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Mediated Deviance and Social Otherness: Interrogating Influential Representations

Kylo-Patrick R. Hart

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If, in fact, Lizzie Borden took an axe and gave her [step]mother forty whacks, why (from a representational standpoint) did her stepmother deserve it? If older gay men in Internet chat rooms regularly provide much-needed acceptance and advice to younger gay males during the coming-out process, how is it that they continually reinforce racist ideologies and powerless subjectivities while doing so? What sorts of media images are commonly presented of individuals and groups that are regarded as being deviant in society, and whose interests do they ultimately serve? The answers to these important questions and many others are provided in the pages of Mediated Deviance and Social Otherness: Interrogating Influential Representations, which explores provocative representations of deviance in various media forms including books, films, musical offerings, news accounts, television programs, and Internet sites and their substantial cultural, political, and social consequences for the lived realities of individuals of different backgrounds and lifestyles. The eye-opening chapters of this book enable readers to more fully realize the regularity with which media representations continuously contribute, in powerful ways, to the formation and perpetuation of influential social constructions of deviance and otherness as they pertain to delinquents, criminals, and individuals of all ages, classes, genders, races, sexual orientations, and health/(dis)ability statuses. 'Mediated Deviance and Social Otherness: Interrogating Influential Representations is a thought-provoking anthology that offers fresh insight and new approaches to critically analyzing social constructions of deviancy across a variety of media forms. While scholars have long examined the relationship between media and deviancy, this collection of essays features a range of theoretical perspectives through which to investigate deviancy and its various interpretations in original ways. In the process, it deepens our understanding of how deviancy has been constructed across time and in differing social/cultural milieus. The essays in this anthology reflect the diverse disciplines of their contributing scholars. At the same time, the anthology does not waver from its clear focus on deviancy, lending it substantial coherence and readability. The book is expertly structured and edited. Each of the essays draws inspiration from a refreshing variety of sources and fields of study. The anthology is accordingly divided into six distinct yet related sections that mark its coherence and readability. Simultaneously, the essays within each section are quite different from one another, allowing the reader to make thought-provoking connections between representations of deviancy both within sections and among them. Mediated Deviance and Social Otherness: Interrogating Influential Representations is an important text. Considering the growth of new media forms, its investigation of both old and new media in relation to social constructions of deviancy represents a timely and topical contribution to the field of media and cultural studies. Given its breadth and scope, the anthology represents a highly significant scholarly contribution that will greatly benefit scholars, students, and interested individuals of all levels. It offers eye-opening insights to anyone with an interest in cultural studies, disease and disability studies, film and television studies, LGBT studies, criminal justice, sociology, and related fields.' Brief Reviewer Bio: Metasebia Woldemariam, Ph.D., is an associate professor of communication and media studies at Plymouth State University who specializes in media representations of deviancy and otherness.

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