

Beyond Belief : Randomness, Prediction and Explanation in Science

John L. Casti, Anders Karlqvist



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Beyond Belief : Randomness, Prediction and Explanation in Science John L. Casti, Anders Karlqvist How can we predict and explain the phenomena of nature? What are the limits to this knowledge process? The central issues of prediction, explanation, and mathematical modeling, which underlie all scientific activity, were the focus of a conference organized by the Swedish Council for the Planning and Coordination of Research, held at the Abisko Research Station in May of 1989. At this forum, a select group of internationally known scientists in physics, chemistry, biology, economics, sociology and mathematics discussed and debated the ways in which prediction and explanation interact with mathematical modeling in their respective areas of expertise.

Beyond Belief is the result of this forum, consisting of 11 chapters written specifically for this volume. The multiple themes of randomness, uncertainty, prediction and explanation are presented using (as vehicles) several topical areas from modern science, such as morphogenetic fields, Boscovich covariance, and atmospheric variability. This multidisciplinary examination of the foundational issues of modern scientific thought and methodology will offer stimulating reading for a very broad scientific audience.

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