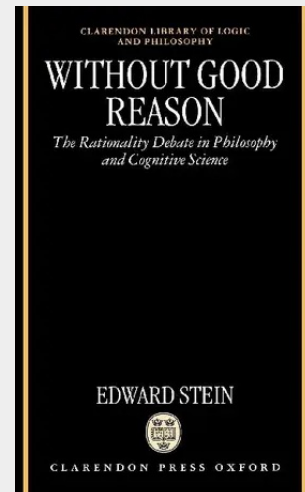


Without Good Reason

The Rationality Debate in Philosophy and Cognitive Science

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.

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