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7U5YSB - KAUFMAN CURTIS

THE double act has been at the heart of the British entertainment scene for over 150 years: from its start in the music halls, through radio shows such as Hancock's Half Hour playing in virtually every household and on cinema and television, from Carry On films to Withnail and I. Explore the influence of comedy duos on their audience and how their performances evolved over time, the importance of the straight man next to the comic and discover some acts who might have passed you by. This book is a tribute to the comedians who have entertained the public for so long, dedicating their lives

to adding a bit of laughter to the mundane everyday. The Double Act will appeal to all lovers of British comedy as it takes them through the golden moments of its history.

The remarkable, moving and exciting autobiography of an African child through wealth, poverty, civil war to Show business Stardom. An inspiration for all those with faith.

John Fisher, 'Keeper of the Cooper flame', collects the cream of Tommy Cooper's personal archive bequeathed to Fisher by Cooper's widow Gwen and manager Miff Ferrie. Souvenirs from his many stage triumphs jostle side by side with candid shots of him at play with his family, many revealing a side to the man the public never really saw.

Covering Sid's early years in South Africa and life as a ladies' hairdresser, his obsession with gambling and women, his questioning by Scotland Yard in a murder case, Hancock's Half Hour and the Carry On films, and Sid's death on stage at the age of 63, Cliff Goodwin reveals the amazing truth behind the legend.

A magical memoir of Dad's Army star John Le Mesurier: one of the greatest actors - and gentleman - of his generation. Some years after John Le Mesurier's death, his widow Joan re-read her carefully stored cache of John's letters - to her, and to him from his closest friends. Dear John is her letter back to him today, helping us to understand their remarkable life to-

gether, taking us with her behind the scenes on Dad's Army and his many films, and into the world of their friendships - including with Clive Dunne and maverick Beatles publicist Derek Taylor. Through her own recollections and John's correspondence, Joan reveals the real John Le Mesurier, a man of kindness, charm and integrity. She describes how they first met when John was unhappily married to Hattie Jacques. It was Hattie - a wonderful woman who became a lifelong friend - who encouraged Joan and John to get married. Their marriage lasted 21 years and survived Joan's love affair with Tony Hancock. Although deeply hurt, John nevertheless welcomed her back. Honest, touching, nostalgic, this is a story that will warm every reader's heart as well as give a new understanding of a remarkable man.

Tony Hancock was regarded as the best radio and television comic of his era. A man whose star burned brightly in the eyes and ears of millions before his untimely death. This is the first fully authorised account of his life.

An expansive and insightful exploration of one of the most iconic and electrifying artists ever, this

book reveals the stunning, multi-generational influence and appeal of Prince and his revered music—from celebrated journalist, author, and host of the popular podcast The Touré Show. Infused with Touré's unique pop-culture fluency, *I Would Die 4 U* is as passionate and radical as its subject matter. Building on his lifelong admiration for Prince's oeuvre and interviews with those closest to the late artist, including band members, his tour manager, and music and Bible scholars, Touré deconstructs the life and work of the enigmatic icon who has been both a reflective mirror of and inspirational force for America. By defying traditional categories of race, gender, and sexuality, but also presenting a very conventional conception of religion and God, Prince was a man of profound contradictions. He spoke in the language of 60s pop and soul to a generation fearing Cold War apocalypse and the crack and AIDS epidemic, while simultaneously being both an MTV megastar and a religious evangelist. He creatively blended his songs with images of sex and profanity to invite us into a musical conversation about the healing power of God and religion.

By demystifying Prince as a man, an artist, and a cultural force, *I Would Die 4 U* shows us how he impacted and defined a generation.

