The "Other War": Images of the second world war in service comedies


Abstract/Description

This chapter argues, following Angus Calder, that there was an official line of commemoration of the Second World War: a mythic construction that celebrated heroism, courage, resourcefulness, loyalty and patriotism. It valorised the virtues of the responsible middle class and of officers. Drawing on a range of cultural sources, The chapter concentrates on a counter-hegemonic construction: the 'other war' - a war of skivers, shirkers and petty criminals out for individual gain who displayed the reverse qualities to those lauded in the official myth. The mode for this alternative construction was comedy, which could present this disturbing and unsettling construction under the guise of 'harmless fun'. The chapter focuses on a group of service comedies made from 1945-65 that celebrated the wit, resourcefulness and bloodymindedness of the working-class ordinary serviceman and woman which were highly popular and so spoke to a deep-seated irreverence in Britsh culture.
WWII In Colour documents World War 2 as the troops saw it - in full colour. The documentary includes colour footage of Adolf Hitler and Eva Braun, D-Day, a B-17 bombing raid over Germany, the Allied advance into France and Italy, the liberation of Dachau, and much more. This three-hour digitally remastered video presents a rarely-seen picture of the war. The documentary includes colour footage of Adolf Hitler and Eva Braun, D-Day, a B-17 bombing raid over Germany, the Allied advance into France and Italy, the liberation of Dachau, and much more. This documentary looks at the clampdown on satire and other undesirable comedians as the Third Reich grew in power. The plight of specific groups (or “art”) tends to get lost in the scale of the much bigger human cost of WWII. Watch Now.