Habermas: A Very Short Introduction

In this new collection of recent essays, Habermas takes up and pursues the line of analysis begun in The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity. He begins by outlining the sources and central themes of twentieth-century philosophy, and the range of current debates. He then examines a number of key contributions to these debates, from the pragmatic philosophies of Mead, Perce and Rorty to the post-structuralism of Foucault. Like most contemporary thinkers, Habermas is critical of the Western metaphysical tradition and its exaggerated conception of reason. But he cautions against the temptation to relinquish this conception altogether. In opposition to the radical critics of Western philosophy, Habermas argues that postmetaphysical thinking can remain critical only if it preserves the idea of reason while stripping it of its metaphysical trappings. Habermas contributes to this task by developing further his distinctive approach to problems of meaning, rationality and subjectivity. This book will be of particular interest to students of philosophy, sociology and social and political theory, and it will be essential reading for anyone interested in the continuing development of Habermas's project.

Communication and the Evolution of Society

A major contribution to contemporary social theory. Not only does it provide a compelling critique of some of the main perspectives in 20th century philosophy and social science, but it also presents a systematic synthesis of the many themes which have preoccupied Habermas for thirty years. --Times Literary Supplement

A Sociological Theory of Communication

The papers contained in this volume are based on the contributions to an international, interdisciplinary Symposium entitled 'Analytical and Sociological Action Theories' which took place in Berlin (West) on September 1-3, 1982. Each part comprises a main paper followed by two (in Part IV three) papers commenting on it. On the whole there is an equal division into philosophical and sociological papers. In particular each main...
paper receives both inter- and innerdisciplinary comments. The Berlin Symposium was supported by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (Bonn) and, to a smaller extent, by the Freie Universität Berlin; both grants are acknowledged gratefully. Berlin and Helsinki, May 1984 GOTTFRIED SEEBASS RAIMO TUOMELA vii GOTTFRIED SEEBASS INTRODUCTION I. It is a striking fact that the extended efforts of both sociologists and analytical philosophers to work out what is termed a 'theory of action' have taken little, if any, account of each other. Yet of the various reasons for this that come to mind none appears to be such as to foil any hopes for fruitful interdisciplinary exchange. Being concerned, apparently, with the same set of phenomena, viz. individual and social actions, the two theories can reasonably be expected to be partially overlapping as well as competitive and complementary. Accordingly each can eventually be shown by the other to need completion or revision. Whether or to what extent this is the case is subject to inquiry and discussion.

**Toward a Rational Society**

**Inclusion of the Other**

Here, for the first time in English, is volume one of Jurgen Habermas's long-awaited magnum opus: The Theory of Communicative Action. This pathbreaking work is guided by three interrelated concerns: (1) to develop a concept of communicative rationality that is no longer tied to the subjective and individualistic premises of modern social and political theory; (2) to construct a two-level concept of society that integrates the 'lifeworld' and 'system' paradigms; and (3) to sketch out a critical theory of modernity that explains its sociopathologies in a new way. Habermas approaches these tasks through a combination of conceptual analyses, systematic reflections, and critical reconstructions of such predecessors as Marx and Weber, Durkheim and Mead, Horkheimer and Adorno, Schutz and Parsons. Reason and the Rationalization of Society develops a sociological theory of action that stresses not its means-ends or teleological aspect, but the need to coordinate action socially via communication. In the introductory chapter Habermas sets out a powerful series of arguments on such foundational issues as cultural and historical relativism, the methodology of Verstehen, the inseparability of interpretation from critique. In addition to clarifying the normative foundations of critical social inquiry, this sets the stage for a systematic appropriation of Weber's theory of rationalization and its Marxist reception by Lukacs, Horkheimer and Adorno. This is an important book for degree students of philosophy, sociology and related subjects.

