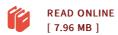# Causal Models: How People Think about the World and Its Alternatives (Hardback)

By Steven Sloman

Oxford University Press Inc, United States, 2005. Hardback. Condition: New. New. Language: English . Brand New Book ***** Print on Demand *****.Human beings are active agents who can think. To understand how thought serves action requires understanding how people conceive of the relation between cause and effect, that is, between action and outcome. In cognitive terms, the question becomes one of how people construct and reason with the causal models we use to represent our world. A revolution is occuring in how statisticians, philosophers, and computer scientists answer this question. These fields have ushered in new insights about causal models by thinking about how to represent causal structure mathematically, in a framework that uses graphs and probability theory to develop what are called causal Bayesian networks . The framework starts with the idea that the purpose of causal structure is to understand and predict the effects of intervention: How does intervening on one thing affect other things? This question is not merely about probability (or logic), but about action. The framework offers new understanding of mind: Thought is about the effects of intervention, so cognition is thereby intimately tied to actions that take place either in the actual physical...

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