

THE MAMMOTH BOOK OF

GREAT BRITISH HUMOUR



Edited by
Michael Powell

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Michael Powell grew up in North Wales. After studying English Language and Literature at Manchester University, he spent three years at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, and then enjoyed several years as an internationally unknown professional actor and musical director. After winning £10 on the National Lottery, he quit acting and went into publishing before becoming an author. Since then he has penned over seventy titles, including many humour books for adults and children. He lives in Somerset with his wife, two children and a pedigree golden retriever called Feargal Sharkey. His hobbies include running with scissors, looking gift horses in the mouth and staring directly at total solar eclipses.

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ADVICE

- * Throwing acid is wrong . . . in some people's eyes.

Jimmy Carr

- * Don't be chuckin' stuff about, if you're surrounded by glass an' what have ya.

Karl Pilkington

- * People like Coldplay and voted for the Nazis. You can't trust people, Jeremy.
Super Hans (Matt King), *Peep Show*

- * Blame someone else and get on with your life.

Alan Woods

“Think in the morning. Act in the noon.
Eat in the evening. Sleep in the night.

William Blake”

- * Now here, you see, it takes all the running you can do, to keep in the same place. If you want to get somewhere else, you must run at least twice as fast as that!

Lewis Carroll

- * In an underdeveloped country don't drink the water. In a developed country don't breathe the air.

Jonathan Raban

- * Let your enemies be disarmed by the gentleness of your manner, but at the same time let them feel the steadiness of your resentment.

Lord Chesterfield

“Bath twice a day to be really clean, once a day to be passably clean, once a week to avoid being a public menace.

Anthony Burgess”

* When someone close to you dies, move seats.

Peter Kay

* My lover was a midget. She gave birth to a tumour. Grandad always told me: don't lose your sense of humour.

John Dowie

* No problem is insoluble given a big enough plastic bag.
Tom Stoppard

* There's no smoke without mud being flung around.

Edwina Currie

* Nothing matters very much, and very few things matter at all.

Arthur Balfour

* Be wiser than other people, if you can, but do not tell them so.

Lord Chesterfield

My general approach is that you mustn't generalize.

Harriet Harman

* Don't ever take a fence down until you know the reason it was put up.

G.K. Chesterton

* Save the world and you get merit in Heaven.
Save ten worlds and you get a free alarm clock radio.

Tom Holt

* First things first; second things never.

Shirley Conran

* To see what is in front of one's nose needs a constant struggle.

George Orwell

* Most idiots don't lose their privacy, they give it away.

Chrissie Hynde

* Playing it safe will always end in disaster.

Banksy

* A man's sperm count can be adversely affected by factors like heat, caffeine and alcohol, so avoid dipping your plums in Irish coffee before sex.

Jeremy Hardy

* Moderation is the last refuge for the unimaginative.

Oscar Wilde

* It's all right letting yourself go, as long as you can get yourself back.

Mick Jagger

* Don't put your trust in revolutions. They always come around again. That's why they're called revolutions. People die, and nothing changes.

Terry Pratchett

“You cannot fashion a wit out of two half-wits.

Neil Kinnock”

* A committee should consist of three men, two of whom are absent.

Herbert Beerbohm Tree

* Eighty-two point six per cent of statistics are made up on the spot.

Vic Reeves

* If you can keep your head when all about are losing theirs, you'll be taller than anybody else.

Tim Brooke-Taylor

* There are only two rules in this prison, Rudge. Are you listening to me? One: You do not write on the walls. Two: You obey all the rules.

Mr Mackay (Fulton Mackay), *Porridge*

* You cannot make a man by standing a sheep on its hind legs. But by standing a flock of sheep in that position you can make a crowd of men.

Max Beerbohm

I don't make predictions. I never have and I never will.

Tony Blair

* Everyone loathes his own country and countrymen if he is any sort of artist.

Lawrence Durrell

* Don't ask anybody else if they think you should do it. If they knew it was a good idea they'd be doing it.

Simon Woodroffe

* A desk is a dangerous place from which to view the world.

John le Carré

* If you're going to make rubbish, be the best rubbish in it.

Richard Burton

* Are you sitting comfortably? Then get up. This is no time for sloth.

Maureen Lipman

* The smaller the function, the greater the management.

C. Northcote Parkinson

* To wear your heart on your sleeve isn't a very good plan; you should wear it inside, where it functions best.

Margaret Thatcher

“A bird in the hand invariably shits on your wrist.

Billy Connolly”

* Time you enjoy wasting, was not wasted.

John Lennon

* Have the courage to be ignorant of a great number of things in order to avoid the calamity of being ignorant of everything.

Revd Sydney Smith

* I don't encourage anybody to do what I do, you know? Why should you? More for me.

Keith Richards

* I hate it when people say, “It's always the last place you look.” Of course it is. Why the hell would you keep looking after you've found it?

Billy Connolly

* For every expert there is an equal and opposite expert.

Arthur C. Clarke

* Chain mail isn't much defence against an arrow. It certainly isn't when the arrow is being aimed between

your eyes.

Terry Pratchett

* If you're going to kick authority in the teeth, you might as well use two feet.

Keith Richards

* Biologically speaking, if something bites you, it is more likely to be female.

Desmond Morris

* A mistake which is commonly made about neurotics is to suppose that they are interesting.

Cyril Connolly

* Sometimes it's better to light a flamethrower than curse the darkness.

Terry Pratchett

* First things first, but not necessarily in that order.

Dr Who

* It does not do to leave a live dragon out of your calculations, if you live near him.

J.R.R. Tolkien

* Arguments are to be avoided: they are always vulgar and often convincing.

Oscar Wilde

The last time someone was as wrong as you, was when a politician stepped off an aeroplane in 1939 waving a piece of paper in the air, saying, "There will be no war with Germany."

Jeremy Clarkson

* Think outside the box, collapse the box, and take a fucking sharp knife to it.

Banksy

* If you are first you are first. If you are second you are nothing.

Bill Shankly

* It's impossible to look cool whilst picking up a Frisbee.

Peter Kay

* When any organizational entity expands beyond twenty-one members, the real power will be in some smaller body.

C. Northcote Parkinson

* Father told me that if I ever met a lady in a dress like yours, I must look her straight in the eyes.

Prince Charles

* Kids! Bringing about Armageddon can be dangerous.
Do not attempt it in your home.

Terry Pratchett

* If you've broken the eggs, you should make the omelette.

Anthony Eden

* No one can go on being a rebel too long without turning into an autocrat.

Lawrence Durrell

* Do not do unto others as you would they should do unto you; their tastes may not be the same.

George Bernard Shaw

* The only way to spend New Year's Eve is either quietly with friends or in a brothel. Otherwise, when the evening ends and people pair off, someone is bound to be left in tears.

W.H. Auden

* Logic merely enables one to be wrong with authority.

Dr Who

“Anything that is worth doing has been done frequently. Things hitherto undone should be given, I suspect, a wide berth.

Max Beerbohm”

* Take care of the sense, and the sounds will take care of themselves.

Lewis Carroll

* It is dangerous to be sincere unless you are also stupid.

George Bernard Shaw

* The greatest mistake is trying to be more agreeable than you can be.

Walter Bagehot

* Of two evils, choose neither.

Charles H. Spurgeon

* Leave the house before you find something worth staying in for.

Banksy

* Most harm is done by people who are awake.

Jeremy Hardy

* A good plan isn't one where someone wins, it's where nobody thinks they've lost.

Terry Pratchett

* Virtue is its own punishment.

Aneurin Bevan

* If you are doing things the same way as two years ago, you are almost certainly doing them wrong.

John Harvey-Jones

- * When in doubt go to the library.

J.K. Rowling

- * When one burns one's bridges, what a very nice fire it makes.

Dylan Thomas

- * There's nothing more dangerous than a wounded mosquito.

Monty Python's Flying Circus

- * Just because nobody complains doesn't mean all parachutes are perfect.

Benny Hill

- * Not all who wander are lost.

J.R.R. Tolkien

- * It seldom pays to be rude. It never pays to be only half-rude.

Norman Douglas

- * Idealism increases in direct proportion to one's distance from the problem.

John Galsworthy

- * Round numbers are always false.

Samuel Johnson

- * It's no use crying over spilt milk, because all of the forces of the universe were bent on spilling it.

W. Somerset Maugham

- * The fatal law of gravity; when you are down, everything falls down on you.

Sylvia Townsend Warner

- * Only dull people are brilliant at breakfast.

Oscar Wilde

- * Sharpening a pencil with a knife makes you feel really manly.

Peter Kay

* Never trust anything that can think for itself if you can't see where it keeps its brain.

J.K. Rowling

“Rule A: Don't. Rule A1: Rule A doesn't exist. Rule A2: Do not discuss the existence or non-existence of Rules A, A1 or A2.

R.D. Laing”

* The Law of Triviality . . . briefly stated, it means that the time spent on any item of the agenda will be in inverse proportion to the sum involved.

C. Northcote Parkinson

* If you want to confuse a girl, buy her a pair of chocolate shoes.

Milton Jones

* Do unto others, then run.

Benny Hill

* If you want something done properly, kill Baldrick before you start.

Edmund Blackadder (Rowan Atkinson), *Blackadder*

* It takes little talent to see what lies under one's nose, a good deal to know in what direction to point that organ.

W.H. Auden

* Seriousness is the only refuge of the shallow.

Oscar Wilde

* Always live in the ugliest house on the street – then you don't have to look at it.

David Hockney

* Don't give a woman advice; one should never give a woman anything she can't wear in the evening.

Oscar Wilde

* Pratchett's guide to mushrooms: One: All fungi are edible. Two: Some fungi are not edible more than once.

Terry Pratchett

* My father passed on the following wisdom when I was eighteen: never trust a man in a ready-made bow tie; and one martini is not enough, two is plenty, and three's too many. He said that was probably all I needed to know. He was right.

Sandi Toksvig

Bear in mind the simple rule, X-squared to the power of two minus five over the seven point eight three times nineteen is approximately equal to the cube root of MCC-squared divided by X minus a quarter of a third per cent. Keep that in mind, and you can't go very far wrong.

Eric Idle

* A lot of people never use their initiative because no one told them to.

Banksy

* Just a warning: If you're a bunch of sexy teenagers at a lake where other sexy teenagers were killed 30 years ago – leave! The guy in the forest with a hockey mask . . . maybe doesn't play hockey.

Craig Ferguson

* My advice? You wanna look twenty years younger? Stand further away.

Jeff Green

* Never argue with an idiot, for he is doing the same.

Les Barker

* If you are going through hell, keep going.

Winston Churchill

* You know what they say about stamp collecting. Philately will get you nowhere.

Chic Murray

* One way to stop a runaway horse is to bet on him.

Jeffrey Bernard

* Never trust a man who when left alone with a tea cosy doesn't try it on.

Billy Connolly

* If you see a woman staggering around in pyjamas, it's probably a mermaid doing her bronze survival walking badge.

Milton Jones

* It is absurd to divide people into good and bad. People are either charming or tedious.

Oscar Wilde

* Never say a humorous thing to a man who does not possess humour. He will always use it in evidence against you.

Herbert Beerbohm Tree

* Don't put off until tomorrow what you can do today, because if you do it today and like it, you can do it again tomorrow.

Billy Connolly

* Never trust any complicated cocktail that remains perfectly clear until the last ingredient goes in, and then immediately clouds.

Terry Pratchett

* What about the Rimmer Directive? It states quite clearly: Never tangle with anything that's got more teeth than the entire Osmond family.

Arnold Rimmer (Chris Barrie), *Red Dwarf*

* We know what happens to people who stay in the middle of the road. They get run over.

Aneurin Bevan

* Never forget that only dead fish swim with the stream.

Malcolm Muggeridge

* After forty a woman has to choose between losing her figure or her face. My advice is to keep your face, and stay sitting down.

Dame Barbara Cartland

* Luck, like a Russian car, generally only works if you push it.

Tom Holt

“Perhaps one of the only positive pieces of advice that I was ever given was that supplied by an old courtier, who observed: Only two rules really count. Never miss an opportunity to relieve yourself; never miss a chance to sit down and rest your feet.

Edward VIII,
Duke of Windsor”

* Never criticize the post office – they might just figure out where you live.

Les Barker

* If you drink much from a bottle marked “Poison”, it is almost certain to disagree with you, sooner or later.

Lewis Carroll

* The only thing one can do with good advice is to pass it on. It is never of any use to oneself.

Oscar Wilde

* Never get behind the Devil in a post office: the Devil

can take many forms.

Dan Antopolski

* A little inaccuracy sometimes saves tons of explanation.

Hector Hugh Munro

* The rule is: Don't use commas like a stupid person. I mean it.

Lynne Truss

* Never contradict. Never explain. Never apologize.

Lord Fisher

* Why should we take advice on sex from the pope? If he knows anything about it, he shouldn't.

George Bernard Shaw

* If you stay in a house and there is no toilet paper, you can always slide down the banisters. Don't tell me you haven't tried it.

Paul Merton

“Never try to keep up with the Joneses; drag them down to your own level. It is ever so much cheaper.

Quentin Crisp”

I hate these people who give you advice on dangerous animals: “Oh, if you see an angry bear pretend to be dead.” You won't be pretending for long – it's a bear that's already angry; the last thing you should be thinking of doing is playing a practical joke on it.

Danny Bhoy

* Wit ought to be a glorious treat like caviar. Never spread it about like marmalade.

Noël Coward

* When a man wants your advice he generally wants your praise.

Lord Chesterfield

* Never trust a man with testicles.

Jo Brand

* If you ever have trouble opening a bottle of champagne, my advice – hit it with a ship. I’ve seen people do that. It works.

Paul F. Taylor

* Always be nice to those younger than you, because they are the ones who will be writing about you.

Cyril Connolly

* Never sweep. After four years the dirt gets no worse.

Quentin Crisp

* Decide promptly, but never give your reasons. Your decisions may be right, but your reasons are sure to be wrong.

Lord Mansfield

* Never look backwards or you’ll fall down the stairs.

Rudyard Kipling

* A person who is keen to shake your hand usually has something up his sleeve.

Alec Guinness

* A sure cure for seasickness is to sit under a tree.

Spike Milligan

* If little green men land in your back yard, hide any little green women you’ve got in the house.

Mike Harding

* Never drink black coffee at lunch; it will keep you awake all afternoon.

Jilly Cooper

* Always rise from the table with an appetite, and you will never sit down without one.

William Penn

* Always behave as if nothing had happened, no matter what has happened.

Arnold Bennett

* Never believe anything until it has been officially denied.

Claud Cockburn

* First law on holes: When you're in one, stop digging!

Denis Healey

“Always have an answer – even if you change your mind five minutes later.

Richard E. Grant”

* Stop being a vegan and start enjoying what you eat.

Jamie Oliver

* Always do right. That will gratify some of the people and astonish the rest.

Alexander Pope

* Never build a dungeon you wouldn't be happy to spend the night in yourself. The world would be a happier place if more people remembered that.

Terry Pratchett

ALL IN THE MIND

★ Susan Boyle finished second in *Britain's Got Talent* to a group called Diversity. They got that name because they're made up of fifteen different personalities. Susan, sadly, is only made up of four, maybe five at the most.

Jeff O'Boyle

★ Suppose conventional wisdom to be a forest. I am chainsaw. You are squirrels.

Simon Munnery

★ Does the brain control you or are you controlling the brain? I don't know if I'm in charge of mine.

Karl Pilkington

★ How can what an Englishman believes be hearsay? It is a contradiction in terms.

George Bernard Shaw

★ Don't know what I want but I know how to get it.

The Sex Pistols

★ If I don't know I don't know, I think I know. If I don't know I know I know, I think I don't know.

R.D. Laing

★ When you wake up in the morning and the first thing you hear is some bloke saying, "Oh, God, where have I put my stilettos?" you know you're in a nuthouse.

Maxwell Trotter Ward, contestant on British *Big Brother*

★ What is interesting about self-analysis is that it leads nowhere – it is an art form in itself.

Anita Brookner

People who like quotations love meaningless generalizations.

Graham Greene

★ I have a memory like an elephant. In fact, elephants often consult me.

Noël Coward

★ Have I had therapy? I went to a yoga class once. I fell asleep.

Dylan Moran

★ I had a dream last night that I was eating a ten-pound marshmallow. I woke up this morning and the pillow was gone.

Tommy Cooper

★ You have to open your mind to every new experience. This week I've been practising sneezing with my eyes open.

Billy Connolly

★ I am all in favour of spontaneity, providing it is carefully planned and ruthlessly controlled.

John Gielgud

“I had a fantasy man for about a year.
They always leave you. The sex is great, though.

Abi Harper (Siobhan Hayes), *My Family*”

★ Finding bad reasons for what one believes for other bad reasons – that's philosophy.

Aldous Huxley

★ If we know what the future is, we aren't looking far enough ahead.

Tim Berners-Lee

- ★ I've got a memory like an elephant . . . that's lost its memory.
Letitia Cropley (Liz Smith), *The Vicar of Dibley*
- ★ I hear voices in my head. They say things like, "Go home", "Do the dishes" or "Have an early night". I just ignore them, and carry on killing.
Sean Lock
- ★ Psychoanalysis is confession without absolution.
G.K. Chesterton
- ★ I'm convinced that candle's giving me the finger.
Jeremy Limb
- ★ "That's right," he said, "we're philosophers. We think, therefore we am."
Terry Pratchett
- ★ The basis of optimism is sheer terror.
Oscar Wilde
- ★ I never forgive, but I always forget.
Arthur Balfour
- ★ There is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so.
William Shakespeare
- ★ I may not believe in myself, but I believe in what I'm doing.
Jimmy Page
- ★ He's mad! He's mad. He's madder than Mad Jack McMad, the winner of this year's Mr Madman competition.
Edmund Blackadder (Rowan Atkinson), *Blackadder*
- ★ Every faculty and virtue I possess can be used as an instrument with which to worry myself.
Mark Rutherford
- ★ I used to be clinically fed up.
Alan Partridge (a.k.a. Steve Coogan)

★ The young always have the same problem – how to rebel and conform at the same time. They have now solved this by defying their parents and copying one another.

Quentin Crisp

“Do you know what would be the best way to wipe out all of humankind? Make all women telepathic because if they suddenly found out about the kind of stuff that goes on in our heads they’d kill us all on the spot.

Jeff Murdock (Richard Coyle), *Coupling*”

★ Cynicism is merely the art of seeing things as they are instead of as they ought to be.

Oscar Wilde

★ The human mind treats a new idea the way the body treats a strange protein; it rejects it.

Peter Medawar

★ A guy walks into the psychiatrist wearing only Clingfilm for shorts. The psychiatrist says, “Well, I can clearly see your nuts.”

Tommy Cooper

★ His mind was a small thing with big holes through which passions regularly seeped out.

Zadie Smith

★ In a mad world it always seems simpler to obey.

Graham Greene

★ If you believe that your thoughts originate inside your brain, do you also believe that television shows are made inside your television set?

Warren Ellis

- ★ This calls for a very special blend of psychology and extreme violence.

Adrian Edmondson

- ★ I am not a lunatic. I have the psychiatric report to prove it. A slender majority of the panel decided in my favour.

Owen Newitt (Roger Lloyd-Pack), *The Vicar of Dibley*

- ★ Exhilaration is that feeling you get just after a great idea hits you, and just before you realize what's wrong with it.

Rex Harrison

- ★ The men who really believe in themselves are all in lunatic asylums.

G.K. Chesterton

- ★ Human beings are the only creatures who are able to behave irrationally in the name of reason.

Ashley Montagu

- ★ He suffered from paralysis by analysis.

Harold S. Geneen

- ★ New ideas pass through three periods. One: It can't be done. Two: It probably can be done, but it's not worth doing. Three: I knew it was a good idea all along!

Arthur C. Clarke

- ★ A neurosis is a secret that you don't know you are keeping.

Kenneth Tynan

- ★ Sometimes I've believed as many as six impossible things before breakfast.

Lewis Carroll

- ★ In a totally sane society, madness is the only freedom.

J.G. Ballard

★ Memories are like mulligatawny soup in a cheap restaurant. It is best not to stir them.

P.G. Wodehouse

★ I don't believe in astrology; I'm a Sagittarius and we're sceptical.

Arthur C. Clarke

★ How can I know what I think till I see what I say?

E.M. Forster

The eyes are open, the mouth moves, but Mr Brain has long since departed, hasn't he?

Edmund Blackadder (Rowan Atkinson),
Blackadder

★ Psychoanalysts believe that the only “normal” people are those who cause no trouble either to themselves or to anyone else.

A.J.P. Taylor

★ Intuition is the strange instinct that tells a woman she is right, whether she is or not.

Oscar Wilde

★ Having therapy is very much like making love to a beautiful woman. You get on the couch, string 'em along with some half-lies and evasions, probe some deep dark holes, and then hand over all your money.

Swiss Toni (Charlie Higson), *The Fast Show*

★ I am transcending the material world by acknowledging the eternal light within. Then I'm gonna watch some porn.

Russell Brand

★ Big girls don't cry? Yeah, they do – cry because they're fat, cry 'cos they can't get a boyfriend and cry because there's no trifle left.

Sarah Millican

“I’m sort of like a child genius, without us. being a child or a genius.

Tim Rice-Oxley”

★ An original idea. That can’t be too hard. The library must be full of them.

Stephen Fry

★ Every man, wherever he goes, is encompassed by a cloud of comforting convictions which move with him like flies on a summer day.

Bertrand Russell

★ The human brain is like an enormous fish – it is flat and slimy and has gills through which it can see.

Monty Python’s Flying Circus

★ To disagree with three-fourths of the British public is one of the first requisites of sanity.

Oscar Wilde

★ To get the best results, you must talk to your vegetables.

Prince Charles

★ If I were to say you are crazy, what part of that would you find unacceptable?

Daisy Donovan

★ Just dreamed I had a nightmare . . . I was so relieved to wake up and realize I hadn’t had one.

Jeremy Limb

★ There are many things that we would throw away, if we were not afraid that others might pick them up.

Oscar Wilde

★ Closure is a greasy little word which, moreover, describes a non-existent condition. The truth, Venus, is that nobody gets over anything.

Martin Amis

★ It just came to me in a dream, like St Paul on the road to Domestos.

Brian Potter (Peter Kay), *Phoenix Nights*

★ They say the heat and the flies here can drive a man insane. But you don't have to believe that, and nor does that bright mauve elephant that just cycled past.

Terry Pratchett

★ The trouble with dreams, of course, is that other people's are so boring.

W.H. Auden

★ People who insist on telling their dreams are among the terrors of the breakfast table.

Max Beerbohm

★ Just wanted to issue a press release saying, "My friend Caroline has gone a bit bonkers. However, the good news is, she's made a lovely wicker basket."

Craig Cash

★ A lot of people say there's a fine line between genius and insanity. I don't think there's a fine line, I actually think there's a yawning gulf. You see some poor bugger scuffling up the road with balloons tied to his ears – he's not going home to invent a rocket, is he?

Bill Bailey

★ He objected to ideas only when others had them.

A.J.P. Taylor

Sam: I was just dreaming.

Gene: What I call a dream involves Diana Dors and a bottle of chip oil!

Sam Tyler (John Simm) and
Gene Hunt (Philip Glennister), *Life on Mars*

★ Everything is vague to a degree you do not realize till you have tried to make it precise.

Bertrand Russell

★ Progress towards sanity is achieved by abandoning first the desire for omnipotence and then that for exceptional achievement.

Celia Green

★ Five exclamation marks, the sure sign of an insane mind.

Terry Pratchett

★ Women think we are normal . . . But all the time in our brains we've got the word "breasts" on a loop. If we ever lost control for a second, we'd all start shouting, "breasts, breasts, breasts, breaaastsss . . ."

Jeff Murdock (Richard Coyle), *Coupling*

★ It is the vice of a vulgar mind to be thrilled by bigness.

E.M. Forster

★ They called me mad, I called them mad, and, damn them, they outvoted me.

Nathaniel Lee

★ I can never make my mind up. I'm so fucking flippy-floppy.

David Bowie



AMERICA

❖ America was discovered by Amerigo Vespucci and was named after him, until people got tired of living in a place called Vespuccia, and changed its name to America.

Mike Harding

❖ England and America are two countries separated by the same language.

George Bernard Shaw

❖ Any foreigner visiting the United States can perform an easy magic trick: buy a newspaper and see your own country disappear.

Julian Barnes

❖ The best way of looking at the US is – a good idea that's got out of hand.

Al Murray

❖ Americans should not be allowed to carry guns. They should no longer be allowed to own or carry anything more dangerous in public than a vegetable peeler.

John Cleese

❖ I was overwhelmed with joy on my first ever morning in New York, when a stranger in a cafe yelled "Fuck you, asshole" at me for no apparent reason. It was glorious, like arriving in Brazil and being immediately dragged into a carnival by a woman with fruit in her hair.

Mark Steel

❖ Every visitor to the United States is struck by the comparative rarity of what he would call a face, by the frequency of men and women who look like elderly babies.

W.H. Auden

“There are so many psychos in the United States that psychoanalysis is, paradoxically, the only profession that never shrinks.

Victor Lewis-Smith”

❖ Los Angeles is awful – like Liverpool with palm trees.

John Lydon

❖ American women: can't afford to live with them; can't afford to pay them \$2 million a year.

John Cleese

❖ Hell has been described as a pocket edition of Chicago.

Ashley Montagu

❖ Presenter: What happened in Dallas on 22 November 1963?

Contestant: I don't know. I wasn't watching it then.

GWR FM, Bristol radio station

❖ I was crossing what they call the Piney Woods of East Texas, which cover an area the size of Belgium – as all big woods invariably do.

John Peel

❖ An average English motorcar could be placed, I believe, without much difficulty, in the luggage-rack of an average American automobile.

George Mikes

“Before I ever set out for the United States, I asked a friend if I should study American. His answer was unequivocal. “On no account,” he said. “The more English you sound, the more likely you are to be believed.”

Quentin Crisp”

❖ Los Angeles is seven suburbs in search of a city.

Alfred Hitchcock

❖ American girls seem to have these massive bottoms.

George Harrison

❖ American English is essentially English after having been wiped off with a dirty sponge.

J.R.R. Tolkien

❖ The Americans will always do the right thing . . . After they've exhausted all the alternatives.

Winston Churchill

❖ From the American newspapers, you'd think America was populated by naked women and cinema stars.

Nancy Astor

❖ What a pity, when Christopher Columbus discovered America, that he ever mentioned it.

Margot Asquith

❖ It was decided almost 200 years ago that English should be the language spoken in the United States. It is not known, however, why this decision has not been carried out.

George Mikes

❖ America is the only country that went from barbarism to decadence without civilization in between.

Oscar Wilde

❖ That seems to point up a significant difference between Europeans and Americans. A European says, "I can't understand this, what's wrong with me?" An American says, "I can't understand this, what's wrong with him?"

Terry Pratchett

❖ The Oreo Pizza – the single most patriotic item I have ever seen in my life. Hoist that up a flagpole; get children to swear allegiance to that in the morning!

John Oliver

❖ I love Los Angeles. It reinvents itself every two days.

Billy Connolly

❖ Americans will listen, but they do not care to read. *War and Peace* must wait for the leisure of retirement, which never really comes: meanwhile, it helps to furnish the living room.

Anthony Burgess

❖ In Washington the first thing people tell you is what their job is. In Los Angeles you learn their star sign. In Houston you're told how rich they are. And in New York they tell you what their rent is.

Simon Hoggart

Too many times you've taken too much from us. London Bridge . . . the Queen Mary . . . Julie Andrews and David Frost. And we're grateful.

Tim Brooke-Taylor, *The Goodies*

❖ America's favourite sport is talking. Football is really just talk. You only get about four and a half seconds of action and then everybody talks. The commentators talk, the spectators talk, even the players get together and talk. Then they go back, sadly silent, play for another four and a half seconds, and then they get together and talk again!

John Cleese

❖ In America, through pressure of conformity, there is freedom of choice, but nothing to choose from.

Peter Ustinov

❖ Disney World has acquired by now something of the air of a national shrine. American parents who don't take

their children there sense obscurely that they have failed in some fundamental way, like Muslims who never made it to Mecca.

Simon Hoggart

❖ The American does not drink at meals as a sensible man should. Indeed, he has no meals. He stuffs for ten minutes thrice a day.

Rudyard Kipling

❖ Europe was created by history. America was created by philosophy.

Margaret Thatcher

❖ Barack Obama will appeal to both black and white voters in America. White voters who'll think he's Tiger Woods.

Frankie Boyle

❖ Some people – I think they're called racists – say America is not ready for a black president. But I know America to be a forward-thinking country, right, because otherwise, you know, would you have let that retarded cowboy fella be president for eight years? We were very impressed. We thought it was nice of you to let him have a go, because, in England, he wouldn't be trusted with a pair of scissors.

Russell Brand

❖ Anyone wishing to communicate with Americans should do so by e-mail, which has been specially invented for the purpose, involving neither physical proximity nor speech.

Auberon Waugh

❖ The great American novel has not only already been written, it has already been rejected.

W. Somerset Maugham

❖ It is always dangerous to generalize, but the American people, while infinitely generous, are a hard and strong race and, but for the few cemeteries I have seen, I am inclined to think they never die.

Margot Asquith

❖ Living in New York is like being at some terrible late-night party. You're tired, you've had a headache since you arrived, but you can't leave because then you'd miss the party.

Simon Hoggart

❖ America: it's like Britain, only with buttons.

Ringo Starr

“Have you ever watched footage of the destruction caused by hurricanes in America? When a big wind sweeps across America, there isn't a building left standing. And you can't help thinking: the southern states of America must have been built by the first two little piggies.

Dara O Briain”

❖ As always, the British especially shudder at the latest American vulgarity, and then they embrace it with enthusiasm two years later.

Alistair Cooke

❖ American beer is a lot like making love in a row boat:
it's fucking close to water!

Eric Idle

❖ The thing that impresses me most about America is the way parents obey their children.

Edward VIII, Duke of Windsor

❖ American husbands are the best in the world; no other husbands are so generous to their wives, or can be so easily divorced.

Elinor Glyn

❖ That's the main trouble with the two nations: bad Brits are snobs, bad Americans are slob.

Peter Shaffer

❖ Americans are apt to be unduly interested in discovering what average

opinion believes average opinion to be.

John Maynard Keynes

❖ Never criticize Americans. They have the best taste that money can buy.

Miles Kington

❖ I would rather have a nod from an American than a snuffbox from an emperor.

Lord Byron

❖ Oh, holy crap. If Obama has this much time to tweet I hope America is governing itself OK.

Hils Barker

I want to be American. America is the coolest place on the face of the earth. You've got freedom of speech. You've got McDonald's.

Ozzy Osbourne

❖ America is a large, friendly dog in a very small room. Every time it wags its tail, it knocks over a chair.

Arnold Toynbee

❖ We're actually unwholesome, aren't we, really? And we have bad teeth – that's the thing they [Americans] really can't forgive us for.

Emma Thompson

❖ In the United States, the election has become a so-called water-cooler debate, meaning that Americans gather round the water cooler at work and discuss whether it would make a better president.

Angus Deayton

❖ The thing you notice here after America is how refreshingly ordinary people look, because they haven't had their chin wrapped around the back of their ears.

Ian McKellen

❖ The sum and substance of female education in America, as in England, is training women to consider marriage as the sole object in life, and to pretend that they do not think so.

Harriet Martineau

❖ What I like about playing America is you can be pretty sure you're not going to get hit with a full can of beer when you're singing, and I really enjoy that.

Joe Strummer

❖ Americans call it *The Tonight Show* so they can remember when it's on.

Jo Brand

“A recent survey of North American males found 42 per cent were overweight, 34 per cent were clinically obese and 8 per cent ate the survey.

Banksy”

❖ Americans want grungy people stabbing themselves in the head on stage. They get a bright bunch like us, with deodorant on – they don't get it.

Liam Gallagher

❖ The English are polite by telling lies. The Americans are polite by telling the truth.

Malcolm Bradbury

❖ America does to me what I knew it would do: it just bumps me. The people charge at you like trucks coming down on you – no awareness. But one tries to dodge aside in time. Bump! bump! go the trucks. And that is human contact.

D.H. Lawrence

❖ America is a model of force and freedom and moderation – with all the coarseness and rudeness of its people.

Lord Byron

❖ American women expect to find in their husbands a perfection that English women only hope to find in their butlers.

W. Somerset Maugham

❖ People in America, when listening to radio, like to lean forward. People in Britain like to lean back.

Alistair Cooke

❖ Americans are good at herding bison. The end.

Jeremy Clarkson



ANIMALS

* Listen, boy. Have you ever had your scrotum pulled off by a mountain goat and seen him sell it on eBay a day later?

Kodiak Jack (Rich Fulcher),
The Mighty Boosh

* I am not over fond of animals.

David Attenborough,
well-known British naturalist and broadcaster

* A fish is designed to swim through water, and it does it very well – I couldn't keep up with it . . . but if I were to ask that fish to come hill walking with me . . . clearly it would be useless . . . it would be quite literally, a fish out of water.

Alan Partridge (a.k.a. Steve Coogan)

Among the mammals
Only man has ears
That can display no emotion.

W. H. Auden

* People say, “Why do we kill so many cows?” Well, they're crap! They're dumb animals, otherwise they'd learn to shit without it hitting the back of their legs! They'd swing it out at least!

Lee Evans

* Cats have a scam going. You buy them the food, they

eat it and they go away . . . unless it's raining. You can't say "Cat! Be in by six! I don't want you back later! Don't you stay out . . . Oh, God . . . And don't take the car!"
Vrrooom.

Eddie Izzard

* Nobody who is not prepared to spoil cats will get from them the reward they are able to give to those who do spoil them.

Compton Mackenzie

* If a dog's tail is still wagging, then how can that be rape?

Marek Larwood

* A friend has a weekend cottage in the country, with a bit of garden. He hangs up bird feeders because he likes the sound and the flutter. Before he leaves on Sunday, he takes them down and puts them in the shed.

A.A. Gill

* Wouldn't it be lovely if some kittens were born with pink fur and you didn't actually have to paint them yourself?

Alice Tinker (Emma Chambers), *The Vicar of Dibley*

* My father bought me what I thought was a homing pigeon. It was a budgie on an elastic band.

Roy "Chubby" Brown

* I hope this isn't going to take long, Captain Peacock. The last time I was late a fireman had to climb out of my bedroom window and risk his life on a narrow ledge trying to grab hold of my pussy.

Mrs Slocombe (Mollie Sugden), *Are You Being Served?*

* Red squirrels . . . you don't see many of them since they became extinct.

Michael Aspel

* I am literally petrified of unicorns. I can't get to sleep at night due to my fear of having one eye poked out when arguing with a unicorn at a Scrabble

tournament.

Andy Zaltzman

* Why do people want to swim with dolphins? The equivalent would be an Indonesian fellow coming over here, going up to a farmer and saying, “Can I get in with the cows? I just fancy scuffling about with them.”

Bill Bailey

* Pets are always a great help in times of stress. And in times of starvation too, o’course.

Terry Pratchett

* Rodents can come across as being quite vacant in the personality stakes.

Julian Clary

* A snail can travel over a razor blade without cutting itself. Or to put it another way, sometimes scientists get bored.

Jimmy Carr

“ I like pigs. Dogs look up to us. Cats look down on us. Pigs treat us as equals.

Winston Churchill”

* Despite constant warning, I have never met anybody who has had their arm broken by a swan.

Peter Kay

* The male gypsy moth can smell the female gypsy moth up to seven miles away – and that fact also works if you remove the word “moth”.

Jimmy Carr

* I like cows very much, I like their big eyes and they moo a lot and they don’t do any harm.

Tim Rice-Oxley

* Why are there no aspirins in the jungle? The parrots-eat-’em-all.

Alan Davies

* Have you ever pondered on the similarity between the pelican and British Gas? They can both stick their bills up their arse.

Stephen Fry

* Nirvana saved my lizard. I bought an iguana and for two days it didn't move. Then I put on "Smells Like Teen Spirit" and it came to life. That's when I knew this was a great record.

Mark Owen

* For animals, the entire universe has been neatly divided into things to (a) mate with, (b) eat, (c) run away from, and (d) rocks.

Terry Pratchett

* The smaller the monkey the more it looks like it would kill you at the first given opportunity.

Peter Kay

* I remember the first time my budgie Carrot died. He came back to life, you know. A bit like Jesus, but with feathers.

Alice (Emma Chambers), *The Vicar of Dibley*

* If rhino horn is such a powerful aphrodisiac, why are rhinos an endangered species?

Rory McGrath

* That's the problem with them fables, they're putting animals together that wouldn't meet. I don't know where a scorpion is knockin' around with a frog.

Karl Pilkington

* If we increase the size of the penguin until it is the same height as the man and then compare the relative brain size, we now find that the penguin's brain is still smaller. But -and this is the point – it is larger than it was.

Monty Python's Flying Circus

* One disadvantage of being a hog is that at any moment some blundering fool may try to make a silk purse out of your wife's ear.

J.B. Morton

What's black and white and eats like a horse? A zebra.

Peter Kay

* Interesting fact: a shark will only attack you if you're wet.

Sean Lock

* I suggest you count your bees, you may find that one of them is missing.

Inspector Clouseau (Peter Sellers),
The Pink Panther Strikes Again

* Snakes. They're like bits of rope, only angrier.

Charlie Brooker

* A dog is not intelligent. Never trust an animal that's surprised by its own farts.

Frank Skinner

* I never married because there was no need. I have three pets at home which answer the same purpose as a husband. I have a dog which growls every morning, a parrot which swears all afternoon, and a cat that comes home late at night.

Marie Corelli

* It doesn't matter what you teach a dog, if you don't get up at seven in the morning to let it out, it's gonna poo in your bathroom.

Ozzy Osbourne

* I wonder what kind of bird Humpty Dumpty would have hatched into eh? Sadly, we'll never know.

Harry Hill

* Well, of course it's a rat! You have rats in Spain, don't you – or did Franco have them all shot?

Basil Fawlty (John Cleese), *Fawlty Towers*

* I read an article recently about the dawn chorus and apparently all it actually is is territorial threats and mating calls, so if you heard the birds singing in English all you'd hear coming out of the trees at four in the morning would in fact be: "Who wants a fuck? Who wants a fuck?" "I'll fuckin' fuck ya. I'll fuckin' fuck ya."

Nick Revell

* The great thing about racehorses is you don't need to take them for walks.

Albert Finney

* I have absolutely no empathy for camels. I didn't care for being abused in the Middle East by those horrible, horrible, horrible creatures. They don't like people. It's not at all like the relationship between horses and humans.

Rachel Weisz

* I know two things about the horse, And one of them is rather coarse.

Naomi Royde-Smith

* A dove is a bird, isn't it?

Helen Adams, contestant on British *Big Brother*

* A horse is dangerous at both ends and uncomfortable in the middle.

Ian Fleming

* It's between a fish and a dog.

Karl Pilkington, on the seal

* A dog needs God. It lives by your glances, your wishes. It even shares your humour. This happens about the fifth year. If it doesn't happen, you are only keeping an animal.

Enid Bagnold

“Why didn't evolution give them genes to make them good at carpentry, then, so they could build a ladder instead of growing long necks?

Karl Pilkington, on giraffes”

* Did you hear about the flea who won the lottery? He bought a dog in Spain.

Harry Hill

* A man loses his dog, so he puts an ad in the paper. And the ad says, “Here, boy!”

Spike Milligan

* You will find that the woman who is really kind to dogs is always one who has failed to inspire sympathy in men.

Max Beerbohm

* Some of my best leading men have been dogs and horses.

Elizabeth Taylor

* Never catch a loose horse. You could end up holding the fucking thing all day.

Lester Piggott, British former champion jockey

* If God did not intend for us to eat animals, then why did he make them out of meat?

John Cleese

* Cats’ names are more for human benefit. They give one a certain degree more confidence that the animal belongs to you.

Alan Ayckbourn

* I got a note from my council today it said: “Please shred all your documents; you never know who’s going through your bins.” I do know who’s going through my bins. Foxes. To be honest, if there’s a fox out there who wants to steal my identity – fucking good luck to it.

Liam Mullone

* Why do dogs always race to the door when the doorbell rings, when it’s hardly ever for them?

Harry Hill

* You can't respect a man who carries a dog.

Peter Kay

* I don't often agree with the RSPCA as I believe it's an animal's duty to be on my plate at suppertime.

Jeremy Clarkson

* Man is a dog's ideal of what God should be.

Holbrook Jackson

I saw you in the park,
I wanted to be your friend.
I tunnelled my snout,
Up your non-barking end.

John Hegley, "Love Poem by my Dog"

* I have caught more ills from people sneezing over me and giving me virus infections than from kissing dogs.

Barbara Woodhouse, British dog trainer

* I had a cat called Minton who swallowed a shuttlecock. I said, "Bad Minton!"

Tim Vine

* Cats have nine lives. Which makes them ideal for experimentation.

Jimmy Carr

* If a dog jumps in your lap, it is because he is fond of you; but if a cat does the same thing, it is because your lap is warmer.

Alfred North Whitehead

* I thought about buying a cat. But then I realized that a cat isn't going to make me any less lonely. It'll just provide a mascot for my loneliness.

Simon Amstell

* I reckon my cat should be the regimental mascot for the SAS [part of the

British Special Forces]. All it does is eat, kill and bonk.

Jasper Carrott

* If you leave a dog locked in a car on a hot day, it will die in about half an hour. If you leave the heating on you can get that down to about ten minutes.

Sean Meo

* The eyes of a dog, the expression of a dog, the warmly wagging tail of a dog and the gloriously cold damp nose of a dog were, in my opinion, all God-given for one purpose only – to make complete fools of us human beings.

Barbara Woodhouse, British dog trainer

* I don't know how long I could be a vet before I got bored and started shagging stuff. I'd shag an owl because whatever position you took it from you could always get eye contact. Or shag a kitten. You know? Could you imagine having sex with something you actually wanted to cuddle afterwards?

Frankie Boyle

* Our choice of dog defines us. As does professing not to like dogs. The dog reveals pretension, insecurity, assumption and aspiration.

A.A. Gill

* A white horse walks into a pub. The landlord says, "Blimey, we've got a whisky named after you." The horse replies, "What . . . Eric?"

Lee Mack



APPEARANCE

★ There's more to life than cheek bones.

Kate Winslet

★ Madame, that is by far the ugliest nose I have ever seen and I compliment you on it, it suits you.

Inspector Clouseau (Peter Sellers), *The Pink Panther*

★ There's a shortage of perfect breasts in this world. It would be a pity to damage yours.

Westley (Cary Elwes), *The Princess Bride*

★ I'm actually pale blue. It takes me a week of sunbathing to turn white.

Billy Connolly

★ If anybody says their facelift doesn't hurt, they're lying. It was like I'd spent the night with an axe murderer.

Sharon Osbourne

★ I'm proud to see his penis twenty-five feet tall. It's huge. It's enormous. Massive. If I looked like that, I'd walk down the streets in my panties, too.

Victoria Beckham on footballer husband David's Armani adverts

★ Her mouth had the coldly forbidding look of the closed door of a subway express when you have just missed the train.

P.G. Wodehouse

★ Bob Geldof is a loss to the road-sweeping profession, as well as actually

looking like something swept up.

Jilly Parkin

★ I had very good dentures once. Some magnificent gold work. It's the only form of jewellery a man can wear that women fully appreciate.

Graham Greene

★ Gordon Ramsay has a face like a bag of smashed crabs.
Andrew Lawrence

★ He's now so wrinkled he looks like Sid James' nutsack.

Frankie Boyle

★ Only a toothbrush is really indispensable: starting from the top this will neaten the hair, remove scurf from the collar, clean the teeth, then the fingernails – and then, if needs are dire, ream out between the toes and the welts of the shoes.

George Courtauld

★ I'm so short I'm the only citizen in the UK with a full-length picture in my passport.

Ronnie Corbett

★ Am I bovered though? Do I look bovered?
Catherine Tate

★ Have you noticed that vegans don't have tits? Or if they do they wear them as fleshy ends to a belt.

Karen Bayley

★ He looks like a dwarf who's been dipped in a bucket of pubic hair.

Boy George, on Prince

The nicest buttocks in the world are in Ireland. Irish women are always carrying water on their heads, and always carrying their husbands home from pubs. Such

things are the greatest posture-builders in the world.

Peter O'Toole

★ I have a suspicion that the photos on seed packets are posed by professional flowers.

Denis Norden

★ I don't know whether to get a facelift or a new floor.

Jean (Anne Reid), *Dinnerladies*

★ Lord Northcliffe: Looking at how thin you are, people would think there was a famine in England.

George Bernard Shaw: And looking at how fat you are, people would think you were the cause of it.

★ The Elephant Man would never have gotten up and gone, "Oh, God. Look at me hair today."

Karl Pilkington

★ You know what you are? You're a beard with an idiot hanging off it.

Bernard (Dylan Moran), *Black Books*

“Are you aware, sir, that the last time I saw anything like that on a top lip, the whole herd had to be destroyed?

Eric Morecambe
to Dennis Lillee, former Australian

cricketer with an impressive moustache”

★ I'm only six stone really . . . the camera puts ten pounds on you, and there's eighteen cameras on me.

Kerry Katona, contestant on British
I'm a Celebrity . . . Get Me Out of Here!

★ Glyn, you look like the cat that got the cheese.

Nikki Grahame, contestant on British *Big Brother*

★ If you had some spare white goods they went in the garden just so you could show off to the neighbours. You could say “Look – I’ve got a fridge I don’t even use. Look at that. And we’re doing that well we’ve left the plug on it.”

John Bishop

★ I wish I was covered in fur . . . or feathers . . . or something more interesting than just fat.

John Peel

★ People often say to me, “What are you doing in my garden?”

Michael Redmond

★ A woman is never shy of patting you on the tummy and saying, “Who ate all the pies, Peter?”

You’re supposed to say, “Ha, ha! Yes I’m a fat old git, aren’t I?” But do the same to a woman and die.

Peter Davison

★ I think Brian Moore’s gnashers are the kind you get from a DIY shop and hammer in yourself. He is the only player we have who looks like a French forward.

Paul Randall, on the former England Rugby Union player

★ One hair of a woman can draw more than a hundred pair of oxen.

James Howell

★ He moved in a way that suggested he was attempting the world speed record for the nonchalant walk.

Terry Pratchett

★ Nudity is a deep worry if you have a body like a bin bag full of yoghurt, which I have.

Stephen Fry

★ The small of my back is too big.

Spike Milligan

★ When I was much younger, I sometimes felt rejected by feminists because of an image that I sold because it paid the bills. Any fool could tell my hair is dyed.

Felicity Kendal

★ I think I have been blessed with two things – big feet and a big memory.

Stephen Fry

“I knew I was going bald when it was taking longer and longer to wash my face.

Harry Hill”

★ I’m so fascinated by breasts because my mother didn’t have them either. If I had them, I’d run up and down flights of stairs.

Kate Beckinsale

★ There’s never any graffiti in the hotel. Although in the Gents a couple of weeks ago I did see someone had drawn a lady’s part. Quite detailed. The guy obviously had talent.

Alan Partridge (a.k.a. Steve Coogan)

★ Lord Castlerosse was taken to task by Nancy Astor over the size of his stomach. “What would you say if that was on a woman?” she asked, pointedly.

“Half an hour ago it was,” he replied.

Nigel Rees

★ My hairdresser actually spends more time digging hair out of my ears than off the top or back of my head.

Des Lynam

★ I’m not ginger, I’m auburn. That’s what I’ve been told.

Prince Harry

★ I would define my looks as a Victorian childcatcher. Or an S&M Willy Wonka who likes to use a riding crop on his own leg in his spare time.

Russell Brand

★ I don't need plastic surgery. I need Lourdes.

Paul O'Grady

Do you think George Bush actually knows who Gordon Brown is? He probably just thinks Tony Blair's put on weight and had a mild stroke.

Frankie Boyle

★ Oh my god. Mickey Rourke had another facelift. He looks like his trousers.

Fran (Tamsin Greig), *Black Books*

★ I always like to compare models to supermodels in the way I compare Tampax to Super Tampax: supermodels cost a bit more and they are a lot thicker.

Jo Brand

★ A temple and popular place of worship. Entry is free, although a small deposit before departure is greatly appreciated.

Julian Clary, on his body

★ It's a dilemma to not only have to choose what outfit to wear but which boyfriend to wear it with.

Tara Palmer-Tomkinson

★ Michael Owen isn't the tallest of lads, but his height makes up for that.

Mark Lawrenson

★ If God had meant them to be lifted and separated, He would have put one on each shoulder.

Victoria Wood

★ Comparing Marilyn Monroe to Madonna is like comparing Raquel Welch to the back of a bus.

Boy George

★ I put my spectacles on for the first time and the insults started, you know: “four eyes”, “goggle box”, “Joe 90”, to which I replied, “Look, you’re not the only opticians around here!”

Harry Hill

★ The Tory Party Conference are not an attractive lot, are they? I mean, if all those people were born in the same village, you’d blame pollution, wouldn’t you?

Jeremy Hardy

★ You have to be wary of men with moustaches. Stalin had a moustache; Hitler had a moustache; Saddam Hussein had a moustache . . . Tom Selleck had a moustache . . .

Craig Ferguson

★ You look like a million dollars. Is that how much it cost?

Clive Anderson to Cher

★ Alexandra was tall and blonde, with a balcony you could do Shakespeare from.

Simon R. Green

★ He looks like a cross between a terminally ill schoolboy and a flamingo.

Frankie Boyle, on Peter Crouch, famously tall (6ft 7in)
English international footballer

★ Marilyn Manson: made entirely from Cher offcuts.

Mark Lamarr

★ She has no waist, an interesting face, but all we are really worshipping is two bags of silicone.

Martin Amis, on Jordan

★ I’d make plastic surgery compulsory for every woman over forty.

Simon Cowell

- ★ A sweet national joke with funny ears who looks like a womble.

David Starkey, on the Archbishop of Canterbury,
Dr Rowan Williams

- ★ Someone really should tell Gordon Brown to stop smiling – it just looks like he’s trying to shit a sea urchin.

Frankie Boyle

- ★ You see a big pair of grey Y-fronts? That’s you, that is.

History Today, *The Mary Whitehouse Experience*

“I saw Lee Majors, the bionic man, the other day on the Royal Mile. He looked a million dollars . . . he’s really let himself go.

Eddie Bannon”

- ★ It is rather suitable for umpires to dress like dentists, since one of their tasks is to draw stumps.

John Arlott, journalist and cricket commentator

- ★ I tell my son that the makeup is how daddy makes his money.

David Bowie

- ★ The fishy glitter in his eye became intensified. He looked like a halibut which had been asked by another halibut to lend it a couple of quid till next Wednesday.

P.G. Wodehouse

- ★ Time is an illusion. Lunchtime doubly so.

Douglas Adams

- ★ If you look at Kylie’s head . . . those teeth are proportionate to the teeth of a camel in the mouth of a

toddler.

Jeremy Hardy

★ She was stark naked, expect for a PVC raincoat, dress, net stockings, undergarments, shoes, rain hat and gloves.

Keith Waterhouse

★ It scares me when you think Goldie Hawn probably has the best plastic surgeon in the whole world and she still looks like a fish that's being pushed through a keyhole.

Graham Norton

★ She has an insipid double chin, her legs are too short, and she has a slight potbelly. She has a wonderful bosom, though.

Richard Burton, on Elizabeth Taylor

★ John Prescott: a man who couldn't wear a tie and a belt on the same day or he'd turn into sausages.

Frankie Boyle

Eddy: Inside of me there is a thin person screaming to get out.

June: Just the one, dear?

Eddy (Jennifer Saunders) and June (June Whitfield), *Absolutely Fabulous*

★ If you permed a fox I think it'd look a bit like Mick Hucknall. I actually think it'd be kinder to perm them than hunt them. And they'd be too embarrassed to go out and bother the sheep.

Sean Lock

★ Perhaps if I dyed my hair peroxide blond and called myself the 'Great White Tadpole' people would take more notice of me.

Ian Woosnam, Welsh professional golfer

★ And you never thought to say to him: “Mike, you look fine! Look, let’s leave the face, I’ll buy you a new hat”?

Simon Amstell to David Gest on Michael Jackson

★ The man who walks into the Langham Hotel is so handsome, tall, well built, tousle-haired, generally gorgeous, that I don’t immediately recognize him as Hugh Laurie . . . he has a sex appeal that one simply never associates with Hugh Laurie. I read that Emma Thompson went out with him at Cambridge, and thought, “Why did she bother?” As soon as I saw him I thought, “Why didn’t she marry him?”

Lynn Barber

★ Jar Jar Binks makes the Ewoks look like fucking Shaft.

Tim Bisley (Simon Pegg), *Spaced*

★ Poetry and consumption are the most flattering of diseases.

William Shenstone

★ She looks like a boiled horse.

Jeremy Clarkson on Sarah Jessica Parker

“I actually didn’t want him on the stage, ‘cause his haircut at the time was so appalling.

Bob Geldof on Bono’s
appearance at Live Aid”

★ The uglier a man’s legs are the better he plays golf.

H.G. Wells

★ I have no face, only two profiles.

Margot Asquith

★ I come from Killimare in Ireland – it’s a very ugly town. It’s so ugly it’s twinned with the ginger one from Girls Aloud.

Jo Caulfield

★ My face is like five miles of bad country road.

Richard Harris

★ I am not too keen on my nose, I don't like my knees, I hate my ankles, I am unsure about my behind, I don't like my legs at all. I am not sure about my chin, my forehead is a bit dodgy. But, overall, I can live with it.

Helen Mirren

★ You cannot insult me. God got there first.

Johnny Vegas

★ She's got the worst set of teeth I've ever seen, and I'm a dentist.

Ben (Robert Lindsay), *My Family*

★ Ronnie Wood looks like a blow-dried crow.

Sean Lock

★ Delia may have lovely dumplings – but it's hard to trust a woman whose fingers look like they're made of uncooked sausages.

Jim Shelley, on Delia Smith,
UK cookery presenter and cookbook writer

★ His face is sagging with tension.

Sid Waddell

The buttocks are the most aesthetically pleasing part of the body because they are non-functional. Although they conceal an essential orifice, these pointless globes are as near as the human form can ever come to abstract art.

Kenneth Tynan

★ Isn't it amazing that Camilla looks exactly like Princess Diana if she had survived the car crash?

Frankie Boyle

★ I come from Newcastle . . . that makes me a Geordie . . . this is it. This is what happens when the English fuck the Scots, you get this nice little drunken Ewok effect.

John Fothergill

★ My friend Karen's teeth are so bad, someone happy-slapped her and lost a finger.

Alan Carr

★ One more facelift on this one and she'll have a beard.

Patsy (Joanna Lumley), *Absolutely Fabulous*

★ My face looks like a wedding cake left out in the rain.

W.H. Auden

★ Jane: Do they really call me the one with the breasts?

Susan: Yes.

Jane: Then what do they call you?

Susan: Susan.

Jane (Gina Bellman) and Susan (Sarah Alexander),
Coupling

★ I'd kill myself if I was as fat as Marilyn Monroe.

Liz Hurley

★ Beauty is in the eye of the beholder, which is a pity because this week the National Association of Beholders wrote to tell me I've got a face like a rucksack full of dented bells.

Charlie Brooker

★ Most people that get plastic surgery are disappointed with the results – but they always look pleasantly surprised.

Jimmy Carr

★ Well, madam, have you looked in the mirror and seen the state of your nose? Boxing is my excuse. What's yours?

Henry Cooper to Baroness Summerskill

“I'm a fan of the bigger woman . . . very much the sort of man who would climb over Kylie Minogue to get to Fern Briton . . . basically, if a woman takes her jeans off in front of me and there's no indentation in her skin, I ain't aroused in the slightest.

Wil Hodgson”

★ It was irritating to have one's physical shortcomings pointed out quite so plainly twice in one evening, once by a beautiful girl and once by a dying badger.

Tom Holt

★ You have to give this much to the Luftwaffe: when it knocked down our buildings it did not replace them with anything more offensive than rubble. We did that.

Prince Charles

★ Has anyone ever told you you're really beautiful . . . and meant it?

Dennis Pennis (a.k.a. Paul Kaye) to Cher

★ A lady should always look her best, Thomas. Mummy used to wear so much mascara she had to throw her head back to get her eyes open.

Linda La Hughes (Kathy Burke), *Gimme, Gimme, Gimme*

★ This is really a lovely horse. I once rode her mother.

Ted Walsh, horseracing commentator

★ I bet she even does nice poos, like little Maltesers that smell like the Body Shop.

Jeremy Osborne (Robert Webb), *Peep Show*

★ That Seaman is a handsome young man but he spends too much time looking in his mirror rather than at the ball. You can't keep goal with hair like that.

Brian Clough, on English international
goalkeeper David Seaman

★ The lunches of fifty-seven years had caused his chest to slip down to the mezzanine floor.

P.G. Wodehouse

“Fuck handsome . . . rich works.

Billy Connolly”

★ I'm a lady, I don't have testicles. Well perhaps tiny little lady testicles.

Emily Howard (David Walliams), *Little Britain*

★ All men dream of fat women, never thin women.

Anthony Burgess

★ Whatever may be said in favour of the Victorians, it is pretty generally admitted that few of them were to be trusted within reach of a trowel and a pile of bricks.

P.G. Wodehouse

★ She looks like a campaign poster for neglected horses.

Frankie Boyle, on Amy Winehouse

★ Why is it called a Brazilian when it looks more like Chile?

Jeremy Hardy

★ I'm not bald. I'm just taller than my hair.

Clive Anderson

★ Get a haircut and a boiler suit so I don't have to keep explaining you to my friends!

Eddy (Jennifer Saunders), *Absolutely Fabulous*

★ I had my boobs measured and bought a new bra. Now I call them Joe Cocker and Jennifer Warnes because they're up where they belong.

Sarah Millican

★ Don't watch TV news. Look at those anchors in their wigs and ridiculous hairdos. Can you trust people who are lying about their appearance?

Eric Idle

★ He looks like a refugee from his sunlamp.

John Major, on Robert Kilroy-Silk, television presenter

★ I wonder why all the men in Iraq have black moustaches? They can't *all* think it suits them.

Paul Merton

I was once approached by a man in a shop who said, "Here, you look just like that Andrew Marr . . . you poor bugger."

Andrew Marr

★ It is better to be beautiful than to be good, but it is better to be good than to be ugly.

Oscar Wilde

★ When God gave you teeth, he spoilt a bloody good arse.

Bernard Manning

★ What I have to say is far more important than how long my eyelashes are.

Walter Scott

★ Being pretty on the inside means you don't hit your brother and you eat all your peas – that's what my grandma taught me.

Lord Chesterfield

★ It has been said that a pretty face is a passport. But it's not: it's a visa, and it runs out fast.

Julie Burchill

★ Beauty is the first present nature gives to a woman and the first it takes away.

Fay Weldon

★ If I had been around when Rubens was painting, I would have been revered as a fabulous model. Kate Moss? Well, she would have been the paintbrush.

Dawn French

★ It's a tough gig being Iraqi-Chinese; it's hard because you really want to grow a moustache but you just can't.

Chris Addison

★ My hair's got a life of its own. Last week I found it in the kitchen, making an omelette.

Paul Merton

★ I'm sorry about the cow earlier, by the way. You're not a cow. And if you were you'd be a lovely Jersey ripe for milking.

Alan Partridge (a.k.a. Steve Coogan)

“Hair is also a problem. I remember once, when I was reporting from Beirut at the height of the civil war, someone wrote in to the BBC complaining about my appearance.

Kate Adie”

★ Remember that the most beautiful things in the world are the most useless; peacocks and lilies for instance.

John Ruskin

★ The problem with beauty is that it's like being born rich and getting poorer.

Joan Collins

★ I used to file my nails, then I thought, “What’s the point of keeping them?”

Tim Vine

★ Beauty, to me, is about being comfortable in your own skin. That, or a kick-ass red lipstick.

Gwyneth Paltrow

★ Strange that the vanity which accompanies beauty – excusable, perhaps, when there is such great beauty, or at any rate understandable – should persist after the beauty was gone.

Elizabeth Russell

★ I hate the word “sneering”. I can’t help the way my face looks.

Jeremy Paxman

★ I have a face that is a cross between two pounds of halibut and an explosion in an old clothes closet.

David Niven

★ I lent my wife £1,000 to have for plastic surgery; now I can’t get the money back and I don’t know who to look for.

Jethro (a.k.a. Geoff Rowe)

★ I went to Buckingham Palace to cut Prince William’s hair. I said to the policeman, “Can you let me in to the car park, I’m here to cut Prince William’s hair?”

The policeman said, “Have you got a permit?”

I said, “No, just a bit off the back.”

Tim Vine

★ Oh sweet lady, with your face like a cream oval, and your nose like a delicious slope of cream, your ears like cream flaps, and your teeth like hard shiny pegs of cream . . .

Howard Moon (Julian Barratt), *The Mighty Boosh*

★ I'm fascinated that hair grows after death; I'm looking forward to that.

Clive Anderson

ARTS

❖ If you can't masturbate to it, it's art.

Sean Lock

❖ Art is merely the refuge which the ingenious have invented, when they were supplied with food and women, to escape the tediousness of life.

W. Somerset Maugham

❖ Well, it's about time a transvestite potter won the Turner Prize.

Grayson Perry

❖ Art is long, and the talk about it is even longer.

William J. Locke

❖ It does not matter how badly you paint so long as you don't paint badly like other people.

George Moore

❖ I cannot go to the opera, because I have forsworn all expense which does not end in pleasing me.

Charles Townshend

❖ I do not mind what language an opera is sung in so long as it is a language I don't understand.

Sir Edward Appleton

❖ This place, you tell them you're interested in the arts, you get messages of sympathy.

Alan Ayckbourn

“If it were not for the intellectual snobs who pay – in solid cash – the arts would perish with their starving practitioners. Let us thank heaven for hypocrisy.

Aldous Huxley”

Art is parasitic on life, just as criticism is parasitic on art.

Kenneth Tynan

People look at an oil painting and admire the use of brushstrokes to convey meaning. People look at a graffiti painting and admire the use of a drainpipe to gain access.

Banksy

❖ I simply refuse to countenance paintings that do not have at least a horse, a gladioli or a canal in them.

Dylan Moran

❖ I should have been – I don't know - a con man, a robber or a prostitute. But it was vanity that made me choose painting, vanity and chance.

Francis Bacon, artist

❖ In my experience, if you have to keep the lavatory door shut by extending your left leg, it's modern architecture.

Nancy Banks-Smith

❖ Opera, next to Gothic architecture, is one of the strangest inventions of Western man. It could not have been foreseen by any logical process.

Kenneth Clark

❖ A highbrow is someone who looks at a sausage and thinks of Picasso.

A.P. Herbert

❖ No good opera plot can be sensible, for people do not sing when they are feeling sensible.

W.H. Auden

❖ The holy grail is to spend less time making the picture than it takes people to look at it.

Banksy

❖ Most architects think by the inch, talk by the yard and should be kicked by the foot.

Prince Charles

❖ The words “creativity” and “innovation” make me vomit.

Grayson Perry

❖ Few persons who have ever sat for a portrait can have felt anything but inferior while the process is going on.

Anthony Powell

❖ The reason you start painting yourself . . . is that you are a model; a cheap model. I mean, you’ve always got yourself.

David Hockney

❖ If I ever forget my lines, I just sing, “Kiss my arse, I come from Leeds.” It usually fits everything.

Lesley Garrett, opera singer

❖ Buy old masters. They fetch a better price than old mistresses.

Lord Beaverbrook

❖ As far as I can see, the history of experimental art in the twentieth century is intimately bound up with the experience of intoxicification.

Will Self

❖ Talking about art is like dancing about architecture.

David Bowie

“People are wrong when they say opera is not what it used to be. It is what it used to be. That is what’s wrong with it.

Noël Coward”

❖ Sharks can be good. Artist’s dung can be good. Oil on canvas can be good. There’s a squad of conservators out there to look after anything an artist decides is art.

Charles Saatchi, art collector

❖ I always said God was against art, and I still believe it.

Edward Elgar

❖ The surest sign that a man has a genuine taste of his own is that he is uncertain of it.

W.H. Auden

❖ No operatic star has yet died soon enough for me.

Thomas Beecham, conductor

❖ A painting is never finished – it simply stops in interesting places.

Paul Gardner

❖ All artists are willing to suffer for their work. But why are so few prepared to learn to draw?

Banksy

❖ I think the art world had more trouble coming to terms with me being a potter than my choice of frocks.

Grayson Perry

❖ All that stuff about what art is supposed to be and how it should be geared to reflect its time is shit. It’s simple: just like what you like, love what you love.

Keith Allen

❖ My show got reviewed and it described my show as “the closest comedy gets to modern art” . . . right at the edge of comedy, a long way from funny comedy, almost not comedy at all, but not art. Heading towards art but can never get there.

Simon Munnery

No Englishman could have done that [the *Ring* Cycle]. After seven hours, they’d have given in and begged for a touch of farce, a naked Rhinemaiden in the closet, an Irish Valkyrie. That’s why the Germans got Wagner and we got Gilbert and Sullivan.

A.A. Gill

❖ She has the smile of a woman who has just dined off her husband.

Lawrence Durrell, on the Mona Lisa

❖ In a Scottish opera, it ain’t over till the fat lady bitch-slaps you.

Craig Ferguson

❖ I wouldn’t sell shit to Charles Saatchi. If I sell 55,000 books and however many screen prints, I don’t need one man to tell me I’m an artist. It’s hugely different if people buy it, rather than one fucking Tory punter does. No, I’d never knowingly sell anything to him.

Banksy, on art collector Charles Saatchi

❖ Fourteen-year-old wunderkind Josh Sumner, brought to the attention of the art establishment by an alert teacher, has drawn phalluses in the hands or mouths of all the people pictured in a history textbook. This work has already been sold to Saatchi for £800,000.

Michael Kelly

❖ I thought it might be nice to have a little line on the side going, just in case, of doing famous people’s pets for them, in formaldehyde.

Damien Hirst

❖ All my life I have enjoyed having erections, and I have been grateful to the people and the works of art that made them possible.

Kenneth Tynan

❖ The finest collection of frames I ever saw.

Sir Humphry Davy on the Paris art galleries

❖ The more you look at modern art exhibits, the more everything begins to look like an exhibit, including the attendant's chair and the fire extinguisher.

Brian Sewell, art critic

❖ It's amazing what you can do with an E in A-level Art, twisted imagination and a chainsaw.

Damien Hirst

BABIES AND CHILDREN

* My wife was getting broody because four women she works with got pregnant in the space of a month. She was, like, “There must be something in the water.” I said, “Unless it’s spunk, it doesn’t matter, does it?”

Jason Manford

* Social Worker: All I want to know, Vicky, is where your baby is.

Vicky Pollard: Oh, I swapped it for a Westlife CD.

Social Worker: OH MY GOD! HOW COULD YOU?

Vicky Pollard: I know . . . they’re RUBBAAASH!

Vicky Pollard (Matt Lucas),
Little Britain

* My friend spent £50 on a baby alarm and still got pregnant.

Linda Smith

* Have you noticed that all the people in favour of birth control are already born?

Benny Hill

* They kept trying to sponge down my face with cool water and all I could do was shout, “Be careful of my hair!” because I didn’t want it to go all curly.

Jordan, on childbirth

“The hardest thing with twins, of course, is picking your favorite.

Jason Manford”

* When I had my daughters, I had to have stitches. I did ask them to put a

couple of extra ones in, as a special treat for me husband, really. He said it really improved things. He said before that it was like waving a stick in the Albert Hall.

Pauline Calf (a.k.a Steve Coogan)

Me and Amber have just had our baby boy christened. We done a Posh and Becks, right, and named him after where we done it. Yeah – little Stairwell.

Lee Nelson (a.k.a. Simon Brodtkin),
after Victoria and David Beckham
named their son Brooklyn

* Parents are the bones on which children sharpen their teeth.

Peter Ustinov

* Should a father be present at the birth of his child? It's all any reasonable child can expect if dad is present at the conception.

Joe Orton

* Everything's twice the size it was nine months ago and I'm growing another head inside me.

Dorothy (Caroline Quentin), on her pregnancy
Men Behaving Badly

* Tom Cruise is to become a father. So we'll soon hear the pitter-patter of tiny feet . . . as Tom rushes down to the shop to get nappies.

Jonathan Ross

* I see my body as a time share.

Ulrika Jonsson, on pregnancy

* Being a child is horrible. It is slightly better than being a tree or a piece of heavy machinery, but not half as good as being a domestic cat.

Julie Burchill

* Ken is so tired his sperm are on crutches.

Emma Thompson, on ex-husband Kenneth Branagh

* Children are uncreative. They can only imitate.

Anthony Burgess

* I've never been to a sperm bank; I just keep it all under the mattress.

Jeremy Limb

* Someone I don't know that well Tells me they have a little boy.
"Oh yes," I enquire, "and how old is he or she?"

John Hegley

* The main purpose of children's parties is to remind you that there are children more awful than your own.

Katherine Whitehorn

* When you're a child, you're given certain boundaries: my mother always used to say, "If I am at the kitchen window and you are in the garden, I can see you. If I am in the garden and you are playing across the street, I can still see you. If I come to the gate and you are playing at the end of the road, I can see you . . . so piss off up the park."

Sara Benham

"We had our first child on the National Health Service, and had to wait nine months. Can you believe it?"

Hugh Laurie, *A Bit of Fry and Laurie*

* Youth is such a wonderful thing. What a crime to waste it on children.

George Bernard Shaw

* My friends look at me with their bleary, bloodshot eyes; they say, "Matt, isn't there a part of you that wants to have kids?"

I go, "Yeah, I keep a condom on it."

Matt Welcome

* So, Carol, you're a housewife and mother. And have you got any children?

Michael Barrymore, game-show presenter

* There are many differences between a baby and an iPod. And one of the biggest is, no one's going to mug you for your baby.

Nick Hornby

* Don't buy one of those baby monitors. Babies pretend to be dead. They're bastards and they do it on purpose.

Billy Connolly

* Ain't having a baby a miracle? How did my one little sperm find its way over to Amber's egg? I came on her tits, for fuck's sake . . .

Lee Nelson (a.k.a. Simon Brodtkin)

* Nicole Kidman is pregnant. Isn't that lovely? And here's the great news – she still has the little bed Tom used to sleep in.

Craig Ferguson

* Prodigy: a child who plays the piano when he ought to be in bed.

J.B. Morton

If it's a girl they're gonna name it Sigourney after an actress, and if it's a boy they're gonna name him Rodney after Dave.

Trigger (Roger Lloyd-Pack),
Only Fools and Horses

* There's a lot to do when you're a kid – spiders to catch, girls to poke in the eye – stuff to be getting on with.

Alan Davies

* He that doth get a wench with child and marries her afterwards, it is as if a man should shit in his hat and then clap it on his head.

Samuel Pepys

* If men had to have babies, they would only ever have one each.

Princess Diana

* I'm very hairy on my body and my wife is very ginger. We could very easily have an orang-utan.

Mike Gunn

* I don't dislike babies, though I think very young ones rather disgusting.

Queen Victoria

“Now, I'm not saying it doesn't smart a bit, but if blokes did it, I reckon you'd be looking at, what, give birth, have a couple of paracetamol [Panadol], maybe a bit of a nap and then back to work within the hour.

Gary Strang (Martin Clunes),
on childbirth, *Men Behaving Badly*”

* They say men can never experience the pain of childbirth. They can if you hit them in the goolies with a cricket bat for fourteen hours.

Jo Brand

* If you are allowed to smack children, you should be allowed to smack geriatrics as well, because they are just as much of a nuisance as children, if not more.

Jack Dee

* My childhood was just like *The Waltons*, but without the sawmill.

Johnny Vegas

* I've only got one child. People say, “Won't she be lonely?”
I say, “No, she's got Sky Plus.”

Jenny Eclair

* How inimitably graceful children are before they learn to dance.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge

* Man hands on misery to man.
It deepens like a coastal shelf.

Get out as early as you can,
And don't have any kids yourself.

Philip Larkin

* I had a happy childhood. We were poor, but we were shoplifters.

Lily Savage (a.k.a. Paul O'Grady)

* Breast feeding should not be attempted by fathers with hairy chests, since they can make the baby sneeze and give it wind.

Mike Harding

“I'd like to smack smug parents who say, “Our three-year-old's reading *Harry Potter*.” Well, my three-year-old's smearing his shit on the fridge door.

Jack Dee”

* We have lots of rows about the whole baby thing. I wanted to have a baby for about five years, but my wife wants to keep it forever.

Lee Mack

* For a while I was the perfect mother. Then the pethidine [Demerol] wore off.

Jenny Eclair

* I have four children, which is not bad considering I'm not a Catholic.

Peter Ustinov

* I was not a particularly small child. I was the one who always got picked to play Bethlehem in the school nativity play.

Jo Brand

* Men's second childhood begins when a woman gets a hold of him.

J.M. Barrie

* I was brought up by me mam. Why she couldn't give

birth the normal way still remains a mystery.

Roy “Chubby” Brown

* No wonder people are so horrible, when they start life as children.

Kingsley Amis

* What are children, anyway? Midget drunks. They greet you in the morning by kneeing you in the face and talking gibberish. They can’t even walk straight.