**The Theory of Communicative Action: Lifeworld and system : a critique of functionalist reason**

A rare systematic thinker, Habermas has furthered our understanding of modernity, social interaction and linguistic practice, societal institutions, rationality, morality, the law, globalization, and the role of religion in multicultural societies. He has helped shape discussions of truth, objectivity, normativity, and the relationship between the human and the natural sciences. This volume provides an accessible and comprehensive conceptual map of Habermas' theoretical framework and its key concepts, including the theory of communicative action, discourse ethics, his social-political philosophy and their applications to contemporary issues. It will be an invaluable resource for both novice readers of Habermas and those interested in a more refined understanding of particular aspects of his work.

**Philosophical Introductions**

Universities must transmit technically exploitable knowledge. That is, they must meet an industrial society's need for qualified new generations and at the same time be concerned with the expanded reproduction of education itself. In addition, universities must not only transmit technically exploitable knowledge, but also produce it. This includes both information flowing from research into the channels of industrial utilization,
armament, and social welfare, and advisory knowledge that enters into strategies of administration, government, and other decision-making powers, such as private enterprises. Thus, through instruction and research the university is immediately connected with functions of the economic process.

**Communication and Capitalism**

In an earlier era, the communication field was dominated by the study of mediated and unmediated message effects during which considerable research focused on the attitudinal and action consequences of exposure to messages. A more catholic purview of the communication process exists today. This more encompassing perspective does not deny the importance of studying message effects, but raises the additional question of how individuals generate messages in the first place. While the earlier era of communication research was dominated by studies that focused on attitude and behavior change as primary dependent variables, such variables as message comprehension have begun to emerge in this new era. The focus on communication and cognition has led, paradoxically, to a more intense focus on social interaction processes. The theory and research presented in this volume seeks to strike a balance between the internal workings of the individual cognitive system on the one hand and the outer world of social interaction on the other. Whether or not the theory and research stands the test of time, it is clear that complete cognitive accounts of social interaction cannot confine themselves to mere descriptions of the cognitive structures and processes that are responsible for message production and comprehension. Explicit links must be made between these cognitive structures and processes and the workings of social interaction. This work takes a modest step in that direction.

**Understanding Communication Theory**

This study offers a systematic reconstruction of the theoretical foundations and framework of critical social theory. It is Habermas' "magnum opus", and it is regarded as one of the most important works of modern social thought. In this second and final volume of the work, Habermas examines the relations between action concepts and systems theory and elaborates a framework for analyzing the developmental tendencies of modern societies. He discusses in detail the work of Marx, Durkheim, G.H. Mead and Talcott Parsons, among others. By distinguishing between social systems and what he calls the "life-world", Habermas is able to analyze the ways in which the development of social systems impinges upon the symbolic and subjective dimensions of social life, resulting in the kind of crises, conflicts and protest movements which are characteristic of advanced capitalist societies in the late-20th century.

**Theory and Practice**

Cristina Lafont draws upon Hilary Putnam's work in particular to criticize the linguistic idealism and relativism of the German tradition, which she traces back to the assumption that meaning determines reference.

**From Communicative Action to the Face of the Other**

Although the continental philosophers Jurgen Habermas and Emmanuel Levinas are both inescapably important to an array of debates in contemporary moral theory, they are rarely assessed in relation to each other. Steven Hendley's study is based on the conviction that beneath the surface there is in fact a remarkable degree of convergence in the two philosophers' work that is usually overlooked. Hendley discovers and explains the complementarity of Levinas's conception of discourse in relation to the Other to Habermas's theory of communication as the basis for recognition of universal moral norms.
Postmetaphysical Thinking II

In this wide-ranging work, now available in paperback, Habermas presents his views on the nature of the social sciences and their distinctive methodology and concerns. He examines, among other things, the traditional division between the natural sciences and the social sciences; the characteristics of social action and the implications of theories of language for social enquiry; and the nature, tasks and limitations of hermeneutics. Habermas’ analysis of these and other themes is, as always, rigorous, perceptive and constructive. This brilliant study succeeds in highlighting the distinctive characteristics of the social sciences and in outlining the nature of, and prospects for, critical theory today.

