

Neoliberal Subjectivities in Television Culture: Exploring the Impact on Society

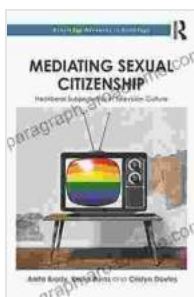
Neoliberalism, an economic and political ideology emphasizing free markets, reduced government intervention, and individual responsibility, has become a dominant force shaping contemporary societies. Its influence has extended beyond economic policy to permeate various aspects of social life, including television culture. This article delves into the complex and multifaceted relationship between neoliberalism and television culture, examining how television programs and narratives reflect, reinforce, and challenge neoliberal subjectivities.

Television has emerged as a powerful medium for transmitting and shaping cultural values and beliefs. Its capacity to reach vast audiences has made it an effective tool for promoting neoliberal ideologies. Television programs often depict characters and storylines that embody neoliberal values, such as:

- **Entrepreneurialism and Self-Reliance:** Characters are portrayed as self-sufficient individuals who achieve success through their own hard work and determination. Government assistance or social safety nets are often portrayed as obstacles to personal growth.
- **Individualism and Competition:** Television narratives emphasize the importance of individual achievement and competition. Characters are often pitted against each other in high-stakes contests, where success is seen as the ultimate measure of worth.

- **Consumerism and Materialism:** Television programs frequently feature characters who consume goods and services as a means of achieving happiness and status. Material possessions are often depicted as symbols of success and social acceptance.

These representations reinforce the neoliberal belief that individuals are responsible for their own well-being and that material success is the ultimate goal.



Mediating Sexual Citizenship: Neoliberal Subjectivities in Television Culture (Routledge Advances in Sociology

Book 223) by Jerry Martin

★★★★☆ 4 out of 5

Language	: English
File size	: 1156 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 175 pages



While television often promotes neoliberal values, it also provides a platform for challenging and critiquing these ideologies. Television programs can offer alternative perspectives that:

- **Highlight the Flaws of Individualism:** Some programs depict the negative consequences of excessive individualism and competition, showing how it can lead to isolation, loneliness, and burnout.

- **Emphasize the Importance of Community:** Other programs emphasize the value of community and social connections, countering the neoliberal focus on self-reliance.
- **Criticize Consumerism:** Some television narratives criticize the consumerist culture, exploring its negative effects on the environment, mental health, and social relationships.

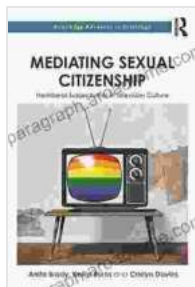
By providing these alternative perspectives, television can help viewers to critically examine the neoliberal subjectivities that are often presented as the norm.

The pervasive influence of neoliberal subjectivities in television culture has had far-reaching effects on society. It has contributed to:

- **Increased Pressure on Individuals:** The emphasis on individual responsibility and self-reliance can increase feelings of anxiety and inadequacy among those who struggle to achieve material success.
- **Erosion of Social Cohesion:** The focus on competition and individualism can weaken social bonds and make it more difficult for individuals to work together for the common good.
- **Increased Inequality:** The glorification of material success can exacerbate inequality by creating a sense of hierarchy and entitlement among those who possess wealth and privilege.

The relationship between neoliberalism and television culture is complex and multifaceted. While television programs often reflect and reinforce neoliberal subjectivities, they also provide a space for challenging and critiquing these ideologies. By understanding the ways in which television

shapes our perceptions of self and society, we can be more critical consumers of media and work towards creating a more just and equitable society.



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