

not nine o'clock news

Introduction to Not Nine O'Clock News

Not Nine O'Clock News is a groundbreaking British television comedy sketch show that first aired in the late 1970s, leaving a significant mark on the landscape of satire and comedy in the UK. Created by a talented team of writers and performers, including Rowan Atkinson, Mel Smith, and Griff Rhys Jones, the show challenged traditional news formats by blending satire, parody, and slapstick humor to comment on contemporary politics, social issues, and media culture. Its innovative approach and sharp wit made it a beloved series, influencing future generations of comedians and sketch shows.

This article explores the origins, format, impact, and legacy of **Not Nine O'Clock News**. Whether you're a comedy enthusiast, a media historian, or simply interested in British television history, understanding this iconic show offers insight into how satire can reflect and critique society.

Origins and Development of Not Nine O'Clock News

The Birth of the Show

1. **Conception in the 1970s:** The idea for **Not Nine O'Clock News** emerged during a period of political upheaval and social change in Britain. The creators sought to produce a comedy that would satirize the news media and public affairs.
2. **Influences:** Inspired by American satirical programs like *Saturday Night Live* and *Monty Python's Flying Circus*, the creators aimed to develop a uniquely British style of satire that combined topical humor with innovative sketches.

3. **Development:** The show was developed by ITV's Thames Television and first aired in 1979, with a sharp focus on current events, politicians, and media personalities.

Key Creators and Cast

- **Rowan Atkinson:** Known for his physical comedy and character work, Atkinson played a pivotal role in shaping the show's humor.
- **Mel Smith:** Co-creator and performer, Smith's comedic style contributed significantly to the show's tone.
- **Griff Rhys Jones:** Co-writer and performer, Rhys Jones brought a sharp wit and satirical edge to the sketches.
- **Additional Cast and Writers:** The show also featured other talented comedians and writers who contributed to its diverse humor style.

The Format and Content of Not Nine O'Clock News

Structure of the Show

Not Nine O'Clock News was structured as a series of comedic sketches, parody segments, and satirical commentaries. Each episode typically included:

- Mock news reports and anchors

- Political satire sketches
- Parodies of popular TV shows and commercials
- Character-based humor featuring recurring personas

Topical and Political Satire

The core of the show's humor was its sharp critique of political figures, policies, and media practices.

Some prominent themes included:

- Mockery of government officials and politicians
- Commentary on social issues such as class, race, and gender
- Parodies of television and advertising culture
- Exposing media sensationalism and bias

Notable Sketches and Segments

- **The Newsreader Parodies:** Imitations of popular news presenters, highlighting their biases and style.
- **Political Figures:** Comedic impressions of politicians like Margaret Thatcher and others, satirizing their policies and personalities.

- **Advertising Parodies:** Funny takes on commercials and product endorsements, often highlighting consumer culture.

Impact and Cultural Significance

Breaking New Ground in Comedy

Not Nine O'Clock News revolutionized British comedy by demonstrating that satire could be both humorous and insightful. It opened doors for future shows like *Spitting Image*, *Have I Got News for You*, and *The Day Today*.

Influence on Future Comedians and Shows

- Many comedians who appeared on or were inspired by the show went on to establish successful careers, including Rowan Atkinson, who later created *Mr. Bean*.
- The show's blend of topical humor and sketch comedy became a template for many subsequent British satire programs.

Critical Reception and Public Response

The series received critical acclaim for its clever writing and daring humor. It also sparked some controversy, as satirists often challenge societal norms and political correctness. Nonetheless, its popularity underscored a public appetite for intelligent, provocative comedy.

Legacy of Not Nine O'Clock News

Enduring Influence

Although **Not Nine O'Clock News** aired for only a few seasons, its influence persists. It set a standard for political satire and comedy sketches in the UK, inspiring countless comedians and writers.

Revivals and Reboots

While there have been no official revivals of the original series, clips, episodes, and compilations remain popular on platforms like YouTube, introducing new generations to its humor.

Recognition and Awards

The show has received various awards and nominations, emphasizing its cultural significance and the respect it garnered within the entertainment industry.

