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## **A STUDY ON UKRAINIAN ETHNIC JOKES**

**UKR 423:  
Ukrainian folk prose  
Prof. B. Medwidsky**

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# Study on Ukrainian ethnic jokes

Sogu Hong

## I. Introduction

### A) The Statement of Problem

Ukrainian ethnic jokes have been in oral circulation for a long time and still enjoy widespread popularity in Canada. The popularity and productivity of Ukrainian ethnic jokes give a fertile ground to study Ukrainian verbal lore. Like other ethnic jokes, Ukrainian ethnic jokes have stereotypes concerning Ukrainian individuals or Ukrainian groups. Also, most of these jokes emphasize the negative traits of Ukrainians. When we study the nature of Ukrainian ethnic jokes, when we study their relationship to sociocultural systems, and when we study the forms and functions of Ukrainian ethnic jokes, we can understand the reason why these jokes mention the negative traits of Ukrainians and why Ukrainian jokes are told amongst Ukrainians and non-Ukrainians.

In this paper, I studied Ukrainian ethnic jokes which would be defined as a type of humour in which fun is made of the perceived behavior, customs, personality, or any other traits of Ukrainians by virtue of their specific sociocultural identity. I collected these jokes mainly from people who live in Edmonton. They are largely divided into two groups; in-group (Ukrainians) and out-group (non-Ukrainians). Also I collected several jokes from reference books and articles pertaining to Ukrainian ethnic jokes.

The theoretical part of my study is mainly based on *Humor and Laughter: An Anthropological Approach*, written by M. L. Apte, and *A Basic Guide to Fieldwork for Beginning Folklore Students*, edited by Carl Lindahl. *Humor and Laughter* has a separate chapter for ethnic humour and suggests important research topics, such as stereotypes, forms and types, contextual determinants, and so on. Also *A Basic Guide* introduces many methods of research.

I obtained general information about Ukrainian ethnic jokes from “The Ethnic Joke in Canada Today,” in *Keystone Folklore Quarterly* (Winter 1970), “Folk Narrative among Ukrainian-Canadians in Western Canada,” in *Canadian Center for Folk Culture Studies Paper No. 4*, and “Humour,” in *Continuity and Change: The Cultural Life of Alberta’s First Ukrainians*, written by Robert B. Klymasz. These articles explain characteristics and functions of Ukrainian ethnic jokes and introduce several Ukrainian ethnic jokes.

#### B) Hypotheses and Methodology of Study

In this study, I proposed three hypotheses. Firstly, Ukrainian ethnic jokes are more often told in Canada than in Ukraine, because ethnic jokes are much more likely to occur not in highly homogeneous societies but in societies where Ukrainians belong to a minority group, such as Canada or the United States.

Secondly, Ukrainian stereotypes of Ukrainian ethnic jokes in Canada are different from Ukrainian ethnic jokes in Ukraine. Contextual factors which influence Ukrainian ethnic jokes are different in Canada compared to Ukraine.

Thirdly, old Ukrainian ethnic jokes are different from new Ukrainian ethnic jokes in Canada, because socioculture has changed in Canada.

Concerning these hypotheses, I also studied forms and types of Ukrainian ethnic jokes, techniques used in Ukrainian ethnic jokes and functions of these jokes.

My study is mainly based on interview. I planned an interview on a one-to-one basis. I recorded the informant’s interview on tape. Also I made a questionnaire and collected information in written form.

#### C) Informants

The subject group in my study is largely divided into two categories: in-group (Ukrainians) and out-group (non-Ukrainians). Each group is also divided into two categories:

\* in-group A: Ukrainians who were born in Canada

B: Ukrainians who came from Ukraine or other countries recently.

\* out-group A: Other ethnic people who were born in Canada.

B: Other ethnic people who came from Ukraine or other countries.

\* Informants

name	sex	age	ethnic root	Occupation
Paul Yzda	M	20-30	Ukrainian (in-group A)	Student
Greg Skrypiczajko	M	20-30	Ukrainian (in-group A)	Student
Volodymyr Chorny	M	30-40	Ukrainian (in-group B)	
Frances Falkenberg	F	50-60	Swedish(m)-French(f) (out-group A)	retired teacher
Yuri Novikov	M	30-40	Russian(f)-Ukrainian(m) (out-group B)	Student

Besides these informants, I found several volunteers who answered the questionnaire.

name	sex	age	ethnic root	Occupation
Maria Kotovyca	F	20-30	Ukrainian (in-group A)	Student
Susan Niawchuk	F	20-30	Ukrainian (in-group A)	Student
Natalka Shostak	F	20-30	Ukrainian (in-group B)	Student
Kirby Simpson	M	20-30	French-English (out-group A)	Student
Ben	M	40-50	French (out-group B)	Market owner

#### D) Evaluation of interview

I had difficulties in finding informants who belonged to out-group A. Since many Ukrainian ethnic jokes have hostile meaning and portray racial discrimination, many people are reluctant to be informants who tell “bad” ethnic jokes. One of my informants asked me to erase the tape after the interview and did not allow me to make a transcript of the interview. Judging from the reaction of out-group members, it seems to be difficult for a researcher to find and record the natural contexts of joke telling.

Another problem is that the occupation of informants are not varied. Considering that jokes are often told in working contexts, I should have found several workers, farmers or salesmen.

I should mention that there is no informant who is over 60 or under 20 years of age. Compared to younger people, older people have had more of a chance to hear Ukrainian ethnic jokes from other ethnic groups. Also many jokes are usually created and told by children at school. If I had found informants in these age groups, I could have proved how productive Ukrainian ethnic jokes are.

Even though my study has a certain limitation, my research was generally well conducted. The age range of my informants is not narrow. Also the informants gave me sufficient information to prove my hypotheses.

## **II. Contextual determinants and Ukrainian stereotypes**

### **A) Hypothesis 1:**

Ukrainian ethnic jokes are more often told in Canada than in Ukraine, because ethnic jokes are much more likely to occur not in highly homogeneous societies but in societies where Ukrainians belong to a minority group, such as Canada or the United States.

#### **<Data>**

##### **In-group A:**

Paul - 7 jokes / Greg - 4 / Maria - 1/2 / Susan - 0

##### **In-group B:**

Volodymyr - 0 (about Ukrainians), 1 (about Moldavians), 1 (about Russians) /  
Natalka - 2 (about Ukrainians) , 2 (about Russians) /  
Boychuk - 0 (about Ukrainians)

##### **Out-group A:**

Frances - 2 (about Ukrainians) /  
Kirby - 4 (about Ukrainians)/

##### **Out-group B:**

Yuri - 4 (about Ukrainians) /  
Ben - 1 (about Ukrainians) /

#### **<Analysis>**

The data seems to testify that this hypothesis is right. Informants of in-group A remember many Ukrainian ethnic jokes. Ukrainians, who came from Ukraine recently, remember other ethnic jokes better than Ukrainian ethnic jokes.

Volodymyr and Boychuk, who came from Ukraine, could not remember any Ukrainian ethnic jokes, even though they mentioned that they have heard several jokes before. Only Nataalka, who also came from Ukraine, told two Ukrainian jokes which she heard in Edmonton.

