a useful function by emphasizing the form of these significant undulations. ...It [laughter] indicates a slight revolt on the surface of social life.”*

So, as society improves (and we hope that it does), people must become more societally adaptable and flexible. This results in friction because individual human beings tend naturally toward rigidity. Humor helps increase our flexibility and our resilience.

Doug wanted to know how comedy affects society itself? Do comedy and laughter only serve to smooth out the disturbances within society, or is there a role for comedy to point out the rigidity of society itself? I was reminded of this old joke from the Soviet Union:

The new Brezhnev stamps weren't sticking to the envelopes. When the post office looked into how comrades were using the stamps, they found they were spitting on the wrong side.

Can comedy be subversive and effect societal change? Bergson is silent on this question, but it seems to be an important possibility.

Tom was disappointed that the essays didn't address the physical manifestations of laughing. Why do we guffaw? Why do we bare teeth, chuckle, hunch our shoulders, squint our eyes, and gyrate? Bergson is silent on this question as well.

There's nothing like getting together with a few friends, and taking up an old subject and seeing it in a new, unfamiliar way. If only we'd really been in a literal bar, having cold beers, and sharing our stories together in person.

Which reminds me, have you heard the one about the blind man and his seeing-eye dog? They entered a bar and the blind man picked up his dog by its hind legs and started swinging him in a circle above his head. "What the hell are you doing?" the bartender demanded. "Oh," said the blind man, "I was just taking a look around."

by Robert Bienenfeld