



The Parlour and the Suburb: Domestic Identities, Class, Femininity and Modernity

Judy Giles

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Classic accounts of modernity have generally ignored or marginalized women, relegating them to the private sphere of home, sexuality, and personal relationships. *The Parlour and the Suburb* argues, however, that home and private life have been significant in the formation of modern feminine identities. Twentieth-century women's studies tend to focus on middle-class women, but Giles includes working-class women throughout the book. Topics covered include domestic service, suburbia, consumption practices, and the wartime figure of the housewife. The author makes excellent use of oral history, women's magazines, radio, film, and newspapers to construct a readable narrative. *The Parlour and the Suburb* subverts the conventional equation of domesticity with tradition, showing how domestically minded women could also be modern. The result is a re-evaluation of women's roles in the private sphere.

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