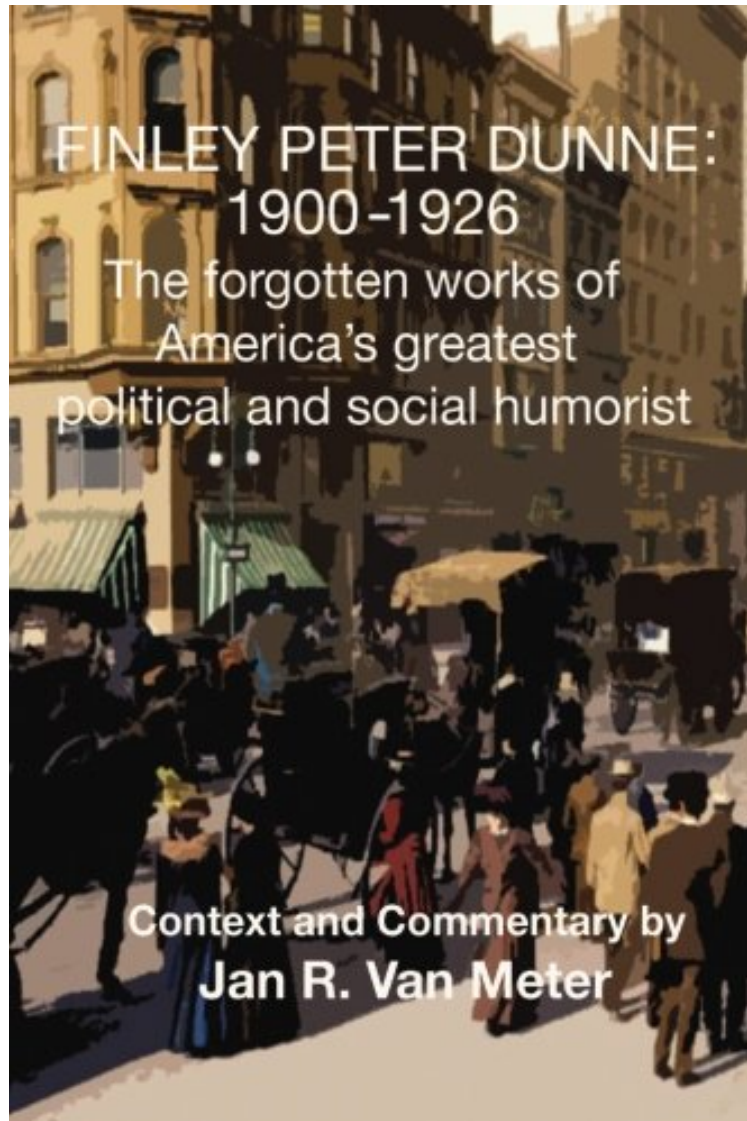


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Finley Peter Dunne: 1900-1926: The Forgotten Works of Finley Peter Dunne, America's Greatest Political and Social Humorist

Finley Peter Dunne

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Finley Peter Dunne : Finley Peter Dunne: 1900-1926: The Forgotten Works of Finley Peter Dunne, America's Greatest Political and Social Humorist before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Finley Peter Dunne: 1900-1926: The Forgotten Works of Finley Peter Dunne, America's Greatest Political and Social Humorist:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. "The past is a lens we use to understand the present." By James MoriceStrangely, a book for our times -- I find several of Mr. Dooley's comments inserting themselves into my thoughts and my conversation. Most recently, I have Finley Peter Dunn to thank for Mr. Dooley's response when he was asked who he planned to support in an upcoming election. The Irish philosopher and barkeep said: "That is between me an' me conscience, an' I'm not sure I'll aven tell me conscience this year." I suspect I could find several million Americans who would agree with that sentiment today, but who, like me, couldn't put it in such an amusing way. Van Meter's commentary, and Dunn's essays, provide useful and entertaining perspective on the past, and the present as well. Not many books can claim as much.

The early 1900s were a transitional time in America, as the country entered and exited the Progressive Era, a period marked by radical social and political changes. Relief came in the form of fictional barkeep Mr. Dooley, among others. Through his creation, Finley Peter Dunne explored some of the most hotly debated topics in the country, as well as professional and amateur sports, financial crises, and presidential elections. It was all done with a serious purpose disguised with wit, humor, and the sidelong glance at human frailty. Readers ranged from ordinary workingpeople to members of presidential cabinets. Jan R. Van Meter provides context and commentary, introducing readers to this unique time in Finley Peter Dunne 1900-1926. Through some of the now-forgotten essays by Dunne after he left his native Chicago for New York City, the societal upheaval and aftermath come alive and the memory of Dunne's genius revives. Van Meter has unearthed some of the rarest of Dunne's later writings. Finley Peter Dunne's ability to take on any heady topic and deflate the pompous and self-absorbed with wit was admired by the likes of Mark Twain and Edith Wharton. His valuable model of truth through humor has been copied ever since.

From Kirkus SA book offers a collection of an American humorist's vivid writings. Van Meter (Tippecanoe and Tyler Too, 2008) focuses on the period after Finley Peter Dunne relocated from Chicago to New York City in 1900. Dunne is most famous for creating Martin Dooley—a wisecracking, middle-aged bar owner whose thoughts on a wide array of topics appeared in a transliterated Irish brogue throughout the nation via newspapers and magazines. Logically, Van Meter emphasizes the Dooley pieces in his overall selection of essays, and he accurately characterizes the bar owner's voice in the preface: "His gruff concern, willing kindness, and skeptical thoughtfulness are always present alongside a clear eye for hypocrisy and unfairness." Commenting on the lack of civil discourse during the 1912 presidential campaign, Dooley remarks, "Ivrybody callin' each other liars an' crooks not like pollytickal inimies, d'ye mind, but like old frinds that has been up late dhrinkin' together." Sound familiar? Wading through this dialect can be immensely challenging but is largely worth the effort. ...Likewise, modern audiences should appreciate the author's decision to boldface the names of the era's prominent political figures and provide a supremely helpful glossary of names at the end of the text. Mr. Worldly Wiseman, another wonderful character, emerges from these pages, a pompous blowhard whom Van Meter aptly compares to the archconservative personage inhabited for many years by Stephen Colbert. ...Beyond the expanded Dooley repertoire, this bloviating autocrat is a real discovery. ... Readers should enjoy the contemporaneous accounts of notable events (the death of Mark Twain, the women's suffrage movement, the sinking of the Titanic) as well as more perennial topics (professional baseball, collegiate football, and women's fashion). Van Meter may inspire skepticism with his use of the superlative in the book's subtitle, but he certainly mounts a credible case. ---KirkusAbout the AuthorJan R. Van Meter earned a BA from Wesleyan University and a PhD from the State University of New York at Stony Brook. Van Meter has worked as a public relations senior executive, a CIA intelligence analyst, an assistant professor of English, and a corporate speechwriter. He is now retired and active as an "independent scholar." His first book, Tippecanoe and Tyler Too: Famous Slogans and Catchphrases in American History, was published in 2008. He has now compiled and edited Finley Peter Dunne 1900-1926, a collection of the humorist's thoughts and witticisms, written by Dunne when he lived in New York City. These writings have not been seen in almost a century.