

# The History and Science of Cognitive Science: Introductory Lectures

## Chapter 1: Scientific Treatments of Physical Domains

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## 1.1 Questions, Answers, and Frameworks: The Development of Scientific Treatments of Domains

Every human being spends some time wondering about the nature of the world, their own nature, and how the two fit together. Asking such questions marks the beginning of rational inquiry. However, questioning in itself is not inquiry. Inquiry requires adopting a framework—adopting answers to certain basic questions—in order to use those answers as the foundation of one’s inquiry. For example, a given scientific theory represents an answer to questions about the sorts of experiences that can count as evidence, how one ought to categorize phenomena, the sorts of dynamical relationships constitutive of an adequate treatment of phenomena, the manner in which one ought to test dynamical hypotheses, etc.. Indeed, scientific knowledge differs from religion or commonsense, for example, in that science insists upon adopting a framework within which researchers address questions regarding phenomena through highly controlled, repeatable experimentation. In the case of cognitive science, theorists seek answers questions at many levels of description and across several academic disciplines. In order to pursue this goal, and like any other science, cognitive scientists work within a framework that adopts common answers to certain central questions.

Before turning to cognitive science specifically, this chapter outlines a general picture of the products and processes of science. This general framework provides students with a perspective on the nature of science (and specifically of cognitive science) allowing them to better understand the process of scientific development as well as the specific details of current theories. The general understanding of scientific processes and products this chapter and lectures introduce informs and provides a structure for the

			
Ronald Giere 1938 – 2020	Thomas Kuhn July 18, 1922–June 17, 1996	Frederick Suppe February 22, 1940 -	
			
Patrick Suppes 1922–2014	Bas Van Fraassen April 5, 1941 -	Robert Cummins	Nancy Cartwright January 24, 1944 -

presentation of material throughout the text and lectures. One central idea behind the account offered in this chapter is that scientific treatments of physical phenomena emerge from what I call **ontological frameworks**. Through an often meandering and unsystematic period of early inquiry or proto-science, thinkers develop and render rigorous the elements of a given ontological framework. This process of development often creates strong, systematic ties

between the categorizations of the framework and the physical phenomena in the world through the establishment of operationalizations (operations for quantitatively or qualitatively categorizing phenomena) and an experimental tradition (a relatively uniform set of practices, set-ups, instruments, etc..). Researchers begin to gather increasing amounts of increasingly diverse data about the dynamical and attributional features of physical phenomena. Researchers begin to formulate both dynamical and attributional theoretic models. Data recording unified and regular dynamic interactions give rise to **dynamical theoretical models** that seek to retrodict, predict, manipulate, and explain observed dynamical interactions (how elements of the phenomena

interact with one another) and/or the development of domain elements over time (e.x. changes in the properties exhibited by objects, properties, events, or relations within the domain). **Attributional theoretical models**, on the other hand, capture unities or regularities manifested as attributes of objects, events, or relations within the domain. **Importantly, this text distinguishes retrodiction, prediction, and especially manipulation from explanation when discussing the central goals of scientific activity. Consequently, it portrays scientists as seeking to develop tools that allow them to potentially manipulate the elements of the domain—not just predict, retrodict, or explain.**

As scientists forge a comprehensive theoretical understanding of the various phenomenon and their interrelationships what I call a scientific treatment of a domain begins to emerge. While the structure of the world both informs and constrains the scientific treatment of a domain, the categorizations, conventions, tools, and interests of the scientists and the larger society also inform and constrain theorizing. The account given here no doubt seems somewhat superficial compared to the more knowledgeable student of science. Many scientists, historians, and philosophers might disagree with various elements. Nevertheless, I offer it as a useful schema for understanding science and the scientific process.

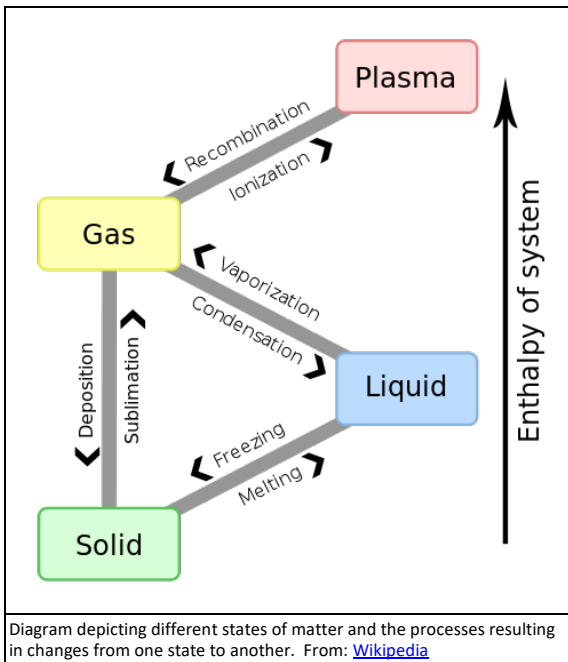
I adapt most of the central concepts in this exposition primarily from the ideas and approaches in [Robert Cummins](#),<sup>1-4</sup> [Nancy Cartwright](#),<sup>5, 6</sup> [Ronald Giere](#),<sup>7-10</sup> [Thomas Kuhn](#),<sup>11-13</sup> [Frederick Suppe](#),<sup>14-16</sup> [Patrick Suppes](#),<sup>17-19</sup> and [Bas Van Fraassen](#).<sup>20-22</sup> Interested readers should look to their more sophisticated and thoughtful accounts for a fuller treatment of the issues discussed here.

### **1.1.a Ontological Frameworks**

Cooperative investigation and theorizing requires formulating and agreeing upon basic ideological and methodological constraints within which researchers conduct inquiry. Thus, a prerequisite for any theorizing involves researchers formulating (and achieving a rough consensus within their community) a general framework for understanding the nature of a domain and its phenomena. Perhaps the most fundamental presupposition of any inquiry, therefore, concerns what I call an **ontological framework**. Ontological frameworks act to constrain and focus investigation in large part by providing a set of fundamental categories, fundamental properties, generalized relationships, and methodological practices within which one can formulate meaningful questions, propose theoretic answers to those questions, and test the adequacy of those proposals. For instance, most philosophers do not think that logically impossible situations can serve as counterexamples to a theory. So, when told that circles consist of sets of points equidistant from a center point on a Euclidean plane, it strikes people as irrelevant to object, “but what if the circle is a square?” As a result, philosophers generally agree upon the constraint that counterexamples to theories must pass the minimum standard of logical possibility. Similarly, scientists still standardly accept that statistically significant findings must meet the minimum standard of .95 probability--meaning the probability of the experimental result occurring by chance alone must be no greater than .05.

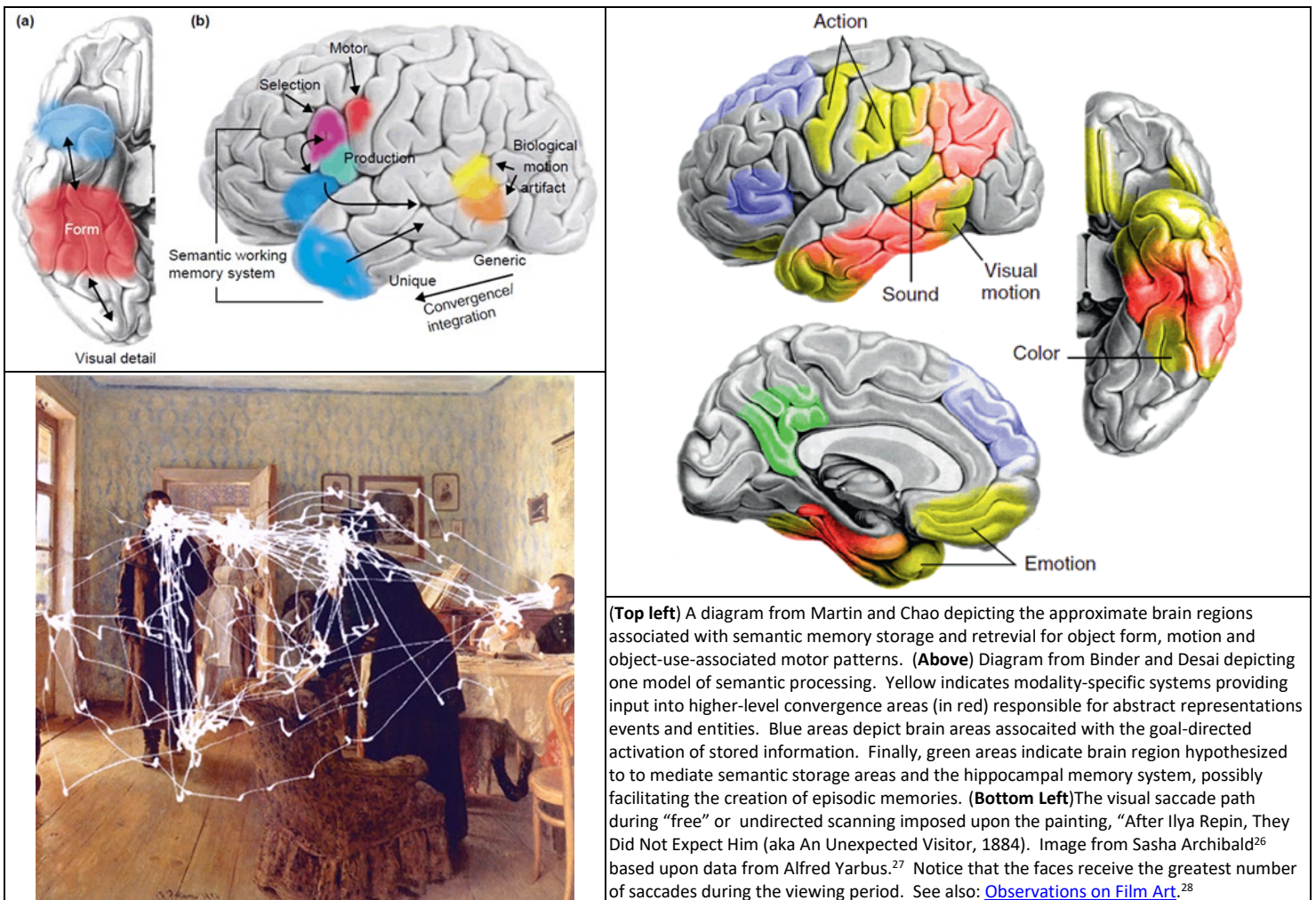
### **1.1.b Fundamental Categories, Dynamical Interactions, and Attributions**

An important part of understanding science and scientific practice involves recognizing that scientific practice **does not** represent an alternative methodology for thinking about the world. Rather, scientific practices build upon features and methods found in cognition generally. Indeed, though the categorizations and relations in mature sciences usually differ significantly from everyday categorizations and relations, scientific treatments of domains often begin with the ontological framework used by ordinary people in everyday life.



Early investigations into the domain of thermodynamics, for example, start with the ordinary notions of hot and cold. As a result, early theorists do not distinguish between heat energy and temperature. However, researchers discover that the amount of energy need to raise the temperature of different materials by the same amount varies significantly. Eventually theorists distinguish between temperature and specific heat capacity, where the latter refers to energy measured in joules. For example, the amount of energy need to raise one kilogram of solid tungsten by one degree kelvin is a mere 0.134 joules. Raising one kilogram of solid aluminum by one degree kelvin requires 0.897 joules, while raising one kilogram of gaseous hydrogen by one degree kelvin requires a full 14.3 joules. Distinguishing between temperature and specific heat capacity allows physicists predict that, for instance, adding heat to ice to melt it does not immediately raise the temperature of the ice.

Instead, the energy initially acts to trigger what physicists call a “phase change” or “phase transition” during which heat energy breaks the rigid hexagonal bonds between water molecules (the ice melts) resulting in liquid water.<sup>23-25</sup>





Both psychology and biology have similar roots in ordinary categorizations. Humans naturally differentiate objects in the world into the categories of living from non-living entities; they likewise differentiate and understand phenomena using these terms as well. In fact, people can develop a deficit for naming non-living things, while remaining relatively unimpaired in naming living things. Indeed, the very structure of the brain's semantic memory provides the basis for some of this asymmetry.<sup>29-32</sup> Likewise, humans appear to manifest an innate disposition to categorize objects and phenomena into mental and non-mental entities and/or phenomena.<sup>33-48</sup> This disposition to think about the world in terms of mental and non-mental entities occurs even in early, automatic, unconscious perceptual processing. To wit, the white lines imposed upon the (below) picture of the painting, "After Ilya Repin, They Did Not Expect Him (aka An Unexpected Visitor, 1884)," represent the path of visual eye movements (saccades) of subjects during undirected scanning. Saccades correspond to the points to which the visual system attends when viewing the painting. Notice that the faces of the people receive the greatest number of saccades during the viewing period.<sup>26-28</sup> In essence, the viewer's eye movements suggest that the visual system strongly distinguishes between mental and non-mental elements of the scene and relies heavily upon information about the mental entities to interpret the scene.

Indeed, cognitive processes based upon a mental/non-mental distinction manifest themselves very early in development. For instance, faces strongly attract visual attention (saccades). The human visual system's preference for faces occurs at the very earliest stages of scene perception when the brain selects objects to which it will attend. This preference for faces manifests itself by 3 months in human infants—suggesting an innate disposition to find faces visually salient (important/noticeable).<sup>49-52</sup> Likewise, humans automatically and unconsciously process information regarding the emotional states and motor intentions of other people during vision. As a result, "mind blindness" is one of the most significant pathologies associated with autistic spectrum disorder.<sup>33-45</sup> Humans, moreover, monitor and interact with other people using a vast array of automatic and unconscious processes.<sup>48, 53-55</sup> In short, the human disposition to categorize the world into mental and non-mental results—at least partially—from a variety of innate, automatic, and unconscious cognitive processes. All of these cognitive processes are based upon the adoption of the categories of mental and non-mental for the purposes of visual processing.

As the lectures and text repeatedly emphasize, philosophical and scientific theories of the mind throughout history attempt to understand (and either to affirm or to deny) the real-world basis of this innate tendency of human categorization. Do the categories of mental and non-mental cut the world at a joint? That is, does the distinction marked by mental versus non-mental categorization correspond to a real and important distinction in the world? Must any adequate theory of the number and nature of the universe's basic kinds recognize the existence of mental and non-mental objects, properties, etc.? Within the framework of specific answers to such questions philosophers and scientists strive to systematically formulate, observe, and theorize about mental phenomena and entities. Theorists likewise seek to characterize mental phenomena and entities as well as to specify the place of mental phenomena and entities in relationship to physical phenomena and entities. In other words, if mental and non-mental categories mark a fundamental and real distinction between kinds, what relationship(s) do these kinds have to one another? What, if anything, differentiates these kinds? What, if any, interactions can occur between them?

All the thinkers in this text and in this course explicitly or implicitly adopt and theorize within this most basic of constraints upon inquiry—an ontological framework. For instance, **fundamental categories** constitute one important component of an ontological framework. Fundamental categories tend to specify the kinds of

things and the kinds of changes considered legitimate (real) within a given ontological framework. Champions of belief-desire psychology, like Jerry Fodor, operate within an ontological framework that inherits its moniker from two of its most prominent fundamental categories. Part of this chapter outlines how theorists utilize the categories, types, and interrelationships of an ontological framework to specify a domain of inquiry and to formulate and test theoretic models. Finally, the chapter discusses how ontological frameworks transition from a position of high salience early in inquiry to the status of a rather amorphous and neglected theoretic purview within more advanced inquiry.

Indeed, the periods during which ontological frameworks play the most significant role, and seem most conspicuous, correspond to the early stages of inquiry and episodes of significant upheavals in inquiry (like periods sometimes characterized as scientific revolutions). As the chapters on the development of philosophical and psychological theories of cognition make manifest--philosophical and scientific theorists throughout most of history devote great amounts of effort towards understanding how best to categorize mental phenomena as well as how best to understand the place of mental phenomena in relationship to physical phenomena. Do the mental and the physical constitute distinct kinds of things--fundamental categories--or do they fall into a single kind? Do the processes and changes operant in the dynamic temporal evolution of mental phenomena differ fundamentally from the processes and changes driving the temporal evolution of physical phenomena? Such questions regarding the best perspective ontological framework for understanding the relationship between mind and body dominate the history of philosophical and psychological thought. One finds similar questions and debates regarding the proper ontological framework for understanding the nature of living vs non-living things and the relationship between organic and inorganic processes in the development of biology and chemistry. (We'll return to this issue in the chapters on the development of philosophical and psychological theories of mind.) During the early stages of inquiry--proto-science if you will, ontological frameworks tend proliferate. Likewise, these frameworks exhibit a lack of development and only loose connections to the phenomena they purport to encompass. The lack of rigor within frameworks as well as a looseness of fit between the elements of a framework and the elements of the domain looms large when the next chapter shifts our focus to the emergence of the concept of a mind in early Greek thought.

As sciences develop ontological frameworks recede in prominence; researchers shift their focus from broad framing issues towards the development of specific theories. Nevertheless, ontological frameworks continue to operate as constraints upon theory formulation--by articulating a hypothesis regarding number and the nature of the fundamental categories and their interrelationships for some domain or domains. During periods of dramatic theoretical shifts, ontological frameworks often return to prominence as researchers reexamine even the most basic presuppositions of their science. For example, the rise of quantum mechanics represents a change in physical theories--a change that challenged many of the tacit, but widely and deeply held tenets of the ontological framework that had guided physics since the renaissance. Indeed, Einstein's famous proclamation in his 1926 letter to Max Bohr concerns ontological frameworks--not specific theoretic details:<sup>56</sup>

Quantum mechanics is certainly imposing. But an inner voice tells me that it is not yet the real thing. The theory says a lot, but does not really bring us any closer to the secret of the 'old one'. I, at any rate, am convinced that He is not playing at dice. (p.90)

For Einstein the inherently probabilistic nature of much of quantum mechanics violated an important constraint--physical theories must be mechanistic and deterministic. That is, theories must specify mechanisms through which dynamic change occurs and theories must make exact, definitive predictions. Indeed, the nature of the disagreement between Einstein and Bohr comes most clearly into focus in Einstein's 1950 letter, where he states that:<sup>56</sup>

I see from the last paragraph of your letter that you, too, take the quantum theoretical description as incomplete (referring to an ensemble). But you are after all convinced that no (complete) laws exist for a complete description, according to the positivistic maxim *esse est percipi*. Well, this is a programmatic attitude, not knowledge. This is where our attitudes really differ. For the time being, I am alone in my views as Leibniz was with respect to the absolute space of Newton's theory. There now, I've paraded my old hobby-horse once again. But it is your own fault, because you provoked me. (pp. 188-9)

Now that we have sketched the general role of ontological frameworks, let us turn our attention to better understanding the elements of ontological frameworks. **Fundamental categories** consist of the set of categories considered essential and ineliminable to any adequate account of the phenomena in some domain.

