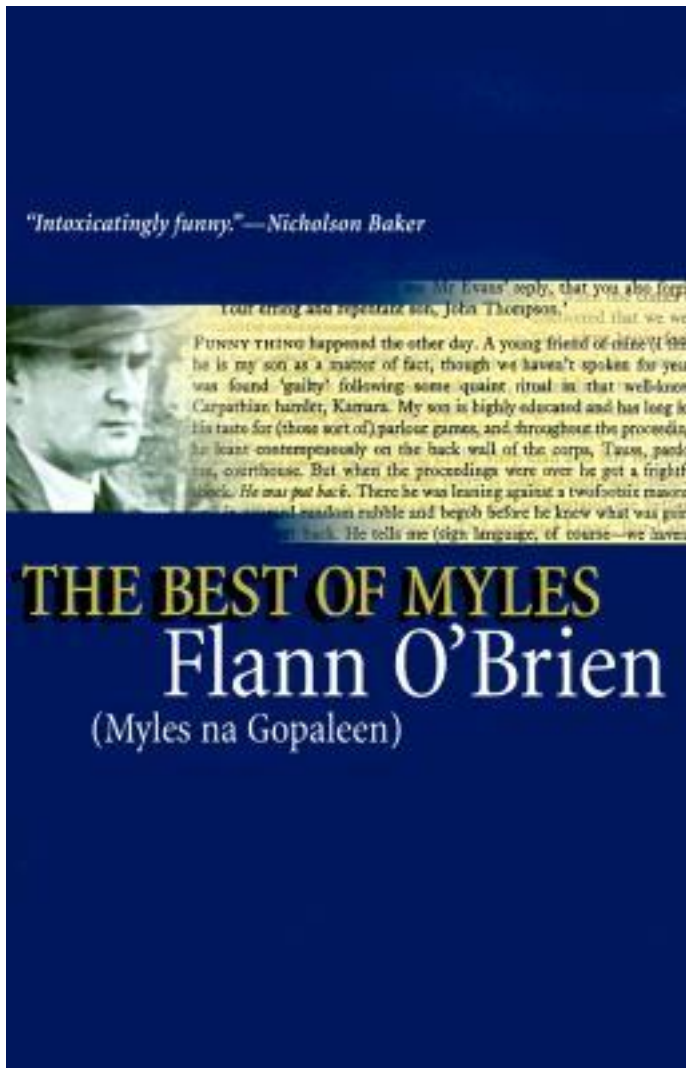

Flann O'Brien

The Best of Myles



Title: The Best of Myles

Author: Flann O'Brien

Format: Paperback

Language: English

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Download: allowed

Description

The great Irish humorist and writer Flann O'Brien, aka Brian O'Nolan, aka Myles na Gopaleen, also wrote a newspaper column called "Cruiskeen Lawn." *The Best of Myles* collects the best and funniest, covering such subjects as plumbers, the justice system, and improbable inventions.

Insightful reviews

Tim: I haven't read nearly enough Irish literature. This is actually columns that were in the Irish Times by Flann O'Brien, writing under the name Myles Na Gopaleen. It is brilliant and damn funny.

Dan: A collection of humorous columns written by Brian O'Nolan for the [Irish Times](#), and which for legal reasons appeared in that newspaper under a pseudonym de plume (false name for a French goose quill). "Myles na cGopaleen," the newspapers call him (pronounced Flann O'Brien, Gaelic orthography being what it is—and "Flann" means "Irish," don't you know).

The book is divided into chapters, with O'Brien's columns grouped together by subject. The first chapter, describing the activities of the WAAMA (the Irish Writers, Actors, Artists, Musicians Association) is screwball comedy. The type of humor employed in the columns included in the chapter on inventions (representing the work of the Myles na gCopaleen Central Research Bureau) and the chapter on different types of bores is closer to the satire typical of publications like [Mad Magazine](#).

The subject that gets the greatest amount of attention in O'Brien's book is that of clichés. This is not entirely surprising: as columnist for the *Irish Times* (and writer and editor for the student journal *Blather* at [University College](#)--see [Myles Before Myles](#) for this early work), it is likely O'Brien saw many feints at communication choked by the weeds of their own verbiage (FWIW, in the contemporary moment, with the [24-hour news cycle](#), ultra-modern electronic communication devices, and {cliché alert!} "new and improved" forms of invasive advertising, we all enjoy {?} enhanced opportunities of collecting and trading overused phrases that far outstrip anything we dream O'Brien could have dreamed. Or do I dream?)

