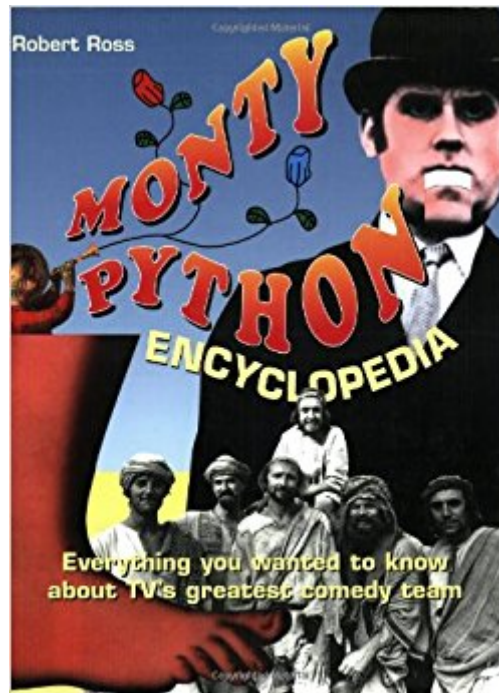




The book was found

Monty Python Encyclopedia



Synopsis

This guide includes everything you ever wanted to know about the history and stars of the Python comedy team from And Now For Something Completely Different to The Wind In The Willows via Dead Parrots, Twelve Monkeys and Basil the Rat. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Love it as really am a Python fan!

I find this flawed effort nevertheless very enjoyable; but I am of two minds about its not quite being what it professes to be. An encyclopedia should (as Sgt. Friday used to insist) just give the facts. Almost every sentence here is concerned with Mr. Ross's personal opinion about the facts--opinion, by the way, stated as fact. When he says, for example, that episode 7 of the 1st series of MP's Flying Circus is "one of the most unfunny," this can scarcely be accepted as fact (it is the one about the transformation into Scotsmen). The format is also inconsistent. A complete treatment of an Avengers episode is offered because John Cleese makes a brief appearance but another episode in which Carol Cleveland plays a major role is not featured and barely mentioned in her own write up. Also--and this is a Good Thing--Ross includes any film or tv show in which even a single Pythonite has had a hand. So with an eye open for typos and occasional inaccuracies, I will continue to peruse this book but always careful to separate fact from opinion. And all the more so now that the MPFC tapes and DVDs are being made available by A&E!

The back cover alone, should be the biggest tip off, to this gigantic rip-off! Mr. Ross is paid to write books about British television shows. Besides Python, he has written books on The Avengers, and The Saint. (Heaven help their fans as well!). He doesn't have to be a fan of the show, just a flunky who collects information. It's easy enough to get a Python endorsement as well, since a book about them, obviously generates interest in their own projects. One thing I wonder about is this: why do the authors of books about funny people, naturally assume they themselves are the comic event of the decade? (Please, leave the comedy to the professionals.). Mr. Ross is no more a comedian, than Geoffrey Giuliano is a musician. Mr. Ross's overly long descriptions of every Python episode, are like being trapped in a pub with a drunken neo-Python fan, intent on retelling every joke to you until you laugh at it. Frankly, if you wanted a run down of cast and crew for any Python film, you could run it down on the Internet Movie Data Base. (And more than likely see the information spelled correctly as well.). Obviously all Mr. Ross had to do, was pay someone to surf for the information, and copy it down for his book. This book would benefit from being, simply, the facts. Most "encyclopedias" tend to state facts, rather than personal opinions. As a Python fan, I frankly don't care if Mr. Ross laughs at the same jokes I do, or "gets" the social ramifications of certain subjects. We all laugh differently, and Python offers much to laugh about. Instead of having every film, ruined by a full out synopsis that kills every joke, why not give just a general overview? Instead of merely listing the albums, why not list the variants? (And yes, original Python vinyl came with extras!). Instead of going over every episode with a fine tooth comb, why not give just a season intro? Mr. Ross wants too hard to be Kim Johnson, and fails.

This encyclopedia is filled with information not just on Monty Python, but on the individual members as well. What I mean is, not only do we read about things like "Life of Brian" and "The Meaning of Life," but we also hear about "Silverado" and "Splitting Heirs." The book provides a chronology starting with John Cleese's birthday in 1939 to 1997. There is also a list of videos and books as well as addresses for the British and American fan clubs. The focus for the entries is on the Monty Python cast. For instance, not a lot of information is given on the movie "Silverado," but there is quite a bit of information about John Cleese's role in the movie. Unfortunately, there are not a lot of pictures in the book. Personally, I think that would be a grand addition to this work. I would recommend this for diehard fans of Monty Python.

Alright, this has gone a little too far. Perhaps the reason why 3 Pythons have endorsed the book is

because they *ACTUALLY LIKED IT*. Mr. Frankenstein, or whatever his name is who wrote that lousy review probably right above this one, has not a clue what humor is. Probably the best way to write about a topic is to know it firsthand, and the second best way is to be objective. To leave writing Python books to the Pythons themselves would probably leave us with a bunch of books to be reviewed badly by uninformed persons such as Mr. Frankenstein, or whatever his name is. I have read through the book and have found nothing but pure Python emerging from its pages, pure humor, comprehensive and complete, and pretty well written. To give it one star is a lousy show of action. The only people who would give the Monty Python Encyclopedia ONE LOUSY STAR would be people who don't appreciate British humor for what it's worth. I thoroughly enjoyed reading the book, even though it's paperback and doesn't have many pictures. It's got everything else, what's wrong with it?

This person Robert Ross knows television but his book is written in a horridly repetitious style (constant references to "glam girls" and "pure class") and is filled with a distressing amount of errors. He obviously used a spellcheck program instead of a proofreader, so we get the information (in the first paragraph on the first page!) that the show started with the Sousa march and a huge "bear" foot. It does not improve. As far as grammar and punctuation go, I'm not the type of person to hate a book for bad grammar and horrifying punctuation -- but if I were, I would hate this book. Nonetheless, even though its flaws are terribly annoying, my interest in Python and post-Python was renewed, so I suppose that it did its job.

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