Group→	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	
↓Period																			
1	1 H																	2 He	
2	3 Li	4 Be											5 B	6 C	7 N	8 O	9 F	10 Ne	
3	11 Na	12 Mg											13 Al	14 Si	15 P	16 S	17 Cl	18 Ar	
4	19 K	20 Ca	21 Sc	22 Ti	23 V	24 Cr	25 Mn	26 Fe	27 Co	28 Ni	29 Cu	30 Zn	31 Ga	32 Ge	33 As	34 Se	35 Br	36 Kr	
5	37 Rb	38 Sr	39 Y	40 Zr	41 Nb	42 Mo	43 Tc	44 Ru	45 Rh	46 Pd	47 Ag	48 Cd	49 In	50 Sn	51 Sb	52 Te	53 I	54 Xe	
6	55 Cs	56 Ba	*	71 Lu	72 Hf	73 Ta	74 W	75 Re	76 Os	77 Ir	78 Pt	79 Au	80 Hg	81 Tl	82 Pb	83 Bi	84 Po	85 At	86 Rn
7	87 Fr	88 Ra	*	103 Lr	104 Rf	105 Db	106 Sg	107 Bh	108 Hs	109 Mt	110 Ds	111 Rg	112 Cn	113 Nh	114 Fl	115 Mc	116 Lv	117 Ts	118 Og
			*	57 La	58 Ce	59 Pr	60 Nd	61 Pm	62 Sm	63 Eu	64 Gd	65 Tb	66 Dy	67 Ho	68 Er	69 Tm	70 Yb		
			*	89 Ac	90 Th	91 Pa	92 U	93 Np	94 Pu	95 Am	96 Cm	97 Bk	98 Cf	99 Es	100 Fm	101 Md	102 No		

The modern periodic table. From: [Wikipedia](#)

These categories further constrain the sorts of **fundamental property attributions**, and **dynamical interactions** theorists can utilize. In chemistry, the [periodic table](#) provides an excellent example of fundamental categories.<sup>57-59</sup>




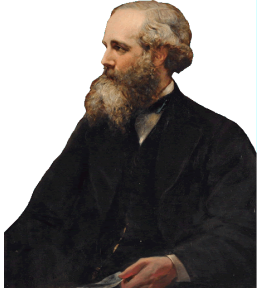
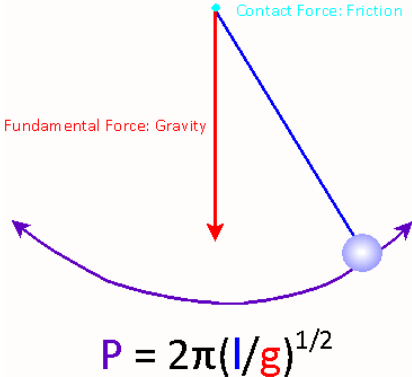
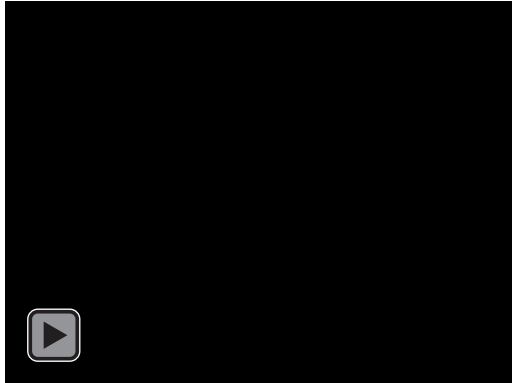
The table organizes all known chemical elements (fundamental categories) giving several definitive attributes such as their atomic number (number of protons). Likewise, each column organizes elements within the same group, i.e., elements having the same electron configurations. Colors

also categorize elements in terms of attributions. For instance, in this table, light blue indicates that the element is a [noble gas](#)—colorless, odorless, single-atom gases.<sup>57-60</sup> Colors also indicate potential dynamical interactions; noble gases like Helium tend not to react chemically with other elements under normal conditions and have similar melting<sup>61</sup> and boiling points. So, in part, one can distinguish ontological frameworks by how they categorize domains as well as the attributions they allow for fundamental categories and dynamical interactions they allow between those fundamental categories. Consider another example from theoretical physics: Prior to special and general relativity, physicists consider space and time to constitute distinct elements of the universe. After general relativity, space and time become a single element space/time. Similarly, the ontological framework of modern physics includes the category of force. Thus, modern physicists claim that adequate theories of physical phenomena must include forces.

The category of forces illustrates some additional important aspects of an ontological framework. First, **some of the elements of an ontological framework prove less central than, even dependent upon, other elements.** Indeed, modern physics recognizes two general categories of forces. On the one hand, physicists appeal to “contact forces.” **Contact forces** transfer energy by direct mechanical contact. For example, friction is a paradigmatic contact force. On the other hand, physicists also posit the category of “fundamental forces.” **Fundamental forces** (sometimes called field forces or interactive forces) constitute the current hypothesis as to the number and nature of essential and ineliminable forces in modern physics. Thus, contact forces prove

dependent upon fundamental forces in that all contact forces ultimately result from fundamental forces acting on objects. For example, friction at the pivot of a pendulum results from the surfaces dragging against one another during the swing of the pendulum (see Diagram A below). The swing itself as well as the contact pressure that results in the drag (the frictional contact force) comes from gravitation (a fundamental force).

Currently physicists recognize four fundamental forces; [gravitation](#),<sup>62</sup> [electromagnetism](#),<sup>63</sup> [strong nuclear force](#),<sup>64</sup> and [weak nuclear force](#).<sup>65</sup> All force not directly generated by fundamental forces involves the transfer of a fundamental force through one or more contact forces. Thus, fundamental forces occupy a central position in the ontological framework of physics, while contact forces—though important in understanding phenomena like pendulum motion--operate only in conjunction with fundamental forces.

			
Hans Christian Ørsted (1777–1851) From: <a href="#">Wikipedia</a>	Michael Faraday (1791–1867) From: <a href="#">The History Of Surgery</a>	Sir Humphry Davy (1778-1829) From: <a href="#">Wikipedia</a>	James Clerk Maxwell (1777–1851) From: <a href="#">Your Paintings</a>
			
<b>Diagram A</b> illustrating how both <a href="#">contact</a> and <a href="#">fundamental forces</a> operate in pendulums. Since all contact forces result from fundamental forces acting on objects, the pendulum’s swing as well as the contact pressure that results in the drag at the arm pivot result from the fundamental force of gravitation (in red). The contact force, friction (in light blue), operates at the pendulum arm pivot resulting from the surface drag during the swing of the pendulum.		<b>Diagram B</b> Picture of “A small (~6mm) piece of pyrolytic graphite levitating over a permanent neodymium magnet array (5mm cubes on a piece of steel). Note that the poles of the magnets are aligned vertically and alternate (two with north facing up, and two with south facing up, diagonally).” This is an example of diamagnetism. Description and picture from: <a href="#">Wikipedia</a> Click on image to play a video of this effect from <a href="#">Youtube</a>	

### 1.1.c Changes in Fundamental Categories: Fundamental Forces

The distinction between contact and fundamental forces illustrates how some elements of an ontological framework prove less central, even dependent upon, other elements. Fundamental forces also illustrate a second important point regarding ontological frameworks; **the elements and properties of an ontological framework can change as inquiry progresses**. Indeed, the number and nature of fundamental forces can and has increased and decreased as physical theories changed in physics. Prior to [James Clarke Maxwell’s](#)<sup>66</sup> publication of “On Physical Lines of Force,” in 1861 and [Treatise on Electricity and Magnetism](#) in 1873<sup>67, 68</sup> physicists treat electric force and magnetic force as separate fundamental forces. Today, however, physicists posit a single force in relation to both electric and magnetic phenomena--the electromagnetic force.

What brought about the change? Physicists begin by treating electric and magnetic phenomena as unrelated and as clearly differentiated. As a consequence, physicists propose electric and magnetic forces in explaining



the respective phenomena. However, as time goes by physicists begin to notice relationships between electric and magnetic forces. Maxwell's book represents a synthesis of work that begins around 1820 with the Danish chemist and physicist [Hans Christian Ørsted](#).<sup>69</sup> Ørsted reports his discovery that an electric current can deflect a compass needle in his *Experimenta Circa Effectum Conflictus Electrici in Acum Magneticam* in 1820.<sup>70</sup> Ørsted's observation represents the first systematic experimental evidence for a relationship between electric and magnetic phenomena. Though Ørsted's observations alone do not prompt revisions to the ontological framework of physics, eventually enough interrelationships emerge to warrant revision.

The next significant contribution to the unification of electric and magnetic forces comes from the work of [Michael Faraday](#),<sup>71</sup> an English chemist and physicist. Faraday attends a lecture given by the English chemist [Humphry Davy](#).<sup>72</sup> Deeply impressed with Davy, Faraday seeks employment in Davy's lab. Faraday submits a letter together with a 300 page book based upon notes from Davy's lectures. Davy hires him, first as a

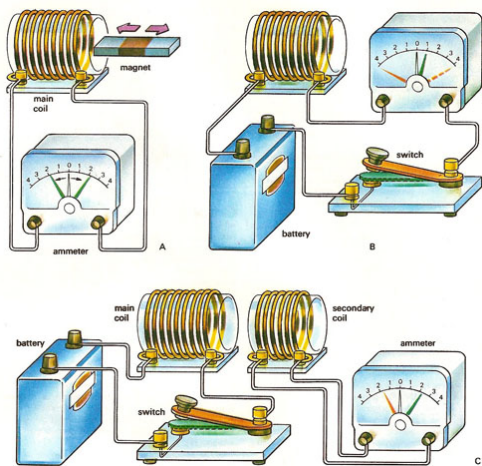
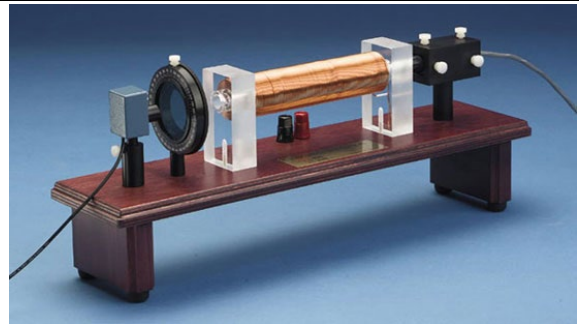
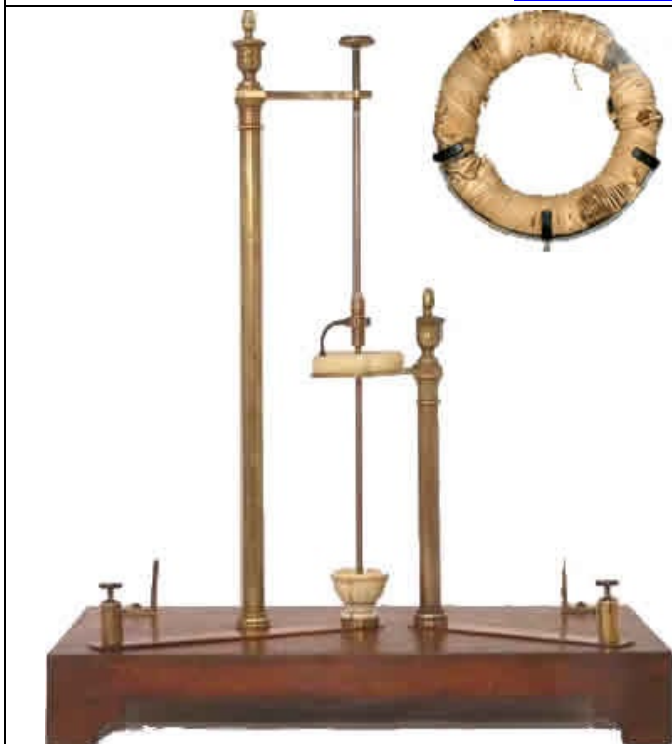


Diagram depicting electromagnetic induction from [The Encyclopedia of Science](#)  
Link to java applet illustrating electromagnetic induction: [Molecular Expressions](#)



Picture of a device to create a Faraday Effect: the Signal Processor/Lock-In Amplifier (SPLIA1-A). From: [Teachspin](#)



Faraday's magnet and apparatus for creating the Faraday Effect. From: [The Physics Hypertextbook](#)

Video of homemade homopolar engine Click to view video. From: [Youtube](#)

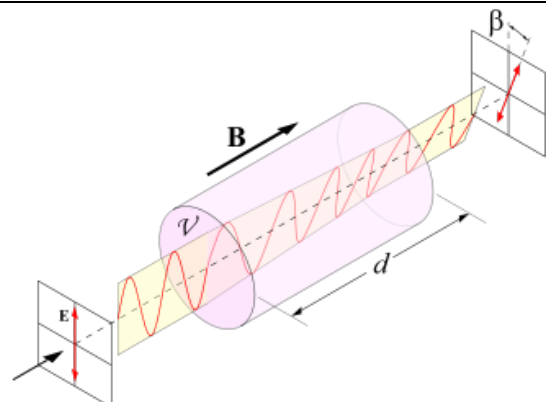


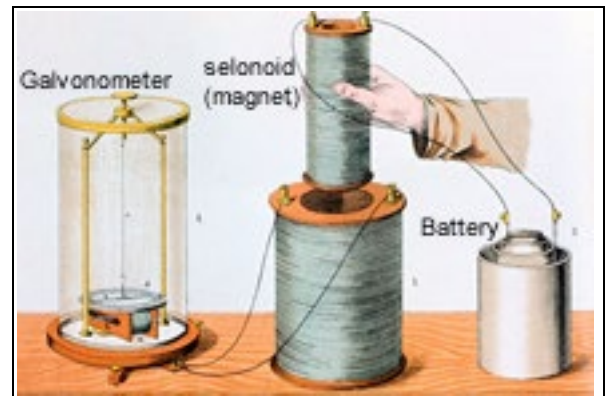
Diagram of light rotation polarization due to Faraday effect. From: [Wikipedia](#)

a secretary, and later as an assistant. In 1821 as the Superintendent of House and Laboratory of the Royal Institution, Faraday designs experiments that result in the [homopolar motor](#)<sup>73</sup> (an electric motor with a fixed magnetic polarity). In 1831 he designs experiments that reveal [electromagnetic induction](#).<sup>74</sup> Electromagnetic induction occurs when one places a conductor (e.x. a wire) in a changing magnetic field or moves the conductor through a stable magnetic field inducing an electrical current in the conductor (see right). Prior to the combining the electrical and magnetic forces, this experiment appears to generate an electrical force from a non-electrical force.

Maxwell would express the general relation using the law:  $\nabla \times \mathbf{E} = -\partial \mathbf{B} / \partial t$ , where the  $\nabla \times$  is the curl operator from vector calculus, the  $\mathbf{E}$  is the electric field (a vector quantity generally a function of position and time) and  $\mathbf{B}$  is the magnetic field (a vector quantity generally a function of position and time).

1845 finds Faraday turning his attention to a phenomenon first noted by [Anton Brugmans](#)<sup>75</sup> in 1778. Faraday demonstrates

that [diamagnetism](#)<sup>76</sup> (the property of some materials to create an opposing magnetic field when one applies a magnetic field to that material; see diagram B above), is a property of matter. He further theorizes that all materials respond to an applied magnetic field (i.e. all materials are either diamagnetic or [paramagnetic](#)<sup>77</sup>). Faraday further designs experiments showing that magnetic forces can affect light ([the Faraday Effect](#)).<sup>78</sup> Faraday also argues that electric phenomena result from a single kind of electricity and that electromagnetic forces extend beyond the physical conductor. His contemporaries reject much of his work, in part because he lacks the mathematical knowledge to express his theories mathematically.<sup>71, 79, 80</sup>



Faraday's original experimental set-up for electromagnetic induction. Adapted from [Thought Co.](#)

Finally, Maxwell publishes his [Treatise on Electricity and Magnetism](#) that includes four laws.<sup>68</sup> Together these laws form the basis of classical electrodynamical theory. One of the laws expresses Faraday's results on electromagnetic induction. Maxwell's work unifies electric, magnetic, and light phenomena, showing these diverse phenomena result from the same entity, electromagnetic fields traveling through space as waves and moving at the speed of light. As a result, the ontological framework of physics changes by combining electric and magnetic forces.

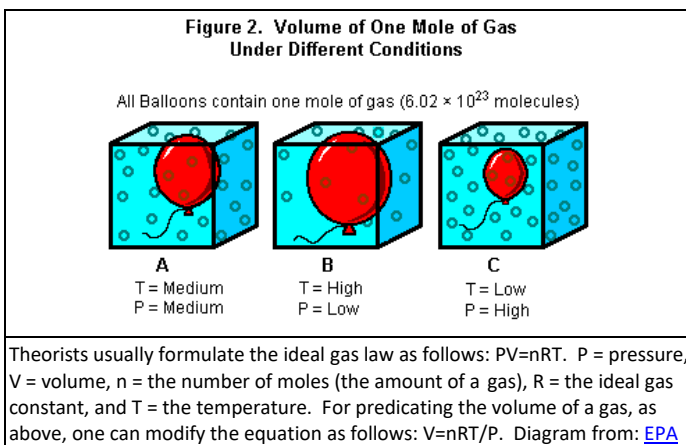
In summary, ontological frameworks provide structure and constraints upon inquiry by articulating a hypothesis regarding nature and number fundamental categories and fundamental properties for some domain together with their potential interrelationships. Fundamental categories serve in an ontological framework as the essential and ineliminable elements in any adequate account of the phenomena in a domain. Ontological frameworks also constrain the sorts of attributions and dynamical interactions theorists can utilize to explain phenomena. For instance, fundamental forces like gravitation can interact with objects directly as well as indirectly through contact forces (like friction). Thus, the category of fundamental forces also specifies the sorts of allowable dynamical interactions between forces and between forces and objects. Fundamental forces like gravity constrain attributions as well. Physicists attribute gravitational attraction to all objects having mass and measure this attraction in units like the kilopond (kp), which is equal to the force exerted by one kilogram in 1g (9.80665 m/s<sup>2</sup> the standardized average of Earth's gravity). We also observed that specific heat capacity specifies a fundamental property of various materials in their various phases within



objects, properties, events, or relations within the domain). Unified and regular dynamic interactions give rise to **dynamical theoretical models**. **Attributional theoretical models**, on the other hand, capture unity or regularity manifested as attributes of objects, events, or relations within the domain. **Importantly, many philosophers of science focus upon explanation via dynamical theoretic models as the primary (or exclusive) goal or product of scientific activity. I follow those thinkers who distinguish between dynamical and attributional models. I also emphasize the importance of retrodiction, prediction, and especially manipulation as central goals of scientific activity.**

The rate of radioactive decay for various elements provides a simple example of a unity or regularity manifested in attributes of objects. Scientists identify several “classical” types of [radioactive decay](#).<sup>81</sup> In the most common type of decay part of the atom’s nucleus breaks away resulting in a loss of energy and the transmutation of the atom from one kind of element to another kind of element.<sup>81</sup> For instance, uranium decays through a series of steps into lead. Scientists quantify radioactive decay using the measure of a [half-life](#).<sup>82, 83</sup> The half-life of a given element consists of the time that it takes for half of the atoms of the element to decay. Thus, a radioactive element, like Iodine-131, manifests a regularity (decay rate) about which scientists create attributional models. For instance, the decay rate of Iodine-131 characterized in terms of its half-life is about 8 days. In contrast, Plutonium has a radioactive half-life of 88 years while Plutonium 239 has a half-life of 24,100 years. Technetium-99, commonly used in as a radioactive tracer in medical imaging, has a half-life of 211,000 years.

