

BEHIND THE LAUGHS

CULTURE AND ECONOMIC LIFE

EDITORS

Frederick Wherry

Jennifer C. Lena

Greta Hsu

EDITORIAL BOARD

Gabriel Abend

Michel Anteby

Nina Bandelj

Shyon Baumann

Katherine Chen

Nigel Dodd

Amir Goldberg

David Grazian

Wendy Griswold

Brayden King

Charles Kirschbaum

Omar Lizardo

Bill Maurer

Elizabeth Pontikes

Gabriel Rossman

Lyn Spillman

Klaus Weber

Christine Williams

Viviana Zelizer

BEHIND THE LAUGHS

Community and Inequality in Comedy

MICHAEL P. JEFFRIES

STANFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
STANFORD, CALIFORNIA

Stanford University Press
Stanford, California

© 2017 by the Board of Trustees of the Leland Stanford Junior University.
All rights reserved.

No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system without the prior written permission of Stanford University Press.

Printed in the United States of America on acid-free, archival-quality paper
Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Jeffries, Michael P., author.

Title: Behind the laughs : community and inequality in comedy / Michael P. Jeffries.

Other titles: Culture and economic life.

Description: Stanford, California : Stanford University Press, 2017. | Series: Culture and economic life | Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2017008538 (print) | LCCN 2017010957 (ebook) | ISBN 9780804798082 (cloth : alk. paper) | ISBN 9781503602908 (pbk. : alk. paper) | ISBN 9781503602977 (e-book)

Subjects: LCSH: Comedians—United States—Social conditions. | Comedy—Social aspects—United States. | Group identity—United States. | Racism—United States. | Sexism—United States.

Classification: LCC PN2272 .J44 2017 (print) | LCC PN2272 (ebook) | DDC 792.7/60973—dc23
LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2017008538>

Cover photo: Ghost light on an empty stage. Jon Ellwood, via Wikimedia Commons.

Cover designer: Rob Ehle

Typeset by Motto Publishing Services in 10/14 Minion Pro

For Keira and Alex

This page intentionally left blank