Dylan Moran

* When I was a child I used to entertain myself with nothing more than a box of matches and a kitten.

Jeremy Lion (a.k.a. Justin Edwards)

* Right, where’s me newspaper? I’m off to the khazi to try for a little baby of me own.

Jim Royle (Ricky Tomlinson), *The Royle Family*

My unhealthy affection for my second daughter has waned. Now I despise all my seven children equally.

Evelyn Waugh

* The last thing I would attempt to do is to buy clothes for a child I didn’t know well.

Colin Firth

* You don’t have favourites among your children but you do have allies.

Zadie Smith

* My boredom threshold is low at the best of times but I have spent more time being slowly and excruciatingly bored by children than by any other section of the human race.

Jill Tweedie

* Kids today get bored dead easily. It winds me up. When I was a kid, a dead bumblebee would give me two weeks of fun. I'd know where it was on the street; I'd even have a stick to poke it.

Mick Ferry

* Children are the most honest critics. They will say "You're funny", but also "You're pathetic – go away."

Dylan Moran

* Actually, I think children should be taught to be bored. I was in a coma of boredom throughout the 1970s. The shops weren't even open on a Sunday, and your nana, both your nanas, came for lunch and you had to be there.

Jenny Eclair

* Adults are just children who earn money.

Kenneth Branagh

* It's a hard job, being a parent. You're constantly asked questions you just can't answer, like, "What kind of socks do fairies wear? How many germs can you fit on a bead?" and the question I hear most often: "When can we come out of the cupboard, Mummy?"

Sara Benham

* Children do not give up their innate imagination, curiosity, dreaminess easily. You have to love them to get them to do that.

R.D. Laing

* It's nonsense to say that children are affected by playing computer games. If Pacman had affected us as kids, we'd be running around in dark rooms munching pills and listening to repetitive music . . .

Marcus Brigstocke

* Part of the reason for the ugliness of adults, in a child's eyes, is that the child is usually looking upwards, and few faces are at their best when seen from below.

George Orwell

* What Madonna's actually done is go to Africa to buy a black child for £1.5 million. And someone said to me, "Surely you find that offensive." Not really – I find it exciting because I've got two black kids at home.

Ava Vidal

* A lot of mothers will do anything for their children, except let them be themselves.

Banksy

Men are but children of a larger growth,
Our appetites as apt to change as theirs,
And full as craving too, and full as vain.

John Dryden

* I want twenty! Sell sixteen and keep four! Take the eyebrows off, though; they don't come with the eyebrows.

Liam Gallagher, on having children

* A five-year age gap between siblings is like a garden that needs constant attention. Even three months apart allows the weeds to grow up between you.

Zadie Smith

* I love children, especially when they cry, for then someone takes them away.

Nancy Mitford

* I think one of them asked if I wore Y-fronts or boxers or something. My favourite question was at the end – "Why are you evil?"

Simon Cowell, on being interviewed by children

* People have been marrying and bringing up children for centuries now. Nothing has ever come of it.

Celia Green

* The government is really worried about childhood obesity. I don't know what they're going to do about it, though. Maybe strengthen seesaws?

Sean Lock

* Children should be like waffles – you should be able to throw the first one away.

Nancy Mitford

* One child punishes you by leaving, the other punishes us ALL by staying.

Patsy (Joanna Lumley),
Absolutely Fabulous

* I really think that girls are born in conversation. I think they just pop out of the womb going, “Are you my mother? Lovely to put a name to a face. You, nurse, weigh me. Get it over with; it's the best it's ever going to be. Seven pounds one? It's downhill from here.”

Michael McIntyre

* When childhood dies, its corpses are called adults.

Brian Aldiss



BRITISH TOWNS AND CITIES

★ The city is not a concrete jungle, it is a human zoo.

Desmond Morris

★ In America they once asked me what my hometown of Newcastle was like, and I said it was a nice place to bring up your food.

Sting

★ It's great to be in Manchester – home of Oasis, Smiths, and other high-street retail outlets.

Tony Ferrino (a.k.a. Steve Coogan)

“Tell someone that you live, or have lived in Leeds, and they are quite likely to say, “Well, it's easy to get out of.”

Alan Bennett”

★ A town that looks like it's helping police with their inquiries.

Keith Waterhouse, on Brighton

★ I passed through Glasgow on the way here and couldn't help noticing how different it was from Venice.

Raymond Asquith

★ It is folly of too many to mistake the echo of a London coffee-house for the voice of the kingdom.

Jonathan Swift

★ Wheel-clamp. Dogs. Vagrants. A tour of our wonderful capital city is not to be

missed. The Fergie, The Princess Di and the football hooligan.

Carol Anne Duffy, “Translating the English”

★ In Manchester, you either become a musician, a footballer, a drugs dealer or work in a factory. And there aren’t a lot of factories left, y’know.

Noel Gallagher

★ It’s tough being a Geordie . . . All that beer to drink, the proper note of genial chirpiness to maintain, and having to remember to say “like” at the end of every sentence, like.

Phil Johnson, on coming from Newcastle

★ Look at that: “Accident Blackspot”? These aren’t accidents. They’re throwing themselves into the road gladly. Throwing themselves into the road to escape all this hideousness.

Withnail (Richard E. Grant), *Withnail and I* ★ According to legend, Telford is so dull that the bypass was built before the town.

Victor Lewis-Smith

★ My family decided to move to Bradford for a special reason – we got to the outskirts of the city and saw a sign that said “No Pakis” . . . and we thought, “Ooh, a shortage . . . let’s settle here!”

Isma Almas, British stand-up comedian of Pakistani origin ★ I like to go to Liverpool, just to visit my hubcaps.

Bernard Manning

★ I’ve lived in London for fifteen years. The reason I’ve still got my northern accent is I haven’t had a conversation yet.

John Fothergill

★ Too full of drugs, obesity, underachievement and Labour MPs.

Boris Johnson, on Portsmouth

★ Cities, like cats, will reveal themselves at night.

Rupert Brooke

★ A broken heart is a very pleasant complaint for a man in London if he has a comfortable income.

George Bernard Shaw

★ The people of Liverpool are a crowd of mawkish whingers.

Boris Johnson

“London – what a waste of time. I mean, Dick Whittington went to London thinking the streets are paved with gold. Probably why they call him Dick.

Jasper Carrot”

★ I like playing in Sheffield, it's full of melancholy happy-go-lucky people.

Alex Higgins, former professional snooker player

★ He needs those skyscrapers and the long straight avenues of the [Manhattan] grid system just to get a good swing up. He wouldn't have fared so well if the spider had bitten him in Prague or Edinburgh or one of our curvy old European cities . . . or an English village, where the height of the houses is less than the width of the road.

Dan Antopolski, on Spiderman

London Transport commissioned a study to find out why buses were running late, and it turned out it was because they kept stopping to let people on.

Rory McGrath

★ I wouldn't say that Morningside was pretentious, but the ice-cream van plays Rachmaninov.

Gavin Webster, on the Morningside area in Edinburgh

★ Liverpool is a kind of collision caused by the English trying to get out while

the Irish are trying to get in.

Nancy Banks-Smith

★ Why move from the north to the south? You go to London and within ten minutes you've got black snot.

Justin Moorhouse

★ The one good thing you can say for Manchester is that it's not Liverpool.

Richard Littlejohn

★ Growing up in inner London today, I might possibly have been a hoodie.

Norman Tebbit, politician and Conservative peer

★ I took my nephew out recently. The London Eye was too expensive so I took him up a tower block in Hackney and told him it was the London Arm.

Micky Flanagan

★ Is the 2012 Olympics really what we need? I've been to East London, and people there don't seem to have much call for an international dressage centre.

Frankie Boyle

★ May I remind all passengers that there is strictly no smoking allowed on any part of the Underground. However, if you are smoking a joint, it's only fair that you pass it round the rest of the carriage.

London Underground driver announcement

★ I was watching the London Marathon and saw one runner dressed as a chicken and another runner dressed as an egg. I thought, "This could be interesting."

Paddy Lennox

★ The problem with London is the tourists. They cause the congestion. If we could just stop tourism we could stop the congestion.

Prince Philip

★ First time I went to London, I got stuck on the Underground. I got on the escalator, there was a sign: “Dogs must be carried”. Could I find a dog? Could I fuck.

Dave Spikey

★ Please note that the beeping noise coming from the doors means that the doors are about to close. It does not mean throw yourself or your bags into the doors.

London Underground driver announcement

★ Somewhere between “murder” and “suicide” there’s a place called Merseyside.

Milton Jones

BRITISHNESS

❖ The British press hate a winner who's British. They don't like any British man to have balls as big as a cow's, like I have.

Nigel Benn, British former boxer ❖ Remember that you are an Englishman, and have consequently won first prize in the lottery of life.
Cecil Rhodes

❖ Sometimes, I don't wonder if we [the British] actually prefer things a bit crap.

Ben Elton

❖ My roles play into a certain fantasy of what people want English people to be, whereas half the time we're vomiting beer and beating people up.

Hugh Grant

❖ Britain today is suffering from galloping obsolescence.

Tony Benn, longstanding Labour politician ❖ Our trouble is that we drink too much tea. I see in this the slow revenge of the Orient, which has diverted the Yellow River down our throats.
J.B. Priestley

❖ The British public has always had an unerring taste for ungifted amateurs.

John Osborne

❖ Only in Britain would we have a bestselling book entitled *Crap Towns* and have to produce a second book, *Crap Towns II* because too many British people had written in complaining that their town hadn't made the first book.

Andy Parsons

❖ In England we have come to rely upon a comfortable time-lag of fifty years or a century intervening between the perception that something ought to be done and a serious attempt to do it.

H.G. Wells

❖ People from Newcastle, they're called Liverpudlians, aren't they?

Jade Goody, contestant on British *Big Brother* ❖ I think the British have the distinction above all other nations of being able to put new wine into old bottles without bursting them.

Clement Attlee

❖ Maybe we're one of the more tolerant countries in the world, being able to live with so many people we can't bloody stand.

Andy Parsons

❖ It's a philistine country. The only country in the world where a man of letters is actively looked down on; where it is a matter of pride that the royal family love only horses.

Anthony Burgess, on Great Britain ❖ I think my country is a disgusting wreck of a place. I will never move back there.

Tim Roth

“When the whole story about Josef Fritzl came out, everyone seemed to be disgusted, but I reacted differently. My reaction could possibly be described as a British reaction. The one thing I said was, “Oh my God I bet he didn't have planning permission for that.”

Jimmy Carr, on the news
that the Austrian Fritzl had

kept his daughter in a concealed basement for twenty-four years”

There are moments when we in the British press can show extraordinary sensitivity; these moments usually coincide with the death of a proprietor, or a proprietor's wife.

Craig Brown

❖ There is no British dream. This isn't because we lack some sort of sense of moral purpose, it isn't because we haven't got a sense of guiding destiny taking us towards a better tomorrow. We don't have a dream because we're awake. It's that simple.

Pub Landlord (a.k.a. Al Murray)



CHARACTER

* We once saw him beat a man until both he and the man were crying.

Chloe Denton (Megan De Wolf),
The League of Gentlemen

* The great majority of people in England and America are modest, decent and pure minded, and the amount of virgins in the world today is stupendous.

Dame Barbara Cartland

* What I say is that, if a man really likes potatoes, he must be a pretty decent sort of fellow.

A.A. Milne

* Being good is just a matter of temperament in the end.

Iris Murdoch

* They say a man should be judged by his enemies. I am very proud of mine.

Michael Heseltine, politician

* I have only got down on to paper, really, three types of people: the person I think I am, the people who irritate me, and the people I'd like to be.

E.M. Forster

* Shyness is just egoism out of its depth.

Penelope Keith

* Red wine with fish. Well, that should have told me something.

James Bond (Sean Connery), *From Russia with Love*

* Like many rich men, he thought in anecdotes; like many simple women, she thought in terms of biography.

Anita Brookner

* I'm a hero with coward's legs.

Spike Milligan

* Cleanliness is next to godliness? The chip shop is next to the hairdresser's. It doesn't persuade me to visit either.

Simon Munnery

* Noel Edmonds looks just the sort of person to chip in: "You can tell it's only ketchup" halfway through a horror movie.

Craig Brown

* It's a great burden, Granville. Being holier than everybody else. But I enjoy it.
Mr Arkwright (Ronnie Barker), *Open All Hours*

“He is one of those people who would be enormously improved by death.

Hector Hugh Munro”

* Somebody once said to me, "We are judged by what we do when no one else is watching."

I said, "God, I hope not."

Rob Brydon

* He's a perfectly charming person who would water your roses while you were on holiday, but as leader of the main campaigning body against racism in Britain he's been a complete dud.

Ken Livingstone, former Mayor of
London, on Trevor Phillips

* I turn over a new leaf every day. But the blots show through.

Keith Waterhouse

* Most human beings have an almost infinite capacity for taking things for

granted.

Aldous Huxley

* He has a face so innocent you could eat your breakfast off it.

Nancy Banks-Smith

* He is every other inch a gentleman.

Rebecca West

* Some are blessed with musical ability, others with good looks. Myself, I was blessed with modesty.

Roger Moore

* There is no sinner like a young saint.

Aphra Behn

* I'm not a philosopher. Guilty bystander, that's my role.

Peter O'Toole

* I'm an angel in the courtroom and a whore in the bedroom.

Abi Titmuss

* You can recognize a cruel man: he cries in the cinema.

Graham Greene

* I had always felt I was a self-destructive type but I didn't have a self-destructive habit. I didn't drink much or take drugs. I remember thinking that night, as we were playing, "Oh yeah, this is my vice. This is the thing I've been looking for to ruin my life."

Patrick Marber, on gambling

* When a stupid man is doing something he is ashamed of, he always declares that it is his duty.

George Bernard Shaw

* Nothing is more unpleasant than a virtuous person with a mean mind.

Walter Bagehot

* Nice guys finish last, but we get to sleep in.

Evan Davies

* Four fairies attended the birth of David Owen. Number One said, “You’ll be good looking.”

Number Two said, “You’ll be clever.”

Number three said, “You’ll be very ambitious.”

Number Four said, “You’ll be all these things and you’ll also be a shit.”

Dennis Healey, on the former leader of the
Social Democratic Party

There’s only one thing worse than an estate agent, but at least that can be safely
lanced, drained and surgically dressed.

Stephen Fry, *A Bit of Fry and Laurie*

* One might well say that mankind is divisible into two great classes: hosts and
guests.

Max Beerbohm

* Ingrid: It isn’t fair what people keep saying about him. They’d tell you he’d
sell his own mother.

Fletcher: I heard that on very good authority.

Ingrid: Who from?

Fletcher: The two blokes who bought his mother.

Ingrid Fletcher (Patricia Brake) and
Norman Stanley Fletcher (Ronnie Barker), *Porridge*

* If one sticks too rigidly to one’s principles, one would hardly see anybody.

Agatha Christie

* Nothing irritates me more than chronic laziness in
others. Mind you, it’s only mental sloth I object to.
Physical sloth can be heavenly.

Liz Hurley

* There was a boy called Eustace Clarence Scrubb, and he almost deserved it.

C. S. Lewis

* My idea of an agreeable person is a person who agrees with me.

Benjamin Disraeli

* The problem with people who have no vices is that generally you can be pretty sure they're going to have some pretty annoying virtues.

Elizabeth Taylor

* Apparently, you can tell a lot about someone's personality from what they're like.

Harry Hill

“Do you know what? Not in a mean way, but you're a little bit like one of those old men in *The Muppets*.

Natalie Haynes to

Robert Kilroy-Silk, *Question Time*”

* Hitler was a bad man. Winston Churchill was a good man. But if you were in a hot-air balloon with Hitler and Churchill and you were losing altitude . . .

Harry Hill

* He had sufficient conscience to bother him, but not sufficient to keep him straight.

David Lloyd George, on Ramsay MacDonald, British prime minister 1924 and 1929–35

* I hate mankind, for I think myself to be one of them, and I know how bad I am.

Samuel Johnson

* Vices are sometimes only virtues carried to excess.

Charles Dickens

* Harry was left to ponder in silence the depths to which girls would sink to get revenge.

J.K. Rowling

* The trouble with you, John, is that your spine does not reach your brain.

Margaret Thatcher

* He could not see a belt without hitting below it.

Margot Asquith

* The function of vice is to keep virtue within reasonable bounds.

Samuel Butler

* All charming people have something to conceal, usually their total dependence on the appreciation of others.

Cyril Connolly

* What you do when you don't have to, determines what you will be when you can no longer help it.

Rudyard Kipling

* Ladies, just a little more virginity, if you don't mind.

Herbert Beerbohm Tree

* The world may be divided into people that read, people that write, people that think and fox-hunters.

William Shenstone

* We confess our bad qualities to others out of fear of appearing naive or ridiculous by not being aware of them.

Gerald Brenan

* What, after all, is a halo? It's only one more thing to keep clean.

Christopher Fry

* Anger makes dull men witty, but it keeps them poor.

Francis Bacon, philosopher

* Zealous men are ever displaying to you the strength of their belief, while judicious men are showing you the grounds of it.

William Shenstone

I have often wished I had time to cultivate modesty . . . But I am too busy thinking about myself.

Edith Sitwell

* England has always been disinclined to accept human nature.

E.M. Forster

* Taste is the only morality. Tell me what you like and I'll tell you what you are.

John Ruskin

* O Lord, help me to be pure, but not yet.

Saint Augustine

* He mistrusts anyone who reads past the sports pages of the tabloids.

Peter Roebuck

* Some have been thought brave because they were afraid to run away.

English proverb

* The higher the buildings, the lower the morals.

Noël Coward

* A jump jockey has to throw his heart over the fence – and then go over and catch it.

Dick Francis

- * It is good to be without vices, but it is not good to be without temptations.

Walter Bagehot

- * You always get a little snidey one.

Karl Pilkington, on identical twins

“I’m compulsive, but I’m also very indecisive. I don’t know what I want, but I know that I want it now.

Dylan Moran”

- * I hope there’s a tinge of disgrace about me. Hopefully there’s one good scandal left in me yet.

Diana Rigg

- * Without the aid of prejudice and custom, I should not be able to find my way across the room.

William Hazlitt

- * The very powerful and the very stupid have one thing in common. Instead of altering their views to fit the facts, they alter the facts to fit their views . . . which can be very uncomfortable if you happen to be one of the facts that needs altering.

Dr Who

- * In every age the vilest specimens of human nature are to be found among demagogues.

Lord Macaulay

- * Moral indignation is jealousy with a halo.

H.G. Wells

- * I shall be glad when you have strangled the invincible respectability that dogs your steps.

D.H. Lawrence

* I'm so in touch with my feminine side, I'm practically going out with it.

Laurence Llewelyn-Bowen

* I have always thought of sophistication as rather a feeble substitute for decadence.

Christopher Hampton

* She said I'm a procrastinator . . . I had to go and look it up. Not immediately, obviously.

Ben Norris

* The more things a man is ashamed of, the more respectable he is.

George Bernard Shaw

* It's so much easier to do good than to be good.

B.C. Forbes

* You've no idea what a poor opinion I have of myself – and how little I deserve it.

W.S. Gilbert

* I'm a holy man minus the holiness.

E.M. Forster

* I would rather be a coward than brave because people hurt you when you are brave.

E.M. Forster

* Sentimentality – that's what we call the sentiment we don't share.

Graham Greene

* I don't think I've got bad taste. I've got no taste.

Graham Norton

* The public is wonderfully tolerant. It forgives everything except genius.

Oscar Wilde

I'm sure Hitler was a lovely bloke. You know. Beneath the moustache and all.

Russell Brand

* Jeez, Bob, you've got Tourette's syndrome of the soul, you know?

Bono, to Bob Geldof

* No one can have a higher opinion of him than I have, and I think he's a dirty little beast.

W.S. Gilbert

* I think my securities far outweigh my insecurities. I am not nearly as afraid of myself and my imagination as I used to be.

Billy Connolly

* Like all weak men he laid an exaggerated stress on not changing one's mind.

W. Somerset Maugham

* When a man is wrapped up in himself, he makes a pretty small package.

John Ruskin

“You have no idea how promising the world begins to look once you have decided to have it all for yourself. And how much healthier your decisions are once they become entirely selfish.

Anita Brookner”

* He behaved like an ostrich and put his head in the sand, thereby exposing his thinking parts.

George Carman

* She's the sort of woman who lives for others – you can always tell the others by their hunted expression.

C.S. Lewis

* An Englishman thinks he is moral when he is only uncomfortable.

George Bernard Shaw

* There used to be a real me, but I had it surgically removed.

Peter Sellers

* I am easily satisfied with the very best.

Winston Churchill

* I'm not sayin' she's a bragger, but if you've been to paradise, she's got a season ticket. She's that type, Gillian, you know. If you've got a headache, she's got a brain tumour.

Shirley Valentine (Pauline Collins),
Shirley Valentine

* I think, like most people, my moral values tend to be pretty fuzzy.

Mick Jagger

* What is morality in any given time or place? It is what the majority then and there happen to like, and immorality is what they dislike.

Alfred North Whitehead

* Modern Britain is full of snivelling people on the take who have lost all moral background and fibre.

Quentin Letts

* Punctuality is the virtue of the bored.

Evelyn Waugh

* People find it far easier to forgive others for being wrong than being right.

Albus Dumbledore

Not only don't I know who I am, but I'm very suspicious of people who do know who they are. I am sometimes ten or twelve people a day, and sometimes four or five people an hour!

Tom Baker

* You must stop this interview now as I have come to the end of my personality.
Quentin Crisp

* A fanatic is a man who consciously over-compensates a secret doubt.
Aldous Huxley

* Boredom is a vital problem for the moralist, since at least half the sins of mankind are caused by the fear of it.
Bertrand Russell

* To be absolutely honest, what I feel really bad about is that I don't feel worse. There's the ineffectual liberal's problem in a nutshell.
Michael Frayn

* Neat? She was so anally retentive she couldn't sit down for fear of sucking up the furniture!
Patsy (Joanna Lumley), *Absolutely Fabulous*

* Never mind, dear, we're all made the same, though some more than others.
Noël Coward

* Selfishness must always be forgiven, you know, because there is no hope of a cure.
Jane Austen

* You are morally, spiritually and physically a festering fly-blown heap of accumulated filth.
Harold Steptoe (Harry H. Corbett),

Steptoe and Son



CHARITY

★ You can't give these sorts of clothes to the poor. Haven't they got enough to contend with without the added humiliation of wearing last season?

Eddy (Jennifer Saunders), *Absolutely Fabulous*

“I don't do enough for charity. I do a bit but you can always do more, but I look at it like this . . . it's a pain, isn't it? Nothing in it for me.

Ricky Gervais”

★ Philanthropy is the refuge of people who wish to annoy their fellow creatures.

Oscar Wilde

★ Ted: What was it he used to say about the needy? He had a term for them?

Dougal: A shower of bastards.

Father Ted Crilly (Dermot Morgan) and

Father Dougal McGuire (Ardal O'Hanlon), *Father Ted* ★ It's so bad being homeless in winter. They should go somewhere warm like the Caribbean, where they can eat fresh fish all day.

Lady Victoria Hervey, on the homeless

★ I've sponsored a child in Africa. She's got a Jimmy Carr T-shirt, a Jimmy Carr hat. But I worry whether it's making any real difference, you know? I'm not getting any more bookings.

Jimmy Carr

★ Africa ain't just a country that gave us Bob Marley. I've seen documentaries about it, and there are some terrible images that have been left in my mind.

Especially with tribeswomen with well droopy swingers. With your help, we can stop these shocking things happening.

Ali G (a.k.a. Sacha Baron Cohen)

★ A drunkard would not give money to sober people. He said they would only eat it, and buy clothes and send their children to school with it.

Samuel Butler

★ No matter how much you give a homeless person for tea, you never get that tea.

Jimmy Carr

A woman came from the parish council and asked me if I wanted to run a half-marathon. And I said, “Oh no, I couldn’t do a half marathon.’

And she said, “You really should think about it. It’s for partially sighted and blind children.”

So I thought, “Well, fuck it, I could win that.”

Dave Spikey

★ A lady with a clipboard stopped me in the street the other day. She said, “Can you spare a few minutes for Cancer Research?”

I said, “All right, but we won’t get much done.”

Jimmy Carr



CHRISTMAS

❖ I come from a very traditional family. When I was seven, my uncle Terry hanged himself on Christmas Eve. My family didn't take his body down until 6 January.

Nick Doody

❖ It's not just for life, it's for Christmas.

Bubble (Jane Horrocks),
Absolutely Fabulous

❖ We are really quite lucky this year because Christmas falls on Christmas Day.
Bobby Gould

❖ I got the worst Christmas present ever, ever in my life. My sister gave me a "Grow Your Own Loofah" kit. It was a clay pot, a bag of earth and five seeds. And I think the clay pot hit her hardest.

Sean Lock

❖ My memories are of my mother crying on Christmas Eve because she'd bought too many satsumas and couldn't face the ordeal ahead.

Nigella Lawson

❖ I've never been to an Al-Qaeda Christmas party, but I have seen the invites. No music, no dancing, but we promise the fastest game of Pass-the-Parcel you've ever seen.

Omid Djalili

❖ The one thing I remember about Christmas was that my father used to take

me out in a boat about ten miles offshore on Christmas Day, and I used to have to swim back. Extraordinary. It was a ritual. Mind you, that wasn't the hard part. The difficult bit was getting out of the sack.

John Cleese

❖ Bloody Christmas, here again, Let us raise a loving cup,
Peace on earth, goodwill to men,
And make them do the washing-up.

Wendy Cope

“Last year, I bought all my presents on Christmas Eve. From a petrol station. I'll never forget the looks on everyone's faces when they opened their barbecue fuel.

Sean Lock”

❖ Is genitalia the silver stuff you drape over the branches?

Anita (Shobna Gulati), *Dinnerladies* ❖ Were those presents the three kings brought Jesus for Christmas or his birthday?

Karl Pilkington

❖ You may have remembered us from a couple of Christmasses ago when we did “White Chocolate”, a play about racism.

Ollie Plimsoles (Reece Shearsmith),
The League of Gentlemen ❖ The first rule of family Christmas is that nobody is allowed to be upstairs having a good time when they could be in the living room getting on somebody's nerves.

Victoria Wood

❖ I once bought my kids a set of batteries for Christmas with a note on it, saying, “Toys not included”.

Bernard Manning

❖ Christmas is taken very seriously in this household. I believe in Father Christmas, and there's no way I'd do anything to undermine that belief.

Carol Ann Duffy

❖ I spent Christmas in Manchester, just to go into the Royal Mail depot to see all the postmen going "Sorted! Sorted!"

Milton Jones

❖ From all of us here, whichever religion you are, remember, only one can be right, so . . . let's have a war! Happy Christmas!

Simon Amstell

❖ By far the worst celebrity Christmas chef is Nigella Lawson. Instead of floating orgasmically through her larder, we should be shown the reality of most women's lives at this time of year.

Liz Jones

❖ Never work for a liberal employer, dear boy, they'll sack you on Christmas Eve.

Philip Hope-Wallace

CLASS

* Put three Englishmen on a desert island and within an hour they'll have invented a class system.

Alan Ayckbourn

“What I want to know is: what is actually wrong with an elite?”

Prince Charles”

* Some names have class connotations. I was born on a council estate but once I'd been called Jeremy, we had to move.

Jeremy Hardy

* My grandfather used to have his eggs timed by the passing trains. If they were hard-boiled he had the driver sacked.

Audrey fforges-Hamilton (Penelope Keith),
To the Manor Born

* I haven't got a butler. We just have three people who look after the house. End of story.

Shaun Woodward

* Feet off the furniture, you Oxbridge twat; you're not on a punt now.

Malcolm Tucker, (Peter Capaldi),
The Thick of It

* If you want to kill a fox, all you need is some overflowing bins and a brick. You don't need no effing trumpet.

Lee Nelson (a.k.a. Simon Brodwin), on fox hunting

Take a good look: there are only twenty-four of these in the country.

Duke of Marlborough,
at the urinal of his gentlemen's club.

- * I hate talking to Onslow on the phone, especially if he's not wearing a shirt.
Hyacinth Bucket (Patricia Routledge),
Keeping Up Appearances

- * Eccentricity, to be socially acceptable, had still to have
at least four or five generations of inbreeding behind it.
Osbert Lancaster

- * Tim: I'd be happy to be an OBE. Best of all, an earl and an OBE.
Graeme: You'd be an earlobe.
Tim Brook-Taylor and Graeme Gardner, *The Goodies* * If human beings could
be propagated by cutting, like apple trees, aristocracy would be biologically
sound.
J.B.S. Haldane

- * Actually, I vote Labour, but my butler's a Tory.
Earl Mountbatten of Burma

- * Outer space is no place for a person of breeding.
Lady Violet Bonham Carter

- * That's what I love about you, Barbara, you're one of us . . . You're like a big
film star, but you're still common as muck.
Mrs Merton (a.k.a. Caroline Aherne), to Barbara Windsor * The trouble with
Michael Heseltine is that he has had to buy all his furniture.
Alan Clark

- * Scratch a pessimist and you find often a defender of privilege.

William Beveridge

“Aristocrats spend their childhood being beaten by fierce nannies and their later years murdering wildlife, so it is hardly surprising their sex lives are a bit cock-eyed.

Jilly Cooper”

* No place in England where everyone can go is considered respectable.

George Moore

* I went on the Countryside Alliance march. I’m not pro-or anti-fox hunting, I just like to watch posh people get beaten up.

Russell Howard

* When everyone is somebody, then no one’s anybody.

W.S. Gilbert

* The British are funny. We hate the working class. We hate posh people.

Mike Skinner

* People think there’s a rigid class system here, but dukes have even been known to marry chorus girls. Some have even married Americans.

Prince Philip

* I have changed. I no longer keep coal in the bath; I keep it in the bidet.

John Prescott

* I’m not a snob. Ask anybody. Well, anybody who matters.

Simon Le Bon

* I think factories would close down, really, if it wasn’t for working-class people.

Victoria Wood

* An English gentleman never shines his shoes, but then nor does a lazy bastard.

Will Self

* I came from a family who had fruit on the sideboard even when no one was ill.

Ted Ray

* The vendetta is on the other foot.

Christopher Bland

* Apparently, Tory leader David Cameron wants to make all towns in Britain triple-barrelled, like Kingston-upon-Thames and Berwick-upon-Tweed. He wants to have Leeds-on-Benefit.

Milton Jones

* I knew I'd become middle class when I found myself having an out-of-body experience in Sainsbury's. I looked down on myself and found myself buying a scented candle and a packet of couscous.

Alun Cochrane

* Don't knock Bingo. It's the only chance working-class people will ever have of owning a giant ceramic cheetah.

Johnny Vegas

* I may be middle class, but I'm hard. *Al dente*, you might say.

Jimmy Carr

* I certainly did feel inferior. Because of class. Because of strength. Because of height. I guess if I'd been able to hit somebody in the nose, I wouldn't have been a comic.

Dudley Moore

* Nigel and I hit it off like a horse on fire.

Tony Britton, on Nigel Havers

They is some people who suddenly get loads of money who become very

tasteless. How has you two managed to avoid that?

Ali G (a.k.a. Sacha Baron Cohen), interviewing David and Victoria Beckham for
Comic Relief

COMEDY

★ Have you ever noticed, right, when you're walking along the street at night . . . there's always someone, isn't there, on the other side of the road, that says at the top of their voice, "Hey you, ya four-eyed bastard, where d'you get that hat?"

Duncan Thicket (a.k.a. Steve Coogan)

★ Oscar Wilde has a legacy as being very witty. I don't think he was. I just think he talked all the time, and if you throw enough shit at the wall, some sticks.

Dan Atkinson

★ If you expect Lenny Bruce then you may as well piss off now!

Frankie Howerd

★ From the stage I've seen people of all ages absolutely roaring at really good toilet humour.

Adrian Edmondson

★ His hilarity was like a scream from a crevasse.

Graham Greene

★ He has a terrible act. There, I've said it, and already I feel better.

Arthur Smith, on fellow stand-up comedian Jimmy Carr

★ He who laughs most, learns best.

John Cleese

★ God's always got a custard pie up his sleeve.

Margaret Forster

“It's probably why I had to have a hip replacement.

John Cleese, on the Ministry of Silly Walks sketch in *Monty Python's Flying*

Circus”

“I never thought he was a racist. I just thought he was a fat white bastard.

Trevor McDonald,
on Bernard Manning”

★ I’m not here for your amusement. You’re here for mine.

John Lydon

★ We participate in a tragedy; at a comedy we only look.

Aldous Huxley

★ There is no reason why a joke should not be appreciated more than once.
Imagine how little good music there would be if, for example, a conductor
refused to play Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony, on the ground that his audience
might have heard it before.

A.P. Herbert

★ I’ve been heckled so much recently . . . in the street.

Duncan Thicket (a.k.a. Steve Coogan)

★ “What d’you think of t’comedian?”
“Well, he’s all right, if you like laughing.”

Dave Spikey

★ As a humour columnist, I don’t do witty off-the-cuff
remarks; it’s like throwing five-pound notes into the
gutter.

Keith Waterhouse

★ I got heckled, so I said to the bloke, “You think you’re hard?”
He said, “I’m a black belt in judo.”
I said, “How many times are you really attacked by a man in a dressing

gown?”

He said, “I work in a mental hospital.”

Lee Mack

★ I have to say that Frank Skinner has never, ever, ever made me laugh – ever! He’s just never, ever, ever, ever, made me laugh. The amount of money he has earned for not making me laugh is staggering!

Will Self on Frank Skinner

★ You can sway an audience if you win the women over. The gentlemen will follow ’cos they can be so foolish like that at times, they are easily led.

Johnny Vegas

★ I told my mother I wanted to grow up and be a comedian. She said you can’t do both.

Jimmy Carr

★ I’ve got a shaving box . . . I’ll grab you, sir, I’ll grab you by your little shiny face, I’ll put you in, I’ll stuff you right in, you’ll be all crammed in there like a bitch . . . you won’t know what’s happening, there’s a penguin in there . . . you won’t know each other, there’ll be embarrassing pauses.

Noel Fielding

★ The marvellous thing about a joke with a double meaning is that it can only mean one thing.

Ronnie Barker

★ I can never tell a joke, I’ve always found it easier to just fall over.

Norman Wisdom

★ Imagination was given to man to compensate him for what he is not, a sense of humour to console him for what he is.

Francis Bacon, philosopher

“The aim of a joke is not to degrade the human being but to remind him that he is already degraded.

George Orwell”

Three blokes go into a pub. Well, I say three; could be four or five. Could be nine or ten, doesn't matter. Could have been fifteen, twenty, fifty. Round it up. Hundred. Let's go mad, eh – two-fifty. Tell you what, double it up – five hundred. Thousand! Oh, I've gone mad! Two thousand! Five thousand!

Bill Bailey

★ My dad said, “Laughter is the best medicine,” which is why, when I was six, I nearly died of diphtheria: “Dad, I can't breathe!”

“Knock, knock . . .”

Dave Spikey

★ It's a United Nations comedy cultural exchange programme tonight. Tonight I am here and Jim Davidson is being buggered in Baghdad right now, systematically and without cessation by US troops.

Omid Djalili

“If you were to ask me to name three geniuses, I probably wouldn't say Einstein, Newton . . . I'd go Milligan, Cleese, Everett . . . Sessions.”

David Brent (Ricky Gervais),

The Office”

★ I'm very bad at keeping a straight face. And that's my job, really, to be near very funny men and not laugh, and basically I'm very, very bad at my job.

Tamsin Greig, on acting in *Black Books*

★ There'll be no swearing, bad language or dirty talk. No, no, none of that. Because as my mother always says, “If you have to swear to get laughs, then

you're obviously a cunt."

Ed Byrne

★ The proof that God has a very weird sense of humour is that, having invented the sublime mystery of haute cuisine, he went and gave it to the French.

A.A. Gill

★ I finally heard some applause from a bald man and said, "Thank you for clapping me," and he said, "I'm not clapping – I'm slapping me head to keep awake."

Les Dawson

★ Before I got into comedy, I was a plumber for 150 years – although that's just an estimate.

Gordon Southern

★ Whoopee cushions . . . I don't know about you, yeah, but when you're getting them ready, do you not find them really difficult to fart into?

Spencer Brown

★ There was an Englishman, a Pakistani and a Chinaman – what a wonderful example of a multicultural society.

Bernard Righton (a.k.a. Steve Coogan)

★ The rewards for being sane may not be very many, but knowing what's funny is one of them.

Kingsley Amis

★ He makes jokes like little clocks. He has no interest in their context or meaning, only that they cause an explosion of laughter. I want a comedian to have a hinterland. The best comedians are interested in jazz, poetry and the world.

Arthur Smith, on fellow stand-up comedian Jimmy Carr

★ I remember once having to stop performing when I thought an elderly man a few rows back from the front was actually going to die because he was laughing so hard.

Adrian Edmondson

★ I got into stand-up comedy because I thought it'd be sex, drugs and rock 'n' roll. It's ended up being wanking, cough mixture and Billy Ray Cyrus.

Lee Mack

★ Anyone who thinks women aren't funny is an idiot: two of my favourite comedians of the last twenty-five years are Lily Savage and Dame Edna Everage.

Ricky Gervais

★ You're entering dangerous land when you start theorizing about comedy.

Adrian Edmondson

★ A laugh is something that comes out of a hole in your face? Anywhere else and you're in dead trouble.

Ken Dodd

★ A humorist tells himself every morning, "I hope it's going to be a rough day." When things are going well, it's much harder to make the right jokes.

Alan Coren

★ When I first said I wanted to be a comedian, everybody laughed. They're not laughing now.

Bob Monkhouse

★ He's the funniest man in the world, my dad. Kind of bloke that could read out a telephone directory and it'd be funny. I mean, to be fair, he used to do it with his cock out.

Lee Mack

★ I'm funny only because I'm experienced at being funny. I practised for ages in front of a mirror putting my glasses on sideways.

Eric Morecambe

★ The French are pathetic. They've got a town called Brest and none of them think it's funny.

Al Murray

“There is a lot of rubbish written about toilet humour – people saying it is childish and pretending it is beneath them – but there is no doubting the effectiveness of a really good willy gag.

Adrian Edmondson”

★ To truly laugh, you must be able to take your pain, and play with it.

Charlie Chaplin

★ David Walliams: Noel, is there anything you banned from the Boosh tour? Jokes?

Noel Fielding: Catchphrases.

On the *Never Mind the Buzzcocks* quiz show

★ Got a phone call today to do a gig at a fire station. Went along. Turned out it was a bloody hoax.

Adrian Poynton



COMMUNICATION

❖ “Help!” What an arresting voice. Such a rich timbre, full and melodious. I wonder if it’s a natural voice or whether its owner has had it trained? I’ll let him call again. Perhaps I shall then better be able to tell.

Ivor Cutler

❖ I think someone’s been phoning my taps.

Jeremy Limb

“Once I found myself siting across the table from the Two Ronnies [Ronnie Corbet and Ronnie Barker] and thinking, “What do I say to these bastards?”

John Peel”

❖ If anyone hasn’t heard of Bebo, it’s basically heroin for fourteen-year-olds.

Dara O Briain

❖ If one could only teach the English how to talk, and the Irish how to listen, society here would be quite civilized.

Oscar Wilde

❖ Now is not the time for sound-bites.

Tony Blair

❖ I wish I could see things from your point of view; unfortunately I can’t stick my head that far up my ass.

Liam Gallagher

❖ The reason Neil Kinnock's speeches go on for such a long time is that, having nothing to say, he has no idea of when to stop saying it.

John Major British prime minister (1990-7),
on the leader of the opposition

❖ I was walking the streets of Glasgow the other week and I saw this sign: "This door is alarmed". I said to myself, "How do you think I feel?"

Arnold Brown

❖ There's nothing wrong with acronyms, but let's be more specific about them, you know? How about CTM – Chuckled to Myself, SI -Smiled Inwardly, or CEBATPTL – Couldn't Even Be Arsed to Pretend to Laugh.

Geoff Norcott

❖ I sometimes think that when the prime minister tries to select a weapon it is the boomerang he finds most effective.

John Smith

The worst scenario you can find yourself in if you're an electrical appliance is if you're a smoke alarm and you haven't got any batteries, 'cos you can see the fire happening but you can't do anything about it.

Noel Fielding

❖ I've always said there's a place for the press, but they haven't dug it yet.

Tommy Docherty

❖ I could not fail to disagree with you less.

Boris Johnson

❖ If a giant ape and a table-tennis champion got into a fight over a karaoke machine, would the newspaper headline be, "King Kong Ping Pong Sing Song Ding Dong?"

Jimmy Carr

❖ You'll interrupt yourself in a minute.

David Cameron, MP, to presenter John Humphrys,
Today Programme, BBC Radio 4

“I refuse to answer that question on the grounds that I don’t know the answer.

Douglas Adams”

❖ My research team tells me young people do not read newspapers these days, being either too busy downloading ring tones for their telephones, or too morbidly obese to make it to the newsagents.

Martin Kelner

❖ Vodafone says it’s the largest mobile community. Now, correct me if I’m wrong, but that’s the gypsies.

Jimmy Carr

❖ How many times do I have to flush before you go away?

Stephen Fry

❖ Through the pigeonhole flew a carrier pigeon. There was something attached to its leg. It was a postman.

The Goon Show

❖ Silence is not only golden; it is seldom misquoted.

Bob Monkhouse

❖ Acres of time, wasted, wasted. I play poker (and lose), I play Ludo and Mah Jong. I check out MetaFilter. I buy frocks. Anything. It’s a kind of hell. I sometimes think I might go back to typewriting. But you can’t get the ribbons.

Jenny Diski, on the internet

❖ It’s a small world, but I wouldn’t want to have to paint it.

Chic Murray

❖ Bill: Allow me to elucidate— Graeme: You do and you clean it up yourself.

Bill Oddie and Graeme Gardner, *The Goodies*

❖ I am told that I talk in shorthand and then smudge it.

J.R.R. Tolkien

❖ I love it when someone insults me. That means that I don't have to be nice any more.

Billy Idol

❖ Silence is as full of potential wisdom and wit as the unhewn marble of a great sculpture.

Aldous Huxley

❖ Compromise: an agreement between two men to do what both agree is wrong.

Lord Edward Cecil

❖ They call it “surfing” the net. It's not surfing. It's typing in your bedroom.

Jack Dee

“As I was leaving this morning, I said to myself, “The last thing you must do is forget your speech.” And, sure enough, as I left the house this morning, the last thing I did was to forget my speech.

Rowan Atkinson”

❖ I'm out of my depth. What do I do? Put the kettle on? The sound of the kettle might drown out her tears.

Mark Corrigan (David Mitchell), *Peep Show*

❖ Note to self: must get some Post-its. This dictaphone's becoming quite unwieldy.

Mark Lamarr

❖ You can't just come marching in here tellin' them

they're useless. That's my job.

Pauline Campbell-Jones
(Steve Pemberton),
The League of Gentlemen

❖ Bert, it's been a long day. Take two aspirin and insult me in the morning.

Doc Martin (Martin Clunes), *Doc Martin*

❖ The e-mail of the species is deadlier than the mail.

Stephen Fry

No, no, not goodbye, Margaret; no, just *bonjour*.

Del Boy (David Jason),
Only Fools and Horses

❖ Everyone knows how to talk, and no one knows what to say.

Nick Hornby

❖ Weally centuwion? I'm surprwised to hear a man like you wattled by a wabble of wowdy webels.

Pontius Pilate (Michael Palin), *The Life of Brian*

❖ Some of our greatest catastrophes have been caused by people talking, and some by people not talking.

Stephen Hawking

❖ There were gorgeous flashes of silence . . . that made his conversation perfectly delightful.

Revd Sydney Smith

❖ Glenn: This is a bucket of shit. If someone throws shit at us, we throw shit back at them. We start a shit fight. We throw so much shit at them, that they

can't pick up shit, they can't throw shit, they can't do shit.

Hugh: That's top swearing Glenn, well done.

Glenn Cullen (James Smith) and Hugh Abbot (Chris Langham), *The Thick of It*

❖ If nobody said anything unless he knew what he was talking about, a ghastly hush would descend upon the earth.

A.P. Herbert

❖ There may be a reason I can't think of, but the problem with that reason is that I can't think of it now.

Boris Johnson

❖ It's silly to make generalizations, but if you talk to anyone in the south for longer than five minutes, they will try to sell you fruit.

Paul Merton

❖ The best way I know of to win an argument is to start by being in the right.

Lord Hailsham

❖ I just come and talk to the plants, really – very important to talk to them, they respond, I find.

Prince Charles

❖ Graffiti is one of the few tools you have if you have almost nothing. And even if you don't come up with a picture to cure world poverty you can make someone smile while they're having a piss.

Banksy

❖ I've always been a *Daily Mail* reader. I prefer it to a newspaper.

Hugh Laurie

❖ Where in this small-talking world can I find A longitude with no platitude?

Christopher Fry

❖ The single most important two things we can do . . .

Tony Blair

❖ I sometimes feel as if I have nothing to say, and I want to communicate this.

Damien Hirst

❖ Hell is an all-male black-tie dinner of chartered accountants which goes on for eternity.

John Mortimer

“My little sister, she got me on Facebook because I was on MySpace: “No, no, no. You don’t want to be on MySpace, you want to be on Facebook!” So I joined both. But I keep muddling them up, so I keep asking people to come on MyFace. Still, eighty *thousand* friends!

Shappi Khorsandi”

❖ The annual conference of media pundits is cancelled, owing to unforeseen circumstances.

Craig Brown

❖ Umpire Bowden does like his leg-bye signal. It’s a little stroke of the inner thigh followed by a wiggle of the foot. I imagine he practises it in front of the mirror.

Jonathan “Aggers” Agnew, cricket commentator

❖ Gossip is when you hear something you like about someone you don’t.

Jane Seabrook

❖ Gossip is just news running ahead of itself in a red satin dress.

Liz Smith

❖ Hugh Abbot: God that’s why the PM always looks so clued up, I always thought he was genuinely quite with it.

Malcolm Tucker: No, no, he’s as bad as you, he uses phrases like “with it” as well.

Hugh Abbot (Chris Langham) and

Malcolm Tucker (Peter Capaldi), *The Thick of It*

❖ Whenever I meet someone with a Somerset burr, I always imagine that in the next five minutes I'm going to be tied to a candlelit table, with a goat, and raped.

Jeremy Clarkson

❖ Reading someone else's newspaper is like sleeping with someone else's wife. Nothing seems to be precisely in the right place, and when you find what you are looking for, it is not clear then how to respond to it.

Malcolm Bradbury

❖ We can't move off because some idiot has their fucking hand stuck in the door.

London Underground driver announcement

Mike, I'll see you back here 2200 hours. Everyone else, I'll see you back here at ten.

Tim Bisley (Simon Pegg), *Spaced*

❖ Conversation is never easy for the British, who are never keen to express themselves to strangers or, for that matter, anyone, even themselves.

Malcolm Bradbury

❖ Advertising is the rattling of a stick inside a swill bucket.

George Orwell

❖ I'm convinced there's a small room in the attic of the Foreign Office where future diplomats are taught to stammer.

Peter Ustinov

❖ I spoke to my mum today, because I don't have caller ID.

Jo Caulfield

❖ Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will make me go in a corner and cry by myself for hours.

Eric Idle

“Why have we got predictive texting? Why do we need it? We don’t have predictive talking – but it would be great if we did: “Where did you go today?” Today, me? I ~~wallabied~~, ~~wanked~~, walked to the ~~sharons~~, ~~shits~~, shops . . . I reckon that’s what Tourete’s is – it’s just predictive talking people can’t turn of.

Lee Mack”

❖ It’s possible to disagree with someone about the ethics of non-violence without wanting to kick his face in.

Christopher Hampton

❖ When people say, “You’re breaking my heart,” they do in fact usually mean that you’re breaking their genitals.

Jeffrey Bernard

❖ Only the other day I was enquiring of an entire bed of old-fashioned roses, forced to listen to my ramblings on the meaning of the universe as I sat cross-legged in the lotus position in front of them.

Prince Charles

❖ Misquotations are the only quotations that are never misquoted.

Hesketh Pearson

❖ Next week we’ll be investigating rumours that the president of the dairy council has become a Mason, and goes around giving his colleagues the secret milkshake.

Ronnie Barker

❖ Old MacDonald was dyslexic, IEIEO.

Billy Connolly

❖ Please allow the doors to close. Try not to confuse this with “Please hold the doors open”. The two are distinct and separate instructions.

London Underground driver announcement

❖ A diplomat is somebody who can tell you to go to hell and leave you looking forward to the trip.

Alex Salmond

❖ I don’t like repeating gossip, so listen up.

Jane Seabrook

❖ What I said to them at half time would be unprintable on the radio.

Gerry Francis

❖ They do say Mrs Miggins, that verbal insults hurt more than physical pain. They are, of course, wrong, as you will soon discover when I stick this toasting fork in your head.

Edmund Blackadder (Rowan Atkinson), *Blackadder*

❖ Look, we all have something to bring to this discussion. But I think from now on the thing you should bring is silence.

Arnold Rimmer (Chris Barrie), *Red Dwarf*

❖ They were trying to use me as an escape goat.

Jade Goody, contestant on British *Big Brother*

❖ If the person you are talking to doesn’t appear to be listening, be patient. It may simply be that he has a small piece of fluff in his ear.

A.A. Milne

“Alton Towers – Where the magic never ends”, or so the commercial says. Imagine my disappointment when it closed at 7.30.

Colin Hill, “Letters”, *Viz*

❖ Six, “Cecilia”, by Suggs.

Chris Eubank, guest-presenting *Top of the Pops*

❖ Hoovers remind me of Teresa Gorman. Every now and then it starts whining and you realize the bag needs changing.

William Hague, on fellow Conservative MP

❖ Jill, could you come for a brief scuba in my think tank?

Gus Hedges (Robert Duncan), *Drop the Dead Donkey*

❖ Come the fuck in or fuck the fuck off.

Malcolm Tucker, (Peter Capaldi),
The Thick of It

❖ Let the passengers off the train first . . . oh, go on then, stuff yourselves in like sardines – see if I care.

London Underground driver announcement

❖ As one bastard to another, I accept your apology.

Aneurin Bevan to Hugh Dalton

❖ I once punched a bloke in the face for saying Hawk the Slayer was rubbish, when what I should have said was, “Dad, you’re wrong.”

Bill Bailey

❖ That’s asexual harassment.

Jade Goody,
contestant on British *Big Brother*

❖ I’m warning you, I don’t mince my punches.

Nicola Bodeux (Sue Wallace), *Dinnerladies*

❖ My friend’s mum recently pointed out that I have the same ironing board cover as her. Can anyone think of a more mundane and pointless remark to make than this?

Alun Daniel, “Letters”, *Viz*

❖ This probably illustrates why I haven’t done many . . . um, you know. I’m just terrible. At talking. With words.

Richard Ayoade

❖ Excuse me, mate. I'm not being racist, right, but can you tell me how to get to Camden from here?

Andrew O'Neill

❖ I always have a quotation for everything – it saves original thinking.

Dorothy L. Sayers

❖ He is an old bore. Even the grave yawns for him.

Herbert Beerbohm Tree

❖ There is no such thing as conversation. It is an illusion. There are interesting monologues, that's all.

Rebecca West

❖ The English language has a deceptive air of simplicity, so have some little frocks; but they are both not the kind of thing you can run up in half an hour with a machine.

Dorothy L. Sayers

“Consultation is a good thing when people agree with you and a waste of time when people don't agree with you.

Ken Livingstone”

❖ I rang British Telecom. I said, “I want to report a nuisance caller.”

He said, “Not you again.”

Frank Carson

❖ I have a bit of a problem with reading. I read slowly, and get my words jumbled up a bit. I had some test done and apparently it's not dyslexia – I'm just thick. At least now I have a name for it.

Jack Dee

❖ Muddle is the extra unknown personality in any committee.

Anthony Sampson

❖ They don't pay their sixpences and shillings at a music hall to hear the Salvation Army. If I was to try to sing highly moral songs, they would fire ginger-beer bottles and beer mugs at me. I can't help it if people want to turn and twist my meanings.

Marie Lloyd, music hall singer famous for insinuating double meanings into innocent lyrics

❖ If a lion could speak, it would not understand itself.

Michael Frayn

❖ A man never tells you anything until you contradict him.

George Bernard Shaw

❖ Prepare to put mustard on those words, for you will soon be consuming them along with this slice of humble pie that comes direct from the oven of shame set at gas mark egg on your face!

Moss (Richard Ayoade), *The IT Crowd*

❖ I won't say anything because no one ever listens to me anyway! I might as well be a Leonard Cohen record.

Neil (Nigel Planer), *The Young Ones*

❖ I'd just like you to stir-fry a few ideas in my think-wok.

Gus Hedges (Robert Duncan),
Drop the Dead Donkey

❖ It was one of those parties where you cough twice before you speak, and then decide not to say it after all.

P.G. Wodehouse

❖ I cannot speak well enough to be unintelligible.

Jane Austen

❖ When you do Shakespeare they think you must be intelligent because they think you understand what you're saying.

Helen Mirren

“Nothing is so impenetrable as laughter in a language you don't understand.

William Golding”

❖ Though he tortures the English language, he has never yet succeeded in forcing it to reveal its meaning.

J.B. Morton

❖ Critics search for ages for the wrong word, which, to give them credit, they eventually find.

Peter Ustinov

❖ A fool and his words are soon parted.

William Shenstone

❖ The words to describe pain are inaccurate and imprecise.

Tony Moore

❖ Do not accustom yourself to use big words for little matters.

Samuel Johnson

❖ Why do old people pick up the phone and say their number? I've just dialled it. Do they open their front door and say their address?

Michael McIntyre

❖ Why is it that people who most often use the phrase “Do you know what I mean?” are the people least likely to preface it with anything so scientifically or

philosophically bamboozling that the last words are required?

Robert Ince

❖ Could we interlock brain spaces in my work area?

Gus Hedges (Robert Duncan), *Drop the Dead Donkey*

❖ He has the gift of compressing the largest amount of words into the smallest amount of thought.

Winston Churchill, on Ramsay MacDonald

❖ In a British hotel, the words, “Can I help you, sir?” mean roughly, “What the hell do you want?”

Kingsley Amis

❖ I suspect language isn’t his first language.

Linda Smith on John Prescott

❖ Old women with mobile phones look wrong.

Peter Kay

❖ I will not allow my daughters to learn foreign languages because one tongue is sufficient for a woman.

John Milton

❖ Jamie Lee Curtis has trouble learning her lines because English is not her first language. She doesn’t, unfortunately, have a first language.

John Cleese

❖ To the people who’ve got iPhones: you just bought one, you didn’t invent it!

Marcus Brigstocke

❖ He can’t speak Turkey, but you can tell he’s delighted.

Kevin Keegan

❖ I like Alexander Graham Bell because, having invented the phone, he realized how annoying it was and refused to have one in his study.

Sandi Toksvig

“I do not object to people looking at their watches when I am speaking. But I strongly object when they start shaking them to make sure they are still going.

Lord Birkett”

❖ Speak in French when you can't think of the English for a thing.

Lewis Carroll

❖ What language are you talking in now? It appears to be Bollocks.

Richard Wilson

❖ Helen, if I could just park in your mental multistorey a moment . . .

Gus Hedges (Robert Duncan), *Drop the Dead Donkey*

❖ The trouble with words is that you never know whose mouths they've been in.

Dennis Potter

❖ Richard Burton had a tremendous passion for the English language, especially the spoken and written word.

Frank Bough



DATING

* Do you seriously expect me to be the first prince of Wales in history not to have a mistress?

Prince Charles

* She said, “You, take me out for dinner? I wouldn’t piss on you if you were on fire.”

I said, “What if I *wasn’t* on fire?” . . . it was a gamble, but imagine if it had paid off.

Richard Herring

* I’m in a relationship at the moment. Sorry, girls, it will have to be your place.

Lee Mack

* Shit, what’s she talking about? Nod. Look serious. I’m Di, she’s Bashir.

Jeremy Osborne (Robert Webb), *Peep Show*

– Who was that lady I seen you with last night?

– You mean, “I saw.”

– Sorry. Who was that eyesore I seen you with last night?

Eric Morecambe and Ernie Wise

* He was so benevolent, so merciful a man that, in his mistaken passion, he would have held an umbrella over a duck in a shower of rain.

Douglas Jerrold

* Strategy is buying a bottle of fine wine when you take a lady out for dinner.

Tactics is getting her to drink it.

Frank Muir

* People wonder why I go out with models with nothing between their heads.

Simon Le Bon

* Her mother had just finished the washing and we sat holding hands and watching the moon go down over her father's underpants.

Les Dawson

* Rod Stewart is a man of principle; he will not go out with a woman with brown hair.

David Walliams

“Let's face it, Tony, the only way you're gonna be in there is if you're both marooned on a desert island and she eats a poisonous berry or a nut which makes her temporarily deaf, dumb, stupid, forgetful and desperate for sex.

Gary Strang (Martin Clunes), *Men Behaving Badly*”

* Sophie: How's the love life?

Mark: Love life may be a rather grandiose term for staring at women on the bus.

Sophie Chapman (Olivia Coleman) and

Mark Corrigan (David Mitchell), *Peep Show*

* I went to South Africa and I thought, “I'm single I'm going to find myself a bloke . . . tall, good looking, built like a brick shit-house, six foot four, blond haired, blue eyed white guy for the duration of my stay and then at the end of it I'll take away his farm.”

Ninia Benjamin, black British comedian

* It is true that when you're going out with an impressionist you can sleep with lots of different men – not because he does lots of voices, but because he's away on tour all the time.

Ronni Ancona

* My ex-boyfriend came round last night, which was a bit weird because I

didn't even know he was in a coma.

Jo Brand

* You girls would never help us boys out. You'd never undo the top button of your jeans. It was like trying to stroke a dog through a letterbox.

Jeff Green

* Manny: And you will stay with me, just in case Bernard: No no no, I'm a boyfriend now. I've got duties. Lots of sighing and holding hands and not finishing sentences.

Manny (Bill Bailey) and
Bernard Black (Dylan Moran), *Black Books*

* Well, we don't go in for all that around here – all that “moonlight and roses”. It's all right for Noël Coward. I bet he didn't try it with any of the women round here. If he crept up behind them in a silk dressing gown, he'd find his fag-holder shoved down the back of his throat.

Rigsby (Leonard Rossiter), *Rising Damp*

* I'm the kind of person who thinks it's appropriate to quote bits from *Blackadder* on a first date.

Luke Wright

* Come on, she can only hurt you emotionally.

Mark Corrigan (David Mitchell), *Peep Show*

* Bob: When it comes to women you're hardly Omar Sharif.
Terry: If Omar Sharif lived in Gateshead I doubt he'd be Omar Sharif.

Bob Ferris (Rodney Bewes) and
Terry Collier (James Bolam), *The Likely Lads*

* Condoms come in all different flavours nowadays. There's strawberry and curry and that. Do you like curry?

Gareth Keenan (Mackenzie Crook), *The Office*

* I am fine about being single because for me being single is a choice . . . it's my second choice.

Graham Norton

* Since when has a great rack and an open mind not been a man's type?

Nessa (Ruth Jones), *Gavin and Stacey*

* I see all my ex-girlfriends. Well, not so much see as . . . watch.

Brian Topp (Mark Heap), *Spaced*

* Rule one of playing it cool: Only smile at her face.

Jeff Murdock (Richard Coyle), *Coupling*

* Susan, you are offering this man food and sex in the same place. If there's something to read in the loo he may never leave.

Sally Harper (Kate Isitt), *Coupling*

“I'm a lonely celibate, me. I do nothing. I go home and fry eggs. If I ever do get a girl to come back to my place I won't know what to do with her. Ill be flicking hot fat at her with a spatula.

Tony Martin (Andrew Dunn), *Dinnerladies*”

* Relax, Mark. You're not Hitler in his bunker. He was really under the cosh. Mind you, at least he had a girlfriend.

Mark Corrigan (David Mitchell), *Peep Show*

* Now the whole dizzying and delirious range of sexual possibilities has been boiled down to that one big, boring, bulimic word. Relationship.

Julie Burchill

* I'd like to show you who's the boss, but I'm afraid it would only confirm that you are.

Jane Seabrook

* My girlfriend was complaining last night that I never listen to her.

Or something like that. Jack Dee

* The trouble is you can't live with men, but then you can't chop them into little pieces and boil the flesh off the bones because that would be cooking.

Jenny Eclair

* Dorothy: How would you feel if I farted in bed all the time?

Gary: I'd be absolutely delighted.

Dorothy (Caroline Quentin) and
Gary Strang (Martin Clunes), *Men Behaving Badly*

* I'd break her bastard teeth if I knew which drawer they were in.

Roy "Chubby" Brown

* I don't think that couples should look alliterative.

Jeremy Limb

* It's no good pretending that any relationship has a future if your record collections disagree violently or if your favourite films wouldn't even speak to each other if they met at a party.

Nick Hornby

* After eight years with my girlfriend she still gets annoyed if I use her toothbrush. Well, if she can tell me a better way of getting dog shit off my trainers . . .

Jimmy Carr

* To err is dysfunctional, to forgive co-dependent.

Berton Averre

* When I look back, the fondest memory I have is not really of the Goons. It is of a girl called Julia with enormous breasts.

Spike Milligan

* Reporter: Who wears the trousers in your house?

Denis Thatcher, husband of the British prime minister: I do. And I wash and iron them.

* My girlfriend snores really loudly. Apparently she had her nose broken when she was younger, but it didn't teach her. She still snores really loudly.

Ed Byrne

“You can't dangle the bogus carrot of possible reconciliation in front of me whilst riding some other donkey.

Tim Bisley (Simon Pegg), *Spaced*”

* It's amazing the clarity that comes with psychotic jealousy.

Rupert Everett

* I'm not sayin' he's bad, my fella. He's just no bleedin' good.

Shirley Valentine (Pauline Collins), *Shirley Valentine* * I am always looking for meaningful one-night stands.

Dudley Moore

* You don't wake a sleeping woman on a lie-in. There are only two caveats to this: if a celebrity has died, or it's snowing.

Michael McIntyre

* There are some things you can't share without ending up liking each other.

J.K. Rowling

* She looked up at me and she gave me a great big smile. Straight away I knew it wouldn't cost me much for the supper . . . No teeth.

Max Wall

* I'll get the speech about how wonderful I am. Basic rule, isn't it? More wonderful you are at the start of the speech, the more dumped you are at the end.

Sally Harper (Kate Isitt), *Coupling*

* To say she was my girlfriend was absurd: no one the wrong side of thirty has a girlfriend . . . I suppose I ought to have realized it's ominous that 40,000 years

of human language had failed to produce a word for our relationship.

Robert Harris

* Dating on the internet . . . I've got a mate . . . he met this one girl and he'd just shaved his head and she sent him a message saying he reminded her of Travis Bickle from *Taxi Driver*, and he thought, being the Romeo that he is, "I'll reply with a line from the film," but the line he chose was "Have you ever seen what a Magnum 45 can do to a woman's face?" She didn't reply.

Sam Avery

* Going out with a girl is like entering a new town. Either you get lucky and go straight onto the next or you get unlucky and end up on the ring road, heading for the industrial estate.

Simon Nye

* I've been on some dodgy dates. How bad can a date be when you spike your own drink with Rohypnol?

Alan Carr

The glances over cocktails
That seem to be so sweet
Don't seem quite so amorous
Over Shredded Wheat.

Frank Muir

* So I kissed Lucy, and I was very surprised to feel her tongue pop out. It was my first real snog, and I loved it . . . Sadly, the next year Lucy developed distemper and had to be put down.

Hugh Laurie

* If you invite a girl out to dinner, I don't see why she should expect a pudding.

Stephen Merchant

* I went back to this girl's fat and she had an eight-foot light switch. I thought, "That's a huge turn off."

Tim Vine

* How long is it polite to continue to be interested in what someone says after they reveal they've got a boyfriend?

Russell Brand

* Eddy: You know, Patsy used to date Keith Moon.

Patsy: Well, sort of. I woke up underneath him in a hotel room once.

Eddy (Jennifer Saunders) and
Patsy (Joanna Lumley), *Absolutely Fabulous*

* What I don't get is that women will accept a drink from you in a bar. But when I stand on my front doorstep with a can of Kestrel, see a female and ask, "D'you want a swig?" they run away.

Sean Lock

* I went out with an Irish Catholic. Very frustrating. You can take the girl out of Cork . . .

Markus Birdman

* Women remember, Steve. It's like they've got minds of their own.

Jeff Murdock (Richard Coyle), *Coupling*

* She's got the magic combination of beauty and low self-esteem.

Mark Corrigan (David Mitchell), *Peep Show*

* I met a Dutch girl with inflatable shoes last week, phoned her up to arrange a date but unfortunately she'd popped her clogs.

Peter Kay

* I've dated jerks, so why not geeks?

Kelly LeBrock

* Samantha has to go now as she's off to meet her Italian gentleman friend who's taking her out for an ice cream. She says she likes nothing better than to spend the evening licking the nuts off a large Neopolitan.

Humphrey Lyttelton,

I'm Sorry I Haven't a Clue, BBC Radio 4



DEATH

★ In India when a man dies, his widow throws herself on the funeral pyre. Over here, she says, “Fifty ham baps, Beryl – you slice, I’ll butter.”

Victoria Wood

★ I plan to put my ashes while still hot in one of those green wheelie bins. That’ll show ’em.

Rob Brydon

★ You can spend your whole life trying to be popular but, at the end of the day, the size of the crowd at your funeral will be largely dictated by the weather.

Frank Skinner

★ The best definition of an immortal is someone who hasn’t died yet.

Tom Holt

“If God’s omnipotent, what could he possibly want with my old woman?

Clegg (Peter Sallis),

Last of the Summer Wine”

★ When you’ve told someone that you’ve left them a legacy the only decent thing to do is to die at once.

Samuel Butler

★ I was taking my dog for a stroll in the cemetery early one day and a woman passed me by and said, “Morning!”
I said, “No, just walking the dog.”

John Mann

★ Look, I don't care what the telly says, all right? We have to get out of here. If we don't, they'll tear us to pieces, and that is really going to exacerbate things for all of us.

Shaun (Simon Pegg), *Shaun of the Dead*

★ Erm . . . you may be thinking that I am comparing my penis to that of a corpse.

Dr Alan Statham (Mark Heap), *Green Wing*

★ Two guys are talking, and one says to the other, "What would you do if the end of the world was in three minutes' time?"

The other one says, "I'd shag everything that moved . . . What would you do?" And he says, "I'd stand perfectly still."

Billy Connolly

★ "Oh, well, life goes on," people say when someone dies. But from the point of view of the person who has just died, it doesn't.

Terry Pratchett

★ It's purely ugly. It looks like a sewer.

Elton John, on the Diana Memorial Fountain

★ Lord Randolph Churchill was the chief mourner at his own protracted funeral.

Lord Rosebery

★ I thought about killing myself, but I went on holiday to Belgium instead.

Stephen Fry

★ I shall not waste my days in trying to prolong them. I shall use my time.

Ian Fleming

★ Posterity will ne'er survey A nobler grave than this;
Here lie the bones of Castlereagh;
Stop, traveller, and piss.

Lord Byron, on Lord Castlereagh

★ Who died and made you fucking king of the zombies?

Ed (Nick Frost), *Shaun of the Dead*

“I’ll always remember what I was doing when I heard that Michael Jackson had died; I was hearing the news that Farrah Fawcett had died.

Armando Iannucci”

★ When I die, I’ll probably climb out of the coffin and play the organ at my own funeral.

Rick Wakeman

★ My uncle Jimmy took liver salts twice a day for forty years. He died on Sunday, was buried Wednesday and the following Friday they had to go to the cemetery to beat his liver to death with a stick.

Frank Carson

★ You never see a black ghost, do you?

Karl Pilkington

★ My grandfather died in his rocking chair. I was only a kid at the time. Didn’t realize the whole thing would keel over by climbing on the back of it.

Michael Redmond

★ Wright: Johnny Weissmuller died on this day. Which jungle-swinging character clad only in a loincloth did he play?

Contestant: Jesus.

Steve Wright in the Afternoon, BBC Radio 2

★ Alan: Hey, Rigsby, you don’t think he’s going to do something desperate, do you?

Rigsby: Why do you always have to look on the grisly side? Anyway, I’ve just shampooed the carpet in there!

Alan (Richard Beckinsale) and
Rigsby (Leonard Rossiter), *Rising Damp*

★ I wish Richard Hammond *had* died and I wish he had been decapitated. Of course, it's a joke. But coincidentally it's also what I believe.

Stewart Lee

★ There is nothing like a morning funeral for sharpening the appetite for lunch.

Arthur Marshall

★ I want to go ahead of Father Time with a scythe of my own.

H.G. Wells

★ A friend of mine died of dyslexia. He choked on his own Vimto.

Dave Spikey

★ When my gran died, she left us a wardrobe full of fur. She didn't have any expensive coats – she was just crap at cleaning.

Sara Benham

“This is a late parrot. It's a stiff. Bereft of life, it rests in peace. If you hadn't nailed it to the perch, it would be pushing up the daisies. It's rung down the curtain and joined the choir invisible. This is an ex-parrot.

John Cleese, *Monty Python's Flying Circus*”

★ Millions long for immortality who do not know what to do with themselves on a rainy Sunday afternoon.

Susan Ertz

★ There are a couple of conditions. Whoever takes my kidneys must also take my face. And my name as well. And they can kiss goodbye to manmade fibres, watching films with Tom Hanks in and heterosexual sex.

Julian Clary, on organ donation

★ On this week's programme, we hear about the man who fell out of an aeroplane at 10,000 feet and lived. Until he hit the ground.

John Culshaw

★ Where there's a will, there's a relative.

Ricky Gervais

Sometimes I wonder what my grandfather would think of what I do. He spent his whole life in the kebab business. He's buried with all his equipment – he's probably turning in his grave.

Milton Jones

★ Good riddance to him, the freeloading bastard! I hope he fries.

John Cleese, at Graham Chapman's memorial service

★ If Prime Minister Sharon had lived . . . he is dead, isn't he?

Kim Howells

★ If I were reincarnated, I would wish to be returned to earth as a killer virus to lower human population levels.

Prince Philip

★ I am ready to meet my Maker. Whether my Maker is prepared for the great ordeal of meeting me is another matter.

Winston Churchill

★ My wife said she thought it would be very romantic if when she dies she could be buried in her wedding dress. I said, "You'd better hope you die of some kind of wasting disease."

Mike Gunn

★ I'm sure, wherever my dad is, he's looking down on us. He's not dead. Just very condescending.

Jack Whitehall

★ I think about death sometimes. Analytically, of course.

Lynne Truss

★ Death comes along like a gas bill one can't pay.

Anthony Burgess

★ Poor soul – very sad; her late husband, you know, a very sad death – eaten by missionaries – poor soul.

William Archibald Spooner

“ I was a rust repairer. I was a rust repairer and full-time survivor. I survived all the major earthquakes, and the *Titanic*, and several air crashes.

Keith Moon”

★ My girlfriend said, “Can you take me to the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco?” I took her there and she jumped off, and she's dead. I think I blame myself . . . because I drove her to it.

Liam Mullone

★ Going to the brink of death and back, in a nine-car pile-up on a dual carriage-way, is very much like making love to a beautiful woman. First of all, brace yourself, hold on tight -particularly if it's a rear-ender. And pray you make contact with her twin airbags as soon as possible.

Swiss Toni (Charlie Higson), *The Fast Show*

★ Last year marked the tenth anniversary of the tragic death in Paris of a much-loved figure – Henri Paul, the people's chauffeur.

Jimmy Carr

★ A recent survey, called “Funeral Rights”, revealed that many people admitted

to “secret disappointment” with their funeral service.

Crosby Herald

★ The Princess Diana Memorial Fountain. People say it’s great; it’s what she would have wanted; it’s a place where families can hang out, children can play; it’s what Princess Diana would have wanted. It isn’t. What Princess Diana would have wanted is to have not been killed.

Stewart Lee

★ Any work that is to be judged as significant must exhibit undertones of death. This is most easily achieved by placing the word daintily in the title.

Craig Brown

★ As Beckett said, it’s not enough to die, one has to be forgotten as well.

John Hurt

★ Cemetery could be a death trap.

Sleaford Target

★ When he heard the news of Stalin’s death, from the radio, Gyuri was shampooing his hair. Apart from experiencing an intense well-being, his first thought was whether the whole system would collapse in time for him not to have to take the exam in Marxism-Leninism he was due to take the following week.

Tibor Fischer

★ It matters not how a man dies, but how he lives. The act of dying is not of importance, it lasts so short a time.

Samuel Johnson

★ The leading cause of death in this world is birth.

Mitch Murray

★ And then my bereavement counsellor died. I didn’t know who to turn to.

Hugh Laurie, *A Bit of Fry and Laurie*

★ If this is dying, then I don't think much of it.

Lytton Strachey

★ The Beatles are dying in the wrong order.

Victor Lewis-Smith

★ Don't send me flowers when I'm dead. If you like me, send them while I'm alive.

Brian Clough

★ The idea is to die young as late as possible.

Ashley Montagu

★ Swans sing before they die – 'twere no bad thing, Did certain persons die before they sing.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge

★ I hope you die of cancer of the clitoris.

