

political comedians stand up

political comedians stand up as a unique and influential voice within the world of comedy, blending humor with sharp social and political commentary. These performers use satire, wit, and observational humor to critique political figures, policies, and societal issues, often provoking thought as well as laughter. Political stand-up comedy has evolved over decades, reflecting the changing political landscape and cultural attitudes. This article explores the history, significance, and impact of political comedians stand up, as well as the challenges they face in navigating sensitive topics. From legendary pioneers to contemporary voices, the role of political stand-up comedians is examined in detail. The discussion also includes how these comedians influence public discourse and the techniques they use to engage audiences effectively.

- The Evolution of Political Comedians in Stand-Up
- Key Characteristics of Political Stand-Up Comedy
- Prominent Political Comedians and Their Impact
- Techniques and Styles in Political Stand-Up
- Challenges Faced by Political Comedians
- The Influence of Political Comedy on Society

The Evolution of Political Comedians in Stand-Up

The tradition of political comedians stand up dates back to the early 20th century, when performers first began incorporating political satire into their routines. Over time, this form of comedy has grown more sophisticated and daring, reflecting shifts in social norms and political climates. During the 1950s and 1960s, figures like Mort Sahl and Lenny Bruce paved the way by addressing controversial subjects openly. In the decades that followed, political stand-up comedy became an established genre, with comedians using their platforms to challenge authority and highlight injustices. The evolution of mass media and the internet further expanded the reach and influence of political comedians stand up, enabling them to connect with global audiences and shape public opinion.

Historical Milestones in Political Stand-Up

Political comedians stand up have marked several key milestones in comedy history. The use of satire in vaudeville acts provided an early foundation, while the countercultural movements of the 1960s brought political humor into the mainstream. The 1980s and 1990s saw comedians like George Carlin and Bill Hicks push boundaries by addressing topics such as government corruption, war, and civil rights. More recently, comedians have incorporated digital platforms, podcasts, and social media to amplify their political commentary.

Key Characteristics of Political Stand-Up Comedy

Political comedians stand up utilize distinct traits that differentiate their performances from other comedy genres. Their material typically involves incisive commentary on political events, leaders, policies, and societal issues. A strong sense of timing, irony, and the ability to provoke critical thinking are essential. The humor often relies on exaggeration, parody, and sarcasm to make complex topics more accessible and entertaining. Moreover, political stand-up often encourages audience engagement and reflection, sparking conversations beyond the performance itself.

Common Themes in Political Comedy

- Government corruption and scandals
- Election campaigns and political candidates
- Social justice and civil rights issues
- International relations and diplomacy
- Media bias and propaganda
- Economic policies and inequality

Prominent Political Comedians and Their Impact

Throughout history, numerous political comedians stand up have made significant contributions to comedy and public discourse. These performers have not only entertained but also influenced political awareness and activism. Figures such as Jon Stewart, Stephen Colbert, and George Carlin are celebrated for their ability to blend humor with sharp criticism. Their work often challenges audiences to reconsider their perspectives on political matters and encourages civic engagement. Emerging comedians continue this tradition, using stand-up as a platform to address contemporary political issues with fresh insights and humor.

Notable Influential Political Comedians

- George Carlin – Known for his candid critiques of language, politics, and society.
- Joan Rivers – Pioneered sharp political satire, especially regarding gender and power.
- Bill Maher – Combines stand-up with political commentary on television.
- Hannah Gadsby – Incorporates political themes related to identity and social justice.
- Dave Chappelle – Addresses race, politics, and culture with provocative humor.

Techniques and Styles in Political Stand-Up

Political comedians stand up employ various techniques to deliver effective and memorable performances. Storytelling is a common approach that helps humanize political topics. Satire and parody allow comedians to exaggerate flaws in political systems or figures, making criticism more palatable. Irony and understatement are also frequently used to highlight contradictions or absurdities. Additionally, some comedians adopt a confrontational style to provoke strong reactions, while others use self-deprecation to build rapport with the audience. The choice of technique often depends on the comedian's personality, audience, and the political climate.

