

## Frankie Howerd Stand Up Comic

Offers an analysis of the four collaborative sitcoms of Jimmy Perry and David Croft, 'Dad's Army', 'It Ain't half Hot, Mum!', 'Hi-de-Hi!' and 'You Rang M'Lord?'. Considers the themes and ideas that run through the series in terms of their representation of class and gender, and in terms of other sitcoms and cultures which produced them.

With his sly little moustache, broad gap-toothed grin, garish waistcoats and ostentatious cigarette holder, Terry-Thomas was known as an absolute bounder, both onscreen and off. Graham McCann's hugely entertaining biography celebrates the life and career of a very English rascal. Born in 1911 into an ordinary suburban family, Thomas Terry Hoar-Stevens set about transforming himself at a very early age into a dandy and a gadabout. But he did not put the finishing touches to his persona until the mid-1950s with his groundbreaking TV comedy series *How Do You View?*, a forerunner of *The Goon Show* and *Monty Python*. Terry-Thomas went on to carve out a long and lucrative career in America, appearing on TV alongside Judy Garland, Bing Crosby and Lucille Ball, and in Hollywood movies with Jack Lemmon, Rock Hudson and Doris Day. He became every American's idea of a mischievous English gent. After a long battle

with Parkinson's disease, he died in 1990 in comparative obscurity, but his influence lives on. Basil Brush was a polyester tribute to Terry-Thomas, and comedians including Vic Reeves and Paul Whitehouse hail T-T as a role model. 'Dandyism is the product of a bored society,' D'Aurevilly observed. Terry-Thomas cocked a snook at the dull sobriety of post-war Britain with his sly humour. As he would say himself: 'Good show!'

The first biographical guide to 100 British TV personalities who have appeared on American networks--from Joan Hickson to Benny Hill to Leo McKern.

Writing Comedy Unit Objective: Students will demonstrate a deepening awareness of the comic sketch by writing and performing a nine minute sketch. Life Skill: Students will record life events and observations strengthening their understanding of self, work, and life and then stretch this into comic proportions. Theatre Skills: Students will

- Create a paragraph describing who they are and how they will project themselves as a comedian.
- Develop observation journals of times, places, countries, facts, and people
- Write jokes and practice using them on stage
- Research jokes and practice jokes of the successful comedians
- Create a comedy sketch and perform this.

Mike Myers thinks he was "a genius", while John Cleese regards him as "a true cultural icon". He was an architect of British comedy, paving the way for Monty

Python, and then became a major Hollywood star, forever remembered as Igor in Mel Brooks' Young Frankenstein. A writer, director, performer and true pioneer of his art, he died aged only 48. His name was Marty Feldman, and here, at last, is the first ever biography. Acclaimed author Robert Ross has interviewed Marty's friends and family, including his sister Pamela, Tim Brooke-Taylor, Michael Palin and Terry Jones, and also draws from extensive, previously unpublished and often hilarious interviews with Marty himself, taped in preparation for the autobiography he never wrote. No one before or since has had a career quite like Marty's. Beginning in the dying days of variety theatre, he went from the behind the scenes scriptwriting triumphs of Round the Horne and The Frost Report to onscreen stardom in At Last the 1948 Show and his own hit series Marty. That led to transatlantic success, his work with Mel Brooks, and a five-picture deal to write and direct his own movies. From his youth as a tramp on the streets of London, to the height of his fame in America – where he encountered everyone from Orson Welles to Kermit the Frog, before his Hollywood dream became a nightmare – this is the fascinating story of a key figure in the history of comedy, told in full for the first time.

