JUDGMENT / DECISION MAKING

NEWSLETTER

Vol. VIII

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May 1989

1989 J/DM MEETING. . .

CALL FOR POSTER PRESENTATIONS

The Annual Meeting of the Society for Judgment and Decision Making will be held November 19-20 in Atlanta. This year's meeting will include a poster session. Presentations on all aspects of judgment and decision making are encouraged by the Program Committee (Reid Hastie, Thomas Wallsten, and Frank Yates, Chair). At least one of the authors of a poster presentation must be a member of the Society. The required application form is included in this issue of the Newsletter (see Page 16). The deadline for receipt of applications by the Program Committee Chair is Monday, June 26, 1989.

1989 DUES REMINDER. . .

If you have not paid your dues for 1989, now is the time to do so. Check your mailing label: *If the number in the upper right hand corner is a 7 or 8, then you have NOT paid for 1989.* If the number is a 9, then you are O.K. Dues are $10.00 ($5.00 for students) this year. Please use the form on the last page of the newsletter when paying your dues.

--Steve Edgell

LIVING UNDER UNCERTAINTY. . .

> We sail within a vast sphere, ever drifting in uncertainty, driven from end to end.
>
> What a chimera then is man! ... Judge of all things, ... a sink of uncertainty and error, the glory and shame of the universe!
>
> *--Pascal, ca. 1670*

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SOCIETY FOR JUDGMENT AND DECISION MAKING

J/DM NEWSLETTER

Editor:

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FROM THE EDITOR.

The *J/DM Newsletter* welcomes submissions from individuals and groups. However, we do not publish substantive papers. Book reviews will be published. If you are interested in reviewing books and related materials, please write to the editor.

There are few ground rules for submissions. In order to make the cost of the *J/DM Newsletter* as low as possible, please submit camera-ready copy. This means that the copy should be typed single-spaced on white 8½ by 11 paper. If possible, use a carbon or film ribbon. Please mail flat -- do not fold.

Subscriptions: Subscriptions are available on a calendar year basis only. Requests for information concerning membership in the Society for Judgment and Decision Making should be sent to Stephen Edgell.

Address correction: Please check your mailing label carefully. Because the *J/DM Newsletter* is usually sent by bulk mail, copies with incorrect addresses or which are otherwise undeliverable are neither forwarded nor returned. Therefore, we have no way of knowing if copies are delivered. Address changes or corrections should be sent to Stephen Edgell.

Mailing Labels: Some readers may wish to sent reprint lists or other material to people listed in the directory. Contact Stephen Edgell for details.

Electronic Mail: The editor may be reached through BITNET at "castellan@IUBACS." [Some users may find it either necessary (or more convenient) to address the editor using only the first 8 characters (castella).] BITNET addresses also can be reached from most of the university and research networks. I check for mail several times a day, and a prompt reply to electronic messages is assured. To add your name to the *J/DM Electronic Mail Directory* (or to receive a copy of the electronic directory) contact the Editor.

RECENT PHILOSOPHICAL LITERATURE...

Tillers, P. & Green, E. D. (Eds.) (1988). PROBABILITY AND INFERENCE IN THE LAW OF EVIDENCE: THE USES AND LIMITS OF BAYESIANISM. Kluwer Academic Publishers. Pp. 342. ($71.10)

1. 499 people bought tickets to Jane's rodeo, but 1000 are counted in the seats. Dick was in a seat, but there is no other evidence against him. Jane sues Dick for the price of the ticket. The probability that Dick was a gatecrasher is .501, which (let us suppose) meets the "preponderance of the evidence" standard required for civil suits. Should Jane win?

2. Bert sues Ernie for an injury. Bert must prove that Ernie intended that injury and that he caused it. According to legal tradition, the proof of each of these elements (cause and intention) must meet the "preponderance" standard in order for the whole case to meet that standard. But the requirement that each element meet the standard ($p>.5$, say) implies that the whole case must meet a higher standard ($p>.75$ assuming independence). The more elements there are, the higher the standard for the whole case. Is this right?

