

The Politics of Belonging: Intersectional **Contestations (Sage Studies in International** Sociology)

By Nira Yuval-Davis



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In this groundbreaking book, Nira Yuval-Davis provides a cutting-edge investigation of the challenging debates around belonging and the politics of belonging. Alongside the hegemonic forms of citizenship and nationalism which have tended to dominate our recent political and social history, the author examines alternative contemporary political projects of belonging constructed around the notions of religion, cosmopolitanism, and the feminist 'ethics of care'. The book also explores the effects of globalization, mass migration, the rise of both fundamentalist and human rights movements on such politics of belonging, as well as some of its racialized and gendered dimensions. A special space is given to the various feminist political movements that have been engaged as part of or in resistance to the political projects of belonging.



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Editorial Review

Review

This is an in-depth examination of a slippery and contradictory subject. Knowledge alone is not enough for this type of project. It takes breaking out of narrow conceptual cages and unsettling what we think of as stable meanings. The author brings all of this to life in often unforgettable ways. (Saskia Sassen)

National identities were once taken largely for granted in social science. Now they are part of an even more complex "politics of belonging" that challenges both public affairs and the categories of social science. Nira Yuval-Davis offers a nuanced account that will be important for scholars and all those concerned with contemporary politics. (Craig Calhoun)

Nira Yuval-Davis always pushes the feminist envelope. Here she guides us through the thickets of five questions that preoccupy all of us today, shining a bright light on the fraught dynamics of "belonging." One of the innovations of *The Politics of Belonging* is to introduce us to specific feminist groups and movements tackling each one of these five thorny questions. I've learnt a lot, as I always do when guided by Nira Yuval-Davis. (Cynthia Enloe)

Nira Yuval-Davis has written an important book on the politics of belonging. As a result of her anti-racist, socialist version of feminist political commitment she has always approached the issues of gender and gender relations intersectionally; this stands as a key feature of her work overall and of this particular book... Yuval-Davis thus provides a mapping of the 'politics of belonging' applied to different environments and she does it with exquisite sophistication and attention to detail by including a wide range of theories and authors.

(Montserrat Guibernau, Queen Mary, University of London)

This book is a major contribution to debates about how we can understand the intersections between multiple forms of identification and belonging which structure social relations. It argues that analyses and political projects which privilege particular axes of identity are always incomplete and limiting and thus always make for inadequate social science and dangerous politics... Yuval-Davis' scholarship is always concerned with understanding the social world in order to change it – in a more meaningful way than that captured by the now ubiquitous term 'impact'.

(Ben Gidley, University of Oxford)

The book provides the reader with a dense theoretical description and exhaustive examples, which cover a range of disciplines such as Political Science, Sociology, Philosophy, Gender Studies and Cultural Studies. Furthermore, it not only gathers multiple aspects for a critical analysis of the slippery and complex manifestations and dynamics of belonging in contemporary political projects, but it is also a valid tool for fostering awareness and mobilization strategies, especially for feminist movements. (Giulia D'Odorico)

This is a timely and important book which addresses key contemporary issues around thethemes of belonging and the politics of belonging... *The Politics of Belonging* is an ambitious and pertinent book which sets out to equipsociologists, political scientists and others with the tools to analyse complex

contemporary debates in this field. Applied in specific contexts, this book is another potential classic, andmay well emerge as the definitive text on the politics of belonging. (Naaz Rashid)

Yuval-Davis draws the contents skillfully together with the help of theoretical frame... The literary contribution is valuable to understanding contemporary political projects of belonging, and how the boundaries of belonging are constructed with different naturalized signifiers. Besides ample examples from grassroots movements to supranational projects, also numerous footnotes provide the reader [with] easily accessible online references... Yuval-Davis's literal contribution is more than topical as it explores the slippery and complex phenomenon of belonging as well as its manifestations and dynamics in contemporary political projects. (Mari Toivanen)

In this book, the author outlines a specific approach to the infinite number of inherent difficulties in tackling the major categories of social division in modern societies, along with their normative significance... The sense of balance and differentiation is a constant throughout the analysis in this book and it is this, along with the general strength of argumentation, which gives the concluding arguments their weight. The capacities of individual and collective actors to negotiate the increasingly dynamic, complex and involved processes of changing attachment, value and meaning are at the core of Yuval-Davis's perspective upon the contemporary politics of belonging.

(Kieran O'Connor)

About the Author

Nira Yuval-Davis is Director of the Research Centre on Migration, Refugees and Belonging (CMRB) at The University of East London.

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