



Heavens to Betsy!: And Other Curious Sayings

Charles Earle Funk , Tom Funk (Illustrator)

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He's as mad as a hatter!

Whether it's like *a bump on a log* or *a bat out of hell*, these expressions have been around forever, but we've never really known why ... until now! Finally Dr. Funk explains more than 400 droll, colorful, and sometimes pungent expressions of everyday speech. Derived from classical sources, historic events, famous literature, frontier humor, and the frailties of humankind, each of these sayings has an interesting story behind its origin.

If you've ever wondered why when you're in a hurry you are told to *hold your horses*, wonder no more!

Heavens to Betsy!: And Other Curious Sayings Details

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Author : Charles Earle Funk , Tom Funk (Illustrator)

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Kim says

The writing style and word usage seemed a bit antiquated. I also got very bored with references to Hog on Ice. That being said this was the perfect thing to read a few minutes at a time while in the bathroom. I found myself saying quite often, "That is interesting."

Linda says

Interesting origins of familiar sayings. Absorbing read.

Finn Kopp says

This book is good because it is helpful and fun. I never knew that a charley horse was a reference to a horse that had stiff muscles. This book is slightly outdated. It was made in 1955, so some sayings are not used today. It is organized because it doesn't have chapters or anything to place them in a specific order.

Alan says

From 1955, so some of the phrases are out of date, it is still a fun, and occasionally educational, read.

Alison says

I love finding out where interesting sayings come from, but this book wasn't what I was looking for. Many of the sayings' origins are obvious, and others are so outdated that I had never heard them used.

Melody says

I recall this being a very fun little compendium.

Debbie says

The book covers a good number of expressions, but most of them are ones I heard before and already knew what they meant. I was somewhat skeptical about the origins he gave for some of the expressions, but it was a fun read overall.

Bailey Jane says

This is one of those interesting books that sheds a little light on those little phrases you've always wondered, "How did that ever come to be said?" It's a great coffee table book as anyone can thumb through it and be more enlightened than before they sat down! It's nice to have one of those books around that isn't necessarily meant to be read in any kind of order. Just opening to a page and reading is sufficient!

Sandra says

This book is an interesting compendium of curious mostly American sayings, along with a brief history of how they came about. A rather fun romp through history via local color.

Christy says

This book was interesting, but there were parts of it that I just skimmed because some of the phrases were unfamiliar to me-- out of date? I would be interested in reading a more current book on a similar theme.

Some interesting things I learned from this book:

- "Ham actor" originated from "hamfatter", which was applied to Black minstrels starting around 1875.
 - Having someone "by the short hairs" didn't, at least at one time, refer to the pubic hairs, but rather to the beard, or the little hairs on the scruff of the neck.
 - There's a cute phrase, "busman's holiday", referring to spending one's vacation doing the same thing one does for a living.
 - There's another phrase, "absent treatment", which refers to talking about a person as if s/he isn't there.
 - There have been "ambulance chasers" at least since the 1890s.
 - The phrase "casting pearls before swine" is a real phrase, not just a comic-strip title, and refers to giving nice things to people who won't appreciate them.
 - "Nip and tuck" used to refer not to plastic surgery, but to being neck-and-neck in a race!
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Rrshively says

This book was a handy way to occupy those last few minutes when one is dressed and ready to go somewhere or waiting for the computer to warm up. I learned the origins and whys and wherefores of many of our common sayings. It was O.K. with me that I did.

Hannah says

That was interesting, and even funny at times, but could have been more readable. The entries don't appear to be organized in any way, they don't follow a theme, they're not divided into chapters. I would hate to have

to look up an expression in this book.

Sarah Sammis says

Heavens to Betsy was first published in 1955 and is still in print. I think by 1955 most of the "curious sayings" were already falling out of common use and by now this laundry list of sayings seems more like a strange historical document than a current look at popular expressions in day-to-day speech.

Funk's begins the book with an explanation as to why "Heavens to Betsy" inspired the writing of the book. Although he gives no definitive explanation about the history or origin of the saying the process of researching it makes for the only truly interesting read of the entire book.

So many of the "common" expression are ones I've never heard or even seen written outside of this book. Then the ones that Funk asserts are no longer in use are the ones that I personally use on a regular basis or at least hear or see frequently.

Mindy says

I thought this would be really interesting, and at first it was. First of all: it rapidly became BORING! This author completely sucked the life and interest out of the subject. In addition, since it was written in 1955, meanings of some of the expressions have actually changed! It felt dated beyond belief.
