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A quest, a war, a ring that would be grounds for calling any wedding off, a king without a kingdom, and a little, furry "hero" named Frito, ready - or maybe just forced by the wizard of Goodgulf - to undertake the one mission which can save Lower Middle Earth from enslavement by the evil Sorhed...Luscious Elfmaidens, a roller-skating dragon, ugly plants that can soul-kiss the unwary to death - these are just some of the ingredients in the wildest, wackiest, most irreverent excursion into fantasy realms that anyone has ever dared to undertake.

## Bored of the Rings: A Parody of J.R.R. Tolkien's Lord of the Rings Details

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# From Reader Review Bored of the Rings: A Parody of J.R.R. Tolkien's Lord of the Rings for online ebook

## Heidi The Hippie Reader says

The clever parts of this so-so parody of The Lord of the Rings trilogy were the character names and the map on the first two pages. The rest was repetitive and silly nonsense, but the map especially was inspired.

At the front of most science fiction or fantasy novels, the author provides a map, usually hand-drawn, of their world, the different countries, the rivers, mountains, dragon hoards, what-have-you from the story. Tolkien's was particularly detailed and it was clear that he put a lot of time, effort and emotion into the creation of it.

The skewered version in this book of the LoTR map is hysterical. Mordor became Fordor which is, of course, right next to Tudor. Isengard becomes Eisentower and so on. Even Tolkien's ornate compass receives a makeover with the directions north, south, east, west becoming up, down, left, right. I saw the map and I had high hopes for some big laughs.

Sadly, that never really came about. But oh, the name changes. Sam becomes Spam. Frodo becomes Frito. By far, my favorite was Legolas which was turned into Legolamb.

Listen to what happens if you bear the Great Ring for too long: *"For as surely as the Ring gives power, just as surely it becomes the master! The wearer slowly changes, and never to the good. He grows mistrustful and jealous of his power as his heart hardens. He loves overmuch his strengths and develops stomach ulcers. He becomes logy and irritable, prone to neuritis, neuralgia, nagging backache, and frequent colds. Soon no one invites him to parties anymore."* pg 11. The horror!

This parody also tackles Tolkien's frequent use of inset song lyrics. Here is one of my favorite characters Tom Bombadil, in this book, Tim Benzadrino singing: *"Toke-a-lid! Smoke-a-lid! Pop the mescalino! Stash the hash! Gonna crash! Make mine methedrino! Hop a hill! Pop a pill! For Old Tim Benzadrino!"* pg 21. And actually, making one of the most curious and unexplained characters into a drugged-out hippie was kind of funny. The gag lost its charm though after the first couple lines.

If forced to pick a favorite scene, I'd have to go with when the party was attacked by a "Thesaurus" outside of the Mines of "Andrea Doria": *"The creature was about fifty feet tall, with wide lapels, long dangling participles, and a pronounced gazetteer. "Aiye!" shouted Legolam. "A Thesaurus!" "Maim!" roared the monster. "Mutilate, mangle, crush. See HARM."* pg 68.

Anyway, rather than garnering a lot of laughs, this parody succeeded in making me want to re-read the original books. Recommended only for the super fans who must read everything that has to do with the LoTR. Otherwise, I'd give it a pass.

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## Richard says

This is an extremely out-to-left-field parody of a timeless fantasy classic. Full of horrible puns, cheap shots and droll tongue-in-cheekery, it will infuriate purists and delight others.

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## Mike says

I almost gave this book a 5, and I may yet go back and alter the star count before completing this review. It's definitely worth at least a "4.5".

I first read this book when loaned a copy by a high school friend. Yes, I had read "The Hobbit" and the three volumes of "The Lord of The Rings" before picking up this slim, but powerful volume. As soon as I read it, I ordered two (yes, two) copies of the book from a long-since gone bookstore. Since that day, I try to maintain ownership of two copies of this book and have had to purchase several more.

Why two? Quite simply, one to have as a loaner and one to have to re-read when the mood strikes me. If you paid attention to the "had to purchase several more" phrase, you'd either think me a terribly forgetful person that loses things, a compulsive cleaner that tosses things prematurely, or a well-meaning book lender that doesn't often get a certain book back - bingo! Yup, "Bored of The Rings" is like a sock in a dryer. Sometimes it seems to slip into an alternate universe and then I am down to one or occasionally none. (Yes, I have loaned out the last copy more than once.)

I am considered by most to be an intelligent, smart and educated fellow, so why do I have this seeming "blind spot" to the probability of this book's return? Simply because it is the parody to define all parodies, IMHO. No one would consider it "high brow literature", but it manages in about 200 paperback pages to lampoon, twist, puncture, and (if you will) defile a lengthy, intricate, and amazing tale (in six books, as defined by the author) in a way that seems so natural, so precise, so funny as to have no equal, let alone superior!

