



Stupid Christmas

Leland Gregory

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A new collection of outrageous, laugh-out-loud anecdotes about the weird and wacky things that happen during the Christmas holidays, by the author of New York Times best-sellers *Stupid American History* and *America's Dumbest Criminals*.

From absurd 911 calls to presidential philosophizing and foolish felons, Leland Gregory generates the best laughs by exposing the worst of human nature. Following up his *New York Times* best-selling *Stupid American History*, Gregory sets his sights on the holidays as he exposes mind-numbing mistletoe maladies in *Stupid Christmas: Idiots under the Mistletoe*.

Perhaps it's the spiked eggnog or the multiple family members gathered around crazy-colored, twinkly lights, but the holidays are rife with idiocy by the daft and the dumb. Inside this latest collection, Gregory offers more than 200 accounts of holiday-induced stupidity, including:

* While smoke billowed out of the store, firefighters had to physically restrain enthusiastic shoppers from entering a Great Lakes Mall store during an electrical fire.

* In 1995, officials debated over whom to invite to the city's Christmas tree ceremony: President Bill Clinton or the Mighty Morphin Power Rangers.

* As a joke, Andrew Jackson sent formal invitations to his Christmas ball to a well-known mother-and-daughter prostitute team in Salisbury, North Carolina.

Stupid Christmas Details

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Diana says

I'll rate this one a 3.5. This is one of those books who have very short almost sound bites of weird or dumb things that people have done around the holiday season. For example, government employees sending people of the Jewish faith Merry Christmas cards even though they have Happy Hanukkah cards. Some things made me groan, some things made me laugh, and most just made me shake my head. This would be a good book to read during a read a thon.

Doris says

I thought this was a great collection of zany tidbits of the kind of weird news that used to be shared at the end of the nightly television news. Stories such as the one where a young student had her classmates in tears over the 'truth about Santa' or people who steal goods before Christmas then try to return them afterwards or who steal items thinking they will make great gifts... sometimes with the help of the intended recipient.

You have to shake your head as you wonder "WHAT were they THINKING!?!?"

Overall - good for when you need a few minutes distraction or a little something to lighten your day.

Sarah Crawford says

This is a book that is humorous most of the time about different things that have happened concerning Christmas and Santa Claus. These events are recorded from mainly the U.S. and European countries. A lot of them deal with people getting in legal trouble for being drunk or stealing.

I say most of them are funny but there are some that I think shouldn't have been included that are about a person being killed in some manner.

Robin says

Entertaining and amusing but it's mostly just a bunch of quick, random facts and news stories that jump around a lot, like a collection of blog entries. Some of the stories could have done with a little bit more elaboration and a few of the entries didn't even seem to have a strong connection with Christmas. One entry in particular seemed like a strange and random anti-Sarah Palin plug since it had nothing to do with Christmas.

But if you like odd facts, stupid criminals and Darwin Awards, you'll probably like this. It's a short and easy read too, ideal during the busy holidays.

Jaime O'Connell says

Packed with short-and-quick humorous tails of Christmas-related incidents and trivia, this book is best shared aloud (at least in selected pieces) with a crowd. Bring it to the Holiday gathering after dinner and entertain relatives with your favorite excerpts.

And this whole book manages to pack itself with entertaining anecdotes without once mentioning the Fox News - Comedy Central arguments on the 'War Against Christmas'!

Yes, this book is definitely worth purchasing!

An Abundance of Books says

Stupid Christmas is a collection of Christmas themed news articles and police reports from around the world. While vaguely amusing (with the occasional heart-warming incident thrown in) I've basically learned that Christmas causes families to become violent; it's not rare for large groups of Santas to form drunken mobs; robbing a house via the chimney never ends well; the mall Santa does not want to be a form of discipline; the occasional Santa's grotto might be made out of used nuclear waste containers; kids do the craziest things when they don't get what they want; and please people, if you're mailing a loved one's ashes you need to include a note lest they be returned to Walmart or mistaken for Christmas pudding herbs.

Southern states were featured a lot, Arkansas only twice (thank goodness), and Ohio popped up a concerning number of times. Dude, what's going on in Oberlin? My husband (from Columbus) tried to explain that it's a very liberal and creative town. Um, so is Eureka Springs, Arkansas, and they only had an old lady steal the baby Jesus (it's a strange but cool little town). They don't have a history of creating seasonal displays featuring The Iron Lung Santa or Nazi gingerbread men.

Verdict:

It's kind of amusing, a few interesting facts, and it's free right now for the Kindle. But you could live without it.

Stephanie says

As many other reviewers stated, this isn't so much a book as a collection of amusing/interesting/strange articles that have some (tenuous) tie back to Christmas. A lot of robbers dressed as Santa, people getting stuck in chimneys, and people getting into fights over gifts. There are a few amusing stories among the repetitive crap and it's a very quick read but overall, probably not worth your time.

D.S. Williams says

I'm not certain why so many people have given bad reviews to this book - its well-written, entertaining and in some places quite funny in a 'Darwin Awards - High Level of Stupidity' manner.

