

 **Contents** 

Series Introduction by Harold Bloom: Themes and Metaphors	xi
Volume Introduction by Harold Bloom	xv
The Plays of Aristophanes	1
“Aristophanes’ Comic Apocalypse” by Louise Cowan, in <i>The Terrain of Comedy</i> (1984)	
The Plays of Samuel Beckett and the Theatre of the Absurd	29
“The Theatre of the Absurd” by Martin Esslin, in <i>Theatre in the Twentieth Century</i> (1956)	
<i>Catch-22</i> (Joseph Heller)	47
“ <i>Catch-22</i> and Angry Humor: A Study of the Normative Values of Satire” by James Nagel, in <i>Studies in American Humor</i> (1974)	
<i>Cat’s Cradle</i> (Kurt Vonnegut)	57
“Dark Humor in <i>Cat’s Cradle</i> ” by Blake Hobby	
<i>A Clockwork Orange</i> (Anthony Burgess)	67
“ <i>A Clockwork Orange</i> and the Metaphysics of Slapstick” by Matthew J. Bolton	
On Dark Humor in Literature	79
“The Comedy of Entropy: The Contexts of Black Humour” by Patrick O’Neill, in <i>Canadian Review of Comparative Literature</i> (1983)	

<i>Divine Comedy</i> (Dante Alighieri) “Elements of Dark Humor in Dante’s <i>Divine Comedy</i> ” by Lauren P. De La Vars	105
<i>The Dumbwaiter</i> (Harold Pinter) “When Farce Turns into Something Else: Harold Pinter’s <i>The Dumb Waiter</i> ” by Scott Walters	115
The Stories of Nikolai Gogol and <i>Lolita</i> (Vladimir Nabokov) “Observations on Black Humor in Gogol and Nabokov” by Woodin W. Rowe, in <i>The Slavic and East European Journal</i> (1974)	127
“A Good Man Is Hard to Find” (Flannery O’Connor) “Clichés, Superficial Story-Telling, and the Dark Humor of Flannery O’Connor’s ‘A Good Man Is Hard to Find’” by Robert C. Evans	139
<i>Henry IV, Parts One and Two</i> (William Shakespeare) “The Rejection of Falstaff” by A.C. Bradley, in <i>Oxford Lectures on Poetry</i> (1909)	149
“The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock” (Thomas Stearns Eliot) “‘Almost Ridiculous’: Dark Humor in Eliot’s ‘The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock’” by Robert C. Evans	171
<i>A Modest Proposal</i> (Jonathan Swift) “Wood’s Halfpence” by Leslie Stephen, in <i>Swift</i> (1882)	181
<i>The Mysterious Stranger</i> (Mark Twain) “ <i>The Mysterious Stranger</i> and ‘3,000 Years Among the Microbes’: Chimerical Realities and Nightmarish Transformations” by Patricia M. Mandia, in <i>Comedic Pathos: Black Humor in Twain’s Fiction</i> (1991)	197
<i>Reservation Blues</i> (Sherman Alexie) “The Saddest Joke: Sherman Alexie’s Blues” by James A. Crank	219

<i>White Noise</i> (Don DeLillo)	229
“The Dark Humor of <i>White Noise</i> ” by Joseph Dewey	
<i>Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf?</i> (Edward Albee)	241
“Dark Humor in Edward Albee’s <i>Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf?</i> ” by Kate Falvey	
“The Yellow Wallpaper” (Charlotte Perkins Gilman)	251
“‘Too Terribly Good to Be Printed’: Charlotte Gilman’s ‘The Yellow Wallpaper’” by Conrad Shumaker, in <i>American Literature</i> (1985)	
Acknowledgments	263
Index	265