Conclusion: Why Not Nine O'Clock News Matters Today

Not Nine O'Clock News remains a landmark in British television comedy. Its fearless approach to satire, its innovative format, and its talented cast have cemented its place in entertainment history. As society continues to grapple with political and social issues, the show's legacy reminds us of the power of humor to question authority, challenge perceptions, and reflect the zeitgeist. For anyone interested in the evolution of satire or the history of British comedy, revisiting **Not Nine O'Clock News** offers valuable insights into the art of sharp, socially conscious humor.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is 'Not the Nine O'Clock News'?

'Not the Nine O'Clock News' is a British television comedy sketch show that originally aired from 1979 to 1982, known for its satirical take on current events and social issues.

Who were the main cast members of 'Not the Nine O'Clock News'?

The main cast included Mel Smith, Griff Rhys Jones, Pamela Stephenson, and Jeremy Paxman, among others, who contributed to its sharp wit and memorable sketches.

How did 'Not the Nine O'Clock News' influence British comedy?

It was influential for its satirical style, paving the way for later comedy shows like 'Spitting Image' and 'Have I Got News for You', and helped establish political satire as a staple of UK comedy.

Are there any recent revivals or reunions of 'Not the Nine O'Clock News'?

While there have been no official full revivals, cast members like Griff Rhys Jones and Pamela Stephenson have occasionally spoken about their memories of the show, and some sketches have been revisited or referenced in modern comedy.

What are some iconic sketches from 'Not the Nine O'Clock News'?

Notable sketches include parodies of political figures, satirical takes on media and pop culture, and the recurring 'News Benders' segment, which mocked current affairs.

How has 'Not the Nine O'Clock News' been received over the years?

The show is regarded as a classic of British comedy, praised for its intelligence, wit, and influence on the genre, though some humor is considered dated by modern standards.

Where can I watch episodes of 'Not the Nine O'Clock News' today?

Some episodes and clips are available on streaming platforms like YouTube, and select compilations or specials may be found on DVD or through British TV archives online.

Additional Resources

Not Nine O'Clock News: A Deep Dive into the British Satirical Landmark

In the landscape of British television comedy, few programs have left as lasting a footprint as Not Nine O'Clock News. Debuting in 1979, this satirical sketch show challenged the conventions of traditional news broadcasting while simultaneously delivering sharp social commentary. As a pioneering force in political satire, Not Nine O'Clock News not only redefined comedy in the UK but also influenced generations of satirists and comedians. This article explores the origins, impact, and legacy of the show, offering a comprehensive review suitable for media analysts, comedy enthusiasts, and cultural historians alike.

Origins and Context: The Birth of a Satirical Powerhouse

Historical and Cultural Background

The late 1970s in Britain was a period characterized by political upheaval, economic instability, and social change. The country faced strikes, inflation, and a sense of disillusionment with traditional institutions. During this tumultuous time, the BBC sought to modernize its programming and reach a younger, more politically aware audience. It was within this environment that Not Nine O'Clock News was conceived.

The show was produced by London Weekend Television (LWT), a commercial broadcaster affiliated with ITV, which allowed for a slightly different tone and approach compared to BBC's more conservative standards. The creators, including Rowan Atkinson, Mel Smith, Griff Rhys Jones, and Pamela Stephenson, aimed to produce a program that combined comedy, satire, and media critique.

Development and Format

Not Nine O'Clock News was designed as a satirical news program, parodying the conventional news magazine format. Each episode typically combined:

- Parodies of actual news reports
- Political sketches
- Cultural commentary
- Parodies of other television programs and personalities

The show distinguished itself through rapid-fire sketches, clever wordplay, and a willingness to tackle taboo subjects. Its format was innovative, blending traditional news presentation with absurdist humor and social critique.

Key Features and Stylistic Elements

Satire and Social Commentary

At its core, Not Nine O'Clock News aimed to lampoon the absurdities of contemporary society. Its sketches often highlighted:

- Political corruption and incompetence
- Media sensationalism
- Cultural stereotypes
- Social inequalities

The program didn't shy away from controversial topics, which sometimes led to protests or complaints but also established its reputation as a fearless critic of establishment figures.

Innovative Comedy Techniques

The show employed several comedic devices:

- Impersonations: Notable impressions of politicians and public figures, including Margaret Thatcher and Harold Wilson.
- Mock News Reports: Parodying the tone and style of real news broadcasts.
- Absurdist Sketches: Surreal scenarios that exposed societal hypocrisies.
- Running Gags: Memorable recurring sketches that audiences anticipated each week.

