

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

This new edition of *Critical Survey of World Literature*, previously *Magill's Choice of World Literature*, offers profiles of major writers outside the United States from all time periods, accompanied by analyses of their significant titles of fiction, drama, poetry, and nonfiction. This work was originally published in 1993, a supplement appeared in 1995, and then a revised six-volume edition was published in 2009. This new edition covers 450 writers at the heart of literary studies for middle and high school students and at the center of book discussions among library patrons. It brings together information on the lives and works of writers from around the world in all genres. Its companion set, *Critical Survey of American Literature*, was published in 2016.

SCOPE

For this edition of *Critical Survey of World Literature*, new authors include Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, Patrick Chamoiseau, Orhan Pamuk, William Woodward Self, Yann Martel and Amitav Ghosh. The list of authors span both the globe, representing nearly fifty different countries, and time, from the sixth century BCE to the twenty-first century. This new edition also includes more women writers and authors of children's and young adult literature.

CURRENCY

All the original essays were evaluated for their currency, and many were significantly revised. Biography, Analysis, and Summary sections were updated to include new titles or awards, changes in residence or employment, and alterations in critical and popular reception, with many including new works. Bibliographies for all essays were reviewed, and lists of the author's works and sources for further consultation were revised to provide readers with the latest information.

Each essay includes a Discussion Topics sidebar that addresses the writer's body of work, specific works, or life as it relates to his or her literature. Aimed at students, teachers, and members of

reading groups, they can be used as paper topics or conversation points.

In addition, phonetic pronunciation is provided for many foreign author's last name – for example, Aeschylus (EHS-kuh-luhs). A Key to Pronunciation appears at the beginning of all six volumes.

FORMAT AND CONTENT

Critical Survey of World Literature is arranged in an A-Z format, by author's last name. Essays vary from approximately six to thirteen pages in length. Each begins with a block of reference information in a standard order:

- Name by which the author is best known
- Born: place and date
- Died: place and date
- Statement about the author's literary importance

The main text is divided into the following sections:

- Biography: chronological overview of the author's life
- Analysis: discussion about the author's style, dominant themes, and literary characteristics
- Works: profiles of one or more individual titles (novels, novellas, plays, poems, short stories, essays)
- Summary: one or two brief paragraphs summarizing the author's legacy

Each Works section lists the year in which the title was first published. For short stories, poems, essays, or other short pieces, a collection of the author's works in which the reader can find the title is also indicated.

Every essay ends with a bibliography listing both the author's works in all genres (By the Author) and sources for further study (About the Author) and contains the thought-provoking Discussion Topics sidebar. All essays include the byline of the contributor. In addition, hundreds of

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author portraits and thumbnail photographs of book jackets illustrate the text.

REFERENCE FEATURES

At the beginning of each volume are the Table of Contents for that volume, including the works featured in the Works sections, and a Complete List of Contents for the entire set.

Five helpful reference sections appear at the end of Volume 6:

- Glossary defines crucial literary terms for the reader, with examples from world literature
- Category List groups authors by genre, gender, and identity into the following 12 categories:
 - Children's and Young Adult Literature Writers
 - Gay or Bisexual Writers
 - Jewish Writers
 - Mystery and Detective Writers
 - Nonfiction Writers
 - Novelists
 - Playwrights

- Poets
- Science-Fiction and Fantasy Writers
- Screenwriters
- Short-Story Writers
- Women
- Geographical List groups authors by country of their origin or where they did the majority of their writing
- Title Index lists all featured works in alphabetical order
- Author Index lists all authors profiled in the set, with a list of their featured works.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Salem Publishing thanks the editor of the previous edition, Steven G. Kellman, Professor of Literature at the University of Texas at San Antonio, and editor of this edition, Robert C. Evans, L.B. Young Professor of English, Auburn University at Montgomery. We also thank the outstanding writers who contributed material for this new edition of the *Critical Survey of World Literature* and for its previous versions. A list of their names and affiliations can be found in the front of Volume 1.

