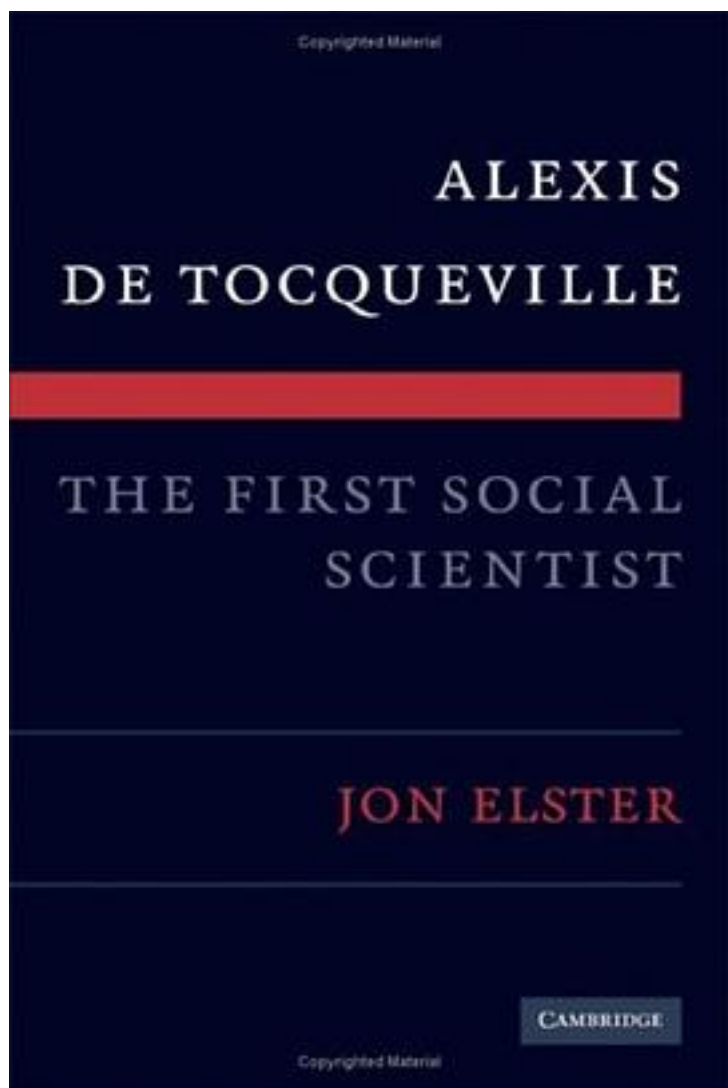


Alexis de Tocqueville, the First Social Scientist



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The book proposes a new interpretation of Alexis de Tocqueville that views him first and foremost as a social scientist rather than as a political theorist. Drawing on his earlier work on the explanation of social behavior, Elster argues that Tocqueville's main claim to our attention today rests on the large number of exportable causal mechanisms to be found in his work, many of which are still worthy of further exploration. Elster proposes a novel reading of Democracy in America in which the key explanatory variable is the rapid economic and political turnover rather than equality of wealth at any given point in time. He also offers a reading of The Ancien Régime and the Revolution as grounded in the psychological relations among the peasantry, the bourgeoisie, and the nobility. Consistently going beyond exegetical commentary, he argues that Tocqueville is eminently worth reading today for his substantive and methodological insights.

作者介绍:

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标签

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Tocqueville

InterpretedHistory

Elster

评论

其实在传统的托克维尔研究中来说，Elster算是异类了，作者称托克维尔是第一个社会科学家，所以在写作过程中分版块来重新理解托克维尔的作品，当然很有新意，但是否能进入主流的见解呢？不得而知，我猜难。更何况Elster老爷子毕竟还是实证取向的政治科学家，有空再仔细念下……

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书评

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