

27 Top Most Inspirational Comedy Classics



**Handpicked by University Professor
Jeffrey Davis, Chair and Associate
Professor of Screenwriting at Loyola
Marymount University, Los Angeles**

**Interviewed by
Dr. Susan Lange, OMD, L.Ac.
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27 Top Inspirational Comedy Classics

Introduction



Jeffrey Davis

Jeffrey Davis serves as Chair and Associate Professor of Screenwriting, and also Film and TV writing, at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles.



Dr. Susan Lange

Dr. Susan Lange is a Doctor of Oriental Medicine, educator and author practicing in Southern California. She interviewed Professor Davis about his favorite Inspirational Comedy Classics for her book, "The PLAY Formula," because she often prescribes Inspirational Comedies in her private practice.

The Questions

Susan Lange: I asked Professor Davis six questions about his favorite comedies:

1. What are your favorite five star (five being highest) classic, historic, Inspirational Comedies?
2. What makes them so funny – and spiritual?
3. What purpose does Inspirational Comedy serve?
4. What is the universal appeal of comedy?
5. How does it affect our lives?
6. Where we would be without it?

You'll find his answers starting on the next page...

Jeffrey Davis' 27 Top Inspirational Comedy Classics:

Sullivan's Travels

I would start with writer, director Preston Sturges' masterpiece, **Sullivan's Travels**. It's very interesting to me that a lot of people don't know that it's based on The Odyssey. The story is very interesting because it's about a filmmaker who's made his living on comedy and he then tries to make this socialistic statement. He wants to be very serious and so he goes out on the road much like Ulysses. And the reason I think this is a spiritual comedy is because of his realization in that great prison scene at the end of the film. He's working on a chain gang around the end of the Depression. He's watching this cartoon and all of these men around him who are hopeless are laughing and he realizes what he does make a contribution. And I think that's the highest form of spirituality because I'm an agnostic and certainly don't care much for organized religion. So for me, the statement that Preston Sturges made about ***what someone's calling can be and how they discover it***, to me that's a very spiritual film.

Ground Hog Day

Next, there's **Ground Hog Day**, a very interesting film. It's the mid 90's and Bill Murray plays a guy who repeats the same day over and over again. He's basically a narcissistic schmuck. And he keeps waking up every day doing the same things, seeing the same people. It's Ground Hog Day and he's stuck in this little town. And ***what he learns over the course of the film is how to be a better human being. What's more spiritual than that?***

A lot of people think the film is a little riff on the Twilight Zone which presented these kinds of stories. But I think it's really a story about how to become a better human being and have a higher purpose in life and look out for other people. To me that's the highest spirituality. We're all reaching for it and how few of us ever get there.

I absolutely love Ground Hog Day and I would recommend it to anybody. What's beautiful about the film is how well matched Bill Murray is to the subject. I don't think he's ever been better before or since. It's great.

Parenthood

Another movie I love that has a different sort of vent is Ron Howard's 1989 film, **Parenthood**.

This one I might rate a four. It's what's called in Hollywood a gang comedy like Friends where you're not focusing on one protagonist. It's multiple stories within the same setting. And it's really about parents and children. I think it's spiritual again because Steve Martin, the main character realizes that being a good parent isn't necessarily what you say. ***It's being there. It's being present. And it's offering up, it's showing not telling.*** And it's also just this picture of what a real family is with the exaggeration of comedy because that's all comedy is. I mean I could do Hamlet as a comedy. Anybody could. **Comedy's just real life turned on its head and exaggerated.**

For some reason, and I don't know why, it's very rare for comedy to win an Academy Award. I've been saying for years that they really ought to have two categories because it's ridiculous that Brokeback Mountain which was a great movie beat out other movies that year that were just as good that were comedies. We've had a few exceptions: The Apartment which is a very dark comedy and Annie Hall which I'm going to talk about in a minute. Albert Brooks - they're always overlooked.

