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Annotated Bibliography on Humor Resources (Humor Genre Presentation)

<http://thehumorbooksblog.blogspot.com/> - Though it's been five years since the last update, this blog offers introductions to humor writers and books. It was run by Liam James Leaven and combines humorous essays with book recommendations and stories. It's a shame that he stopped updating the site, but the archives are worth looking through.

<https://electricliterature.com/tagged/humor> - It's not a dedicated site for the humor genre, but by going to their page tagged with humor, we can find all of the recent posts about literature and the comedic. Traditional blogs and sites about books that use tags to sort their posts into categories are good resources for finding recommendations. Flavorwire is a site that publishes well flushed out lists of different books, including a few dedicated to humor or funny non-fiction.

Bizarro Central - <https://bizarrocentral.com/> - This is the epicenter of bizarro fiction online. It collects bizarro stories, puts out updates on the latest books, and creates a space for the fans of this cult fiction to revel in their weirdness. This is a good resource for anyone trying to find both the latest in bizarro and also the classics of the subgenre.

Black Chick Lit Podcast/Blog - <https://blackchicklit.com/>

Two women, Dani and Mollie, run this podcast and blog online; both claim to love reading and writing. This bi-monthly podcast features book talks by and about black women. Dani and Mollie discuss the characters, plot, and authors. The blog has not been updated since 2016, but their podcasts are still going strong and feature interesting discussion topics. Each podcast is about an hour long.

This can be a useful resource in keeping up with novels that feature diverse characters by authors that are African American. A librarian does not have to listen to the podcast in entirety, but if they want some opinions of a book in this genre, it could be useful for them.

The American Bystander Magazine - A Kickstarter-funded magazine, this magazine features writers and artists from *Saturday Night Live*, *The Simpsons* and *The Onion*, and many more, so as to create a classic humor magazine. They say they try to print this magazine four times a year, but they now use print-on-demand publishing. They have a large social media presence, which alerts subscribers to new magazine issues. Contributors get to keep the rights to their own material, so it does feature big names in the comedy field.

While this is one of the few magazines in the humor genre, it also does not offer new humor book suggestions, only featuring short-stories written for the magazine. I can see it being

popular among library patrons, but not a useful tool in keeping track of the humor genre for librarians.

Bevis, M. (2013). *Comedy: A very short introduction*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Comedy is another book from the same series; it probes the definition of humor and explores several questions: When do we laugh, and why? What do users of comedy (writers and speakers) enjoy and risk when they aim to be funny? Another scholarly source.

BookBrowse. (n.d.) *Humor & satire*. [List of online reviews]. Retrieved from <https://www.bookbrowse.com/browse/index.cfm>

This list of Humor & Satire books from BookBrowse is also very handy--it allows more organizational options than the Goodreads list, allowing the user to see the list as just book jackets, or with some book information. It also allows for sorting the list by publication date; author; title; or by the critics' reviews. Like the Goodreads list, these books cross all humor subcategories, and should be taken with a grain of salt: the reviewers are the ones who decide if the book is "funny" or not, so cross-referencing with other sources (or peeking into the book yourself) is advised.

Carroll, N. (2014). *Humour: A very short introduction*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Humour is a slim, pocket-sized volume that is part of the Very Short Introductions series by Oxford University Press. This is not a resource for funny book recommendations, but would be useful for anyone wanting a very brief, scholarly overview of humor theory: what is the nature of humor? And how does it shape and fit into society?

Goodreads. (n.d.) *Best humorous books*. [Online list]. Retrieved from https://www.goodreads.com/list/show/312.Best_Humorous_Books?page=1

"Best Humorous Books" is a list of humor-based books on Goodreads. At 3,400 books, the list is long and extensive, crossing many categories of humor (fantasy, sci fi, memoir, etc), and is best for general browsing through what Goodreads users have found that have tickled their funny bones.

Goodreads. (n.d.) *Popular parody books*. [Online list]. Retrieved from <https://www.goodreads.com/shelf/show/parody>

"Popular Parody Books" is another Goodreads list, this time with an extensive collection of works of parody. Spoofs of popular written works such as *The Lord of the Rings*, *Pride and Prejudice*, and *The Hunger Games* are listed, as well as riffs on tv and movie properties like *Star Trek* and *Star Wars*.

Orr, C & Tixier Herald, D. (Eds.). (2013). *Genreflecting: A guide to popular reading interests* (7th ed.). Santa Barbara, CA: Libraries Unlimited.

Genreflecting does not have a separate chapter dedicated solely to humor and its subcategories, but does offer a few useful sections on books and authors with a humorous style within the fantasy and women's literature chapters.

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Eggers, D. (2014). *Your Fathers, Where Are They? And the Prophets, Do They Live Forever?* Knopf.