Tony Hancock reigned for fifteen years as the undisputed king of comedy. In this relatively short timespan he managed to leave an astonishing legacy of hilarious radio and television, including the enduring classic HANCOCK'S HALF HOUR. When he committed suicide at the age of 44, comedy fans the world over mourned his loss. Now, in this definitive new biography, Cliff Goodwin reveals at last the man behind the myth. Using a wealth of previously unpublished new material, he is able to fully explore the tensions between Hancock's status as comic genius and his personal battles with drink and drugs. He also examines in detail for the first time the reason for Hancock's depression and suicide. Hancock inspired such tremendous love and devotion in his public that they felt they were entitled to a part of his private life: Spike Milligan summed up Hancock's response: 'One by one he shut the door on all the people he knew; then he shut the door on himself.' In this major new biogra-

phy, Cliff Goodwin opens the door to reveal Tony Hancock the fans never saw.

The Daleks are one of the most iconic and fearsome creations in television history. Since their first appearance in 1963, they have simultaneously fascinated and terrified generations of children, their instant success ensuring, and sometimes eclipsing, that of Doctor Who. They sprang from the imagination of Terry Nation, a failed stand-up comic who became one of the most prolific writers for television that Britain ever produced. *Survivors*, his vision of a post-apocalyptic England, so haunted audiences in the Seventies that the BBC revived it over thirty years on, and *Blake's 7*, constantly rumored for return, endures as a cult sci-fi classic. But it is for his genocidal pepperpots that Nation is most often remembered, and on the 50th anniversary of their creation they continue to top the Saturday-night ratings. Yet while the Daleks brought him notoriety and riches, Nation played a much wider role in British broadcasting's golden age. He wrote for Spike Milligan, Frankie Howerd and an increasingly troubled Tony

Hancock, and as one of the key figures behind the adventure series of the Sixties - including *The Avengers*, *The Saint* and *The Persuaders!* - he turned the pulp classics of his boyhood into a major British export. In *The Man Who Invented the Daleks*, acclaimed cultural historian Alwyn W. Turner, explores the curious and contested origins of Doctor Who's greatest villains, and sheds light on a strange world of ambitious young writers, producers and performers without whom British culture today would look very different.

The seaside, like football and the railways, is a distinctly English and largely nineteenth century invention. At the Festival of Britain in 1951, a replica of a seafront represented hope and modernity - once the preserve of the sickly elite, the seaside had become one of the great English egalitarian institutions. But when the advent of cheap flights allowed us to go and see how the rest of the world did it - with better weather and sandier beaches - our boarding houses and bandstands slowly rotted away. As the economy forced a reassessment of our holidaying habits, resorts from

Morecambe to Bournemouth enjoyed a renaissance. Capitalising on the uniquely English combination of irony and pride, the English Riviera has been reborn. In many ways, our national character has been defined by our relationship with the seaside - and in tracing its development, we can see how our ideas about health, wealth and happiness evolved. Our aspirations and snobbery, our attitudes to sex, our keen sense of fair play, our chequered relationship with national pride and our ability to laugh at ourselves have all been played out against a backdrop of stormy skies, pebbly beaches and sticks of rock. The seaside is the place we go to get better, to let our hair down, to downsize, to retire, to take drugs and to hide. Ranging from Agatha Christie to the Prince Regent via Billy Butlin and Brighton Rock, Travis Elborough explores how a coastline peppered with quasi-Oriental piers makes us quintessentially English. Erudite, charming and surprising, *Wish You Were Here* is a gloriously unorthodox social history of a nation of islanders. Presents jokes on the subjects that range from 'A for Absent-minded' to 'Z

for Zoo'.

A biography of the comedian Tony Hancock, whose troubled life ended in suicide. The book is co-written by his widow, and incorporates recollections by personalities such as Kenneth Williams, Harry Secombe, Spike Milligan and Eric Sykes.