KEY TO PRONUNCIATION

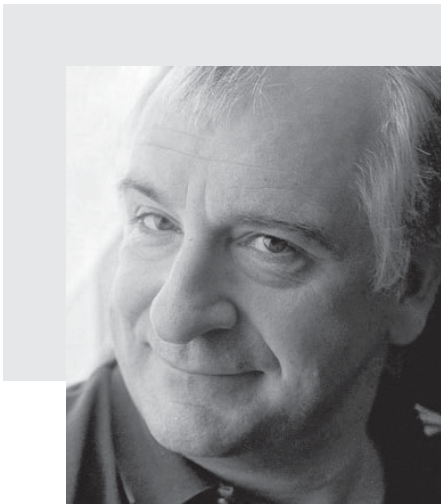
Foreign and unusual or ambiguous English-language names of profiled authors may be unfamiliar to some users of *Critical Survey of World Literature*. To help readers pronounce such names correctly, phonetic spellings using the character symbols listed below appear in parentheses immediately after the first mention of the author's name in the narrative text. Stressed syllables are indicated in capital letters, and syllables are separated by hyphens.

Vowel Sounds

Symbol	Spelled (Pronounced)
a	answer (AN-suhr), laugh (laf), sample (SAM-puhl), that (that)
ah	father (FAH-thur), hospital (HAHS-pih-tuhl)
aw	awful (AW-fuhl), caught (kawt)
ay	blaze (blayz), fade (fayd), waiter (WAYT-ur), weigh (way)
eh	bed (behd), head (hehd), said (sehd)
ee	believe (bee-LEEV), cedar (SEE-dur), leader (LEED-ur), liter (LEE-tur)
ew	boot (bewt), lose (lewz)
i	buy (bi), height (hit), lie (li), surprise (sur-PRIZ)
ih	bitter (BIH-tur), pill (pihl)
o	cotton (KO-tuhn), hot (hot)
oh	below (bee-LOH), coat (koht), note (noht), wholesome (HOHL-suhm)
oo	good (good), look (look)
ow	couch (kowch), how (how)
oy	boy (boy), coin (koyn)
uh	about (uh-BOWT), butter (BUH-tuhr), enough (ee-NUHF), other (UH-thur)

Consonant Sounds

Symbol	Spelled (Pronounced)
ch	beach (beech), chimp (chihmp)
g	beg (behg), disguise (dihs-GIZ), get (geht)
j	digit (DIH-juht), edge (ehj), jet (jeht)
k	cat (kat), kitten (KIH-tuhn), hex (hehks)
s	cellar (SEHL-ur), save (sayv), scent (sehnt)
sh	champagne (sham-PAYN), issue (IH-shew), shop (shop)
ur	birth (burth), disturb (dihs-TURB), earth (urth), letter (LEH-tur)
y	useful (YEWS-fuhl), young (yuhng)
z	business (BIHZ-nehs), zest (zehst)
zh	vision (VIH-zhuhn)



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DOUGLAS ADAMS

Born: Cambridge, England; March 11, 1952

Died: Santa Barbara, California; May 11, 2001

Adams was a pioneer in both humor and science fiction and was among the first to combine the two genres, creating The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy and other popular novels.

BIOGRAPHY

Douglas Noel Adams was born in 1952 in Cambridge, England, where he spent much of his early life and his years of education. Adams's signature trait was unpredictability. He was master of the unexpected—when his life story trudged toward the usual university chapter, Adams set off on a hitchhiking trip through Europe that stimulated one of his most innovative ideas: a hitchhiker's guide to the galaxy.

The years at Cambridge University for Adams were centered not so much on studying English as on Footlights, the undergraduate comedy society that he shared with his lifelong comedic hero John Cleese, a member of the Monty Python comedy troupe. Like many Footlighters, Adams attained fame in the comedy world, contributing to episodes of *Monty Python's Flying Circus* and the science-fiction series *Dr. Who*. He was inspired by such popular icons as his literary favorites P. G. Wodehouse and Kurt Vonnegut and was influenced even more by the Beatles.

Adams's career took off with *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* (1979). The popular series started out as a radio program for the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) that aired from 1978 through 1980; he adapted the program as a book in 1979 and a television series in 1981, and it later was used as the basis of an animated film, a computer game, and a feature-length film. He extended the Hitchhiker's series with *The Restaurant*

at the End of the Universe (1980); *Life, the Universe, and Everything* (1982); and *So Long, and Thanks for All the Fish* (1984). This popular success secured Adams's fame in the world of comedy and ushered him into the world of science fiction. Adams attended science-fiction conventions, campaigning for humor there at the same time that he promoted science fiction to humor fans.