These are the sorts of questions discussed in the papers in this volume. The answers are varied: Bayesian theory should be used explicitly in legal proceedings; the theory should not be used explicitly, but legal rules should be modified so that they are consistent with it; they do not need to be modified because they already are consistent; Bayesian theory is not appropriate anyway and should be replaced with Cohen's measures of inductive support or Shafer's belief functions (raising again the question of how THESE should be applied).

For example, arguably, the unwillingness of judges to admit statistical evidence (like that against Dick) encourages plaintiffs to search for non-statistical evidence, leading to non-normative results in particular cases but closer-to-normative results overall. (Of course, the same argument could be used to justify exclusion of ANY type of evidence.) Or the simple application of probability theory to the case could ignore the ABSENCE of specific evidence against Dick; the absence of specific evidence could reduce the probability below .5. The exchange between L. J. Cohen, Kaye, Brilmayer, and Martin on the question of missing evidence and the role of stories or scenarios is most enlightening.

Most contributors try to be open-minded. Shafer does not even defend his theory of belief functions, and Schum suggests that his prior development of Bayesian theory (not summarized) might not be all there is to say. It appears that many of the legal scholars do not fully understand the Bayesian theory, even when they defend it. Perhaps the law will not be ready for Bayesianism until the teachers of lawyers understand it. In a final brief commentary, Ward Edwards concludes compellingly that the theory has not been touched by the criticisms made of it.

The papers are short on detail but long on words. (I recommend prior familiarity with Bayesian theory, including Schum & Martin's approach, and with alternatives such as Shafer or Cohen.) But the book provides – uniquely so far as I know – an overview of the controversy concerning the role of Bayesian reasoning in the law.

-- Jonathan Baron

Recent Developments in the Psychology of Judgment and Decision Making

Compiled by JAY CHRISTENSEN-SZALANSKI, PhD, MPH

Journal Articles

BARON J, Hershey JC: Heuristics and biases in diagnostic reasoning. I. Priors, error costs, and test accuracy. Organ Behav Hum Decis Proc 41:259–279, 1988. Examines the influence of test cost and accuracy on undergraduates' judgments.

BEACH LR, Mitchell TR: Image theory. Principles, goals, and plans in decision making. Acta Psychol 66:201–220, 1987. Proposes a model of how people make personal decisions; suggests that people do not maximize expected utility but rather chose alternatives that fit their image of what is right. [Commentaries follow: Montgomery H: Image theory and dominance search theory. How is decision making actually done? Acta Psychol 66:221–224, 1987. Vlek C: Towards a dynamic structural theory of decision behavior? Acta Psychol 66:225–230, 1987. Beach LR, Mitchell TR: More on image theory. Acta Psychol 66:231–235, 1987.]

BILLINGS RS, Scherer LL: The effects of response mode and importance on decision-making strategies. Judgement versus choice. Organ Behav Hum Decis Proc 41:1–19, 1988. Concludes that research that uses a judgment response (e.g., policy capturing) should be generalized to choice tasks.

CAMERER CF: Do biases in probability judgment matter in markets? Experimental evidence. Am Econ Rev 77:981–997, 1987. Suggests that certain judgment biases may have limited effects on people's behavior in experimental markets.

COLBERT JL: Inherent risk. An investigation of auditors' judgments. Account Organ Society 13:111–121, 1988. Suggests that auditors are sensitive to different measures of inherent risk.

HESSING DJ, Elffers H, Weigel R: Exploring the limits of self-reports and reasoned action. An investigation of the psychology of tax evasion behavior. J Pers Soc Psychol 54:405–413, 1988. Observes no relationship between people's self-reports of tax evasion and objectively documented behavior.

JEMMOTT JB III, Croyle RT, Ditto PH: Commonsense epidemiology. Self-based judgments from laypersons and physicians. Health Psychol 7:55–73, 1988. Reports that people who had a history of a condition assigned a greater prevalence to the condition.

JOHNSON JT, Drobny J: Happening soon and happening later. Temporal cues and attributions of liability. Basic Appl Soc Psychol 8:209–234, 1987. Investigates how temporal contiguity affects judgments of legal responsibility; reports that actions of a defendant were rated less negligent when temporally remote, while actions of a plaintiff were perceived to be more negligent.