Yuri, who came from Minsk, remember many Ukrainian ethnic jokes. Yuri said that the people of Minsk told Ukrainian ethnic jokes more often than Russian or White-Russian ethnic jokes. According to this data, Ukrainian ethnic jokes are likely to occur where Ukrainians belong to minority group, such as in Canada or in Minsk.

However, it is difficult to generalize this hypothesis, because the research group is too small for this study. According to Nataalka, in Ukraine, she has heard about sixty to seventy Ukrainian jokes about Ukrainians. Judging from her interview, there must be many Ukrainian ethnic jokes in Ukraine.

#### B) Hypothesis 2:

Ukrainian stereotypes of Ukrainian ethnic jokes in Canada are different from those of Ukrainian ethnic jokes in Ukraine or other country, because contextual factors, which influence Ukrainian ethnic jokes, are different.

<Data>

#### \* Ukrainian ethnic jokes in Canada

1. Q: How do you get an one-armed Ukrainian out of a tree?

A: Wave at him.

2. Q: Why don't Ukrainians like to eat M&Ms?

A: It's hard to peel them.

3. Q: How many Ukrainians are needed to change a lightbulb?

A: Three hundred and one. One to hold the lightbulb and three hundred to turn the house around.

4. A Ukrainian was walking down the street with a piece of wood. A man stopped

and said, "Hey, are you a pole vaulter?", The Ukrainian said, "No, I'm a Ukrainian, but how did you know my name is Walter?"

5. Q: Why did the Ukrainian break his arm raking leaves?

A: He fell out of a tree.

\* Ukrainian ethnic jokes in other countries.

1. When three Russians get together you get a primary communist party organization, three Ukrainians - Ukrainian Academy of science, three Jews - "Tryo banduryctov".

2. Where a Jew was there is nothing to do for a Russian, but where a Ukrainian was there is nothing to do for a Jew.

3. In 1966 when Gagarin made his space flight, in a small village in western Ukraine, a small boy was running home from school:

Boy - Vuiko (Uncle), you know, Moskali (Russians) have gone into the space!

Uncle - (With smile on his face): Як, yci? (Wow, all of them?)

4. A Ukrainian and a poor African student travelled in the same compartment on a train. The African got hungry, but had no food with him or money. The Ukrainian got some bacon(calor) out of his bag and began eating, with great pleasure. The African couldn't turn his eyes from the bacon. The Ukrainian, seeing that, asked: "You like bacon, eh?" - "Yes, very much," replied the African. "All right," said the Ukrainian. "Do you have father?" - "Yes," said the African. "Then," said the Ukrainian, "write to him, and ask him to send you some bacon too."

<Analysis>

According to the data, in Canada, Ukrainians are generally described as foolish. However, in other countries (eg. Minsk), Ukrainian ethnic jokes portray various traits of Ukrainians. Some jokes describe Ukrainians as misers and boasters. Others describe Ukrainians as people who are interested in learning, or who are usually divided into several political sects.

What makes Ukrainian stereotypes in Canada different from those in Ukraine? In my opinion, the different historical experiences of Ukrainians in Canada might

make them different from each other. If we consider that the first Ukrainians were poor farmers and did not speak English, we can imagine how Ukrainians were regarded by Anglophones at that time and we can understand why Ukrainians are described as moronish in Canada.

According to Yuri, Ukrainian ethnic jokes in Minsk also often describe Ukrainians as foolish. But He added that in Minsk, Ukrainian ethnic jokes are more offensive than in Canada<sup>1</sup>. In other words, Ukrainians or other ethnic groups are described as worse figures than fools in ethnic jokes. In my opinion, it is because of crucial historical relationships between Ukrainians and Russians or Ukrainians and other ethnic groups. Many jokes reflect these historical relationships. In these jokes, we can see what national feeling Ukrainians have against Russians, Poles, or Jews. These jokes are also inclined to focus on specific ethnic traits.

### C) Hypothesis 3:

The nature of old Ukrainian ethnic jokes has changed, because socioculture has changed in Canada.

#### <Data>

1. Q: Did you hear about the Ukrainian who went ice-fishing?  
A: He brought back four hundred pounds of ice<sup>2</sup>.
2. Q: How did a Ukrainian die in ice-fishing?  
A: He got run over by the Zamboni.
3. Ukrainians went ice-fishing, but they didn't catch anything, because they took all day just to cut off a big hole enough for a boat.

#### <Analysis>

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<sup>1</sup> . Yuri Novikov, interview, p. 11.

<sup>2</sup> . Robert B. Klymasz, *Folk narrative among Ukrainian-Canadians in western Canada: Canadian Center for Folk Culture Studies Paper No. 4, 1973, p. 109.*



I could not find many differences between old and new Ukrainian ethnic jokes. However, I found several important changes concerning to Ukrainian ethnic jokes. Firstly, many variants of old jokes appear. According to data, the joke about ice-fishing has many variants and enjoys widespread popularity.

Secondly, “dialect” or language jokes are rarely told at the present time. In my opinion, it is because that today “broken English” is less often heard amongst Ukrainians in Canada. However, with new Ukrainians immigrating to Canada, it could be possible to hear new Ukrainian jokes concerning language somewhere in Canada.

Thirdly, Ukrainian jokes are more often told amongst Ukrainians than amongst other ethnic people. Due to emphasis on human rights and racial discrimination in the schools, the work place, institutions and families, out-group people rarely tell ethnic jokes which often look down people. On the contrary, Ukrainian ethnic jokes are still popular among Ukrainian groups and created by Ukrainians themselves.

### **III. Forms and types of Ukrainian ethnic jokes.**

#### **A) Riddle-jokes**

A popular type of ethnic joke is a combination of a joke and a riddle. The joke takes the form of a question and answer, and the answer usually reveals some stereotypic attribute of an ethnic group mentioned in the question.<sup>3</sup>

Robert B. Klymasz introduced some examples of introductory, riddling question taken from the Ukrainian joke cycle in Western Canada in his article “The Ethnic Joke in Canada Today,” in *Keystone Folklore Quarterly*. According to him, these introductory questions usually focus on distinguishing ethnic features and qualities. However, the answer usually does not provide a satisfactory answer but

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<sup>3</sup> . Mahadev L. Apte, *Humor and Laughter: An Anthropological Approach* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1985), p. 116.

offers a formulation that is distorting, absurd and completely inapplicable.<sup>4</sup> The following are examples of riddle jokes taken from a student's article "The ethnic joke and sense of community"<sup>5</sup>, written by Grant Renney.

1. Q: What's the new Ukrainian motorcycle called?

A: Kubasaki.

2. Q: At a Ukrainian wedding how can you tell who is the Ukrainian bride?

A: She's the one with the braided armpits.

3. Q: In a chorus line how can you tell a Ukrainian?

A: She's the one that sticks to the floor when they do the splits.

#### B) Jokes with Gestures and Actions

Gestures or actions appear in some ethnic riddle-jokes. According to Mahadev L. Apte, there are two types of jokes: Firstly, the narrator performs an action or makes a gesture and usually asks the question "What is this?". Secondly, the narrator of a joke asks a question pertaining to a trait of an ethnic individual and supplies the answer by way of a gesture or an action.<sup>6</sup> The following are examples of the first form of jokes with gestures and actions.

1. Q: What is this?

A: You pull your pants part away down,  
then put your finger at that point.

