

## Critical Social Theory In The Interests Of Black Folks

In this outstanding reinterpretation - and extension - of the Critical Theory tradition, Craig Calhoun surveys the origins, fortunes and prospects of this most influential of theoretical approaches. Moving with ease from the early Frankfurt School to Habermas, to contemporary debates over postmodernism, feminism and nationalism, Calhoun breathes new life into Critical Social Theory, showing how it can learn from the past and contribute to the future. This book uses the philosophy of Wittgenstein as a perspective from which to challenge the very idea of critical social theory, represented preeminently by Giddens, Habermas and Bhaskar. Renouncing the quest for an alternative Wittgensteinian theory of social and political life, the author shows that Wittgenstein nevertheless has considerable significance for critical thought and practice.

The book offers a critical synthesis of critical theory, decolonial theory and Buddhist/Confucian inspired social theory.

- Provides brief accounts of the central ideas behind key concepts of critical social theory
- Prepares students to tackle primary texts and gives them a point of reference when they find themselves stuck
- Is essential reading for undergraduates in sociology and across the social sciences.

Critical Issues in Social Theory is an analytical survey of persistent controversies that have shaped the field of sociology. It defines, clarifies, and proposes solutions to these &"critical issues&" through commentary on the writings of such influential social theorists as Hobbes, Marx, Durkheim, Weber, Mead, Merton, Parsons, and Schutz. Instead of being just another history, or another classification of theories, Rhoads's four-part model allows him to focus attention on issues that remain at the core of sociological theory today. First, Rhoads analyzes the controversy over positivism as the proper methodological model for the study of human society. Is there one science, of which sociology is a branch, or do the peculiarities of sociology's subject matter require a modification of the scientific method borrowed from the natural sciences? Rhoads next considers the relationship of individuals to society and its structures. Does society have a mode of existence distinct from its members, or is it merely an abstraction derived from the characteristics of individuals? Third, a discussion of social order raises the question of whether social order is the consequence of rules and their underlying moral values, or the product of continuous construction based on self-interest. Finally, the relative importance of consensus and conflict in social relationships is addressed. Is society better understood as a community united by beliefs, values, and rules, or is the social dynamic of continual conflict over beliefs, values, and rules more fundamental? In coming to grips with these issues, the author in some instances takes sides and in others arrives at a synthesis of diverse perspectives. In the final chapter he points to the limitations on the possibility of rational action that come to light in the clashes over these basic issues.

Critical Theory and Social Transformation provides an exploration of the major themes in critical social theory of recent years. Delanty argues that a critical theory perspective can offer much-needed insights into the pressing socio-political challenges of our time. In this volume, he advances the need to reconnect social theory and social research and to return to the foundational concerns of critical social theory. Delanty engages with the key topics facing critical social theorists: capitalism, cosmopolitanism, modernity, the Anthropocene, and legacies of history. The connecting thread is that the topics are all contemporary challenges for critical theory and relate to major social transformations. The notions of critique, crisis, and social transformation are central to the book. Critical Theory and Social Transformation will be of interest to the broad readership in social and political theory. It will appeal to those working in sociology, political sociology, politics, and international studies and to anyone with an interest in any of the chapter-specific topics, such as public space, memory, and neo-

authoritarianism.

Critical theory explained and espoused Simpson ably introduces critical social theory, the German-born intellectual movement that has spawned sharp criticisms of modernity, its use of reason, and our highly technological, bureaucratic culture. Part 1 recounts the emergence of critical social theory within the Frankfurt School of Social Research and the theological stirrings that the Frankfurt project sparked, especially in Paul Tillich. Part 2 explores Jürgen Habermas' reconception and expansion of critical social theory, especially his ideas about hermeneutics, praxis, communicative action, and civil society as the locus of prophetic social movements. Finally, in Part 3 Simpson shows how Christian theology employs critical social theory for the tasks of prophetic reason in a global civil society. Simpson's work is at once a programmatic introduction and a creative theological proposal for public theology.

