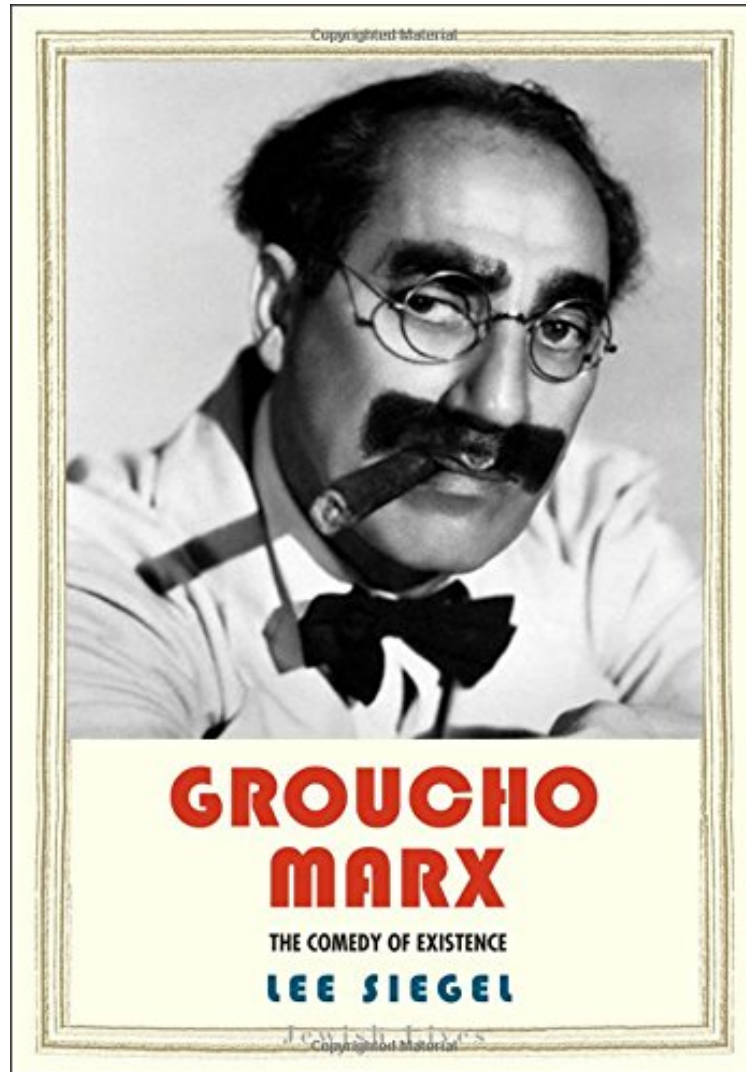


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Groucho Marx: The Comedy of Existence (Jewish Lives)

Lee Siegel

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#622170 in Books Siegel Lee 2016-01-12 2015-12-21Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 8.25 x .69 x 5.751, .0 #File Name: 0300174454176 pagesGroucho Marx The Comedy of Existence | File size: 33.Mb

Lee Siegel : Groucho Marx: The Comedy of Existence (Jewish Lives) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Groucho Marx: The Comedy of Existence (Jewish Lives):

0 of 2 people found the following review helpful. GOOD PIECE OF WORK - ANOTHER VIEW ON THE BROTHERS' MOTIVATIONBy J. MontotoInteresting read, includes good food for thought about the derivation and motivation for the brothers' comedy and subject matter. Other reviewers get hung up on assigning blame onto the author for dwelling on what they term the more lurid skits of their films, and while they are in no way excessive, isn't that why we read books such as these? To view the opinions of others, absorb them or discard them, and enhance our own personal opinions? I think the book serves this purpose well.18 of 19 people found the following review helpful.

Fredric Wertham Re-incarnated By J. Slott Lenny Bruce said "Obscenity is in the mind of the beholder". Lee Siegel clearly has some demons lurking inside his grey matter if he thinks that the over-the-top slapstick scene of Groucho, Harpo, and Chico "jumping on Thelma Todd" in *Horsefeathers* constitutes gang-rape. This absurd, puritanical viewpoint is only one example of where this utterly humorless man is coming from. Avoid this mess like the pompous, self-righteous plague that it is. 17 of 19 people found the following review helpful. Not the Groucho I Know By Tim Field Lee Siegel's "biocommentary" on the life of Groucho Marx fails to illuminate the genius of this comic and instead becomes an exercise in reductionism, employing Freud and dimstore psychology to explain Groucho. Lack of maternal love, not being listened to as a child, catching gonorrhea from a prostitute, stymied from pursuing a medical career, full of self-loathing, women-hating: all of these made Groucho the caustic comic he became according to Siegel. Harpo suffers a like analytical fate: his persona stems from being bullied in grade school. Siegel explains the genesis of Harpo's character being beaten by the opera singer in *A Night at the Opera* thusly: "It is fair to assume that (George S.) Kaufman and (Morrie) Ryskind, being intimates of the Marxes, were familiar with Harpo's brutalization at the hands of the two Irish bullies." Does Siegel really believe that is how Hollywood comedies were written, by mining the comic's childhood traumas? This is just one example of forehead-slapping analysis that abounds in this book. Do yourself a favor and re-read your favorite book about the Marx Brothers rather than waste your time with this claptrap.

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 performers 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.

A beautiful, brilliant, and persuasive reading of Marx as crypto-nihilist. A necessary and pulse-quickening work (utterly bereft of jargon or self-seriousness), linking Aristophanes to Kafka to Beckett to Groucho to Woody Allen to Amy Schumer. David Shields, author of *Reality Hunger*