



Cultural Theory: An Introduction

By Philip Smith, Alexander Riley

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This second edition of *Cultural Theory* provides a concise introduction to cultural theory, placing major figures, traditional concepts, and contemporary themes within a sharp conceptual framework.

- Provides a student-friendly introduction to what can often be a complex field of study
- Updates the first edition in response to reader feedback and to the changing nature of the field
- Includes additional coverage of theorists from the classical period to include Nietzsche and DuBois
- Introduces entirely new chapters on race and gender theory, and the body
- Considers themes that have become more important in theoretical activity in recent years such as computers and virtual reality, cosmopolitanism, and performance theory
- Draws on theories and theorists from continental Europe as well as the English-speaking world

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Editorial Review

Review

"This is the best introductory survey of cultural theories I have read." -- *Christian Smith, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill*

"I cannot conceive of a better introduction to a century of cultural theory. Smith gives cultural theory life and brings it down to earth, where it belongs." *Barry Schwartz, University of Georgia*

"Philip Smith has written the Zagat guide not just to sociology of culture and cultural sociology, but of cultural theory in the grandest sense. This will be a great introduction for students and a cheat sheet for more than a few professors. Bravo!" *Roger Friedland, University of California at Santa Barbara*

"This engaging book deftly maps the important theoretical traditions in the field of cultural analysis, with special attention to the leading thinkers. Philip Smith's lucid writing and comprehensive scope will be of great value to students and scholars as they seek to orient themselves in the field and identify the major concepts." *Robin Wagner-Pacifici, Swarthmore College*

"Being a remarkable practitioner in the domain of cultural theory, Philip Smith adopts a powerful stance in his far-reaching approach of the genealogy of this domain." *Laurent Thévenot, Ecole des Hautes Etudes, Paris*

".Smith has produced a very useful and informative introduction to a broad variety of theories and culture"
Choice

Review

"For those stalking culture, you'd best set out with this mapping of the terrain."

–**Roger Friedland, University of California, Santa Barbara**

"The second edition of *Cultural Theory* provides a clear, lively, and timely introduction to leading thinkers and their ideas. Its lucid writing and comprehensive scope is of great value to students and scholars seeking to understand the field of cultural theory."

–**Robin Wagner-Pacifici, Swarthmore College**

"Bringing alive a subject as broad as cultural sociology is difficult, but this fresh edition succeeds brilliantly. Books about theory are usually less than exciting, let alone inspiring, but this book glows and absorbs as it informs. I have depended on it for years, cannot do without it, and, given the growth of cultural theory, I cannot see how anyone else can."

–**Barry Schwartz, University of Georgia**

From the Back Cover

Cultural Theory: An Introduction is a concise, accessible introduction to a complex field. Philip Smith provides a balanced, wide-ranging overview of contemporary cultural theory, covering the major thinkers and key concepts that have appeared and developed over the last century. Assuming no specialist knowledge on the part of the reader, Smith deals with some of the most sophisticated issues in contemporary social thought. Coverage includes fields such as symbolic interactionism, structuralism, and psychoanalysis, and leading thinkers like Foucault, Bourdieu, Habermas, and Giddens. The book has an abundance of special features for students, with summaries, biographical notes, suggestions for further reading, and extensive cross-referencing. For any student or scholar with an interest in the theoretical study of culture and society, this book is an ideal guide.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

John Frank:

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Sean Rusin:

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