



Decision Science and Technology: Reflections on the Contributions of Ward Edwards

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Decision Science and Technology is a compilation of chapters written in honor of a remarkable man, Ward Edwards. Among Ward's many contributions are two significant accomplishments, either of which would have been enough for a very distinguished career. First, Ward is the founder of behavioral decision theory. This interdisciplinary discipline addresses the question of how people actually confront decisions, as opposed to the question of how they should make decisions. Second, Ward laid the groundwork for sound normative systems by noticing which tasks humans can do well and which tasks computers should perform. This volume, organized into five parts, reflects those accomplishments and more.

The book is divided into four sections: 'Behavioral Decision Theory' examines theoretical descriptions and empirical findings about human decision making. 'Decision Analysis' examines topics in decision analysis. 'Decision in Society' explores issues in societal decision making. The final section, 'Historical Notes', provides some historical perspectives on the development of the decision theory. Within these sections, major, multi-disciplinary scholars in decision theory have written chapters exploring some very bold themes in the field, as an examination of the book's contents will show.

The main reason for the health of the Decision Analysis field is its close links between theory and applications that have characterized it over the years. In this volume, the chapters by Barron and Barrett; Fishburn; Fryback; Keeney; Moreno, Pericchi, and Kadane; Howard; Phillips; Slovic and Gregory; Winkler; and, above all, von Winterfeldt focus on those links. Decision science originally developed out of concern with real decision problems; and applied work, such as is represented in this volume, will help the field to remain strong.

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