



Fractal Time: Why a Watched Kettle Never Boils (Studies of Nonlinear Phenomena in Life Science)

By Susie Vrobel

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This book provides an interdisciplinary introduction to the notion of fractal time, starting from scratch with a philosophical and perceptual puzzle. How subjective duration varies, depending on the way we embed current content into contexts, is explained.

The complexity of our temporal perspective depends on the number of nestings performed, i.e. on the number of contexts taken into account. This temporal contextualization is described against the background of the notion of fractal time. Our temporal interface, the Now, is portrayed as a fractal structure which arises from the distribution of content and contexts in two dimensions: the length and the depth of time. The leitmotif of the book is the notion of simultaneity, which determines the temporal structure of our interfaces.

Recent research results are described which present and discuss a number of distorted temporal perspectives. It is suggested that dynamical diseases arise from unsuccessful nesting attempts, i.e. from failed contextualization. Successful nesting, by contrast, manifests itself in a "win-win handshake" between the observer-participant and his chosen context. The answer as to why a watched kettle never boils has repercussions in many a discipline. It would be of immense interest to anyone who works in the fields of cognitive and complexity sciences, psychology and the neurosciences, social medicine, philosophy and the arts.

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Editorial Review

From the Inside Flap

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Paul Butler:

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Susan Gagnon:

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