Structure, Consciousness, and History

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edited by Richard Harvey Brown

and Stanford M. Lyman

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First published in 1978, this volume is addressed to the crisis prevailing in the social and cultural sciences. The authors explore the conflict between positivism and romanticism, between hard and soft sociological research methods, and between objectivity and subjectivity - conflicts that were particularly acute in sociology at the time of publication. All of the essays adopt the approach of 'symbolic realism' or 'cognitive aesthetics' to overcome the dualism in conventional sociological theory. This strategy of symbolic realism is a philosophical amalgam forged from findings in existential phenomenology, ordinary language philosophy and pragmatism. It establishes a legitimate basis for the application of aesthetic criteria to truth-seeking in the social sciences. The synthesis emergent from these essays suggests a paradigm with broad implications for all the human studies. Students of culture will find this volume a provocative point of departure for their own investigations.

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目录:
Structure, Consciousness, and History_下载链接1_
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评论
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