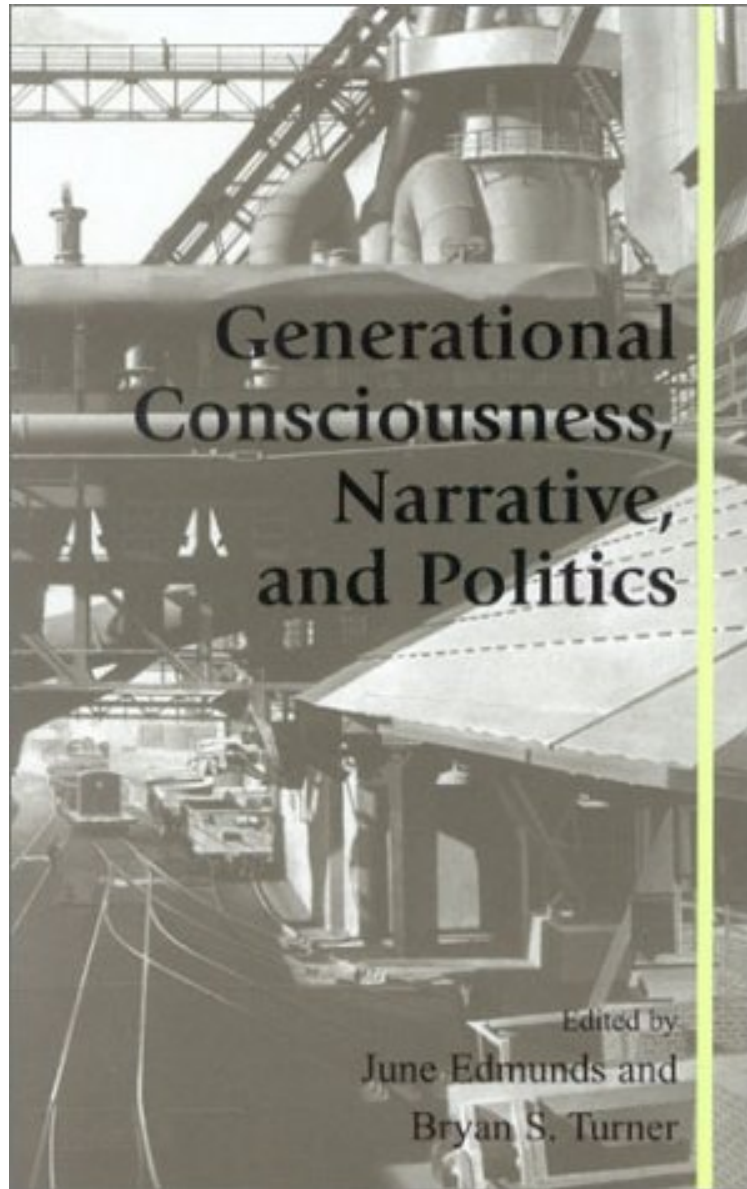


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Generational Consciousness, Narrative, and Politics

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With the erosion of strong class theory, sociologists have recently started to look at aspects of social stratification other than class. One of the most interesting new areas of investigation is the sociology of generations. This book brings together the work of scholars who are making a major contribution to this new sociological interest. Through a combination of innovative theoretical and empirical studies, this book shows that an analysis of generations is essential to an understanding of major social, political and intellectual trends in the postwar period. Each author brings to the volume insights from their own area of specialism - with rich illustrative material spanning topics as diverse as African American identity and Spanish youth culture. Theoretical inspiration also comes from a range of traditions, including cultural and historical sociology; social interactionism; social and cognitive psychology and life course theory. However, a unifying thread emerges around questions about how generations should be conceptualized; the role of trauma generating generational consciousness; the relationship between auto-biography and generational identity and the nature of inter and intra-generational relationships. This volume, therefore, provides a lively contribution to debates about the nature of generations and a stimulating basis for further work in this area.

In these days of post-class analysis, what Karl Mannheim called 'the problem of generations' is especially relevant to our times. In this absorbing and wide-ranging collection the contributors mix acute theoretical observation with vivid empirical detail to cast light on a host of cultural and political questions. They have certainly set the ball rolling again, after a long period of neglect. (Krishan Kumar, William R. Kenan, Jr. Professor of Sociology, University of Virginia) How do generational cultures emerge and how are such cultures transmitted? Edmunds and Turner demonstrate why these questions have a new political relevance for understanding today's increasingly global world. Drawing on theories of collective memory and cultural trauma, the book draws together a diverse range of studies of generational narratives across time and place. Students and researchers in sociology, cultural studies, and gender studies, will find this book a highly readable introduction to the importance of generational consciousness for understanding issues as wide-ranging as gender stratification, inter-generational relations, inequality, and the cultural and technological transformations of the post-Communist era. (Jackie Scott, faculty, Social and Political Sciences, University of Cambridge) About the Author June Edmunds, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, University of Cambridge. Bryan S. Turner, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, University of Cambridge.