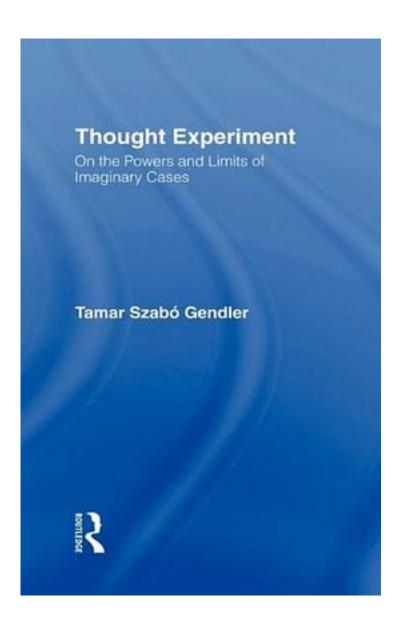
Thought Experiment



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This work offers an analysis of the widely-used but ill-understood technique of thought experiment which is a process of reasoning. It is carried out within the context of a well-articulated imaginary scenario in order to answer a specific question about a non-imaginary situation and is extensively employed in fields as diverse as physics, computer science, law, and philosophy. The book puts forward the argument that the powers and limits of this methodology can be traced to the fact that when the contemplation of an imaginary scenario brings us to new knowledge, it does so by forcing us to make sense of exceptional cases.

作者介绍:

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标签

科学哲学

哲学原著

评论

作者提出了有关思想实验之作用的一种较为激进的观点:思想实验不能够还原为平凡的论证,其知识论效力也并不来源于它"实际上"是个论证这一事实。但是,作者为支持这种观点所诉诸的并不是看上去不太靠得住的柏拉图主义,而是心灵模型(mental model)理论。在作者看来,思想实验激起了形而上学方面的默会知识,并且扩展或变更了人们的概念空间,而这些功能是与之对等的平凡论证所不能够完成的。作者的这一思路模糊了经典科学哲学所设立的发现的语境和辩护的语境的界限,提出辩护即是说服,或者说使人重新发现。这样一来,对科学主体的心理学解释就有了知识论上的效力;思想实验之所以成功,就是因为它能够在持有旧形而上学的人不知不觉间偷偷地引入毁灭性的预设,而后者直到思想实验导出矛盾时才恍然大悟,从而不得不接受一套新的形而上学。

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