



Émile Durkheim and the Collective Consciousness of Society

A Study in Criminology

Kenneth Smith

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A detailed engagement with Émile Durkheim's concept of the collective consciousness of society from a criminological perspective.

'This excellent book makes a number of extremely interesting and original arguments and neatly links the historical/theoretical focus on Durkheim to contemporary criminological and more broadly sociological concerns. It should be accessible to undergraduates as well as being of interest to scholars in the field.' —William Outhwaite, Professor of Sociology, Newcastle University, UK

'In his excellent book Kenneth Smith provides a rigorous reading of a wider range of Durkheim's texts than is typically used by sociologists and criminologists. In doing so, he finds rarely noticed positive developments of, but also flaws in, the conceptual systems Durkheim deploys. Smith works with these systems, discriminating between them, correcting them, combining them, and using his own sociological imagination to produce a new and conceptually enriched Durkheimianism.' —Frank Pearce, Professor of Sociology, Queen's University, Canada

This volume sets out to explore the use of Émile Durkheim's concept of the 'collective consciousness of society', and represents the first ever book-length treatment of this underexplored topic. Operating from both a criminological and sociological perspective, Kenneth Smith argues that Durkheim's original concept must be sensitively revised and suitably updated for its real relevance to come to the fore. Major adjustments to Durkheim's concept of the collective consciousness include Smith's compelling arguments that the model does not apply to everyone equally, and that Durkheim's concept does not in any way rely on what might be called the disciplinary functions of society.

Contents

Preface; Erehwon; Introduction; Part I: The Concept of the Collective Consciousness of Society; Part II: The Form of the Collective Consciousness; Part III: Durkheim on Crime and Punishment; Part IV: Social Factor Social Phenomenon? Durkheim's Concept of the Collective Consciousness as a 'Social Fact'; Part V: Some Problems with Durkheim's Concept of the Common and Collective Consciousness; Conclusion; Appendix; Notes; References; Index

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Kenneth Smith is Reader in Criminology and Sociology at Buckinghamshire New University, High Wycombe, UK and the author of 'A Guide to Marx's "Capital" Vols I–III' (2012), also published by Anthem Press.

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