KEREN GB, Raaijmakers JGW: On between-subjects versus within-subjects comparisons in testing utility theory. Organ Behav Hum Decis Proc 41:233–247, 1988. Proposes a process to assess whether within-subject or between-subject designs should be used to test theories of judgment.

KULIK JA, Mahler HIM: Effects of preoperative roommate assignment on preoperative anxiety and recovery from coronary-bypass surgery. Health Psychol 6:525–543, 1987. Shows that patients who had a postoperative roommate before their operation were less anxious preoperatively, more ambulatory postoperatively, and more quickly released from the hospital.

KUNDA Z: Motivated inference. Self-serving generation and evaluation of causal theories. J Pers Soc Psychol 53:636–647, 1987. Suggests that people hold theories of causality that are consistent with the belief that good things will happen to them and bad things will not.

LOWENSTEIN GF: Frames of mind in intertemporal choice. Manage Sci 34:200–214, 1988. Demonstrates the applicability of the framing reference point to intertemporal choice.

MARCH JG, Shapira Z: Managerial perspectives on risk and risk taking. Manage Sci 33:1404–1418, 1987. Identifies three ways in which managers' conceptions of risk lead to risk orientations that are different from what might be expected from a decision theory perspective.

MEDIN DL, Edelson SM: Problem structure and the use of base-rate information from experience. J Exp Psychol [General] 117:68–85, 1988. Observes that subjects' use of base rate information can be altered by the nature of the task presented to them.

PAQUETTE L, Kida T: The effect of decision strategy and task complexity on decision performance. Organ Behav Hum Decis Proc 41:128–142, 1988. Reports that the more efficient decision makers were those who used a reduced processing strategy when faced with a complex decision task.

PETERSON DK, Pitz GF: Confidence, uncertainty, and the use of information. J Exp Psychol [Learn] 14:85–92, 1988. Finds that a person's beliefs about possible values for an unknown quantity and the belief that a specific prediction is correct are affected differently by the amount of available information.

PUTO CP: The framing of buying decisions. J Cons Res 14:301–315, 1987. Demonstrates a conceptual framework of the reference point formation process for buying decisions.

RAVINDRA HV, Kleinmuntz DN, Dyer JS: The reliability of subjective probabilities obtained through decomposition. Manage Sci 34:186–199, 1988. Develops an expression that describes the random error associated with decomposition estimates as a function of characteristics of the component assessments.

SHARDA R, Barr SH, McDonnell JC: Decision support system effectiveness. A review and an empirical test. Manage Sci 34:139–159, 1988. Reviews empirical evidence regarding effectiveness of decision support systems.

Received from the Department of Management Sciences, University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa 52242, USA.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS (Continued)

TAYLOR SE, Brown JD: Illusion and well-being. A social psychological perspective on mental health. Psychol Bull 103:193–210, 1988. Reviews the usefulness of exaggerated perceptions of control and unrealistic optimism to people engaging in productive and creative work.

TURNQUIST DC, Harvey JH, Anderson BL: Attributions and adjustment to life-threatening illness. Br J Clin Psychol 27:55–65, 1988. Reviews the role of attributions in people's adjustment to a life-threatening illness or injury.

VAN DER PLIGT J, Eiser JR, Spears R: Comparative judgments and preferences. The influence of the number of response alternatives. Br J Soc Psychol 26:269–280, 1987. Shows that the more alternatives that a person has to rate, the smaller are the percentage ratings they give to any single alternative.

WAGENAAR W: Calibration and the effects of knowledge and reconstruction in retrieval from memory. Cognition 28:277–296, 1988. Suggests that a person's calibration should be better when recalling information that is stored in memory than when reconstruction information is based on inferential reasoning.

WAGNER U, Taudes A: Stochastic models of consumer behaviour. Eur J Oper Res 29:1–23, 1987. Reviews probabilistic approaches to predicting consumer behavior.

WRIGHT G, Ayton P: Decision time, subjective probability, and task difficulty. Mem Cogn 16:176–185, 1988. Obtains findings that are inconsistent with predictions of a nonmonotonic relationship between decision time and task difficulty.

WRIGHT G, Ayton P: Task influences on judgmental forecasting. Scand J Psychol 28:115–127, 1987. Observes that task difficulty and time duration were not related to forecasting performance.