Moral Consciousness and Communicative Action

Jürgen Habermas is one of the foremost philosophers and social theorists in the world today. But the complexity and breadth of his thought make him often difficult to understand. In this book, Stephen White offers a clear, accessible, and reliable introduction to Habermas's work, particularly that which he has written since the publication of Knowledge and human interest (produced in English in 1971). During this period, new themes and directions have emerged in Habermas's thought, which culminated in The Theory of Communicative Action, a massive work that has not hitherto been the subject of extended commentary and analysis. This book is the first to provide a full-length study of Habermas's mature thought. Locating the latter in the context of contemporary debates, White explains Habermas's ideas about action, rationality, communicative ethics, contemporary capitalism, and new social movements, which characterize his later work. He also examines Habermas's interpretation of modernity, showing that although, like his forerunners in the Frankfurt School, Habermas maintains a critical stance towards modernity's instrumentalization of reason, he nonetheless offers a sophisticated defense of the universal significance of other aspects of modern consciousness that are too often forgotten by many recent radical critics of modernity. Throughout, White presents Habermas's work in such a way as to emphasize its coherence, and to demonstrate how it constitutes the beginnings of a distinctive new research program in the social sciences. As a well-researched and lucid account of Habermas's thought, this book will appeal to readers wanting an introduction to the complexity of his ideas, as well as to those already conversant with them. It will also interest social and political theorists concerned with the general theoretical issues that it covers.

The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere

The Theory of Communicative Action: Volume 1

In this important volume Habermas outlines the views which form the basis of his critical theory of modern societies. The volume comprises five interlocking essays, which together define the contours of his theory of communication and of his substantive account of social change. 'What is Universal Pragmatics?' is the best available statement of Habermas's programme for a theory of communication based on the analysis of speech acts. In the following two essays Habermas draws on the work of Kohlberg and others to develop a distinctive account of moral consciousness and normative structures. 'Toward a Reconstruction of historical Materialism' takes these issues further, offering a wide-ranging reconstruction of Marx's historical materialism understood as a theory of social evolution. The final essay focuses on the question of legitimacy and on the legitimation problems faced by modern states. This book is essential reading for anyone concerned with the key questions of social and political theory today.

The Theory of Communicative Action: Volume 1
This book provides a comprehensive and detailed analysis and sustained critique of Jurgen Habermas' "Critical Theory". It will be essential reading for scholars and students alike.

**Planning Strategic Interaction**

‘There is no alternative to postmetaphysical thinking’: this statement, made by Jürgen Habermas in 1988, has lost none of its relevance. Postmetaphysical thinking is, in the first place, the historical answer to the crisis of metaphysics following Hegel, when the central metaphysical figures of thought began to totter under the pressure exerted by social developments and by developments within science. As a result, philosophy’s epistemological privilege was shaken to its core, its basic concepts were de-transcendentalized, and the primacy of theory over practice was opened to question. For good reasons, philosophy ‘lost its extraordinary status’, but as a result it also courted new problems. In Postmetaphysical Thinking II, the sequel to the 1988 volume that bears the same title (English translation, Polity 1992), Habermas addresses some of these problems. The first section of the book deals with the shift in perspective from metaphysical worldviews to the lifeworld, the unarticulated meanings and assumptions that accompany everyday thought and action in the mode of ‘background knowledge’. Habermas analyses the lifeworld as a ‘space of reasons’ – even where language is not (yet) involved, such as, for example, in gestural communication and rituals. In the second section, the uneasy relationship between religion and postmetaphysical thinking takes centre stage. Habermas picks up where he left off in 1988, when he made the far-sighted observation that ‘philosophy, even in its postmetaphysical form, will be able neither to replace nor to repress religion’, and explores philosophy’s new-found interest in religion, among other topics. The final section includes essays on the role of religion in the political context of a post-secular, liberal society. This volume will be of great interest to students and scholars in philosophy, religion and the social sciences and humanities generally.

