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"Blessed be the Fruit"- Female Representation in The Handmaids Tale Season 1

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“Blessed be the Fruit” – Female Representation in *The Handmaid’s Tale* Season 1

Abstract: The show *The Handmaid’s Tale* on the television network Hulu, created by Bruce Miller, depicts the struggle of a woman named June who is serving as a handmaid to a powerful commander and his wife to bear their child. This society is a futuristic version in which fertility and birth rates have plummeted. They have an extreme, twisted version of gender norms. A woman’s only purpose is to bear children. Fertile women are forced to carry children for powerful couples, their only worth is being fertile. In this project I will present how the show, specifically focusing on the first season, depicts women and men in this society, and how it uses and demeans women.



This image shows who they force June, or **Offred** to be, versus who she really is

The women in Gilead can not express individuality or autonomy, only their fertility can remain

This show demonstrates men’s desired control over women’s bodies, even though in an exaggerated format. Men are powerful, women are submissive

The handmaid’s are not the only women being exploited in this series, women known as “**Aunts**” are brainwashed into training and forcing the handmaids into submission

Handmaids must participate in the “**Ceremony**”, where she lays between the husband and wife to conceive “their” child. Failure to conceive is strictly the handmaids fault

The “**Wives**”, who are the women married to powerful men, do not have much more freedom, they are the property of their husbands

Women can also be forced to be “**Jezabels**”, women who are used by powerful Commanders for sex

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