So, attributional models either assign attributes to phenomena or articulate the underlying basis for various attributes of phenomena. What about dynamical theoretic models? Recall that dynamical theoretic models represent the dynamical interactions between elements of some system as the system develops over time.



The [ideal gas law](#)<sup>84</sup> represents a dynamical theoretic model of the relationship between the pressure, volume, and temperature of a contained gas. The ideal gas law proves useful for determining how changes in pressure, volume, and temperature affect a gas under a variety of circumstances. The diagram (left) illustrates how the ideal gas law can help to predict how changes in temperature affect volumes of an elastic container like a balloon.

The nature of the phenomena in a potential domain strongly determines if and how scientists approach the process of domain building. However, many other factors influence the development and treatment of a scientific domain. Such factors include (1) the interests of scientists, (2) the needs of science and industry, (3) the available experimental techniques and instruments, (4) the available modeling tools, and (5) the available data regarding the phenomena as well as its relationship to other phenomena. All these factors can make important contributions in formulating and refining a scientific domain. As we will see, Galileo has different interests, experimental techniques, modeling tools and data when he formulates the [ideal pendulum law](#) than we have today.<sup>85</sup> He views the ideal pendulum law as an instance of uniform acceleration in a gravitational field, whereas we now view pendulums as oscillating

systems. Galileo's experiments seem crude now, his data proves incomplete, and he lacks the sophisticated mathematical techniques available to contemporary physicists. Researchers who follow Galileo, like [Christiaan Huygens](#),<sup>86</sup> [John Harrison](#),<sup>87</sup> [Henry Kater](#),<sup>88</sup> and [Léon Foucault](#),<sup>89</sup> introduce better experimental techniques and modeling tools. The applications of pendulums in science and industry drive the interests of these later researchers. The changes that these researchers introduce lead to a slow reformulation of the pendulum law and its domain into what contemporary physicists now call oscillating systems theory. How do scientists coordinate all of this? In the next section we look at the central organizational concept for scientific domains proposed in the work of Thomas Kuhn—the paradigm.

## 1.2 Paradigms and Paradigmatic Cases

The concept of a paradigm occupies a central role in the exposition in this chapter and lectures. Specifically, the notion of a paradigm structures the discussion of how scientists delimit scientific domains and develop theoretical treatments of the phenomena therein. My use of paradigms differs in some ways from Kuhn's use of the term in his writings. Moreover, many theorists object to Kuhn's characterization of paradigms and his use of them in his account of scientific theorizing. Since the term paradigm brings a rather large amount of baggage, I'll take a moment to clarify Kuhn's original notion and use of paradigms as well as to contrast Kuhn's conceptualization and use with my own.

### 1.2.a Kuhn's Use of the Concept of Paradigms

Thomas Kuhn famously appeals to the notion of a paradigm as the central concept in his account of science.<sup>11</sup> Kuhn uses the concept of a paradigm in at least two general senses: On the one hand, Kuhn thinks of paradigms as exemplars--specific cases of scientific research and theorizing having two important properties. Paradigms prove "sufficiently unprecedented" and highly successful in treating some class of phenomena. At the same time paradigms exhibit unresolved problems and/or potential, providing the basis for further work to remedy difficulties and extend the central insights. On the other hand, Kuhn thinks of paradigms as frameworks abstracted from those specific cases of scientific research. These frameworks provide the basis for "normal science." Kuhn uses the term, "normal science," as the moniker for those periods in scientific development during which researchers seek to extend the categories, theoretic models, operationalizations, experimental techniques, etc. of a paradigm to new phenomena and to problematic cases. Kuhn characterizes paradigms in both senses as follows:<sup>11</sup>

Aristotle's *Physica*, Ptolemy's *Almagest*, Newton's *Principia* and *Opticks*, Franklin's *Electricity*, Lavoisier's *Chemistry*, and Lyell's *Geology-these* and many other works served for a time implicitly to define the legitimate problems and methods of a research field for succeeding generations of practitioners. They were able to do so because they shared two essential characteristics. Their achievement was sufficiently unprecedented to attract an enduring group of adherents away from competing modes of scientific activity. Simultaneously, it was sufficiently open-ended to leave all sorts of problems for the redefined group of practitioners to resolve.

Achievements that share these two characteristics I shall henceforth refer to as 'paradigms' a term that relates closely to 'normal science.' By choosing it, I mean to suggest that some accepted examples of actual scientific practice--examples which include law, theory, application, and instrumentation together provide models from which spring particular coherent traditions of scientific research. (p.10)



In order to minimize terminological confusion, I adopt the convention of using the term **paradigmatic cases** to pick out paradigms in this sense of specific cases. Such specific (paradigmatic) cases include, at a minimum, three elements: **categorizations** of the targeted phenomena into kinds of objects, properties, events or



relations; **operationalizations**—methods, techniques, operations, and/or instruments used to tie categorizations to the phenomena through qualitative or quantitative measurements that prove systematic, inter-subjective, and reliable; and **theoretical models**—structured combinations of categorizations that allow for retrodiction, prediction, manipulation, and explanation of target phenomena.

So, Kuhn sometimes refers to paradigms in the sense of paradigmatic cases—examples of promising but incomplete treatments of a class of phenomena. Kuhn elsewhere describes paradigms and their role in the

development of sciences—contrasting the role of paradigms in emerging sciences with their role of more mature sciences as follows:<sup>11</sup>

...somehow, the practice of astronomy, physics, chemistry, or biology normally fails to evoke the controversies over fundamentals that today often seem endemic among, say, psychologists or sociologists. Attempting to discover the source of that difference led me to recognize the role in scientific research of what I have since called "paradigms." These I take to be universally recognized scientific achievements that for a time provide model problems and solutions to a community of practitioners. (p.viii)

Thus, Kuhn also refers to paradigms as the shared "rules and standards for scientific practice" (p.11) abstracted from paradigmatic cases and adopted by researchers as definitive of the scientific domain.<sup>11</sup> This textbook and lectures uses **paradigm** to designate the general framework that researchers develop around paradigmatic cases for defining a scientific domain and treating the phenomena therein.

Both notions of a paradigm operate in Kuhn's exposition. However, Kuhn resists any analysis of paradigmatic cases into a set of constitutive concepts, theories, instruments, methodologies, values, and similar explicit and/or tacit commitments. Kuhn acknowledges that elements of paradigmatic cases like concepts, theories, and instruments unite and define researchers within the paradigm as well as delimiting the domain itself. Nevertheless, Kuhn holds that the primary unit of analysis remains the individual paradigmatic cases—not the elements of those cases. Kuhn chooses paradigmatic cases as the basic unit through which one ought to analyze science because of what he views as the primacy and unity one finds in these cases. Kuhn notes that all or nearly all theorists in a domain recognize the salient paradigmatic cases and they likewise structure their theoretical understanding of the domain around these cases. However, Kuhn suggests that a deeper analysis of paradigmatic cases seeking a common set of tacit constitutive elements inevitably proves problematic due

to the tacit nature of these elements together with the variation in understanding and values among individual scientists.

For Kuhn, the tacit, ephemeral, and equivocal nature of doctrine as dictated through paradigmatic cases renders such analyses difficult at best and unhelpful at worst. To understand Kuhn's concerns, one can usefully think of paradigmatic cases on the analogy of perception. All scientists "see" the same paradigmatic cases—just as everyone looking at a face sees the same face. However, people may differ in how they interpret what they see when looking at the face. Likewise, they may be unaware of aspects of their reaction or disagree as to why they react as they do. For instance, people may agree that a face is attractive without agreeing as to why the face is attractive. Some people might cite hair color as a reason for attractiveness, others might emphasize eye color, still others might remark upon complexion, etc.. Moreover, what people cite as making one face seem attractive might differ from what they notice in finding another face attractive. Thus, one might well disparage attempts to analyze attractiveness into some definitive set of elements and their relationships. Kuhn believes that the same lack of unanimity holds true for scientists with regard to paradigmatic cases. Theorists may agree on the importance of certain paradigmatic cases, but differ as to why these cases are important or what features of the cases make them important. Thus, Kuhn doubts the value of generalized analyses of paradigmatic cases, particularly in that he views such analyses as attempts to generate a singular, detailed prescriptive methodology for scientific practice.

### **1.3 Paradigms as Frameworks**

Given Kuhn's views above, the exposition of this chapter and lectures proves decidedly un-Kuhnian. Indeed, the current chapter seeks to highlight several elements of a paradigm in Kuhn's second, framework sense. Specifically, this chapter and lectures outline elements of a paradigm that must come together in order for a paradigmatic case (in Kuhn's first sense of an exemplar) to emerge. These elements likewise structure the presentation of paradigmatic cases in textbooks and the general manner in which theorists seek to further elaborate and refine their treatment of a scientific domain. I defend my deviation from Kuhn by noting three general facts. First, Kuhn himself engages in analyses of paradigms. For instance, Kuhn analyzes and compares paradigmatic cases on the basis of the categorizations they employ. Indeed, Kuhn enjoys a certain infamy in some quarters for arguing that successive paradigms often categorize the same phenomena in ways that prove incommensurable with one another. Second, the analysis of paradigmatic cases does not equate to the formulation of a singular, detailed prescriptive methodology for scientific practice. This second point finds excellent illustration in the third fact: Kuhn's frequent analogy to perception, specifically his comparison of paradigmatic cases to Gestalts—perceptual wholes or unified entities not analyzable to their constitutive components--proves antithetical to his view.

To wit, people's perceptual judgments of facial attractiveness look like Gestalts—judgments having no principled decomposition into constitutive elements and their interrelationships. However, one can find research into perceptual judgments of facial attractiveness beginning in the 1970s. This research provides a deep and useful analysis of the elements that drive people's perception of attractiveness, without producing a singular, detailed prescription for attractive faces. Indeed, despite the apparent disunity in people's accounts of what makes a face attractive, several physical facial features provide strong constraints upon the perception of attractiveness. For instance, facial characteristics like pupil dilation, averageness (mean values) of features, symmetry of features, skin color, skin texture, as well as gender-specific dimorphisms (two forms distinct in structure within a single species) heavily influence judgments of attractiveness.<sup>90-97</sup> Additionally,

situational and idiosyncratic factors like familiarity, imprinting during development, hormone levels, fertility cycles in women, major histocompatibility complex dissimilarities (the degree of dissimilarities in immune responses that can prove compatible in an individual resulting from reproduction), peer evaluations, self-perceptions (of attractiveness and personality characteristics), social status, and social learning all modulate impact of physical facial features.<sup>90, 98-104</sup> This diverse and complex set of factors defies any singular, detailed prescriptive methodology for determining inter-subjective attractiveness ratings. Nevertheless, the depth of insight this research provides into attractiveness judgments together with its unprecedented nature qualifies it, ironically, as a Kuhnian paradigmatic case.

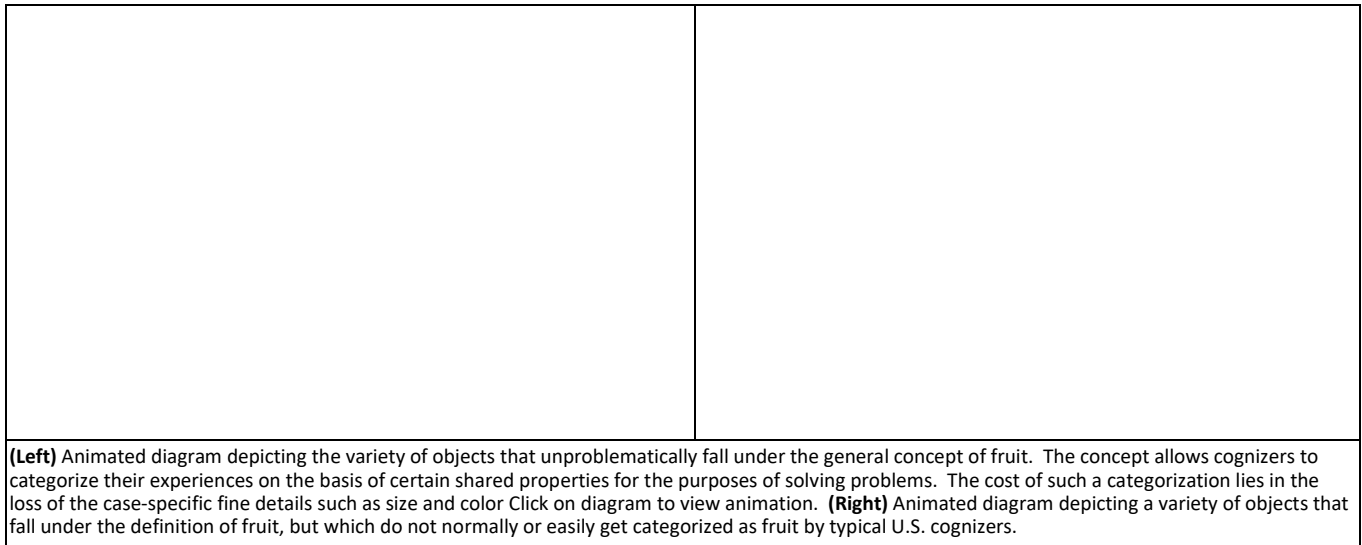
By analogy, I suggest that engaging in a more fine-grained analysis of the elements of typical paradigmatic cases and the ways in which scientists elaborate upon and extrapolate from these cases to develop paradigms can result in significant insight into the formation, presentation, and further development of scientific treatments of specific domains. One need not seek these insights through the formulation of ill-conceived universal and exceptionless prescriptions for scientific practice. One merely needs to take note of the more prominent underlying elements of such cases and the general patterns that tend to emerge as cases coalesce and domains become codified. Specifically, I analyze paradigms and scientific domains in terms of eight elements. The treatment here remains at the level of relatively superficial generalizations. The analysis, nevertheless, proves sufficiently rich to provide structure for the rest of the chapters in this text.

### **1.3.a Eight Elements of Paradigms**

The first three elements of paradigmatic cases discussed in this chapter provide the basic elements of theories. I'll start by discussing **categorization**—the basic classes into which theorist sort the raw phenomena of a domain. One of the most important differences between ontological frameworks and theoretical treatments of phenomena in a more developed science lies in the systematic, intersubjective, and repeatable methods theorists employ to tie their categorizations to the phenomena. I use the term **operationalization** to describe the techniques used to categorize and measure elements of a domain. This chapter and lectures introduce a characterization of theories as collections of models. Simply stated a **model** is a structured relationship between a set of categories. Models represent the phenomena in the domain in so far as their categories and the modeled relationships between those categories systematically map onto the objects, properties, relations, or events in the domain. Operationalizations play a crucial role in establishing that mapping. Experimental traditions further elaborate and verify the integrity of that mapping through careful, systematic, and intersubjectively verifiable tests of that mapping. **Data accumulation** helps to establish the limits of such models, identifies potential problems for models, and identifies potential elaborations and alternative formulations for models. The remainder of this section spells out each of these elements. The next section illustrates these elements in operation through the example of the development of the contemporary domain of oscillating systems theory from the ideal pendulum law.

**1.3.a.1 Categorization:** Researchers develop categorizations of phenomena allowing them to differentiate types of objects, events, properties, and relations. Categorizations gain generality by divorcing themselves from the fine details of individual cases to unite many instances under a common type (usually on the basis of their shared similarities in certain respects and to certain degrees). People tend to focus upon the representational content of categories. This focus leads to insufficient appreciation for the trade-off between the loss of case-specific information and cognitive economy of commonality essential to the categorization

process. For instance, an apple and an olive both fall under the common and very useful biological categorization of fruit: Each is the seed-bearing structure of flowering plants formed from the ovules (female reproductive structure) after flowering and fertilization occurs. However, while many people consider black



olives a savory treat, they show markedly less gustatory enthusiasm when presented with black apples--a fact lost in the biological distillation.

**1.3.a.2 Operationalization:** One important feature of ontological frameworks is the looseness of the ties between targeted phenomena in a domain and the categorizations, attributions, and relations comprising the ontological framework. That is, categorizations often exhibit significant vagueness when applied to phenomena; often ontological frameworks exhibit few if any systematic and/or intersubjective methods or rules for applying their categories, attributions, and relations to phenomena. As the next chapter and lectures emphasize, this looseness of fit between the world and the categories, attributions, and relationships within an ontological framework impedes progress by masking or minimizing problems within the framework. One significant example of such difficulties is labeled “tenuous dualism” in the next chapter and lecture. Thus, one of the more significant factors in the development of a scientific treatment of a domain occurs when researchers develop and refine operationalizations. Operationalizations consist in methods and/or tools that facilitate systematic, reliable, and intersubjective categorizations of phenomena. Operationalizations work either qualitatively (yes/no, in/out categorizations) or quantitatively (measurement, increasing/decreasing categorizations). Operationalizations increase the systematicity, rigor, and intersubjective validity of categorizations thereby rendering both the categories and the theoretic models of a burgeoning science much less vague and much more testable. Qualitative operationalizations allow theorists to apply categorizations in a systematic and intersubjective fashion. Quantitative operationalizations likewise allow for the quantification of categories integral to many theoretic models. For example, biologists apply a qualitative operationalization process to potential fruits, sorting them into fruits and non-fruits. In contrast, psychologists employ a quantitative operationalization when discussing the typicality rating of fruits—a numerical index of how well a given item matches people’s concepts.