Margaret Rutherford was without a doubt one of Britain's best-loved comic actresses. But behind the kindly, serene front Rutherford presented to the world

lay a life of trauma and repeated nervous breakdown – the legacy of the legacy of family tragedy that saw her father murder her grandfather during a bout of mental illness and her depressive mother later kill herself. Andy Merriman's acclaimed biography intrigued and shocked readers with these revelations when it was published in hardback. Now out in paperback, it is also a portrait of one of our most individual actresses. Rutherford appeared in such thoroughly English classics as *Blithe Spirit*, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *Passport to Pimlico* and *I'm All Right, Jack!* But above all she was Miss Marple, in four films – and entirely created for the screen the role of Agatha Christie's elderly and fearless private detective that subsequent actresses like Joan Hickson and Geraldine McEwan have continued. Rutherford first played Miss Marple at the age of 70, and insisted on wearing her own clothes to feel right in the part. Above all, this was a vulnerable woman whom no-one failed to like and respect, notable again and again for quiet acts of kindness, whose life story has great appeal to everyone who appreciates both classic English comedy and simple human decency.

In the thirty years since viewers first visited Nelson Mandela House, *Only Fools and Horses* has won countless awards and is still Britain's most-watched and best-loved sitcom. Del Boy's overwhelming popularity has even inspired the

Oxford English Dictionary to include a selection of his most famous words and phrases, such as 'lovely jubbly' and 'twonk'. In this fascinating, entertaining and meticulously researched book, acclaimed biographer Graham McCann goes behind the scenes to tell the inside story of Britain's most enduring comedy. With major contributions from the people who wrote, produced and starred in the programme and with material drawn from the BBC archives, it's time to take one last trip down Hooky Street . . .

When *Will I Be Famous?* is about a world of entertainment; a twilight world far from the bright lights of the West End. Among the pages of *Showcall*, an annual index of artistes and attractions, there is an army of hopefuls waiting for their big break. Some may be on the verge of a big break; for others, the big break came and went years ago. What they all have in common is that they are out there, entertaining people night after night, folding paper into interesting shapes, telling jokes to businessmen at corporate functions, stripping for hen-parties. Together, they represent an unalloyed triumph of hope over experience. Using acts from *Showcall* as a starting point, Martin Kelner travels from town to town, demonstrating that how we are entertained, what we do for fun, says at least as much about *The Way We Live Now* as any other indicator. *When Will I Be Famous?* is a fascinating and funny account of Britain as seen by the people who

try to keep it happy.

Frankie Howerd's comic genius made him a hero to the older generation and new wave comics alike. He remains one of our best-loved comedians, and his influence continues to grow. He was the king of nudge-nudge humor, and *The Complete Frankie Howerd* is the essential guide to his career. Robert Ross details forgotten and obscure performances, alongside well-loved highlights such as *Up Pompeii*, *The Ladykillers*, and *Carry On Doctor*. It also includes a definitive filmography and dozens of previously unpublished stills.

Comedy has always been one of the most high-profile, glamorous and potentially lucrative markets for scriptwriters, but it is also perceived as one of the hardest. In the fourth edition of this highly regarded handbook, John Byrne breaks down the basics of writing comedy into simple steps and shows you how to make the most of your own comedy writing talent and - just as importantly - your ability to market that talent. Here is a wealth of practical advice both on how to get your career off the ground and how to keep developing it. Whether you are writing comedy routines, sketches or sitcoms, and aiming your work at the page, the stage or the ever-expanding world of broadcasting, you will find something in this book to encourage, inform and inspire you. As with any art form, the basics of good comedy never go out of fashion. While the easy steps in this book are illustrated with examples of work by classic comedians old and new, you will also find useful advice on developing and adapting your work for the twenty-first

century market, whether your aim is to promote your work online or simply to keep your gags fresh and topical in a world where the news changes by the minute and gets flashed around the world in seconds.

British comedy cinema has been a mainstay of domestic production since the beginning of the last Century and arguably the most popular and important genre in British film history. This edited volume will offer the first comprehensive account of the rich and popular history of British comedy cinema from silent slapstick and satire to contemporary romantic comedy. Using a loosely chronological approach, essays cover successive decades of the 20th and 21st Century with a combination of case studies on key personalities, production cycles and studio output along with fresh approaches to issues of class and gender representation. It will present new research on familiar comedy cycles such as the Ealing Comedies and Carry On films as well as the largely undocumented silent period along with the rise of television spin offs from the 1970s and the development of animated comedy from 1915 to the present. Films covered include: St Trinians, A Fish Called Wanda, Brassed Off, Local Hero, The Full Monty, Four Lions and In the Loop. Contributors: Melanie Bell, Alan Burton, James Chapman, Richard Dacre, Ian Hunter, James Leggott, Sharon Lockyer, Andy Medhurst, Lawrence Napper, Tim O'Sullivan, Laraine Porter, Justin Smith, Sarah Street, Peter Waymark, Paul Wells