Heaven Can Wait

One of my all-time favorite movies is Warren Beatty's **Heaven Can Wait**.

It's based on a 40's movie, Here Comes Mr. Jordan. It was re-made by Chris Rock and it was terrible. Then came Warren's version that I've seen about 10 times and it gets better with each viewing. It's about a football player who is killed. He's not supposed to be killed. So Mr. Jordan,

substituting for God decides to put him back in another body. And again, why is it spiritual? Because ***it's about higher consciousness*** -- I guess this is my prejudice about spirituality. For me, inspiration and spiritual movies are movies that are about something. I don't like comedies that are just sort of dumb. Dumb and Dumber would not qualify -- I mean it's funny. It would not be on my list. And I'm not going to talk about it today, but Something About Mary written by the same writers would be because Mary's about something where as Dumb and Dumber is just sort of cute and funny. And I'm not that interested in that. I get bored. I can see it once and that's it.

The great thing about Heaven Can Wait is that it's a movie about (and ***all these movies are going to be about***) ***finding a higher self and being a better person. Being there for other people. That's my definition of spirituality. Finding your higher self. And also not thinking you're alone. I think that's what all these movies have in common.***

The Bird Cage

Next, let's talk about **The Bird Cage** with Robin Williams and Hank Azaria. Your subscribers might not know that the Director, Mike Nichols and his wife Elaine were a very famous comedy team, in the late 50's early 60's. They played Carnegie Hall and made comedy albums in the days when comedians made albums. And then Elaine went off to write plays and movies, and Mike became this famous director. And the first collaboration they had done in years was the movie The Bird Cage. They had tried to get the rights to La Cage Aux Folles years before.

Why do I think this is an inspirational film? Mainly because it ***makes you laugh and laughing is so good.*** We know this now. Dr. Oz's books have taught us that. We knew this with the Norman Cousins book. I think what's wonderful about this movie is that it teaches you that there are all kinds of families and to never be ashamed.

And I think it's probably the most perfectly cast film in the last 20 years. Robin Williams was originally supposed to play the Nathan Lane part and decided not to because he had just done **Mrs. Doubtfire**.

Mrs. Doubtfire

Mrs. Doubtfire is a movie that has the same theme. It's about finding out who you are. There's really only one theme for me and that's ***realizing that you're not alone and that you can be a better person and you can serve other people. I think that's what inspiration is.*** I don't know if it's spiritual because I think spirituality is such a subjective thing. I mean there are people who believe God is spiritual. I think about the way God has been abused. Being a Jew you don't have the Jesus Christ problems but they always forget that he was Jewish. But I think that religion in this country has been so corrupted in the last eight years that it's hard for me to talk about it with a straight face. But there's another kind of spirituality that is just being a better person. Just concentrating, thinking about others and trying to reach out and be part of a larger community. I think that's what these movies all have in common and realizing that what you do makes a contribution even when you don't feel it. That's why I love Sullivan's Travel.

The whole plot of **Mrs. Doubtfire** is built around the premise that he can't see his children so he dresses up as this old Scottish fat woman so that he can see the kids. And it's great because with any kind of drama, comedy, whatever -- the character has to have a strong want. If there's no want and nothing against the character, then there's really no conflict and without conflict we might as well be watching a Dutch movie on Fields of Flowers. I mean that's really true. Even in documentaries you've got to have some conflict, some tension.

Defending Your Life

I'm a big Albert Brooks fan and think that **Defending Your Life** is probably one of the funniest films ever made. It's about a guy who dies and goes to this kind of holding area in Heaven.

I love this film because it's kind of daring. It starts when he dies and he goes to this place called Judgment City. The theme of the film is how we allow fear in our lifetime to hold us back. To keep us from doing the things that would make us happier. The thing that I think is wonderful is that it presents a hopeful ending. For me, ***it's a film about fear and hope, and***

about how you can triumph over fear. And I don't know anything that's more inspirational than that.

