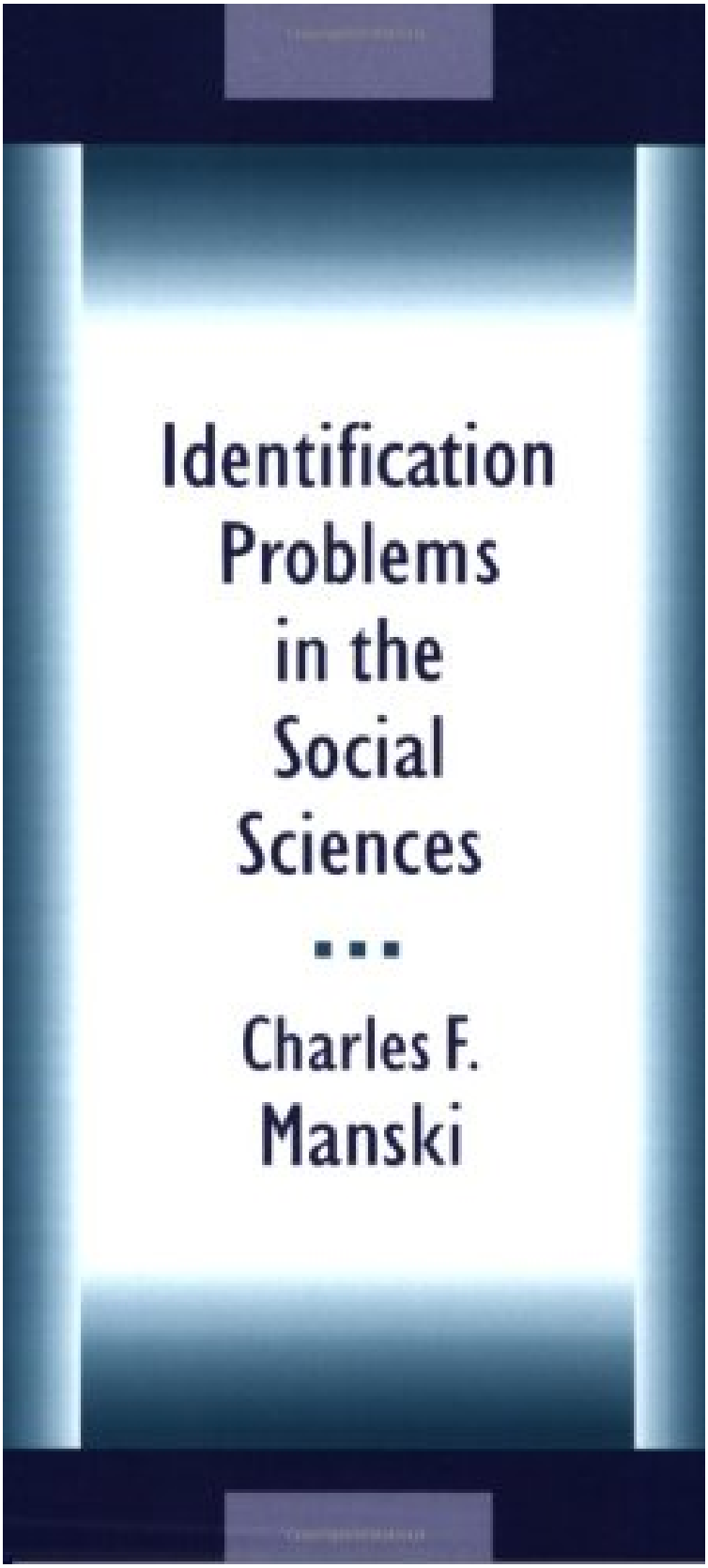
Identification Problems in the Social Sciences

