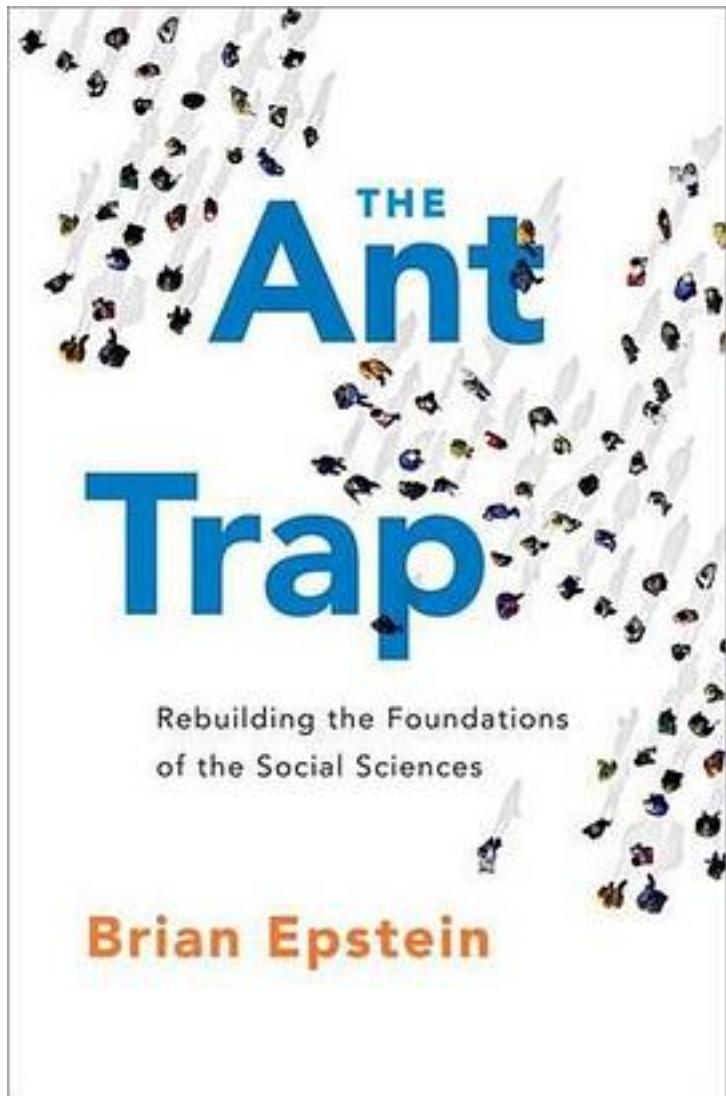


# The Ant Trap



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著者:Brian Epstein

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We live in a world of crowds and corporations, artworks and artifacts, legislatures and languages, money and markets. These are all social objects - they are made, at least in part, by people and by communities. But what exactly are these things? How are they made, and what is the role of people in making them?

In *The Ant Trap*, Brian Epstein rewrites our understanding of the nature of the social world and the foundations of the social sciences. Epstein explains and challenges the three prevailing traditions about how the social world is made. One tradition takes the social world to be built out of people, much as traffic is built out of cars. A second tradition also takes people to be the building blocks of the social world, but focuses on thoughts and attitudes we have toward one another. And a third tradition takes the social world to be a collective projection onto the physical world. Epstein shows that these share critical flaws. Most fundamentally, all three traditions overestimate the role of people in building the social world: they are overly anthropocentric.

Epstein starts from scratch, bringing the resources of contemporary metaphysics to bear. In the place of traditional theories, he introduces a model based on a new distinction between the grounds and the anchors of social facts. Epstein illustrates the model with a study of the nature of law, and shows how to interpret the prevailing traditions about the social world. Then he turns to social groups, and to what it means for a group to take an action or have an intention. Contrary to the overwhelming consensus, these often depend on more than the actions and intentions of group members.

## 作者介绍:

Brian Epstein received his PhD in philosophy from Stanford University, his master's in philosophy from Oxford University, and graduated summa cum laude with an AB in philosophy from Princeton University. His research interests include philosophy of social science, metaphysics, and philosophy of language, focusing in particular on issues in the theory of reference and the ontology of social kinds. He also has interests in conceptual schemes, the philosophy of music, and the philosophy of economics. Between degree programs, he worked at a number of technology startups and consulting firms.

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## 标签

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## 评论

可能是social ontology在英語世界這幾年最重要的書之一。

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## 书评

2019年的秋季学期，我在Tufts University进行三个月的访学，接待我的外方导师正是本书的作者Brian Epstein。在这三个月里，大概有9周的时间我都在和Epstein教授交流这本著作中的内容。当然，作为一名博士研究生，大多时间里都是Epstein教授对我的问题做出解答。在这种意义上，...

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