John Freeman was one of Britain's most extraordinary public figures for over half a century: a renaissance man who constantly reinvented himself; a household name who sought complete anonymity. From advertising executive to war hero to MP tipped to be Prime Minister, Freeman then changed direction to become a seminal television interviewer and editor of the *New Statesman*. He subsequently remodelled himself yet again to become, in turn, an ambassador, a TV mogul, a university professor and, finally, in retirement, a well-known bowls player in south London. Freeman packed nine lives into his ninety-nine years, but all he really wanted was to be forgotten. The paradox of this private celebrity was captured by the very series that made him famous: *Face to Face*. While Freeman remorselessly interrogated the stars of his

age, he himself sat in the shadows, his back to the camera. He was the grand inquisitor, exposing the personalities behind the public figures - but never his own. For ten years, Hugh Purcell has been tracking Freeman's story, trying to come face to face with this enigma who believed in changing his life - and his wife - every ten years. Why did Freeman want to forget what most old men would be proud to remember? Why did he try to erase himself from history? And yet, despite Freeman's best efforts to be ignored, his death in 2014 was marked by an enormous outpouring of appreciation and admiration. With his life now free from its shroud of inscrutability, the true story of this incredibly multifaceted man can finally be told.

The first life of the man who was Lord Peter Wimsey, Bertie Wooster and starred in *I'm Alright, Jack!* With the death of Ian Carmichael in 2010 one of the last links was lost with the golden age of British cinema. Carmichael starred alongside Terry-Thomas and Peter Sellers in the Boulting brothers' classic satirical comedies *I'm Alright, Jack!* *Private's Progress* and *School for Scoun-*

drels. He summed up, on screen and in life, the kind of Englishman who was beginning to emerge after the war - educated, not necessarily upper class, upwardly mobile and a study in good manners and a sense of fair play - and thus played the straight-man foil to the distracted ravings of his wilder co-stars. Subsequently, he became Bertie Wooster in a highly successful television series based on P.G. Wodehouse's *Jeeves* stories. He also made the part of Lord Peter Wimsey his own in another long-running adaptation of Dorothy L. Sayers' famous detective novels, and was still acting on television well into his eighties alongside Susan Hampshire in ITV's drama series *The Royal*.

A sparkling history of the golden age of British comedy told through its most famous names ndash; Spike Milligan, Eric Sykes, Ray Galton & Alan Simpson ndash; and the bizarre office they shared in *Shepherds Bush*.

The stand-up comedian is our hero. Unchanged fundamentally since the days of the Music Hall, he—and occasionally she—has been a waspish or laconic or outrageous commentator on politics, sex, work, friends, and the family.

John Fisher traces the traditions of the music hall comedian as they are handed down through the great British comics of the twentieth century. Dan Leno, the Crazy Gang, Will Hay, and Max Miller are seen to pass the baton to the great radio comics like Arthur Askey, Tony Hancock, Frankie Howerd, and the Goons. In time, Morecambe and Wise, Tommy Cooper, Benny Hill, the Two Ronnies, and Ken Dodd are seen to hold the flame. The comedians understand us as no one else, and in this distinctively original and funny book John Fisher comes close to understanding them, what makes us laugh and the connecting themes in their humor and our responses. First published in 1973 when he was in his late 20's, John Fisher's *Funny Way to be a Hero* is regarded as the finest book ever written on 20th century comedians and comedy. Fisher in his career as a television producer went on to become a friend to many of the subjects written about in his book. Forty years later, he has revised and expanded the original from this perspective and added six new chapters. With spectacular new design and over 350 illustrations, many

never published before, this will be a landmark publication.

"Beyond a Joke" is a celebration of comedy - one of the modern world's most dominant and compelling art forms - but it is also the story of comedy's dark side, homing in on the scandals that have surrounded some of light entertainment's biggest stars, and telling it as it is, featuring insight from one who was there at the time. While "Beyond a Joke" explores the extremes of this world it also addresses another question. Are comedians naturally dysfunctional, or does the stress and pressure of the job make them dysfunctional? Ruby Wax once told the author that she had builders in her house who were just as emotionally unstable as most stand-up comedians she had worked with. But they don't want to go on stage and plead with an audience to love them. Bruce Dessau is the only person who could write this book. From Russell Brand slashing his chest onstage to Jo Brand trashing a friend's car on the motorway, he has heard it all. Bruce Dessau knows where the bodies are buried.

