

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910781175903321
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Titolo	Ernie Kovacs & early tv comedy [[electronic resource] ] : nothing in moderation / / by Andrew Horton
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Austin, : University of Texas Press, 2010
ISBN	0-292-79297-2
Edizione	[1st ed.]
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (141 p.)
Disciplina	791.4502/8092 B
Soggetti	Comedians - United States Motion picture actors and actresses - United States Television comedies - United States
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Bibliographic Level Mode of Issuance: Monograph
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references and index.
Nota di contenuto	Introduction: Nothing in moderation. An overview of the postwar era and the Ernie Kovacs shows in the context of American television comedy -- The flow of the Philadelphia and New York Kovacs shows: comic surrealism, verbal and visual -- Silents please! Ernie, California, and working with music, sound, and surrealistic visuals on his specials -- Ernie in the movies: from comic director to supporting character actor -- The Kovacs legacy: I don't know. I just do it!.
Sommario/riassunto	Among the pioneers of television, Ernie Kovacs was one of the most original and imaginative comedians. His zany, irreverent, and surprising humor not only entertained audiences throughout the 1950s and early 1960s, but also inspired a host of later comedies and comedians, including Monty Python, David Letterman, much of Saturday Night Live, Rowan and Martin's Laugh-In, Captain Kangaroo, and even Sesame Street. Kovacs created laughter through wildly creative comic jokes, playful characterizations, hilarious insights, and wacky experiments. "Nothing in moderation," his motto and epitaph, sums up well Kovacs's wholehearted approach to comedy and life. In this book, Andrew Horton offers the first sustained look at Ernie Kovacs's wide-ranging and lasting contributions to the development of TV comedy. He discusses in detail Kovacs's work in New York, which

included The Ernie Kovacs Show (CBS prime time 1952–1953), The Ernie Kovacs Show (NBC daytime variety 1956–1957), Tonight (NBC late-night comedy/variety 1956-1957), and a number of quiz shows. Horton also looks at Kovacs's work in Los Angeles and in feature film comedy. He vividly describes how Kovacs and his comic co-conspirators created offbeat characters and zany situations that subverted expectations and upended the status quo. Most of all, Horton demonstrates that Kovacs grasped the possibility for creating a fresh genre of comedy through the new medium of television and exploited it to the fullest.

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