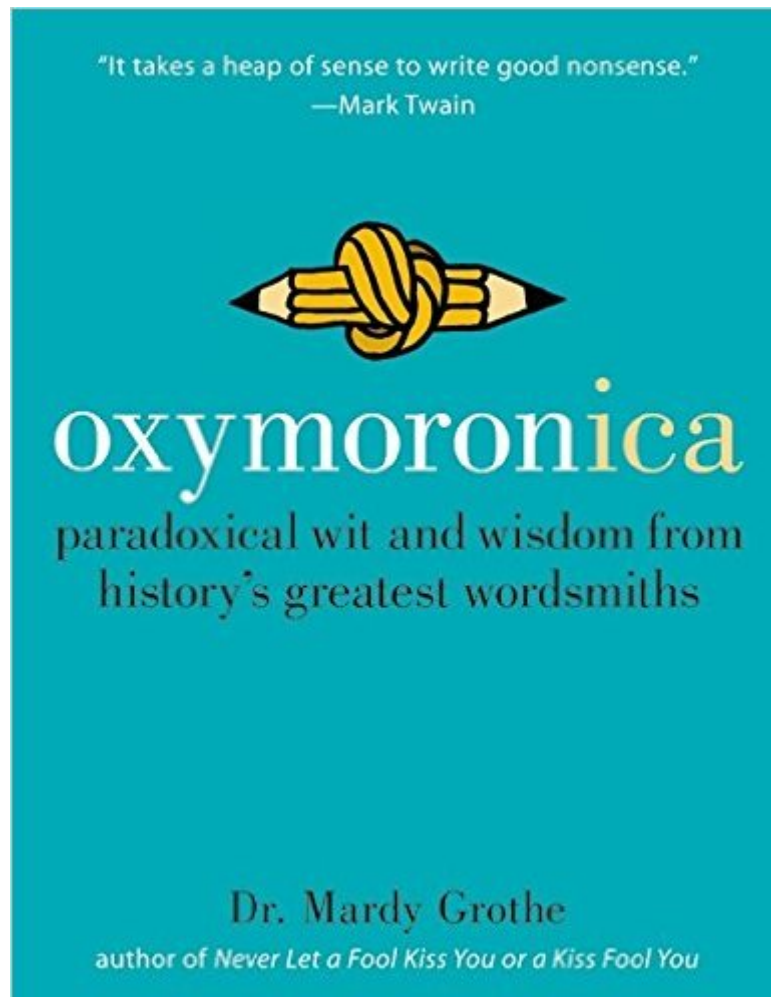


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Oxymoronica: Paradoxical Wit & Wisdom From History's Greatest Wordsmiths



Synopsis

ox-y-mor-on-i-ca (OK-se-mor-ON-uh-ca) noun, plural: Any variety of tantalizing, self-contradictory statements or observations that on the surface appear false or illogical, but at a deeper level are true, often profoundly true. See also oxymoron, paradox. examples: "Melancholy is the pleasure of being sad." Victor Hugo "To lead the people, walk behind them." Lao-tzu "You'd be surprised how much it coststo look this cheap." Dolly Parton You won't find the word "oxymoronica" in any dictionary (at least not yet) because Dr. Mardy Grothe introduces it to readers in this delightful collection of 1,400 of the most provocative quotations of all time. From ancient thinkers like Confucius, Aristotle, and Saint Augustine to great writers like Shakespeare, Oscar Wilde, and G. B. Shaw to modern social observers like Woody Allen and Lily Tomlin, Oxymoronica celebrates the power and beauty of paradoxical thinking. All areas of human activity are explored, including love, sex and romance, politics, the arts, the literary life, and, of course, marriage and family life. The wise and witty observations in this book are as highly entertaining as they are intellectually nourishing and are sure to grab the attention of language lovers everywhere.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

One of my best friends had an aunt (let's call her Ginny) who, like Yogi Berra, could bring a lively conversation to a screeching halt with one brief comment. Aunt Ginny really was unaware of this (shall we say) unique talent. She was not trying to be funny, clever, etc. On the contrary, she offered what she considered to be a serious comment and everyone knew what her intended meaning was. For example: "Quicker than you can count Jack Robinson." "Deader than a door knob." "She was

born on a silver platter."My personal favorite:"He's on a treadmill to Bolivia."I am curious to know what Aunt Ginny would make of Grothe's book. (She died many years ago.) She would no doubt agree with many observations but perhaps not see the humor in any of them. Grothe has selected what he calls "oxymoronical" material from his vast collection of quotations. With regard to the term, his definition: "Oxymoronica, n.; A compilation of self-contradictory terms, phrases, or quotations; examples of oxymoronica appear illogical or nonsensical at first, but upon reflection, make a good deal of sense and are often profoundly true." As other reviewers have correctly noted, many of the quotations which Grothe has assembled are hilarious, others insightful, still others cynical. All of them qualify as "oxymoronica."Among those forgotten or of which I was previously unaware, my personal favorites include:"Meetings are indispensable when you don't want to do anything."John Kenneth Galbraith"Hatreds are the cinders of affection."Sir Walter Raleigh"I must follow the people. Am I not their leader?"Benjamin Disraeli"What you get free costs too much.

I am sure if someone had told me before I read this book that it was an easy-to-read, entertaining, and informative combination of a simple quote book, many cultural and historical references, and a scholarly and literary analysis of paradoxes and oxymorons, I would not have bought it. Well, I sure am glad nobody told me exactly what the book was about because I not only bought it and read it, I thought it was an outstanding book."Oxymoronica," a new term introduced by Dr. Mardy Grothe and the title of this book, was defined inside the front cover as "any variety of tantalizing, self-contradictory statements or observations that on the surface appear false or illogical, but at a deeper level are true, often profoundly true."In keeping with that definition, the book contained over 1,400 oxymoronic and paradoxical quotations from ancient times to today, organized into fourteen categories, most of which you would expect to find in any standard book of quotations (i.e. advice; insults; politics; sex, love, and romance; marriage, home, and family life). Complementing the wit and wisdom of the quotations was Grothe's historical and cultural research and his ability to present and put into a logical, often humorous, context the quotations so that I could reflect on and appreciate their profound meanings. You can open the book at random or read it sequentially and get the same pleasant experience both ways.I had many profoundly personal moments of reflection on people and events in my life throughout the pages of this book:"Real knowledge is to know the extent of one's own ignorance." Confucius"You can't make anything idiot-proof because idiots are so ingenious." Ron Burns"The child is father of the man.

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