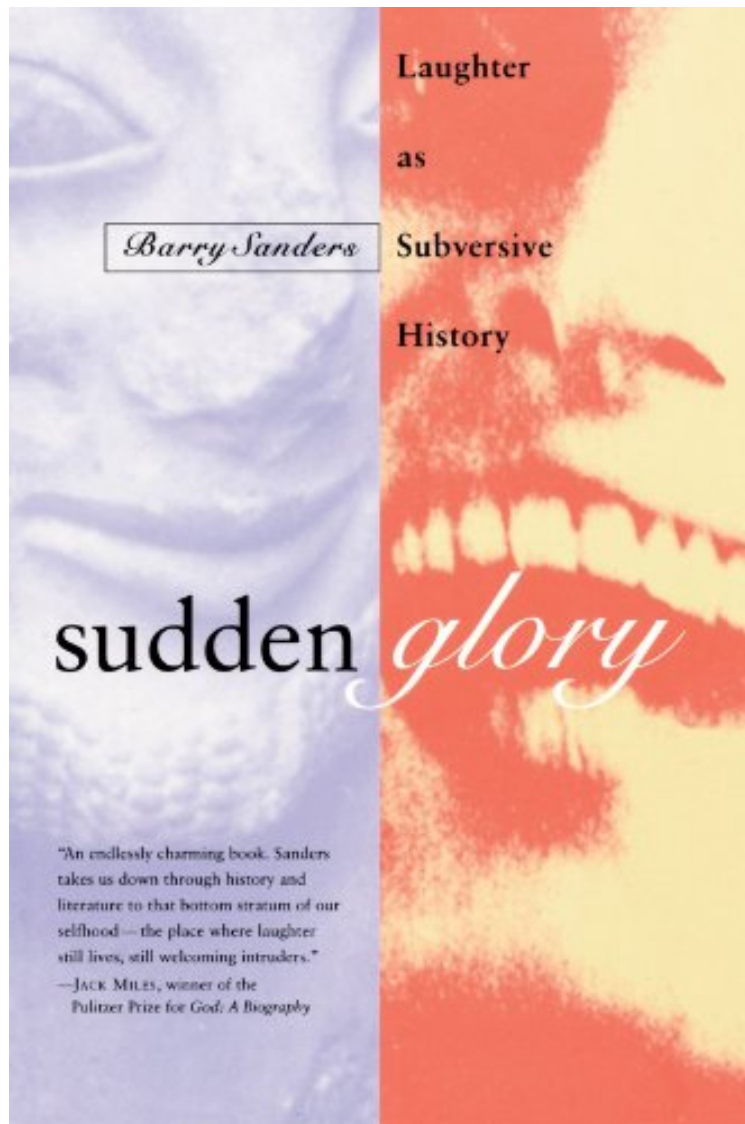


Sudden Glory: Laughter as Subversive History

Barry Sanders

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Barry Sanders : Sudden Glory: Laughter as Subversive History before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Sudden Glory: Laughter as Subversive History:

5 of 9 people found the following review helpful. wonderfulBy Benjamin J GodsillThis book truly works at the essence of what it means to be human, the idea the sentience can be seen as the ability to laugh may seem at times to be a stretch it is argued in such a effortless care-free manner that one is drawn to share the authors conclusions. Not light reading but well worth the time and effort.

In this wonderful exploration of the meaning of laughter, Barry Sanders queries its uses from the ancient Hebrews to Lenny Bruce, turning up evidence of its age-old power to subvert authority and give voice to the voiceless.

From the Back Cover Sudden Glory presents the history of one of the most evanescent but powerful forms of human expression - laughter. Here is the first book to look not at humor or comedy, but at laughter itself - and specifically at the way laughter evolved into an effective weapon for political subversion. Barry Sanders asks What did people laugh at? And why? What was the Church's attitude? The Rabbis'? Who could do it, when, and at whom? When did the joke first appear? Sudden Glory records the changes in attitudes toward laughter from the ancient world down to the present, with specific emphasis on cultural shifts from the late Middle Ages, when the Church's reach into the realm of the body was felt throughout society, through the end of the eighteenth century, when only deviants and derelicts laughed freely. Along the way, Sanders imagines the voices of women and peasants, whose laughter often went unrecorded, but surely not unheard. Sanders concludes with a brilliant chapter on contemporary laughter, beginning with "sick" comic Lenny Bruce (with whom he was personally acquainted), and ending with women stand-up comics, who seem to be finding their voices while male comics are mired in adolescent shtick. Sudden Glory, which contains an extensive bibliography on the subject of laughter, is an important study from one of our most penetrating and playful public intellectuals. About the Author Barry Sanders is the author of A Is for Ox: Violence, Electronic Media, and the Silencing of the Written Word, among other books. He is Peter and Gloria Gold Professor of English at Pitzer College in Claremont, California.