



Contested Knowledge: Social Theory Today

By Steven Seidman

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Contested Knowledge: Social Theory Today By Steven Seidman

Contested Knowledge is a well-established text offering up-to-date perspectives on social theory by one of the most important thinkers of our time. This fourth edition includes an exploration of globalization and a new section on the theories of global and world order. It provides a thoughtful and rigorous, yet highly accessible and reader-friendly account of social theory.

- Responds to current issues, debates, and new social movements
- Reviews sociological theory from a truly contemporary perspective
- Examines both classical and contemporary theories
- Combines social analysis and moral advocacy to demonstrate how social theory contributes to the making of a better world
- Challenges social scientists to renew their commitment to the important moral and political role social knowledge plays in public life
- A thoughtful and rigorous, yet highly accessible and reader-friendly account of social theory
- An accompanying website containing additional support for lecturers and students is available at www.blackwellpublishing.com/seidman



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Editorial Review

Review

Praise for the third edition:

"There is no better social theory text for demonstrating to students the political relevance of both past and current social thinkers. Seidman compellingly argues for a more lively, publicly-engaged sociology. *Contested Knowledge* is required reading for any discussion of how social theory can help us make sense of our own times."

Nancy L. Fischer, Macalester College

"Seidman is one of the most original and profound voices in social theory today. A master of historical scholarship, he has produced here a revisionist theoretical story that will continue to be widely read and debated."

Jeffrey Alexander, Yale University

"The Third edition of *Contested Knowledge* is a strong, clear and progressive argument for the active and moral role of sociological theory in a globalized and multicultural age. It is an optimistic, rigorous and reflective text, and a highly accessible one."

Joe Bailey, Kingston University

From the Back Cover

Contested Knowledge is a well-established text offering up-to-date perspectives on social theory by one of the most important thinkers of our time. Steven Seidman tracks the work of major figures in the field, from the classical sociologists – Durkheim, Marx, Weber – to contemporary theorists -- Giddens, Foucault, Bourdieu, and Judith Butler. By exploring contemporary social theories and movements -- including feminism, post-structuralism, African-American thought, and queer theory -- the author provides a compelling look at sociological theory and its established canon. *Contested Knowledge* combines social analysis and moral advocacy, showing how social theory can and does – and sometimes doesn’t – work within the public and political sphere.

Highlights of the fourth edition include a new section on globalization. A major revision of social theory has been to shift the unit of social analysis from the independent nation state or discrete-bounded society to the global or world order, and to emphasize the importance of situating key social dynamics within a wider global context. The updated version includes a new section entitled Theories of Global and World Order, offering three timely chapters, 'Capitalism as a world order', 'The making of a global order', and 'Civilizational clash or the return of Empire?' The book's introduction is more in-depth and existing chapters are widely revised.

With sustained historical and theoretical argument, the text successfully balances the tensions existing between philosophical, scientific, and moral modes of theorizing. The challenges and changes to the classical tradition found within current social theory are explored. *Contested Knowledge* is a thoughtful and rigorous, yet highly accessible and reader-friendly account of social theory.

About the Author

Steven Seidman is Professor of Sociology at State University of New York at Albany. He is a world

renowned social theorist working in the areas of social theory, culture, sexuality, comparative sociology, theory of democracy, nationalism and globalization. He is the author and editor of several books including *Embattled Eros: Sexual Politics and Ethics in Contemporary America* (1992), *The Postmodern Turn: New Perspectives on Social Theory* (editor, 1995), *Queer Theory/Sociology* (Blackwell, 1996), *The New Social Theory Reader: Contemporary Debates* (edited with Jeffrey C. Alexander, 2001), and *Beyond the Closet: The Transformation of Gay and Lesbian Life* (2002).

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