Elton John to a female photographer

★ When I die I want to go to *Vogue*.

David Bailey

★ When good Americans die they go to Paris.

Oscar Wilde

★ I was number one on the Who's Likely to Die list for ten years. I mean, I was really disappointed when I fell off the list.

Keith Richards

★ Lister: What's it feel like?

Rimmer: Death? It's like being on holiday with a group of Germans.

Dave Lister (Craig Charles) and

Arnold Rimmer (Chris Barrie), *Red Dwarf*

★ You live and learn. Then you die and forget it all.

Noël Coward

★ There are so many ways of us dying it's astonishing any of us choose old age.

Beryl Bainbridge

★ We are going to die, and that makes us the lucky ones. Most people are never going to die because they are never going to be born.

Richard Dawkins

“Everyone is afraid of dying alone. I don't understand. Who wants to die and have to be polite at the same time?

Quentin Crisp”

★ John Maynard Keynes: In the long run we are all dead.

Joan Robinson: Yes, but not all at the same time.

★ It's the only thing we haven't succeeded in completely vulgarizing.

Aldous Huxley on death

★ Every moment dies a man, every moment one and one-sixteenth is born.

Charles Babbage

★ Death is the last enemy: once we've got past that I think everything will be all right.

Alice Thomas Ellis

People who think there's no good way to die have obviously never heard the phrase “Drug-fuelled-sex heart attack”.

Frankie Boyle

★ My grandfather gave me some sound advice on his deathbed: “It's worth

spending money on good speakers.”

Jonathan Broke

★ Dying is easy; it's living that scares me to death.

Annie Lennox

★ The most positive way to think about death is to try to live.

Michael Caine

★ If you gave Jerry Falwell an enema, you could bury him in a matchbox.

Christopher Hitchens, on Jerry Falwell,
the day after his death

“Some people think football is a matter of life and death. I assure you, it's much more important than that.

Bill Shankly”

★ It is computed that 11,000 persons have at several times suffered death rather than submit to break their eggs at the smaller end.

Jonathan Swift

★ Death is like the rumble of distant thunder at a picnic.

W.H. Auden

★ Sure, there have been injuries and deaths in boxing –
but none of them serious.

Alan Minter

★ There are any number of magical creatures, mostly female, whose singing can bring about horror and death. Sirens, undines, banshees, Bananarama tribute bands . . .

Simon R.
Green

★ There are a couple of ways to avoid death; one of them is to be magnificent,

this is my favourite way.

Ian Dury

★ Death is the most convenient time to tax rich people.

David Lloyd George

★ My dad's dying wish was to have his family around him. I can't help thinking he would have been better off with more oxygen.

Jimmy Carr

★ I consider it one of the compensations of death not to be required to have an opinion on the royal family.

Matthew Parris

When I was taking drugs with the Pistols and the Rolling Stones, it didn't occur to me that I was doing anything unhealthy or might die one day. But now that I'm drinking Perrier, eating celery and going to the gym, I'm thinking about death.

Tony Parsons

★ Death before dishonour. I always used to wonder, "Hey, exactly how much dishonour are we talking about here?" 'Cos I could handle quite a lot. I would, for instance, fellate a Smurf before I picked death.

Dylan Moran

★ He was cremated and I couldn't resist grinding him up with a bit of blow.

Keith Richards on snorting his father's ashes



DEMOCRACY

❖ If a thirty-nine-year-old man can't discuss putting a trout into the vagina of a sixteen-year-old girl then Al-Qaeda has won, my friend.

Richard Herring

❖ Democracy is all very well, but why give it to the people?

Audrey fforbes-Hamilton
(Penelope Keith), *To the Manor Born* ❖ The best
argument against democracy is a five-minute
conversation with the average voter.

Winston Churchill

❖ The only way to get anything done in a democracy is to take someone out to lunch.

Anthony Armstrong

❖ Our great democracies still tend to think that a stupid man is more likely to be honest than a clever man.

Bertrand Russell

❖ The worst thing I can say about democracy is that it has tolerated the Right Honourable Gentleman for four and a half years.

Aneurin Bevan, MP, on Neville Chamberlain, British prime minister (1937-40)

❖ Our society is a free society. In a free society you are allowed to say what you think. But you are not allowed to think.

George Mikes

❖ Democracy is not about making speeches. It is about making committees

work.

Alan Bullock

❖ Democracy means government by the uneducated, while aristocracy means government by the badly educated.

G.K. Chesterton

❖ In an autocracy, one person has his way; in an aristocracy, a few people have their way; in a democracy, no one has his way.

Celia Green

“The more I see of democracy the more I dislike it. It just brings everything down to the mere vulgar level of wages and prices, electric light and water closets, and nothing else.

D.H. Lawrence”

❖ Democracy is too good to share with just anybody.

Nigel Rees

❖ I’m all in favour of free expression provided it’s kept rigidly under control.

Alan Bennett

❖ Corruption is nature’s way of restoring our faith in democracy.

Peter Ustinov

❖ In democracy everyone has the right to be represented, even the jerks.

Chris Patten

❖ We should silence anyone who opposes the right to freedom of speech.

Boyle Roche

❖ The freedom to make a fortune on the Stock Exchange has been made to sound more alluring than freedom of speech.

John Mortimer

❖ Democracy means government by discussion, but it is only effective if you can stop people talking.

Clement Attlee

❖ Democracy: everyone should have an equal opportunity to obstruct everybody else.

Celia Green

❖ Democracy consists of choosing your dictators after they've told you what you think it is you want to hear.

Alan Coren

❖ Democracy is a device that insures we shall be governed no better than we deserve.

George Bernard Shaw

DRINK AND DRUGS

* This isn't even a pop quiz any more; it's an intervention, Amy.

Simon Amstell to Amy Winehouse

* People say "Now you've given up the booze at least you can remember what you did last night."

I say, "Yeah, nothing."

Frank Skinner

* There are two reasons for drinking: one is, when you are thirsty, to cure it; the other, when you are not thirsty, to prevent it.

Thomas Love Peacock

This chap said to me, "D'you want some LSD?"

I said, "No thanks, mate, we've gone decimalized now. Pounds, shillings, pence – no use to me any more."

Ted Chippington

* Bernard: Alrighty. What did you order?

Manny: Lager.

Bernard: I got you . . . crème de menthe.

Bernard Black (Dylan Moran) and
Manny (Bill Bailey), *Black Books*

* One of my greatest regrets is that I urinated on the Alamo.

Ozzy Osbourne

* It's amazing how low you go to get high.

John Lennon

* I think I was once given cocaine but I sneezed, so it didn't go up my nose. In fact, it may have been icing sugar.

Boris Johnson

* You can't drink on an eight-hour flight, pass out, and then go on stage . . . well you can, but then you're Spandau Ballet.

Robert Smith

* I hadn't the heart to touch my breakfast. I told Jeeves to drink it himself.

P.G. Wodehouse

* He talked with more claret than clarity.

Susan Ertz

* Gary: The local pub is like, a cathedral. It's where blokes go to be with other blokes, and chat about the world as they see it over a pint.

Dorothy: So it's not really like a cathedral then, is it?

Gary Strang (Martin Clunes) and
Dorothy (Caroline Quentin), *Men Behaving Badly*

* If anyone knows of a pub that has draught stout, open fires, cheap meals, a garden, motherly barmaids and no radio, I should be glad to hear of it, even though its name were something as prosaic as the Red Lion or the Railway Arms.

George Orwell

* Sugar is responsible for a lot of deaths. Arguably more than crack cocaine.

Guy Ritchie

* That new Heineken ad slogan, "Get the head right and the rest will follow". Wasn't that Abi Titmuss' career

plan?

Ian Hyland

* I have a begrudging admiration for anyone who can work their way from one side of a pub to the other, spouting rubbish at anyone who will listen and be seemingly oblivious to people's lack of interest.

Matt Price

* I'd offer you a beer, but I've only got six cans.

Terry Collier (James Bolam), *The Likely Lads*

* . . . not too skinny, in fact, for ein junkie she is actually zehr fat.

Brüno (a.k.a. Sacha Baron Cohen), on Amy Winehouse

* I feel like a pig shat in my head.

Withnail (Richard E. Grant), *Withnail & I*

* Apparently cigarettes contain embalming fluid. This explains why I'm possibly the best-preserved woman in Britain.

Sue Carroll

* I thought I would have a quiet pint . . . and about seventeen noisy ones.

Gareth Chilcott

“My local's rough as anything. I went to the pub quiz the other night . . . First question was, “What the fuck are you looking at?”

Jack Dee”

* I have a nervous breakdown in the film and in one scene I get to stand at the top of the stairs waving an empty sherry bottle which is, of course, a typical scene from my daily life, so isn't much of a stretch.

Emma Thompson

* I think the English, maybe the British, have been binge drinkers since time

immemorial and I don't think we're going to turn into Tuscany just because the hours have changed.

Frank Dobson, MP,
on the extension of the licensing hours

* One of the most awkward things that can happen in a pub is when your pint-to-toilet cycle gets synchronized with a complete stranger.

Peter Kay

* I quite like those fizzy Vitamin C drinks. They're like Fanta without the comedown.

Jeremy Hardy

* The rest of the population are getting hammered all the time, so why not the leader of a party? I just think this thing of expecting people to be paragons of virtue doesn't work.

Jarvis Cocker, on Charles Kennedy,
leader of the Liberal Democrat Party

* I was walking down the road the other day; this chap walked up to me and said, "Do you want to buy some grass, mate?"

I said, "No thanks mate, I've got crazy paving. Haven't got a garden, you see."

Ted Chippington

* I couldn't really see the point of having lunch unless it started at one and ended a week later in Monte Carlo.

Arthur Smith

* A good local pub has much in common with a church, except that a pub is warmer, and there's more conversation.

William Blake

* Drink that, Lewis, and loosen some brain cells.

Inspector Morse (John Thaw), *Inspector Morse*

* Sometimes when I'm flying over the Alps I think, "That's all the cocaine I

sniffed.” We once tried to figure out how much money we spent on coke and alcohol. We were so disgusted that we stopped.

Elton John

* A tavern is a place where madness is sold by the bottle.

Jonathan Swift

Pete Doherty was given a wedgie by one of his fans. They pulled his pants up so quickly, the condition is now called “smoking crack”.

Mark Watson

* This is one of the disadvantages of wine: it makes a man mistake words for thoughts.

Samuel Johnson

* I’m on a whisky diet. I’ve lost three days already.

Tommy Cooper

* I like to give my inhibitions a bath now and then.

Oliver Reed

* I’m only not smoking in front of Baby David until he’s old enough to get up and walk out of the room, then it’s his choice.

Denise Best (Caroline Aherne), *The Royle Family*

* Of all vices, drinking is the most incompatible with greatness.

Walter Scott

* You know what really pisses me off? When you’re on a plane and the hostess comes up to you and asks you to stop singing. Hold on, you’ve been giving me free drinks for five hours – what do you expect me to do?

Sean Lock

* Man, the creature who knows he must die, who has dreams larger than his destiny, who is forever working a confidence trick on himself, needs an ally. Mine has been tobacco.

J.B. Priestley

* I've been smoking for thirty years now and there's nothing wrong with my lung.

Freddie Starr

* Sherry . . . a silly, sickly compound, the use of which will transform a nation, however bold and warlike by nature, into a race of sketchers, scribblers and punsters, in fact into what Englishmen are at the present day.

George Borrow

“I don't know why you need to smell wine before you drink it; you don't listen to a CD and rub it to your ear beforehand.

Michael McIntyre”

* The Spanish wine, my God, it is foul, catpiss is champagne compared, this is the sulphurous urination of some aged horse.

D.H. Lawrence

* So smoking is the perfect way to commit suicide without actually dying. I smoke because it's bad – it's really simple.

Damien Hirst

* His mouth had been used as a latrine by some small creature of the night, and then as its mausoleum.

Kingsley Amis

* My mum's like a horror movie. If we all don't stick together, she'll pick us off one at a time.

Susan Harper (Zoë Wanamaker), *My Family*

* We're trying something new. Absinthe. You know that

one? That slogan, “The drink that makes you want to kill yourself”?

Bernard Black (Dylan Moran),
Black Books

* French wine-growers fear that this year’s vintage may be entirely spoiled due to the grape treaders’ sit-in.

Ronnie Corbett

* Apart from cheese and tulips, the main product of the country is advocaat, a drink made from lawyers.

Alan Coren, on Holland

* Marijuana? It’s harmless really unless you fashion it into a club and beat somebody over the head with it.

Bill Bailey

* Manny: It’s not my fault you’re hungover.

Bernard: It is your fault. If you were a normal person there wouldn’t be so much to blot out.

Manny (Bill Bailey) and
Bernard Black (Dylan Moran), *Black Books*

Smokers pay £19,000 a minute to the Exchequer, and that’s enough to pay for the whole police force. Or to put it another way, for every £1 we cost the National Health Service, we give it £3.60. Please don’t encourage the state to dictate how I live my life.

Jeremy Clarkson

* What I like to do, I take a bit of Rohypnol, bake myself a cake. Wake up next morning – haven’t got a clue what happened – oh, what a wonderful surprise!

Spencer Brown

* I rather like bad wine . . . one gets so bored with good wine.

Benjamin Disraeli

* Tell you what – that crack is really more-ish.

Super Hans (Matt King), *Peep Show*

* Drink up. The world's about to end.

Douglas Adams

* I often sit back and think, “I wish I’d done that,” and find out later that I already have.

Richard Harris

* I’m trying to give up two of my worst habits: smoking and masturbation. I’m finding it really difficult as I’m a twenty-a-day man. And I smoke like a chimney.

Paul Calf (a.k.a. Steve Coogan)

* Morning came, and a grey wash of light found Dan, his cheek thrust hard in the carpeted right-angle of the bottom stair.

Will Self

“ I love to sing and I love to drink scotch. Most people would rather hear me drink scotch.

G.K. Chesterton ”

* He resolved, having done it once, never to move his eyeballs again.

Kingsley Amis

* People hate themselves, anyway. If it wasn’t smack, they’d hate themselves for eating carrots. You can bet on it.

Keith Richards

* Being sober for so many years is getting interesting.

Peter O'Toole

* Oscar Wilde: Do you mind if I smoke?
Sarah Bernhardt: I don't care if you burn.

* I've often wanted to drown my troubles, but I can't get my wife to go swimming.

Peter Kay

* Diplomacy is entirely a question of the weed. I can always settle a quarrel if I know beforehand whether the plenipotentiary smokes Cavendish, Latakia, or Shag.

Lord Clarendon

* The day he moved out was terrible – that evening she went through hell. His absence wasn't a problem but the corkscrew had gone as well.

Wendy Cope

* I simply don't feel like me without a packet of cigarettes to hand, and I have become a stranger to myself.

Beryl Bainbridge, on quitting smoking

* I might smoke more.

Jeremy Irons, on his New Year's resolution

* A woman is only a woman, but a good cigar is a smoke.

Rudyard Kipling

* I'll pour you the first one and after that, if you don't have one, it's your own fucking fault. You know where it is.

Kingsley Amis

* Am I the only person who gets confused about the amount of alcohol you can safely drink before driving and the amount of alcohol you can take through

customs?

Harry Hill

“If you resolve to give up smoking, drinking and loving, you don’t actually live longer; it just seems longer.

Clement Freud”

* I’ve never had a problem with drugs. I’ve had problems with the police.

Keith Richards

* Everybody who does not live in a prostitute’s bed and on a diet of cocaine snow is called an ascetic nowadays.

George Bernard Shaw

* If you’ve never seen an elephant ski, then you’ve never been on acid.

Eddie Izzard

* The most futile and disastrous day seems well spent when it is reviewed through the blue, fragrant smoke of a Havana cigar.

Evelyn Waugh

* There are various ways to give up smoking: nicotine patches, nicotine gum . . . my auntie used to pour a gallon of petrol over herself every morning.

Paul Merton

* Women are really jealous of cigars . . . they regard them as a strong rival.

William Thackeray

* If I’m seen smoking in the street, people should come up to me and say, “Thank you very much for keeping my tax bill down.”

Jeremy Clarkson

* I did think about giving up smoking, but I decided not to, because I'm not a quitter. And I know that every cigarette I smoke takes five minutes off my life, but I also know it takes ten minutes to smoke it. That's a clear five-minute net gain, I reckon.

Ed Byrne

* Addictions do come in handy sometimes: at least you have to get out of bed for them.

Martin Amis

* People say, "Think of the money you'll save." I'm not going to save any money, because I'm going to live longer. It's going to cost me a fortune in jigsaws and conservatories. My advice: if you haven't got a good pension, keep smoking.

Sean Lock

* Martinis before lunch are like a woman's breasts. One is too few and three are too many.

John Humphrys

“My forte is playing drunks down the ages. When my agent rings me about a role, I don't ask what the part is, but what century it's in.

Johnny Vegas”

* Only fine cigars are worth smoking and only men who smoke fine cigars are worth kissing.

Joan Collins

* Being sober on a bus is, like, totally different than being drunk on a bus.

Ozzy Osbourne

* If Amy Winehouse had a northern mother, she wouldn't be injecting heroin between her toes. She's be sat at the table, elbows off, eating a meat 'n' potato pie.

Jenny Eclair

* Bessie Braddock: Winston, you're drunk!

Winston Churchill: Bessie, you're ugly, and tomorrow morning I shall be sober.

When kids go to the pub and try to get served: "[deep voice] Pint of lager please."

Bartender says, "Had a good day at school?"

Kid says, "Yeah, geography was a bit shit tho' . . . oh fuck."

Lee Evans

* If you are going to get wasted, then get wasted elegantly.

Keith Richards

* A man should always be pleasantly conscious of the fact that he is smoking.

J.B. Priestley

* There's nothing worse than an introspective drunk.

Tom Sharpe

* Giving up spirits is OK so long as you drink an incredible amount of beer, sherry, wine and port and can cope with especially bad hangovers.

Martin Amis

* I have never turned blue in someone's bathroom. I consider that to be the height of bad manners.

Keith Richards

* I don't really smoke drugs any more because I'm thirty-eight, so I don't need to create a chemical imbalance to make myself paranoid and lethargic. That's basically how I wake up in the morning.

Robert Ince

* One of the penalties of being president of the United States is that you must subsist for four years without drinking anything except Californian wine.

A.J.P. Taylor

* I really don't get karaoke, I just don't see the point of it. I mean, if I want to see a hopeless drunk murder an Amy Winehouse song, I'll go to an Amy Winehouse gig.

Jack Dee

* There are drug tests everywhere in sport now. Even the old guys who play crown green bowls, they've been giving urine samples. They don't mean to . . .

Jasper Carrott

* The most important thing to remember about drunks is that drunks are far more intelligent than non-drunks. They spend a lot of time talking in pubs, unlike workaholics, who concentrate on their careers and ambitions, who never develop their higher spiritual values, who never explore the insides of their head like a drunk does.

Shane MacGowan

“The last mosquito that bit me had to book in to the Betty Ford clinic.

Patsy (Joanna Lumley),

Absolutely Fabulous”

* I met this guy, he was, like, “I'm so drunk I'm pissing tequila.” I can't believe I fell for it.

Spencer Brown

* Drunkenness is temporary suicide.

Bertrand Russell

What about the rumours David Cameron smoked drugs as a schoolboy? What worries me most is that he dressed up as a schoolboy to do it, the pervert.

* Rule One: No drinking till the work is done.

Rule Two: Work as fast as you can!

* After twenty years of taking coke, its good to drink Pepsi.

Mick Jagger

* Trying to separate cigarettes and alcohol, that's against God's will!

Ed Byrne

* I would offer you a glass of champagne, but it's bad for you in small doses.

Jason King (Peter Wyngarde)

* When I was a teenager, my idea of chemical stimulation was sucking on a Fisherman's Friend!

Inspector Raymond C. Fowler (Rowan Atkinson),
The Thin Blue Line

* It is widely held that too much wine will dull a man's desire. Indeed it will – in a dull man.

John Osborne

* In 1969 I gave up drinking and sex. It was the worst twenty minutes of my life.

George Best

* There are some sluggish men who are improved by drinking; as there are fruits that are not good until they are rotten.

Samuel Johnson

* A red nose never lost a friend worth holding.

Evelyn Waugh

* The highest form of wisdom is to get drunk and go to pieces.

Rudyard Kipling

* I demand to have some booze!

Withnail (Richard E. Grant), *Withnail and I*

* I was left in no doubt as to the severity of the hangover when a cat stamped into the room.

P.G. Wodehouse

* An alcoholic is someone you don't like who drinks as much as you do.

Dylan Thomas

* I am as drunk as a lord, but then, I am one, so what does it matter?

Bertrand Russell

* I shall drink water . . . it's a mixer, Patsy, we have it with whisky.

Eddy (Jennifer Saunders), *Absolutely Fabulous*

“ I know plenty of people who take drugs, drive too fast and kill foxes, and they're all good company. But honestly, I would rather do time in a Turkish prison than spend time with a drinker.

Jeremy Clarkson ”

* Some men are like musical glasses; to produce their finest tones you must keep them wet.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge

* 'Tis pity wine should be so deleterious, For tea and coffee leave us much more serious.

Lord Byron

* I don't drink as much as the British press has made it sound, but then, of course, I lie a lot to the press.

Robert Smith

* My dear girl, there are some things that just aren't done, such as drinking Dom Perignon '53 above the temperature of thirty-eight degrees Fahrenheit. That's just as bad as listening to the Beatles without earmuffs.

James Bond (Sean Connery), *Goldfinger*

* Claret is the liquor for boys; port for men. But he who aspires to be a hero must drink brandy.

Samuel Johnson

* Not everyone who drinks is a poet. Some of us drink because we're not poets.

Dudley Moore

* I've stopped drinking, but only while I'm asleep.

George Best

* Alcohol is the anaesthesia by which we endure the operation of life.

George Bernard Shaw

Alcohol rewards its followers with the gift of mediocrity while offering the illusion of greatness.

Michael Bradley

* One day recently a man called out to me from the other side of the street, asking me for the price of a drink. I beckoned him to come over for it and he waved me away. This has to be the Everest of laziness.

Jeffrey Bernard

* Alcohol is a very necessary article . . . It makes life bearable to millions of

people who could not endure their existence if they were quite sober. It enables Parliament to do things at eleven at night that no sane person would do at eleven in the morning.

George Bernard Shaw

* For Tony to admit he is an alcoholic took an awful lot of bottle.

Ian Wright

* Civilization is a careful construction for the production and distribution of alcohol.

Tibor Fischer

* Apparently, alcoholism skips a generation so . . . I drink so my children don't have to.

Ava Vidal

* I would rather commit adultery than drink a glass of beer.

Lady Astor

* Alcoholics need a drink first and last thing. I need oral sex and a cigarette. Which means I'm not an alcoholic.

Peter Cook

* I try to drink a glass of champagne every morning – it's penicillin for the soul.

John Mortimer

* My favourite drink is a cocktail of carrot juice and whisky. I am always drunk but I can see for miles.

Roy "Chubby" Brown

We want the finest wines available to humanity, we want them here, and we want them now!

Withnail (Richard E. Grant),
Withnail and I

* I like to drink to suit my location.

Tom Jones

* Poor me, poor me . . . pour me a drink.

George Galloway on Michael Barrymore,
British Celebrity *Big Brother*

* It is immoral to get drunk because the headache comes after the drinking, but if the headache came first and the drunkenness afterwards, it would be moral to get drunk.

Samuel Butler

* Light beer is an invention of the Prince of Darkness.

Inspector Morse (John Thaw),
Inspector Morse

* An airport customs inspector once recognized me from *Trainspotting* and strip-searched me, looking for drugs.

Ewan McGregor

* Oh, God, God, God! What on earth was I drinking last night? My head feels like there's a Frenchman living in it.

Edmund Blackadder (Rowan Atkinson), *Blackadder*

“Vodka is a very deceptive drink, because you drink it and you say, “Why are we drinking this? This is nothing, it has no smell, no taste! Why are we . . . Why are we on a traffic island?”

Dylan Moran”

* Yes, cannabis is dangerous, but no more than other perfectly legal drugs. It's time for a rethink, and the Tory Party – the funkiest, most jiving party on earth – is where it's happening.

Boris Johnson

* What annoys me is that anyone who ever says they experiment with drugs . . . whenever you ask to see any of their results, any thesis, any form of bar charts . . . nothing at all.

Robert Ince

* When I take drugs I start going, “Oooohh! insurance? And pensions . . . very sensible.” So don’t do drugs or you’ll end up like that.

Eddie Izzard

* My parents are from Glasgow, which means they’re incredibly hard, but I was never smacked as a child . . . well maybe one or two grams to get me to sleep at night.

Susan Murray

* Amidst this haze of sex, drugs and rock and roll, Amy Wineglass has just been released on bail.

Jon Snow, *Channel 4 News*

* In my opinion, most of the great men of the past were only there for the beer.

A.J.P. Taylor

* If penicillin can cure those that are ill, Spanish sherry can bring the dead back to life.

Alexander Fleming

* I tried Ecstasy once. All it did was make me feel slightly less miserable in a field.

Robert Ince

* I formed a new group called Alcoholics-Unanimous. If you don’t feel like a drink, you ring another member and he comes over to persuade you.

Richard Harris



EDUCATION AND INTELLIGENCE

- ★ “Brevity is the soul of wit,” said Shakespeare.
I say, “Wank!” Thus I win.

Simon Munnery

- ★ I graduated from university last year – I went in on the first day to register, and I went into the main hall and they were giving away free condoms, rape alarms and sweets. What the fuck have I signed up for? Obviously they were expecting a group of recklessly promiscuous diabetics.

Ben Davis

- ★ An intellectual is a person who’s found one thing that’s more interesting than sex.

Aldous Huxley

- ★ I thought Inspector Morse and Sherlock Holmes were real people.
Jade Goody, contestant on British *Big Brother*

- ★ His IQ was somewhat lower than that of a backward clam -a clam, let us say, which had been dropped on its head as a baby.

P.G. Wodehouse

- ★ This is a general-knowledge game, not a home for the bewildered.
Ann Robinson, presenter of game show *The Weakest Link*

- ★ Reading is just one of those things . . . it can’t be taught!

Bernard Black (Dylan Moran),

Black Books

★ Philosophy: empty thinking by ignorant conceited men who think they can digest without eating.

Iris Murdoch

★ I have a plan so cunning you could stick a tail on it and call it a weasel.

Edmund Blackadder (Rowan Atkinson),
Blackadder

★ It is hard to repress a certain wilful nostalgia for the erotic dimension of pedagogy.

Mary Beard

★ Universities incline wits to sophistry and affectation.

Francis Bacon

★ Bamber Gascoigne: What was Gandhi's first name?
Contestant: Goosey?

University Challenge, BBC Television

“He's about as much use as a marzipan dildo.

Malcolm Tucker (Peter Capaldi),

The Thick of It”

If you had to get someone to answer a question on a quiz machine to save your life . . . I would rather that she fell drunkenly on the quiz machine with her face and chose the answer that way.

Frankie Boyle, on Jodie Marsh

★ The root of all superstition is that men observe when a thing hits but not when it misses.

Francis Bacon, philosopher

★ I doubt Constable Goody would “get it”, if it came in a large bag marked “IT”.

Inspector Raymond C. Fowler (Rowan Atkinson),
The Thin Blue Line

★ Of course, it is very important to be sober when you take an exam. Many worthwhile careers in the street-cleansing, fruit-picking and subway-guitar-playing industries have been founded on a lack of understanding of this simple fact.

Terry Pratchett

★ Every man is a potential genius until he does something.

Herbert Beerbohm Tree

★ My favourite word is existentialism. I can't say it and I'm not quite sure what it means.

Geri Halliwell

★ Every time Karl opens his mouth, it's the equivalent of walking across one of those rickety bridges in Indiana Jones.

Stephen Merchant

★ There are only two kinds of people who are really fascinating: people who know absolutely everything, and people who know absolutely nothing.

Oscar Wilde

★ What we call logic may just as well be described as “the way adult Athenian males of the fifth century BC think”.

Alan Garner

“If brains were chocolate, he wouldn't have enough to fill a Smartie.

Alan Birchenall, on Robbie Savage,

Welsh professional footballer”

★ Education: the inculcation of the incomprehensible into the indifferent by the incompetent.

John Maynard Keynes

★ In philosophy if you aren't moving at a snail's pace you aren't moving at all.

Iris Murdoch

★ The philosophy exam was a piece of cake – which was a bit of a surprise, actually, because I was expecting some questions on a sheet of paper.

Mel Smith

★ I only took the regular courses, reeling and writhing.

Lewis Carroll

★ New Year's resolution: to tolerate fools more gladly, provided this does not encourage them to take up more of my time.

James Agate

★ A wise man will live as much within his wit as within his income.

Lord Chesterfield

★ If you chopped my head off I'd still carry on talking, 'cos the head stays alive for a bit. I've seen it in films.

Jade Goody, contestant on British *Big Brother*

★ I sometimes think
His critical judgment is so exquisite
It leaves us nothing to admire except his opinion.

Christopher Fry

★ As gold which he cannot spend will make no man rich, so knowledge which he cannot apply will make no man wise.

Samuel Johnson

★ The trouble with the world is that the stupid are cocksure and the intelligent are full of doubt.

Bertrand Russell

★ Genius and stupidity never stray from their respective paths; talent wanders to and fro, following every light.

George Moore

“ Intellectuals are people who believe that ideas are more important than values. That is to say, their own ideas and other people's values.

Gerald Brenan ”

★ To the uneducated, an A is just three sticks.

A.A. Milne

★ Roy: [singing] We don't need no education.

Moss: Yes you do. You've just used a double negative

Roy (Chris O'Dowd) and
Moss (Richard Ayoade), *The IT Crowd*

★ If you don't know where you are going, any road will get you there.

Lewis Carroll

★ Definition of a college professor: someone who talks in other people's sleep.

W.H. Auden

★ Logic, like whisky, loses its beneficial effect when taken in too large quantities.

Lord Dunsany

★ The worst thing is when the press call me a dizzy blonde – I got a B in Drama, a D in English, I did a hairdressing course and a beauty certificate.

Helen Adams, contestant on British *Big Brother*

★ A Geordie said to me: “Are yous looking at us?” How many mistakes can you make in one sentence?

Michael McIntyre

★ “Can you do Addition?” the White Queen asked. “What’s one and one and one and one and one and one and one and one and one and one?”

“I don’t know,” said Alice. “I lost count.”

“She can’t do Addition,” the Red Queen interrupted.

Lewis Carroll

★ Mother Theresa and Doctor Heinstein – I thought they were related because people always mention them at the same time.

Jade Goody, contestant on British *Big Brother*

★ The only thing you study is your navel. You even shave lying down.

Rigsby (Leonard Rossiter), *Rising Damp*

★ I’d always thought her half-baked, but now I think they didn’t even put her in the oven.

P.G. Wodehouse

★ The best thing anyone’s ever shouted at me? “Oi, you Paki! Go back to India!”

Shazia Mirza

★ Every man wishes to be wise, and they who cannot be wise are almost always cunning.

Samuel Johnson

★ Where is East Anglar? Is it abroad?

Jade Goody, contestant on British *Big Brother*

★ He has a brilliant mind until he makes it up.

Margot Asquith

★ If a little knowledge is dangerous, where is the man who has so much as to be out of danger?

Thomas Henry Huxley

★ The fox knows many small things, whereas the hedgehog knows one big thing. Ronald Reagan was neither a fox nor a hedgehog. He was as dumb as a stump.

Christopher Hitchens

★ He looks at us like we're stupid, scatty, uneducated girls. He's a right chauvinistic pig, whatever that means.

Chantelle Houghton, on George Galloway,
British Celebrity *Big Brother*

★ The avoidance of taxes is the only intellectual pursuit that still carries any reward.

John Maynard Keynes

“His had been an intellectual decision founded on his conviction that if a little knowledge was a dangerous thing, a lot was lethal.

Tom Sharpe”

★ There should be a club for the people in the bottom 2 per cent of mental agility and their club would be called DENSA. And the sort of people you'd get in it would be the Hoff, President Bush . . . and anyone who's just cum.

Katie Schutte

★ There are some ideas so wrong that only a very intelligent person could believe in them.

George Orwell

★ British education is probably the best in the world, if you can survive it. If you can't there is nothing left for you but the diplomatic corps.

Peter Ustinov

★ Education . . . has produced a vast population able to read but unable to distinguish what is worth reading, an easy prey to sensations and cheap appeals.

G.M. Trevelyan

My definition of an intellectual is someone who can listen to the *William Tell* overture without thinking of the Lone Ranger.

Billy Connolly

★ Knowledge is almost annoying.

Karl Pilkington

★ It is tiresome to hear education discussed, tiresome to educate, and tiresome to be educated.

William Lamb

“Only in Britain could it be thought a defect to be too clever by half. The probability is that too many people are too stupid by three-quarters.

John Major”

★ It has been said that there is no fool like an old fool, except a young fool. But the young fool has first to grow up to be an old fool to realize what a damn fool he was when he was a young fool.

Harold Macmillan

★ Tea, though ridiculed by those who are naturally coarse in their nervous sensibilities . . . will always be the favourite beverage of the intellectual.

Thomas De Quincey

★ Pol Pot – he rounded up anybody he thought was intellectual and had them executed. And how he told someone was intellectual or not was whether they

wore glasses. If they're that clever, take them off when they see him coming.

Ricky Gervais

★ Men are born ignorant, not stupid. They are made stupid by education.

Bertrand Russell

★ For a simple man, you retain an awful lot of knowledge. It's just all rubbish. If you just replace all this rubbish with good stuff, you'd be an intellectual really. Because your retention is fantastic.

Ricky Gervais, to Karl Pilkington

★ Whether you voted for Obama or not, his life is a shining example of the power of education – he was born in Kenya; he studied seven days a week learning how to forge Hawaiian birth certificates . . .

Craig Ferguson

★ The Cardinal is at his wit's end – it is true that he had not far to go.

Lord Byron

★ The English have no respect for their language, and will not teach their children to speak it.

George Bernard Shaw

★ I got all the schooling any actress needs. That is, I learned to write enough to sign a contract.

Hermione Gingold

★ Do I look like a mug? Have I got a handle? Am I made of china? Am I kept in a cupboard or on a small wooden tree? Would you like to put your lips on my rim? You may answer that question – the others were rhetorical.

Sue White (Michelle Gomez), *Green Wing*

★ There are always intellectuals around who praise the incompetent as

profound.

Anthony Burgess

★ Why don't they teach proper maffs in schools? Why teach in kilos and grams when you should deal in ounces, quarters and eighths?

Ali G (a.k.a. Sacha Baron Cohen)

★ We have now sunk to a depth at which restatement of the obvious is the first duty of intelligent men.

George Orwell

★ I dropped out of Oxford, and now I only speak Russian with the woman who gives me a bikini wax. See what Hollywood does to you?

Kate Beckinsale

★ It has yet to be proven that intelligence has any survival value.

Arthur C. Clarke

★ Do they speak Portuganese in Portugal? I thought Portugal was in Spain.

Jade Goody, contestant on British *Big Brother*

★ I am so clever that sometimes I don't understand a single word of what I am saying.

Oscar Wilde

★ I am patient with stupidity but not with those who are proud of it.

Edith Sitwell

★ I'm blessed with total recall, except about where I left my umbrella.

Hubert Gregg

“I've got a degree – does that mean I have to spend my life with intellectuals? I've also got a life-saving certificate, but I don't spend my evenings diving for a rubber brick with my pyjamas on.

Victoria Wood”

★ Despite allegations of being thick, Jodie is a very successful glamour model.
36-24-32. No one's exactly sure what her IQ is.

Angus Deayton, on Jodie Marsh

★ I took this lady out on a first date to Manchester City Art Gallery . . . I was looking at my favourite painting called *Hylas and the Nymphs*, by J.W. Waterhouse and . . . she said, “Ah, J.W. Waterhouse, one of the founding seven members of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood.” Now you all know, and I know, that Waterhouse was only loosely associated with the movement. And I thought to myself, “Bloody hell, why are the beautiful ones always so fucking stupid.”

Ben Davis

★ Chance is a name for our ignorance.

Leslie Stephen

★ When a true genius appears, you can know him by this sign: that all the dunces are in a confederacy against him.

Jonathan Swift

I don't think there's intelligent life on other planets. Why should other planets be any different from this one?

Bob Monkhouse

★ In university they don't tell you that the greater part of the law is learning to tolerate fools.

Doris Lessing

★ The ability to quote is a serviceable substitute for wit.

W. Somerset Maugham

★ The task of the modern educator is not to cut down jungles, but to irrigate deserts.

C.S. Lewis

★ I've been down the morgue . . . I got a leg. I'm supposed to write an essay on it, but I think I'm just gonna stick it on the bonnet of my car.

Vyvyan (Adrian Edmondson), *The Young Ones*

★ Facts are what pedantic dull people have instead of opinions. Opinions are always interesting. Facts are only the scaffolding, the trellis up which bright opinions grow.

A.A. Gill

★ A wise person does at once what a fool does at last. Both do the same thing; only at different times.

Lord Acton

★ I can certainly see that you know your wine. Most of the guests who stay here wouldn't know the difference between Bordeaux and Claret.

Basil Fawlty, (John Cleese), *Fawlty Towers*

★ I realized I was dyslexic when I went to a toga party dressed as a goat.

Marcus Brigstocke

★ Now, you say "erbs" and we say "herbs" because there's a fucking h in it!

Eddie Izzard

★ A man who read everything published today would be more stupid than a man who read nothing.

Stewart Lee

★ Experience is the name everyone gives to their mistakes.

Oscar Wilde

★ It is a cliché that most clichés are true, but then like most clichés, that cliché is untrue.

Stephen Fry



THE ENGLISH

❖ The English have no soul; they have the understatement instead.

George Mikes

❖ The English sent all their bores abroad, and acquired the empire as a punishment.

Edward Bond

❖ The English like eccentrics. They just don't like them living next door.

Julian Clary

❖ I like the English. They have the most rigid code of immorality in the world.

Malcolm Bradbury

❖ The stupidity of the English as a whole has and will be, I suppose, their salvation.

Anthony Burgess

❖ The English think incompetence is the same thing as sincerity.

Quentin Crisp

“The English country gentleman galloping after a fox – the unspeakable in full pursuit of the uneatable.

Oscar Wilde”

❖ The English never draw a line without blurring it.

Winston Churchill

❖ The English approach to ideas is not to kill them, but to let them die of neglect.

Jeremy Paxman

❖ I'm very English, really. I even ordered a book on the internet: *How to Have Absolutely Nothing to do with your Neighbours*. Unfortunately, I was out when it was delivered.

Milton Jones

❖ Hanging on in quiet desperation is the English way.

Roger Waters

❖ The English can laugh and at the same time strike you down, without the least compunction. It is the secret of their success as a nation.

Peter Ackroyd

❖ The English people, a lot of them, would not be able to understand a word of spoken Shakespeare. There are people who do and I'm not denying they exist. But it's a far more philistine country than people think.

Colin Firth

❖ The English don't like people to know too much. Polymath is a term of abuse.

Anthony Burgess

Your Englishman, confronted by something abnormal, will always pretend that it isn't there. If, however, you force him to look into it, he'll at once pretend that he sees the object not for what it is but for something that he would like it to be.

James Agate

❖ Propose to any Englishman any principle, or any instrument, however admirable, and you will observe that the whole effort of the English mind is directed to find a difficulty, defect or an impossibility in it.

Charles Babbage

❖ The English instinctively admire any man who has no

talent and is modest about it.

James Agate

❖ There is something remarkably and peculiarly English about the passion for sitting on damp seats watching open-air drama; only the English have mastered the art of being truly uncomfortable while facing up to culture.

Sheridan Morley

❖ I don't like the English. One at a time, I don't mind them. I've loved some of them. It's their collective persona I can't warm to: the lumpen and louty, coarse, unsubtle, beady-eyed, beefy-bummed herd of England.

A.A. Gill



ENVIRONMENT

* It turns out that wind has been horrifically over-farmed over the last twenty years and if we keep farming it at this rate, by 2020 there will be no wind whatsoever . . . is that the world you want to live in? No – then get up to Alaska, hippies and start drilling.

John Oliver

“Global warming – the planet’s heating up – certain species will suffer as a result: penguins, polar bears, Goths, they’re fucked. Last summer when it was really, really hot I used to catch a tube up to Camden just to watch them explode.

Zoe Lyons”

* We are no longer a green and pleasant land spotted with filthy places. We are a filthy island in which there is now an occasional oasis of cleanliness.

Jeremy Paxman

* Pollution all around, sometime up, sometimes down, but always around; Pollution, are you coming to my town or am I coming to yours? We’re on different buses, pollution, but we’re both using petrol . . . bombs.

Rick (Rik Mayall), *The Young Ones*

* I stooped to pick a buttercup. Why people leave buttocks lying around, I’ve no idea.

Stephen Fry, *A Bit of Fry and Laurie*

* The sun, the moon and the stars would have disappeared long ago . . . had they happened to be within the reach of predatory human hands.

Henry Havelock Ellis

* It's all very well collecting and reusing carrier bags, but when that starts to interfere with drawer-opening, you've got a problem.

Harry Hill

* Alternative energy was our idea. We were the pioneers . . . hundreds of years ago Britain was entirely powered by burning Catholics.

John Oliver

* Man is the only creature that seems to have the time and energy to pump all his sewage out to sea, and then go swimming in it.

Miles Kingston

* Why is it, if there's such a shortage of oil, it keeps appearing on my trouser bottom?

Clegg (Peter Sallis), *Last of the Summer Wine*

* I can't do with mountains at close quarters – they are always in the way, and they are so stupid, never moving and never doing anything but obtrude themselves.

D.H. Lawrence

* You *can* see the sea. It's over there, between the land and the sky.

Basil Fawlty (John Cleese), *Fawlty Towers*

We've always had pollution. The north-east invented pollution long before it became fashionable down south.

Terry Collier (James Bolam), *The Likely Lads*

* The green belt is a Labour initiative, and we intend to build on it.

John Prescott, Labour MP

* The human race believes in not taking its problems seriously enough to solve them.

Celia Green

- * Of all the trees we could've hit we had to pick one that fights back.

J.K. Rowling

- * How inappropriate to call this planet Earth when it is clearly Ocean.

Arthur C. Clarke

- * Save the trees? . . . Trees are the main cause of forest fires!

Billy Connolly

“We have been god-like in our planned breeding of our domesticated plants and animals, but we have been rabbitlike in our unplanned breeding of ourselves.

Arnold Toynbee”

- * The world is always ending, for someone.

Neil Gaiman

- * Bloody recycling. Attempting to recycle Marmite jars while Alaska is being drilled for oil – it's like turning up at an earthquake with a dustpan and brush.

Sean Lock

May I ask what you were expecting to see out of a Torquay hotel bedroom window? Sydney Opera House, perhaps? The Hanging Gardens of Babylon? Herds of wildebeest sweeping majestically . . .

Basil Fawlty (John Cleese), *Fawlty Towers*

- * Anyone who has paid close attention to how the world's going will know that you should reuse your plastic bags to suffocate your children.

Frankie Boyle

- * Global warming has just replaced God. Something to

feel guilty about. The new religion.

David Hockney

* In Scotland we have mixed feelings about global warming because we'll get to sit on the mountains and watch the English drown. "More pineapple, Hughie?"
"Well, I've got a coconut here, I'm fine."

Frankie Boyle

* We're so terrified of any rising gas prices, people have been seen at recent oil slicks, wedging seagulls directly into their gas tanks, screaming, "I've got to get to work, keep still and tuck your fucking wings in."

John Oliver

* I've never seen the point of the sea, except where it meets the land. The shore has a point. The sea has none.

Alan Bennett

* People ask me if I'm worried about climate change. I'm Welsh – bring it on!

Rhod Gilbert

* I used to be in favour of fighting climate change, but since I saw LiveEarth, I feel our collective number one priority must be to destroy the planet before Madonna has the chance to perform again.

Nick Revell

* Is it fair to say that there'd be less litter in Britain if blind people were given pointed sticks?

Adam Bloom



ETIQUETTE

★ If you are a man and you were to announce at a dinner party that you had a prosthetic vagina, a battery-powered one – that would be considered something of a social faux pas.

Rob Rouse

“I know at least . . . oh, my God, at least 127 words. And I still prefer “Fuck”.

Billy Connolly”

★ I’m very polite in person. I’m just not great with answering machines.

Jonathan Ross, television and radion presenter,
on being suspended by the BBC after leaving
an offensive message on Andrew Sachs’
answering machine during a radio show

★ In my mind, there is nothing so illiberal, and so ill-bred, as audible laughter.

Lord Chesterfield

★ I think deep down this planet yearns for the days of the British Empire again. They long once more to be treated that badly that politely.

John Oliver

★ Are you disrespecting me?

Catherine Tate

★ I’d love to get my hands on the bastard. Or bitch – might be a lady.

Alan Partridge (a.k.a. Steve Coogan)

★ It’s just that in this house we leave our shoes in the lobby, underneath the barometer.

Harvey Denton(Steve Pemberton),
The League of Gentlemen

★ Denise: Why do you have to announce it every time you go to the toilet.

Jim: I'm only making polite conversation, what's the do with her?

Denise Best (Caroline Aherne) and
Jim Royle (Ricky Tomlinson), *The Royle Family*

An Englishman, even if he is alone, forms an orderly queue of one.

George Mikes

★ Manners are especially the need of the plain. The pretty can get away with anything.

Evelyn Waugh

★ Whenever I call an Englishman rude he takes it as a compliment.

George Mikes

★ I'm not being condescending; I'm too busy thinking about far more important things you wouldn't understand.

Jimmy Carr

★ When you're drowning, you don't say, "I would be incredibly pleased if someone would have the foresight to notice me drowning and come and help me." You just scream.

John Lennon

★ Curtsey while you're thinking what to say. It saves time.

Lewis Carroll

★ Captain Peacock, I do not respond to any man's finger.

Mrs Slocombe (Mollie Sugden), *Are You Being Served?*

★ So, I go to the toilet in your wicker chair – it's a faux pas.

Bernard Black (Dylan Moran), *Black Books*

★ Denise: Dad, stop fiddling with yerself.

Jim: I'm not fiddling with meself. I paid a quid for these underpants and I've got fifty pence stuck up me arse.

Denise Best (Caroline Aherne) and
Jim Royle (Ricky Tomlinson), *The Royle Family*

“No one can be as calculatedly rude as the British, which amazes Americans, who do not understand studied insult and can only offer abuse as a substitute.

Noel Gallagher”

★ Richard, a little decorum please – that is not the sort of behaviour one would expect from a person with a reservation for a quality cruise.

Hyacinth Bucket (Patricia Routledge),
Keeping Up Appearances

★ Oh, and Basil, one more thing: if you're going to grope a girl, have the gallantry to stay in the room with her while you're doing it.

Sybil Fawlty (Prunella Scales), *Fawlty Towers*

Try saying, “Whale oil beef hooked”, without sounding like an Irish man swearing.

Jack Dee

★ Nothing more rapidly inclines a person to go into a monastery than reading a book on etiquette. There are so many trivial ways in which it is possible to commit some social sin.

Quentin Crisp

★ What the human race needs is a lot more streakers.

Banksy

★ Say you're sorry. No one says you have to mean it.

Jeff Green

“How do people, like, not curse? . . . There are these gaps in speech where you just have to put a “fuck”. Ill tell you who the most admirable people in the world are: newscasters. If that was me, I'd be, like, “And the motherfuckers flew the fucking plane right into the Twin Towers.”

Nick Hornby”

★ It is more comfortable for me, in the long run, to be rude than polite.

Wyndham Lewis

★ Discretion is the polite word for hypocrisy.

Christine Keeler

★ A footman may swear; but he cannot swear like a lord. He can swear as often: but can he swear with equal delicacy, propriety and judgment?

Jonathan Swift

★ This is not the Chinese restaurant. This is a residential number and you are speaking to the lady of the house on a white, slimline telephone with last number redial facility.

Hyacinth Bucket (Patricia Routledge),
Keeping Up Appearances

★ When people are on their best behaviour they aren't always at their best.

Alan Bennett

★ All that changing of plates and flapping of napkins while you wait forty

minutes for your food.

Hugh Casson

★ My kids have beautiful manners. Our Jason may be a car thief but he always leaves a thank-you note on the pavement.

Lily Savage (a.k.a. Paul O'Grady)

★ How do you deal with that awkward situation of somebody in a wheelchair coming and you want to push them away but you don't want to create a scene? How do you turn them away? Do you ignore them or wheel them away?

Brüno (a.k.a. Sacha Baron Cohen)

★ We don't deliberately set out to offend. Unless we feel it's justified.

Graham Chapman

★ So, if this show teach you anything, it should teach you how to respek everyone: animals, children, bitches, spazmos, mingers, lezzers, fatty boombahs and even gaylords. So, to all you lot watching this, but mainly to the normal people, respek. West side.

Ali G (a.k.a. Sacha Baron Cohen)

★ There are many who dare not kill themselves for fear of what the neighbours will say.

Cyril Connolly

★ If somebody blocks you when you're walking, you're positively Edwardian in your manners. You do this sheepish little smile together, and you step aside . . . But, for some reason, in a car, that becomes "YOU SPUNK BUCKET!"

Dylan Moran

★ People who say they don't swear haven't had the right sex or food.

Russell Howard

★ Last time I went on an Intercity train there were a couple across the aisle having sex. Of course, this being a British train, nobody said anything. Then they finished, they both lit up a cigarette and this woman stood up and said, "Excuse me, I think you'll find this is a non-smoking compartment."

Victoria Wood



EUROPE

❖ I just wish they hadn't called it the Common Market. Is that snobbish of me? I mean why not the Nice Market? It would be so much nicer.

Hugh Laurie, *A Bit of Fry and Laurie*

“Chocolate bread! That's how they *start* the day. It's only going to escalate from there.

Dylan Moran, on the French”

❖ Oh, German. I'm sorry, I thought there was something wrong with you.

Basil Fawlty (John Cleese), *Fawlty Towers* ❖ For me, the only downside of driving in Europe is that you soon lose UK radio reception. When I am driving to Spain, the forests of the Landes, in south-west France, is where I lose Radio 4 . . . it seems wrong, in this age of mobile phones and digital television, that you can't get British radio in your car while abroad . . . it's a denial of my human rights for them not to do so.

Alexei Sayle

❖ She had principles. Those were the last things to take to an EU summit.

Bernard Ingham,
on Margaret Thatcher

❖ The phone went in the house and I answered it, and this voice said, “Hello, how would you like a dirty weekend in Paris?” And then there was a silence, and the voice said, “I'm sorry. Have I shocked you?”

And I said, “God, no – I was just packing.”

Helen Lederer

❖ A gesticulation is any movement made by a foreigner.

J.B. Morton

❖ The best thing I know between France and England is the sea.

Douglas Jerrold

❖ Some refer to it as a cultural Chernobyl. I think of it as a cultural Stalingrad.

J.G. Ballard, on EuroDisney

❖ The French are a logical people, which is one reason the English dislike them so intensely. The other is that they own France, a country which we have always judged to be much too good for them.

Robert Morley

❖ French cooking's all very well, but they can't do a decent English breakfast.

Prince Philip

❖ Hey Elton, do you know what they call you in Germany? Herr Piece.

Dennis Pennis (a.k.a. Paul Kaye), to Elton John

“I can never forgive God for creating the French.

Peter Ustinov”

❖ The French cannot forgive us because they owe us so much.

Winston Churchill

❖ Continental people have sex lives; the English have hot-water bottles.

George Mikes

❖ If a Frenchman goes on about seagulls, trawlers and sardines, he's called a philosopher. I'd just be called a short Scottish bum talking crap.

Gordon Strachan, on Eric Cantona

❖ There are lots of French people who are not at all hypocritical, inefficient,

aggressive, arrogant, adulterous or incredibly sexy. They just didn't make it into my book.

Stephen Clarke

“Since both its national products, snow and chocolate, melt, the cuckoo clock was invented solely in order to give tourists something solid to remember it by.

Alan Coren, on Switzerland”



FAME AND CELEBRITY

* Five minutes of stardom means another sixty-five years of emptiness.

Marc Almond

* I'm glad I'm rated *People's* sexiest man alive, because now I can masturbate over my own picture and not feel guilty.

Colin Farrell

* I'd have to be Superman to do some of the things I'm supposed to have done, I've been at six different places at six different times.

George Best

Being famous is like wearing blue pyjamas at the opera. It's like kissing Neil Young, but only on Wednesdays. It's like a silver disc gummed to the ear of a wolverine. It's like licking crumbs from the belly of a waitress called Eileen . . . I mean, honestly. What's it like? Stop it at once.

Stephen Fry

* It's a parasite. It doesn't contribute. It's a moron. It's a bicycle pump.

John Lydon, on Jordan, fellow contestant on British
I'm a Celebrity . . . Get Me Out of Here!

“An overview of my career is usually . . . glasses . . . homosexuality . . . Watford Football Club . . . tantrums . . . flowers.

Elton John”

* It is easy to laugh at David Hasselhoff's pomposity. But first of all you should laugh at his hair. Then you should laugh at his face, his teeth, his name, his hair

again, his acting ability, his singing ability and his grasp of his place in the scheme of things.

Mark Lamarr

* I am alive and well, but if I were dead I would be the last to know.

Paul McCartney

* Darling, I've gone out with half your iPod.

Tara Palmer-Tomkinson

* Most of us have a skeleton in the cupboard. David Beckham takes his out in public.

Andrew Laurence

* You won't catch me going to the opening of an envelope . . . a Jiffy bag, but never an envelope.

Peter Kay

* I may be known as the girl who was sunbathing topless with a prince, but Jordan is known as that thick girl who always falls out of clubs drunk. I know which one I prefer.

Jenny Frost

* As long as my face is on page one, I don't care what they say about me on page seventeen.

Mick Jagger

* To the unwashed public, Joan Collins is a star. But to those who know her, she's a commodity who would sell her own bowel movement.

Anthony Newley

* I've had death threats – well, OK, a petition.

Jack Dee

* I've worked out that the economics of being an obscure cult figure might just work out better in the long run than the economics of being a discarded television performer.

Stewart Lee

* I got a pair of red, synthetic satin women's pants through the post the other day with a phone number on. That was quite strange. I haven't tried the phone number. In times of stress I may.

Jarvis Cocker

“I've got this window of opportunity in pubs of about half an hour. After that, things start happening and it's not relaxing any more. I've got really good at drinking eighteen pints in half an hour.

Daniel Craig”

* I'm so proud to be voted as a number one role model by these young women. Of course, though, no one knows more about “rolls” than I do.

Dawn French

* I don't normally do requests, unless I'm asked to.

Richard Whiteley

* Jordan said that Gareth Gates was very inexperienced and didn't know where to put his hands. If anyone is in that position again: round her throat and squeeze till her eyes pop.

Mark Lamarr

* Reporter: Ringo, why do you get the most fan mail?

Ringo Starr: I don't know. Perhaps it's because more people write to me.

* But this recession is affecting everyone, even celebrities. Victoria Beckham hasn't eaten for three weeks. Charlie Sheen has been forced to have sex without paying for it. It's true. And even Madonna has had to get rid of one of her personal assistants: our thoughts go out to you, Guy Ritchie.

Sacha Baron Cohen at the Golden Globes, 2009

* Come in, sit down, take the weight off your ego.

Clive Anderson, to Gary Glitter

* I knew I'd conquered America when Mike Tyson told me I was one mean lady.

Anne Robinson

* Plenty of people have said to me in supermarkets, in slightly affronted tones, "What are you doing here?"

Stephen Fry

* Americans adore me and will go on adoring me until I say something nice about them.

George Bernard Shaw

* I am the only man who can say he's been in Take That and at least two members of the Spice Girls.

Robbie Williams

* Martyrdom . . . is the only way in which a man can become famous without ability.

George Bernard Shaw

“You're the Tom Cruise of menopausal women.

Mrs Merton (a.k.a. Caroline Aherne), to

Des Lynam, BBC sports commentator”

* There are people starving in the world, but then again, they get on telly.

Adam Bloom

* He had a genius for backing into the limelight.

Lord Berners

* Stars are not the people who are best at what they do; they are merely the

people who want it most.

Julie Burchill

* Thank you for leaving us alone but giving us enough attention to boost our egos.

Mick Jagger

* He is remembered chiefly as the man about whom all is forgotten.

Nicolas Bentley

* Member of the public: Are you Peter Sellers?
Peter Sellers: Not today.

* Newspaper people have a habit of putting you in the front pages to sell their papers, and then, after they've sold their papers and got big circulations, they say, "Look at what we've done for you."

John Lennon

Andy Murray has such a warm, friendly, likeable personality that it must have been a difficult choice for him whether to pursue a career with a tennis racket or an abattoir bolt gun.

Jimmy Carr

* Clarissa Dickson-Wright: I had a llama named after me once.
Angus Deayton: What was it called?
Clarissa Dickson-Wright: . . . Clarissa.

On the BBC current affairs quiz
Have I Got News for You

* I did a promotional video with Britney Spears. It's difficult to meet someone for the first time when you've already seen a photograph of their vagina.

Rhod Gilbert

* I was never a journalist. I was always an institution.

Robin Day

* It is better to be a has-been than a never-was.

C. Northcote Parkinson

“Nobody notices me. Nobody thinks I’m me. But then I look less like me than most of the people coming to our concerts.

Robert Smith”

* He’s one of those people you’d never tire of hitting with a hammer.

Jeremy Clarkson, on footballer Cristiano Ronaldo

* A fan club is a group of people who tell an actor he’s not alone in the way he feels about himself.

Kenneth Williams

* I discovered I was on the shortlist for Greatest Living Briton. Greatest Living Briton? I wanted to bring Isaac Newton down a peg or two. What’s he done since gravity? I followed up *The Office* with *Extras*.

Ricky Gervais

My wife and I both made a list of five people we could sleep with . . . She read hers out and there were no surprises. . . One: George Clooney. Two: Brad Pitt. I thought, “I’ve got the better deal here. One: your sister . . .”

Michael McIntyre

* I’ve searched all the parks in all the cities and found no statues of committees.

G.K. Chesterton

* My ambition is to host a TV chat show with Neil Armstrong as a guest and never once mention the moon.

Ardal O’Hanlon

* I’m an instant star. Just add water and stir.

David Bowie

* People walk up to me and say, “You’re not as big as you are on telly are you?”
Well, I don’t know – how big’s your fucking television?

Jack Dee

* A celebrity is one who is known to many persons he is glad he doesn’t know.

Lord Byron

* The function of posterity is to look after itself.

Dylan Thomas

“In case you’re wondering who this funny old bloke is, I’m the one who comes on Radio 1 late at night and plays records made by sulky Belgian art students in basements dying of TB.

John Peel, debut on *Top of the Pops*”

* If I saw an ugly bird but she was a celebrity with loads of money, she wouldn’t attract me at all.

Rio Ferdinand

* I always knew I was a star
And now, the rest of the world seems to agree with me.

Freddie Mercury

* I’ve had lots of kids come up and ask for my autograph, I’ve had a grandmother stop me and ask me if I know a good place to buy underwear.

Prince William

* It’s a funny thing, this celebrity. If you don’t wave back you’re a miserable bugger; if you do wave back you’re a big-headed bugger. I don’t know.

Fred Dibnah

* You know, I hardly get any fan mail from women. They're all from badly educated boys in Leeds who can only buy paper with lines on it. And a lot of Germans.

Keith Allen

* Whenever I see a well-meaning celebrity teetering to peer precariously into the dustbins of humanity, my knee-jerk reaction is to condemn them . . . Does Bono even know where he is in the world, given the opacity of his wraparound shades?

Liz Jones

* People say Callum Best is only famous because of who his dad was. But then you could say the same about Jesus.

Karl Pilkington

“Today, everything on TV is celebrity driven, of course. I even notice on my pack of breakfast sausages, there's a picture of Antony Worrall Thompson. Underneath it says, “Prick with a fork”.

Humphrey Lytelton”

* . . . and on the way back from the cove, within a hundred yards of each other, we saw Stevie Nicks and Helena Bonham-Carter, so we gave them a lift on the back of a tractor . . . which was nice.

Patrick Nice (Mark Williams), *The Fast Show*

* I have no interest in Shakespeare and all that British nonsense . . . I just wanted to get famous. All the rest is hogwash.

Anthony Hopkins

* I met Mr Blair before he was famous and concluded that he was an empty-headed soap actor, chosen by the Labour Party to be the plausible frontman for its slow-motion coup d'etat.

Peter Hitchens

* D'you know, if you laid out all of Britain's celebrity chefs end to end, starting at John O'Groats, I would shoot them?

Armando Iannucci

* He only got famous by stealing my Anglo-Saxon vocabulary.

John Lydon, on Gordon Ramsay

* She's amazing – twenty years in ze business und all the pressure und fame hasn't changed her a bit. She's remained a total bitch.

Brüno (a.k.a. Sacha Baron Cohen), on Naomi Campbell

* Fame is a figment of everyone else's imagination.

Van Morrison

* Fame hits you really hard – like a juggernaut. You deal with it two ways: drink and drugs.

Noel Gallagher

* We were the Spice Boys.

George Harrison

* You cannot combine being a movie star with not being a movie star.

Martin Amis

* Whenever I am sent a new book on the lively arts, the first thing I do is look for myself in the index.

Julie Burchill

* . . . and I was at university with Hugh Grant, so he lent us his cottage in Provence, and we just spent the whole week pottering about in his battered old rubber dinghy . . . which was nice.

Patrick Nice (Mark Williams), *The Fast Show*



FAMILY

★ I worry about my nan: what if she's alone in her house and she falls – does she make a sound?

Jimmy Carr

★ Susan: I have decided to put an end to this madness that is ruining all our lives.

Michael: You're going to kill Dad?

Susan Harper (Zoe Wanamaker) and
Michael (Gabriel Thomson), *My Family*

★ I've got a brother, our Archie. I hate him. In fact, the only reason I speak to him is because you never know when you might need a kidney.

Lily Savage (a.k.a. Paul O'Grady)

★ Dads are amazing. They can do stuff that nobody's ever taught them, like changing a plug with a butter knife. That's in no DIY manual is it?

Jason Manford

★ I guess I really should thank our kid for singing all these great songs – but as he's not here, fuck him.

Noel Gallagher on brother Liam at Q Awards

“I wish either my father or my mother, or indeed both of them, as they were in duty both equally bound to it, had minded what they were about when they begot me.

Laurence Sterne”

★ Denise: Come on Dad! Blow it out!

Jim: I will buggery! There's five minutes left in that – save on the lecky.

Denise Best (Caroline Aherne) and
Jim Royle (Ricky Tomlinson), *The Royle Family*

★ Webster: Don't you even know where you were born? Your mother must have told you.

Frank Spencer: She might have mentioned it in passing – we talked of so many things.

Webster (Bernard Hepton) and Frank Spencer
(Michael Crawford), *Some Mothers Do 'Ave 'Em*

My Daddy was a leper.
Mummy is a psycho.
My brother is a hunchback.
My sister works in Tesco.

John Dowie

★ The lullaby is the spell whereby the mother attempts to transform herself back from an ogre to a saint.

James Fenton

★ Grandad: I mean, smoking mari-jew-arna! You brought a slur upon the family name.

Rodney: Oh, leave off, Grandad. I'd have to get done for chicken molesting to bring a slur on this family's name!

Grandad (Lennard Pearce) and Rodney Trotter
(Nicholas Lyndhurst), *Only Fools and Horses*

★ Susan: Don't even think about locking that door!

Ben: Locking it? I was thinking of bricking it up!

Susan Harper (Zoe Wanamaker) and
Ben Harper (Robert Lindsay), *My Family*

★ Would I lay down my life to save my brother? No, but I would to save two

brothers or eight cousins.

J.B.S. Haldane

★ The popular game Twister: I like to describe it as sex with none of the enjoyable bits, except, of course, during sex my face isn't quite as close to my mother's arse.

Ben Davis

★ I saw six men kicking and punching the mother-in-law. My neighbour said, "Are you going to help?"

I said, "No, six should be enough."

Les Dawson

★ I have a gold watch that belonged to my father. He sold it to me on his deathbed, so I wrote him a cheque.

Chic Murray

★ They don't want you to be a kid. They want you to be a chauffeur and keep out of the way.

Billy Bragg, on children

★ I'm ghetto! I live in the hood. With my mum.

Science, contestant on British *Big Brother*

“As kids my dad tried to think of ways to keep us occupied. His solution was to get my mum pregnant eight more times.

Stephen K. Amos”

★ I did have a dreadful mother. Isn't that a terrible thing to say? Always thought entirely of herself. And she lived to 101 – I thought I'd never get rid of her.

John Cleese

★ Colin is the sort of name you give your goldfish for a joke.

Colin Firth

★ My Hungarian grandfather was the kind of man that could follow someone into a revolving door and come out first.

Stephen Fry

★ I always used to hate it when my grandfather came to visit us. It wasn't just because he was blind. But I had always been told that I had his eyes.

Michael Redmond

★ I'm still mastering the art of grandfatherhood. It's like being a dad, only with a little more corruption and mischief.

Keith Richards

My father only hit me once – but he used a Volvo.

Bob Monkhouse

★ Every luxury was lavished on you – atheism, breast-feeding, circumcision. I had to make my own way.

Joe Orton

★ My father dealt in stocks and shares, and my mother also had a lot of time on her hands.

Hermione Gingold

★ My mother tried to kill me when I was a baby. She denied it. She said she thought the plastic bag would keep me fresh.

Bob Monkhouse

★ My grandfather has a small holding, but it only shows if he wears very tight trousers.

Sara Benham

★ I'm sorry I haven't been a very good mother. You can't be good at everything and I was A1 with a hula hoop.

Petula Gordini (Julie Walters), *Dinnerladies*

★ Tragically I was an only twin.

Peter Cook

★ I've got the biggest tits in Huddersfield. Apart from my mum . . . and my nana.

Lesley Sanderson,
contestant on British *Big Brother*

★ If it's not one thing, it's your mother.

Peter Kay

★ Bringing up children on your own is very difficult, even when there are two parents.

Virginia Bottomley

★ I have a really nice step-ladder, but sadly, I never knew my real ladder.

Harry Hill

★ Everyone had an uncle who tried to steal their nose.

Peter Kay

★ I can trace my ancestry back to a protoplasmal primordial atomic globule. Consequently, my family pride is something inconceivable. I can't help it. I was born sneering.

W .S. Gilbert

★ I come from a very old military family. One of my ancestors fell at Waterloo . . . someone pushed him off Platform Nine.

Eric Morecambe

★ My mum's into role reversal. She puts the ham and cheese on the outside.

Tim Vine

★ I always thought our family was like the giant panda –

we had come to the end of our genetic usefulness. But that doesn't mean I don't like sex.

Clarissa Dickson-Wright

★ Freud is all nonsense; the secret of neurosis is to be found in the family battle of wills to see who can refuse the longest to help with the dishes.

Julian Mitchell

★ I've been having an affair, but I still believe in family values.

Paul Johnson

★ The place of the father in the modern suburban family is a very small one, particularly if he plays golf.

Bertrand Russell

★ Having one child makes you a parent; having two you are a referee.

David Frost

★ The fundamental defect of fathers is that they want their children to be a credit to them.

Bertrand Russell

“My mum was a ventriloquist and she was always throwing her voice. For ten years I thought the dog was telling me to kill my father.

Peter Kay”

★ No, I'm the only one in our family who ever went to sea . . . I tell a lie. My grandmother's brother was safety officer on the *Titanic*.

Albert Trotter (Buster Merryfield), *Only Fools and Horses* ★ When I was a kid my parents went, “Matt, don't talk to strangers – you'll bore them.”

Matt Kirshen

★ My father's name is Mohammed. Which he abbreviates to Bob.

Shazia Mirza

★ I learned the way a monkey learns – by watching its parents.

Prince Charles

★ Honour thy parents; that is, all From whom advancement may befall:
Thou shalt not kill; but need'st not strive
Officiously to keep alive.

Arthur Hugh Clough

★ Both my parents were Communists. We would go to sort of big public meetings – protest things – the only way I knew how to get around London was to start at Speakers' Corner and walk down the middle of the road, shouting.

Alexei Sayle

Family members keep trying to set me up with men, but they're always cousins. Or cousins of cousins of cousins. It gets very confusing in Asian circles – if you don't keep track, you could end up sleeping with yourself.

Shazia Mirza

★ My parents have been there for me, ever since I was about seven.

David Beckham

★ Apparently, one in five people in the world are Chinese. And there are five people in my family, so it must be one of them. It's either my mum or my dad. Or my older brother Colin. Or my younger brother Ho-Chan-Chu. But I think it's Colin.

Tim Vine

★ It's hard being a parent, especially when you discover your kids are thick.

JoJo Sutherland



FASHION

❖ Any other race's men can look cool in a pair of shorts; an Englishman in a pair of shorts generally just looks like someone stole his trousers . . . I think it's 'cos we always keep the sensible shoes on.

Nick Revell

❖ What is it with chimpanzees and that middle parting? It's so 1920s.

Harry Hill

❖ A man should look as if he bought his clothes with intelligence, put them on with care, then forgot about them.

Hardy Amies

❖ Am I the only one who's always tempted to light the wick on top of a beret?

Paul Merton

❖ I dress sexily – but not in an obvious way; sexy in a virginal way.

Victoria Beckham

“We were driving back from Birmingham when Kieron suddenly shouted, “Stop the bus! I’ve left my diamond earring in the dressing room.” Can you imagine in my playing days a player telling Bill Shankly, “Stop the bus, Bill, I’ve left me earring in the dressing room”?

Bobby Robson, former footballer,
on modern footballer, Kieron Dyer”

❖ She breaks all the rules, at any age. A leather coat borrowed from an officer in the SS. A shiny belt. A stupid hat. Earrings that will become entangled in trees. Gloves! Nooooooooo! And, why?!

Liz Jones, on Sharon Stone

❖ I believe there is a market for stylish clothes for people who are still relatively continent.

Lesley Brain, contestant on British *Big Brother*

❖ President Kim Jong-il wears platform heels, not because of his alleged lack of height, but because in North Korea they've only just reached 1973.

Dara O Briain

❖ Brian: Do you think I should lose the waistcoat?

Tim: I think you should burn it. Because, if you lose it, you might find it again.

Brian Topp (Mark Heap) and
Tim Bisley (Simon Pegg), *Spaced*

❖ A man does not buy his wife a fur coat to keep her warm, but to keep her pleasant.

Seymour Hicks

In the last couple of weeks I have seen the ads for the Wonder Bra. Is that really a problem in this country? Men not paying enough attention to women's breasts?

Hugh Grant

❖ No man is esteemed for gay garments but by fools and women.

Walter Raleigh

❖ Those hot pants of hers were so damned tight, I could hardly breathe.

Benny Hill

❖ Victoria's obviously decided to exercise and not to eat, and the result is that

her clothes wear her rather than the other way around.

Janet Street-Porter, on Victoria Beckham

“I’ve had my nipples pierced. Why? Because I was sick of losing my car keys. The only trouble is that I have got this really elongated nipple from shoving the keys in the ignition.

Jenny Eclair”

❖ Dave Gahan of Depeche Mode has a pierced perineum, which is the bit between the scrotum and the arsehole. Just think Sharon Osbourne in between Louis Walsh and Simon Cowell.

Mark Lamarr

❖ Posh does not equal style. Really, God, that’s just ridiculous. Posh equals tradition. Anyone can achieve style. It doesn’t matter who you are or where you’re from.

Susannah Constantine

❖ It ain’t easy being cheesy.

Geri Halliwell

❖ You don’t have to signal a social conscience by looking like a frump. Lace knickers won’t hasten the holocaust, you can ban the bomb in a feather boa just as well as without, and a mild interest in hemlines doesn’t necessarily disqualify you from reading *Das Kapital* and agreeing with every word.

Jill Tweedie

❖ It’s in the Bible, people . . . it is documented. There is the passage where Moses takes the children of Israel to the banks of the Red Sea and says we’re going to cross this. It was a black woman who turned to Moses, “Moses, I just had my hair relaxed. You better part that shit.”

Gina Yashere

❖ People are more violently opposed to fur than leather because it’s safer to harass rich women than motorcycle gangs.

Alexei Sayle

❖ I frequently see women walking home late at night, crying, carrying their shoes. Women's shoe design hasn't caught up with the current trend for girls getting absolutely shitfaced. We need a new shoe, like a ladies' drinking stiletto.

Sean Lock

❖ OK then, does you not fink dat you looks rank wearing a wig? Ah mean, you looked a total dick in the seventies wiv da shades, but everyone looked like dicks in da seventies.

Ali G (a.k.a. Sacha Baron Cohen), to Elton John

❖ I went on a girls' night out recently. The invitation said, "Dress to kill". I went as Rose West.

Zoe Lyons

“G-strings are comfortable? They're not. They ride up. By the end of the night you realize you're wearing a fucking eye-patch.

Karen Bayley”

❖ Do you ever think of the person who designed the sports skirt? Someone sat down, drew a fantasy and made it compulsory. I can never watch Wimbledon without thanking him.

Inspector Morse (John Thaw), *Inspector Morse*

❖ This year's hairstyle is called a shag, and our resident stylist is here to give our model one.