Adams went in a new direction in his next novel *Dirk Gently's Holistic Detective Agency* (1987), the story of a private detective with a holistic approach to solving his cases; he followed it with a sequel, *The Long Dark Tea-Time of the Soul*, in 1988. He returned to the Hitchhiker's series in his final novel, *Mostly Harmless* (1992).

Adams married Jane Elizabeth Belson in 1991, and the couple had a daughter, Polly. An atheist, Adams was so opposed to the christening of his daughter that he invented his own naming ceremony. He placed his faith in science, not in religion. Science was his way of making sense of the universe: He tried to understand the universe better so he could better display it to his readers from his eye-opening perspective.

To the ongoing chagrin of his publishers, Adams rarely met a publication deadline. At one point, a frustrated publisher insisted that he end the sentence he was writing and send in a manuscript. The book was published, as was a sequel that tied the loose ends that the half sentence created.

In 2001, Adams was in Los Angeles to adapt *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* for a feature film. He suffered a heart attack and died in Santa Barbara, California, on May 11, 2001, at the age of forty-nine. Adams had produced some of the most innovative, most enjoyed, and—in their own

way—most inspiring works to come out of twentieth century England.

ANALYSIS

Humor is the keystone of Douglas Adams's fiction. His sense of humor is decidedly understated, influenced by the deadpan Monty Python school of laughs. He has a knack for distilling something as impossibly complicated as the Ultimate Answer to the Universe into a two-digit number. He can take something as simple as a bath towel and instill it with such cosmic significance that readers may want to meditate on their linen closets. His style of humor relies on unexpected narrative turns delivered by means of witty twists of the English language. His linguistic deftness and narrative adroitness enable Adams to make readers regularly laugh out loud.

His innovative views of the universe allow readers to step back from the status quo and look at things from a different perspective. Both reader and protagonist are provoked into viewing life afresh on virtually every page of his novels through delightfully unnerving story lines that tend to make readers smile and the protagonist scratch his head wondering where he can find a good cup of tea.

Adams pokes fun at virtually everyone. He satirizes governments, bureaucracy, business, technology, philosophers, dictionaries, airports, politicians, bad poets, queues—anything in which he can place his cosmic comic barbs. He is an equal-opportunity satirizer, pointing out the flaws of almost everything while simultaneously dramatizing its unrealized potential.

Adams's fiction is replete with imagined technology—technology that pretends to improve life while actually complicating it. Characters in this fiction may find themselves battling some computer program or automated coffee maker to complete a simple task. Adams was a fan of cutting-edge technology who saw that newfangled gadgets could make life more difficult. The familiarity of that disillusionment may be why readers can easily relate to the many absurd situations that Adams's characters experience.

Religious disbelief shows up frequently in Adams's works in the form of philosophical questions. Characters constantly search for the meaning of life, always unsuccessfully. The nihilistic Adams depicts humankind's utter insignificance in the vast

realms of the universe. His whimsical evidence for the existence of God tends to make the possibility of the divine disappear altogether. He negates not only God and humanity but the universe itself, describing the destruction of the cosmos as the “gnab gib,” the opposite (and reverse spelling) of the “big bang,” in which the universe was created.

Adams's novels tend to be episodic, following colorful characters around the universe as they battle illogic, gravity, and deadlines. His picturesque and picaresque characters grandly traverse time and space in interstellar slapstick adventures. He often features an Everyman character with whom readers can readily relate, a normal human being from Earth. This unlikely hero is thrust into extreme circumstances, forced to deal with crises ranging from zero gravity to galactic protocol to depressed robots. These Everyman heroes are not extremely intelligent, not particularly good-looking, not even skilled with automatic firearms; the typical Adams protagonist experiences his biggest thrill when walking to his mailbox.

Adams places his characters in outlandish plots. For example, the mailbox might explode at the moment the protagonist goes to open it or a character might find himself unsuspectingly teleported into a passing spaceship and a cascade of increasingly improbable events that render him confused and vulnerable. The predicaments of these characters make readers realize that they are not the only ones in the cosmos who are overwhelmed; readers share awkward moments with Adams's protagonists, who are subjected to situations that test their abilities to adapt.