This book introduces educational practitioners, students, and scholars to the people, concepts, questions, and concerns that make up the field of critical social theory. It guides readers into a lively conversation about how education can and does contribute to reinforcing or challenging relations of domination in the modern era. Written by a group of experienced educators and scholars, in an engaging style, *Critical Social Theories and Education* introduces and explains the preeminent thinkers and traditions in critical social theory, and discusses the primary strands of educational research and thought that have been informed and influenced by them. The *Routledge Handbook of Critical Social Work* brings together the world's leading scholars in the field to provide a cutting-edge overview of classic and current research and future trends in the subject. Comprised of 48 chapters divided into six parts: Historical, social, and political influences Mapping the theoretical and conceptual terrain Methods of engagement and modes of analysis Critical contexts for practice and policy Professional education and socialisation Future challenges, directions, and transformations it provides an authoritative guide to theory and method, and the primary debates of today in social work from a critical perspective. This handbook is a major reference work and the first book to comprehensively map the wide-ranging territory of critical social work. It does so by addressing its conceptual developments, its methodological advances, its value-based front-line practice and as an influence on the policy field. By offering a definitive survey of current academic knowledge as it relates to professional practice, it provides the first comprehensive, up-to-date, definitive work of reference while at the same time identifying emerging, innovative and cutting-edge areas. Have we resigned ourselves to a cyber-future that has been decided behind our backs? Why is technology - and our understanding of it - central to the concerns of critical social theory? In developing the PC technologists have borrowed ideas from the human sciences about what people are like, about the nature of meaning and the desirability of some experiences over others. Yet, to date, the academic disciplines most concerned with these ideas have offered neither resistance nor debate. In this book, Graeme Kirkpatrick shows why it is crucial that we initiate that debate. Offering a revealing critique of PC design and the social assumptions that underlie it, Kirkpatrick argues that it relies on a particular conception of a capitalistic society that expects its technology to come pre-packaged, mass-marketed and "user-friendly". Anyone who is critical of such a society and its commodification of human achievement should, he suggests, be suspicious. Kirkpatrick argues that the computer is a contested space within which major social conflicts are played out. On the one hand, there is a narrative of flexibility and human empowerment, and on the other a sense of a "system" that controls our lives, leaving us in thrall to the computer corporations, and at constant risk from phishers and hackers. The outcomes of these conflicts are extremely important as they will shape our future experience of technology, society and politics. *Critical Technology*

is a lively, provocative and often radical book, which forces us to reflect on the meaning of an artefact that is central to our daily lives, yet that we too often take for granted. Examining the situations of African Americans in the U.S.A., Lucius Outlaw's essays illustrate over twenty years of work dedicated to articulating a 'critical theory of society' that would account for issues and limiting-factors affecting African-descended peoples in the U.S. Attempting to put politics aside, Outlaw writes from a non-partisan standpoint, in the hopes that the issues he raises in his essays will inspire improvement for the well-being of African Americans and will also strengthen America's democracy. Outlaw envisions a democratic order that is not built upon racist projections of the past. Instead, he seeks in these essays a transformative social theory that would help create a truly democratic social order.

Marx's oeuvre is vast yet with key elements to an evolving social theory, even including state conspiracies. Deep confrontation with Ricardian economics is an expression, including with accumulation of capital. Luxemburg was the most significant contributor to Marxism, post-Marx.

