

# Saluting Television's

# First gorgeous

# Feminist

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## Television's first gorgeous feminist

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“Man you couldn’t drag a needle out of her butt with a tractor”. That’s funny, right? It is when Roseanne Barr says it.

Like all serious comedians who retain full creative control over their craft, Roseanne only delivers a comic punchline if she finds it hilarious in her heart-of-hearts. This is one source of Roseanne's signature-style comic genius.

Labeling Barr a 'genius' in no way diminishes her work-ethic and tenacious spirit that underpins her global acclaim as a comedian, actress, businesswoman, philanthropist and champion humanitarian.

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An Emmy winning actress, Roseanne is among the select few whose art form reached the pinnacle of her field - as a stand-up comedian and as a television actress. She is a positive role-model for fellow comedians, actors and global citizens of all ages, genders, colors and creeds.

Roseanne Barr epitomizes the virtues that define the women who rock our planet: courage, integrity, humility and an unwillingness to compromise her convictions for expedience or short-term gain.

The mainstream appeal of Roseanne's self-titled sitcom stems from its authenticity. Barr stymied those who sought to airbrush the Conner family into just another plastic fantastic cyborg posse.

Most Americans are proud, humble members of the blue-collar working class. This is why the masses of real people relate to Matriarch Roseanne Conner and the core members of her tight-knit loving clan: Dan, Becky, Darlene, D.J., Jerry, Jackie and Beverly.

Roseanne Barr defies the mold of what Hollywood requires of its leading ladies. Her alter ego Roseanne Conner is a minimum wage earning working class mom for the best part of the series. She is the antithesis of the 'bimbo waif' formula that is perpetually repackaged for the masses by television's patriarchal elite. Cuddly, outspoken, smart and strong are not the traits that television portrays in its leading ladies.

From 1988 to 1997, the Domestic Goddess of 'Lanford' Illinois gave America's silent, invisible majority a strong voice and a proud face on the small screen in America and beyond. She made us laugh, too many times. She also made us cry.

Roseanne's sitcom also gave a voice to several marginalized social groups as it casually dealt with a raft of awkward social problems that bedevil our society. Barr refused to shy away from the realities of life such as same-sex love, alcoholism, wage-debt slavery, mental illness and planned parenthood.

Yet Roseanne's show never comes across as political or agenda-driven. In a subtle manner, Roseanne and her talented cast merely mirror back to us the 'life-and-stuff' issues that most ordinary folk encounter in their day-to-day existence.

Fast forward to 2017. Roseanne and her sitcom remain more relevant than ever. Class relations are back on the political map. The POTUS glass ceiling bears a few fingernail scratches and the word 'fake news' has entered the mainstream lexicon. Race relations remain tense and marriage equality remains a distant dream.

Barr's catalogue of work belongs in the Smithsonian archives alongside America's national treasures. Roseanne's phenomenal contribution to television made the world a better place and for this we should be eternally grateful. She paid a high personal price in her conquest for truth and justice.

The passing of two decades has proven that Roseanne - the sitcom and personality, are decades ahead of their time. When I reflect on the state of affairs of contemporary society, I question whether I am short-changing Roseanne Barr's glorious legacy. Decades, definitely. Centuries, could be.

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