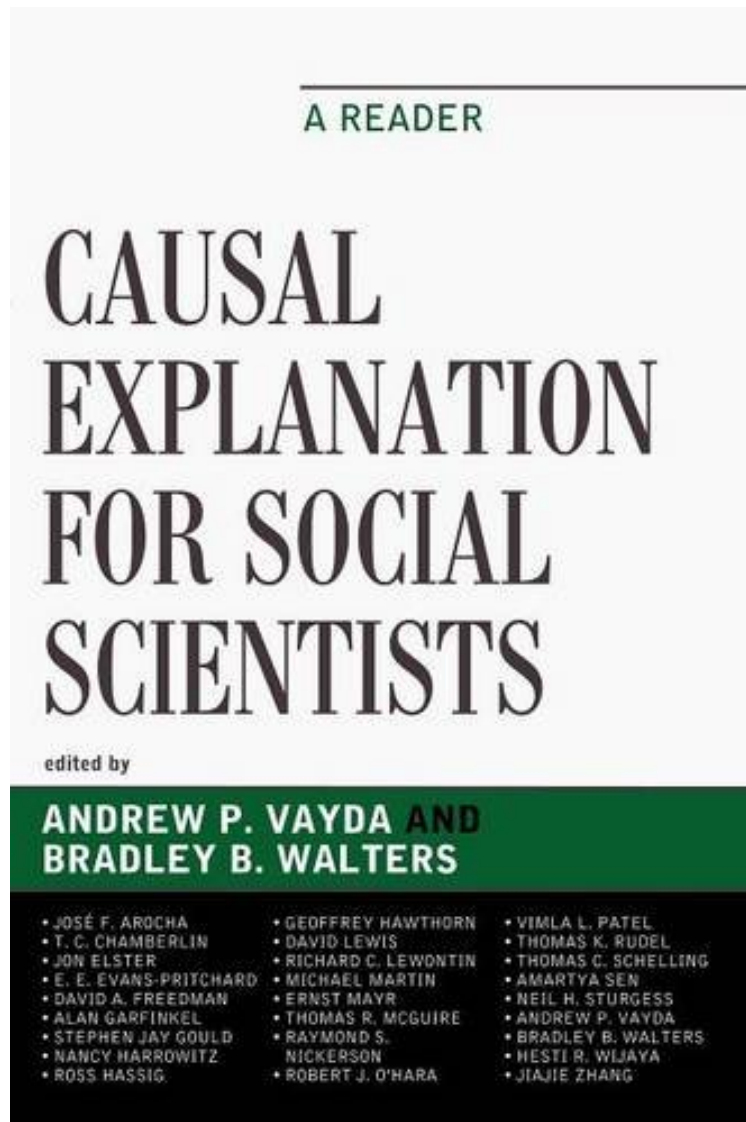


Causal Explanation for Social Scientists: A Reader

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carefully will be well ahead of the game of research. And it is clearly written and quite fascinating. It upgrades our collective IQ massively..with a wide range of historical, ecological,anthropological and cognitive problems and their intricate challenges in seeking to fit very complex types of variables and problems together and study them from a range of viable and challenging perspectives showing brilliant detective work and mastery of multiple objectives.

All social scientists, despite their differences on many issues, ask causal questions about the world. In this anthology, Andrew P. Vayda and Bradley B. Walters set forth strategy and methods to answer those questions.

The volume is a compendium unlike most others. Rather than gather causal arguments about specific substantive outcomes, Vayda and Walters have assembled essays on how to question, how to reason, and why to do it a pragmatic fashion....The book is thoroughly coherent, strategically repetitive, and by no means unconvincing. Whether your field is human ecology, land change science, vulnerability research, or political ecology, there are sobering lessons here about bad methodological habits and good question writing....[I]t is hard not to come away from this collection with a renewed sense of energy and possibility. The world is filled with strange events and outcomes, after all, none of which have ready-made answers, and all of which can avail themselves to energetic observers with open minds. For a moment, viewed this way, it is possible to think that environment-society research might actually be filled with surprise. That is a welcome message. (Human Ecology)About the AuthorAndrew P. Vayda is professor emeritus of anthropology and ecology at Rutgers University. Bradley B. Walters is professor of geography and environment at Mount Allison University in New Brunswick.