

This collection offers an exciting overview of British TV comedies, ranging from the beginnings of sitcoms in the 1950s to the current boom of 'Britcoms'. It provides in-depth analyses of major comedies, systematically addressing their aesthetic properties, filmic history, humour politics and cultural impact. Understanding TV comedies as powerful cultural media, the volume explores their role in the often provocative negotiation of social controversies and cultural concepts such as class, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, family and work. Some of the key questions that are addressed include: How does comedy use symbolic codes and images to negotiate new social and cultural issues? How and to what end is humour used? How do the dynamics of seriality connect to media and popular culture? And what is the role of the British television industry and marketing strategies? By examining these and other questions, the volume opens new vistas in the field of media and television studies. The volume brings together international experts in the field and represents essential reading for those interested in British TV comedy or in theories of comedy and television.

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