



Pregnant with the Stars: Watching and Wanting the Celebrity Baby Bump (The Cultural Lives of Law)

Renée Cramer

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"Check out that baby bump!" Online and print magazines, television shows, and personal blogs are awash with gossip and speculation about pregnant celebrities. What drives our cultural obsession with celebrity baby bumps? *Pregnant with the Stars* examines the American fascination with, and judgment of, celebrity pregnancy, and exposes how our seemingly innocent interest in "baby bumps" actually reinforces troubling standards about femininity, race, and class, while increasing the surveillance and regulation of all women in our society.

This book charts how the American understanding of pregnancy has evolved by examining pop culture coverage of the pregnant celebrity body. Investigating and comparing the media coverage of pregnant celebrities, including Jennifer Garner, Angelina Jolie, Beyoncé Knowles, Kristen Bell, M.I.A., Jodie Foster, and Mila Kunis, Renée Cramer shows us how women are categorized and defined by their pregnancies. Their stories provide a paparazzi-sized lens through which we can interpret a complex set of social and legal regulations of pregnant women.

Cramer exposes how cultural ideas like the "rockin' post-baby body" are not only unattainable; they are a means of social control. Combining cultural and legal analysis, *Pregnant with the Stars* uncovers a world where pregnant celebrities are governed and controlled alongside the recent, and troubling, proliferation of restrictive laws aimed at women in the realm of reproductive justice and freedom. Cramer asks each reader and cultural consumer to recognize that the seeing, judging, and discussion of the "baby bump" isn't merely frivolous celebrity gossip—it is an act of surveillance, commodification, and control.

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