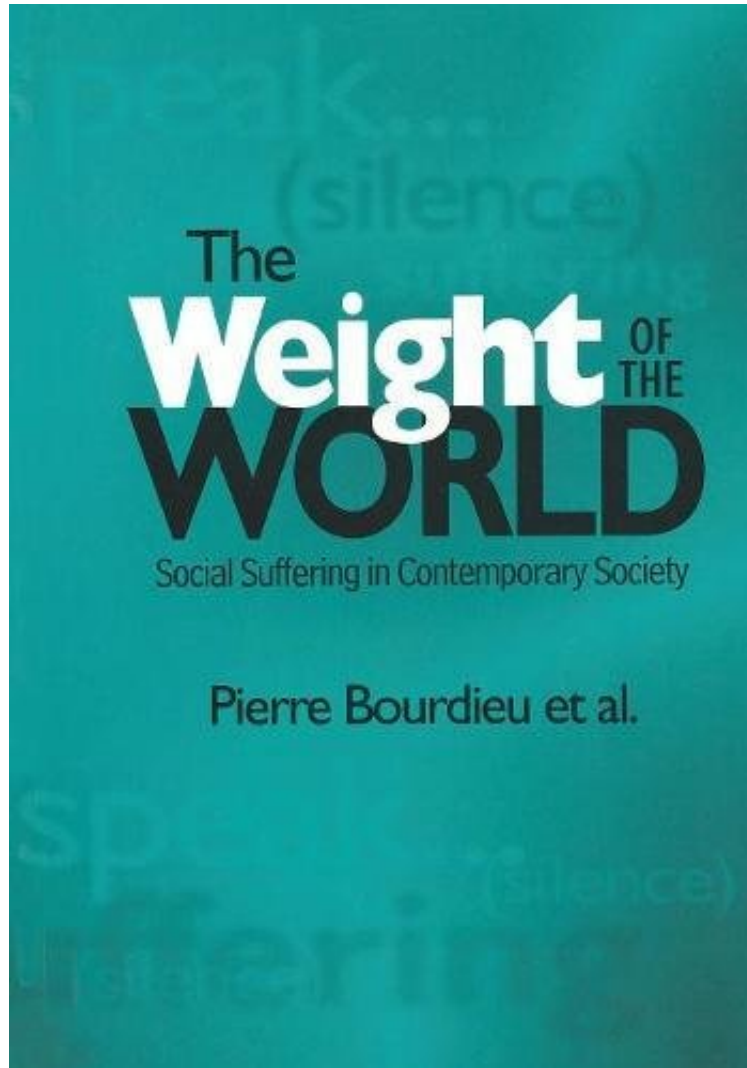


[Download pdf] The Weight of the World: Social Suffering in Contemporary Society

# The Weight of the World: Social Suffering in Contemporary Society

*Pierre Bourdieu et al.*

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#375207 in Books Stanford University Press 2000-01-01 2000-01-01 Original language: English PDF # 1 9.00 x 1.50 x 6.00l, 2.44 #File Name: 0804738459656 pages | File size: 48.Mb

**Pierre Bourdieu et al. : The Weight of the World: Social Suffering in Contemporary Society** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Weight of the World: Social Suffering in Contemporary Society:

29 of 29 people found the following review helpful. a unique contribution By A Customer "The Weight of the World" consists mainly of conversations with a wide variety of contemporary (mostly French) people--judges, gangsters, policemen, concierges. The various interviews, while covering quite disparate social worlds, manage to coalesce fairly well. This is excellent ethnography, and while many of the statements of these people might at first seem banal, taken as an aggregate, they support Bourdieu's theoretical framework quite well. On a more personal level, some of the

interviews are quite funny and a few even made me cry. Bourdieu's works continue to challenge and demolish theories which neglect social reality. Very powerful, but I might suggest reading some of his more theoretical stuff first ("Pascalian Meditations" is very good)...

Confined in their governmental ivory towers, their actions largely dictated by public opinion polls, politicians and state officials are all too often oblivious to the everyday lives of ordinary citizens. These persons, who often experience so much hardship in their lives, have few ways to make themselves heard and are obliged either to protest outside official frameworks or remain locked in the silence of their despair. Under the direction of Pierre Bourdieu, France's foremost sociologist, a team of 22 researchers spent three years studying and analyzing the new forces of social suffering that characterize contemporary societies: the daily suffering of those denied the means of acquiring a socially dignified existence and of those poorly adjusted to the rapidly changing conditions of their lives. Social workers, teachers, policemen, factory workers, white-collar clerks, farmers, artisans, shopkeepers: no one seems to be immune from the frustrations of today's life, not to speak of the institutions of the family, work, and education. The book can be read like a series of short stories, which include: a steel worker who was laid off after 20 years and now struggles to support his family on unemployment benefits and a part-time job; a trade unionist who finds his goals undermined by the changing nature of work; a family from Algeria living in a housing tract on the outskirts of Paris who must cope with pervasive forms of racism; and a schoolteacher confronted with urban violence. Reading these stories enables one to register these people's lives and the forms of social suffering that infuse them. The original publication of this book was a major social and political event in France, where it topped the best-seller list and triggered a widespread public debate on inequality, politics, and civic solidarity. It offers not only a distinctive method for analyzing social life, but another way of practicing politics.

Language Notes  
Text: English (translation) Original Language: French  
From the Inside Flap  
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