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Braillard, Pierre-Alain, Malaterre, Christophe

Explanation in Biology

An Enquiry into the Diversity of Explanatory Patterns in the Life Sciences

- Comprehensive overview of explanation types in biology and their relationship
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Patterns of explanation in biology have long been recognized as different from those deployed in other scientific disciplines, especially that of physics. Celebrating the diversity of interpretative models found in biology, this volume details their varying types as well as explaining their relationships to one another. It covers the key differentials with other sciences in the nature of explanation, such as the existence in biology of varieties unheard of in the physical sciences, such as teleological, evolutionary and even functional explanations. Offering a wealth of fresh analysis of the phenomenon, chapters examine aspects ranging from the role of mathematics in explaining cell development to the complexities thrown up by evolutionary-developmental biology, where explanation is altered by multidisciplinary itself. They cover major domains such as ecology and systems biology, as well as contemporary trends, such as the mechanistic explanations spawned by progress in molecular biology. With contributions from researchers of many different nationalities, the book provides a many-angled perspective on a revealing feature of the discipline of biology.

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