



Oxymoronica: Paradoxical Wit and Wisdom from History's Greatest Wordsmiths

Mardy Grothe

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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.

Oxymoronica: Paradoxical Wit and Wisdom from History's Greatest Wordsmiths Details

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From Reader Review Oxymoronica: Paradoxical Wit and Wisdom from History's Greatest Wordsmiths for online ebook

Megan says

What a clever little collection... once you get past the introduction. I wish Grothe had spent less time bragging about his intelligence and more page space with quotes. He has amassed a fun bunch of oxymora and paradoxical quotes but his pretentiousness is annoying and rampant throughout. Just read the emboldened witticisms and forget the rest!

Erica says

I learned from this book that I really hate it when an author tells me what something is "really" saying. I don't like to be spoon-fed, apparently. I love quotation compilations and the absurd. I thought this book was written just for me! Turns out, it was written just to showcase how clever the author is. Sigh. I want to be the clever one. I want to read the collected quotations exemplifying the ideal of the oxymoron, and chuckle quietly, silently congratulating myself on my ability to "get it." This book denies me that secret little pleasure by telling me what the quote means before I get to read it. ARGH! Yes, Mr. Author, you are very smart. You are also an obsessive-compulsive, a kill-joy, and have some unresolved control issues. Let the quotes stand for themselves. Let the reader interpret on his or her own. I realize that means trusting your audience. But really, who's going to buy a book called Oxymoronica who isn't up to the challenge? I tried to read around your commentary, Mr. Author, but you structured the book in such a way as to make avoiding your opinion nigh impossible. I am currently considering cutting the book into pieces (if you knew me, you'd know just how profoundly upset I must be to consider harming a book) and reassembling just the quotation bits in order to enjoy the collected quotes without your enforced context. Shall I send the discarded slivers with your explanations back to you, so that you may warm yourself beside their unearthly glow of wisdom? On the up side, this book gives me hope that I too may one day convince a publisher to showcase my bizarre collection of quotes, quips, and queries to sell to the unsuspecting public.

Akhil Jain says

My fav quotes (not a review):

-Page 2 |

"Who among us is not experienced something ugly in everything beautiful, something; true in everything false, something female in everything male, or, as King Claudius says in Shakespeare's Hamlet, "mirth in funeral" and "dirge in marriage"?"

-Page 3 |

"Even his ignorance is encyclopedic."

-Page 3 |

"Another example occurs in the Albert Camus observation: I love my country too much to be a nationalist."

-Page 6 |

"after the attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon on September 11, 2001: A nation is only at peace when it's at war."

-Page 7 |

"Perhaps the only true dignity of man is his capacity to despise himself. GEORGE SANTAYANA"

-Page 7 |

"Katherine Mansfield: If you wish to live, you must first attend your own funeral."

-Page 8 |

"Gibbon advanced the same idea: I was never less alone than when by myself."

-Page 9 |

"Painting is easy when you don't know how, but very difficult when you do."

-Page 9 |

"On the Road: Thanks to the interstate highway system, it is now possible to travel across the country from coast to coast without seeing anything."

-Page 11 |

"A verbal contract isn't worth the paper it's printed on. SAMUEL GOLDWYN Nobody goes there anymore. It's too crowded. YOGI BERRA, ON A POPULAR RESTAURANT"

-Page 13 |

"One martini is all right, two is two many, three is not enough."

-Page 15 |

"When I came home I expected a surprise and there was no surprise for me, so, of course, I was surprised."

-Page 18 |

"wish I were either rich enough or poor enough to do a lot of things that are impossible in my present comfortable circumstances."

-Page 18 |

"I figure you have the same chance of winning the lottery whether you play or not."

-Page 18 |

"The fly that does not want to be swatted is safest if it sits on the fly-swatter."

-Page 19 |

"I have never let my schooling interfere with my education. MARK TWAIN"

-Page 24 |

"You never know what is enough unless you know what is more than enough."

Zack Nelson says

"Oxymoronica" by Mardy Grothe is a great collection oxymoronic quotes and statements. I really liked all of the quotes. Many of them made me think about them for a while, while some of them made me laugh out loud and tell my friends about them. Like the quote, "I love Wagner, but the music I prefer is that of a cat hung up by its tail outside a window and trying to stick to the panes of glass with its claws." That was pretty funny. There were some things that I did not like about the book. One thing that the author says is that they are so intelligent that they coined this new term... that pretty much means the same thing as oxymoron. Also the author interrupts the great quotes, which often is nice to get a new perspective and it makes you think about the quote more, but the author frequently says what the quoted person "actually means" as if they are that person. I think what the author "actually means" is that this is what they interpret this statement as. Other than the little annoying things and the arrogance, I liked the layout and the way it reads. I definitely do not recommend this if you want a book that you can spend hours reading, but it is fun to pick it up every and read some funny oxymorons or find quotes that make you think deeply for a while. All in all an okay read, I especially recommend it to people who love quote books. (7th review, 256 pages)

Mary Lou says

A fun collection of quotes, but sometimes too much commentary.

Joanne says

now if i could just remember some to quote on the proper occasion!

Rk says

After a great deal of research, I stumbled upon a neat book on quotes.

Oxymoronica , a word coined by Dr Mardy Grothe , a psychologist, author of “Never let a fool kiss you or a kiss fool you” , has come up with a book of same name, containing paradoxical wit and wisdom from greatest wordsmiths.

Oxymoronica is a superset and mixture of paradox, oxymoron, chiasmus, as author says. I felt it also encapsulates irony, sarcasm and many other things. Author goes on to define oxymoronicas to convey deeper meaning than they mean superficially. Before I began to read, I wondered about the existence of so many quotes to fill the fat book. But after finishing I now will have to search for normal quotes.

