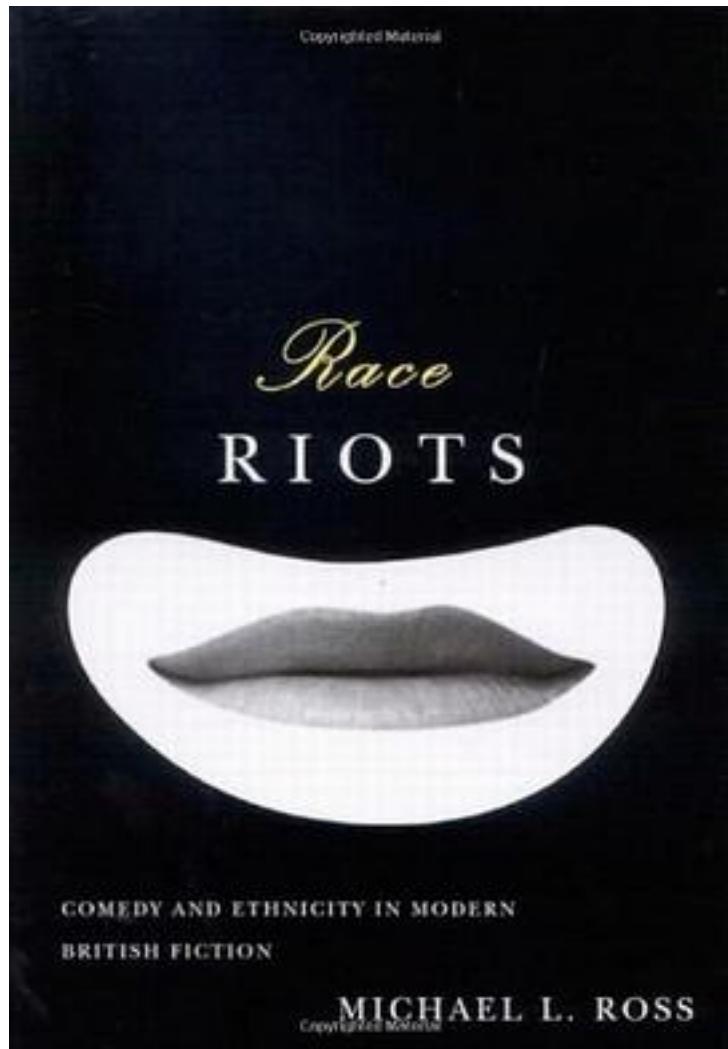


Race Riots



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From Black Mischief to The Buddha of Suburbia, twentieth-century British fiction is rife with racial humour. Challenging the common reluctance to take such comedy seriously, Michael Ross shows how humour directed at ethnic "others" exposes deep-seated national attitudes. Race Riots explores the development and implications of racial comedy in British literature from the early twentieth century to the present. Ross examines racial humour as a manifestation of post-colonialism and questions contemporary critiques of "political correctness." Looking at cartoons from pre-World War II issues of *Punch*, Ross shows how disdain for non-Europeans plays a key role in period British humour and links this idea to the racial humour in the work of Evelyn Waugh and Joyce Cary. He also demonstrates how these assumptions are later turned on their heads by writers such as Salman Rushdie. Race Riots documents the growing self-consciousness in British comic fiction about the moral status of humour itself, a tendency that aligns recent writers like Hanif Kureishi, Zadie Smith, and Angela Levy with broader postmodernist trends.

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