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Reassembling the Social Environment: A Network Approach to Human Behavior

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Abstract

This paper critically examines the influence of the structural elements of human behavior that are often neglected in social work literature (Robbins et al., 1998). It incorporates a new multi-theoretical framework that critically examines the significance of a network approach in analyzing social, ideological, and economic structures and their influence on individual actors. This paper discusses two interrelated theories: social network theory and social capital theory, and critiques their relevance in explaining human behavior for social work educators and professionals in an increasingly information-driven and electronically-interconnected global society. The author hopes that an expanded theory base will provide a holistic view of individual problems stemming out of inequitable social structure.

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Last updated: November 20, 2007

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