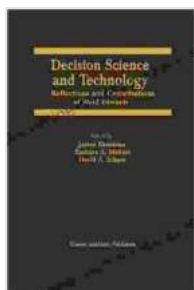


# Reflections On The Contributions Of Ward Edwards

Ward Edwards (1927-2009) was an American psychologist and decision scientist who made significant contributions to the fields of decision making and risk analysis. He is best known for his development of multi-attribute utility theory (MAUT), a mathematical framework for making decisions under uncertainty that takes into account multiple factors. Edwards also made important contributions to the study of cognitive biases, the heuristics and biases that can lead to errors in judgment and decision making.



## Decision Science and Technology: Reflections on the Contributions of Ward Edwards by Lesley Downer

★★★★☆ 4.3 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 6915 KB

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

Screen Reader: Supported

Word Wise : Enabled

Print length : 446 pages

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## Early Life and Education

Edwards was born in Boulder, Colorado, in 1927. He received his B.A. in mathematics from the University of Colorado in 1948 and his Ph.D. in psychology from the University of Michigan in 1955. After completing his doctoral studies, Edwards joined the faculty of the University of Michigan, where he remained for the rest of his career.

## **Research on Decision Making**

Edwards's early research focused on the study of decision making under uncertainty. In the 1950s and 1960s, he developed a series of mathematical models to represent the process of decision making. These models took into account factors such as the probability of different outcomes, the desirability of those outcomes, and the costs and benefits of different actions.

One of Edwards's most important contributions to decision theory was his development of MAUT. MAUT is a general framework for making decisions under uncertainty that takes into account multiple factors. MAUT is based on the idea that the value of a decision is determined by the weighted sum of the desirability of the possible outcomes and the probability of each outcome. The weights are determined by the decision maker's preferences.

Edwards's work on decision making has had a profound impact on the field. MAUT is now widely used in a variety of applications, including business, engineering, and public policy. Edwards's research on cognitive biases has also helped to improve our understanding of how people make decisions.

## **Later Career**

In the later years of his career, Edwards became increasingly interested in the application of decision theory to public policy issues. He served on a number of government committees and panels, and he advised policymakers on a wide range of issues, including nuclear power, climate change, and terrorism.

Edwards was also a gifted teacher and mentor. He taught at the University of Michigan for over 50 years, and he supervised the dissertations of over

100 doctoral students. His students have gone on to become leading researchers and educators in the field of decision science.

## Legacy

Ward Edwards was one of the most influential decision scientists of the 20th century. His work on decision making under uncertainty, cognitive biases, and public policy has had a profound impact on the field. Edwards was also a gifted teacher and mentor, and his students have gone on to become leading researchers and educators in the field of decision science.

Edwards died in Ann Arbor, Michigan, in 2009. He is survived by his wife, Susan, and his three children, John, Ann, and David.

## Additional Resources

\* [Ward Edwards's website]

(<https://www.psych.lsa.umich.edu/people/faculty/ward-edwards>) \* [Obituary in The New York Times]

(<https://www.nytimes.com/2009/05/21/science/21edwards.html>) \* [Interview with Ward Edwards]

(<https://www.decisionsciences.org/Newsletter/Archives/Aug2008.pdf>)



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