



Contemporary Introduction to Sociology: Culture and Society in Transition

By Jeffrey C. Alexander, Kenneth Thompson, Laura Desfor Edles

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The first edition of *A Contemporary Introduction to Sociology* was the first truly new introductory sociology textbook in decades. Written by two leading sociologists at the cutting edge of theory and research, the text reflected the idioms and interests of contemporary American life and global social issues. The second edition continues to invite students to reflect upon their lives within the context of the combustible leap from modern to postmodern life. The authors show how culture is central to understanding many world problems as they challenge readers to confront the risks and potentialities of a postmodern era in which the futures of both the physical and social environment seem uncertain. As culture rapidly changes in the 21st century, the authors have broadened their analysis to cover developments in social media and new data on gender and transgender issues.

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- Sales Rank: #996691 in Books
- Published on: 2011-08-18
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.25" h x 7.50" w x 1.00" l, 2.35 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 656 pages

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Review

Treats sociology as a living, vibrant discipline. The book is a masterful synthesis written in a style that is at once sophisticated, engaging, and accessible. I can think of no better way to introduce my students to the discipline. -- Peter Kivisto, Augustana College Alexander and Thompson have produced the modern textbook we have all been waiting for-comprehensive and coherent, but above all intelligent. Designed to make teaching sociology unproblematic, the book is the ideal combination of theory, evidence, and accessibility. -- Bryan S. Turner, editor of The Cambridge Dictionary of Sociology Sets new standards in speaking directly to students of the most significant recent developments in sociology and social changes they are living. It shows how inspiring the sociological imagination can be in areas like media, sexuality, gender relations, inequality, and globalization. -- Lyn Spillman, University of Notre Dame A truly contemporary sociology, one that mines the classics of sociology for insights into a profoundly changed, postmodern world. Most important, the book reminds us of sociology's capacity to surprise. -- Francesca Polletta, University of California-Irvine An extraordinary textbook that synthesizes a wealth of sociological studies. The book is engaging and readable, key concepts are clearly defined, and important theories are succinctly explicated. I highly recommend it to students and faculty alike. -- William Julius Wilson, Harvard University

About the Author

Jeffrey C. Alexander is the Lillian Chavenson Saden Professor of Sociology at Yale University, where he is co-director of the Center for Cultural Sociology. Among his many influential books is *The Civic Sphere* (Oxford University Press, 2006). He is also co-editor of the Yale Cultural Sociology Series (Paradigm Publishers).

Kenneth Thompson, Professor Emeritus of Sociology at the Open University, has held positions at Yale, UCLA, Rutgers, and Smith. He is the author of *Moral Panics* (Routledge, 1998).

Laura Desfor Edles received her doctorate in Sociology from UCLA. Dr. Edles has published articles on race and ethnicity in cultural sociology, and is the co-author (with Scott Appelrouth) of *Sociological Theory in the Classical Era*. She teaches sociology at California State University, Northridge.

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