



Scale (Key Ideas in Geography)

By Andrew Herod

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Geographical scale is a central concept enabling us to make sense of the world we inhabit. Amongst other things, it allows us to declare one event or process a national one and another a global or regional one. However, geographical scales and how we think about them are profoundly contested, and the spatial resolution at which social processes take place – local, regional or global – together with how we talk about them has significant implications for understanding our world.

Scale provides a structured investigation of the debates concerning the concept of scale and how various geographical scales have been thought about within critical social theory. Specifically, the author examines how the scales of the body, the urban, the regional, the national, and the global have been conceptualized within Geography and the social sciences more broadly. The first part of the book provides a comprehensive overview of how different theoretical perspectives have regarded scale, especially debates over whether scales are real things or merely mental contrivances and/ or logical devices with which to think, as well as the consequences of thinking of them in areal versus in networked terms. The subsequent five chapters of the book then each takes a particular scale: the body; the urban; the regional; the national; the global and explores how it has been conceptualized and represented discursively for political and other purposes. A brief conclusion draws the book together by posing a number of questions about scale which emerge from the foregoing discussion.

The first single-author volume ever written on the subject of geographical scale, this book provides a unique overview in pushing understandings of scale in new and original directions. The accessible text is complimented by didactic boxes, and *Scale* serves as a valuable pedagogical reference for undergraduate and postgraduate audiences wishing to become familiar with such theoretical issues.

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Editorial Review

Review

"Andrew Herod's *Scale* offers an exhaustive and critical account of the theoretical importance and political centrality of spatial scale. With knife-edge precision he charts the theoretical controversies, explores different conceptualizations and excavates the relevance of thinking through scale for understanding real world process. This book is a must read for all those interested in understanding how the world works, why it does so and how to act in it." Erik Swyngedouw, University of Manchester

"With understanding of rare insight, Herod provides an exhaustive and thorough survey of the literature on geographic scale. The book sets a high standard. It fills a major gap in the literature and will be a standard reference for all those doing research on the topic." Kevin R. Cox, The Ohio State University

About the Author

Andrew Herod is Professor of Geography and Adjunct Professor of International Relations and of Anthropology at the University of Georgia. He is also an elected official, serving in the government of Athens-Clarke County, Georgia.

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