



The Way We Argue Now: A Study in the Cultures of Theory

Amanda Anderson

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How do the ways we argue represent a practical philosophy or a way of life? Are concepts of character and ethos pertinent to our understanding of academic debate? In this book, Amanda Anderson analyzes arguments in literary, cultural, and political theory, with special attention to the ways in which theorists understand ideals of critical distance, forms of subjective experience, and the determinants of belief and practice. Drawing on the resources of the liberal and rationalist tradition, Anderson interrogates the limits of identity politics and poststructuralism while holding to the importance of theory as a form of life.

Considering high-profile trends as well as less noted patterns of argument, *The Way We Argue Now* addresses work in feminism, new historicism, queer theory, postcolonialism, cosmopolitanism, pragmatism, and proceduralism. The essays brought together here--lucid, precise, rigorously argued--combine pointed critique with an appreciative assessment of the productive internal contests and creative developments across these influential bodies of thought.

Ultimately, *The Way We Argue Now* promotes a revitalized culture of argument through a richer understanding of the ways critical reason is practiced at the individual, collective, and institutional levels. Bringing to the fore the complexities of academic debate while shifting the terms by which we assess the continued influence of theory, it will appeal to readers interested in political theory, literary studies, cultural studies, gender studies, and the place of academic culture in society and politics.

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