

Call for papers:

**HUMOR, EDUCATION,
AND THE QUEST FOR A GOOD LIFE**

**PhD course at Faculty of ARTS, Aarhus University
May 30-31, 2024**



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Description: "When nothing goes right, go left" – this humoristic postcard inscription invites its readers to laugh, or at least smile, about the situations in which we seem to have ended up in a cul-de-sac, a dead end, a blind alley. We are re-directed from the one end to the other end, without knowing whether 'left' is better than 'right.' When being caught in an ethical dilemma or a double bind, either way reaches an impasse.

How can we regain hope and the courage to live despite finding ourselves in rather desperate situations, for instance in regard to the current climate crisis, conflicts and wars as well as personal life crises?

This course and conference will explore responses that involve (1) humor as a powerful tool for managing unresolvable conflicts and for reviving one's spirits in one's way of relating to oneself and others, (2) education for peaceful and environmentally sustainable solutions to global problems and, more generally, (3) the quest for a good life, whatever this means in concrete cases.

In her book *Philosophy, Humor, and the Human Condition – Taking Ridicule Seriously* (2019), Lydia Amir argues that the *homo risibilis* resolves the tensions and contradictions of our *conditio humana* without epistemological cost by addressing life's ambiguities without losing sight of its tragic overtones, thus bringing along far-ranging personal and social benefits.

This thesis will be discussed in an interdisciplinary dialogue between philosophy, educational science, literary studies, religious studies, and other relevant disciplines – thereby showing connections between humor and human flourishing.

Invited speakers: Finn Thorbjørn Hansen (Aalborg University), Tami Yaguri (Ono Academic College), Bernhard Obsieger (Saint Louis University, Madrid), Essi Maria Ikonen (University of Helsinki)

Course convenor: Claudia Welz (University of Aarhus)

The course aims to

1. show connections between humor and human flourishing in classical texts
2. provide an introduction into and a critical discussion of theories and practices of educating younger generations in life orientation, conflict resolution and approaching the climate crisis
3. outline an interdisciplinary approach to the quest for a good life.

We invite PhD papers from different disciplines. If you want to present your work, please upload the title and abstract (around 250 words) of your proposed paper, including your name and affiliation, **by April 5, 2024.**

Register here: <https://au.phd-courses.dk/CourseCatalog/ShowCourse/1466/>