**The Recent Work of Jürgen Habermas**

This sociological work examines the phenomenon of the Death Café, a regular gathering of strangers from all walks of life who engage in “death talk” over coffee, tea, and desserts. Using insightful theoretical frameworks, Fong explores the common themes that constitute a “death identity” and reveals how Café attendees are inspired to live in light of death because of death. Fong examines how the participants’ embrace of self-sovereignty and confrontation of mortality revive their awareness of and appreciation for shared humanity. While divisive identity politics continue to foster neo-tribalisms and the construction of myriad “others,” Fong makes visible how those who participate in Death Cafés end up building community while being inspired toward living more fulfilling lives. Through death talk unfettered from systemic control, they end up feeling more agency over their own lived lives as well as being more conscious of the possibility of a good death. According to Fong, participants in this phenomenon offer us a sublime way to confront the facticity of our own demise—by gathering as one.

**Fundamentals of Legal Argumentation**

Jürgen Habermas is one of the most influential philosophers of our time. His diagnoses of contemporary society and concepts such as the public sphere, communicative rationality, and cosmopolitanism have influenced virtually all academic disciplines, spurred political debates, and shaped intellectual life in Germany and beyond for more than fifty years. In The Habermas Handbook, leading Habermas scholars elucidate his thought, providing essential insight into his key concepts, the breadth of his work, and his influence across politics, law, the social sciences, and public life. This volume offers a comprehensive overview and an in-depth analysis of Habermas’s work in its entirety. After examining his intellectual biography, it goes on to illuminate the social and intellectual context of Habermasian thought, such as the Frankfurt School, speech-act theory, and
contending theories of democracy. The Handbook provides an extensive account of Habermas’s texts, ranging from his dissertation on Schelling to his most recent writing about Europe. It illustrates the development of his thought and its frequently controversial reception while elaborating the central ideas of his work. The book also provides a glossary of key terms and concepts, making the complexity of Habermas’s thought accessible to a broad readership.

**Communicative Action and Rational Choice**

**The Philosophy of Jürgen Habermas**

Anyone who wishes to pursue a career in communication with groups needs this comprehensive book on the theories behind communication. This volume provides practical, engaging overviews of over 42 different theories that readers will need to be aware of if they are pursuing this serious field. The authors, established writers and scholars who are known as "the park rangers of communication theory", have provided a user-friendly tour. Accurate, up-to-date, and comprehensive, this volume will prove a valuable addition to the literature on the subject. Those involved in communication careers.

**The Habermas Handbook**

This book offers a critical analysis of the complex theory of law and democracy developed by celebrated German philosopher and public intellectual Jürgen Habermas.

**Between Facts and Norms**

Juergen Habermas opens Volume 2 with a brilliant reinterpretation of Mead and Durkheim and then develops his own approach to society, combining two hitherto competing paradigms, "system" and "lifeworld." The strength of this combination is then demonstrated in a detailed critique of Parsons's theory of social systems. Concluding with a critical reconstruction of the Weberan and Marxian treatment of modernity and its discontents, Habermas sets a new agenda for the critical theory of contemporary society. The combination of historical and theoretical sweep, analytical acumen and synthetic power, imagination and engagement mark this as one of the great works of twentieth-century social theory.

**Postmetaphysical Thinking**

This book is an updated and revised edition of Fundamentals of Legal Argumentation published in 1999. It discusses new developments that have taken place in the past 15 years in research of legal argumentation, legal justification and legal interpretation, as well as the implications of these new developments for the theory of legal argumentation. Almost every chapter has been revised and updated, and the chapters include discussions of recent studies, major additions on topical issues, new perspectives, and new developments in several theoretical areas. Examples of these additions are discussions of recent developments in such areas as Habermas' theory, MacCormick's theory, Alexy's theory, Artificial Intelligence and law, and the pragma-dialectical theory of legal argumentation. Furthermore it provides an extensive and systematic overview of approaches and studies of legal argumentation in the context of legal justification in various legal systems and countries that have been important for the development of research of legal argumentation. The book contains a discussion of influential theories that conceive the law and legal justification
as argumentative activity. From different disciplinary and theoretical angles it addresses such topics as the institutional characteristics of the law and the relation between general standards for moral discussions and legal standards such as the Rule of Law. It discusses patterns of legal justification in the context of different types of problems in the application of the law and it describes rules for rational legal discussions. The combination of the sound basis of the first edition and the discussions of new developments make this new edition an up-to-date and comprehensive survey of the various theoretical influences which have informed the study of legal argumentation. It discusses salient backgrounds to this field as well as major approaches and trends in the contemporary research. It surveys the relevant theoretical factors both from various continental law traditions and common law countries.

