

Table of Contents

<i>Acknowledgments</i>	IX
<i>Preface</i>	XI
<i>Part One: Comic Sense and the Problem of Attitude</i>	
1. Coover, Elkin and Roth as "Redfaces"	1
2. The Evidence: A Controversial Reading of Three Meta-Comic Texts	4
2.1 Adorno's "Comic Judgement of the Comic"	5
2.2 Philip Roth's "On the Air"	8
2.3 Robert Coover's <i>Whatever Happened to Gloomy Gus of the Chicago Bears?</i>	13
2.4 Stanley Elkin's <i>The Living End</i>	19
3. Interpreting the Evidence: 'Homogenism' vs. 'Heterogenism'	25
3.1 Comic Judgements of the Comic	25
3.2 'Heterogenism': The Comic as a Way of Seeing	30
4. A Theory: Comedy that "Happens" in the Act of Reading	38
<i>Part Two: Robert Coover and The Comedy of Good & Bad Sport.</i>	43
1. "I thought it was all for fun": "Panel Game" as Paradigm	44
2. Comic Characters in Coover's Fictional World	47
2.1 The Clown: "Charlie in the House of Rue"	47
2.2 Magicians: "The Hat Act" and "The Phantom of the Movie Palace"	52
3. "Always leave 'em laughin' as you say goodbye!": <i>The Public Burning</i>	59

3.1	History as Entertainment	59
3.2	Nixon Agonistes	62
3.3	The "Sam Slick Show"	68
3.4	Self-Reflection and Self-Incrimination	72
4.	The Cackle of Fiction	77
<i>Part Three: Philip Roth's Zuckerman Novels as a Comic "Künstler-Roman"</i>		83
1.	Heroisms	84
1.1	Ghost Writing and "The Madness of Art"	85
1.2	Nathan Parricida and Appel the Porn-King	90
1.3	Nathan Zuckerman, Zionist Agent	95
1.4	The Ridicule of Seriousness	97
2.	"Dans le vrai": The Writer and His Public	100
3.	Love: The Role of Women in Roth's "Künstler-Roman"	104
4.	"The Counterlife" as Climax	110
4.1	Death of an Author	110
4.2	Two Readers: Henry and Maria	112
4.3	Mariolatry	117
5.	Life and Counterlife	119
<i>Part Four: Stanley Elkin's Comic Passion</i>		
1.	Cruelty and Empathy: "A Poetics for Bullies"	127
2.	Personality as Passion	133
2.1	The Prisonhouse of Personality	133
2.2	Two Sisyphuses: Ben Flesh and Eddy Bale	136
3.	Comic Passion and the Ordinary	142
3.1	Ben Flesh's "Life under the Logo of Others"	143
3.2	Dick Gibson's "Strange Displacements of the Ordinary"	148
4.	Transience	153
5.	Elkin's Comic Strategy	162
<i>Part Five: Conclusion</i>		167
<i>Works Cited</i>		185
<i>Index</i>		193