



Motherhood and Representation: The Mother in Popular Culture and Melodrama

E. Ann Kaplan

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From novels of the nineteenth century to films of the 1990s, American culture, abounds with images of white, middle-class mothers. In *Motherhood and Representation*, E. Ann Kaplan considers how the mother appears in three related spheres: the historical, in which she charts changing representations of the mother from 1830 to the postmodernist present; the psychoanalytic, which discusses theories of the mother from Freud to Lacan and the French Feminists; and the mother as she is figured in cultural representations: in literary and film texts such as *East Lynne*, *Marnie* and *the The Handmaid's Tale*, as well as in journalism and popular manuals on motherhood. Kaplan's analysis identifies two dominant paradigms of the mother as 'Angel' and 'Witch', and charts the contesting and often contradictory discourses of the mother in present-day America.

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