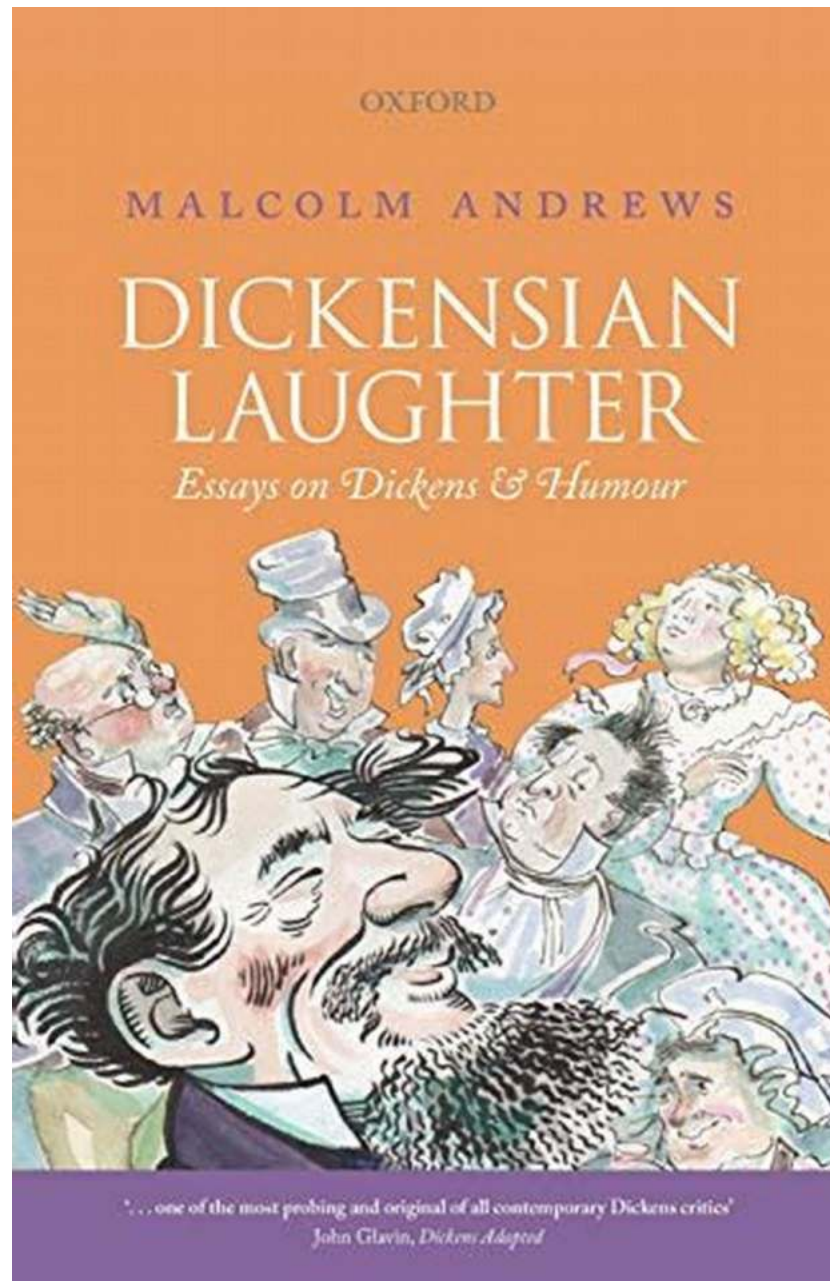


Dickensian Laughter: Essays On Dickens And Humour

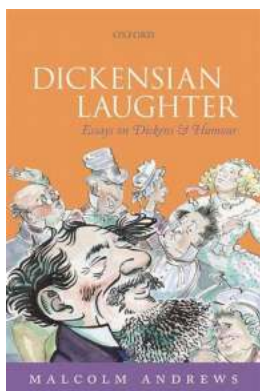


In the world of English literature, few authors have left a mark as profound and enduring as Charles Dickens. Renowned for his works depicting social injustice and class disparity, Dickens also possessed a remarkable talent for injecting his stories with laughter and humour. In this collection of essays, we delve into the

captivating world of Dickensian laughter and explore how it adds depth and richness to his storytelling. Join us as we analyze the comedic elements in Dickens' works and unravel the secrets behind his unique brand of humor.

The Many Faces of Dickensian Laughter

Dickensian laughter is far from one-dimensional. It takes on various forms, from subtle wit to uproarious satire. One cannot help but chuckle at the misadventures of characters like Mr. Micawber in "David Copperfield" or the bumbling antics of Mr. Pickwick in "The Pickwick Papers." Dickens masterfully weaves humor into the fabric of his narratives, creating memorable moments that leave readers both entertained and enlightened.



Dickensian Laughter: Essays on Dickens and

Humour by Malcolm Andrews (Illustrated Edition, Kindle Edition)

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

Language	: English
File size	: 2126 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 207 pages
Lending	: Enabled



The Role of Satire

One of the distinctive aspects of Dickens' humor is his use of satire. With a keen eye for observing society, Dickens holds up a mirror to its flaws and excesses. Through his witty writing and sharp insights, he mercilessly mocks the vices and follies of the Victorian era. From the pompous and self-important characters to

the corrupt and hypocritical institutions, Dickens' satire provides a biting critique of the times and an opportunity for readers to reflect on their own society.

