

Seminar

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The stringy dimension of physics: a perspective from philosophy of science

The practice of physics is shaped by experiences and expectations. Physicists and philosophers of science alike are tempted to evaluate scientific achievements by relating them to successfully tested predictions. However, some contemporary research programs at the physical frontiers refuse to be rated based on their power to predict testable phenomena. Without the crucial link to the natural world other criteria of evaluation must be considered. Recently, a shift of strategies for theory assessment was proposed as an explanation to why large numbers of physicists are attracted by string theoretical research. However, historical accounts pointed out years ago shifting practices of fundamental physics that dislocate the balanced system of experiment, theory and mathematics that once established physics as a hard science.

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