Charles F. Manski



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Charles F. Manski : Identification Problems in the Social Sciences before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Identification Problems in the Social Sciences:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Good book on an important topicBy Luis-DurhamThe book is really easy to read even if your background in statistics is light.it is rather opinionated (which is not necessarily a bad thing) and addresses important topics in statistical identification namely: what can you learn from a statistical model? This is too often a non discussed topic, either by econometricians who go too deep in the technical details, or by applied social scientists who look at statistics as a tool that helps to make their case.1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Identification Problems in the Social SciencesBy Sailor PeteGreat book! I wish this book was around when I took graduate econometrics. In particular, it provided me with a much clearer understanding of identification issues and provided me with a getting started, first look at non-parametric regression.9 of 17 people found the following review helpful. Great introduction to nonparametric estimation.By Alejandro BelluscioThis book is a nonparametric introduction written for social sciences students. This implies that it's light on the mathmetical side. But the nonparametrics are easy to understand anyway. This is a highly recommended book for those who want to formalize their thoughts and want to test that model with real life data but find it difficult to apply classical parametric methods.

This book provides a language and a set of tools for finding bounds on the predictions that social and behavioral scientists can logically make from nonexperimental and experimental data. The economist Charles Manski draws on examples from criminology, demography, epidemiology, social psychology, and sociology as well as economics to illustrate this language and to demonstrate the broad usefulness of the tools.There are many traditional ways to present identification problems in econometrics, sociology, and psychometrics. Some of these are primarily statistical in nature, using concepts such as flat likelihood functions and nondistinct parameter estimates. Manski's strategy is to divorce identification from purely statistical concepts and to present the logic of identification analysis in ways that are accessible to a wide audience in the social and behavioral sciences. In each case, problems are motivated by real examples with real policy importance, the mathematics is kept to a minimum, and the deductions on identifiability are derived giving fresh insights.Manski begins with the conceptual problem of extrapolating predictions from one population to some new population or to the future. He then analyzes in depth the fundamental selection problem that arises whenever a scientist tries to predict the effects of treatments on outcomes. He carefully specifies assumptions and develops his nonparametric methods of bounding predictions. Manski shows how these tools should be used to investigate common problems such as predicting the effect of family structure on children's outcomes and the effect of policing on crime rates.Successive chapters deal with topics ranging from the use of experiments to evaluate social programs, to the use of case-control sampling by epidemiologists studying the association of risk factors and disease, to the use of intentions data by demographers seeking to predict future fertility. The book closes by examining two central identification problems in the analysis of social interactions: the classical simultaneity problem of econometrics and the reflection problem faced in analyses of neighborhood and contextual effects.

Manski's provision of nonparametric bounds is insightful. The book also gives lucid and methodical exposition of the techniques involved and illustrative examples. Above all, its reminder that our conclusions can only be as good as our assumptions and its thoughtful remarks on the limitations of controlled experimentation in program evaluation research are incisive. Manski's self-reflective and circumspective critique and offer of solutions are surely commendable...The book provides an illuminating discussion of a fundamental problem in social research. (Raymond Sin-Kwok Wong Contemporary Sociology)A landmark book in social science methodology. No sociologist who takes statistical methods seriously can afford to ignore it...The book is written in plain and lucid English...Manski's book gives us good directions to follow to solve various practical problems in the future...Identification Problems in the Social Sciences is a great book to read...You will surely admire the book's elegance and logical clarity. I highly recommend the book. (Yu Xie American Journal of Sociology)From the Back CoverManski's provision of nonparametric bounds is insightful. The book also gives lucid and methodical exposition of the techniques involved and illustrative examples. Above all, its reminder that our conclusions can only be as good as our assumptions and its thoughtful remarks on the limitations of controlled experimentation in program evaluation research are incisive. Manski's self-reflective and circumspective critique and offer of solutions are surely commendable ...The book provides an illuminating discussion of a fundamental problem in social research.-Raymond Sin-Kwok Wong, Contemporary SociologyAbout the AuthorCharles F. Manski is Board of Trustees Professor of Economics at Northwestern University.