The sharpness of the humor was complemented by inventive visual gags and a fast-paced editing style, which kept viewers engaged and often surprised.

Influential Cast and Creative Team

Notable Performers

Not Nine O'Clock News launched or boosted the careers of several prominent comedians:

- Rowan Atkinson: Known for his impeccable timing and character work, Atkinson's contributions included memorable impressions and comic sketches that showcased his versatility.
- Mel Smith and Griff Rhys Jones: A comedy duo whose chemistry and timing became a staple of the show; their sketches often satirized political and social institutions.
- Pamela Stephenson: Brought a sharp wit and boldness to the ensemble, contributing to both sketches and impersonations.

Creative Impact of Writers and Producers

The creative team was responsible for establishing a tone that balanced intelligence with accessibility. Their contributions included:

- Developing parody formats that mimicked real news broadcasts.
- Crafting sketches that were both humorous and thought-provoking.
- Pushing boundaries in terms of content and social critique.

The collaborative effort resulted in a program that was both critically acclaimed and popular among viewers seeking more than mere slapstick.

Reception and Cultural Impact

Initial Reception

Not Nine O’Clock News was met with both praise and controversy upon its debut. Critics lauded its intelligence, wit, and daring approach to satire, while some conservative viewers and media figures condemned it for its irreverence and perceived disrespect towards institutions.

Nevertheless, the show quickly garnered a dedicated following, especially among younger audiences and those disillusioned with mainstream media.

Influence on British Comedy and Media

The program played a pivotal role in shaping the landscape of political satire in Britain. Its influence can be seen in:

- The rise of alternative satirical programs such as Spitting Image and later The Day Today.
- The careers of subsequent comedians like John Cleese, Rowan Atkinson, and Tony Hendra.
- The broader acceptance of satire as a legitimate form of social critique on television.

Not Nine O’Clock News demonstrated that comedy could serve as a potent tool for questioning authority and exposing societal flaws.

Legacy and Modern Relevance

Though the show concluded in 1982 after three seasons, its legacy endures. Many of its sketches and stylistic innovations continue to influence modern satire, and its cast members have gone on to significant success in comedy, television, and film.

In an era where satire remains a vital part of political discourse, revisiting Not Nine O’Clock News offers valuable insights into the evolution of comedy as a form of social commentary.

Criticism and Controversies

Contentious Moments

Despite its acclaim, the show was not without controversy. Some sketches offended specific groups or individuals, leading to complaints and debates about the boundaries of satire. Notable incidents include:

- Parodies of religious figures, which sparked protests.
- Jokes about sensitive political issues that drew criticism from authorities.

The program's willingness to confront taboo topics sometimes led to censorship or public backlash but also underscored its role as a provocative voice.

Balancing Satire and Responsibility

Critics have debated whether Not Nine O'Clock News occasionally crossed lines of taste or decency. However, supporters argue that its confrontational style was necessary to challenge complacency and stimulate social reflection.

Conclusion: A Pioneering Force in Satirical Television

Not Nine O'Clock News stands as a landmark in British television history. Its innovative approach to comedy, fearless critique of societal institutions, and influence on future satirists cement its place as a

pioneering program. While it navigated controversy and challenged norms, it ultimately expanded the boundaries of what satire could achieve on television.

Today, as we reflect on its contributions, it's clear that Not Nine O'Clock News not only provided entertainment but also fostered critical engagement with the world. Its legacy reminds us of the power of comedy to question authority, expose hypocrisy, and inspire change—a tradition that continues to resonate in contemporary satire.

In reviewing Not Nine O'Clock News, it becomes evident that the show's blend of wit, daring, and social insight marks it as more than just a comedy program; it is a significant cultural artifact that shaped the landscape of political satire and television comedy in Britain and beyond.

