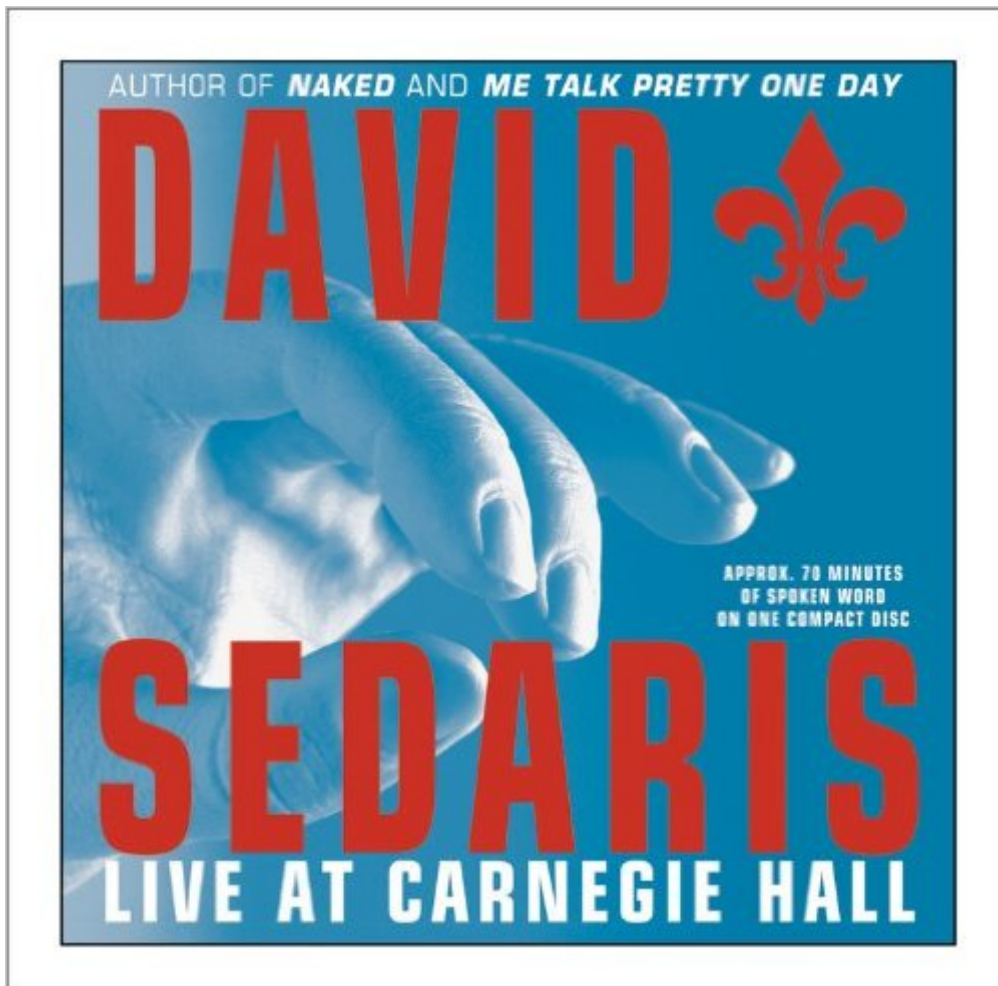


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# David Sedaris Live At Carnegie Hall



## Synopsis

At David Sedaris' sold-out performance at Carnegie Hall he debuted five new stories, all captured on this CD. They include a parrot who mimics an ice maker, lovers quarrelling over a rubber hand, and a Santa Claus who moonlights from his job as bishop of Turkey.

