



# **Psychosocial Explorations of Film and Television Viewing: Ordinary Audience (Studies in the Psychosocial)**

*Jo Whitehouse-Hart*

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Most people have, at some point in their lives, experienced powerful, often strange and disconcerting, responses to films and television programmes of which they cannot always make sense. *Psychosocial Explorations of Film and Television Viewing* takes as its subject the seemingly mundane and everyday activity of watching television and films in the home, arguing that the affective and emotional experiences generated for audiences make this activity in fact *extraordinary*. Based on a fascinating empirical study of audiences' "favourite" films and television programmes, the book unravels the biographical and emotional intensity of viewing, from a psychosocial perspective.

Drawing on insights from psychoanalysis including the work of Sigmund Freud, Melanie Klein, Donald Winnicott, Wilfred Bion and Christopher Bollas, and sociological theorists such as Pierre Bourdieu, the book argues that viewing is a psychosocial activity which must consider the relationships and processes between "inner" and "outer" worlds. Important ideas from media audience research are revisited, to show that families and biographical experiences influence audience identification, interpretation and uses of television. The in-depth case studies show that whilst viewing can be pleasurable, in the conventional sense of enjoyment, it can also be anxiety-provoking and contradictory. Employing psychoanalytic methods for social and cultural research, this book is an important contribution to Media Studies, Film Studies, Cultural Studies and Psychosocial Studies.

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