Lorraine Kelly, TV presenter

❖ I may wear stilettos, but I still have balls.

Kemal Shahin, contestant on British *Big Brother*

❖ Well, fluffy shirts are, by definition, very comfortable.

Hugh Dancy

❖ If people turn to look at you on the street, you are not well dressed.

Beau Brummel

❖ Fashion is what you adopt when you don't know who you are.

Quentin Crisp

❖ One snap of my fingers and I can raise hemlines so high the whole world's your gynaecologist.

Patsy (Joanna Lumley), *Absolutely Fabulous*

❖ I'm an action transvestite really, so it's running, jumping, climbing trees . . . putting on makeup when you're up there.

Eddie Izzard

❖ When you look in the mirror and despair and none of your clothes seem appropriate, relax, put the kettle on. It might suit you.

Simon Munnery

❖ I made a terrible social gaffe. I went to a Ken and Barbie party dressed as Klaus Barbie.

Arthur Smith

Uncool people never hurt anybody – all they do is collect stamps, read science-fiction books and stand on the end of railway platforms staring at trains.

Ben Elton

❖ I love new clothes. If everyone could just wear new clothes every day, I reckon depression wouldn't exist any

more.

Sophie Kinsella

❖ All that Swinging Sixties nonsense, we all thought it was passé at the time.

David Bailey

❖ The only people who wear ties daily are male politicians and reporters and dodgy estate agents.

Jeremy Paxman

❖ Had me hair cut the other day: walked down the barbershop, said to the bloke, “Cut my hair round the back, mate?”

He said, “What’s wrong with *this* room?”

Ted Chippington

“Why would I wear pink trousers? It’s hard enough being gay.

Rupert Everett”

❖ Trousers can never be too tight. You have to go through a couple of days of pain, then everything stretches out.

Vince Noir (Noel Fielding), *The Mighty Boosh*

❖ Ali G (a.k.a. Sacha Baron Cohen): So now, Beckham, let’s talk about fashion. We has all seen pictures of you wearing clothes that was well embarrassing and frankly make you a proper laughing stock! What’s the name of that dress that you wore?

David Beckham: Sarong.

Ali G: Yeah, I know it was so wrong.

❖ Ever since cloaks and top hats moved out of fashion, you hardly ever see young women tied to railway lines.

Linda Smith

❖ Fashion is a form of ugliness so intolerable that we

have to alter it every six months.

Oscar Wilde

❖ You remember the stick-on soles? They was never as good as shoes.

Jethro (a.k.a. Geoff Rowe)

❖ It's impossible to be unhappy in a poncho.

Vince Noir (Noel Fielding),
The Mighty Boosh

❖ In my case I slob around in old clothes in the country. But I have the luxury of knowing I can pull myself out of that. So I don't feel bad about looking like shit.

Susannah Constantine

❖ I'm gonna get my hair frozen. Imagine that. Then future generations can get it out and just look at it – see what's possible.

Vince Noir (Noel Fielding), *The Mighty Boosh*

❖ I hate the fashion at the minute. How're we sposed to dress cool? It's all skinny-fit jeans, neckerchiefs, straggly hair . . . I mean, I don't want to look like David Essex. What do you accessorize with, a dog on a piece of string?

Alan Carr

Goth Juice . . . the most powerful hairspray known to man. Made from the tears of Robert Smith.

Vince Noir (Noel Fielding),
The Mighty Boosh



FILM AND TELEVISION

“If you’ve never watched Channel Four before, then hello! I’m Jimmy Carr. Basically, I run the place, with my brother Alan.

Jimmy Carr”

* Television? No good will come of this device. The word is half Greek and half Latin.

C.P. Scott

* A good film is when the price of the dinner, the theatre admission and the babysitter were worth it.

Alfred Hitchcock

* The BBC is setting its own taste dial – and the dial is right beside the panic button.

Michael Deacon

* Compared to a novel, a film is like an economy pizza where there are no olives, no ham, no anchovies, no mushrooms, and all you’ve got is the dough.

Louis de Bernières

* Channel Four is like a flood of sewage that comes unbidden into your home, whereas E4 is like you constructed a sluice to let it in.

Stewart Lee, on British television channels

* Philistines. I mean – how can you remake *Casablanca*? The one starring Myra Dinglebat and Peter Beardsley was definitive.

Dave Lister (Craig Charles), *Red Dwarf*

* I know exactly what the people want, and I'm damned if I'm going to give it to them.

Lord Reith, first director-general of the BBC

* I imagine Aro being someone who loves to kind of, you know, sit by a fire and watch an old Barbara Streisand movie . . . I mean, there are a few dead bodies around the place that he's just sucked the blood out of . . .

Michael Sheen, on playing Aro in *Twilight: New Moon*

“Watching *The One Show* with Adrian Chiles: it's like being trapped in the buffet car of a slow-moving express train with a toby jug that's somehow learned to speak; a speaking toby jug filled to the brim with piss . . . it makes me long for the days when a regional accent was considered a professional disadvantage.

Stewart Lee,

on TV presenter Adrian Chiles”

* Television has brought back murder into the home – where it belongs.

Alfred Hitchcock

* The film *Capricorn One* was actually shot on the moon.

Armando Iannucci

* It is the business of turning money into light and then back into money again.

John Boorman, on making movies

Getting a movie made in Hollywood is like trying to grill a steak by having a succession of people coming into the room and breathing on it.

Douglas Adams

* I really want to play Princess Leia. Stick some big pastries on my head. Now

that would be interesting.

Ewan McGregor

* Going to watch a film later, *Anal Lesbians*. It's a film about a group of women going through the fridge, labelling everything.

Liam Mullone

* Broadcasting is really too important to be left to the broadcasters.

Tony Benn, longstanding Labour politician

* Movie stars, from any serious point of view, are inconsequential. The only people who take movie stars seriously are other movie stars.

Michael Caine

* I never quite understand why we watch the news. There doesn't really seem much point watching somebody tell you what the news is when you could quite easily listen to it on the radio.

John Hurt

* There are now more TVs in British households than there are people – which is a bit of a worry.

Prince Charles

* I don't like watching myself. Telly makes me look a little overweight, and actually I'm an incredibly slender man.

Matt Lucas

* He who prides himself on giving what he thinks the public wants is often creating a fictitious demand for low standards which he will then satisfy.

Lord Reith, first director-general of the BBC

* The principal contributor to loneliness in this country is television. What happens is that the family "gets together" alone.

Ashley Montagu

* I never do any television without chocolate. That's my motto and I live by it. Quite often I write the scripts and I make sure there are chocolate scenes.

Actually I'm a bit of a chocolate tart and will eat anything. It's amazing I'm so slim.

Dawn French

* Oprah's announced that she's quitting her show in 2011. Now you know why the Mayans ended their calendar in 2012.

Craig Ferguson

“For me, watching television nowadays is like being in a tepid bath the whole time. You want to get out of it but you're too tired. That's the feeling I have after two minutes, so I don't watch it.

Dylan Moran”

* If we were to draw a graph of my process, of my method, it would be something like this: Sir Ian, Sir Ian, Sir Ian. Action. WIZARD! “YOU SHALL NOT PASS!” Cut! Sir Ian, Sir Ian, Sir Ian.

Ian McKellen, on playing Gandalf, *Extras*

* It takes a rather special sort of person to follow soaps. You have to be highly intelligent (to understand them) and as thick as a brick (to want to).

Alan Coren

* I was criticized for swearing on television. The word I used was “bloody”, which, where I come from in Yorkshire, is practically the only surviving adjective.

Maureen Lipman

* I didn't watch any TV this week. The only TV I watched was, *Are You Good in Bed?* I already knew the answer.

Stephen Merchant

* It's not that we can't afford a [television] set; my employers won't give me any time off to watch.

Harold Macmillan,
British prime minister (1957-63)

“My main goal is my own TV show. But as, we are all aware, the BBC have a diversity policy and apparently I’ve got to wait for Lenny Henry to die. One in, one out, let’s not rock the boat.

Stephen K. Amos,
British stand-up comedian of Nigerian origin”

* The four-foot Pole you wouldn’t want to touch with a ten-foot pole.

Kenneth Tynan, on Roman Polanski

* All you have to do is to look like crap on film and everyone thinks you’re a brilliant actress. Actually, all you’ve done is look like crap.

Helen Mirren

* Samantha has to nip away to be photographed for a double-page feature in the *Radio Times*. The editor says that, in case she needs any touching-up, he wants to inspect her spread on his desk first.

Humphrey Lyttelton, *I’m Sorry I Haven’t a Clue*,
BBC Radio 4

* I was voted seventh most intelligent person on television by readers of the *Radio Times* . . . although eighth was Lisa Simpson, who’s a fictitious cartoon character.

Bill Bailey

* The length of a film should be directly related to the endurance of the human bladder.

Alfred Hitchcock

* You know Ronnie Corbett? He’s brilliant, but ’e’s not really small, ’e’s a great big bloke who they made look small so he could fit on the telly.

Brilliant Kid (Paul Whitehouse), *The Fast Show*

* I have not prepared a speech because tonight's not being televised so it did not seem worth it.

Stephen Merchant, accepting a
Royal Television Society award

* I was offered a small part in the fourth of the *Jaws* series of films at a tremendous fee and I took it. I have never seen the film, but by all accounts it was terrible. However, I have seen the house that it built, and it is terrific.

Michael Caine

* I went to the video shop and said, "Can I rent *Batman Forever*?"
He said, "No, you'll have to bring it back."

Tim Vine

* The satanic genius credited with introducing the idea of *Big Brother* to Britain is Peter Bazalgette, the Cambridge-educated son of a stockbroker who heads Endemol. He is the great-grandson of the illustrious Victorian engineer Sir Joseph Bazalgette, who built London's sewers and rid the capital of a great stink. There are those who think that the present generation has reversed the flow.

Alan Hamilton

* You don't merely give over your creativity to making a film – you give over your life! In theatre, by contrast, you live these two rather strange lives simultaneously; you have no option but to confront the mould on last night's washing-up.

Daniel Day-Lewis

We have to do a film parody for Comic Relief. We can't decide which film to parody at the moment. Any ideas welcome, but not *Spiderman*, owing to costume being too tight.

Dawn French

* The British film industry is not dead – it's alive and well and it's called television.

Lord Gus Macdonald

* I only saw my first porn film last week and it was weird 'cos I couldn't believe how young I was.

Sam Avery

* Where's the porn? I thought they said TV was full of sex. All it seems to be is quiz shows and sport.

Philip Larkin,
after buying his first television set

* Seeing a murder on television can help work off one's antagonisms. And if you haven't any antagonisms, the commercials will give you some.

Alfred Hitchcock

* This film is apparently meaningless, but if it has any meaning it is doubtless objectionable.

British Board of Film

* Television is an invention that permits you to be entertained in your living room by people you wouldn't have in your home.

David Frost

* Television is the first truly democratic culture – the first culture available to everybody and entirely governed by what the people want. The most terrifying thing is what the people do want.

Clive Barnes

* I would love to go to see *Blade Runner* with Leonardo da Vinci. Can you imagine sitting there, wallop, 'ere y'are son, cop some of that! If you had some of that in your day would you have mucked about with a pot of paint?

Bob Hoskins

* On commercial television the high quality of the entertainment is often spoiled by those annoying little interruptions, which we call programmes.

Kenneth Horne

* The only thing that's better about television now is the pay.

Michael Parkinson

* Television was not invented to make human beings vacuous, but is an emanation of their vacuity.

Malcolm Muggeridge

* Television is more interesting than people. If it were not we should have people standing in the corner of our room.

Alan Coren

* I don't watch television; I think it destroys the art of talking about oneself.

Stephen Fry



FOOD

- ★ Garlic bread, that's right Max. Garlic bread – it's the future, I've tasted it.
Brian Potter (Peter Kay), *Phoenix Nights*
- ★ If the British can survive their meals, they can survive anything.
George Bernard Shaw
- ★ Pizza Hut, Pizza Express, Domino's, you've eaten them all. It's a Domino effect, really.
Trevor Lock
- ★ Hors d'oeuvres have always a pathetic interest for me; they remind me of one's childhood that one goes through wondering what the next course is going to be like – and during the rest of the menu one wishes one had eaten more of the hors d'oeuvres.
Hector Hugh Munro
- ★ A man who is sick of chips is sick of life.
Cilla Brown (Wendi Peters),
Coronation Street
- ★ My friend, Lily, can recognize 157 different cheeses just by looking at the labels.
Mrs Merton (a.k.a. Caroline Aherne)
- ★ Triangular sandwiches taste better than square ones.
Peter Kay
- ★ Oysters are horrible – it's like licking phlegm off a tortoise.
Frank Skinner
- ★ What has China ever given the world? Can you really respect a nation that has

never taken to cutlery?

Victoria Wood

★ Why are bees so attracted to honey since they make it? It can only be vanity.

Simon Munnery

★ Hitler was a vegetarian. Just goes to show: vegetarianism, not always a good thing. Can, in some extreme cases, lead to genocide.

Bill Bailey

“ They say cheese gives you nightmares. Ridiculous! I’m not scared of cheese!

Ross Noble”

★ This week I have been mostly eatin’ . . . Prozac.

Jesse (Mark Williams), *The Fast Show*

★ A cucumber should be well-sliced, dressed with pepper and vinegar, and then thrown out.

Samuel Johnson

★ I hate sausages. They’re such bitches.

Craig Coates,
contestant on British *Big Brother*

★ Let’s face it, in Britain “Let’s have a barbecue” means “Let’s get pissed in the garden . . . and burn a few sausages while we’re at it.”

Nick Revell

★ Why do toasters always have a setting that burns the toast to a horrible crisp no one would eat?

Peter Kay

★ Here’s my ID. Yes, I do look rather startled. It was taken in a photo booth and someone had just poked an éclair through the curtain.

Victoria Wood

★ It's easy to distract fat people. It's a piece of cake.

Chris Addison

★ He's an idiot, like a big cheesecake on legs.

Boy George, on Andy Warhol

★ They are steeped in sin and, if eaten for long enough and in quantity, will almost certainly kill you.

Emma Thompson, on crisps

★ Meat pies! Hot sausages! Inna bun! So fresh the pig h'an't noticed they're gone!

Terry Pratchett

★ I don't know how anyone can be a vegetarian. I like meat so much that I can't walk past a field without going in and licking a cow.

Ardal O'Hanlon

★ Why is it that Swiss cheese has the holes when it's Gorgonzola that needs the ventilation?

David Frost

What is it with McDonald's staff who pretend they don't understand you unless you insert the "Mc" before the item you're ordering? It has to be a McChicken burger . . . a chicken burger gets blank looks. Well, I'll have a McStraw and jam it into your McEyes, you fucking McTosser!

Billy Connolly

★ It's like a big tide of jam coming toward us, but jam made out of old women.

Father Dougal McGuire
(Ardal O'Hanlon), *Father Ted*

★ Do watch out for bones, everybody. You can't be too careful with avocados.

Audrey fforbes-Hamilton (Penelope Keith),
To the Manor Born

★ Nobody ever dares make Cup-a-Soup in a bowl.

Peter Kay

★ Coffee in England always tastes like a chemistry experiment.

Agatha Christie

★ Our ice-cream man was found lying on the floor of his van covered with hundreds and thousands. Police say that he topped himself.

Tommy Cooper

“Well, there’s egg and bacon; egg, sausage and bacon; egg and spam; egg, bacon and spam; egg, bacon sausage and spam; spam, bacon, sausage and spam; spam, egg, spam, spam, bacon and spam; spam, sausage, spam, spam, bacon, spam, tomato and spam.

Terry Jones, *Monty Python’s Flying Circus*”

★ “The rule is, jam tomorrow and jam yesterday – but never jam today.”

“It MUST come sometimes to ‘jam today’,” Alice objected.

“No, it can’t,” said the Queen. “It’s jam every OTHER day: today isn’t any OTHER day, you know.”

Lewis Carroll

★ Maître d’: Ah, good afternoon, sir, and how are we today?

Mr Creosote: Better—

Maître d’: Better?

Mr Creosote: Better get a bucket. I’m gonna throw up.

Monty Python, *The Meaning of Life*

★ I wonder how many lentils I’ve ever eaten?

Neil (Nigel Planer), *The Young Ones*

★ Coffee in England is just toasted milk.

Christopher Fry

★ I used to get a weekly vegetable box delivered . . . as varied an assortment as

possible of what was in season and good at the time, and delivered it to you weekly in a box. One week it might be a hundredweight of sweet potatoes, the next week maybe a hundredweight of sweet potatoes.

Giles Coren

★ The cook was a good cook, as cooks go; and as cooks go, she went.

Hector Hugh Munro

★ Vegetarians have wicked, shifty eyes and laugh in a cold, calculating manner. They pinch little children, steal stamps, drink water, favour beards.

J.B. Morton

“There is absolutely no one, apart from yourself, who can prevent you, in the middle of the night, from sneaking down to tidy up the edges of that hunk of cheese at the back of the fridge.

Boris Johnson”

★ You ever dip your biscuit in your tea and it breaks? I swear now, you never get used to that.

Peter Kay

★ Knowledge tells us that a tomato is a fruit; wisdom prevents us from putting it into fruit salad.

Miles Kington

★ This week I are been mostly eatin’ . . . Bourbon biscuits.

Jesse (Mark Williams),
The Fast Show

★ There is no cannibalism in the British navy, absolutely none, and when I say none, I mean there is a certain amount.

Graham Chapman

★ A lot of people cry when they chop onions. The trick is not to form an emotional bond.

Jimmy Carr

★ There's nothing like a big hot sausage inside you on a cold night like this.

Clair Frisby, TV presenter, *Look North*

★ I like a Blackpool breakfast, me – 20 ciggies and a pot of tea.

Lilly Savage (a.k.a. Paul O'Grady)

★ Vegetarianism is harmless enough, though it is apt to fill a man with wind and self-righteousness.

Anthony Eden

★ I went to a seafood disco last week . . . and pulled a muscle.

Tommy Cooper

★ People complain my sense of humour is puerile, but the reason I have a job is because my sense of humour is puerile.

Giles Coren

★ I've never worked out what the moral of Humpty Dumpty is. I can only think of: don't sit on a wall if you're an egg.

Ricky Gervais

“I could catch a monkey. If I was starving, I could. I'd make poison darts out of the poison of the deadly frogs. One milligram of that poison can kill a monkey. Or a man. Prick yourself and you'd be dead within a day. Or longer. Different frogs, different times.

Gareth Keenan (Mackenzie Crook),

The Office”

★ You'll have some tea . . . are you sure you don't want any? Aw, go on, you'll have some. Go on, go on, go on go on go on go on go on GO ON!

Mrs Doyle (Pauline McLynn), *Father Ted*

★ Old Robert a bit slow on the uptake there, dunno what he had for breakfast this morning . . . Presumably an infected spinal column in a bap.

Alan Partridge (a.k.a. Steve Coogan)

★ I'm an appalling cook. I can just about create a glass of orange juice and a ham-and-cheese sandwich.

Dara O Briain

★ Seeing Scott Henshaw refuse to eat an anus was like watching Red Rum pull up at Beacher's Brook.

Jimmy Carr, on

I'm a Celebrity . . . Get Me Out of Here!

★ A mind of the calibre of mine cannot derive its nutriment from cows.

George Bernard Shaw

★ One-armed waiters: they can take it, but can they dish it out?

Tim Vine

★ Chopsticks are one of the reasons the Chinese never invented custard.

Spike Milligan

★ It's a good job we're not having soup, or else I'd put me head in it and drown meself.

Shirley Valentine (Pauline Collins), *Shirley Valentine*

“They're talking about bringing in a two-pence sausage. People have said that's bollocks. I think it'll have brains in it as well.

Frankie Boyle”

★ I’ve never seen anyone clear a plate as fast as you. It’s as if you’re feeding something under the table.

Rigsby (Leonard Rossiter), *Rising Damp*

★ Fruit: it’s just God showing off. “Look at all the colours I know!”

Dylan Moran

★ I could eat a knob at night.

Karl Pilkington

★ Neil, are you going to make me dinner, or am I going to have to kick your teeth in?

Vyvyan (Adrian Edmondson), *The Young Ones*

★ I thought coq au vin was love in a lorry.

Victoria Wood

★ Despair is perfectly compatible with a good dinner.

William Thackeray

★ Studies show one in five British teens are unable to peel an orange . . . It’s a good job they’ve all got knives, then.

Jack Dee

Samantha has to nip off to the coast now for a spot of lobster fishing with some lads on their boat. They never forget where they dropped their pots ’cos it’s where Samantha tossed a large buoy over the side.

Humphrey Lyttelton,
I’m Sorry I Haven’t a Clue, BBC Radio 4

★ Congealed fat is pretty much the same, irrespective of the delicacy around which it is concealed.

Clement Freud

- ★ The English contribution to world cuisine – the chip.

John Cleese

- ★ My friend drowned in a bowl of muesli. A strong currant pulled him in.

Tommy Cooper

- ★ Who discovered we could get milk from cows, and what did he think he was doing at the time?

Billy Connolly

- ★ You're about as organized as tossed salad.

Julie (Hilary Crowson), *Bread*

- ★ Be content to remember that those who can make omelettes properly can do nothing else.

Hilaire Belloc

- “All the ingenious men and all the scientific men in the world could never invent anything so curious and so ridiculous as a lobster.

Charles Kingsley”

- ★ Poets have been mysteriously silent on the subject of cheese.

G.K. Chesterton

- ★ If it has got four legs and is not a chair, if it has two wings and it flies but is not an aeroplane, and if it swims and is not a submarine, the Cantonese will eat it.

Prince Philip

- ★ Is there chicken in chickpeas?

Helen Adams, contestant on British *Big Brother*

- ★ What's a sparagus? Do you grow it?

Jade Goody, contestant on British *Big Brother*

★ I'm a postmodern vegetarian. I eat meat ironically.

Bill Bailey

★ I shouldn't think even millionaires could eat anything nicer than new bread and real butter and honey for tea.

Dodie Smith

★ Toblerones! It's impossible to eat a Toblerone without hurting yourself.

Billy Connolly

How many people died in the Irish famine? I mean, it was just the potatoes that were affected . . . at the end of the day, you will pay the price if you are a fussy eater.

Steve Coogan

★ Is the chemical aftertaste the reason why people eat hot dogs, or is it some kind of bonus?

Neil Gaiman

★ And he said, "My dog doesn't eat meat."

I said, "Why not?"

He said, "We don't give him any."

Tommy Cooper

★ All I can say is, thank God for the Atkins Diet. Today I had sixteen chickens, a horse, a fried egg. I lost two pounds.

Omid Djalili

★ I sometimes feel that more lousy dishes are presented under the banner of pâté than any other.

Kingsley Amis

★ To eat well in England, you should have breakfast three times a day.
W. Somerset Maugham

★ I'm a vegetarian, I'm not strict. I eat fish. And duck, but they're nearly fish aren't they.
Bill Bailey

★ I hate fish. My rule is, if it doesn't have shoulders, I won't eat it.
Patrick Kielty

★ Food is life, life is food. If you don't like my approach you are welcome to go down to McDonald's.
Keith Floyd

★ Child: That's puke, that is!
Basil: Well at least it's fresh puke.
Basil Fawlty (John Cleese), *Fawlty Towers*

★ For what we are about to receive, may the Lord help us to pay for.
Nellie Boswell (Jean Boht), *Bread*

★ I have decided that the best thing to do with the view is to eat it.
Jeremy Clarkson,
on taking up shooting

★ If I was in charge, I'd get rid of Jamie Oliver and tell people to eat what they liked.
Boris Johnson, on TV chef Jamie Oliver

★ The kebab diet, it's the latest fad. What you do is you get a kebab from a dodgy shop, you leave it for a month. Don't knock it; my mate lost five stone like that. All right she lost her legs as well, but, fuck it, she's thin now, she don't need to walk.

Gina Yashere

★ The almond, have pity on the almond . . . too broad and flat to be a peanut, its shell too easily shed for it to be a pistachio . . . not wrinkled enough to be a walnut, not curly enough to be a cashew . . . the almond!

Harry Hill

“Why do people say, “Oh you just want to have your cake and eat it too”? Dead right! What good is a cake if you can’t eat it?

Billy Connolly”

★ All I ask of food is that it doesn’t harm me.

Michael Palin

★ My dad kept bees, not for the honey, no, for the fur!

Harry Hill

★ He’ll shoot, he’ll score, he’ll eat your Labrador – Seol Ki-Hyeon.

Chant of Reading Football Club’s fans
in honour of their South Korean winger

★ Cottage cheese has no flavour; it’s like kissing your sister.

Cathy Hopkins

It was quite a challenge to make people eat crab ice cream.

Heston Blumenthal,
famously adventurous chef who
has won three Michelin stars at his
restaurant “The Fat Duck” in Berkshire

★ My friend’s been on the Feng Shui diet, which works just by repositioning things round the house. She really has lost weight. I think she lost about a stone just getting the fridge up to the attic on day one.

Lucy Porter

★ It was a bold person that first ate an oyster.

Jonathan Swift

★ A diet is when you watch what you eat and wish you could eat what you watch.

Hermione Gingold

★ Barbara: How's your diet going, Cheryl?

Cheryl: Oh, all right thanks, yeah, Barbara, I lost four pounds . . . and then I put two back on and then another two. But I've not gained any.

Barbara Royle (Sue Johnston) and
Cheryl Carroll (Jessica Hynes), *The Royle Family*

★ Diets are like boyfriends – it never really works to go back to them.

Nigella Lawson

★ No diet will remove all the fat from your body because the brain is entirely fat. Without a brain, you might look good, but all you could do is run for public office.

George Bernard Shaw

★ I went to a restaurant the other day called “Taste of the Raj”. The waiter hit me with a stick and got me to build a complicated railway system.

Harry Hill

★ Vindaloo is the staple diet of more than 90 per cent of Britain's colonic masochists.

Jonathan Meades

★ I'm the head waiter. This is a vegetarian restaurant only. We serve no animal flesh of any kind. We're not only proud of that, we're smug about it.

Monty Python's Flying Circus

★ There is no love sincerer than the love of food.

George Bernard Shaw

“I’m a big fan of the Mars Bar Diet. You don’t eat the Mars bar, you stick it up your arse and let a Rottweiler chase you home.

Billy Connolly”

★ When it comes to food, Brooklyn’s just like me. What other little boy would turn down a piece of chocolate for a piece of haddock?

Victoria Beckham

★ You never know where to look when eating a banana.

Peter Kay

★ I shall never go on another diet. My bosom is a triumph, as my husband will testify.

Emma Thompson

★ I got kicked out of the scouts for eating a brownie.

Ross Noble

“Dieting on New Year’s Day isn’t a good idea as you can’t eat rationally but really need to be free to consume whatever is necessary, moment by moment, in order to ease your hangover. I think it would be much more sensible if resolutions began generally on 2 January.

Helen Fielding”

★ At this one seaside hotel, I started eating my fry-up and . . . it was so disgusting, even my tapeworm was saying, “Ooh, I’m stuffed.”

Alan Carr

★ It tasted exactly like licking a hot Turkish urinal.

Jeremy Clarkson, on eating seal flipper

★ Mozzarella has to be perfect and impeccably sourced or it’s like eating a blind

whale's eyeball.

A.A. Gill

★ Eating is touch carried to the bitter end.

Samuel Butler

★ I bit the head off a live bat the other night. It was like eating a Crunchie wrapped in chamois leather.

Ozzy Osbourne

★ Do you know what breakfast cereal is made of? It's made of all those little curly wooden shavings you find in pencil sharpeners.

Roald Dahl

★ Nobody has the time. You come in from work and, if you're getting very adventurous, you think "Tonight we will eat something that has two colours in it." But you don't. You end up eating bread from the bag, dipping it in anything runnier than bread.

Dylan Moran

★ Mangetouts eh? Mangetouts, they're lovely aren't they? But couldn't eat a whole one.

Harry Hill

★ Artichoke: that vegetable of which one has more at the finish than at the start of dinner.

Lord Chesterfield

★ Why would anyone take food advice from Mr Brown, a man who eats his own fingernails?

Robert Warner, on Gordon Brown

★ Samantha is off on a dinner date with a gentleman friend from Moscow who's brought over a variety of caviars and an array of vodka-based aperitifs. She says he's going to offer her delicious food in his hotel room and then liquor out on the

balcony.

Humphrey Lyttelton, *I'm Sorry I Haven't a Clue*,
BBC Radio 4

★ I just love Chinese food. My favourite dish is number twenty-seven.

Clement Attlee

Some breakfast food manufacturer hit upon the simple notion of emptying out the leavings of carthorse nose bags, adding a few other things like unconsumed portions of chicken layer's mash, and the sweepings of racing stables, packing the mixture in little bags and selling them in health food shops.

Frank Muir

★ A woman should never be seen eating or drinking, unless it be lobster salad and champagne, the only true feminine and becoming viands.

Lord Byron

★ What I say to people in the north of England is . . . not every town has to have a cake named after it.

Stewart Lee

“On wedding buffets: vol au vents, chicken legs, cheesecake. Vol au vents, chicken legs, cheesecake. That's all it is, same food repeated. Always reminds of *Scooby Doo*, the cartoon, where they always used to run down a corridor passing the same things. Plant, clock, plant, clock.

Peter Kay”

★ I'm like the filler in a sandwich. I'm not the ham but I'm something that makes it work.

Johnny Vegas

★ Don't let love interfere with your appetite. It never does with mine.

Anthony Trollope

★ Unlike European mustards that bring out the subtle flavours of food, English mustard makes your nose bleed.
Jack Dee

★ We may find in the long run that tinned food is a deadlier weapon than the machine gun.

George Orwell

★ It's a food that ain't worth injuring yourself for. If it's a hassle to get into, leave it to the experts.

Karl Pilkington, on avocados

★ You'd eat beaver if you could get it.

Carenza Lewis,
on foraging for food in the Middle Ages, *Time Team Live*

★ On the continent people have good food; in England people have good table manners.

George Mikes

★ I love England, especially the food. There's nothing I like more than a lovely bowl of pasta.

Naomi Campbell

★ Somebody said to me the other day "Shall we eat, or have a McDonald's?"

Dave Allen

★ Fish should swim thrice: first it should swim in the sea . . . then it should swim in butter, and at last, sirrah, it should swim in good claret.

Jonathan Swift

★ You cannot sell a blemished apple in the supermarket, but you can sell a tasteless one, provided it is shiny, smooth, even, uniform and bright.

Elsbeth Huxley

“ I love kebabs: they give you all that meat, that saturated fat, and they give you that little bit of salad. What’s that, the healthy section? Never see a drunk do that, do you? “Where’s me salad! What you trying to do, kill me?”

Lee Evans”

★ It’s a bit sad really when an omelette dies, isn’t it?

Bob Mortimer



FRIENDS

❖ Hands up, who likes me?

Rick (Rik Mayall), *The Young Ones*

❖ My friends, as I have discovered myself, there are no disasters, only opportunities. And, indeed, opportunities for fresh disasters.

Boris Johnson

❖ We're about as similar as two completely dissimilar things in a pod.

Edmund Blackadder (Rowan Atkinson), *Blackadder*

❖ Business, you know, may bring you money, but friendship hardly ever does.

Jane Austen

❖ The finest proof of our loyalty toward one another was our monstrous disloyalties towards everyone else.

Alain de Botton

❖ We English are good at forgiving our enemies; it releases us from the obligation of liking our friends.

P.D. James

❖ Have you noticed the way that burns victims stick together?

Carey Marx

❖ We have become friends and I wouldn't like to jeopardize that friendship by sticking my dirty love inside her body.

Avid Merrion (a.k.a. Leigh Francis)

❖ A true friend stabs you in the front.

Oscar Wilde

❖ Never exaggerate your faults. Your friends will attend to that.

Francis Bacon, philosopher

❖ A friend in need is a friend indeed. But a friend in Marbella means you get a free holiday every year.

Joe Pasquale

❖ Nine-tenths of the people were created so you would want to be with the other tenth.

Horace Walpole

❖ I'm a single woman in my thirties, so most of my friends are gay men and cats. Turns out they're both attracted to the stench of gin and regret.

Lucy Porter

“Pigeons don't shit on their friends. That's something Ken Livingstone ought to learn Tony Banks, on fellow MP,

Ken Livingstone”

❖ Every murderer is probably somebody's old friend.

Agatha Christie

❖ Was delighted to learn my friend's *schadenfreude* was not as satisfying as mine.

Armando Iannucci

❖ Weeds are flowers too, once you get to know them.

A.A. Milne

❖ *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?* What a rip off! Phone a friend? What if you haven't got any friends?

Linda La Hughes (Kathy Burke), *Gimme, Gimme, Gimme* ❖ Histories are more full of examples of the fidelity of dogs than of friends.

Alexander Pope

❖ My friends call me Keith, but you can call me John.

Keith Moon

❖ A true friend is one who likes you despite your achievements.

Arnold Bennett

❖ Holly: Jean-Paul Sartre said hell was being locked forever in a room with your friends.

Dave: Holly, all his mates were French.

Holly (Norman Lovett) and
Dave Lister (Craig Charles), *Red Dwarf*

❖ We read that we ought to forgive our enemies but we do not read that we ought to forgive our friends.

Francis Bacon, philosopher

❖ He has no enemies, but is intensely disliked by his friends.

Oscar Wilde

❖ I just wanna say, that over the years, I have come to regard you as . . . people . . . I met.

Arnold Rimmer (Chris Barrie), *Red Dwarf*



GETTING ON A BIT

* I found my first grey pubic hair the other day. It was in a kebab, but there you go.

Jeff Green

* I don't need you to remind me of my age. I have a bladder to do that for me.

Stephen Fry

* Say what you like about Madonna, but she has the body of a man half her age.

Jimmy Carr

* What's the point in growing old if you can't hound and persecute the young?

Kenneth Clarke

* I've got really middle aged lately. I can't read the paper . . . unless the woman in the house across the street holds it up in the bedroom window.

Victoria Wood

* I'll be around until the green, green grass is turned into a car park.

Tom Jones

“I can't do this partying any more . . . I've reached the point where if I queue up for a nightclub and the bouncer says, “You can't come in,” I say, “Thanks, mate . . . my feet are killing me.”

Micky Flanagan”

* My memory is going. I brush my teeth, and then ten minutes later I go back and have to feel the toothbrush. Is it wet? Did I just brush them?

Terry Gilliam

* Every woman feels she is too old and has missed the boat.

Felicity Kendal

* Young people wonder how the adult world can be so boring. The secret is that it is not boring to adults because they have learned to enjoy simple things like covert malice at one another's expense.

Celia Green

* Well, my nan, oh yeah, she gets things mixed up. She gets the hair dryer mixed up with the telephone . . . you might have seen her around . . . wet hair, chapped lips.

Harry Hill

* A man's as old as he's feeling. A woman as old as she looks.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge

* It is far better to be out with beautiful girls than be an old fart in the pub talking about what you were like in the sixties.

Mick Jagger

* I will fight for what I believe in until I drop dead. And that's what keeps you alive.

Barbara Castle

That's another warning sign of old age: golf. It's nature's way of telling you you should be dead.

Eric Idle

* We, the middle-aged majority, must never relax our vigilance, never be seduced by their apparent charm into attaching any importance to whatever the young may say or think.

Auberon Waugh

* Inside every old person is a young person wondering what happened.

Terry Pratchett

* You've turned into your dad the day you put aside a thin piece of wood

specifically to stir paint with.

Peter Kay

* When you're eighteen you think everyone over forty plays dominoes and smells of Vicks.

Jasper Carrott

* He immatures with age.

Harold Wilson, on Tony Benn,
longstanding Labour politician

* I refuse to admit I'm more than fifty-two, even if that does make my sons illegitimate.

Nancy Astor

* When people are old enough to know better they are old enough to do worse.

Hesketh Pearson

* I hate middle age. Too young for the bowling green, too old for Ecstasy.

Rab C. Nesbitt (a.k.a. Gregor Fisher)

* To my surprise, my seventies are nicer than my sixties and my sixties than my fifties, and I wouldn't wish my teens and twenties on my enemies.

Lionel Blue

* Nostalgia is heroin for old people.

Dara O Briain

The old believe everything, the middle-aged suspect everything, the young know everything.

Oscar Wilde

* One of the delights known to age, and beyond the grasp of youth, is that of Not Going.

J.B. Priestley

* I was eighteen about six years ago. I'm twenty-eight now.

Frank Bruno

* No woman should ever be quite accurate about her age.
It looks so calculating.

Oscar Wilde

* Trigger: Twenty years, it's a long time Dave.

Rodney: Yeah, well it's two decades.

Trigger: I wouldn't go that far, but it's a long time.

Trigger (Roger Lloyd-Pack) and Rodney Trotter
(Nicholas Lyndhurst), *Only Fools And Horses*

* There are three classes into which all the women past seventy that ever I knew
were to be divided. One: That dear old soul; two: That old woman; three: That
old witch.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge

* Is that a birthday? 'tis, alas! Too clear;
'Tis but the funeral of the former year.

Alexander Pope

* The three ages of man are youth, middle age and "my word, you do look
well".

June Whitfield

* Just keep pissing in your pyjamas and complaining
about everything. That's the great benefit of old age.

Eric Idle

* Being over seventy is like being engaged in a war. All our friends are going or
gone and we survive amongst the dead and the dying as on a battlefield.

Muriel Spark

* The young have aspirations that never come to pass, the old have reminiscences of what never happened.

Hector Hugh Munro

“Nobody really talks to old people, 'cos, you know, you don't know what they're saying. They just go, “Arghh, arghh, arghh”, and you don't know if they're having a good time or being bitten.

Dylan Moran”

* I feel very very old. My hair hurts. I have buttocks all over my body and I can't even smoke properly any more. I don't have lungs, I just have two poppadoms in here

Dylan Moran

* When my kids are in college, maybe I'll drag my fishnets and high heels out.

Sheena Easton

“I've started wearing the clothes of a much younger man, and he's furious about it . . . I've started wearing these trendy figure-hugging T-shirts 'cos I figure if I'm going to deny the fact I'm old, I might as well deny the fact that I'm fat as well.

Richard Herring”

* I used to do this thing in my shows. I used to say I knew when I was getting older when I'd walk past a rack of Dr Scholl sandals and think, “Ooh, they look comfy.” Now I think, “Too modern, too modern.”

Victoria Wood

* Youth is wasted on the young.

George Bernard Shaw

“I can't be doing with any torrid love scenes at my age. Some of that goes back

to my daughter Kitty saying when she was quite little: “Dad, we’re not going to see your bum again, are we?”

Kevin Whatley”

* I’m fifty-nine and people call me middle aged. How many 118-year-old men do you know?

Barry Cryer

* I couldn’t imagine playing someone young now; it would be so boring.

Francesca Annis

* I think a lot about getting old. I don’t want to be one of those seventy-year olds who still want lots of sex.

Rupert Everett

* You end up as you deserve. In old age you must put up with the face, the friends, the health and the children you have earned.

Fay Weldon

* A woman is as young as her knees.

Mary Quant

* Whenever the talk turns to age, I say I am forty-nine plus VAT.

Lionel Blair

* Only the old are innocent. That is what the Victorians understood, and the Christians. Original sin is a property of the young. The old grow beyond corruption very quickly.

Malcolm Bradbury

* Growing old is like being increasingly penalized for a crime you haven’t committed.

Anthony Powell

* Women are still throwing their undies at me in concert, but now the panties are quite a bit larger than they used to be.

Tom Jones

* I've always been older than I am. I was a middle-aged adolescent in tweed trousers.

Daniel Kitson

You will recognize, my boy, the first sign of age: it is when you go out into the streets of London and realize for the first time how young the policemen look.

Seymour Hicks

* I'm getting to an age where I can only enjoy alphabet spaghetti if I'm wearing my reading glasses.

Frank Skinner

* When I found a dead body, they said I was thirty-nine. I'm thirty-six. I was more traumatized by the fact they got my age wrong than the fact I'd found a stiff.

Amanda Holden

* One of the consequences of growing older, I find, is that you become progressively less interested in other people's sex lives. These days, frankly, I find it difficult to show much interest even in my own.

Martin Kelner

* Sometimes getting older feels easy; sometimes it feels difficult. It depends how the wine is hitting you really.

Rupert Everett

“I can feel myself getting older. The problem is, it creeps up on you like a Ninja. You think to yourself, “Ooh, I'm really young,” then one day you catch

yourself tucking your shirt into your underpants.

Jeff Green”

* Older women are best, because they always think they may be doing it for the last time.

Ian Fleming

* We shall all be old one day – provided, of course, we can avoid being slaughtered on the roads or beaten up by some hooligan in a peace demonstration.

Prince Philip

* I used to dread getting older because I thought I would not be able to do all the things I wanted to do, but now that I am older I find that I don't want to do them.

Nancy Astor

As I grow older and older,
And totter toward the tomb,
I find that I care less and less,
Who goes to bed with whom.

Dorothy L. Sayers

* As you get older, you don't get as horny – I don't take as many cold showers a day as I used to.

Tom Jones

* I'm tired. Being older makes you tired. I quite like just sitting on the sofa.

Liz Smith

* Stretching, stretching and more stretching, that's what we all have to do. As you get older your body wants to curl up, like a piece of bacon under a hot grill.

Chris Evans

* Fred Davis, the doyen of snooker, now sixty-seven years of age and too old to get his leg over, prefers to use his left hand.

Ted Lowe

* The greatest problem about old age is the fear that it might go on too long.

A.J.P. Taylor

* The joy of being older is that in one's life one can, towards the end of the run, over-act appallingly.

Quentin Crisp

* As I get older I seem to believe less and less and yet to believe what I do believe more and more.

Bishop of Durham

* The media would have us believe that ageing is harder for women, which might be true, but then, hey, men age too. For example, how hairy are my toes becoming?

Jeff Green

* One thing only has been lent to youth and age in common – discontent.

Matthew Arnold

* When you get to my age you either run away or jump in with both feet.

Jan Leeming

* When you get to my age life seems little more than one long march to and from the lavatory.

John Mortimer

* I think age is a very high price to pay for maturity.

Tom Stoppard

“It is said that at the age of fifty-five each man becomes what he most despised

at the age of twenty-five. I live in constant fear lest I become a badly organized trip to Bournemouth.

Simon Munnery”

* And meanwhile time goes about its immemorial work of making everyone look and feel like shit.

Martin Amis

* As you get older three things happen. The first is your memory goes, and I can't remember the other two . . .

Norman Wisdom

* Middle age snuffs out more talent than even wars or sudden death does.

Gerald Brennan

* Most artists go potty as they get older: dafter and madder as they get more celibate. So I am consciously going to do that.

Peter Blake

* As you grow old you lose interest in sex, your friends drift away and your children often ignore you. There are other advantages, of course, but these are the outstanding ones.

Richard Needham



HAPPINESS

★ Is the glass half full or half empty? I say it's half empty – people say that makes me a pessimist but it kind of depends what's in the glass . . . what if it's a glass of monkey semen? The monkey semen is half gone – that's a good thing – not so much to go.

Richard Herring

★ Remember when Sellotape came out? Oh, the excitement! Smooth on one side, sticky on the other!

Harry Hill

★ There's always someone worse off than yourself, and he probably lives in Wrexham.

Michael Kelly

★ There was a long time that I wanted to have blonde hair, be called Tracey and go out with boys.

Meera Syal, Asian-British comedian

★ There is a lot of sorrow in the world. Most of it, luckily, is in *EastEnders*.

Nancy Banks-Smith

★ You want the moon on a stick!

Richard Herring, *Fist of Fun*

★ An Englishman never enjoys himself, except for a noble purpose.

A.P. Herbert

★ This lamentable phrase “the pursuit of happiness” is responsible for a good part of the ills and miseries of the modern world.

Malcolm Muggeridge

★ Lying in bed would be an altogether perfect and supreme experience if only one had a coloured pencil long enough to draw on the ceiling.

G.K. Chesterton

★ Maybe put your finger up your arse a little bit . . . I beg you, do not go to your grave not knowing what it's like . . . we have access to a world of wonder! Our own internal brown Narnia.

Russell Brand

★ The place where optimism most flourishes is the lunatic asylum.

Henry Havelock Ellis

“Look how much mic lead I've got, whooaar – how happy am I? Come on, get on stage, get naked, well have a cuddle. Not in a gay way – like two soldiers away from home, missing their wives . . . in bunk beds.

Noel Fielding”

★ Time misspent in youth is sometimes all the freedom one ever has.

Anita Brookner

★ People say to me, “Bill, are you an optimist?”
I say, “I hope so.”

Bill Bailey

★ Dreams don't come true. If they did, the nation's offices would be full of people who'd accidentally turned up for work with no clothes on.

Charlie Brooker

“The countryside is incredibly boring. There’s lots of shagging, lots of murders, lots of sarcasm, lots of treachery and lots of bad cooking, but it’s all hidden. You’ve got all the space and the flowers, but it’s dull.

Tom Baker”

★ Happiness is a hard master, particularly other people’s happiness.

Aldous Huxley

★ A pessimist is a man who thinks everybody is as nasty as himself, and hates them for it.

George Bernard Shaw

★ When one door closes, another one falls on top of you.

Angus Deayton

If you don’t get what you want, it’s a sign either that you did not seriously want it, or that you tried to bargain over the price.

Rudyard Kipling

★ Let’s find out what everyone is doing, And then stop everyone from doing it.

A.P. Herbert

★ Bad humour is an evasion of reality; good humour is an acceptance of it.

Malcolm Muggeridge

★ Society is everybody’s way of punishing one another because they daren’t take it out on the universe.

Celia Green

★ Our proper bliss depends on what we blame.

Alexander Pope

★ I like blinking, I do!

Helen Adams, contestant on British *Big Brother*

★ I like being Rupert Everett, but I'd also like to be a muscular black billionaire hip-hop singer.

Rupert Everett

★ The boredom occasioned by too much restraint is always preferable to that produced by an uncontrolled enthusiasm for a pointless variety.

Osbert Lancaster

★ I have noticed that the people who are late are often so much jollier than the people who have to wait for them.

E.V. Lucas

★ To be stupid, and selfish, and to have good health are the three requirements for happiness – though if stupidity is lacking, the others are useless.

Julian Barnes

“I'm happy with who I am and what I am, and if people don't like that they can go kill themselves like Mum did.

Phill Proctor (Mark Gatiss),
The League of Gentlemen”

★ A cynic is what an idealist calls a realist.

Sir Humphrey (Nigel Hawthorne), *Yes Minister*

★ Pessimism, when you get used to it, is just as agreeable as optimism.

Arnold Bennett

★ If mankind had wished for what is right, they might have had it long ago.

William Hazlitt

★ What we feel and think is to a great extent determined by the state of our ductless glands and viscera.

Aldous Huxley

★ People must not do things for fun. We are not here for fun. There is no reference to fun in any act of Parliament.

A.P. Herbert

★ Most people would rather be certain they're miserable than risk being happy.

Robert Anthony

★ The British do not expect happiness. I had the impression, all the time that I lived there, that they do not want to be happy; they want to be right.

Quentin Crisp

★ When people say, "She's got everything," I've only one answer: I haven't had tomorrow.

Elizabeth Taylor

★ Happiness is a good martini, a good meal, a good cigar and a good woman . . . or a bad woman, depending on how much happiness you can stand.

G.K. Chesterton

★ I'll tell you what I love doing more than anything: trying to pack myself into a small suitcase. I can hardly contain myself.

Tim Vine

★ Happiness is the perpetual possession of being well deceived.

Lytton Strachey

★ Are you depressed, unhappy, suicidal? Then think what it's like for me as a Conservative candidate.

John Kelly

★ The secret of happiness is to admire without desiring. And that is not happiness.

F.H. Bradley

★ Deprivation is for me what daffodils were for Wordsworth.

Philip Larkin

★ The music was loud, the food was cold, the drinks were few and the people many.

Bernard (Dylan Moran), *Black Books*

★ A pier is a disappointed bridge.

Julian Barnes

If you want to be happy for a short time, get drunk; happy for a long time, fall in love; happy forever, take up gardening.

Arthur Smith

★ No human being, however great, or powerful, was ever so free as a fish.

John Ruskin

★ Some cause happiness wherever they go; others, whenever they go.

Oscar Wilde

★ This must be Thursday. I never could get the hang of Thursdays.

Douglas Adams

★ Men who are unhappy, like men who sleep badly, are always proud of the fact.

Bertrand Russell

★ One of the secrets of a happy life is continuous small treats.

Iris Murdoch

★ One has to have the courage of one's pessimism.

Ian McEwan

★ Bloodnok: What's the matter with you this morning, Seagoon? Why have you got such a long face?

Seagoon: Heavy dentures, sir.

Dennis Bloodnok (Peter Sellers) and
Neddie Seagoon (Harry Secombe), *The Goon Show*

★ For a happy and successful life you need a love of people and a love of maths.
Johnny Ball

★ The English are not happy unless they are miserable, the Irish are not at peace unless they are at war, and the Scots are not at home unless they are abroad.
George Orwell

★ Point me out the happy man and I will point you out either egotism, selfishness, evil or else an absolute ignorance.
Graham Greene

★ The secret of happiness is to be happy already.
Julian Barnes

★ Laugh and the world laughs with you. Snore and you sleep alone.
Anthony Burgess

★ Build a man a fire, and he'll be warm for a day. Set a man on fire, and he'll be warm for the rest of his life.
Terry Pratchett

“I used to desire many, many things, but now I have just one desire, and that's to get rid of all my other desires.
John Cleese”



HEALTH

❖ It's twenty-five years since the Chernobyl disaster. Is it only me that's surprised there are still no superheroes?

Jimmy Carr

❖ Keep away from physicians. It is all probing and guessing and pretending with them. They leave it to Nature to cure in her own time, but they take the credit. As well as very fat fees.

Anthony Burgess

❖ I go to a woman dentist. It's a relief to be told to open my mouth instead of shut it.

Bob Monkhouse

❖ Why does your gynaecologist leave the room when you get undressed?

Peter Kay

❖ I'm already two years ahead on my daily fat allowance. I'm looking for skinny people to see if I can borrow theirs.

Jo Brand

❖ In the good old days you were poor, you got ill and you died.

Alan B'Stard (Rik Mayall),
The New Statesman

❖ Jean: Is the room airy?
Basil: Well, it's got air in it.

Jean Wilson (April Walker) and
Basil Fawlty (John Cleese), *Fawlty Towers*

❖ A bit of lusting after someone does wonders for you and is good for your skin.
Liz Hurley

❖ Laughter is the best medicine – unless you are diabetic.
Then insulin comes pretty high on the list.
Jasper Carrott

❖ I wish I had the voice of Homer to sing of rectal carcinoma.
J.B.S. Haldane

❖ She needs open-heart surgery, and they should go in through her feet.
Julie Andrews on columnist Joyce Haber

❖ I have a heart condition. If you hit me, it's murder.
Withnail (Richard E. Grant), *Withnail and I*

❖ My teeth are all my own. I've just finished paying for them.
Ken Dodd

“In the sixties, we were too stoned to jog; in the seventies we had platform shoes, and in the eighties . . . I can't remember what happened in the eighties.
Eddy (Jennifer Saunders),
Absolutely Fabulous”

❖ A cockroach can live for a whole week without a head. Beat that, Heather Mills!
Jimmy Carr

❖ Amy Winehouse went to Glastonbury. She had to wade through dirt, rubbish and people lying around – just to leave her flat.
Patrick Kielty

❖ I got my willy caught in my fly for the first time the other day. I just wasn't thinking. I just buttoned it up so fast.
Spencer Brown

“People always say I shouldn’t be burning the candle at both ends, maybe because they don’t have a big enough candle.

George Best”

❖ I do get hot. Sometimes I think, “Oh I can smell the menopause on me.” You know, it’s kind of BO and Prozac and furniture polish.

Jenny Eclair

❖ Is it possible to brush your teeth without wiggling your backside?

Peter Kay

❖ I was going through puberty at the same time my mother went through the change. The menfolk kept away.

Julie Walters

❖ Drink wine and have the gout; drink none and have the gout.

Thomas Cogan

❖ People have believed for hundreds of years that newts in a well mean that the water’s fresh and drinkable, and in all that time never asked themselves whether the newts got out to go to the lavatory.

Terry Pratchett

I’ve got a huge roll of fat around here which I never worry about unless sometimes I think: if I fell in a canal would anyone bother to throw me a life belt?

Victoria Wood

❖ I consider being ill as one of the great pleasures of life, provided one is not too ill.

Samuel Butler

❖ I was burning the candle at both ends and the flames met in the middle.

Colin Farrell

❖ Suicide is a real threat to health.

Virginia Bottomley, MP

“ Disney has installed hand-sanitizers to combat swine flu. And I was thinking, “Disney – if you’re really serious about not spreading swine flu, get that Donald Duck to start wearing pants.”

Craig Ferguson”

❖ I’ve been using Head & Shoulders for a week now. I’ve still got dandruff but my shoulders have never been shinier or more manageable.

Rob Rouse

❖ Disabled loos. Ironically, the only loos big enough to run around in.

Adam Bloom

❖ Soon I’ll be bendy like Madonna, darling. Then I’ll be able to kiss my own ass from both directions.

Eddy (Jennifer Saunders),
Absolutely Fabulous

❖ There’s nobody fitter at his age, except maybe Raquel Welch.

Ron Atkinson

❖ The only exercise I get is walking behind the coffins of friends who took exercise.

Peter O’Toole

❖ Why does mineral water that “has trickled through mountains for centuries” have a “use-by” date?

Peter Kay

❖ My husband’s had a vasectomy, didn’t tell me – bloody liar said he was going to the garden centre.

Victoria Wood

❖ I've got ten pairs of training shoes, one for every day of the week.

Samantha Fox

❖ If someone calls me fat, I don't get angry. I just turn the other chin.

Jo Brand

❖ Time is a great healer, unless you've got a rash, in which case you're better off with ointment.

Holly (Norman Lovett), *Red Dwarf*

❖ I've got an electric toothbrush, but it makes me retch, so I never use it.

David Mitchell

“He ached all over. It wasn't just that his brain was writing cheques that his body couldn't cash. It had gone beyond that. Now his feet were borrowing money that his legs hadn't got, and his back muscles were looking for loose change under the sofa cushions.

Terry Pratchett”

❖ Every collection of five Englishmen needs a foreigner to stop it becoming a social health hazard.

A.A. Gill

❖ My cousin just came out of hospital, and she had to have an ovary removed. Now her fucking granny, when she came out of hospital, had bought her a massive box of Mini-eggs.

Tom Wigglesworth

❖ I don't like doing anything that makes you sweat if you don't come at the end of it.

Russell Brand

❖ There's only one fatal disease, I've concluded. It's called hypochondria. And it is deadly.

Keith Richards

❖ I've never had major knee surgery on any other part of my body.

Winston Bennett

❖ I try to keep fit. I've got these parallel bars at home. I run at them and try to buy a drink from both of them.

Arthur Smith

❖ If you want to lose weight, don't eat anything out of a bucket.

Billy Connolly

❖ I have the body of an eighteen-year-old. I keep it in the fridge.

Spike Milligan

❖ BSE – I'm sure there weren't that many cows that went mad. I'm sure a lot of them were just joining in, acting a bit weird . . . don't get eaten.

Alan Davies, on BSE, or "mad cow disease"

❖ Inside every fat bloke there's a couple of burgers and a pasty just waiting to get out.

Bob Mortimer

❖ It's a lovely leg for the role! As soon as I saw it come in, I said to myself, "Hello, what a lovely leg for the role." I got nothing against your right leg. The trouble is, neither have you. It is on the left leg that you fall down.

Peter Cook

❖ Thirty years ago I was diagnosed with motor neurone disease, and given two and a half years to live. I have always wondered how they could be so precise about the half.

Stephen Hawking

❖ Do you know, they have eating dogs for the anorexic now?

Prince Philip

❖ We are the Peter Pan of prejudice, especially when you think of all the doctors

the National Health Service has stolen from overseas. I think most illegal immigrants only come here to see their local doctor.

Andy Zaltzman

“At the gym the women never ever speak to each other . . . and then the other day . . . we found a turd in the ladies’ shower, and it was instant bonding : “Oh, my God, that’s awful, dreadful, let’s go for coffee . . .” Christ, the things I do to make friends.

Karen Bayley”

❖ Why are they still using the index finger?

Karl Pilkington, on prostate exams

I wouldn’t say my mother-in-law is fat, but when she was run over recently the driver said it was because he didn’t have enough petrol to go around her.

Jimmy Tarbuck

❖ I can’t believe Amy Winehouse self-harms. She’s so irritating she must be able to find someone to do it for her.

Zoe Lyons

❖ I have a punishing workout regimen. Every day I do three minutes on a treadmill, then I lie down, drink a glass of vodka and smoke a cigarette.

Anthony Hopkins

❖ Dust. Anybody? No? Dust. Anybody? No? Dust. Anybody? No? Dust. Anybody? No? Dust. Anybody? No? Dust. It’s actually very low in fat. You can have as much dust as you like.

Marjorie Dawes (Matt Lucas), *Little Britain*

❖ The one way to get thin is to re-establish a purpose in life.

Cyril Connolly

- ❖ So I went to the dentist. He said, "Say 'Aaah'."
I said, "Why?"
He said, "My dog's died."

Tim Vine

- ❖ We say here that if you fall down in the United States, the ambulance man must feel for your wallet before he feels for your pulse.

George Galloway

- ❖ Samantha tells me she's off with a team of local paramedics this evening. They're so excited at the thought they just can't wait for her to arrive so they can get their ambulance and stretcher out for the night.

Humphrey Lyttelton, *I'm Sorry I Haven't a Clue*,
BBC Radio 4

- ❖ Revenge is sweet and not fattening.

Alfred Hitchcock

- ❖ In some ways, cramp is worse than having a broken leg.

Kevin Keegan

- ❖ I often compare Margaret Thatcher with Florence Nightingale. She stalks through the wards of our hospitals as a lady with a lamp. Unfortunately, it's a blowlamp.

Denis Healey

- ❖ A pint [of blood]? That's very nearly an armful.

Tony Hancock

- ❖ Jogging is for people who aren't intelligent enough to watch breakfast TV.

Victoria Wood

“Use your health, even to the point of wearing it out. That is what it is for. Spend all you have before you die and do not outlive yourself.

George Bernard Shaw”

❖ A spa hotel? It's like a normal hotel, only in reception there's a picture of a pebble.

Rhod Gilbert

❖ If your body is 90 per cent water, what have you got to drink water all the time for? Why can't you just have some crisps?

Russell Brand

❖ Chlamydia is symptomless? Then what's the biggie? I mean, no one cares if the invisible man comes to dinner.

Jeremy Osborne (Robert Webb), *Peep Show*

❖ Homeopathic experts tell you that water has memory, which scares the hell out of me because I've done some weird things in the shower. Luckily, water has memory, but can't speak.

Matt Kirshen

❖ Who are the most decent people at the hospital? The ultrasound people.

David O'Docherty

❖ I said to my girlfriend, “You shouldn't eat before you go swimming.”
She said, “Why?”
I said, “You look fat.”

Jimmy Carr

❖ An apple a day keeps the doctor away, but in my experience so does an air rifle.

Harry Hill

❖ The great thing about homeopathy is you can't overdose on it. Yeah, but you

can drown.

Dara O Briain

❖ I bumped into a friend coming out of the doctor's. "You look sad," I said.

He said, "I've been diagnosed as a kleptomaniac."

"So what did the doctor say?"

"He's given me some tablets. If they don't work, can I get him a CD player."

Ronnie Corbett

❖ I like to end all my words of advice to any young musician like this: if it itches, go see a doctor.

David Bowie

❖ I went to the dentist. He said my teeth are fine but my gums will have to come out.

Tommy Cooper

❖ I phoned the local gym and I asked if they could teach me how to do the splits. The bloke said, "How flexible are you?"

I said, "I can't make Tuesdays or Thursdays."

Tim Vine

And the day two pain of the gym! When you go back to the gym and you're in agony, and every bit of you is in pain. And the gym guy, you go up to him, you go, "Why am I in so much pain?" -and he goes, "That's because you're using muscles you haven't used in years." And you look at him and go, "Why the fuck are we wasting our time with *those* muscles?"

Dara O Briain

❖ If you believe the doctors, nothing is wholesome; if you believe the theologians, nothing is innocent; if you believe the military, nothing is safe.

Lord Salisbury

❖ Outside every fat man there was an even fatter man trying to close in.

Kingsley Amis

❖ Joining the gym is like giving money to charity. I feel like I'm doing greater good to somebody but I never see it.

John Bishop

“ A government health survey decided there isn't any such thing as a north-south divide, although there is a sign on the M1 motorway just north of Leicester that says, “SERVICES AHEAD – LAST SALAD FOR 600 MILES”.

Dara O Briain”

❖ Bob Marley decided to fight cancer with homeopathy. If you don't want to see the results, look away now. Although cancer did go on to play AIDS in the semi-finals.

Frankie Boyle

❖ The army medical was very strict. I said to the doctor, “You can't take me – I wear glasses.”

He said, “That's all right. We'll put you right in the front so you won't miss anything.”

Eric Morecambe

❖ A woman tells her doctor, “I've got a bad back.”

The doctor says, “It's old age.”

The woman says, “I want a second opinion.”

The doctor says: “OK – you're ugly as well.”

Tommy Cooper

❖ Obesity's a disease. It makes everything taste good – except salad.

Ricky Gervais

❖ Why do people who work in health food shops always look so unhealthy?

Victoria Wood

❖ My friend was told by her doctor that she was morbidly obese . . . as if she

doesn't have enough on her plate.

Jimmy Carr

❖ Health consists of having the same diseases as one's neighbours.

Quentin Crisp

❖ Don't talk to me about doctors, I ordered a vagina with a depth of eight inches . . .

Barbara Dixon (Paul Hays-Marshall),
The League of Gentlemen

❖ I had to go to the doctor's because this leg keeps falling asleep during the day, and I hate that – it means it's going to be up all night.

Joe Pasquale

❖ Samantha tells me she has to nip out now as she's off to see her personal trainer for a fitness demonstration. She says she's looking forward to him showing how he gets the fat down and pounds off in front of her.

Humphrey Lyttelton, *I'm Sorry I Haven't a Clue*,
BBC Radio 4

❖ I took the wife's family out for tea and biscuits. They weren't too happy about having to give blood, though.

Les Dawson

❖ I try to take care of myself . . . OK, I'm drinking and smoking, but look – I'm also eating a cough sweet.

Dylan Moran

❖ I went to the doctors the other day, and he said, "Go to Bournemouth, it's great for flu." So I went, and I got it.

Tommy Cooper

The government tells us that we are eating too many pies and dying of heart disease, then in the next breath they're telling us we are living too long and there'll be no more pension money left for us. I wish they'd make their minds up.

John, "Letters", *Viz*

❖ I have never yet met a healthy person who worried very much about his health, or a really good person who worried much about his own soul.

J.B.S. Haldane

❖ People want to ban junk food adverts for kids. Ban the ads? Ban your fanny until you can look after what plops out of it.

Russell Howard

❖ Doctor: I'd like to examine you. Please strip to the waist and lie on the couch. Do you smoke, Mr Trotter?

Del: Not just now, thank you, doctor.

Derek Trotter (David Jason),
Only Fools and Horses

❖ Health is the state about which medicine has nothing to say.

W.H. Auden

❖ I'm all ears . . . well, not all ears. I'm face and tummy and legs and lots of other bits, including some rather private bits I only let a doctor see . . . except he wasn't a doctor, and later he got arrested.

Alice Tinker (Emma Chambers),
The Vicar of Dibley

❖ I asked my doctor for something for persistent wind. He gave me a kite.

Les Dawson

❖ I went to the doctor's recently. My cholesterol was so high, I had béarnaise

sauce for blood.

Dara O Briain

❖ The truth is, that in London it is always a sickly season. Nobody is healthy in London, nobody can be.

Jane Austen

❖ – Doctor, I’m having problems with my hearing.
– Can you tell me all the symptoms?
– Marge, Homer, Bart . . .

Frank Skinner

❖ We don’t come here for our health. We can think of other ways of enjoying ourselves.

Prince Philip, on Canada

❖ Always laugh when you can. It is cheap medicine.

Lord Byron

❖ Me hot water heater’s packed up, so I had to fill the bath using a kettle and a load of saucepans . . . Mind, it was effing uncomfortable when I got in.

Seymour Mace

❖ A man went to the doctor with a strawberry growing out of his head. The doctor said, “I’ll give you some cream to put on it.”

Tommy Cooper

❖ I never did like working out – it bears the same relationship to real sport as masturbation does to real sex.

David Lodge

❖ I went to the doctor and he said, “You’ve got hypochondria.”
I said, “Not that as well!”

Tim Vine

❖ After her accident, my nan had a plastic hip put in. But I thought they should have replaced it with a Slinky, coz if she did fall down the stairs again . . .

Steve Williams

HISTORY

* The British never remember it, the Irish never forget it, the Russians never make it and the Americans never learn from it.

Bishop Fulton J. Sheen

* Human history becomes more and more a race between education and catastrophe.

H.G. Wells

* For ten years Caesar ruled with an iron hand. Then with a wooden foot, and finally with a piece of string.

Spike Milligan

* You may talk of the tyranny of Nero and Tiberius; but the real tyranny is the tyranny of your next-door neighbour.

Walter Bagehot

* The pyramids in ancient Egypt are like a giant game of Jenga that got wildly out of hand.

Al Murray

* The past grows gradually around one, like a placenta for dying.

John Berger

“Cleopatra? Ain't that someone who's dead? No, that's Mona Lisa I was thinking about.

Jade Goody,
contestant on British *Big Brother*”

* The past is always tense, the future perfect.

Zadie Smith

* The crisis of today is the joke of tomorrow.

H.G. Wells

* What on earth was Adolf Hitler thinking of?

Mrs Merton (a.k.a. Caroline Aherne)

* O'Brien: How many kings of England have been called Henry?

Contestant: Er, well, I know there was a Henry the Eighth . . . er . . . er . . . Three?

James O'Brien Show, LBC radio station

* Human blunders usually do more to shape history than human wickedness.

A.J.P. Taylor

* Most of our historic houses are no longer lived in by dukes and duchesses; they're full of Arabs and pop stars, or they've been taken over by the gas board and turned into rest houses for exhausted meter readers.

Audrey Forbes-Hamilton (Penelope Keith),
To the Manor Born

* Does history repeat itself, the first time as tragedy, the second time as farce? No, that's too grand, too considered a process. History just burps, and we taste again that raw-onion sandwich it swallowed centuries ago.

Julian Barnes

* Whatever happened to the good old days: you know, dirty attics, tuberculosis and general all-round suffering?

Arnold Wesker

* Important families are like potatoes. The best parts are underground.

Francis Bacon

* Why's it just Tudor houses we mock?

Harry Hill

- * If history repeats itself, I should think we can expect the same thing again.
Terry Venables

* Don't talk to me about naval tradition! It's nothing but rum, sodomy and the lash.

Winston Churchill

- * People who make history know nothing about history. You can see that in the sort of history they make.

G.K. Chesterton

I doubt if King John
Was a sine qua non.
I could rather imagine it
Of any other Plantagenet.

Edmund C. Bentley

- * – You see those workmen's tents in the road?
– I have observed them.
– That's your house. That's where you go on holiday.
“History Today”, *The Mary Whitehouse Experience* * Voiding bowels in those days was unheard of. People just kept it in.
Ivor Cutler

* The greater part of what passes for diplomatic history is little more than the record of what one clerk said to another clerk.

George Malcolm Young

- * History repeats itself. Historians repeat each other.

Philip Guedalla

* History is too serious to be left to historians.

Iain Macleod

* The only important thing to realize about history is that it all took place in the last five minutes.

Celia Green

* For most of history, Anonymous was a woman.

Virginia Woolf

* Why doesn't the past decently bury itself, instead of sitting waiting to be admired by the present?

D.H. Lawrence

“Revisionist historians now claim that, far from being mad, Joan of Arc may have been a victim of food poisoning. Makes sense: I can't tell you the number of times I've eaten a few dodgy prawns and ended up commanding the French army.

Angus Deayton”

* I grew up in Europe, where the history comes from.

Eddie Izzard

* That men do not learn very much from the lessons of history is the most important of all the lessons of history.

Aldous Huxley

* Nostalgia: how long's that been around?

Bill Bailey

* History is an endless repetition of the wrong way of living.

Lawrence Durrell

“All castles had one major weakness. The enemy used to get in through the gift shop.

Peter Kay”

* – In his journal, Samuel Pepys gives a particularly harrowing account of one man whom he describes thus: “He had scurvy and rickets and was covered from head to foot in festering sores. All in all he was the quite the most ghastly apparition of a man I had ever seen.”

– I see, and who exactly was this poor unfortunate?

– That’s you that is.

“History Today”, *The Mary Whitehouse Experience* ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

HOME COMFORTS

★ We had a nice little farmhouse in the country but it had no electricity so my dad made me use my bum hole as a doorbell, because he said it had a nice ring to it. I got to know everyone in the village just by the length of their fingernails.

Marek Larwood

★ I still live like a student but with nicer carpets.

Stephen Merchant

It keeps me awake at night. I find myself looking at the bricks, touching them, counting them even, thinking, “Are there enough?”

Michael McIntyre,
on buying his first home

★ I do some DIY. At present, I’m hand-painting Chinese wallpaper in our principal guest room.

Laurence Llewelyn-Bowen

★ Many a man who thinks to found a home discovers that he has merely opened a tavern for his friends.

Norman Douglas

★ I want a house that has got over all its troubles; I don’t want to spend the rest of my life bringing up a young and inexperienced house.

Jerome K. Jerome

“They say leather’s mainly for perverts. Don’t know why. Think it’s very practical, actually. I mean, you spill anything on it and it just comes off. I suppose that could be why the perverts like it.

Charlotte Coleman”

- ★ So I rang up a local building firm. I said, “I want a skip outside my house.”
He said, “I’m not stopping you.”

Tim Vine

- ★ The central heating broke down and I had to hold my pussy in front of it. It was frozen solid.

Mrs Slocombe (Mollie Sugden),
Are You Being Served?

- ★ I live in a first-floor flat. I did that thing where you pull up all the carpets. Underneath were these beautiful old floorboards . . . But I didn’t stop there: I pulled up the floorboards. Underneath was a whole other room!

Spencer Brown

- ★ We’ve got stained-glass windows in our house. It’s those damned pigeons.

Chic Murray

- ★ There is no housing shortage in Lincoln today – just a rumour that is put about by people who have nowhere to live.

G.L. Murfin, Mayor of Lincoln

- ★ I hate those ads for air fresheners: they are always populated by women and children, when we all know it is men who make the most smells.

Liz Jones

- ★ The housing market is getting so bad, the banks have repossessed Paul Young’s hat.

Lee Mack

- ★ My neighbour asked if he could use my lawnmower, and I told him of course he could, so long as he didn’t take it out of my garden.

Eric Morecambe

★ The landlady said, “Have you got a good memory for faces?”

I said, “I have.”

She said, “You’ll need one ‘cos there’s no mirror in the bathroom.”

Ken Goodwin

★ I need to get up early. If I get into bed really fast, maybe I’ll sleep more quickly.

Jeremy Limb

“You were lucky! We lived for three months in a brown paper bag in a septic tank. We used to have to get up at six o’clock in the morning, clean the bag, eat a crust of stale bread, go to work down mill for fourteen hours a day, week in, week out. When we got home, our dad would thrash us to sleep with his belt!

Michael Palin,

Monty Python’s Flying Circus”

★ How do you know if it’s time to wash the dishes and clean your house? Look inside your pants. If you find a penis in there, it’s not time.

Jo Brand

★ Cold: you kids don’t know the meaning of the word.
You should have been with me on the Russian convoys.
One night it was so cold the flame on my lighter froze.

Albert Trotter (Buster Merryfield),
Only Fools and Horses

★ Minnie: Oh, Henry, after all these years, our own piano!

Henry: Yes, all our own. At last, we can take a bath.

Henry Crun (Peter Sellers) and

Minnie Bannister (Spike Milligan), *The Goon Show* ★ Occasional tables. What are they the rest of the time?

Harry Hill

★ I like going abroad, but I can't go anywhere for longer than a week, because I start missing my sofa.

Leigh Francis

★ It takes only four men to wallpaper a house, but you have to slice them thinly.
Jo Brand

★ You can't clean the toilet, Neil! It'll lose all its character.

Vyvyan (Adrian Edmonson),
The Young Ones

★ His pride and joy was the expensive hand-tufted carpet in their main living room, mown every Thursday by a member of his household staff.

Craig Brown

★ If there were less people in here it would be less crowded.

Dean O'Loughlin, contestant on British *Big Brother* ★ These are the sort of windows faces look in at.

Withnail (Richard E. Grant), *Withnail & I* ★ I have noticed that rooms which are extra clean feel extra cold.
Dodie Smith

★ I've got a sponge door . . . don't knock it.

Tim Vine

“I have quite simple ambitions. I can't see the point in bungee jumping or doing something extreme like that when I haven't learned to make stock yet. It'd be awful to die in a bungee-related accident thinking: should have done stock before this should have gone up in stages.

Alun Cochrane”

★ To be fair to builders, where would we be without them? Outside.

Andrew O'Neill

★ People who live in glass houses have to answer the door.

