Since its intellectual inception in the 1930s and its political emergence in the 1970s, neo-liberalism has sought to disenchant politics by replacing it with economics.

This agenda-setting text examines the efforts and failures of economic experts to make government and public life amenable to measurement, and to re-model society and state in terms of competition. In particular, it explores the practical use of economic techniques and conventions by policymakers, politicians, regulators and judges and how these practices are being adapted to the perceived failings of the neoliberal model.

By picking apart the defining contradiction that arises from the conflation of economics and politics, this book asks: to what extent can economics provide government legitimacy?

Contents

Published in association with Theory, Culture & Society
May 2014 · 296 pages
Hardback (978-1-4462-7068-4) £85.00 • £29.75

Order at www.sagepub.co.uk and quote the code UK14SM08 to receive your discount*  
*This discount is valid until 31st December 2014. 

The discount is not applicable to trade customers, and cannot be used in conjunction with any other discount offer.
Reviews for The Limits of Neoliberalism:

“Some books describe the neoliberal project using the neoliberals’ own terms; others promote more profound understanding by bringing in other intellectual resources. Will Davies is one of the best of the latter. In this fascinating book he inverts the conventional neoliberal practice of treating politics as if it were mere epiphenomenon of market theory, demonstrating that their version of economics is far better understood as the pursuit of politics by other means.”

-Professor Philip Mirowski, University of Notre Dame

“Writing with clarity and precision and drawing on a rich array of sources, Will Davies takes the sociological discussion of neo-liberalism, its past and possible futures, to newer and richer intellectual realms. A substantial, original, and welcome contribution to the burgeoning literature on neo-liberal thought and rule.”

-Professor Paul du Gay, Copenhagen Business School

“A sparkling, original, and provocative analysis of neoliberalism... Combining philosophical reflection, principles of grounded critique, political theory, intellectual history, the theory of conventions, reflections on law and economics, and a sociological analysis of competitiveness, this book breaks new ground, offers new modes of critique, and points to post-neoliberal futures.”

-Professor Bob Jessop, University of Lancaster

“In a world that seems to lurch from one financial crisis to the next, this book questions both the sovereignty of markets and the principles of competition and competitiveness that lie at the heart of the neoliberal project. This is a brilliant piece of work and is essential reading for anyone interested in the politics and economics of contemporary capitalism.”

-Professor Nicholas Gane, University of Warwick