Seismology is a quantitative physical science that examines mechanical properties of our planet. Descriptions of these properties result from an interplay of mathematical strategies, computational techniques and observational apparatus. Beside its intrinsic interest in describing the Earth’s interior, seismology is of practical importance in earthquake predictions as well as mineral and petroleum exploration. In this presentation, we describe the conceptual issues involved in seismic theory, including the relation between theories and models, as well as the choices available to a theorist.

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