

5-2009

# Beyond the Chemistry Web

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## Recommended Citation

Buchanan, Bob (2009) "Beyond the Chemistry Web," *Sci-Tech News*: Vol. 63 : Iss. 2 , Article 9.  
Available at: <http://jdc.jefferson.edu/scitechnews/vol63/iss2/9>

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## Beyond the Chemistry Web...

Bob Buchanan, Chemistry Librarian, Auburn University

This column is devoted to humor in science, particularly in chemistry. Many of these are great to use in the classroom, especially the cartoons and visual humor.

### Jokes

When you feel the need for humor, especially puns, on just about any science-related topic, go to **Science Jokes**. Indexed by discipline and keyword searchable, this large collection of over 2,500 jokes includes subcategories like “Why the chicken crossed the road” and “You might be a chemist if ....” This is the best single site for science and chemistry humor.

<http://www.xs4all.nl/~jcdverha/scijokes/index.html>

Terry Helser has gathered jokes about chemistry and academia in **Chemistry Quotes and Jokes**.

<http://employees.oneonta.edu/helsertl/ChemQuotes.html>

**Bad Chemistry Jokes and Stories** offers much visual chemical humor and jokes.

<http://www.nku.edu/~russellk/G-html/chemhum.html>

**Chemistry Jokes** offers the old standbys.

<http://www.jupiterscientific.org/sciinfo/jokes/chemistryjokes.html>

**Chemistry Puns** offers 38 element-based puns.

[http://www.sciencebyjones.com/chemistry\\_puns.htm](http://www.sciencebyjones.com/chemistry_puns.htm)

### Cartoons

The comic strip **Piled Higher and Deeper** provides a humorous view of the Ph.D. process. Use the “New to PhD” link to navigate to the best cartoons. This is an outstanding and on-going strip.

<http://www.phdcomics.com/comics/aboutcomics.html>

**Lab initio**, formerly called Nearing Zero, offers over 400 cartoons by Nick Kim. Most are science-oriented and many are specific to

chemistry. Navigation is easy by the subject index. This is one of my favorites for the classroom.

<http://www.lab-initio.com>



**Lab Bratz – Online science humor comic strip** features biologically-oriented cartoons with continuing characters. Unfortunately, site navigation is problematic – cartoons can only be viewed sequentially.

<http://labbratz.comicgenesis.com>

The deservedly well known cartoons of Sidney Harris can be found at **Science Cartoons Plus**.

<http://www.sciencecartoonsplus.com/pages/gallery.php>

### Scientist Humor

“What authors really mean ...” is an all-time cynic’s favorite. **Research Definitions**, published in *Reactive Reports*, is adapted from a paper by C. D. Graham, Jr. (*Metal Progress* 71, 75 May 1957). This much quoted (and rarely cited) collection of witticisms is as apt today as it was in 1957. In **Interpreting Statements in Scientific Papers: What Common Research Phrases Really Mean**, Anne Marie Helmenstine adds a few more wry observations.

<http://www.reactivereports.com/humor/1.html>

<http://chemistry.about.com/cs/chemists/a/researchpaper.htm>

Any who doubt scientists have a sense of humor have not heard of the annual **Ig Nobel Prizes** which honor “achievements that first make people laugh and then make them think.” The site lists previous winners back to 1991, links to videos of recent ceremonies, and the philosophy behind the prizes.

<http://improbable.com/ig>

Science with an attitude – anyone who has ever worked in a lab may be amused by the 74 badges of the **Order of the Science Scouts of Exemplary Repute and Above Average Physique**. Warning: some of the humor is a bit off-color.

<http://www.scq.ubc.ca/sciencescouts> ❖