Laughing in the Face of Adversity

Despite the often bleak themes in Dickens' novels, laughter emerges as an essential coping mechanism for his characters. Laughter serves as a powerful tool to combat adversity, allowing characters to find solace amidst their struggles. By infusing his stories with laughter and cheer, Dickens reminds us of the resilience of the human spirit and the power of humor to provide a much-needed escape from the hardships of life.

Legacy of Dickensian Laughter

The influence of Dickensian laughter extends far beyond his own lifetime. As we delve into the essays in this collection, we explore how his unique brand of humor has impacted subsequent generations of authors and comedians. From Mark Twain to P.G. Wodehouse, Dickens' ability to navigate the thin line between comedy and social commentary has inspired countless literary talents.

Dickensian laughter is a testament to Charles Dickens' masterful storytelling and his ability to tackle serious subjects with wit and humor. Through this collection of engaging essays, we have scratched the surface of his comedic genius, exploring the multifaceted nature of his humor and its lasting legacy. So let us embark on this journey into the world of Dickensian laughter and discover how laughter truly is the best medicine.

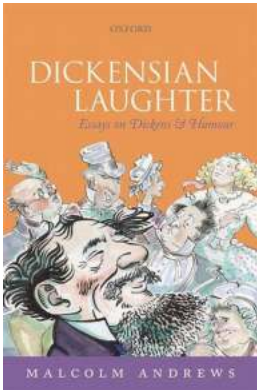
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How does Dickens make his readers laugh? What is the distinctive character of Dickensian humour? These are the questions explored in this book on a topic that has been strangely neglected in critical studies over the last half century.

Dickens's friend and biographer John Forster declared that: 'His leading quality was Humour.' At the end of Dickens's career he was acclaimed as 'the greatest English Humourist since Shakespeare's time.' In 1971 the critic Philip Collins surveyed recent decades of Dickens criticism and asked 'from how many discussions of Dickens in the learned journals would one ever guess that (as Dickens himself thought) humour was his leading quality, his highest faculty?' Forty years later, that rhetorical question has lost none of its force.

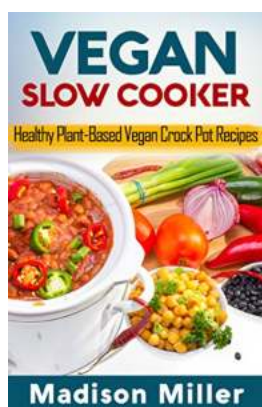
Why? Perhaps Dickens's genius as a humourist is simply taken for granted, and critics prefer to turn to his other achievements; or perhaps humour is too hard to analyse without spoiling the fun? Whatever the reason, there has been very little by way of sustained critical investigation into what for most people has constituted Dickens's special claim to greatness.

This book is framed as a series of essays examining and reflecting on Dickens's techniques for making us laugh. How is it that some written incident, or speech, or narrative 'aside' can fire off the page into the reader's consciousness and jolt him or her into a smile, a giggle, or a hearty laugh? That is the core question

here. His first novel, *Pickwick Papers*, was acclaimed at the time as having 'opened a fresh vein of humour' in English literature: what was the social nature of the

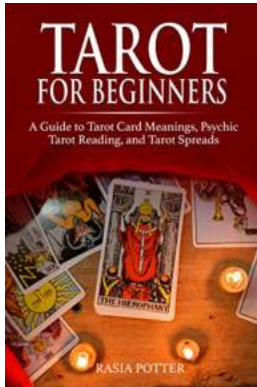
humour that established this trademark 'Dickensian' method of making people laugh? And how many kinds of laughter are there in Dickens? What made Dickens himself laugh? Victorian and contemporary theories of laughter can provide useful insights into these processes - incongruity theory or the 'relief' theory

of laughter, laughter's contagiousness (laughter as a 'social glue'), the art of comic timing, the neuroscience of laughter. These and other ideas are brought into play in this short book, which considers not only Dickens's novels but also his letters and journalism. And to that end there are copious quotations. The aim of the book is to make readers laugh and also to prompt them to reflect their laughter. It should have an interest not only for Dickensians but for anyone curious about the nature of laughter and how it is triggered.



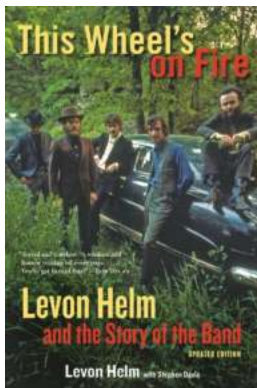
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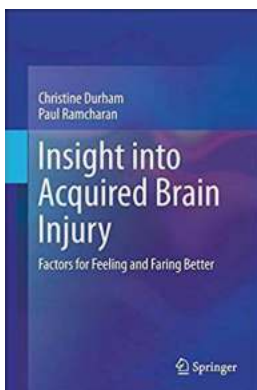
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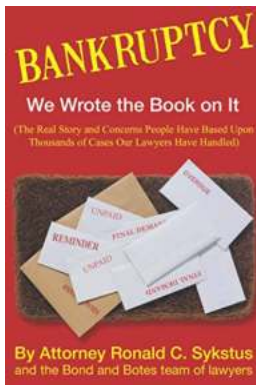
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