



# The McSweeney's Joke Book of Book Jokes

*John Hodgman (Editor) , McSweeney's Publishing , Jared Young (Contributor)*

Download now

Read Online ➞

# The McSweeney's Joke Book of Book Jokes

John Hodgman (Editor) , McSweeney's Publishing , Jared Young (Contributor)

**The McSweeney's Joke Book of Book Jokes** John Hodgman (Editor) , McSweeney's Publishing , Jared Young (Contributor)

As John Hodgman says in this book's introduction, "We all know that books are funny. First, they are made of paste and cloth, which is funny, as is the fact that people still buy and read them." With that in mind, the *McSweeney's Joke Book of Book Jokes* collects the best book-related humor from the humor-laden archives of *McSweeney's Internet Tendency*. Open it and be regaled by such sketches, lists, letters, and spoofs as:

Postcards from James Joyce to his Brother Stan

Winnie-the-Pooh is My Coworker

Ikea Product or Lord of the Rings Character?

Popular Children's Fairy Tales Reimagined Using Members of My Family

The Very Unauthorized Biography of Steven Seagal

Chuck Norris Erotica

John Updike, Television Writer

Jane Eyre Runs for President

Cormac McCarthy Writes to the Editor of the *Santa Fe New Mexican*

Holden Caulfield Gives the Commencement Speech to a High School

Letters from Odysseus's College Roommate

And many dozens more.

## The McSweeney's Joke Book of Book Jokes Details

Date : Published April 1st 2008 by Vintage (first published 2008)

ISBN : 9780307387332

Author : John Hodgman (Editor) , McSweeney's Publishing , Jared Young (Contributor)

Format : Paperback 224 pages

Genre : Humor, Fiction, Writing, Essays, Books About Books, Funny, Short Stories



[Download The McSweeney's Joke Book of Book Jokes ...pdf](#)



[Read Online The McSweeney's Joke Book of Book Jokes ...pdf](#)

**Download and Read Free Online The McSweeney's Joke Book of Book Jokes John Hodgman (Editor) , McSweeney's Publishing , Jared Young (Contributor)**

---

# From Reader Review The McSweeney's Joke Book of Book Jokes for online ebook

## Tina says

I gotta bump this back up to a 4. Rereading "RE: Hardy Boys Manuscript Submission," by Jay Dyckman out of the book this morning. And giggled profusely and with complete immaturity at:

"Page 50: Colorful banter between the brothers is, of course, is expected. Please reconsider, however, whether Joe would tell Frank to 'grow a pair.' Further, Joe would not dismiss Frank's suggestion to call for help with, 'Step off, bitch. I know what I'm doing.'"

---

## Maggie says

As John Hodgman writes in the book's introduction, "(T)hese are all original pieces of humorous writing that are joined together merely by their appreciation of the intrinsic and unique hilariousness of books...We all know that books are funny. First, they are made of paste and cloth, which is funny, as is the fact that people still read and buy them. Also, books connote a sort of intellectual stuffiness, which is always easy and appealing to make fun of. It's humanizing."

He's being silly, but it's also the truth. Making fun of Jean-Paul Sartre's morose intellect, Ernest Hemingway's bloated male ego and Emily Dickinson's poetic melancholy is fun - especially if you're someone like me whose education has forced her to read *No Exit* more times than she cares to recall.

Fortunately, not all the jokes revolve around James Joyce (although several do), so an English major is not necessarily a prerequisite. In fact, my favorite pieces are ones like "Thirteen Writing Prompts" and "A Serial Killer Explains the Distinctions Between Literary Terms," where the joke comes more from literary devices rather than specific books or authors.

Of course, the actual book jokes are fun too, with "Jean-Paul Sartre, 911 Operator;" "Rough Drafts Of Jenna Bush's Young-Adult Novel;" "Bedtime Stories By Thom Yorke;" and "Phrases On The Marquee At The Local Strip Club To Cater To A More Literate Crowd" being among my favorites.