Then smell your finger and say,  
"A Ukrainian doing crack(cocaine)."

2. Q: How does a Ukrainian tie his shoe?

A: A Ukrainian stands by a chair, places his right leg on the seat,  
bends down to his left foot on the floor and ties his left shoe.

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<sup>4</sup> . *Ibid.* p. 117.

<sup>5</sup> . Grant Renney, "The ethnic joke and sense of community" (University of Manitoba, 1989), p. 7.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

### C) Jokes in the form of proverb

Several jokes have the form of proverbs which are usually short two-part expressions. The following are examples of jokes in the form of proverb.

1. Where three Ukrainians get together, there will be two political organizations.
2. Where three Russians get together, you get a primary communist party organization, three Ukrainians - Ukrainian Academy of science, three Jews - "Tryo bandurystov".
3. Where a Jew was there is nothing to do for a Russian, but where a Ukrainian was there is nothing to do for a Jew.

### D) Definition

Some jokes define Ukrainians as a garlic eater or a moron.

1. Ukrainians - garlic eaters.
2. Q: What's the definition of a maniac?  
A: A Ukrainian in a whore-house with a credit card<sup>7</sup>.

### E) Dialogue in a short story.

Jokes often have a short story form. In this case, more than two people appear in a story and the story finish with dialogue.

1. Two Ukrainians saw two guys fishing out in the middle of a field, and one says to the other, "Look at those two dummies out there trying to fish, maybe we should tell them what's going on." And the other one says, "How the hell are we going to do that? We haven't got a boat."<sup>8</sup>

2. Young man answers his uncle (in western Ukraine):

Boy - Ах, вуйку, ви не маєте рації!

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<sup>7</sup> . Grant Renney, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

<sup>8</sup> . *Ibid.*, pp. 7-8.

Uncle (feeling offended) - Може, рації і не маю, зате кулемет і досі в  
городі закопаний!

3. A Ukrainian with a frog on his shoulder goes into a bar, and the bartender said, “Hey you, you can’t come in here with that.” Frog said, “well it started out as a wart on my ass, and it grew into this!”

4. There was a few people on an airplane flying over Alberta. Unfortunately, engine trouble broke out. But there were only two parachutes. A Ukrainian man first jumped up from the plane. An English man said to a German, “That’s OK. There are still two parachutes left. The Ukrainian guy jumped with nap-sack.”

#### **IV. Techniques used in Ukrainian ethnic jokes.**

##### **A) “Accent” or pronunciation**

Accent or pronunciation is often used in ethnic jokes. If a few features and sounds are identified as characteristic of a particular language, people use them in language jokes. The following is an example of this case. Since Russian pronunciation is different from Ukrainian, this joke points out a different sound.

A conversation between the two western Ukrainian peasants:

- Слухай, а ти знаєш як москалі називають наше пиво
- Як
- Пі-і-і-во!
- От гади...

##### **B) exaggeration**

Exaggeration composes an important part in ethnic jokes. Exaggeration in ethnic jokes makes people more ridiculous. Amongst Ukrainian ethnic jokes in Canada, jokes about a lightbulb and ice-fishing use this technique.

1. Q: How many Ukrainians are needed to change a lightbulb?

A: Three hundred and one. One to hold the lightbulb and three hundred to turn the house around.

2. Q: Did you hear about the Ukrainian who went ice-fishing?

A: He brought back four hundred pounds of ice.

## **V. The function of Ukrainian ethnic jokes.**

Most informants mentioned that Ukrainian ethnic jokes bring not hostility but light mood to our society. Even though Ukrainian ethnic jokes were made at first based on prejudice and hostility, informants think, Ukrainian ethnic jokes help people escape from the monotony of daily life in our time.

Paul Yzda mentioned that Ukrainian ethnic jokes make closer relationships between other ethnic people and himself. He often tells Ukrainian ethnic jokes to people for “ice-breaking”<sup>9</sup>.

Ukrainian ethnic jokes simultaneously perpetuate the desire and the urge for identity, individuality and separateness in terms of ethnicity. While Ukrainians enjoy Ukrainian ethnic jokes, they encourages strong ethnic identity and emphasizes that ethnic identity is permanent. At present time, it is ture that Ukrainian ethnic jokes are more often told amongst Ukrainians. It might be because of their need for social cohesion, than amongst majority or dominant groups who do not face the dilemma of choosing between acculturation and the maintenance of distinct ethnic identity.<sup>10</sup>

Here, I have to mention what function these jokes play when out-group members create and tell ethnic jokes which look down on other ethnic people. According to Mahadev L. Apte, out-group people make ethnic jokes to strengthen their ethnocentrism. He said that treating or thinking of other cultures and people as inferior is one way of strengthening self-image. Prejudice reinforces

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<sup>9</sup> . Paul Yzda, interview 1, p. 4.

<sup>10</sup> . Mahadev L. Apte, op. cit., p. 143.

ethnocentrism, just as negation of the cultural values of other people nurtures self-esteem and feelings of superiority.

However, ethnic traits seen as negative by outgroups are viewed as positive by ingroups. We can find the evidence from Greg's interview.

How do you get off an one-armed Ukrainian out of tree? The answer is that you wave to him. They also make Ukrainian people seem to be unintelligent. But I think that it also potrays Ukrainian people quite friendly.<sup>11</sup>

All informants of in-group A mentioned that negative traits which were told in Ukrainian ethnic jokes made people laugh in our society rather than bother people. Most informants said that a joke is just a joke and it is for fun. Therefore, Ukrainian ethnic jokes are widely told within both in-group and out-group.

## **VI. Conclusion.**

Ukrainian ethnic jokes are more likely to be present where Ukrainians belong to minority or subordinate groups. No matter who made the Ukrainian ethnic jokes, they enjoy widespread popularity within both in-group and out-group. On the one hand, Ukrainian ethnic jokes help ingroup people to strengthen Ukrainian identity. On the other hand, they bring feelings of superiority to out-group people. If we consider that Ukrainians also tell many other ethnic jokes, such as Russian jokes, Moldavian jokes, Polish jokes, Jewish jokes, and so on, ethnic joke telling must be a common phenomenon in multiethnic societies where majority and minority groups are existing.

Ukrainian ethnic jokes reflect the historical experiences of Ukrainians, the relationship between Ukrainians and other ethnic groups, and the behavior, customs, personality, or any other traits of Ukrainians. Therefore, Ukrainian ethnic

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<sup>11</sup> . Greg Skrypiczajko, interview 2, p. 7.

jokes are like a window or mirror through which we can see the face of Ukrainian culture.

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## Ukrainian Ethnic jokes

1. A Ukrainian and a poor African student travel in the same compartment on train. The African got hungry, but had no food with him or money to buy it. The Ukrainian got some bacon(calor) out of his bag and began eating, with great pleasure. The African was ..... and couldn't turn his eyes of the bacon. The Ukrainian, seeing that, asked: "You like bacon, eh?" - "Yes, very much," replied the African. "All right," said the Ukrainian. "Do you have your father?" - "Yes," said the African. "Then," said the Ukrainian, "write to him, and ask him to send you some bacon too."

2. When three Russians get together you get a primary communist party organization, three Ukrainians - Ukrainian Academy of science, three Jews - "Tryo banduryctov".