I grant that humor is highly subjective, but there are certain universal concepts that funny men throughout the ages have used to get people to laugh. We have names for these tools and constructions: pathos, irony, sarcasm, hyperbole, plays-on-words (aka "puns"), jokes. We classify jokes: knock-knock, elephant, etc. We analyze verbal, written and visual comedy. Our greatest playwright wrote Comedies as well as Tragedies; both survive today as high school reading assignments and actively performed plays by our leading lights of the stage.

"Bored of The Rings" uses many of these time-tested methods plus knowledge of the original tale to create a weapon of mass amusement. It has very shallow as well as mid-range and deep jokes. It assails one with its silliness and its cleverness all at once. I will never meet Henry N. Beard and I don't know if I have ever read anything else by him, but this book still brings a smile to my face just thinking about how to describe it.

Don't mistake my praise for blindness. This book is not fair. This book attacks ethnic and social groups (some mythological, some more "realistic"). It blends a kind of written slapstick with the more thinking humor of witty people, but it can offend and offers no apologies. So, not everyone will embrace it or offer a kind review, but that should not stop you from trying it.

It's difficult for me to say so much about how I enjoy this work without giving you examples of what I find so funny. Even today, years later, I recall certain things that I will say to friends or associates. But to present them here would be a double injustice: first to the work itself, as often a line or two may be independently funny, but in context it is hilarious; and second to you, as "spoilers" are often cherry-picked from the best of anything and thus lessen your enjoyment when you finally decide to brave the waters. (Yes, mixed

metaphors are probably in the book, too.) But let me this approach:

If you have read any of my previous "reviews", you'll note that I recently read a parody of Frank Herbert's "Dune". "Doon" was less than I expected and hoped for and yet I thought it was a pretty good lampoon of the classic. Nice puns, good "translation" of essential story elements and characters, etc. but it just didn't "click" in the way I wanted. As I read it I realized that I was comparing it to "Bored of The Rings". And, as I wrote that review I acknowledged that in doing so, I probably liked it less than it deserved and would someday read it again to see if it grew on me.

And now a week or two after that I realize that it is the (seemingly) effortless way that Mr. Beard created his savage parody of "The Lord of The Rings" that I was judging "Doon" by. I doubt that I will ever consider another lampoon as completely funny and as well-constructed. Certainly it truncates off the end of the original, as most such books will, but it has this coherency, this clarity of wit that makes the book hold together so well in both the reading and the recollection of it.

To fully appreciate it, one must have read the original. Liking the original is probably also a prerequisite since it is in the details of the parody that some of the best humor awaits you. Having watch the epic trilogy ("LOTR") of Mr. Jackson might not be enough. The visual clues created by the movies are similar to, but different from the books and of course you don't have the original language to compare against the biting prose of "BOTR". That's my take on how best to prepare yourself for this slim, tour-de-force. Now it's up to you to read it. Hope you do! (Yes, I updated it to a "5.0".)

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## K.D. Absolutely says

There are quite a few funny scenes particularly when the book makes fun of the Tolkien characters by incorporating sex innuendos. Imagine **Frito** (Frodo) having a hard-on with an elf-maiden. When I picture in my mind the scene with Elijah Wood and Liv Tayler then the scene becomes alive and funny.

As a parody, the story follows the same as the one of Tolkien's trilogy *The Lord of the Rings* minus some details and characters. However, you can still follow this book's a-lot-shorter story, if you've read the books or probably read some Wiki entries about them. Anyway, this book, *The Bored of the Rings* was first published in 1969 so *The Harvard Lampoon* aimed this really for the readers and not the moviegoers who, in 2001-2003, saw the Oscar-nominated/winner film adaptations.

However, I did not really like this book because of 2 reasons:

(1) I really liked the trilogy. I fact, I found it amazing. I will not repeat the reasons here as I will be like a broken record already. Suffice it to say that any parody or copy-cat works will seem like a blasphemy or second-tier work for me. That's how much I loved Tolkien and LOTR.

(2) There are many words or events in this parody that are not familiar to me. For example, **Goodgulf** (Gandalf) is said to be a brand name used by Gulf Oil and I did not know that it is a premium grade of gasoline. I also found some green jokes too much. However, I loved the equivalent of Gondor, **Twodor** and for Mordor **Fordor** because these Gondor and Mordor were confusing for me while reading Tolkien. Here it is easier to remember! I also loved **Minas Troney** that sounded like my favorite soup. This is Harvard Lampoon's equivalent to Minas

Tirith.

If you don't love *The Lord of the Rings* because it is too serious for you, try this one. Guaranteed to make you laugh if you are not squeamish about green (sex) jokes. Who knows, this may even perk up your interest to try Tolkien.

But not the other way around. For the serious lovers of Tolkien, don't read this book.

