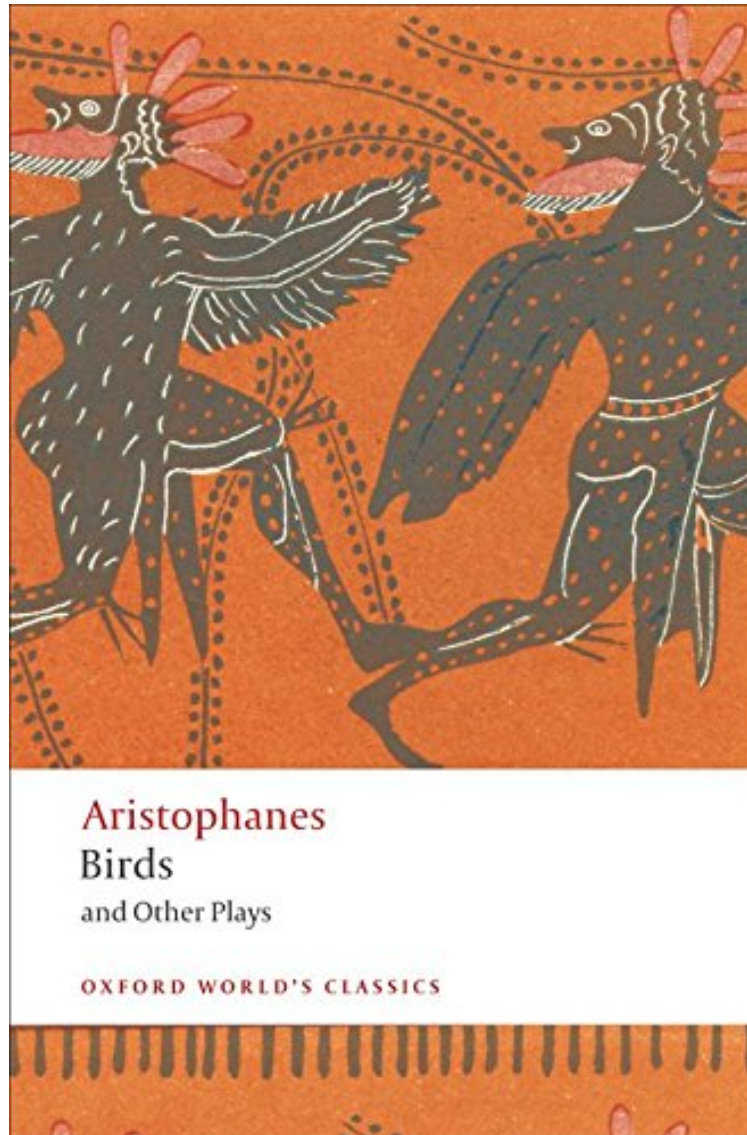


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## Birds and Other Plays (Oxford World's Classics)

*Aristophanes*

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**Aristophanes : Birds and Other Plays (Oxford World's Classics)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Birds and Other Plays (Oxford World's Classics):

0 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Three StarsBy Auntie Ane's AtticRequired for school. Kept my attention while in class.1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. The sexiest plays of AristophanesBy HHSome people pride themselves on finding fart and dick jokes unfunny. "It's the lowest form of humor!" they scoff, then try to direct you to something more sophisticated and mature. Well, it is refreshing to learn that fart jokes and

dick jokes are precisely where Western humor began, and were good enough, indeed the specialty of, one of the greatest comic playwrights who ever lived. If you want extremely broad and larger-than-life characters engaging in utterly insane plots with bathroom humor abound and insults back and forth faster than you can keep track, than Aristophanes is the man for you. You'll also get more than your share of female-bashing, old person-bashing, government official-bashing, celebrity-bashing, and every other kind of bashing you can imagine. This is comedy of the throw-everything-at-the-wall-and-see-what-sticks variety, and if you can get into that over-the-top mindset, you'll have a great time with this. "The Birds" is a genuine fantasy. It's about a disgruntled Athenian who convinces a bunch of birds to build a magic city in the sky (called Cloudcuckooland) in order to separate the humans from the gods and help the birds regain their supposedly natural bird-ascendency over the universe. The birds fall for it, choosing the disgruntled Athenian as their leader, and the protagonist's rise to power over the world of birds, humans, and eventually gods is portrayed with flair and comic intensity. The play is almost epic in its ludicrousness. "Lysistrata" is the famous play where the women take over the city and refuse to offer sex to the men unless they promise to end the war on Sparta. Don't be fooled -- this is not necessarily a feminist play, at least not by modern standards, but it is a very funny one, and a very good one. "The Assembly-women" is another "women" play of Aristophanes', this time about the women taking over the government. They want to replace the current male system with a socialist state (the joke being, I suppose, that women are more compassionate and eager to share.) The results are predictably disastrous, and the play's comical swipes at socialism are entertaining, but the climax, involving three old ladies, a young man, and the laws regarding sex, is a masterpiece of offensive craziness, both hilarious and shocking, even to a modern audience. The final play, "Wealth", is the weakest of the lot, by quite a margin, but it's worth reading for a nicely considered, if flawed, argument against the distribution of wealth exclusively to the good and the just. It doesn't have the "reckless abandon" approach to comedy of the earlier plays: it's more dogmatic and controlled (it's a precursor to what the historians call "New Comedy"). So readers those used to the broader tone of the others may find this one on the dull side. It is a very short read, though. In any case, anyone interested in the roots of comedy should read this. The footnotes in this edition are also very helpful, and not overpowering. All in all, "Birds and Other Plays" is a lively and most entertaining reading experience. 0 of 20 people found the following review helpful. TextbookBy BriandaSo I got this book for a class and didn't necessarily read it for pleasure, but it was a good book. Assembly women was better than birds for sure. Like what is the point of birds? And I don't mean the metaphorical point, but I digress.

This new verse translation of Aristophanes' comedies offers one of the world's great comic dramatists in a form that is both historically faithful and theatrically vigorous. Aristophanes' plays were produced for the festival theater of classical Athens in the fifth century BC and encompass the whole gamut of humor, from brilliantly inventive fantasy to obscene vulgarity. This edition includes a substantial general introduction and introductory essays for each of the plays, as well as full explanatory notes and an index of names. About the Series: For over 100 years Oxford World's Classics has made available the broadest spectrum of literature from around the globe. Each affordable volume reflects Oxford's commitment to scholarship, providing the most accurate text plus a wealth of other valuable features, including expert introductions by leading authorities, voluminous notes to clarify the text, up-to-date bibliographies for further study, and much more.