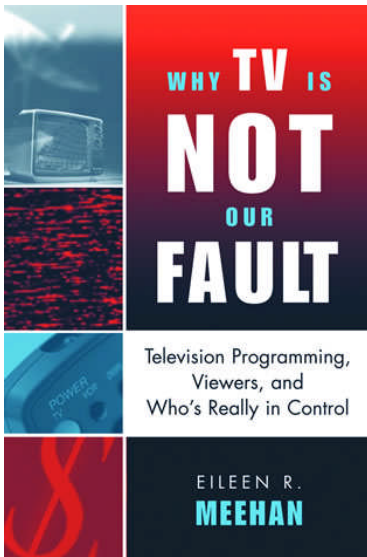




WHY TV IS NOT OUR FAULT

Television Programming, Viewers, and Who's Really in Control

By Eileen R. Meehan



"In Why TV Is Not Our Fault, Eileen Meehan effectively explodes the notion that television ratings represent accurate measures of the number of audience members who exercise their demands for specific programming in a free, competitive market. This cogent and incisive book offers a historically contextualized, unassailable argument that corporate—and not audience—interest is what counts in television programming. It is distinctive in exposing that 'audience measurements' are shaped by advertisers' and network and cable owners' shared demand for consumers that meet the appropriate upscale demographics. The book is a myth-busting, political-economic analysis of the confluence of television programming and the selling of consumers to advertisers through ratings. It is long overdue and essential reading for students and scholars interested in television studies, and—more broadly—the political economy of communication. I only regret that Why TV Is Not Our Fault cannot be made required reading for all television viewers."

—Lisa M. McLaughlin, Miami University; editor, *Feminist Media Studies*

"Meehan tells it like it is! Television is unmasked in this lively, well-documented, and sharply argued text that will be savored by media students and scholars. Meehan presents a thorough analysis of U.S. television's markets for consumers, ratings, and programs within the context of a transindustrial structure and corporate synergy. Thanks to this critical study, television viewers will be relieved to know that they aren't to blame for what has been called 'a vast wasteland.'"

—Janet Wasko, University of Oregon

"Meehan's timely book finally lays bare the facts about who controls television programming and how and why they do what they do. It once and for all puts to rest the claim that television executives simply 'give people what they want.' This is a serious and sophisticated scholarly book; Meehan carefully analyzes the economics and sociology of the industry to reach her conclusions. But she does so in an accessible way, without hiding behind jargon or intellectual obfuscation. Policymakers, industry professionals, and concerned citizens should all read this book—and will be glad they did." —Thomas Streeter, University of Vermont

This book dispels the myth that the television industry is just giving viewers the programming they want to see and, thus, we as viewers are "responsible" for the existence of shows like *Fear Factor* and yet another *Survivor*. In fact, Meehan explains, viewers exert no demand in the market. She also counters the idea that TV programs reflect our culture directly. Introducing us to the political economy of television, Meehan covers programming, corporate strategies, advertising, network "competition," and organizations that seek more industry accountability. She tells us why TV isn't our fault—and who's really to blame.

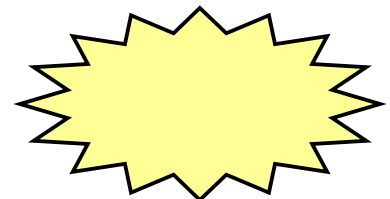
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