

## Comedians of the Twentieth Century

"Laugh, and the world laughs with you" goes the familiar adage, but around the world people laugh at different things and for different reasons. This course explores what has made America laugh over the past one hundred years and how comedy has changed along with the times. It's not an academic treatise on the nature of comedy because as the great essayist E. B. White once put it, "Analyzing humor is like dissecting a frog. Few people are interested and the frog dies of it." This course covers brief biographies including the comedians' rise to fame as well as via primarily video excerpts, a sampling of their more famous routines.

Below is a list of the people we will probably cover (maybe more) but not necessarily in that exact order. How much we will cover in the next several weeks depends on how much of each artist you want to see and hear – and I'll need your inputs as we progress from week-to-week. If you have a particular routine of any of these comedians, just let me know. If you can tell me where I can find it on YouTube or another source, even better. In that way, I can better make this course – your course. Just know, there are enough more modern day comedians to make three such courses but it's up to you to let me know if that is of interest to you.

Charlie Chaplin	Milton Berle
Buster Keaton	Sid Caesar
W.C. Fields	Ernie Kovacs
Mae West	Red Skelton
Will Rogers	Jackie Gleason
Laurel & Hardy	Carol Burnett
Marx Brothers	Henny Youngman
Abbott & Costello	Myron Cohen
Burns & Allen	Alan King
Martin & Lewis	Buddy Hackett
Edgar Bergen	Phyllis Diller
Jack Benny	Joan Rivers
Bob Hope	Lily Tomlin
Danny Kaye	2000 Year Old Man
Lucille Ball	Woody Allen

**LEADER:** Larry Wolfert grew up in Brooklyn in the 60s where he found a special resonance with folk music, clever comedy and anthology TV shows. Some people write essays, some sermons and some blogs. Larry crafts his messages by creatively stitching together the words and music of singer/songwriters and comedians from the past half century.

**THURSDAYS:** 10:00 a.m. to noon, 8 weeks: February 27 through April 16

**LOCATION:** Monument Hall, Maximum 30