THE HITCHHIKER'S GUIDE TO THE GALAXY

First published: 1979

Type of work: Novel

Arthur Dent, with his towel and his alien friend Ford Prefect, begins an intergalactic journey by hitchhiking off the soon-to-be-demolished planet Earth.

The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy is the first book of the five-volume series (which Adams

humorously called a “trilogy”) based on Adams’s successful radio series of the same name. An immediate best seller, it has remained popular for more than a quarter century.

In a quiet suburb of London, Arthur Dent is minding his own business when his morning is interrupted by bulldozers and wrecking machines coming to destroy his house. The home, which blocks the path of a new bypass, is slated to be torn down. Things go from bad to worse when Arthur’s friend, Ford Prefect, who has drunk too much at the nearest bar, enlightens Arthur about the imminent destruction of Earth. Ships from the Vogon Constructor Fleet surround the planet, commissioned to destroy it to make way for the new hyperspace express bypass, whose path Earth is blocking. Soon Arthur’s house, along with the rest of the planet, is drifting through space in tiny particles of recently vaporized matter.

Fortunately for Arthur, Ford turns out to be an experienced intergalactic hitchhiker who manages to smuggle the two of them aboard a Vogon craft moments before the end of the Earth. As punishment for their hitchhiking, the Vogons submit the stowaways to the torture of listening to poetry—Vogon poetry is widely regarded as the universe’s worst. When the hitchhikers miraculously survive this death sentence, the Vogons eject them into outer space to a more certain death by asphyxiation.

During the painful poetry reading, Zaphod Beeblebrox, president of the Imperial Galactic Government, steals a remarkable spacecraft powered by the new Infinite Improbability Drive. As he pilots the craft, the *Heart of Gold*, away from the intergalactic police, he improbably picks up Arthur and Ford exactly one second before their inevitable deaths, the first of many improbable things that regularly occur in the vicinity of the spaceship.

The hitchhikers are greeted by Zaphod and two other travelers, Marvin and Trillian. Trillian, formerly known as Tricia McMillan, met Arthur at a London party a few years before; Marvin is a chronically depressed robot. The group determine to band together to aid Zaphod’s flight from the intergalactic police.

They travel to Magrathea, where customized planets are produced. Long ago, Magratheans

constructed a massive computer planet in a quest to find the Ultimate Question to Life, the Universe, and Everything. The Ultimate Answer had already been discovered to be forty-two. That computer planet, the travelers realize, is none other than Arthur’s own Earth. Unfortunately, the vast computer with its intricate organic program was destroyed by the bureaucratic blundering of the Vogons precisely five minutes before completing its ten-million-year calculation.



Arthur and Trillian carry enough of Earth within them to complete the crucial calculation. They are less than happy to contribute to that cause, however, as the calculation will damage their brains and make them unusable. After a near-fatal stay on Magrathea, the travelers escape the planet, heading off into the sunset toward the Restaurant at the End of the Universe.

Adams’s uniquely humorous style contains creative descriptions of the universe and even such unlikely insights as glimpses into the thought processes of a sperm whale. The story is persistently interrupted and enriched by entries from *The Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy* describing phenomena the characters have recently encountered or are about to experience. Readers learn about Vogons, poetry, towels, and much else. At first glance, it appears that these entries have little to do with the plot’s development, but Adams manages to tie seemingly random and insignificant trivia into the story line.

The book sets itself up marvelously for a sequel, and Adams wrote four more novels in which Arthur, the commonplace English protagonist—still wearing his bathrobe, carrying his trusty towel, and driven by his unquenchable thirst for tea—quests for his lost planet through hilarious cosmic adventures.

THE RESTAURANT AT THE END OF THE UNIVERSE

First published: 1980

Type of work: Novel

The sequel to The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy follows the hitchhikers to the end of the universe in quest of the meaning of life and good food.

The Restaurant at the End of the Universe continues the story of Arthur Dent; Trillian, his sometime girlfriend; Zaphod Beeblebrox, president of the Imperial Galactic Government; Marvin the depressed robot; and Ford, his longtime hitchhiking companion. *The Heart of Gold* is speeding away from Magrathea, the adventurers having barely escaped there with their lives at the end of *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*.

