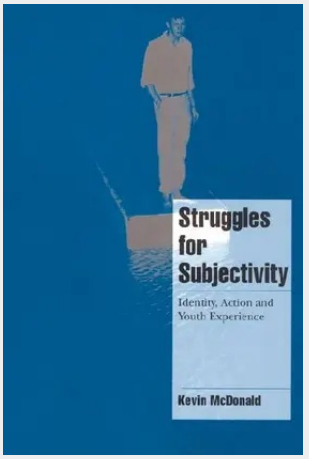
McDonald

Struggles for Subjectivity

Identity, Action and Youth Experience

This book explores the relationship between new experiences of selfhood and new patterns of social life. It does so through an encounter with young people who confront urgent social and cultural transformations, whose experience of selfhood is unclear, often shaped by social forces that while powerful, appear difficult, if not impossible to name. These young people live in a world where institutions are weakening and identities fragmenting, where socialisation into roles is being replaced by new imperatives of communication and self-esteem. Their world is shaped by new forms of freedom, but also by new forms of social polarisation and conflict. More than other social groups, young people confront the imperative of locating a sense of self and subjectivity, and this book is an account of this struggle in a context of profound social and cultural change. The author draws on the experience of a diverse group of young people -graffiti artists, sufferers of anorexia, the unemployed - all from a broad range of educational and cultural backgrounds. This book renews hands-on fieldwork in the Chicago School tradition; it is one where we meet real people confronting real social situations, while its research agenda is posited within the new French' sociology of experience'. Struggles for Subjectivity is not only about young people - it explores forms of crisis and struggle increasingly evident in advanced societies.



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