

## The collected writings of Ambrose Bierce

*Ambrose. Introduction by Clifton Fadiman. Bierce  
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**Ambrose. Introduction by Clifton Fadiman. Bierce : The collected writings of Ambrose Bierce** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The collected writings of Ambrose Bierce:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Be selectiveBy No BS guyWhile the chronically depressed Bierce wrote some great gotcha stories and had a biting cynical wit, I found that many of his lesser known tales were lesser known for a reason, they were depressing. Be selective in what you read and you'll have a good time. If you try to read it cover to cover, frustration awaits.31 of 33 people found the following review helpful. Bierce is always splendid, but Fadiman is utterly midcult.By A CustomerThis is a splendid selection of Bierce's work,and includes The Devil's Dictionary, Tales of Soldiers and Civilians, Can Such Things Be?, and other works of importance. It does desire to be the definitive selection, however, and therefore omits some extremely interesting criticism,journalism, some proto-Dada plays and political satires. These omissions all confirm Clifton Fadiman's genteel bias, evident in his Introduction. He characterizes Bierce as merely a cynic--as though that were not a tenable position--but in fact Bierce was a satirist of the first order. A true "cynic" would not bother to satirize anything at all. By all means read the Introduction, but try to imagine, as I do, separate afterlives for Bierce and Fadiman, the ones they deserve. Bierce is having a roaring good time in Hell, while Fadiman is serving herbal teas in dull Eternity.4 of 16 people found the following review helpful. Highly Educated WitBy Bruce P. BartenThese are about the only ghost stories that I like to read, and I usually like to think that I am a lot smarter than that. But I am inclined to think that some people were a lot

better educated in the days of Ambrose Bierce, or he wouldn't have written his poem about "poor Salmasius" in THE DEVIL'S DICTIONARY's definition of the word logomachy, a concept which is like psychoanalysis in its quest for effectiveness. What is absolutely lacking today is any evidence for the truth of the final line of that poem, "For reading Milton's wit we perish too." (p. 295) In these days, it is far more likely that the TV news and entertainment will be competing for most of the attention devoted to whoever is being more fatal.