**The Theory of Communicative Action**

Theory and Practice is one of Habermas's major works and is widely recognized as a classic in contemporary and social and political theory. Through a series of highly original historical studies, Habermas re-examines the relations between philosophy, science and politics. Beginning with the classical doctrine of politics as developed by Aristotle, he traces the changing constellation of theory and practice through the work of Machiavelli, More, Hobbes, Hegel and Marx. He argues that, with the development of the modern sciences, politics has become increasingly regarded as a technical discipline concerned with problems of prediction and control. Politics has thus lost its link with the practical cultivation of character, that is, with the praxis of enlightened citizens. Theory and Practices includes a major re-assessment of Marx's work and of the status of Marxism as a form of critique. In an important concluding chapter Habermas examines the role of reason and the prospects for critical theory in our modern scientific civilization.

**The Theory of Communicative Action**

‘An authoritative analysis of the role of communication in contemporary capitalism and an important contribution to debates about the forms of domination and potentials for liberation in today’s capitalist society.’ — Professor Michael Hardt, Duke University, co-author of the tetralogy Empire, Commonwealth, Multitude, and Assembly ‘A comprehensive approach to understanding and transcending the deepening crisis of communicative capitalism. It is a major work of synthesis and essential reading for anyone wanting to know what critical analysis is and why we need it now more than ever.’ — Professor Graham Murdock, Emeritus Professor, University of Loughborough and co-editor of The Handbook of Political Economy of Communications Communication and Capitalism outlines foundations of a critical theory of communication. Going beyond Jürgen Habermas’ theory of communicative action, Christian Fuchs outlines a communicative materialism that is a critical, dialectical, humanist approach to theorising communication in society and in capitalism. The book renews Marxist Humanism as a critical theory perspective on communication and society. The author theorises communication and society by engaging with the dialectic, materialism, society, work, labour, technology, the means of communication as means of production, capitalism, class, the public sphere, alienation, ideology, nationalism, racism, authoritarianism, fascism, patriarchy, globalisation, the new imperialism, the commons, love, death, metaphysics, religion, critique, social and class struggles, praxis, and socialism. Fuchs renews the engagement with the questions of what it means to be a human and a humanist today and what dangers humanity faces today.

**On the Logic of the Social Sciences**

In this book Joseph Heath brings Jürgen Habermas's theory of communicative action into dialogue with the most sophisticated articulation of the instrumental conception of practical rationality-modern rational choice theory. Heath begins with an overview of Habermas's action theory and his critique of decision and game theory. He then offers an alternative to Habermas's use of speech act theory to explain social order and outlines a
multidimensional theory of rational action that includes norm-governed action as a specific type. In the second part of the book Heath discusses
the more philosophical dimension of Habermas's conception of practical rationality. He criticizes Habermas's attempt to introduce a
universalization principle governing moral discourse, as well as his criteria for distinguishing between moral and ethical problems. Heath offers an
alternative account of the level of convergence exhibited by moral argumentation, drawing on game-theoretic models to specify the burden of proof
that the theory of communicative action and discourse must assume.