NEW JOURNAL. . .

Games and Economic Behavior publishes original and survey papers dealing with game-theoretic modeling in the social, biological, and mathematical sciences. Papers published are mathematically rigorous as well as accessible to readers in related fields. Research areas include game theory, Economics, Political Science, Biology, Computer science, mathematics, psychology. Volume 1 will be published in 1989. For further information contact Academic Press, Inc., Journal Promotion Department, 1250 Sixth Avenue, San Diego, CA 92101. (619) 699-6742.

SOME NEW AND RECENT BOOKS. . .

Etzioni, A. (1988). ***The Moral Dimension: Toward a New Economics.*** New York: The Free Press. Pp. 352. ISBN: 0-02-909900-5 ($24.95)

Paulos, J. A. (1988). ***Innumeracy: Mathematical Illiteracy and Its Consequences.*** New York: Hill and Wang. Pp. 135. $16.95 ISBN: 0-8090-7447-8

Reiser, S. J., Bursztajn, H. J., Appelbaum, P. S., ***et al. Divided Staffs, Divided Selves: A Case Approach to Mental Health Ethics.*** New York: Cambridge University Press. Pp. 150. $29.95, $8.95 (paper)

AND THE J/DM READER. . .

Arkes, H. R., & Hammond, K. R., (Eds.) (1986). ***Judgment and Decision Making: An Interdisciplinary Reader.*** New York: Cambridge University Press. Pp. 812. ISBN: 0-521-33914-6 (Available in paper).

DECISION-AIDING SOFTWARE AND JUDGMENT/DECISION-MAKING

By Stuart S. Nagel, University of Illinois

The **essence** of decision-aiding software is that it consists of various forms of microcomputer programming designed to enable users to process a set of (1) goals to be achieved, (2) alternatives available for achieving them, and (3) relations between goals and alternatives in order to choose the best alternative, combination, allocation, or predictive decision-rule.

Decision-aiding software should be **distinguished from** at least two other kinds of software that are relevant to making decisions, but do not process goals, alternatives, and relations in order to arrive at prescriptive conclusions. One related type of software is information retrieval software. It can be very useful for determining such things as the amount of money spent on a certain expense item in a certain year, the court cases that are relevant to a given subject matter, or any kind of information that might be contained in a statistical almanac, encyclopedia, or other compendium of information. Another related type of software is office practice software which can be useful for word processing reports, filing and retrieving in-house information, or doing bookkeeping relevant to financial matters. That kind of software is useful for better organizing the decision-making processes of a government agency, a law firm, or any kind of office. Such software, however, does not process goals, alternatives, and relations to arrive at prescriptive conclusions.

Decision-aiding software can take a **variety of forms**. The most common might be the following:

1. Decision-tree software for making decisions under conditions of risk such as whether to go on strike or accept a management offer. A decision tree is usually pictured as looking like a tree on its side with branches and sub-branches. The branches generally represent alternative possibilities that depend on the occurrence or non-occurrence of probabilistic events.
2. Linear-programming software for allocating money, time, people, or other scarce resources to activities, places, tasks, or other objects to which the resources are to be allocated. In terms of form rather than function, linear programming involves maximizing or minimizing an objective function or algebraic equation subject to constraints generally in the form of inequalities like greater than or less than.
3. Statistical software for predicting how a future event is likely to occur such as a trial, an election, or a weather occurrence in light of past events or expert opinions. Statistical software generally involves calculating averages or predictive equations in which decisions or other outcomes are related to factual inputs.
4. Spreadsheet-based software in which the alternatives tend to be on the rows, the criteria on the columns, relations in the cells, overall scores for each alternative in a column at the far right, and a capability for determining what it would take to bring a second-place or other-place alternative up to first place.
5. Rule-based software which contains a set of rules for dealing with a narrow or broad field of decision-making. The user gives the computer a set of facts, and the computer applies the rules to the facts in order to determine which alternative decision should be or is likely to be decided. Such software is sometimes referred to as artificial intelligence or expert systems, but the other forms of decision-aiding software also have characteristics associated with AI and expert systems.
6. Multi-criteria decision-making (MCDM) software which emphasizes multiple goals to be achieved, as contrasted to decision trees, linear programming, and statistical regression analysis which emphasize a single objective function or a single dependent variable.
7. Decision-aiding software that focuses on a specific subject matter, as contrasted to the above software which cuts across all subjects. Subject-specific software could relate to how to decide where to drill an oil well, how to deal with crisis situations in flying a plane, or any other specific decision-making situations.
8. Software that is useful for generating alternatives, goals, or relations, but that does not process those elements in order to draw a conclusion.

