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Mama's Boy: Momism and Homophobia in Postwar American Culture

Roel van den Oever

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In postwar America, sociologists and psychiatrists held that a mother who was over-affectionate or too-distant could hurt her son's development, resulting in conditions such as asthma, autism, and schizophrenia. Deemed worst of all was a gay son, since the country was in the midst of Senator Joseph McCarthy's witch-hunt against communists and homosexuals alike.

This book examines the cultural representation of Momism and homophobia at the time, discussing texts by Tennessee Williams, Alfred Hitchcock, and Philip Roth, and reintroducing the largely forgotten novel *The Grotto*.

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