



Theory and Reality: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Science (Science and Its Conceptual Foundations series)

Peter Godfrey-Smith

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How does science work? Does it tell us what the world is "really" like? What makes it different from other ways of understanding the universe? In *Theory and Reality*, Peter Godfrey-Smith addresses these questions by taking the reader on a grand tour of one hundred years of debate about science. The result is a completely accessible introduction to the main themes of the philosophy of science.

Intended for undergraduates and general readers with no prior background in philosophy, *Theory and Reality* covers logical positivism; the problems of induction and confirmation; Karl Popper's theory of science; Thomas Kuhn and "scientific revolutions"; the views of Imre Lakatos, Larry Laudan, and Paul Feyerabend; and challenges to the field from sociology of science, feminism, and science studies. The book then looks in more detail at some specific problems and theories, including scientific realism, the theory-ladeness of observation, scientific explanation, and Bayesianism. Finally, Godfrey-Smith defends a form of philosophical naturalism as the best way to solve the main problems in the field.

Throughout the text he points out connections between philosophical debates and wider discussions about science in recent decades, such as the infamous "science wars." Examples and asides engage the beginning student; a glossary of terms explains key concepts; and suggestions for further reading are included at the end of each chapter. However, this is a textbook that doesn't feel like a textbook because it captures the historical drama of changes in how science has been conceived over the last one hundred years.

Like no other text in this field, *Theory and Reality* combines a survey of recent history of the philosophy of science with current key debates in language that any beginning scholar or critical reader can follow.



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