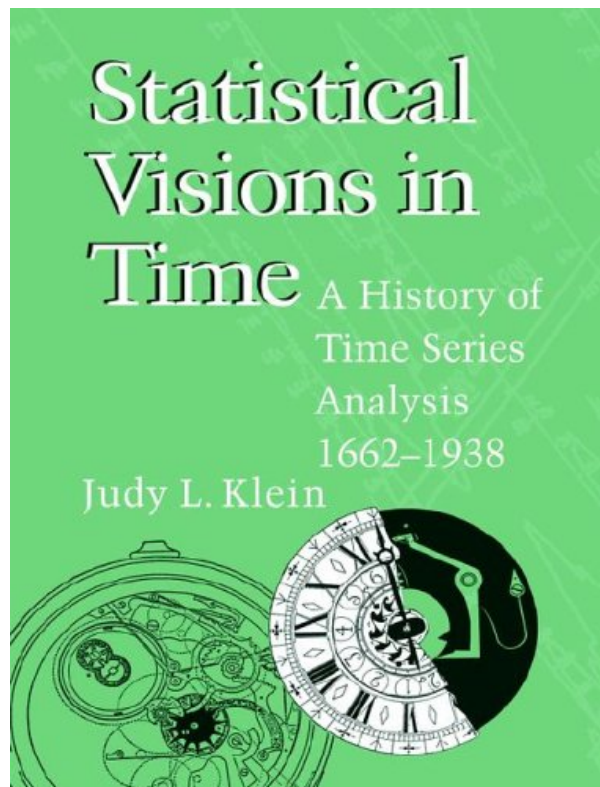


**STATISTICAL VISIONS IN TIME: A
HISTORY OF TIME SERIES ANALYSIS, 1662-
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Statistical Visions in Time

A History of
Time Series
Analysis
1662–1938

Judy L. Klein



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Review

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This work documents the history of techniques that statisticians have used to manipulate economic, meteorological, biological, and physical data taken from observations recorded over time. The manipulation tools include percent change, index numbers, moving averages, and "first differences," i.e., subtracting one observation from the previous value. Professor Klein argues that nineteenth-century business journals, such as *The Economist*, were as important to the development of time series analysis as Latin treatises on probability theory. While examining the roots of mathematical statistics in commercial practice, she traces changes in analytical forms from table to graph to equation. This history is accessible to students with a basic knowledge of statistics as well as financial analysts, statisticians, and historians of economic thought and science.

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A rare excellent piece of work

By max wong

As a financial risk quant who uses time series models extensively I have always wondered how models such as VaR (quantiles of time series models) always seem to get it terribly wrong at episodes of market stress and crises. The magnitude and frequency of extreme losses are fatally underestimated. Moreover, such models are perpetually late, ie. show a signal after the crisis had started. Having a formal education in physics, I have always had deep respect for great minds in the history of science--whose works (theorems and laws) were used as pillars of knowledge by subsequent generations of great minds to advanced the knowledge of man--that led to the technologically advanced society of today. If this is true for statistical science as well, why are we so far off the mark in its application today in finance? My curiosity led me to Prof. Klein's wonderfully well written and well-researched book.

Prof. Klein showed that the history of statistical thoughts is not a romantic linear improvement of theorems built upon the great minds of the past (as most people would imagine). In fact, the current modeling paradigm represents a historical legacy of different school of thoughts and the squabbling between diverse ideas. As one school gets more popular and attracted a larger following, that idea became the dominant theory, not unlike the evolution of major religions. In an easy-to-read narrative style (to be fair, some knowledge of statistics is required to digest the book), the book leads to the startling and disturbing realization that our failed statistics of today (in finance/ economics) may have come from the evolution of ideas that have taken a wrong turn in history!

Without spoiling the suspense, my takeaway from the book is, let me use a quote of warning from the book: "Measurement does not necessarily mean progress. Failing the possibility of measuring that which you desire the lust for measurement may, for, example, merely result in your measuring something else - and perhaps forgetting the difference - or in your ignoring some things because they cannot be measured."
-- Udney Yule in a letter to Maurice Kendall (Kendall 1952, 160)

This book is more relevant today than in the past, as practitioners, as if awakened by the global financial crisis in 2008, is starting to question the econometrics of today. A historical perspective (as accounted by Prof. Klein) helps us see the dogma of today's curriculum in a more open way. This book is a rare gem--I bought a copy for my own collection after reading it.

-- Max Wong, author of "Bubble value at risk: a countercyclical risk management approach."

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