**1.3.a.3 Theoretic Models:** Researchers analyze phenomena into component categories, utilizing these categories to formulate dynamical and attributional models (i.e., theories). **Dynamical models**, such as the

ideal pendulum law discussed in greater detail below, depict the dynamical evolution of phenomena through time as a function of the interrelationship of component elements. These models can have an explicit temporal variable, like [periodicity](#), in the ideal pendulum law:  $P = 2\pi(l/g)^{1/2}$ . However, dynamic models need not have explicit temporal variables; they can simply relate categories in a manner that allows the user to model changes in properties. For example, the ideal gas law,  $PV = nRT$ , is dynamic model even though  $T$  is temperature, and no other variable represents time. The model predicts what will happen to, say, temperature if you increase the pressure of the gas—it predicts change in  $T$  from  $t_1$  to  $t_2$  given a change in  $P$  from  $t_1$  to  $t_2$ . **Attributional models** either assign attributes to phenomena or articulate the underlying basis for various attributes of phenomena. “Water is  $H_2O$ ” represents one sort of attributional theory. Another famous example of an attributional model is Einstein’s  $E = mc^2$ . One might suppose that Einstein’s equation is a dynamic model along the lines of the ideal gas law. However, Einstein isn’t proposing a variable relationship. Rather Einstein’s formula expresses an equivalent relation between the invariant mass of an object or system in its rest frame (the coordinate system in which it is at rest) and the energy of that object or system, where invariant mass refers to the portion of the total mass of an object or system that is independent of the overall motion of the system. Thus, the model attributes a fundamental and invariant property of equivalence between matter and energy, and as such the equation generally goes under the name of mass–energy equivalence. The notion of an attributional model as I employ it in this text serves as an umbrella for a collection of models discussed in greater detail by Cummins.<sup>1</sup>

As noted earlier, many philosophers of science focus upon explanation via dynamical theoretic models as the primary (or exclusive) goal or product of scientific activity. In contrast, this text aligns itself with those thinkers who distinguish between dynamical and attributional models. Of equal or greater importance, the text eschews the somewhat typical exclusive focus on explanation in science. Instead, the text emphasizes the importance of retrodiction, prediction, and especially manipulation as additional and equally central goals of scientific activity.

Like the categorizations from which scientists construct theoretic models, theoretic models involve trade-offs. Specifically, models must often trade expressive detail, complexity, and predictive power for tractability, i.e., theorists trade expressive detail, complexity, and predictive power for models with which one can reliably calculate answers given one’s computational resources. To paraphrase Ronald Giere; the most accurate and complete model of the world is the world itself—good luck getting it inside your head and manipulating it in the ways you need to make predictions in a timely fashion.

A historically infamous example of the trade-off between complexity and expressive detail in theoretic models is known as the three-body problem. In Newtonian physics the problem of calculating the motions of three or more bodies from initial data on their positions, masses, and velocities proves non-computable. Specifically, the solution would require solving nine differential equations simultaneously. During the period between 1687, when Newton first discusses the problem, and 1910 physicists and mathematicians develop a number of approximate solutions—usually by introducing simplifying assumptions such as restricting the motion to two dimensions. Interested students can read about the three-body problem on [Wikipedia](#)<sup>105</sup> and [Scholarpedia](#).<sup>106</sup>

**1.3.a.4 Data Accumulation:** Developing a sufficiently broad and accurate understanding of the actual behavior of the elements of a domain proves integral to categorization and theorizing. Researchers often develop relatively systematic collections of raw observational data describing phenomena in a prospective domain.

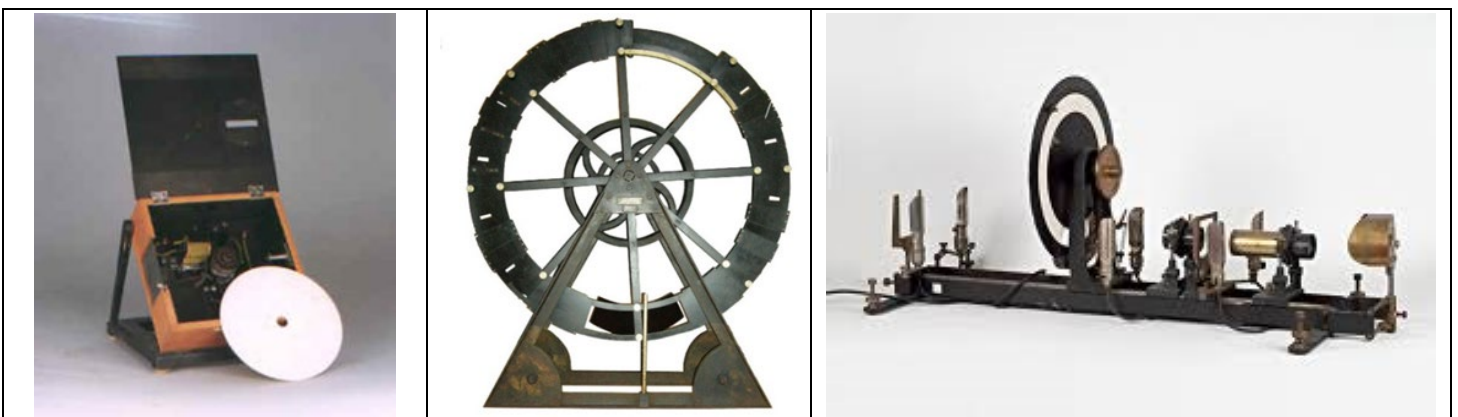


Such collections can identify regularities at a superficial level without detailing and relating their component elements, or these collections can specify more elaborate analyses of the phenomena. For instance, one way to characterize and model the motion of a pendulum employs the notion of periodicity. A pendulum period consists of the time that it takes the bob of the pendulum to swing from one extreme of its swing to the other extreme and back again—a round trip. Galileo used weighted pendulum bobs attached to string to gather raw data on periodicity purportedly after observing the swinging of a lamp in the cathedral of Pisa.

To explain, predict, and retrodict phenomena categorized as pendulum periodicity Galileo introduces a more elaborate analysis of pendulum motion when he formulates the ideal pendulum law. [See the box on Galileo and pendulums in section 1.4.a below for more detail on the ideal pendulum law.] Galileo also reports a superficial regularity when he notes that pendulum motion exhibits isochronism. **Isochronism** holds when the periodicity of a pendulum remains constant through increases in swing amplitudes and proves crucial to the original adoption of pendulums for clocks. In other words, Galileo claims that the periodicity of a pendulum remains the same no matter how far you pull the bob from the center before releasing it. So, a swing of thirty degrees will have the same periodicity (take the same time) as a swing of 20 degrees or a swing of 5 degrees. Christiaan Huygens later refines Galileo's observations, noting that increases in periodicity become significant when swing amplitude exceeds about  $4^\circ$  to  $6^\circ$ . Cummins calls such collections of data "effects."<sup>2, 107</sup>

In summary, researchers collect and organize data in both their initial investigations and during the course of the further development and elaboration of a domain within a particular paradigm. While this data provides grist for the theoretic enterprise, it also serves to correct misconceptions embodied in ordinary experience, to fill in holes where ordinary experience rarely strays, and to provide regularities for which researchers can seek attributional and dynamical models. Cognitive science provides a source of profoundly salient and seemingly endless examples of how poorly human beings understand the world. No one I've ever met, for instance, has claimed ordinary experience led them to notice the role that pupil dilation plays in their judgments of facial attractiveness. Nor has anyone offered reflections upon how the role of pupil dilation has changed as they have grown older. Indeed, so profound is human ignorance of how humans actually work that Cummins has only half-jokingly described psychology as more of a gallery of effects than a set of theories.<sup>2</sup>

**1.3.a.5 Developing Experimental Traditions:** Researchers likewise develop or adapt experimental methodologies and apparatus to test their models. The set of accepted experimental designs and apparatus



**(Left)** To study memory Hungarian psychologist Pál (Paul) Ranschburg developed "The Ranschburg Memory Device" in the early 1900s. The device consists of a box containing a rotating disk visible through a slot in the top. Experimenters can use the box to visually present a successive series of stimuli such as letters, words, numbers, symbols etc. at a controlled rate of presentation. The experimenter draws the stimuli on the disk and uses the box's motor to control the rate of presentation of stimuli through the slot. From: [University of Toronto](#) **(Right)** The tachistoscope allows researchers to present images for a specific and controllable time period. The inventor of the tachistoscope remains unclear, though historians usually attribute the first general description of the device to the psychologist A.W.

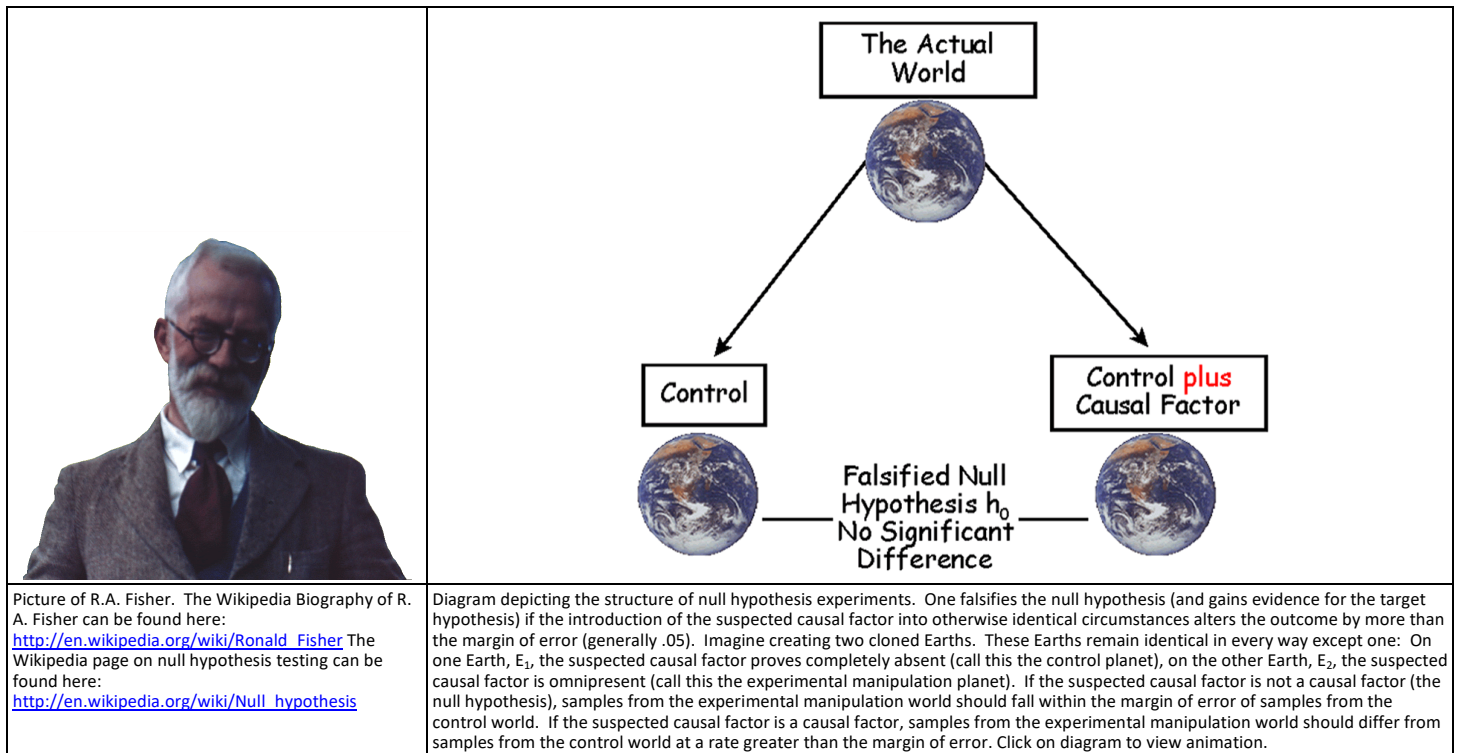
constitute an experimental tradition. For instance, in order to study memory the Hungarian psychologist [Pál \(Paul\) Ranschburg](#)<sup>108</sup> creates a device, “The Ranschburg Memory Device,” to allow for the controlled visual presentation of symbols, numbers, words, etc. around 1900. To study perception researchers create the [tachistoscope](#)<sup>109</sup> around the mid-1850s. The tachistoscope allows researchers to study, for instance, how long it takes people to recognize objects.

One can find another example of the development and utilization of experimental methodologies in the introduction and proliferation of [null hypothesis testing](#).<sup>110</sup> Null hypothesis testing seeks to accumulate evidence for a target hypothesis,  $h_t$ , by testing and rejecting the null hypothesis,  $h_0$ . In a fascinating bit of irony, the hypothesis that theorists test, the null hypothesis,  $h_0$ , consists of the supposition that the suspected causal factor has **no effect**. Indeed, the power of null hypothesis design lies in the fact that—unlike the likelihood of an experimental result given the target hypothesis,  $h_t$ —theorists can quite easily calculate the probability that the causal factor in  $h_t$  affects the outcome given the null hypothesis,  $h_0$ —it is zero!! For example, suppose that you wish to test the hypothesis that increased pupil dilation increases the level of attractiveness in judgments of facial attractiveness by post-pubescent males. How probable is it that you will see such an effect when you look at the data? It is almost impossible to say before you investigate. However, it is easy to estimate the probability that post-pubescent males will find the faces of women with dilated pupils more attractive given that pupil dilation has **no effect**. The probability of increased attractiveness judgments given no relationship between pupil dilation and attractiveness judgments is zero!

One gathers evidence for the target hypothesis (not the null) by gaining negative evidence for (i.e. falsifying) the null hypothesis. In null hypothesis experiments the experimenters compare two groups; the control group, lacking elements of  $h_t$ ; and the experimental manipulation group, where elements of  $h_t$  are ubiquitous. The null hypothesis,  $h_0$ , merely asserts that any difference between the experimental manipulation group and the control group will not exceed differences due to chance alone.

The widespread use of what R.A. Fisher eventually calls **null hypothesis** testing begins with Fisher’s research agriculture and genetics. Fisher designs the technique to solve a specific problem in experimental design: How does one determine the probability of an effect given a particular hypothesis? For example, how does one estimate the likelihood of a hypothesis like magnetic forces could bend light? Fisher designs the null hypothesis to solve this problem by creating and testing a hypothesis, the null hypothesis, for which one can easily determine the probability prior to experimentation. Fisher presents and defends the general technique, called exact tests, in his 1922 papers, “On the Mathematical Foundations of Theoretical Statistics”<sup>111</sup> and “On the Interpretation of  $\chi^2$  from Contingency Tables, and the Calculation of P.”<sup>112</sup> Fisher introduces less technical presentations in his books, *Statistical Methods for Research Workers*<sup>113</sup> and *The Design of Experiments*.<sup>114</sup> In [The Design of Experiments](#),<sup>114</sup> Fisher famously outlines this experimental design and introduces the designation, null hypothesis testing, using his “lady tasting tea” illustration—an illustration and experiment inspired by the claims of a colleague, [Muriel Bristol](#).<sup>115</sup> Bristol, who Fisher does not name, but who apparently passed his test while the two were at the Rothamsted Experimental Station in 1919, claimed an ability to discriminate between cups of tea on the basis of the order—tea or milk—in which the contents had been added. Fisher and another colleague, William Roach, designed and performed the experiment that ultimately inspired the anecdote.<sup>116</sup> As a result of Fisher’s exposition, particularly in his textbook, *The Design*

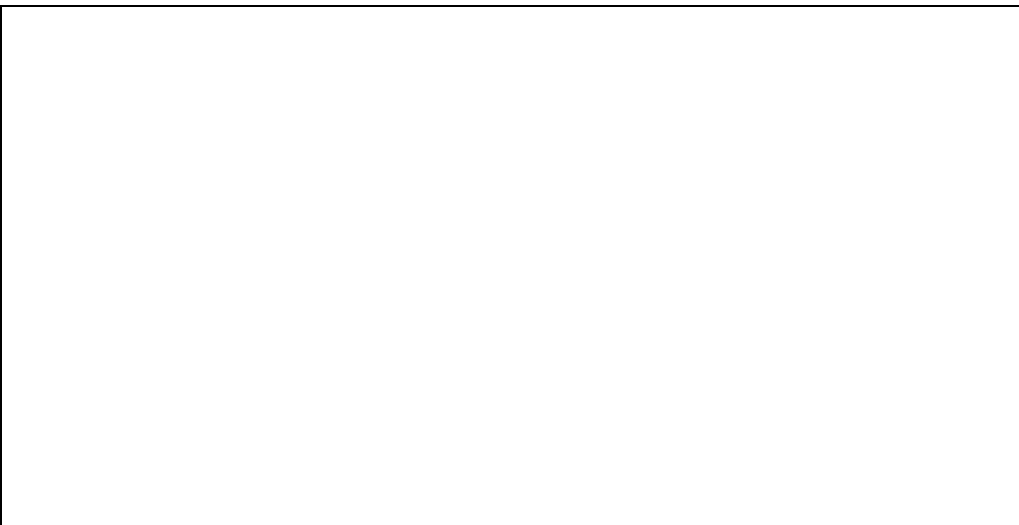
of Experiments, researchers adapt the technique (for better or worse) across a wide range of scientific disciplines.



The chapter in this text on the rise of psychology discusses the development of the experimental tradition in psychology, including the development and adaptation of many other experimental techniques such as measuring reaction times. The emergence of a robust and creative experimental tradition plays an important part in the discovery and elaboration of any paradigm. Experiments provide the mechanism whereby researchers can accurately and systematically evaluate a theoretical model's fit with the world, identify implicit assumptions, and chart areas where theorists must adapt the basic insights of the model.

**1.3.a.6 Explanatory Schema:** Researchers elaborate and refine one or more explanatory schemas in developing scientific treatments of a given domain. Theorists develop a general framework--a general schema--for predicting, retrodicting, manipulating and explaining phenomena in that domain. These schemas also comprise outlines or strategies for treating new or problematic aspects of the phenomena based upon the central insights of the paradigmatic cases. Thus, the explanatory schema serves to delineate and structure the domain--it represents the central insight or insights into the phenomena. Researchers adapt these strategies from salient aspects of the paradigmatic cases. For instance, biologists use the general schema of evolution to explain differences in the expression of traits across entire species. Evolution provides a general framework for depicting differences in traits and mechanisms by which such traits appear and propagate. Similarly, early treatments of pendulum motion sought to understand that motion through the relationship between periodicity, arm-length, and gravitational acceleration. If theorists change their understanding of the central insight of a domain, then the domain will often change to reflect the new understanding. For example, as noted later in this chapter, the domain of the ideal pendulum law changes as theorists shift the explanatory schema from periodic motion to harmonic motion and finally to oscillating systems.

