## RECONFIGURING THE 'UNRULY' WOMAN IN BRITISH TV COMEDY

SO HOW

CAN WE

DEFINE

THE

'UNRULY'

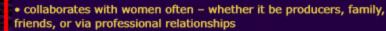
WOMAN

## 'UNRULINESS' THEN

- . TV comedy has typically been androcentric and Americentric, but, in the 2010s, British women such as Michaela Coel and Phoebe Waller-Bridge have been transforming the media landscape in writing and/or performing television comedy that has had a lasting impact on the cultural imagination.
- . Such women are typically described as 'unruly,' a term coined by Kathleen Rowe to outline how women in comedy are deemed excessive - too fat, too loud, too old - as well as being associated with dirt, liminality, and taboo via their grotesque bodies (1995). She cites Roseanne Barr and Miss Piggy as prime examples of 'unruly' women.

## 'UNRULINESS' NOW

In the wake of these changes, I have identified key features of the contemporary 'unruly' woman in Britain. She:



· is treated ambivalently by critics/audiences and often discussed in terms of class: a comic British tradition that remains significant to contemporary contexts

- . is both 'unruly' in a traditional sense 'too loud,' 'too much,' and 'over the top' in her texts, but also 'fastidious' in talking back to the industry, creating tightly woven/crafted TV series, and navigating the political landscape with care
- · can no longer be defined as simply 'unruly' in the shift from second wave to fourth wave feminism - or reduced to a 'grotesque' body. A blanket application of 'unruliness' is no longer fruitful in the contemporary media landscape concerned with intersectionality

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