



Stand-up Comedy in Theory, or, Abjection in America (Paperback)

By John Limon

Duke University Press, United States, 2000. Paperback. Condition: New. New.. Language: English . Brand New Book. Stand-Up Comedy in Theory, or, Abjection in America is the first study of stand-up comedy as a form of art. John Limon appreciates and analyzes the specific practice of stand-up itself, moving beyond theories of the joke, of the comic, and of comedy in general to read stand-up through the lens of literary and cultural theory. Limon argues that stand-up is an artform best defined by its fascination with the abject, Julia Kristeva's term for those aspects of oneself that are obnoxious to one's sense of identity but that are nevertheless-like blood, feces, or urine-impossible to jettison once and for all. All of a comedian's life, Limon asserts, is abject in this sense. Limon begins with stand-up comics in the 1950s and 1960s-Lenny Bruce, Carl Reiner, Mel Brooks, Mike Nichols, Elaine May-when the norm of the profession was the Jewish, male, heterosexual comedian. He then moves toward the present with analyses of David Letterman, Richard Pryor, Ellen DeGeneres, and Paula Poundstone. Limon incorporates feminist, race, and queer theories to argue that the commodification of America-stand-up comedy's escape from its narrow...



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