**1.3.a.7 Generalized Solution Strategies:** Researchers do not just develop theoretic models and experimental



Animated diagram depicting an object on an inclined plane. One explains the motion of the object on the plane by analyzing the force of gravity ( $m$ =mass,  $g$ =gravitational attraction,  $\theta$ = the angle of inclination) into component forces. One multiplies the force of gravity,  $mg$ , by the cosine of the angle,  $\theta$ , of planar inclination to generate the normal force,  $N$ . One then treats the normal force as the force exerted directly down (perpendicular to) on the surface of the inclined plane. So, one uses the normal force to determine frictional resistance generated between the surface of the plane and the surface of the object. One multiplies the force of gravity,  $mg$ , by the sine of the angle,  $\theta$ , of planar inclination to determine the force parallel to the surface of the inclined plane,  $f$ , which one uses to calculate the acceleration (and velocity) of the object as it moves down the plane. Click diagram to view animation.

traditions. Researchers also develop generalized solution strategies as part of their treatments of scientific domains. Generalized solution strategies consist of techniques for adapting and manipulating their theoretical models, allowing scientists to utilize those models to generate predictions, retrodictions, manipulations, and explanations across a wider range of applications. For example, in order to explain how gravity moves objects down inclined planes [movement both along the

downward direction (i.e., vertical motion) and along the direction orthogonal to the downward force of gravity (i.e., horizontal movement)] physicists introduce the generalized solution strategy of component forces or [force vectors](#).<sup>117</sup> Physicists do not suppose that gravity acts along the angle indicated by the force line labeled  $mg \cos \theta$  and  $N$ --also often called the normal force (sometimes symbolized as  $F_n$ ). Physicists define the normal force as the force line perpendicular to the plane's inclined surface. Likewise, physicists do not suppose that gravity acts along the angle indicated by the force line labeled  $f$  and  $mg \sin \theta$ . The force line,  $f$ , parallel to the surface of the plane represents the force acting to move the object along the inclined surface (usually symbolized as  $f$  and  $mg \sin \theta$ ). Instead, gravity exerts a force directly downward along the line indicated by  $mg$  which also represents the object's weight in the gravitational field.

**1.3.a.8 Accepted Partial-Potential Models & Success Criteria:** An integral aspect of scientific practice as I depict it involves disabusing oneself of the false view that science formulates universal, exceptionless laws expressing the exact and complete nature of the phenomena subsumed by those laws (or that science will eventually express theories as universal, exceptionless laws). Theories often have exceptions, scope limits (limits to the cases to which they apply), and perhaps most importantly; theories have no specific privileged formulation. As Frederick Suppe notes,<sup>14</sup>

...the heart of a theory is an extralinguistic *theory structure*. Theory structures variously are characterized as set theoretic predicates (Suppes and Sneed), state spaces (Beth and van Fraassen), and relational systems (Suppe). Regardless which sort of mathematical entity the theory structures are identified with, they do pretty much the same thing--they specify the admissible behaviors of state transition systems. (p.4)

Thus, theories use a variety of mediums to symbolize or represent the categories and relationships between those categories through which the target phenomena are modeled. Theoretic models utilize some representational medium(s) (symbols, numbers, diagrams, etc.). The particular medium with which scientists formulate theoretic models determines to some extent the information and operations one can utilize in

formulating and manipulating those theoretic models. This last point has an excellent illustration later in this chapter during the discussion of the idealized pendulum law. For now, consider the following, very simple example: Suppose one represents  $\pi$  as the symbol,  $\pi$ , in the formula for the circumference of a circle:  $C = d\pi$  (where  $C$  = circumference,  $d$  = diameter, and  $\pi = \pi$ ). One cannot, given one's choice of representational medium for  $\pi$ , calculate circumferences expressed exclusively as explicitly represented decimal approximations of the circle's circumference. For instance, if the diameter equals 5 inches, then one's calculated circumference equals  $5\pi$  inches. On the other hand, if one uses a decimal approximation of  $\pi$ , like 3.14159265, then one can calculate circumferences expressed exclusively as explicitly represented decimal approximations, e.x.,  $5 \cdot 3.14159265 = 15.70796325$  inches. Using  $\pi$  to represent  $\pi$  makes representing and calculating the circumference easy enough that people can calculate the circumference in their head—without the aid of a calculator or paper and pencil. However, one's answer does not really help one determine, say, how long a piece of string one needs in order to wrap string around the outside of the circle. Representing  $\pi$  as a decimal approximation like 3.14159265 allows one to calculate the circumference of a circle with great precision. However, most people would have difficulty calculating the circle's circumference without a calculator or paper and pencil. Similarly, the specific approximation, 3.14159265, likely provides a greater potential for accuracy in calculating the circumference than the average accuracy of the average person's measurement skills. In other words, one may determine that the circumference equals 15.70796325 inches, but few people could measure and cut a piece of string to exactly that length.

**As a result of the above considerations, one must conclude that theories necessarily depict the world through the selective lens of abstraction and the specific properties of the chosen representational medium. Categorizations gain generality by divorcing themselves from the fine details of individual cases to unite many instances under a common type. Choice of representational medium and the elements included in the theoretic model introduces tradeoffs between complexity, predictive power, and tractability (where a tractable model is one with which one can calculate answers, i.e., a model one can use).**

Thus, scientific practice inherently involves tradeoffs between factors like details, complexity, predictive power, and representational medium. Scientific progress and consensus, as a result, can only occur against a backdrop of norms for success. Researchers must converge upon generally acceptable norms for determining the adequacy of predications, retrodictions, manipulations, and explanations of phenomena within the domain. Part of the formulation of acceptable norms involves reaching rough agreement as to the appropriate representations for theoretic models, aspects of the physical system incorporated into the model, operationalizations, and uses of models for solving problems. I call these acceptable uses **partial potential models**. For instance, the ideal pendulum law abstracts from a number of relevant factors to model pendulum motion. One important factor ignored by the ideal pendulum law is frictional resistance at the arm-pivot of pendulums. Indeed, Galileo explicitly chose pendulums consisting of weights suspended using strings precisely because he wished to minimize frictional resistance at the arm-pivot so as to eliminate noise from friction in his data allowing him to focus his research upon acceleration due to gravity. For this reason, scientists agree that all acceptable partial potential models for the ideal pendulum law must have negligible frictional resistance at the arm pivot. The law, as a result, applies only to those instances that fall within the scope of acceptable partial potential models. As the discussion about pendulums below illustrates, people must also reach a general agreement regarding the standards for success of a given set of theoretic models together with the categorizations and operationalizations that connect those models to the phenomena.



## 1.4 Applying the Eight Elements to the Development of Oscillating Systems Theory

The remainder of this chapter utilizes the above-mentioned notions to outline the general processes whereby researchers (A) come to view a set of phenomena as constituting a scientific domain and (B) develop and refine treatments of that domain. The process begins when researchers identify domains of interest—that is, domains in which the phenomena appear to exhibit both a unity and regularity. The unity and regularity needed to highlight a domain for potential scientific treatment can manifest itself in the dynamical interactions and/or development of domain elements over time. The stable properties exhibited by objects, events, or relations within the domain can likewise provide the prerequisite unity and regularity. While unified and regular dynamic phenomena give rise to dynamical models, attributional models capture unity or regularity manifested as attributes of objects, events, or relations within the domain.

For instance, this chapter uses the ideal pendulum law, a dynamical theory of pendulum motion, as its central illustrative example. Part of that ideal pendulum law is the constant,  $g$ . This constant represents part of a unified theory of gravitational acceleration—namely the uniform acceleration of matter within the Earth’s gravitational field. As students might recall, this theory assigns a constant value to gravitational acceleration;  $g = 9.8\text{m/s}^2$ . In short,  $g$  represents an **attributional model** of gravitational acceleration—a theory intended to capture the disposition of objects to accelerate when unrestrained in the Earth’s gravitational field.

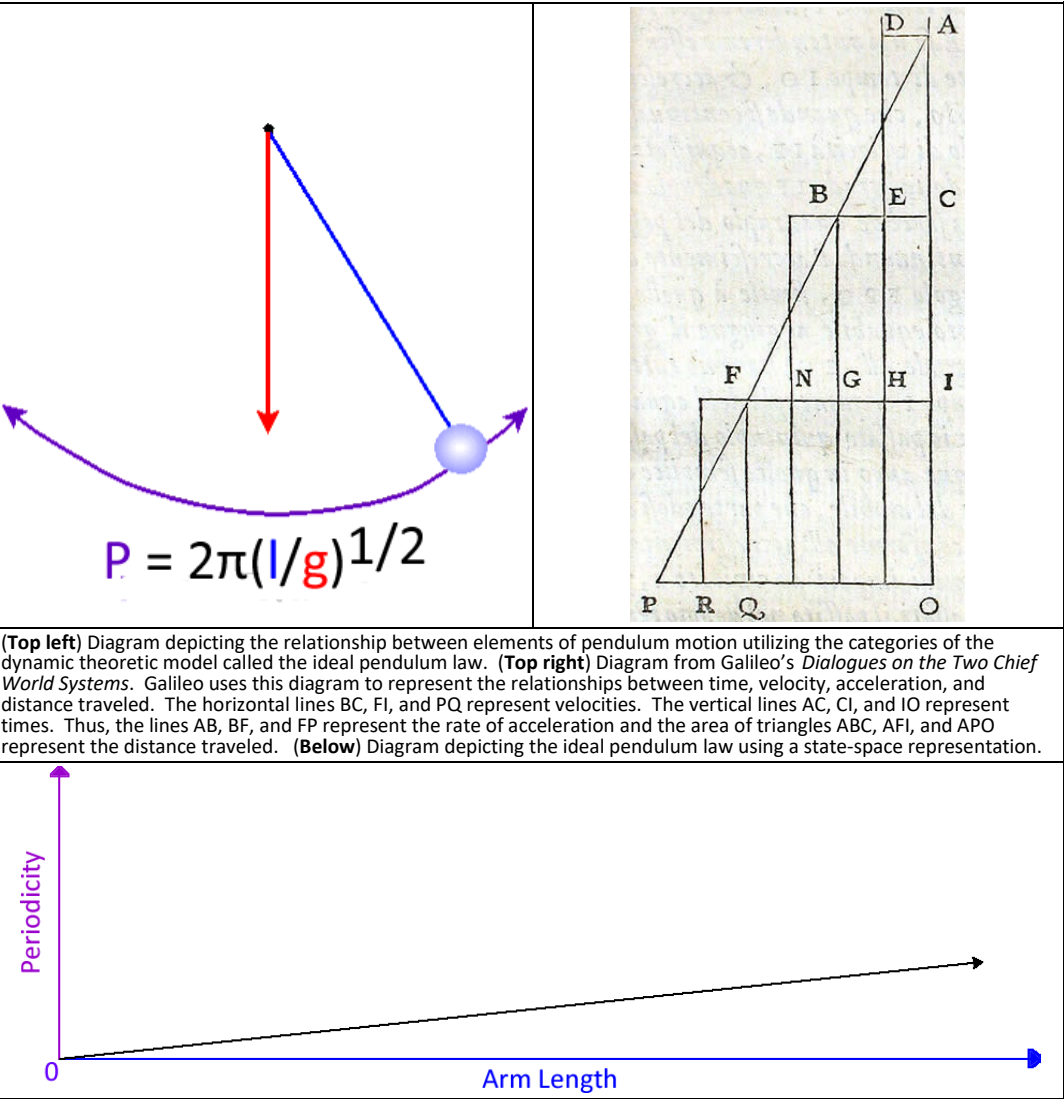
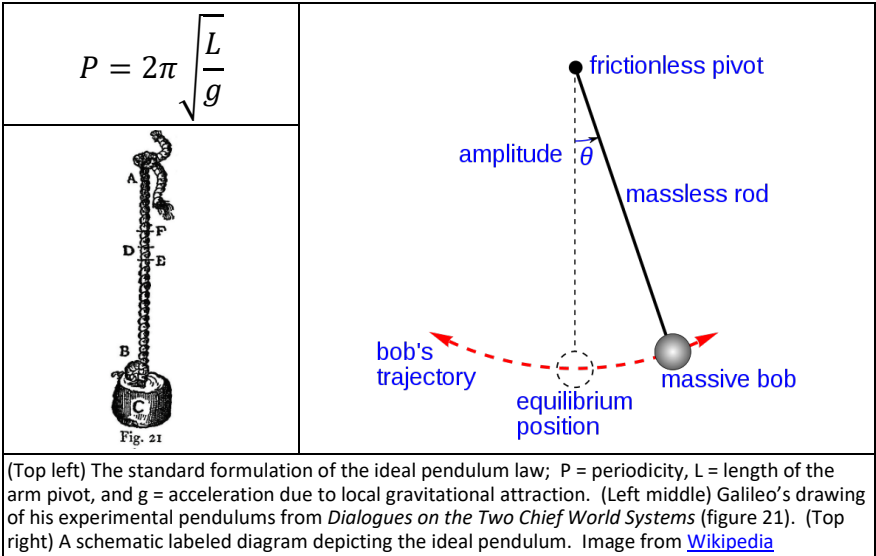
Researchers make further progress by collecting data about the phenomena in the domain, developing categorizations of phenomena that appear to capture unity and that facilitate the expression of regularities in the form of theoretic models. The testing of these categorizations, dynamical theories, and attributional theories both requires and facilitates the establishment of a robust experimental tradition within the domain. At this point, it becomes possible for a paradigmatic treatment, in Kuhn’s first sense, to emerge. As researchers and research organizations around one or two paradigmatic treatments (paradigmatic cases), a general explanatory framework (paradigm) emerges that serves to structure further research. More standardized treatments of the domain structured around the paradigmatic cases emerge. These treatments include pseudo-physical models to aid in conceptualizing the world as portrayed in the theory as well as a set of generalized solution strategies for adapting and further articulating the core theoretic models to encompass novel instances and important variants of the central cases. Finally, the domain may expand or contract as further instances come under the explanatory schema or further differentiations between types of phenomena occur.

### 1.4.a Theories as Models: The Ideal Pendulum Law

The last two paragraphs might seem like word salad to many students, so let us turn to a more concrete treatment. Consider a simple theory with which many students have some familiarity, the ideal pendulum law:  $P = 2\pi \cdot (l/g)^{1/2}$  (see below). In English, the law asserts that the periodicity (the time it takes the bob of a pendulum to swing from one extreme of its arc to the other and back again) equals two  $\pi$  times the square root of the length of the pendulum arm divided by the acceleration due to gravity. This treatment of the pendulum dates to Galileo’s investigations into pendulum motion around 1602. Galileo discusses his findings regarding pendulums and offers further speculations in a 1602 letter to [Guido Ubaldo dal Monte](#).<sup>118</sup> (pp.97-100) When he publishes [Dialogue on the Two Chief World Systems](#) in 1632, Galileo reports discovering that periodicity varies in a proportional fashion to the square root of length of the arm.<sup>119</sup> That is, increasing arm length increases periodicity. In addition to relating arm length to periodicity, Galileo reports the

independence of periodicity from both the mass of the bob and (approximately) the amplitude of the swing. In other words, neither increasing the mass of the bob, nor increasing the swing size affects periodicity. Theorists call the approximate constancy of periodicity across different swing amplitudes **isochronism**. **Isochronism**, in fact, drives Galileo’s interest in pendulums.<sup>120</sup>

Though not as robust as Galileo reports, isochronism proves extremely significant as well as consistent with his general understanding of the domain of terrestrial motion—namely, that bodies accelerate uniformly within gravitation fields. Galileo’s findings provide a theory for pendulum motion in the form of the equation in the table below (top left). But what does it mean to say that scientific theories like the ideal pendulum law are models? What does it mean to say that a mathematical equation models a pendulum?



Focusing upon the equation itself, one can observe two important features of theories. First, theories assert relationships between types or categories. The ideal pendulum law relates periodicity (a type of time period) to arm length (type of object property) and local gravitation acceleration (a type of force). Thus, the ideal pendulum law illustrates one central feature of theoretic models. Specifically, the categories that theories employ allow theorists to depict phenomena through an analysis of the phenomena into more elemental components

and their interrelationships. Thus, the ideal pendulum law analyzes the movements of pendulums by expressing the pattern of those movements in terms of the relationships between component elements of that movement.

The ideal pendulum law categorizes pendulum movement in terms of periodicity--the time it takes the bob to move from one end of the swing arc to the other and return. Periodicity allows theorists decompose the continuous movements of pendulums into a series of discrete constituent movements, dividing the continuous temporal evolution of the pendulum into discrete temporal components. Theorists then depict the motion of pendulums in terms of the relationship between periodicity, on one hand, and two other component elements of the phenomena--arm length, and uniform gravitational acceleration. The equivalence relation between categories in the mathematical structure of the ideal pendulum law mirrors the structural relationship between time, motion, length, and acceleration in pendulums. I express the relationship as a state-space (as in the diagram in the bottom panel of the above table) and Galileo expresses it as volumetric relationship between geometric figures (in the diagram on the top right of the table). What, then, makes something an expression of a theory? I suggest that a model (representational structure) expresses a theory when elements of the model's structure systematically map onto the elements of the phenomena in such a way that the model's structure, as interpreted through the mapping, expresses the theory's insight into the phenomena. For instance, a state-space like the one depicted above expresses the ideal pendulum theory because of the following mapping: (1) The horizontal (blue line) direction represents the length of the pendulum arm increasing from the origin of zero (far left). (2) The vertical direction (purple line) represents the duration of the period increasing from the origin of zero (bottom left). (3) The black line represents the values for each period corresponding to each arm length. Understood through such an interpretation, the state-space depicts a relationship between the categorizations of gravitational acceleration, arm length, and periodicity identical to the numerical formation  $P = 2\pi(l/g)^{1/2}$ .

Philosophers like Ronald Giere and Bas Van Fraassen emphasize variable formulations of theories; they see this variability as crucial to understanding scientific theories in that it deemphasizes the role of some or other canonical formulation (e.x. an exceptionless universal statement). In their view, shifting focus away from canonical formulations of exceptionless universal theories towards a model-theoretic account illuminates the actual nature and function of theories in the scientific enterprise. Indeed, Galileo draws extensively upon geometry both in formulating and in proving various theories in *Dialogues on the Two Chief World Systems*.<sup>119</sup>

The second aspect of theories that the pendulum law equation brings into focus is that theories model phenomena only in certain respects and to certain degrees. For instance, the ideal pendulum law only models certain features of pendulums (respects). Some features of real-world pendulums neglected by the law include properties irrelevant to periodicity like color, material composition, ownership, the mass of the bob, etc.. Still other features of real-world pendulums neglected by the law prove relevant to periodicity (e.x., frictional and medium resistance). As a result of these missing relevant features of real-world pendulums, the relationship between periodicity, arm-length, and gravitational acceleration expressed in the ideal pendulum law only approximates the behavior of real-world pendulums. That is, the relationship asserted in the ideal pendulum law only models real-world pendulums under certain conditions and to a certain degree of accuracy. Thus, the ideal pendulum law and its associated conventions for application constitute a partial potential model.

