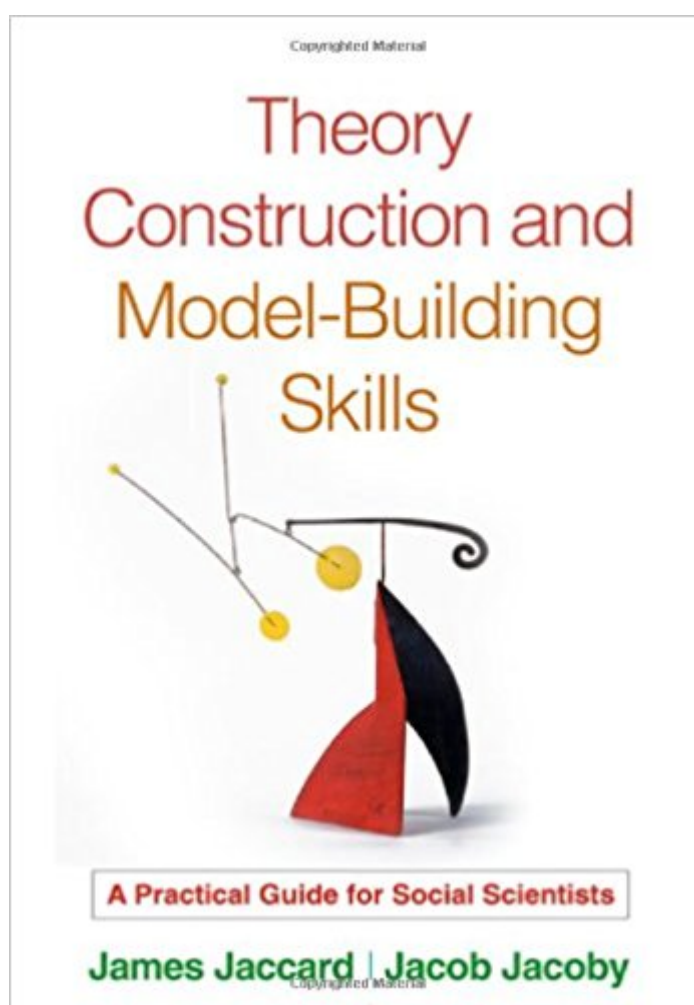


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Theory Construction And Model-Building Skills: A Practical Guide For Social Scientists (Methodology In The Social Sciences)



Synopsis

Meeting a crucial need for graduate students and newly minted researchers, this innovative text provides hands-on tools for generating ideas and translating them into formal theories. It is illustrated with numerous practical examples drawn from multiple social science disciplines and research settings. The authors offer clear guidance for defining constructs, thinking through relationships and processes that link constructs, and deriving new theoretical models (or building on existing ones) based on those relationships. Step by step, they show readers how to use causal analysis, mathematical modeling, simulations, and grounded and emergent approaches to theory construction. A chapter on writing about theories contains invaluable advice on crafting effective papers and grant applications. Useful pedagogical features in every chapter include: *Application exercises and concept exercises. *Lists of key terms and engaging topical boxes. *Annotated suggestions for further reading.

Book Information

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"This much-needed book fills a gap in the social science literature. The text provides clear examples of how researchers and graduate students can formulate conceptual models, grapple with issues of measurement, and choose the most appropriate data-analytic methods for their conceptual frameworks. The authors have done an exceptional job of providing detailed instruction in the formulation and development of strong theories of behavior. Jaccard and Jacoby have written a high-quality, clear, and useful text. I highly recommend this text for graduate-level research courses