Paradox – A statement that looks false but is nonetheless true(Less is more OR The more the things change the more they remain same-Alphonse Karr)

Oxymoron – Two contradicting terms (pretty ugly)..Oxymoronica is not just contradicting terms, but contradicting ideas (Free love is too expensive-Delvin)

Chiasmus – Reversing the order of words.

First I dream my painting , then I paint my dream –Vincent van Gough

Infact may of all our favorite quotes (and e-mail signatures) could be categorized into one of these groups. Or they are our favorite only because they are oxymoronicas.

Neatly broken into 14 chapters depending on interesting basis like “ancient oxymoronica??(The half is greater than the whole-Greek poet Hesiod) , “political oxymoronica??(“Your greatest enemy is your greatest friend) “oxymoronic advice??(Never take anybody’s advice- George Bernard Shaw), “oxymoronic insults(and few praises)??(she never was really charming till she died-Terence), “oxymoronica on stage?? (I just want to be normally insane) and the ultimate “inadvertent oxymoronica??(oxymoronic quotes by accident). Inadvertent oxymoronica, where most of Bush’s quotes are found, is an ideal last chapter of the book. And I stil have my reserves about author’s decision to place many quotes in chapters other than “inadvertent oxymoronica?? and vice –versa.

Most often , his definition of oxymoronica – any variety of tantalizing self-contradictory statements or observations that on the surface appear false /silly / illogical, but at a deeper level are true, often profoundly true – fits the quotes.

As suggested on the cover “as addictive as a bowl of peanuts??, it made a fast read. If sometimes I would just

laugh loudly at the quotes, other times I would take a break to understand and absorb the inner meaning.

If in an effort to find the oxymoronica meaning in normal quotes, if one succeeds, purpose served is only less (Because “less is more??”).

All my best thoughts were stolen by ancients- Emerson

Betsy Ashton says

I am a wordsmith. Dr. Mardy Grothe is also a wordsmith and a collector of oxymorons. This collection is a must for all lovers of paradox and all writers who look for the right word in the right place.

From the common oxymorons we all know (jumbo shrimp, military intelligence) to those who from great writers, this book demands to be read and laughed over. One early entry, less is more, sets the tone from the beginning. You'll find quotes from Chuang-Tsu to Lao-Tsu, from Yogi Berra to Shakespeare. Some are funny. Some are profound. All make you think.

You should put this book on your shelf, after you've read it.

Chelsey says

Lots of good quotes, not too crazy 'bout the author.

Ashok Rao says

There are reasons why Dr Mardy Grothe is called Quotation Guru. This collection of paradoxical quotes will not only entertain you but would make you intellectually a better person. This book is too interesting to be boring.

Katie says

Bookworms, meet your new favorite wordworm: Mardy Grothe. A psychologist by trade, this language lover culled about 1,400 oxymoronic phrases for "Oxymoronica" from his growing collection numbering near 10,000. Packaging them into chapters thematically makes for a satisfying reflection on the quotations of an eclectic mix of history's authors, philosophers, actors, and other memorable dynamos.

Read with a pencil in hand and unsparingly star your favorites. Even before I'd finished the book, I was already re-reading the very best quips, whether downright funny, alarmingly honest, or a refreshingly new perspective.

I hesitate to criticize because I love the culmination of these oxymorons into one accessible book, but I must say Grothe's talent lies in collecting and not in narrating. In each chapter's brief opening commentary, before

he lists each quote alphabetically by speaker, he sets the stage, but it is a dry, dry stage. In his shortcoming, however, he lets a most brilliant and deserving light shine on the people whose clever observations have generated this gratifying feast of oxymorons.

Heather the Hillbilly Banjo Queen says

This is a great quote book, if you go in for quote books, which I do. I didn't get a chance to read all of it before I had to turn it back in to the library. It isn't really something you sit down and read like a novel, but it is fun to pick it up and peruse once in a while. A worthy reference. I love a good paradox, don't you?

Heather says

Dr. Mardy Grothe has put together a great little collection of wit. His introduction and discussions are a little pedantic but I like the background detail. Since this is a collection of quotes you don't really sit down and read it cover to cover. It's the type of book that you like to have around to browse and laugh with occasionally. It has some of the best examples of wit and wordplay from the western world and I highly recommend it to those who enjoy clever observations of life and society.

Richard Thompson says

A lot of good quotes from the "Great Wordsmiths", but a lot that didn't strike as particularly witty or wise. Grothe's comments and explanations added only marginally to the book.

Last month I started a new project on our blog: The Random Book Project.
<http://sharppencil.squarespace.com/jo...> OXYMORONICA was the second book featured.

14. MemoryWalk: The upper parking lot at The Bay. As we enter the store on the main floor, we pass a notice: PARK IN THE UPPER PARKING LOT. "There's an oxymoron for you," I comment to Maggee. "There isn't anything parklike about a parking lot." We go up the escalator and head for the exit doors. As we are about to open the doors to the parking lot, the asphalt cracks open and the a huge sink-hole appears. Cars, trucks, light standards, cement barriers and screaming shoppers slide into the abyss. The hole closes up, and in a magical time-lapse sequence a lake forms, trees grow, animals appear... a park where moments earlier there was only a parking lot.

Terry says

While this is not a volume that one would expect to read straight through, ten years is probably a bit longer than it should have lingered on my currently-reading list. It is occasionally very amusing and consistently worth a wry grin and a groan, but it is best taken in small doses. Two of my favorites: "Never use a long word when a diminutive one will suffice." and "Eschew obfuscation."