[Not Nine O Clock News](#)

not nine o clock news: Not! John Lloyd, Sean Hardie, 1980 A spoof magazine featuring Rowan Atkinson, Griff Rhys Jones, Mel Smith and Pamela Stephenson. It has articles covering many areas of topical interest, including stunt popes, cross-country scrabble and celebrity skateboarding, and pieces on Lady Thatcher, Ayatollah Khomeini, and HM The Queen.

not nine o clock news: Bad News (Routledge Revivals) Peter Beharrell, Howard Davis, John Eldridge, John Hewitt, Jean Hart, Gregg Philo, Paul Walton, Brian Winston, 2009-10-15 It is a commonly held belief that television news in Britain, on whatever channel, is more objective, more trustworthy, more neutral than press reporting. The illusion is exploded in this controversial study by the Glasgow University Media Group, originally published in 1976. The authors undertook an exhaustive monitoring of all television broadcasts over 6 months, from January to June 1975, with particular focus upon industrial news broadcasts, the TUC, strikes and industrial action, business and economic affairs. Their analysis showed how television news favours certain individuals by giving them more time and status. But their findings did not merely deny the neutrality of the news, they gave a new insight into the picture of industrial society that TV news constructs.

not nine o clock news: Public Policy and the Mass Media Sigrid Koch-Baumgarten, Katrin Voltmer, 2010-02-25 This book explores the extent and circumstances under which the media affects public policy; and whether the political impact of the media is confined to the public representation of politics or whether their influence goes further to also affect the substance of political decisions.

not nine o clock news: A History of Television News Parody in America Curt Hersey, 2022-07-26 In this book, Curt Hersey explores the history of U.S. media, demonstrating how news parody has entertained television audiences by satirizing political and social issues and offering a lighthearted take on broadcast news. Despite shifts away from broadcast and cable delivery, comedians like Samantha Bee, Michael Che, and John Oliver continue this tradition of delivering topical humor within a newscast format. In this history of the television news parody genre, Hersey

critically engages with the norms and presentational styles of television journalism at the time of their production. News parody has increasingly become part of the larger journalistic field, with viewers often turning to this parodic programming as a supplement and corrective to mainstream news sources. Beginning in the 1960s with the NBC program *That Was the Week That Was*, the history of news parody is analyzed decade by decade by focusing on presidential and political coverage, as well as the genre's critiques of television network and cable journalism. Case studies include *Saturday Night Live's* "Weekend Update," HBO's *Not Necessarily the News*; Comedy Central's original *Daily Show*, *The Daily Show* with Jon Stewart, and *The Colbert Report*; and HBO's *Last Week Tonight with John Oliver*. Scholars of media history, political communication, and popular culture will find this book particularly useful.

not nine o clock news: *No News is Bad News* Michael Bromley, 2014-09-11 This volume of collected essays provides a wide-ranging survey of the state of radio and television, especially the idea of public service broadcasting, and of news, current affairs and documentary programming in America, Australia, the UK and the rest of western Europe. Among the key issues it addresses are the 'dumbing down' of TV news, the infotainment factor in current affairs shows and the disappearance of the documentary. Using contemporary cases and examples - from the row over the scheduling of *News at Ten* in the UK to the creation of ABC News Online in Australia -- the essays link the performance of radio and television at the turn of the millennium with the processes of deregulation, liberalisation and digitalisation which have been evident since the 1980s. Working from a much needed and original comparative approach which encompasses complex and well-established public broadcasting in the USA as well as emerging and vulnerable participatory radio stations in El Salvador, the book sets a variety of experiences of factual radio and television programming within wider political and cultural contexts. It offers analyses of not only the 'problems' associated with news, current affairs and documentary broadcasting in an era of a declining public service ethos and the apparent triumph of the market, however. The essays also explore the potential of alternative radio and television, new forms of communication, such as the internet, and changing practices among journalists and programme makers, as well as the resilience of public broadcasting and the powers of the public to ensure that the media remain relevant and accountable. A companion text to the bestselling *Sex, Lies and Democracy: The Press and the Public*, this volume presents a multi-faceted approach to the tumultuous present and the uncertain future of news, current affairs and documentary in radio and television.

not nine o clock news: *The Churchill War Papers* Winston Churchill, Martin Gilbert, 1993 The much-anticipated third volume of Churchill's fascinating papers.

not nine o clock news: *Encyclopedia of Television* Horace Newcomb, 2014-02-03 The *Encyclopedia of Television*, second edition is the first major reference work to provide description, history, analysis, and information on more than 1100 subjects related to television in its international context. For a full list of entries, contributors, and more, visit the *Encyclopedia of Television*, 2nd edition website.