Effective Delivery Methods

- Use of rhetorical questions to engage audiences
- Timing and pacing to maximize comedic impact
- Incorporation of current events to maintain relevance
- Balancing humor with serious messages
- Interactive elements to involve the audience

Challenges Faced by Political Comedians

Political comedians stand up face unique challenges due to the sensitive nature of their material. Navigating controversial topics can lead to backlash, censorship, or legal repercussions in some cases. They must carefully balance humor with respect to avoid alienating audiences or crossing ethical boundaries. Additionally, political polarization can make it difficult to reach consensus or appeal across ideological divides. The rise of social media has increased exposure but also vulnerability to criticism and harassment. Despite these obstacles, political comedians continue to play a crucial role in democracy by fostering dialogue and questioning authority.

Common Obstacles in Political Comedy

- Risk of offending diverse audience segments
- Potential for political or corporate censorship
- Pressure to constantly update material based on fast-changing events
- Balancing humor with factual accuracy

- Dealing with online backlash and cancel culture

The Influence of Political Comedy on Society

Political comedians stand up contribute significantly to shaping public opinion and political culture. Their ability to simplify complex issues and present them through humor makes politics more accessible to wider audiences. By highlighting hypocrisy, injustice, and absurdity, they encourage critical thinking and skepticism toward authority. Political comedy can also serve as a coping mechanism during times of crisis or uncertainty. Furthermore, comedians often inspire civic engagement by motivating viewers to participate in elections and activism. The symbiotic relationship between politics and comedy continues to evolve, reflecting societal values and challenges.

Social and Cultural Impact

- Raising awareness of political and social issues
- Influencing younger generations' political perceptions
- Encouraging open discussions on taboo topics
- Providing a platform for marginalized voices
- Shaping the narrative around political events

Frequently Asked Questions

Who are some of the most popular political comedians in stand-up today?

Some of the most popular political comedians in stand-up today include John Mulaney, Hasan Minhaj, Samantha Bee, Dave Chappelle, and Michelle Wolf, known for their sharp political commentary and humor.

How do political comedians use stand-up to influence public opinion?

Political comedians use stand-up to influence public opinion by highlighting social and political issues through satire, making complex topics more accessible and encouraging audiences to think critically about current events.

What are common themes in political stand-up comedy?

Common themes in political stand-up comedy include government policies, elections, social justice issues, political hypocrisy, media bias, and cultural conflicts, often presented with humor to engage and entertain audiences.

Has political stand-up comedy become more popular in recent years?

Yes, political stand-up comedy has become more popular in recent years due to increased political polarization, social media amplification, and a growing appetite for comedians who address current events and politics directly.

What challenges do political comedians face in their stand-up routines?

Political comedians face challenges such as backlash from audiences with opposing views, navigating sensitive topics without offending, censorship concerns, and balancing humor with respectful critique.

How has social media impacted political stand-up comedy?

Social media has amplified political stand-up comedy by allowing comedians to reach wider audiences, share clips instantly, engage with fans directly, and create viral content that sparks conversations beyond traditional comedy venues.

Can political stand-up comedy contribute to social change?

Yes, political stand-up comedy can contribute to social change by raising awareness, challenging norms, encouraging critical thinking, and inspiring audiences to engage in political discourse and activism through humor.

Additional Resources

1. "Laughter Against the Machine: The Rise of Political Stand-Up Comedy"

This book explores how stand-up comedians have used humor to challenge political norms and speak truth to power. It delves into the history of political comedy, highlighting key figures who paved the way for modern political satire. Through interviews and analysis, the author examines how comedy can influence public opinion and foster political engagement.

2. "Punchlines and Politics: The Art of Political Comedy"

A comprehensive guide to the techniques and strategies employed by political comedians, this book breaks down how humor can be a powerful tool for social commentary. It discusses famous routines from iconic comedians and the balance between entertainment and activism. Readers gain insight into the craft of turning complex political issues into accessible and humorous material.

