Monty Python’s Flying Circus
Week 1

Contemporary Comedic Genius Series
Martin J. Marshall, instructor
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What Is
The Contemporary Comedic Genius Series?

– Designed specifically for OLLI classes at:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sonoma State</th>
<th>UCLA</th>
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<tr>
<td>Carnegie Mellon</td>
<td>San Francisco State</td>
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<td>Calstate Eastbay</td>
<td>San Diego State</td>
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<td>Santa Clara University</td>
<td>Widener University</td>
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<td>Dominican University</td>
<td>University of Dayton</td>
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<td>U of Alabama</td>
<td>Santa Rosa Jr. College</td>
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<td>U of Minnesota</td>
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– Clips
– Comedic technique analysis
– Context of the times
– Great comedians
– Class interaction
Who needs comedy anyway?

• Comedy = Dopamine, the neural transmitter
• Dopamine in seniors (from Dr. Madan Kataria)
  • Better sex life
  • Better memory
  • Better sleep
  • Greater enjoyment of life
  • More vigor
  • ---Did we mention better sex life?
Average American
Average American on Comedy
What Comedians Are Covered?

• **Monty Python**
  • Jon Stewart
  • Stephen Colbert
  • SNL: The Gilda Age
  • Woody Allen
  • Mel Brooks
  • Garry Trudeau
  • Robin Williams
  • Billy Crystal
• Smothers Brothers
  • Moms Mabley
  • Lenny Bruce
  • George Carlin
  • Richard Pryor
  • Jonathan Winters
  • Tom Lehrer
  • Firesign Theater
  • The Committee
Monty Python Syllabus: Weeks 1-3

• Week 1: BBC in the 1960s
  – Syllabus
  – BBC: Before There Were Pythons

• Week 2: Monty Python’s Flying Circus
  – Forming the Pythons
  – BBC Flying Circus Clips and analysis

• Week 3: Holy Grail
  – Arthurian mythology and European history
  – Holy Grail clips, analysis, and how they got it made
Monty Python Syllabus Weeks 4-6

• **Week 4: Meaning Of Life, Rutles**
  – Meaning of Life clips (and background)
  – The Rutles

• **Week 5: Life of Brian**
  – Life of Brian (funded by Beatle George Harrison)
  – Hollywood Bowl

• **Week 6: Not The Messiah**
  – Not the Messiah (Royal Albert Hall, London 2009)
  – Post-Python Movie Montages
Before There Were Pythons: BBC Comedy

- **The Goon Show (radio, 1951-1960)**
  - Spike Milligan, Peter Sellers, Harry Secombe

- **That Was The Week That Was (TV, 1962-63 UK, 64-65 USA)**
  - David Frost, John Cleese, Graham Chapman, Peter Cook, many others

  - John Cleese, Graham Chapman, Marty Feldman, John Law

- **The Two Ronnies (1971-87)**
  - Ronnie Barker, Ronnie Corbett

- **At Last The 1948 Show (1967-69)**
  - John Cleese, Graham Chapman, Marty Feldman, Tim Brooke-Taylor
  - Aimie Macdonald, David Frost

- **Do Not Adjust Your Set (1967-69)**
  - Michael Palin, Terry Jones, Eric Idle, Terry Gilliam, David Jason, Denise Coffey Brooke-Taylor, Aimie Macdonald, David Frost

- **Spike Milligan’s Q5 (1969, 1975)**
  - Premiered months before Python with the same formats
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  - Spike Milligan, Peter Sellers, Harry Secombe,
  - [Michael Bentine 1951-53]
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- The Frost Report (1966-67)
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