It's a Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World

OK, **It's a Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World**, is a Stanley Cramer's film, released in 1963

It was in the days when they would run movies with an intermission. So the first time *My Fair Lady*, for example, was run as a film, there was an intermission. So you would buy the tickets in advance and then you would show up and you would get your assigned seat. They were called road pictures. Not to be confused with the Bob Hope, Bing Crosby road pictures, but road shows so that they played in big theaters. It was the days of Cinerama. That movie was in Cinemascope or Cinerama when it first came out.

The reason this is an inspirational film, I don't know that I would call it spiritual, is that ***it just makes you laugh***. Every single moment of the film is vaudeville. It's ***vaudeville captured on film***. Burlesque and vaudeville. And a lot of the people in the film were actually in vaudeville. Terry Thomas is in it so he'd be in the music halls which is essentially where vaudeville came from. It came from the musical halls of England and France. America certainly didn't invent vaudeville. It just was different. And there's a lot of burlesque. You've got Ethel Merman, Milton Berle, and Jimmy Durante. All these people are in this film. Spencer Tracy is the only straight actor in the film and he's wonderful. ***I think it's inspirational because underneath, it's really about what money does to people and how it's really worthless. How there are other more important things.*** I wouldn't say it has a hard and fast theme, but it's just an incredibly funny film. And laughter is so good.

It was remade very badly about eight years ago. I can't even remember the name of it but they missed the point of the original. And you know what, you can't really remake films. It rarely ever works.

Tootsie

Tootsie is about somebody who becomes a better person. In my experience, and this is not a hard and fast rule, movie themes are usually expressed in the last part of a film. Dustin says to Jessica Lange at the end of the film, ***"I was a better man as a woman than I ever was as a man."*** And you've got Larry Gelbart and Murray Schisgal, two of the great American comedy writers who have something to say writing it. You don't get better than that. Larry Gelbart wrote the TV series, **Mash** and a thousand other things.

Some Like It Hot

Anything by Billy Wilder is great but I would choose **Some Like It Hot**. Again, *it's got that same theme of being a better person*. Learning. Is it spiritual? Probably not. But is it inspirational? Again, it's the same as **Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World**. It's just so funny. Take **Mrs. Doubtfire, Tootsie, and Some Like It Hot**. Their commonality is men dressing up as women and getting away with it. And learning -- see **Tootsie's** great because it's about someone stepping into somebody else's skin. I don't think there's anything more inspirational than that. I feel that **Some Like It Hot** falls into that category. A lot of people when they look at this movie said it's a farce. Yes, but ***farce can be very inspirational like Tony Curtis realizing at the end of the film that he can sacrifice for someone else.*** And in sacrificing, he gets the girl that's a nice kind of ironic twist. That's what I love about that movie. And, I love the fact that Billy Wilder is a cynic with a heart. I mean you look at Billy Wilder's body of work. Most of time the guy gets the girl or the girl gets the guy, but after they've been through all this hell.

The Apartment

The Apartment is really a comedy. This is another film that's a work of genius and one of the few times a comedy has received an Academy Award.

Getting in touch with their higher self. That's what I think makes an interesting movie.

Annie Hall

Of course not everyone's going to put **Annie Hall** on their list but I don't think any list would be complete without it. And the reason is not because it's about relationships or what happens in them. I think it's really about how we need them in spite of their imperfections. And I think that's very spiritual. I don't think it's Woody Allen's best film because he went darker as he got older. And I like a little dark mixed in with my light. But that's just me. If I were to see **Ground Hog Day** today, I probably wouldn't like it as much as when I saw it the first time because I'm older and I like a little more dark. But it's a great film.

Annie Hall is really a film about ***how relationships are imperfect, but you need them. We need each other.*** And isn't that a spiritual message? I don't know. I don't know what spiritual is. It's a daunting thing to address. I mean I'm not a Buddhist monk, so I wouldn't be able to tell you, but to me **that's what spirituality is. It's realizing you're not alone in the world and that you need other people.** These movies all address how you need them and what you do.

