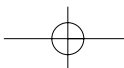
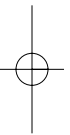


Social Theory: Central Issues in Sociology



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John Scott

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Study Guide

This book is intended as a guide to self-directed learning and a textbook to support courses in sociological theory. It aims to provide the background and context from which more detailed reading and understanding of primary texts can be undertaken. Courses in social theory frequently focus on particular theorists, and timetable pressures mean that the selection of theorists considered is of necessity limited to a handful of figures. I hope that a reading of the appropriate chapters of this book will allow the maximum to be gained from lectures and from your own reading.

Each of the main chapters contains a number of 'Focus' boxes in which the views of key figures are outlined and sources for their key ideas are given. This is the point at which independent reading will help to illuminate and to deepen the knowledge gained from reading the rest of the chapter. It is also the point at which lecture material on particular theorists can most easily be related to the book as a whole. Reading the relevant section of a chapter before a lecture on a theorist or school of thought, followed by a review of that same section, is the best possible basis for then going on to read the material suggested in the Focus box and by the lecturer.

The book is also intended as a means through which postgraduate students and practising sociologists can consolidate their own understanding of the relevance of sociological theory. We have all tended to become highly specialised in our professional practice, focusing mainly on those approaches that we see as directly relevant to our own work and, perhaps, denigrating all others. I hope that a reading of this book will help to fill the seen and unseen gaps in theoretical knowledge that many of us experience.