In May 1999, after a 40-

year career including 100 films, Oliver Reed died, as he had invariably lived, drinking with friends while making a film - his well-reviewed performance in the blockbuster *Gladiator*. Having risen through Hammer Horror films to international stardom as Bill Sykes in *Oliver!*, Reed became, in his own works, 'the biggest star this country has got'. With his legendary off-screen exploits and blunt opinions - especially of his co-stars - he was also one of the most infamous. Bestselling author Cliff Goodwin uses material from first-hand interviews with Reed's family, friends and colleagues and never before seen photographs to explore Reed's eventful career. But he also reveals another side to this unique and complex man. Presents neo-conservatism in three ages covering the history, and illuminating core developments, including the split of liberalism, and the shifting relationship of party affiliation and foreign policy position.

The 50s and 60s radio and TV shows Hancock's *Half Hour* made Tony Hancock Britain's best-loved comedian. But he was a deeply insecure and tortured genius, whose failed marriages and increasing de-

pendence on alcohol and drugs eroded his confidence and brilliance. From 1963 he suffered a number of serious setbacks as the rating for his television shows began to decline. Just about washed up, in 1968 Tony Hancock accepted an offer to make a series for Australian TV. Edward Joffe was asked to produce and direct that series. His book recounts for the first time, and in intimate detail, the story of Tony Hancock's last days and what it was like working with a difficult, frequently intoxicated, star whose bid to make a last claim to fame would end in suicide. Joffe is unsparring in providing provocative details of the comedian's death and includes Hancock's final, poignant suicide note. Also included is the last script Joffe and Hancock worked on together for the series that never was.

Best known for *Dad's Army*, in which his Sergeant Wilson played the languid, rakish foil to Arthur Lowe's pompous, chippy Captain Mainwaring, John Le Mesurier was one of Britain's favourite and most recognisable character actors. The epitome of insouciance and languor on screen, in real life this charming, quiet-

ly-spoken bon viveur was plagued by private turmoil and heartbreak. Married three times, he saw his first wife succumb to alcoholism, his second – the comedy diva Hattie Jacques – move her lover into the family home, and his third enjoy a passionate dalliance with troubled comic Tony Hancock. As Graham McCann reveals in this fully authorised and moving biography, as an actor John Le Mesurier was a key ingredient in the success of Britain's greatest sitcom, but as a man he was far more courageous than Sergeant Wilson was ever meant to be.

Quite simply, *Last of the Summer Wine* is the longest-running comedy programme in the world. It premiered 37 years ago, in 1973, and, after 31 series it finally came to an end last year – even though all its original protagonists – Compo, Foggy, even Nora Batty – are now dead. Remarkably, for a series of such longevity and international appeal, it is all about elderly people, has little action or plot, and is set and filmed in and around the small Yorkshire town of Holmfirth. Now, Andrew Vine, the deputy editor of Yorkshire's daily newspaper, has written the defini-

tive history of this television phenomenon. It covers the show's inauspicious beginnings, with low ratings, its endless reinvention as participants like Bill Owen, Michael Bates, Brian Wilde and Kathy Staff retired or died, the appearance of a string of guest stars from John Cleese and Norman Wisdom to Thora Hird and Russ Abbott (both of whom soon found themselves fixtures in the cast), and the ingenious plot contrivances as the protagonists became too old and frail to attempt any of the slapstick stunts with runaway prams – indeed any outdoor action. Holmfirth is now a year-round tourist attraction, and endless repeats and new DVD box sets will ensure a readership for this book for years to come.

