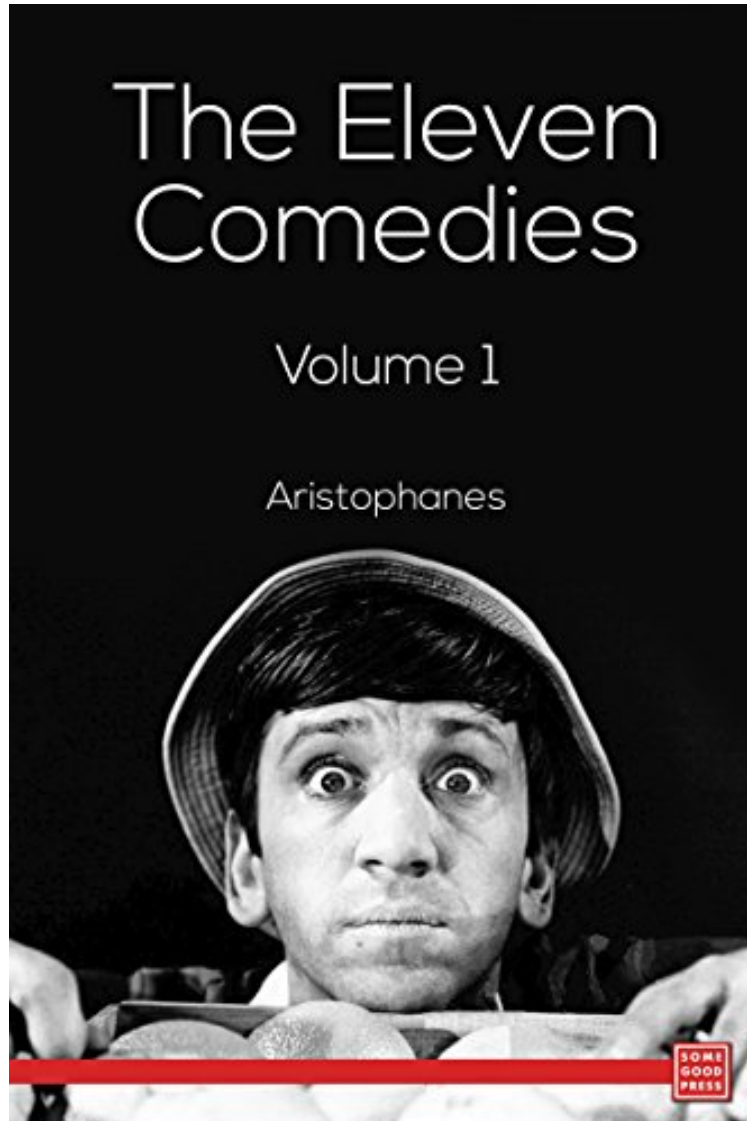


## The Eleven Comedies, Volume 1

*Aristophanes*

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**Aristophanes : The Eleven Comedies, Volume 1** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Eleven Comedies, Volume 1:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. As much a critique of our society today as it is of Athenian GreeceBy John J. PetryI have always loved these plays. There are aspects here that reach out across the centuries and touch us because in many ways we are different but also very much the same. The ancient Greeks being unencumbered by centuries of Christian hypocrisy and dislike of human sexuality expressed themselves very differently but altogether very much like us. Lysistrata could be slightly reworked and be a comment on our own time

and the fundamental critique of empire implicit in Aristophanes writing is a valid subtext to our own time period and our existence in a never ending state of war against one or another of the "enemy". These are satire of a very fundamental nature and directed at the society and social structures of the time. They are not fluff but they are humorous and fortunate for Aristophanes he could freely express himself in this fashion in the Athens of his day. Had he lived a little later in the world of Alexander or the Romans he likely would have found himself exiled or murdered for what he wrote as those states were not so liberal when it came to freedom of speech and critique of the governing class. Of course the one great irony of his thesis is his critique of democracy which he felt was the reason for the imperialism of the Athenian state and his yearning for the earlier, more conservative and much idealized monarchy he idolized. This is often the issue with those of whatever political ilk who recall however spottily the idolized and sanitized versions of by-gone eras as a "golden age" and wish for it to return. That aside Aristophanes was a delightful writer and his critiques of the society in which he lived are witty and humorous and well worth reading both in terms of where we originate as well as what is occurring around us. Human nature has not changed really in the centuries and that is a point well worth considering.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Ancient humor is not much different than modern humor

By Jeffrey Van Wagoner Enjoyed the book and found the translation to be very readable. These comedies show that humor has not changed a lot over the centuries. Be forewarned that the humor is crude and on the order of something you would see on SNL. The way Aristophanes made fun of the politicians is also similar to SNL or other late night comedy. Volume 1 contains 5 of the 11 comedies and volume 2 is also available for free. The forward and introductions to each play were extremely useful in understanding what is going on. There were also end notes to each play (unfortunately they are not hyperlinked) that explained things well. Highly recommended for anyone trying to understand what ancient humor was like.

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Lysistrata was absolutely hilarious

By Ashley PenSo, I only needed to read Lysistrata for class (which is why I only gave 4 stars since I don't know how the other comedies are). I hunkered down, ready to be bored, and to my surprise I was cracking up laughing at just how funny the play was. This was a great translation and I would recommend it.

Playwright Aristophanes of ancient Athens wrote a series of eleven comedies, naming them solely after the number contained in them. This book is volume one of the series.

About the Author ARISTOPHANES, the most famous comic dramatist of ancient Greece, was born an Athenian citizen in about 445 B.C. Forty-four plays have been attributed to Aristophanes; eleven of these have survived. His plays are the only extant representatives of Greek Old Comedy, a dramatic form whose conventions made it inevitable that the author would comment on the political and social issues of fifth-century Athens. This Aristophanes did so well that Plato, asked by the tyrant of Syracuse for an analysis of Athenians, sent a copy of Aristophanes' plays in reply.

#160;#160;#160;#160;His earliest play, the *Banqueters*, won the second prize in 427 B.C. when the dramatist must have been less than eighteen years old, since, as he notes in the *Clouds* (423), he was too young to produce it in his own name. Another early play, the *Babylonians*, criticized the demagogue Cleon, who responded by subjecting Aristophanes to legal persecution, and as the author charges in the *Acharnians*, Cleon had "slanged, and lied, and slandered and betongued me . . . till I well nigh was done to death." Nevertheless, in the *Knights* (424), he renewed his attack on the popular Athenian leader and won first prize in that year's contest. *Plutus* (388) was the last of the author's plays to be produced in his lifetime.