Karl Pilkington

★ If I ever get to go to the moon, I'll probably just stand on the moon and go,
"Mmm, yeah, fair enough, gotta go home now."

Noel Gallagher

★ All I really need is music, sex and TV.

George Michael

I had this remote, right, and it had a big red button on it: "Cinema Sound". So I clicked the Cinema Sound and this voice behind me went, "Put your head down you fat twat!"

Phill Jupitus

★ In awe I watched the waxing moon ride across the zenith of the heavens like an ambered chariot towards the ebony void of infinite space wherein the tethered belts of Jupiter and Mars hang forever festooned in their orbital majesty. And as I looked at all this I thought . . . I must put a roof on this lavatory.

Les Dawson

★ Jeremy: We might need to untape the DVD and video and TV and Sky remotes— Mark: The Megatron? But . . . No!

Jeremy: It smells wrong. The Megatron doesn't say, "Urban freewheelers". It says, "Sofa masturbators".

Mark Corrigan (David Mitchell) and

Jeremy Osborne (Robert Webb), *Peep Show* ★ I was cleaning out the attic the other day with the wife. Filthy, dirty and covered with cobwebs . . . but she's good with the kids.

Tommy Cooper

★ I always sing a song my mother taught me: "When it's cold and stormy, and

you're feeling a little sick, cuddle up nice and warmy, and play with your little dick." Actually, I don't think it was my mother that taught me that. I think it was a boy at school.

Hugo Horton (James Fleet), *The Vicar of Dibley* ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

LAW AND ORDER

❖ If you want to do a burglary, just take a really long bath beforehand . . . all the fingerprints you leave – really wrinkly.

Spencer Brown

❖ Change gear, change gear, change gear, check mirror, murder a prostitute, change gear, change gear, murder. That's a lot of effort in a day.

Jeremy Clarkson, on lorry drivers

❖ I'm not against the police; I'm just afraid of them.

Alfred Hitchcock

❖ There was something flattering about being arrested . . . but being in custody was becoming a habit; he really had to cut down.

Tibor Fischer

❖ A naked woman seen dangling from a bridge across the A66 could need help, police said.

Darlington Times

❖ Please can everyone stop stabbing each other in the UK – it's really sad.

Lily Allen

❖ A security guard took one look at my ID and said, "I'm afraid this is out of date."

So I said to him, "Well, I'm still me."

Dara O Briain

❖ So finally justice is served. Well, not actual justice, just what I wanted. Which is basically the same thing.

Jeremy Osborne (Robert Webb), *Peep Show*

“Most of the men that sue in Hollywood are all about five foot two. They wake up every day, know they’re tiny and feel very angry about it, so they go out and sue people.

Piers Morgan”

❖ Horne: Will you take my case?

Julian: Well it depends what it is, we’ve got a criminal practice that takes up most of our time.

Kenneth Horne and
Julian (Hugh Paddick), *Round the Horne*

❖ What sort of person nicks the toilet seats from public loos? Wouldn’t you expect the barman to say, “Excuse me mate, did you come in with that toilet seat?”

Ricky Gervais

❖ I have kleptomania. But when it gets bad, I take something for it.

Ken Dodd

❖ I met this cowboy with a brown paper hat, paper waistcoat and paper trousers. He was wanted for rustling.

Chic Murray

❖ ‘Cos you know what’ll happen, Raymond, don’t you – it’ll be your cock up, my arse.

Detective Inspector Derek Grim (David Haig),
The Thin Blue Line

❖ I reckon we can take him: I’ll jump on him, you take his gun and Cartwright can jump up and down on his knackers.

Gene Hunt (Philip Glenister),
Life on Mars

❖ Drug addicts have been breaking into churches and stealing everything that wasn't nailed down. So Jesus was all right.

Pauline Calf (a.k.a. Steve Coogan)

❖ A cement mixer collided with a prison van on the Kingston bypass. Motorists are asked to be on the lookout for sixteen hardened criminals.

Ronnie Corbett

❖ Painting something that defies the law of the land is good. Painting something that defies the law of the land and the law of gravity at the same time is ideal.

Banksy

❖ Godber: I'm only in here due to tragic circumstances.

Fletcher: Which were?

Godber: I got caught.

Lennie Godber (Richard Beckinsale) and

Norman Stanley Fletcher (Ronnie Barker), *Porridge* ❖ The thief. Once committed beyond a certain point he should not worry himself too much about not being a thief any more. Thieving is God's message to him. Let him try and

be a good thief.

Samuel Butler

❖ The overall level of crime has come down but the level of violent crime has gone up . . . we now have fewer criminals but the ones that are left are getting much better at it, which works much better for us, the consumers of crime.

Andy Zaltzman

❖ Are you going to come along quietly, or am I going to have to use ear plugs?

Spike Milligan

❖ One wonders what would happen in a society in which there were no rules to break. Doubtless everyone would quickly die of boredom.

Susan Howatch

❖ The search for the man who terrorizes nudist camps with a bacon slicer goes on. Inspector Jones had a tip-off this morning, but hopes to be back on duty tomorrow.

Ronnie Barker

❖ Life is nothing but a competition to be the criminal rather than the victim.

Bertrand Russell

❖ Playing poker online is like being mugged without the company.

Lucy Porter

❖ I've always thought the best thing to do if you hear a burglar, is to get stark naked, working on the assumption that no burglar will think there's any possession worth nicking that you've got to wrestle a naked man for.

Jeff Green

Could the home secretary explain to me how biometric checks on iris patterns and fingerprints are going to help keep tabs on Muslim cleric Abu Hamza?

Les, Barnsley, "Letters", Viz

❖ Trouble at Dartmoor Prison today: A bomb destroyed the toilet block. Local residents have complained that, since then, at least twenty inmates have been seen going over the wall.

Ronnie Barker

❖ There's a difference between criminals and crooks. Crooks steal. Criminals blow some guy's brains out. I'm a crook.

Ronnie Biggs,
best known for his role in the
Great Train Robbery of 1963

❖ The best thing about buying illegal DVDs is you don't have to sit through that

annoying warning about buying illegal DVDs.

Dara O Briain

❖ Countryside: the killing of Piers Morgan.

Stephen Fry, on Piers Morgan, former newspaper editor

❖ Now, are you going to save us a lot of time and trouble, Mr Downes, and confess or are you going to be a burden on the taxpayer?

Inspector Morse (John Thaw), *Inspector Morse*

“Nor do I propose to defend the right to talk on a mobile phone while driving a car, though I don't believe that is necessarily any more dangerous than the many other risky things that people do with their free hands while driving – nose-picking, reading the paper, studying the A-Z, beating the children and so on.

Boris Johnson”

❖ Thieves respect property; they merely wish the property to become their property that they may more perfectly respect it.

G.K. Chesterton

❖ Kids these days are tough. I parked my car and some said,

“Ere, mind your car, mister?”

I told them, “It's all right, I've got a bull terrier in the back.”

They said, “Great – put out fires, can he?”

Jimmy Tarbuck

❖ A fifty-year-old man in California was arrested for having sex with a horse. It isn't only that he had sex with a horse, he had sex with a horse . . . again. Doesn't he understand naaay means naaay?

Craig Ferguson

❖ Perhaps the world's second worst crime is boredom. The first is being a bore.

Cecil Beaton

❖ Tony Banks described the English football fans arrested in Marseilles as “brain-dead louts”. This goes for me as well.

Harriet Harman, Labour politician

❖ On my first day in New York a guy asked me if I knew where Central Park was. When I told him I didn’t he said, “Do you mind if I mug you here?”

Paul Merton

❖ A policeman stopped me the other night, he taps on the window of the car and says, “Would you please blow into this bag, sir?”

I said, “What for, officer?”

He said, “My chips are too hot.”

Tommy Cooper

❖ My name is Shazia Mirza, at least that’s what it says on my pilot’s licence.

Shazia Mirza

❖ Cycling’s a good thing for the youngsters, because it keeps them off the streets.

David Bean

❖ I’d just like to say to the old man wearing camouflage gear and using crutches, who stole my wallet earlier – you can hide, but you can’t run.

Milton Jones

❖ Wretches hang that jurymen may dine.

Alexander Pope

❖ Do you have a licence for your minkey?

Inspector Clouseau (Peter Sellers),
Return of the Pink Panther

❖ Every time we had a raid, I’d get a boyfriend out of it.

Cynthia Payne, former British party hostess

❖ Hats off to the witty burglars who stole my entire CD collection with the exception of *There is Nothing Left to Lose* by the Foo Fighters. I hope that when sentencing, the judge takes into account their splendid sense of humour.

Chris Scaife, "Letters", *Viz*

❖ I wonder if anybody this side of the Atlantic has ever bought a baseball bat with playing baseball in mind?

Irving Welsh

❖ There is no satisfaction in hanging a man who does not object to it.

George Bernard Shaw

Anything happens to this motor, I'll come round your houses and stamp on all your toys. Got it? Good kids.

Gene Hunt (Philip Glenister),
Life on Mars

❖ Has anyone here been caught thieving in the Middle East? Let's have a show of hands . . .

Jimmy Carr

❖ The record companies would have us believe that the money made by CD pirates goes to fund the drug industry. But the money rock stars make from legal record sales ends up in exactly the same place. When they stop breaking the law, so will I.

P. Boddington, "Letters" *Viz*

❖ Many a thief is a better man than many a clergyman, and miles nearer to the gate of the kingdom.

George MacDonald

❖ I can't go to prison, Roy. They'll rape the flip out of me.

Moss (Richard Ayoade), *The IT Crowd*

❖ The first time Adam had a chance, he laid the blame on women.

Nancy Astor

❖ The lord chief justice of England recently said that the greater part of his judicial time was spent investigating collisions between propelled vehicles, each on its own side of the road, each sounding its horn and each stationary.

Philip Guedalla

❖ The truth of the matter is that muggers are very interesting people.

Michael Winner

❖ The world is a dangerous place; only yesterday I went into Boots and punched someone in the face.

Jeremy Limb

❖ New York is so clean now you could eat your dinner off its streets. I'll do London next, but I'll charge this time.

Boy George

❖ The law is simply expediency wearing a long white dress.

Quentin Crisp

❖ It is only losers that are prosecuted.

George Galloway

❖ I think our police are excellent, probably because I have not done anything that has occasioned being beaten up by these good men.

Clement Freud

❖ The sign said, "This door to remain closed at all times". Correct me if I'm wrong, but doesn't that defeat the purpose of a door?

Danny McCrossan

❖ The difference between tax avoidance and tax evasion is the thickness of a prison wall.

Denis Healey

❖ We shall be judged by what we do, not by how we felt while we were doing

it.

Kenneth Tynan

“At the end of my trial, I was rather hoping the judge would send me to Australia for the rest of my life.

Jeffrey Archer,
former MP, on his conviction for
perverting the course of justice”

❖ I could have been a judge, but I never had the Latin for the judgin’. I never had it, so I’d had it, as far as being a judge was concerned.

Peter Cook

❖ There’s nothing worse than a violent beating from an unremarkable person. Physical violence with someone is too much like shagging them. Too much id involved.

Irving Welsh

❖ There were MPs claiming for moats, for tennis courts, for lawnmowers, for swimming pools and they all claimed, “It’s legal! It’s legal!” So is waking your nan up dressed as Hitler. But you don’t do it.

Russell Howard, on the British MPs’ expenses scandal

❖ Lawyers are the only persons in whom ignorance of the law is not punished.

Jeremy Bentham

❖ You’re never quite sure whether it’s against the law or not to have a fire in your back garden.

Peter Kay

❖ Laws are like cobwebs, which may catch small flies, but let wasps and hornets break through.

Jonathan Swift

❖ Any one of the strange laws we suffer is a compromise between a fad and a

vested interest.

G.K. Chesterton

❖ Nothing is so unproductive as the law. It is expensive whether you win or lose.

Gilbert Parker

❖ The police said I was doing between 106 and 108 miles per hour. “107, then,” I said.

Alan Davies

❖ The first thing we do, let’s kill all the lawyers.

William Shakespeare

❖ A lawyer will do anything to win a case; sometimes he will even tell the truth.

Patrick Murray

❖ It’s against the law to hit kids in the UK. So how about vacations to places where you can hit your kids? Just to see their little faces when you tell them you aren’t going to EuroDisney, but to Kenya with a stick.

Pete Johansson

❖ Possession isn’t nine-tenths of the law. It’s nine-tenths of the problem.

John Lennon

“I’ve often thought that people reach the top of the tree because they haven’t quite got the qualifications to detain them at the bottom. A very good lawyer tends to stay in the law. The one who’s not quite as gifted becomes Richard Nixon.

Peter Ustinov”

❖ Marriage laws, the police, armies and navies are the mark of human incompetence.

Dora Russell

❖ If there were no bad people, there would be no good lawyers.

Charles Dickens

“Irish police are being handicapped in a search for a stolen van, because they cannot issue a description. It’s a Special Branch vehicle and they don’t want the public to know what it looks like.

Guardian”

❖ Bad laws were made to be broken.

Dr Who

❖ If your lawyers tell you that you have a very good case, you should settle immediately.

Richard Ingrams

❖ Police reveal that a woman arrested for shoplifting had a whole salami in her underwear. When asked why, she said it was because she was missing her Italian boyfriend.

Manchester Evening News

❖ And at 7.10 we’ll be meeting the WPC fingered by her own police force.

Fiona Phillips, *GMTV*

❖ You know you live in a shit area when you can read the registration on a police helicopter . . . I want to live in a good area. I want to live in an area where your neighbour will take you to court over a hedge.

Gina Yashere

CAR THIEVES OPERATE IN THIS AREA. Where else would they operate? It’s a fucking car park! The number of times I’ve been driving through the country, see a couple of car thieves standing in a field saying “You said there’d be cars!”

❖ What a waste of council tax. We paid for your hats . . . two hats, two hats, twats, twats . . . *etc.*

Soccer chant sung to policemen

❖ Policemen are numbered in case they get lost.

Spike Milligan

❖ If you're being chased by a police dog, try not to go through a tunnel, then on to a little seesaw, then jump through a hoop of fire. They're trained for that.

Milton Jones

❖ The artful dodger was a thief. And I don't think he'd have considered himself quite so "at home" in a juvenile detention centre, which is where I'd have put him. Thieving is thieving and no amount of oom-pa-pa or boom-titty-titty will change that.

Inspector Raymond C. Fowler (Rowan Atkinson),
The Thin Blue Line

❖ There is nothing more unaesthetic than a policeman.

Arthur Conan Doyle

❖ John Peel was such a fan of The Undertones he simply had the words "Teenage Kicks" engraved on his tombstone. Sadly, it's been kicked over by teenagers.

Frankie Boyle

❖ Why don't police clean up after their horses, like dog owners have to? I want to see them hoisting a big bag of horse shit over their shoulder. That'd stop them.

Lee Evans

❖ My greatest hero is Nelson Mandela: incarcerated for twenty-five years, he was released in 1990, he's been out about eighteen years now and he hasn't reoffended.

Ricky Gervais



LITERATURE

* The trouble began with Forster. After him it was considered ungentlemanly to write more than five or six novels.

Anthony Burgess

* I have decided to keep a full journal, in the hope that my life will perhaps seem more interesting when it is written down.

Adrian Mole

* The British have long had a taste for bad books, but they like them well written.

Malcolm Bradbury

“ I feel sorry for novelists when they have to mention women’s eyes; there’s so little choice, and whatever colouring is decided upon inevitably carries banal implications.

Julian Barnes ”

* Agatha Christie has given more pleasure in bed than any other woman.

Nancy Banks-Smith

* A novel must be exceptionally good to live as long as the average cat.

Lord Chesterfield

I never read any novels except my own. When I feel worried, agitated or upset, I read one and find the last pages soothe me and leave me happy. I quite

understand why I am popular in hospitals.

Dame Barbara Cartland

* I can do to him whatever I like. I'm allowed to torture him as much as I want. He's mine.

J.K. Rowling, on Harry Potter

* The number of people who can copulate properly may be few; the number who can write well are infinitely fewer.

Hugh MacDiarmid, reviewing *Lady Chatterley's Lover*

* I thought I'd begin by reading a poem by Shakespeare, but then I thought, why should I? He never reads any of mine.

Spike Milligan

* I would have thought you'd actually have to be able to remember your life to write about it.

Mick Jagger, on Keith Richards

* I was working on the proof of one of my poems all the morning, and took out a comma. In the afternoon I put it back again.

Oscar Wilde

* Journalism could be described as turning one's enemies into money.

Craig Brown

* I've always written. Like everyone else, I've got a cupboard full of publishers' and agents' rejection letters along the lines of "Yes, you're wonderful, you're just not our kind of wonderful."

Stephen Clarke

“It is very, very difficult for a playwright to write a scene in which a young man has his first deep experience of sex with a girl whom he found immensely

attractive, is fully satisfied by this event and gets up and blinds a lot of horses.

Peter Shaffer”

* Sit down to write what you have thought, and not to think about what you shall write.

William Cobbett

* We journalists are taught to avoid clichés like the plague.

Barry Norman

* A literary movement consists of five or six people who live in the same town and hate each other cordially.

George Moore

Most people ignore most poetry
because
most poetry ignores most people.

Adrian Mitchell

* I do not keep a diary. Never have. To write a diary every day is like returning to one's own vomit.

Enoch Powell

* Your manuscript is both good and original, but the part that is good is not original, and the part that is original is not good.

Samuel Johnson

* Only incredibly ugly people go to Hay.

V.S. Naipaul, on the Hay literary festival

* A man who writes for a living does not have to go anywhere in particular, and he could rarely afford to if he wanted.

C.S. Forester

* Science fiction is no more written for scientists than ghost stories are written

for ghosts.

Brian Aldiss

* Self-plagiarism is style.

Alfred Hitchcock

* The meaning of the poet Gay Was always as clear as day While that of the poet Blake Was often practically opaque.

Edmund C. Bentley

“I only wrote that sodding paragraph to make that joke. And you’ve fucking stripped it out like a pissed Irish plasterer restoring a renaissance fresco and thinking Jesus looks shit with a beard so plastering over it.

Giles Coren,

to *The Times* sub-editors”

* To paraphrase and slightly adapt Vladimir Nabokov: I think like a genius, I write like a distinguished man of letters, I talk like an idiot.

Martin Amis

* You’re miserable, edgy and tired. You’re in the perfect mood for journalism.

Warren Ellis

* Richard’s bookshelves weren’t alphabetized. He never had time to alphabetize them. He was always too busy looking for books he couldn’t find.

Martin Amis

* Complete loose-stool water. Arse gravy of the very worst kind.

Stephen Fry, on Dan Brown’s novel,
The Da Vinci Code

* I can’t write about my greatest mistakes because I’ve slept with most of them.

Arabella Weir

* Roses are red, violets are blue. I can't write poems, but I've been told I've many other good qualities.

Graham Norton

* The king died and then the queen died is a story. The king died, and then the queen died of grief is a plot.

E.M. Forster

* A bad review may spoil your breakfast but you shouldn't allow it to spoil your lunch.

Kingsley Amis

* She said to me last time, "You look bored, Mrs Taylor. I've got three words for you: Barbara Taylor Bradford."

So I said, "Yeah? I've got three words for you, too: calorie-controlled diet."

Gran (Catherine Tate), *The Catherine Tate Show*

* Writing is one-tenth perspiration and nine-tenths masturbation.

Alan Bennett

“If you can't think of what to write, tough luck; write anyway. If you can think of lots more when you've finished the three pages, don't write it; it'll be that much easier to get going next day.

Philip Pullman”

* Books are like mirrors: if a fool looks in, you cannot expect a genius to look out.

J.K. Rowling

* A poet can survive everything but a misprint.

Oscar Wilde

* Men of power have no time to read; yet the men who do not read are unfit for power.

Michael Foot, British politician

* Read over your compositions, and wherever you meet with a passage which you think is particularly fine, strike it out.

Samuel Johnson

* No news is good news. No journalists is even better.

Nicolas Bentley

* There was a time when I thought my only connection with the literary world would be that I had once delivered meat to T.S. Eliot's mother-in-law.

Alan Bennett

* I write plays because dialogue is the most respectable way of contradicting myself.

Tom Stoppard

* The reason why so few good books are written is that so few people who can write know anything.

Walter Bagehot

* Writing is like walking in a deserted street. Out of the dust in the street you make a mud pie.

John le Carré

* Media is just a word that has come to mean bad journalism.

Graham Greene

* People say to me, "Are you a fan of pastiche?" and I say, "Well, I prefer sausage rolls."

Gavin Webster

* 'Tis pleasant, sure, to see one's name in print;
A book 's a book, although there 's nothing in 't.

Lord Byron

* Journalism is the art of explaining to others what one doesn't understand oneself.

Lord Northcliffe

* Journalism is the ability to meet the challenge of filling space.

Rebecca West

* Anyone could write a novel given six weeks, pen, paper and no telephone or wife.

Evelyn Waugh

* – I have here a copy of your book, *Origins of the Crimean War*. It smells of poo.

– That's because it's been inside your mum's bra.

“History Today”, *The Mary Whitehouse Experience*

I think something had gone a bit wrong with the translation, because one of the reviewers said to me *Bridget Jones's Diary* was a “transcendental study of existential despair”. So, naturally, I was delighted that someone had at last recognized how profound I was.

Helen Fielding

* Library books . . . are thought by my mother to carry contagion – TB and scarlet fever particularly – and so are not to be read in bed.

Alan Bennett

* Journalism consists largely in saying, “Lord Jones died,” to people who never knew Lord Jones was alive.

G.K. Chesterton

* There are two motives for reading a book: one, that you enjoy it; the other, that you can boast about it.

Bertrand Russell

* I would lay aside the wisest book to talk to a stupid woman.

George Moore

* Junk journalism is the evidence of a society that has got at least one thing right: that there should be nobody with the power to dictate where responsible journalism begins.

Tom Stoppard

* The book every man has inside him should usually stay there.

A.J.P. Taylor

* Rooney has signed a deal to do five books. That's an awful lot of crayons.

Johnnie Walker,
on footballer Wayne Rooney

“Books . . . are like lobster shells, we surround ourselves with 'em, then we grow out of 'em and leave 'em behind, as evidence of our earlier stages of development.

Dorothy L. Sayers”

* Booksellers are the most valuable destination for the lonely given the numbers of books that were written because authors couldn't find anyone to talk to.

Alain de Botton

* The only rule I have found to have any validity in writing is not to bore yourself.

John Mortimer

* I take the view, and always have done, that if you cannot say what you have to say in twenty minutes, you should go away and write a book about it.

Lord Brabazon

* He had long held one of the most fundamental of all literary convictions, that

the world owed him a living.

G.K. Chesterton

“While I was reading the book I believed it entirely. Clever Dan Brown twisted my mind convincingly. But when I put it down I thought, What a load of . . . potential claptrap.

Ian McKellen,
on *The Da Vinci Code*”

* Writing is like getting married. One should never commit oneself until one is amazed at one's luck.

Iris Murdoch

* Modern journalism is survival of the vulgarest.

Oscar Wilde

* I'm going to take this as a vote of confidence and a promise to do better next time.

Zadie Smith, on
winning the Guardian First Book Award

* My local vet read a book about a dog that's immune to anaesthetic. He said he couldn't put it down.

Frank Skinner

* I wrote a book on penguins. Paper would have been better.

Gary Delaney

* Some books are undeservedly forgotten; none are undeservedly remembered.

W.H. Auden

* Having your book turned into a movie is like seeing your oxen turned into bouillon cubes.

John Le Carré

* There is no more sombre enemy of good art than the pram in the hall.
Cyril Connolly

* Visions of that greasy muff, which one could easily have fried an egg on without benefit of oil, haunt me till this very day.
Julie Burchill, on Madonna's book *SEX*

* It is a sad fact about our culture that a poet can earn much more money writing or talking about his art than he can by practising it.
W.H. Auden

* Definition of a classic: a book everyone is assumed to have read and often think they have.
Alan Bennett

* How long most people would look at the best book before they would give the price of a large turbot for it!
John Ruskin

A good book is called a "page-turner" – surely that's the minimum you expect from any book? "Would you recommend that book?"
"No, the pages don't turn. It's more of a block than a book."
Michael McIntyre

* I said to my publishers, "What are you going to do if all my books sell out?" and they said, "Oh, we'll print another ten."
Eric Sykes

* It is all very well to be able to write books, but can you waggle your ears?
J.M. Barrie

* It's red hot, mate. I hate to think of this sort of book getting in the wrong hands. As soon as I've finished this, I shall recommend they ban it.

Tony Hancock

* Running out of black Bic fine-point biros and having to write with the stubby one you were sent by the RSPB.

Malcolm Burgess,
when asked “What’s the worst thing about writing?”

“The easier a thing is to write then the more the writer gets paid for writing it.
(And vice versa: ask the poets at the bus stop.) Martin Amis”

* Literature is the art of writing something that will be read twice; journalism what will be grasped at once.

Cyril Connolly

* A bit of advice: never read a pop-up book about giraffes.

Sean Lock

* When I started writing, I thought the only way to write books that were set in the country was to go and look at the primroses on Putney Common.

Jilly Cooper

* If a million monkeys were given a million typewriters, eventually one of them might produce the complete works of Shakespeare, but to reach it, would it be worth wading through 400 copies of *Money* by Martin Amis?

Simon Munnery

* It’s a little known, indeed little researched, fact of literature and journalism that no non-smoker is worth reading. And writers who give up become crashing bores.

A.A. Gill

* You can never get a cup of tea large enough or a book long enough to suit me.

C.S. Lewis

* I put things down on sheets of paper and stuff them in my pockets. When I have enough, I have a book.

John Lennon

* I'm the only kid in the world who doesn't want an eighth Harry Potter book.

Daniel Radcliffe

* Parents should leave books lying around marked "Forbidden" if they want their children to read.

Doris Lessing

* What literature can and should do is change the people who teach the people who don't read the books.

A.S. Byatt

* When I am dead,
I hope it may be said:
"His sins were scarlet,
But his books were read."

Hilaire Belloc

* Biography is a very definite region bounded on the north by history, on the south by fiction, on the east by obituary, and on the west by tedium.

Philip Guedalla

“Oh Christ. I couldn't care less . . . I can't say I'm overwhelmed with surprise. I'm eighty-eight years old and they can't give the Nobel to someone who's dead, so I think they were probably thinking they'd probably better give it to me now before I've popped of.

Doris Lessing,

after winning the Nobel Prize for Literature”

A writer's ambition should be to trade a hundred contemporary readers for ten readers in ten years' time and for one reader in a hundred years' time.

Arthur Koestler

* I'm the kind of writer that people think other people are reading.

V.S. Naipaul

* I haven't read any of the autobiographies about me.

Elizabeth Taylor

* Borrowers of books – those mutilators of collections, spoilers of the symmetry of shelves, and creators of odd volumes.

Charles Lamb

* The oldest books are still only just out to those who have not read them.

Samuel Butler

* All fiction is largely autobiographical and much autobiography is, of course, fiction.

P.D. James

* Taste is no help to a writer . . . it's a handicap. It stunts.

Alan Bennett

* The shelf life of the modern hardback writer is somewhere between the milk and the yoghurt.

John Mortimer

* Autobiography is probably the most respectable form of lying.

Humphrey Carpenter

* Writers, like teeth, are divided into incisors and grinders.

Walter Bagehot

* Two people writing a novel is like three people having a baby.

Evelyn Waugh

* I am persuaded that foolish writers and foolish readers are created for each other; and that fortune provides readers as she does mates for ugly women.

Horace Walpole

* It seems to me wrong that one should have had to do so much writing in order to make a living, and not a very good living at that.

Anthony Burgess

* Literature is strewn with the wreckage of men who have minded beyond reason the opinions of others.

Virginia Woolf

* The difference between literature and journalism is that journalism is unreadable and literature is not read.

Oscar Wilde

The Art of Biography
Is different from Geography.
Geography is about Maps,
But Biography is about Chaps.

Edmund C. Bentley

* Asking a working writer what he thinks about critics is like asking a lamppost how it feels about dogs.

Christopher Hampton

* Being a writer in a library is rather like being a eunuch in a harem.

John Braine

* Writing is easy. You only need to stare at a blank piece of paper until your forehead bleeds.

Douglas Adams

* The world may be full of fourth-rate writers but it's also full of fourth-rate readers.

Stan Barstow

* You can read Russell Brand's autobiography and dismiss it as rubbish if you like, or you can dismiss it as rubbish without reading it, to save time, if you'd prefer.

Stewart Lee

“I have been commissioned to write an autobiography and I would be grateful to any of your readers who could tell me what I was doing between 1960 and 1974.

Jeffrey Bernard”

* There are three rules for writing the novel. Unfortunately, no one knows what they are.

W. Somerset Maugham

* If you can't annoy somebody, there's little point in writing.

Kingsley Amis

* It means I don't need to get on and off airplanes and I can sit contentedly and eat biscuits.

Sophie Dahl, on being a writer

* My main reason for adopting literature as a profession was that, as the author is never seen by his clients, he need not dress respectably.

George Bernard Shaw

* The author of the *Iliad* is either Homer or, if not Homer, somebody else of the same name.

Aldous Huxley

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

LOVE

★ Sure, I love Liam, but not as much as I love Pot Noodles.

Noel Gallagher

★ Love makes the world go round? Not at all. Whisky makes it go round twice as fast.

Compton Mackenzie

★ It's unthinkable not to love – you'd have a severe nervous breakdown. Or you'd have to be Philip Larkin.

Lawrence Durrell

★ Even logical positivists are capable of love.

A.J. Ayer

★ Some people's hearts are shrunk in them, like dried nuts. You can hear 'em rattle as they walk.

Douglas Jerrold

★ I tell you what is close to my heart at the moment. My left lung.

Tim Vine

When I was a kid I used to love Bobby Davro. I also liked self-harm and bedwetting, but, you know . . .

Simon Amstell

★ Love is just a system for getting someone to call you darling after sex.

Julian Barnes

★ Won't you come into the garden? I would like my roses to see you.

Richard Brinsley Sheridan

★ I love the smell of armpits in the morning. It's like victory.

Ozzy Osbourne

★ Love is an ocean of emotions entirely surrounded by expenses.

Lord Dewar

★ A man will never love you or treat you as well as a store. If a man doesn't fit, you can't exchange him seven days later for a gorgeous cashmere sweater.

Sophie Kinsella

★ A lady's imagination is very rapid; it jumps from admiration to love, from love to matrimony in a moment.

Jane Austen

★ Men always want to be a woman's first love – women like to be a man's last romance.

Oscar Wilde

★ Love, it turns out, is as undemocratic as money, so it accumulates around people who have plenty of it already: the sane, the healthy, the lovable.

Nick Hornby

“ I love Thierry Henry . . . I saw him once when I was trying on wigs in Selfridges and he saw me with one of those really unattractive nylon skull caps on. Had there ever been a chance he'd leave his wife for me, it was blown at that moment.

Catherine Tate”

★ A woman's best love letters are always written to the man she is betraying.
Lawrence Durrell

★ Gavin: Oh right so you're just gonna leave me here to get bombed?
Stacey: I know and I do feel bad but I was going to text you.
Gavin (Matthew Horne) and
Stacey (Joanna Page), *Gavin and Stacey*

I need you like a bully likes to boast,
I need you like an ocean needs coast.
John Hegley

★ He fell in love with himself at first sight, and it is a passion to which he has
always remained faithful. Self-love seems so often unrequited.
Anthony Powell

★ I'd do time for him. I love him. Me and him are cool. If anyone stepped on his
toes, I'd cut them off.
Liam Gallagher, on his brother Noel

★ There's always one who loves and one who lets himself be loved.
W. Somerset Maugham

★ Friendship's more lasting than love, and more legal
than stalking.
Jane Christie (Gina Bellman),
Coupling

★ People either love me or they hate me, or they don't really care.
Banksy

★ Greater love hath no man than this, that he lay down his friends for his life.
Jeremy Thorpe

★ The British love permanence more than they love beauty.

Hugh Casson

★ – So then her mum came downstairs, and she was really very cross.

– I said, “Sorry, Mum.” She said, “That’s OK, you can do the both of us.”

We Are Klang,
“Memories, Memories, of Love’s Young Dream”

“There is no reciprocity. Men love women, women love children, children love hamsters.

Alice Thomas Ellis”

★ I fall in love every seven years or so. I can feel it coming on. It must be like menstruation – I get all flustered and irritable.

Julian Clary

★ Whoever loveth me, loveth my hound.

Thomas More

★ Oh, love will make a dog howl in rhyme.

Francis Beaumont

★ Love is staying awake all night with a sick child. Or a very healthy adult.

David Frost

★ The only true love is love at first sight; second sight dispels it.

Israel Zangwill

★ My wife said to me, “If you won the lottery, would you still love me?”

I said, “Of course I would. I’d miss you, but I’d still love you.”

Frank Carson

They were frantically in love with each other. They could only express their love in one way, by showing each other their pubes. Jacques showed Emile his greying pubes. Emile showed Jacques her balding pubes. Come on, show each other your pubes.

We Are Klang

★ Estate agents: love them or loathe them, you'd be mad not to loathe them.

Stephen Fry

★ Alan: Times have changed, Rigsby. We believe in "love without fear".

Rigsby: "Love without fear"? I seem to remember, the last time you indulged in "love without fear", you spent three days under that bed hiding from her father.

Alan (Richard Beckinsale)
and Rigsby (Leonard Rossiter), *Rising Damp*

“You have to come up with this shit every year. Last week I just wrote, “I still love you, see last year’s card for full details.”

Michael McIntyre,
on Valentine’s Day cards”

★ Young men’s love then lies not truly in their hearts, but in their eyes.

William Shakespeare

★ In how many lives does love really play a dominant part? The average taxpayer is no more capable of a “grand passion” than of a grand opera.

Israel Zangwill

★ I finally learned to love myself by dressing up as Geri Halliwell.

Matt Lucas

★ Tell me, I'm curious. Is it fun being in love with just anyone?
How do you remember his face
if you meet in a public place?

Craig Raine

★ Lister: Love is what separates us from animals.
Rimmer: No, Lister. What separates us from animals is that we don't use our
tongues to clean our own genitals.

Dave Lister (Craig Charles) and
Arnold Rimmer (Chris Barrie), *Red Dwarf*

★ The best way to let someone else know you love them is with a pie chart
because that way they know exactly . . . Also you can use it to dump someone.

Sean Lock

★ Well, look at it this way: 'tis better to have loved and
lost than . . . to spend your whole ruddy life with her.

Mr Barrowclough (Brian Wilde),
Porridge

★ Love is loving someone, no matter what their faults, in a blind and
unconditional way. Like the love Tony Blair has for George Bush.

Hugh Grant

★ Oedipus, he's the bloke who so loved his mother he killed his father and
fucked her. Most mums prefer it if you just help around the house a bit.

Richard Herring

★ Everybody loves you when you're six foot in the ground.

John Lennon



MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE

❖ Swans mate for life, and look how bad-tempered they are.

Jeff Green

❖ Well, my wife and I were married in a toilet; it was a marriage of convenience.

Tommy Cooper

❖ Marriage: a ceremony in which rings are put on the finger of the lady and through the nose of the gentleman.

Herbert Spencer

❖ It's like Catholics getting married at a *Star Trek* convention.

Lee Mack on Tom Cruise
choosing to get married in Rome

❖ I took my husband to the hospital yesterday to have seventeen stitches out – that'll teach him to buy me a sewing kit for my birthday.

Jo Brand

❖ It has been said that a bride's attitude towards her betrothed can be summed up in three words: aisle, altar, hymn.

Frank Muir

“A man is in general better pleased when has had a good dinner upon the table than when his wife talks Greek.

Samuel Johnson”

❖ The critical period of matrimony is breakfast time.

A.P. Herbert

❖ Adam knew Eve his wife and she conceived. It is a pity that this is still the only knowledge of their wives at which some men seem to arrive.

F.H. Bradley

❖ Instead of getting married again, I'm going to find a woman I don't like and just give her a house.

Rod Stewart

❖ Please excuse my wife. She may appear to be rather nasty, but underneath she has a heart of Formica.

Monty Python's Flying Circus

❖ A man likes his wife to be just clever enough to appreciate his cleverness, and just stupid enough to admire it.

Israel Zangwill

❖ Men marry because they are tired; women because they are curious. Both are disappointed.

Oscar Wilde

❖ Gladys: What are your meringues like?

Albert: I'm not telling you till after we're married.

Nurse Gladys Emmanuel (Lynda Baron) and
Albert Arkwright (Ronnie Barker), *Open All Hours*

“I shan't be taking my wife with me to Paris. You don't take a sausage roll to a banquet.

Winston Churchill”

❖ Married a professional mud wrestler, my first wife, a professional mud wrestler: violent temper, lovely skin.

Martin Beaumont

❖ I don't think my wife likes me very much. When I had a heart attack she wrote for an ambulance.

Frank Carson

❖ The comfortable estate of widowhood is the only hope that keeps up a wife's spirits.

John Gay

❖ A man explained inflation to his wife thus: "When we married, you measured 36-24-36. Now you're 42-42-42. There's more of you, but you are not worth as much."

Lord Barnett

❖ All reformers are bachelors.

George Moore

My notion of a wife at forty is that a man should be able to change her, like a banknote, for two twenties.

Douglas Jerrold

❖ Diamonds never leave you – men do!

Shirley Bassey

❖ You've got to be married, haven't you? You can't go through life being happy.

Colin Crompton

❖ I've only slept with men I've been married to. How many women can make that claim?

Elizabeth Taylor

❖ I came home about two o'clock in the morning on Thursday, and she's stood

behind the front door with a rolling pin. I said, “You’re never up at this time baking, are you?”

Roy “Chubby” Brown

❖ I would never be unfaithful to my wife for the simple reason that I love my house too much.

Bob Monkhouse

“ People are worried about the new cohabiting laws because they'll have the same rights as married couples, and it means they might lose their stuff. Except I'm in quite a strong position because my stuff's shit and I'd quite happily trade it for two years of sex.

Frankie Boyle”

❖ Big girls need big diamonds.

Elizabeth Taylor

❖ I met her in the tunnel of love. She was digging it. I can see her now, hooking clay from behind her denture-plate.

Les Dawson

❖ I have a theory that the secret of marital happiness is simple: drink in different pubs to your other half.

Jilly Cooper

❖ My wife and I had a bit of a fight, there was some high-spirited name calling, and I had stormed upstairs to fetch my birth certificate.

Ronnie Corbett

❖ I'm married to a scruffy one. Every time you go to have a pee in the sink, it's full of dishes.

Jackie Hamilton

Geoff and I are twin souls. We believe we have met in a previous existence. Hypnotherapy sessions have led us to the astonishing conclusion that Geoff was
--

Queen Victoria's chief lady-in-waiting and I was a porter employed by the Great Western Railway. It is this belief that keeps an undertow of physical excitement in our connubial union. Plus we are both fond of chips.

Victoria Wood

❖ Bachelors should be heavily taxed. It is not fair that some men should be happier than others.

Oscar Wilde

❖ I've had bad luck with both my wives. The first one left me and the second one didn't.

Patrick Murray

❖ I was thinking about Henry VIII the other day. Do you think he ever thought, "Fuck, maybe it's me?"

Russell Howard

❖ Don't marry for money; you can borrow it cheaper.

Scottish proverb

❖ Bigamy is having one wife too many. Monogamy is the same.

Oscar Wilde

“I don't think I'll ever get married, I'm scared of commitment . . . it's for that reason I'm into kinky sex. It doesn't get me of, it's just a lot harder to fall in love when someone's dressed as a baby and pissing on you.

Ben Davis”

❖ When you've been married for a while it gets a bit boring in bed. The other day I said to my husband, "I can't remember the last time we had sex."

He yelled back, "We're having it now!"

Jo Brand

❖ The conception of two people living together for twenty-five years without having a cross word suggests a lack of spirit only to be admired in sheep.

A.P. Herbert

❖ Joan Collins unfortunately can't be with us tonight. She's busy attending the birth of her next husband.

John Parrott

❖ There is nothing so difficult to marry as a large nose.

Oscar Wilde

❖ When you're bored with yourself, marry and be bored with someone else.

Edward VIII

❖ I thought when I was forty-one I would be married with kids. Well, to be honest, I thought I'd be divorced with weekend access.

Sean Hughes

❖ Sybil: Don't shout at me, I've had a difficult morning.

Basil: Oh dear, what happened? Did you get entangled in the eiderdown again? Not enough cream in your éclair? Hmm? Or did you have to talk to all your friends for so long that you didn't have time to perm your ears?

Sybil Fawlty (Prunella Scales) and
Basil Fawlty (John Cleese), *Fawlty Towers*

Nancy Astor: Winston, if you were my husband I would flavour your coffee with poison.

Winston Churchill: Madam, if I were your husband, I should drink it.

❖ Betty: Our marriage was a great shock to her; she wanted me to marry someone else.

Frank: Who?

Betty: No one in particular, just someone else.

Betty Spencer (Michele Dotrice) and Frank Spencer
(Michael Crawford), *Some Mothers Do `Ave `Em*

❖ Really I only want to thank one person, that's my wife Philippa because she's been my best sponsor, editor, support and mainly my lover.

Grayson Perry

❖ The true index of a man's character is the health of his wife.

Cyril Connolly

❖ I'm happily married. Unfortunately my husband's not, but you can't have everything.

Jo Brand

❖ I'm good to me wife – I never go home!

Fred Dibnah

❖ Strange to say what delight we married people have to see these poor fools decoyed into our condition.

Samuel Pepys

“Is your wife a . . . goer . . . eh? Know what I mean? Know what I mean? Nudge, nudge. Nudge, nudge! Know what I mean? Say no more . . . Know what I mean?

Eric Idle”

❖ WAGs stand for Wives And Girlfriends of a footballer, but as we all know you can't be a wife and a girlfriend. It should actually be called WOG. Wife Or Girlfriend of a footballer. But I understand this could have racist connotations which could take Liverpool back five years.

Shazia Mirza

❖ When a man opens a car door for his wife, it's either a new car or a new wife.

Prince Philip

❖ Going to marry her? Impossible! You mean a part of her; he could not marry her all himself. It would be a case, not of bigamy but trigamy; there is enough of her to furnish wives for the whole parish.

Revd Sydney Smith

❖ Wives in their husbands' absences grow subtler, And daughters sometimes run off with the butler.

Lord Byron

❖ Of course, I do have a slight advantage over the rest of you. It helps in a pinch to be able to remind your bride that you gave up a throne for her.

Edward VIII

❖ I got off lightly. Think what I'd have had to pay Alyce if she had contributed anything to the relationship.

John Cleese,
on his £12 million
divorce settlement

❖ Women love scallywags, but some marry them and then try to make them wear a blazer.

David Bailey

❖ You don't marry one person; you marry three: the person you think they are, the person they are, and the person they are going to become as the result of being.

Richard Needham

❖ Love is blind and marriage is the institution for the blind.

James Graham

❖ Britney Spears is a joke now. I wish her luck with her marriage as I hope it stops her going into the studio.

Amy Winehouse

❖ When you marry your mistress you create a job vacancy.

James Goldsmith

❖ And no bathroom on earth will make up for marrying a bearded man you hate.

Dodie Smith

❖ Twenty years of romance make a woman look like a ruin; but twenty years of marriage make her something like a public building.

Oscar Wilde

“Well, here’s to love and marriage, which go together like a horse and carriage, according to Cole Porter, who should know, ’cos he was gay.

Geraldine Granger

(Dawn French), *The Vicar of Dibley*”

❖ The total amount of undesired sex endured by women is probably greater in marriage than in prostitution.

Bertrand Russell

❖ Getting divorced isn’t like a bereavement at all, because if he’d died I’d have had me mortgage paid, and I could’ve danced on his grave.

Sarah Millican

❖ Every time I try to make my marriage more exciting, my wife finds out about it right away.

Bob Monkhouse

❖ I can’t believe I have had three marriages. Two is one thing, but three is like someone who goes on the *Jerry Springer Show*.

Patsy Kensit

❖ The most happy marriage I can picture or imagine to myself would be the union of a deaf man to a blind woman.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge

❖ Marriage resembles a pair of shears, so joined that they cannot be separated; often moving in opposite directions, yet always punishing anyone who comes between them.

Revd Sydney Smith

❖ There is more to marriage than four bare legs in a bed.

John Heywood

❖ Why buy a book when you can join the library?

Lily Savage (a.k.a. Paul O'Grady), on marriage

❖ A marriage is no amusement but a solemn act, and generally a sad one.

Queen Victoria

❖ For marriage to be a success, every woman and every man should have her and his own bathroom. The end.

Catherine Zeta-Jones

❖ I wish them a long and happy life. If it's as long as their wedding, I'm sure they'll be fine.

Michael Palin

❖ Eighteen thousand quid, that's how much the average wedding costs. That's everything out of the Argos catalogue . . . My advice: marry a Buddhist. They always want to get married under a tree: "No problem, love. Oak or larch? It's *your* big day."

Jeff Green

I hate weddings. When I go to weddings, they all say, "You'll be next!" What I do now is, when I go to funerals, I say to the relatives, "You'll be next!" That shuts them up.

Paul O'Grady

❖ On the morning of the wedding, she was in a complete panic. She said, “Something old, something new – I’ve got nothing borrowed and blue!”

I said, “You’ve got a mortgage and varicose veins, will that do?”

Victoria Wood

❖ There’s nothing more off-putting at a wedding than a priest with an enormous erection.

Charles (Hugh Grant),
Four Weddings and a Funeral

❖ She had been married so often she bought a drip-dry wedding dress.

Chic Murray

“Peter Andre might look smug in all his wedding pictures, but I’d just like to remind him that, as a *Playboy* reader, I have seen his wife’s minge. He hasn’t seen my wife’s, so who’s had the last laugh?

P, Leeds, “Leters”, *Viz*”

❖ Every time I go to one of my friend’s weddings I’m sat on the table with the only other gay man, and we never have anything in common. It’s always me who has to praise him for conducting such a beautiful service.

Paul Sinha

❖ I think it should be like dog licences. I think you should have to renew marriage licences every five years.

John Cleese

❖ So, a £24.3m divorce settlement for Heather Mills. She’s really landed on her foot.

John Inverdale

❖ Marriage is an alliance entered into by a man who can't sleep with the window shut, and a woman who can't sleep with the window open.

George Bernard Shaw

❖ Marriage is one long conversation, checkered by disputes.

Robert Louis Stevenson

❖ Marriage is like the witness protection programme: you get new clothes, you live in the suburbs and you're not allowed to see your friends any more.

Jeremy Hardy

❖ Marriage is a ghastly public confession of a strictly private intention.

Ian Hay

“You seem to forget the Crippens enjoyed many happy years of marriage before he murdered her. They didn't just give up. They worked on it. That's the real message of the Crippens.

Jane Christie (Gina Bellman),
Coupling”

❖ Hugh Laurie: You ever been trapped in a loveless marriage with a woman you despise?

Stephen Fry: Ooh, not since I was nine!

A Bit of Fry and Laurie

❖ Marriage may often be a stormy lake, but celibacy is almost always a muddy horsepond.

Thomas Love Peacock

❖ Ronnie Corbett: Do you think marriage is a lottery?

Ronnie Barker: No. With a lottery you do have a slight chance.

The Two Ronnies

❖ Marriage is like wine. It is not to be properly judged until the second glass.

Douglas Jerrold

❖ In a happy marriage it is the wife who provides the climate, the husband the landscape.

Gerald Brenan

❖ Marriage isn't a process of prolonging the life of love, but of mummifying the corpse.

P.G. Wodehouse

❖ Marriage is forever. It's like cement.

Peter O'Toole

❖ The wife of the tenor Richard Tauber once said the breaking point of the marriage was having to look lovingly down his throat while he sang, "You are my heart's delight."

Nancy Banks-Smith

My wife was on the beach at Newquay when I met her. She was feeding the seagulls. She was. She was breastfeeding, she was.

Jethro (a.k.a. Geoff Rowe)

❖ In Britain two out of three marriages end in divorce. The other one ends in murder.

Jeff Green

Here lies my wife.
Here let her lie!
Now she's at rest. And so am I.

John Dryden



THE MEANING OF LIFE

* I wonder what the point is of living? It doesn't seem to get you anywhere.

Victor Meldrew (Richard Wilson),
One Foot in the Grave

* We are here on earth to do good to others. What the others are here for, I don't know.

W.H. Auden

* Sigmund Freud asked the question, "What is it that women want?" But it's obvious, isn't it? They want the central heating turned up, don't they?

Al Murray

“As the days go by, we face the increasing inevitability that we are alone in a godless, uninhabited, hostile and meaningless universe. Still, you've got to laugh, haven't you?

Holly (Norman Lovett),
Red Dwarf”

* Pass-the-Parcel: when I was a kid, there was none of this everybody gets something. I mean, you were lucky if there was anything in the middle. You would get to the last layer and say, "There's nothing in it, Mrs Pickering."

"No, that's life, that is, think on!"

Victoria Wood

* Man is the only animal that laughs and has a state legislature.

Samuel Butler

* Telling me I can do anything I want is like pulling the plug out of the bath and then telling the water it can go anywhere it wants. Try it, and see what happens.
Nick Hornby

* A hen is only an egg's way of making another egg.
Samuel Butler

“My justification is that most people my age spend a lot of time thinking about what they're going to do for the next five or ten years. The time they spend thinking about their life, I just spend drinking.
Amy Winehouse”

* If your world doesn't allow you to dream, move to one where you can.
Billy Idol

* I expect to pass through this world but once, and therefore if there is anybody I want to kick in the crotch I had better kick them in the crotch now, for I do not expect to pass this way again.
Maurice Bowra

Half-ten?! Half-ten?! I've never been up at half-ten! What happens? Bernard (Dylan Moran), <i>Black Books</i>

* I've committed to nothing . . . and that's just suicide . . . by tiny, tiny increments.
Nick Hornby

* You know it's a bad day when you wake up and the birds are singing Leonard Cohen numbers.
Jenny Eclair

* I sometimes think that God, in creating man, overestimated His ability.

Oscar Wilde

* However many ways there may be of being alive, it is certain that there are vastly more ways of being dead.

Richard Dawkins

* What would the world do without tea? – how did it exist? I am glad I was not born before tea.

Revd Sydney Smith

* Of course I'm ambitious. What's wrong with that? Otherwise you sleep all day.

Ringo Starr

* Somewhere there's danger; somewhere there's injustice; somewhere else the tea's getting cold.

Doctor Who

* We are closer to the ants than to the butterflies. Very few people can endure much leisure.

Gerald Brenan

* All the shy people are doomed! Natural selection favours the loud and aggressive.

Bernard (Dylan Moran), *Black Books*

* The horror of getting up is unparalleled, and I am filled with amazement every morning when I find that I have done it.

Lytton Strachey

* The moment you're born you're done for.

Arnold Bennett

* Why did Nature create man? Was it to show that she is big enough to make

mistakes, or was it pure ignorance?

Holbrook Jackson

“The range of what we think and do is limited by what we fail to notice. And because we fail to notice that we fail to notice, there is little we can do to change; until we notice how failing to notice shapes our thoughts and deeds.

R.D. Laing”

* It's a strange world. Let's keep it that way.

Warren Ellis

* Experience teaches only the teachable.

Aldous Huxley

* The unfortunate thing about this world is that the good habits are much easier to give up than the bad ones.

W. Somerset Maugham

* We are bits of stellar matter that got cold by accident, bits of a star gone wrong.

Arthur Eddington

* The best thing we can do is to make wherever we're lost in look as much like home as we can.

Christopher Fry

* I've learned from my mistakes and I'm sure I can repeat them exactly.

Peter Cook

* When men have come to the edge of a precipice, it is the lover of life who has the spirit to leap backwards, and only the pessimist who continues to believe in progress.

G.K. Chesterton

* Like all young men, I set out to be a genius, but mercifully laughter intervened.

Lawrence Durrell

* What's the point? You're born, you walk about a bit and then you die. Waste of time, really, isn't it?

John Dowie

* Eddy: In Zen terms we are all just molecules. There's no difference between me and the table, me and a tree, me and Madonna.

Saffy: Except you have a fatter bottom.

Eddy (Jennifer Saunders) and
Saffy (Julia Sawalha), *Absolutely Fabulous*

* I always fear that creation will expire before tea time.

Revd Sydney Smith

* For what do we live, but to make sport for our neighbours and laugh at them in our turn?

Jane Austen

* I wouldn't dream of taking life as it comes – it may not be colour coordinated.

Julian Clary

* Sarcasm and compassion are two of the qualities that make life on earth tolerable.

Nick Hornby

It is a truth universally acknowledged that as soon as one part of your life starts looking up, another falls to pieces.

Helen Fielding

* Life was planned by a committee while the clever ones had popped outside for a smoke.

Michael Bradley

* It's a metaphor of human existence, a dragon. And if that wasn't bad enough, it's also a bloody great hot flying thing.

Terry Pratchett

* Claudia's the sort of person who goes through life holding on to the sides.

Alice Thomas Ellis

* One could argue that most of the trouble in the world is caused by introspection.

Nick Hornby

* Behind every man now alive stand thirty ghosts, for that is the ratio by which the dead outnumber the living.

Arthur C. Clarke

* Life is a sexually transmitted disease and the mortality rate is 100 per cent.

R.D. Laing

* The very purpose of existence is to reconcile the glowing opinion we hold of ourselves with the appalling things that other people think about us.

Quentin Crisp

* The four most overrated things in life are champagne, lobster, anal sex and picnics.

Christopher Hitchens

* Life is like a grapefruit. It's orange and squishy, and has a few pips in it, and

some folks have half a one for breakfast.

Douglas Adams

* No sooner do we come into this world, than bits of us start to fall off.

Julian Barnes

* Life wouldn't be worth living if I worried over the future as well as the present.

W. Somerset Maugham

* People from Yorkshire are very proud of their underachievement. You see these old fellas in the pub going, "I've had a great life, me. Gone nowhere. Done fuck all. Aye."

Paul Tonkinson

Said Hamlet to Ophelia,
"I'll draw a sketch of thee;
What kind of pencil shall I use?
2B or not 2B?"

Spike Milligan

* The best maxim I know in this life is, to drink your coffee when you can, and when you cannot, to be easy without it.

Jonathan Swift

* There was life before *Coronation Street* but it didn't amount to much.

Russell Harty

* When you get angry, they tell you, count to five before you reply. Why should I count to five? It's what happens before you count to five which makes life interesting.

David Hare

* Soup and fish explain half the emotions of life.

Sydney Smith

* He felt that his whole life was some kind of dream, and he sometimes wondered whose it was and whether they were enjoying it.

Douglas Adams

* Life is too short to learn German.

Richard Porson

* You know how sad your life is when you know the release date of DVDs.

Heston Blumenthal

“Life’s not fair, is it? Some of us drink champagne in the fast lane, and some of us eat our sandwiches by the loose chippings on the A597.

Victoria Wood”

* Life is a long process of getting tired.

Samuel Butler

* Being given chances, and not taking them. That’s what life is all about.

Ron Greenwood

* You only require two things in life: your sanity and your wife.

Tony Blair

* Life is a wretched grey Saturday, but it has to be lived through.

Anthony Burgess

“I look at life like a big book, and sometimes you get halfway through it and

go, “Even though I’ve been enjoying it, I’ve had enough. Give us another book.”

Karl Pilkington”

✱ It is fatal in life to be right too soon.

Enoch Powell

✱ This fellow, he picks up this tiny bird in his hands, and carries its quivering little body across this busy junction, and feeds it to his cat. Life’s like that: a complex texture of conflicting moralities.

Clegg (Peter Sallis), *Last of the Summer Wine*

✱ In the chocolate box of life the top layer’s already gone. And someone’s pinched the orange creme from the bottom.

Bob Ferris (Rodney Bewes), *The Likely Lads*

✱ If only life were so simple! I would’ve wished for a self-flowering lavatory seat a long, long time ago.

Harvey Denton (Steve Pemberton),
The League of Gentlemen

✱ We are all serving a life sentence in the dungeon of self.

Cyril Connolly

✱ Youth would be an ideal state if it came a little later in life.

Herbert Asquith

✱ Real life can be very badly written.

Jonathan (Alan Davies),
Jonathan Creek

✱ They say life begins at forty but I think it just takes forty years to realize it’s already started.

Jeremy Hardy

✱ We all start off as sperm and end up as ash; our life amounts to jacking off

into an ashtray.

Sean Hughes

* For the first half of your life, people tell you what you should do; for the second half, they tell you what you should have done.

Richard Needham

“Somebody was trying to tell me that CDs are better than vinyl because they don't have any surface noise. I said, “Listen, mate, life has surface noise.”

John Peel”

* All animals, except man, know that the principal business of life is to enjoy it.
Samuel Butler

* Life is one of those things that most of us find very difficult to avoid.
Rowan Atkinson

* The majority of people perform well in a crisis and when the spotlight is on them; it's on the Sunday afternoons of this life, when nobody is looking, that the spirit falters.

Alan Bennett

* Stress: what used to be called life.

Malcolm Burgess

* Drama is life with the dull bits cut out.

Alfred Hitchcock

Why do people say life is short? Life is the longest damn thing anyone ever bloody does. What can you do that's longer?

Billy Connolly

* Yesterday was the first day of the rest of your life, and you messed it up again.
Patrick Murray

* My life is spent in one long effort to escape from the commonplaces of existence. These little problems help me to do so.
Arthur Conan Doyle

* Richard Herring: Leave him alone. Give him back to me. Don't you worry, Dad, don't listen to him. Just 'cos someone's a little bit different or strange doesn't mean that they can't live a perfectly full, ordinary life.
Stewart Lee: Well, he can't, can he? He's in a jar, let's face it.

* I'm a great believer in getting your priorities wrong, setting your sights low, so that you don't go through your whole life frustrated that you never became prime minister.
John Peel

“My grandmother, she had the life force. She had that extra power pack. She just kept going . . . She was an energetic woman. And then she got that gran coat. You know at a certain age, you get a gran coat and a cake on top of your head.
Eddie Izzard”

* Life is a gamble at terrible odds – if it was a bet, you wouldn't take it.
Tom Stoppard

* All designed objects are propaganda for a way of life.
Alain de Botton

* Literature is mostly about having sex and not much about having children; life is the other way round.
David Lodge

“At the drabber moments of my life (swilling some excrement from the steps, for instance, or rooting with a bent coat-hanger down a blocked sink) thoughts occur like “I bet Tom Stoppard doesn’t have to do this” or “There is no doubt David Hare would have deputed this to an underling.”

Alan Bennett”

* Life is too short to stuff a mushroom.

Shirley Conran

* The main dangers in this life are the people who want to change everything – or nothing.

Nancy Astor

* Men’s legs have a terribly lonely life – standing in the dark in your trousers all day.

Ken Dodd

* Life is the art of drawing sufficient conclusions from insufficient premises.

Samuel Butler

* The guiding motto in the life of every natural philosopher should be, “Seek simplicity and distrust it”.

Alfred North Whitehead

* If in 100 years I am only known as the man who invented Sherlock Holmes, then I will have considered my life a failure.

Arthur Conan Doyle

* Saffy: My life just flashed before my eyes.

Eddy: What was it like? A Bergman film without the jokes?

Saffy (Julia Sawalha) and
Eddy (Jennifer Saunders), *Absolutely Fabulous*

* The path of my life is strewn with cowpats from the Devil's own satanic herd.
Edmund Blackadder (Rowan Atkinson), *Blackadder*

* Terry: That's just one of life's bitter ironies, Bob.
Bob: I suffer a lot from those.

Terry Collier (James Bolam) and
Bob Ferris (Rodney Bewes), *The Likely Lads*

* Life is a tragedy when seen in close-up, but a comedy in long-shot.
Charlie Chaplin

“There are two great rules in life, the one general and the other particular. The first is that every one can in the end get what he wants if he only tries. This is the general rule. The particular rule is that every individual is more or less of an exception to the general rule.

Samuel Butler”

* His life was one long extravaganza, like living inside a Fabergé egg.
John Lahr

* I want to lead the Victorian life, surrounded by exquisite clutter.
Freddie Mercury

* Life is a maze in which we take the wrong turning before we have learned to walk.
Cyril Connolly

* Life is a comedy for those who think but a tragedy for those who feel.
Horace Walpole

* That's the thing about your destiny: how are you supposed to know it when it arrives? How are you supposed to recognize it from the random life?
David Baddiel

* It has been said that man is a rational animal. All my

life I have been searching for evidence which could support this.

Bertrand Russell

* It seems that I have spent my entire time trying to make life more rational and that it was all wasted effort.

A.J. Ayer

* If life were fair, Dan Quayle would be making a living asking, “Do you want fries with that?”

John Cleese

Brought up in the provinces in the forties and fifties one learned early the valuable lesson that life is generally something that happens elsewhere.

Alan Bennett

* I want to moonwalk, son, but life's a shithouse.

Brian Potter (Peter Kay), *Phoenix Nights*



MEN AND WOMEN

★ If we men had periods, we wouldn't have discreet tampon boxes, would we? We'd have boxes with MY FUCKING TAMPONS printed on the outside.

Ben Elton

★ Instead of this absurd division into sexes they ought to class people as static and dynamic.

Evelyn Waugh

★ For the female of the species is more deadly than the male.

Rudyard Kipling

★ Boys will be boys. And even that wouldn't matter if only we could prevent girls from being girls.

Anthony Hope Hawkins

“Women can talk, empathize, apply lipstick, see things using the eyes in the back of their head, remember birthdays, write lists, run the country and bark demands, all while executing a spot of parallel parking.

Liz Jones”

★ If you want to know what a man's like, take a good look at how he treats his inferiors, not his equals.

J.K. Rowling

★ Men's men: gentle or simple, they're much of a muchness.

George Eliot

★ Dorothy: Well you're always rummaging around in your underpants adjusting yourselves.

Gary: It's complicated down there, things need freeing up.

Dorothy (Caroline Quentin) and
Gary Strang (Martin Clunes), *Men Behaving Badly*

★ Men, I feel, are like wine – before buying, a real connoisseur takes a small sip, and spits them out.

Jill Tweedie

★ The main difference between men and women is that men are lunatics and women are idiots.

Rebecca West

★ Most of us women like men, you know; it's just that we find them a constant disappointment.

Clare Short

“I can't stand these New Men siting talking about classical music and eating lettuce. I want me vest ripping of and shagging on a landing.

Lily Savage (a.k.a. Paul O'Grady)”

★ Aristotle maintained that women have fewer teeth than men; although he was twice married, it never occurred to him to verify this statement by examining his wives' mouths.

Bertrand Russell

★ I think being a woman is like being Irish . . . Everyone says you're important and nice, but you take second place all the same.

Iris Murdoch

★ Women are never disarmed by compliments. Men always are. That is the difference between the two sexes.

Oscar Wilde

★ They say men can't multitask, but you watch us when we nearly get caught watching porn, we're like ninjas: telly over, trousers up, tissues down the couch.

Jason Manford

★ What would women do if they could not cry? What poor, defenceless creatures they would be.

Douglas Jerrold

“Men are far more romantic than women. Men are the ones who'll say, “I've found somebody. She's amazing. If I don't get to be with this person, I can't carry on. If I'm not with her I'll end up in a bedsit, I'll be an alcoholic.” That's how women feel about shoes.

Dylan Moran”

★ There must be some reason why a man must be convinced, while a woman must be persuaded.

Robert Fleming

★ Certain women should be struck regularly, like gongs.

Noël Coward

★ I've got a theory actually that every single man in the world can do Sean Connery and if they can't they don't deserve to have a penis.

Ronni Ancona

I can read women. You've got to know their wants and their needs. And that can be anything from making sure she's got enough money to buy groceries each week to making sure she's gratified sexually after intercourse.

Gareth Keenan (Mackenzie Crook),
The Office

★ She wore far too much rouge last night and not quite enough clothes. That is always a sign of despair in a woman.

Oscar Wilde

★ Contrary to popular belief, English women do not wear tweed nightgowns.

Hermione Gingold

★ My feeling is that women will never be equal to men . . . I think men are catching up in all kinds of ways.

Jack Dee

★ The cocks may crow, but it's the hen that lays the egg.

Margaret Thatcher

★ Even the most powerful lie detector invented couldn't drag a secret out of a woman. However, women rarely have lunch with lie detectors.

Danny McCrossan

★ We women talk too much, but even then we don't tell half what we know.

Nancy Astor

“There are only three things to be done with a woman. You can love her, suffer for her or turn her into literature.

Lawrence Durrell”

★ If you put a woman in a man's position, she will be more efficient, but no more kind.

Fay Weldon

★ A man's face is his autobiography. A woman's face is her work of fiction.

Oscar Wilde

★ Good women always think it is their fault when someone else is being offensive. Bad women never take the blame for anything.

Anita Brookner

★ There are only two kinds of women in this world: those who love chocolate, and complete bitches.

Dawn French

★ I've always felt that English women had to be approached in a sisterly manner, rather than an erotic manner.

Anthony Burgess

★ If you think of women as human, they are exasperating on account of their incredible feebleness; of course, it's all right if you don't think of them as human at all.

Celia Green

★ I like my coffee like I like my women . . . in a plastic cup.

Eddie Izzard

I love women, though I couldn't eat a whole one. But I think I know where I'd start.

Jonathan Ross

★ The useless piece of flesh at the end of a penis is called a man.

Jo Brand

★ After I punched Piers Morgan, every woman said, "Why did you hit him?" and every man said, "Where did you hit him?"

Jeremy Clarkson

★ Men drive too fast, we are told, because the car is an extension of the penis. But if it were, men would surely not drive too fast; they would just back in and out of the garage. Or maybe just polish it all the time.

Jeremy Hardy

★ I've got no problem buying tampons. I'm a modern man. But apparently, they're not a "proper present".

Jimmy Carr

★ The radiator key: is there a more masculine device? We feel at our most manly when we're bleeding radiators.

Michael McIntyre

★ I don't want to make any huge generalizations about women . . . but all I'd say is they have no feelings.

Dylan Moran

★ Men think about women. Women think about what men think about them.

Peter Ustinov

★ Women do not find it difficult nowadays to behave like men, but they often find it extremely difficult to behave like gentlemen.

Compton Mackenzie

★ At the age of eleven or thereabouts, women acquire a poise and an ability to handle difficult situations which a man, if he's lucky, manages to achieve somewhere in his late seventies.

P.G. Wodehouse

“All these programmes on telly about women being domestic goddesses are just not true, are they? I'd like to have a programme that truly represented how women approach the housework. And if I did, it would be called, "Fuck it, that'll do".

Jo Brand”

★ The great and almost only comfort about being a woman is that one can always pretend to be more stupid than one is and no one is surprised.

Freya Stark

★ All women become like their mothers. That is their tragedy. No man does. That's his.

Oscar Wilde

★ The trouble with women is that they never put the toilet seat back up.

Simon Nye

★ Men don't know much about women. We do know when they're happy. We know when they're crying, and we know when they're pissed off. We just don't know in what order these are gonna' come at us.

Evan Davies

★ I like my A4 refill pads like my women – punched twice near the spine to keep them in line with the others.

Robbie Bonham

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

MONEY

❖ The creed of the Inland Revenue is simple: “If we can bring one little smile to one little face today, then somebody’s slipped up somewhere.”

David Frost

❖ One man’s wage rise is another man’s price increase.

Harold Wilson

❖ Satan is wiser now than before, and tempts by making rich instead of poor.

Alexander Pope

“ I never have cash in my wallet at any time. Instead, I carry around months and months of receipts. So there, banditos! Really, I need a mugger who can file my VAT returns.

Dara O Briain ”

❖ So, what first attracted you to millionaire Paul Daniels?

Mrs Merton (a.k.a. Caroline Aherne),
to Debbie McGee, wife of magician Paul Daniels

❖ My needs have always been modest, but my desires, to make up for that, have become increasingly expensive.

Tibor Fischer

❖ It is easier for a rich man to enter a camel if he stands on a box.

Jonathan (Alan Davies),
Jonathan Creek

❖ Gamblers Anonymous: how do they know where to send your winnings?

Harry Hill

❖ They have the usual socialist disease; they have run out of other people's money.

Margaret Thatcher

❖ Be at the pains of putting down every single item of expenditure whatsoever every day which could possibly be twisted into a professional expense and remember to lump in all the doubtfuls.

Hilaire Belloc

“You can't get as rich as he is without being as tight as a camel's arse in a sandstorm, can you? He wouldn't give you the steam of his piss, that fella.

Jim Royle (Ricky Tomlinson),

on Richard Branson, *The Royle Family*”

❖ She was practising fastest-finger-first by herself in bed last night.

Chris Tarrant, on the first

Who Wants to Be a Millionaire winner Judith Keppel

❖ A rich man's joke is always funny.

Thomas Edward Brown

❖ Any man who can afford to buy a newspaper should not be allowed to own one.

Roy Hattersley

❖ What's the quickest way to become a millionaire? Borrow fivers off everyone you meet.

Richard Branson

❖ I'm worth a thousand BBC journalists.

Jonathan Ross

❖ I believe in reincarnation, so I've left all my money to myself.

Tony Blackburn

“Taxation, gentlemen, is very much like dairy farming. The task is to extract the maximum amount of milk with the minimum of moo. And I am afraid to say that these days all I get is moo.

Terry Pratchett”

❖ This high official, all allow, is grossly overpaid; there wasn't any board, and now there isn't any trade.

A.P. Herbert

❖ Can there be a more lamentable picture than that of a chancellor of the Exchequer seated on an empty chest by a pool of bottomless deficiency, fishing for a budget?

Robert Peel

❖ I make a fortune from criticizing the policy of the government, and then hand it over to the government in taxes to keep it going.

George Bernard Shaw

❖ Rich men's houses are seldom beautiful, rarely comfortable, and never original. It is a constant source of surprise to people of moderate means to observe how little a big fortune contributes to beauty.

Margot Asquith

“Somebody said to me, “But The Beatles were anti-materialistic.” That's a huge myth. John and I literally used to sit down and say, “Now, let's write a swimming pool.”

Paul McCartney”

❖ Do they use a different currency in the north?

Jade Goody contestant on British *Big Brother*

❖ It is better to have a permanent income than to be fascinating.

Oscar Wilde

Al-Qaeda must be kicking themselves. For so long they've been using bombs and suicide attacks and it turns out all they had to do to fuck the west was take out a load of mortgages!

Sean Lock

❖ Saving is a very fine thing. Especially when your parents have done it for you.

Winston Churchill

❖ He who serves God for money will serve the devil for better wages.

Roger L'Estrange

❖ People say that I'm a millionaire, but that's not true – I only spend millions.

Robert Plant

❖ The poor have sometimes objected to being governed badly; the rich have always objected to being governed at all.

G.K. Chesterton

❖ Genius is born – not paid.

Oscar Wilde

Victoria pointed to her necklace and said, "£1.5 million." David introduced himself. I was staring at his wife's tits and shouting. "How much?"

Graham Norton,
on meeting David and Victoria Beckham

❖ Rick: Hey! Wouldn't it be amazing if all this money was real?

Vyvyan: That is the single most predictable . . . and BORING thing that anybody could ever say whilst playing Monopoly.

Rick (Rik Mayall) and
Vyvyan (Adrian Edmondson), *The Young Ones*

❖ When speculation has done its worst, two and two still make four.

Samuel Johnson

❖ International business may conduct its operations with scraps of paper, but the ink it uses is human blood.

Eric Ambler

❖ If I had to give a definition of capitalism I would say: the process whereby American girls turn into American women.

Christopher Hampton

❖ No rich man considers himself rich enough; but I consider myself poor enough.

George Mikes

❖ The Christian usually tries to give away his own money, whilst the philosopher usually tries to give away the money of someone else.

Lord Salisbury

❖ I spent 90 per cent of my money on women and drink.
The rest I wasted.

George Best

“In the days when the nation depended on agriculture for its wealth it made the lord chancellor sit on a woolsack to remind him where the wealth came from. I would like to suggest we remove that now and make him sit on a crate of machine tools.

Prince Philip”

❖ Bankruptcy is like losing your virginity. It doesn't hurt the next time.

Clarissa Dickson-Wright

❖ Gold, n.: A soft malleable metal relatively scarce in distribution. It is mined deep in the earth by poor men who then give it to rich men who immediately bury it back in the earth in great prisons, although gold hasn't done anything to them.

Mike Harding

❖ Few women care to be laughed at and men not at all, except for large sums of money.

Alan Ayckbourn

❖ I do not want money. I do not want wealth. All I ask is that people humbly and honestly sink to their knees and worship me.

Tim Brooke-Taylor

❖ Credit is a system whereby a person who cannot pay gets another person who cannot pay to guarantee that he can pay.

Charles Dickens

❖ Money may not buy happiness, but it can damn well give it!

Freddie Mercury

❖ To the Bank of Scotland I bequeath my testicles, because it has no balls.

Lord Erskine

❖ Anyone who lives within their means suffers from a lack of imagination.

Oscar Wilde

❖ I know half the money I spend on advertising is wasted, but I can never find out which half.

Lord Leverhulme

❖ All heiresses are beautiful.

John Dryden

❖ People who want to make a million borrow a million first.

Sophie Kinsella

Commenting on a complaint from a Mr Arthur Purdey about a large gas bill, a spokesman for North-West Gas said, “We agree it was rather high for the time of year. It’s possible Mr Purdey has been charged for the gas used up during the explosion that destroyed his house.”