Beyond a Joke is a celebration of comedy - one of the modern world's most dominant

and compelling art forms - but it is also the story of comedy's dark side, homing in on the scandals that have surrounded some of light entertainment's biggest stars, and telling it as it is, featuring insight from one who was there at the time. While *Beyond a Joke* explores the extremes of this world it also addresses another question. Are comedians naturally dysfunctional, or does the stress and pressure of the job make them dysfunctional? Ruby Wax once told the author that she had builders in her house who were just as emotionally unstable as most stand-up comedians she had worked with. But they don't want to go on stage and plead with an audience to love them. Bruce Dessau is the only person who could write this book. From Russell Brand slashing his chest onstage to Jo Brand trashing a friend's car on the motorway, he has heard it all. Bruce Dessau knows where the bodies are buried.

*Stand-Up!* is the first book to both analyse the background of stand-up comedy and take us inside the world of being a solo comedian. Oliver Double writes a lively history of the traditions of British stand-up comedy - from its roots in music hall and variety to today's club and alternative comedy scene - and also engages in a serious exploration of what it is like to be a comedian onstage in front of a sometimes adoring and sometimes hostile audience. He looks critically at the work of such stand-up stars as Frankie Howerd, Les Dawson, Billy Connolly, Victoria Wood, Ben Elton and Eddie Izzard. And he looks at himself as a performer.

The Telegraph's obituaries pages are renowned for their quality of writing and capacity

to distil the essence of a life from its most extraordinary moments. A unique mix of heroism, ingenuity, infamy and the bizarre, *Thinker, Failure, Soldier, Jailer* collects the very best of those obituaries to present an endlessly absorbing compendium of human endeavour. Organised day by day around the calendar year, with each life presented on the date it ended, the book features hundreds of remarkable stories. World statesmen jostle with glamorous celluloid stars, pioneering boffins sit alongside chart-topping rock 'n' rollers, while artists and their muses mingle with record-breaking sportsmen, Victoria Cross winners, spies, showgirls and captains of industry – as well as the titans of rather more esoteric fields. Here, for instance, can be found Britain's greatest goat breeder, a hangman who campaigned to abolish the death penalty, a priest to Soho's pimps, a cross-dressing mountaineer and a minister who preached a gospel of avarice - donations in notes only, please, as 'change makes me nervous'. A treasure trove of human virtue, vice and trivia, *Thinker, Failure, Soldier, Jailer* is the perfect gift for the armchair psychologist in all of us.

Performing Brecht is an unprecedented history of the productions of Brecht's plays in Britain over forty years. Margaret Eddershaw surveys all aspects of Brecht in performance, from his methodologies to his place in postmodernist theatre and beyond. She focuses on key productions by directors including George Devine, Sam Wanamaker, William Gaskill, Howard Davies, John Dexter and Richard Eyre. Eddershaw also provides three in-depth case studies of productions in the 1990s,

incorporating her own exclusive access to the rehearsals and in-depth interviews with directors and performers. The case studies are: \* The Good Person of Sechuan, directed by Deborah Warner and starring Fiona Shaw; \* Mother Courage, directed by Philip Prowse and starring Glenda Jackson; \* The Resistable Rise of Arturo Ui, directed by Di Trevis and starring Antony Sher

'This is the kind of book that troubles grey-suited committees of academic peers. It's too enjoyable. But that, given its subject, is just what it ought to be, and it treats that subject seriously . . . There isn't a "dull" page anywhere in the book.' – Professor Peter Thomson, *Studies in Theatre and Performance*