Arthur inadvertently overloads the computer's systems by asking for a good cup of English tea. When the approaching Vogon ship, sent to kill Arthur and Trillian because of their ties with Earth, opens fire on the *Heart of Gold*, the computer is so focused on brewing a pot of tea that it cannot devote the needed resources to provide an adequate defense. The characters once again narrowly escape what appears to be certain death when Zaphod manages to summon his great-grandfather to bail them out.

As a result of that rescue, Zaphod and Marvin mysteriously disappear from the ship, finding themselves in the offices of *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*, the self-proclaimed repository of all knowledge. After Zaphod and Marvin make it past the existential elevator to find the office of Zarniwoop, Zaphod realizes why his great-grandfather sent him there—he was reminding Zaphod that he is in fact searching for the man who runs the universe.

Zaphod is transported to Frogstar World B, the most evil planet in the universe, and subjected to the Total Perspective Vortex. The Vortex reveals to its

victims the entire scope of the universe and the excruciatingly small part that they play in it. It invariably destroys the viewer, demonstrating the high moral lesson that in order to survive as a sentient being one must not have too strong a sense of proportion. Yet Zaphod learns he is not the least but the most important thing in the universe because his universe was created especially for him by Zarniwoop. The two together continue the search, in the real universe, for the man who rules the universe.

Zaphod, Trillian, Arthur, and Ford end up, astonishingly, in Milliways, the Restaurant at the End of the Universe, an entertainment emporium that takes advantage of deep pockets and cataclysmic upheavals of matter. It and its counterpart, the Big Bang Burger Bar, use time travel to provide customers with the experience of the two biggest events in the history of the universe: its creation and its demise. After dinner and a brief brush with death, Zaphod and Trillian materialize back on the *Heart of Gold*, now piloted by Zarniwoop. They travel across space propelled by the ship's Infinite Probability Drive and land on the planet of the ruler of the universe. After a disappointing chat, they leave Zarniwoop behind to cope with the unimpressive ruler.

Arthur and Ford find themselves in a strange spaceship peopled with the unwanted exiled third of a distant planet's population. After crash-landing with the outcasts, they wander around for a while, meeting some creatures clearly in need of evolution's guiding hand. Arthur and Ford eventually recognize that they are on prehistoric Earth. The outcasts quickly create committees, subcommittees, documentaries, and management meetings which enable them to declare war on an uninhabited continent and declare tree leaves legal tender. Ford realizes that the prehistoric people are sadly dying off, leaving the crash-landed bureaucrats as the sole ancestors of the human race.

The book concludes with Zaphod and Trillian chatting purposelessly with the ruler of the universe, Arthur and Ford celebrating with humankind's ancestors at a management party, and Marvin missing and unaccounted for.

THE LONG DARK TEA-TIME OF THE SOUL

First published: 1988

Type of work: Novel

Dirk Gently, “holistic detective,” is caught between Norse gods, an angry eagle, his murdered client, his annoyed girlfriend Kate, and a frighteningly dirty fridge.

The Long Dark Tea-Time of the Soul is a sequel to the original Dirk Gently novel *Dirk Gently’s Holistic Detective Agency*. Gently makes his living as a “holistic” detective, basing his detective work on “the absolute interconnectedness” of all things. This leads to interesting investigative strategies. Gently rejects Sherlock Holmes’s idea that whatever is left after ruling out all impossibilities must be the truth. Instead, Gently insists on not rejecting a possibility merely because of its complete impossibility. His faith in the impossible proves a remarkably successful detection strategy.

Kate Schechter is on her way to Norway to visit a friend. Kate gets delayed in line at the airport behind a large Norse-looking man who has no passport, credit card, or birth certificate. This disregard for red tape makes the bureaucratic check-in girl increasingly inflexible and rude. Kate ends up missing her flight and on her way out of the airport gets rocked by an explosion that causes the check-in girl to vanish mysteriously.

Meanwhile, Dirk Gently has just remembered an appointment. His morning to this point has featured luxurious sleeping, a protracted staring contest with his refrigerator, and wishing he had a rich client—a wish which finally reminds him of his appointment. He hurries, five hours late, to the client who has complained of death threats from a green man with a scythe. When Dirk at long last arrives at his client’s house, he finds police cars surrounding the home and his client sitting in a chair, his severed head spinning on a record turntable. The green man with the scythe appears to have gotten to Dirk’s client before Dirk did.

