



## The Best American Humorous Short Stories

*Alexander Jessup (Editor / Contributor) , George William Curtis (Contributor) , Edward Everett Hale (Contributor) , Oliver Wendell Holmes Sr. (Contributor) , Richard Malcolm Johnston (Contributor) , Mark Twain (Contributor) , H.C. Bunner (Contributor) , Frank R. Stockton (Contributor) , more... Harry Stillwell Edwards (Contributor) , Bret Harte (Contributor) , O. Henry (Contributor) , George Randolph Chester (Contributor) , George Pope Morris (Contributor) , Grace MacGowan Cooke (Contributor) , Edgar Allan Poe (Contributor) , W.J. Lampton (Contributor) , Eliza Leslie (Contributor) , Wells Hastings (Contributor) , Caroline Kirkland (Contributor) ...less*

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*A massive collection of humorous stories from America's favorite writers:*

The Little Frenchman and His Water Lots (1839) George Pope Morris  
The Angel of the Odd (1844) Edgar Allan Poe  
The Schoolmaster's Progress (1844) Caroline M.S. Kirkland  
The Watkinson Evening (1846) Eliza Leslie  
Titbottom's Spectacles (1854) George William Curtis  
My Double; and How He Undid Me (1859) Edward Everett Hale  
A Visit to the Asylum for Aged and Decayed Punsters (1861) Oliver Wendell Holmes Sr.  
The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County (1865) Mark Twain  
Elder Brown's Backslide (1885) Harry Stillwell Edwards  
The Hotel Experience of Mr. Pink Fluker (1886) Richard Malcolm Johnston  
The Nice People (1890) Henry Cuyler Bunner  
The Buller-Podington Compact (1897) Frank Richard Stockton  
Colonel Starbottle for the Plaintiff (1901) Bret Harte  
The Duplicity of Hargraves (1902) O. Henry  
Bargain Day at Tutt House (1905) George Randolph Chester  
A Call (1906) Grace MacGowan Cooke  
How the Widow Won the Deacon (1911) William James Lampton  
Gideon (1914) by Wills Hastings

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# **From Reader Review The Best American Humorous Short Stories for online ebook**

## **Debbie Davies says**

In spite of the fact that my sense of humor and irony didn't always appreciate all the short stories in this collection, I still enjoyed reading them. Most of these stories were truly enjoyable and while I was unfamiliar with a few of these authors, I was happy to sample their literary offerings. I would recommend this collection to anyone who is looking for a taste of early nineteenth century short stories with a side of giggles.

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## **Dorer002 says**

Overall pretty okay, but such ridiculous notions about women and black people (and everything else). All of the stories were from the late 1800s to about 1910, so I can't be that surprised. Also, I don't think I really understood about half the humor, like jokes about men not wearing hats. Hilarious, right! But, ridicule aside, some of the stories were pretty funny.

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## **Sheela Word says**

It's hard to rate these, because the quality of the tales varies considerably. Also, there is a very long and (to me) tedious introduction, in which the editor exhaustively describes his process for selecting the tales. I'd advise skipping it unless you're writing a doctoral dissertation on early American literature.

All of the stories were at least mildly entertaining, although not all were funny. I particularly enjoyed "Titbottom's Spectacles," a melancholy fantasy by George William Curtis, whom I had never heard of before; "A Visit to the Asylum for Aged and Decayed Punsters" by Oliver Wendell Holmes (reads exactly like a Monty Python sketch!); "Colonel Starbottle for the Plaintiff" by Bret Harte; and "The Duplicity of Hargraves" by O'Henry.

