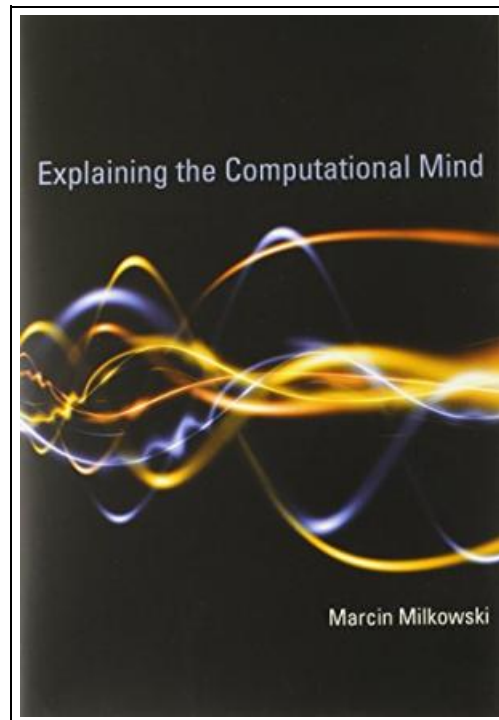


Explaining the Computational Mind (Hardback)



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Reviews

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EXPLAINING THE COMPUTATIONAL MIND (HARDBACK)



MIT Press Ltd, United States, 2013. Hardback. Condition: New. Language: English . Brand New Book. A defense of the computational explanation of cognition that relies on mechanistic philosophy of science and advocates for explanatory pluralism. In this book, Marcin Milkowski argues that the mind can be explained computationally because it is itself computational -- whether it engages in mental arithmetic, parses natural language, or processes the auditory signals that allow us to experience music. Defending the computational explanation against objections to it -- from John Searle and Hilary Putnam in particular -- Milkowski writes that computationalism is here to stay but is not what many have taken it to be. It does not, for example, rely on a Cartesian gulf between software and hardware, or mind and brain. Milkowski's mechanistic construal of computation allows him to show that no purely computational explanation of a physical process will ever be complete. Computationalism is only plausible, he argues, if you also accept explanatory pluralism. Milkowski sketches a mechanistic theory of implementation of computation against a background of extant conceptions, describing four dissimilar computational models of cognition. He reviews other philosophical accounts of implementation and computational explanation and defends a notion of representation that is compatible with his mechanistic account and adequate vis a vis the four models discussed earlier. Instead of arguing that there is no computation without representation, he inverts the slogan and shows that there is no representation without computation -- but explains that representation goes beyond purely computational considerations. Milkowski's arguments succeed in vindicating computational explanation in a novel way by relying on mechanistic theory of science and interventionist theory of causation.



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