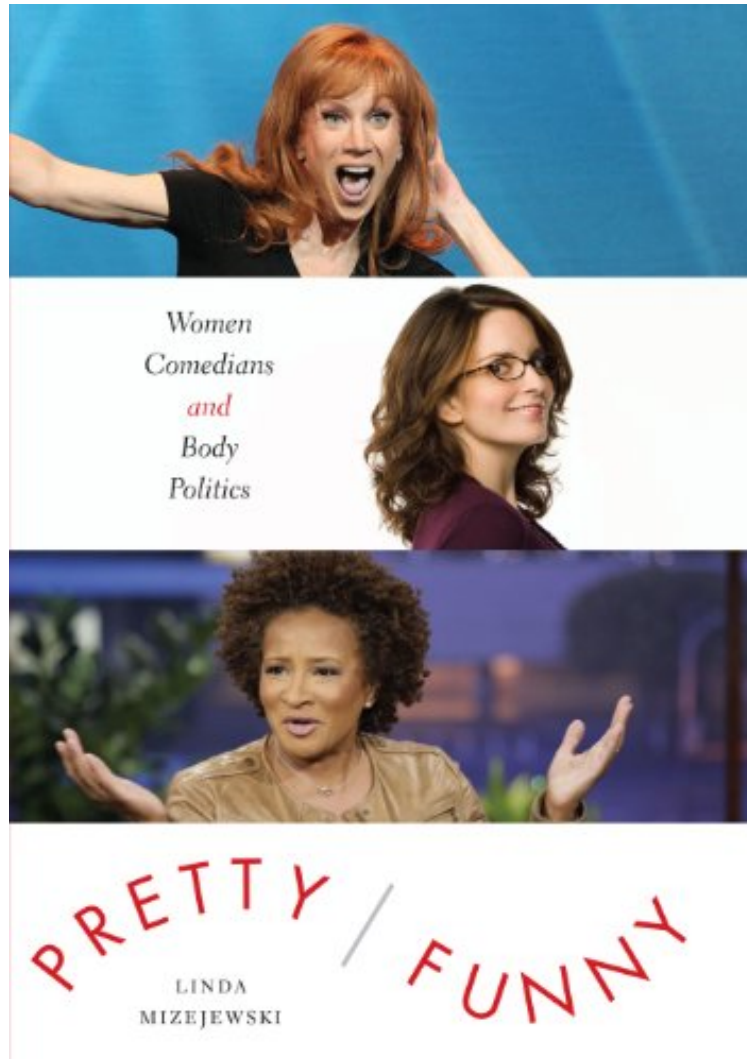


[Read now] Pretty/Funny: Women Comedians and Body Politics

## Pretty/Funny: Women Comedians and Body Politics

*Linda Mizejewski*

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**Linda Mizejewski : Pretty/Funny: Women Comedians and Body Politics** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised *Pretty/Funny: Women Comedians and Body Politics*:

Women in comedy have traditionally been pegged as either "pretty" or "funny." Attractive actresses with good comic timing such as Katherine Hepburn, Lucille Ball, and Julia Roberts have always gotten plum roles as the heroines of romantic comedies and television sitcoms. But fewer women who write and perform their own comedy have become stars, and, most often, they've been successful because they were willing to be funny-looking, from Fanny Brice and

Phyllis Diller to Lily Tomlin and Carol Burnett. In this pretty-versus-funny history, women writer-comedians no matter what they look like have ended up on the other side of "pretty," enabling them to make it the topic and butt of the joke, the ideal that is exposed as funny. *Pretty/Funny* focuses on Kathy Griffin, Tina Fey, Sarah Silverman, Margaret Cho, Wanda Sykes, and Ellen DeGeneres, the groundbreaking women comics who flout the pretty-versus-funny dynamic by targeting glamour, postfeminist girliness, the Hollywood A-list, and feminine whiteness with their wit and biting satire. Linda Mizejewski demonstrates that while these comics don't all identify as feminists or take politically correct positions, their work on gender, sexuality, and race has a political impact. The first major study of women and humor in twenty years, *Pretty/Funny* makes a convincing case that women's comedy has become a prime site for feminism to speak, talk back, and be contested in the twenty-first century.

"Comedy is a mainstay of popular culture, and yet female comedians continue to receive surprisingly little attention from feminist media scholars. *Pretty/Funny* picks up where my own study of women and comedy, *The Unruly Woman*, left off. . . . The subject of this book will be inherently attractive and interesting to readers in many academic fields: women's and gender studies, performance studies, race/ethnicity/queer studies, and film and television studies, among others. It will also appeal to general readers familiar with the comedians Mizejewski studies, from edgy Margaret Cho to the widely popular Ellen Degeneres." (Kathleen Rowe Karlyn, Professor of English, University of Oregon, and author of *The Unruly Woman: Gender and the Genres of Laughter and Unruly Girls, Unrepentant Mothers: Redefining Feminism on Screen*) "I found this book a totally engaging read, and I learned a lot from it. . . . This selective picture of six successful women—straight, lesbian, Asian, Jewish, white, black—allows the reader to get a fascinating look at the diversity and range of female comics, their talent, their different styles, and the wealth of social and political criticism that emerges from their comedy. . . . This book has a solid theoretical grounding. In addition, it is clearly written by an author who herself obviously has a sense of humor." (Joanna E. Rapf, Professor of English, University of Oklahoma, coeditor of *The Blackwell Companion to Film Comedy* and author of many other works on comedy) "Comedy is a mainstay of popular culture, and yet female comedians continue to receive surprisingly little attention from feminist media scholars. *Pretty/Funny* picks up where my own study of women and comedy, *The Unruly Woman*, left off. . . . The subject of this book will be inherently attractive and interesting to readers in many academic fields: women's and gender studies, performance studies, race/ethnicity/queer studies, and film and television studies, among others. It will also appeal to general readers familiar with the comedians Mizejewski studies, from edgy Margaret Cho to the widely popular Ellen Degeneres." (Kathleen Rowe Karlyn, Professor of English, University of Oregon, and author of *The Unruly Woman: Gender and the Genres of Laughter and Unruly Girls, Unrepentant Mothers: Redefining Feminism on Screen*) "I found this book a totally engaging read, and I learned a lot from it. . . . This selective picture of six successful women—straight, lesbian, Asian, Jewish, white, black—allows the reader to get a fascinating look at the diversity and range of female comics, their talent, their different styles, and the wealth of social and political criticism that emerges from their comedy. . . . This book has a solid theoretical grounding. In addition, it is clearly written by an author who herself obviously has a sense of humor." (Joanna E. Rapf, Professor of English, University of Oklahoma, coeditor of *The Blackwell Companion to Film Comedy* and author of many other works on comedy) About the Author Linda Mizejewski is Professor of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies at the Ohio State University in Columbus. She is the author of *Divine Decadence: Fascism, Female Spectacle, and the Makings of Sally Bowles*, *Ziegfeld Girl: Image and Icon in Culture and Cinema*, and *Hardboiled High Heeled: The Woman Detective in Popular Culture*. Her most recent book, *It Happened One Night*, is a study of the original romantic comedy film.