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The Fundamentality of Physics and the Autonomy of the Special Sciences

Autumn semester 2023, Wednesdays 12-14, L208, SE MA2a/MA5a

Program:

20 Sept	*No class (EPSA 2023 in Belgrade)*
27 Sept	Oppenheim and Putnam (1958)
4 Oct	Nagel (1961)
11 Oct	Fodor (1974)
18 Oct	Kitcher (1984)
25 Oct	Waters (2008)
1 Nov	Kim (2007)
8 Nov	*No class (semaine de lecture)*
15 Nov	Hoefer (2003)
22 Nov	Ladyman and Ross (2007)
29 Nov	Loewer (2008, 2009)
6 Dez	Hüttemann and Love (2011)
13 Dez	Batterman (2018)
20 Dez	Ney (2020)

Descriptif :

Philosophers of science are puzzled by the fact that, according to a robust scientific consensus, everything (material) consists of the same kind of matter subject to the same physical laws, yet there exist numerous sciences with their own principles that appear to be independent of fundamental physics, such as biology, psychology, economics, etc. Even some areas of chemistry, condensed matter physics and thermodynamics have resisted a reduction to fundamental physics. In what sense, then, is physics fundamental? And how can we explain the autonomy or the sheer existence of the "special sciences"? This seminar will approach these questions from two different angles, namely the philosophy of physics and (mainly) the philosophy of biology.

Bibliography

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