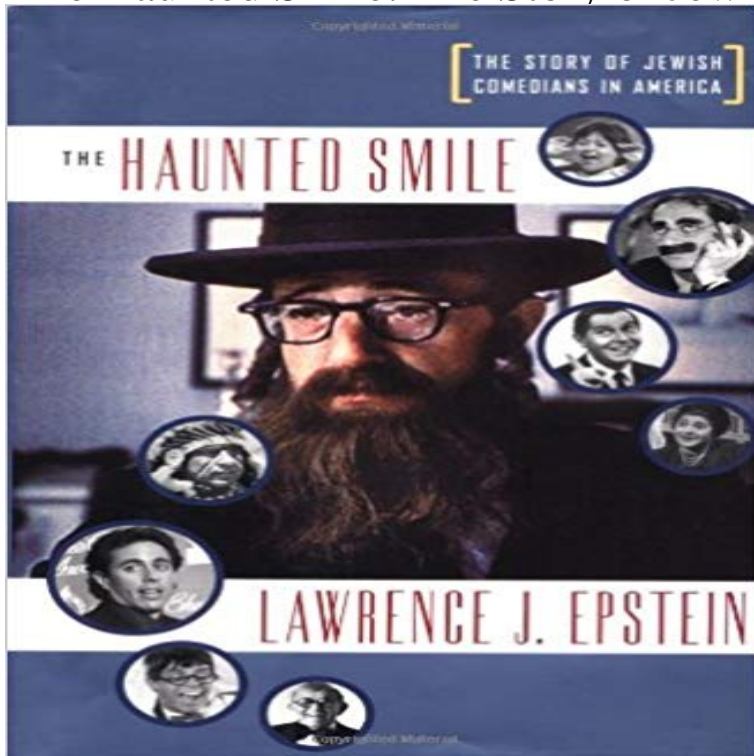


The Haunted Smile: The Story of Jewish Comedians in America



From vaudeville to the movies to television: The complete (and often hilarious) history of how Jewish comedians transformed American entertainment. Lawrence J. Epstein's *The Haunted Smile* tackles a subject both poignant and delightful: the story of Jewish comedians in America. For the past century and more, American comedy has drawn its strength and soul from the comic genius of Jewish performers and writers. Even an incomplete listing of names makes the point: the Marx Brothers, Jack Benny, Fanny Brice, George Burns, Milton Berle, Jackie Mason, Joan Rivers, Rodney Dangerfield, Mel Brooks, Mort Sahl, Woody Allen, Lenny Bruce, Andy Kaufman, Richard Belzer, Jerry Seinfeld. These men and women, among others, form the canon of American Jewish comedy, and in *The Haunted Smile* Epstein offers us a deep and subtle understanding of how Jewish culture and American openness gave birth to a new style of entertainment. Epstein writes, Jewish comedians in each generation were able to find in Jewish tradition, culture, and history a way to express the feelings of the wider American culture in which they lived. They drew on their heritage in ways they themselves didn't always understand. As they used that heritage to find ways to express truths about America, they transformed American culture, making Jews and Jewishness acceptable, even enviable. And what kind of book about comedy would be complete without a few laughs? Epstein frequently uses the comedians' own routines to illustrate his points, making this thoughtful work of history a great deal of fun to read.

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He is best known for his book The Haunted Smile: The Story of Jewish Comedians in America. **The haunted smile : the story of Jewish comedians in America** THE HAUNTED SMILE: The Story of Jewish Comedians in America. Lawrence J. Epstein, Author . Public Affairs \$30 (400p) ISBN 978-1-891620-71-3 **Lawrence J. Epstein, The Haunted Smile: The Story of Jewish** Lawrence Epsteins The Haunted Smile tackles a subject both poignant and delightful: the story of Jewish comedians in America. For the past century and more, **The Haunted Smile: The Story of Jewish Comedians in America by Lawrence J. Epstein - Wikipedia** Read the full-text online edition of The Haunted Smile: The Story of Jewish Comedians in America (2001). **The Haunted Smile: The Story of Jewish Comedians in America** Lawrence J.

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