Let's pretend that you are a young California man with questions like, why did America stop trying to get to the moon and start spending trillions of dollars on war? Let's say that you just haven't been able to find satisfactory answers on your own. So what do you do? Kidnap a NASA astronaut and interrogate him in an abandoned military base. Still not enough answers? Grab a U.S. Congressman too. Before you know it, you've got a few hostages, very little time, and still no answers. This hilarious novel, written entirely in dialogue, takes a simple premise to its limits and leaves you shaking your head at the results.

Hiaasen, C. (2016). *Razor girl*. New York, NY: Knopf.

Razor Girl is a novel by prolific author Carl Hiaasen, a journalist, columnist, author of adult and YA fiction, and native Floridian. All of his writing is set in Florida, with his novels centered on wacky characters caught in crazy stories. Razor Girl is no exception,

Huang, E. (2013). *Fresh off the boat*. New York: Spiegel & Grau.

Now a hit TV show on ABC, this memoir was a National Bestseller and named one of the best books of the year by Kirkus Reviews. It tells the story of Eddie Huang, born in an immigrant family from Taiwan. Eddie battles racism and family life in this novel, eventually raising up on good food and hip hop culture. A raw, moving, and funny book about race (and food) in America, Eddie's story in *Fresh off the Boat* is not one to be missed.

Irby, S. (2013). *Meaty*. Curbside Splendor Publishing.

Irby is the brilliance behind the blog bitchesgottaeat.com and brings her stories to print. *Meaty* (2013) is a frank, honest portrayal of one woman navigating the world of dating, living with Chron's Disease, and what it means to be a young black woman in Chicago. She doesn't shy away from any topic. Essays like *The Twinkie Diet* both affirm and subvert stereotypes on food and America while leaving you breathless from laughter in the process. Fans of David Sedaris should check Irby out, and if you like *Meaty*, she has a new book *We Are Never Meeting in Real Life*.

Offerman, N. (2014). *Paddle your own canoe: One man's fundamentals for delicious living*. New York, NY: Dutton.

Paddle Your Own Canoe: One Man's Fundamentals for Delicious Living is a memoir/book of life advice by Nick Offerman, an actor/woodworker most famous for playing the laconic, humorously macho government worker Ron Swanson on tv's *Parks and Rec*. Offerman recounts his childhood growing up in a small farming community in Illinois through to his adult years, including his college years, his theater days in Chicago, and his courtship of wife and fellow actor Megan Mullally. Woven throughout is Offerman's personal, humorous commentary on sex, religion, dating, people's dependence on electronics, and the importance of working with your hands.

Palahniuk, C. (2016). *Make something up: stories you can't unread*. New York, NY: Anchor Books.

Fans of Palahniuk, especially *Fight Club*, will enjoy this dark humor fiction novel. There are 21 short stories and one novella in this new book from Palahniuk, all of which can disturb and delight. From high school students getting addicted to electrical shocks from a cardiac defibrillator, to a character tripping on acid while on "The Price is Right," if you're looking for a shocking read and you like the darker side of humor, this book is for you!

Reichert, A. E. (2017). *The simplicity of cider*. New York: Gallery Books.

Taking place in Door County, WI, Sanna Lund is fighting to keep the family orchard from being sold to build a water park. With the purchase of some expensive cider-making equipment, and it not paying off, she's having a hard time holding off the sale.

Enter Isaac Banks, a web-designer from California with a dark secret, and his 10-year-old son, Sebastian. Can he come up with a way to increase business, all the while keeping the secret from his son? Will Sanna's orchard business survive the looming water park? Find out in this heartwarming story of family, love, and life.

Singh, M. (2016). *American Candide*. Rosarium Publishing.

Both parody and satire, *American Candide* (2016) offers a contemporary take on Voltaire's original that is set in the country of Freedonia (ahem, America). Singh offers a biting critique of Freedonia's political and social directions. You'll see the inner workings of the Senate Sub-Committee on Homeland Furnishings, join our heroes Candide and Pangloss through torture at a black site, and witness a hurricane loosed upon citizens "too patently lazy to live on higher ground." The book is fast paced, pulls no punches, and is buoyed by Singh's wonderful illustrations.

Vowell, S. (2015). *Lafayette in the somewhat United States*. New York, NY: Riverhead Books.

Lafayette In The Somewhat United States is a book by Sarah Vowell, a journalist, essayist, actress, and author who has written several books exploring and offering commentary on parts of American history. In this book, Vowell examines the role the Marquis de Lafayette played as a young general in the American Revolution; the ideals and image of the Revolution versus the reality; and his legacy in American culture, particularly as highlighted by his 1824 return tour to the United States as one of the last living symbols of the Founding generation. Vowell shows no qualms about poking at the absurdities of this period of American history, nor highlighting the fallibility of the Founding Fathers.