



Physics Colloquium



Thursday, April 9th at 3:40PM in SC 234

Featuring:

Dr. Wayne Myrvold

Rotman Institute of Philosophy

Western University

Ontario, Canada

“Probabilities in Statistical Physics: What are they?”

There's something puzzling about the way that probabilities are treated in standard statistical mechanics texts. They are introduced because of incomplete knowledge of the state of a system, which suggest that the probabilities have to do with what we do and don't know, rather than with the physical system under investigation. On the other hand, they are used to generate testable predictions, which suggests that we think of them as something physical. In this talk, I will propose a reading of these probabilities that makes sense of both aspects and, I claim, does justice to the way we use probabilities in statistical physics.

Refreshments at 3:00PM in SC 103