In short, if you're a fan of McSweeney's and at all literary-minded, it's very much worth your time.

---

## Alex Telander says

The McSweeney's Joke Book of Book Jokes by McSweeney's: When Mountain Man Dance Moves: The McSweeney's Book of Lists hit book shelves with the cover of a triumphant, ethereal, blue, rearing unicorn, readers curiously started reading and then found themselves bursting with laughter, buying the book, and entertaining friends with it. The editors of McSweeney's return with The McSweeney's Joke Book of Book Jokes; and if the title doesn't capture your interest, maybe the cover of a plucked headless chicken - with a smoking cigarette in one flabby wing, while smoke effuses from its cylindrical hole of a neck - will.

With an introduction from John Hodgman about the cash cow industry of satire, McSweeney's aims its new book at the intellectual crowd as jokes and humor are procured at the expense of classic works and authors revered in collegiate halls. The first piece, The Recruitment of Harry Potter, is from the viewpoint of a quidditch coach looking to recruit Harry Potter to the team. It warns to stay away from talk about He Who Must Not Be Named and anything involving family. From this we go to George Samsa, currently dealing with his life as a cockroach, having his disability claim denied by Social Security for very specific reasons.

McSweeney's Joke Book of Book Jokes runs the gamut of literature, leaving no book unopened or unmocked. There are short pieces, such as Possible Titles For Future Sue Grafton Novels After She Runs Out of Letters, including: "/" Is for Slash and "Ctrl+X" Is for Cut; and there are longer pieces like Submission Guidelines For Our Refrigerator Door. Then there are plain weird and unusual pieces like Thirteen Writing Prompts, including 'Write a story that ends with the following sentence: Debra brushed the sand from her blouse, took a last, wistful look at the now putrefying horse, and stepped into the hot-air balloon,' and 'Your main character finds a box of scorched human hair. Whose is it? How did it get there?'

Whether it's Jane Eyre Runs for President or Jean-Paul Sartre, 911 Operator, or Klingon Fairy Tales, readers will be laughing out loud and rolling on the floor - or if you prefer LOLing and ROFLing - for hours. And for all those people forced to read long and boring classics, or listen to their teachers verbally worshipping dead writers, McSweeney's Joke of Book Jokes is a restorative tonic, the book you've been waiting for that will make those hours and hours of late night reading of lengthy, overwritten prose worth it, because you'll get all the jokes!

For more book reviews and exclusive author interviews, go to [BookBanter](#).

---

## Laura says

Another volume of humor from the fabulous McSweeney's folks, this one filled with essays, lists, epistolary stories, and the like relating to books and authors. Like a lot of the McSweeney's humor stuff, the pieces in here tend to be hit or miss; either you're laughing uproariously in inappropriate locations like the subway, or sort of arching one eyebrow going, "Hm." But when a piece in here hits, boy does it ever hit.

Among the hits: *Re: Hardy Boys Manuscript Submission*, by Jay Dyckman (editor, noting that while it was admirable for the author of the latest Hardy Boys story to try and bring a contemporary feel to the series, "we don't think Frank pacing outside the bathroom door while his girlfriend, Callie, uses a First Response pregnancy test is consistent with the Hardy Boys formula"); *Goofus, Gallant, Rashomon*, by Jim Stallard, wherein various friends and acquaintances of the two boys are interviewed about how they finally came to a bad end; *Postcards from James Joyce to His Brother Stan*, by Martin Bihl ("Stan -- Greetings from Paris. Yesterday, my son said, 'Let's go see Napoleon's tomb.' Yes, let's, I thought. And don't let the fact that I'm blind stop us. Christ. And even if I could see, why would I want to look at the remain of a dead Corsican when there are hookers flashing their hoo-hahs in Pigalle? Idiots. J."); and the one that had me falling off the bed, *Words and Expressions Commonly Misused by Insipid Brothers-in-Law* by Dennis DiClaudio, which doesn't quite fit into the theme but is hilarious anyway.