Decision-aiding software enhances various **decision-making skills**. These include:

1. Choosing among alternatives, where each alternative is a lump sum choice, meaning that one cannot generally choose parts or multiples of such an alternative. The situation can involve mutually exclusive alternatives, or it can allow for combinations.

2. Allocating scarce resources such as money, time, or people to such objects as places or activities. The allocating can be with or without minimum or maximum constraints on how much each object can receive.
3. Explaining and predicting behavior including individual cases or relations, either in the past or the future.
4. Teaching decision-making, as well as actually making or prescribing decisions.

There are various **obstacles to systematic decision-making** which decision-aiding software helps overcome. Those obstacles include:

1. Multiple dimensions on multiple goals. This is sometimes referred to as the apples and oranges problem, although the problem appears to become more difficult if the goals are more abstract, like freedom and equality. The measures may simultaneously involve hours, miles, dollars, 1-5 scales, pounds, pollution units, and other measures.
2. Multiple missing information. In its simplest form, this problem involves knowing the benefits and costs for a number of alternatives with the exception of one benefit or one cost. In its more challenging form, many benefits, costs, probabilities, and other inputs are unknown.
3. Multiple and possibly conflicting constraints. In its simplest form, there are a number of constraints that need to be met simultaneously, but they do not conflict. In its more challenging form, there may be minimum allocations required for each budget category, but the sum of the minimums adds to more than the maximum budget constraint.
4. The need for simplicity in drawing and presenting conclusions in spite of all that multiplicity. This is where spreadsheet-based software can be especially helpful because it can be relatively easy to manipulate and interpret in comparison to decision trees, payoff matrices, systems of simultaneous equations and inequalities, and arrow diagrams.

Decision-aiding software can be applied to a variety of fields of knowledge, such as the following:

1. Physics: Choosing among alternative energy policies.
2. Chemistry: Comparing alternative incentives for reducing water pollution.
3. Geology: Policies for dealing with earthquakes and related natural disasters.
4. Astronomy: Deciding on research and deployment for the Star Wars defense.
5. Biology: Deciding an optimum level of cancer in light of the prevention and damage costs.
6. Psychology: Deciding whether to take away or leave an abused child.
7. Sociology: Alternative public policies toward race relations.
8. Economics: How to deal with unemployment and inflation.
9. Political Science: Evaluating alternative ways of relating government to the electorate.
10. Philosophy: Comparing socialistic and capitalistic perspectives.
11. Language-Literature: Alternative ways of handling freedom of speech.
12. Art-Music: Public policies toward the arts.
13. History: The alternative motives of key decision-makers like FDR or JFK.

Other **benefits** from using decision-aiding software include:

1. Being more explicit about goals to be achieved, alternatives available for achieving them, and relations between goals and alternatives.
2. Being stimulated to think of more goals, alternatives, and relations than one would otherwise be likely to do.
3. Being able to handle multiple goals, alternatives, and relations without getting confused and without feeling the need to resort to a single composite goal or a single go/no-go alternative.
4. Being encouraged to experiment with changes in the inputs into one's thinking to see how one's conclusions are affected.

5. Being better able to achieve (or more than achieve) one's goals when choosing among alternatives or allocating scarce resources.
6. Being better able to predict future occurrences and explain past occurrences.
7. Being better able to teach decision-making and other related skills to students in courses that involve controversial issues.
8. Being able to more effectively handle multi-dimensionality, missing information, and multiple constraints as surmountable obstacles to systematic decision-making.
9. Being more able to deal with diverse subject matters as a result of having a cross-cutting decision-analytic framework that is easy to use.
10. Becoming more capable of systematic decision analysis, even when the software is not available.