As of this writing, Wikipedia says that "a [cliché](#) may sometimes be used in a work of fiction for comedic effect." In fact, O'Brien wrote a novel employing this technique: in [The Poor Mouth: A Bad Story About the Hard Life](#), he parodies the language and situations common to the "[Gaeltacht autobiography](#)," a popular genre of Irish fiction in which is represented the miserable and poverty-stricken life of a protagonist and his or her people. One example of this type of novel is *Peg*, in which [Peig Sayers](#) "recounts her life, especially the latter half, as a series of misfortunes in which much of her family die by disease, drowning or other mishap" (thanks again, Wikipedia).

In the newspaper articles included in *The Best of Myles*, O'Brien employs a number of techniques to make fun of clichés. For instance, in addition to parodying the language of

bureaucrats, art critics and lawyers, he deploys clichés ironically, calling attention to them by employing them but setting them off from the rest of the passage in which they appear through the use of parentheses. He includes humorous stories representing absurd situations, the “punch lines” to which are clichés (or puns or spoonerisms constructed from the same), the effect of which is to suggest that only in the context of such fantastic situations could these worn-out phrases become meaningful once again. In one chapter, he makes fun of the cliché by employing the form of the catechism, implying that some clichés have become so rigid as to have become part of ideological dogma. As well, he analyzes passages from speeches and from newspaper articles employing hackneyed phrases and shows how these contribute to imprecision of meaning. It was while reading some of these latter that I had to reach for a copy of the essay [“Politics and the English Language.”](#) in which [George Orwell](#) comments on “dying metaphors,” “pretentious diction” and “meaningless words,” and argues that the English language “becomes ugly and inaccurate because our thoughts are foolish, but the slovenliness of our language makes it easier for us to have foolish thoughts.” In that essay, the first of Orwell's six “rules” for increased precision in communication reads: “Never use a metaphor, simile or other figure of speech which you are used to seeing in print.” Orwell does not mention it, but I would add that the exception to this rule would be that you could use a metaphor, simile or figure of speech that you are used to seeing in print if you are using it for its entertainment value, as O’Brien does.

At this point, I would want to suggest that O’Brien’s employment of cliché as a comic device substantiates [Marshall McLuhan](#)’s notion that a medium, once replaced by a newer medium, becomes the content of that newer medium—but that’s a whole other essay that would take me far(ther) off the topic—that being that Flann O’Brien’s *The Best of Myles* is a funny book (frequently LOL funny) and that it has makes some very good points about language and communication.

Et ca suffit. Enough is enough.

Riccardo Benussi: Per apprezzare a fondo un libro come questo bisognerebbe essere vissuti nello stesso periodo in cui le parti che lo compongono venivano pubblicate sull'*Irish Times*, tanti sono i riferimenti al periodo, ai personaggi (allora) contemporanei e alle usanze degli irlandesi del tempo. Altra cosa che non rende onore all'autore leggerlo in traduzione, perdendo così i giochi di parole... resta comunque un bel libro dal quale traspare la genialità dell'autore!

Bill: in addition to writing novels below the pseudonym Flann O'Brien, Brian O'Nolan additionally wrote a standard column for the Irish instances lower than the identify Myles na gCopaleen ("Myles of the Little Horses"). This ebook collects the superior ones. they have a tendency to be sarcastic observations on Dublin existence within the 1940s-50s, which would appear beautiful arcane, yet simply as you do not have to reside in Chicago to understand Dave Barry, you do not have to be a Dubliner to take pleasure in Myles. The character he creates for himself might rank as one of many nice characters of fiction, if O'Nolan had ever positioned him in a novel.

Simon: Hilarious! that is not hyperbole, this ebook is actually hilarious; it makes me chuckle out loud whenever I choose it up. it truly is huge, packed choked with the easiest components of the

satirical column that Myles na gCopaleen (aka Flann O'Brien, aka Brian O'Nolan) wrote within the Irish instances till his loss of life in 1966, so it isn't a booklet that you will learn instantly through, yet simply realizing that this quantity is on my shelf, prepared for me to select up at any time when i would like a laugh, is especially comforting. i do not recognize why he's not larger known, yet O'Nolan was once a real nice of an Irish literary scene already choked with greats. hugely recommended!

John: Struggled via this one. enjoyed The 3rd Policeman and components of this have been natural genius however the nature of ways those articles are awarded made the whole lot challenging going.

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