I won't list the misses, but fortunately, there are far fewer of them. (Although I confess that some of these little pieces are sophisticated enough that the humor simply went over my head -- for example, *Pound-Eliot Sestina* by Alfred Corn.)

---

## Ashley says

Jake and I saw this at the bookstore, and I was inclined toward a favorable opinion of it simply because I loved *Mountain Man Dance Moves: The McSweeney's Book of Lists*. This one was funny, and I particularly liked many of the pieces near the beginning of the book.

I consider myself reasonably well-read for a person of my age (and I chalk that up mostly to majoring in English), but I was pretty lost with quite a few of the bits. If you're going to like this book, I recommend having read at least a little Joyce, Kafka, Nabokov, and all those other books your teachers told you read but never read themselves.

The ones about books I had read were generally hilarious. The ones I hadn't weren't accessible.

---

## Greg says

A few misses, but most of the pieces in this collection hit their mark. Good literary humor for people who like reading literary fiction.

---

## Jessica says

Mcsweeneys.net that you can read in the tub.

---

## Erin says

I had high hopes for this book because a co-worker had recommended it to me and had me read one little section from it which was quite funny. However, the rest of the book was largely a disappointment. So much so that I must confess I quit reading it about two-thirds of the way through. I usually felt like I really should have paid more attention in my high-falutin' literature classes in college because I was definitely missing something. Ironically, one of the spoofs on why Shakespeare wanted to kill all lawyers based one section of the spoof on a misinterpretation of a key word in the quote--something even a ninth grader could have told the writer of that section. Argh! "Wherefore" means "WHY," not "where." If you're going to be a literary snob, you should at least get your facts straight!

Sorry. Yoga breathing now.....

Anyhow, this book did have a few funny parts. And if you have read and analyzed all the literary works or authors in question, you might enjoy the book quite a lot. If not, well, the "quiz" on which names were from *Lord of the Rings* and which were from *IKEA* was amusing...as was the bit about recruiting Harry Potter, apparently to a college with a Quidditch team...and the part about denying social security benefits to the giant cockroach.... You know, really, I'd give most of the first 100 or so pages about 3 stars. After that...one star. So I'll compromise with 2.

---

**Rachel says**

A bit tiresome if you try to read completely and straight-through, but delivered several literal LOLs. Just skip the parts related to books you haven't read or authors you don't care about. My favorite bits were "Winnie-the-Pooh is My Coworker" and the "A Christmas Carol" portion of "The Five Most Dangerous Children's Books Ever Written, According to Sean Hannity." The latter currently falls into "sad/funny/too-close-to-reality" territory: "He further advances the liberal agenda by advocating free health care for Tiny Tim and suggesting that poverty is the result of something other than laziness and stupidity."

---

**Vincent Saint-Simon says**

Dear Sirs and Madams,

If self-reflective sap stories with an overwhelming dose of awkwardness are what pass for jokes in this so-called "post-ironic" era, we all need to reflect on the unreadable results our philosophic shift has caused and tremble.

S,

V

---

**Martin Bihl says**

uneven, but forgivable because of some really brilliant work. in other words, what you would expect from the folks at mcsweeney's.

---

**Pointsandwheels says**

This should not be read in one go. I did so, and it was an overdose of humor. I probably would have enjoyed it more had I read it a chapter a day or something similar. But as I did read it, I found it to contain an awful lot of angry and violent humor; many of the pieces seemed to be enraged about something. The one with Romeo and the high school cheerleader was just depressing; I have never been very fond of either Romeo or Juliet, but the portrayal of Romeo has him as a socially-clueless stalker nerd -- none of which I can see in the original. And many of the others seem to have that same "How can I humiliate these characters that I so clearly love?" vein to them. Really, I found the most successful pieces to be the titles -- the Klingon Fairy Tales and Sue Grafton after Z pieces especially.

