A sociological account of law argues that in order to understand and explain the concept of law we need to adopt a sociological analysis based on the actual social circumstances in which the law and legal ideas are shaped and applied. This approach typically makes three related claims: that we cannot correctly comprehend the meaning of law except as a ‘social phenomenon’, that the study of legal concepts offers an incomplete explanation of ‘law in action’, and that law is only one form of social control. This chapter examines how these claims are developed in the theories of Roscoe Pound, Eugen Ehrlich, Émile Durkheim, Max Weber, Karl Marx, Michel Foucault, and Jürgen Habermas.
7. Law and social theory

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