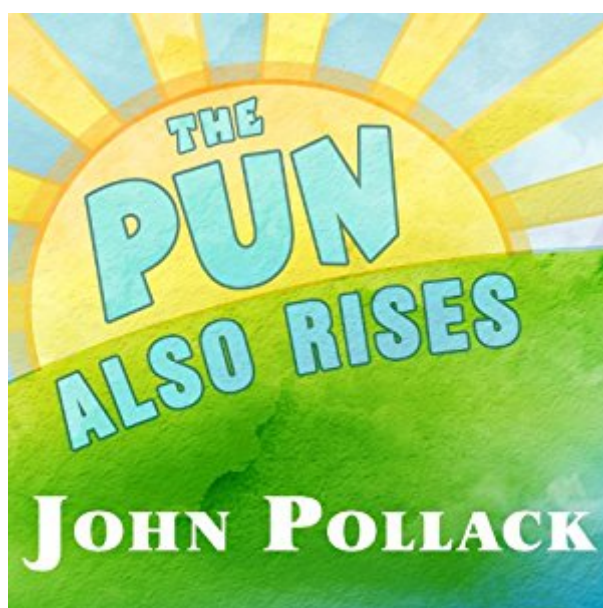


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# The Pun Also Rises: How The Humble Pun Revolutionized Language, Changed History, And Made Wordplay More Than Some Antics



## Synopsis

The pun is commonly dismissed as the lowest form of wit, and punsters are often unpopular for their obsessive wordplay. But such attitudes are relatively recent developments. In *The Pun Also Rises*, John Pollack - a former World Pun Champion and presidential speechwriter for Bill Clinton - explains why such wordplay is significant: It both revolutionized language and played a pivotal role in making the modern world possible. Skillfully weaving together stories and evidence from history, brain science, pop culture, literature, anthropology, and humor, *The Pun Also Rises* is an authoritative yet playful exploration of a practice that is common, in one form or another, to virtually every language on earth. At once entertaining and educational, this engaging book answers fundamental questions: Just what is a pun, and why do people make them? How did punning impact the development of human language, and how did that drive creativity and progress? And why, after centuries of decline, does the pun still matter?

## Book Information

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Reference > Words, Language & Grammar > Semantics

## Customer Reviews

Serendipity has also been kind to John Pollak. Just when I thought the pun was an affliction, his book illuminates punning as deserving affection. Attention class clowns; you have been exonerated, after all these years by *The Pun Also Rises*. Finally, someone has demonstrated your wisecracks have been a talent deserving recognition. Ironically, while John Pollak was writing for Pres. William Jefferson Clinton, I was making a living by wordsmithing on the funny side of the presidency. Due to resembling and sounding like Bill, I had the opportunity to appear on stage, film and television as

the Counterfeit Bill. Learning that Jay Leno has discovered the writings of John Pollak, we may be able to enjoy more of what talented warped minds can do with language. The book is a keeper for quick thinkers.

I purchased this as a present for a friend this holiday season. He absolutely adored it! He's the most punny (couldn't resist that one) person I know, and he was immediately intrigued by the book. I would highly recommend it for anyone who enjoys wordplay!

A fun read, erudite without being pompous.

I read John Pollack's book about his part in the design and assembly of a cork boat in America, and the unexpected transport of the boat to Portugal where he, his family, and friends sailed it down a partially tamed river. That captivating story was largely about the people involved and their relationships, travails, and courage. I didn't know what to expect from him in a book about puns. Pages and pages of funny stuff? No, this is not a book of puns, it is about puns. The introduction to the book was about his personal experience in managing to gain entry into a punning contest and unexpectedly winning it. I like puns, but before I read the book I classified puns into two categories: true works of art and boring nonsense. In the introduction I learned a little about what would be allowed in a punning contest and now I feel a little more tolerant towards all types of puns. The book delves into the history, psychology, and science of punning. There are puns throughout, but they're part of the writing and not blatant attempts at punnery. You have to pay attention to find them all. The book could have fallen into the genre of "the paper clip and how it saved the world" but it is an enjoyable speculation of how the pun may be part of what makes us human, how it may have helped to shape our language, and what the latest science of the brain has to say about this. I preordered the book and when it shipped, I got an email that said that in keeping with Amazon's price protection policy, I was getting a 14 cent reduction in the price. So not only did I get a very enjoyable book about puns, but it made cents too!

Interesting and enjoyable perspective with insightful implications related to our reasoning ability as well as our use and interpretation of language.

Hilarious!

I have learned so much from this book.

I hemmed before starting to read the book, but after I found my way, it turned out to be a delightful history of the pun replete with examples of some real groaners. The best example is the tale of the two Greek immigrants at the beginning of chapter 3 in which one of them brings a pair of torn trousers into a tailor shop in lower East Side New York. After examining them, the tailor says "Euripides?" To which the customer replies, "Eumenides?" It left me panting.

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