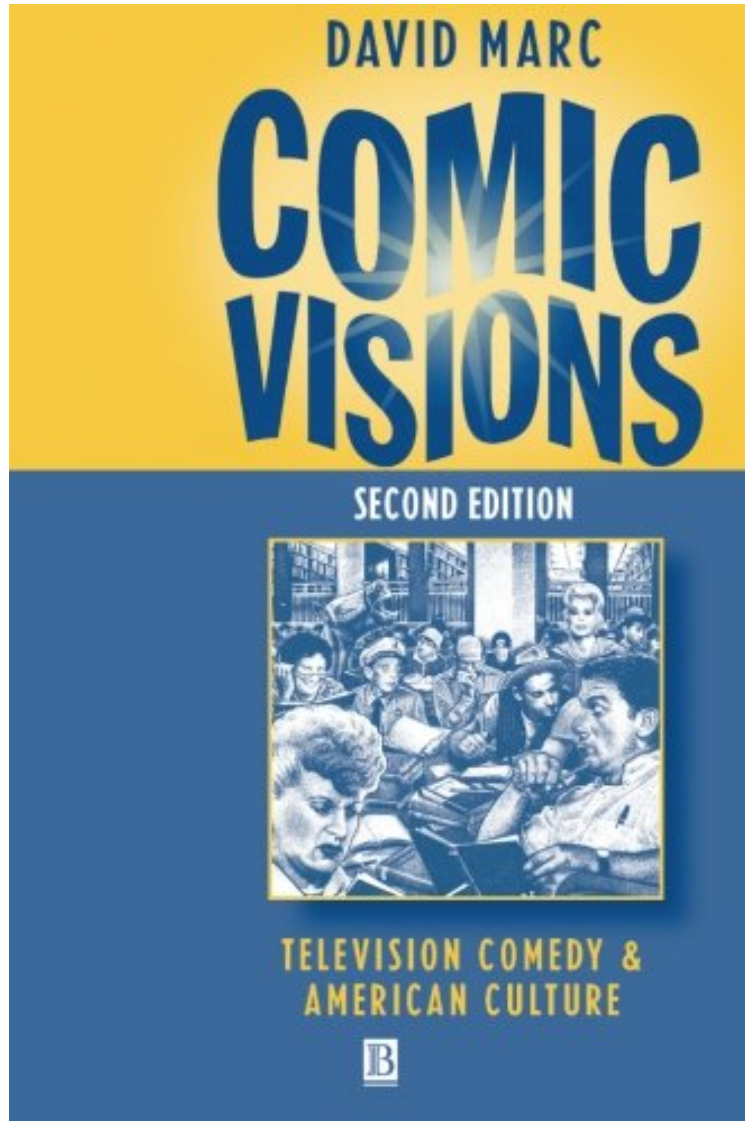


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Comic Visions: Television Comedy and American Culture

David Marc

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David Marc : Comic Visions: Television Comedy and American Culture before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Comic Visions: Television Comedy and American Culture:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. How we got this wayBy Doktor SchoenSure, I spent 6 hours a day in school as a kid. But while I hardly remember any of my class schedules from back then, I know that The Beverly Hillbillies was broadcast on Wednesday night at 9, and that Candid Camera and What's My Line? were my ticket to staying up late on Sundays. And while I was able to recite the Preamble to the Constitution on command for my 8th grade teacher, I knew the words to the theme from Pettitcoat Junction much better. Indeed, I could play it on the piano.

(I would eventually spend many an evening in college in the 70's with friends singing TV show themes from the 60's.) Anyone who is a child of television will find his (or her) roots here. "That's where I learned what a normal family is!" In the book, one encounters discussions of episodes and characters to which one nods and says, "Wow, I don't remember that as remarkable (or racy, or stereotypical, or subversive) but I guess it was!" It's a fun read, filled with revelations, at least for me (well educated, to be sure, but not so much in formal psychology and sociology). And it's always amusing to read a treatment of *Father Knows Best* in a tone and at a level that was once reserved for Dickens. (I was once forced to read *David Copperfield* over my Christmas vacation. Never had sympathy for an English teacher since.) 3 of 4 people found the following review helpful. analytical, insightful and entertaining
By R. Krieger
This is an excellent psychological, socio-historical overview and analysis of the behind-the-scenes casting and creation of many famous and not-so-famous sitcoms, that is not overly academic in style, but is in-depth in analysis, i.e., this book is for all levels of comprehension. An added bonus is the funny commentary and musings that the author adds (Bill Bixby is a "low-rent Alan Alda" etc.). A shortcoming though is the little analysis of big sitcoms like the *Jeffersons* and *Seinfeld*. The Last chapter especially needed more information on sitcoms of the 1990s. Overall a fantastic read, and David Marc is really nice and answers your email questions promptly.
3 of 4 people found the following review helpful. A Unique Vision
By William E. Loges
Marc has a unique vision of American situation comedy. He sees it through the lens of classical criticism, seeking themes, genres, and other Greek-sounding nouns. He places American sitcoms in historical contexts. He does all of this so brilliantly and in such a readable yet erudite manner that a reader familiar with both "*Bewitched*" and "*Beowulf*" will find the book a treasure. I have never found a better book about American comedy in the post World War II era. So much of that comedy was televised that David Marc owns the patent on its intelligent criticism with this book.

Comic Visions, Second Edition is an update of the most influential critical history of American television comedy. Most comprehensive social and critical history of American television comedy Very engaging, lucid and entertaining writing style Approaches social criticism without being too scholarly and pedantic

From Library Journal
Following his *Demographic Vistas* (1984), Marc continues to study the situation comedy as a major exponent of our existing social order. Isolating the sitcom from other comic forms it eclipsed on TV, he examines representative programs: from the middle suburban nuclear families of the 1950s, through the "stagflation-era designer social comedies" of the 1970s and beyond. Marc's scholarly stance falls between objective analysis and subjective experience, the high-cultural gourmet and fannish gourmand. The resulting gumbo--of thematic dissection spiced with sociopolitical context and connection and mass market realities--strives to evoke television's role in our cultural consciousness. Marc's work has yet to achieve this convincingly, but it is important groundwork in communications studies.- Jeff Clark, James Madison Univ. Lib., Harrisonburg, Va .Copyright 1989 Reed Business Information, Inc. "A new edition of David Marc's *Comic Visions* is grounds for rejoicing. His historical survey of TV comedy remains unrivalled, and new material on the cable era will be more than welcome." Francis Couvares, Amherst College. "David Marc's *Comic Visions* is the outstanding book of its type: social and cultural analysis of the most popular and important comedic forms of television." Chad Gordon, Rice University. "Recommended for all academic and large public libraries; all levels." A. Hirsh, emeritus, Central Connecticut State University.
From the Back Cover
Comic Visions, Second Edition is an update of the most influential critical history written on the evolution of American television comedy. In his witty, lucid, and insightful style, David Marc skilfully combines historical research with cultural analysis to provide an immensely readable study of television comedy as a reflection of the diversity and richness in American society. Marc examines the roots of television comedy beginning with the influence of Vaudeville, cinema and radio on the variety shows and sitcoms of the 1940's and 1950's. He then moves into television's response to the turbulent 1960's and the great expansion of situational comedy popular in the 1970's. A completely new chapter looks at recent developments such as Comedy Central and the proliferation of stand-up comedy and also includes an engaging analysis of why shows like *Seinfeld* and *The Simpsons* are such major hits in the 1990s. Foreword by Ken Tucker, Entertainment Weekly