GORDON BROWN's three years in power were among the most turbulent in Downing Street's post-war history. Brown at 10 tells the compelling story of his hubris and downfall, and with it, the final demise of the New Labour project. Containing an extraordinary breadth of previously unpublished material, *Brown at 10* is a frank, penetrating portrait of a remarkable era, written by one of Britain's leading political and social

commentators. Using unrivalled access to many of those at the centre of Brown's government, and original material gleaned from hundreds of hours of interviews with many of its leading lights, Brown at 10 looks with greater depth and detail into the signal events and circumstances of Brown's premiership than any other account published since the May 2010 general election. It also relates, for the first time, the full extraordinary tale of the pivotal role played by Brown in persuading the world's leaders to address the global banking crisis head-on. The result is the definitive chronicle of Gordon Brown's troubled period in Number 10, from the unique perspective of those who worked most closely with him.

Idols of the Odeons examines British film stardom in the post-war era, a time when Hollywood movies were increasingly supplanting the Pinewood/Elstree studio system. The book encompasses the careers of sixteen actors, including Stanley Baker, Diana Dors, Norman Wisdom, Hattie Jacques, Peter Finch and Peter Sellers. Such extremely diverse careers provide the opportunity to explore overlooked films,

in addition to examining how the term 'star' could apply to a stalwart leading man, a Variety comic, a self-created 'Vamp' and a character actor. Above all, this is a book that celebrates, with idiosyncratic humour and warmth, how these actors accomplished much of their best work during the transitional period between the Rank/ABPC roster of stars and the US domination of the British film industry.

"A one-time comrade and intimate of Adolf Hitler, Ernst Julius Gunther Rohm commanded the stormtroopers and had an influential and controversial career within the Nazi Party before being killed on Hitler's orders in 1934. This book, the first English-language biography of Rohm, overturns many misconceptions that have arisen about his politics and his role in Nazism - including the claim that he stood for a more revolutionary form of national socialism - and makes a significant contribution to our understanding of the Nazi rise to and consolidation of power."--BOOK JACKET.

The funny and tragic, best-selling biography of The Queen's sister, Princess Margaret, perfect for fans of Netflix's *The Crown*. A

GUARDIAN BOOK OF THE YEAR • A TIMES BOOK OF THE YEAR • A DAILY MAIL BOOK OF THE YEAR 'I honked so loudly the man sitting next to me dropped his sandwich' Observer

This book explores the ways in which popular music can criticise political, social and economic structures, through the lens of alternate rock band Manic Street Preachers. Unlike most recent work on popular music, Peters concentrates largely on lyrical content to defend the provocative claim that the Welsh band pushes the critical message shaped in their lyrics to the forefront. Their music, this suggests, along with sleeve art, body-art, video-clips, clothes, interviews and performances, serves to emphasise this critical message and the primary role played by the band's lyrics. Blending the disciplines of popular music studies, culture studies and philosophy, Peters confronts the ideas of German philosopher and social critic Theodor W. Adorno with the entire catalogue of Manic Street Preachers, from their 1988 single 'Suicide Alley' to their 2018 album *Resistance is Futile*. Although Adorno argues that popular music is unable to re-

sist the standardising machinery of consumption culture, Peters paradoxically uses his ideas to show that Manic Street Preachers releases shape 'critical models' with which to formulate social and political critique. This notion of the 'critical model' enables Peters to argue that the catalogue of Manic Street Preachers critically addresses a wide range of themes, from totalitarianism to Holocaust representation, postmodern temporality to Europeanism, and from Nietzsche's ideas about self-overcoming to reflections on digimodernism and post-truth politics. The book therefore persuasively shows that Manic Street Preacher lyrics constitute an intertextual network of links between diverse cultural and political phenomena, encouraging listeners to critically reflect on the structures that shape our lives.

Kenneth Williams was the stand-out comic actor of his generation. Beloved as the manic star of Carry On films and as a peerless raconteur on TV chat shows, he was also acclaimed for serious stage roles. Born Brilliant includes previously unseen material from Williams's candid daily journal and also draw on rare in-depth interviews

with friends and colleagues. Since the publication of edited extracts from his diaries, much controversy has surrounded Williams's personal and professional lives. This biography traces the complex contradictions that characterised an extraordinary life and presents the first full portrait of a star who was born brilliant.

