

How The Sitcom Kept Britain Smiling In The 70s

The 1970s were a truly remarkable decade for television in Britain. It was a time where audiences found solace in the laughter and joy brought to their living rooms by an array of sitcoms. From classic comedies like "Dad's Army" and "Are You Being Served?" to groundbreaking shows such as "Fawlty Towers" and "The Good Life," comedies of the 70s captured the essence of British humor and kept the nation smiling.

The Golden Age of British Sitcoms

During the 70s, sitcoms became an integral part of the British television landscape. These shows provided a much-needed escapism for viewers who were facing economic challenges and political unrest. With their relatable characters and hilarious situations, sitcoms offered a lighthearted break from reality and a chance to laugh.

The genius of sitcoms from this era lies in their timeless appeal. Even after several decades, shows like "Porridge" and "Open All Hours" still make audiences burst into laughter. The writing was clever, the characters were endearing, and the situations were both familiar and absurd, creating a winning formula that resonated with millions.

Raising Laughter: How the Sitcom Kept Britain Smiling in the '70s by Robert Sellers (Kindle Edition)

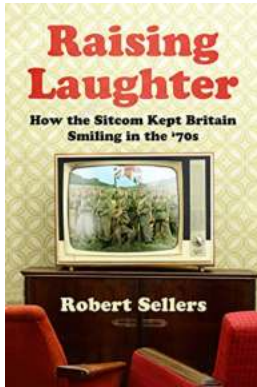
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Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
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The Legendary Characters

One of the key reasons why sitcoms of the 70s were so beloved was the memorable characters they introduced us to. From the lovable fools like Basil Fawlty and Captain Mainwaring to the eccentric but relatable men like Tom Good and Reggie Perrin, these characters became iconic figures in British pop culture.

Basil Fawlty, played brilliantly by John Cleese, brought chaos to the hospitality industry in "Fawlty Towers." His explosive temper and hilarious mishaps made him an unforgettable comedic figure. Meanwhile, the endearing and bumbling Captain Mainwaring of "Dad's Army" showed us that even in the face of war, humor could prevail.

Challenging Social Norms

While sitcoms were known for their comedy, they also played an important role in challenging social norms during the 70s. Shows like "The Good Life" addressed issues of self-sufficiency and freedom from the constraints of society. Tom and Barbara Good's decision to live off the land, despite the skepticism of their suburban neighbors, reflected the changing attitudes towards alternative lifestyles.

Similarly, "Till Death Us Do Part" tackled issues of race and politics through the confrontational character of Alf Garnett. While his views may have been seen as controversial, the show used humor to open up conversations and challenge prevailing attitudes.

A Lasting Legacy

Even though the 70s has long passed, the legacy of these sitcoms still endures. They paved the way for future generations of comedians and writers, setting the benchmark for what a great sitcom should be. Many of the renowned actors and writers of that era continue to be celebrated today for their contribution to British comedy.

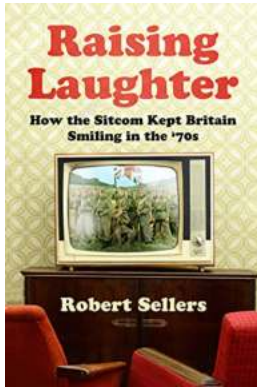
Furthermore, the timeless humor and themes explored in these shows continue to captivate audiences of all ages. The 70s sitcoms still make us laugh, invoke nostalgia, and provide a glimpse into a bygone era.

The sitcoms of the 70s undoubtedly had a profound impact on British television and culture. They kept the nation smiling during a time of social and economic uncertainty, offering a much-needed escape and a reason to laugh.

From the unforgettable characters to the clever writing and the willingness to challenge social norms, these sitcoms remain a testament to the enduring power of British humor. Even today, their influence can be seen in the comedies we watch and the laughter they bring.

So, let's raise a toast to the sitcoms of the 70s, for they continue to keep Britain smiling.

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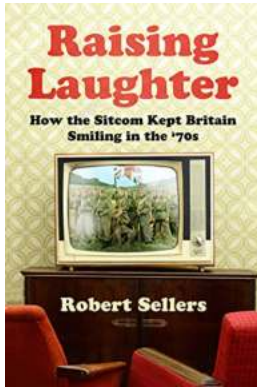
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The 1970s were the era of the three-day week, the Troubles in Northern Ireland, the winter of discontent, trade union Bolshevism and wildcat strikes. Through sitcoms, Raising Laughter provides a fresh look at one of our most divisive and controversial decades. Aside from providing entertainment to millions of people, the sitcom is a window into the culture of the day.

Many of these sitcoms tapped into the decade's sense of cynicism, failure and alienation, providing much-needed laughter for the masses. Shows like Rising Damp and Fawlty Towers were classic encapsulations of worn-out, run-down Britain, while the likes of Dad's Army looked back sentimentally at a romanticised English past.

For the first time, the stories behind the making of every sitcom from the 1970s are told by the actors, writers, directors and producers who made them all happen. This is nostalgia with a capital N, an oral history, the last word, and an affectionate salute to the kind of comedy programme that just isn't made anymore.



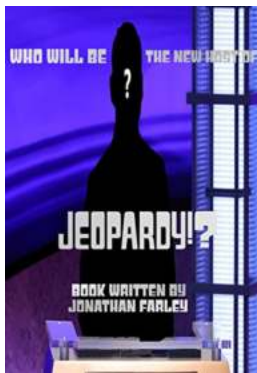
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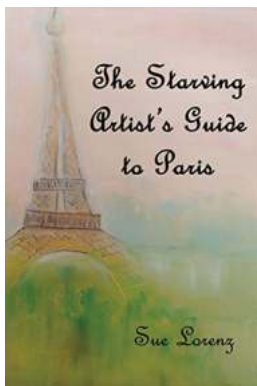
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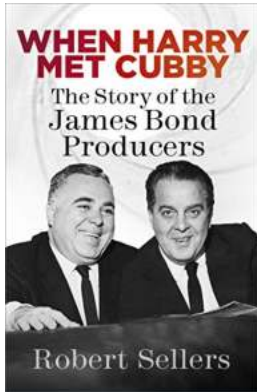
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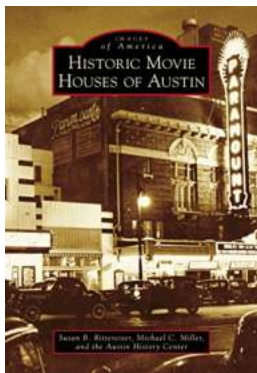
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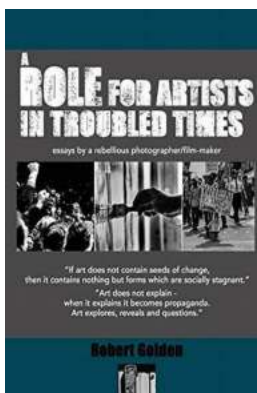
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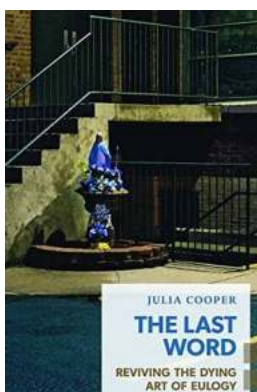
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