

All Talk: The Talkshow in Media Culture (Culture And The Moving Image) PDF



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All Talk: The Talkshow in Media Culture (Culture And The Moving Image) by Wayne Munson ISBN 1566391946

Wayne Munson examines the talkshow as a cultural form whose curious productivity has become vital to America's image economy. As the very name suggests, the talkshow is both interpersonal exchange and mediated spectacle. Its range of topics defies classification: from the sensational and bizarre, to the conventional and the advisory, to politics and world affairs. Munson grapples with the sense and nonsense of the talkshow, particularly its audience participation and its construction of knowledge.

This hybrid genre includes the news/talk "magazine," celebrity chat, sports talk, psychotalk, public

affairs forum, talk/service program, and call-in interview show. All share characteristics of lucidity and contradiction—the hallmarks of postmodernity—and it is this postmodern identity that Munson examines and links to mass and popular culture, the public sphere, and contemporary political economy.

Munson takes a close look at the talkshow's history, programs, production methods, and the "talk" *about* it that pervades media culture—the press, broadcasting, and Hollywood. He analyzes individual shows such as "Geraldo," "The Morton Downey Show," "The McLaughlin Group," and radio call-in "squawk" programs, as well as movies such as *Talk Radio* and *The King of Comedy* that investigate the talkshow's peculiar status. Munson also examines such events as the political organizing of talkhosts and their role in the antitax and anti-incumbency groundswells of the 1990s. In so doing, Munson demonstrates how "infotainment" is rooted in a deliberate uncertainty. The ultimate parasitic media form, the talkshow promiscuously indulges in—and even celebrated—its dependencies and contradictions. It "works" by "playing" with boundaries and identities to personalize the political and politicize the personal. Arguing that the talkshow's form and host are productively ill-defined, Munson asks whether the genre is a degradation of public life or part of a new, revitalized public sphere in which audiences are finally and fully "heard" through interactive.

All Talk: The Talkshow in Media Culture (Culture And The Moving Image) Review

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