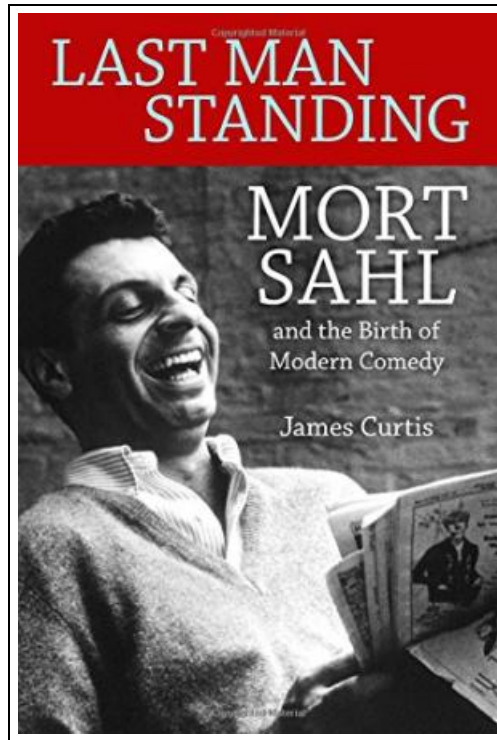


## Last Man Standing: Mort Sahl and the Birth of Modern Comedy (Hardback)



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University Press of Mississippi, United States, 2017. Hardback. Condition: New. Language: English . Brand New Book. On December 22, 1953, Mort Sahl (b. 1927) took the stage at San Francisco s hungry i and changed comedy forever. Before him, standup was about everything but hard news and politics. In his wake, a new generation of smart comics emerged-Shelley Berman, Mike Nichols and Elaine May, Lenny Bruce, Bob Newhart, Dick Gregory, Woody Allen, and the Smothers Brothers. He opened up jazz-inflected satire to a loose network of clubs, cut the first modern comedy album, and appeared on the cover of Time surrounded by caricatures of some of his frequent targets such as Dwight Eisenhower, Richard Nixon, Adlai Stevenson, and John F. Kennedy. Through the extraordinary details of Sahl s life, author James Curtis deftly illustrates why Sahl was dubbed by Steve Allen as the only real political philosopher we have in modern comedy. Sahl came on the scene the same year Eisenhower and Nixon entered the White House, the year Playboy first hit the nation s newsstands. Clad in an open collar and pullover sweater, he adopted the persona of a graduate student ruminating on current events. It was like nothing I d ever seen, said Woody Allen, and I ve never seen anything like it after. Sahl was billed, variously, as the Nation s Conscience, America s Only Working Philosopher, and, most tellingly, the Next President of the United States. Yet he was also a satirist so savage the editors of Time once dubbed him Will Rogers with fangs. Here, for the first time, is the whole story of Mort Sahl, America s iconoclastic father of modern standup comedy. Written with Sahl s full cooperation and the participation of many of his friends and contemporaries, it delves deeply into the influences...

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