CONTENTS

List of Plates ix
Acknowledgements xi
1 Introduction 1
2 History, Cycles, and Society 25
3 Thinking Seriously About Laughter and Romance 67
4 Trouble in Paradise (1932): What is the Trouble in Paradise? 84
5 His Girl Friday (1940): Jailbreak! 96
6 The Miracle of Morgan’s Creek (1944): The Home Front Romantic Comedy 106
7 Adam’s Rib (1949): Anatomy Lesson 117
8 Some Like It Hot (1959): Riding Sidesaddle 129
9 The Graduate (1967): Counter-Conventions and Cultural Change 139
10 Annie Hall (1977): The Trials of Partnership 150
11 When Harry Met Sally (1989): Friendship, Sex, and Courtship 160
12 There’s Something About Mary (1998): Parody and the Grotesque 171