



Time Matters: On Theory and Method (Oriental Institute Publications)

Andrew Abbott

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What do variables really tell us? When exactly do inventions occur? Why do we always miss turning points as they transpire? When does what doesn't happen mean as much, if not more, than what does? Andrew Abbott considers these fascinating questions in *Time Matters*, a diverse series of essays that constitutes the most extensive analysis of temporality in social science today. Ranging from abstract theoretical reflection to pointed methodological critique, Abbott demonstrates the inevitably theoretical character of any methodology.

Time Matters focuses particularly on questions of time, events, and causality. Abbott grounds each essay in straightforward examinations of actual social scientific analyses. Throughout, he demonstrates the crucial assumptions we make about causes and events, about actors and interaction and about time and meaning every time we employ methods of social analysis, whether in academic disciplines, market research, public opinion polling, or even evaluation research. Turning current assumptions on their heads, Abbott not only outlines the theoretical orthodoxies of empirical social science, he sketches new alternatives, laying down foundations for a new body of social theory.

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