

THOUGHT EXPERIMENTS
IN
SCIENCE AND PHILOSOPHY



CPS PUBLICATIONS IN PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE

Edited on behalf of the
Center for Philosophy of Science
University of Pittsburgh

by

Gerald Massey
James E. McGuire
Nicholas Rescher
Merilee Salmon
Kenneth Schaffner
Wilfred Sellars

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Edited by

Tamara Horowitz

and

Gerald J. Massey

Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

ROWMAN & LITTLEFIELD PUBLISHERS, INC.

Published in the United States of America
by Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.
8705 Bollman Place, Savage, Maryland 20763

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British Cataloging in Publication Information Available

Co-published by arrangement with
the Center for Philosophy of Science

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Thought experiments in science and philosophy
/edited by Tamara Horowitz and Gerald J. Massey.
p. cm.

"This volume originated in a conference ... held
at the Center for Philosophy at the University
of Pittsburgh, April 18-20, 1986"—Pref.

Includes bibliographical references.

1. Thought and thinking—Congresses.
2. Philosophy and science—Congresses.

I. Horowitz, Tamara. II. Massey, Gerald J.

B105.T54T56 1991 101—dc20 91-30795 CIP

ISBN 0-8476-7706-0 (hardcover : alk. paper)

Printed in the United States of America



TM The paper used in this publication meets the minimum requirements of American National Standard for Information Sciences—Permanence of Paper for Printed Library Materials, ANSI Z39.48-1984.

PREFACE

This volume originated in a conference on "The Place of Thought Experiments in Science and Philosophy" which was organized by us and held at the Center for Philosophy of Science at the University of Pittsburgh, April 18-20, 1986. The idea behind this conference was to encourage philosophers and scientists to talk to each other about the role of thought experiments in their various disciplines.

These papers were either written for the conference, or were written after it by commentators and other participants. We are grateful to those who committed themselves, before the conference, to presenting as yet unwritten papers, and to those who wrote papers for this volume after the conference was over. We hope that this volume will be of use to other philosophers and scientists who are interested in thought experiments, as well as inspire more work in this area.

There are many people who were helpful both in organizing the conference and preparing the volume. We particularly thank our colleague Nicholas Rescher, then Director of the Center and now its Vice Chairman, both for his initial support which made it possible for us to have the conference, as well as his invaluable help in shepherding this volume through the press. Barbara Massey helped with the introduction, Linda Butera with the assistance of Deborah Layne insured that the conference ran smoothly, and Mary Connor helped bring this volume together. David Carey, Susan Sterrett, and Martha Harty-Scheiner all provided editorial assistance. Finally, we would like to express our appreciation to the R.K. Mellon Foundation for financial support of the conference as well as of this volume.

Tamara Horowitz & Gerald J. Massey

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

January 1991

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