In this rich interpretation of the history of critical theory, Axel Honneth clarifies critical theory's central problems and emphasizes the social factors that should provide it with a normative and practical orientation. Axel Honneth's *Critique of Power* is a rich interpretation of the history of critical theory, which clarifies its central problems and emphasizes the "social" factors that should provide that theory with a normative and practical orientation. Honneth focuses on the dialog between French and German social theory that was beginning at the time of Michel Foucault's death. It traces the common roots of the work of Foucault and Jürgen Habermas to a basic text of the last generation of critical theorists—Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno's *Dialectic of Enlightenment*—and draws from this connection the outline of a program that might unite and surpass their seemingly irreconcilable methods of critiquing power structures. In doing so, Honneth provides a constructive and nonpolemical framework for comparisons between the two theorists. And he presents a novel interpretation of Foucault's analysis of social systems. Honneth traces the internal contradictions in critical theory through an analysis of Horkheimer's early programmatic writings, the *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, and Adorno's later social-theoretical writings. He shows how Habermas and Foucault in their distinctive ways reinserted the social world into critical theory but argues that neither operation has been wholly successful. His cogent analysis redirects critical social theory in ways that can draw on the strengths and avoid the weaknesses of the two approaches.

This book, from one of international social work's leading radical educators, provides a richly compelling argument for the profession to become more critical and dissenting. Addressing the troubled times in which we find ourselves, Garrett's book examines a broad range of theoretical frameworks and draws on diverse writers, such as Marx, Foucault, Brown, Zuboff, Rancière, Wacquant, Arendt, Levinas, Fanon and Gramsci. The author's panoramic vision encompasses Ireland, the United Kingdom, the United States, Algeria, Israel/Palestine and China. Timely, lively and accessible, this book speaks directly to some of the main preoccupations of our era. Readers will be encouraged to relate developments in social work to key themes circulating around migration, the threat of neo-fascism, surveillance culture, colonialism, the Black Lives Matter movement and the COVID-19 pandemic. Imbued with a sense of hope for a

brighter future, this book encourages a new generation of social work students to recognise and examine the importance of critical theory for understanding the structural forces shaping their lives and the lives of those with whom they work and provide services. This book is vital, indispensable and essential reading for social work students and other readers, throughout the world, seeking to make the connection between social work, social theory and sociology.

An accomplished, sophisticated and up-to-date account of the state of critical social theory today. Craig Browne explores the key concepts in critical theory (like critique, ideology, and alienation), and crucially, goes on to relate them to major contemporary developments such as globalisation, social conflict and neo-liberal capitalism. Critical theory here is not solely the work of Adorno, Horkheimer, Marcuse and Habermas. The book begins with the Frankfurt School but uses this as a base to then explore more contemporary figures such as Nancy Fraser, Axel Honneth, Luc Boltanski, Cornelius Castoriadis, Ulrich Beck, Anthony Giddens, Pierre Bourdieu and Hannah Arendt. A survey of critical social theory for our times, this is an essential guide for students wishing to grasp a critical understanding of social theory in the modern world.

Critical theory has left an indelible mark on postwar social thought. But what are the relations between critical theory and 'the cultural turn' ? How did critical theory inform later French critical theorists, such as Lefebvre, Barthes and Baudrillard? This accomplished and accessible book: - Demonstrates the origins of critical theory in the Marxian analysis of the capitalist mode of production and Freudian psychoanalysis - Clearly explains the main achievements of critical theory - Elucidates how critical theory defines culture as a system that constrains and alienates the individual - Explores the potential for social change and personal emancipation in the critical heritage. The author locates the importance of myth and reason, the significance of sexuality, the place of work, the difference between art and entertainment, the nature of everyday life and the relationship between knowledge and action. The result is a lucid and informative text which will appeal to all students interested in the critical traditions of social thought.

