# Critics call for more diverse stories as TV clings to wealthy white narratives



In recent discourse on television programming, a growing concern has emerged regarding the persistent focus on narratives centred around affluent characters, specifically wealthy white individuals. This criticism has gained traction, particularly following the latest season of HBO's acclaimed series, *The White Lotus*. The critique extends to a variety of popular media, such as *Succession*, *Big Little Lies*, *The Menu*, *Triangle of Sadness*, *Knives Out*, and *Saltburn*, which predominantly explore the complexities of wealthy lives and the dynamics surrounding them.

The author of the commentary expresses disappointment with this trend, articulating the desire for a shift away from the portrayal of the elite in favour of narratives representing broader societal experiences. One point raised is the impending release of a new Apple show featuring actor Jon Hamm as a wealthy individual who descends into criminality after losing his fortune, alongside a project titled *Mountainhead*, penned by *Succession* writer Jesse Armstrong, focusing on a summit of billionaires. These ongoing developments solidify the author's belief that media is saturated with portrayals of the affluent.

The author articulates a nostalgic longing for shows that resonate more closely with the realities of everyday life, particularly those depicted from the perspective of working-class families. Citing personal experiences, the author highlights the significance of programmes such as *Roseanne*, *Malcolm in the Middle*, and *Bob’s Burgers*, which effectively capture the struggles and joys common to more modest backgrounds. This sentiment is echoed in the recent work of comedian Julio Torres in *Problemista*, which offers a humorous yet poignant commentary on contemporary societal challenges.

In an analysis of audience motivations for engaging with affluent narratives, several possibilities are posited: whether viewers indulge in these depictions for a sense of power or smugness, to engage in self-reflection, or perhaps even out of aspirational longing for wealth and its accompanying lifestyle. The author underscores that while such stories about the powerful abound, there remains a crucial omission: the narratives of those who navigate life without privilege.

Amidst this critique, the author contends that stories focused on individuals lacking power can be equally engaging. Rather than shying away from hardship, these narratives can illuminate perseverance and humour in adversity without necessarily being morose. Comedy and drama drawn from everyday struggles can offer valuable insights and inspiration for viewers, revealing that the complexities of life afford a wealth of storytelling potential that remains largely unexplored.

The crux of the discussion points to the entrenched privilege among creators and decision-makers in the entertainment industry, suggesting that this may hinder the diversification of narratives presented on screen. As new projects continue to emerge with a familiar focus on the elite, the call for a broader representation of varying socioeconomic experiences remains salient. Ultimately, this growing dialogue invites viewers to seek out less conventional perspectives and support creators from diverse backgrounds, cultivating a richer tapestry of stories reflective of the societal landscape.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.americamagazine.org/arts-culture/2024/02/15/white-lotus-beef-rich-television-247282> - This article discusses the trend of television series like 'The White Lotus' and 'Succession' focusing on the lives of wealthy individuals, highlighting the audience's fascination with such narratives.
2. <https://www.commonwealmagazine.org/wealth-rich-triangle-sadness-oscars-succession-white-lotus-aristotle> - The piece analyzes films such as 'Triangle of Sadness' and 'Succession,' critiquing their portrayal of the wealthy and questioning the moral grounding of these narratives.
3. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/arts-entertainment/2022/12/28/glass-onion-white-lotus-billionaires/> - This article examines the 'eat-the-rich' theme in films like 'Glass Onion' and 'The White Lotus,' exploring how these works critique the ultra-wealthy.
4. <https://collider.com/white-lotus-succession-big-little-lies/> - The article discusses the prevalence of television series centered around affluent characters, such as 'Succession' and 'The White Lotus,' and the audience's complex relationship with these portrayals.
5. <https://edition.cnn.com/2021/08/15/entertainment/white-lotus-succession-rich-characters-tv-trnd/index.html> - This piece explores the audience's fascination with television series featuring wealthy characters, including 'Succession' and 'The White Lotus,' and the moral complexities these shows present.
6. <https://www.esquire.com/entertainment/movies/a42005064/eating-the-rich-movies-the-menu-wealth-criticism/> - The article critiques films like 'The Menu' and 'Triangle of Sadness' for their portrayal of the wealthy, questioning the effectiveness of their 'eat-the-rich' narratives.
7. <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2025/may/01/i-am-sick-of-seeing-the-rich-and-powerful-on-my-screen-where-are-all-the-tv-shows-about-normal-people> - Please view link - unable to able to access data