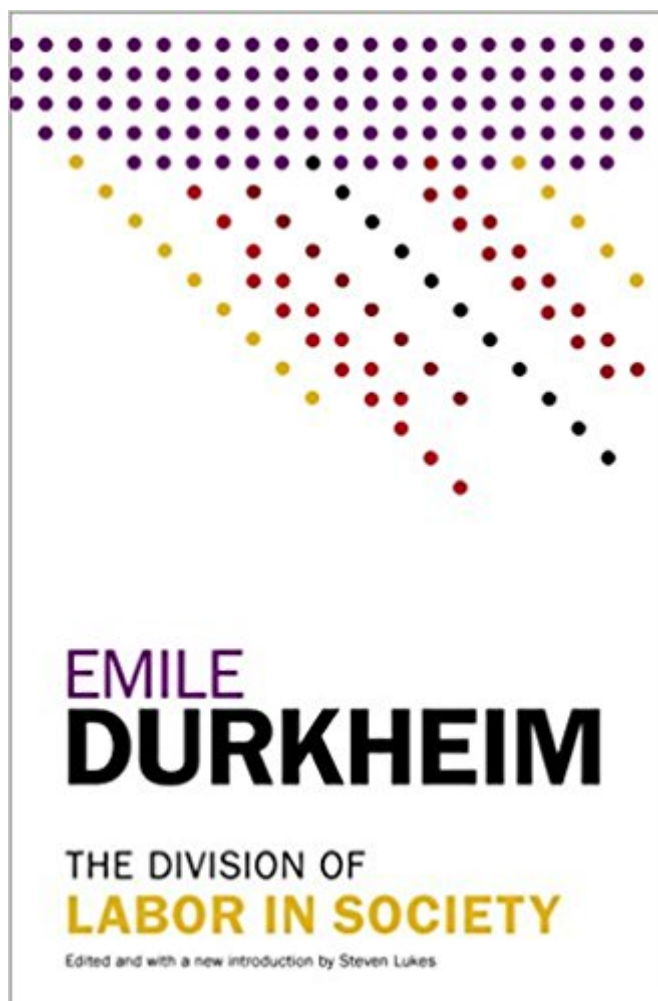


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The Division Of Labor In Society



Synopsis

Revised for the first time in over thirty years, this edition of Emile Durkheim's masterful work on the nature and scope of sociology is updated with a new introduction and improved translation by leading scholar Steven Lukes that puts Durkheim's work into context for the twenty-first century reader. When it was originally published, it was an entirely original work on the nature of labor and production as they were being shaped by the industrial revolution. Emile Durkheim's seminal work studies the nature of social solidarity and explores the ties that bind one person to the next in order to hold society together. This revised and updated second edition fluently conveys Durkheim's arguments for contemporary readers. Leading Durkheim scholar Steve Lukes's new introduction builds upon Lewis Coser's original—which places the work in its intellectual and historical context and pinpoints its central ideas and arguments. Lukes explains the text's continued significance as a tool to think about and deal with problems that face us today. The original translation has been revised and reworked in order to make Durkheim's arguments clearer and easier to read. The Division of Labor in Society is an essential resource for students and scholars hoping to deepen their understanding of one of the pioneering voices in modern sociology and twentieth-century social thought.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"If one had to choose one foundational text in sociology--this has to be it. Its critique of market society as well as its radical treatment of capitalism's diseases are even more pertinent today than

they were a century ago." (Michael Burawoy Department of Sociology, University of California, Berkeley)

Text: English, French (translation) --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Durkheim is sometimes characterized as "the sociologist of constraint," meaning that, as he saw it, an unregulated life is devoid of meaning and a source of misery. In a very limited way, one might argue that Durkheim, in contrast to Marx, held that man does have a rudimentary nature, at least in terms of social and cultural needs. People need norms, standards, and social ties to provide them with direction, purpose, knowledge of realistic limits, and a sense of belonging. This is one reason for Durkheim's life-long interest in religion as a social phenomenon. His emphasis on constraint and stability also helps explain why he is commonly regarded as a conservative. Durkheim was less optimistic than Marx with regard to prospects for the variegated development of human potential. While Marx envisioned opportunities for people to develop a broad range of talents in a self-actualizing way, Durkheim was more cautious. His emphasis on an evermore complex division of labor characterized by increasingly narrow specialization held his expectations in check. At the same time, however, Durkheim was convinced that a more complex division of labor and the organic solidarity it occasioned enabled individuals to become more independent and self-determining. As with Marx, however, Durkheim was aware that increasing specialization did not serve all interests equally well. While Durkheim and Marx have more in common than is typically acknowledged, Durkheim did not view the antagonistic character of the capital-labor relationship as inevitable or basic to the structure of capitalist society. In Durkheim's judgment, increasing social and cultural complexity, along with the rise of modern industry and an attendant ethos of reciprocity and complementarity, were more important than the emergence of mature capitalism and the capital-labor dichotomy. In my view, Durkheim was wrong. Nevertheless, his struggle to find a basis for social solidarity for modern industrial society prompted him to develop the powerful concepts anomie (or cultural de-regulation) and egoism (or social deracination). These, in turn, led to his brilliant work on the social sources of suicide. Perhaps it's a mark of genius that failures lead to new discoveries which give important areas of intellectual endeavor an entirely new and unexpected conceptual direction. As an addendum, Steven Lukes, who wrote the recent all-caps review, edited the revision of *The Division of Labor in Society* to which he refers. As such, he has a vested interest in its success. Since he gives us absolutely no information as to why he judges the reviews based

on an earlier edition misleading, I suggest that his admonition be ignored. I've read a lot of and about Durkheim, including the recent biography by Forunier which I reviewed on , and I see no reason to judge my review misleading.

The Division Of Labor in Society seeks to answer a very fundamental question. That is, with increasing division of labor in society, are we losing our solidarity? Is increasing specialization good or bad for human society? To put it in few words, Durkheim shows that organic solidarity (i.e. one of mutual dependence) grows in an increasingly specializing society. This is a classic statement for sociology. The question remains ever relevant. Happy reading. Regards, Abdullah Shahid Cornell University

Organic solidarity pops off the page and this seminal text in political sociology proves its relevance for our contemporary challenges in a post-collective bargaining world.

Hard to read but it is a good book.

Arrived quickly and as described

High quality

Don't really like it because it does not provide page numbers. How am I supposed to keep track?

Note to customers: There is a new 2014 edition of this book published by The Free Press. This includes Lewis Coser's introduction and also a new introduction by Steven Lukes, together with a timeline of Durkheim's life and works and a guide to further reading. The translation by W. D. Halls (which supersedes the earlier seriously defective translation by George Simpson) has in turn been extensively revised and improved for clarity and accuracy.

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