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“And then she met this moron”: Gender Narratives in Addiction-Themed Reality Television [poster]

University of Northern Iowa. Women's and Gender Studies Program

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Reality television shows centered around the theme of addiction have become a popular form of TV entertainment. Professor Baker presents findings from a content analysis of shows like A&E’s Intervention and VH-1’s Dr. Drew’s Celebrity Rehab, in an attempt to illustrate how these shows reinforce gender stereotypes of addiction. In her research, Professor Baker found that women are portrayed as passive vessels filled with drugs, while men are portrayed as active seekers of drugs. Additionally, women are presented as coping with past victimization, while men are presented as struggling with success in their lives.