## Book Information

Audio CD

Publisher: Time Warner Audio Books (October 2003)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1586215647

ISBN-13: 978-1586215644

Product Dimensions: 5 x 0.4 x 5.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 3.5 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (74 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #38,016 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #2 in [Books > Books on CD > Humor](#) #31 in [Books > Books on CD > General](#) #245 in [Books > Humor & Entertainment > Humor > Essays](#)

## Customer Reviews

As you would expect from David Sedaris, this disc is completely hilarious and should help tide you over until his forthcoming "Untitled Collection" is released in June. I imagine that many of the essays he reads on this disc (most were originally published by Esquire) will find their way into that book. As he proved with *Me Talk Pretty One Day*, David Sedaris is at his best when he's exposing cultural differences, as illustrated through language and tradition (especially religious customs, with all of the associated secular trimmings). From the questions he chooses to ask upon arriving in a new country (his first is always "what do your roosters say?") to his confusion with the languages that humans speak (the French use the same word for chef and boss), his unique perspective shines a different light on some very funny, if not always particularly significant, truths. If you were moved to tears by his attempt, in French, to describe the basic tenets of Easter, you'll certainly feel the same about his description of the practice of Christmas in the Netherlands. Evidently, though the Dutch think the idea of Santa employing elves is freakish and disgusting, they see nothing wrong with a Santa who is assisted on his yearly journey by "six to eight black men" (according to tradition, they were once slaves, but now they're just Santa's close friends). My only criticism is that two of the tracks are rereadings of excerpts from *The David Sedaris Box Set* (they're bonus tracks, originally

taken from the Esquire article "Buddy, Can You Spare a Tie?," but they're on the Barrel Fever disc of the box set). Still, at least they're quite funny, so you don't mind hearing them again. You just might wish that the CD were longer and included only new material.

They aren't kidding when they say pull over while listening to this disc in your car! David live is even more fun than David in print - he has a delivery style that is perfectly suited to his material, and has a way with a stutter, a pause and an emphasis that highlights his humorous material. This guy is a natural! Primarily a look at family interactions (the bit with his sister Amy, which opens this reading, works on many levels - the interplay of siblings, the breaches of privacy, and that all too volatile mix of love and bickering), David knows how to play his subjects to the hilt, without forgetting that these are people worth caring about. Another tale involving sister Amy's pet parrot (who is a verbal copy of its owner) is both absurd and heart-warming, especially when the parrot goes on the attack. The funniest tale (involving a device for bladder weary truckers) is gutter humor at its best. Raunchy to the extreme, this piece might be unlistenable if someone besides David delivered it. Instead, he fills the tale with a sense of awe and wonder, and his delight in the device is every infomercial watcher's sense of satisfaction when learning they haven't been ripped off this time. Truly hysterical work from one of America's funniest writers.

Forget workout videos. My abdominal muscles took a few days to recover from laughing so hard, but I am noticing a more toned look in my belly. That's because I listened to this CD over and over again. I didn't know I could laugh in great, gulping guffaws like that. I hope my neighbors didn't hear me, but I'm fairly certain that's why they have been giving me funny looks lately. David Sedaris is just that funny. Reading his stories will make you laugh out loud, but actually listening to him read his stories demands a soft place to roll around on the floor and at least 1 half hour in which you might be able to quiet your breath back to a normal rhythm. If you listen with a friend (I listened with my boyfriend), expect to dissolve into giggles many weeks later when you catch that friend's eye over something that reminds you of a story. This is a 10-STAR cd.

I've read all of David Sedaris' books and plays -- I think he's simply the best comic writer working today. Unfortunately, I haven't had the opportunity very often to hear his readings, making me very pleased when Sedaris released this audio collection in 2003. Recorded at Carnegie Hall in October 2002, he's in fine form. Most of the stories feature his family and partner (Hugh) who provide perfect fodder for his dry humor. "Repeat After Me" is the longest and funniest section and features his

sister, Lisa, and her parrot. In this selection, Sedaris discusses the developing plans for a movie about his life; this movie has been in discussions for quite a few years and one can only hope that it will come to fruition. Another funny story is "Who's the Chef," which involves Sedaris' attempts to find a volunteer job in France; he ultimately works with a rubber-handed chef. Several of the stories have appeared elsewhere previously, such as "Six to Eight Black Men" -- a brilliant compendium of bizarre Christmas customs from around the world. However, hearing these old stories read in Sedaris' nasal whine makes them sound fresh again. The collection ends with Sedaris taking some questions from the audience -- the questions are rather uninteresting, but Sedaris proves his wit by handily providing impromptu laughs. This collection doesn't give hardcore fans much new material but is still likely to please those hungry for more Sedaris.

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