**DESCRIPTION**

This work, by one of Europe's foremost social theorists, presents a critical history of the concept of ideology. The author's discussion ranges from the early conceptions of ideology to its current usage in the works of Barthes, Foucault, Habermas and others.

Boudon develops a distinctive and original approach to the analysis of ideology. Drawing on a series of case studies, he seeks to explain how and why social actors adhere so readily to false or dubious ideas. In opposition to those views which associate ideology with irrationalism, Boudon develops a rationalist theory which helps to explain why certain ideas are believed by individuals and are thereby effective in the social world.

Rigorously argued and clearly written, this work is a major restatement of Boudon's theoretical views and a timely intervention in current debates. It will be of particular interest to students of sociology, politics and philosophy.

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

**Raymond Boudon** is Professor of Sociology at the Sorbonne University in Paris. He is the author of numerous works including *Theories of Social Change* (1986).
1. The book challenges the ways in which ideology-critique has ascribed `irrational' grounds to why people often believe false or debatable theories.
2. Boudon offers a comprehensive overview of theories of ideology and formulates a controversial framework for the analysis of ideology.
3. Raymond Boudon is one of the leading European social theorists and many of his previous books have appeared in English.

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