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Durkheim's Philosophy of Socience and the Sociology of Knowledge: Creating an Intellectual Niche. Warren Schmaus.

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and philosophers as well. Although living personalities are excluded, the biographic entries provide excellent summaries of the lives and contributions of key thinkers who have helped shape the modern social sciences. The dictionary is an invaluable resource and should be on everyone's shelf.

Warren Schmaus, *Durkheim's Philosophy of Science and the Sociology of Knowledge: Creating an Intellectual Niche*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994. \$50 hardcover, \$24.95 papercover.

This book offers one of the most detailed analyses of Durkheim's contribution to scientific methodology which has yet been published. Schmaus shows how, in the wider context of social thought at the end of the 19th century, Durkheim's insistence on sociology identified an intellectual niche which was to insure a permanent place for his ideas not only in the history of sociology but in the philosophy of science as well. Durkheim was the first to articulate a truly sociological perspective which located social phenomena in a realm quite distinct from the physical and psychological worlds. He was not only able to argue persuasively for a non-reductionist sociological approach, but by illustrating his methodology through the analysis of the division of labor, suicide, and religious forms, he convincingly supported his methodological arguments with case material.

The book has three parts which flow nicely in logical sequence, building on each preceding section. The first part begins by offering a perspective on Durkheim's ideas which emphasizes his contribution to the philosophy of science and the sociology of knowledge. Part II provides a detailed discussion of his methodological approach focusing on his conception of social facts, his philosophical perspective and his approach to explanation. The third part examines Durkheim's three major empirical works which elucidate his methodology. As noted earlier, these include his studies of the division of labor, suicide and the elementary forms of religious life. The final part concludes with an assessment of Durkheim's contribution to the sociology of knowledge.

This book makes a major contribution to understanding Durkheim's work. Although it would have benefited from more biographic detail, the book will be an essential resource for sociol-

ogists and others interested in understanding the epistemological foundations of contemporary social science.

Doug A. Timmer, D. Stanley Eitzen and Kathryn D. Talley, *Paths to Homelessness: Extreme Poverty and the Urban Housing Crisis*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1994. \$55.00 hardcover, \$16.95 papercover.

Despite the widespread belief that homelessness occurs chiefly among alcoholics, the mentally ill and other special need groups, the authors of this informative book argue convincingly that it is ordinary working people who earn low incomes who are most of at risk of losing their homes. Their vulnerability is amply demonstrated in this book which traces the causes of homelessness to the profound economic and social changes taking place in American society.

While the authors recognize that personal factors do play a role in the complex etiology of homelessness, they show that homelessness is primarily a function of de-industrialization, changing labor market conditions, a lack of affordable low income housing, and a shrinking social service system that no longer cushions the impact of declining standards of living. To illustrate their arguments, the authors offer detailed ethnographies of nine homeless people and their families whose personal stories provide depressing support for the book's hypotheses. While statistical facts are also used to analyze homelessness, the narratives of the persons interviewed offer potent insights into the experiences of those who live on the margins of society.

Paths to Homelessness is based on extensive interviews undertaken in the late 1980s in different parts of the country. The interviews were conducted with people living in shelters, in streets and parks, and in abandoned houses in inner city slums. The author's 'unbounded' ethnographic approach facilitated the collection of firsthand information about what it is like to become homeless and to experience its effects. Each homeless person's story is related to wider sociological explanations and interpretations. As such, these accounts combine personal narrative and sociological analysis in ways that will be of interest to all social scientists working with deprived populations.