



Biosociology: Bridging the Biology-Sociology Divide

Anthony Walsh

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Anthony Walsh bridges the divide separating sociology from biology—a divide created in the late nineteenth century when sociology emerged from the fields of social theory and philosophy. Walsh focuses on the viewpoint held by former American Sociological Association president Douglas Massey: sociologists have allowed the fact that we are social beings to obscure the biological foundations upon which our behavior ultimately rests.

Walsh argues that sociology has nothing to fear and a wealth of riches to gain if it pays attention to the theories, concepts, and methodologies of the biological sciences. Both study the same phenomena. Beginning with an examination of the reasons why we need a biosocial approach, Walsh explores sociology's traditional "taboo" concepts (reductionism, essentialism, etc.) and how those concepts are viewed in the natural sciences.

Throughout the work, the author introduces relevant concepts from genetics and the neurosciences, using examples that will appeal to all sociologists. Later chapters apply his introductory arguments to traditional substantive sociological issues such as culture, crime, gender, socialization, social class, and the family. This book will be essential to all sociologists, evolutionary biologists, and scholars interested in the history of this important divide between the fields and where it currently stands.

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