



# The Myth of Individualism: How Social Forces Shape Our Lives

*Peter Callero*

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## **The Myth of Individualism: How Social Forces Shape Our Lives** Peter Callero

Despite some popular arguments to the contrary, Americans are like people everywhere: naturally social, interdependent, and shaped by social forces. *The Myth of Individualism* offers a concise introduction to sociology and sociological thinking. Callero challenges the dominant belief that human behavior is the result of free choices made by autonomous actors. Drawing upon personal stories, historical events, and sociological research, Callero offers an informative outlook on enduring social problems that can help us begin the process of developing a sociological perspective. By acknowledging the limits of individual effort and control, we gain insight into our own lives and the lives of others.

Callero engagingly examines the fundamental importance of cultural symbols, the pressures of group conformity, the influence of family, the impact of social class, the wide reach of global capitalism, and the revolutionary potential of collective action. The second edition is updated throughout, including new examples from the recent financial crisis and the Arab Spring. It also includes a new chapter on the power of mass media and how media influences our lives. *The Myth of Individualism* is a must-read for anyone interested in how powerful social forces shape individual lives in subtle but compelling ways.

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