'Not only is this book a wonderful introduction to what faith-based social action contributes to the UK today, it also puts forward a striking and significant argument. Dinham suggests that the notion of 'social capital', fashionable with policy-makers and faith groups alike, has been so hollowed out that it fails to make sense of faith's distinctive contributions to society - good and bad. Faith has many dimensions, not least reverence for what is good, true and Godly. To judge it in terms of the 'capital' it can generate is to subject it to a market logic which turns it into a mere instrument of social policy and economic progress'. - Linda Woodhead, Professor of the Sociology of Religion, Lancaster University and Director of the AHRC/ESRC Religion and Society Programme, UK

The founding father of 'social capital', Pierre Bourdieu, said that treating the church as an economic enterprise would lead to uproar, disbelief and the laughter of the bishops. Yet, in the last couple of decades, policy-makers and social scientists have increasingly sought to capitalize on faith by asking whether it produces social capital. In the context of faith-based social action in communities, this book asks what becomes of faiths when seen as social capital? Is the social subjugated to the capital part of the equation? As the debt crisis took hold, doesn't the relationship between the social and capital seem increasingly unbalanced? Using new research, theory and critical analysis, this book asks whether faiths can help rebalance society in favour of the human scale of life in communities, focusing on the value of the ordinary relationships which are already there, regardless of their wider 'use'.

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