Specifically, the ideal pendulum makes simplifying assumptions about the pendulums it describes. These simplifying assumptions allow for the formulation of equations with computationally tractable solutions tailored to specific uses and interests. For instance, the ideal pendulum law captures pendulum motion using an equation that proves computationally tractable (i.e., the equations have relatively straightforward and calculable solutions). However, the benefits of these simplifying assumptions come at a cost. Should the real-world pendulum system violate these simplifying assumptions to a significant degree, systematic inaccuracies in prediction or, at minimum, the potential for systematic inaccuracies in prediction can result from the use of the ideal pendulum law.

Indeed, the ideal pendulum law assumes a massless and perfectly rigid pendulum arm. Likewise, it assumes zero resistance from the medium (the air through which the pendulum travels) and zero frictional resistance at the arm pivot. It assumes that one can treat the mass of the bob as a point-mass because the bob's mass is evenly distributed. Finally, it assumes that the amplitude of the swing does not affect periodicity. Strictly speaking, none of these assumptions holds true for real pendulums. Thus, philosophers like [Nancy Cartwright](#) assert that<sup>5, 6</sup>

In modern physics, ..., phenomenological laws [laws scientists formulate specifically to capture explicitly observed data] are meant to describe, and they often succeed reasonably well. But fundamental equations [laws] are meant to explain, and paradoxically enough the cost of explanatory power is descriptive adequacy. Really powerful explanatory laws of the sort found in theoretical physics do not state the truth. ... I will argue that the accounts they [fundamental laws] give are generally not true, patently not true by the same practical standards that admit an indefinite number of commonplace phenomenological laws. We have detailed expertise for testing the claim of physics about what happens in concrete situations. When we look to the real implications of our fundamental laws, they do not meet these ordinary standards. Realists are inclined to believe that if theoretical laws are false and inaccurate, then phenomenological laws are more so. I urge just the reverse. When it comes to the test, fundamental laws are far worse off than the phenomenological laws they are supposed to explain. (p.3)

Because of the implicit simplifying assumptions built into the ideal pendulum law, scientists also have conventions regarding its use. Specifically, one can use the ideal pendulum law to predict the behavior of pendulums having rigid arms within a tolerable margin of error for relatively small swing amplitudes—at least, in so far as the arm mass, bob mass asymmetry, fictional resistance, and medium resistance prove negligible. The number of pendulums having negligible frictional and medium resistance proves relatively small in the real world. Discussions of pendulums, therefore, often move from the ideal pendulum law to other models that include frictional and/or medium resistance—usually called damped harmonic motion. These models tend not to differentiate between resistance due to the medium and resistance due to friction at the arm pivot. While combining these two forces again results in a less accurate theoretical depiction of pendulums, it represents a trade-off of descriptive accuracy for ease of use—accuracy for simplicity and function.

But why, then, does the ideal pendulum law ignore frictional resistance to begin with? I suggest three reasons. First, Galileo conducts the original studies using pendulums consisting of weights suspended by strings, thereby minimizing frictional resistance. Second, Galileo's discovery of uniform gravitational acceleration (in his famous, though possibly fictional, experiments in which he drops objects from the leaning tower of Pisa) no doubt shapes Galileo's theoretical perspective in investigating pendulums. Third, since frictional and medium resistance increases proportionally with velocity, these models prove much more complicated. Indeed, the standard treatments of damped pendulums describe pendulums using different

categorizations. These models move from a dynamical analysis of pendulum motion in terms of periodicity to analyses in terms of position, velocity, and time. These modern models likewise employ the mathematics of trigonometry and calculus, neither of which is available to Galileo. In short, these models introduce alternative categorizations and alternative inter-category relationships in order to capture the dynamic evolution of pendulum motion. The theoretic treatment of pendulums remains unified in that the models retain the basic insight of the ideal pendulum law—the relationship between arm length, gravitational acceleration, and oscillatory motion. Likewise, periodicity remains definable and calculable within the alternative categorizations, though the calculations become much more complex.


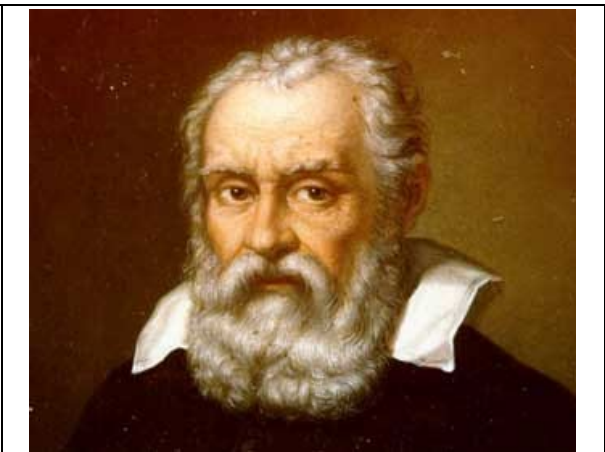

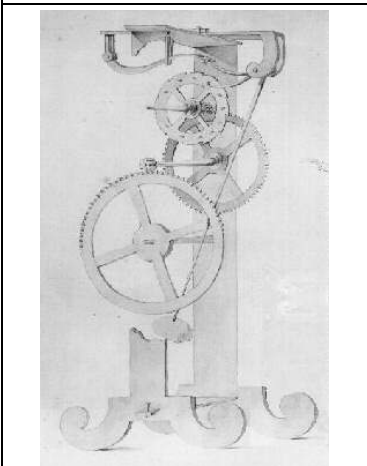
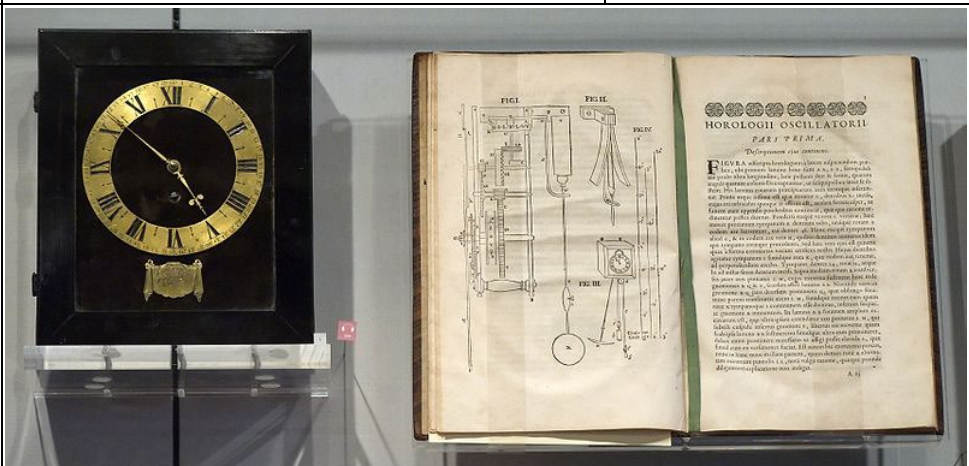
Similarly, when swing amplitude exceeds about 4° to 6°, isochronism no longer proves viable. Recall, isochronism asserts that periodicity remains constant through increases in swing amplitudes, and proves crucial to the original adoption of pendulums for clocks. In point of fact, as swing amplitudes increase periodicity likewise increases. Unlike frictional resistance, violations of isochronism for larger swing

$\frac{d^2\theta}{dt^2} + \frac{g}{L} \sin \theta = 0$	$\frac{d^2x}{dt^2} + 2\zeta\omega_0 \frac{dx}{dt} + \omega_0^2 = 0$
<b>Above:</b> The equation for calculating the motion of a pendulum for all swing amplitudes. For small swing amplitudes the equation reduces to the equation for simple harmonic motion: $\theta(t) = \theta_0 \cos(2\pi t/T)$ where $\theta$ is the angular displacement in radians, $t$ = time, and $T$ equals periodicity.	<b>Above:</b> Pendulum law taking frictional resistance into account. Here $x$ represents the current position of the bob, $\zeta$ is dampening ratio and $\omega_0$ is the undamped angular frequency. For small damping one generally adopts the <i>Ansatz</i> equation: $x(t) = Be^{-\omega_\gamma t} \cos(\omega' t)$ .
$\frac{\Delta T}{T_0} = \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \left( \frac{2n!}{2^{2n}(n!)^2} \right)^2 \sin^{2n} \left( \frac{\theta_0}{2} \right)$	<b>Left:</b> In order to determine the real periodicity of a pendulum one must calculate both the ideal periodicity, $T_0$ , and the difference between the ideal periodicity and the real periodicity, $\Delta T$ , usually called the <i>circular error</i> . One then calculates the real periodicity, $T_r$ , thusly: $T_r = T_0 + \Delta T = T_0(1 + \Delta T/T_0)$ . Above is the complete elliptic integral of the first kind for the Jacobian elliptic sine function used to determine the increased value for periodicity for any angular displacement (given in radians); $\theta$ = the maximum angular displacement in radians, $\Delta T$ = the difference between the ideal periodicity and the real periodicity, usually called the <i>circular error</i> , and $T_0$ = the ideal periodicity.

amplitudes represents a real empirical discovery. Christiaan Huygens’ [\*Horologium Oscillatorium sive de motu Pendulorum\*](#) (1673) represents the first systematic demonstration of periodicity variation due to swing amplitude, though the French polymath [Marin Mersenne](#)<sup>121</sup> first reported failures of isochronism in his book, [\*Reflectiones Physico-Mathematicae\*](#).<sup>122, 123</sup> Modifications of the dynamic model for pendulum motion to include swing amplitude prove equally complicated. For illustrative purposes I include these more complicated models in the table above without further comment.

The modifications of the basic pendulum law provide two more insights into the nature of theories. First, within mature paradigms theories are collections of models, each representing extensions or modifications of the central model or insight for specific situations or applications. Second, both the nature of the phenomena itself as well as the needs and interests of theorists drive the development of theories in the form of additional models. For instance, the elaborations of the ideal pendulum law come in part because of the interests of scientists, craftspeople, and the public at large—in this case, an interest in more accurate methods of keeping time. Indeed, Galileo himself uses pendulums as timing devices in simple metronomes. One of Galileo’s friends, [Santorio Santorio](#), creates a device, the *pulsilogium*, to time the pulse of his patients.<sup>124, 125</sup> Towards the end of his life, in 1637, Galileo and his son even develop a design for the pendulum clock. However, Christiaan Huygens built the first known pendulum clock in 1656, and refined his designs in light of his investigations into horology (the study and measurement of time), especially into the failure of isochronism for large swing amplitudes. Early pendulum clocks, including Huygens’ utilized swing amplitudes of up

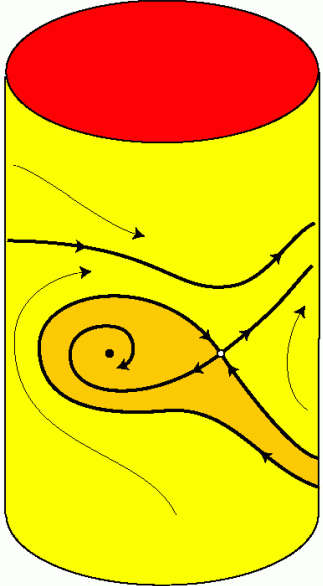


		
<p>Portrait of Santorio Santorio 1561–1636</p>	<p>Portrait of Galileo From: <a href="#">Wikipedia</a> February 15, 1564 - January 8, 1642</p>	<p>Portrait of Christiaan Huygens April 14, 1629 – July 8, 1695</p>
		
<p>Galileo's conception for the pendulum clock. Image from <a href="#">Wikipedia</a>.</p>	<p>Huygens' clock together with a copy of <i>Horologium Oscillatorium sive de motu Pendulorum</i>. Image from <a href="#">Wikipedia</a>.</p>	

to  $100^\circ$  in order to effectively actuate their verge escapement (or crown wheel). Despite inaccuracies due to failures of isochronism, pendulum clocks initially increase the accuracy of clocks from approximately 15 minutes a day to 15 seconds a day. Modifications of pendulum clocks increase accuracy so significantly that US National Bureau of Standards utilizes pendulum clocks as late as 1929.

Not surprisingly, the additional models for pendulum motion discussed above do not exhaust the models. Indeed, researchers also have an interest in the potential energy contained in the pendulum (energy stored in the system) at various points in its swing since one can convert potential energy into to mechanical energy to drive machines other than clocks. The interest in the energy of pendulum systems spawns diverse treatments. Moreover, if one opens a physics textbook today, one does not find a chapter on pendulums. Rather the chapters discussing pendulums, like the domain itself, have moved from uniform acceleration to pendulums to generalized harmonic systems to and finally to oscillatory systems.

Contemporary categorizations of systems like pendulums classify these systems according to several properties. First, **periodic motion** occurs when an object's motion exhibits repetitive patterns. In the case of

<p>Film depicting the collapse of the Tacoma Narrows Bridge due to forced oscillatory motion. Movie from <a href="#">Youtube</a>. Click on image to view the movie.</p>	<p>Animation depicting the conversion of gravitational energy to inertial energy in the form of velocity and back again through acceleration and deceleration. Click on image to view the animation. Animation from <a href="#">Wikipedia</a>.</p>
	
<p>Diagram schematically depicting the evolution of the scientific domain encompassing pendulums. Click on diagram to view animation.</p>	<p>Diagram of the state-space model of a damped pendulum. Image from <a href="#">Scholarpedia</a>.</p>

pendulums, the bob moves along the swing arc over and over. **Harmonic motion** refers to periodic motion in which roughly proportional displacing and restoring forces govern the motion. In the case of pendulums, the displacing force, gravity, accelerates the bob during the downward arc of swing, converting potential gravitational energy into inertial energy in the form of velocity. At the bottom of the swing, all energy in the system takes the form of inertial velocity driving the bob through the upward arc of the swing. During the upward arc, the inertial energy reconverts into potential gravitational energy through deceleration, and so on.

Thus, like all harmonic systems, the pendulum moves about an equilibrium position—a place in which the restoring and displacing forces normally equal one another. When a harmonic system gets displaced from its equilibrium position, that action introduces an unbalanced relationship between displacing and restoring forces, causing the periodic motion about the equilibrium position—i.e., oscillations.

Of course, not all oscillatory systems have single, stable equilibrium positions, thus simple harmonic motion represents an important subset of oscillatory motions. Other important oscillatory motions include damped, driven (or forced), and coupled oscillatory motions. The characteristic systems in such chapters include

weighted spring systems, pendulums, and rotating bars. In the table above, the movie (top left) shows forced oscillatory motions destroying the Tacoma Narrows Bridge. The animated diagram (top right) illustrates the harmonic motion of a pendulum. The animated diagram (bottom left) depicts the changing structure of driven or forced, and coupled oscillatory motions. The diagram (bottom right) depicts the state-space model of a damped pendulum.

### 1.4a Categorization

Though Galileo formulates what we now call the ideal pendulum law, his initial interest in pendulums comes primarily from his interest in gravitational acceleration. Galileo famously articulates the principle of universal



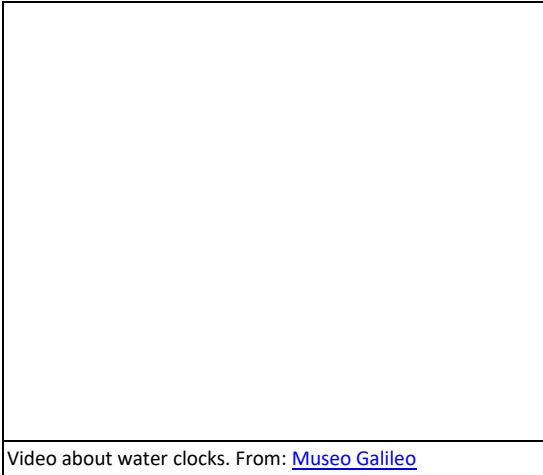
Pictures of the actual inclined plane apparatus used by Galileo to test the principle of universal gravitational acceleration and determine a value for  $g$ . Balls rolled down the tracks ringing bells to help with timing. The inclines could be changed in some cases to increase or decrease the vertical component force of  $g$  accelerating the balls. From: [Arbor Scientific](#)<sup>126</sup>

gravitational acceleration. Prior to Galileo falling objects were generally thought to fall at differential rates corresponding to their weight [inner *gravitas* for Aristotle; something like relative density for [Marcus Vitruvius Pollio](#)<sup>127</sup>]. Galileo performs (or claims to have performed) a number of experiments demonstrating uniform acceleration. Galileo likely never dropped balls from the leaning tower of Pisa. He does, however, perform a series of careful experiments showing that balls of different weights accelerate at the same rate when rolled down inclined planes. Finally, Galileo performs experiments using pendulums (weights of various sizes suspended on strings) that seemed to show that these weights accelerated at a uniform rate through their swings. For Galileo, then, pendulums attracted his interest initially as applications of the principle of uniform gravitational acceleration. Thus, the ideal pendulum law invokes three categorizations: periodicity, arm length, and  $g$ , the constant for uniform gravitational acceleration. As noted above, later treatments of pendulum motion involve quite different categorizations such as position, velocity, time, frictional coefficient, and angular displacement.

