

Logics of History: Social Theory and Social Transformation (Chicago Studies in Practices of Meaning)

William H. Sewell Jr.



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While social scientists and historians have been exchanging ideas for a long time, they have never developed a proper dialogue about social theory. William H. Sewell Jr. observes that on questions of theory the communication has been mostly one way: from social science to history. *Logics of History* argues that both history and the social sciences have something crucial to offer each other. While historians do not think of themselves as theorists, they know something social scientists do not: how to think about the temporalities of social life. On the other hand, while social scientists' treatments of temporality are usually clumsy, their theoretical sophistication and penchant for structural accounts of social life could offer much to historians.

Renowned for his work at the crossroads of history, sociology, political science, and anthropology, Sewell argues that only by combining a more sophisticated understanding of historical time with a concern for larger theoretical questions can a satisfying social theory emerge. In *Logics of History*, he reveals the shape such an engagement could take, some of the topics it could illuminate, and how it might affect both sides of the disciplinary divide.

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