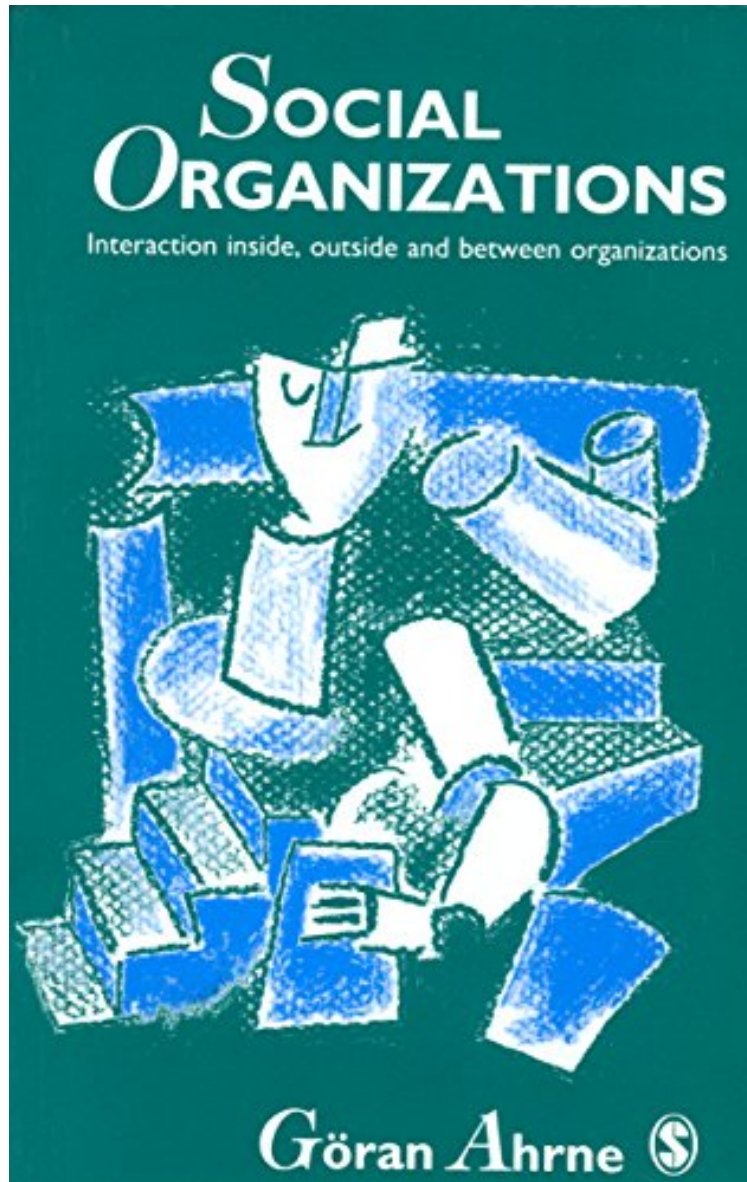


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Social Organizations: Interaction Inside, Outside and Between Organizations

Goran Ahrne

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Goran Ahrne : Social Organizations: Interaction Inside, Outside and Between Organizations before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Social Organizations: Interaction Inside, Outside and Between Organizations:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. How is society really organized?By Fredrik AugustssonIn 'Social

Organizations...' Ahrne elaborates on the organizational theory of society first presented in 'Agency and Organizations. Towards an organizational theory of society'(1990, Sage). Starting with resource dependence and asset specificity, common concepts in organization theory and other disciplines, Ahrne argues successfully for a view of organizations as some of the main actors in society. He further manages to explain how it is both possible and fruitful to view both companies, interest organizations, nation states and families as organizations, without ending in a watered down definition lacking content or usage. When reading this book it becomes clear four years past since the release of 'Agency and Organization': Ahrnes ideas are better structured, definitions and arguments have been sharpened and he has found more examples to back up his ideas. The first book had the subtitle 'towards an organizational theory of society'. with this book, Ahrne has taken a huge step in the right direction. And it is nice to see that the overall improvements in the structuring of the ideas have not made the book any duller than its' precursor: Just like the last book, reading this one is great fun.

