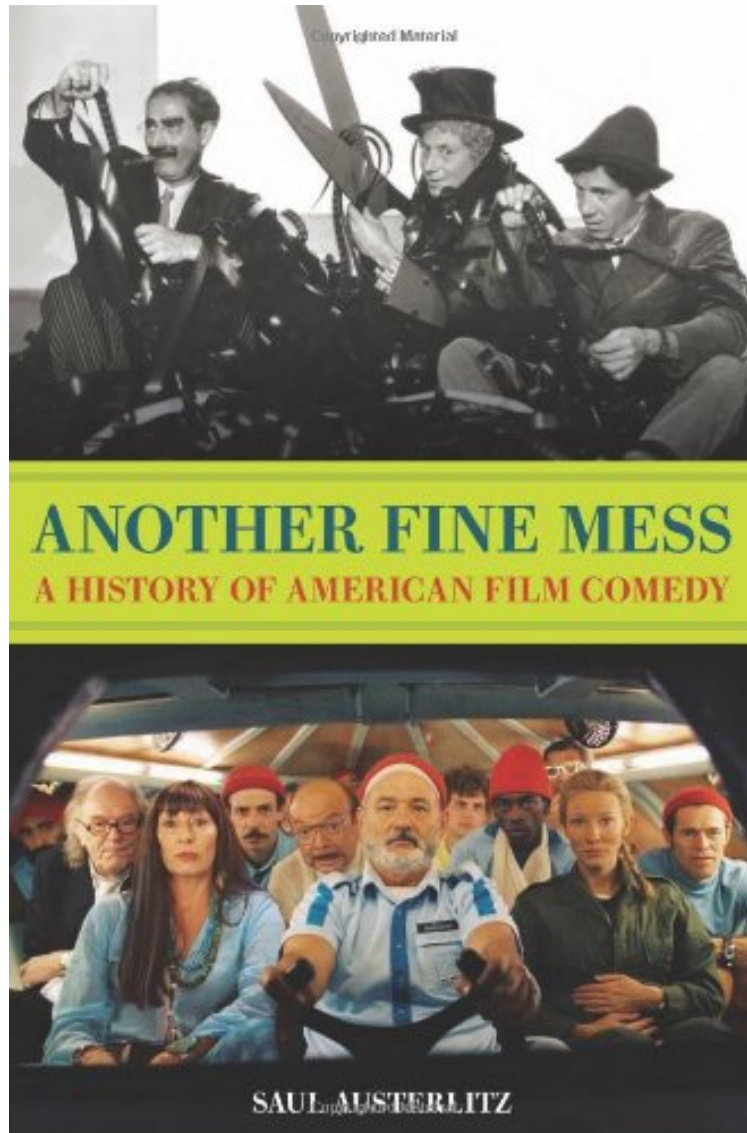


[Pdf free] Another Fine Mess: A History of American Film Comedy (Cappella Books (Paperback))

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Saul Austerlitz

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Saul Austerlitz : Another Fine Mess: A History of American Film Comedy (Cappella Books (Paperback))
before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Another Fine Mess: A History of American Film Comedy (Cappella Books (Paperback)):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Very Enjoyable By Michael Samerdyke I read this book because I

enjoyed Austerlitz's "Sitcom." Unfortunately, he wrote "Another Fine Mess" before he wrote "Sitcom," and I think "Sitcom," which looks at the history of the sitcom by focusing on 24 episodes, benefitted from his experience writing "Another Fine Mess." The earlier book tries to cover too much, film comedy from Charlie Chaplin to Judd Apatow, or about 95 years of movies, by looking at 30 careers. Had he limited himself to 30 movies, it might have gone better. However, I really enjoyed this book. Austerlitz is an engaging writer who clearly enjoys what he is talking about. While I did not agree with all of his judgments (the first half of "The Lady Eve" is funnier than the second half???) I ended up agreeing with most of the career assessments Austerlitz offered. If you want an accessible look at how American film comedy has changed from the silents until the near-present, you could do a lot worse than to read "Another Fine Mess." 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Few facts By Patricia Slayton The book was scarcely worth writing as it fails to cover so much of the history of any of the chosen subjects. Reviewing the Marx brothers, for instance, (which is the one comedy team I'm totally familiar with,) it leaves out interesting facts and gets others wrong. It doesn't seem like the results were worth the bother of writing it. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A Series of Bios, Not A History By Joseph Maltby I expected this to cover the history of comedy in film. Instead it's a series of vaguely biographical sketches that mostly focus on what the author thinks of that comedian. He writes well and if I wanted a film reviewer, it would be great, but I thought it was a history.

