

## Humor and Astronomy: A Resource Guide

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### 1. Articles and Books

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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](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 Sites and Articles

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“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>

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

<https://astrobob.areavoices.com/2014/01/14/hey-whats-so-funny-31-dubious-astronomy-jokes/>

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>

John Scalzi “Pluto Tells All” (a humorous piece by a popular science fiction writer, after Pluto was “demoted” to dwarf planet):

[https://subterraneanpress.com/magazine/spring\\_2007/fiction\\_pluto\\_tells\\_all\\_by\\_john\\_scalzi/](https://subterraneanpress.com/magazine/spring_2007/fiction_pluto_tells_all_by_john_scalzi/)

Some 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):

<http://www.oeffner.net/researchpapers.htm>

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

## 3. Astronomical Cartoons

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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* or *The Cartoonists Group*:

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

<https://www.cartoonistgroup.com/subject/The-Astronomy-Comics-and-Cartoons.php>

Astronomy and astronaut humor and souvenirs (by an amateur astronomer):

<https://www.astronomyastronautumor.com/>