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This original and engaging book investigates American television viewing habits as a distinct cultural form. Based on an empirical study of the day-to-day use of television by working people, it develops a unique theoretical approach integrating cultural sociology, postmodernism, and the literature of media effects to explore the ways in which people give meaning to their viewing practices. While recognising the power of television, it also emphasises the importance of the social and political factors which affect the lives of individual viewers, showing how the interaction between the two can result in a disengagement with corporately produced culture at the same time as an appropriation of the images themselves into people's lives. Accessibly written and at the cutting edge of Cultural Studies and television research, this book is essential reading for students and academics in Cultural Studies, television research, and Media and Communication Studies.

RON LEMBO is Associate Professor of Sociology at Amherst College, Massachusetts.

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*For Phyllis,
her dad, Chris,
who would have been proud,
and for Addie,
who was behind me all the way*

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