



The Literary Mother: Essays on Representations of Maternity and Child Care

Susan C. Staub

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The essays in this book examine the ideology of motherhood in British and American literature from the 16th to the 21st centuries. This book looks at the institution of motherhood, that is, at various cultural interpretations and manipulations of maternity. Presenting mothers whose roles are often empowering yet confining, these essays scrutinize three distinct aspects of motherhood: its social and cultural construction; the significance of maternal absence; and, finally, its representation as an agent of social change. Literary works examined include William Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis*; Daniel Defoe's *Roxana*; John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*; Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury*; Charles Dickens' *Dombey and Son*; Harriet Jacobs' *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*; Dorothy Leigh's *The Mother's Blessing*; and W.S. Penn's *Killing Time with Strangers*, among others.

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