Charlie Chaplin. Buster Keaton. The Marx Brothers. Billy Wilder. Woody Allen. The Coen brothers. Where would the American film be without them? Yet the cinematic genre these artists represent--comedy--has perennially received short shrift from critics, film buffs, and the Academy Awards. Saul Austerlitz's *Another Fine Mess* is an attempt to right that wrong. Running the gamut of film history from *City Lights* to *Knocked Up*, *Another Fine Mess* retells the story of American film from the perspective of its unwanted stepbrother--the comedy. In 30 long chapters and 100 shorter entries, each devoted primarily to a single performer or director, *Another Fine Mess* retraces the steps of the American comedy film, filling in the gaps and following the connections that link Mae West to Doris Day, or W. C. Fields to Will Ferrell. The first book of its kind in more than a generation, *Another Fine Mess* is an eye-opening, entertaining, and enlightening tour of the American comedy, encompassing the masterpieces, the box-office smashes, and all the little-known gems in between.

From Publishers Weekly American film comedy is barely a century old and already commentary on it can fill bookshelves, with countless pages devoted to the evolution of physical comedy, the influence of notable comedians like Charlie Chaplin, and the effects of technology on the form. Austerlitz touches on all of these things, but his objective is to provide a chronological set of biographies of the most important figures, both major (the top 30) and minor (over 100 more), and comment on their achievements and influence. The result is a comprehensive textbook that traces a legitimate line of succession from Chaplin to Apatow. Clearly Austerlitz has great affection for and knowledge of his subject; he can comment with equal skill on Renee Zellweger and W.C. Fields. Still, his take on the century is not without bias. Never less than candid ("Mel Brooks is overrated"), his tastes are also present in what he leaves out (Hal Ashby, Hal Hartley, and Cameron Crowe are all missing). Though readers will surely disagree with some of his choices, the breadth of material Austerlitz has compiled here is a feat. Photos. (Sept.) (c) Copyright PWxyz, LLC. All rights reserved. From Booklist *Starred* Austerlitz asserts that comedy has been underappreciated as a cinematic genre by critics and historians, and that this has resulted in underrepresentation in Academy Awards presentations and nominations. To redress this inequity, Austerlitz presents more than 100 biographical sketches of top comedy talents from Charlie Chaplin to Judd Apatow, augmented by shorter tidbits regarding lesser players. So the Jim Carrey saga coexists with the legend of Harold Lloyd, and the debonair comic stylings of Cary Grant contrast nicely with those of Will Ferrell. As the title would indicate, Laurel and Hardy are limned, as are Buster Keaton, W. C. Fields, Mae West, and the Marx Brothers. Katharine Hepburn, Marilyn Monroe, and Doris Day are the only other women accorded full chapters, but Myrna Loy, Carole Lombard, and Tina Fey, among others, garner tidbit status. More recent comic masters featured include Ben Stiller, the Coen Brothers, and Steve Martin. With broad coverage like this, the book has some reference applications, though most of the pieces are unfailingly upbeat. Even tragic death is fraught with dreamy potential: regarding Jean Harlow's death at 26, Austerlitz muses, What might Preston Sturges have made of her had she lived? Entertaining reading. --Mike Tribby "Entertaining reading." Booklist