### 1.4.c Operationalization

In order to formulate and test a dynamic model of pendulum motion Galileo needs to operationalize the categories he uses to formulate the ideal pendulum law. In other words, Galileo needs to find a reliable, inter-subjective way to find the values for these categories. Measuring length poses little problem for Galileo, but operationalizing periodicity and determining the value of  $g$  both require accurate time measurements. Galileo used his own pulse as an initial timing device when he first notices pendulum swing, but for his experimental work Galileo uses a water clock. To wit:<sup>119</sup>

For the measurement of time, we employed a large vessel of water placed in an elevated position; to the bottom of this vessel was soldered a pipe of small diameter giving a thin jet of water, which we collected in a small glass during the time of each descent, whether for the whole length of the channel or for a part of its length; the water thus collected was weighed, after each descent, on a very accurate balance; the differences and ratios of these weights gave us the differences and ratios of the times, and this with such accuracy that although the operation was repeated many, many times, there was no appreciable discrepancy in the results. (p.146)



Of course, the process here measures time in terms of relative weight and could be no more accurate than the scales, units for weight, and collection processes allow. Indeed, Galileo likely uses inclined planes and pendulums in his experiments because he could more accurately and reliably time their acceleration. Vertical drops result in much more rapid acceleration. Balls rolling down an inclined plane move much more slowly than they do when dropped from a tower. Using movement of balls rolling down inclined planes, Galileo determines that gravitational acceleration is a function of the square of the time. His estimate comes out to be about  $10.8\text{m/s}^2$ , compared to our  $9.81\text{m/s}^2$ .<sup>119</sup>

A piece of wooden moulding or scantling, about 12 cubits long, half a cubit wide, and three finger-breadths thick, was taken; on its edge was cut a channel a little more than one finger in breadth; having made this groove very straight, smooth, and polished, and having lined it with parchment, also as smooth and polished as possible, we rolled along it a hard, smooth, and very round bronze ball. Having placed this[213] board in a sloping position, by lifting one end some one or two cubits above the other, we rolled the ball, as I was just saying, along the channel, noting, in a manner presently to be described, the time required to make the descent. We repeated this experiment more than once in order to measure the time with an accuracy such that the deviation between two observations never exceeded one-tenth of a pulse-beat. Having performed this operation and having assured ourselves of its reliability, we now rolled the ball only one-quarter the length of the channel; and having measured the time of its descent, we found it precisely one-half of the former. Next we tried other distances, comparing the time for the whole length with that for the half, or with that for two-thirds, or three-fourths, or indeed for any fraction; in such experiments, repeated a full hundred times, we always found that the spaces traversed were to each other as the squares of the times, and this was true for all inclinations of the plane, i.e., of the channel, along which we rolled the ball. We also observed that the times of descent, for various inclinations of the plane, bore to one another precisely that ratio which, as we shall see later, the Author had predicted and demonstrated for them. (p.146)

### 1.4b Data Accumulation

The development of the treatment of oscillating systems like the pendulum illustrates another feature important to the development of scientific treatments of a domain—data collection. Prior to Galileo only a few people consider pendulums. Likewise, terrestrial motion generally has little real data upon which people can base categorizations and dynamical theories. The primary area in which researchers had gathered more extensive data concerned projectile motion. Consistent with the orientation of this text, the practical applications of data and theories regarding projectile motion recommended these studies to researchers.

Indeed, with a few exceptions, the theories of terrestrial motion prior to Galileo follow what people generally call “Aristotelian Physics.” Aristotle was no stranger to terrestrial motion, and even seems to grasp inertia



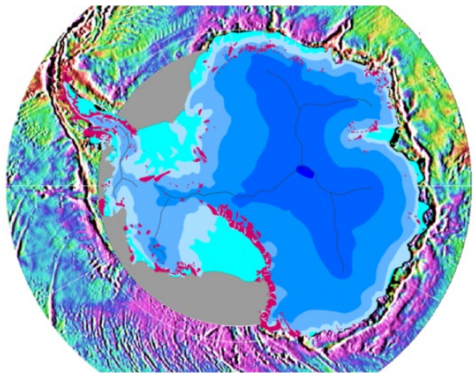
(though in what he considers a counterfactual situation: the void) in some of his writings<sup>128</sup> (Book IV, part 8, paragraph 7). However, Aristotle proposes that terrestrial motion occurs because each of the four elements (earth, air, fire, and water) moves toward their natural place in existence. Since these four elements compose all other materials, each type of material moves toward the place representing the equilibrium between their component parts. Thus, rocks fall to earth because they are composed primarily of earth. There are obvious and striking difficulties with this view when confronted by the facts. For instance, why do arrows travel anywhere but straight into the ground once released as they too are primarily earth? Aristotle supposed that arrows are driven by an external force which is transmitted through the air. The Byzantine philologist [John Philoponus](#)<sup>129</sup> introduces the [theory of impetus](#)<sup>130</sup> to Aristotelian mechanics in the 6<sup>th</sup> century, impart to deal with projectiles. The theory proposes something like an early account of inertia in which a hurled object acquires an inclination to continue moving from the thrower. Thus, we see that people had a very limited set of data about terrestrial motion. Indeed, even today many people have little insight into very ordinary terrestrial motions. For example, if you accelerate in your car and you have a soda bottle laying on the seat with an air bubble in it, does the bubble move forward, backward, or does it remain in the same place? Many people think the bubble will move backward. In fact, the bubble will move forward.

However, data was accumulating; ideas were emerging. In the 14<sup>th</sup> century the [Oxford Calculators of Merton College](#)<sup>131</sup> as well as the French philosopher, [Jean Buridan](#),<sup>132, 133</sup> reject Aristotelian accounts of terrestrial motion in favor of accounts based upon impetus, which looks quite similar to momentum. The Merton scholars formulated the [mean speed theorem](#)<sup>134</sup> stating that an accelerating body will travel the same distance as a body traveling at a uniform velocity equal to half the final velocity of the accelerated body. The French philosopher, [Nicole Oresme](#),<sup>135</sup> proved the theorem in his book, *Tractatus de configurationibus qualitatum et motuum*.<sup>136-139</sup> So, we see that Galileo did not operate in a vacuum. Rather, he benefitted from the data and theories of earlier thinkers. In a similar fashion, Copernicus drew upon data and ideas from Islamic astronomers.

Another important feature of scientific data collection lies in its systematic, replicable, and accurate nature. For instance, Galileo might not have dropped objects from the Tower of Pisa, but he did perform systematic and replicable experiments in which he rolled balls down an inclined plane, he also performed a number of experiments with pendulums. Similarly, Aristotle himself seems to have determined that water is ten times denser than air (an estimate Galileo criticizes) based upon the relative speeds at which similarly shaped objects of differing weights fall through water. Indeed, we now have a much larger and better body of data with which to understand acceleration due to gravity in terrestrial motion. Just like data collection revealed difficulties with isochronism, data reveals that uniform gravitational acceleration is not actually uniform. In 2002 NASA launched the Gravity Recovery And Climate Experiment (GRACE) satellite. The mission produced maps of the variations in the Earth's mass and hence gravity (below). Acceleration varies depending upon latitude, altitude, and depth. Indeed, acceleration ranges from a value of  $9.780 \text{ m/s}^2$  at the equator to a value of  $9.832 \text{ m/s}^2$  at the Earth's poles. Additionally, the net component of the Earth's gravity available to accelerate objects decreases at the equator because the greater the distance of an object from the Earth's center, the faster it rotates. Faster rotational motion results in greater [centrifugal force](#), meaning that a greater share of gravitational attraction is required to redirect an object's trajectory to keep it in place in the rotation (as opposed to the object continuing in a straight trajectory)<sup>140</sup> Centrifugal force increases with the



distance from the Earth as well as with increases in angular velocity, ultimately completely nullifying gravitational attraction and resulting in the “weightlessness” experienced by astronauts. [Specifically, the dynamical model for centrifugal force relates distance ( $r$ ), mass ( $m$ ), and angular velocity ( $\omega$ ) to force as follows:  $F = m\omega^2 r$ .] Data collection, therefore, proves essential not merely as gist for the theoretic mill, but because researchers often have little insight into the true nature of the phenomena in a domain at the onset of their investigations. The global gravitation maps (below) illustrate this point nicely in that it has

	
<p>Earth's gravity measured by NASA's GRACE mission, showing deviations from the theoretical gravity of an idealized smooth Earth, the so called earth ellipsoid. Red shows the areas where gravity is stronger than the smooth, standard value, and blue reveals areas where gravity is weaker. Picture and caption from <a href="#">Wikipedia</a>.</p>	<p>Gravity map of the Southern Ocean around the Antarctic continent. This gravity field was computed from sea-surface height measurements collected by the US Navy GEOSAT altimeter between March, 1985, and January, 1990. The high density GEOSAT Geodetic Mission data that lie south of 30 deg. S were declassified by the Navy in May of 1992 and contribute most of the fine-scale gravity information. The Antarctic continent itself is shaded in blue depending on the thickness of the ice sheet (blue shades in steps of 1000 m); light blue is shelf ice; gray lines are the major ice divides; pink spots are parts of the continent which are not covered by ice; gray areas have no data. Picture and caption from <a href="#">Wikipedia</a>.</p>

taken researchers some 400 years to collect the exact data relevant to understanding the nature of gravitational acceleration and its effect on terrestrial motion.

#### 1.4.e Explanatory Schemas

So, Galileo’s hypothesis of uniform gravitational acceleration allows theorists understand a number of important features of terrestrial movement, which together provide a general schema for predicting, retrodicting, manipulating and explaining terrestrial motion. First, falling objects accelerate during falls--in contrast to the Aristotelian notion that such motion had a uniform velocity. Second, gravitational acceleration is uniform regardless of mass and material, and one can determine that rate of acceleration experimentally. Within this framework, scientists after Galileo explain an impressive set of terrestrial motions.

#### 1.4.f Accepted Partial Potential Models and Success Criteria

Galileo’s work proves quite useful for predicting, retrodicting, manipulating, and explaining terrestrial motion. For example, one could now calculate the trajectories of cannon balls and generate ballistics tables. However, the model assumes that a number of potential factors influencing terrestrial motion prove negligible. For example, frictional resistance and resistance of the medium both invalidate Galileo’s models. Wind can affect ballistics calculations; rubber cubes will not move down an inclined plane at the same rate polished bronze balls roll down that plane; bronze balls fall slower in water than in air, and so on. **In fact, gravitational acceleration isn’t really uniform**—an observation that would, no doubt, make Nancy Cartwright smile.

Differences in the mass of objects, for instance, do result in different net attractive force between the Earth and those objects—just as the NASA probe showed that variations in Earth’s mass affect the rate of gravitational acceleration in those areas. We say that acceleration is uniform because the Earth has such a large mass that the differences between the masses of two objects will prove negligible compared to the mass of the Earth in most cases.

Thus, we see that the proper applications of specific models as well as the modification of models for alternative cases becomes a large part of the work done by theorists after Galileo, as we have seen in the case of oscillating systems. In other words, scientists must establish criteria for acceptable degrees of predictive, retrodictive, manipulative and explanatory success for their theoretic models. They must likewise discover what physical systems are acceptably modeled by particular theoretic models and which systems require alternative models. So, because frictional dampening affects the accuracy of pendulum clocks theorists like Huygens must develop alternative models within the same explanatory framework in order to better serve the prediction, retrodiction, manipulation and explanation of such physical systems. Kuhn refers to such work as “normal science.”<sup>11</sup>

## 1.5 Cognitive Science as Science

The idea that one must understand how science operates in general to understand cognitive science serves as an important organizational and expository principle in this text. Thus, this section utilizes the conceptual framework articulated above to provide students with a preview of the overall picture of cognitive science and its treatment of various cognitive domains. The expository goal consists primarily in providing students with an overarching outline of the final picture that emerges by the end of the introductory chapters and lectures.

### 1.5.a The Ontological Framework of Cognitive Science

Cognitive science operates under the general physicalistic framework of all the sciences, but it also has its own

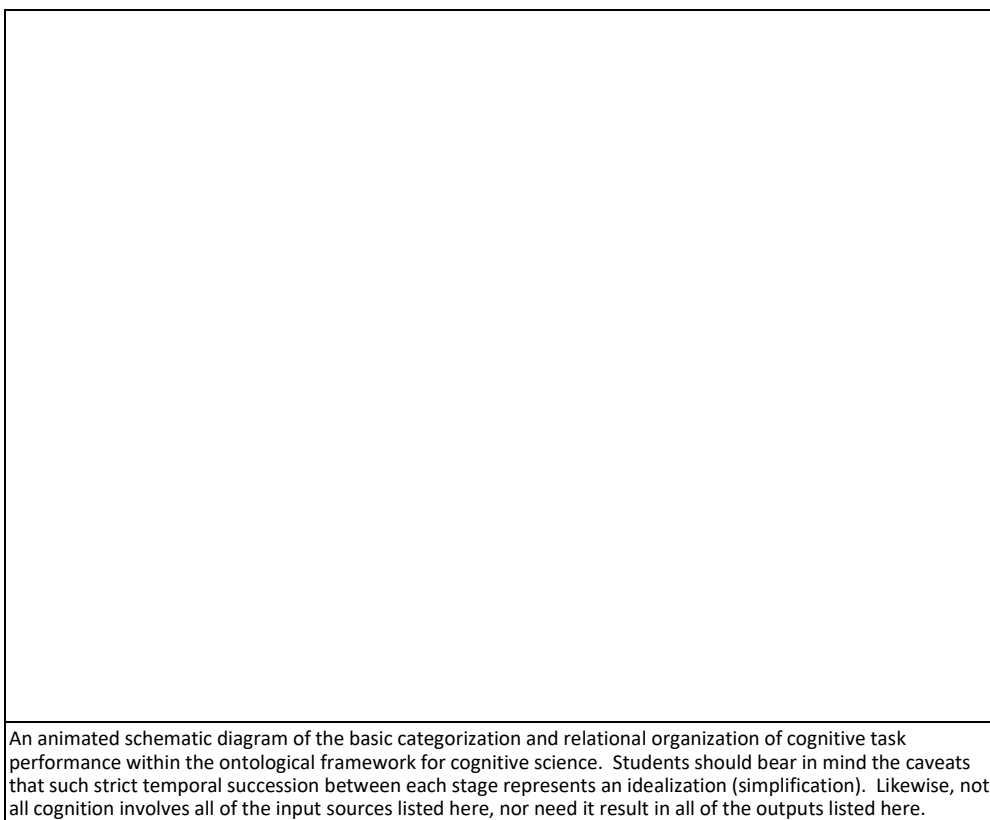


distinct set of categorizations and interrelationships. I adopt the appellations introduced by Robert Cummins in outlining the two theses which help to define its ontological framework: “Computational Theory of Cognition” (CTC) and the “Representational Theory of Intentionality” (RTI). Together the CTC and RTI provide the fundamental categorizations and relations within which much of cognitive science emerges.<sup>4</sup> In its broadest statement, RTI asserts that mental states are about the world (have content) in virtue of

a representation relation holding between the world and those states. The CTC holds that cognition consists of the computation of complex functions on such representational states, where computation consists in performing operations defined over the structure of representational states. The combination of the CTC and the RTI create two general explanatory schemas that inform much of the theorizing in cognitive science, and form the basis through which researchers understand physical systems as trafficking in information. Cummins refers to the schematic relationship between cognitive processes and the world as the “Tower Bridge Model” of computation.<sup>4</sup> As illustrated in the animated diagram (above left), the tower bridge portrays certain cognitive states, inputs to the system, as standing in a representation relationship with physical objects, properties, events, and/or relations in the world.

Dynamic changes in the world result in new physical states. These dynamic changes in the world are mirrored by the dynamic processes that transform the initial representational state of the cognitive system in order to create a new, output, state. This output state also maps onto the new physical state generated by the dynamic changes in the world. It is this similarity of structure between the states and dynamic changes in the world and in the states and dynamic changes within the cognitive system that allows the cognitive system to model the world and its dynamic changes.

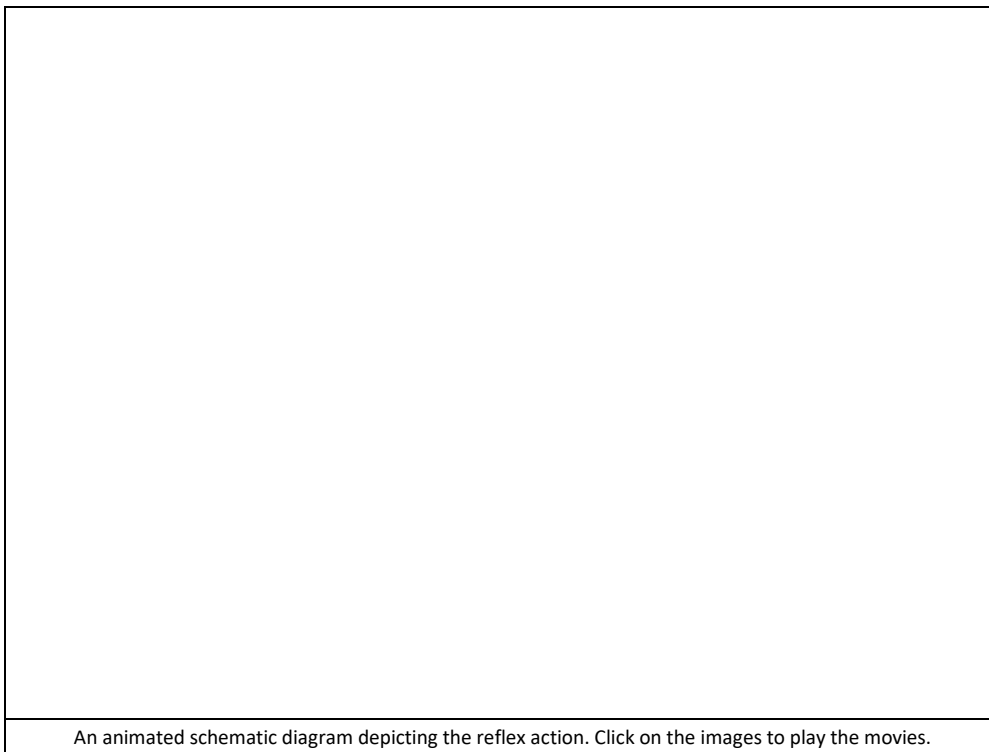
In addition to the tower bridge model of computation and representation, CTC/RTI also provides a general schema for cognitive processes.



This three-stage schema (see below) portrays cognizers as receiving input via sensory organs that transduce physical features of the world, retrieval of stored memories, and/or the output from a previous process. Cognitive (computational) process operate upon the input states transforming them through computation so as to generate output states. Outputs guide the system’s behavioral response by becoming encoded as memories, by serving as an output to another process, and/or by serving as motor response commands. This

three-stage schema for cognitive task performance does not necessarily dictate a rigid temporal sequence. Rather it serves to structure the formulation of models for predicting, retrodicting, manipulating, and explaining cognitive task performance by differentiating computationally salient functional components, ordering them in a common, but not exceptionless sequence.

