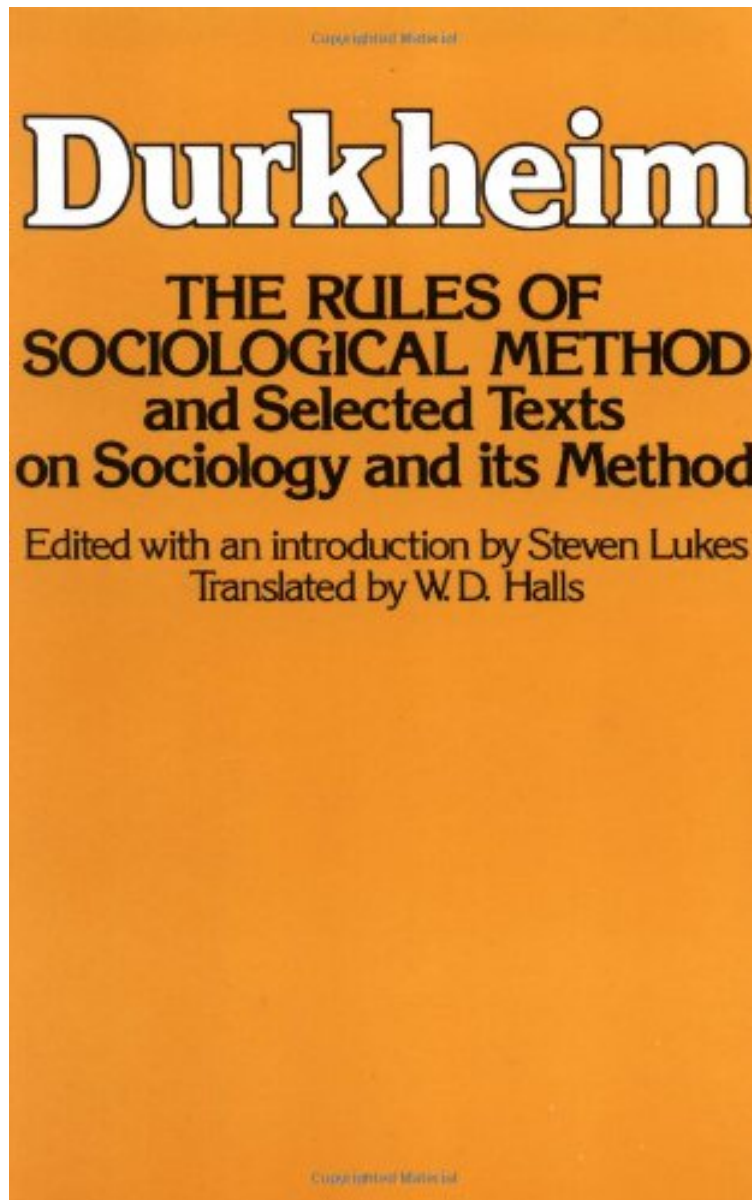


## Rules of Sociological Method

*Emile Durkheim*

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#227609 in Books 1982-12-01 1982-12-01 Original language: English PDF # 1 8.50 x .69 x 5.50l, .80 #File Name: 0029079403272 pages | File size: 22.Mb

**Emile Durkheim : Rules of Sociological Method** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Rules of Sociological Method:

2 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Social properties and social facts: A Hypothetical Illustration from the '60's By not a natural The Rules of Sociological Method is an uncompromising and compelling polemic against

