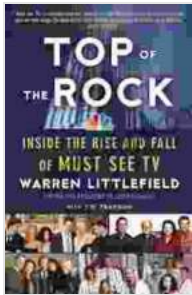


# Inside the Rise and Fall of Must-See TV



## Top of the Rock: Inside the Rise and Fall of Must See

TV by Warren Littlefield

★★★★☆ 4.4 out of 5

Language : English  
File size : 12608 KB  
Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 338 pages



Must-See TV was a cultural phenomenon that dominated television in the 1980s and 1990s. Every Thursday night, millions of Americans tuned in to NBC to watch a lineup of must-see comedies that defined an era: *The Cosby Show*, *Family Ties*, *Cheers*, *Seinfeld*, *Friends*, and *ER*. These shows were not just popular; they were cultural touchstones that shaped the way we talk, think, and live.

But how did Must-See TV come to be? And why did it eventually decline? In his new book, *Inside the Rise and Fall of Must-See TV*, author Michael Katz tells the inside story of this groundbreaking era in television history.

Katz, a former NBC executive, has interviewed dozens of key players involved in Must-See TV, including Brandon Tartikoff, the legendary NBC programming chief who created the lineup; Marcy Carsey and Tom Werner,

the producers behind *The Cosby Show* and *Roseanne*; and Jerry Seinfeld, Julia Louis-Dreyfus, and Jason Alexander, the stars of *Seinfeld*.

## **The Rise of Must-See TV**

Must-See TV was born out of a combination of factors:

1. **The rise of cable TV.** In the early 1980s, cable TV was starting to take off, and NBC was losing viewers to cable networks like MTV and CNN. Tartikoff realized that he needed to create a lineup of shows that would keep viewers from switching channels.
2. **The success of *The Cosby Show*.** In 1984, NBC launched *The Cosby Show*, a sitcom about an upper-middle-class African American family. The show was an instant hit, and it helped to change the face of American television.
3. **Tartikoff's programming genius.** Tartikoff was a brilliant programmer who had a knack for spotting hits. He knew that viewers wanted to watch shows that were funny, heartwarming, and relatable. And he knew how to create a lineup of shows that would complement each other.



3. **The aging of Must-See TV's stars.** The stars of Must-See TV's shows were getting older, and their shows were starting to feel dated.

By the mid-1990s, Must-See TV was over. NBC's ratings had declined, and its shows were no longer the cultural touchstones they once were.

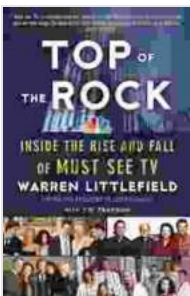
## The Legacy of Must-See TV

Even though Must-See TV is gone, its legacy lives on. The shows that aired during that era remain some of the most popular and beloved sitcoms of all time. And the lessons that Tartikoff learned about programming continue to be used by television executives today.

Katz's book, *Inside the Rise and Fall of Must-See TV*, is a fascinating and insightful look at one of the most important eras in television history. It's a must-read for anyone who loves television or who wants to learn more about the business of show business.

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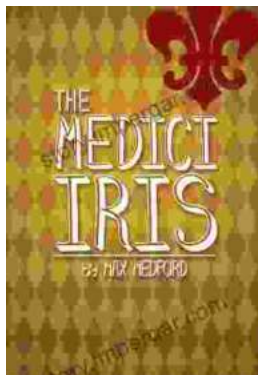
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