This book examines the crossroads of quantum and critical approaches to International Relations and argues that these approaches share a common project of uncovering complexity and uncertainty. The "quantum turn" in International Relations theory has produced a number of interesting insights into the complex ways in which our assumptions about the physics of the world around us can limit our understanding of social life. While critique is possible within a Newtonian social science, core assumptions of separability and determinism of classical physics impose limits on what is imaginable. The author argues that by adopting a quantum imaginary, social theory can move beyond its Newtonian limits, and explore two methods for quantizing conceptual models--translation and application. This book is the first introductory book to quantum social theory ideas specifically intended for an audience of critical International Relations. Michael P. A. Murphy is a SSHRC Doctoral Fellow in International Relations and Political Theory at the University of Ottawa, Canada. He has published over a dozen peer-reviewed articles in journals such as Contemporary Security Policy, International Relations, the Journal of International Political Theory, and Critical Studies on Security.--

Praised for its clarity and accessibility, this fully updated edition of Critical Social

Theories presents a comprehensive analysis of leading social and cultural theories today. Diverse perspectives are addressed, from feminism and cultural studies to postmodernism and critical theory. Written accessibly for students and faculty, the second edition includes new chapters on the need for a new public sociology in the post-9/11 era—one that moves beyond both positivism and postmodernism. Agger updates and develops for today's world a model for this engaged sociology rooted in 1960s activism, when C. Wright Mills and Tom Hayden framed the New Left as a vehicle for the sociological imagination.

Qualitative research has become a legitimate approach within the information systems community, but researchers have traditionally drawn upon material from the social sciences given the absence of a single source relevant to them. *Qualitative Research in Information Systems: A Reader* represents just such a volume and is both timely and relevant. Information systems and qualitative research articles are now widely used for teaching on many upper level courses in information systems, and there is demand for a definitive collection of these readings as a basic reader and teaching text. This book expertly brings together the seminal works in the field, along with editorial introductions to assist the reader in understanding the essential principles of qualitative research. The book is organized according to the following thematic sections: · Part I: Overview of Qualitative Research · Part II: Philosophical Perspectives · Part III: Qualitative Research Methods · Part IV: Modes of Analyzing and Interpreting Qualitative Data *Qualitative Research in Information Systems: A Reader* should become the benchmark reference point for students and researchers in information systems, management science and others involved in information technology needing to learn about qualitative research.

In this collection of essays, Richard Lichtman critically analyzes and applies Marx's theory of ideology to a range of philosophical, social, political and cultural issues. Tracing the changes in Marx's theory from an early -camera obscura- view to a later -constitutive- position, Lichtman shows how the mature theory can be used to understand the function of liberal political theory, equal protection and reverse discrimination, social theory, and finally, in a concluding essay, the nature of contemporary welfare capitalism and a socialist alternative."

Written by one of America's foremost geographers, *Postmodern Geographies* contests the tendency, still dominant in most social science, to reduce human geography to a reflective mirror, or, as Marx called it, an "unnecessary complication." Beginning with a powerful critique of historicism and its constraining effects on the geographical imagination, Edward Soja builds on the work of Foucault, Berger, Giddens, Berman, Jameson and, above all, Henri Lefebvre, to argue for a historical and geographical materialism, a radical rethinking of the dialectics of space, time and social being. Soja charts the respatialization of social theory from the still unfolding encounter between Western Marxism and modern geography, through the current debates on the emergence of a postfordist regime of "flexible accumulation." The postmodern geography of Los Angeles, exposed in a provocative pair of essays, serves as a model in his account of the contemporary struggle for control over the social production of space.

Most empirical researchers avoid the use of theory in their studies, providing data but little or no social explanation. Theoreticians, on the other hand, rarely test their ideas with empirical projects. As this groundbreaking volume makes clear, however, neither data nor theory alone is adequate to the task of social explanation—rather they form and inform each other as the inquiry process unfolds. *Theory and Educational Research* bridges the age-old theory/research divide by demonstrating how researchers can use critical social theory to determine appropriate empirical research strategies, and extend the analytical, critical – and sometimes emancipatory – power of data gathering and interpretation. Each chapter models a theoretically informed empiricism that places the data research yields in constant conversation with

theoretical arsenals of powerful concepts. Personal reflections following each chapter chronicle the contributors' trajectories of struggle and triumph utilizing theory and its powers in research. In the end this rich collection teaches education scholars how to deliberately engage with critical social theory in research to produce work that is simultaneously theoretically inspired, politically engaged, and empirically evocative.

