

## HIGH LEVEL EXPLANATION INFORMATION

*Due Date* Tuesday January 18th. I will not accept papers after this date; it is final.

*Length* Twenty-five pages (or more).

*Topics* Whatever you like. Here are a few suggestions, among the many possibilities:

1. Explain the unificationist's take on explanatory autonomy (or a unificationist take, if there is more than one). Critically discuss. For example: Is the idea of the autonomy of the higher level sciences fundamentally opposed to the ideal of unity? Does an overriding concern with unification lead to alarmingly empty explanatory models (e.g. PS-processes)?
2. Fodor argues that a property is potentially causally, hence explanatorily, relevant if it appears (in the causal position) in at least one causal law. Is this view tenable? You might focus on the question whether there is an account of special science laws stern enough to police the causal relevance of higher level properties.
3. Why, when explaining an event, is it important to point out that it was produced by a robust process? (Or: why isn't it important?) Does the causal or some other approach to the nature of explanation make better sense of the explanatory role of robustness?
4. Causal explanations often "black-box" some of the mechanisms involved in producing an explanandum. What are the virtues of black-boxing? The vices? Can you generalize from black-boxing to explanatory autonomy as a whole?
5. To what extent can worries about the autonomy of (common sense or cognitive) psychology as a science be addressed by way of the question of the autonomy of psychological explanation?