Comedy is changing: stand-up comedians routinely sell out stadia, their audience-figures swollen by panel-show appearances and much-followed Twitter feeds. Meanwhile, the smaller clubs are filling up, with audiences as well as aspirants. How can we make sense of it all? This new edition of *Getting the Joke* gives an insider's look at the spectrum of modern comedy, re-examining the world of stand-up in the internet age. Drawing on his acclaimed first edition, Oliver Double focuses in greater detail on the US scene and its comedians (such as David Cross, Sarah Silverman, Louis CK, Demetri Martin and Margaret Cho); the 'DIY' comedy circuit and its celebrated apostles and visionaries, from Josie Long to Stewart Lee; the growing importance of the solo stand-up show; the role played by Twitter (including an interview with the organiser of the world's first comedy gig on Twitter), and the driving force that is the TV guest slot, be it on *Mock the Week* or *Live*

at the Apollo. With expanded sections on joke construction, as well as ways to challenge the audience, and a host of new and updated exercises to guide the aspiring comedian, this new edition of *Getting the Joke* is the only book to combine the history of stand-up comedy with an analysis of the elements and methods that go into its creation. Featuring a range of interviews with working comedians – from circuit veterans to new kids on the block – combined with the author's vast experience, this is a must read for any aspiring stand-up comedian.

Think you know everything there is to know about Hammer Films, the fabled "Studio that Dripped Blood?" The lowdown on all the imperishable classics of horror, like *The Curse of Frankenstein*, *Horror of Dracula* and *The Devil Rides Out*? What about the company's less blood-curdling back catalog? What about the musicals, comedies and travelogues, the fantasies and historical epics--not to mention the pirate adventures? This lavishly illustrated encyclopedia covers every Hammer film and television production in thorough detail, including budgets, shooting schedules, publicity and more, along with all the actors, supporting players, writers, directors, producers, composers and technicians. Packed with quotes, behind-the-scenes anecdotes, credit lists and production specifics, this all-inclusive reference work is the last word on this cherished cinematic institution.

*The Encyclopedia of Television*, second edition is the first major reference work to provide description, history, analysis, and information on more than 1100 subjects

related to television in its international context. For a full list of entries, contributors, and more, visit the Encyclo pedia of Television, 2nd edition website.

Frankie Howerd Stand-up Comic HarperCollins (UK)

Fawlty Towers was only on our screens for 12 half-hour episodes, but it has stayed in our lives ever since. The Major; 'Don't mention the war!'; 'He's from Barcelona'; Basil the Rat -- everyone has a favourite line, moment or character. In this, the first biography of the show, Graham McCann holds up to the light each of the unpredictable elements - the demented brilliance of John Cleese, his creative partnership with Connie Booth - that added up to an immortal sitcom, beloved all over the world, even in Barcelona.

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.

Genre is central to understanding the industrial context and visual form of television. This new edition of the key textbook on television genre brings together leading international scholars to provide an accessible and comprehensive introduction to the debates, issues and concerns of the field. Structured in eleven sections, The Television Genre Book introduces the concept of 'genre' itself and how it has been understood in television studies, and then addresses the main televisual genres in turn: drama, soap opera, comedy, news, documentary, reality television, children's television, animation and popular entertainment. This third edition is illustrated throughout with case studies of classic and contemporary programming from each genre, ranging from The Simpsons to Buffy the Vampire Slayer and from Monty Python's Flying Circus to Who Wants to be a Millionaire?. It also features new case studies on contemporary shows, including The Only Way Is Essex, Homeland, Game of Thrones, Downton Abbey, Planet Earth, Grey's Anatomy and QVC, and new chapters covering topics such as constructed reality, travelogues, telefantasy, stand-up comedy, the panel show, 24-hour

news, Netflix and video on demand.

The Oxford Handbook of Sondheim Studies offers a series of cutting-edge essays on the most important and compelling topics in the growing field of Sondheim Studies. Focusing on broad groups of issues relating to the music and the production of Sondheim works, rather than on biographical questions about the composer himself, the handbook represents a cross-disciplinary introduction to comprehending Sondheim in musicological, theatrical, and socio-cultural terms. This collection of never-before published essays addresses issues of artistic method and musico-dramaturgical form, while at the same time offering close readings of individual shows from a variety of analytical perspectives. The handbook is arranged into six broad sections: issues of intertextuality and authorship; Sondheim's pioneering work in developing the non-linear form of the concept musical; the production history of Sondheim's work; his writing for film and television; his exploitation and deployment of a wide range of musical genres; and how interpretation through key critical lenses (including sociology, history, and feminist and queer theory) establishes his position in a broader cultural context.

