

ABSTRACT

THESIS: The State of Affairs of Fictional Political Women: A Critical Rhetorical Analysis of the Television Series Madam Secretary

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This thesis examines the political drama “Madam Secretary.” I analyze the series from a critical rhetorical perspective, looking at how the series portrayed leadership, and how the lead character, Elisabeth McCord, negotiated her public and private life. Through this analysis, I argue that “Madam Secretary” presents a new model for a fictional political woman, as it meshes the public and private spheres, and privileges maternal thinking as a foreign policy strategy.