

Philosophia Scientiæ

Repositioning realism

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Abstract

"Naturalised realism" is presented as a version of realism which is more compatible with the history of science than convergent or explanationist forms of realism. The account is unpacked according to four theses : 1) Whether realism is warranted with regards to a particular theory depends on the kind and quality of evidence available for that theory ; 2) Reference is about causal interaction with the world ; 3) Most of science happens somewhere in between instrumentalism and scientific realism on a continuum of stances towards the status of theories ; 4) The degree to which realism is warranted has something to do with the degree to which theories successfully refer, rather than with the truth of theories.