and for applied researchers focused on the development of rigorous theoretical frameworks."--Vincent Guilamo-Ramos, PhD, LCSW, Columbia University School of Social Work "I know of no better introduction to theory development and hypothesis testing in the social sciences. Jaccard and Jacoby pull off an impressive high-wire act: they explore the conceptual underpinnings of science while providing lots of good, practical advice; they cover a wide range of approaches while avoiding oversimplification; and they offer an epistemologically principled yet inclusive vision of what social science is and could be."--Philip E. Tetlock, PhD, Mitchell Endowed Chair, Haas School of Business, University of California, Berkeley "Too often, students just study the writings and theories of others, and are left on their own when it comes to developing theory directly relevant to their research problems. Jaccard and Jacoby have written a wonderful, practical guide to help budding and experienced social scientists do just that. The book is clearly written and well organized. It would make an excellent text for graduate students from a variety of social science fields."--Kenneth A. Bollen, PhD, H. R. Immerwahr Distinguished Professor of Sociology and Director, Howard W. Odum Institute for Research in Social Science, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill "Filling an important gap, this book is very well written and impressive in its coverage. It is the perfect text for early-career graduate students in sociology, organizational studies, education, and psychology. I highly recommend it for graduate-level courses such as Research Methods, The Nature of Scientific Inquiry, and Research Practicum, and I will use it with my graduate students."--Elif Andac, PhD, Department of Sociology, University of Kansas "Outstanding. The authors explain abstract ideas in impressively straightforward and understandable language, and the self-study materials at the end of each chapter are well formulated. I urge any scientist who is designing a program of research to spend some time using the tools in this book."--Thomas A. Cornille, PhD, Department of Family and Child Sciences, Florida State University "An excellent book on how to develop theory in the social sciences. It is mainly oriented toward quantitative reasoning and models, but there are valuable ideas and strategies for qualitative research as well. It is very readable and contains helpful exercises and examples."--Joseph Maxwell, PhD, Graduate School of Education, George Mason University "This book's pages will become worn and tattered as graduate students, professors, and researchers across the social sciences refer to it repeatedly to inform their efforts to do theoretically engaged empirical research."--Richard Tardanico, PhD, Chair, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Florida International University "This book will help you think about the work you do in a different way. It will tighten up your own thinking as well as how you present your theoretical models to others. It will enable you to write better grant proposals, and could help make the difference

between a fundable score and a nonfundable score."--Rob Turrisi, PhD, Department of Biobehavioral Health, Pennsylvania State University "This book is aimed to provide social scientists with hand-on tools for defining concepts and formalizing theories. It is particularly addressed to graduate students and it ranges from causal analysis to mathematical modeling, from simulation to grounded and emergent approaches to theory construction. It is well organized, includes many simple and effective examples, and has a very clear setup. At the end of each chapter, the authors provide a summary, concluding comments, and suggested readings. The latter are complemented by a sentence about the content of each referenced literature, which is very helpful to find the respective reference of interest. Above, an index with key terms of each chapter and intuitive exercises to deepen the understanding of it are provided. Doing so, the book is very suitable for didactical purpose, in particular for research courses to graduate students. The effective, easy-to-understand, and straightforward style of writing is noticeable since from the first pages of the book....The book is highly recommendable for social science students, is a good lecture for young and open minded researchers, and locates simulation at the core of the scientific endeavour." (Journal of Artificial Societies and Social Stimulation 2009-12-25)

James Jaccard is Professor of Psychology and Director of the Institute for Child Health and Development at Florida International University in Miami. Previously, he was Distinguished Professor of Psychology for 20 years at the State University of New York, Albany. Dr. Jaccard has authored or edited 11 books and over 200 articles in peer-reviewed scientific journals. He has served on numerous boards and panels for the Institute of Medicine of the National Academies and the National Institutes of Health and is a Fellow of the American Psychological Association. His research focuses broadly on attitudes, cognitions, and emotions as they affect decision making, especially in applied settings. This includes research on adolescent decision making, health-related decisions, and a critical analysis of the effects of unconscious influences on adult decision making.Â Jacob Jacoby is Merchants Council Professor of Consumer Behavior at New York Universityâ™s Stern School of Business. He has authored or edited six books and over 160 articles in peer-reviewed social science and law journals. Dr. Jacoby is a Fellow of the American Psychological Association and a Fellow and past president of the Association for Consumer Research. His research on the factors that affect consumer decision making and behavior has been honored by awards from the American Psychological Association, the American Marketing Association, the American Academy of Advertising, the Association for Consumer Research, and the Society for Consumer Psychology. He has conducted research or consulted for dozens of

Fortune 500 companies and other organizations. He has also worked for federal agencies (including the U.S. Senate, Federal Trade Commission, and Food and Drug Administration) and testified in more than 100 cases heard in U.S. District Courts.

It's great to finally have some concrete guidelines to follow when constructing or evaluating a theory! Not the be-all end-all, but a wonderful guide to follow as long as you also look for other resources. I used this to help me pass my comprehensive exams, and will continue to use it in my theoretical publication articles.

Excellent

I think this book is very useful if you are interested in learning more about theory building. It takes a mostly quantitative approach, but also has information on qualitative processes. It's nice because you can jump around the chapters and get the information you need. Very practical as well as theoretical so you can really know what to do instead of just getting information in the abstract.

The abstraction of dissertation made easy. I love it

Good book when doing a dissertation and more

Absolutely vital for theory development.

Got this for my wife's class and she uses it.

It was a required textbook for my doctoral program and I received well in advance to start on my reading assignments

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