



Without Good Reason: The Rationality Debate in Philosophy and Cognitive Science (Clarendon Library of Logic and Philosophy)

By Edward Stein

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In this book, Edward Stein offers a clear critical account of the debate about rationality in philosophy and cognitive science. He discusses concepts of rationality--the pictures of rationality on which the debate centers--and assesses the empirical evidence used to argue that humans are irrational. He concludes that the question of human rationality must be answered not conceptually but empirically, using the full resources of an advanced cognitive science. Furthermore, he extends this conclusion to argue that empirical considerations are also relevant to the theory of knowledge--in other words, that epistemology should be naturalized.

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Editorial Review

Review

"Stein has done a great service in bringing together all of the important arguments in the human rationality debate and providing a measured critical assessment of them....This will be an important book and is essential reading for epistemologists, philosophers of mind, and cognitive and evolutionary psychologists."--*Choice*

From the Back Cover

Are humans rational? Various experiments performed over the last several decades have been interpreted as showing that humans are irrational, we make significant and consistent errors in logical reasoning, probabilistic reasoning, similarity judgements, and risk-assessment, to name a few areas. But can these experiments establish human irrationality, or is it a conceptual truth that humans must be rational, as various philosophers have argued? In this book, Edward Stein offers a clear critical account of this debate about rationality in philosophy and cognitive science. He discusses concepts of rationality - the pictures of rationality that the debate centres - on and assesses the empirical evidence used to argue that humans are irrational. He concludes that the question of human rationality must be answered not conceptually but empirically, using the full resources of an advanced cognitive science. Furthermore, he extends this conclusion to argue that empirical considerations are also relevant to the theory of knowledge - in other words, that epistemology should be naturalized.

About the Author

Edward Stein is at New York University.

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