One of the most exciting developments regarding the future of decision-aiding software is the idea of being able to achieve **super-optimum solutions**. Such a solution is one that is better than what each side in a controversy had originally proposed as its best alternative using each side's own goals and their relative weights. For example, George Bush proposes retaining the minimum wage at $3.35 in order to stimulate business. Michael Dukakis proposes raising the minimum wage to $4.00 in order to help labor. A super-optimum solution might be to allow business firms to pay as low as $3.00 an hour where they agree to hire the elderly, the handicapped, mothers of pre-school children, or other unemployed people and also agree to provide on-the-job training. The workers, however, receive $4.50 an hour with the government paying a $1.50 minimum wage supplement to the $3.00 business base. Business comes out ahead of its best expectations ($3.35) of being able to retain the present minimum wage. Labor comes out ahead of its best expectation of getting $4.00 an hour. The taxpayer is also better off if unemployed people are put to work who might otherwise be receiving public aid, food stamps, Medicaid, public housing, and maybe committing crimes. They can now become income-receiving taxpayers. This is a super-optimum solution where everybody comes out better off. It should be distinguished from a compromise solution which would be between $3.35 (Bush) and $4.00 (Dukakis) an hour. Super-optimum solutions are facilitated by thinking in terms of multiple goals and alternatives using spreadsheet-based decision-aiding software.

For **further information** concerning decision-aiding software, see S. Nagel, *Evaluation Analysis with Microcomputers* (Greenwich, Conn.: JAI Press, 1989); and S. Nagel (ed.), *Decision-Aiding Software and Decision Analysis* (London and New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1990). The latter book is still in the process of being developed. I would welcome receiving papers or proposals relevant to any of the subjects discussed in this article on decision-aiding software. The book will probably be part of the series of decision analysis books that is being developed by the Judgment/Decision Making Society.

Kellogg J. L. Kellogg Graduate School of Management Northwestern University

DISPUTE RESOLUTION RESEARCH CENTER

January 31, 1989

Dear Colleague:

Our series of Working Papers has been received with great interest. Several papers have been added in the past year, and are listed below. To cover the costs of mailing, we are charging $2.00 per paper; make checks payable to Northwestern University. If you would like to order a copy of any of the papers, please circle the number of the paper on the list, write your name and address, and return this letter to:

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Sincerely,

Roger Myerson
Professor
Managerial Economics and Decision Sciences

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Leigh L. Thompson, Elizabeth A. Mannix, Max H. Bazerman, available in print: Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 54, 86-95.

10. NEGOTIATOR BEHAVIOR AND DECISION PROCESSES IN DYADS, GROUPS, AND MARKETS
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Max Bazerman, Elizabeth Mannix, Leigh Thompson, available in print: Advances in Group Processes, 1988, Vol. 5, 195-216.

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Negotiations Teaching Materials

A manual of new materials for teaching negotiations and dispute resolution will be available in late spring. The manual will be spiral bound and will cost $10. If you wish to order the manual, return the form below.

Contents:

1. El Tek - an quantified integrative negotiation exercise set within a firm. Max Bazerman and Jeanne Brett
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The Social Psychology of Justice, Tom Tyler and E. Allan Lind, Plenum, 1988.

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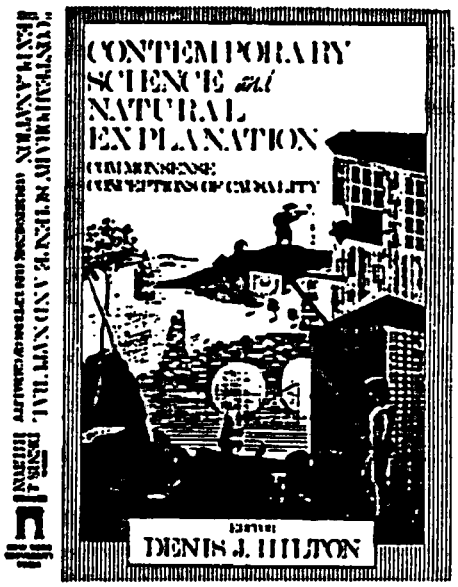

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