This volume examines the intellectual contribution made by Frankfurt School Critical Theory to our understanding of modern life. Thematically organized and offering a strong mix of historical and contemporary material, it considers the work of both the first and second generation.

In bringing together a wide-ranging collection of essays covering everything from queer theory to labour history, this volume pushes studies of Nietzsche into new areas of research

This volume applies critical social theories to family therapy practice, using sociopolitical context for a clearer focus on the power dynamics of couple and family relationships. Its decolonizing approach to therapy is shown countering the pervasive cultural themes that grant privilege to specific groups over others, feeding unequal and oppressive relationships that bring families and couples to treatment. Therapy is shown here as a layered and nuanced process, with practitioners developing an ethical human rights perspective toward their work as they aid clients in negotiating for greater justice and equity in their relationships. The book bridges theory and practice by giving readers these essential tools: Strategies for asking clients about social class. A framework for understanding gender issues within the larger patriarchy. Guidelines for relating concepts of race and class in therapy. Structure for creating the family cartography. Ways to utilize a queer perspective in therapy. Illustrative case examples throughout. Breaking new ground in family therapy, *Applying Critical Social Theories to Family Therapy Practice* challenges social workers, social work researchers, therapists, and psychologists to push beyond current ideas of social awareness and cultural competence toward truly liberatory client-centered practice. .

Critical Social Theory Culture, Society and Critique SAGE

*Critical Social Theory and the End of Work* examines the development and sociological significance of the idea that work is being eliminated through the use of advanced production technology. Granter's engagement with the work of key American and European figures such as Marx, Marcuse, Gorz, Habermas and Negri, focuses his arguments for the abolition of labour as a response to the current socio-historical changes affecting our work ethic and consumer ideology. By combining history of ideas with social theory, this book considers how the 'end of work' thesis has developed and has been critically implemented in the analysis of modern society. This book will appeal to scholars of sociology, history of ideas, social and cultural theory as well as those working in the fields of critical management and sociology of work.

These essays, written in the 1930s and 1940s, represent a first selection in English from the major work of the founder of the famous Institute for Social Research in Frankfurt. Horkheimer's writings are essential to an understanding of the intellectual background of the New Left and the too much current social-philosophical thought, including the work of Herbert Marcuse. Apart from their historical significance and even from their scholarly eminence, these essays contain an immediate relevance only now becoming fully recognized.

Social media platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter are enormously popular: they are continuously ranked among the most frequently accessed websites worldwide. However there are as yet few studies which combine critical theoretical and empirical research in the context of digital and social media. The aim of this book is to study the constraints and emancipatory potentials of new media and to assess to what extent digital and social media can contribute to strengthen the idea of the

communication and network commons, and a commons-based information society. Based on a critical theory and political economy approach, this book explores: the foundational concepts of a critical theory of media, technology, and society users' knowledge, attitudes, and practices towards the antagonistic character and the potentials and risks of social media whether technological and/or social changes are required in order to bring about real social media and human liberation. *Critical Theory and Social Media* examines both academic discourse on, and users' responses to, new media, making it a valuable tool for international scholars and students of sociology, media and communication studies, social theory, new media, and information society studies. Its clear and interesting insights into corporate practices of the global new media sector will mean that it appeals to critical social media users around the world. *Critical social work* encourages emancipatory personal and social change. This text focuses on the challenge of incorporating critical theory into the practice of social workers and provides case studies and insights from a range of fields to illustrate how to work with tensions and challenges. Beginning with an outline of the theoretical basis of critical social work and its different perspectives, the authors go on to introduce key features of working in this tradition including critical reflection. Part II explores critical practices in confronting privilege and promoting social justice in social work, examining such issues as human rights, gender, poverty and class. Part III considers the development of critical practices within the organisational context of social work including the fields of mental health, child and family services, within Centrelink and prison settings. Part IV is focused on doing anti-discriminatory and anti-oppressive practice in social work with particular populations including asylum seekers, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, domestic violence survivors, older people and lesbian, gay and transgender groups. Finally, Part V outlines collectivist and transformative practices in social work and beyond, looking at environmental issues, social activism, the disability movement and globalisation. 'A highly valuable addition to social work education and practice literature in Australia and beyond its shores.' Ruth Phillips, Associate Professor, Faculty of Education and Social Work, University of Sydney