3. "Stand-Up and Speak Out: Political Comedy in the 21st Century"

Focusing on contemporary comedians, this book highlights how stand-up has evolved in the digital age to address pressing political issues. It covers the impact of social media, viral videos, and

streaming platforms on political humor's reach and effectiveness. The book also addresses the risks and rewards comedians face when tackling controversial topics.

4. *"Comedy as Protest: The Political Stand-Up Revolution"*

This work investigates how comedians have historically used their platforms as forms of protest against injustice and corruption. Through case studies and personal stories, it reveals the courage and creativity behind some of the most influential political stand-up acts. The book also considers the societal impact of political comedy movements around the world.

5. *"The Politics of Humor: Stand-Up Comedy and Social Change"*

Examining the intersection of humor and politics, this book explores how stand-up comedy serves as a catalyst for social change. It analyzes how comedians challenge stereotypes, question authority, and promote dialogue on sensitive issues. The author argues that political comedy is not only entertainment but a vital component of democratic discourse.

6. *"Funny Business: Inside the World of Political Stand-Up Comedy"*

Offering an insider's view, this book takes readers behind the scenes of the political comedy circuit. It features interviews with prominent comedians, agents, and producers who share their experiences navigating the complexities of political humor. The narrative also covers the business side of comedy and the challenges of maintaining integrity in a competitive industry.

7. *"Sharp Tongues: Political Satire and the Stand-Up Stage"*

This book focuses on the razor-sharp wit of political satirists who use stand-up as their platform. It explores the historical roots of satire and how modern comedians adapt this tradition to contemporary politics. The author discusses the power of satire to expose hypocrisy and provoke critical thinking among audiences.

8. *"Laughing at Power: The Role of Political Comedy in Democracy"*

Delving into the democratic function of political comedy, this book argues that humor plays a crucial role in holding leaders accountable. It examines how stand-up comedians act as informal watchdogs, using laughter to reveal truths that might otherwise be ignored. The book also considers the limits of political comedy and its potential to both unite and divide.

9. *"The Comedian's Guide to Political Commentary"*

Designed for aspiring political comedians, this practical guide offers advice on crafting effective and impactful routines. It covers topics such as research, joke writing, timing, and audience engagement with a political focus. The book also addresses ethical considerations and the importance of balancing humor with respect for differing viewpoints.

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political comedians stand up: The Politics of British Stand-up Comedy Sophie Quirk,

2018-11-11 This Palgrave Pivot questions how a new generation of alternative stand-up comedians and the political world continue to shape and influence each other. The Alternative Comedy Movement of the late 1970s and 1980s can be described as a time of unruly experimentation and left-wing radicalism. This book examines how alternative comedians continue to celebrate these characteristics in the twenty-first century, while also moving into a distinct phase of artistic development as the political context of the 1970s and 1980s loses its immediacy. Sophie Quirk draws on original interviews with comedians including Tom Allen, Josie Long, John-Luke Roberts and Tony Law to chart how alternative comedians are shaped by, and in turn respond to, contemporary political challenges from neoliberalism to Brexit, class controversy to commercialism. She argues that many of our assumptions about comedy's politics must be challenged and updated. This book is essential reading for anyone who wants to understand the working methods and values of today's alternative comedians.

political comedians stand up: The Dance of the Comedians Peter M. Robinson, 2010 A lively account of the comedy of politics and the politics of comedy from Artemus Ward to The Daily Show

political comedians stand up: *Punching Up in Stand-Up Comedy* Rashi Bhargava, Richa Chilana, 2022-12-30 *Punching Up in Stand-Up Comedy* explores the new forms, voices and venues of stand-up comedy in different parts of the world and its potential role as a counterhegemonic tool for satire, commentary and expression of identity especially for the disempowered or marginalised. The title brings together essays and perspectives on stand-up and satire from different cultural and political contexts across the world which raise pertinent issues regarding its role in contemporary times, especially with the increased presence of OTT platforms and internet penetration that allows for easy access to this art form. It examines the theoretical understanding of the different aspects of the humour, aesthetics and politics of stand-up comedy, as well as the exploration of race, gender, politics and conflicts, urban culture and LGBTQ+ identities in countries such as Indonesia, Finland, France, Iran, Italy, Morocco, India and the USA. It also asks the question whether, along with contesting and destabilising existing discursive frameworks and identities, a stand-up comic can open up a space for envisaging a new social, cultural and political order? This book will appeal to people interested in performance studies, media, popular culture, digital culture, sociology, digital sociology and anthropology, and English literature. Chapter 9 of this book is freely available as a downloadable Open Access PDF at <http://www.taylorfrancis.com> under a Creative Commons (CC-BY) 4.0 license. Funded by the University of Helsinki.

