

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9911008974103321
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Titolo	Humor and irony in nineteenth-century German women's writing : studies in prose fiction, 1840-1900 / / Helen Chambers
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Suffolk : , : Boydell & Brewer, , 2007
ISBN	1-57113-691-6
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (222 pages) : digital, PDF file(s)
Collana	Studies in German literature, linguistics and culture
Classificazione	GL 1411
Disciplina	813/.54093216082
Soggetti	German literature - Women authors - History and criticism German fiction - 19th century - History and criticism Humor in literature Irony in literature
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Title from publisher's bibliographic system (viewed on 02 Oct 2015).
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references (p. [203]-213) and index.
Nota di contenuto	Annette von Droste-Hulshoff and Ida Hahn-Hahn: overcoming seriousness? -- Ottilie Wildermuth and Helene Bohlau: harmless humor or subtle psychology? -- Marie von Ebner-Eschenbach: satire, physical comedy, irony, and deeper meaning -- Ada Christen and Clara Viebig: laughter and pain in the world of work -- Isolde Kurz and Ricarda Huch: the humor of skeptical idealism.
Sommario/riassunto	Nineteenth-century German literature is seldom seen as rich in humor and irony, and women's writing from that period is perhaps even less likely to be seen as possessing those qualities. Yet since comedy is bound to societal norms, and humor and irony are recognized weapons of the weak against authority, what this innovative study reveals should not be surprising: women writers found much to laugh at in a bourgeois age when social constraints, particularly on women, were tight. Helen Chambers analyzes prose fiction by leading female writers of the day who prominently employ humor and irony. Arguing that humor and irony involve cognitive and rational processes, she highlights the inadequacy of binary theories of gender that classify the female as emotional and the male as rational. Chambers focuses on nine women writers: Annette von Droste-Hulshoff, Ida Hahn-Hahn, Ottilie Wildermuth, Helene Bohlau, Marie von Ebner-Eschenbach, Ada

Christen, Clara Viebig, Isolde Kurz, and Ricarda Huch. She uncovers a rich seam of unsuspected or forgotten variety, identifies fresh avenues of approach, and suggests a range of works that merit a place on university reading lists and attention in scholarly studies. Helen Chambers is Professor of German at the University of St Andrews, Scotland, UK.

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