Saucy, rude and vulgar—the 31 Carry On films remain an important part of the history of British cinematic and low brow comedy. In this book, Gerrard discusses the Carry On roots in the music halls of the Victorians and the saucy seaside postcards of Donald McGill. Made in post-war Britain, these films reflect a remarkable period of social change as the British Empire faded and a nation learned to laugh at itself. Nothing was

sacred to the Carry On team. James Bond and Cleopatra were mercilessly lampooned, Miss World competitions and toilet factories came in for a cinematic pasting, while Sid James' laugh, Barbara Windsor's wiggle, Kenneth Williams' flared nostrils and Charles Hawtrey's "Oh, hello!" became synonymous with laughter, merriment and fun. Gerrard's work examines the Carry On films as part of a wider canvas linking both their heritage and tradition to the contextual world they mirrored. The Carry On Films is an essential read for Carry On fans the country through. "Ding dong! Carry On!" Appropriating Shakespeare argues that the vibrant history of Pyramus and Thisbe as an independent text affirms the place of artist as both consumer and producer of Shakespeare. The playlet's four-century history is one that identifies Shakespeare's value as a transformative agent of aesthetic inquiry.

The rambling perambulations, the catchphrases, the bland brown suit and chestnut hairpiece—such were the hallmarks of a revolution in stand-up comedy that came in the unique shape of Frankie Howerd. This new biography from Graham McCann charts the circuitous course of an extraordinary career, moving from his early success in the 40s and early 50s as a radio star, through a period at the end of the 50s when he was all but forgotten as a has-been, to his rediscovery in the early 60s by Peter Cook and continued success. Graham McCann vividly captures both Howerd's colorful career and precarious private life through extensive new research and original interviews with such figures as Paul McCartney, Eric Sykes, Bill Cotton, Barbara Windsor, Joan Simms, and

Michael Grade.

Alison Oddey's interviews with prominent performing women span generations, cultures, perspectives, practice and the best part of the twentieth century, telling various stories collectively. Stand-ups, 'classic' actresses, film and television personalities, experimental and 'alternative' practitioners discuss why they want to perform, what motivates them, and how their personal history has contributed to their desires to perform. Oddey's critical introductory and concluding chapters analyse both historical and cultural contexts and explore themes arising from interviews. These include sense of identity, acting as playing (recapturing and revisiting childhood), displacement of roots, performing, motherhood and 'being', performing comedy, differences between theatre, film and television performance, attitudes towards and relationships with audiences, and working with directors. The prominent subtext of motherhood reveals a consciousness of split subjectivities with and beyond performance.

When Dave Allen passed away in March 2005, we lost a true comedy great. Sitting cross-legged on a high stool, whiskey in one hand, cigarette in the other, Dave Allen's exasperated commentaries on the absurdities of modern life struck a chord with millions of fans in Britain, Ireland and Australia for over four decades. He was a compelling storyteller - able to spin shaggy dog stories out of the almost any subject, including the missing tip of his fourth finger of his left hand, for which he provided various unlikely explanations. But his gentle, laconic wit could also give way to ferocious attacks on the

media, the state and, most famously, the Catholic Church. He was a unique talent - a comic who could make his audiences laugh, cry, and be shocked, all in one. This official celebration of Dave Allen's comedy has been drawn together by Graham McCann - Britain's best-loved entertainment writer. It is a treasure trove of stories, stand-up routines, sketches, interviews and photos, which takes us on a journey from the cradle to the grave. It will delight Dave Allen's million of fans, old and new alike.

'Dave Allen was our greatest storyteller and nobody ever came close to his ability to spin a yarn. He was unique, right up there with the greats.' Jack Dee

One of the cultural phenomena to occur in Ireland in the last two decades has been the highly successful growth of stand-up comedy as a popular entertainment genre. This book examines stand-up comedy from the perspective of the narrated self, through the prism of the fabricated comedy persona, including Tommy Tiernan, Dylan Moran and Maeve Higgins.

