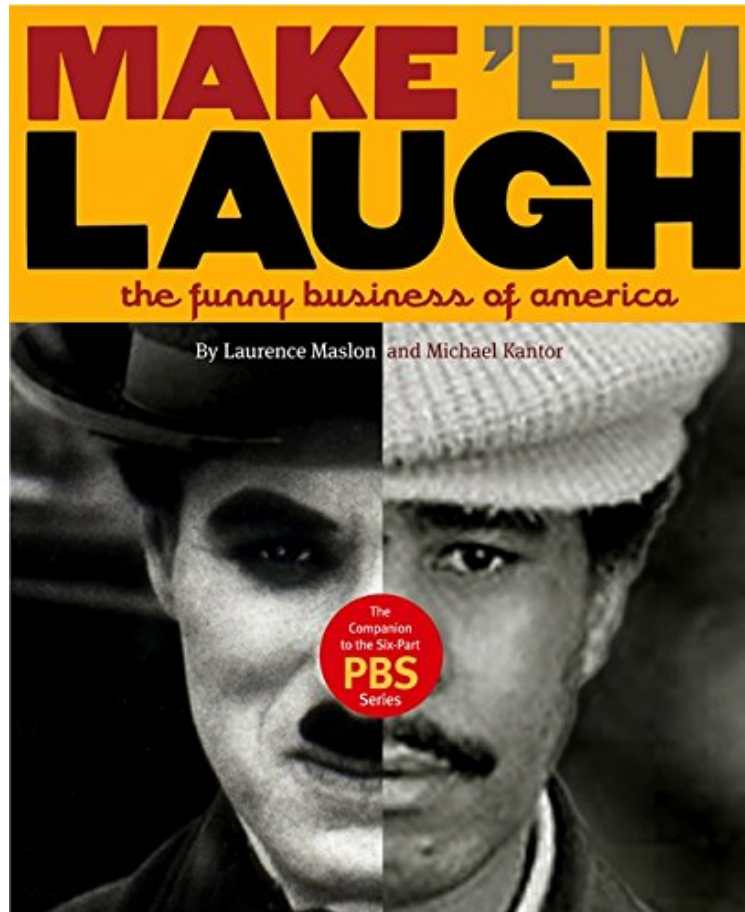


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Make 'Em Laugh: The Funny Business of America

Michael Kantor, Laurence Maslon

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Michael Kantor, Laurence Maslon : Make 'Em Laugh: The Funny Business of America before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Make 'Em Laugh: The Funny Business of America:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A real treasure, and a great gift idea!By MizzMaryA wonderful gift. This is a "coffee table" type volume, but in this case, the photos are worth the bulk. For many, it will bring back fond memories of comedic genius unique to America, with a dash of history thrown in. Also could be valuable to students involved in media and communications.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Make 'em Laugh takes you inside the world of comedy.By Dave WallaceAs a long time lover of comedians and the art of comedy, I found this volume to be an incredibly fascinating look, not only at the players, but their place in the system, from vaudaville ... to radio ... to TV and movies. Everyone you ever laughed at is in this book, and once you read their stories, you will appreciate their genius even more ... dead or alive. A masterpiece of historical research and celebration.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. if you love comedy, this is a must-have!By Elaine P.The book divides America's comedic genuises into categories, such as "nerds, jerks, oddballs, and slackers." "breadwinners and homemakers," etc.

The photographs are fantastic as are the analysis of humor. There is also a terrific 3-DVD set of the same name.

From the most popular routines and the most ingenious physical shtick to the snappiest wisecracks and the most biting satire of the last century, MAKE 'EM LAUGH illuminates who we are as a nation by exploring what makes us laugh, and why. Authors Laurence Maslon and Michael Kantor draw on countless sources to chronicle the past century of American comedy and the geniuses who created and performed it-melding biography, American history, and a lotta laughs into an exuberant, important book. Each of the six chapters focuses a different style or archetype of comedy, from the slapstick pratfalls of Buster Keaton and Lucille Ball through the wiseguy put-downs of Groucho Marx and Larry David, to the incendiary bombshells of Mae West and Richard Pryor . And at every turn the significance of these comedians-smashing social boundaries, challenging the definition of good taste, speaking the truth to the powerful-is vividly tangible. MAKE 'EM LAUGH is more than a compendium of American comic genius; it is a window onto the way comedy both reflects the world and changes it-one laugh at a time. Starting from the groundbreaking PBS series, the authors have gone deeper into the works and lives of America's great comic artists, with biographical portraits, archival materials, cultural overviews, and rare photos. Brilliantly illustrated, with insights (and jokes) from comedians, writers and producers, along with film, radio, television, and theater historians, MAKE 'EM LAUGH is an indispensable, definitive book about comedy in America.

From Publishers Weekly Kantor, who produced and directed the Emmy-winning Broadway: The American Musical for PBS in 2004, returns with a six-part PBS series on comedy. For this companion book, he teamed with NYU professor Maslon, editor of Library of America's George S. Kaufman collection. Their guide to guffaws and giggles ranges from silent film actors (Charles Chaplin, Buster Keaton) to sitcoms (Seinfeld), satire (Mad, SNL) and stand-up comics (George Carlin, Lenny Bruce). Taking a scattershot approach with 60-plus performer profiles and sidebars, the resulting text is sometimes superficial with curious oversights; two decades of radio comedy get squeezed into three pages, so Amos 'n' Andy and Bob and Ray rate only a few paragraphs; Stan Freberg sold millions of records yet is dismissed in a single sentence. With hundreds of fascinating photographs, this book benefits from the TV series' extensive photo research, but what is certain to be a hilarious cascade of clips on PBS is a pratfall in print. (Dec. 2) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. About the Author Michael Kantor is a writer, director, and producer whose work includes "Quincy Jones: In the Pocket" for American Masters, Cornerstone for HBO, and The West with Ken Burns. Prior to his work in television, Kantor was a freelance theater director and writer, published in Newsday, American Theater, and Interview. He is president of Ghost Light Films and Almo Inc., companies dedicated to bringing the arts to television. Laurence Maslon is an associate arts professor at New York University's Tisch School of the Arts. With Michael Kantor, he coauthored two episodes of the Broadway series and served as its senior adviser. He also wrote the American Masters biography of Richard Rodgers and edited the Library of America edition of George S. Kaufman's comedies. He lives in New York City and on the North Fork of Long Island.