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Modeling and Using Context

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Preface

Context has emerged as a central concept in a variety of contemporary approaches to reasoning. The conference at which the papers in this volume were presented was the third international, interdisciplinary conference on the topic of context, and was held in Dundee, Scotland on July 27-30, 2001. The first conference in this series was held in Rio de Janiero in 1997, and the second in Trento in 1999.

Like the previous conferences, CONTEXT 2001 was remarkably successful in bringing together representatives of many different fields, spanning the entire range of the cognitive and informational sciences, and with interests ranging from specific, commercial applications to highly general philosophical and logical theories.

The papers collected here demonstrate well the range of context-related research. While foundational problems remain, and continue to be discussed in many of the contributions collected in this volume, the work shows increased sophistication about what forms of reasoning are important, and what techniques are appropriate in accounting for them. The papers themselves, however, do not convey the lively excitement of the conference itself, and the continuing spirit of cooperation and communication across disciplines that has been the hallmark of these conferences. We are very pleased that the field of context research has shown over four years intense, sustained development while retaining this sense of interdisciplinary cooperation.

We would especially like to thank our keynote speakers: Patrick Blackburn (INRIA, Lorraine, France), Herbert Clark (Psychology Department, Stanford University, California), Jerry Hobbs (SRI International, Menlo Park, California), Alex Lascarides (Division of Informatics, University of Edinburgh, Scotland), and John Perry (Philosophy Department, Stanford University, California) for providing a portrait of the best contemporary work in the field.

We would also like to thank the many people who made CONTEXT 2001 possible. First of all, the program committee members and all the additional reviewers for all they did to ensure the high quality of accepted contributions. We also thank Dr. Nicholas Davey, Head of the Philosophy Department (University of Dundee), Professor Huw Jones, Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (University of Dundee) for help with funding; the Finance Office at the University of Dundee, in particular Mr. Gordon Campbell and his assistants, for help with financial administration; the staff at the West Park Conference Center, co-ordinated by Mrs. Eve Anderson and Mrs. Ann Bishop, for all their work;

Drs. Roy Dyckhoff (University of St Andrews), Nick Taylor, Wayne Murray, and their postgraduate assistants for work on the poster, the Scottish end of the web site and providing support at the conference.

July 2001

Varol Akman
Paolo Bouquet
Richmond Thomason
Roger A. Young

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CONTEXT 2001 was organized by the *Department of Philosophy* at the University of Dundee. CONTEXT 2001 was hosted at the *Conference Center* of the University of Dundee.

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