



A Nonprofit 501(c)(3) Education Corporation  
 P.O. Box 23228, Santa Barbara, CA 93121  
 (805) 967-6030  
 Web: [vistaslifelonglearning.org](http://vistaslifelonglearning.org)  
 Email: [vistas@silcom.com](mailto:vistas@silcom.com)

# A History of Laughing & Crying

Presented by: Thomas Scheff

**Four Mondays**  
*November 21, 28, December 5, & 12, 2016*  
 9:30 am - 12:30 pm

Valle Verde - Social Room  
 900 Calle de los Amigos, Santa Barbara

A brief review of the treatment of laughing and crying in past and current literature. This discussion will begin with the Greek philosopher Aristotle (Third Century B.C.), who discussed "the purgation of pity and terror in theatre audiences" and since then has figured largely in theories of drama in the humanities (Belifiore 1992).

The word terror obviously refers to the emotion of fear, but the word pity is not an adequate translation of Aristotle's usage. He was referring not to a specific emotion in the modern sense, but to empathic identification with one or more of the characters in the drama. It is important to note that the whole definition concerns only a very narrow domain, emotional reactions of members of an audience to drama. A large part of the problem with social and psychological research on catharsis involves an unwarranted broadening of the definition of catharsis, as will be discussed below.

One part of Aristotle's treatment of catharsis has been especially puzzling to modern readers: his insistence that catharsis in drama was not only a source of entertainment and pleasure, but also a necessity for the survival of a society in the long run.



**Deadline for registration: November 14th**

**Enrollment Form:** *Laughing & Crying* - Nov 21,28, Dec 5, & 12, 2016  
**VISTAS Members \$50 - Nonmembers \$75**

Amount Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Check# \_\_\_\_\_

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail registration form to:  
 VISTAS Lifelong Learning, Inc., P.O. Box 23228, Santa Barbara, CA 93121-3228

*Or you may go to our website and pay by secure credit card through PayPal*

<http://www.vistaslifelonglearning.org/upcoming.html>

Please check here if you would like to volunteer to help with refreshments \_\_\_\_\_

**BIOGRAPHY: Thomas Scheff** is Professor Emeritus at the University of California, SantaBarbara. He is past president of the Pacific Sociological Association, and past chair of the Emotions Section of the American Sociological Assoc. Some of his earlier publications are *Being Mentally Ill*, *Microsociology*, *Bloody Revenge*, *Emotions*, *the Social Bond and Human Reality*, *Goffman Unbound!*, *What's Love Got to Do with It?: Emotions and Relationships in Pop Songs*, and *Easy Rider*. He is interested in creative teaching and integration of the social, political, behavioral and clinical arts and sciences, and particularly, the integration of these disciplines into new directions of thought and effort.



Linked Books and materials here:  
<http://www.soc.ucsb.edu/faculty/scheff/>

## VISTAS Calendar

Seminar/Event	Inclusive Dates	Time	Venue
Annual Picnic	Sunday, September 11	12:30 pm	Tuckers Grove
Documentary Film Club	3rd Thurs Monthly	2:00 pm	Maravilla Theater
Nonfiction Book Club	3rd Wed Monthly	1:30 pm	Vista del Monte-Sierra Madre
Cinematographic Elections	Mon, Sept 12,19,26	9:30 am	Maravilla Theater
Macbeth	Thurs, Sept 22	9:30 am	Valle Verde-SB Room
Initiative/Referendum Process	Thur, Sept 29, Oct 6,13	9:30 am	Goleta Library
Trials of the Century	Mon, Oct 10-Nov 14	9:30 am	Valle Verde - Social Room
Poetry & Metaphor	Tues, Oct 18,25, Nov 1	1:30 pm	Valle Verde - Social Room
Brazil's Econ/Political	Wed, Oct 19	9:30 am	Valle Verde - Social Room
LGBT/Transgender/Transsexual: What Is Being Taught in College Courses Today?	Tues, Oct 25	9:30 am	Valle Verde - Social Room
Post Election Analysis	Thurs, Nov 10	1:30 pm	Goleta Library
Eleanor Roosevelt	Wed, Nov 16	1:30 pm	Valle Verde - Social Room
Laughing & Crying	Mon, Nov 21,28, Dec 5,12	9:30 am	Valle Verde - Social Room