political comedians stand up: Inside Comedy David Steinberg, 2023-06-06 David Steinberg's name has been synonymous with comedy for decades. The Canadian-born comedian, producer, writer, director, and author has been called a comic institution himself by the New York Times. He appeared on The Tonight Show Starring Johnny Carson 140 times (second only to Bob Hope), and directed episodes of popular television sitcoms, including *Curb Your Enthusiasm*, *Seinfeld*, *Friends*, *Mad About You*, *The Golden Girls*, and *Designing Women*. From 2012-2015, Steinberg hosted the comedy documentary series *Inside Comedy*, which featured such comedy greats as Billy Crystal, Chris Rock, and Gary Shandling. In this entertaining history of comedy, Steinberg shares insightful memories of his journey through his career and takes the reader behind the curtain of the comedy scene of the last half-century. Steinberg shares amusing and often hilarious stories and anecdotes from some of the most legendary comedians in the industry—from Groucho Marx, Carol Burnett, Mel Brooks, and Richard Pryor to Lily Tomlin, Robin Williams, Jerry Seinfeld, Julia Louis-Dreyfus, and Tina Fey. *Inside Comedy* presents in-depth portraits of some of the most talented and revered comedians in the world of comedy today.

political comedians stand up: Comedy Book Jesse David Fox, 2023-11-07 One of NPR's Best Books of 2023. A New York Times Book Review Editors' Choice. Named a Most Anticipated Book by Vulture, Elle, Chicago Tribune, The Millions, and Lit Hub. "Comedy Book changes the way we talk about an art form that is more diverse and exciting than ever before." —Seth Meyers "Energetic and wise . . . Comedy Book is not the definitive history of the past three-plus decades. It's Fox's history,

and better for it.” —The New York Times Book Review From a beloved comedy critic, a wisecracking, heartfelt, and overdue chronicle of comedy’s boom—and its magic. In *Comedy Book*, Jesse David Fox—the country’s most definitive voice in comedy criticism and someone who, in his own words, enjoys comedy “maybe more than anyone on this planet”—tackles everything you need to know about comedy, an art form that has been under-considered throughout its history, even as it has ascended as a cultural force. Weaving together history and analysis, Fox unravels the genre’s political legacy through an ode to Jon Stewart, interrogates the divide between highbrow and lowbrow via Adam Sandler, and unpacks how marginalized comics create spaces for their communities. Along the way, Fox covers topics ranging from comedy in the age of political correctness and Will Smith’s slap, to the right wing’s relationship with comedy, to comedy’s ability to heal in the wake of tragedy. With memorable cameos from Jerry Seinfeld, Dave Chappelle, John Mulaney, Ali Wong, Kate Berlant, and countless others, *Comedy Book* is an eye-opening education in how to engage with our most omnipresent art form, a riotous history of American pop culture, and a love letter to laughter.

