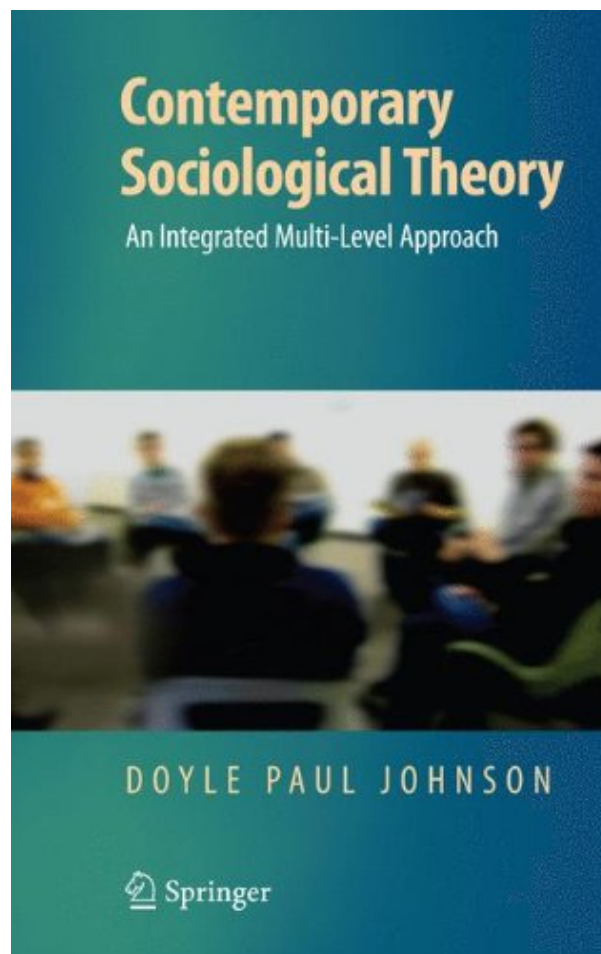


# CONTEMPORARY SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY: AN INTEGRATED MULTI-LEVEL APPROACH BY DOYLE PAUL JOHNSON



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# Contemporary Sociological Theory

An Integrated Multi-Level Approach



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The distinctions between micro, meso, and macro levels serve as the organizing framework, with the micro/macro distinction related to the contrast between agency and structure. The various theories and theorists are compared, contrasted, and integrated as appropriate in portraying the complex and multidimensional features of the social world. Everyday life examples enable students to apply these abstract ideas to personal experiences and current social issues.

Distinctive features include:

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#### About the Author

D. Paul Johnson is a Professor and the former Chair of the Department of Sociology at Texas Tech University.

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This volume is designed as a basic text for upper level and graduate courses in contemporary sociological theory. Most sociology programs require their majors to take at least one course in sociological theory, sometimes two. A typical breakdown is between classical and contemporary theory. Theory is perhaps one of the broadest areas of sociological inquiry and serves as a foundation or framework for more specialized study in specific substantive areas of the field. In addition, the study of sociological theory can readily be related to various aspects of other social science disciplines as well. From the very beginning sociology has been characterized by alternative theoretical perspectives. Classical theory includes the European founding figures of the discipline whose works were produced during the later half of the nineteenth century and the first couple of decades of the twentieth century plus early American theorists. For most of the second half of the twentieth century, a fairly high consensus has developed among American sociologists regarding these major founders, particularly with regard to the works of Durkheim and Weber in analyzing the overall society and of Simmel in analyzing social interaction processes. Since the late 1960s and early 1970s the influence of Marx has also been recognized. Recent decades have also witnessed an increased emphasis on the important contributions of several pioneering feminist perspectives in the early years of sociology.

- Sales Rank: #301741 in Books
- Published on: 2008-04-23
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.19" h x 1.41" w x 6.43" l, 2.28 pounds
- Binding: Hardcover
- 630 pages

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A strong upper-level undergraduate text

By Rump Roast

Not recommended as a primary text for graduate course (contains no original works of the theorists discussed), but functions well as a companion to primary sources. As a primary text, I'd recommend Johnson's book for junior- or senior-level sociology theory courses. Johnson takes complex concepts and uses easily-understood "real world" examples that allow the reader to understand, and internalize, a great array of highly-influential contemporary social theories. Just as importantly, Johnson offers critiques (of his own, and of other theorists) of each framework he presents to foster critical thinking regarding its pertinence and applicability to a variety of situations. Johnson consistently compares the theories explored to those covered earlier in the text, allowing the student to synthesize these ideas for a multiparadigmatic understanding of social issues. Furthermore, the text gives brief overviews of those in sociology's classical canon (Durkheim, Marx, Weber, et al.), and uses these foundations of sociology as bases for understanding (and critiquing) contemporary thought. Highly recommended.

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