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SERIES IN SOCIOLOGY

Erwin James
Casareno

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A Materialist Social Theory of the Idea

SERIES IN SOCIOLOGY

About the author

Erwin James Casareno is an independent scholar working at the intersection of sociology, philosophy, and political economy. He holds a Master of Arts in International Affairs from Carleton University, where he specialized in international economic policy, as well as an undergraduate degree in International Studies. His academic training spans international trade, global finance, and the analysis of institutional and economic systems.

Over the course of nearly two decades, Casareno has developed an interdisciplinary research program focused on the nature of ideas, their material basis, and their role in shaping social and institutional life. His work integrates insights from sociology, philosophy, and the social sciences to construct a unified theoretical framework for understanding ideation across neural, social, and material domains.

In addition to his work in social theory, Casareno has conducted research in economics and interdisciplinary social science, with a particular interest in the relationship between cognition, value, and social organization. His current work advances a neuromaterialist framework that reconceptualizes ideas as materially instantiated phenomena and examines their role in social reproduction, ideological formation, and institutional development. He writes from outside formal institutional affiliation, drawing on both academic training and long-term independent inquiry to develop theoretical contributions that bridge disciplinary boundaries.

Summary

'A Materialist Social Theory of the Idea' advances a unified theoretical framework for understanding how ideas emerge, circulate, and materialize in the world. Rejecting both classical Idealism and reductive Materialism, the book develops a neuromaterialist approach that defines ideas as physically instantiated patterns of neural activity and traces their effects across social, institutional, and material domains. Beginning from the premise that thought is a biological process, the book follows the idea from its origin in the brain through its transmission via language and behavior, its reproduction within culture, and its eventual crystallization in norms, institutions, and physical structures. This recursive process—linking brain, behavior, environment, and social organization—provides a comprehensive model of how ideas function as causal forces in history. Drawing on insights from sociology, philosophy, neuroscience, and political theory, the work introduces original conceptual tools, including models of ideational transmission, activation, and threshold dynamics, as well as the concept of cognitive terraforming to describe the large-scale transformation of reality through ideation. This book offers an interdisciplinary framework for analyzing ideology, social change, and institutional development, making it relevant to scholars and students in social theory, sociology, philosophy of mind, and related fields. It also provides a foundation for further research into the material basis of thought and its role in shaping human behavior and social structure.

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