methodological individualism. It argues that explanations of human behavior are not invariably reducible to individual-level factors. Instead, social facts, real social phenomena which are more than just convenient short-hand terms for aggregated entities have an existence of their own, produce predictable social outcomes, and do not rest on the heads and hearts of individual human beings. By way of providing a speculative contemporary illustration, it has been reported that suicide rates among American soldiers in Iraq are higher than in previous conflicts. Could this be due to the fact that the character of individual soldiers has changed such that the one's fighting in Iraq are less capable of withstanding the merciless stress of combat than soldiers in earlier wars? It's possible. But can we think of a plausible, in principle testable, alternative explanation that is social in character and does not rely on reference to individual traits? The war in Iraq is unique in that National Guard and Reserve units comprise 40 percent of the total fighting force. With the exception of the very beginning of the Korean War, the National Guard and Reserve have not played a combat role in past conflicts, being kept at home for domestic duties. When compared with the regular army, National Guard and Reserve units are poorly trained, lacking in discipline and conditioning, very short on experienced officers and non-commissioned officers, and commonly use obsolete, poorly maintained equipment. Because of these deficiencies, when National Guard and Reserve units are thrown into combat, they perform ineffectively, with high casualty rates and little success in attaining their assigned objectives, which may be ambiguous to begin with. As a result, instead of becoming a more unified and cohesive fighting force with close interpersonal ties and a shared culture of effective combat, the units tend to disintegrate. Their experience is characterized by cultural chaos and loss of social anchorages; a shared set of experientially determined norms of combat does not develop. In other words, to use concepts taken from Durkheim, the National Guard and Reserve units tend to be anomic (culturally deregulated) and egoistic (devoid of a sense of belonging). All this, including higher suicide rates, anomie, and egoism are the opposite of what one would expect of an effective fighting force. Instead, we would expect an experientially determined culture of effective combat to be shared by the members of such a unit, and strong interpersonal bonds of membership would be forged among them. Durkheim's own empirical research demonstrated that groups characterized by dysfunctional levels of anomie and egoism were also characterized by comparably high suicide rates. Varying levels of anomie and egoism were the social forces. Comparably varying suicide rates were the social facts. Anomie and egoism as social properties cannot be reduced to individual characteristics, because they are properties of social systems. These inherently social properties are manifest in social facts, such as suicide rates which vary in predictable ways. Too much, I think, has been made of the inherently positivistic character of Durkheim's perspective. Yes, it is positivistic to the core, relying on good quality measurement and sound statistical analysis. But all that just puts it in the mainstream of American sociology. Besides, even the most stringently positivistic research requires interpretation, and Durkheim's interpretations, following from his preliminary theoretical work, are simply brilliant. As an addendum, since I wrote this review, I have been informed by current members of the Guard and Reserves that my take on typical deficiencies of units to which they belong is informed too much by things I saw when I was drafted in '65 and too little by a much improved current state of affairs. As a result, it seems best to take my characterization of Guard and Reserve units as hypothetical, as in IF they were as described ... For those now serving, I apologize for being stuck in a decade long past.

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Lives up to expectations  
By Daniel Douglas  
Durkheim is probably one of the few people who should be allowed to call his book 'The Rules' for Sociology and get away with it. Durkheim's positivism, though I can't agree at every moment, does much to inform the aspiring social scientist about the objects of his/her pursuit. The translation from the French was effective and Luke's introduction is a good frame of reference for both the author as a whole and the specific piece. If you want to understand one of the driving forces behind sociology as it is done today, this is a good point of departure.

0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars  
By Becci  
Item arrived on time and as described.

First published in 1895: Emile Durkheim's masterful work on the nature and scope of sociology--now with a new introduction and improved translation by leading scholar Steven Lukes. *The Rules of the Sociological Method* is among the most important contributions to the field of sociology, still debated among scholars today. Through letters, arguments, and commentaries on significant debates, Durkheim confronted critics, clarified his own position, and defended the objective scientific method he applied to his study of humans. This updated edition offers an introduction and extra notes as well as a new translation to improve the clarity and accessibility of this essential work. In the introduction, Steven Lukes, author of the definitive biography *Emile Durkheim: His Life and Work*, spells out Durkheim's intentions, shows the limits of Durkheim's view of sociology, and presents its political background and significance. Making use of the various texts in this volume and Durkheim's later work, Lukes discusses how Durkheim's methodology was modified or disregarded in practice--and how it is still relevant today. With substantial notes on context, this user-friendly edition will greatly ease the task of students and scholars working with Durkheim's method--a view that has been a focal point of sociology since its original publication. *The Rules of the Sociological Method* will engage a new generation of readers with Durkheim's rich contribution to the field."

Language Notes  
Text: English, French (translation)  
About the Author  
Emile Durkheim (1858-1917) was a French

sociologist who formally established the academic discipline and, with Karl Marx and Max Weber, is commonly cited as the principal architect of modern social science.