To illustrate how these three schemas structure theoretic models of various cognitive capacities in cognitive science consider the standard (simplified) model of the basic reflex action (also known as reflex arc) in the animated diagram (below). The reflex arc consists of three main components; afferent (incoming) sensory neurons called nociceptors that travel from dermal receptor sites into the dorsal horn of the spine where they synapse on interneurons, interneurons in the dorsal horn of the spinal cord that receive nociceptor input and synapse on motor neurons, and efferent (outgoing) motor neurons that travel from the spine to synapse on receptors in muscle fiber. As indicated in the diagram, the reflex arc has a direction. Sensory receptors in the skin called nociceptors convert mechanical and chemical signals in the skin into electrical signals that they then transmit into the dorsal horn of the spinal column. Theorists classify the incoming nociceptor signals as



inputs to the reflex arc. These inputs carry information to the spinal cord about changes in the areas of the skin that the nociceptor cells monitor. Specifically, these cells transmit information about changes in pressure, temperature, as well as cellular damage in the skin. Large and dramatic increases in the activity of nociceptor cells suggest rapid changes in pressure, temperature, or actual cell damage—i.e., a threat to that area. The interneuron cells in the dorsal horn of the spine receive the signals from the

nociceptor cells. Their role in the reflex arc consists of processing this information in a quick-and-dirty fashion.

Specifically, interneurons in the dorsal horn sum the incoming electrical signals of nociceptor afferent fibers. If the summed value of the incoming nociceptor cell signals exceeds a threshold level, the interneurons pass activation to efferent motor fibers. One can characterize the information processed by these interneurons as the computation of a threshold function that quickly assesses the threat to the skin cells as indicated by the information transmitted by the nociceptor cells and determines a differential response based upon that assessment. The final stage of the reflex arc consists of the efferent motor neurons receiving a signal from the spinal interneurons and transmitting that signal to the muscles, thereby initiating a startle response resulting in rapid withdrawal of the area from its current position. Thus, efferent motor neuron activity carries motor response commands to the muscles based upon an inference about the threat to the area.

### 1.5.b Cognitive Science is Interdisciplinary

As the above example might suggest, theories in cognitive science describe human cognition using information from many different disciplines and using many different categorizations and theoretic models. Not surprisingly, then, cognitive scientists collaborate with one another across disciplines in formulating and

integrating theoretic models of various cognitive capacities. For example, in understanding language linguists cooperate with neuroscientists, sociologists, and anthropologists to understand the nature, origins, universal features, and neurological bases of language.

The main disciplines usually cited as having helped to found cognitive science include computer science, neuroscience, philosophy, psychology, linguistics. As the course moves forward, the chapters and text will discuss the basics of each of these disciplines as they relate to cognitive science.

### 1.5.c Disciplinary Convergence

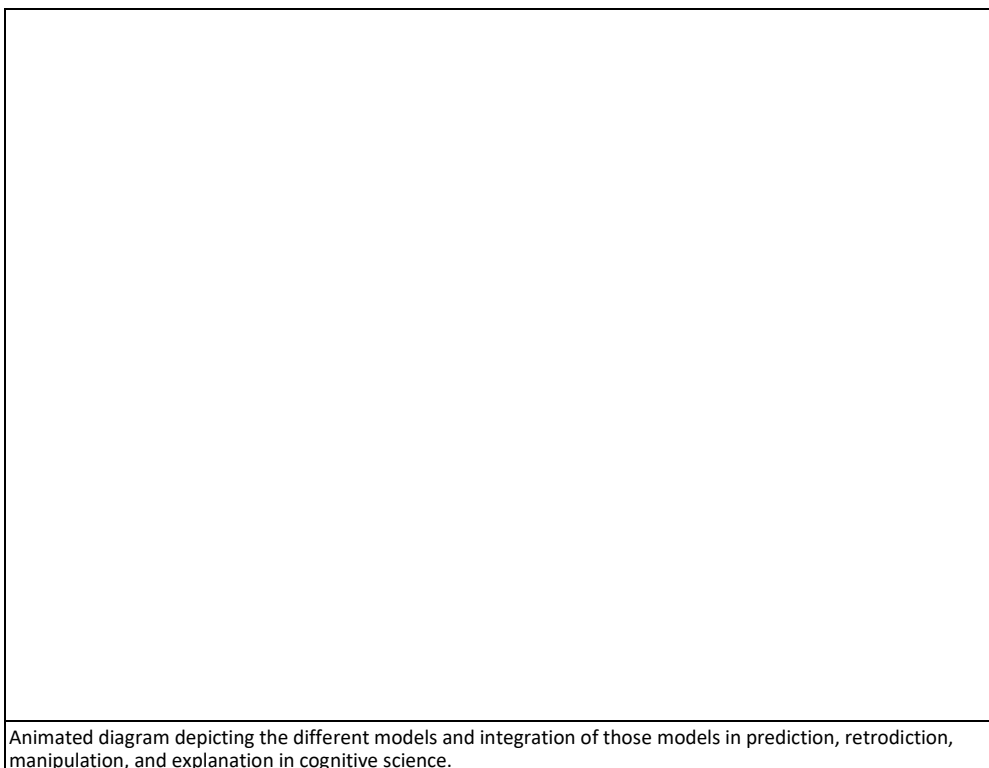
One central theme that emerges in the discussions of each of the core disciplines concerns how each of these disciplines converged upon a common conception of cognition and the generalized computational schema for predicting, retrodicting, manipulating, and explaining cognitive capacities. Each of the disciplinary summaries in the introductory chapters focuses upon those elements of that discipline that contribute to and converge upon this common conception of cognition and cognitive task performance.

### 1.5.d The Central Aim of Cognitive Science

As the material in the course demonstrates decisively, cognitive scientists have elaborated and expanded the paradigm encapsulated in the above sections to provide tremendous insight into cognitive task performance of humans and many other animals for an enormous number of cognitive capacities. However, not every aspect of cognition has proven equally and obviously susceptible to such treatments. Cognitive science, of course, seeks to understand all aspects of mentality. As a result, whenever problems arise for the computational paradigm, the text will note these difficulties and current thinking about these areas.

### 1.5.e Integration of Four Different Theoretical Models

During the course of this chapter and lectures I portray cognitive science and cognitive scientists as operating



in the same manner in which other scientists operate. However, one of the themes that emerges repeatedly throughout the chapters and associated lectures is that predictions, retrodictions, manipulations, and explanations in cognitive science do differ somewhat from other sciences. Specifically, cognitive scientists predict, manipulate and explain cognitive task performance by creating multiple models for their target system. Moreover, cognitive scientists use these models and their integration or lack thereof to explain both



successful cognitive task performance and unsuccessful task performance. For now, I will merely outline the four types of theoretic models employed by cognitive scientists and discuss how these models interact in retrodictions, predictions, manipulations, and explanations of cognitive task performance. The diagram (above) illustrates the four types of models employed by cognitive science and the contributions of each of those models. First, one has the physical theory. In the case of human cognition, the physical theory usually encompasses the neuroscientific account of the relevant neuronal physiology, anatomy, and basic functioning. Thus, in the case of the reflex arc theorists identify the afferent neurons, interneurons, and efferent neurons. Likewise, accounts of basic neuronal functioning indicate how the reflex arc operates. I call this the physical theory. The physical theory does what other physical theories do—it explains how physical work gets done. Second, in looking at the physical theory for the reflex arc, theorists note that the reflex arc treats different levels of afferent neuron input differently. Thus, the system treats different states differently. Cognitive scientists model these changes in the physical system by differentiating types of states—different categories for the states of the components in the physical system—and modeling the system's behavior using these types. For example, researchers often discriminate between neuronal states based upon firing rate—the rate of action potentials traveling down the axon. I call these categorizations within the physical theory the syntactic theory. Thus, theorists also describe the reflex arc in terms of inputs and outputs and the mechanisms by which the reflex arc exhibits a differential response. In employing the syntactic theory, cognitive scientists model the reflex arc in a manner that relates types of activity to other types of activity. As a result, the scientists can now model the physical state changes and the state-type changes. Third, theorists associate representational content with the types in the syntactic theory. I call this third model the representational theory. The representational theory allows scientists to model the state-type changes as information transformations. In the case of the reflex arc, the actions of the system can now be understood as inferences from nociceptor information about changes in pressure, temperature, and/or cell integrity, first to assessments of threat and cell integrity, then to motor commands issued in response to threats to the affected area. Fourth, and finally, researchers employ the epistemic theory to model how well and when the system correctly represents the information in the problem domain for the purposes of inference—to assess the goodness of the inference. In the reflex arc, for instance, the epistemic theory connects nociceptor functioning to the information relevant to this particular inference. The epistemic theory likewise assesses the calibration of the interneuron threshold function as a measure of potential damage/threat to the affected areas. The epistemic theory, ultimately, shows how and to what extent the reflex arc tends to function in a manner that correctly responds to real threats to cell integrity in the affected skin areas.

#### **1.5.e Understanding When Models Converge and Diverge Cognitive Science as Science**

On the view of retrodictive, predictive, manipulative, and explanatory structure advocated in this text and lectures, theoretic models predict and explain both successful cognition and failures of cognition. Theoretic models predict and explain successful cognition by showing how all of the theoretic models accurately predict the target phenomena; each of the theoretic models have overlapping partial potential models and the target phenomena fail under those partial potential models. Thus, theoretic models predict, retrodict, manipulate, and explain successful cognition by illustrating the integration of the various descriptions and models of the system's functioning. Likewise, theoretic models in cognitive science explain failures of cognition by showing how one or more of the theoretic models does not predict the phenomena--by showing that the phenomena

fall outside the partial potential model for one or more of the theoretic models. Thus, failures of cognition always find their predictive and explanatory source in a failure of one or more of the theoretic models.

Referring again to the reflex arc; failures of the reflex arc can occur in a number of situations accurately described by the physical theory that nevertheless violate the syntactic, representational, and/or epistemic models. For example, when noxious stimuli rise slowly in intensity the sensory neurons become less sensitive through a process called habituation. Likewise, in cases of slowly increasing and/or repeated or sustained stimulus the threshold levels in the interneuron rise as well, delaying or even erasing the withdrawal response.

Communication between the sensory neurons and interneurons can be chemically blocked locally. One can block motor neuron signaling with a paralytic like curare. Many contemporary accounts of prediction, manipulation, and explanation suppose all such failures of computational accounts of cognitive functions trace back to the physical theory. However, higher order cognitive causes also lead to divergent partial potential models. For example, conscious inhibitory feedback can prevent the reflex arc from triggering a withdrawal response as well. Finally, I end this chapter noting that the ability to manipulate pain perception and response in the reflex arc and in higher-order pain perception has been a central and important goal of research into nociception. The development of analgesics, general anesthetics, sedatives, hypnotics, dissociatives, narcotics, paralytics, regional and local anesthetics, as well as cognitive-behavioral techniques all illustrate the goal of manipulating nociception.

## 1.6 Key Terms

**Afferent neurons:** Sensory neurons that carry information into the central nervous system (CNS), i.e., towards the spinal cord and/or brain, all fall under the classification of afferent neurons. Discussions of afferent neurons almost always use somatosensory neurons in the skin (proprioceptors, mechanoreceptors providing spatial information about body parts and nociceptors that process pain and temperature). However, rods and cones (the photoreceptor cells in the eye), hair cells in the ear, taste buds, and olfactory receptor neurons.

**Attributional theoretical models:** Attributional theoretical models describe a unity or regularity manifested as attributes of objects, events, or relations within the domain. Thus, attributional models either assign

Animated diagram depicting the process of prediction, retrodiction, manipulation, and explanation in cognitive science. Each type of theoretic model has a set of categorizations and relationships that model the phenomena. However, not all the partial potential models for these theoretic models prove coextensive. As a result, when the partial potential model for one or more models fails to with the other partial potential models, one uses this failure to explain failure to perform a cognitive task. Similarly, the integration of all the models allows theorists to explain successful cognitive task performance.

attributes to phenomena or articulate the underlying basis for various attributes of phenomena. Examples of attributional theoretical models include hypotheses about chemical structure like “water is H<sub>2</sub>O.” Radioactive half-life (the time that it takes for half of the atoms of a given element to decay) is also an attributional theoretic model. Likewise, the speed of light in a vacuum (i.e., 299,792,458 m/s) as well as the value of rate of gravitational acceleration near the Earth’s surface (i.e., 9.8 m/s<sup>2</sup>) are also attributional theories.

**Categorization:** Researchers develop categorizations of phenomena allowing them to differentiate, re-identify, and/or measure types of objects, events, properties, and relations within some phenomena. Categorizations gain generality by divorcing themselves from the fine details of individual cases to unite many instances under a common type (usually on the basis of their shared similarities in certain respects and to certain degrees). For instance, the category of *volume* picks out the size of a three-dimensional space within some container or boundary. Galileo, to cite another example, categorizes the phenomena of pendulum motion into arm-length, gravitational acceleration and periodicity.

**Data Accumulation:** As the treatment of a prospective domain progresses researchers often develop relatively systematic collections of raw observational data describing phenomena in a prospective domain. Such collections can identify regularities at a superficial level without detailing and relating their component elements, or these collections can specify more elaborate analyses of the phenomena. For instance, Galileo reports a superficial regularity when he notes that pendulum motion exhibits isochronism.

**Dynamical Theoretic Models:** Dynamical theoretic models—often expressed in mathematical equations—represent the dynamical interactions (how elements of the phenomena interact with one another) and/or the development of domain elements over time (e.x. changes in the properties exhibited by objects, properties, events, or relations within the domain). Unified and regular dynamic interactions give rise to dynamical theoretical models. Examples of dynamical theoretic models include the ideal pendulum law, the ideal gas law, and Mendel’s Law of Dominance (one of the two factors for an inherited trait will determine the trait (be dominant) unless both factors are recessive. Galileo’s discovery of universal

**Efferent neurons:** All neurons that transmit information from the central nervous system (CNS) to glands and muscles fall under the category of efferent neurons.

**Explanatory Schemas:** Explanatory schemas are general schemas for predicting, retrodicting, manipulating and explaining phenomena in that domain. These schemas also comprise outlines or strategies for treating new or problematic aspects of the phenomena based upon the central insights of the paradigmatic cases. Thus, the explanatory schema serves to delineate and structure the domain—it represents the central insight or insights into the phenomena. Researchers adapt these strategies from salient aspects of the paradigmatic cases. For example, in predicting the harmonic motion of a weighted spring system physicists adopt the approach of describing the temporal evolution of the system in terms of periodic motion in which roughly proportional displacing and restoring forces govern the motion. In the case of weighted spring systems, the displacing force accelerates the weight downward storing equal amounts of potential energy in the stretched spring. Upon release the potential energy in the spring causes an upward acceleration of the weight beyond the equilibrium point. Gravity then provides the displacing force for the next downward acceleration.

**Fundamental Categories:** Fundamental categories consist of the set of categories considered essential and ineliminable to any adequate account of the phenomena in some domain. Within an ontological framework fundamental categories tend to specify the kinds of things and the kinds of changes considered legitimate (real) within the framework. Some examples of fundamental categories include elements in chemistry and forces in physics.

**Generalized Solution Strategies:** Researchers also develop generalized solution strategies as part of their treatments of scientific domains. Generalized solution strategies consist of techniques for adapting and manipulating their theoretical models, allowing scientists to utilize those models to generate predictions, retrodictions, manipulations, and explanations across a wider range of applications. For example, in physics problems involving vector quantities like force and work physicists often decompose a vector into two orthogonal component vectors. Similarly, to handle friction at the arm pivot or medium resistance in pendulum motion physicists introduce a frictional constant.

**Interneurons:** Interneurons form connections between two or more neurons. So, all the neurons in the CNS are interneurons.

**Ontological frameworks:** Ontological frameworks constrain and focus investigation by providing a set of fundamental categories, property attributions, hierarchical and dynamical relationships, as well as methodological practices within which one can formulate meaningful questions and propose theoretic answers to those questions. Ontological frameworks allow researchers to organize phenomena in a domain into useful categories, and to differentiate among categories. Thinkers can then propose dynamical models of how phenomena evolve, and explain how kinds come to manifest properties. Early in inquiries ontological frameworks play a prominent and explicit role. Such early ontological frameworks often have loose or poorly defined categories, properties, and/or hierarchical and dynamical relationships. Likewise, early ontological frameworks tend to have very few and/or ill-defined methodological practices. As a result, theorists often fail to rigorously tie the individual framework elements and the theoretical models constructed from early ontological frameworks to the phenomena those theorists seek to describe, explain, predict, and/or manipulate. As inquiry progresses and paradigmatic cases begin to offer successful explanations of phenomena, ontological frameworks begin to recede into the background of inquiry.

**Operationalization:** The methods and tools that facilitate systematic, reliable, and intersubjectively valid categorizations of phenomena fall under the moniker of operationalizations. Operationalizations work either qualitatively (yes/no, in/out categorizations) or quantitatively (measurement, increasing/decreasing categorizations). The increased systematic, rigorous, and intersubjective categorizations facilitated by operationalizations render both the categories and the theoretic models of a burgeoning science much less vague and much more testable. Thus, the techniques and tools of measurement count as operationalizations. For instance, the use of thermometers allows one to accurately measure temperature. Biologists employ taxonomic criteria, like morphological, behavioural, genetic, and biochemical properties to operationalize species categorization.

**Paradigm:** Thomas Kuhn uses the concept of a paradigm in two general senses: On the one hand, Kuhn thinks of paradigms as exemplars--specific cases of scientific research having two important properties. Paradigms prove both "sufficiently unprecedented" and highly successful in treating some phenomena. At the same time

paradigms exhibit unresolved problems and/or potential, providing the basis for further work to remedy difficulties and extend the central insights. (See *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* p.10) Kuhn, however, resists any analysis of paradigms into a set of constitutive concepts, theories, instruments, methodologies, values, and similar explicit and tacit commitments. Though Kuhn acknowledges that these elements of paradigmatic cases unite and define practitioners with a given field, he views the tacit nature of these elements together with the variation in understanding and values among individual scientists as rendering such analyses difficult at best and unhelpful at worst.

**Paradigmatic Case:** In this text and lectures, paradigmatic case refers to paradigms in this sense of specific cases. Such specific (paradigmatic) cases include, at a minimum, three elements: categorizations of the targeted phenomena into kinds of objects, properties, events or relations; operationalizations—methods, techniques, operations, and/or instruments used to tie categorizations to the phenomena through qualitative or quantitative measurements that prove systematic, inter-subjective, and reliable; and theoretical models—structured combinations of categorizations that allow for prediction, retrodiction, manipulation, and explanation of target phenomena. Kuhn famously cites Copernicus' heliocentric model of the solar system as an example of a paradigmatic case. Galileo's discovery of uniform gravitational acceleration and quantification of the rate of acceleration likewise counts as a paradigmatic case.

**Partial Potential Models:** In this text the notion of partial potential models refers to the acceptable norms as to the appropriate representations for theoretic models, aspects of the physical system incorporated into the model, operationalizations, and uses of models for solving problems. Partial potential models dictate the nature and appropriate uses of theoretical models within the paradigm.

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