

Palgrave Studies in Comedy

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“Pushing beyond orthodox theories, this book draws attention to the aesthetics of humour, long-neglected by mainstream humour research. Compelling analyses of contemporary American popular comedy underpin the author’s important conclusions about the political aesthetic of modern comic forms across the English-speaking world. Challenging and insightful, the book offers food for thought to scholars of contemporary humour and comedy.”

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“In a historical moment marked by lively debate over the political uses of comedy and satire, Nicholas Holm’s *Humour as Politics* arrives to bring us the conceptual tools we need. Holm’s book is at once a thorough overview of theories of humour and a sharply observed analysis of the way in which recent media texts mobilize humour for political ends. Witty, rigorous and convincing, *Humour and Politics* is a landmark work of cultural analysis.”

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“This is a remarkably erudite, rigorous and persuasive analysis of one of the most important, and under-studied cultural forms of our time. Making no casual assumptions about the political effects and consequences of popular comedy, *Humour as Politics* demonstrates with close attention the multiple ways in which humour can reproduce, trouble or overturn established norms of understanding and behaviour. An important work of cultural studies and cultural criticism, this ground-breaking study sheds crucial new light on the operations of this most central, but still elusive, point of interface between everyday life, media culture and the wider public domain.”

—Jeremy Gilbert, *Professor of Cultural and Political Theory, University of East London, UK*

Comedy is part of the cultural landscape as never before, as older manifestations such as performance (stand-up, plays, etc.), film and TV have been joined by an online industry, pioneered by YouTube and social media. This innovative new book series will help define the emerging comedy studies field, offering fresh perspectives on the comedy studies phenomenon, and opening up new avenues for discussion. The focus is 'pop cultural', and will emphasize vaudeville, stand-up, variety, comedy film, TV sit-coms, and digital comedy. It will welcome studies of politics, history, aesthetics, production, distribution, and reception, as well as work that explores international perspectives and the digital realm. Above all it will be pioneering—there is no competition in the publishing world at this point in time.

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Nicholas Holm

Humour as Politics

The Political Aesthetics of Contemporary Comedy

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For Lucy

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Palmerston North, New Zealand

Nicholas Holm

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