political comedians stand up: *Political Satire, Postmodern Reality, and the Trump Presidency* Mehnaaz Momen, 2018-12-11 This book attempts to grasp the recent paradigm shift in American politics through the lens of satire. It connects changes in the political and cultural landscape to corresponding shifts in the structure and organization of the media, in order to shed light on the evolution of political satire on late-night television. Satire is situated in its historical background to comprehend its movement away from the fringes of discourse to the very center of politics and the media. Beginning in the 1990s, certain trends such as technological advances, media consolidation, and the globalization of communications reinforced each other, paving the way for satire to claim a prized spot in the visual media—a tendency that only gained strength after September 11. While the Bush presidency presented itself as an apposite target for satirists, their stronghold on American television was made possible by a number of transitions in broader culture, which are encapsulated in the shrinking space available for political engagement under neoliberalism. This largely underestimated development can be understood through the framework of postmodernism, which focuses on the relationship between language, power, and the presentation of reality. These trends and transitions reached a climax in the 2016 election where President Trump was elected, embodying what can only be considered a significant turning point in American politics. The bigger narrative contains various subplots represented in the rise of the neoliberal economy, the acceptance of postmodernism as the dominant cultural code, and the role of the voyeur superseding that of the engaged citizen. It is only through understanding each of these pieces and connecting them that we can comprehend the current political transformation. The present moment may feel like a golden age of satire, and it may well be, but this book addresses the hardest questions about the realities behind such a claim: what can we conclude about when and how satire is effective, judging by the history of this genre in its various incarnations, and how can the “apolitical” postmodern media landscape be reconciled with what the best of this genre has had to offer during times of political duress?

political comedians stand up: *Alternative Comedy* Oliver Double, 2020-04-16 In the late 1970s, the alternative comedy scene exploded into life in Britain and completely changed the style, subject matter and politics of British stand-up. Contemporary critics talked about it as 'anti-matter comedy' that 'makes you laugh while actually rearranging large chunks of your brain'. This book draws on a wealth of archive material - including unpublished recordings of early performances - and new interviews with key figures such as Alexei Sayle, Andy de la Tour and Jim Barclay, to provide a detailed history of the early scene and an examination of the distinctive modes of performance style which developed. Beginning with its origins, the volume traces the influence of American stand-up, and in particular the significance of Mort Sahl and Lenny Bruce as the originators of a style of stand-up that influenced the British pioneers of alternative comedy. It shows how the opening of the Comedy Store in 1979 provided a catalyst for a new movement, which grew outward from there with the foundation of the group Alternative Cabaret and the opening of the

Comic Strip. But it also looks at smaller venues and less celebrated acts that have not been as well remembered, including ranting poets and street performers. Finally, it looks at alternative comedy's legacy, showing how it was the starting point for the UK's thriving and varied live scene, which encompasses anything from small pub gigs to huge arena tours.

political comedians stand up: Why Stand-up Matters Sophie Quirk, 2015-11-19 Funny, lively and unpredictable, stand-up comedy is above all a medium to be enjoyed. Popular as a good night out and packing the TV schedules, stand-up permeates British society and culture. Ubiquitous though it is, we are generally reluctant to consider comedy's social consequences. When comedians offend we seem ready to consider the potential for stand-up to do some wider harm, yet we rarely consider the good that it might do. This book looks at the social and political impact of stand-up comedy in both its positive and negative forms. Drawing on exclusive interviews with comedians such as Stewart Lee, Josie Long, Joe Wilkinson and Mark Thomas, and examples of comic material on everything from revolution, terrorism and homosexuality, to knitting and the inefficiency of the home shower, it explores comedy's role in determining our attitudes and opinions. While revealing the conventions comics use to manage audience response, Sophie Quirk demonstrates how comedy audiences allow themselves to be manipulated, and the potential harm - and real benefits - that may arise from 'just' being funny.