The behind-the-scenes story of one of the most successful and admired sitcoms of the 1980s In 1977 the BBC commissioned a new satirical sitcom set in Whitehall.

Production of its first series was stalled, however, by the death throes of Jim Callaghan's Labour government and the 'Winter of Discontent'; Auntie being unwilling to broadcast such an overtly political comedy until after the general election of 1979. That Yes Minister should have been delayed by the very events that helped bring Margaret Thatcher to power is, perhaps, fitting. Over three series from 1980 - and two more as

Yes, Prime Minister until 1988 - the show mercilessly lampooned the vanity, self-interest and incompetence of our so-called public servants, making its hapless minister Jim Hacker and his scheming Permanent Secretary Sir Humphrey two of the most memorable characters British comedy has ever produced. The new prime minister professed it her favourite television programme - a 'textbook' on the State in inaction - and millions of British viewers agreed. In the years since Yes Minister has become a national treasure: Sir Humphrey's slippery circumlocutions have entered the lexicon, regularly quoted by political commentators, and the series' cynical vision of government seems as credible now as it did thirty years ago. Much of this success can be credited to its writers, Antony Jay and Jonathan Lynn, who drew on their contacts in Westminster to rework genuine political folly as situation comedy. Storylines that seemed absurd to the public were often rooted in actual events - so much so that they occasionally attracted the scrutiny of Whitehall mandarins. In *A Very Courageous Decision* acclaimed entertainment historian Graham McCann goes in search of the real political fiascos that inspired Yes Minister. Drawing on fresh interviews with cast, crew, politicians and admirers, he reveals how a subversive satire captured the mood of its time to become one of the most cherished sitcoms of Thatcher's Britain. Best known for *Dad's Army*, in which his Sergeant Wilson played the languid, rakish foil to Arthur Lowe's pompous, chippy Captain Mainwaring, John Le Mesurier was one of Britain's favourite and most recognisable character actors. The epitome of

insouciance and languor on screen, in real life this charming, quietly-spoken bon viveur was plagued by private turmoil and heartbreak. Married three times, he saw his first wife succumb to alcoholism, his second – the comedy diva Hattie Jacques – move her lover into the family home, and his third enjoy a passionate dalliance with troubled comic Tony Hancock. As Graham McCann reveals in this fully authorised and moving biography, as an actor John Le Mesurier was a key ingredient in the success of Britain's greatest sitcom, but as a man he was far more courageous than Sergeant Wilson was ever meant to be.

Kingsley Amis described Paul Johnson's *Intellectuals* as “a valuable and entertaining Rogues' Gallery of Adventures of the Mind.” Now the celebrated journalist and historian offers *Creators*, a companion volume of essays that examines a host of outstanding and prolific creative spirits. Here are Disney, Picasso, Bach, and Shakespeare; Austen, Twain, and T. S. Eliot; and Dürer, Hokusai, Pugin, and Viollet-le-Duc, among many others. Paul Johnson believes that creation cannot be satisfactorily analyzed, but it can be illustrated to bring out its salient characteristics. That is the purpose of this instructive and witty book.

OK2BG is narrative nonfiction, a Memoir about a guy who wants to be a Mentor preferably to a teenager, so they can have a decent & meaningful conversation about stuff & preferably with a kid at-risk, or just otherwise lost, in order to help both the teenager as well as the determined subject of this story realize their unique potential &

find or reinforce their place in the world. Overall, a chronicle about the author's attempt over several years to understand the question of 'why do I want to be a Mentor' which eventually helps him become a more insightful person. Subsequently in September, 2010 after a plague of teen suicides, Jack turns his attention to researching gay biographies into optimistically appropriate groups of books for gay kids at-risk, from bullying. After 5 years Jack has categorized 2,000+ books in the form of Memoirs, Biographies & Autobiographies written by or about 1,000+ allegedly gay men. The primary message in OK2BG is to read & reassess before you run asunder!

