

Humor and Astronomy: A Resource Guide

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1. Articles and a Book

Chaple, Glenn “LOL Astronomy” in *Astronomy*, Apr. 2010, p. 56. Has a nice list of web sites for astronomical jokes and humor

Fraknoi, Andrew “A Short List of Astronomical Daffy-nitions” in *Mercury (the magazine of the Astronomical Society of the Pacific)*, Nov/Dec. 2005, p. 47. Humorous redefinitions of astronomical terms. A slightly updated version reprinted in *The Planetarian*. See: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/320099739_Andrew_Fraknoi's_Decidedly_Demented_Definitions

Fraknoi, Andrew “Stellar Types Mnemonic Competition Results” in *Mercury*, Jul/Aug. 1977, p. 21. (See also “OBAFGKM” in *Mercury*, Mar/Apr. 1995, p. 38.) Fred Walter’s class competition is described here: <http://www.astro.sunysb.edu/fwalter/AST101/mnemonic.html>

Goldman, Stuart “Some Funny Stuff” in *Sky & Telescope*, July 2001, p. 70. Suggestions for astronomical humor on the web.

Goran, Morris *A Treasury of Science Jokes*. 1986, Lincoln-Herndon Press.

Grice, Noreen “A Shopper’s Guide to Astronomy” in *The Griffith Observer*, March 1998, p.2. Common products with astronomical names.

Mendillo, Michael & Hart, Richard “Total Solar Eclipses, Extraterrestrial Life, and the Existence of God” in *Physics Today*, Feb. 1974, p. 73. A tongue in cheek proof from the fact that total

eclipses are visible only from Earth. (The Aug. 1974 issue had humorous letters in response.)

Munves, James “Black Holes” in *The New Yorker*, Apr. 11, 1977. A two-page humor piece.

Pasachoff, Jay & Weart, Spencer “A Modest Proposal: A Supplemental Grant for the Creation of the Universe” in *Mercury*, Jul/Aug. 1977, p. 22.

2. Web Pages

“A Call for More Scientific Truth in Product Labels” (a funny article by Susan Hewitt and Edward Subitzky from the *Journal of Irreproducible Results*, the science humor magazine, calling for warning labels with real physics on them):

<http://www.netfunny.com/rhf/jokes/91q1/prodwarn.html>

Amateur Astronomy Humor (long single page with dozens of examples, some esoteric, some clear to students): <http://www.perseus.gr/Astro-Jokes.html> [just skip the first category if off-color humor is offensive to you.]

AstroBob (Bob King) has a collection of astronomical jokes here:

<https://www.duluthnewstribune.com/astro-bob-hey-whats-so-funny-55-dubious-astronomy-jokes>

Astronomy Trek’s Astronomy Jokes and Humor: <https://www.astronomytrek.com/astronomy-jokes-and-humour/>

William Keel’s site: “Astronomy Students Say the Strangest Things” (with an appendix “And So Do Professionals”): <http://www.astr.ua.edu/keel/sayings.html>

Science jokes (a huge collection by Joachim Verhagen): <https://jcdverha.home.xs4all.nl/scijokes/>

Some funny astronomical bumper stickers, formerly available from the Astronomical Society of the Pacific: <http://www.fraknoi.com/galleries/bumper-stickers-for-astronomy/>

Each April 1, the Astronomy Picture of the Day web site has a joke image; see their calendar at:

<http://antwrp.gsfc.nasa.gov/apod/calendar/allyears.html>

Understanding Research Papers (what common phrases really mean):

https://www.oeffner.net/research_paper_fun.htm

Palen, Melanie: Compilation of Physics Jokes: <https://letterpile.com/humor/Physics-Jokes>

3. Astronomical Cartoons

There is now a *Facebook* group devoted to this subject:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1116922998321463/>

Sidney Harris is arguably the best science cartoonist in the world. His cartoons are organized by subject at: <http://www.sciencecartoonsplus.com/index.php>

Astronomy cartoons on *Pinterest*: <https://www.pinterest.com/starlogborg/astronomy-cartoons/>

Astronomy cartoons for sale at *CartoonStock*:

<https://www.cartoonstock.com/directory/a/astronomy.asp>