political comedians stand up: Defending Politics Matthew Flinders, 2012-04-25 If the twentieth century witnessed the triumph of democracy then something appears to have gone seriously wrong. Citizens around the world have become distrustful of politicians, sceptical about democratic institutions, and disillusioned about the capacity of democratic politics to resolve pressing social concerns. This shift in global attitudes has been explored in a vast body of writing that examines the existence of 'disaffected democrats' and 'democratic deficits'. *Defending Politics* meets this contemporary pessimism about the political process head on. In doing so, it aims to cultivate a shift from the bland and fatalistic 'politics of pessimism' that appears to dominate public life towards a more buoyant and engaged 'politics of optimism'. Matthew Flinders makes a highly unfashionable but incredibly important argument of almost primitive simplicity: democratic politics delivers far more than most members of the public appear to acknowledge and understand. If more and more people are disappointed with what modern democratic politics delivers then is it possible that the fault lies with those who demand too much, fail to acknowledge the essence of democratic engagement and ignore the complexities of governing in the twentieth century rather than with democratic politics itself? Is it possible that the public in many advanced liberal democracies have become 'democratically decadent' in the sense that they take what democratic politics delivers for granted? Would politics be interpreted as failing a little less if we all spent a little less time emphasising our individual rights and a little more time reflecting on our responsibilities to society and future generations? Democratic politics remains 'a great and civilizing human activity... something to be valued almost as a pearl beyond price in the history of the human condition', as Bernard Crick stressed in his classic *In Defence of Politics* fifty years ago. But it is also a far more fragile system of governing than many people appear to realize. By returning to and updating Crick's arguments, this book provides an honest account of why democratic politics matters and why we need to reject the arguments of those who would turn their backs on 'mere politics' in favour of more authoritarian, populist or technocratic forms of governing. In rejecting fashionable fears about the 'end of politics' and daring to suggest that the public, the media, pressure groups, academics and politicians are all part of the problem as well as part of the cure, this book provides a fresh, provocative, and above all optimistic view of the achievements and future potential of democratic politics.

political comedians stand up: The Politics of Joking Jana Kopelent Rehak, Susanna Trnka, 2018-10-25 This book engages anthropologically with humor as political expression. It reveals how humor is in many instances central to human efforts to cope with political struggle and significant to understanding power dynamics in socio-political life. The chapters examine humor and joking activities across a diverse range of geographic areas and cultural contexts. The contributors

consider humor as it is constituted in political anxiety, aggression and power, and when it becomes a tool to resist, repair, reconcile or make a moral claim. Collectively they demonstrate that humor can provide a powerful critique, a non-violent form of political protest and the space for restoration of human dignity.

political comedians stand up: Encyclopedia of Politics, the Media, and Popular Culture

Tony Kelso, Brian Cogan, 2009-10-15 Whether it's television, radio, concerts, live appearances by comedians, Internet websites, or even the political party conventions themselves, the mixing of politics and popular culture is frequently on display. The Encyclopedia of Politics, the Media, and Popular Culture examines the people, major events, media, and controversies in eight thematic chapters and over 150 entries to provide an invaluable resource for any student, scholar, or everyday political junkie needing a comprehensive introduction to the subject. On a typical weeknight in the United States, millions shun the traditional evening network news broadcasts and, instead, later grab their remotes to turn to Comedy Central to catch up on the political happenings of the day, delivered by the comedian Jon Stewart on the faux news program, The Daily Show. Immediately afterwards, they might stay tuned to The Colbert Report for another dosage of hilarious, fake news that, to them, comes across more honestly than the serious version they could watch on CNN. Whether it's television, radio, concerts, live appearances by comedians, Internet websites, or even the political party conventions themselves, the mixing of politics and popular culture is frequently on display. The Encyclopedia of Politics, the Media, and Popular Culture provides in-depth coverage of these fascinating, and often surprising intersections in both historical and contemporary culture. This highly readable and entertaining encyclopedia provides a sweeping survey of the historic and ongoing interplay between politics, the media, and popular culture in eight thought-provoking chapters. The volume is enhanced with the inclusion of over 150 entries to help students and researchers easily locate more in-depth information on topics ranging from political scandals to YouTube.

political comedians stand up: Stand-up Comedy, Theology, and Ethics

Jacob D. Myers, Nicole Graham, 2025-09-04 Bringing together the distinct but connected disciplines of theology and ethics, Stand-up Comedy, Theology, and Ethics adds to the growing field of humor and religion. Beginning by re-considering what we know about jokes and laughter, the authors propose that more attention needs to be paid to the quasi-sacramental, magical quality of jokes and the ways laughter can shift the affective states of an audience. They then turn their attention to key issues and debates within stand-up comedy. First, is the comical legitimacy or illegitimacy of comedians who employ humor ambiguously so that we are not sure at who or what they are "punching". Second, is the phenomenon of canceling comedians for their behavior off stage. Third, is the sociopolitical possibilities of stand-up. Ultimately, the authors argue that there is theological, religious, and ethical significance to contemporary stand-up comedy.

