



Knock Me Up, Knock Me Down: Images of Pregnancy in Hollywood Films

Kelly Oliver

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No longer is pregnancy a repulsive or shameful condition in Hollywood films, but an attractive attribute, often enhancing the romantic or comedic storyline of a female character. Kelly Oliver investigates this curious shift and its reflection of changing attitudes toward women's roles in reproduction and the family. Not all representations signify progress. Oliver finds that in many pregnancy films, our anxieties over modern reproductive practices and technologies are made manifest, and in some cases perpetuate conventions curtailing women's freedom. Reading such films as *Where the Heart Is* (2000), *Riding in Cars with Boys* (2001), *Palindromes* (2004), *Saved!* (2004), *Quinceañera* (2006), *Children of Men* (2006), *Knocked Up* (2007), *Juno* (2007), *Baby Mama* (2008), *Away We Go* (2009), *Precious* (2009), *The Back-up Plan* (2010), *Due Date* (2010), and *Twilight: Breaking Dawn* (2011), Oliver investigates pregnancy as a vehicle for romance, a political issue of "choice," a representation of the hosting of "others," a prism for fears of miscegenation, and a screen for modern technological anxieties.



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