not nine o clock news: *The Chicago Legal News* , 1884

not nine o clock news: *Television News and Human Rights in the US & UK* Shawna M. Brandle, 2015-12-22 Does the CNN Effect exist? Political communications scholars have debated the influence of television news coverage on international affairs since television news began, especially in relation to the coverage of massive human rights violations. These debates have only intensified in the last 20 years, as new technologies have changed the nature of news and the news cycle. But despite frequent assertion, little research into the CNN Effect, or whether television coverage of human rights violations causes state action, exists. Bridging across the disciplines of human right studies, comparative politics, and communication studies in a way that has not been done, this book looks at television news coverage of human rights in the US and UK to answer the question of whether the CNN Effect actually exists. Examining the human rights content in television news in the US and UK yields insights to what television news producers and policy makers consider to be human rights, and what, if anything, audiences can learn about human rights from watching

television news. After reviewing 20 years of footage using three different types of content analyses of American television news broadcasts and two different types of British news broadcasts, and comparing those results with human rights rankings and print news coverage of human rights, Shawns M. Brandle concludes that despite rhetoric from both countries in support of human rights, there is not enough coverage of human rights in either country to argue that television media can spur state action on human rights issues. More simply, the violations will not be televised. A welcome and timely book presenting an important examination of human rights coverage on television news.

not nine o clock news: Terrestrial TV News in Britain Jackie Harrison, 2000-09-02

Harrison's work is timely given the assaults on public broadcasting and the challenges confronting terrestrial television news production and output in the late 20th century.

not nine o clock news: City news notes and queries [afterw.] Manchester notes and queries. Ed. by J.H. Nodal. Vol.1-8 [issued in 33 pt. Wanting pt.1,5]. Manchester city news, 1880

not nine o clock news: More Bad News (Routledge Revivals) Peter Beharrell, Howard Davis, John Eldridge, John Hewitt, Jean Hart, Gregg Philo, Paul Walton, Brian Winston, 2009-10-15 First published in 1980, More Bad News is the Second Volume in the research findings of the Glasgow University Media Group. It develops the analytic findings and methods of the first volume Bad News through a series of Case Studies of Television News Coverage, and argues that much of what passes as balanced and factual news reporting is produced from a highly partial viewpoint. Focusing on the British economy in crisis, and its thematic linkage with the Social Contract during the first four months of 1975, the book deals with three main levels of activity: the story, the language and the visuals. As the book unpacks each level of routine news coverage a picture emerges which has the surface appearance of neutrality and balance but is in fact highly partial and restricted

not nine o clock news: Parliamentary Debates New Zealand. Parliament, 1948

not nine o clock news: Political Communications John Bartle, Ivor Crewe, Brian Gosschalk, 2012-11-12 The dialogue conducted via the press, television, advertising and the opinion polls between politicians and the people in the 1997 campaign and its run-up is analyzed here. Special attention is paid to the innovations and changes that marked the 1997 campaign.

not nine o clock news: The Circuit of Mass Communication David Miller, Jenny Kitzinger, Peter Beharrell, 1998-01-29 This book moves beyond the narrow focus of much of the work on media and cultural studies to examine the whole process of interaction between the media and the social world. Rejecting approaches which focus only on ownership or discourse or audience reception, this new book from the Glasgow Media Group, examines: promotional strategies; media production; representation and audience responses; as well as broader impacts on policy, culture and society. Using a detailed analysis of the struggle over representation during the AIDS crisis as point of departure, The Circuit of Mass Communication reveals the power of the media to influence public opinion, and the complex interaction between media coverage, audience response and contemporary power relations. Based on extensive empirical research, this book offers a range of challenging insights on media power, active audiences and moral panics.

not nine o clock news: Encyclopedia of Television Series, Pilots and Specials Vincent Terrace, 1985

not nine o clock news: Television Mythologies Len Masterman, 2005-06-29 A collection of essays on television which focuses on the previewers, the TV magazines, quiz shows, commercial breaks, Top of the Pops, One Man and His Dog, personalities, politicians and continuity announcers.

not nine o clock news: Illustrated London News , 1843

not nine o clock news: The American Architect and Building News , 1889

not nine o clock news: John Surratt Frederick Hatch, 2016-07-14 John Harrison Surratt, Jr., was a courier for the Confederate Secret Service and the only one of John Wilkes Booth's co-conspirators in the Lincoln assassination plot to escape hanging by the U.S. government. Fleeing vengeful authorities in the wake of the assassination, Surratt traveled through three continents and served in the Papal Zouaves before being arrested in Egypt. His 1867 trial was a sensation, ending

in a hung jury. Upon his release, he sought a quiet life away from the spotlight but privately suffered the consequences of his acts. The most complete study of Surratt's life to date, this book addresses many unanswered questions and considers theories that have received little attention.