Mother

There's a movie that nobody liked except me. It's another Albert Brooks' movie called **Mother** released in 1996.

There are two more Albert Brooks' movies I'll put on the list. One is called **The Muse** with Sharon Stone and Andy McDowell. Nobody liked Mother. I think it's wonderful. It's about a science fiction writer whose partner breaks up with him and he goes home to live with his mother to figure out why he can't have successful relationships. And instead of his mother being happy about it that would be the cliché, she's like, "Your dad's dead. I have my own life. I want to live my own life." So already you have the conflict, right? And he reverts to being a child, an adolescent. Why do I think this is

an inspirational film? Because again ***it's about how you work out relationships and then can move forward.*** At the end of the movie he does. I would give that a four because it's not entirely successful.

The Muse

The Muse is about a Hollywood screenwriter who writes serious screenplays and who's blocked. And he meets this woman who tells him that's she's his muse and of course in the end you find out she's an escaped patient from a mental hospital, but you really don't know. You don't know if she's crazy but the point of the film is that all Albert Brooks is really interested in is how people allow fear to keep them from happiness. He's very interested in that and he's very interested in people allowing themselves to believe, even if it turns out to be false because that's a better thing. I tell my students that they don't have to know where they're going when they write. They just have to go there because something else will take over. And we are all doing that no matter what we do in life, right? So whether we cook or whether we write, if we know the ending why go there? I mean what's the point of the journey. Albert writes about this and that's why I relate to him because fear has been one of the major issues of my life and it's compounded by the fact that I'm Jewish. But I think *what he writes about are people who are afraid to take risks. And in his movies they always do.*

Michael

Nora Efron wrote and directed **Michael** with John Travolta and William Hurt.

Michael is about the archangel Michael. And it's about these reporters who work for a kind of Rupert Murdoch schlock paper. And they're assigned to discover whether John Travolta's character is a real angel or not. And again, it's about believing in something higher than yourself and by doing so -- the movie is really not about John Travolta's character. The main character in that movie is William Hurt who's been so hurt in his past that he's closed off.

I don't want to spoil the movie for you, but my wife and I were watching the movie again the other night and we looked at each other half way through the movie and said, "Why don't people get this film? Why don't they see...?" I wouldn't have used the word spirituality but "why don't they see what it's saying about human relationships and about trusting something larger than yourself? Whether it's love or God or whatever." And I think it's because it means letting go. I think a lot of people, including me some of the time, I hope less as I get older, live our lives this way. We are closed off.

Michael is a movie about opening up and about believing in something bigger. The great thing about the archangel Michael was that he was the troublemaker angel, the bad boy angel. The way John Travolta plays this part is here's this guy come to earth; he's only got a certain amount of time, and he wants to do all the bad things. Smoke. Drink. Overeat. It's wonderful. I mean he turns the whole kind of harp angel on its head. I highly recommend this one. I know that I'm going to be the only one, but I give this movie a five and a big thumbs up.

Being There

I'm an enormous Peter Sellers fan and I've got two Peter Sellers' movies on my list of favorites.

The first is obviously is **Being There**. Which is wonderful for all the reasons we've been talking about. I think that again, ***it's a movie about the absurdity of life and how you can't take it too seriously.*** I mean look at the last image of that film. He's walking on water. And how all the other people in the movie take themselves so seriously. **Forrest Gump** is another movie that should go on that list but it's not a comedy so I can't put it on it. But to me it's the same theme. Notice in those two movies, neither of the main characters change. Everybody else's needs are projected on to **Forrest Gump** or on to Chance.

It's a great film. I think that should be -- I'm sure it's on everybody's list. It's a classic. A great, great, great film. I have two other Peter Sellers. I don't know why I call them Peter Sellers' movies because they're not just Peter Sellers' movies.