But then, a lot of McSweeney humor is wasted on me, so maybe I shouldn't have expected much more than that.

---

## Michael says

A fun collection of writings especially appealing to the book lover (obviously) and the book snob most of all. There is some variety in the quality of the pieces, and some are much more obvious than others. (Having Klingon fairy tale titles like "Old Mother Hubbard, Lacking the Means to Support Herself with Honor, Sets Her Disruptor on Self-Destruct and Waits for the Inevitable" or "The Hare Foolishly Lowers His Guard and Is Devastated by the Tortoise, Whose Prowess in Battle Attracts Many Desirable Mates" is, to paraphrase John Cleese, "Like setting fire to Julie Andrews: Funny, but obvious." And those are the funniest of the bunch.) Some, though, are brilliant, like "Social Security Denies Gregor Samsa's Disability Claim" ("You listed the following impairment(s) on your SSI application: I AM A GIGANTIC COCKROACH. DEPRESSION. BACK PAIN.") or the Choose-Your-Own-Adventure parody using famous American writers. (From Hemingway's *A Very Short Death*: "You felt broken and drunk in the cool night and remembered the white boat on the river. DID YOU? (a.) Grit teeth and think about the war; (b) Order a brandy that overflowed and ran down the stem of the glass and think about the war; (c) Notice the electric light hanging over the empty terrace and think about the war.") A fun and quick read

---

## Jon Hewelt says

What's not to love about McSweeney's? Goofy wit. Absurd premises. And above all, I love their commitment to telling a good story.

We've all seen, read or heard comedy that starts with, "Hey, I wonder what it'd be like if . . ." and does very little to elaborate on that initial premise. That's what turned me off to MadTV for a while. Unlike the magazine, sketches felt very one-joke, catch-phrase heavy.

McSweeney's, by contrast, nine times out of ten takes a premise and runs with it, mining every potential for comedy out of it. Gear all those premises to the foibles of classic and contemporary literature, and you've got yourself a very funny book, my friend. And best of all, you don't need to know the source material in order to appreciate: a good story, after all, is a good story.

My favorite bits were those that mimicked an author's voice in service of an absurd premise. I've never read John Updike, but I would gladly watch any show he wrote for prime-time TV. And bedtime stories by Thom Yorke? I would fall sound asleep every night, listening to those.

Give it a skim, even if you just like "literature" in general. I can't guarantee your favorite author is lovingly mocked herein, but with the plethora of contributors and subjects, there's bound to be something you'll enjoy.

---

## Monica says

As John Hodgman says in this book's introduction, "We all know that books are funny. First, they are made of paste and cloth, which is funny, as is the fact that people still buy and read them."

Although this collection has a few misses, the hits are enough to give it a permanent place on any book lover's

bathroom shelf. Examples:

HARDY BOYS MANUSCRIPT SUBMISSION: editor, noting that while it was admirable for the author of the latest Hardy Boys story to try and bring a contemporary feel to the series, "we don't think Frank pacing outside the bathroom door while his girlfriend, Callie, uses a First Response pregnancy test is consistent with the Hardy Boys formula"

POSTCARDS FROM JAMES JOYCE TO HIS BROTHER STAN: "Stan -- Greetings from Paris. Yesterday, my son said, 'Let's go see Napoleon's tomb.' Yes, let's, I thought. And don't let the fact that I'm blind stop us. Christ. And even if I could see, why would I want to look at the remain of a dead Corsican when there are hookers flashing their hoo-hahs in Pigalle? Idiots. J."

SOCIAL SECURITY DENIES GREGOR SAMSA'S DISABILITY CLAIM

THE FIVE MOST DANGEROUS CHILDREN'S BOOKS EVER WRITTEN, ACCORDING TO SEAN HANNITY

THE EARLIER EPIC BATTLES OF GRENDDEL'S MOTHER

You get the idea.

---