political comedians stand up: The Everything Guide to Comedy Writing

Mike Bent, 2009-08-18 A guy walks into a bar... With this guide, aspiring comics will learn to navigate the complex world of comedy writing. Discover how to tap into your natural sense of humor through real-life examples and hands-on skill-building exercises. Learn the best ways to come up with ideas and write comedy that gets laughs--every time! Mike Bent, an accomplished stand-up comedian and teacher, provides the inside scoop on techniques to jump-start your comedy writing career, including how to: Develop comic characters for sketches and scenes Create and polish a standup routine Write for TV and movies Use the web to advance your comedy career Everyone loves a comedian. But breaking into this tough field is no laughing matter. After sharpening your comedy-writing skills with this practical (and funny!) guide, you'll feel comfortable adding humor to everyday situations and may even take a chance on your dream job in show business!

political comedians stand up: The Palgrave Handbook of Popular Culture as Philosophy

Dean A. Kowalski, Chris Lay, Kimberly S. Engels, 2024-04-30 Much philosophical work on pop culture apologises for its use; using popular culture is a necessary evil, something merely useful for reaching the masses with important philosophical arguments. But works of pop culture are

important in their own right--they shape worldviews, inspire ideas, change minds. We wouldn't baulk at a book dedicated to examining the philosophy of *The Great Gatsby* or 1984--why aren't *Star Trek* and *Superman* fair game as well? After all, when produced, the former were considered pop culture just as much as the latter. This will be the first major reference work to right that wrong, gathering together entries on film, television, games, graphic novels and comedy, and officially recognizing the importance of the field. It will be the go-to resource for students and researchers in philosophy, culture, media and communications, English and history and will act as a springboard to introduce the reader to the other key literature in the field.

political comedians stand up: American Political Humor Jody C. Baumgartner, 2019-10-07
This two-volume set surveys the profound impact of political humor and satire on American culture and politics over the years, paying special attention to the explosion of political humor in today's wide-ranging and turbulent media environment. Historically, there has been a tendency to regard political satire and humor as a sideshow to the wider world of American politics—entertaining and sometimes insightful, but ultimately only of modest interest to students and others surveying the trajectory of American politics and culture. This set documents just how mistaken that assumption is. By examining political humor and satire throughout US history, these volumes not only illustrate how expressions of political satire and humor reflect changes in American attitudes about presidents, parties, and issues but also how satirists, comedians, cartoonists, and filmmakers have helped to shape popular attitudes about landmark historical events, major American institutions and movements, and the nation's political leaders and cultural giants. Finally, this work examines how today's brand of political humor may be more influential than ever before in shaping American attitudes about the nation in which we live.

political comedians stand up: Taking a Stand Jared N. Champion, Peter C. Kunze, 2021-11-15
Contributions by Jared N. Champion, Miriam M. Chirico, Thomas Clark, David R. Dewberry, Christopher J. Gilbert, David Gillota, Kathryn Kein, Rob King, Rebecca Krefting, Peter C. Kunze, Linda Mizejewski, Aviva Orenstein, Raúl Pérez, Philip Scepanski, Susan Seizer, Monique Taylor, Ila Tyagi, and Timothy J. Viator
Stand-up comedians have a long history of walking a careful line between serious and playful engagement with social issues: Lenny Bruce questioned the symbolic valence of racial slurs, Dick Gregory took time away from the stage to speak alongside Martin Luther King Jr., and—more recently—Tig Notaro challenged popular notions of damaged or abject bodies. Stand-up comedians deploy humor to open up difficult topics for broader examination, which only underscores the social and cultural importance of their work. *Taking a Stand: Contemporary US Stand-Up Comedians as Public Intellectuals* draws together essays that contribute to the analysis of the stand-up comedian as public intellectual since the 1980s. The chapters explore stand-up comedians as contributors to and shapers of public discourse via their live performances, podcasts, social media presence, and political activism. Each chapter highlights a stand-up comedian and their ongoing discussion of a cultural issue or expression of a political ideology/standpoint: Lisa Lampanelli's use of problematic postracial humor, Aziz Ansari's merging of sociology and technology, or Maria Bamford's emphasis on mental health, to name just a few. *Taking a Stand* offers a starting point for understanding the work stand-up comedians do as well as its reach beyond the stage. Comedians influence discourse, perspectives, even public policy on myriad issues, and this book sets out to take those jokes seriously.