Daily Telegraph

❖ If you haven’t got the balls to ask people for money because you’re going to lose it, then you’re certainly never going to get rich.

Felix Dennis

❖ Capitalism is the astounding belief that the most wickedest of men will do the most wickedest of things for the greatest good of everyone.

John Maynard Keynes

❖ A citizen can hardly distinguish between a tax and a fine, except that the fine is generally much lighter.

G.K. Chesterton

❖ Poverty is an anomaly to rich people; it is very difficult to make out why people who want dinner do not ring the bell.

Walter Bagehot

❖ People who get through life dependent on other people’s possessions are always the first to lecture you on how little possessions count.

Ben Elton

❖ To me, economics is like the Dutch language. I’m told it makes sense, but I seriously have my doubts.

John Oliver

“It’s all in the marketing – if you call the economic slowdown a recession, it sounds bad. If you call it the credit crunch, it sounds like a new flavour of ice cream by Ben & Jerry’s.

Ed Byrne”

❖ The purpose of studying economics is not to acquire a set of ready-made answers to economic questions, but to learn how to avoid being deceived by economists.

Joan Robinson

❖ Economics is the study of the value and meaning of J.K. Galbraith.

Mike Harding

❖ I can’t eat my notices.

Claude Rains

❖ Teach a parrot the terms “supply” and “demand” and you’ve got an economist.

Thomas Carlyle

❖ No, you certainly shouldn’t panic, as panic is the key trigger to a collapsing market. You should remain calm at all times, and leave the panicking to those who really know what’s going on.

Craig Brown

❖ 50 Cent, or as he’s called over here, approximately 29p.

Sarah Kendall

❖ The failure of the banks could have been predicted from the day they stopped putting blotting paper in cheque books.

Philip J. Barratt

❖ One of the traits of advanced capitalism is that it’s generally staffed by people who aren’t very concerned about selling anything – one of the consequences of a society where, sadly, people don’t starve to death if they lose their job.

Tibor Fischer

❖ Money: the one thing that keeps us in touch with our children.

Gyles Brandreth

❖ There's nothing undignified about lying about all day and being waited on by servants, sipping bloody champagne.

Jeffrey Bernard

“And the same six numbers came up the following week, so that was another three million . . . which was nice.

Patrick Nice (Mark Williams),
The Fast Show”

❖ Those who have some means think that the most important thing in the world is love. The poor know that it is money.

Gerald Brenan

❖ Money can't buy happiness but, as my friend Lily points out, it can certainly buy alcohol.

Mrs Merton (a.k.a. Caroline Aherne)

❖ What breaks capitalism, all that will ever break capitalism, is capitalists. The faster they run the more strain on their heart.

Raymond Williams

❖ We contend that for a nation to tax itself into prosperity is like a man standing in a bucket and trying to lift himself up by the handle.

Winston Churchill

❖ I'm afraid, Mr Goldwyn, that we shall not ever be able to do business together. You see, you're an artist, and care only about art, while I'm only a tradesman and care only about money.

George Bernard Shaw

❖ The inherent vice of capitalism is the unequal sharing of blessings; the inherent virtue of socialism is the equal sharing of miseries.

Winston Churchill

❖ He's got a wonderful head for money. There's this long slit on the top.

David Frost

❖ Almost everything on earth can be manufactured a little less well and be sold for a little less money. And those who are only interested in prices are the main victims of this rule.

John Ruskin

❖ Money . . . enables us to get what we want instead of what other people think we want.

George Bernard Shaw

“The amount of money some parents want to spend . . . would enable baby Jesus to leave the stable and check in to a five-star hotel.

Ed Watson,
on nativity play costumes”

❖ Lack of money is the root of all evil.

George Bernard Shaw

What are we going to do? You're unemployed; I've got no money coming in. How am I going to afford aspirational magazines?

Daisy Steiner (Jessica Hynes),
Spaced

❖ Keeping accounts, sir, is of no use when a man is spending his own money, and has nobody to whom he is to account. You won't eat less beef today because

you have written down what it cost yesterday.

Samuel Johnson

❖ All money nowadays seems to be produced with a natural homing instinct for the Treasury.

Prince Philip

❖ Money cannot buy
The fuel of love
but is excellent kindling.

W.H. Auden

❖ People who say money can't buy you happiness just don't know where to shop.

Tara Palmer Tomkinson

❖ They who are of the opinion that money will do everything may well be suspected to do everything for money.

Marquess of Halifax

❖ Because bankers measure their self-worth in money, and pay themselves a lot of it, they think they're fine fellows and don't need to explain themselves.

James Buchan

❖ Money can't buy love, but it improves your bargaining position.

Christopher Marlowe

❖ Yaaah! Look at my wad!

Loads Money (a.k.a. Harry Enfield)

❖ To force myself to earn more money, I determined to spend more.

James Agate

❖ The only thing I like about rich people is their money.

Nancy Astor

“Every year the international finance system kills more people than the Second World War. But at least Hitler was mad, you know.

Ken Livingstone”

❖ Pay your taxes: help fill the bottomless hole.

Bumper sticker

❖ There are three principal ways to lose money: wine, women and engineers. While the first two are more pleasant, the third is by far the more certain.

Baron Edmond De Rothschild

❖ Inland Revenue: we've got what it takes to take what you've got.

Bumper sticker

❖ In most betting shops you will see three windows marked “Bet here”, but only one window with the legend “Pay out”.

Jeffrey Bernard

❖ Among the very rich you will never find a really generous man, even by accident. They may give their money away, but they will never give themselves away; they are egoistic, secretive, dry as old bones. To be smart enough to get all that money you must be dull enough to want it.

G.K. Chesterton

❖ Actually, I have no regard for money. Aside from its purchasing power, it's completely useless as far as I'm concerned.

Alfred Hitchcock

❖ The first rule of venture capitalism should be, shoot the inventor.

Richard Storey

❖ Shitting is one thing the rich have to do for themselves.

Lindsey Davis

❖ People will swim through shit if you put a few bob in it.

Peter Sellers

❖ It needs to be said that the poor are poor because they don't have enough money.

Keith Joseph

❖ No man will take counsel, but every man will take money; therefore, money is better than counsel.

Jonathan Swift

❖ There are many things in life more worthwhile than money. One is to be brought up in this, our England, which is still the envy of less happy lands.

Lord Denning

❖ The chance of winning the lottery jackpot is less than that of being struck by lightning. I have never bought a ticket and plan to buy an insulating rubber helmet with the money I save. It will increase my life expectancy by precisely one fourteen-millionth.

Steve Jones

❖ Speak not of my debts unless you mean to pay them.

George Herbert

❖ Money is fat and meant to be piled up.

Scottish proverb

❖ Give us your fucking money.

Bob Geldof, LiveAid 1985

❖ Blackadder: Baldrick, how did you manage to find a turnip that cost 400,000 pounds?

Baldrick: Well, I had to haggle . . .

Edmund Blackadder (Rowan Atkinson) and
Baldrick (Tony Robinson), *Blackadder*

❖ I have imbibed such a love for money that I keep some sequins in a drawer to count, and cry over them once a week.

Lord Byron

“Have you tried to use Scottish money in England? There's nothing more tense in life. When you hand it over, they look at you like you've just handed them a dead baby.

Michael McIntyre”

❖ But there was still the big prize money, hanging there like a carrot waiting to be picked.

David Vine

❖ No one would remember the Good Samaritan if he only had good intentions. He had money as well.

Margaret Thatcher

❖ Like dear St Francis of Assisi I am wedded to poverty, but in my case the marriage is not a success.

Oscar Wilde

❖ I'm tired of love;
I'm still more tired of rhyme.
But money gives me pleasure all the time.

Hilaire Belloc

❖ Having money is rather like being a blonde. It is more fun but not vital.

Mary Quant

❖ All I ask is a chance to prove that money can't make me happy.

Spike Milligan

❖ Money doesn't mind if we say it's evil, it goes from strength to strength. It's a fiction, an addiction, and a tacit conspiracy.

Martin Amis

❖ I told the Inland Revenue I didn't owe them a penny because I lived near the seaside.

Ken Dodd

❖ The surest way to ruin a man who doesn't know how to handle money is to give him some.

George Bernard Shaw

❖ Time is waste of money.

Oscar Wilde

❖ Money is the symbol of duty, it is the sacrament of having done for mankind that which mankind wanted.

Samuel Butler

I think a lot of people who have just got rich go out and spend their money recklessly on things like investments and their kids' education when they could more wisely buy stuff that will always be valuable like very trendy clothes, holidays and haircuts.

Ali G (a.k.a. Sacha Baron Cohen)

❖ Sir, he throws away his money without thought and without merit. I do not call a tree generous that sheds its fruit at every breeze.

Samuel Johnson

❖ I'm my father's son; he's a man who's cautious with money. I remember my sister said to him once, "Why do I only get given twenty pence by the tooth fairy, whereas all my friends get a quid?"

He said, "Because all the other tooth fairies have wives that work."

Stephen Merchant

❖ I don't want money. It is only people who pay their bills who want that, and I never pay mine.

Oscar Wilde

❖ A bookie is just a pickpocket who lets you use your own hands.

Henry Morgan

❖ I confidently predict the collapse of capitalism and the beginning of history. Something will go wrong in the machinery that converts money into money, the banking system will collapse totally, and we will be left having to barter to stay alive. Those who can dig in their garden will have a better chance than the rest. I'll be all right; I've got a few veg.

Margaret Drabble



MUSIC

* I am playing all the right notes, but not necessarily in the right order.

Eric Morecambe

* Pete grabbed the microphone and started singing. Well, when I say singing, I mean he began emitting a tuneless, whining noise more akin to a live lobster being brought to the boil.

Piers Morgan, on Pete Doherty

* Where would rock 'n' roll be without feedback?

Dave Gilmour

* There's Elvis and me. I couldn't say which of the two is best.

Liam Gallagher

“ I never really knew what the big deal was – we were just four dimps from Birmingham.

Ozzy Osbourne,
on Black Sabbath ”

* The electric guitar – like making love – is much improved by a little feedback, completely ruined by too much.

Simon Munnery

* The harpsichord sounds like two skeletons copulating on a corrugated-iron roof – in a thunderstorm.

Thomas Beecham

“I sometimes look at myself, I’m sitting with a biro and a cigarette packet, desperately scrawling dribble on it. And sometimes I put down my fag pack and think, what am I, a grown man, doing at this hour of the night? Then I banish that thought, pick the fag pack up again.

Jo Strummer”

* I can’t stand Bob Dylan.

Charlotte Church

* The end of the animal trade would leave more time to trap or beat to death pop star wannabes.

Simon Cowell

* Pete wouldn’t last a minute on *X Factor*.

Simon Cowell, on Pete Doherty

* I forgot to bring in a “Song for the Ladies” this week so I thought I’d play a song for people who enjoy the work of Deep Purple.

Stephen Merchant

* Prince: genius or little fella? It’s up to you!

Ricky Gervais

* I’m not a one-trick pony. I’m at least a five-trick pony.

Amy Winehouse

* Listening to a Beethoven symphony is like being rodded by the Almighty. Like falling through a fractal.

Trevor Lock

“There are two things John and I always do when we’re going to sit down and write a song. First of all we sit down. Then we think about writing a song.

Paul McCartney”

* Joss Stone recently had to duet with Robbie Williams at the Brits. The only way I'd duet with Robbie Williams is on a tandem parachute jump. As long as I had the parachute and he had the tandem.

Mark Lamarr

* What is a harp but an over-sized cheese-slicer with cultural pretensions?

Denis Norden

* Do you know why conductors live so long? Because we perspire so much.

John Barbirolli

* The Perry Como of punk.

John Lydon, on Billy Idol

If any of our songs ever did make it on the top ten, I'd disband the group immediately.

Robert Smith

* The saxophone is the embodied spirit of beer.

Arnold Bennett

* Chris Martin looks like a geography teacher. What's all that with writing messages about Free Trade on his hand when he's playing. If he wants to write things down I'll give him a pen and a pad of paper. Bunch of students.

Liam Gallagher

* Everybody at EMI had become part of the furniture. I'd be a couch; Coldplay were an armchair. Robbie Williams, I dread to think what he was.

Paul McCartney

* Once a week I drive a nail through my foot to remind myself of the stupidity of not going to see them when I had the chance.

John Peel, on American

noise punk band, Big Black

* Shania “Oh, I must remember to buy some mutton” Twain once performed at the Nobel Prize Peace Concert with Elton John and Phil Collins. You probably remember that year. They had to wrestle a Stanley knife off Nelson Mandela.

Mark Lamarr

* I was walking along and this chair came flying past me, and another, and another, and I thought: man, is this gonna be a good night.

Liam Gallagher

* The only good thing about the Spice Girls is that you can look at them with the sound turned down.

George Harrison

* That was the best song I’ve heard since – well, tea time. Mind you, I had a late tea.

John Peel

* Apparently I upset Girls Aloud. I can live with that. I don’t have a beef with them, though they are bitches, obviously.

Simon Amstell

* I like Beethoven, especially the poems.

Ringo Starr

* Phil Collins is losing his hearing, making him the luckiest man at a Phil Collins concert.

Simon Amstell

* If Frank Sinatra were alive, he’d sing songs like “You are my Latte. My skinny, skinny latte!”

Armando Iannucci

* Ringo wasn't even the best drummer in The Beatles.

John Lennon, when asked if Ringo Starr
was the best drummer in the world

Once I was at Heathrow Airport and The Clash were there, and Topper Headon – after he'd had a good look round to make sure there was no press around – came up to me and said, "Man, I'm so pleased to meet you, you're one of my heroes."

Phil Collins

* The press try to categorize me a "gloom-and-doom" singer. But, take a look at Morrissey! That man's a professional moaner.

Robert Smith

* I like Lady GaGa. She'll be the new Madonna if she doesn't slag it up too much.

Robbie Williams

* Brass bands are all very well in their place – outdoors and several miles away.

Thomas Beecham

"I don't like the crappy slogans they've got. "Make it Big" and "Go for It". Go for fucking what? What exactly are they going for? An all-year suntan? What sort of values are they actually going for? Because I don't find any values in those things at all.

Paul Weller, on Wham"

* The words of their songs, pathetic when compared with Cole Porter, are so vapid that psychedelic meanings have to be imposed on them.

Anthony Burgess, on The Beatles

* There are two golden rules for an orchestra: start together and finish together. The public doesn't give a damn what goes on in between.

Thomas Beecham

* Beethoven always sounds to me like the upsetting of a bag of nails, with here and there an also dropped hammer.

John Ruskin

* Suzanne Vega, Alanis Morissette, Tori Amos . . . Great singers. But, come on, girls – let it go . . . We’ve all been dumped.

Steve Coogan (Tommy Saxondale), *Saxondale*

* Barry Manilow’s singing sounds like a bluebottle caught in the curtains.

Jean Rook

* Whose heads do they make earphones for now? It’s like one long earpiece and one short one! There’s people in Cornwall going, “Thank you very much, that fits our heads just fine!”

Lee Evans

* She can’t sing, she can’t dance and, by the looks of things, she can’t hold down a meal.

Gina Yashere, on Geri Halliwell

“I’ve given myself a hard time thinking about my lyrics. I thought they were shit. Just about fit enough to be on the inside of greeting cards.

Robbie Williams”

* A strange thing happened during a performance of Elgar’s *Sea Pictures* at a concert hall in Bermuda tonight. The man playing the triangle disappeared.

Ronnie Barker

* The only difference between a Britney Spears video and a spread in *Playboy* is at least the centrefolds know

they can't sing.

Bono

* Disc jockeys: they are the hollow men. They are electronic lice.

Anthony Burgess

* Madam, you have between your legs an instrument capable of giving pleasure to thousands – and all you can do is scratch it.

Thomas Beecham, to a female cellist

* Carrie Fisher was James Blunt's landlady and let him make a single in her bathroom. If James Blunt ever asks to use your bathroom, make sure he's only having a shit.

Mark Lamarr

* Noel Gallagher is an absolute tosser and he looks like Parker from *Thunderbirds*.

Elton John

* I think you invented notes never ever heard before in music.

Simon Cowell

* Chorus, when we sing, "All we like sheep have gone astray", could we have a little more regret and a little less satisfaction?

Thomas Beecham

* In China, the piano piece *Chopsticks* is known as *Knife and Fork*.

Denis Norden

* Rock and roll: music for the neck downwards.

Keith Richards

“You pick up your guitar, you rip a few people's tunes of, you swap them around a bit, get your brother in the band, punch his head in every now and then, and it sells.

Noel Gallagher”

* If Elvis were alive today, I think he'd really understand happy hardcore.

John Peel

* Let me throw a mathematical dilemma at you: there's 500 left, well how come the odds of you winning are a million to one?

Simon Cowell, to a contestant on *British X Factor*

* Pop begins in bedrooms and ends up in supermarkets.

Damon Albarn

The aural equivalent of having half-chewed, week-old Battenberg cake dribbled into your ear canal by a senile grandparent.

Charlie Brooker
on the *Coronation Street* theme tune

* I don't play the guitar, for the reason that if you leave spare guitar strings lying around the house, all you're doing is arming any would-be assassin.

Dan Atkinson

* If I were in The Beatles, I'd be a good George Harrison.

Noel Gallagher

* She accompanied me down to the gramophone library earlier, where she quickly uncovered the greatest hits ever, and what a treat for my old years they were.

Humphrey Lyttelton, *I'm Sorry I Haven't a Clue*,
BBC Radio 4

* When you think about it, Adolf Hitler was the first pop star.

David Bowie

* I prefer not to listen to music that I can't rip off or improve on.

Ian Dury

* I never listen to the radio. If it's bad, I make fun of it, and if it's good, I get jealous that I didn't think of it.

John Lennon

“But you have to give your whole life to a cello. When I realized that, I went back to the guitar and just turned the volume up a bit louder.

Ritchie Blackmore”

* Woke up this morning . . . got a big chin . . . it's not that much of a problem to be honest . . . I won't base an entire musical genre on it.

Stewart Lee

* That soprano's voice reminds me of a cart coming downhill with the brake on.

Thomas Beecham

* “I've got soul but I'm not a soldier”? Deep down, it really is a meaningless lyric, isn't it? I mean, you may as well be saying, “I've got ham but I'm not a hamster.”

Bill Bailey

* I've always wanted to smash a guitar over someone's head. You just can't do that with a piano.

Elton John

* Like the poetry of Mallarmé, a hi-hat is one symbol on top of another.

Denis Norden

When Cliff Richard wrote “Wired for Sound”, no way was he sitting on a clean lavatory! He was living on the limit, just like me. Where the only place to put bleach is in your hair!

* “Smack My Bitch Up” doesn’t actually mean “beat up my girlfriend”. It’s actually just pimp slang for getting your act together. Similarly tonight, I’m going to set fire to some orphans and eat their charred remains – have a cup of tea and a bath!

Simon Amstell

* Hardly anyone bought the Velvet’s albums when they were originally released, but everyone who did formed a band.

Brian Eno

* You sing like Mickey Mouse on helium.

Simon Cowell

* A team of researchers in Salzburg have discovered an early Mozart score. She was only sixteen and lived over the bakery opposite.

Ronnie Barker

* You’re better off being a brick layer if you’re going to play guitar than a sheet-metal worker.

Roger Daltrey

* I saw Robbie Williams live. He said, “Come on, you know this one.” Yeah we know it, Robbie. But it was 150 quid to get in. Any chance you could sing it for us?

Lee Mack

* Samantha has to nip off to the National Opera, where she’s been giving private tuition to the singers. Having seen what she did to the baritone, the director is keen to see what she might do for a tenor.

Humphrey Lyttelton, *I’m Sorry I Haven’t a Clue*,

- * Well, that was powerfully average.

John Peel, on Bruce Springsteen

“When INXS chose their new front man, they said Michael Hutchence approved the decision from beyond the grave. At least, that’s what they thought he said - it sounded like he had a sore throat.

Simon Amstell”

- * Hell is full of musical amateurs.

George Bernard Shaw

- * You have to resign yourself to the fact that a large part of the audience is sort of thick, you know, and don’t appreciate quality, however much you put it over.

Pete Townshend

- * Everyone talks about rock these days; the problem is they forget about the roll.

Keith Richards

- * A lot of people don’t know about music, but buy records. A lot of people that know about music can’t afford to buy records.

Marc Bolan

- * The Pet Shop Boys are, of course, Chris Lowe and Neil Tennant. Interestingly, Neil Tennant is also the command I give my lodger when he can’t pay the rent.

David Walliams

- * Hi, 50 Cent here. People say my lyrics are violent and misogynistic. But I’m just talking about where I’m from. And where I’m from, everybody is a vile millionaire rapper and all women are rubbish sluts.

Simon Amstell

* I'm the Right Honourable Lord Mixalot. It's like a disease; I've got mixamatosi.

Lindsay Carol (Chris O'Dowd), *FM*

* I have van Gogh's ear for music.

Stephen Fry

* I would rather eat my own testicles than re-form The Smiths, and that's saying something for a vegetarian.

Morrissey

* Samantha has spent a rewarding evening amongst the shelves down in the gramophone archive. As ever, her keen eye has spotted a firm favourite or two, and she couldn't resist getting them down.

Humphrey Lyttelton, *I'm Sorry I Haven't a Clue*
BBC Radio 4

* Music with dinner is an insult both to the cook and the violinist.

G.K. Chesterton

* Sit in these auditions for three weeks and hear "I Believe I Can Fly" out of tune for the millionth time – you try and be nice.

Simon Cowell

* Pop music tells you that everything is OK and rock music tells you that it's not, but that you can change it.

Bono

* Learning to play with a big amplifier is like trying to control an elephant.

Ritchie Blackmore

When Radio 1 started, it was generally regarded as rather unhealthy for presenters to show any interest in music, as it was believed this would lay us open to unscrupulous promotions people offering fast cars and women.

John Peel

* If anyone has conducted a Beethoven performance, and then doesn't have to go to an osteopath, then there's something wrong.

Simon Rattle

* British music is in a state of perpetual promise. It might almost be said to be one long promissory note.

Thomas Beecham

* I've only ever bought one album – *But Seriously* by Phil Collins. I was fifteen, decided to get into music, went into WH Smith and that was number one, so I assumed it was the best.

David Mitchell

* I want to do a musical movie. Like *Evita*, but with good music.

Elton John

* Reporter: The French haven't made up their minds about The Beatles. What do you think of them?

John Lennon: Oh, we like The Beatles.

* A musicologist is a man who can read music but can't hear it.

Thomas Beecham

* Music was invented to confirm human loneliness.

Lawrence Durrell

* The English may not like music, but they absolutely love the noise it makes.

Thomas Beecham

* If you'd have been singing like this 2,000 years ago, people would have stoned you.

Simon Cowell

* You just pick up a chord, go twang, and you've got music.

Sid Vicious

“Rock and roll is a spent force in that we can't expect any more from it, either as music or an instrument for social change . . . I'm not that good a musician to break out of it – it's all I can do.

Mick Jagger”

* An ambulance chasing a fire engine round a roundabout.

Dylan Moran, on dance music

* The only black magic Sabbath ever got into was a box of chocolates.

Ozzy Osbourne

* Gorillaz works because we're not, excuse the pun, trying to ape anybody.

Damon Albarn

* Avant-garde music is sort of research music. You're glad someone's done it but you don't necessarily want to listen to it.

Brian Eno

* Samantha and I spent a few hours in the record library earlier and enjoyed a good long root in the singles section.

Humphrey Lyttelton, *I'm Sorry I Haven't a Clue*,

BBC Radio 4

* You actually sing like a train going off the rails. You sort of start off in tune, then it just goes completely off and very, very fast.

Simon Cowell

“No one listens to jazz. Science teachers and the mentally ill, that’s all jazz is for.

Vince Noir (Noel Fielding),

The Mighty Boosh”



POLITICS AND POLITICIANS

★ Distrust of authority should be the first civic duty.

Norman Douglas

★ Muckers, they just waste your money, innit? Do we really need a red public toilet every few hundred metres with a phone in it? . . . But, to be fair, my council make a bit of an effort trying to make the area look nice – every few weeks they sellotape a bunch of flowers to a lamppost.

Lee Nelson (a.k.a. Simon Brodtkin)

★ Parliament is opened by Her Majesty the Queen, who would be well advised to take one quick look and shut it again.

David Frost

★ You'll make an effing awful prime minister.

George Osborne, to Gordon Brown

★ They travel best in gangs, hanging around like clumps of bananas, thick skinned and yellow.

Neil Kinnock, on the Conservative Party

★ He knows nothing and thinks that he knows everything. That points to a political career.

George Bernard Shaw

★ Blair and Brown are two cheeks of the same arse.

Ray Lewis

★ She ate journalists for breakfast and, feeling peckish, bit off some reporters' heads at a press conference.

Trevor Fishlock, on Margaret Thatcher

“Our society is run by insane people for insane objectives. I think we’re being run by maniacs for maniacal ends and I think I’m liable to be put away as insane for expressing that. That’s what’s insane about it.

John Lennon”

★ Revolution is a trivial shift in the emphasis of suffering.

Tom Stoppard

★ I mean this as a compliment: I always think his voice sounds like Brian the Dog in *Family Guy*.

Clive Anderson, on Barack Obama

★ The Law of Inverse Relevance: the less you intend doing about something the more you have to keep talking about it.

Sir Arnold Robinson (John Nettleton),
Yes Minister

★ To those waiting with baited breath for that favourite media catchphrase, the U-turn, I have only one thing to say: you turn if you want to. The lady’s not for turning.

Margaret Thatcher

★ If unions set up the Labour Party, it’s now grown up and left home. Teenagers go through a phase when their parents are terminally embarrassing.

Brendan Barber

★ Brian: Excuse me. Are you the Judaeen People’s Front?
Reg: Fuck off! We’re the People’s Front of Judaea.

Brian Cohen (Graham Chapman) and
Reg (John Cleese) *Life of Brian*

★ The House of Lords is a model of how to care for the

elderly.

Frank Fields

★ Great socialist statesmen aren't made, they're still-born.

Hector Hugh Munro

I think that all good, right thinking people in this country are sick and tired of being told that all good, right thinking people in this country are fed up with being told that all good, right thinking people in this country are fed up with being sick and tired. I'm certainly not, and I'm sick and tired of being told that I am.

Monty Python's Flying Circus

“I'm not sure about this Live 8 thing. Correct me if I am wrong, but are they hoping that one of these guys from the G8 is on a quick fifteen-minute break at Gleneagles and sees Annie Lennox singing “Sweet Dreams” and thinks, “Fuck me, she might have a point though”?

Noel Gallagher”

★ Famously Margaret Thatcher got by on four hours' sleep a night and that sort of goes some way to explaining why she was a proper miserable bitch. I sometimes wake up after a four hours' sleep and want to close a couple of mines, take milk off children . . .

Jason Manford

★ You're so backbench, you've actually fucking fallen off. You're out by the fucking bins where I put you.

Malcolm Tucker, (Peter Capaldi),
The Thick of It

★ If David Cameron puts his hand out to youth, he's going to get it bitten off.

Goldie

★ You can't expect to wield supreme executive power just 'cos some watery tart threw a sword at you . . . I mean, if I went round saying I was an emperor just because some moistened bint had lobbed a scimitar at me, they'd put me away.

Dennis (Michael Palin), *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*

★ Anybody who enjoys being in the House of Commons probably needs psychiatric help.

Ken Livingstone

★ Living proof that a pig's bladder on the end of a stick can be elected to Parliament.

Tony Banks, on Terry Dicks

★ A liberal conservative is a man who thinks things ought to progress but would rather they remained as they are.

Sir James Fitzjames Stephen

★ The only safe pleasure for a parliamentarian is a bag of boiled sweets.

Julian Critchley

★ One day the don't-knows will get in, and then where will we be?

Spike Milligan

★ When they circumcised Herbert Samuel they threw away the wrong bit.

David Lloyd George

“I myself have never been able to find out precisely what feminism is; I only know that people call me a feminist whenever I express sentiments that differentiate me from a doormat.

Rebecca West”

★ What about Magna Carta? Did she die in vain?

Tony Hancock

★ A sheep in sheep's clothing.

Winston Churchill, on Clement Attlee

★ Like her? She is not there to be liked. She's a force of nature.

Alan Clark, on Margaret Thatcher

★ Winston Churchill – 50 per cent genius, 50 per cent bloody fool.

Clement Attlee

★ Can you imagine anything so boring as world domination. I mean, what would you do in your spare time?

Morrissey

★ Militant feminists: I take my hat off to them – they don't like that.

Milton Jones

★ Liberalism is trust of the people tempered by prudence. Conservatism is distrust of the people tempered by fear.

William Gladstone

★ I am extraordinarily patient, provided I get my own way in the end.

Margaret Thatcher

★ To you liberals, of course, goats are just sheep from broken homes.

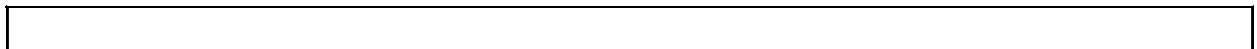
Malcolm Bradbury

★ There's a lot of bleeding idiots in t'country and they deserve some representation.

Bill Stones

★ An aristocracy in a republic is like a chicken whose head has been cut off; it may run about in a lively way, but in fact it is dead.

Nancy Mitford



We shall move about in people's rooms and say, "Excuse me, we are the World Domination League. May we dominate you?" Then, if they say "Get out," of course we give up. Well, you have to give up if you're told to get out.

Peter Cook

★ Conservatives are not necessarily stupid, but most stupid people are Conservatives.

John Stuart Mill

★ Voting for New Labour is like helping an old lady across the road while screaming, "Get a move on!" Even the Tories, who you could once rely on to be completely heartless, are pretending to care.

Boy George

★ The prime minister held a meeting with the cabinet today. He also spoke to the bookcase and argued with the chest of drawers.

Ronnie Barker

★ How come there's only one Monopolies Commission?

Nigel Rees

“All right . . . all right . . . but apart from better sanitation and medicine and education and irrigation and public health and roads and a freshwater system and baths and public order . . . what have the Romans ever done for us?

Reg (John Cleese), *Life of Brian*”

★ He's so wet you could shoot snipe off him.

Anthony Powell

★ Karl Marx wasn't a Marxist all the time. He got drunk in the Tottenham Court Road.

Michael Foot

★ Most British statesmen have either drunk too much or womanized too much. I never fell into the second category.

Baron George Brown

★ I often think how much easier the world would have been to manage if Herr Hitler and Signor Mussolini had been at Oxford.

Lord Halifax

★ Any man who is under thirty, and is not a liberal, has not heart; and any man who is over thirty, and is not a conservative, has no brains.

Winston Churchill

“It’s the same each time with progress. First they ignore you, then they say you’re mad, then dangerous, then there’s a pause and then you can’t find anyone who disagrees with you.

Tony Benn,
longstanding British politician”

★ Twenty million young women rose to their feet with the cry, “We will not be dictated to”, and promptly became stenographers.

G. K. Chesterton

★ In politics, what begins in fear usually ends in failure.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge

★ English policy is to float lazily downstream, occasionally putting out a diplomatic boat-hook to avoid collisions.

Lord Salisbury

★ The pioneering feminist, Emmeline Pankhurst . . . campaigned noisily for

women's rights outside Parliament every day from four o'clock in the afternoon. She would have got there earlier but she always had a stack of ironing to get through first.

Humphrey Lyttelton

★ When it comes to the crunch, the trade unions will put their arms around Mr Kinnock and say "Neil!" And he will, he will.

John Major, British prime minister (1990-7),
on Neil Kinnock, leader of the opposition

★ Compromise used to mean that half a loaf was better than no bread. Among modern statesmen it really seems to mean that half a loaf is better than a whole loaf.

G.K. Chesterton

★ . . . a purveyor of A-level Economics.

Julian Critchley, on Margaret Thatcher

★ Gordon Brown has asked for Labour to be seeded at the next election.

Armando Iannucci

★ Mrs Thatcher has hijacked the Tory Party from the landowners and given it to the estate agents.

Julian Critchley

“I keep telling my Tory colleagues: don't have any policies. A manifesto that has policies alienates people. In 1979 the manifesto said nothing which was brilliant.

Michael Heseltine”

★ Infamy! Infamy! They've all got it in for me!

Kenneth Williams

★ I burned my bra and heated a small village in Cumbria.

Jo Brand

The Labour Party is being led by a woman but she has not been elected to anything. She is the lady who makes the breakfast in the Kinnock household.

Edwina Currie, on Glenys Kinnock,
wife of the leader of the opposition

★ A good liar must have a good memory. Kissinger is a stupendous liar with a remarkable memory.

Christopher Hitchens

★ The House of Commons is the longest-running farce in the West End.

Cyril Smith

★ He couldn't knock the skin off a rice pudding.

Neil Kinnock on Tony Benn

★ Neville Chamberlain? He saw foreign policy through the wrong end of a municipal drainpipe.

David Lloyd George

★ Politics without compromise is like a car without a gear box: it can look quite elegant but you won't get anything out of it.

Neil Kinnock

★ Sometimes the most positive thing you can be in a boring society is absolutely negative.

John Lydon

★ He may be a liar, but at least he's the people's liar.

Andy Hamilton, on Tony Blair

★ All movements go too far.

Bertrand Russell

“When I was seventeen I was a skinhead, when I was nineteen I was a card-carrying Communist, and I have been collecting Care Bears, My Little Ponies, Rainbow Brite Dolls pretty much all my natural life.

Wil Hodgson”

★ I sometimes think that when the prime minister tries to select a weapon it is the boomerang he finds most effective.

John Smith

★ If people don't know what you're doing, they don't know what you're doing wrong.

Sir Arnold Robinson (John Nettleton), *Yes Minister*

★ The dreadful truth is that when people come to see their MP they have run out of better ideas.

Boris Johnson

“I want a prime minister who says, “I really don't care that Michael Jackson has died; I have quite a bit of work on.” And a leader of the opposition who doesn't give a fuck about it either would be great.

Hils Barker”

★ To make matters worse, they have elected a foetus as the party leader. I bet a lot of them wish they had not voted against abortion now.

Tony Banks, on William Hague

★ I don't know what I would do without Whitelaw.
Everyone should have a Willie.

Margaret Thatcher,
on William Whitelaw

★ I got fed up with all the sex and sleaze and backhanders of rock 'n' roll so I

went into politics.

Tony Blair

★ I would like to be a nice Liberal version of Norman Tebbit.

Matthew Taylor

★ Clement Attlee: Feeling standoff-ish, Winston?

Winston Churchill: No. It's just that whenever you see something big, you want to nationalize it.

Both men were standing at
urinals in the House of Commons

Is it 'cos I is black?

Ali G (a.k.a. Sacha Baron Cohen)

★ I cannot bring myself to vote for Margaret Thatcher, a woman who has been voice-trained to speak to me as though my dog has just died.

Keith Waterhouse

★ There will never be a woman prime minister as long as I have a hole in my arse.

Gene Hunt (Philip Glenister),
Life on Mars

The recent local elections saw the Green Party increase their vote to over 8 per cent. They would've done even better than that, but half their voters put their ballot papers in the recycling bin.

Lee Mack

★ It's interesting that in searching for monsters to play you often end up playing leaders.

Michael Sheen

★ Whenever you scratch a Tory you find a fascist.

Aneurin Bevan

★ We'll continue our investigation into the political beliefs of nudists. We've already noticed a definite swing to the left.

Ronnie Barker

★ The speech which he gave was such concentrated, congealed drivel that it probably had to be carried into and out of the room in a spittoon.

Peter Hitchens, on Tony Blair

★ The Liberal Democrats are not just empty. They are a void within a vacuum surrounded by a vast inanition.

Boris Johnson

“Britain should be in the driving seat of Europe. In the driver's seat, or in the passenger seat. That's good, 'cos then you can take a sleep.

Eddie Izzard”

★ No. I have extreme views, weakly held.

A.J.P. Taylor, when asked if he
had strongly held left-wing views

★ She cannot see an institution without hitting it with her handbag.

Julian Critchley,
on Margaret Thatcher

★ If Margaret Thatcher wins on Thursday, I warn you not to be ordinary, I warn you not to be young, I warn you not to fall ill, I warn you not to be old.

Neil Kinnock

★ An empty taxi arrived at 10 Downing Street, and when the door was opened,

Attlee got out.

Winston Churchill, on Clement Attlee

★ A good part – and definitely the most fun part – of being a feminist is about frightening men.

Julie Burchill

“The Labour Party is like a stage-coach. If you rattle along at great speed, everybody is too exhilarated or too seasick to cause any trouble. But if you stop, everybody gets out and argues about where to go next.

Harold Wilson”

★ In politics, guts is all.

Barbara Castle

★ The prime minister is stealing our clothes but he is going to look pretty ridiculous walking around in mine.

Margaret Thatcher

★ Harold Wilson is going around the country stirring up apathy.

William Whitelaw

★ Sydney Bidwell MP: Is the Right Honourable Lady aware that Mr Len Murray the General Secretary of the TUC, insists that when he sees her, it is like having a dialogue with the deaf?

Margaret Thatcher: I had no idea that Mr Murray was deaf.

★ I’m sick and tired of people coming up to me saying, “You’re a sexist!” I’m not a sexist. I’m a radical feminist. I think you’ve got to be these days if you want to get your end away.

Paul Calf (a.k.a. Steve Coogan)

★ The House of Lords is like a glass of champagne that has stood for five days.

Clement Attlee

★ When I was three, I wanted to be four. When I was four, I wanted to be prime minister.

Jeffrey Archer

His overblown sense of entitlement is only matched by his ludicrously inflated opinion of his own abilities. He has never been able to disguise his pathological contempt for those he considers to be his intellectual inferiors – which pretty much covers the whole of mankind.

Richard Littlejohn,
on Gordon Brown

★ My aims are threefold. One: smash the system. Two: replace it with a better one. Three: smash that as well.

Simon Munnery

★ Disloyalty is the secret weapon of the Tory Party.

Julian Critchley

★ It would be wrong to suggest that Neil Hamilton is his own worst enemy when there are so many others better qualified for the post.

Craig Brown

★ Tell the Privy Seal that I am sealed on the privy and that I can only deal with one shit at a time.

Winston Churchill

★ Samantha has to nip off now to meet her constituency chairman for a trip to the House, as she says his member's going up for an all-night session.

Humphrey Lyttelton, *I'm Sorry I Haven't a Clue*,
BBC Radio 4

Politicians are just *Daily Mail* journalists writ large, aren't they? They're always telling us what's going to happen, and we know they don't know.

★ He did not care in which direction the car was travelling, so long as he remained in the driving seat.

Lord Beaverbrook, on David Lloyd George

★ John Selwyn Gummer: an agriculture minister who makes a sheep look charismatic.

Mark Lawson

★ All politicians have vanity; some wear it more gently than others.

David Steel

★ Practically no Briton is interested in politics apart from a handful of bores and those wishing to become politicians and exert power themselves.

Auberon Waugh

“The media are obsessed with spin doctors and with portraying them as a bad thing, yet seem addicted to our medicine.

Alastair Campbell”

★ A modest man, who has much to be modest about.

Winston Churchill, on Clement Attlee

★ Margaret Thatcher and Ted Heath both have a great vision. The difference is that Margaret Thatcher has a vision that Britain will one day be great again, and Ted Heath has a vision that one day Ted Heath will be great again.

Robert Jones

★ Robin is running a “Stop Peter” campaign, Peter is running a “Stop Gordon” campaign and John Prescott always seems to be running a “Stop John Prescott” campaign.

William Hague

★ I may be here because my forefather got pissed with Pitt, but that’s better than

those newcomers who are just Blair's tennis partners.

Earl of Onslow, on the composition
of the House of Lords

“Why do people give a massive shit about people burning their flags?
Essentially it's not their flag. If you burn a flag it's a flag you've bought, it's
your flag: “I've burned your flag.”
“No, you've burned your own flag.”

David Mitchell”

★ Politicians should read science fiction, not Westerns and detective stories.

Arthur C. Clarke

★ Tony Blair is only Bill Clinton with his zip done up.

Neil Hamilton

★ Hacker: Humphrey, do you see it as part of your job to help ministers make
fools of themselves?

Sir Humphrey: Well, I never met one that needed any help.

James Hacker (Paul Eddington) and
Humphrey Appleby (Nigel Hawthorne), *Yes Minister*

“Tory MP Andrew Pelling was suspended from the party last night following
his arrest on suspicion of assaulting his wife. A party spokesman said the whip
had been withdrawn from the MP.

Daily Mail”

★ One man's priority is another man's extravagance.

Edwina Currie

★ Strange though it may sound, politicians and celebrities don't always make
dicks of themselves. As the old Liberal Democrat press office saying goes:

“Some weeks Charles Kennedy keeps his shit together.”

David Mitchell

★ Being wrong is one of the privileges of public life, and indeed it is widely practised.

Tony Benn

★ The great She-Elephant – she has an impenetrably thick hide, she is liable to mount charges in all directions and she is always thinking on the trot.

Denis Healey

★ Sit down, man. You’re a bloody tragedy.

James Maxton, during Ramsay MacDonald’s
last House of Commons speech

★ In politics, if you want anything said, ask a man. If you want anything done, ask a woman.

Margaret Thatcher

★ I’m arresting you for the theft of a motor vehicle, resisting arrest . . . and driving like a div.

Ray Carling (Dean Andrews), *Life on Mars*

★ I’ve spent my life fighting the Germans and fighting the politicians. It is much easier to fight the Germans.

Field Marshal Viscount Montgomery

It was great, actually, when she became Lady Thatcher, because she sounded like a device for removing pubic hair.

Jo Brand, on Margaret Thatcher

★ A man will blithely do in politics what he would kick a man downstairs for in ordinary life.

Lord Rosebery

★ A kind of walking obituary for the Labour Party.

Chris Patten, on Michael Foot

★ Open government, prime minister. Freedom of information. We should always tell the press freely and frankly anything that they could easily find out some other way.

Sir Humphrey Appleby (Nigel Hawthorne),
Yes Minister

★ It is very strange that a woman can vote, but a horse can not.

Borat Sagdiyev
(a.k.a. Sacha Baron Cohen)

★ First law of political indiscretion: always have a drink before you leak.

James Hacker (Paul Eddington), *Yes Minister*

★ I know a great deal more about the world today than I ever did in government.

John Major

★ If people have to choose between freedom and sandwiches they will take sandwiches.

Lord Boyd-Orr

★ I think we have more machinery of government than is necessary, too many parasites living on the labour of the industrious.

Francis Bacon, philosopher

★ If I was in the gutter, which I'm not, he'd still be looking up at me from the sewer.

Neil Kinnock, on Michael Heseltine

★ Peter Mandelson is someone who can skulk in broad daylight.

Simon Hoggart

★ I think we have all enjoyed another lugubrious concatenation of meaningless clichés from the foreign secretary.

Dennis Healey, on Geoffrey Howe

“It’s quite interesting that the Lords’ interest committee is looking into the scandal about cash payments. Because I always thought Lords’ interests were whist, falconry and the return to feudalism.

Phill Jupitus”

★ Strange women lying in ponds distributing swords is no basis for a system of government.

Dennis (Michael Palin),
Monty Python and the Holy Grail

★ The honest truth is that if this government were to propose the massacre of the firstborn, it would still have no difficulty in getting it through the Commons.

Diane Abbott

★ The nation was oppressed by many dragons in 1979. Margaret Thatcher came forth to slay them. After she had slain them the nation no longer had need of her. Normal, humdrum government has been resumed. We shall miss her style of government.

Nicholas Ridley

★ Essex men chosen by Suffolk women.

Julian Critchley on the Conservative Party under
Margaret Thatcher

★ The life of a mule harnessed to a wheel can have more excitement than that of the government backbencher in Parliament.

Jeremy Paxman

The difference between a misfortune and a calamity is this: if Gladstone fell into the Thames, it would be a misfortune. But if someone dragged him out again, that would be a calamity.

Benjamin Disraeli

★ One catches in his company that flavour of final purposelessness, inner responsibility existence outside or away from our Saxon good and evil, mixed with cunning, remorselessness, love of power.

John Maynard Keynes, on Lloyd George

★ When ministers leave government we discover that there are all sorts of things they said in government that they did not actually believe.

John Humphrys

★ Seeing John Major govern the country is like watching Edward Scissorhands try to make balloon animals.

Simon Hoggart

★ Loyalty is a fine quality, but in excess it fills political graveyards.

Neil Kinnock

“You can’t trust politicians. It doesn’t matter who makes a political speech. It’s all lies . . . and it applies to any rock star who wants to make a political speech as well.

Bob Geldof”

★ It is my settled opinion, after some years as a political correspondent, that no one is attracted to a political career in the first place unless he is socially or emotionally crippled.

Auberon Waugh

★ We stole countries with the cunning use of flags! Sail halfway around the

world, stick a flag in. “I claim India for Britain.”

And they’re going, “You can’t claim us. We live here! There’s 500 million of us.”

“Do you have a flag?”

Eddie Izzard

★ Men enter local politics solely as a result of being unhappily married.

C. Northcote Parkinson

★ Mind you, Hugh Gaitskell was a very good dancer. And to me, that is more important than politics in a man.

Barbara Castle

★ There are two problems in my life. The political ones are insoluble and the economic ones are incomprehensible.

Sir Alec Douglas-Home

★ If there is one eternal truth of politics, it is that there are always a dozen good reasons for doing nothing.

John Le Carré

★ There are no true friends in politics. We are all sharks circling, and waiting, for traces of blood to appear in the water.

Alan Clark

★ Politicians are like nappies. They should be changed regularly and for the same reason.

Patrick Murray

★ The weak are a long time in politics.

Neil Shand

★ I am humble enough to recognize that I have made mistakes, but politically astute enough to have forgotten what they are.

Michael Heseltine

★ I am one of a rare breed of true politicians who definitely say what they may or may not mean with absolute certainty.

Anthony Eden

★ The ship of state, Bernard, is the only ship that leaks from the top.

Sir Humphrey Appleby (Nigel Hawthorne),
Yes Minister

★ Many who think they are workers in politics are really merely tools.

Lord Salisbury

★ All political parties have skeletons in their cupboard, some with manacles on, some with their hands tied behind their backs.

Lord Birkenhead

★ In politics people give you what they think you deserve and deny you what they think you want.

C. Northcote Parkinson

It is ludicrously easy to knock Mrs Thatcher. It's the easiest and most obvious thing in the world to remark that she is a shameful, putrid scab, an embarrassing, ludicrous monstrosity that makes one frankly ashamed to be British, and that her ideas and standards are a stain on our national history.

Stephen Fry

★ In politics, being ridiculous is more damaging than being extreme.

Roy Hattersley

★ Diplomacy is about surviving until the next century. Politics is about

surviving until Friday afternoon.

Sir Humphrey Appleby (Nigel Hawthorne), *Yes Minister*

★ Political skill is the ability to foretell what is going to happen and to have the ability afterwards to explain why it did not happen.

Winston Churchill

★ It's no good telling the politicians to go to hell because they're building it for us.

Les Dawson

★ Why do politicians – including sadly, the Tories this week — fawn over Bono, a smug hypocritical, whining, tax dodging Irish mountebank?

Quentin Letts

★ I view Tony Blair as, kind of, the air guitarist of political rhetoric.

Will Self

★ Politician: someone who, when they see the light at the end of the tunnel, orders more tunnel.

Sir John Quinton

★ There are too many men in politics and not enough elsewhere.

Hermione Gingold

“How can you tell if a politician is lying? If he straightens his cuffs, he's telling the truth. If he smoothes his hair, he's telling the truth. If he touches his nose, he's telling the truth. But if he opens his mouth . . .

Maureen Lipman”

★ Some politicians, I really believe, would walk barefoot from John O'Groats to Shepherd's Bush if they were assured of a peak viewing-time appearance on arrival there.

Malcolm Muggeridge

★ A small man intoxicated by being allowed to run around with the big aggressive powerful boys after so many years as a corduroy-clad peacenik.

George Galloway, on fellow MP Robin Cook

James Callaghan: May I congratulate you on being the only man in your team.
Margaret Thatcher: That's one more than you've got in yours.

★ What I actually said was that there are three kinds of politicians: those who do not lie, full stop; those who lie if they absolutely have to and those who do not give a bugger about lying.

John Humphrys

★ A politician is a person with whose politics you don't agree; if you agree with him he's a statesman.

David Lloyd George

★ New Labour, Old Bag.

Alastair Campbell, on Barbara Castle

“Bernard, this government is here to govern, not merely preside like our predecessors did. When a country is going downhill, it is time for someone to get into the driving seat, and put his foot on the accelerator.

James Hacker (Paul Eddington),

Yes Minister”

★ A Communist is no more a left-wing member of the Labour Party than an atheist is a left-wing member of the Christian Church.

John Clynes

★ A consensus politician is someone who does something that he doesn't believe is right because it keeps people quiet when he does it.

John Major

★ A government that robs Peter to pay Paul can always depend on the support of Paul.

George Bernard Shaw

★ It's the people's will. I am their leader; I must follow them.

James Hacker (Paul Eddington),
Yes Minister

★ The politician who never made a mistake never made a decision.

John Major

No, no, minister! It could never be government policy. That is unthinkable! Only government practice.

Sir Humphrey Appleby (Nigel Hawthorne),
Yes Minister

★ Politics has been described as show business for ugly people – like *Britain's Got Talent*, only without the talent.

Clive Anderson



RELIGION

❖ Just think what Jesus could have achieved if he'd only had the money.

Michael Bradley

❖ If Christ were to return today, the Church of England would ask him to set out his ideas on a single sheet of A4.

David Hare

❖ And of all plagues with which mankind are curst, Ecclesiastic tyranny's the worst.

Daniel Defoe

❖ If I wore a string vest, would people think I'd suddenly become a Cabbala convert?

Mick Jagger

❖ The Christian ideal has not been tried and found wanting. It has been found difficult; and left untried.

G.K. Chesterton

“When I look at something as complex and intricate and beautiful as Professor Richard Dawkins, I don't think that could just have evolved by chance. Professor Richard Dawkins was put there by God to test us, like fossils and facts.

Stewart Lee”

❖ An aged rabbi, crazed with liberalism, once said to me, “We Jews are just ordinary human beings. Only a bit more so!”

Lionel Blue

❖ When I am in the pulpit, I have the pleasure of seeing my audience nod approbation while they sleep.

Revd Sydney Smith

❖ I'm not a religious woman, but I find if you say no to everything you can hardly tell the difference.

Mrs Featherstone (Stephanie Cole),
Open All Hours

❖ I trained to be a priest – started to. I went to seminary school when I was eleven. I wanted to be a priest, but when they told me I could never have sex, not even on my birthday, I changed my mind.

Johnny Vegas

❖ The Muslims are the new Irish. But give them thirty years and there'll be Muslim theme pubs everywhere and Osama Bin Laden will be education minister.

Patrick Kielty

❖ I've often thought the Bible should have a disclaimer in the front saying this is fiction.

Ian McKellen

❖ All human life is here, but the Holy Ghost seems to be somewhere else.

Anthony Burgess

❖ I tried to join the Nation of Islam . . . they got all the new recruits and went, "You've done the right thing coming here because white people went to Africa and stole everything of value like diamonds and gold."

And I went, "Well, yeah, I know, but I've been watching hip-hop videos and MTV – it looks like we've got most of it back."

Ava Vidal

❖ DJ Mark: For £10, what is the nationality of the pope?

Ruth from Rowley Regis: I think I know that one. Is it Jewish?

Beacon Radio, Wolverhampton

❖ If one could conclude as to the nature of the Creator from a study of his

creation it would appear that God has a special fondness for stars and beetles.

J.B.S. Haldane

❖ There's nothing an agnostic can't do if he really doesn't know whether he believes in anything or not.

Monty Python's Flying Circus

❖ As you're a Buddhist, do you like Tibet or do you think gambling's wrong?

Dennis Pennis (a.k.a. Paul Kaye), to Richard Gere

❖ In Heaven an angel is nobody in particular.

George Bernard Shaw

The Church's Restoration
In eighteen-eighty-three
Has left for contemplation
Not what there used to be.

John Betjeman

❖ Scratch the Christian and you find the pagan – spoiled.

Israel Zangwill

❖ I don't believe in Heaven or anything. But I want to be the kind of person that qualifies for entry anyway.

Nick Hornby

“I'd like to believe in heaven, not least because I'd like to meet my mum and dad again. I'd like to know whether the Welsh dresser was meant to go to me or my brother, really.

John Peel”

❖ Men will wrangle for religion; write for it; fight for it; die for it; anything but

live for it.

Charles Colton

❖ As an Anglican, you don't lose your faith – you just can't remember where you left it.

Jeremy Hardy

❖ I suppose the drawback of omniscience is that you have to plan for everything.

Michael Kelly

❖ I daresay anything can be made holy by being sincerely worshipped.

Iris Murdoch

❖ Nearly all the evils in the Church have arisen from bishops desiring power more than light. They want authority, not outlook.

John Ruskin

❖ Did St Francis preach to the birds? Whatever for? If he really liked birds he would have done better to preach to the cats.

Rebecca West

❖ Historically, more people have died of religion than of cancer.

Dick Francis

❖ If I had been the Virgin Mary, I would have said, "No".

Stevie Smith

❖ As God once said, and I think rightly . . .

Margaret Thatcher

❖ I was once asked to become a Jehovah's Witness. I said I did not see the accident.

Omid Djalili

“They’re always going, “Don’t deal with terrorists.” Let’s deal with them.
What’s Allah offering you boys, 100 virgins? We’ll give you 50 slags.

Frankie Boyle”

❖ The human mind is inspired enough when it comes to inventing horrors; it is when it tries to invent a heaven that it shows itself cloddish.

Evelyn Waugh

❖ I’m not really a Jew; just Jew-ish, not the whole hog.

Jonathan Miller

Nobody expects the Spanish Inquisition! Our chief weapon is surprise – surprise and fear . . . fear and surprise . . . our two weapons are fear and surprise – and ruthless efficiency . . . our three weapons are fear and surprise and ruthless efficiency and an almost fanatical devotion to the pope . . . our four . . . I’ll come in again.

Cardinal Ximenez of Spain (Michael Palin),
Monty Python’s Flying Circus

❖ It’s fabulous being a priest – think of all that comfort you bring to the sick and dying. They love it, they can’t get enough of it.

Father Ted Crilly (Dermot Morgan), *Father Ted*

❖ No man can be an agnostic who has a sense of humour.

E.M. Forster

❖ You were expecting a bloke with a beard, a Bible and bad breath. You’ve got a babe with a bob cut and a magnificent bosom.

Geraldine Granger (Dawn French),
The Vicar of Dibley

❖ I have noticed even people who claim everything is predestined, and that we can do nothing to change it, look before they cross the road.

Stephen Hawking

❖ You never see animals going through the absurd and often horrible fooleries of magic and religion. Only man behaves with such gratuitous folly. It is the price he has to pay for being intelligent but not, as yet, intelligent enough.

Aldous Huxley

❖ Only a humourless tyrant could want a perpetual chanting of praises that, one has no choice but to assume, would be the innate virtues and splendours furnished him by *his* creator, infinite regression, drowned in praise!

Christopher Hitchens

❖ I'm an atheist . . . thank God.

Dave Allen

❖ I believe in God. If you were me, and had my life, you would believe in God too.

Michael Caine

❖ So far as I can remember, there is not one word in the Gospels in praise of intelligence.

Bertrand Russell

❖ The more I study religions the more I am convinced that man never worshipped anything but himself.

Richard Francis Burton

❖ Faith is the great cop-out, the great excuse to evade the need to think and evaluate evidence. Faith is belief in spite of, even perhaps because of, the lack of evidence.

Richard Dawkins

❖ Beware of the man whose god is in the skies.

George Bernard Shaw

❖ People say I'm the son of God, but it isn't true – my

Nigel is.

Brian Clough

❖ Every sperm is sacred,
Every sperm is great.
If a sperm is wasted,
God gets quite irate.

Michael Palin, *The Meaning of Life*

❖ Yes, testosterone-sodden young men too unattractive to get a woman in this world might be desperate enough to go for seventy-two private virgins in the next.

Richard Dawkins

“Church leaders are in a frustrating double bind, since it is by claiming to provide a refuge from the degrading influence of carnal pleasure that they have gained enormous power and wealth – the only two commodities that enable men to participate in satisfying, uncomplicated sex.

Michael Bradley”

❖ Ted: What was that sermon about?

Dougal: Sorry Ted, I was concentrating too hard on looking holy.

Father Ted Crilly (Dermot Morgan) and
Father Dougal McGuire (Ardal O'Hanlon), *Father Ted*

❖ A theory that seems to explain everything is just as good at explaining nothing.

Christopher Hitchens

❖ My girlfriend's mum has got quite a lot of crucifixes in her house. She's a proper northerner, though – she's got three that get bigger as they go up the wall.
Rob Rouse

❖ I definitely want Brooklyn to be christened, but I don't

know into what religion yet.

David Beckham

❖ He's not the Messiah, he's a very naughty boy.

Mandy Cohen (Terry Jones), *Life of Brian*

❖ If God were to appear in my room, obviously I would be in awe, but I don't think I would be humble. I might cry, but I think he would dig me like crazy.

Marc Bolan

❖ If there is a heaven for homosexuals, it will be very poorly lit and full of people they can be pretty confident they'll never have to meet again.

Quentin Crisp

❖ It is the test of a good religion whether you can make a joke about it.

G.K. Chesterton

❖ I am at peace with God. My conflict is with Man.

Charlie Chaplin

Every weekend more people go to church than go to the football. All very well, but if church was £35 a ticket there wouldn't be a single fucker in there. I do want forgiveness, but at the right price.

Ben Davis

“To some degree Satanism is purely a kind of disease of Christianity. You've got to really be Christian to believe in Satan.

Alan Moore”

❖ The other day I was following a man – I was walking ten paces behind him, then I realized it was actually my dad, so I quickly took the hijab off my face because I didn't want him to recognize me.

Isma Almas

❖ Coincidences are spiritual puns.

G.K. Chesterton

❖ Father Dougal: God, Ted, I heard about those cults. Everyone dressing in black and saying our Lord's gonna come back and judge us all!

Father Ted: No . . . No, Dougal, that's us. That's Catholicism.

Father Ted Crilly (Dermot Morgan) and
Father Dougal McGuire (Ardal O'Hanlon), *Father Ted*

“Fifty-three fucking virgins! The very thought of fifty-three fucking virgins, it's a nightmare! It's not a fucking present; it's not a prize, it's a punishment! Give me two fire-breathing whores any day of the week. I'm a slut man!

Billy Connolly”

❖ If people think God is interesting, the onus is on them to show that there is anything there to talk about. Otherwise they should just shut up about it.

Richard Dawkins

❖ There's something wrong with this coin toss business. OK, then, let me see, I don't think it's going to take ten minutes to disprove the existence of God.

Christopher Hitchens

❖ What a pity it is that we have no amusements in England but vice and religion.

Revd Sydney Smith

❖ Eternity's a terrible thought. I mean, where's it all going to end?

Tom Stoppard

❖ I was standing at a jewellery counter next to a couple of fifteen-year-old girls who were looking at crucifixes. One said, “What do you think?”

Her friend said, “It's a bit plain, innit?”

Then the first girl said to the assistant, “Excuse me, have you got one with that

little bloke on?”

Jasper Carrott

❖ The only reason the Protestants and Catholics have given up the idea of universal domination is because they’ve realized they can’t get away with it.

W.H. Auden

❖ I don’t want to say I don’t believe in God, but I don’t think I do. But I believe in people who do.

Billy Connolly

❖ We have no reliable guarantee that the afterlife will be any less exasperating than this one, have we?

Noël Coward

❖ Did anyone else feel that Mel Gibson’s remake of the classic *Life of Brian* wasn’t anywhere near as funny as the original?

“Letters”, *Viz*

❖ No one can be an unbeliever nowadays. The Christian apologists have left one nothing to disbelieve.

Hector Hugh Munro

“A celestial North Korea. Who wants this to be true? Who but a slave desires such a ghastly fate . . . but at least you can fucking die and leave North Korea. Does the Quran or the Bible offer you that liberty?

Christopher Hitchens”

❖ Dougal: Hello there, Len.

Bishop Brennan: Don’t call me Len, you prick. Refer to me as “Bishop Brennan”!

Dougal: Ah right you are there Len.

Father Dougal McGuire (Ardal O’Hanlon)

and Bishop Len Brennan (Jim Norton), *Father Ted*

❖ [I'm] a bit like Jesus but with an electric willy.

Russell Brand

❖ Two guys came knocking at my door once and said,
“We want to talk to you about Jesus.”
I said, “Oh, no, what’s he done now?”

Kevin McAleer

❖ I know it’s easy to sneer, but still someone has to do it.

Christopher Hitchens

❖ If there were no God, there would be no atheists.

G.K. Chesterton

❖ If Jesus was a Jew, how come he has a Mexican first name?

Billy Connolly

❖ He was an embittered atheist (the sort of atheist who does not so much disbelieve in God as personally dislike him).

George Orwell

❖ We all know Jesus was a carpenter but he never actually sang on any of their records.

Mark Walker

❖ An atheist is a man who has no invisible means of support.

John Buchan

“Do you follow the values of Jesus, or Buddha, or Marx? No. I follow the values of the Carphone Warehouse, committed as they have been these past twenty years to fighting racism through the unusual medium of discount phone retail.

Stewart Lee”

❖ You can now get sugar-free communion wafers. A moment ago Jesus died for our sins, now we're all counting the calories: "Body of Christ, naughty but nice" . . . how fattening are they in the first place? It's not gateau of Christ.

Markus Birdman

❖ It may be that our role on this planet is not to worship God but to create him.

Arthur C. Clarke

❖ I hear Glen Hoddle has found God. That must have been one hell of a pass.

Jasper Carrott,
on footballer Glen Hoddle declaring his religious beliefs

❖ The total absence of humour from the Bible is one of the most singular things in all literature.

Alfred North Whitehead

❖ I think it is typical of her to be part of an organization that buys God, as she doesn't like queuing like the rest of us.

Boy George, on Madonna and the Cabbala

❖ I'm not a fascist. I'm a priest. Fascists dress up in black and tell people what to do. Whereas priests . . . more drink?

Father Ted (Dermot Morgan),
Father Ted

❖ If God wanted to forgive our sins, why not just forgive them? Who's God trying to impress? Presumably himself, since he is judge and jury, as well as execution victim.

Richard Dawkins

“I'm not a Catholic me'self, Mr Warren, but isn't there something in the Bible

about “Thou shalt not suck of rent boys”?

Gene Hunt (Philip Glenister),
Life on Mars”

❖ If God had been a liberal, we wouldn’t have had the Ten Commandments – we’d have the Ten Suggestions.

Malcolm Bradbury

❖ They are always saying God loves us. If that’s love I’d rather have a bit of kindness.

Graham Greene

❖ If English is spoken in heaven . . . God undoubtedly employs Cranmer as his speechwriter. The angels of the lesser ministries probably use the language of the New English Bible and the Alternative Service Book for internal memos.

Prince Charles

No mention of God. They keep him up their sleeves for as long as they can, vicars do. They know it puts people off.

Alan Bennett

❖ People are too apt to treat God as if he were a minor royalty.

Herbert Beerbohm Tree

❖ We are all atheists about most of the gods that societies have ever believed in. Some of us just go one god further.

Richard Dawkins

❖ I don’t believe in God, but I miss him.

Julian Barnes

❖ If God wanted us to believe in him, he’d exist.

Linda Smith

❖ I read the Bible sometimes but it bores me to death. I just want to know what other people find so bloody fascinating.

Keith Richards

Drink! Feck! Arse! Girls!

Father Jack Hackett (Frank Kelly),
Father Ted

❖ I don't believe in God but I'm very interested in her.

Arthur C. Clarke

❖ For me, the great problem growing up in England was that I had a very narrow concept of what God can be, and it was damn close to an old man with a beard.

John Cleese

❖ Perhaps God is not dead; perhaps God is himself mad.

R.D. Laing

❖ I'm not a religious man, right, I don't even believe in God. But still Catholic, obviously.

Dara O Briain

❖ Actually, I began to think that maybe there is a god, after all. Or maybe it's a different one. The old one got fired.

Terry Gilliam

“ I once asked a Jesuit priest what was the best short prayer he knew. He said, “‘Fuck it’, as in, ‘Fuck it; it’s in God’s hands’.”

Anthony Hopkins”

❖ I don't believe in God, or at least not in the one we've invented for ourselves in England to fulfil our peculiarly English needs, and certainly not in the ones

they've invented in America who supply their servants with toupees, television stations and, most importantly, toll-free telephone numbers.

Douglas Adams

❖ Religion is for people who fear hell; spirituality is for people who have been there.

David Bowie

❖ If we were truly created by God, then why do we still occasionally bite the insides of our own mouths?

Dara O Briain

❖ I am determined that my children shall be brought up in their father's religion, if they can find out what it is.

Charles Lamb

❖ Let us start a new religion with one commandment, "Enjoy thyself".

Israel Zangwill

❖ Later on I'm going to be talking to you about how my tragic and ultimately fatal addiction to various forms of hard drugs has helped me overcome my previous dependence on born-again Christianity.

Stewart Lee

❖ Everybody got it wrong. I said I was into porn again, not born again.

Billy Idol

❖ Ask people about God nowadays and they usually reply "I'm not religious, but deep down, I'm a very spiritual person." What this phrase really means is, "I'm afraid of dying, but I can't be arsed going to church."

Colin Ramone

❖ And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light, but the electricity board said he would have to wait until Thursday to be connected.

Spike Milligan

❖ I don't believe in reincarnation, and I didn't believe in it when I was a hamster.

Shane Ritchie

“The punishment God gives to the snake, who fucked up everything, remember . . . “Ye shall crawl on your belly all your days.” Not really a punishment for a snake. I bet it couldn't believe its luck.

Ricky Gervais”

❖ If a pig could pray, it would pray for swill. What do you pray for?

B.C. Forbes

❖ When the gods wish to punish us, they answer our prayers.

Oscar Wilde

But if at church they would give some ale
And a pleasant fire our souls to regale.
We'd sing and we'd pray all the live long day,
Nor ever once from the church to stray.

William Blake

❖ The House of Commons starts its proceedings with a prayer. The chaplain looks at the assembled members with their varied intelligence and then prays for the country.

Lord Denning

❖ If we're all God's children, what's so special about Jesus?

Jimmy Carr

❖ We know he [Jesus Christ] wasn't English because he wore sandals, but never with socks.

Linda Smith

❖ I'm a Jew, by the way. It was my agent's idea.

Simon Amstell

❖ He [God] works for us – he's British after all – that's why we don't have earthquakes in this country.

Pub Landlord (a.k.a. Al Murray)

❖ Revelation is where all crazy people end up. It's the last stop on the nutso express.

Zadie Smith



ROYALTY

* I have not penetrated Prince Edward's intimate circle.

Stephen Fry

* A king is a thing men have made for their own sakes, for quietness' sake. Just as in a family one man is appointed to buy the meat.

John Selden

* I'm proud, proud, proud of being English, but I think the monarchy symbolizes a lot of what was wrong with the country.

Daniel Radcliffe

* Once you touch the trappings of monarchy, like opening an Egyptian tomb, the inside is liable to crumble.

Anthony Sampson

* Why is he seeing that woman with a face like a sack of shit? She looks like a horse's arse.

Ozzy Osbourne,
on Prince Charles and Camilla

“You don't frighten us, English pig-dogs! Go and boil your bottom, sons of a silly person. I blow my nose at you, so-called Arthur King, you and all your silly English k-nnnnniggets. Thpppppt! Thppt!Thppt!

Guard (Michael Palin),

Mony Python and the Holy Grail”

* One of the chief flag-bearers for the republican cause.

Will Self, on Prince Edward

* I was overcome, the moment I walked through the door, with the need to steal something.

Jeremy Clarkson,
on visiting Buckingham Palace

* Bonnie Prince Charlie was the only man ever to be named after three sheepdogs.

Billy Connolly

* The idea of Prince Charles conversing with vegetables is not quite so amusing when you remember that he's had plenty of practice chatting to members of his own family.

Jacqui Stevens

Wearing a Nazi costume wasn't the cleverest thing Prince Harry's ever done. Putting himself forward as a member of the master race with ginger hair and only one O-level.

Graham Norton

* The important thing is not what they think of me, but what I think of them.

Queen Victoria

* I sometimes wonder if two-thirds of the globe is covered in red carpet.

Prince Charles

* The monarchy is finished. It was finished a while ago, but they're still making the corpses dance.

Sue Townsend

* Queen Victoria: one of our more frumpy queens. They're all frumpy, aren't

they? Because it's a bad idea when cousins marry.

Eddie Izzard

* I don't even know how to use a parking meter, let alone a phone box.

Princess Diana

* When I appear in public people expect me to neigh, grind my teeth, paw the ground and swish my tail – none of which is easy.

Princess Anne

* To be Prince of Wales is not a position. It is a predicament.

Alan Bennett

* A family on the throne is an interesting idea. It brings down the pride of sovereignty to the level of petty life.

Walter Bagehot

* The first day I met my producer, she said, "I'm a radical feminist lesbian."
I thought, what would the Queen Mum do? So I just smiled and said, "We shall have fog by tea time".

Victoria Wood

“It is a strange fact, but it is unquestionably true, that almost any English intellectual would feel more ashamed of standing to attention during “God Save the King” than stealing from a poor box.

George Orwell”

* Your Highness, when I said that you are like a stream of bat's piss, I only meant that you shine out like a shaft of gold when all around is dark.

Monty Python's Flying Circus

* The Queen is the only person who can put on a tiara with one hand, while walking downstairs.

Princess Margaret

* She has never spazzed out and lost her decorum. She's got amazing skin.

Geri Halliwell, on Elizabeth II

* A sad little old lady who lives in state-sponsored accommodation.

Ben Elton, on Elizabeth II

We hate our national anthem because it's "God Save the Queen" . . . Now, the Queen lives in a very big house with barbed wire outside and people with guns in front of that. That's one saved fucking queen, I tell you.

Eddie Izzard

* Everybody knows that, like the Queen, Margaret Thatcher doesn't have to go to the loo.

Neil Hamilton

* The only constants in the blindingly mediocre life of Princess Margaret would appear to be privilege, illness and lashings of alcohol.

Tony Parsons

* Everyone likes flattery, and when you come to royalty you should lay it on with a trowel.

Benjamin Disraeli

* Princess Michael is far too grand for the likes of us.

Elizabeth II

“Queen Elizabeth II is head of a dysfunctional family. If she lived on a council estate in Sheffield, she'd probably be in council care.

Michael Parkinson”

* In 1926 the Queen Mother laid the first block of stone in our tenement. After a month or so the council realized she was going to take forever, so they had to let her go and get the builders in.

Sean Lock

* Darling: I'm as British as Queen Victoria!

Blackadder: So your father's German, you're half-German and you married a German?

Captain Kevin Darling (Tim McInnerny)

and Captain Edmund Blackadder (Rowan Atkinson), *Blackadder Goes Forth* *

The Queen is all right and Princess Diana is a goddess, but most of the rest are so awful it is quite a work to describe their vulgarity.

Alan Clark

❖ My father did the Queen Mother's colostomy, you know.

Clarissa Dickson-Wright

“Queen Victoria was like a great paperweight that for half a century sat upon men's minds, and when she was removed their ideas began to blow all over the place haphazardly.

H.G. Wells”

* I'm the heir apparent to the heir presumptive.

Princess Margaret

* It would be great if the Queen started behaving like a proper monarch and began leading us into battle . . . We would always win because the opposing forces would be kept back behind crowd barriers.

Chris Addison

* Father: One day, lad, all this will be yours Prince: What – the curtains?

Father (Michael Palin) and
Prince Herbert (Terry Jones),
Monty Python and the Holy Grail

* You see the royal family all there on the balcony. There's twelve people and only about three different faces.

Linda Smith

“We should get rid of the Queen. We haven't had a royal assassination for what . . . ten years? Let's get rid of her, replace her with Martine McCutcheon and so at last I can wank to the £20 note again.

Frankie Boyle”

* We are all probably related to the royal family because they put it about so much over the last 1,000 years.

Ken Livingstone

* I'm as thick as a plank.

Princess Diana

* If you can't get a job as a pianist in a brothel you become a royal reporter.

Max Hastings

* I am the only woman who has not been beheaded for leaving the royal family.

Sarah, Duchess of York



SCHOOL

★ I was at school with glue sniffers, criminals and people who would have sex behind the bike sheds for enough money to buy a pie, but apparently it didn't stop them being good teachers.

Sara Benham

★ Show me a man who has enjoyed his school days and I'll show you a bully and a bore.

Robert Morley

★ Anyone who has been to an English public school will always feel comparatively at home in prison.

Evelyn Waugh

★ A schoolmaster should have an atmosphere of awe, and walk wonderingly as if he was amazed at being himself.

Walter Bagehot

★ Errr. Stu. You touched the girl who smelled of Spam. Errr. Smell-eerrrrr.

Richard Herring, *Fist of Fun*

There is no end to the things I'd do to keep my children out of an inner-city state school. I'd rent my car to a minicab firm and my bottom to an internet downloader.

Jeremy Clarkson

★ When I was at school, I was perpetually punched in the head by other kids. So my dad sent me off to learn boxing. Where - guess what? – I was perpetually punched in the head by other kids.