Well at least for me, it didn't work. But I am not rating this with 1-star though. It clearly specified its objective in its Foreword:

*"Lastly, we hope that those of you who have read Prof Tolkien's remarkable trilogy already will not be offended by our little spoof of it. All fooling aside, we consider ourselves honored to be able to make fun of such an impressive, truly masterful work of genius and imagination. After all, that is the most important service a book can render, the rendering of enjoyment, in this case, enjoyment through laughter. And don't trouble yourself too much if you don't laugh at what you are about to read, for it you perk up your pink little ears, you may hear the silvery tinkling of merriment in the air, far, far away..."*

Such an endearing forewarning, isn't it? So I proceeded and read the book. As I said, I laughed a little there and a little hear but not enough for me to like this book. I liked Tolkien so much I do not want to make fun of him.

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## **Jen says**

Tolkien's works were sacred and beloved in my family when I was growing up, and this Harvard Lampoon lampoon of the trilogy was outright HERESY--\*hilarious\* heresy, that is.

The Harvard Lampoon was the late 1960s precursor to National Lampoon (of "Animal House", "Vacation" and "Van Wilder" fame). Those boys at Harvard turned over every character, rock, and tree in Tolkien's universe, and exposed their lewd, gross, and satiric underbellies. Really, it's a salacious guffaw-fest fit for the pimply, Tolkien-loving fourteen year-old boy in many of us. Published in 1969, it is a product of its time. Some readers today may not get some of its references (anyone remember the laxative Serutan? Good Gulf brand gas? Richard M. Nixon?), and this book's Middle Earth has a heavy hippie-era vibe (along with a burlesque and peep show vibe). But it's still a hysterical read, even now. In the Preface alone, there is the best footnote ever written!

So, follow Frito, Spam, Moxie, and Pepsi, four boggies from the Sty, as they journey to drop the One Ring into the Zazu Pits and rid Lower Middle Earth from the machinations of the evil Sorhed, the Great Carbuncle of Doom--with a little help from their friends Goodgulf Greyteeth, Stomper the Lone Ranger, and wretched little Goddam, while still finding time to stop for a visit with dear Uncle Dildo, fresh from playing another game of four-letter Scrabble.

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## **Manny says**

Unsubtle, gross, stupid, mechanical, but quite often funny. My favorite line, which I often quote when hungry:

"This better be food, 'cause I'm gonna eat it"

And I liked Deus Ex Machina Airlines too. And the introduction. And the Council of Elrond, where Frito suggests just dropping the Ring down a storm drain, or pawning it and losing the ticket.

OK, OK, I admit it - there is a lot of amusing material.

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## **Lyn says**

Read this in high school and thought it was too funny, not sure how much I would like it now.

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## **Mike (the Paladin) says**

Okay first, I love the Lord of the Rings.

Now, I enjoyed this book, mostly for it's witty humor which unfortunately is often buried amid a lot of off color strained attempts at humor. Still I give it a 3 as it will give you some genuine laughs especially if you are familiar with the trilogy.

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## **John Jr. says**

For one who has never read J. R. R. Tolkien's Lord of the Rings books, this comic takedown offers a fair amount of fun. But I've concluded that it's too ridiculous (deliberately ridiculous) to be properly appreciated without better knowledge of the target than I have. So I'm going to set it aside until I see enough appeal in the originals to plough through them--I'll resist speculating on why I've been immune to such fantasy so far--or (almost as unlikely) until I can watch the Peter Jackson LOTR movies with something more than technical appreciation.

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## **Matt says**

In selecting a literary parody for a recent book challenge, I found myself struggling a great deal. Not one to turn to the classics, I wanted to select a novel that may accentuate a book I read and did not entirely enjoy, while also not choose a parody that had been flogged to death. Turning to this piece by Henry Beard and Douglas Kenney, I felt that I might be in good hands. I will be the first to admit, Tolkien is not for me.

Please, gasp now and shun me as you go to fetch all the rotten eggs and tomatoes you can carry. I read the Lord of the Rings trilogy with gritted teeth when asked to do so by someone and found myself celebrating the end. So, in choosing this parody, I hoped to open my eyes up and be able to laugh at some of the silliness of the highly-successful three box set that it seems everyone has read and enjoyed. Beard and Kenney open with the admission that they are not trying to fill the shoes that Tolkien left, but prefer to write something satirical for their own amusement. With that, I entered the world of Lower Middle-Earth. The story centres around Dildo (how poignant a name) and his nephew, Frito, who are sent on a mission by the illustrious wizard, Goodgulf. Along the way, they encounter numerous heroes and villains, all of whom possess monikers of present-day items or concepts and whose bumbling presents a true Hobbit-esque adventure. Lower Middle-Earth is in danger of being enslaved by Sorhed, though Frito has been handed a less than flashy ring to help protect him. As this (thankfully) short quest continues, fans of the original series will find parallels and new differences to make them laugh, though I suspect that a dislike of the foundational books left me rolling my eyes and injecting only the odd snicker at some one-liners. I choose not to recount much of the narrative, as the book seems to have continued on that fantasy-based adventure and did not modernise it enough for me to have a strong handle on things. Still, I am sure that many will love this book, both those who are Tolkien fans and others who enjoy a good parody. Deemed the 'parody that laid the groundwork for this literary genre', Beard and Kenney have done much with this and surely some collective will find it amusing.

