

Mr bean

Experience, Human Nature



Mr Bean is a series of fourteen shows based around the character of Mr Bean, a grown man who seems to have been born yesterday. The character is played by the versatile comedic star Rowan Atkinson. The programmes were filmed between 1990 and 1995, with the franchise also spawning a number of short specials, an cartoon version, and two feature-length films. Bean is supposedly a grown man but is outstandingly childish; his juvenile behaviour brings him into trouble with alarming regularity.

He bumbles along in life with great abandon and seems oblivious to the havoc he causes. Moreover, in a childish way, everything is exciting, and everything must be played with. Even (especially?) those things that he shouldn't, like the Christmas displays in Harrods! Whilst he rarely speaks (visual humour being the main strength of this sitcom), his occasional vocal offerings expose his voice to be as socially unacceptable as his behaviour, and as amusing as his trademark tweed blazer.

Bean's residence alters between different episodes, but he never progresses beyond a small, one-or-two room grubby flat, which he shares with his sole friend; Teddy, his teddy bear, who rather worryingly Bean seems to think can communicate with him! He also has a long-term (and long-suffering) girlfriend, Irma Gobb (although whether or not he understands the concepts of romance and intimacy is uncertain).

Other people he encounters, he tends to quickly worry with his eccentric behaviour. Indeed, the title sequence might suggest that he's an extra-terrestrial; he finds it difficult to cope with everyday situations, and seems to be learning how to live life each time he does something which to most people would be quite simple (like sit an exam; go to church; stuff a turkey

etc.). The fact that his presence disturbs TV reception would support this theory.

The thing which makes Bean so worrying to those who encounter him, and so intriguing and hilarious to we the viewers, is that it's very difficult to work out who he actually is; it could, of course, just be that he lacks social skills, but we don't know what actually motivates him; what his hopes and dreams and fears are; what makes him tick. The fascination as we watch this peculiar specimen go about his daily existence is often captivating and constantly hilarious.