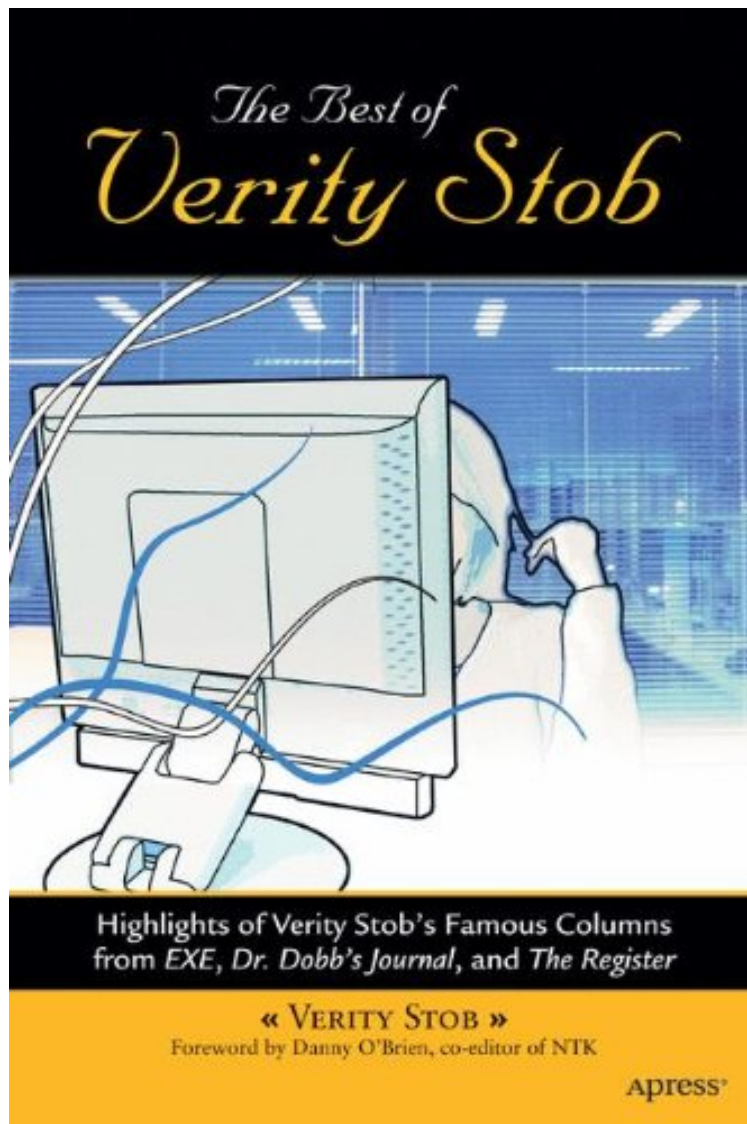


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The Best of Verity Stob: Highlights of Verity Stob's Famous Columns from .EXE, Dr. Dobb's Journal, and The Register

Verity Stob

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Verity Stob : The Best of Verity Stob: Highlights of Verity Stob's Famous Columns from .EXE, Dr. Dobb's Journal, and The Register before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Best of Verity Stob: Highlights of Verity Stob's Famous Columns from .EXE, Dr. Dobb's Journal, and The Register:

5 of 6 people found the following review helpful. a British experience
By W Boudville
What is a Verity? Well, here it is a group of essays best appreciated by programmers. Especially those active from 1988 to the present; the period spanned by her musings. You might consider her output to be the written equivalent of Scott Adams' Dilbert. Her essays are sometimes quite insular. But arranged in chronological order, you can get a tracing of global trends in the programmer's experience. The first part of the book, up till 1994, is pre-GUI. When most programmers dealt with textual I/O. The second part delves into the glories and excesses of the browser and the dot com era. While the last part is the aftermath. All this is told from a British perspective, which may be the greatest appeal of this book to an American reader. Especially concerning the dot com. See how the British also fell under the same spell. Oh, when starting the book, try first reading the appendix. It has droll translations of British jargon used in the text.

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Veteran developers will find this all too familiar...
By Thomas Duff
OK... this was a fun read... The Best of Verity Stob by Verity Stob (Apress). Fine, Tom... so what's a Verity Stob? Eh, it's a fair question... One I asked myself when I received the book. Verity Stob is a long-time columnist for tech publications such as EXE, Dr. Dobb's Journal, and The Register. She's British, so her take on things is definitely outside the normal American experience. This book is a collection of various columns from 1998 through 2004, with a bit of unpublished stuff thrown in for good measure. In addition, she's commented on each item with the aid of 20/20 hindsight. The book is divided into four parts: Life Before GUIs (1988-1994), The Rasp Of The Modem (1995-19100), After The Apocalypse (2000-2004), and Previously Unpublished. To be honest, I was only vaguely familiar with her name before getting the book. I never read EXE, I've never been a DDJ fan, and The Register only pops up on my radar screen when Google News Alerts gives me something from there. Reading the intro, I quickly became a Stob fan. Her writing is witty and satirical, and it's almost as if she's having a conversation with the reader. That combination usually hooks me immediately. Now couple all that with a walk down memory lane, since I've been involved with computers since the very early '80s. "STOB versus the Software Engineers" reminded me of far too many code reviews. "Not Fairies' Footfalls" will be familiar to all programmers at some time in their career. And "You May Start" will resonate with anyone who's taken a certification exam... Not being a Brit, I'll admit to some of the humor being a bit beyond me. But there's more than enough here to amuse and entertain any developer who's gone through the corporate wars. Or, if you're not a techie but just like creative and unique writing styles, give The Best a try. Definitely worth the time to sit back and laugh at where we've all been...

3 of 4 people found the following review helpful. tech humor doesn't age well
By Nadyne Richmond
Topical humour doesn't tend to age well. Tech humour, or at least this tech humour, is no different. Some of it is still amusing as a short trip down memory lane. This isn't enough to warrant a whole book of columns. Early columns are wittier than the later columns, but have lost their humour over the years. Later columns suffer from being much too long and either taking forever to reach their point, or beating it to death. Long-time geeks will smile knowingly at some pieces, and perhaps be amused to recall those days when people actually coded in Pascal. Ultimately, though, the collection is unsatisfying. The best analogy to reading this is what happens when a relative belatedly discovers the Internet. Suddenly, my inbox is filled with all those old jokes that have been going around forever. I remember once being amused by them, but those days are long gone, and now I'm just a bit annoyed by seeing them all over again.

* Verity Stob is a very popular column throughout the IT sector. * Think: "Monty Python" and "The Office" meet IT!!
* Many of the columns haven't been available to the public since .EXE stopped publishing .

About the Author
Verity Stob has been a programmer since 1984 and a columnist since 1988. Her column appeared in the "cult" (i.e. defunct) British programming journal .EXE Magazine until 2000, and has since adorned the granddaddy of programmers' rags, Dr. Dobb's Journal. Stob's work has also appeared on the popular IT news website, The Register. Miss Stob lives and works in London, U.K. Her face remains hidden.