## The Causal Power of Social Structures

Emergence, Structure and Agency

DAVE ELDER-VASS



## **Contents**

Lis	st of figures	page x
Acknowledgements		xi
1	Introduction	1
	The problem of structure and agency	1
	Emergence and social structure	4
	How to read this book	9
	Critical realism	11
2	Emergence	13
	Relational emergence	14
	Strong emergence	28
	Morphogenesis and morphostasis	33
	Conclusion	38
3	Cause	40
	Covering law theories of causality	40
	Realism and causal powers	43
	Actual causation	47
	Reductionism	53
	Downward causation	58
	Conclusion	62
4	Social ontology and social structure	64
	The elements of emergence	66
	A method for social ontology	68
	Applying the method	71
	Social structure	76
	Three facets of social structure	77
	What kind of structural element is social structure?	80

• • •		
V111	Cont	ents

	Four concepts of social structure	83
	Conclusion	86
5	Agency	87
J	The emergence of the mental	89
	An emergentist theory of action .	93
	Bourdieu's habitus	99
	Archer versus Bourdieu	102
	Synthesising Archer and Bourdieu	108
	Conclusion	113
6	Normative institutions	115
	Theories of social institutions	116
	Norm circles	122
	Norm circle boundaries	127
	Intersectionality between normative circles	131
	Change in social institutions	133
	Institutions and structuration theory	138
	Conclusion	142
7	Organisations	144
	Interaction groups	146
	Associations	149
	The causal power of organisations	152
	Individuals in organisations	158
	Authority and organisations	161
	Organisations and institutions	164
	Conclusion	167
8	Social events	169
	A micro-social interaction	170
	Micro-social explanations	176
	From micro to macro	179
	Macro-actors and macro-consequences	182
	Collective macro-events	185
	Statistical macro-events: Durkheim and suicide	186
	Conclusion	190

Contents	1X
Comenis	1.4

9	Conclusion	192
	The causal power of social structures	192
	For and against naturalism	196
	The spatial disarticulation of social structures	199
	An agenda for research	202
Re	ferences	206
Index		218