Related to not nine o clock news

NOT Definition & Meaning - Merriam-Webster The meaning of NOT is —used as a function word to make negative a group of words or a word. How to use not in a sentence

NOT | English meaning - Cambridge Dictionary Not is one of the most common words we use to indicate negation. It is often shortened to n't and joined to an auxiliary verb or modal verb: Not in negative statements (She hasn't , I did

NOT Definition & Meaning | Not definition: (used to express negation, denial, refusal, or prohibition).. See examples of NOT used in a sentence

Not - definition of not by The Free Dictionary In conversation, when not is used after be, have, do, or a modal, it is not usually pronounced in full. When you write down what someone says, you usually represent not as n't and add it to

NOT definition and meaning | Collins English Dictionary You use not when you are contrasting something that is true with something that is untrue. You use this especially to indicate that people might think that the untrue statement is true

not - Dictionary of English (used before a singular count noun) not even one (expressing emphasis about the lack of something):[~ + a/one + noun] He had not a penny to his name. Not a single missile got

What does NOT mean? - Definitions for NOT Not is a term used to indicate the opposite or negation of something. It is a word used to express the absence, rejection, or denial of a particular concept, action, or state

No vs. Not: What's the Difference? - Grammarly Understanding the nuances between no and not is essential for clear communication. No is often used to indicate a straightforward denial, refusal, or the absence of something, whereas not is

NOT - Meaning & Translations | Collins English Dictionary Master the word "NOT" in English: definitions, translations, synonyms, pronunciations, examples, and grammar insights - all in one complete resource

Not - Grammar - Cambridge Dictionary Not is one of the most common words we use to indicate negation. It is often shortened to n't and joined to an auxiliary verb or modal verb: She's not coming with us. I didn't see what

NOT Definition & Meaning - Merriam-Webster The meaning of NOT is —used as a function word to make negative a group of words or a word. How to use not in a sentence

NOT | English meaning - Cambridge Dictionary Not is one of the most common words we use to indicate negation. It is often shortened to n't and joined to an auxiliary verb or modal verb: Not in negative statements (She hasn't , I did

NOT Definition & Meaning | Not definition: (used to express negation, denial, refusal, or prohibition).. See examples of NOT used in a sentence

Not - definition of not by The Free Dictionary In conversation, when not is used after be, have, do, or a modal, it is not usually pronounced in full. When you write down what someone says, you usually represent not as n't and add it to

NOT definition and meaning | Collins English Dictionary You use not when you are contrasting something that is true with something that is untrue. You use this especially to indicate that people might think that the untrue statement is true

not - Dictionary of English (used before a singular count noun) not even one (expressing emphasis about the lack of something):[~ + a/one + noun] He had not a penny to his name. Not a single missile got

What does NOT mean? - Definitions for NOT Not is a term used to indicate the opposite or negation of something. It is a word used to express the absence, rejection, or denial of a particular

concept, action, or state

No vs. Not: What's the Difference? - Grammarly Understanding the nuances between no and not is essential for clear communication. No is often used to indicate a straightforward denial, refusal, or the absence of something, whereas not is

NOT - Meaning & Translations | Collins English Dictionary Master the word "NOT" in English: definitions, translations, synonyms, pronunciations, examples, and grammar insights - all in one complete resource

Not - Grammar - Cambridge Dictionary Not is one of the most common words we use to indicate negation. It is often shortened to n't and joined to an auxiliary verb or modal verb: She's not coming with us. I didn't see what

Related Articles

- [alan watts the book on the taboo](#)
- [throne of glass hardcover box set](#)
- [university physics and modern physics](#)

[Back to Home](#)