**The Theory of Communicative Action: Volume 2**

The Inclusion of the Other contains Habermas's most recent work in political theory and political philosophy. Here Habermas picks up some of the
central themes of Between Facts and Norms and elaborates them in relation to current political debates. One of the distinctive features of
Habermas's work has been its approach to the problem of political legitimacy through a sustained reflection on the dual legitimating and
regulating function of modern legal systems. Extending his discourse theory of normative validity to the legal-political domain, Habermas has
defended a proceduralist conception of deliberative democracy in which the burden of legitimating state power is borne by informal and legally
institutionalized processes of political deliberation. Its guiding intuition is the radical democratic idea that there is an internal relation between
the rule of law and popular sovereignty. In these essays he brings this discursive and proceduralist analysis of political legitimacy to bear on such
urgent contemporary issues as the enduring legacy of the welfare state, the future of the nation state, and the prospects of a global politics of
human rights. This book will be essential reading for students and academics in sociology and social theory, politics and political theory,
philosophy and the social sciences generally.

**Legitimation Crisis**

This is Habermas's long awaited work on law, democracy and the modern constitutional state in which he develops his own account of the nature of
law and democracy.

**The Theory of Communicative Action**

This book provides a clear and readable overview of the works of today's most influential German philosopher. It analyses the theoretical
underpinnings of Habermas's social theory, and its applications in ethics, politics, and law. Finally, it examines how his social and political theory
informs his writing on contemporary, political, and social problems.

**On the Pragmatics of Social Interaction**

A major contribution to contemporary social theory. Not only does it provide a compelling critique of some of the main perspectives in 20th century
philosophy and social science, but it also presents a systematic synthesis of the many themse which have preoccupied Habermas for thirty years.
--Times Literary Supplement

**Habermas**

Presents John Dewey as very much at home in the busy mix of contemporary philosophy - as a thinker whose work, more than fifty years after his
death, still furnishes fresh insights into philosophical debates. This book provides novel interpretations of Dewey's views of religious belief, the psychology of habit, and philosophical anthropology.

**The Theory of Communicative Action**

The Theory of Communicative Action offers nothing less than a systematic reconstruction of the theoretical foundations and framework of critical social theory.

**Communicative Action**

On the occasion of Habermas's 80th birthday, the German publisher Suhrkamp brought out five volumes of Habermas’s papers that spanned the full range of his philosophical thought, from the theory of rationality to the critique of metaphysics. For each of these volumes, Habermas wrote an introduction that crystallized, in a remarkably clear and succinct way, his thinking on the key philosophical issues that have preoccupied him throughout his long career. This new book by Polity brings together these five introductions and publishes them in translation for the first time. The resulting volume provides a unique and comprehensive overview of Habermas's philosophy in his own words. In the five chapters that make up this volume, Habermas discusses the concept of communicative action and the grounding of the social sciences in the theory of language; the relationship between rationality and the theory of language; discourse ethics; political theory and problems of democracy and legitimacy; and the critique of reason and the challenge posed by religion in a secular age. The volume includes a substantial introduction by Jean-Marc Durand-Gasselin, which offers a synoptic view of the development of Habermas’s thought as a whole followed by concise accounts of his contributions in each of the areas mentioned. Together they provide the reader with the necessary background to understand Habermas's distinctive and original contribution to philosophy. Philosophical Introductions will be an indispensable text for students and scholars in philosophy and in the humanities and social sciences generally, as well as anyone interested in the most important developments in philosophy and critical theory today.

**The Linguistic Turn in Hermeneutic Philosophy**

This major work retraces the emergence and development of the Bourgeois public sphere - that is, a sphere which was distinct from the state and in which citizens could discuss issues of general interest. In analysing the historical transformations of this sphere, Habermas recovers a concept which is of crucial significance for current debates in social and political theory. Habermas focuses on the liberal notion of the bourgeois public sphere as it emerged in Europe in the early modern period. He examines both the writings of political theorists, including Marx, Mill and de Tocqueville, and the specific institutions and social forms in which the public sphere was realized. This brilliant and influential work has been widely recognized for many years as a classic of contemporary social and political thought, of interest to students and scholars throughout the social sciences and humanities.