Lee Evans

★ Anyway don't listen to her 'cos everyone knows her fanny goes sideways.

Vicky Pollard (Matt Lucas), *Little Britain* ★ If you don't own a train company then you go and paint on one instead. It all comes from that thing at school when you had to have name tags in the back of something . . . that makes it belong to you. You can own half the city by scribbling your name over it.

Banksy

“ I bullied a kid in the first year when I was in the second, who then hit puberty like a plane crash and grew into a gorilla who bullied me when he was in the fourth year and I was in the fifth. That's Karma.

Simon Pegg”

★ On my first day at school, my parents dropped me off at the wrong nursery. There I was, surrounded by trees and bushes.

Ken Dodd

★ In Britain, the segregated world of public schools crops up in all kinds of institutions A boy can pass from Eton to the Guards to the Middle Temple to Parliament and still retain the same male world of leather armchairs, teak tables and nicknames. They need never deal closely with other kinds of people, and some never do.

Anthony Sampson

★ Do you remember when you were at school . . . you'd come home at the end of the day, you'd take your anorak off, and the back would be completely covered in gob!

Duncan Thicket (a.k.a. Steve Coogan)

★ I went to the sort of school where they made me head girl in the sixth form because I was the only one who wasn't pregnant or on smack.

Lucy Porter

★ At school, I always wanted to belong to a gang, and no one would have me. So I'd have to make my own gang, but with everybody else's leftovers.

Kristin Scott Thomas

★ Grammar schools are public schools without the sodomy.

Tony Parsons

★ He was sent, as usual, to a public school, where a little learning was painfully beaten into him, and from thence to the university, where it was carefully taken out of him.

Thomas Love Peacock

★ I was a teacher for thirteen years. On refecton I would rather have spent those thirteen years continually licking pubes from the basin of a public toilet.

Greg Davis

★ Basically the plain and simple purpose of education must be to teach children, young people, not – I repeat, not – to break into my car.

Hugh Laurie

“He was the product of an English public school and university. He was, moreover, a modern product of those seats of athletic exercise. He had little education and highly developed muscles -that is to say, he was no scholar, but essentially a gentleman.

H. Seton Merriman”

★ Everyone always remembers the day a dog ran into your school.

Peter Kay

★ I didn't mind being unpopular at school, because everyone else was a heathen.
Jeanette Winterson

★ I was expelled because I didn't like football and set fire to the goalposts. I was also kicked out of my next boarding school – in Sussex – for leading an escape expedition.

Marcus Brigstocke

★ I grew up in the Lebanon and went to the same school as Osama Bin Laden . . . My brother has been trying to find an old school photo. That would be the best thing ever - being in a school photo with Bin Laden. I've tried finding him on Friends Reunited but with no luck.

Dom Joly

★ The lines marking a penalty area are a disgrace to the playing fields of a public school.

Christopher Fry

We did a Brecht play, I remember, the last year I was at senior school – *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui* – the parody of the rise of the Nazis . . . I had the lead role . . . I dyed my hair black, and combed it over, grew a little moustache, and my mum said, “Oh, you look very smart.”

Bill Bailey

★ When I was at school I learned to spell the word “myrrh”. I have never had cause to write the word again.

Tony Hawks

★ Jodie left school with eleven GCSEs and three A-levels. I don't know whose they were but she left school with them.

Angus Deayton, on Jodie Marsh

★ Fletcher: I haven't been so put out since my son Raymond crept back into school one night and had a prior peek at the exam papers.

Godber: Did he?

Fletcher: Yes he did! And he still didn't bleedin' pass!

Norman Stanley Fletcher (Ronnie Barker)

and Lennie Godber (Richard Beckinsale), *Porridge* ★ The schoolteacher is certainly underpaid as a child minder, but ludicrously overpaid as an educator.

John Osborne

★ I started so many fights at my school – I had that attention-deficit disorder. So I didn't finish a lot of them.

Lee Nelson (a.k.a. Simon Brodwin)

★ The better class of Briton likes to send his children away to school until they're old and intelligent enough to come home again. Then they're too old and intelligent to want to.

Malcolm Bradbury

“An American lady once remarked that such was the polish imparted by a top-class public school education that you often had to be married to an Englishman for about ten years before you realized he was just dim.

Matthew Parris”

★ Many people who went to boarding schools found them an enriching place, whereas I thought it was like some sort of perverts' sex dungeon with too much rugby. I would never send my kids to one.

Phill Jupitus

★ We had a Jimmy Glasscock at school – you could always see when he was coming.

Alan Davies

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

❖ Why does the universe go to all the bother of existing?

Stephen Hawking

❖ The thing with high-tech is that you always end up using scissors.

David Hockney

❖ If the world should blow itself up, the last audible voice would be that of an expert saying it can't be done.

Peter Ustinov

❖ Only two things are infinite: the universe and human stupidity, and I'm not so sure about the universe.

Stephen Fry

“When NASA found ballpoint pens don't work in space they spent \$12 billion to develop a pen that writes in zero gravity, upside down, on any surface from below freezing to 300°. The Russians gave everyone a pencil.

Dara O Briain”

❖ I'm useless with technology. I bought a waterbed once, but I left my electric blanket on. I woke up poached.

Jasper Carrot

❖ Those who run to the apes to explain our behaviour are chuckle-heads too dumb to know their arse from a hole-in-the-ground.

W.H. Auden

❖ We used to think that if we knew one, we knew two, because one and one are two. We are finding that we must learn a great deal more about “and”.

Sir Arthur Eddington

❖ Was the Big Bang louder than drum 'n' bass?

Ali G (a.k.a. Sacha Baron Cohen)

❖ I heard that Jesus had a pet dinosaur. Evolution must be a myth, then.

John Bacon

❖ All brontosauruses are thin at one end, much, much thicker in the middle and then thin again at the far end. That is the theory that I have and which is mine and what it is, too.

A. Elk, brackets Miss brackets (John Cleese),
Monty Python's Flying Circus

❖ What we call “progress” is the exchange of one nuisance for another nuisance.

Henry Havelock Ellis

❖ Every time I see an adult on a bicycle, I no longer despair for the future of the human race.

H.G. Wells

Sir Humphry Davy
Abominated gravy.
He lived in the odium
Of having discovered sodium.

Edmund C. Bentley

❖ Multimedia? As far as I'm concerned, it's reading with the radio on.

Rory Bremner

❖ Frankenstein was the creator, not the monster. It's a common misconception, held by all truly stupid people.

Kryten (Robert Llewellyn), *Red Dwarf*

❖ I am a sundial, and I make a botch Of what is done much better by a watch.

Hilaire Belloc

❖ Things are the way they are because they were the way they were.

Fred Hoyle

❖ No matter how fast light travels it finds the darkness has always got there first, and is waiting for it.

Terry Pratchett

❖ If academic endeavour had always been vetted in advance for practicality, we wouldn't have the aeroplane or the iPhone, just a better mammoth trap.

David Mitchell

❖ Stephen Hawking? He's pretentious. Born in Oxford and talks with that fake American accent.

Ricky Gervais

❖ The intelligent minority of this world will mark 1 January 2001 as the real beginning of the twenty-first century and the third millennium.

Arthur C. Clarke

❖ The public do not know enough to be experts, but know enough to decide between them.

Samuel Butler

❖ Reading computer manuals without the hardware is as frustrating as reading sex manuals without the software.

Arthur C. Clarke

❖ A modern computer hovers between the obsolescent and the non-existent.

Sydney Brenner

❖ I got a bit of moon rock once. When I broke it open it had “Moon” written all through it.

Ken Dodd

“It’s been suggested that if the supernaturalists really had the powers they claim, they’d win the lottery every week. I prefer to point out that they could also win a Nobel Prize for discovering fundamental physical forces hitherto unknown to science. Either way, why are they wasting their talents doing party turns on television?”

Richard Dawkins”

❖ Errors using inadequate data are much less than those using no data at all.

Charles Babbage

❖ Gravity is a habit that is hard to shake off.

Terry Pratchett

❖ Civilization is the distance man has placed between himself and his excreta.

Brian Aldiss

❖ We haven’t got the money so we’ve got to think.

Ernest Rutherford

❖ Mathematician is a blind man in a dark room looking for a black cat which isn’t there.

Charles Darwin

❖ The laws of probability so true in general, so fallacious in particular.

Edward Gibbon

❖ Now that the internet is here, every white-collar worker is an accomplished

masturbator who puts in eighteen hours a day slumped over a screen.

Martin Amis

Generally, old media don't die. They just have to grow old gracefully. Guess what, we still have stone masons. They haven't been the primary purveyors of the written word for a while now, of course, but they still have a role because you wouldn't want a TV screen on your headstone.

Douglas Adams

❖ We're all basing this on what Stephen Hawking said and the fact is, he's subject to interference from minicabs.

Jeremy Hardy

❖ If a machine does become conscious, I hope for its sake that it simultaneously develops the skills of procrastinating and failing to face up to reality. Without them, it'll go from sentience to insanity in a millisecond.

David Mitchell

❖ Nothing puzzles me more than time and space; and yet nothing puzzles me less, for I never think about them.

Charles Lamb

❖ What we call progress is the exchange of one nuisance for another nuisance.

Henry Ellis

❖ I was saying to someone the other day that technically the weight of an object largely relies on its position in the earth's gravitational field, to which they replied: "Look, you haven't won the cake. Please move away from the stall."

Harry Hill

❖ I don't think necessity is the mother of invention . . . [It] arises directly from idleness, possibly also from laziness. To save oneself trouble.

Agatha Christie

❖ Computer says no.

Carol Beer (David Walliams), *Little Britain*

❖ In the beginning the universe was created. This has made a lot of people very angry and has been widely regarded as a bad move.

Douglas Adams

❖ I believe there are 15,747,724,136,275,002,577,605,653,961,181,555,468,044,717, 914,527,116,709,366,231,425,076,185,631,031,296 protons in the universe and an equal number of electrons.

Sir Arthur Eddington

❖ Google has announced that they're going to give free internet access in airports all across the country. It's fantastic! Up until now, the only way to see something pornographic at an airport was to follow a senator into the bathroom.

Craig Ferguson

“Quite frankly the internet is just a world of hideous filth waiting in earnest to corrupt our children! Why, one only need enter in a harmless barnyard term – like “poo cock” – and there's no end to the smut that appears!

Dawn French”

❖ I am very interested in the universe – I am specializing in the universe and all that surrounds it.

Peter Cook

❖ In fact, the mere act of opening the box will determine the state of the cat, although in this case there were three determinate states the cat could be in: these being Alive, Dead and Bloody Furious.

Terry Pratchett

❖ One day, you'll be able to wake up and eat a yoghurt you can have a chat with.

Karl Pilkington

❖ The trouble with tea is that originally it was quite a good drink. So a group of the most eminent British scientists put their heads together, and made complicated biological experiments to find a way of spoiling it. To the eternal glory of British science their labour bore fruit.

George Mikes

❖ In the studio later we'll be showing you the latest thing in digital watches. When you press the button, a little finger comes out and points to the nearest person with the right time.

Ronnie Barker

There was a young lady named Bright,
Whose speed was far faster than light;
She set out one day
In a relative way,
And returned on the previous night.

Arthur Buller

❖ Nothing travels faster than the speed of light, with the possible exception of bad news, which obeys its own special laws.

Douglas Adams

❖ Darwinian man, though well-behaved, At best is only a monkey shaved.

W.S. Gilbert

❖ E-mails get in the way of serious consideration of what you want to do.

Bob Geldof

❖ Some trillions of years ago a sloppy, dirty giant flicked grease from his fingers. One of those gobs of grease is our universe on its way to the floor. Splat!

Brion Gysin

❖ The trouble with the internet is that it's replacing masturbation as a leisure

activity.

Patrick Murray

❖ Being an astronomer is a very noble profession, but it does leave you at rather a loose end during the day.

Patrick Moore

❖ We could get on very happily if aviation, wireless, television and the like advanced no further than at present.

Edward Arthur Burroughs, 1927

❖ God created a number of possibilities in case some of his prototypes failed – that is the meaning of evolution.

Graham Greene

“The man who invented cat’s eyes got the idea when he saw a cat facing him in the road. If the cat had been facing the other way, he’d have invented the pencil sharpener.

Ken Dodd”

❖ If an elderly but distinguished scientist says that something is possible, he is almost certainly right, but if he says that it is impossible he is very probably wrong.

Arthur C. Clarke

❖ I always wanted to be an inventor, like my dad – he also wanted to be an inventor.

Katie Schutte

❖ If your result needs a statistician then you should design a better experiment.

Ernest Rutherford

❖ In science there is only physics; all the rest is stamp collecting.

Lord Kelvin

“The man who invented the zip fastener was today honoured with a lifetime peerage. Hell now be known as the Lord of the Flies.

Ronnie Barker”

❖ Always be wary of any helpful item that weighs less than its operating manual.

Terry Pratchett

❖ When I hear of Schrödinger’s cat, I reach for my gun.

Stephen Hawking

❖ Once I had learned my twelve times table (at the age of three) it was downhill all the way.

Fred Hoyle

“Technology is just getting so stupidly powerful. For example, my iPod holds 3,000 albums. I own, like, ninety albums. My iPod sits at home, sullen, frustrated and underused. It’s like a wife who gave up her career and the kids turned out to be shite.

Dara O Briain”

❖ Science must have originated in the feeling that something was wrong.

Thomas Carlyle

❖ Facebook is like having a butler. Previously my friends would e-mail me. Now they e-mail on Facebook and Facebook e-mails me.

Dara O Briain

❖ God blimey, how about Stonehenge?! What a waste of money that was. Two thousand years it’s stood there . . .

still doesn't fly!

Bill Oddie, *The Goodies*

❖ New technology is useful, but it's inefficient and ugly; it knows it'll be obsolete by lunch time tomorrow, so it has no incentive to be anything else.

Tom Holt

“The major difference between a thing that might go wrong and a thing that cannot possibly go wrong, is that when a thing that cannot possibly go wrong goes wrong it usually turns out to be impossible to get at or repair.

Douglas Adams”

❖ God not only plays dice. He also sometimes throws the dice where they cannot be seen.

Stephen Hawking

❖ The great tragedy of science - the slaying of a beautiful hypothesis by an ugly fact.

Aldous Huxley

❖ Mrs Slocombe: Is there no demand for mechanical pussies?
Captain Peacock: I'm told people prefer the real thing.

Mrs Slocombe (Molly Sugden) and
Captain Peacock (Frank Thornton), *Are You Being Served?*

❖ Anthropology is the science which tells us that people are the same the whole world over – except when they are different.

Nancy Banks-Smith

❖ . . . and our eldest son, Alexander, won the Nobel Chemistry Prize, so we all went over to Stockholm for the presentation, and REM did an impromptu concert . . . which was nice.

Patrick Nice (Mark Williams), *The Fast Show*

❖ Dantology is the science of opening your mouth and putting your foot in it, a science which I have practised for a good many years.

Prince Philip

❖ Samantha tells me she's had to nip out to meet a nice chap who's training her in computer skills. Tonight she hopes he's going to show her the three-and-a-half-inch floppy he's got in his Mac.

Humphrey Lyttelton, *I'm Sorry I Haven't a Clue*,
BBC Radio 4

❖ Science is an edged tool, with which men play like children, and cut their own fingers.

Arthur Eddington

❖ Moss: Did you and her hit it off?

Roy: Define "hit it off".

Moss: Did she continue talking to you once you'd fixed her computer?

Roy: No. And while I worked on it she rested a cup on my back.

Moss (Richard Ayoade) and
Roy (Chris O'Dowd), *The IT Crowd*

❖ We never put a man on the moon – the moon was never going to be part of the British Empire, was it? There was no one to give it back to after we'd done with it was there?

Pub Landlord (a.k.a. Al Murray)

Every new razor comes out saying it's closer than the one before . . . There are so many blades now, soon we won't even be able to pick it up. You'll have to put it on the bathroom floor and scrape your face along it.

Lee Evans

❖ The only possible conclusion the social sciences can draw is, some do, some don't.

Ernest Rutherford

❖ Why have washing machines got a delayed start button on them? Why would

I want to delay it? In case shit stains suddenly come into fashion?

Rhod Gilbert

❖ There is a coherent plan in the universe, though I don't know what it's a plan for.

Fred Hoyle

❖ Space isn't remote at all. It's only an hour's drive away if your car could go straight upwards.

Fred Hoyle

“It has become almost a cliché to remark that nobody boasts of ignorance of literature, but it is socially acceptable to boast ignorance of science and proudly claim incompetence in mathematics.

Richard Dawkins”

❖ There comes a time when every scientist, even God, has to write off an experiment.

P.D. James

❖ Why would the British – the very people who invented gravity – want to go somewhere where there isn't any. Eh? The moon should be left to its own business of tides, werewolves and periods.

Pub Landlord (a.k.a. Al Murray)



THE SCOTTISH

* They get bevvied, blootered, hammered, guttered, feein', fou, steamin', stotious, paralytic and plastered to name a few.

The Lonely Planet Guide to Scotland * Sean Connery has such a deep love of Scotland that he refuses to use anything other than a Scottish accent, no matter what role he is taking.

Graham Norton

* There are few more impressive sights in the world than a Scotsman on the make.

J.M. Barrie

Nobody thought Mel Gibson could play a Scot, but look at him now: alcoholic and a racist!

Frankie Boyle

* In all my travels I never met with any one Scotchman but what was a man of sense. I believe everybody of that country that has any leaves it as fast as they can.

Francis Lockier

* Incredible isn't it, to think that every single Scotsman started off as a Scotch egg – cold and gingery.

Milton Jones

* The bagpipes sound exactly the same when you have finished learning them as when you start.

Thomas Beecham

* Is there anything worn under the kilt? No, it's all in perfect working order.

Spike Milligan

* You Scots, Mrs Shand, are such a mixture of the practical and the emotional that you escape out of an Englishman's hand like a trout.

J.M. Barrie

* I've sometimes thought . . . that the difference between us and the English is that the Scotch are hard in all other respects but soft with women, and the English are hard with women but soft in all other respects.

J.M. Barrie

“You can tell an awful lot about a country by what it eats for breakfast. In Scotland we like a fry-up . . . It's our way of saying to the rest of the world, “It doesn't mater what you plan to do to us today, it's not nearly as bad as what we've just done to ourselves.”

Danny Bhoy”

* The inventor of the bagpipes was inspired when he saw a man carrying an indignant asthmatic pig under his arm.

Alfred Hitchcock

* I'd like to learn a new language: Scottish. It's a mixture of English and alcohol. You drink a pint and end each sentence with “you bastard”.

Sean Meo

* Before settling on its current motto, Scotland did consider a slightly different option: “If it's fried – we'll eat it. If it's alcohol – we'll drink it. If it's breathing – we'll shag it. And if it's not breathing – we'll fry it and eat it.”

Omid Djalili

* The best chance of reproducing the ancient Greek temperament would be to cross the Scots with the Chinese.

Hugh MacDiarmid

* A friend of mine bought a castle in Scotland. When his daughter had a birthday party, he hired a bouncy council estate.

Harry Hill

* The Scottish verdict “not proven” means “guilty, but don’t do it again”.

Winifred Duke

* The bagpipes – the missing link between noise and sound.

Danny Bhoy

* My mum and dad are Scottish but they moved down to Wolverhampton when I was two, 'cos they wanted me to sound like a twat.

Susan Murray

* Scottishness is passed on through the male gene, like a disability. It overwhelms all female chromosomes and that’s why there are no Scottish women; there are men in kilts, but that’s just nature trying to find its own level.

Stewart Lee



SEX

★ Smurfs . . . all I know is they spunk polka dots.

Frankie Boyle

★ Textbook intercourse. Thanks!

Alan Partridge (a.k.a. Steve Coogan)

★ I often suggest sex from behind. And I always suggest it – I don't just creep up on people. They might have hot tea.

Frank Skinner

★ Genitals are a great distraction to scholarship.

Malcolm Bradbury

★ I wouldn't kidnap a man for sex, but I'm not saying I couldn't use someone to oil the mower.

Victoria Wood

★ Eddy: I did tell you the facts of life, didn't I, sweetie?

Saffy: If you mean that time you sat on my bed and shook me awake at two in the morning, stoned out of your brain, and slurred into my ear, "By the way sweetie, people have it off," then, yes, you told me the facts of life.

Eddy (Jennifer Saunders) and
Saffy (Julia Sawalha), *Absolutely Fabulous*

★ Sex: the pleasure is momentary, the position ridiculous and the expense damnable.

Lord Chesterfield

★ Noel Fielding: Courtney Love – she'd crush you like a twiglet.

Simon Amstell: She would. Or kill me and make it look like suicide.

★ Time is short and we must seize
Those pleasures found above the knees.

Richard Eyre

★ I'd love to have sex in the thunder in a field thick with
mud. With a man in a top hat.

Jessie Wallace

★ Roger, in order for you to be brought about, it was necessary for your mother
and I to do something. In particular it was necessary for your mother to sit on a
chair, to sit on a chair which I had recently vacated and which was still warm
from my body.

Peter Cook

★ Carol Vorderman is considered the thinking man's crumpet. Presumably by
any man who's thinking, "I wouldn't mind shagging some mutton dressed as
lamb tonight."

Angus Deayton

★ When the sun comes up, I have morals again.

Elizabeth Taylor

Mind if I use your phone? If word gets out that I'm missing, 500 girls will kill
themselves. I wouldn't want them on my conscience, not when they want to be
on my face.

Squadron Commander Lord Flasheart
(Rick Mayall), *Blackadder Goes Forth*

★ I'd the upbringing a nun would envy. Until I was fifteen I was more familiar
with Africa than my own body.

Joe Orton

★ The fake tan is a marvellous invention. While everyone else is on the beach trying to get brown, you're in the hotel shagging a waiter.

Jenny Eclair

★ I am actually offering you me, yes, me, yours, to enjoy, like an éclair, or . . . a day at the zoo.

Fran (Tamsin Greig), *Black Books*

★ I can eat a man, but I'm not sure of the fibre content.

Jenny Eclair

★ The moon is nothing but a circumambulating aphrodisiac divinely subsidized to provoke the world into a rising birth rate.

Christopher Fry

★ Not a single one of your ancestors died young. They all copulated at least once.

Richard Dawkins

★ My dear, I thank you. But although I still have the desire, I lack the device.

Peter O'Toole, to a flasher in the lift of a New York hotel

★ Mark: Yeah, so, er, Jeremy tells me you two watched a porno together. You know, I'd be into— Toni: No, that was *The English Patient*.

Mark Corrigan (David Mitchell) and
Toni (Elizabeth Marmur), *Peep Show*

★ I thought I had done what was necessary. I took away the whip. But obviously I should have taken away the handcuffs, suspenders and the thong.

Dave Cameron, on Lord Laidlaw

★ My message to businessmen of this country when they go abroad on business is that there is one thing above all they can take with them to stop them catching

AIDS, and that is the wife.

Edwina Currie

“If you’re financially destitute and you’ve got a piece of glass shaped like a car window are you allowed to just stand there and watch?

Johnny Vegas,
on dogging”

★ Mistresses are like books; if you pore upon them too much, they doze you and make you unfit for company; but if used discreetly, you are the fitter for conversation by ’em.

William Wycherley

★ Some ladies fancy John Prescott. It’d be like having a wardrobe fall on top of you. With the key in.

Jimmy Tarbuck

★ To seduce a woman famous for strict morals, religious fervour and the happiness of her marriage: what could possibly be more prestigious?

Christopher Hampton

★ Society drives people crazy with lust and calls it advertising.

John Lahr

★ Fat people are brilliant in bed. If I’m sitting on top of you, who’s going to argue?

Jo Brand

★ Splendid couple – slept with both of them.

Maurice Bowra

★ In the early eighties, I was pretty innocent and confused. I was like Marie Osmond, only with bigger eyelashes.

Boy George

Why are women . . . so much more interesting to men than men are to women?
Virginia Woolf

★ Masturbation is the thinking man's television

Christopher Hampton

★ Do you always two-time people, Edwina? First you're shagging a prime minister, and now you're shagging me up the arse from behind.

Gordon Ramsay

★ I said to my wife, "Was you faking it last night?"
She said, "No, I really was asleep."

Ricky Grover

★ I can't understand why men find a cleavage so fascinating: surely it contains sweat and crumbs?

Liz Jones

★ Nobody will ever win the battle of the sexes. There's just too much fraternizing with the enemy.

Quentin Crisp

★ I suppose if I am honest I, erm, I use my penis as a sort of car substitute.

Stephen Fry, *A Bit of Fry and Laurie*

★ I was in the toilet and a sign on the condom machine says, "Push in knob for full refund" . . . got a little bit confused.

John Fothergill

★ Always the same with men, isn't it? Looks like a starter handle, works like an off-switch.

Sally Harper (Kate Isitt), *Coupling*

★ Sleeping with prostitutes is like making your cat dance with you on its hind legs. You know it's wrong, but you try to convince yourself that they're enjoying it as well.

Jimmy Carr

★ The Jonas Brothers are a boy band who deliberately don't have sex with their fans. I'm against that. It's like Superman taking the train instead of flying everywhere.

Rhod Gilbert

★ You come out of a woman and you spend the rest of your life trying to get back inside.

Heathcote Williams

Michael Parkinson: What was the nearest to kick-off that you made love?
George Best: Er . . . I think it was half time, actually.

★ Men think about sex every seven seconds, which I think makes talking to your dad very creepy.

Jimmy Carr

★ I once went to one of those parties where everyone throws their car keys into the middle of the room. I don't know who got my moped, but I've been driving that Peugeot for years.

Victoria Wood

★ I've heard that when men's willies are erect they are all the same size.

Helen Adams,
contestant on British *Big Brother*

★ A man with an erection is in no need of advice.

Samuel Pepys

★ My biographer said that my parties reminded them of a vicarage tea party, with sex thrown in.

Cynthia Payne, former British party hostess

★ They say I slept with seven Miss Worlds. I didn't – it was only four. I didn't turn up for the other three.

George Best

“ I love the word “naked”, it's brilliant isn't it: “naked”? When I was a kid I used to write the word naked on a bit of paper hundreds of times and rub my face in it.

Jeff Murdock (Richard Coyle),
Coupling”

★ I saw Saddam's hanging on YouTube and it made me think. It made me think . . . is there nothing on the internet that I won't masturbate to?

Frankie Boyle

★ Why is it that when I find a vibrator in my girlfriend's drawer, she's liberated, yet when she looks in the chest that I keep under my bed and finds an artificial vagina, I'm a pervert?

Frankie Boyle

★ Women reach their sexual peak after thirty-five years . . . men after four minutes.

Jimmy Carr

★ I had a wet dream about you last night. I dreamed you got hit by a bus, and I pissed myself laughing.

Jack Dee

★ His sexual activities normally took place in the bathroom; he was a great masturbator.

Anthony Burgess, on Dylan Thomas

★ She'd never had her ticket punched before.

Marie Lloyd

★ You were born with your legs apart. They'll send you to the grave in a Y-shaped coffin.

Joe Orton

★ Recent surveys show three out of ten men have a problem with premature ejaculation. The rest just didn't really think it was a problem!

Frankie Boyle

★ Mother Theresa . . . insisted that African people don't use condoms during sex. I think it's nice that she let them fuck her at all.

Russell Brand

★ You know that the Tasmanians, who never committed adultery are now extinct.

W. Somerset Maugham

“I lost my virginity under a bridge. I was having sex with this poor girl and I was trying my best, but I was like Scotland at a World Cup – just pleased to be there.

Russell Howard”

★ I've got a sexual fantasy right, and my sexual fantasy . . . is to have sex.

Duncan Thicket (a.k.a. Steve Coogan)

★ The only time a bloke feels like doing it twice is just before he's done it once.

Dave Spikey

★ Get round here 'cos I'm fudding myself stupid and I'm bloody loving it.

Kate Winslet, *Extras*

★ Now I enjoy a wind stiffened nipple as much as the next man. I'd even count myself a connoisseur, I think. Al dente that would be my preference – the firm but not brittle nipple with a bit of give but still with a sense of purpose. Enough to hang your hat on but not your umbrella.

Simon Evans

★ Joanna: What kind of masked kidnapper are you?

Alan: Well, one who is loth to contravene local by-laws, actually.

Joanna Clore (Pippa Haywood) and
Alan Statham (Mark Heap), *Green Wing*

★ A man will fantasize that he's having sex with someone else; a woman will fantasize that she's having sex with anyone else.

Jo Brand

★ I prefer threesomes. Not because I'm a horrible sexual predator – it's because I'm a romantic and it's quicker if I audition two women at a time.

Russell Brand

American sex shops are the most bizarre. They sell these inflatable dolls, but they also sell just the head – supposedly for people to drive along the freeway with.

Billy Connolly

★ Never do anything in bed that you can't pronounce.

Mitch Murray

★ Once a knight, always a knight. Twice a night and you're doing all right.

Tim Brooke-Taylor, *The Goodies*

★ I do not give blow jobs. Why not? Because I find it really off-putting, seeing a grown man look that pathetically grateful.

Jenny Eclair

★ I think all old folk's homes should have striptease. If I ran one I'd have a striptease every week.

Cynthia Payne

★ An orgy looks particularly alluring seen through the mists of righteous indignation.

Malcolm Muggeridge

★ Foreplay is like beefburgers – three minutes on each side.

Victoria Wood

“Nuts magazine is pretty much Jodie Marsh holding her floppers aloft like a couple of stoats she's found in an illegal fairground.

Russell Howard”

★ Show me a frigid woman and, nine times out of ten, I'll show you a little man.

Julie Burchill

★ Making a cup of coffee is like making love to a beautiful woman. It's got to be hot, you've got to take your time, you've got to stir gently but firmly, you've got to grind your beans until they squeak. And then you put in the milk.

Swiss Toni (Charlie Higson), *The Fast Show*

★ I view my own body as a petting zoo. I am the main attraction . . . And the only customer.

Craig Ferguson

★ I always hold in having it if you fancy it
If you fancy it, that's understood
And suppose it makes you fat – I don't worry over that

'Cos a little of what you fancy does you good!

Marie Lloyd

“George [Best] was a fantastic player and he would have been even better if he'd been able to pass nightclubs the way he passed the ball.

Tommy Docherty”

★ This guy I met the other night, never met him before: “You like legs or breasts?”

“No – vaginas!” Apparently KFC don't do those.

Spencer Brown

★ I'm not against half-naked girls – not as often as I'd like to be.

Benny Hill

★ Selfish men make the best lovers. They're prepared to invest in the women's pleasures so that they can collect an even bigger dividend for themselves.

J.G. Ballard

★ Does Mary Poppins have an orgasm? Does she go to the bathroom? I assure you, she does.

Julie Andrews

The world is full of double beds
And most delightful maidenheads,
Which being so, there's no excuse
For sodomy or self-abuse.

Hilaire Belloc

★ What's the matter? We always have sex after I've

cooked for us. That's why I do it.

Gary Strang (Martin Clunes),
Men Behaving Badly

★ I've said it before, vicar, and I'll say it again – what that boy needs is a nice big cock up his arse.

Mrs Williams (Gwenllian Davies), *Little Britain*

★ My body has certainly wandered a good deal, but I have an uneasy suspicion that my mind has not wandered enough.

Noël Coward

★ Richard Burton rang me up once and said, "Do you know, you're my only leading lady I've never slept with?"

I said, "Well, please don't tell everybody, it's the worst image."

Julie Andrews

★ Your place or back to the sheltered accommodation?

Barry Cryer

“A magazine top ten of the most painful things women have to endure says number one is having your nipples clamped. Surely having them towed away is worse?

Dave Spikey”

★ A multiple orgasm is like a good music system - something you see in magazines and which other people have.

Jeremy Hardy

★ Outside every girl there is a fat man trying to get in.

Katherine Whitehorn

★ Safe sex is very important. Take precautions. Put your fag out. Move your cans where they won't get knocked over.

Paul Calf (a.k.a. Steve Coogan)

★ The first time you see a vagina you're like, "It's brilliant." But it's actually terrifying. It looks exactly like Rio Ferdinand's smile.

Russell Howard

★ I always like the female praying mantis, which will bite the head off its male partner in mid-copulation. Apparently after that has happened, he just keeps going. I must admit that when I read that, I felt a twinge of male pride. Blokes are great.

Bill Bailey

★ It's incredible what men will interpret as sexual: "Did you see the way she looked at me before she told me to fuck off?"

Dylan Moran

★ They say making love with me is like a rollercoaster ride. Over far too quickly, and afterwards they wanna throw up.

Victor Lewis-Smith

You were a right old slapper in the seventies, weren't you?

Mrs Merton (a.k.a. Caroline Aherne)
to Germaine Greer

★ In my next life I'm going to come back as a rather good-looking, even quite fat and plain fifty-year-old man, who's just been widowed or sadly divorced, and I would go to the country and I would clean up. I would get a bonk every night of the week.

Jilly Cooper

★ We may eventually come to realize that chastity is no more a virtue than malnutrition.

Alex Comfort

★ Sex and sleep are my two favourite things. If I could do both at the same time

I'd be a happy man. I always envy my girlfriend that trick.

Ed Byrne

★ After I've sexed ladies, sometimes I like to take a nipple as a trophy. What else am I going to make my nipple charm necklace of? Scotch mist?

Russell Brand

★ It's a fallacy that males stop masturbating after seventeen. Most usually stop after one.

Jeff Green

“I had a really horrible experience with sex that put me off for the rest of my life. I actually saw my face as I was having an orgasm. It was bloody horrible . . . Never ever again. It wasn't in a mirror. It was in a shop window.

Jeff Green”

★ It has to be admitted that we English have sex on the brain, which is a very unsatisfactory place to have it.

Malcolm Muggeridge

★ Nurse uniforms have never done anything for me, because my mum's a nurse. I've got a younger sister, so that's the schoolgirl uniform out. And my dad's a French maid, so there's not a lot left.

Jason Manford

★ Great sex is great, but bad sex is like a peanut-butter-and-jelly sandwich.

Billy Idol

★ What should one say after making love? Thank you seems too much. I'm sorry – not enough.

Simon Munnery

★ If a woman's performing oral sex on me, I have to admit I will have a little look down. Usually just to think, “Ugh, how could you?”

Frank Skinner

- ★ I'd like to be able to make someone orgasm just by touching them. Not for sexual purposes, it'd just be great in a fight: "Fuck him up, Steve."
"I'm trying, but I'm too horny."

Russell Howard

- ★ If God had meant us to have group sex, he'd have given us more organs.

Malcolm Bradbury

- ★ He had ambitions, at one time, to become a sex maniac, but he failed his practical.

Les Dawson

- ★ The only reason my wife has an orgasm is so she'll have something else to moan about.

Bob Monkhouse

Sexual intercourse began
In nineteen-sixty-three
(which was rather late for me) -
Between the end of the Chatterley ban
and The Beatles' first LP.

Philip Larkin,
"Annus Mirabilis"

- ★ An erection at will is the moral equivalent of a valid credit card.

Alex Comfort

- ★ Apparently, women need to feel loved to have sex, and men need to have sex to feel loved, so the basic act of continuing the species requires a lie from one of

you.

Billy Connolly

“Hanging wallpaper is also very much like making love to a beautiful woman. Clean all the relevant surfaces, spread her out on the table, cover her with paste, and stick her up. Then you clean your brush, light your pipe, stand back and admire your handiwork.

Swiss Toni (Charlie Higson),
The Fast Show”

★ Sex used to be hilarious, but it stopped being funny when it became performance related.

A.A. Gill

★ The Englishman can get along with sex quite perfectly, so long as he can pretend that it isn't sex but something else.

James Agate

★ I'm still making love at seventy-one, which is handy for me because I live at number sixty-three.

Bernie Clifton

★ Women have created a mystique around their pleasure zones, (hence the invention in the 1960s of the G-spot, the clitoris and multiple orgasms), so that now each time a man has sex he feels like he's stumbled pissed into the cockpit of a Harrier jump jet.

Michael Bradley

★ Really, sex and laughter do go very well together, and I wondered – and I still do – which is more important.

Hermione Gingold

★ I don't think anyone should be educated sexually. There's far too many people on the planet. If we could hush it up for a few years, that would help.

John Cleese

★ Sex on the whole was meant to be short, nasty and brutish. If what you want is cuddling, you should buy a puppy.

Julie Burchill

★ Chastity: the most unnatural of all the sexual perversions.

Aldous Huxley

★ If they ever invent a vibrator that can open pickle jars, men have had it.

Jeff Green

★ I can't find a woman anywhere who will touch me with a shitty stick. Fair enough. It is a bit of an unusual request.

Andrew Lawrence

“As with most liberal sexual ideas, what makes the world a better place for men invariably makes it a duller and more dangerous place for women.

Julie Burchill”

★ I used to ask women to come upstairs and have sex, but now it has to be one or the other.

Clement Freud

★ After you've been married for twelve years, sex is boring – or, for the educated, moribund.

John Moloney

★ France is the only place where you can make love in the afternoon without people hammering on your door.

Barbara Cartland

★ My wife is a sex object – every time I ask for sex, she objects.

Les Dawson

★ People think I hate sex. I don't. I just don't like things that stop you seeing the television properly.

Victoria Wood

★ One could never make love to a woman with a glottal stop.

Brian Sewell

★ You know the worst thing about oral sex? The view.

Maureen Lipman

I think I mentioned to Bob Geldof I could make love for eight hours. What I didn't say was that this included four hours of begging, then dinner and a movie.
Sting

★ Now that I'm seventy-eight I do tantric sex because it's very slow. My favourite position is called the plumber. You stay in all day but nobody comes.

John Mortimer

★ Sex is like a game of bridge: if you don't have a good partner, you'd better have a good hand.

Peter Kay



SEXUALITY

❖ I am not, I repeat, NOT a lesbian – even though I’d like to be one when I grow up.

Dawn French

❖ We think the cross to bear is not for those who are gay, but those who believe in crosses in the first place.

John Armstrong

❖ So, John, is you always been a batty boy ’cos I ’erd dat you woz once married although I also ’erd dat da missus was mingin’?

Ali G (a.k.a. Sacha Baron Cohen),
to Elton John

❖ If he was any further back in the closet, he’d be in Narnia.

Daniel Bryan, contestant on British *Big Brother* ❖ You know you’re gay if you bend over and see four balls.

Graham Norton

❖ I’m not homophobic. I’m not scared of my house.

Peter Kay

❖ *Brokeback Mountain* . . . I can’t wait to see the female version of that!

Jason Byrne

❖ As a homosexual, when I first saw boobs, I thought it was a deformity.

Derek Laud,

contestant on British *Big Brother*

❖ Jeremy Paxman: What is another name for “cherrypickers’ and “cheesemongers’?

Contestant: Homosexuals.

Jeremy Paxman: No. They’re regiments in the British Army who will be very upset with you.

University Challenge

❖ I’d like to have joined the army, but had to make do with being a renowned homosexual instead.

Julian Clary

“I’m very uncomfortable with the idea of vaginas. They bother me in the way that spiders bother some people.

Boy George”

❖ I’m sick of fellas. Think I’ll become a lesbian. At least you get to wear fat shoes.

Lily Savage (a.k.a. Paul O’Grady)

❖ The pope says homosexuality is unnatural. Surely the most unnatural thing in the world is not having any sex whatsoever.

Andy Parsons

❖ Tom: You’re very popular on the gay scene.

Linda: So is amyl nitrate and they both smell like old socks.

Tom (James Dreyfus) and

Linda (Kathy Burke), *Gimme, Gimme, Gimme* ❖ My mother made me a homosexual. And if you give her some yarn, she’ll make you one too.

Quentin Crisp

❖ I’m the only gay in the village. Daffyd (Matt Lucas), *Little Britain*

❖ Just because I've got a sun tan, like to wear pink, I'm a hairdresser and a seventies dancer, it doesn't mean I'm gay.

Anthony Hutton,
contestant on British *Big Brother*

❖ I've just become a lesbian. At first I wasn't sure if I was gay or bi but I'm definitely vegan, so I'm moving in the right direction.

Jade the Folksinger

❖ There's lots of stuff about me being a fan of Cliff but not being gay. Which suggests that he is, but he's not. Anyway, this is Channel Four – let their lawyers sort it out.

Johnny Vegas

❖ You're sophisticates . . . you probably think someone's gay if they have sex with someone of their own gender. I'm from Chippenham – you're gay if you can fucking read. If that book's got no pictures in it you are a nonce.

Will Hodgson

❖ She's a gay man trapped in a woman's body.

Boy George, on Madonna

❖ I'm all for gay adoption, gay men would make brilliant dads. They know where all the best parks are.

Frankie Boyle

❖ Gay culture is youth-obsessed. I don't want to be the old guy wanking in the corner at the bath-house while all the young people have sex. But I probably will be.

Rupert Everett

❖ In Newcastle-upon-Tyne, gay means "owns a coat".

Jimmy Carr

❖ Jen: No no no, if he was gay, why would he ask me out?

Moss: Well, don't take this the wrong way, but could he have thought you were a man?

Jen (Katherine Parkinson) and
Moss (Richard Ayoade), *The IT Crowd*

❖ I was at a gay nineties party the other night. All the men were gay and all the women were ninety.

Eric Morecambe

❖ Barbara: Well, I don't care what anybody is – I don't care whether they're gay straight or Australian. It's what they're like as a person that matters.

Jim: Aye, aye, Barb, steady on there, will ya? This ain't LiveAid, you know, it's just my bloody birthday.

Barbara Royle (Sue Johnstone) and
Jim Royle (Ricky Tomlinson), *The Royle Family*

“I've had enough of being a gay icon! I've had enough of all this hard work, because, since I came out, I keep getting all these parts, and my career's taken of. I want a quiet life. I'm going back into the closet. But I can't get back into the closet, because it's absolutely jam-packed full of other actors.

Ian McKellen”

❖ I would have loved to have a gay dad. Do you remember at school, there were always kids saying “My dad's bigger than your dad, my dad will batter your dad!” So what? My dad will shag your dad. And your dad will enjoy it.

Frankie Boyle

❖ Tony Blair was our first metrosexual prime minister. He had enough personality to be gay, yet caused enough atrocities to be straight.

Shazia Mirza

❖ I had a huge crush on Olga Korbut, the gymnast. The only other person was Cliff Richard, which is

embarrassing; it means that when I was seven I had bad taste and was presumably gay.

Hugh Grant



SHOPPING

“I went to the supermarket and . . . they’ve got a little sign saying, “Forgotten something? Don’t worry, well just go and get it for you.” So now I go in, pick up a basket, go straight to the till. “You are not going to believe this. Yes, everything – here’s a list!”

Spencer Brown”

* So I went down the local supermarket. I said, “I want to make a complaint – this vinegar’s got lumps in it.”

He said, “Those are pickled onions.”

Peter Kay

* My parents used to take me to Lewis’ department store in Glasgow. They were skinflints, they used to take me to the pet department and tell me it was the zoo.

Billy Connolly

* It’s like getting a Louis Vuitton handbag . . . she bought a baby, for God’s sake.

Sharon Osbourne, on Madonna

I remembered what you said – that you liked solitaire diamonds, so I thought . . . well y’know . . . that I’d get her a cluster of solitaires.

Del Boy (David Jason),
Only Fools and Horses

* What’s going on, what’s all that shouting? This is a local shop for local people: we’ll have no trouble here.

Edward Tattsyrup (Reece Shearsmith),
The League of Gentlemen

* The easiest way to convince my kids that they don't really need something is to get it for them.

Joan Collins

* I bought some HP sauce the other day. It's costing me six pence a month for the next two years.

Tommy Cooper

* I've not been to the shops in two weeks. I'll just have to go to a restaurant . . . they'll have toilet paper.

Matt Kirshen

“When people grow gradually rich their requirements and standard of living expand in proportion, while their present-giving instincts often remain in the undeveloped condition of their earlier days. Something showy and not-too-expensive in a shop is their only conception of the ideal gift.

Hector Hugh Munro”

* You'd think in this day and age they could make a supermarket trolley so all the wheels go in the same direction.

Audrey fforbes-Hamilton (Penelope Keith),
To the Manor Born

* I like going into newsagent shops and saying, “Excuse me, is that Mars Bar for sale?” And when he says yes, I say, “OK, I might be back later, I still have a few other ones to see.”

Michael Redmond

Could China make an inflatable barbecue . . . could China sell an inflatable barbecue . . . could the people of China for themselves purchase inflatable barbecues? There is no fucking way.

* Shopping is like sex for men too. They can only manage it for five minutes and then they get tired.

Jeff Green

* Guess who I bumped into in Specsavers the other day? Everyone.

Jimmy Tarbuck

* Went to the paper shop – it had blown away.

Tommy Cooper

* I love going to Argos. It's staffed entirely by people who failed their Woolworths exams.

Jasper Carrott

* My daughter wanted a new pair of trainers. I told her, "You're eleven, make your own!"

Jeremy Hardy

* I'm from a small village in Tyne and Wear, but we can always catch the bus into Newcastle if we want to do some shopping . . . or use the toilet.

John Fothergill

* I went to buy some camouflage trousers the other day but I couldn't find any.

Tommy Cooper

* I went to the butcher's and I bet him fifty quid that he couldn't reach the meat off the top shelf. He said, "No, the steaks are too high."

Tim Vine

* I love the way garages leave black buckets outside for your dead flowers.

Jack Dee

* I like to go into the Body Shop and shout out, “I’ve already got one!”
Norman Lovett

* I like ringing up bookshops and when they say, “Yes, can I help you?”
I say, “I’m OK, thanks, I’m just browsing.”
Michael Redmond

“I went on Amazon and I bought six Jeremy Clarkson books, which you must never do because it will change your Amazon customer profile in a way that can take literally thousands of man hours to correct.
Stewart Lee”

* I’m obsessed with shoes. I must have hundreds of pairs. I’m a shoe fend. That reminds me – I need to go shopping.
Keira Knightley

* When Madonna goes into Dolce & Gabbana to do her shopping they shut the door so she can shop in peace. When I go in there they shut the fucking tills. Tell me to piss off to New Look . . . and they tell me to piss off to Evans.
Gina Yashere

* . . . and we were in Harrods, shopping for guavas, and we saw Kevin Kline, who gave me a lovely smile . . . which was nice.
Patrick Nice (Mark Williams),
The Fast Show

* Went to the corner shop – bought four corners.
Tommy Cooper

* You think hot tubs are going to be amazing, but you realize after about a minute that you’re actually having a bath outside with your mum.
Russell Howard

SHOWBUSINESS

★ I'm a factory-floor actor. I learn the lines, I get there on time. I don't sit around with other actors and talk about the pain and the magic of acting. I'd rather just go down the pub. That's where the real magic happens.

Rhys Ifans

★ If a farmer fills his barn with grain, he gets mice. If he leaves it empty, he gets actors.

Walter Scott

★ It is a great help for a man to be in love with himself. For an actor, however, it is absolutely essential.

Robert Morley

“ I find you a little wooden. How do you psych yourself up? Do you go into a forest and look at some trees?

Dennis Pennis (a.k.a. Paul Kaye)
to Hugh Grant”

★ That's what show business is, sincere insincerity.

Benny Hill

★ *Dancing on Ice* is simply torture to me. I would rather skewer my eyeballs out of their sockets with a blunt bodkin than watch that. Although I do rather like *Celebrity Masterchef*. So what does that say about me?

Stephen Fry

I have always hated that damn James Bond. I'd like to kill him.

“The part never calls for nudity, and I’ve never used that excuse. The box office calls for it.

Helen Mirren”

★ Don’t clap too hard – it’s a very old building.

John Osborne

★ I’d love to see you host a talk show. It would be rubbish, but I’d watch.

Jonathan Ross, to Damon Albarn

★ Presenter: Name a film starring Bob Hoskins that is also the name of a famous painting by Leonardo Da Vinci.

Contestant: *Who Framed Roger Rabbit*.

Rock FM radio station, Preston

★ I am amazed at radio DJs today. I am firmly convinced that AM on my radio stands for Absolute Moron. I will not begin to tell you what FM stands for.

Jasper Carrott

★ If you don’t get bruised playing Bond, you’re not doing it properly.

Daniel Craig

★ Do we have an actual performance, or is the climax of the evening still Owen and his Amazing Farting Duck?

David Horton (Gary Waldhorn),
The Vicar of Dibley

★ Actors search for rejection. If they don’t get it they reject themselves.

Charlie Chaplin

★ Actors are cattle.

Alfred Hitchcock

★ Cartoonists have the best casting system. If they don't like an actor, they just tear him up.

Alfred Hitchcock

★ Players, sir! I look on them as no better than creatures set upon tables and joint stools to make faces and produce laughter, like dancing dogs.

Samuel Johnson

★ A critic is a man who knows the way but can't drive the car.

Kenneth Tynan

★ It is the kind of play that one might enjoy more at a second hearing, if only the first time through hadn't left such a strong feeling that once is enough.

W.A. Darlington

People need to be peppered or even outraged occasionally. Our national comedy and drama is packed with earthy familiarity and honest vulgarity. Clean vulgarity can be very shocking and that, in my view, gives greater involvement.

Kenneth Williams

★ She receives the news that she is about to be ravished by her husband's corpse with little more than the mild annoyance of one who would have preferred foam rubber.

Kenneth Tynan,
on Vivien Leigh's performance in *Titus Andronicus*

“You know, I go to the theatre to be entertained. I don't want to see plays about rape, sodomy and drug addiction . . . I can get all that at home.

Peter Cook”

★ I have your review in front of me and soon it will be behind me.

George Bernard Shaw,
telephoning a drama critic from the toilet

★ A production of such mind-bending awfulness that only the laws of libel prevent me from dwelling on it at even greater length.

Sheridan Morley

★ By increasing the size of the keyhole, today's playwrights are in danger of doing away with the door.

Peter Ustinov

★ I have a greater appreciation for kitchen appliances, having played one.

Anthony Daniels

★ Long experience has taught me that in England nobody goes to the theatre unless he or she has bronchitis.

James Agate

★ A drama critic is a man who leaves no turn unstoned.

George Bernard Shaw

“I can't see the point in the theatre. All that sex and violence. I get enough of that at home. Apart from the sex, of course.

Baldrick (Tony Robinson), *Blackadder*”

★ Acting is a matter of farting about in disguises.

Peter O'Toole

★ My acting range? Left eyebrow raised, right eyebrow raised.

Roger Moore

★ In his bodybuilding days Arnold Schwarzenegger was known as the Austrian Oak. Then he started acting and was known as . . . the Austrian Oak.

Jack Dee

★ Acting is merely the art of keeping a large group of people from coughing.

Ralph Richardson

★ Acting is half shame, half glory. Shame at exhibiting yourself, glory when you can forget yourself.

John Gielgud

“The most important thing in acting is to be able to laugh and cry. If I have to cry, I think of my sex life. If I have to laugh, I think of my sex life.

Glenda Jackson”

★ Rehearsing a play is making the word flesh. Publishing a play is reversing the process.

Peter Shaffer

★ Acting is invigorating. But I don't analyse it too much. It's like a dog smelling where it's going to do its toilet in the morning.

Liam Neeson

★ I'd like to play a horse; many people think I already have. Either end of the horse would be fine.

Dawn French

★ Richard Briers played Hamlet like a demented typewriter.

W.A. Darlington

★ If I was Sir Peter Hall and had instigated such a production, I would take myself out to dinner and very tactfully but firmly sack myself over dessert.

James Fenton

★ One critic complained that I had only two gestures: left hand up, and right hand down. What did he expect me to do? Bring out my prick?

John Gielgud

“First of all, I choose the great [roles], and if none of these come, I choose the mediocre ones, and if they don't come, I choose the ones that pay the rent.

Michael Caine”

★ I always knew that if all else failed I could become an actor, and all else failed.

David Niven

Being asked to host the BAFTA awards is a huge thrill, not to mention a lot easier than sitting in the audience pretending to be pleased for the winners.

Graham Norton

★ I enjoy being a highly overpaid actor.

Roger Moore

★ – Do they know it's ventriloquism?

– Yeah, they do now.

– Do they know how I feel about it? I think it's a dead art.

Monk and Nina Conti

★ It was like kissing the Berlin Wall.

Helena Bonham Carter, on Woody Allen

★ Actors are rogues and vagabonds. Or they ought to be. I can't stand it when they behave like solicitors from Penge.

Helen Mirren

★ He brought to every one of his roles the quality of needing the money.

Stephen Fry

★ I always feel sad when I hear two actors are getting married. You just smell trouble.

Robert Lindsay

★ An agent is a person who is sore because an actor gets 90 per cent of what they make.

Elton John

★ I come from a long line of actors. It's called the dole queue.

Alan Davies

“When you hear the word “England” you think of the country with the most talented actors in the world; Lawrence, Olivier, Alec Guinness and Frank Spencer. “Ooh, Betsy the cat done shit.” This man can do nothing right and two things wrong. This is why I come to Edinburgh Festival to find the most talented performer and bring them back to Kazakhstan.

Ali G (a.k.a. Sacha Baron Cohen)”

★ Actors ought to be larger than life. You come across quite enough ordinary, nondescript people in daily life and I don't see why you should be subjected to them on the stage too.

Donald Sinden

★ In *A Fish Called Wanda* you were privileged to see John Cleese in the nude. Was he Pythonesque or did he have a Fawlty Tower?

Dennis Pennis (a.k.a. Paul Kaye), to Jamie Lee Curtis

★ I used to hate David Copperfield till he [David Blaine] came along. Now I quite miss the spangly blow-dried ponce.

Sean Lock

★ You don't retire in this business. You just notice the phone has not rung for ten years.

Warren Mitchell

★ I never said all actors are cattle; what I said was, all actors should be treated like cattle.

Alfred Hitchcock

★ I don't know what else I could do but pretend to be an actor.

Alec Guinness

“ I am not an enormous believer in research being the be-all and end-all. I get suspicious when I read about actors spending six months in a clinic, say, in order to play someone who is sick.

John Hurt”

★ I'm amazed by actors who can cry. I'd have to get a stunt man to do the emotional stuff. But I'd be perfectly happy to do the car crashes myself.

Hugh Laurie

★ Show business is like sex. When it's wonderful, it's wonderful. But when it isn't very good, it's still all right.

Max Wall

★ Good evening and thank you for your applause. There's still nothing I like more than a warm hand upon my

entrance.

Julian Clary

★ In *Waterworld* you play some kind of fish. Don't you think it's inevitable you get battered by the critics?

Dennis Pennis (a.k.a. Paul Kaye), to Kevin Costner

SPORT

“All we’ve got to look forward to in Britain now is the 2012 Olympic Games. And it’s going to be shit. I mean, do we really want to bankrupt the whole country for the sake of winning one bicycle race?”

Al Murray”

❖ We couldn’t have more excitement here if Elvis walked in and asked for a chip sandwich.

Sid Waddell

❖ The only reason he wins is ’cos he eats plankton.

Hugh Dennis, on Michael Phelps

❖ Rowing seemed to me a monotonous pursuit, and somehow wasteful to be making all that effort to be going in the wrong direction.

Peter Ustinov

❖ Once you have thrown a javelin it is literally out of your hands.

Tessa Sanderson

❖ Cambridge have won the boat race. Oxford were second.

Geoff Twentyman

❖ My brother said, “Why don’t you come fishing?”

I said, “I don’t want to do that – it’s basically dogging without the sex.” Hours out in the open . . . you’re bound to catch something. And then there’s the old dilemma: kill ’em, or let them go?

Sean Lock

❖ I never willingly chased a ball.

Robert Morley

❖ I tend to grunt – I’m quite unfit – even in chess. Uhhhggghh!

Michael McIntyre

“ Ah! Isn’t that nice? The wife of the Cambridge president is kissing the cox of the Oxford crew.

Harry Carpenter, commentating
on the Oxford–Cambridge boat race ”

❖ There are really only three things to learn in skiing: how to put on your skis, how to slide downhill, and how to walk along the hospital corridor.

Lord Mancroft

❖ That’s inches away from being millimetre perfect.

Ted Lowe

❖ So, this is Gregoriava from Bulgaria. I saw her snatch this morning and it was amazing.

Pat Glenn, weightlifting commentator

❖ What on earth has this synchronized swimming got to do with anything, let alone sport?

Frank Keating

❖ I have recently taken up two new sports: roller skating and ankle spraining, in that order. I am getting quite good at both.

Miles Kington

❖ He’s completely disappeared. He’s gone back to his dressing room; nobody knows where he has gone.

Ted Lowe

❖ Sport: essentially just enormous fat people sat down, stuffing their faces, roaring their disapproval at the most finely tuned athletes in the world.

Dylan Moran

There is only one thing now that will unconditionally reduce me to tears. And it's not human suffering. It's not polar bears standing on tiny pieces of ice, although I know it should be. The only thing now that will unconditionally make me weep is slow-motion sequences of sporting triumph and failure set to rock ballads from the 1980s.

John Oliver

❖ The only athletic sport I ever mastered was backgammon.

Douglas Jerrold

❖ Deerstalking would be a very fine sport if only the deer had guns.

W.S. Gilbert

❖ Well, clearly, Graeme, it all went according to plan.
What was the plan, exactly?

Elton Wellsby

❖ It looks like a one-man show here, although there are two men involved.

John Motson

❖ I'm against hunting, in fact I'm a hunt saboteur. I go out the night before and shoot the fox.

Tim Vine

★ ATHLETICS ★

❖ Do you have to plan your tactics before the race or do you just try and run faster than the other blokes?

Mrs Merton (a.k.a. Caroline Aherne) to Kris Akabusi

“Kids are no longer taught competitive sport. My daughter tells me in PE the teacher sticks some music on and they all gallop around the room pretending to be unicorns. I’ve a sneaking suspicion, come the 2012 Olympics, we’re going to be in deep shit.

Morgan Jones”

❖ I became a great runner because if you’re a kid in Leeds and your name is Sebastian you’ve got to become a great runner.

Sebastian Coe

❖ The worst thing about cross-country is cleaning the mud off your spikes afterwards.

Paula Radcliffe

❖ I wasn’t a very athletic boy. I was once lapped in the long jump.

Ronnie Corbett

❖ At Crystal Palace this evening, Neville Stitch broke his own world record in the 800 metres. He was so pleased he went on to try the high hurdles, but, thinking they were the low hurdles, he shattered his personal best.

Ronnie Corbett

❖ My body, from the neck down, is very efficient.

Paula Radcliffe

“And the line-up for the final of the women’s 400 metres hurdles includes three Russians, two East Germans, a Pole, a Swede and a Frenchman.

David Coleman”

★ BOXING ★

❖ Boxing’s just show business with blood.

Frank Bruno

❖ Frank Bruno says I’m chicken. Well, you can tell him I’ve come home to roost.

Joe Bugner

❖ I was a hopeless boxer. I had handles sewn into my shorts so that they could carry me out of the ring easily.

Les Dawson

❖ All this boxing you’re doing, you know, there’s a real danger it might sorta stop people taking your pantomime seriously.

Dennis Pennis (a.k.a. Paul Kaye) to Frank Bruno

❖ Mrs Merton (a.k.a. Caroline Aherne): Do you see Roy over there with the glasses . . . have you ever had a fight with him?

Chris Eubank: Of course not.

Mrs Merton: You liar, Roy!

My uncle once punched a man so hard his legs became trombones. It’s genius.

Vince Noir (Noel Fielding),
The Mighty Boosh

❖ He looks up at him through blood-smeared lips.

Harry Carpenter

❖ Chris Eubank lost his recent comeback fight on points . . . the main one being

that he's a total git.

Nick Hancock

❖ This boxer is doing what is expected of him: bleeding from his nose.

Harry Carpenter

❖ That's cricket, Harry, you get those sort of things in boxing.

Frank Bruno

❖ A rematch with Eubank is not in my plans. I'm not interested in him because he's got nothing I want . . . except a Harley-Davidson motorbike.

Nigel Benn

“Frank Bruno's fall was that of a felled oak. As the dust settled there was a silence, and then followed the gentle rustle of falling leaves of greenbacks.

Frank Keating”

★ CRICKET ★

❖ They should cut Joel Garner off at the knees to make him bowl at a normal height.

Geoffrey Boycott

❖ Glenn Turner looks a bit shaky and unsteady, but I think he's going to bat on – one ball left.

Brian Johnston, cricket commentator,
after the New Zealand batsman was dealt a
painful blow to the box by the fifth delivery of an over

❖ Shane Warne is thicker than a complete set of Wisden yearbooks.

Matt Price

❖ That was a tremendous six; the ball was still in the air as it went over the

boundary Fred Trueman

❖ The traditional dress of the Australian cricketer is the baggy green cap on the head and the chip on the shoulder. Both are ritualistically assumed.

Simon Barnes

❖ Martin Johnson: How anyone can spin a ball the width of Gatting boggles the mind.

Graham Gooch: If it had been a cheese roll, it would never have got past him.

❖ With the possible exception of Rolf Harris, no other Australian has inflicted more pain and grief on Englishmen since Don Bradman.

Mike Walters, on Steve Waugh's retirement

❖ No captain with all the hindsight in the world can predict how the wicket is going to play.

Trevor Bailey

The batsman's Holding, the bowler's Willey.

Brian Johnston

❖ Mark Waugh: Fuck me, look who it is. Mate, what are you doing out here, there's no way you're good enough to play for England.

James Ormond: Maybe not, but at least I'm the best player in my family.

❖ Anyone foolish enough to predict the outcome of this match is a fool.

Fred Trueman

❖ It is easier to choose a bat than pick a wife. A bat has a watermark of quality – the grain. The one basic flaw in the otherwise perfect constitution of women is that you can't detect the knots in the grain until it is too late.

Michael Parkinson

❖ Neil Harvey's at slip, with his legs wide apart, waiting for a tickle.

Brian Johnston

❖ This bowler's like my dog: three short legs and balls that swing each way.

Brian Johnston

❖ I don't like defensive shots; you can only get threes.

W.G. Grace

❖ We owe some gratitude to Gatting and Lamb, who breathed some life into a corpse which had nearly expired.

Trevor Bailey

❖ The first time you face up to a googly you're going to be in trouble if you've never faced one before.

Trevor Bailey

❖ Fred Titmus has two short legs, one of them square.

Brian Johnston

❖ And we don't need a calculator to tell us that the run-rate required is 4.5454 per over.

Christopher Martin-Jenkins

❖ It's a catch he would have caught ninety-nine times out of a thousand.

Henry Blofeld

❖ Charisma seems to me a limited asset to a captain.

Mike Brearley, former captain of the
England cricket team

“There aren't many games in the entire sporting calendar where you can go after four days of play, “Who's going to win,” and get the reply back, “It's too

early to tell.”

Andy Parsons”

❖ When you win the toss – bat. If you are in doubt, think about it, then bat. If you have very big doubts, consult a colleague – then bat.

W.G. Grace

❖ There are 100,000 stars in our galaxy and 1,000 million galaxies. I am sure cricket must be being played elsewhere.

Patrick Moore

❖ England have only three major problems. They can't bat, they can't bowl and they can't field.

Martin Johnson

❖ Cricket is the only game that you can actually put on weight when playing.

Tommy Docherty

❖ And a sedentary seagull flies by.

Brian Johnston

“Drink is a serious problem, particularly on cricket tours, for it can be said, without fear of contradiction, that nothing yet devised by man is worse for a sick hangover than a day's cricket in the summer sun.

Michael Parkinson”

❖ How to cure a cricketer's red nose - drink till it's purple.

J.B. Morton

❖ There is nothing in cricket more calculated to raise a laugh than the sight of some determined and serious man under a spiralling catch.

Peter Roebuck

❖ Ha ha – missed both my legs!

Rik Mayall, after being hit in the groin with a cricket bat

❖ I was brought up to believe that cricket is the most important activity in men's lives, the most important thread in the fabric of the cosmos.

Bernard Hollowood

❖ For any budding cricketers listening, do you have any superstitious routines before an innings, like putting one pad on first and then the other one?

Tony Lewis

❖ Many continentals think life is a game; the English think cricket is a game.

George Mikes

❖ Baseball has the great advantage over cricket of being sooner ended.

George Bernard Shaw

❖ A fart competing with thunder.

Captain Graham Gooch's assessment
of the English cricket team in Australia, 1990-1

❖ It's a funny kind of month, October. For the really keen cricket fan it's when you discover that your wife left you in May.

Denis Norden

The aim of English cricket is, in fact, mainly to beat Australia.

Jim Laker

★ FOOTBALL ★

❖ If we start counting our chickens before they hatch, they won't lay any eggs in the basket.

Bobby Robson

“He cannot kick with his left foot, he cannot head a ball, he cannot tackle and he doesn't score many goals. Apart from that he's all right.

George Best,
on David Beckham”

❖ There'll be no siestas in Madrid tonight.

Kevin Keegan

❖ He got a knock on his shin there, just above the knee.

Frank Stapleton

❖ Julian Dicks is everywhere. It's like they've got eleven Dicks on the field.

Metro Radio

❖ It was a good match, which could have gone either way and very nearly did.

Jim Sherwin

❖ Just enough points here for Tony to pull the cat out of the fire.

Ray Edmonds

❖ Manchester United have got the bull between the horns now.

Billy MacNeil

❖ You've got to have eyes all over you in a game like this.

Graham Taylor

❖ Beckham has two feet – which a lot of players don't have nowadays.

Jimmy Hill

❖ People used to say that if I'd shot John Lennon, he's still be alive today.

Garry Birtles

❖ Gary always weighed up his options, especially when he had no choice.

Kevin Keegan

❖ The rest of the team are very large – they dwarf above you.

Fred Dinenage

❖ The thing about sport, any sport, is that swearing is very much part of it.

Jimmy Greaves

Park, Park, where ever you may be
You eat dogs in your home country.
But it could be worse
You could be a Scouse
Eating rats in your council house.

Sung by Manchester United fans,
to visiting Liverpool fans,
to the tune of "Lord of the Dance"

❖ Oh, he had an eternity to play that ball, but he took too long over it.

Martin Tyler

❖ McCarthy shakes his head in agreement with the referee.

Martin Tyler

❖ They can crumble as easily as ice cream in this heat.

Sammy Nelson

❖ Richard Keys: Well Roy, do you think that you'll have to finish above Manchester United to win the league?

Roy Evans: You have to finish above everyone to win the league, Richard.

❖ Ian Rush, deadly ten times out of ten, but that wasn't one of them.

Peter Jones

❖ Kenneth Clarke: Isn't it terrible about losing to the Germans at our national sport, Prime Minister?

Margaret Thatcher: I shouldn't worry too much – we've beaten them twice this century at theirs.

“I was watching Germany and I got up to make a cup of tea. I bumped into the telly and Klinsmann fell over.

Frank Skinner”

❖ Newcastle, of course, unbeaten in their last five wins.

Brian Moore

❖ Despite the rain, it's still raining here at Old Trafford.

Jimmy Hill

❖ We managed to wrong a few rights.

Kevin Keegan

❖ Yes, he is not unused to playing in midfield, but at the same time he's not used to playing there either.

Emlyn Hughes

As you run around Battersea Park in them, looking like a cross between a member of the SAS and *Blake's Seven*, there is always the lingering fear of arrest.

Brian Moore,
on England's new rubber training suit

Who ate all the pies?
Who ate all the pies?
You fat bastard!
You fat bastard!
You ate all the pies!

Football supporters' chant

❖ He's pulling him off! The Spanish manager is pulling his captain off!

George Hamilton

❖ And I honestly believe we can go all the way to Wembley . . . unless somebody knocks us out.

Dave Bassett

❖ We signed to play until the day we died, and we did.

Jimmy Greaves

❖ It's like a toaster, the ref's shirt pocket. Every time there's a tackle, up pops a yellow card.

Kevin Keegan

❖ It's Arsenal 0 – Everton 1, and the longer it stays like that the more you've got to fancy Everton.

John Motson

❖ We've got DiCanio,
You've got our stereo.

Chant of West Ham fans, to Liverpool fans

Oh the shadow outside is frightening,
Stops the sun from shining,
You see it wherever he goes,
Thompson's nose, Thompson's nose, Thompson's nose.

Sung by Manchester United fans,
on Liverpool player Phil Thompson,
to the tune of "Let it Snow"

❖ I think the action replay showed it to be worse than it actually was.

Ron Atkinson

❖ He's quick, he's red, he talks like Father Ted.

Liverpool fans' chant about their
Irish player Robbie Keane

❖ We absolutely annihilated England. It was a massacre. We beat them 5-4.

Bill Shankly

❖ Steve McCahill has limped off with a badly cut forehead.

Tom Ferrie

❖ Sol Campbell there, using his strength. And that is his strength. His strength.

Kevin Keegan

It's neat,
It's weird,
It's Rafa's goatee beard.

Liverpool fans' chant

about their manager Rafael Benitez

❖ England now have three fresh men, with three fresh legs.

Jimmy Hill

❖ Well, as for Ian Rush, he's perfectly fit, apart, that is, from his physical fitness.

Mike England

❖ The trouble with referees is that they know the rules, but they do not know the game.

Bill Shankly

❖ Aye, Roger Hunt misses a few, but he gets in the right place to miss them.

Bill Shankly

❖ It's always very satisfying to beat Arsenal, as indeed Arsenal would admit.

Peter Jones

❖ Gary Speed has never played better, never looked fitter, never been older.

Bobby Robson

❖ I was saying the other day how often the most vulnerable area for goalies is between their legs.

Andy Gray

He's got ginger pubes
He's got ginger pubes
Gordon Strachan, Gordon Strachan
He's got ginger pubes.

Celtic fans' chant,
about the club's manager

❖ I think everyone in the stadium went home happy, except all those people in Romania.

Ron Greenwood

❖ The goals made such a difference to the way this game went.

John Motson

“Rooney seems to have modelled his style of play on the baby elephant that ran amok in the Blue Peter studio. There is the same impossible size, and there is the same impossibly young age – Rooney is still only eighteen. There is the same air of not being quite in control, as if he hadn’t yet got around to counting his limbs.

Simon Barnes”

❖ The substitute is about to come on – he’s a player who was left out of the starting line-up today.

Kevin Keegan

His name is Angel,
And he’s a show boy,
An Alice band keeps up his hair,
Juan Pablo from Col-om-bi-air.

First verse of the five-verse chant that earned Jonny Hurst the position of football’s Chant Laureate, to the tune of “Copacabana”

❖ Well, either side could win it, or it could be a draw.

Ron Atkinson

❖ That shot might not have been as good as it might have been.

John Motson

❖ At least we were consistent – useless in defence, mediocre in midfield and crap up front.

Ron Atkinson

❖ I don't believe in luck . . . but I do believe you need it.

Alan Ball

❖ I don't blame individuals, Elton, I blame myself.

Joe Royle

❖ Welcome to Bologna on Capital Gold for England versus San Marino with Tennent's Pilsner, brewed with Czechoslovakian yeast for that extra Pilsner taste and England are one down.

Jonathan Pearce

He's only a poor little Scouser,
His face is all battered and torn.
He made me feel sick,
So I hit him with a brick,
And now he don't sing any more.

Sung by Manchester United fans
to the tune of "I'm Only a Poor Little Sparrow"

❖ I know what is around the corner – I just don't know where the corner is. But the onus is on us to perform and we must control the bandwagon.

Kevin Keegan

❖ One day, someone will end a football game scoring more than Brazil. This MIGHT be the time that they lose.

Bobby Robson

❖ Tony Adams stretching, waiting for Seaman to come out.

Brian Moore

❖ Monday, Tuesday, Habib Beyé.

Sung by Newcastle fans,
about their player Habib Beyé,
to the tune of "Happy Days"

❖ Kicked wide of the goal with such precision.

Des Lynam

❖ You've got to believe that you're going to win, and I believe we'll win the World Cup until the final whistle blows and we're knocked out.

Peter Shilton

Arsene Wenger's magic,
He wears a magic hat,
And when he saw the double,
He said, "I'm having that."
Oooooooo . . .

Sung by Arsenal fans,
about the club's manager,
to the tune of "My Old Man's a Dustman"

❖ I've never wanted to leave. I'm here for the rest of my life, and hopefully after that as well.

Alan Shearer

❖ You couldn't have counted the number of moves Alan Ball made. I counted four, and possibly five.

John Motson

❖ I'd love to be a mole on the wall in the Liverpool dressing room at half time.

Kevin Keegan

❖ If Everton were playing down at the bottom of my garden, I'd draw the curtains.

Bill Shankly

❖ I felt a lump in my mouth as the ball went in.

Terry Venables

When you're sat in row Z
And the ball hits your head,
That's Zamora, that's Zamora.

Sung by Fulham fans,
on their player Bobby Zamora,
to the tune of "That's Amore"

❖ Deep fry yer pizzas, we're gonna deep fry yer pizzas.

Chant of Scotland fans when in Italy

❖ I'd like to play for an Italian club, like Barcelona.

Mark Draper

❖ Football's always easier when you've got the ball.

Kevin Keegan

❖ What makes this game so delightful is that when both teams get the ball they are attacking their opponent's goal.

Jimmy Hill

Sign on, sign on,
With a pen in your hand,
'Cos you'll never work again,
You'll never work again,
Sign on, sign on.

Sung by Aston Villa fans,
to Liverpool fans,
to the tune of "You'll Never Walk Alone"

❖ If England had scored in the first half, I think the young legs would have found younger hearts inside them.