3. Where a Jew was there is nothing to do for a Russian, but where a Ukrainian was there is nothing to do for a Jew.

4. The eternal Jew traveled around the world for 3 thousand years. He has been everywhere, but somehow missed Ukraine. So now he stands on the bank of the Dnipro. "Beautiful view, beautiful country." Suddenly, a man in Petlura uniform appears, and says: "Jew?" Then go with me!" He takes the Jew to his military camp and says to his comrades: "See, guys, I caught a Jew! What should we do with him?" "Dispose of!" - yelled everyone. The Jew says: "No, you can't do that. I'm eternal!!!". "Brothers, cut him into pieces!" And the eternal Jew ceased to exist.

5. Я возму кар, поїду на фарму фенсу фіксувати.

(I am going to take my car and go to my farm to fix the fence.)

- From Yuri Novikov (1-5)

6. Where will three Ukrainians get together, there will be two political organizations. (In Canada)

7. - Do you know how to kill at once a thousand Ukrainians?

- No!

- To plant mushrooms on the road. (In Canada)

8. In 1966 when Gagarin made his space flight, in a small village in Western Ukraine, small boy was running from school home:

Boy - Vuiko (Uncle), you know, moskali (Russian) went to the space!

Uncle - (With feel of joy):

9. A conversation between the two western Ukrainian peasants:  
 - Слухай, а ти знаєш як москалі називають наше пиво  
 - Як  
 - Пі-і-і-во!  
 - От гади...
10. Boy - Ах, вуйку, ви не маєте рації!  
 Uncle (feeling offended) - Може, рації і не маю, зате кулемет і досі в  
 городі закопаний!  
 - From Natalka Shostak (6-10)
11. Q: What is this?  
 A: You pull your pants part away down,  
 then put your finger at that point.  
 Then smell your finger and say,  
 "A Ukrainian doing crack (cocaine)."
12. Q: How does a Ukrainian tie his shoe?  
 A: A Ukrainian stands by a chair, places his right leg on the seat,  
 bend down to his left foot on the floor and tie his left shoe.  
 - From Kirby Simpson (11-12)
13. Q: Why don't Ukrainians like to eat M&Ms?  
 A: It's hard to peel it.
14. Q: Why did the Ukrainian break his arm raking leaves?  
 A: He fell out of a tree.
15. Q: How many Ukrainians are needed to change a lightbulb?  
 A: Three hundred and one. One to hold the lightbulb and three hundred to turn  
 the house around.
16. A Ukrainian was walking down the street with a piece of wood. A man  
 stopped and said, "Hey, are you a pole bolter?", Ukrainian said, "No, I am  
 Ukrainian, but how did you know my name is Walter?"
17. A Ukrainian with a frog on his shoulder goes into a bar, and the bartender said,  
 "Hey you, you can come in here with that." Frog said, "well it started out as a wart  
 on my ass, and it grew into this!"
18. (Q) How did a Ukrainian die in ice-fishing?  
 (A) He got run over by Zamboni.

- From Paul Yzda (13-19)

19. Ukrainians - garlic eaters.

20. Q: How do you get an one-armed Ukrainian out of a tree?

A: Wave at him.

21. There was a few people on an airplane flying over Alberta. Unfortunately, engine trouble broke out. But there were only two parachutes. A Ukrainian man first jumped up from the plane. An English man said to a German, "That's OK. There are still two parachutes left. The Ukrainian guy jumped with nap-sack."

22. Ukrainians went ice-fishing, but they didn't catch anything, because they took all day just to cut off a big hole enough for a boat.

- From Greg Skrypichaiko (20-22)

Interview Number 1.

Tape 1

March 23, 1996.

Place: In the room of Paul Yzda at the St. John's Institute.

Informant: Paul Yzda.

Collector: Sogu Hong.

Sogu Hong	Thank you very much for interview today. Can you introduce yourself briefly?
Paul Yzda	My name is Paul Yzda. I go to University of Alberta. This is my last year. I'm majoring in Psychology.
Sogu	I see. Where were you born?
Paul	I was born in Calgary.
Sogu	Can you introduce your family?
Paul	Most my family are Ukrainian Canadians. Exception of few...both my parents are Ukrainian origin.
Sogu	Where do your family live now?
Paul	Most of my family live in Edmonton in Fort Saskatchewan. But my imidiate family live in Calgary.
Sogu	Have you ever studied in bilingual school, in Ukrainian-English bilingual school?
Paul	Not directly. But I did take some Ukrainian courses out side of school.
Sogu	I will asik several questions about jokes. So do you like jokes?
Paul	Yes.
Sogu	Do you often joke in your daily life?
Paul	Very often.
Sogu	Where do you usually joke?
Paul	I usually joke around... with people I'm familiar...good friends...I'm...just anytime...you know...the situation fits...just for fun.
Sogu	Just for fun. I think it is especially at a party time.
Paul	Yes, especillay party times.
Sogu	What kind of jokes do you like?
Paul	I like a lot of ethnic jokes. It conveys a lot of information about what the different ethnicities are alike. You can actually learn a lot of information from these.
Sogu	I see. So you have heard many ethnic jokes, such as Polish, Jewish, or Ukrainian jokes. Yes?
Paul	Yes.
Sogu	Do you think why you enjoy telling ethnic jokes in your daily life? I mean why you like ethnic jokes.

Paul	Because it puts people all over the world an equal level. It doesn't mean one ethnicity is superior to another. We all have own faults.
Sogu	What do you feel when you tell ethnic jokes?
Paul	Feel...I just feel like ...I can gain a better understanding of what people from...origine or ethnicity...[he explains ethnic jokes help us to understand other ethnic people.]
Sogu	Many ethnic jokes have the content of hostility. Have you ever joked to other nation or other people with hostility.
Paul	You mean in the jokes? Yes, but not out of malicious intent. It was just a part of jokes. I have no desire to be malicious.
Sogu	Oh, I see. Have you ever heard jokes about Ukrainian people?
Paul	Yes, lots of jokes.
Sogu	Can you introduce several jokes about Ukrainian people?
Paul	<p>Sure.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. (Q) Why don't Ukrainians like to eat M&amp;Ms? (A) Well, for one thing, they are hard to peel.</li> <li>2. (Q) Why did the Ukrainian break his arm raking leaves? (A) He fell out of a tree.</li> <li>3. A Ukrainian with a frog on his shoulder goes into a bar, and the bartender said, "Hey you you can come in here with that." Frog said, "well it started out as a wart on my ass, and it grew into this!"</li> <li>4. (Q) How did the Ukrainian die in ice-fishing? (A) He got run over by the Zamboni.</li> <li>5. (Q) How does a Ukrainian tie his shoe? (A) [demonstration]</li> <li>6. (Q) How many Ukrainians does it take to change a lightbulb? (A) Three hundred and one. One to hold lightbulb; three hundred to turn the house.</li> <li>7. A Ukrainian was walking down the street with a long piece of wood. A man stops him and says, "Hey, are you a pole vaulter?" He says, "No, I'm a Ukrainian. But how did you know my name is Walter?"</li> </ol>
Sogu	Very interesting. I want to know where and when you usually hear these kind of jokes.
Paul	I hear them from many different people and many different place. It's a very popular theme especially in Edmonton, because there is a big Ukrainian population.
Sogu	Did you hear these jokes from Ukrainian people or from non-Ukrainian people.
Paul	Probably, half and half. I think there is a lot of people...even they are not Ukrainian...they knew Ukrainian jokes.
Sogu	I think you heard these jokes when you a child maybe.
Paul	When I was younger? Some of them are new, but a lot of them are