political comedians stand up: Comedy and Critique Daniel R. Smith, 2018-06-20
Comedy and Critique explores British professional stand-up comedy in the wake of the Alternative Comedy movement of the late twentieth century, seeing it as an extension of the politics of the New Left: standing up for oneself as anti-racist, feminist and open to a queering of self and social institutions. Daniel Smith demonstrates that the comic sensibility pervading contemporary humour is as much 'speaking truth to power' as it is realising one's position 'in' power. The professionalisation of New Left humour offers a challenge to social and cultural critique. Stand-up comedy has made us all sociologists of self, identity and cultural power while also resigning us to a place where a comic sensibility becomes an acknowledgment of the necessity of social change.

political comedians stand up: The Politics and Psychoanalysis of Comedy Robert Samuels, 2023-11-20 This book looks at the political aspects of comedy and how humor is shaped by unconscious social and psychological factors within a particular cultural and historical context. Updating Freud's work on jokes, Robert Samuels argues that any universal model of comedy must take into account the role played by distinct genres, which are themselves determined by particular political psychopathologies. In looking at contemporary comedy, we encounter a structure that is often seen throughout the world: in response to what is experienced as a Leftist super-ego censoring thoughts and speech and a Libertarian Right which promotes free speech as the ultimate value. Within this dynamic, comedians seeking to make their audience laugh by poking fun at sensitive and taboo subjects, intentionally and unintentionally, these humorists present an alternative to Left-wing political correctness and identity politics. Contemporary comedians then cannot help but to cater to Right-wing politics since the Right is centered on loudly rejecting the cultural dictations of the Left.

political comedians stand up: The Complete Idiot's Guide to Comedy Writing James Mendrinos, Jim Mendrinos, 2004 You've always known writing comedy was about more than just being funny. But how do you create a joke and work it into a script or a stand-up routine? Comedian, writer, and teacher Jim Mendrinos has the answers. In *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Comedy Writing*, Mendrinos gives readers the principles he teaches in his popular courses, from understanding what funny is and how to find it, to how to actually construct comedy. Working through the basic constructions and forms including premises, points of view, and twists, he shows the variations of written, verbal, and physical comedy. With useful exercises, Mendrinos helps writers refine their writing, appeal to their audience, and even break writer's block by learning techniques for brainstorming, free association, lists, and finding infinite points of view.

political comedians stand up: Comedy and Distinction Sam Friedman, 2014-04-24 This book was shortlisted for the 2015 BSA Philip Abrams Memorial Prize. Comedy is currently enjoying unprecedented growth within the British culture industries. Defying the recent economic downturn, it has exploded into a booming billion-pound industry both on TV and on the live circuit. Despite this, academia has either ignored comedy or focused solely on analysing comedians or comic texts. This scholarship tends to assume that through analysing an artist's intentions or techniques, we can somehow understand what is and what isn't funny. But this poses a fundamental question – funny to whom? How can we definitively discern how audiences react to comedy? *Comedy and Distinction* shifts the focus to provide the first ever empirical examination of British comedy taste. Drawing on a large-scale survey and in-depth interviews carried out at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe, the book explores what types of comedy people like (and dislike), what their preferences reveal about their sense of humour, how comedy taste lubricates everyday interaction, and how issues of social class, gender, ethnicity and geographical location interact with patterns of comic taste. Friedman asks: Are some types of comedy valued higher than others in British society? Does more 'legitimate' comedy taste act as a tangible resource in social life – a form of cultural capital? What role does humour play in policing class boundaries in contemporary Britain? This book will be of interest to students and scholars of sociology, social class, social theory, cultural studies and comedy studies.

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