Jimmy Armfield

❖ It's now 1-1, an exact reversal of the score on Saturday.

Radio 5 Live

❖ The English football team: brilliant on paper, shit on grass.

Arthur Smith

❖ OK, so we lost, but good things can come from it –
negative and positive.

Glenn Hoddle

❖ Ian Rush unleashed his left foot and it hit the back of the net.

Mike England

❖ You have to get your priorities right. Women are around all the time but
World Cups come only every four years.

Peter Osgood

He's here, he's there,
He's every fucking where –
Frank Leboeuf, Frank Leboeuf.

Original version,
sung by Chelsea fans,
on their player Frank Leboeuf

He's here, he's there,
We're not allowed to swear –
Frank Leboeuf, Frank Leboeuf.

Amended version,
sung by Chelsea fans,
following a request from the player

❖ I'm not going to make it a target but it's something to

aim for.

Steve Coppel

❖ The crowd think that Todd handled the ball . . . they must have seen something that nobody else did.

Barry Davies

❖ And Lineker scored the equalizer thirteen minutes before the end – talk about a last-minute goal.

Simon Mayo

❖ The only thing I have in common with George Best is that we came from the same place, play for the same club and were discovered by the same man.

Norman Whiteside

❖ Two Andy Gorams, there's only two Andy Gorams.

Celtic fans' chant about rival Rangers player Goram
after he was diagnosed with schizophrenia

❖ The scoreline didn't really reflect the outcome.

Tony Gubba

❖ I never comment on referees and I'm not going to break the habit of a lifetime for that prat.

Ron Atkinson

❖ Bryan Robson, well, he does what he does and his future is in the future.

Ron Greenwood

❖ Chile have three options – they could win or they could lose.

Kevin Keegan

❖ If that had gone in it would have been a goal.

David Coleman

❖ We have been saying this, both pre-season and before the season started.

Len Ashurst

❖ An inch or two either side of the post and that would have been a goal.

Dave Bassett

❖ You should've stayed on the telly.

Liverpool fans' chant,
about Newcastle United's manager, Alan Shearer

❖ The first ninety minutes of a football match are the most important.

Bobby Robson

Neville Neville, you play in defence,
Neville Neville, your play is immense,
Neville Neville, like Jacko you're bad,
Neville Neville is the name of your dad.

Sung by Manchester United fans,
on their player Gary Neville,
to the tune of "Rebel Rebel"

❖ And Arsenal now have plenty of time to dictate the last few seconds.

Peter Jones

❖ The match will be shown on *Match of the Day* this evening. If you don't want to know the result, look away now as we show you Tony Adams lifting the trophy for Arsenal.

Steve Rider

❖ He's blond,

He's slick,
His name's a porno flick.

Arsenal fans' chant, about their player Emmanuel Petit

❖ This is a tremendous asset for the club, a tremendous headache lifted from our shoulders, really.

Elton John

❖ The match has become quite unpredictable, but it still looks as though Arsenal will win the cup.

John Motson

❖ Whoever wins today will win the championship, no matter who wins.

Denis Law

❖ The Queen Mother of football.

Arthur Smith, on Gary Lineker

❖ Does your butler know you're here?

Southend fans' chant, to Chelsea fans

❖ Leeds is a great club and it's been my home for years, even though I live in Middlesbrough.

Jonathan Woodgate

❖ We could be putting the hammer in Luton's coffin.

Ray Wilkins

He's fat,
He's round,
He bounces on the ground,
Sammy Lee.

Liverpool fans' chant
on their club's coach

❖ The natural state of the football fan is bitter disappointment, no matter what the score.

Nick Hornby

❖ Your mum does your laundry.

Wimbledon fans' chant to university side Team Bath

❖ I faxed a transfer request to the club at the beginning of the week, but let me state that I don't want to leave Leicester.

Stan Collymore

❖ I don't know if that result's enough to lift Birmingham off the bottom of the table, although it'll certainly take them above Sunderland.

Mike Ingham

❖ You'd think, if any team could put up a decent wall, it would be China.

Terry Venables

❖ . . . and with eight minutes left the game could be won or lost in the next five or ten minutes.

Jimmy Armfield

❖ Literally, he hasn't got a right foot . . . although not literally.

David Pleat

❖ I've had this sneaking feeling throughout the game that it's there to be won.

Ron Atkinson

❖ He's very fast, and if he gets a yard ahead of himself nobody will catch him.

Bobby Robson

❖ He dribbles a lot and the opposition don't like it – you can see it all over their faces.

Ron Atkinson

Dirk Kuyt, as good as he may be,
Hit every branch on the ugly tree.
Like Fowler, Crouch and Craig Bellamy
Dirk Kuyt's boss but he's fucking ugly.

Sung by Liverpool fans,
about their player Dirk Kuyt,
to the tune of "Lord of the Dance"

Don't blame it on the Biscan
Don't blame it on the Hamann
Don't blame it on the Finnan
Blame it on Traoré
He just can't, he just can't, he just can't control his feet . . .

Liverpool fans' chant
about Arsenal player, Armand Traoré,
to the tune of "Blame it on the Boogie"

- ❖ One accusation you can't throw at me is that I've always done my best.

Alan Shearer

- ❖ The ref was vertically fifteen yards away.

Kevin Keegan

- ❖ Great goal by Moss, straight into the textbook.

Gerry Harrison

- ❖ He hit the post, and after the game people will say, well, he hit the post.

Jimmy Greaves

He's fat,
He's round
He swears like Chubby Brown
Joe Kinnear, Joe Kinnear.

Newcastle fans' chant,
about the club's manager

❖ Reporter: Bang, there goes your unbeaten run. Can you take it?

Gordon Strachan: No, I'm just going to crumble like a wreck. I'll go home, become an alcoholic and maybe jump off a bridge. Umm, I think I can take it, yeah.

Allan, Allan McGregor,
He couldn't handle his Stella.

Sung by Scotland fans,
about their goalkeeper,
to the tune of "Abracadabra"

❖ I've told the players we need to win so that I can have the cash to buy some new ones.

Chris Turner

❖ A game is not won until it is lost.

David Pleat

❖ They're the second best team in the world, and there's no higher praise than that.

Kevin Keegan

❖ Not the first half you might have expected, even though the score might suggest that it was.

John Motson

❖ Manchester United have hit the ground running – albeit with a 3-0 defeat.

Bob Wilson

❖ Billy Gilbert hit a kamikaze back pass, which Justin Fashinu pounced on like a black Frank Bruno.

Ian Dark

❖ Nottingham Forest are having a bad run, they've lost six matches in a row now without winning.

David Coleman

❖ 52,000 people here at Maine Road tonight, but – my goodness me – it seems like 50,000.

Byron Butler

❖ Woah-oh Theo Walcott,
Theo, Theo Walcott.
He's an Englishman at Arsenal.

Sung by Arsenal fans
about their player Theo Walcott,
to the tune of "Englishman in New York"

❖ I've got more important things to think about. I've got a yoghurt to finish by today, the expiry date is today. That can be my priority rather than Agustin Delgado.

Gordon Strachan

❖ Where's your hair at?

Sung by Manchester City fans, to Sunderland player
Djibril Cisse, to the tune of "Where's Your Head At?"

❖ They took Wembley stadium down, but there's a little bit of ground with Colin Hendry still standing there.

Paul Gascoigne, on his famous goal
against Scotland, where he completely
wrongfooted the defender, Hendry

There's only one Bolo Zenden,
One Bolo Zenden.
He used to be shite,
But now he's all right,

Walking in a Zenden Wonderland.

Sung by Liverpool fans,
on their midfielder,
to the tune of “Winter Wonderland”

❖ Reporter: Is that your best start to a season?

Gordon Strachan: Well, I’ve still got a job so it’s far better than the Coventry one, that’s for sure.

❖ If we played like that every week we wouldn’t be so inconsistent.

Bryan Robson

❖ Don’t tell those coming in now the result of that fantastic match. Now let’s have another look at Italy’s winning goal.

David Coleman

❖ England have the best fans in the world, and Scotland’s fans are second to none.

Kevin Keegan

❖ Well actually we got the winner up there with three minutes to go, but then they equalized.

Ian McNail

❖ Leighton Baines,
I bet you think this song is about you.

Sung by Everton fans,
about their player,
to the tune of “You’re So Vain”

❖ If you can’t stand the heat in the dressing-room, get out of the kitchen.

Terry Venables

❖ If you don't believe you can win, there is no point in getting out of bed at the end of the day.

Neville Southall

❖ You don't get two chances at this level, or at any other level for that matter.

Kevin Keegan

❖ I've had fourteen bookings this season – eight of which were my fault, but seven of which were disputable.

Paul Gascoigne

We've got joy, we have fun,
We've got Jari Litmanen.
He's got style, he's got flair,
Got a mullet, we don't care.

Sung by Liverpool fans,
about their player,
to the tune of "Seasons in the Sun"

❖ The match has gradually and suddenly come to a climax.

David Vine

❖ Jimmy Hill: Don't sit on the fence, Terry – what chance do you think Germany has got of getting through?
Terry Venables: I think it's fifty-fifty.

❖ If he had gunpowder for brains he couldn't blow his cap off.

Bill Shankly

❖ I always used to put my right boot on first, and then obviously my right sock.

Barry Venison

❖ Luis Figo is totally different to David Beckham, and vice versa.

Kevin Keegan

There's only one Vince Grella,
'ella, 'ella, hey, hey, hey.

Sung by Blackburn-Wigan fans,
about their player,
to the tune "Umbrella"

❖ The game has gone rather scrappy as both sides realize they could win this match or lose it.

Kevin Keegan

❖ And Ritchie has now scored eleven goals, exactly double the number he scored last season.

Alan Parry

❖ Don't cha wish your midfield had Kompany?

Sung by Manchester City fans,
on their player Vincent Kompany,
to the tune of "Don't Cha"

❖ I don't think there is anybody bigger or smaller than Maradona.

Kevin Keegan

❖ Goalkeepers aren't born today until they're in their late twenties or thirties, and sometimes not even then.

Kevin Keegan

❖ I am a firm believer that if you score one goal the other team have to score two to win.

Howard Wilkinson

❖ The Germans only have one player under twenty-two, and he's twenty-three.

Kevin Keegan

❖ Roy Keane has said that he will stay at Manchester United through thick and thin – or Becks and Posh, as they are known.

Rory Bremner

We're shit, but you're worse than us,
We're shit, but you're worse than us,
We're shit, but you're worse than us,
We're shit, but you're worse than us . . . *etc.*

Bolton fans' chant,
to Everton fans

❖ The manager still has a fresh pair of legs up his sleeve.

John Greig

❖ I went to watch Spurs at White Hart Lane last week. I stayed until the very end of the game to avoid the traffic.

Frank Skinner

Sit down, Pinocchio
Sit down, Pinocchio
Sit down, Pinocchio
Sit down, Pinocchio . . .

Football fans' chant
to any player with a big nose

❖ The World Cup is every four years, so it's going to be a perennial problem.

Gary Lineker

❖ Brian Clough's worse than the rain in Manchester. At least God stops that occasionally.

Bill Shankly

❖ He's one of those footballers whose brains are in his head.

Derek Johnstone

John Carew, Carew,
He likes a lap-dance or two.
He might even pay for you.
John Carew, Carew.

Sung by Aston Villa fans,
to their striker after he was
caught visiting a strip club,
to the tune of "Que Sera"

❖ If there weren't such a thing as football, we'd all be frustrated footballers.

Mick Lyons

❖ The goals made such a difference to the way this game went.

John Motson

❖ He sliced the ball when he had it on a plate.

Ron Atkinson

❖ I'll never play at Wembley again, unless I play at Wembley again.

Kevin Keegan

He's got no neck,
He looks like fucking Shrek,
Wayne Rooney, Wayne Rooney.

Newcastle fans' chant,

to Manchester United fans

❖ Brazil – they’re so good it’s like they are running round the pitch playing with themselves.

John Motson

❖ Butcher goes forward as Ipswich throw their last trump card into the fire.

Byron Butler

GOLF ★

“I do regard the playing of golf as like entering the antechamber to death. When my mates tell me they’ve started playing golf, I mentally cross them off the Christmas card list.

John Peel”

❖ What a terrible round of golf! I only hit two good balls all day and that was when I stood on a rake.

Jimmy Tarbuck

❖ Some weeks Nick likes to use Fanny; other weeks he prefers to do it by himself.

Ken Brown, on Nick Faldo
and his caddy Fanny Sunneson

❖ When male golfers wriggle their feet to get their stance right they look exactly like cats preparing to pee.

Jilly Cooper

❖ If God had intended a round of golf to take more than three hours. He would not have invented Sunday lunch.

Jimmy Hill

<p>– You know what your main trouble is? – What? – You stand too close to the ball after you’ve hit it.</p> <p>Eric Morecambe and Ernie Wise</p>
--

❖ Golf is a day spent in a round of strenuous idleness.

William Wordsworth

❖ I’ve got a feeling for the game of golf. I did very well on the course in Skegness, until I got stuck in one of the little wooden windmills.

Rigsby (Leonard Rossiter), *Rising Damp*

❖ What’s the deal with golf? People play it wearing one glove. You wouldn’t play it wearing one shoe, would you? They say it’s for grip. But you know what would give more grip? Two gloves.

Lee Evans

❖ Golf seems to be an arduous way to go for a walk. I prefer to take the dogs out.

Princess Anne

★ HORSE RACING ★

❖ I’m lucky because I have an athlete between my legs.

Willie Carson, former jockey

❖ I’ve had an interest in racing all my life, or longer really.

Kevin Keegan

❖ A good jockey doesn't need orders, and a bad jockey couldn't carry them out anyway; so it's best not to give them any.

Lester Piggott

“ I used to live in Newmarket and went to the same newsagent that all the jockeys used. I knew they went there because all the porn was on the bottom shelf.

Lee Mack”

❖ The racecourse is as level as a billiard ball.

John Francombe

★ MOTOR RACING ★

❖ With two laps to go, then the action will begin, unless this is the action, which it is.

Murray Walker

❖ It's lap twenty-six of fifty-eight, which, unless I'm very much mistaken, is halfway.

Murray Walker

❖ Cornering is like bringing a woman to climax.

Jackie Stewart

❖ There's nothing wrong with the car, except that it's on fire.

Murray Walker

“ Every time I get into a taxi, the driver will tell me I can go for free, if I give him a commentary on the drive.

Peter O'Sullivan,

”
racing commentator

❖ And there's no damage to the car. Except to the car itself.

Murray Walker

❖ Alboreto has dropped back up to fifth place.

Murray Walker

❖ With half the race gone, there is half the race still to go.

Murray Walker

❖ My first priority is to finish above rather than beneath the ground.

James Hunt

❖ And he's done that in a whisker under ten seconds –
call it 9.7 in round figures.

Murray Walker

❖ The front wheel crosses the finish line, closely followed by the back wheel.

David Coleman

❖ The gap between the two cars is 0.9 of a second, which
is less than one second.

Murray Walker

❖ Tambay's hopes, which were nil before, are absolutely zero now.

Murray Walker

❖ Do my eyes deceive me, or is Senna's Lotus sounding a bit rough?

Murray Walker

❖ This has been a great season for Nelson Piquet, as he is now known, and
always has been.

Murray Walker

❖ And the first five places are filled by five different cars.

Murray Walker

❖ I can't believe what is happening, visually, in front of my eyes . . .

Murray Walker

❖ The racing car in front is absolutely unique, except for the racing car behind which is absolutely identical.

Murray Walker

❖ What does it feel like being rammed up the backside by Barrichello?

James Allen,
interviewing Ralf Schumacher

❖ Nigel Mansell – the man of the race – the man of the day – the man from the Isle of Man.

Murray Walker

❖ We now have exactly the same situation as we had at the start of the race, only exactly the opposite.

Murray Walker

❖ Andrea de Cesaris . . . the man who has won more Grands Prix than anyone else without actually winning one of them.

Murray Walker

★ **RUGBY** ★

❖ I think you enjoy the game more if you don't know the rules. Anyway, you're on the same wavelength as the referees.

Jonathan Davies

❖ Rugby is a game for men with no fear of brain injury.

Linda Smith

❖ League is much, much more physical than Union, and that's before anyone starts breaking the rules.

Adrian Hadley

“We've lost seven of our last eight matches. Only team that we've beaten was Western Samoa. Good job we didn't play the whole of Samoa.

Gareth Davies”

❖ Every time I went to tackle him, Horrocks went one way, Taylor went the other, and all I got was the bloody hyphen.

Nick England,
on trying to tackle Phil Horrocks-Taylor

❖ I prefer rugby to soccer. I enjoy the violence in rugby except when they start biting each other's ears off.

Elizabeth Taylor

❖ People say Jonny Wilkinson's a sporting icon just 'cos he can kick a ball over a bar. I'm a Liverpool fan and Emile Heskey did that for four years!

John Bishop

“My main problem with rugby is, why is the ball pointy? Why make it random?

“It’s gonna bounce, it’s gonna bounce . . . oh it’s gone mad!” It’s just like a very muscular form of crazy golf.

Dara O Briain”

❖ If I am in a minority of one it does not mean to say I am wrong.

Clive Woodward

❖ Rugby is a good occasion for keeping thirty bullies far from the centre of the city.

Oscar Wilde

❖ Scotland are staring down the barrel of a wooden spoon.

Will Greenwood

The main difference between playing League and Union is that now I get my hangovers on Monday instead of Sunday.

Tom David

❖ No leadership, no ideas. Not even enough imagination to thump someone in the line-up when the ref wasn’t looking.

J.P.R. Williams

★ SNOOKER ★

❖ For those of you watching in black and white, the green ball’s the one behind the brown.

Ted Lowe

❖ I can’t play snooker any more, ever since someone told me it’s like tossing off

a man behind you.

Michael McIntyre

❖ I think it's a great idea to talk during sex, as long as it's about snooker.

Steve Davis

❖ Someone threw a petrol bomb at Alex Higgins once and he drank it.

Frank Carson

❖ He's lucky in one sense and lucky in the other.

Ted Lowe

❖ If the ball wasn't where it was, he could not have played that shot.

Willie Thorne

❖ And it is my guess that Steve Davis will try to score as many points as he can this frame.

Ted Lowe

❖ Stephen Hendry jumps on Steve Davis' misses every chance he gets.

Mike Hallett

★ TENNIS ★

❖ He's the human form of beige.

Linda Smith, on Tim Henman,
former British number one player

“If Tim Henman had won Wimbledon it would have been so weird it would have actually torn a hole in our reality . . . “Here to present the trophy is Winston

Churchill.”

Frankie Boyle, on Tim Henman,
former British number one player”

❖ What a polite game tennis is. The chief word in it seems to be “Sorry”, and admiration of each other’s play crosses the net as frequently as the ball.

J.M. Barrie



SUCCESS AND FAILURE

* There's nothing the British like better than a bloke who comes from nowhere, makes it, and then gets clobbered.

Melvyn Bragg

* A satisfied customer. We should have him stuffed.

Basil Fawlty (John Cleese), *Fawlty Towers*

* I'm going to start at the bottom and work my way down.

P.G. Wodehouse

* The impossible lives next to the possible; people ring its doorbell by accident all the time.

Tibor Fischer

* If there is such a thing as reincarnation, knowing my luck, I'll come back as me.

Rodney Trotter (Nicholas Lyndhurst),
Only Fools and Horses

I didn't get where I am today by wearing underpants decorated with Beethoven.

C.J. (John Barron),
The Fall and Rise of Reginald Perrin

* I'm going nowhere, Lynn. Quite literally; I'm on the ring road.

Alan Partridge (a.k.a. Steve Coogan)

* To refuse awards is another way of accepting them with more noise than is normal.

Peter Ustinov

* Whom the gods wish to destroy they first call promising.

Cyril Connolly

* Everything happens to everybody sooner or later if there is time enough.

George Bernard Shaw

* I am a quitter! I come from a long line of quitters! It's amazing I'm here at all.

Bernard Black (Dylan Moran), *Black Books*

* Reality can destroy the dream; why shouldn't the dream destroy reality?

George Moore

* Performance stands out like a ton of diamonds. Nonperformance can always be explained away.

Harold S. Geneen

* Fences only become barriers if you choose to leap them.

Alan Bennett

“It is only possible to succeed at second-rate pursuits – like becoming a millionaire or a prime minister, winning a war, seducing beautiful women, flying through the stratosphere or landing on the moon.

Malcolm Muggeridge”

* He's ranked number three in Britain, number four in the world. You can't get any higher.

John Lowe

* Man is the only animal which esteems itself rich in proportion to the number and voracity of its parasites.

George Bernard Shaw

* God was satisfied with his own work, and that is fatal.

Samuel Butler

* If Harry Potter's so magical, why can't he cure his own eyesight and get laid?
A teenage lad shouldn't need a broomstick to cling onto.

Frankie Boyle

* I could manage the England team part-time and still
walk the dog.

Brian Clough

* Behind every great man there lies a great woman. And one in front of him as
well if he's lucky.

Simon Munnery

“When you have found the shrubbery, then you must cut down the mightiest
tree in the forest . . . with a herring.

Tall Knight (Michael Palin),

Monty Python and the Holy Grail”

* Mother always told me my day was coming, but I never realized I'd end up
being the shortest knight of the year.

Gordon Richards, on receiving his knighthood

* When things are at their worst I find something always happens.

W. Somerset Maugham

* All men are born equal, but quite a few eventually get
over it.

Lord Mancroft

You have to be a bastard to make it, and that's a fact. And The Beatles are the biggest bastards on earth.

John Lennon

* You can either see it as selfless dedication to public service broadcasting, or a shocking lack of ambition.

John Peel, on his BBC radio career

* Power corrupts. Absolute power is kind of neat.

John Lennon

“Phil Collins is one of these people who, if you went round to his house, the first thing he'd do is show you all his gold records. He's probably got pictures on the wall of him shaking hands with Eric Clapton and Sting.

Jarvis Cocker”

* I'm still the best Keith Moon-type drummer in the world.

Keith Moon

* Remember, diamonds are only lumps of coal that stuck to their jobs.

B.C. Forbes

* I can forgive Alfred Nobel for having invented dynamite, but only a fend in human form could have invented the Nobel Prize.

George Bernard Shaw

* Surely there must be more to romance than some brazen scramble for the most socially valued genes as exemplified by the ability to get a BMW?

Michael Kelly

* My career is going better now than when I was younger. It used to be that I'd get the girl but not the part. Now I get the part but not the girl.

Michael Caine

- * There's no jealousy in the grave.

Rudyard Kipling

“My medals! I love wearing them to Elton John's annual bash because mine are nicer than his. I'm a chevalier, a knight, a sheikh and a prince Tuareg in Western Sudan. I look like Idi Amin when I've got them all on.

Bob Geldof”

- * Turn up your radio. Watch lots of telly and eat loads of choc. Feel guilty. Stay up all night. Learn everything in six hours that has taken you two years to compile. That's how I did it.

Dawn French

- * I used to nick suits for a living, now I pay a grand for them.

Chris Eubank

- * If you asked my men who they'd rather meet – you or the man who cleans the toilets in Aberdeen – they'd go for Wee Jock PooPong McPlop every day of the week.

Captain Blackadder (Rowan Atkinson),
Blackadder Goes Forth

- * At the end of the day, it's all about what's on the shelf at the end of the year.

Steve Coppel

- * There's terrific merit in having no sense of humour, no sense of irony, practically no sense of anything at all. If you're born with these so-called defects you have a very good chance of getting to the top.

Peter Cook

- * The great advantage of being in a rut is that when one is in a rut, one knows exactly where one is.

Arnold Bennett

* My career must be slipping. This is the first time I've been available to pick up an award.

Michael Caine

* It's no good running a pig farm badly for thirty years while saying, "Really, I was meant to be a ballet dancer." By then, pigs will be your style.

Quentin Crisp

* A professional is a man who can do his job when he doesn't feel like it; an amateur is one who can't when he does feel like it.

James Agate

* Even when you're dead you shouldn't lie down and let yourself be buried.

Gordon Lee

* I climbed Mount Everest – from the inside.

Spike Milligan

* Only mediocrity can be trusted to be always at its best.

Max Beerbohm

* He was one of those men who possess almost every gift, except the gift of the power to use them.

Charles Kingsley

“ I never thought that playing with Plasticine would lead to such a glamorous life.

Nick Park,

creator of Wallace and Gromit animations ”

* They are ill discoverers that think there is no land, when they can see nothing but sea.

Francis Bacon, philosopher

* I never make stupid mistakes. Only very, very clever ones.

John Peel

* If at first you don't succeed, failure may be your style.

Quentin Crisp

* They say Rome wasn't built in a day, but I wasn't on that particular job.

Brian Clough

* And I want to say, anything is possible. Comma. You know.

Frank Bruno

* It is cruel to discover one's mediocrity only when it is too late.

W. Somerset Maugham

* He's completely unspoiled by failure.

Noël Coward

* I don't do the lottery, which means I'm marginally less likely to win than someone who does.

Linda Smith

* In LA, unless you've just won an Oscar or you're Mr Studio Head, no one talks to you. Even at parties.

Rachel Weisz

* Only the impossible is worth attempting. In everything else one is sure to fail.

Celia Green

* Players win games and players lose games, it's all about players really.

Bobby Ferguson

“Think of all the really successful men and women you know. Do you know a single one who didn't learn very young the trick of calling attention to himself in the right quarters?

Storm Jameson”

* I wouldn't say I was the best manager in the business.
But I was in the top one.

Brian Clough

* We can't build a footbridge over the Thames, never mind building an empire.

Hugh Laurie

* A Scout smiles and whistles under all circumstances.

Robert Baden-Powell

* I want to swim in both directions at once. Desire success, court failure.

Alan Rickman

* Moderation is a fatal thing. Nothing succeeds like excess.

Oscar Wilde

Sudden success in golf is like the sudden acquisition of wealth. It is apt to unsettle and deteriorate the character.

P.G. Wodehouse

* I don't know what I'm doing, but I'm damn well gonna do it!

Geri Halliwell

* I owe my success to having listened respectfully to the very best advice, and

then going away and doing the exact opposite.

G.K. Chesterton

* Behind every successful man stands a woman. And behind her stands his wife.

Fay Weldon

* People find out I'm an actress and I see that "Whore" look flicker across their eyes.

Rachel Weisz

* Henman sees balls as the key to his success.

Evening Standard newspaper headline

* The Khasi of Kalabar: And may his wisdom bring success in all your undertakings.

Ruff-Diamond: And in yours.

Kalabar: And may his radiance light up your life.

Ruff-Diamond: And up yours.

Sir Sidney Ruff-Diamond (Sid James)
and the Khasi of Kalabar (Kenneth Williams),
Carry On Up the Khyber

* Success – keeping your mind awake and your desire asleep.

Walter Scott

“All Speakers are highly successful, all Speakers are deeply regretted, and are generally announced to be irreplaceable. But a Speaker is soon found, and found, almost invariably, among the mediocrities of the House.

Lord Rosebery”

* He had the satisfied countenance of a man who has never succeeded in boring himself.

Peter Ackroyd

* It won't be easy, that is why I have always failed where others have succeeded.

Inspector Clouseau (Peter Sellers),
The Pink Panther Strikes Again

* I dread success. To have succeeded is to have finished one's business on earth, like the male spider, who is killed by the female the moment he has succeeded in his courtship. I like a state of continual becoming, with a goal in front and not behind.

George Bernard Shaw

* The penalty of success is to be bored by the people who used to snub you.

Nancy Astor

* In Washington, success is just a training course for failure.

Simon Hoggart

* In real life, it is the hare who wins. Every time. Look around you. And in any case it is my contention that Aesop was writing for the tortoise market. Hares have no time to read. They are too busy winning the game.

Anita Brookner



TRAVEL

★ The first condition of understanding a foreign country is to smell it.

Rudyard Kipling

★ I don't understand bus lanes. Why do poor people have to get to places quicker than I do?

Jeremy Clarkson

“Women hate travelling facing backwards because of primal memories of being carried away from their settlement on the shoulders of Vikings.

Frankie Boyle”

★ I can't read the *A to Z*. Can't read the small streets. If you don't live on a main road, I'm not coming to visit you.

Victoria Wood

★ In the middle ages people were tourists because of their religion, whereas now they are tourists because tourism is their religion.

Robert Runcie

★ I put so much petrol in me car the other day, I couldn't get in.

Vic Reeves

★ I wouldn't mind seeing China if I could come back the same day.

Philip Larkin

★ Did I tell you that we're flying club class? And that doesn't mean you get a free biscuit.

Judee Levinson (Reece Shearsmith),
The League of Gentlemen

★ I suppose the best way to find out where you've come from is to find out where you're going, and then work backwards.

Dr Who

★ Twenty-two minutes late, badger ate a junction box at New Malden.

Reginald Perrin (Leonard Rossiter),
The Fall and Rise of Reginald Perrin

You learn very, very quickly that it is mostly about swearing, actually. That's all you're doing, swearing, in a box with wheels.

Dylan Moran, on driving

★ I always sit in the tail end of a plane, always, 'cos you never hear of a plane backing into a mountain.

Tommy Cooper

★ I was responsible for the introduction of road humps. Would that I could have my time again.

Kenneth Clarke

★ I was getting into my car, and this bloke says to me, "Can you give me a lift?" I said, "Sure, you look great, the world's your oyster, go for it."

Tim Vine

★ Waiting for a bus is about as thrilling as fishing, with the similar tantalization that something, sometime, somehow, will turn up.

George Courtauld

★ If God had intended us to fly, he wouldn't have invented Spanish air traffic control.

Craig Charles

★ Sandy: Don't mention Malaga to Julian, he got very badly stung.

Horne: Portuguese man o'war?

Julian: Well, I never saw him in uniform . . .

Sandy (Kenneth Williams), Kenneth Horne
and Julian (Hugh Paddick), *Round the Horne*

“My experience of ships is that on them one makes an interesting discovery about the world. One finds one can do without it completely.

Malcolm Bradbury”

★ If God had meant us to walk everywhere he wouldn't have given us Little Chefs.

Reverend Bernice Woodall (Reece Shearsmith),
The League of Gentlemen

★ The worst drivers are women in people carriers, men in white vans and anyone in a baseball cap. That's just about everyone.

Paul O'Grady

★ Have you ever flown in a plane? Well, it was just like that.

Prince Philip, when asked,
“How was your flight?”

A lorry full of tortoises collided with a van full of terrapins. It was a turtle disaster.

Tim Vine

★ I once got a puncture in a place called Hindley Green, on the outskirts of

Wigan. I pulled into a garage and said, “Have you got an airline?”

He said, “Fuck off, we’ve not even got a bus station.”

Dave Spikey

★ Ladies and gentlemen, we apologize for the delay, but there is a security alert at Victoria Station and we are therefore stuck here for the foreseeable future, so let’s take our minds off it and pass some time together. All together now . . .

“Ten green bottles, hanging on a wall . . .”

London Underground driver announcement

★ I went down to campaign against the bypass scheme, but I got stuck in traffic.

Harry Hill

★ Combined bus and cycle lanes, what a crap idea that is! It would be like having a path in the jungle for walkers and lions.

Andy Parsons

★ I saw a homeless guy getting off the bus. I thought, “How does he know it’s his stop?”

Jimmy Carr

★ How on earth did Gandhi manage to walk so far in flip-flops? I can’t last ten minutes in mine.

Mrs Merton (a.k.a. Caroline Aherne)

★ A festive custom we could do worse than foster would be stringing piano wire across country lanes to decapitate cyclists.

Matthew Parris

★ Don’t you like being on the bus when an old person gets on and the driver sets off before they’ve had a chance to sit down?

Mick Ferry

★ I was just at the airport. Those treadmills they've got are huge.

Jimmy Carr

★ My first driving test was a nightmare. The instructor decided to make small talk halfway through. She was asking me what films I'd been in. I panicked and said, "Gladiator"!

Johnny Vegas

“I am struck by the way people behave on the Tube. They look at each other beadily and inquisitively, and something goes on in their thoughts which must be equivalent to the way dogs and other animals, when they meet, sniff each other's arses and nuzzle each other's fur.

Graham Swift”

★ The minister of transport issued this appeal to motorists: can anyone give him a lift to Leicester?

Eric Idle

★ Is there any tea on this spaceship?

Douglas Adams

★ Why does James Bond never get jet-lag? "Moneypenny, get me to Spectre's HQ at least three full days before I need to blow them up!"

Armando Iannucci

★ I tolerate this century but I don't enjoy it.

Dr Who

★ Sure it's quiet, for a diesel. But that's like being well-behaved . . . for a murderer.

Jeremy Clarkson

★ Countries are actually closer than you think . . . Pilots just fly aeroplanes around longer to make you think they're far away.

Bill Bailey

★ Moriarty: Just get on this bus.
Seagoon: Does it go past the house?
Moriarty: Yes, but you can jump off.

Jim Moriarty (Spike Milligan) and
Ned Seagoon (Harry Secombe), *The Goon Show*

★ Speed has never killed anyone; suddenly becoming stationary – that’s what gets you.

Jeremy Clarkson

★ There are two kinds of travel: first class and with children.

Julian Barnes

★ Here we are in the Holy Land of Israel – a Mecca for tourists.

David Vine

★ I was walking down the road the other day. A bloke pulls up next to me in a foreign motor car and says, “I’m in a dilemma.”

I said, “Aye, good motors Dilemmas. Used to have one myself.”

Ted Chippington

One fifth of accidents are caused by people falling asleep at the wheel. That means four-fifths – the vast majority – are caused by people staying awake at the wheel. They’re the real killers.

Rhod Gilbert

★ In one of my driving tests, I did 35mph in a 30mph zone. The examiner went, “What speed are you doing?”

I said, “The same as you.”

Jason Manford

★ One small step for man . . . a taxi ride for Ronnie Corbett.

Willy Rushton

★ I've done the elephant. I've done the poverty. I might as well go home.

Phil Tufnell,
English cricketer on tour in India

★ If God had intended us to fly, he would never have given us the railroads.

Michael Flanders

★ Horne: But did you manage to drag yourself up on deck?

Julian: Oh no. We dressed kind of casual like.

Kenneth Horne and Julian (Hugh Paddick),
Round the Horne

“We all know that small cars are good for us. But so is cod liver oil. And jogging. I want to drive around in a Terminator, not the heroine in an E.M. Forster novel.

Jeremy Clarkson”

★ The slowest drivers in the world are those people who are getting out of the parking space you want to get into.

Miles Kington

★ The Devil himself had probably redesigned hell in the light of information he had gained from observing airport layouts.

Anthony Price

★ We once had a car which, after a prang, could only turn left. I couldn't afford to get it fixed so I drove it around for two weeks, mapping out routes that only involved left turns.

Michael McIntyre

★ Your delay this evening is caused by the line controller suffering from backside and elbow syndrome, not knowing one from the other. I'll let you know any further information as soon as I'm given any.

London Underground driver announcement

★ The trouble with many British Rail passengers is that they think the railways are being run for their benefit.

Jeremy Clarkson

★ With the casino and the beds, our passengers will have at least two ways to get lucky on one of our fights.

Richard Branson

★ In one year I travelled 450,000 miles by air. That's about twenty times around the world or once around Howard Consell's head.

Jackie Stewart

★ All the women in my family wear the hijab. Which is good because it means they can share the one bus pass.

Shazia Mirza

“It's true – Bono did once pay \$1,700 to have his favourite trilby flown in a first-class seat from London to a U2 concert in Italy. In a totally unrelated story, on the same day, British Airways staff set a new world record for wiping their arses on a hat.

Angus Deayton”

★ It looks like it might kick your head in . . . for fun. Especially in black. In a pale colour or silver, it looks like Vinnie Jones in one of Graham Norton's T-shirts.

Jeremy Clarkson on a Rolls Royce

★ Racing cars which have been converted for road use never really work. It's like making a hard-core adult film, then editing it so it can be shown in British hotels. You'd just end up with a half-hour close-up of some bloke's sweaty face.

Jeremy Clarkson

★ I think a major element of jet lag is psychological. Nobody ever tells me what

time it is at home.

David Attenborough

★ Modern travelling is not travelling at all; it is merely being sent to a place, and very little different from becoming a parcel.

John Ruskin

★ If forced to travel on an aeroplane, try and get in the cabin with the captain, so you can keep an eye on him and nudge him if he falls asleep or point out any mountains looming up ahead.

Mike Harding

Ladies and gentlemen, I do apologize for the delay to your service. I know you're all dying to get home unless, of course, you happen to be married to my ex-wife, in which case you'll want to cross over to the westbound and go in the opposite direction.

London Underground driver announcement

★ It is no coincidence that in no known language does the phrase “As pretty as an airport” appear.

Douglas Adams

★ Those travel sickness pills mustn't be working. I still feel sick and I've taken four already. And I've only travelled up and down the stairs.

Shirley Valentine (Pauline Collins), *Shirley Valentine*

★ In a bid to increase road safety by introducing more stringent speed limits, the Department of Transport announces that selected roads across the United Kingdom will be designated “Reverse Zones”.

Craig Brown

★ The only way of catching a train I have ever discovered

is to miss the train before.

G.K. Chesterton

★ Your purpose when driving is not to arrive at your destination safely or quickly. Your purpose when driving is . . . to impress your personality on the road.

Martin Amis

★ I never travel without my diary. One should always have something sensational to read in the train.

Oscar Wilde

“ [Cyclists are] trespassers in the motor car’s domain, they do not pay road tax and therefore have no right to be on the road. Some of them even believe they are going fast enough to not be an obstruction. Run them down to prove them wrong.

Jeremy Clarkson”

★ Howard: Just imagine the headlines: “Howard Moon, colon, Explorer”. Got a nice ring to it, doesn’t it?

Vince: “Colon Explorer”? I think that’s got the wrong ring to it.

Howard Moon (Julian Barratt) and
Vince Noir (Noel Fielding), *The Mighty Boosh*

★ I’m sorry, but having a DB9 on the drive and not driving it is a bit like having Keira Knightley in your bed and sleeping on the couch.

Jeremy Clarkson

“ Eighty per cent of the people of Britain want more money spent on public transport – in order that other people will travel on the buses so that there is more room for them to drive their cars.

John Selwyn Gummer”

★ After being bombarded endlessly by road-safety propaganda it was almost a relief to find myself in an actual accident.

J.G. Ballard

★ Travelling is the ruin of all happiness! There's no looking at a building here after seeing Italy.

Fanny Burney

★ I brought the normal Scrabble and the Travel Scrabble. The Travel Scrabble for when we were travelling and the normal Scrabble for when we arrived.

Father Dougal McGuire (Ardal O'Hanlon), *Father Ted*

★ I've just come back from Australia. While I was there I learned some Aborigine words, like "Boo", which means "to return", because when you throw an ordinary meringue . . .

Milton Jones

★ You'd never hear Superman saying, "Hey, Lois, just before we fly off I need to check if any of your liquids are over 100ml."

Andy Parsons

★ I'm always going to go out of the emergency exit just above the wing because if you look on your flight safety card you'll notice you get a slightly longer slide. This could be the last bit of fun I ever have; if there's time I'm going to run back up and have another go.

Liam Mullone

★ Gosh, that takes me back . . . or is it forward? That's the trouble with time travel, you never can tell.

Doctor Who

★ Beggars are operating on this train; please do not encourage professional beggars, if you have any spare change you can give it to me.

London Underground driver announcement

★ The British tourist is always happy abroad as long as the natives are waiters.

Robert Morley

★ I spent a year in that town, one Sunday.

George Warwick Deeping

This is the Renault Espace, probably the best of the people carriers. Not that that's much to shout about. That's like saying, "Ooh, good, I've got syphilis, the BEST of the sexually transmitted diseases."

Jeremy Clarkson

★ In order to fly, all one must do is simply miss the ground.

Douglas Adams

★ I've arrived – and to prove it, I'm here.

Max Bygraves

★ Holidays are an expensive trial of strength. The only satisfaction comes from survival.

Jonathan Miller

★ I've just come back from a long holiday. I went around the world. It's all right for a holiday, but I wouldn't like to live there.

Michael Redmond

★ Every time I go on holiday, the wife gets pregnant. So I'm taking her with me next year.

Roy "Chubby" Brown

★ Howard: OK, we've got to pool our resources. Tweezers, matches, twine, geological hammer. What have you got?
Vince: Kings of Leon CD.

Howard Moon (Julian Barratt) and
Vince Noir (Noel Fielding), *The Mighty Boosh*

“When I come back from holiday, and I put it on when I’m driving from the airport, and I hear Peter Donaldson saying, “And now part four of the history of the duffel coat,” I think, oh yes, I’m home now, everything’s all right.

Sandi Toksvig, about BBC Radio 4”

★ If you look like your passport photo you’re too ill to travel.

Joe Pasquale

★ “Due to a person under the train, no more services until further notice.” I don’t know why they do that, because you may have seen, as I have, a pigeon that’s been run over in the street – granted it’s pretty messy at first, but after a couple of hours of heavy traffic it’s just an inoffensive grey blob.

Liam Mullone

★ Ladies and gentlemen, sorry about the delay – someone forgot to fill the choo-choo with diesel.

The guard of a London-to-Oxford train

★ You get on the train in the morning and everyone’s reading the *Metro* newspaper. Why doesn’t one person just read it out to the whole carriage?

Michael McIntyre

★ What I most like about cross-country trains is their subversive hint that England does not consist of one big bull’s-eye, London.

Matthew Parris

★ I was on a train and we went through a place called Didcot Ladygrove. I was laughing already, but my friend topped it by going, “I’ll bet that’s what the Queen calls her vagina.”

Russell Howard

★ Yesterday I travelled down by train, and a plump young lady came into my compartment at Waterloo. She was not wearing a bra, and her delightful globes bounced prominently . . . I gave her a huge grin; I couldn't help it.

Alan Clark

★ Train delays could last a decade, says Network Rail.

Daily Mail

“Who eats a peach on a train? That's a very soft fruit for public consumption, isn't it? I rarely eat a peach, but if I do, I don't eat it where there's three other human faces a foot and a half away from mine while peach is pissing all down my work shirt.

Alun Cochrane”

★ You can't have this car with a diesel: its like saying, “I won't go to Stringfellow's tonight, I'll get my mum to give me a lapdance, she's a woman!”
Jeremy Clarkson

★ I'm always amazed to hear of air-crash victims so badly mutilated that they have to be identified by their dental records. If they don't know who you are, how do they know who your dentist is?

Paul Merton

★ Why did the Scots invent steam trains? So they could leave. They invented TV so they could look at other places.

Al Murray

★ When you tie up your boat, just to keep it afloat, that's a mooring.

Justin Edwards

“They say the Queen spent £14,000 on a train journey from London to Liverpool, and that's what happens if you let an old age pensioner use the self-service ticket machine.

Frank Skinner”

★ It's strange, isn't it. You stand in the middle of a library and go, "Aaaaagghhhh," and everyone just stares at you. But you do the same thing on an aeroplane, and everyone joins in.

Tommy Cooper

Why is it I get the same luggage allowance as a bloke who's forty stone? Why is that allowed? We're both allowed thirty-two kilograms on the plane. I wanna go, "No, he used up his thirty-two kilograms on his tits!"

Ricky Gervais

★ You know, somebody actually complimented me on my driving today. They left a little note on the windscreen, it said "Parking Fine." So that was nice.

Tim Vine



TRUTH

❖ Oh what a tangled web we weave when first we practice knitting a sweater in a wind tunnel.

Michael Bradley

❖ Anyone can tell the truth, but only very few of us can make epigrams.

W. Somerset Maugham

❖ It is better to be quotable than to be honest.

Tom Stoppard

❖ She always says, my lord, that facts are like cows. If you look them in the face hard enough they generally run away.

Dorothy L. Sayers

❖ There are a terrible lot of lies going around the world, and the worst of it is half of them are true.

Winston Churchill

“ I love late-night phone-ins. People say what they really think at that time. You can listen to them without having to go out to the pub and meet them.

Peter Cook”

❖ I do not mind lying, but I hate inaccuracy.

Samuel Butler

❖ There is no point in asking a man a question until you have established whether he has any reason to lie to you.

Ken Follet

“This is a good day for lying, drug-abusing prima donnas who want to have their cake with the media and the right to then shamelessly guzzle it with their Cristal champagne.

Piers Morgan, on Naomi Campbell”

❖ I don't like you. Gordon Brown's three-year-old son, Fraser, greets Piers Morgan

❖ The prime minister has an absolute genius for putting flamboyant labels on empty luggage.

Aneurin Bevan

I should go on *Mastermind*, answering questions on the life and times of Jeffrey Archer. I'd get more questions right than he would.

Ian Hislop

❖ A thing is not necessarily true because a man dies for it.

Oscar Wilde

❖ It is unfortunate, considering that enthusiasm moves the world, that so few enthusiasts can be trusted to speak the truth.

Arthur Balfour

❖ I used to look down on the world for being corrupt, but now I adore it for the utter magnificence of that corruption.

Richard Needham

❖ Reality leaves a lot to the imagination.

John Lennon

❖ Not seeing is half-believing.

Vita Sackville-West

❖ There are three kinds of lies: lies, damned lies, and statistics.

Benjamin Disraeli

❖ If you have an anecdote from one source, you file it away. If you hear it again, it may be true. Then the more times you hear it the less likely it is to be true.

Anthony Holden

❖ Fallacies do not cease to be fallacies because they become fashions.

G.K. Chesterton

❖ Naked is the best disguise.

Jeanette Winterson

❖ One of the troubles is this: the heart isn't heart-shaped.

Julian Barnes

“I would really like to be honest in the media. It would be good to be the guy who put, “Hasn't quite sold out at the Edinburgh Festival, but nearly did,” on his poster . . . I'd love just to have, “He's done all right at four out of the last five festivals and took one year off to have a baby.”

Alun Cochrane”

❖ The best liar is he who makes the smallest amount of lying go the longest way.

Samuel Butler

❖ The person who is brutally honest enjoys the brutality quite as much as the honesty. Possibly more.

Richard Needham

❖ It's discouraging to think how many people are shocked by honesty and how few by deceit.

Noël Coward

❖ An honest man speaks the truth, though it may give offence; a vain man, in order that it may.

William Hazlitt

❖ If you want to tell people the truth, make them laugh, otherwise they'll kill you.

Oscar Wilde

❖ The point of philosophy is to start with something so simple as not to seem worth stating, and to end with something so paradoxical that no one will believe it.

Bertrand Russell

❖ The best measure of a man's honesty isn't his income tax return. It's the zero adjust on his bathroom scale.

Arthur C. Clarke

❖ It is the customary fate of new truths to begin as heresies and to end as superstitions.

Aldous Huxley

When I want a peerage, I shall buy one like an honest man.

Lord Northcliffe

❖ The trouble about man is twofold. He cannot learn truths which are too complicated; he forgets truths which are too simple.

Rebecca West

❖ I always divide people into two groups. Those who live by what they know to be a lie, and those who live by what they believe, falsely, to be the truth.

Christopher Hampton

❖ A platitude is simply a truth repeated until people get tired of hearing it.

Stanley Baldwin

❖ All great truths begin as blasphemies.

George Bernard Shaw

❖ The great advantage about telling the truth is that nobody ever believes it.

Dorothy L. Sayers

❖ It has always been desirable to tell the truth, but seldom if ever necessary to tell the whole truth.

Arthur Balfour

❖ A journalist is somebody who possesses himself of a fantasy and lures the truth towards it.

Arnold Wesker

“He occasionally stumbled over the truth, but hastily picked himself up and hurried on as if nothing had happened.

Winston Churchill,
on Stanley Baldwin”

❖ Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you mad.

Aldous Huxley

❖ It is always the best policy to speak the truth, unless of course you are an exceptionally good liar.

Jerome K. Jerome

❖ The truth will set you free. Either that or it'll get you a punch in the nose.

Nick Hornby



WAR AND PEACE

* I'll take you out for a meal with Mr and Mrs Pain. Order up some violent quiche.

Howard Moon (Julian Barratt), *The Mighty Boosh* * Everyone wants peace –
and they will fight the most terrible war to get it.

Miles Kingston

* An appeaser is one who feeds a crocodile, hoping it will eat him last.

Winston Churchill

* You can't trample infidels when you're a tortoise. I mean, all you could do is give them a meaningful look.

Terry Pratchett

“Those kids know nothing of the battle of Stalingrad. Although I can't compare my reading of the book with the struggle of the Red Army, it was a big read.

Mark Corrigan (David Mitchell),

Peep Show”

* I sort of sympathize with them looking for weapons of mass destruction, because I'm like that with scissors. Honestly, I just turn the house upside down. Of course the difference is, I know I have got some scissors.

Linda Smith

* Men were made for war. Without it they wandered greyly about, getting under the feet of the women, who were trying to organize the really important things of life.

Alice Thomas Ellis

Revd Farthing: Could I stand by and watch my wife being raped by a Nazi?
Finally I said to myself, no I couldn't.

Mainwaring: But you're not married.

Revd Farthing: I have a very vivid imagination.

Revd Timothy Farthing (Frank Williams) and Captain George Mainwaring
(Arthur Lowe), *Dad's Army*

* They're like an old couple with some holiday brochures: "Where shall we invade next? Cuba looks nice."

Mark Steel, on George W. Bush
and Donald Rumsfeld

* Tanks come in two forms: the dangerous, deadly kind and the "liberating" kind.

Robert Fisk

* My colleagues tell military secrets to their wives, except Asquith, who tells them to other people's wives.

Lord Kitchener

* I can barely walk down the street nowadays without assessing where I crouch to fire the perfect headshot.

Ben Glass, on *Call of Duty 2*

* Boarding this vessel is an act of war. Ergo we surrender.

Arnold Rimmer (Chris Barrie), *Red Dwarf*

* What could you hope to achieve, except to be sunk in a bigger and more expensive ship this time?

Winston Churchill, to Admiral Mountbatten

“Remember when we dug Saddam up out of that hole? He looked like a Father Christmas who had been sacked from Debenhams for being drunk at work.

Russell Brand”

* Mrs Slocombe: I won't forget being thrown fat on my back by a landmine. And the German Air Force was responsible.

Mr Lucas: All the other times she was fat on her back, the American Air Force was responsible.

Mrs Betty Slocombe (Mollie Sugden) and
Dick Lucas (Trevor Bannister), *Are You Being Served?*

* Tony Blair today declared that the war against foot and mouth disease has been won. And to commemorate the occasion farmers and cows came together in a muddy field and played a game of football.

John Gordillo

* You can't come out with guns blazing when you got more guns than you can carry.

John Stone

* The real training for any soldier in the British Army is not the six weeks that he spends at camp, but the seventeen years that he lives on a housing estate.

Frankie Boyle

* Blackadder: For God's sake, Baldrick, take cover.

Baldrick: Why's that, sir?

Blackadder: Because there's an air raid going on and I don't want to have to write to your mother in London Zoo and tell her that her only human child is dead.

Captain Blackadder (Rowan Atkinson) and
Private Baldrick (Tony Robinson), *Blackadder Goes Forth* * If you go on with this nuclear arms race, all you are going to do is make the rubble bounce.

Winston Churchill

* Prince Harry has been on the front line for ten weeks without anyone noticing.

Michael Owen must know how he feels.

Andy Dunn

* North Korea are testing nuclear weapons. Why? Don't worry Korea! Nobody wants to get you. That's like Ann Widdecombe buying a rape alarm.

Russell Howard

Tim: We were wondering if a military man like you, a soldier, could you give a man a lethal blow?

Gareth: If I was forced to, I could. If it was absolutely necessary, if he was attacking me.

Tim: What if he was coming, really hard?

Gareth Keenan (Mackenzie Crook) and
Tim Canterbury (Martin Freeman), *The Office*

* Rigsby: You don't point guns at people, that's the first rule.

Alan: Well, how'd we win the war, then?

Rigsby (Leonard Rossiter) and
Alan (Richard Beckinsale), *Rising Damp*

* Take away politics and religion for world peace. I don't know anything about any of it, but it just seems to cause problems.

Katie Price

* And after the [army cadet] course, I obviously thought, if merit isn't rewarded then, fuck it, I'll go and be a transvestite.

Eddie Izzard

* Max: Hey. It's not an antique. There's nothing wrong with that. It was my granddad's. He shot a German with this.

Paddy: Was that in the Second World War?

Max: No, it were in Benidorm. He had a row over a sun lounger.

Max (Peter Kay) and

Paddy (Patrick McGuinness), *Phoenix Nights*

* History is littered with the wars which everybody knew would never happen.

Enoch Powell

* Kitchener, a great man or a great poster?

Margot Asquith

* Suicide fucking bombing, there's a bright idea. Every time there's a bang, the world's a wanker short.

Billy Connolly

* Britain's nuclear submarines have been deemed unsafe . . . probably because they don't have wheelchair access.

Jeremy Clarkson

* A man may fight for many things. His country, his friends, his principles, the glistening ear on the cheek of a golden child. But personally, I'd mud-wrestle my own mother for a ton of cash, an amusing clock and a sack of French porn.

Edmund Blackadder (Rowan Atkinson), *Blackadder* * Bloke comes up to me,
he said, "I've just got back from 'Nam."

I said, "What d'you mean mate – Vietnam?"

He said, "No, Cheltenham."

Ted Chippington

* That most risky and volatile of all things – a self-pitying majority.

Christopher Hitchens

* I would never die for my beliefs because I might be wrong.

Bertrand Russell

* I never liked guns; I hate them. I always blink before they go off.

Roger Moore

* I hate the way the Nazis treated my grandfather during the war – passed over for promotion time and time again.

Jimmy Carr

* If you're bothered about getting shot, don't join the army.

Noel Gallagher

* Imagine the Aztecs survived and took over the world. We'd have to go up steps all the time. Thank heavens they were slaughtered.

Armando Iannucci

“The ground war in Afghanistan hotted up yesterday when the Allies revealed plans to airdrop a platoon of crack French existentialist philosophers into the country to destroy the morale of Taliban zealots by proving the non-existence of God.

Michael Kelly”

* I chose to live my life by the motto “My enemy's enemy is my friend”. Unfortunately, as it turns out, my enemy is his own worst enemy, so I have to invite him to barbecues and stuff. It's quite annoying as I don't really like him.

Richard Herring

* There's not much makeup in the army, is there? They only have that nighttime look, and that's a bit slapdash, isn't it?

Eddie Izzard

“I'm proud of my grandfather. He shot down two German planes. Unfortunately, this was in 1972, but you can never be too careful.

John Moloney”

* To applaud as loudly as that for so stupid a proposal means that you are just trying to fill that gap between your ears.

David Starkey

* The further away you remove the English soldier from the risk of injury, the higher you pay him.

Ian Hay

* U-boat Captain: What is your name?

Mainwaring: Don't tell him, Pike.

U-boat Captain (Philip Madoc) and

Captain George Mainwaring (Arthur Lowe), *Dad's Army* * The German soldier was trailing behind the others, clutching in his left hand a good portion of the intestines spilling out from an otherwise quite smart uniform.

Tibor Fischer

* War is hell and all that, but it has a good deal to recommend it. It wipes out all the small nuisances of peacetime.

Ian Hay

* What is the difference between toast and Italians? You can make soldiers out of toast Peter Ball, former Bishop of Gloucester

* Always forgive your enemies – nothing annoys them so much.

Oscar Wilde

* War does not determine who is right – only who is left.

Bertrand Russell

* He only went in the army to put his moustache to good purpose.

Alan Bennett

* A democracy which makes or even effectively prepares for modern, scientific

war must necessarily cease to be democratic. No country can be really well prepared for modern war unless it is governed by a tyrant, at the head of a highly trained and perfectly obedient bureaucracy.

Aldous Huxley

“The Afghan war has clearly reached a stage similar to that moment at your child’s party where you realize you’ve forgotten to give the other parents a pick-up time.

Jeremy Hardy”

* “It’s always best on these occasions to do what the mob do.”
“But suppose that there are two mobs?” suggested Mr Snodgrass.
“Shout with the largest,” replied Mr Pickwick.

Charles Dickens

* And what always struck me about that war period was how even Churchill had to talk socialism to keep up people’s morale

Barbara Castle

* Paul Wappat: How long did the Six-Day War between Egypt and Israel last?
Contestant: [long pause] Fourteen days.

BBC Radio Newcastle

“There is a phrase which seems in itself somewhat self-evident, which is often used to account for a good deal – that “War is war”. But when you come to ask about it, then you are told that the war now going on is not war.

Henry Campbell-Bannerman”

* Men love war because it allows them to look serious. Because it is the one thing that stops women laughing at them.

John Fowles

* I've been reading the news about there being a civil war in Madagascar. Well, I've seen it six times and there isn't.

Dan Antopolski

* If it were not for the war, this war would suit me down to the ground.

Dorothy L Sayers

What have we [Hindus] got? Absolutely nothing. You try going out there waging war against the West in the name of Ganesh the Elephant God. People just fall about laughing.

Paul Sinha

* War is a good way of lowering the standard of living so that nobody has time to think, if they do have thoughts about reality they won't have time to write them down.

Celia Green

* Going to war was the only unselfish thing I have ever done for humanity.

David Niven

“The reason Obama likes her so much is that she's a very important weapon in the war against terror, because young extremists are thinking twice about blowing themselves up now that they know what a virgin looks like.

Sean Lock, on Susan Boyle”

* I think Iran and Iraq had a war simply because their names are so similar. They keep getting each other's post.

Paul Merton

* The only reason the Arabs and Jews have managed to keep their nasty little war going for fifty years is because it never bloody rains there. If the post-war

powers had put Israel in Manchester, there'd have been no bloodshed.

Jeremy Clarkson

* Of course Tony Blair can't be a war criminal. He listens to Oasis.

Rob Newman

We are the world war champions of the world . . . we even had a war against the French that lasted a hundred years, called the Hundred Years War, and the reason it lasted a hundred years was because we were enjoying winning it so much that we spun it out for the full century.

Pub Landlord (a.k.a. Al Murray)

* We won the Second World War; I seem to remember only seven or eight countries bothered sending a team – does that mean we didn't really win?

Liam Mullone

* Cowards die many times before their deaths; the valiant never taste death but once.

William Shakespeare

* The right to bear arms is slightly less ludicrous than the right to arm bears.

Chris Addison

* The pen is mightier than the sword, and considerably easier to write with.

Marty Feldman

* If everyone demanded peace instead of another television set, then there'd be peace.

John Lennon



WEATHER AND CLIMATE

★ Taking it all in all, I do not believe anybody on earth has a worse time than an emperor penguin.

Apsley Cherry-Garrard

★ It's pissing it down.

Joanne Malin, TV weather forecaster ★ It was one of those perfect English autumnal days which occur more frequently in memory than in life.

P.D. James

★ I met a friend of mine this morning. He said, "Did you see the heavy fog last night?"

I said, "No, nothing wakes me."

Michael Redmond

★ By midday the heat is so unbearable that the streets are empty except for thousands of Englishmen taking mad dogs for walks.

Spike Milligan

They seem cold out there. They're rubbing each other and he's come in his shorts.

Michael Buerk, as Philippa Forrester cuddles up to a male astronomer for warmth during BBC1's eclipse coverage

★ American-style iced tea is the perfect drink for a hot, sunny day. It's never really caught on in the UK, probably because the last time we had a hot, sunny day was back in 1957.

Tom Holt

“ At the height of the gale, the harbourmaster radioed a coast guard and asked him to estimate the wind speed. He replied he was sorry, but he didn't have a gauge. However, if it was any help, the wind had just blown his Land Rover off the cliff.

Aberdeen Evening Express”

★ We are so saturated with the conviction that rain is invariably and immutably chilly, wet and grey, and leads to colds, mould and mud, that we can't encompass the contrary knowledge that, for almost all of the rest of the world, rain is little short of a miracle.

A.A. Gill

★ Today has been eighty degrees in the shade. I was clever. I stayed in the sun.

Tommy Cooper

★ There's no such thing as bad weather, just the wrong clothing, so get yourself a sexy raincoat and live a little.

Billy Connolly

★ Once you've been with each other in a primal, shagging state, it's hard to talk about the weather.

Irving Welsh

“ Our response to flooding at the moment: sandbags. What a shit idea that is. I've often been down to the beach, and let me tell you, it hasn't stopped the tide coming in once. Why not make them out of HobNobs? You can soak up a whole cup of tea with one HobNob.

Andy Parsons”

★ What about this fog! My pussy's been gasping all night.

Mrs Betty Slocombe (Mollie Sugden),
Are You Being Served?

★ The British, he thought, must be gluttons for satire: even the weather forecast seemed to be some kind of spoof, predicting every possible combination of weather for the next twenty-four hours without actually committing itself to anything specific.

David Lodge

★ I like storms. I like thunder and lightning. What I do during a storm is shag my girlfriend and pretend that we're taking part in the conception of the Antichrist.

Frankie Boyle

★ A young girl who was blown out to sea on a set of inflatable teeth was rescued by a man on an inflatable lobster. A coastguard spokesman commented, "This sort of thing is all too common."

The Times

★ Why do they bother with wind on weather reports? "There'll be a stiff southwesterly." I don't give a shit – I'm not sailing to work.

Michael McIntyre

★ Did you enjoy summer this year? It was on a Thursday.
Jeff Green

★ I had a good eight inches last night.

Ulrika Jonsson,
GMTV weathergirl talking about snowfall ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

WELSH

❖ The land of my fathers. My fathers can have it.

Dylan Thomas

❖ In Wales it's brilliant. I go to the pub and see everybody who I went to school with. And everybody goes, "So what you doing now?"

And I go, "Oh, I'm doing a film with Antonio Banderas and Anthony Hopkins."

And they go, "Ooh, good." And that's it.

Catherine Zeta-Jones

❖ I'm from Wales . . . I was eight before I realized you could take a kagool off, man.

Rhod Gilbert

❖ There are still parts of Wales where the only concession to gaiety is a striped shroud.

Gwyn Thomas

“I went to Wales. No bugger talks to you. I know how Kevin Costner felt in *Dances with Wolves*. Six weeks on a beach, on my own, siting there, being feared by the locals.

Johnny Vegas”

❖ And you've got a moustache – you're proper Welsh. You probably think you look like Magnum, don't you? You do, but more the ice cream than the detective.

Rob Brydon

❖ The relationship between the Welsh and the English is based on trust and understanding. They don't trust us and we don't understand them.

Dudley Wood

❖ We can trace almost all the disasters of English history to the influence of Wales.

Evelyn Waugh

❖ If it wasn't for the English, the Welsh would still be living in caves, poking sticks at the Irish.

A.A. Gill

❖ In Wales they don't give a shit, they take what [currency] they're given. You don't go in Wales, "Have you got a Tom Jones £20 note?" They're not that bothered.

Michael McIntyre

Was he a malignant creature whose perverted sense of humour delighted to send travellers astray? Was he merely half-witted? Probably not: the Welsh are quite incapable of directing one anywhere.

John Moore

“Eddy was a tremendously tolerant person, but he wouldn't put up with Welsh. He always said, surely there's enough English to go round.

John Mortimer”



WORK

* I had an amazing cab driver. He was smiling and whistling – clearly in a brilliant mood. He said, “I love my job, I’m my own boss. Nobody tells me what to do.”

I said, “Left here.”

Jimmy Carr

* A trade unionist is someone who hates his job and is afraid someone will take it from him.

Richard Needham

* I wonder sometimes if manufacturers of foolproof items keep a fool or two on their payroll to test things.

Alan Coren

* The ugliest of trades have their moments of pleasure. Now, if I was a grave digger, or even a hangman, there are some people I could work for with a great deal of enjoyment.

Douglas Jerrold

* I firmly believe that humanity consists of three main groups – one: BBC employees; two: former BBC employees; three: future BBC employees.

George Mikes

* I had a great business plan: I was going to build bungalows for dwarfs. There was only one tiny flaw . . .

Justin Edwards

* More men are killed by overwork than the importance of the world justifies.

Rudyard Kipling

* I used to be a lumberjack on a mushroom farm.

Ronnie Corbett

* The ghastly thing about postal strikes is that after they are over, the service returns to normal.

Richard Needham

Some of us have arms that are urgently needed up a certain sheep's backside.

Trigger (Roger Lloyd-Pack),
Only Fools and Horses

* Astronomers, like burglars and jazz musicians, operate best at night.

Miles Kington

* Caroline: How was the interview?

Mac: Not sure . . . think I might have used the words “job“, “stick“, “up” and “arse” all in one sentence. Is that a bad thing?

Dr Caroline Todd (Tamsin Greig) and
Dr Macartney (Julian Rhind Tutt), *Green Wing*

* The trouble is that things never get better, they just stay the same, only more so.

Terry Pratchett

* Do not free a camel of the burden of his hump; you may be freeing him from being a camel.

G.K. Chesterton

* All I know about my job is that there are biscuits in the

stationery cupboard.

Fran (Tamsin Greig), *Black Books*

* Britain has invented a new missile. It's called the civil servant. It doesn't work and it can't be fired.

General Sir Walter Walker

“Thank you, Ronald McDonald, for providing me with soft white toilet paper for all the years I was unemployed, and thank you, Ronald McDonald, for putting locks on your toilet roll holders, giving me the incentive to look for a job.

Liz Bentley”

* This is the accounts department, the number bods. Do not be fooled by their job descriptions, they are absolutely mad, all of 'em. Especially that one, he's mental. Not literally, of course, that wouldn't work.

David Brent (Ricky Gervais), *The Office*

* I'm intelligent, but unemployable – I've been living off taxpayers for twenty-one years!

Shahbaz Chauhdry, contestant on British *Big Brother* * Ooo . . . Bear with me, see, I am hopeless with names, faces and people.

Bubble (Jane Horrocks),
Absolutely Fabulous

* He was a strong union man, my dad. When he read us a story at night, he'd say, “Once upon a time and a half . . .”

Roy “Chubby” Brown

* Miss Babs: Here I am blabbing away about my own troubles and I never asked you about your husband's car crash.

Mrs Overall: Oh, he's dead, Miss Babs. In fact I was going to ask you if I could have a couple of hours off on Thursday for the funeral.

Miss Babs: Of course. Just pop back at five for the hoovering.

Miss Babs (Celia Imrie) and
Mrs Overall (Julie Walters), *Acorn Antiques*

* Multitasking is the ability to screw everything up simultaneously.

Jeremy Clarkson

* I used to be a window cleaner. I got fired because I sometimes liked to drink the soapy water.

Jamelia

* You can know a person by the kind of desk he keeps. If the president of a company has a clean desk then it must be the executive vice-president who is doing all the work.

Harold S. Geneen

I think it was working for Benetton, and I had the job for about less than an hour before I walked out. I was standing there folding up jumpers and people kept coming in and unfolding them so I just walked out.

Jessie Wallace,
on the worst job she ever had

* This looks like a job for BICYCLE REPAIRMAN!

Monty Python's Flying Circus

“My first job was selling doors, door to door. That's a tough job, innit? Ding Dong. Can I interest you in a – oh shit, you've got one already, haven't you? Well, never mind . . .

Bill Bailey”

* I believe in benevolent dictatorship, provided I am the dictator.

Richard Branson

* My father said to me, “I always wanted you to have the things in life I never had.” So he got me a job.

Roy “Chubby” Brown

* I’ve decided to pick my moment to retire very carefully – in about 200 years’ time.

Brian Clough

* If you must have motivation, think of your paycheque on Friday.

Noël Coward

* Maybe I should pack up, become a pirate and live by the sea.

Geri Halliwell

I worn my elbows down to the bone for you.
I worn my elbows down to the bone for you.
I worn my elbows down to the bone, down to the bone.
I worn my elbows down to the bone for you.

Ivor Cutler

* I told my girlfriend I had a job in a bowling alley. She said, “Ten pin?”
I said, “No, permanent.”

Tim Vine

* In a packed programme tonight, we will be talking to an out-of-work contortionist who says he can no longer make ends meet.

Ronnie Barker

- * Always suspect any job men willingly vacate for women.

Jill Tweedie

- * A foolproof plan for not getting a job – show up for your interview wearing flip-flops.

Alan Davies

- * I used to sell furniture for a living. The trouble was, it was my own.

Les Dawson

- * Manuel will show you to your rooms – if you're lucky.

Basil Fawlty (John Cleese), *Fawlty Towers*

“I had a job selling hearing aids door to door. It wasn't easy, because your best prospect never answered.

Bob Monkhouse”

- * Avoid employing unlucky people: throw half of the pile of CVs in the bin without reading them.

David Brent (Ricky Gervais), *The Office*

- * What is it about people who repair shoes that makes them so good at cutting keys?

Harry Hill

“I visited a hospital last week. I know they say that footballers are overpaid compared to nurses. Well, now I know why – we had a kick around with them and they're shit.

Jason Bent (a.k.a. Simon Brodtkin)”

* Fran: Bernard? Finished with your accounts?

Bernard: Yes. I've turned them into a rather smart casual jacket.

Fran (Tamsin Greig) and
Bernard Black (Dylan Moran), *Black Books*

* The pollen count: that's a difficult job. Especially if you've got hay fever – one sneeze and you've got to start again.

Milton Jones

* I've created an atmosphere where I'm a friend first, boss second. Probably entertainer third.

David Brent (Ricky Gervais),
The Office

* My father used to say to me: always fight fire with fire. And that's why he was thrown out of the fire brigade.

Harry Hill

* Everybody was saying we must have more leisure. Now they are complaining they are unemployed.

Prince Philip

* To park your car in Soho costs more than the minimum wage. There are people working in McDonald's in Soho who can look out of the window and see parking meters earning more than they do.

Simon Evans

* Jerry: Have you had any previous experience of bar work?

Spencer: Oh, yes. You name it. Not only have I seen the film *Cocktail* six times, but . . . er . . . I also once was an innkeeper.

Jerry "St Clair" Dignan (Dave Spikey) to
Spencer (Daniel Kitson), *Phoenix Nights*

* He awoke at six, as usual. He needed no alarm clock. He was already comprehensively alarmed.

Martin Amis

* I recently went to Amsterdam on a stag do. I don't know if you've been, but the place is fantastic. I tried to stay and get a job as a window cleaner.

John Bishop

* After all, the best part of a holiday is perhaps not so much to be resting yourself, as to see all the other fellows busy working.

Kenneth Grahame

* It's not that I'm a workaholic; it's rather that I like to tread the precarious line between boredom and fear.

Nigella Lawson

* I used to work as a lumberjack and every time I cut a tree, I'd put on a clean shirt. I was always chopping and changing.

Tim Vine

“Here's a piece of late news: Mr Arthur Perkiss, the man who this week won £500,000 on the pools, has announced that he will never work another day in his life. So he's staying on with British Rail.

Ronnie Corbet”

* It's a terrible thing to be a worker exploited in the capitalist system. The only worse thing is to be a worker unable to find anyone to exploit you.

Joan Robinson

* Toughest job I ever had was working in a bank call-centre. The job was all right, it was the commute to Bangalore every day I couldn't handle.

Jeff Green

“The first proper job I had was working in a supermarket. It was my job to hand out samples of things for people to taste, but I was asked to leave after the little cups of bleach incident.

Milton Jones”

* Sexual harassment at work. Is it a problem for the self-employed?

Victoria Wood

* Reliable office staff come in the shape of mature married women working from 9.30 to 3.30 (inside school hours), during which they will do more than the nine-to-fivers.

Fay Weldon

* I’ve been working like a Japanese prisoner of war. But a happy one.

Alan Partridge (a.k.a. Steve Coogan)

I work hard and I party hard. When I go to work, I know what I am doing and I do it to the best of my abilities. When I party, I take exactly the same rulebook with me. Except I might turn up later and outstay my welcome.

Rhys Ifans

* I was never much good at domestic work. My mother had a theory that if you didn’t know how to do it you wouldn’t have to.

Muriel Spark

* The only way to enjoy life is to work. Work is much more fun than fun.
Noël Coward

* I like work; it fascinates me. I can sit and look at it for hours. I love to keep it by me; the idea of getting rid of it nearly breaks my heart.
Jerome K. Jerome

* You never see a lazy ant. It's always working . . . It's drunk, but it's always working.
Ricky Gervais

* I always arrive late at the office, but I make up for it by leaving early.
Charles Lamb

* A team effort is a lot of people doing what I say.
Michael Winner

* To do great work a man must be very idle as well as very industrious.
Samuel Butler

“Being Asian, I love doing overtime. I don't feel human if I haven't worked a 900-hour week and opened up a couple of new businesses.
Shazia Mirza”

* One of the symptoms of an approaching nervous breakdown is the belief that one's work is terribly important.
Bertrand Russell

* They say a woman's work is never done. Maybe that's why they get paid less.
Sean Lock

* If they make it illegal to wear the veil at work, beekeepers are going to be

furious.

Milton Jones

“We spend our lives on the run: we get up by the clock, eat and sleep by the clock, get up again, go to work – and then we retire. And what do they give us? A clock.

Dave Allen”

* Jennifer: Well, surely it's gonna be worse for morale in the long run when there are going to be redundancies and you've told people there won't be.

David: They won't remember.

Jennifer Taylor-Clark (Stirling Gallacher) and
David Brent (Ricky Gervais), *The Office*

* Even a rich man thinks he has to go down to the office every day. Not because he likes it, but because he can't think of anything else to do.

W.H. Auden

We must, in my view, always have the right to promote the best man for the job, regardless of sex.

Sir Humphrey Appleby
(Nigel Hawthorne), *Yes Minister*