	from...when I was younger, too.
Sogu	Do you think...I think most jokes...you heard from your friends. is it right?
Paul	Yes.
Sogu	Same ages of friend.
Paul	Same ages of friend and relatives.
Sogu	Which joke do you remember best? Do you like best?
Paul	I like that Ukrainian pole vaulter.
Sogu	Why do you like that joke?
Paul	Because it conveys information about how stupid... Ukrainians are supposed to be...? It's funny.
Sogu	I think except for these jokes you know many Ukrainian jokes. So I am wondering how you know so many Ukrainian jokes.
Paul	Well, it's being part of a large Ukrainian family. You know...family members are always...you know...saying Ukrainian jokes...but also friends bring Ukrainian jokes...just... they can bug me...I bug them back.
Sogu	Do you think you have a talent of jokers.
Paul	Not especially. There are people who tell jokes better than I.
Sogu	So do you think why Ukrainians are described as foolish or moronish in Ukrainian ethnic jokes?
Paul	It's...well may be because of...when maybe they first came to Canada, there were settling...they couldn't...you know...they were still Canadianized...they weren't in part of Western culture yet. And many of things they did might have been perceived as being dumb ... you know lot of them didn't go to a school because they couldn't afford to ...they couldn't speak properly...
Sogu	Do you think Ukrainian people still have some problems in their characteristics or in their life style?
Paul	Yes, they have problems. But for instance, they are supposed to be hard knock drinkers and there are supposed to be stupid. But on the other side, they are supposed to be very hard workers.
Sogu	Do you think who made these jokes at first? Ukrainians or non-Ukrainians?
Paul	Probably, non-Ukrainians.
Sogu	Have you ever seen Ukrainians told Ukrainian ethnic jokes among Ukrainian people?
Paul	No, I have never experienced it personally.
Sogu	I think when you are child you have met many Ukrainian Canadian friends. So have you ever told Ukrainian ethnic jokes with Ukrainian Canadian friends?
Paul	Yes, I often. It was funny, because it was a chance for laughing at who

	we are and who we aren't.
Sogu	What did you feel at that time?
Paul	I felt...I wasn't insulted. [he explains joke is not serious but just fun.]
Sogu	Have you ever told these Ukrainian ethnic jokes to non-Ukrainian people?
Paul	Yes, very often.
Sogu	When and where do you usually do?
Paul	Usually with my friend who are non-Ukrainians. I usually tell them Ukrainian jokes...just for fun. They could laugh at...and who I am and ...you know...get a better understanding of what my culture is like.
Sogu	I see. So you don't have any different feeling when you told these jokes to Ukrainian people or non-Ukrainian people.
Paul	Not very much. I wouldn't ....Ukrainian from Ukraine...I wouldn't... exactly go up to them and start telling them Ukrainian jokes because something...they might be very sensitive ...usually I tell them with acquaintances.
Sogu	And have you ever seen that non-Ukrainians told Ukrainian ethnic jokes to Ukrainians?
Paul	Yes.
Sogu	And have you ever seen non-Ukrainian people told Ukrainian ethnic jokes to you?
Paul	Yes.
Sogu	When? and where?
Paul	Just friends who are not Ukrainian. They throw it from their mouse...they say it because they know I'm a Ukrainian.
Sogu	Have you ever felt hostility from them?
Paul	From the jokes?
Sogu	From the people who told Ukrainian ethnic jokes?
Paul	No. [ ]. I don't want to take it seriously.
Sogu	I've heard many Ukrainian jokes from non-Ukrainian people. Do you think why non-Ukrainians enjoy Ukrainian ethnic jokes?
Paul	Do I think why?...The one thing...the whole idea behind the jokes is their stupidity of Ukrainians involved...for example...[He tell a joke about a Ukrainian who is in a tree. He thinks that stupid figure in ethnic jokes brings laugh to people, because we can not see this kind of funny situation in our real life.]
Sogu	And you said that you have joked other ethnic jokes to other people. So can you introduce some other ethnic jokes?
Paul	Ok. Have you ever heard about the new Jewish car? [He tell two Jewish jokes]
Sogu	Have you ever told this kind of jokes to Jews?
Paul	No. Not intentionally.

Sogu	So you are enjoying that joke just for fun.
Paul	Just for fun.
Sogu	No hostility?
Paul	No. No hostility.
Sogu	Never.
Paul	[He empathize that he never tell jokes with hostility.]
Sogu	So last questions. I want to know if you think Ukrainians have special characteristics which are different from other nation's.
Paul	Yes.
Sogu	What is that?
Paul	Well, sepcial characteristics...well...I don't really know how different Ukrainians are from other nations. But for one thing, there are not supposed to be [ ] people, on the other hand, there are very rich cultural people, there are also very hard working. Lot of them are supposed to be drinking a lot. Those are kinds of main idears come to my mind.
Sogu	I see. Thank you very much.
Paul	OK.



Interview 2.

Tape 2.

March 29, 1996.

Place: In collector's apartment.

Informant: Greg Skrypiczajko.

Collector: Sogu Hong

Sogu Hong	Thank you very much for your time.
Greg ✓	<del>Skrypiczajko</del> No problem.
Sogu	Can you introduce yourself briefly?
Greg	How detail?
Sogu	Just name and...
Greg	OK. My name is Greg Skrypichaiko. I'm a student at University Alberta. And a friend of Sogu. And I am the native of Edmontonian and heard a lot of Ukrainian ethnic jokes.
Sogu	Can you introduce your ethnic background?
Greg	Yes, I am hundred percent Ukrainian. Only my father was born in Ukraine. All my grandparents have Ukrainian origins.
Sogu	So I think I found very good informant today. So do you often tell jokes in daily life?
Greg	Yes, as often as I can anyway.
Sogu	Where and when do you tell jokes usually?
Greg	Well, back to the last question. Usually jokes are for me like any kind of twist play on words. Most of my good friends also tell jokes anyway. In daily life, as soon as people...especially when people first start to meet ...first meet their friends...first half and hour...people make jokes. If you go to work, there is definitely...make a lot of jokes with people. [ ] Especially when you get to back in touch with somebody you haven't seen long time. It could be a bar or bus-stop.
Sogu	So have you ever heard a Ukrainian ethnic joke or jokes?
Greg	Yes, very many.
Sogu	Can you tell me several jokes about Ukrainian people?
Greg	I can tell you few.
	One about the ... There were a few people on an airplane, a small air craft, flying over Alberta. There were an English man...I think maybe a German...and...anyway...there was an engine trouble...there was only a couple of parachutes...but a Ukrainian guy first jumped up from the plane. A English man said to a German, "That's OK. There are still two parachutes left. A Ukrainian guy grabbed and jumped with nap-sack."
Sogu	I see.

