THE DEPARTMENT OF BIOMEDICAL INFORMATICS PRESENTS:

Dr. Barry Smith, Grand Rounds Speaker

Dr. Barry Smith is a prominent contributor to both theoretical and applied research in ontology, focusing especially on ontologies in the biomedical field. He is the author of some 350 peer-reviewed publications on ontology and related topics, with over 29,000 citations. His research has been funded by the National Institutes of Health, the US, Swiss and Austrian National Science Foundations, the Volkswagen Foundation, the European Union, and the US Department of Defense. In 2013 he was elected Fellow of the American College of Medical Informatics (FACMI).
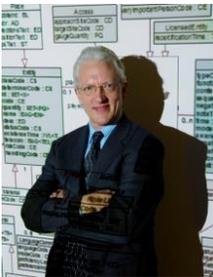
Defining Disability

Basic Formal Ontology (BFO) is a top-level architecture used by over 300 ontology initiatives in biology, medicine and other fields. When applied to persons, BFO distinguishes three types of attributes: qualities -- such as temperature or height; roles -- such as the patient role; and dispositions -- such as the disposition to go bald or to sweat. Recently it has been proposed that BFO be supplemented with a treatment of a fourth kind of attribute, called 'capability'. Briefly, a capability is a disposition of a person which, when realized, brings benefits to that person or to some group to which the person belongs. Examples are: the capability to walk, to speak, to digest food. In this talk I will outline the BFO theory of capabilities. I will then develop on this basis a theory of disabilities. I will then show how this theory is contrasted with other accounts of disability, including the recent proposal of Elizabeth Barnes, according to which disability is based not on physical impairment but rather on social disadvantage

DATE: Tuesday, September 25, 2018
TIME: 10:00 am – 11:30 am.
LOCATION: Department of Biomedical Informatics, 77 Goodell St, Buffalo, NY Room 506

DR. BARRY SMITH

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