The name Larry Grayson will be instantly recognisable to anyone who can remember the 1970s when his catchphrase 'Shut That Door' was on everybody's lips. However, Larry's rise to fame was slow in coming, born of years of perfecting his craft in clubs and theatres across the country. This biography details Larry's early life, how he was handed over as a baby to a miner's family in mysterious circumstances and brought up by his beloved foster sister, Flo, who was to become his lifelong companion. As a boy, encouraged by Flo, Larry would perform comedy routines for his school chums, standing on a tin bath in a wash-house yard, and he took his first steps into showbiz as a teenager with a local concert party. Seems Like a Nice Boy describes how, after a long career, Larry

was eventually spotted by a top agent and set on the road to stardom, not only on stage but on television. Larry went on to host The Generation Game, attracting weekly audiences of around twenty million viewers and bringing Larry the kind of fame that he had always dreamed of. This fascinating book reveals how Larry Grayson's determination to succeed turned him into one of Britain's best-loved entertainers. This is a must-have read for Larry Grayson fans and anyone who enjoys classic comedy from a bygone age.

'[A] fascinating voyage round McKellen' Simon Callow, Guardian 'Surely the definitive McKellen biography' Alexander Larman, Observer 'A well-researched, eminently readable book' Benedict Nightingale, The Times Few actors achieve in their lifetime what Sir Ian McKellen has. A repertoire of vast commercial success coupled with critically acclaimed and authoritative Shakespearian roles. A man whose achievements inspire both admiration and affection. McKellen has been feted and admired in every country across the globe, and has been knighted by, and received the Companionship of Honour

from Queen Elizabeth II. He is an icon of, and ardent campaigner in the cause for LGBT rights. Many of us know of McKellen through his depiction of Gandalf in *Lord of the Rings*. Garry O'Connor's definitive biography reveals the man behind McKellen the actor. The inside story of the person himself: a constantly developing drama and a work in progress. Yet O'Connor pulls no punches: some of his revelations may be controversial to his fans, even explosive, given McKellen's constant ability to shock and surprise. The author directed McKellen in some of his very first roles. This is an unflinching yet deeply intimate and affectionate biography that, like McKellen himself, will stand the test of time as a rounded and complete portrait of one of the most unusual geniuses of our times. The first biography of one of Britain's best-loved comedy shows. Many people consider Tony Hancock to be the finest comic actor of them all. November 2004 sees the 50th anniversary of his best-loved work, Hancock's *Half-Hour*, which began as a radio series, penned by the writers Galton and Simpson. Two years later, the first of 58 TV instal-

ments had been screened, and Hancock's genius, coupled with Galton and Simpson's brilliant scripts, ensured that the show soon became a yardstick against which all subsequent British sitcoms have since been measured. Amazingly, no book has ever been written about the show. Fully authorised by Galton and Simpson, *Fifty Years of Hancock's Half-Hour* is a full history of the show, including how the show came about, behind-the-scenes stories from Hancock's fellow artists and members of the crew and production team, and the story of its demise. Incorporating extracts from the shows, the book will also feature photographs and a full listing of the radio and TV episodes.

Following the bestselling publication of *THE KENNETH WILLIAMS DIARIES*, the devastating self-portrait of one of our most loved and complex performers is completed with this marvellous selection of his letters.