The Mouse That Roared

The Mouse That Roared is an obscure film that few know much about and was Peter Sellers first movie released in 1959. It's about this little country, the Duchy of Grand Fenwick, which declares war on the United States. That's all I'm going to say about it. ***It's inspirational because it's called The Mouse That Roared. It's hysterically funny.*** Peter Sellers plays multiple roles in it. I just love the film and what it says about how size doesn't matter. And again, I think what's inspirational to me is to realize the absurdity of life. I think that's why **Modern Times** is on my list.

Modern Times

You can't have comedies without Charlie Chaplin. I mean that would be a crime. And in **Modern Times**, ***here's the little guy and, in spite of that, he prevails.*** I think that's a great film. Five, five and five. It should be a fifteen!

Talk to Her

Talk to Her. Pedro Almodóvar won the Academy Award for Best Original Screenplay and was nominated for the Best Director Oscar for his efforts on this 2002 Spanish-language comedy.

Talk to Her begins with a Female bullfighter being gored and going into a coma. And it's really these two women who are in a coma and the two men who love them. And it's about finding your other half through this absolutely bizarre experience. And again I don't want to spoil this movie for anybody by talking too much about it. But ***it's really about human communication.*** I think it's far more interesting than all of his other movies which are wonderful. You know he's a great director. But this I could see a hundred times and still find new things in it.

You could never do this movie in America. Certainly not a commercial film. I mean just the idea of the fact that two woman are in the coma for more than half the movie is hysterically funny and very sad. And yet the way he

handles it, you're laughing. And then it has kind of a happy ending and I don't want to spoil it for you. He twists it at the end. It's a wonderful movie.

Get Out Your Handkerchiefs

Then there's an old French film, **Get Out Your Handkerchiefs** which is a fabulous comedy. I know most people are going to mention La Cage which is okay. It's good. It's light. I'm not a big fan of that film and I'm not a big fan of the things that **Three Men and a Baby** came from. I like this film **Get Out Your Handkerchiefs** that's about these two guys who have this thing for this woman, this unavailable woman. And that's all I can really tell you about it. But it's a five plus. It's an old film from 1978. It's that period when the French cinema came back for a while and they were doing a lot of comedy. It's that same period as **Three Men and a Baby** and they did a lot of dramas like **The Lace Maker** if you remember that film. I wish we were doing a list of dramas because to me that's a drama that's a comment on what intellectuals without feeling can do to the human spirit. That's a great film. So is **Get Out Your Handkerchiefs**.

Finding Nemo

The last two I have for you, **Finding Nemo**, about a family and what matters and **The Incredibles** about finding your higher self are animated movies from Brad L. Burt at Pixar. And ***Nemo is about the sacrifice parents make.*** And strangely enough, Albert Brooks is the voice of the father in **Finding Nemo**. I haven't seen the movie since it came out but I have seen **The Incredibles** two or three times since it was released.

The Incredibles

It's wonderful. It's really about how people are profiled and kept in a category and what's been going on in this country. It's really ***a comment on how people are judged by what they appear to be and not who***

they really are. And you know, what a better subject for a book on spirituality and inspiration.

Super Bad and **Knocked Up** are Greg Mottola's two movies that I love. My daughter saw the newest one and said it's wonderful. Greg Mottola believes it's an anti-drug movie. I'll be interested to see it. It's called **Pineapple Express**.

Knocked Up

Knocked Up is wonderful because what he does is take the romantic comedy, the classic situation of two people having a one-night stand and then she gets pregnant, and turns it into ***two unlikely people finding one another and becoming a family in spite of the obstacles***. And I think that it's a lovely film.

