



# New Directions in the Philosophy of Social Science

*Daniel Little*

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## **New Directions in the Philosophy of Social Science** Daniel Little

Philosophy matters for the social sciences. Our world faces ever more complex and hazardous problems and, social science ontology and methods need to be adequate to the changing nature of the social realm. Imagination and new ways of thinking are crucial to the social sciences.

Based on Daniel Little's popular blog, this book provides an accessible introduction to the latest developments and debates in the philosophy of social science. Each chapter addresses a leading issue in the philosophy of the social sciences today. Little advocates for an 'actor-centred sociology', endorsing the idea of meso-level causation and proposing a solution to the problem of 'mechanisms or powers?'. The book draws significant conclusions from the facts of complexity and heterogeneity in the social world. The book develops a series of arguments that serve to provide a new framework for the philosophy of social science through deep engagement with social scientists and philosophers in the field. Topics covered include:

- the heterogeneity and plasticity of the social world;
- the complexity of social causation;
- the nuts and bolts of causal mechanisms;
- the applicability of the theory of causal powers to the social world;
- the intellectual coherence of the perspective of scientific realism in application to social science.

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