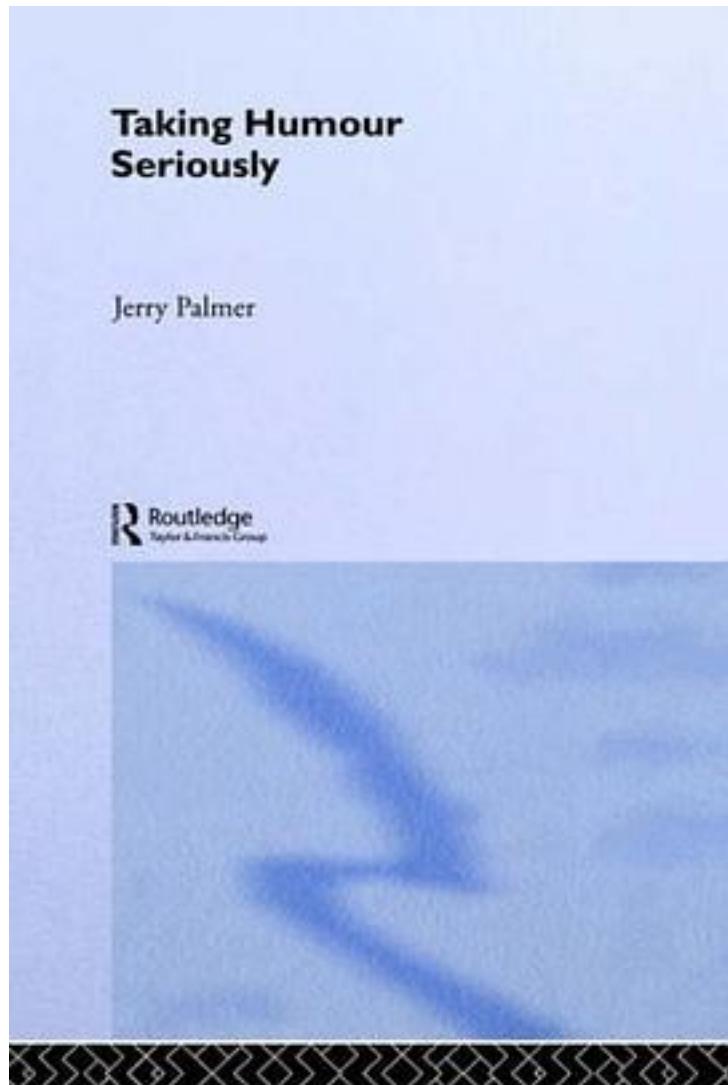


Taking Humour Seriously



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Listen to any everyday conversation: it is full of the constant interruptions and detours of humour. Look at the TV schedules for any evening - how many of the programmes are comedies, or contain a degree of humour? Humour and comedy invite our pleasure at every step we take. In *Taking Humour Seriously*, Jerry Palmer argues that we must take humour seriously (as well as humorously) or fail to understand a fundamental element of culture. *Taking Humour Seriously* unravels humour's multi-dimensional nature. It is part of our personality and our cognitive and emotional processes and subject to the social rules which govern our behaviour on different occasions. It is integral to literary and visual narrative; it is subject to moral and aesthetic judgement and it is a rhetorical instrument. Palmer argues that only by investigating these separate dimensions that we can begin to understand the phenomenon of humour. *Taking Humour Seriously* examines the role humour and comedy play in many different types of society. It looks at the many different approaches to its study - from Freud to anthropology, from literary criticism to biology. Finally it considers its limits - the things that prevent humour and comedy from delivering their usual pleasures - and explores the aesthetic value of those pleasures.

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