One might ask "why would you ever read this book?". To that person, I can strongly assert that I am not entirely sure. Perhaps I needed a quick parody, or even something that could light my spirits. Surely I would not want to touch a satire of a book I have not read, in case there are narrative parallels whose humour is lost on those who do not know the original story. Still, I struggled and praised whatever Being there is when it was all said and done. Beard and Kenney do a wonderful job with name changes and modernising things in that regard, from the various creatures that Frito encounters through to the songs that are embedded throughout. I can admit that these were well-crafted and I did chuckle, if only out of eye-rolling dismissal. The story seems to be similar, though not entirely true to the Tolkien original, though its brevity is surely a godsend in the long run. There will be those who applaud the story and others who spit in the direction of this satire, but I will step back and let that literary war commence as I check another category off on my reading challenge. Onwards to something more my style...

Kudos, Messrs. Beard and Kennedy, as you have surely stirred up the pot. I hope you have received many wonderful comments on your work and that others find the glory you can expect in reviews. It simply was not for me.

This book fulfills Equinox I (A Book for All Seasons) Book Challenge for Topic #5: A Book That is a Spoof of a Literary Classic

Love/hate the review? An ever-growing collection of others appears at:  
<http://pecheyponderings.wordpress.com/>

A Book for All Seasons, a different sort of Book Challenge: <https://www.goodreads.com/group/show/...>

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**Chris says**

Ahhhh.... the sweet, sweet scent of true comedy.



The first time I read this, I nearly soiled myself laughing. As with all comedy, repetition kind of diminishes the effect, but there are still laughs to be had. Just from the beginning, when Dildo Bugger throws a party for the gluttonous freeloaders of the Sty, and the foists his Magic Ring off on his hapless nephew Frito, you know things can only go wacky.

The folks at Harvard Lampoon did a brilliant job here, warping the characters of the original story (with the utmost love and respect, of course, for the money they're making from sales of the book) into funhouse mirror-images. Thus brave Aragorn, son of Arathorn becomes Arrowroot, son of Arrowshirt, wielder of Krona, Conqueror of Dozens, whose foolproof strategy for dealing with overwhelming odds is to play dead. Or wise and resourceful Gandalf becomes Goodgulf, the shifty con artist and 32nd degree Mason who is all too willing to let the Shadow win if it means he can escape with his hide and the majority of someone else's gold. Legolas and Gimli become Legolam and Gimlet, sniping at each other with the kind of accuracy we could have only wished for in the films, and Merry and Pippin twist into Moxie and Pepsi, the blundering brothers who wish they were dead. And so does everybody else.

What really differentiates this book from, say The Sillymarillion, is that the Harvard Lampoon writers have allowed these warped characters to evolve in their own right. So instead of forcing them along the path of the original story, the writers have broadened the guidelines a bit. In other words, if you're looking for a one-to-one event correlation with the original books, you'll be disappointed. But the major events and characters are all there, even though they've compacted the entire three-volume saga into a slim paperback of less than 150 pages. So just sit back and enjoy it. Whether you've read the books or just seen the movie, you should be able to get a lot of good laughs out of this.

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### **Ashley \*Hufflepuff Kitten\* says**

An interesting title choice as I did in fact find myself bored more than once while reading this. A shame, because a Lord of the Rings parody had the potential to be hilarious. Some of the jokes just felt too on the nose (or conversely, way out in left field) and by the end I was actually having trouble with all the names (can you imagine?). It was clever in spots and I did laugh out loud a fair bit, but overall I'd rather have reread the trilogy instead. Thankfully it's rather more condensed than the trilogy, though ;)

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### **Stephen Robert Collins says**

Don't try to read this if don't love LOTRs this very funny this joke book that will have you giggling

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### **bookczuk says**

Clever, but probably more fun if you actually really liked the original books. I must confess, that while I liked The Hobbit, I got a little fed up with the actual Ring books- Frodo was always saying "I know what I must do". I think the subtitle should have been "Seven guys take a long hike". The movies, though, did capture me. I think that tolkien was just a little too verbose for my tastes at times. Oh well.

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**Thomas says**

A thorough sendup of Tolkien's classic trilogy. Character names alone will crack you up. (After awhile you'll struggle to recall the real ones.) But I really enjoyed the points when the writing logic became childishly simple: "It started to rain, and they all caught colds." Still makes me laugh.

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