

# Laugh Out Loud: A Critical History of Rowan and Martin's Laugh-In (1968-1973)

Rowan and Martin's Laugh-In was a groundbreaking television comedy series that aired from 1968 to 1973. The show's rapid-fire sketches, topical humor, and irreverent attitude made it a hit with viewers and critics alike. Laugh-In was a product of its time, reflecting the social and political turmoil of the late 1960s and early 1970s. The show's sketches tackled a wide range of issues, from the Vietnam War to the Watergate scandal. Laugh-In also featured a number of memorable characters, such as Ruth Buzzi's Gladys Ormphby, Henry Gibson's The Poet, and Goldie Hawn's Go-Go Girl.



## "From Beautiful Downtown Burbank": A Critical History of Rowan and Martin's Laugh-In, 1968-1973 by Hal Erickson

★★★★☆ 4.3 out of 5

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Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 507 pages  
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The show's creators, Dan Rowan and Dick Martin, were both experienced comedians. They had met in the early 1960s while performing at the Improv in New York City. Rowan had a background in stand-up comedy, while Martin had worked as a writer for several television shows. In 1967, Rowan

and Martin teamed up to create a new comedy series for NBC. The show was originally called "The Rowan and Martin Show," but was later renamed "Laugh-In."

Laugh-In premiered on NBC on September 9, 1968. The show was an immediate hit, and quickly became one of the most popular shows on television. Laugh-In's success was due in part to its unique format. The show featured a series of short sketches, each of which was only a few minutes long. The sketches were often topical, and they frequently poked fun at current events. Laugh-In also featured a number of recurring characters, such as Ruth Buzzi's Gladys Ormphby, Henry Gibson's The Poet, and Goldie Hawn's Go-Go Girl.

Laugh-In was a controversial show. Its irreverent humor and its willingness to tackle controversial topics angered some viewers. However, the show's fans loved its originality and its willingness to push the boundaries of what was acceptable on television. Laugh-In was also a critical success. The show won numerous awards, including two Emmy Awards for Outstanding Variety Series.

Laugh-In ended its run in 1973. By that time, the show's popularity had begun to decline. The show's creators had also grown tired of the constant pressure to produce new material. However, Laugh-In remains one of the most influential comedy series of all time. The show's rapid-fire sketches, topical humor, and irreverent attitude helped to change the face of television comedy.

## **The Impact of Laugh-In on American Culture**

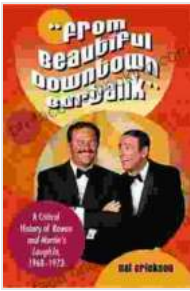
Laugh-In had a profound impact on American culture. The show's irreverent humor and its willingness to tackle controversial topics helped to break down traditional barriers. Laugh-In also helped to popularize the counterculture of the late 1960s and early 1970s. The show's sketches often featured characters who were openly critical of the government and the establishment. Laugh-In also helped to break down racial and sexual barriers. The show featured a number of black and female comedians, and it frequently addressed issues of race and gender.

Laugh-In's impact on American culture can still be seen today. The show's rapid-fire sketches and its irreverent humor have been imitated by countless other comedy shows. Laugh-In also helped to pave the way for the rise of political satire on television. Today, shows like *The Daily Show* and *The Colbert Report* regularly use humor to criticize the government and the media.

### **The Enduring Legacy of Laugh-In**

Laugh-In remains one of the most influential comedy series of all time. The show's rapid-fire sketches, topical humor, and irreverent attitude helped to change the face of television comedy. Laugh-In also had a profound impact on American culture, helping to break down traditional barriers and popularize the counterculture of the late 1960s and early 1970s.

Laugh-In's legacy continues to this day. The show's influence can be seen in countless other comedy shows, and its rapid-fire sketches and irreverent humor have become a staple of American television. Laugh-In is a reminder that comedy can be a powerful force for social change.



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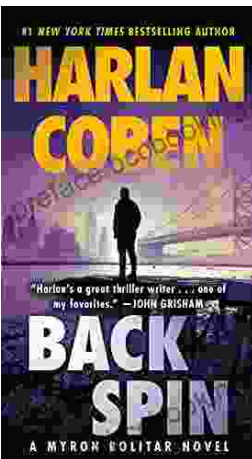
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