In this lively and wide-ranging essay, Goran Ahrne sketches an organizational theory of society. Combining the insights of organization theory with the traditional concerns of social theory, he makes an innovative and creative contribution to both fields. Using a broad definition of organizations, the author shows that what goes on inside, outside and among organizations is central to understanding social relations. Organizations provide people with resources and motives, and they set the frames for human action. Although organizations do not form societies or systems, society is shaped and changed through interaction between organizations. Drawing on various schools of organization theory, including institutional, ecological and contingency theories, the book shows how their synthesis with social theory clarifies the nature and effects of organizational interactions.

In Social Organizations Ahrne's main idea is: action and structure are brought together in organizations, but organizations do not form societies or systems. The main purpose in Ahrne's book is to present more arguments supporting the idea that organization theory may contribute to social theory. To do this, the author deals with several theories relevant to the support of his main argument.... Important themes in the different chapters are: the universal pattern of organization, how individual interaction is transformed into organizational action, the limits of organizations, the main types of organizations in existence today, the relation between organizations and institutions and networks, how constellations of organizations are constituted. The exposition is very clear.... Despite the many themes with dealt with in only 170 pages, Ahrne binds the themes together by relating them to his main argument. In sum, the book presents a convincing argument for the relevance of utilizing organization theory in order to make social theory less abstract' - Acta Sociologica `Ahrne's exposition is deceptively simple and clear. He reconstructs social theory, untangles many major problems, and sets us all on the right track. Ahrne's writing reminds me of Erving Goffman, simple, elegant and profound' - Arthur L Stinchcombe, Northwestern University, Illinois `Goran Ahrne has written a delightful book, building on the premise that human actions are transformed into social processes through organized interaction. From that simple statement, Ahrne weaves a compelling argument, challenging us to look at organizations again, as if we had never seen them before. I mean this literally - his first question brought me up short: "Why do you go home?" Why indeed? Ahrne's book is filled with such startling questions, and his penetrating insights reminded me of a great deal of Erving Goffman's work. He asks us to take nothing for granted and to question self-evident practices. Because Ahrne takes a very inclusive view of organizations, this book should appeal to nearly all the social science fields concerned with organized action, including public administration, organization studies, the sociology of the family, economic sociology, and social psychology' - Professor Howard Aldrich, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill `The exposition is very clear. Each chapter deals with important questions relevant to Ahrne's intent.... In sum, the book presents a convincing argument for - at least - the relevance of utilizing organization theory in order to make social theory less abstract' - Acta Sociologica `In Social Organizations Ahrne's main idea is: action and structure are brought together in organizations, but organizations do not form societies or systems. The main purpose in Ahrne's book is to present more arguments supporting the idea that organization theory may contribute to social theory. To do this, the author deals with several theories relevant to the support of his main argument.... Important themes in the different chapters are: the universal pattern of organization, how individual interaction is transformed into organizational action, the limits of organizations, the main types of organizations in existence today, the relation between organizations and institutions and networks, how constellations of organizations are constituted. The exposition is very clear.... Despite the many themes with dealt with in only 170 pages, Ahrne binds the themes together by relating them to his main argument. In sum, the book presents a convincing argument for the relevance of utilizing organization theory in order to make social theory less abstract' - Acta Sociologica `Ahrne's exposition is deceptively simple and clear. He reconstructs social theory, untangles many major problems, and sets us all on the right track. Ahrne's writing reminds me of Erving Goffman, simple, elegant and profound' - Arthur L Stinchcombe, Northwestern University, Illinois `Goran Ahrne has written a delightful book, building on the premise that human actions are transformed into social processes through organized interaction. From that simple statement, Ahrne weaves a compelling argument, challenging us to look at organizations again, as if

we had never seen them before. I mean this literally - his first question brought me up short: "Why do you go home?" Why indeed? Ahrne's book is filled with such startling questions, and his penetrating insights reminded me of a great deal of Erving Goffman's work. He asks us to take nothing for granted and to question self-evident practices. Because Ahrne takes a very inclusive view of organizations, this book should appeal to nearly all the social science fields concerned with organized action, including public administration, organization studies, the sociology of the family, economic sociology, and social psychology; - Professor Howard Aldrich, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill`The exposition is very clear. Each chapter deals with important questions relevant to Ahrne's intent.... In sum, the book presents a convincing argument for - at least - the relevance of utilizing organization theory in order to make social theory less abstract; - Acta SociologicaAbout the AuthorGouml;ran Ahrne is Professor of Sociology at the University of Stockholm. His previous publications include Agency and Organization (Sage, 1990). He is a former president of the Swedish Sociological Association.