

Groucho Marx : The Comedy of Existence pdf

Lee Siegel

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DESCRIPTION OF THE BOOK GROUCHO MARX : THE COMEDY OF EXISTENCE

A trenchant examination of an iconic American figure that explores the cultural and psychological roots of his comic genius Born Julius Marx in 1890, the brilliant comic actor who would later be known as Groucho was the most verbal of the famed comedy team, the Marx Brothers, his broad slapstick portrayals elevated by ingenious wordplay and double entendre. In his spirited biography of this beloved American iconoclast, Lee Siegel views the life of Groucho through the lens of his work on stage, screen, and television. The author uncovers the roots of the performer's outrageous intellectual acuity and hilarious insolence toward convention and authority in Groucho's early upbringing and Marx family dynamics. The first critical biography of Groucho Marx to approach his work analytically, this fascinating study draws unique connections between Groucho's comedy and his life, concentrating primarily on the brothers' classic films as a means of understanding and appreciating Julius the man. Unlike previous uncritical and mostly reverential biographies, Siegel's "bio-commentary" makes a distinctive contribution to the field of Groucho studies by attempting to tell the story of his life in terms of his work, and vice versa.

GROUCHO MARX: THE COMEDY OF EXISTENCE (JEWISH LIVES)

Groucho Marx: The Comedy of Existence is a slim but interesting examination of some of the aspects of the humor of The Marx Brothers, and Groucho specifically. It can't be called academic because of the lack of footnotes, but it is probably more intellectual than one would associate with the humor of The Marx Brothers. Born Julius Marx in 1890, the brilliant comic actor who would later be known as Groucho was the most verbal of the famed comedy team, the Marx Brothers, his broad slapstick portrayals elevated by ingenious wordplay and double entendre. Groucho Marx: The Comedy of Existence by Lee Siegel A trenchant examination of an iconic American figure that explores the cultural and psychological roots of his comic genius Born Julius Marx in 1890, the brilliant comic actor who would later be known as Groucho was the most verbal of the famed comedy team, the Marx Brothers, his broad. Lee Siegel's Groucho Marx: The Comedy Of Existence opens with an image of its subject in profile, a photo of a man who is unrecognizable. Absent is the famous greasepaint mustache, the familiar glasses, the comic's bushy eyebrows or ever-present cigar. Lee Siegel, author of Groucho Marx: The Comedy of Existence, wanted his biography to uncover the real man

behind the iconic mustache. What Siegel found, he says, was "a thoroughgoing misanthrope." Groucho Marx: The Comedy of Existence was my book club's selection for June 2016. In all fairness, I expected a biography, and this book was nothing of the sort. I suspect the book club member who chose the book had a similar expectation. Groucho Marx: The Comedy of Existence is a fascinating new appreciation of Groucho Marx, the man and the comedian, and what really lurked behind the moustache, eyebrows, glasses and cigar. His witty, sardonic brand of anarchistic brutally frank verbal comedy was the perfect antidote to what ailed the world throughout his and his brothers. In this so-called "biocommentary" on comedy legend Julius "Groucho" Marx, brainy culture critic Lee Siegel describes the best-known Marx brother's scabrous sense of humor as prototypical of the ugly confrontational language that often characterizes twenty-first-century Internet discourse. This account of Groucho's correspondence with Eliot is among a number of revealing scenes in Lee Siegel's Groucho Marx: The Comedy of Existence, and as the book is a critical biography, all. The Comedy of Existence, "By having Groucho continue trying to outwit his reflection after he realizes it is someone else, the mirror scene is mocking its own comical pretense, even as it grows. Groucho Marx: The Comedy of Existence is a slim but interesting examination of some of the aspects of the humor of The Marx Brothers, and Groucho specifically. It can't be called academic because of the lack of footnotes, but it is probably more intellectual than one would associate with the humor of The Marx Brothers. Lee Siegel, in his fast and stimulating little read, "Groucho Marx: The Comedy of Existence," is at least half successful, which makes his book a rarity in Marx criticism. Crisply analytical, Siegel calls Groucho Marx: The Comedy of Existence a "bio-commentary." His interest lies in exposing the performative aspects of Groucho's psyche - especially its embodiment of "the spirit of nihilism" - and in puncturing earlier biographical profiles that "try to impart some positive or affirmative quality. Born Julius Marx in 1890, the brilliant comic actor who would later be known as Groucho was the most verbal of the famed comedy team, the Marx Brothers, his broad slapstick portrayals elevated by ingenious wordplay and double entendre. In his spirited biography of this beloved American iconoclast.

GROUCHO MARX: THE COMEDY OF EXISTENCE — JEWISH LIVES

This account of Groucho's correspondence with Eliot is among a number of revealing scenes in Lee Siegel's Groucho Marx: The Comedy of Existence, and as the book is a critical biography, all such scenes are in service of a literary and philosophical analysis. The first critical biography of Groucho Marx to approach his work analytically, this fascinating study draws unique connections between Groucho's comedy and his life, concentrating primarily on the brothers' classic films as a means of understanding and appreciating Julius the man. Groucho Marx: The Comedy of Existence Now the fascination with the Marx Brothers has taken yet another tack in Lee Siegel's Groucho Marx: The Comedy of Existence, published in January as part of Yale University Press' Jewish Lives series. This is what explicitly distinguishes this book from previous Marx biographies: In Siegel's hands, the details of Groucho's life are less interesting than the broader literary argument that they illustrate, which Groucho would have found both deeply validating and kind of annoying. Much has been said about the vaudevillian Groucho Marx (1890-1977), the third-born and most famous of the five Marx Brothers, but Siegel manages to add new insight into the entertainer. Despite the

fact that Groucho Marx appears in Yale's Jewish Lives series, it is far from being a conventional biography. If it's the facts you're after, the Das Kapital of Marxist studies remains. Groucho's trademark eyeglasses, nose, mustache, and cigar have become icons of comedy—glasses with fake noses and mustaches (referred to as "Groucho glasses", "nose-glasses," and other names) are sold by novelty and costume shops around the world. Groucho mastered the skill of being funny while remaining both "confrontational and conversational." Groucho Marx: The Comedy of Existence is a must-read for all Groucho lovers and for all those who want to understand what Siegel states is "the evolution of Jewish humor itself." He calls Groucho Marx: The Comedy of Existence "a biocommentary," in which he "weaves the outward facts of Groucho's life into and through a story about the inward facts of Groucho's life." Early in the book Siegel makes the point that Groucho's brother Chico had a larger penis than he did. Born Julius Marx in 1890, the brilliant comic actor who would later be known as Groucho was the most verbal of the famed comedy team, the Marx Brothers, his broad slapstick portrayals elevated by ingenious wordplay and double entendre. Note! Citation formats are based on standards as of July 2010. Citations contain only title, author, edition, publisher, and year published. Citations should be used as a guideline and should be double checked for accuracy. acquaintance unaware of Groucho's show-business success, and so on. Third, this "comedy of existence" cannot really be described as existential in a broadly encompassing sense, since Siegel traces its ultimate horizon

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