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978-1-107-12075-4 - Information, Power, and Democracy: Liberty is a Daughter of Knowledge

Nico Stehr

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Information, Power, and Democracy

The link between liberty and knowledge is neither static nor simple. Until recently, the mutual support between knowledge, science, democracy, and emancipation was presupposed. Recently, however, the close relationship between democracy and knowledge has been viewed with skepticism. The growing societal reliance on specialized knowledge often appears to actually undermine democracy. Is it that we do not know enough, or that we know too much? What are the implications for the freedom of societies and their citizens? Does knowledge help or heed them in unraveling the complexity of new challenges?

This book systematically explores the shifting dynamics of knowledge production and the implications for the conditions and practices of freedom. It considers the growth of knowledge about knowledge and the impact of an evolving media. It argues for a revised understanding of the societal role of knowledge and presents the concept of “knowledge societies” as a major resource for liberty.

NICO STEHR is Karl Mannheim Professor of Cultural Studies at the Zeppelin University, Friedrichshafen, Germany, and Founding Director of the European Centre for Sustainability Research at his university. His recent publications include: *Who Owns Knowledge: Knowledge and the Law* with Bernd Weiler (2008), *Knowledge and Democracy* (2008), *Society: Critical Concepts in Sociology* with Reiner Grundmann (2008), *Climate and Society* with Hans von Storch (2010), and *Experts: The Knowledge and Power of Expertise* (2011) and *The Power of Scientific Knowledge: From Research to Public Policy* (2012), both with Reiner Grundmann.

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