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## **Shawn says**

I had a great time with many of these short stories especially, "Titbottom's Spectacles" by George William Curtis (1854), "My Double; and How He Undid Me" by Edward Everett Hale (1859), and "The Duplicity of Hargraves" by O. Henry (1902). I did not find the humor bawdy or slapstick, but the wry sense of humor and irony in these pieces has a charm that made me smile. Aside from Poe's "The Angel of the Odd" and Twain's tale of "The Celebrating Jumping Frog of Calaveras County," most of these pieces are forgotten to the contemporary reader. This may partially be explained by the depiction of African-Americans in many of the stories, but also due to the fact that changes in language and culture make these stories distant from the modern reader.

If you are looking for something that you can read in short sessions (15-30 min) this book provides a few clever gems.

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### **Gerald Matzke says**

This book gave me an appreciation for humor that does not have to be slap stick or shocking as most modern day humor is presented. These stories found humor in more subtle ways that required a true skill on the part of the author. I enjoyed reading this collection.

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### **Kareen says**

Enjoyed reading this at my leisure. The stories are dated, yes. But the writing and the language used in those days are a refreshing and terrific break from the vapid and curt writing I encounter so much these days! My favorite stories: Titbottom's Spectacles, A Visit to the Asylum for Aged and Decayed Punsters, My Double; and How He Undid Me, and The Buller-Podington Compact.

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### **Shaheenbaloch Baloch says**

an excellent read, i enjoyed it immensely <3

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### **Jennifer says**

Another fascinating exercise in changing standards, this book was compiled early in the last century. That means some of the stories are still funny, some are worth a chuckle, a few are just baffling. For example, I discovered that casual racism and romanticism of slavery (as opposed to the deliberate savage mocking of it in Twain's works) dramatically cuts down on the humor of a piece--when characters are casually mentioned as "owning five slaves between them" I just find their hijinks less amusing. The O. Henry story plays with racism and stereotypes in ways that seem to be subverting expectations and thus retains some humor, but many are quite off-putting, and the last story in the volume (where the shiftless and dim lead in a minstrel show steals a bunch of money and runs away home to the South, where he abducts a screaming girl to be his "wife," the end) will almost certainly hit modern ears with a shocking thud--if it was ever funny, it just isn't anymore. Some of the stories will elicit a smile, and when they don't it's interesting to puzzle out why someone once thought they were funny when they don't seem it now, but it's hardly an anthology for when you want a belly laugh.

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### **Gridknightt says**

Sorry, not for me. Unless you are privy to 1800's lingo and long forgotten words and phrases...I am guessing you will not like this book. It was like doing a very very hard crossword when you don't know the meanings of the words. Gave up reading on third story.

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### **Bob G says**

These short stories were pretty funny. Read it on an iPod Touch and with small screen it wasn't easy to look up, as writing this, the dates of the various stories. But I think most written in 1800s and early 1900s. Certainly no automobiles. Great read on small screen. Highly recommended. Price is right too.

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### **Baa says**

A nice collection. My favorites were: The Angel of Odd, Bargain Day at Tutt House, and A Call

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### **Scott Harris says**

This brief collection of 19 short stories is an interesting collection from the late 19th and early 20th century, featuring great authors and some of their more interesting brief works. There are familiar pieces from Henry, Bierce and others as well as some lesser known pieces from authors like Poe. Those who enjoy the tongue in cheek, ironic and observant will enjoy these playful and sometimes biting pieces.

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### **Prity Malhotra says**

I feel very much tempted to kill this Idiot 'DEXTER' style who compiled this book under the Fake Title of 'Best American Humorous Stories'. I didnt even chuckle once while reading this Childish, Bland Boring short stories. They are not even minutely funny. They resembled to me like stories that toddlers read in kindergarden. It took me 2 days to finish this Crap book & I so wish I could get my precious 2 days back !! Minus 100 stars for this Book !!

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### **Ron says**

Not all that humorous. Perhaps the standards of humor have changed in the last hundred years, but most of these stories are interesting rather than funny. There is certainly sociological and literary ore here, it's just not gold. Nor even silver.

It was free, but hardly worth the time. Too many better books to read.

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### **Ravinder says**

Very old american short stories...different kind of humour

