



## EINLADUNG ZUM KOLLOQUIUM

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(München)

### **Ceteris Paribus Laws and Minutiae Rectus Laws**

It is a commonplace that the generalizations of the special sciences – such as ecology – admit of exceptions. Often they are taken to hold only *ceteris paribus*: that is, under normal (or even ideal) conditions. Roughly, the idea is that the special sciences do not characterize closed systems, and hence their generalizations hold only in the absence of abnormal influences from outside the systems they characterize. I argue that their *ceteris paribus* nature is not the only reason that special science generalizations admit of exceptions. There is a second class of exception that does not have to do with the fact that the special sciences characterize only open systems, but rather has to do with the fact that the properties that they are concerned with are multiply realizable. Certain unusual realizations of those properties can lead to exceptions to special science generalizations even where circumstances are normal or even ideal (certain exceptions to the Second Law of Thermodynamics are also plausibly of this kind). I call generalizations that admit of this second class of exception *minutiae rectus* generalizations: generalizations that obtain only when the properties that they relate are realized in the right microphysical way. I argue that traditional attempts to show that *ceteris paribus* generalizations can support predictions and causal-explanatory relationships don't apply to *minutiae rectus* generalizations. I explore the prospects for an account of *minutiae rectus* generalizations that can explain how they are nevertheless able to perform these functions. Such an account seems necessary if we are to explain why the special sciences count as genuine sciences.

**Luke Glynn** completed a B.A. in Philosophy, Politics, and Economics (2004), a B.Phil. in Philosophy (2006), and a D.Phil in Philosophy (2009), all at the University of Oxford. His doctoral dissertation was entitled 'A Probabilistic Analysis of Causation'. Since 2012, he holds a post-doc at the Munich Center for Mathematical Philosophy; before coming to Munich, Luke held post-doctoral positions at the University of Konstanz (2009-2011) and at California Institute of Technology (2011-2013). Luke's research primarily concerns metaphysical issues in the philosophy of science. Specifically, Luke is interested in the relationship between causation, probability, and laws of nature. He is also interested in the relationship between the causes (if any), probabilities, and laws of fundamental physics, and those of the special sciences (e.g. biology, geology, meteorology, economics, etc.).

**Mittwoch, 05.06.2013**  
**18 c.t. Uhr**  
**Raum N.10.20**

Volkert Remmert  
Gregor Schiemann

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