As a practice meant to improve society, evaluation is implicated in discussions about which societal and cultural values and principles of justice will prevail and which ones will get subverted or ignored altogether. For the most part, as currently configured, the relationship of evaluators to policy makers has jeopardized evaluation's ability to provide the critical lens needed for feedback on the effects of a society's practices, policies, and structures. Many theorists believe that it is only by examining and critically assessing how knowledge is produced and reproduced in society that we can better reflect on and imagine new, more socially just, social configurations and relations. One such approach, critical theory, is a pedagogical practice that employs a systemic and historical critique of social and cultural formations and practices in a way that fosters citizens' abilities to evaluate and alter them. The intent of this issue of *New Directions for Evaluation* is to show the relevance of critical social theory for evaluation practice. Each of the authors in this volume addresses in a different way and from a variety of disciplinary fields what a critical theory lens might offer evaluation practice. This is the 127th volume of the Jossey-Bass quarterly report series *New Directions for Evaluation*, an official publication of the American Evaluation Association.

Axel Honneth has been instrumental in advancing the work of the Frankfurt School of critical theorists, rebuilding their effort to combine radical social and political analysis with rigorous philosophical inquiry. These eleven essays published over the past five years reclaim the relevant themes of the Frankfurt School, which counted Theodor W. Adorno, Max Horkheimer, Walter Benjamin, Jürgen Habermas, Franz Neumann, and Albrecht Wellmer as members. They also engage with Kant, Freud, Alexander Mitscherlich, and Michael Walzer, whose work on morality, history, democracy, and individuality intersects with the Frankfurt School's core concerns. Collected here for the first time in English, Honneth's essays pursue the unifying themes and theses that support the methodologies and thematics of critical social theory, and they address the possibilities of continuing this tradition through radically changed theoretical and social conditions. According to Honneth, there is a unity that underlies critical theory's multiple approaches: the way in which reason is both distorted and furthered in contemporary capitalist society. And while much is dead in the social and psychological doctrines of critical social theory, its central inquiries remain vitally relevant. Is social progress still possible after the horrors of the twentieth century? Does capitalism deform reason and, if so, in what respects? Can we justify the relationship between law and violence in secular terms, or is it inextricably bound to divine justice? How can we be free when we're subject to socialization in a highly complex and in many respects unfree society? For Honneth, suffering and moral struggle are departure points for a new "reconstructive" form of social criticism, one that is based solidly in the empirically grounded, interdisciplinary approach of the Frankfurt School.

This book provides an overview of recent debates about critical theory from Pierre Bourdieu via Luc Boltanski to the Frankfurt School. Robin Celikates investigates the relevance of the self-understanding of ordinary agents and of their practices of critique for the theoretical and emancipatory project of critical theory.

In *Intersectionality as Critical Social Theory* Patricia Hill Collins offers a set of analytical tools for those wishing to develop intersectionality's capability to theorize social inequality in ways that would facilitate social change. While intersectionality helps shed light on contemporary social issues, Collins notes that it has yet to reach its full potential as a critical social theory. She contends that for intersectionality to fully realize its power, its practitioners must critically reflect on its assumptions, epistemologies, and methods. She places intersectionality in dialog with several theoretical traditions—from the Frankfurt school to black feminist thought—to sharpen its definition and foreground its singular critical purchase, thereby providing a capacious interrogation into intersectionality's potential to reshape the world.

