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The Dappled World

A Study of the Boundaries of Science

It is often supposed that the spectacular successes of our modern mathematical sciences support a lofty vision of a world completely ordered by one elegant theory. In this book Nancy Cartwright argues to the contrary. When we draw our image of the world from the way modern science works – as empiricism teaches us we should – we end up with a world where some features are precisely ordered, others are given to rough regularity and still others behave in their own diverse ways. This patchwork of laws makes sense when we realise that laws are very special productions of nature, requiring very special arrangements for their generation. Combining previously published and newly written essays on physics and economics, *The Dappled World* carries important philosophical consequences and offers serious lessons for both the natural and the social sciences.

Nancy Cartwright is Professor of Philosophy at the London School of Economics and Political Science and at the University of California, San Diego, a Fellow of the British Academy, and a MacArthur Fellow. She is the author of *How the Laws of Physics Lie* (1983), *Nature's Capacities and their Measurement* (1989), and *Otto Neurath: Philosophy Between Science and Politics*, co-authored with Jordi Cat, Lola Fleck and Thomas Uebel (1995).

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To Emily and Sophie

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[1] Suppes 1984.

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