Humour is without doubt a vital element of the human condition but it has rarely been the subject of serious historical research. Yet a closer look at jokes and other comic phenomena shows us that the nature of humour changes from one period to another, and that these changes can provide us with important insights into the social and cultural developments of the past.

This important and highly original book sets out to explore the *terra incognita* of humour through the ages - from jokes and stage humour in Greece and Rome to the jestbooks of early modern Europe, from practical jokes in Renaissance Italy to comic painting during the Dutch Golden Age, from Bakhtin's conception of laughter to the joking relationships of anthropologists.

These innovative accounts move humour into the centre of social and cultural history and throw an unexpected light on life and manners through the ages.
FEATURES

* Highly original and innovative account of the history of humour through the ages from Antiquity to the present day.

* Includes accounts of jokes and stage humour in Greece and Rome, practical jokes in Renaissance Italy and comic painting during the Dutch Golden Age.

* This is a cutting edge work in cultural history and includes contributions by some of the most eminent cultural historians such as Peter Burke, Jacques Le Goff and Aron Gurevich.

To purchase this product, please visit https://www.wiley.com/en-us/9780745618807