Leland Gregory has collected numerous little snippets of amusement regarding the Christmas season, which allowed me to wile away a couple of hours enjoying reading about the crazy and idiotic things which can happen around December. Reminded me a lot of the Uncle John Bathroom Readers, which I also enjoy and

recommend.

Robin says

Corny articles taken from various newspapers about Christmas. Really no redeeming value whatsoever and if it wasn't a free Kindle book I wouldn't have bothered with it. Only the fact that it was a quick short read made it tolerable at all.

Holly says

From all the low ratings, you'd think people didn't know what they were getting into with this book! It's really not as bad as everyone makes it out to be. It's supposed to be a collection of zany Christmas stories, as in stories that made it on the news. Some are downright stupid in nature and some are a little shocking. And some make you go, "What in the world were they thinking?" Example: Burglars that try to come down the chimney. Idiots.

It's not supposed to be a deep story; it's just entertaining and a quick read. I think they're funny and I'd probably read more by this author.

Elsi says

This was a fair book. I'm glad it was free, since if I had paid for it I probably would have rated it much worse.

I read every article, but as I did, I kept thinking "This is the kind of stuff that gets sent in 'chain e-mails'." You know, those viral stories that circle and circle and circle the Internet but never seem to be able to flow down the drain.

There were some articles that I thought were even worth sharing, but most of them were simply amusing.

Julie says

This book was not what I thought it would be when I downloaded it to my Kindle. However, I was looking for a Christmas themed book (trying to STILL get into the spirit this year!) so I chose this one to read. It's a collection of short stories and news clippings of events that have occurred involving a Christmas themes. Only a couple of the stories were humorous in my opinion but I did learn where some of the typical traditions originated. Fans of the popular Bathroom Reader series would enjoy this book as it is very similar in nature.

This was a free download for Kindle from Amazon.

Kate says

I should have realized from the title that this wasn't going to be an uplifting holiday read, and it does deliver a lot of stories that show the worst of humanity during the Christmas season. Overall it's amusing, and I got it free last year for my Kindle so that goes a long way for that second star. It would probably make a good bathroom book... not that I'm admitting to reading in the bathroom because I don't... at least not with my Kindle or Nook.

Dale says

Not much of a book, but it is what it is advertised to be

Leland Gregory is a co-author of *America's Dumbest Criminals: Wild and Weird Stories of Fumbling Felons, Clumsy Crooks, and Ridiculous Robbers*, a book filled with a series of short, mostly humorous "filler on a newspaper page" type stories.

?

He follows this format with *Stupid Christmas*, a book full of short (1-2 pages) stories about Christmas. Some are amusing stories about Christmas history, some are about Christmas criminals, some are sweet and touching and some are just about Christmas oddities such as the middle school teacher that drove his student around town to vandalize Christmas displays, including putting some in compromising positions, so to speak.

Unfortunately, unlike the criminal themed book, which has the entire realm of criminal activity to draw from, this book feels a bit limited by the Christmas theme. Too many repetitive stories about drunken Santas. This is a great "bathroom book" - just something to pick up and read a little bit and put back down again without having to worry about plots, characters or having to remember what was going on the last time you were reading.

Donna says

Overall it was a cute read. It got some chuckles out of me. No plot to speak of, of course, but I wouldn't necessarily call someone that just rehashes dumb stories pulled from other sources an author. I'm not trying to say that to be mean or anything. I'm just saying Gregory, in my eyes, is more of an editor than an actual author. Sure he retold these stories to the reader but I didn't feel the voice was all that amazing or anything. Cute, but that's about it.

STUPID CHRISTMAS works well as a stocking stuffer for that hard-to-buy-for person with the quirky sense of humor. There are outright funny stories in these pages, along with some that are slightly horrifying. But they're all interesting to read. And it's a quick read at that. Something that you zoom through, get your fill of human stupidity and set it aside. Maybe hand it off to someone else or else pull it out each holiday season and use it as coffee table fodder next to your dancing Santa Claus.

My favorite blurb, though, was all so poignant to us book lovers -

A public library in Oberlin, Ohio, unveiled a holiday display by conceptual artist Keith McGuckin that featured a legless Santa Claus in a wheelchair being pushed down the stairs by an evil Christmas tree. A narrative that accompanied the image explained that Santa had lost his legs when they got entangled in power lines during an alcoholic binge and that the sadistic tree is planning on stealing the money in a Salvation Army kettle and visiting a strip club. A December 4, 2008, article from United Press International quoted library director Darren McDonough as saying that the display would remain in place during the holiday season and to "Remember the old library saying - 'If we don't have something to offend you, we're not going our job.'"

Loved it. This one really tickled me so. This is also a good example of the length and style of the writing. Not bad, but not really indicative of any kind of stand out voice, in my opinion. I'm just getting retold some silly stuff. It's like giving Bob Sagat credit for the videos that's he simply replaying on America's Funniest Home Videos. You get the cute little asides but, at the end of the day, it's really someone else that provides the entertainment.

Like I said, STUPID CHRISTMAS is cute and works great as a stocking stuffer. I learned some mind-numbing stuff about my area as it's so featured in this snarky book. I just don't see anyone needing to read this one more than once, though. I wouldn't be surprised with its regifting potential. Hey, at least it's better than a singing fish.