Super Bad is not a movie about two boys looking to get laid the night before they graduate. It's about friendship. And it was funny. I saw it twice. I saw it the night we had just dropped our daughter off for her first day of college and my wife was not in a good place. The movie had just opened next door to our Manhattan hotel. We were the oldest people in the theater. And it was not kids, it was 25-35 year olds. Even 40 year olds. I think that's who he made the movie for. And my wife didn't like it. But I loved it. Maybe it's a male thing but I think ***it's a movie about friendship and how friendship can bring you to a higher place***. Yes, you have to grow up and leave people, but I just love that film.

I saw it again with my son and he got the movie. He said to me as we were coming out of the theater, "It's not a movie about chasing girls." It's not, in other words - I don't know those Porkies movies from the 80's. It's not that at all. It's a movie about friendship and if a 16 year old could get that, I think that's really kind of meaningful. **Knocked Up** is wonderful. They're both fives. Jonah Hill was the hottest thing in Hollywood. He doesn't seem to be able to make a mistake. It's wonderful.

I have spent my life around the industry because Tony's and my Dad, Jerry Davis, was a writer and producer. There is one that I would like to add *talking about friendship and how it's a spiritual thing and it makes a person.*

There's May Sarton, a famous poet, essayist and fiction writer, who nobody knows about for lots and lots of reasons. But writers know about her. She said that, ***"Nothing makes somebody grow more than reaching outside themselves, learning something new like a language or loving somebody, because it makes you embrace the other and there you grow."*** And that is what spirituality is, right? I mean if we don't really know what's next, focusing on what comes after is a false positive. What's the point? What's great in movies is when someone is shown how they can be better, especially if it can be done honestly and without fake props and things like that.

The Odd Couple

A movie that should definitely be on the list, and I'm sure it is, is **The Odd Couple** because it's probably the greatest comedy ever written.

Susan: And this is the one that your father, Jerry Davis, was involved with?

Jeffrey Davis: My father was involved with the TV series but the film is Neil Simon. And again, it's about these two guys, I mean everybody steals it. But **The Odd Couple** is almost a flawless piece of writing. It's brilliant because you have these two guys who behave essentially with each other the way they did in their marriages. And I would put that on my list. I just think that's a great film.

Planes, Trains and Automobiles

Planes, Trains and Automobiles is a wonderful comedy by John Hughes. I'd put that on the list and I would give that a five. It's wonderful -- it's basically the same story except that the movie is ***about missing connections and how these two unlikely guys find each other.***

I want to return to the idea of darkness in films and clarify that a bit. I don't think films need a dark streak to make them more meaningful. I'm just saying that as I get older I like a little light with my dark and a little dark with my light and it tends to be how I write. And not intentionally. I just

find physical comedy easier. Don't get me wrong, **Dumb and Dumber** is not a bad movie. It's just that you come out of there and it's kind of like eating a Mars bar. You know it's wonderful while you're eating it and then -- now I can't remember a single scene from it. Like **The Cable Guy** or those kinds of movies. Whereas, you have a movie like **Being There**, which is hysterically funny and comes completely out of the foibles of human beings that is something that we all need for inspiration.

We all need to see how little we really are and how much better we could be. I just think that life is not all black or white so I don't like dramas that are all completely dark without any light in them. I have a problem with that too. So it's just my prejudice. And of course I could find exceptions. I mean you don't go to an Ibsen play for example and expect to have a lot of laughs.

Shakespeare knew how to do it. Shakespeare was the one who knew how to do it the best. In every tragedy there is comedy. There's the grave digger scene in Hamlet. You just name it. There's always a fool, there's always some little comedy scene inserted because who was Shakespeare doing his play for? Not wealthy rich people, but the groundlings. So he wasn't really writing them for the Royals, who of course came.

