

From Happy Homemaker
to Desperate Housewives
MOTHERHOOD AND POPULAR TELEVISION

Rebecca Feasey



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Description

A comprehensive and accessible introduction to key debates concerning the representations of motherhood and the maternal role in contemporary television programming.

From Happy Homemaker to Desperate Housewives: Motherhood and Popular Television is a comprehensive and accessible introduction to key debates concerning the representations of motherhood, motherwork and the maternal role in contemporary television programming. The volume looks at the construction of motherhood in the ostensibly female genre of soap opera; the mother as housewife in the domestic situation comedy; deviant, desiring and delinquent motherwork in the teen drama; the single working mother in the contemporary dramedy; the fragile and failing mother of reality parenting television; the serene and selfless celebrity motherhood profile; and the new mother in reality pregnancy and childbirth television. **Motherhood and Popular Television** examines the depiction of motherhood in this wide range of popular television genres in order to illustrate how the maternal role is being constructed, circulated and interrogated in contemporary factual and fictional programming, paying particular attention to the ways in which such images can be seen to challenge or conform to the ideal image of the 'good' mother that dominates the contemporary cultural landscape.

- Offers a clear and comprehensive overview of existing theoretical debates concerning the representations of motherhood on popular television.
- Explores various representations of motherhood across a wide range of factual and fictional television genres.
- Draws on a broad range of today's most critically and commercially successful television programmes in order to make the volume both accessible and enjoyable for the reader.

Readership: The book will be useful as a course text for students on television and screen studies programmes, and as supplementary reading for film studies, media communications, cultural theory and gender studies.

Contents

1. Introduction: Theorising Motherhood on the Small Screen; 2. Soap Opera: Challenging the 'Good' Mother Stereotype; 3. Situation Comedy: the (Un)Funny Mummy Wars; 4. Teen Drama: Absent, Inept and Intoxicated Mothers; 5. Dramedy: Struggling, Sexual and Sisterly Single Mothers; 6. Reality Parenting Programming: Fragile, Failing and Ineffectual Mothers; 7. Celebrity Reality Television: Maintaining the 'Yummy Mummy' Profile; 8. Factual Television:

About the Author

Rebecca Feasey is Senior Lecturer in Film and Media Communications at Bath Spa University, UK.

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