Clarion Review

Humor

The World's Greatest Email
Sue Shifrin-Cassidy
978-1-4343-2392-7
Three Stars (out of Five)

Laughter has long been considered a cheap and effective medicine for the masses. Studies have shown that laughter can help prevent heart disease, boost the immune system, and clear the lungs. We all need to laugh more—at the world, our jobs, our partners, our children, and ourselves.

Thank goodness for the internet. People with email accounts will likely receive at least one joke a day, passed along by family, friends, co-workers, and perfect strangers. But free entertainment comes with a price: unwanted advertisements, chain letters, or pornographic cartoons. Sue Shifrin-Cassidy has done the world a favor by sorting through the spam and plucking out the gems to share in her aptly named book, *The World's Greatest Email*.

Shifrin-Cassidy shuffles her emails into ten different categories, such as Smart People / Stupid People, Men, Women, and Sex, and Political / Politically Incorrect. The jokes range from raunchy to religious, lengthy to pithy. In addition to funny anecdotes and one liners, Shifrin-Cassidy also shares emails such as STATE TRIVIA which lists an interesting fact about each individual state, and WORDS OF INSPIRATION, quotes from Mother Teresa about living life in service of God. She devotes one section to those life-saving emails that teach people to recognize a stroke or avoid being abducted. She has done her research, however, and avoids blindly spreading erroneous information by including a disclaimer on those emails that have been debunked by website watchdogs. By including a mixture of emails, Shifrin-Cassidy makes sure she has something for everyone.

Each page is laid out in email format with the sender, recipient, and subject at the top. This design is fairly easy to follow after the first few entries. Shifrin-Cassidy addresses the reader in bold print at the top of most of the emails. She also seems to occasionally interject within the email body as well, which can be confusing, but doesn't detract from the enjoyment of the joke. A few of the entries are repeats; another read through the book by an editor would

have been beneficial.

Be warned: read this book with an open mind! Shifrin-Cassidy spares nobody and includes jokes about Democrats, liberals, conservatives, homosexuals, men, women, politicians, and the elderly. She pokes fun with a light hand, however, and gives fair warning when something might be especially offensive.

Shifrin-Cassidy provides a funny, healthy reading alternative. This is a great book to keep on the kitchen counter, in the car, in the diaper bag, or anywhere else easily accessible during a long commute or a lull in the fractious activity of modern life. Not only does it provoke a hearty chuckle, it might just save a life or two.

Andi Diehn