

# “ Bottom-up” Corrections and the Phenomenologically-driven View

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## Abstract

In this paper I analyse and criticise Nancy Cartwright’s phenomenologically-driven view and her notion of phenomenological laws, which can only be understood in conjunction. I shall show that both notions spring from Cartwright’s genuine observation of “bottom-up” corrections of theoretical derivations in scientific treatments of real systems. Although I do not deny the existence of these “bottom-up” corrections I hold that they are not apt to support (i) either a view that claims that science is driven by the phenomena and not by our theories, nor (ii) an ontologically autonomous notion of phenomenological laws. Furthermore, it shall be pointed out that one of the most central tenets of Cartwright’s position, namely that the truth comes from the bottom-up through ad-hoc and nonprincipled corrections, is actually not tenable.

**Keywords:** phenomenologically-driven view, phenomenological laws, bottom-up corrections, Nancy Cartwright

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