**The Theory of Communicative Action: Lifeworld and system**

Networks of communication evolve in terms of reflexive exchanges. The codification of these reflections in language, that is, at the social level, can be considered as the operating system of society. Under sociologically specifiable conditions, the discursive reconstructions can be expected to make the systems under reflection increasingly knowledge-intensive. This sociological theory of communication is founded in a tradition that includes Giddens' (1979) structuration theory, Habermas' (1981) theory of communicative action, and Luhmann's (1984) proposal to consider social systems as self-organizing. The study also elaborates on Shanpon's (1948) mathematical theory of communication for the formalization and
The Death Café Movement

These critical essays on Jurgen Habermas's major contribution to sociological theory, The Theory of Communicative Action, provide an indispensable guide for anyone trying to grasp that large, difficult, and important work. The editors' introduction traces the history of the reception of the work and identifies the main themes on which discussion has focused: a concept of communicative rationality; a theory of action based on distinguishing communicative from instrumental reason; a two-level concept of society that integrates lifeworld and system paradigms; and a critical theory of modernity meant to diagnose the sociopathologies of contemporary society. Axel Honneth is a Research Fellow at the Institute of Advanced Studies in Berlin. Hans Joas is Professor of Sociology at the Free University, Berlin. Contributors: Jeffrey Alexander. Johann P. Arnason. Johannes Berger. Gunter Dux. Jurgen Habermas. Hans Joas. Hans-Peter Kruger. Thomas McCarthy. Herbert Schnadelbach. Martin Seel. Charles Taylor.

Pragmatism as Post-postmodernity

In this important book Habermas develops his views on a range of moral and ethical issues. Drawing on his theory of communicative action, Habermas elaborates an original conception of 'discourse ethics', seeking to reconstruct a moral point of view from which normative claims can be impartially judged. Habermas connects communicative ethics to the theory of social action via an examination of research in the social psychology of moral and interpersonal development. He aims to show that our basic moral intuitions spring from something deeper and more universal than contingent features of our tradition, namely from normative presuppositions of social interaction that belong to the repertoire of competent agents in any society. Moral Consciousness and Communicative Action confronts directly a variety of difficult and controversial problems which are at the centre of current debates in philosophy and social and political theory.

Jurgen Habermas

The core of this book is a set of five lectures delivered by Habermas at Princeton in 1971 under the title 'Reflections on the Linguistic Foundation of Sociology'. These lectures offer a preliminary view of what would become The Theory of Communicative Action, and they form an excellent introduction to Habermas's ideas about communication and society. They lay out the general parameters of Habermas's project in an accessible way, and situate his work in relation to other theories of society, particularly those of Edmund Husserl, Wilfrid Sellars, and Ludwig Wittgenstein. Two additional essays elaborating the themes of the lectures are also included in this volume. 'Intentions, Conventions, and Linguistic Interactions' is an essay in the philosophy of action that focuses on the validity of social norms and examines the conceptual connections between rules, conventions, norm-governed action, and intentionality. 'Reflections on Communicative Pathology' addresses the question of deviant processes of socialization and contains an analysis of the formal conditions of systematically distorted communication. This book was designed as a companion to On the Pragmatics of Communication (1998), which took pieces from Habermas's later work to create a systematic introduction to his theory of
formal pragmatics.

**Social Action**

Critical Theory originated in the perception by a group of German Marxists after the First World War that the Marxist analysis of capitalism had become deficient both empirically and with regard to its consequences for emancipation, and much of their work has attempted to deepen and extend it in new circumstances. Yet much of this revision has been in the form of piecemeal modification. In his latest work, Habermas has returned to the study of capitalism, incorporating the distinctive modifications of the Frankfurt School into the foundations of the critique of capitalism. Drawing on both systems theory and phenomenological sociology as well as Marxism, the author distinguishes four levels of capitalist crisis - economic, rationality, legitimation, and motivational crises. In his analysis, all the Frankfurt focus on cultural, personality, and authority structures finds its place, but in a systematic framework. At the same time, in his sketch of communicative ethics as the highest stage in the internal logic of the evolution of ethical systems, the author hints at the source of a new political practice that incorporates the imperatives of evolutionary rationality.

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