

# Saturday Night Live

**Katie Whalen and Elizabeth Kaufmann**

# In The Beginning...

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- SNL was originally created to fill air time because Johnny Carson refused to air reruns of his show
- NBC found a rising producer, Lorne Michaels, who created Saturday Night Live, (Originally titled Saturday Night for copyright reasons)
- Michaels originally took writers from National Lampoon and the West Coast Comedy club
- Wanted to use local NYC comedians

# SNL Samurai Skit

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Original SNL skit

<https://www.nbc.com/saturday-night-live/video/samurai-delicatessen/n8627>

# Show Details

- The first episode aired on October 11th, 1975 at 11:30 pm and a new episode aired each week which still continues today
- Its current head writers are Rob Klein and Bryan Tucker
- SNL is aired on NBC
- Original cast was made up of Chevy Chase, Gilda Radner, Jane Curtin, Bill Murray, Laraine Newman, Dan Aykroyd, John Belushi and Garrett Morris
- However the cast is frequently changed as the seasons pass. SNL has been the career starter for stars such as Tina Fey, Will Ferrell, Chris Rock, Adam Sandler, Eddie Murphy, Kristen Wiig, Steve Martin, Mike Meyers, Jimmy Fallon and Amy Poehler

# Show Details Cont.

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- SNL has the same format today as it did when it first aired.
  - A cold open (i.e. a monologue from the host)
  - Series of skits
  - First musical act
  - Skits/Weekend Update
  - 2nd Musical performance
  - A few more skits
- SNL resurrected the appeal of variety shows which everyone could find something they enjoyed

# Section from an Early Weekend Update

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(POINT/COUNTERPOINT)

<https://www.nbc.com/saturday-night-live/video/point-counterpoint-lee-marvin-and-michelle-triola/2846665>

# Social Influence

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- At the time it aired it was an instant hit with the people and still is. In 2002 it was ranked as one of the 50 greatest shows of all time by the TV Guide and has won over 45 Emmys
- At the time it started, politics were a mess with things like the Vietnam war, Watergate and the Cold WarSNL made a joke out of Politics which the public greatly enjoyed. This gave them a huge influence on the political spectrum. For example, when Ford tripped getting out of an airplane they made such a mockery out of Ford that everyone looked to Jimmy Carter instead

# Ford Skit

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<https://screen.yahoo.com/sn1-awards-skits/betty-white-monologue-facebook-000000994.html>



# Social Influence Cont.

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- The target audience was originally the people who had been growing up in the radical 60's and through the seventies living through Vietnam, Watergate, Civil Rights - The idea was to make the show edgy and to push the boundaries
- Most of today's fans weren't around when the show started but fans from the first season who are still sticking around now are no longer in the target demo
- The target audience now is everyone from early teen to a young senior as they have set the standard for some of the most iconic comedy

# One of the Most Iconic Skits

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<https://screen.yahoo.com/snl-iconic-skits/more-cowbell-174128899.html>