



Graham McFee

Philosophy and the 'Dazzling Ideal' of Science

- Defends the possibility of philosophy against a prevalent scientism
- Presents a vision of philosophy that does not presuppose a 'dazzling ideal' associated with science
- Explores the conditions for the possibility of philosophy

Recent decades have seen attacks on philosophy as an irrelevant field of inquiry when compared with science. In this book, Graham McFee defends the claims of philosophy against attempts to minimize either philosophy's possibility or its importance by deploying a contrast with what Wittgenstein characterized as the "dazzling ideal" of science. This 'dazzling ideal' incorporates both the imagined completeness of scientific explanation—whereby completing its project would leave nothing unexplained—and the exceptionless character of the associated conception of causality. On such a scientific world-view, what need is there for philosophy? In his defense of philosophy (and its truth-claims), McFee shows that rejecting such scientism is not automatically anti-scientific, and that it permits granting to natural science (properly understood) its own truth-generating power. Further, McFee argues for contextualism in the project of philosophy, and sets aside the pervasive (and pernicious) requirement for exceptionless generalizations while relating his account to interconnections between the concepts of person, substance, agency, and causation.

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