Greg	Another one is about ice-fishing. About two Ukrainian guys who went ice-fishing died. It was really tragedy. Both were killed by Zamboni. The other ice-fishing jokes is about two Ukrainians who went ice-fishing, but they didn't catch anything, because they took all day just to cut off a hole big enough for a boat.
Sogu	I see. I know one Ukrianian joke about ice-fishing. But answer is different. Answer is "he brought back four hundred pound of ice". Maybe your's is variant of this joke. But I think we can find several different things between this joke and your joke. Do you have any idea about that?
Greg	Yes. [he think that the ice-fishing jokes which I told is more malicious compare to his jokes.]
Sogu	Where did you hear these jokes?
Greg	I don't know. Usually because I am Ukrainian, everybody know I am Ukrainian...they tell me jokes. [he said many people know he is a Ukrainian and he likes to listen to Ukrainian jokes.]
Sogu	Probably Ukrainian people told these jokes to you.
Greg	On many occasions Ukrainians told me Ukrainian jokes. But not all occasions. For instance, Mark who I told you about...Mark is a Rumanian...somehow he has got some connections with Ukrainians...anyway he is not a Ukrainian. [Greg expalin the ethnic background of Mark. He said that Mark very well know Ukrainian ethnic jokes. Also he lists several non-Ukrainians who know many Ukrainian jokes. He also mentioned Ukrainian jokes about little Johney.
Sogu	Can you introduce jokes about Ukrainian people?
Greg	More jokes about Ukrainian people. I told one before but I can't remeber. The other jokes which I mentioned before was that...how do you get off one-armed Ukrainian out of tree? The answer is that you wave to him. They also make Ukrainian people seem to be unintelligent. But I think that it also potraits Ukrainian people quite friendly. Definitely way back.
Sogu	That's good point.
Greg	That's what I mean by clever joke. It shows something about the culture.
Sogu	Why do you think Ukrainians are discribed as foolish or moronish in Ukrainian ethnic jokes?
Greg	Actually, I don't know...I think it's been carried on and on and on...but I am slightly biased. [He says that the first Ukrainian people were so naive that English people regard Ukrainians as stupid.] They were called garlic eaters...
Sogu	So you think, maybe, English people made these jokes at first.
Greg	I think they originated from them, becasue many of jokes have malicious sort of [ ].
Sogu	I see. Do you think new Ukrainian ethnic jokes are made by people in Canada?

Greg	Yes, a lot of jokes are generated. First instance, one-armed Ukrainian out of tree joke is an old joke. I remember from that I was a kid. The little Johny jokes which I told about also ...I can't say definitely that about Ukrainian people. [Greg says that "ice-fishing" jokes belong to new jokes. He think new jokes are still made by people.]
Sogu	Do you know anybody who know many Ukrainian ethnic jokes?
Greg	Yes, as I told you befoer, Mark Bezner, my buddy, he knows a lot of jokes about Ukrainian people. So does one of my professors, Dr. Dorin. [He says that they very well remember many jokes.]
Sogu	How do you think they remember many jokes? Good memory?
Greg	[He expalins that they are very creative people and have good social relationships with people.]
Sogu	Have you ever found any hostility when they told jokes to other people?
Greg	No. People tell jokes sometimes ...tell you the truth...I think usually in this age in Canada a lot of people ... [ He think people tell jokes without malicious meaning.]
Sogu	Have you ever seen non-Ukrainians who told Ukrainan ethnic jokes?
Greg	Yes, definitely. Everybody who knows I'm a Ukrainian tell me Ukrainian jokes, the best Ukrainian ethnic jokes they've heard recently. They come right to me and phone me up to tell jokes sometimes.
Sogu	Have you got angry because of those jokes?
Greg	No, not seriously angry. I think I only get angry about that...when I already angry. [He expalins that jokes is just for fun.]
Sogu	Why do Ukrainains tell Ukrainian ethnic jokes among themselves?
Greg	I don't know. [ ]. It is a sort of the fun way of dealing with other human being...
Sogu	I see. Who do you think more often tell Ukrainian ethnic jokes? Ukrainian Canadians or other ethnic people?
Greg	I don't know. There are a lot of Ukrainians. I don't know. but many Ukrainian people... a lot of Ukrainian people tell Ukrainian jokes.
Sogu	More than...
Greg	No I don't know how I can answer the question. A lot of Ukrainians tell Ukrainian jokes, but a lot of people tell jokes about Ukrainian people at least in western Canada. Especially Alberta and Saskachewan. There are a lot of Ukrainians.
Sogu	I have the last question. Have you ever told other ethnic people, such as English, Jewish or Polish people? If yes, why?
Greg	Yes. I definatly have. This is a really contraversy qestion. But for fun and for tease. [He says there is no malicious meaning in joke telling. and he tell one frog joke about Franch people]
Sogu	You gave me very good information. It is very very helpful.

Greg	I hope so. I hope it is a kind of information you intend to get.
Sogu	Thank you very much today.
Greg	Thank you sogu.

Interview 3.

Tape 3.

March 29, 1996.

Place: In the room 441 E of Art Building

Informant: Yuri Novikov.

Collector: Sogu Hong.

Sogu Hong	Thank you very much for your time today. Can you introduce yourself briefly? your name, ethnic background, and where you came from.
Yuri Novik -ov	I am Yuri Novikov. My mother is a Russian and my father is a Ukrainian. I consider myself a Russian. Practically I don't speak Ukrainian. I came to Canada from Belo-Rus'. I lived most of my life in Minsk.
Sogu	So, your answer on the questionnaire was very interesting. So I want to know what ethnic jokes people more often tell in Minsk.
Yuri	I think... if we talk about Ukrainian, Belo-Russian and Russian ethnic jokes, I think there are very few Belo-Russian ethnic jokes and probably people tell Ukrainian ethnic jokes more often. And jokes about Jews are popular too.
Sogu	What ethnic group is majority in Minsk in Belo-Russia?
Yuri	Belo-Russians are majority.
Sogu	What ethnic groups are minority?
Yuri	The biggest minority will be Russains. They are about 50% there. Then there are Ukrainians. There are a lot of Poles. Some people are Lithuanians. There is a substantial Jewish minority also.
Sogu	How were their relationships among ethnic groups in Minsk?
Yuri	I think very good. There is no ethnical tension at all. There is very little nationalism. And There is no [enemicity --> hostility?] between Russians and Belo-Russians and between Belo-Russians and Ukrainians and any other nationality.
Sogu	You answered Ukrainians might be described as foolish in ethnic jokes because of some traits in their national characteristics. Can you tell me some traits in Ukrainian national characteristics?
Yuri	From the point of view how they are described in jokes?
Sogu	Or from your point of view.
Yuri	From my point of view, Ukrainians are like all other people...there are some people who are stubon and you would probably find more of them in Ukrainian or with Ukrainian background. So if we talk about this as their national or ethnic feature, we can mention that.
Sogu	Do you think why they are stubon?
Yuri	I don't know. [It's just other way looking at the world...persistence...so they have a goal. And they ... goal steadily.] People think they are stubon.

