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Encyclopedia of British Humorists: Geoffrey Chaucer to John Cleese (Garland Reference Library of the Humanities)

From Routledge

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From Routledge : Encyclopedia of British Humorists: Geoffrey Chaucer to John Cleese (Garland Reference Library of the Humanities) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Encyclopedia of British Humorists: Geoffrey Chaucer to John Cleese (Garland Reference Library of the Humanities):

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From BooklistThe scope of this two-volume work is literary humor of the British Isles (England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales), from the eighth century to the present. Writers widely known as humorists, such as P. G. Wodehouse and Evelyn Waugh, are obviously included, but Gale (editor also of the Encyclopedia of American Humorists [Garland, 1988]), has cast a wide net, examining the humorous or satiric aspects of major literary figures. Thus there are entries for Winston Churchill, John Donne, and Bertrand Russell; the entry for Thomas Hardy considers his humorous treatment of rustic Dorset villagers and country life. While John Cleese is included as a comedy writer, the editor

emphasizes in the introduction that the use of the word humorist in the title indicates those who work primarily in a literary medium, excluding comedians who may write jokes but are basically performers--hence no Benny Hill. The signed articles are sizable. The entry on Chaucer, for example, is some 14 pages, though most range from three to five. Most of the 118 contributors are professors, with a history of scholarship on their subjects, although there are librarians and independent scholars as well. Each article includes a section of biographical information, extensive literary analysis, some footnotes, and a bibliography including primary sources, modern editions, and annotated secondary sources. The articles are written in a scholarly but readable style. While the two volumes are alphabetically arranged, a complete name-title index in volume 2 leads to other mentions of the treated authors and their works, as well as names mentioned in the articles. Overall, this is an impressive work. Though there are many treatments of British wit and humor, there are no comparable reference works. While most of these authors can be found in a variety of literary reference works, none has quite this focus on humor. The biographical information is interesting, but the set's value lies in the literary analysis of the elements of humor, wit, satire, and irony in the works of these 206 figures, as well as the inclusion of further references. Very appropriate for academic collections as well as large public libraries. An impressive work, and while there are many treatments of British wit and humor, there are no comparable reference works....Very appropriate for academic collections as well as large public libraries. Booklist/RBB This encyclopedia excels. Rettig on Reference Both the analysis and the summary provide rich detail about the writer's humor...Recommended. Library Journal Libraries, especially academic and research libraries, should find this work useful. Choice