Critical Theory traces its roots from Marxism, through the renowned Frankfurt School, to a wide array of national and cultural traditions. Raymond Morrow's book traces the history and outlines the major tenets of critical theory for an undergraduate audience.

He exemplifies the theory through an analysis of two leading social theorists: Jürgen Habermas and Anthony Giddens. Unique to this volume is the emphasis on the link between Critical Theory and empirical research and social science methodology, often thought to be incompatible.

*What's Critical About Critical Realism?: Essays in Reconstructive Social Theory* draws together 4 major articles that are situated at the intersection of philosophy and sociology. Preceded by a general presentation of Bhaskar's work, critical realism is

used to reconstruct the generative structuralism of Pierre Bourdieu, warn about the dangers of biocapitalism, theorize about social movements and explore the hermeneutics of internal conversations. Together, the essays form a logical sequence that starts with a search for a solid conception of social structure through a realist critique of Bourdieu's rationalist epistemology, proceeds to an ideology critique of posthumanism through an investigation of Actor-Network Theory, extends critical realism to social movements through an investigation of the constitution of collective subjectivities and engages in a sustained dialogue with Margaret Archer through an attempt to reconnect hermeneutics and pragmatism to critical realism. The result is an ongoing dialogue between British critical realism, French historical epistemology, German critical theory and American pragmatism. As suits a collection of essays in social theory, this book will address a broad audience of sociologists, philosophers, social psychologists and anthropologists who are interested in contemporary social theory at the cutting edge. Academics and advanced students who relate to critical realism and critical theory, epistemology and philosophy of the social sciences, hermeneutics and pragmatism, or anyone else who follows the work of Roy Bhaskar, Pierre Bourdieu, Bruno Latour or Margaret Archer will find a keen interest in some of the theoretical questions the book raises.

Analyzes contemporary capitalism through the products of culture and art for fresh insight into emancipatory possibilities concealed within capitalism's darkest dynamics. Aesthetic objects, crafted as poetic reflections of the contradictory worlds that they inhabit, are simultaneously theorized and theorizing. In *Capital in the Mirror*, eminent critical theorists explore the aesthetic dimension for reflective visions of capital that are difficult to obtain through even the most rigorous statistical analyses. Chapters address inequality, alienation, ideology, warfare, and other problems of contemporary capitalism through the cultural prisms of Herman Melville, Thomas Mann, Charles Dickens, J. W. Goethe, Friedrich Hölderlin, Walt Whitman, Bertolt Brecht, and science-fiction cinema. Famous narrative elements in their works, such as Ahab's pursuit of the white whale in Melville's *Moby-Dick*, demonic production and perverse desire in Mann's *Doctor Faustus*, socially electrified bodies of Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*, and dystopian projections of current sci-fi cinema, are theorized as stylistically distorted reflections of social life within capital. The authors reveal theoretical powers latent within these condensed images that prefigure the dark dynamics of capitalism. Focusing on dark images of domination and also prophetic images of transformation, the book points the way toward emancipation, social regeneration, and human flourishing. Dan Krier is Professor of Sociology at Iowa State University and the author of *Speculative Management: Stock Market Power and Corporate Change*, also published by SUNY Press. Mark P. Worrell is retired Professor of Sociology at the State University of New York College at Cortland and serves as an associate editor for the journal *Critical Sociology*. Together they have coedited *The Social Ontology of Capitalism and Capitalism's Future: Alienation, Emancipation, and Critique*.

The essential premise of critical social theory is that contemporary society is neither democratic nor free, but that modern global capitalism creates a citizenry satiated with consumer goods, unaware of alternative ways of living. In the public sector, critical theory suggests that governing systems are influenced, if not controlled, by the wealthy and powerful, leaving public professionals to decide whether to serve those interests or