Shakespeare in Love

I think that's a movie, by the way. Not a comedy, straight comedy, **Shakespeare in Love**, but a wonderful film. I would love for that to be on the list but I don't know if it would be considered a comedy. It's very funny. It's absolutely a five. Tom Stoppard? Come on. And Marc Norman did a great job too. Tom Stoppard actually came in later and worked with him but it was Marc's idea. His son actually gave him the idea. But why do I love that film? Because ***it's about the human spirit***. We don't know if that's the real Shakespeare or not. It doesn't matter. But that's a movie about a guy who has a passion for something and he finds a muse and because he finds a muse, he is able to rise above what he thinks he can be. If that's not inspiration and spirituality, then I don't know what is. The best scene in that movie, because it goes against all of our expectations, is when Jeffrey Rush, who is a great actor, playing the guy backing the play and all it's all been

about money, money, money, The producers are listening to the language and the producer says, "Where are the pirates and the dog...?" and Jeffrey Rush who we think is going to be this baby character who just cares about making money turns to the producer and says, "Quiet." because he's so involved in the beauty of the language. That moment in that movie, I get goosebumps just thinking about that. I am actually getting goosebumps right now. It's a great film about the human spirit and it's about also what you can do when you have to. Because remember he's got no money, and he's an actor and the way they paint Shakespeare in the movie is wonderful. And there's another great scene that all writers relate to -- when he's in the gondola and he's going across to Gwyneth Paltrow's house and the gondolier says to him, "I heard you're a writer. I have this script I want you to read."

The End

Jeffrey Davis' own book on comedy writers and their process is called "Show Me the Funny:"

*I have a book coming out that I can't tell you much about yet. I will tell you it's a book on comedy writers and it's a book about showing the process rather than the writers' talking about it. We've interviewed writers from the Golden Age like Sherwood Schwartz who created **Gilligan's Island** and **The Brady Bunch**, to Phil Rosenthal who created **Everybody Loves Raymond**. And a lot of writers in between. I think it's an unusual idea.*

Mostly what I write now I write for a company called Weller Grossman that does a lot of narrative stuff for Discovery Channel. And I write plays. I'm not really writing screen plays very much anymore. I'm working on one right now but I'm a playwright.

I'm not doing sitcom anymore. We had a rather pleasant divorce in the mid 90's. So, I'm doing other kinds of TV and stuff and I'm at Loyola Marymount. I think situation comedy is a young man's or young woman's game. The people who are in charge are never young, but I think people who don't have families yet, don't mind staying till three in the morning. I never liked any of that.

I look forward to another interview with you as soon as my book comes out.

Post Script:

Jeffrey Davis



“Show Me the Funny! At the Writers Table with Hollywood’s Top Comedy Writers” (Sterling 2010) with co-author Peter Desberg provides readers a unique glimpse into the intelligent and quirky inner workings of the comedic mind. The book presents 27 top comedy screenwriters from the revered figures of television’s “Golden Age” to today’s favorite movie jokesters.”

Jeffrey has presented academic seminars on comedy and writing for universities and conferences across the United States. His written works on the craft of comedy and writing have also been published in *The Comic Bible*, *Writers Store E-zine*, *The Wrap* and *Script Magazine*, to name a few.

Jeffrey Davis’ earliest memories are of sitting around the Writers’ Table at Nate & Al’s Delicatessen with his father and his comedy writer cronies. Writing credits: “House Calls” with Lynn Redgrave, “Gimme Me A Break,” “Valerie’s Family,” “Night Court,” “America’s Funniest People,” “America’s Funniest Home Videos.” Film projects with: Bette Midler’s All Girl Productions.

Special thanks to Professor Jeffrey Davis for taking the time to research and do this interview for us, and to Jeff Hutner, the former editor of our Inspirational Comedy blog which can be found at:

<http://www.ComediesThatHeal.com>

For more information on a couple of our fun and free “Little Gifts for the Soul”:

● **The PLAY Formula**

● **The 101 Top Inspirational Comedies Ever Made**

And to learn more about the work of Drs Susan and Julian Lange, OMD, L.Ac.,

“How to Transform Suffering and Trauma into Lightness and Joy”

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This interview with Jeffrey Davis took place in August, 2008.