



Happiness: Understandings, Narratives and Discourses

Laura Hyman

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Discourses of happiness surround us in contemporary culture. Listen to any pop song, and there is a reasonable chance that happiness will feature somewhere in the words. Watch any advertisement, and you will likely come across a product or service that promises to improve your life in some way. We have also seen a proliferation of the self-help industry in recent decades. This original and timely book offers one of the first sociological analyses of the ways in which people make sense of their experiences and perceptions of happiness. Drawing on a range of accounts from qualitative interviews, it documents how we make sense of happiness via a distinctly therapeutic, individualized discourse, but simultaneously, how the concept is also understood to be rooted in social relationships and structures.



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