	But it can be a positive turn too.
Sogu	How about point of view of many jokes?
Yuri	Sorry.
Sogu	From the point of view of jokes?
Yuri	It's just exaggeration generally. We can..in the jokes...we can also mention there are [ ] with money. They are trying to say they are not so eager to spend on certain thing...and something we can call gridness because some people might say they do not want to share with other people as eager as probably some other nationality.
Sogu	How about the second one [second joke which Yuri wrote on the questionnaire]? Ukrainians are described as people who are interested in learning here.
Yuri	Second... This joke shows thier nationalism because they get together and form unity based on their ethnic background. They are confedent in what they think in all questions.
Sogu	So here Ukrainians organize Academy of science. Is there any metaphor or not?
Yuri	It's because they are confedent in their knowledge. So they can be all academicians.
Sogu	Have you ever heard Ukrainian ethnic jokes in Canada?
Yuri	There was fun. It's not actually joke about Ukrainians but about their language, mixture of Ukrainian and English, produced very funny results. As one Ukrainian who came to Canada long time ago ... Я поїду на фарму ... нет ... Я возму кар, поїду на фарму фенсу фіксавати.
Sogu	Can you translate?
Yuri	I am going to take my car and go to my farm to fix the fence. So all the words are taken from English. They have a Ukrainian reflection.
Sogu	When did you hear that?
Yuri	Couple of years ago.
Sogu	And from whom and where?
Yuri	It was a ... somebody who was describing the language of a Ukrainian who lived here.
Sogu	So that is a kind of language joke.
Yuri	Yes, it's a language joke definately.
Sogu	Have you ever heard Ukrainian ethnic jokes which describe Ukrainian people as foolish people in Canada?
Yuri	Ukrainians described in Ukrainian as fools in the jokes. No.
Sogu	So Can you find any differences between Ukrainian ethnic jokes in Minsk and in Canada?
Yuri	I think even with comparison to the language joke, jokes here are not as offensive as there. There are good humour.

Sogu	Here?
Yuri	Yes.
Sogu	Do you think so?
Yuri	I think so.
Sogu	Who do you think made Ukrainian ethnic jokes at first?
Yuri	Who made them what?
Sogu	Who made Ukrainian ethnic jokes?
Yuri	I don't know. I have no idea.
Sogu	Do you think Ukrainian people or non-Ukrainian people?
Yuri	Of course, non-Ukrainian.
Sogu	Do you think why?
Yuri	Just to show superiority over Ukrainians.
Sogu	Have you ever seen that Ukrainian people tell Ukrainian ethnic jokes among themselves?
Yuri	No.
Sogu	No?
Yuri	No. They can hardly believe in that.
Sogu	I see. Thank you very much.
Yuri	Your welcome.

Interview 4.

Tape 4.

April 2, 1996.

Place: In the living room of Frances' place.

Informant: Frances Frankberg

Collector: Sogu Hong.

Sogu Hong	Thank you very much for your time. Can you introduce yourself briefly?
Frances Frankberg	Yes, my name is Frances Frankberg.
Sogu	And can you tell me your ethnic background?
Frances	My ethnic background...from my father side of the family, I'm... swedish and german background. My mother is a Franch and Italian.
Sogu	I see. Do you often use jokes in your daily life?
Frances	I come from a home where there were much humour in daily life, but jokes are ... not precicely jokes but much humour.
Sogu	I see. Have you ever heard ethnic jokes?
Frances	Well, years back when Ukrainian jokes came into style ... I did hear couple of them...Ukrainian jokes. But the...seems to be passed away these days.
Sogu	How many Ukrainian jokes do you know?
Frances	Well, we heard about the lightbulb. That was one of the first one introduced...that was the common joke, and also for example the riddle type jokes...I say what...poking fun.
Sogu	Can you introduce those jokes?
Frances	Well, I say the lightbulb. How many people does take to change a lightbulb?, that was a common one. One to hold the lightbulb, three to turn the chair around. And then I say the riddle jokes about bride...How can you tell a Ukrainian lady from non-Ukrainian ladies...her armpits are braided or her lags are braided...hair on her lags are braided. It was that type of joke.
Sogu	Who do you think made these jokes at first?
Frances	Well, I don't know because besides Ukrainian jokes after Ukrainians who had newfy jokes...always some minority group is ... poke fun at.
Sogu	I see. And new Ukrainian ethnic jokes are still created by people in our time?
Frances	Yes, I would say not in Canada ... but, I'm thinking, in Ukraine. There are always political jokes ...they are arise..when they change leaders or change political policies.
Sogu	I see. And do you think which group more often tell Ukrainian ethnic



	jokes in Canada?
Frances	Which group?
Sogu	In-group, Ukrainians or non-Ukrainians
Frances	Well I don't ...I would think probably ...in-group
Sogu	Ukrainians.
Frances	Yes, often tell...tell jokes to their own people
Sogu	Why? I mean...I want to know Ukrainians...
Frances	Erase that question...
Sogu	Which group more often tell Ukrainian ethnic jokes in Canada? So can you answer the question?
Frances	Which group... I don't know because I seldom hear ethnic jokes any longer.
Sogu	But, you think...in your opinion, maybe Ukrainians more often tell...
Frances	Perhaps, but I don't know Ukrainians or in-group or out-group...
Sogu	Oh, I see. Do you have any comment on his topic?
Frances	Well, any comment I like to make is that I said, I feel they are pass [ ] ... there is a humour but not jokes as regarding certain ethnic groups or certain types of people as so forth ... my home probably... I was raised with the respect for human lights and there was no descrimination ...be racial, descrimination...and...[ ] ethnic jokes have not been a part of my life or my environment.
Sogu	Thank you very much for interview. Thank you.
Frances	Your welcom.

## Questionnaire

This questionnaire aims to research Ukrainian ethnic jokes<sup>1</sup> in Canada. You will be asked several questions pertaining to Ukrainian ethnic jokes. I would appreciate your response to the following questions. I thank you for your time.

1. Please write your name. YURI NOVIKOV
2. Please write your ethnic background? RUSSIAN - Ukrainian
3. Have you ever heard a Ukrainian ethnic joke or jokes? If yes, where?  
Yes. Mainly while talking to my friends
- 3-1. (If you are from Ukraine, please answer the following question)  
Where do you think people more often hear Ukrainian ethnic jokes?  
In Ukraine or in Canada? And why?  
N/A
4. How many Ukrainian ethnic jokes do you know? About a dozen
5. Can you tell several Ukrainian ethnic jokes? (Please use reverse side)  
I remember a couple only
6. Please write where you heard these jokes.  
From my friends, books
7. Why do you think Ukrainians are described as foolish or moronish in Ukrainian ethnic jokes?  
Because of some traits in their national character
8. Have you told jokes about other ethnic people, such as English, Polish or Jewish?  
If yes, why? and where?  
Yes, I have. Some of them are simply funny. I told them to my friends.

Thank you!

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<sup>1</sup> . Ukrainian ethnic joke is a type of joke in which fun is made of the perceived behavior, customs, personality, or any other traits of Ukrainians. For example, (Q) Did you hear about the Ukrainian who went ice-fishing? - (A) He brought back four hundred pounds of ice.

# Questionnaire

This questionnaire aims to research Ukrainian ethnic jokes<sup>1</sup> in Canada. You will be asked several questions pertaining to Ukrainian ethnic jokes. I would appreciate your response to the following questions. I thank you for your time.

1. Please write your name. *Kirby Simpson*
2. Please write your ethnic background? *FRENCH/BELGIAN/METIS*

3. Have you ever heard a Ukrainian ethnic joke or jokes? If yes, where?

*At school as a child.*

3-1. (If you are from Ukraine, please answer the following question)

Where do you think people more often hear Ukrainian ethnic jokes?  
In Ukraine or in Canada? And why?

