



Talking Trash: The Cultural Politics of Daytime TV Talk Shows

By Julie Manga

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When *The Phil Donahue Show* topped the ratings in 1979, it ushered in a new era in daytime television. Mixing controversial social issues, light topics, and audience participation, it created a new genre, one that is still flourishing, despite being harshly criticized, over two decades later. Now, the daytime TV landscape is littered with talk shows. But why do people watch these shows? How do they make sense of them? And how do these shows affect their viewers' sense of what constitutes appropriate public debate?

In **Talking Trash**, Julie Engel Manga offers a fascinating exploration of these questions and reveals the wide range of reasons viewers are drawn to “trash talk.” Focusing on such shows as *Oprah!*, *Jerry Springer*, *Ricki Lake*, *Jenny Jones*, and *Maury Povich*, and drawing upon interviews with women who watch these shows, **Talking Trash** is the first examination of the talk show phenomenon from the viewers’ perspective. In taking this approach, Manga is able to understand what talk shows mean to the women who watch them. And by refusing to judge either the shows or their viewers as good or bad, she is able to grasp how viewers relate to these shows-as escape, entertainment, uninhibited public discourse, or an accurate reflection of their own hardships and heartaches. Manga concludes that while the form of “trash-talk” shows may be relatively new, the socio-cultural experience they embody has been with us for a long time.

Absorbing, entertaining, and keenly perceptive, **Talking Trash** illuminates the complex viewer response to “trash talk” and examines the cultural politics surrounding this wildly controversial popular phenomenon.

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Editorial Review

Review

“An important contribution to our understanding of the talkshow genre and its cultural political function.”
-*American Journal of Sociology*

“Provides a stunningly effective analysis of the diverse ways in which viewers make sense of the contentious culture of TV talk shows. The result is a first-rate sociological contribution to the study of popular culture, mass media, and public discourse. Attentive to both personal experience and complex vectors of power, Talking Trash involves a subtle and challenging interpretation of the transgressive lure, structural limitations, and utopian yearnings underlying this controversial realm of televisionary entertainment.”
-Stephen J. Pfohl, author of *Images of Deviance and Social Control: A Sociological History*

“A cogent analysis of our culture.”
-*The Times*

“A wide-ranging exploration of some key theoretical issues in cultural sociology centering on subjectivity, sense-making, and cultural hierarchy.”
-*Contemporary Sociology*

About the Author

Julie Engel Manga is a Senior Research Associate at The Center for Corporate Citizenship at Boston College.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Margaret Clayton:

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young ones, there are many kinds of book which exist now. The authors these days always try to improve their ability in writing, they also doing some research before they write for their book. One of them is this Talking Trash: The Cultural Politics of Daytime TV Talk Shows.

Phyllis Kelly:

The book with title Talking Trash: The Cultural Politics of Daytime TV Talk Shows possesses a lot of information that you can find out it. You can get a lot of advantage after read this book. That book exist new knowledge the information that exist in this guide represented the condition of the world right now. That is important to you to find out how the improvement of the world. This book will bring you inside new era of the internationalization. You can read the e-book on your smart phone, so you can read the item anywhere you want.

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