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978-0-521-57185-2 - Theorizing Textual Subjects: Agency and Oppression

Meili Steele

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This book addresses the central crisis in critical theory today: how to theorize the subject as both a construct of oppressive discourse and a dialogical agent. By engaging with a wide range of leading political, philosophical, and critical thinkers – Jameson, Habermas, Lyotard, MacIntyre, Rorty, Taylor, Benhabib, and West are all critiqued – Meili Steele proposes linking language with human agency in order to develop an alternative textual and ethical theory of the subject. Steele shows how constructivist theories fail to account for the ethical implications of the supposed contingency of all contexts, and how dialogical theorists fail to acknowledge the insight of postmodern critiques. Developing this theory through readings of texts that address issues of identity politics, race, and feminist theory, Steele illustrates that we do not have to choose between an idealized and a demonized modernity. This book maps new ways of confronting the problem of how politics and ethics are deployed in imaginative narratives.

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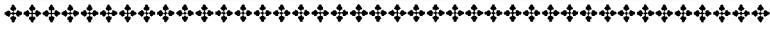
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Literature, Culture, Theory 21



Theorizing textual subjects

Literature, Culture, Theory 21



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