



The Nature of Time

Ulrich Meyer

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The theory of relativity convinced many philosophers that space and time are fundamentally alike, and that they are mere aspects of a more fundamental space-time. In *The Nature of Time*, Ulrich Meyer argues against this consensus view. Instead of a "spatial" account of time that treats instants like positions in space, he presents the first comprehensive defense of a 'modal' account that emphasizes the similarities between times and the possible worlds in modal logic. Modal accounts of time are naturally cast in terms of a tense logic that accounts for temporal distinctions in terms of primitive tense operators. Tense logic was originally developed to provide a linguistic theory of verb tense in natural languages, but here Meyer proposes that it can be treated as a metaphysical theory of the nature of time. Contrary to popular belief, such modal accounts of time do not commit us to the view that there is something metaphysically special about the present moment, and they are easily reconciled with the theory of relativity.

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