



Rape on Prime Time: Television, Masculinity, and Sexual Violence (Feminist Cultural Studies, the Media, and Political Culture)

Lisa M. Cuklanz

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Depictions of rape on television have evolved dramatically, from hard-boiled stories about male detectives to more insightful shows focusing on rape victims. *Rape on Prime Time* is the first book to examine those changing depictions of rape.

Lisa M. Cuklanz reveals that prime-time television programs during the 1970s—usually detective shows—reflected traditional ideas that "real" rape is perpetrated by brutal strangers upon passive victims. Beginning in 1980, depictions of rape began to include attacks by known assailants, and victims began to address their feelings. By 1990, scripts portrayed date and marital rape and paid greater attention to the trial process, reflecting legal reformers' concerns.

While previous studies have examined one series or genre, Cuklanz examines programs as dissimilar as *Barney Miller*, *Dallas*, *The Cosby Show*, and *Quincy*. She outlines the "basic plot" for rape episodes, then traces the historical development of rape themes. In each chapter she includes close analyses of episodes that add depth to findings derived from scripts and taped episodes.

Rape on Prime Time provides important insight into the social construction of rape in mainstream mass media since the inception of rape law reform in 1974.



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