

P.E.Meehl: Philosophical Psychology Seminar

Lecture 4 (of 12) 01/26/1989

Truth phobia (cont. from Lecture 3)

Verisimilitude (cont. from Lecture 3):

Ontological, not epistemological;

Not "probable," that's an *evidentiary* concept;

Matter of degree. Everything we consider is "complexes."

Some concepts useable and unavoidable, even if unclear (e.g., probability).

Ex: Kinetic theory of heat [*PM makes error in lecture: Van der Waals force is not gravitational*]

"Falsified" (literally) \neq "abandoned".

Constants of Van der Waals equation not theory derived. Curve fit.

Falsifier becomes corroborator of modified theory.

Ex: Neptune as perturber of Uranus orbit

Two kinds of adjustments: (1) Theory itself modified;

(2) Alter or add particulars, no theory change.

Formalization (hypothetico-deductive postulates) can be done by logician
even if scientist (e.g., Skinner) doesn't bother.

Core vs periphery of a theory (Lakatos hard core vs protective belt)

Latent learning: Skinner, Hull, Tolman; Freud, neo-Freud; Hull, sHR core

PEM attempt to explicate "core" by class of all experimental *wffs*

Theory as "complete," all true *wffs* derivable

PEM Verisimilitude explication-sketch

Kinds of entities (substance, structure, event, state, disposition, field)

Three kinds of theories: functional-dynamic, compositional, developmental

Fisher effects=partial derivatives for continuous case.

Interaction=mixed partial derivatives for continuous case.