British popular culture would probably be very different had Larry Stephens not been born. We could now be living in a world without the *Carry On* films or *Monty Python*,

and we may never have heard of Tony Hancock, Peter Sellers or Spike Milligan. Stephens' promising career as a jazz pianist was interrupted by the war, and after serving as an officer with the commandos he moved to London and struck up a friendship with Tony Hancock, becoming the sole writer of his stage material. Hancock introduced him to Peter Sellers, Harry Secombe, Spike Milligan and Michael Bentine and together they created *The Goon Show*, arguably the world's most influential comedy programme. As one of the main writers throughout its nine-year run, Stephens' experiences and acquaintances became themes and characters within the show. For the first time, the life and work of this unsung hero of British comedy has been thoroughly explored. Using unrivalled access to Larry Stephens' personal archive of letters, photographs and artwork, plus interviews with Stephens' many notable friends, family members, comrades and colleagues, *It's All In The Mind* tells the story of a boy from the Black Country whose short life had an enduring impact.

This book provides a narrative history of the BBC Ra-

dio Variety Department exploring, along chronological lines, the workings of, tensions within and the impact of BBC policies on the programme-making department which generated the organisation's largest audiences. It provides an insight into key events, personalities, programmes, internal politics and trends in popular entertainment, censorship and anti-American policy as they individually or collectively affected the Department. Martin Dibbs examines how the Department's programmes became markers in the daily and weekly lives of millions of listeners, and helped shape the nation's listening habits when radio was the dominant source of domestic entertainment. The book explores events and topics which, while not directly forming part of the Variety Department's history, nevertheless intersected with or had an impact on it. Such topics include the BBC's attitude to jazz and rock and roll, the arrival of television with its impact on radio, the pirate radio stations, and the Popular Music and Gramophone Departments, both of whom worked closely with the Variety Department. Ray Galton and Alan Simpson are two of the most in-

fluential and celebrated television scriptwriters of our time. Praised for inventing the sitcom, their own seminal creations are still standing the test of time with modern audiences - Hancock's Half Hour and Steptoe and Son are two of the most successful sitcoms ever made. This book is a charming tribute to their career in comedy, written in collaboration with Galton and Simpson themselves and with exclusive access to their personal archive of scripts. Readers will discover the fascinating story of their progress from variety shows to television, and how they came to create characters and programmes that have captured the nation's heart for generations. Their insightful comments on their own writing, along with their first-class understanding of the television writers' craft, make this anthology unique, informative and incredibly entertaining.

You've heard of the lone ranger? I'm his brother hydrangea! The other night I dreamt I was eating a ten-pound marshmallow. When I woke up the pillow had gone! My wife just phoned me. She said, 'I've got water in the carburettor.' I said, 'Where's the car?' She said, 'In the

river.' I said to the doctor, 'Doctor, I'm losing all sense of direction. What should I do?' He said, 'Get lost.' I've got a dog, you know. I have. He's a one-man dog. He only bites me. Tommy Cooper died on stage at Her Majesty's Theatre, London, twenty-five years ago in April 1984 and is still revered today as probably the greatest comedian of the second half of the 20th century. More than just a comedian, Tommy Cooper was a born entertainer. Working in a golden age of British comedy, Cooper stood - literally - head and shoulders above the crowd, and had a magical talent for humour that defied description. With a love of laughter stemming from a magic performance gone wrong when he was in his teens, Cooper enlisted in the army in 1939 and began to perfect his comic timing on his army colleagues in the Egyptian desert. The man with the fez was born.

This book explores docudrama as a creative response to troubled times. With generic characteristics formed via traditions in theatre as well as film, and with claims to fact underscored by investigative journalism, television docudrama examines key

events and personalities in unfolding national histories. Post-Fall of the Berlin Wall, docudrama has become a means for nations to work through traumatic experiences both within national borders and Europe-wide. In this regard, it is an important genre for television networks as they attempt to make sense of complex current

events. These authors offer a template for further study and point towards ways in which European television cultures, beyond those discussed here, might be considered in the future.

The first ever intimate portrait of Britain's best-loved, but little known, comedy entertainer. Fully authorised, and written by

Cooper's friend and colleague John Fisher.

Relive the mirth, magic and mischief of everybody's favourite magic man with gags galore, tricks unlimited and a priceless trip down memory lane courtesy of many previously unpublished photographs from the Cooper archives - jus like that!