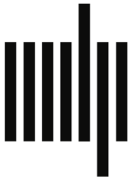
Explanation and Cognition

edited by Frank C. Keil and Robert A. Wilson



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Preface

From very different vantage points both of us have had longstanding interests in the relations between cognition and explanation. When the opportunity arose through the kind invitation of Jim Fetzer, editor of *Minds and Machines*, to put together a special issue on the topic, we eagerly agreed and assembled a series of seven papers that formed an exciting and provocative collection. But even before that issue appeared, it was obvious that we needed a more extensive and broader treatment of the topic. We therefore approached The MIT Press and suggested the current volume, containing revised versions of the seven original papers plus seven new papers. All of these chapters have been extensively reviewed by both of us as well as by other authors in this volume. There have been many revisions resulting from discussions among the authors and editors such that this collection now forms a broad and integrated treatment of explanation and cognition across much of cognitive science. We hope that it will help foster a new set of discussions of how the ways we come to understand the world and convey those understandings to others is linked to foundational issues in cognitive science.

We acknowledge thanks to the staff at The MIT Press for help in shepherding this collection of papers through the various stages of production. Many thanks also to Trey Billings for helping in manuscript processing and preparation and to Marissa Greif and Nany Kim for preparing the index. Frank Keil also acknowledges support by NIH grant R01-HD23922 for support of the research-related aspects of this project.