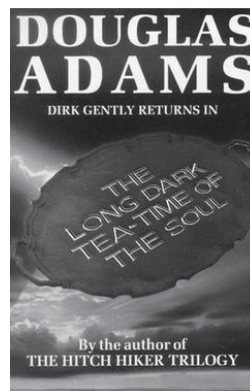
In the meantime, Kate visits an unusual medical institution, where she looks for the large Norse man who thwarted her plans for a holiday in

Norway. She meets a number of patients with strange ailments but cannot locate the man, whom she ultimately discovers to be Thor, the Norse god of thunder. On the way from the hospital, Kate’s car is rear-ended by Dirk, who is following her because he is lost. Dirk gets lost so often he has devised a system in which he follows anyone who seems to know where he or she is going. Dirk maintains that this counterintuitive process usually gets him where he needs to be, though seldom where he thought he was going.

Dirk and Kate realize that their paths have led them both on a collision course with Thor. Kate drives home to find Thor waiting for her; Thor found her house because she had given him her address at the airport in an attempt to help him make his flight. She aids him again, removing floorboards embedded in his back from his father’s recent punishment. They fly off together, clinging to Thor’s thrown hammer, toward Valhalla, where Thor plans to confront his father about some vast, vague injustice.

Dirk makes it home to discover an angry eagle on his doorstep who seems to be trying to tell him something. When the eagle threatens him, Dirk escapes from the house on a quest for a cigarette, a pursuit which leads him eventually to follow a group of beggars through a secret passageway into Valhalla. There he meets the Draycotts, a couple who have drafted a contract which exchanges the gods’ powers for cash. Odin, canny but sleepy leader of the gods, signed the contract against the will of his son Thor, triggering the thunder god’s angry reaction.

The book ends with the deaths of the Draycotts in a freak accident with a fighter jet, annulling their contract. Thor manages to straighten out most of the problems that he has created. Dirk, having experienced difficulties with a sofa impossibly stuck on his staircase and a saltcellar that cannot possibly work the way it does, returns home to his shiny new fridge.



SUMMARY

Douglas Adams's innovative narrative and inimitably warm humor earned him a place among the best-loved British authors. His science fiction may lack the usual rapid-fire action plot, but his novels are filled with creative descriptions, witty word-play, and charming characters.

Steven C. Walker

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By the Author

LONG FICTION:

The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy, 1979
The Restaurant at the End of the Universe, 1980
Life, the Universe, and Everything, 1982
So Long, and Thanks for All the Fish, 1984
Dirk Gently's Holistic Detective Agency, 1987
The Long Dark Tea-Time of the Soul, 1988
Mostly Harmless, 1992

SHORT FICTION:

"A Christmas Fairly Story," 1986 (with Terry Jones)
"The Private Life of Genghis Khan," 1986
"Young Zaphod Plays It Safe," 1986

RADIO PLAYS:

The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy, 1978-1980
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TELEPLAYS:

Doctor Who, 1978-1980
The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy, 1981
Hyperland, 1990

NONFICTION:

The Meaning of Liff, 1983 (with John Lloyd)
Last Chance to See, 1990 (with Mark Carwardine)
The Deeper Meaning of Liff: A Dictionary of Things There Aren't Words for Yet—But There Ought to Be, 1990 (with Lloyd)

EDITED TEXT:

The Utterly, Utterly Merry Comic Relief Christmas Book, 1986 (with Peter Fincham)

MISCELLANEOUS:

The Salmon of Doubt: Hitchhiking the Galaxy One Last Time, 2002

DISCUSSION TOPICS

- Douglas Adams was among the first to combine the genres of science fiction and humor. What effects did this new combination have on the science-fiction genre? The humor genre?
- How do Adams's Everyman characters draw readers into the story?
- What does the immense popularity of the Hitchhiker's series suggest about the sort of books readers enjoy?
- What role does the persistent emphasis on food play in Adams's novels?
- What advantages and disadvantages of high-technology gadgets does Adams highlight?
- How does Dirk Gently's style of detective work differ from the detective work to which most readers are accustomed? What is the effect of this unusual approach to the genre?
- Marvin the paranoid android came into being around the same time as the droids of *Star Wars*. What besides paranoia separates him from his counterparts in the *Star Wars* films?
- Adams was a devout atheist, yet many of his books deal directly with deities. Why?

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