4. How many Ukrainian ethnic jokes do you know? *A few, see reverse.*

5. Can you tell several Ukrainian ethnic jokes? (Please use reverse side)

6. Please write where you heard these jokes. *University/High school*

7. Why do you think Ukrainians are described as foolish or moronish in Ukrainian ethnic jokes?

*Maybe bc they have a heavy accent and are also well known in Canada. Most people have heard Ukrainians speak or know of them as a minority group. Maybe bc of their long last names w/ endings that we find peculiar like "chuk", "Ski", "enko". Basically bc they are different from us so we pick on their stereotypical flaws - big + stupid.*

8. Have you told jokes about other ethnic people, such as English, Polish or Jewish?

If yes, why? and where?

*Traveling, school, work - everywhere basically*

*German, Chinese  
Russian, East Indian, Blacks  
Neighborhoods  
Swedish*

Thank you!

<sup>1</sup> . Ukrainian ethnic joke is the type of joke in which fun is made of the perceived behavior, customs, personality, or any other traits of Ukrainians. For example, (Q) Did you hear about the Ukrainian who went ice-fishing? - (A) He brought back four hundred pounds of ice.

# Questionnaire

This questionnaire aims to research Ukrainian ethnic jokes<sup>1</sup> in Canada. You will be asked several questions pertaining to Ukrainian ethnic jokes. I would appreciate your response to the following questions. I thank you for your time.

1. Please write your name. *Maria (Marichka) Kotovych*

2. Please write your ethnic background? *Ukrainian*

3. Have you ever heard a Ukrainian ethnic joke or jokes? If yes, where?

*Yes - on this questionnaire. also, some of my friends like to make Ukrainian wisecracks.*

3-1. (If you are from Ukraine, please answer the following question)

Where do you think people more often hear Ukrainian ethnic jokes?  
In Ukraine or in Canada? And why?

4. How many Ukrainian ethnic jokes do you know? *Not sure*

5. Can you tell several Ukrainian ethnic jokes? (Please use reverse side)

6. Please write where you heard these jokes.

*Friends*

7. Why do you think Ukrainians are described as foolish or moronish in Ukrainian ethnic jokes?

*Probably because the first Ukrainian Canadians came from farming communities and were thus associated with the "hick" image. also, the first UKR. Canadians didn't speak English, and the Canadian-born anglophones thought that*

8. Have you told jokes about other ethnic people, such as English, Polish or Jewish? If yes, why? and where?

*Yes, I've ~~made~~ made fun of English people because they're such easy targets (ie) their manners).*

*this was a sign of stupidity.*

*I just do this at home. <sup>preoccupation with</sup> Thank you!*

*Every so often, a Polish joke slips out too.*

<sup>1</sup> . Ukrainian ethnic joke is a type of joke in which fun is made of the perceived behavior, customs, personality, or any other traits of Ukrainians. For example, (Q) Did you hear about the Ukrainian who went ice-fishing? - (A) He brought back four hundred pounds of ice. *Sometim if I'm*

*joking around with a Polish friend, I'll make Polish jokes, and the Polish person will make UKR. jokes. ~~It's~~ It's all in fun though.*

Sogu, I forgot to give this to you last week. I hope it isn't too late.

### Questionnaire

This questionnaire aims to research Ukrainian ethnic jokes<sup>1</sup> in Canada. You will be asked several questions pertaining to Ukrainian ethnic jokes. I would appreciate your response to the following questions. I thank you for your time.

Q.

1. Please write your name. *Susan Niawchuk*

2. Please write your ethnic background?

*Ukrainian*

3. Have you ever heard a Ukrainian ethnic joke or jokes? If yes, where?

*Yes, here in Edmonton, around the Ukrainian community and in school.*

3-1. (If you are from Ukraine, please answer the following question)

Where do you think people more often hear Ukrainian ethnic jokes? In Ukraine or in Canada? And why?

*n/a*

4. How many Ukrainian ethnic jokes do you know?

*I don't remember any.*

5. Can you tell several Ukrainian ethnic jokes? (Please use reverse side)

*No*

6. Please write where you heard these jokes.

*n/a*

7. Why do you think Ukrainians are described as foolish or moronish in Ukrainian ethnic jokes?

*... because that is how we were portrayed when we first came to Canada, and I suppose that our success in this country lets us look back at our past and*

8. Have you told jokes about other ethnic people, such as English, Polish or Jewish? If yes, why? and where?

*Yes, but it always seems easier to tell a joke about Ukrainians & not about other people - I don't want to insult anybody*

Thank you!

*laugh - we know that the negative descriptions are not true.*

<sup>1</sup> . Ukrainian ethnic joke is a type of joke in which fun is made of the perceived behavior, customs, personality, or any other traits of Ukrainians. For example, (Q) Did you hear about the Ukrainian who went ice-fishing? - (A) He brought back four hundred pounds of ice.

*and Ukrainian are definitely able to take a joke (not as an insult)*

*Sogu Hong*

## Questionnaire

This questionnaire aims to research Ukrainian ethnic jokes<sup>1</sup> in Canada. You will be asked several questions pertaining to Ukrainian ethnic jokes. I would appreciate your response to the following questions. I thank you for your time.

1. Please write your name. *Natalya Shostak*

2. Please write your ethnic background? *Ukrainian from Ukraine*

3. Have you <sup>yes</sup> ever heard a Ukrainian ethnic joke or jokes? If yes, where? *Almost at any occasion: being with friends out, camping, visiting some members of extended family. But this is true about any joke, whether it is about Ukrainians, or about politics etc. probably most often we may hear jokes while travel*

3-1. (If you are from Ukraine, please answer the following question) Where do you think people more often hear Ukrainian ethnic jokes? In Ukraine or in Canada? And why?

*(елекмпурка) that linked city with countryside villages, towns*  
I also must admit that many jokes were told in Russian. Those that were about Ukrainians were told in Ukrainian or broken Ukrainian. I think this is an important point. I heard Ukr. ethnic jokes in Canada only from Ukrainians and not as often as I would hear them in Ukraine. And often in English.

4. How many Ukrainian ethnic jokes do you know? *Unfortunately I never remember jokes about other ethnic group*  
But I guess I've heard in my life about 60-70 jokes about Ukr., and hundreds

5. Can you tell several Ukrainian ethnic jokes? (Please use reverse side)

6. Please write where you heard these jokes.

7. Why do you think Ukrainians are described as foolish or moronish in Ukrainian ethnic jokes? *It may be because they were always viewed as peasants and peasants are stereotypically considered to be "strange" and may be foolish. But within the ethnic hierarchy as it would come out of jokes I've heard Ukrainians are far from the last positions = there were many others that were depicted as more dumb & fool.*

8. Have you told jokes about other ethnic people, such as English, Polish or Jewish?

If yes, why? and where?

*More often about Jews, less (much!) about Poles and even less about British. Historically Jews & Ukrainians as two nations were always messed up about each other. So Jews are popular heroes in jokes.*

Thank you!

<sup>1</sup> . Ukrainian ethnic joke is a type of joke in which fun is made of the perceived behavior, customs, personality, or any other traits of Ukrainians. For example, (Q) Did you hear about the Ukrainian who went ice-fishing? - (A) He brought back four hundred pounds of ice.