This enthralling collection of weird and wonderful tales from the world of theatre includes such unusual stories as the legendary ghost of Drury Lane, how an actor can exorcise the curse of Macbeth, and the well-known theatre manager who fried bacon and eggs in the Royal Box to feed her starving cast at the interval. If you have ever wondered whether what happens in the stalls is actually more dramatic than what happens on stage, which shows were so bad that they closed during the interval on the first night, or how the 'green room' was named, then 'Theatre's Strangest Acts' is the book for you.

The personal diaries of the renowned actor and glamorous celebrity describe his life from 1939 to 1983, including his struggles with weight, drinking and jealousy when other men looked at the love of his life, Elizabeth Taylor.

Judy Huxtable, a beautiful Swinging Sixties model and actress, met and fell in love with

Peter Cook in 1967. They were together during the memorable hit shows 'Behind the Fridge' and 'Derek and Clive', divorcing in 1989. Being intimate with Peter meant that Judy was inevitably close to Peter's comic partner, Dudley Moore, and they all formed an extraordinary bond. She was in a unique position to observe the special relationship that Peter and Dud shared, and the rivalry that existed between them. In *LOVING PETER*, Judy gives a perceptive and poignant account of the Peter Cook that only she knew. She writes with a mix of humour, insight and sadness about one of the funniest, most enigmatic and troubled men on the planet. She describes what he was like as a husband, performer, friend, father and man and gives an inside view of what really made him tick; why he seemed to want to destroy those he loved the most; how he succumbed to the destructive forces of drink and drugs; and how he and Dudley really got on.

Contrary to popular belief, LSD is much more connected to Britain than it is to the USA. This engaging book looks at the use of LSD in British society, from its arrival in 1952 to the present day. It provides a hidden history of a controversial drug and how it permeated British culture. The author explores LSD's use by the medical profession in treating a variety of psychological and mental problems. At the same time, The Ministry of Defence believed they were on the brink of harnessing LSD as a battlefield incapacitation drug which would enable wars to be won without loss of life. But LSD's popularity rose with its use among the British counterculture, from the 1950s beatniks

through to the late 80s acid house parties. At its height, when it was legal, LSD affected the lives and philosophies of significant individuals (politicians, scientists, writers, educators, entertainers, artists, journalists) as well as ordinary people for good and bad. This book is the first to explore LSD's amazing influence on British culture and society. LEARN HOW TO WRITE AND PERFORM STAND UP COMEDY. A new edition of Be A Great Stand-Up, now fully revised and updated with new material on setting up and running a comedy night and mining almost any subject for jokes. Logan Murray has successfully taught the techniques of stand-up comedy to thousands, and in this book he distills his years of experience into the essential skills for a great and enjoyable performance. He will help you find your creative streak and your funny side, build the confidence to deliver, and explain the finer details of stagecraft, from dealing with hecklers to coping with props. There is a full guide to the practicalities, from finding gigs to securing an agent, with plenty of valuable hints, tips and advice. Drawing on Logan's years of teaching and his own successful stand-up career, with top tips from some of the most well-known people in the business, it is guaranteed to bring a smile to both your face and that of your future audience. As well as full updates throughout the book, this new edition contains fresh material on how to set up and run a comedy night, mine any subject for jokes and advice on festivals. ABOUT THE SERIES The Teach Yourself Creative Writing series helps aspiring authors tell their story. Covering a range of genres from science fiction and romantic novels, to illustrated children's books and

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comedy, this series is packed with advice, exercises and tips for unlocking creativity and improving your writing. And because we know how daunting the blank page can be, we set up the Just Write online community at [tyjustwrite](http://tyjustwrite.com), for budding authors and successful writers to connect and share.

With a cast of thousands, including Peter Cook, Ken Dodd, Dusty Springfield, Spike Milligan, Rolf Harris, Bruce Forsyth, and Reeves and Mortimer, this book reveals a world of comedians and cavorters, dancing girls, and crooners. From the early days of vaudeville, via the golden age of radio, live television spectacles, the rise of the chat show, and alternative comedy, Louis Barfe pulls back the curtain of variety to reveal the world of light entertainment in all its glory.

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