

Review Symposium

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On

Laurens Laudan. *Progress and Its Problems: Toward a Theory of Scientific Growth*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: The University of California Press, 1977. Pp. x + 257. \$10.00.

Laudan's Progress and Its Problems

DAVID L. HULL, *Philosophy, University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee*

Anyone teaching a course in the philosophy of science is presented with the problem of finding a text which carries recent disputes beyond the received doctrines set out in Hempel's *Philosophy of Natural Science* [1], the heresies which flowed from Kuhn's *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* [3], and criticisms of both these positions collected in Suppe's *The Structure of Scientific Theory* [5]. Everyone seems to agree that neither logical empiricist philosophy of science nor the relativistic reactions to it are good enough. What has been needed for some time is a book which presents a fully developed, self-contained alternative to these two extremes, which is nevertheless easy to follow. Larry Laudan's *Progress and Its Problems* at long last does just that. Not everyone is likely to swallow Laudan's position whole, especially in regard to the short shrift he gives to empirical truth, but for pedagogic purposes, his book could not be better. The exposition is clear, the historical examples which he presents both to illustrate and to test his views are historically accurate, and Laudan's combination of the traditional epistemological elements is sufficiently novel to force both students and teachers out of their familiar mental ruts.

1. PROGRESS THROUGH PROBLEM SOLUTION.

As welcome as Laudan's book is as a text, it is primarily a contribution to the professional literature in philosophy of science and must be evaluated as such. *Progress and Its Problems* is above all else a sustained defense of the role of rationality in all intellectual endeavours, especially science. If cultural relativism were correct, if 'we in the West venerate science, not because it is more rational than its alternatives, but simply because we are a product of a culture that has traditionally set great store by science' (p. 3), then 'it would mean that

Laudan Problem Solving And Is Building

David Danks,Emiliano Ippoliti



Laudan Problem Solving And Is Building:

Building Theories David Danks, Emiliano Ippoliti, 2018-01-18 This book explores new findings on the long neglected topic of theory construction and discovery and challenges the orthodox current division of scientific development into discrete stages the stage of generation of new hypotheses the stage of collection of relevant data the stage of justification of possible theories and the final stage of selection from among equally confirmed theories The chapters written by leading researchers offer an interdisciplinary perspective on various aspects of the processes by which theories rationally should and descriptively are built They address issues such as the role of problem solving and heuristic reasoning in theory building how inferences and models shape the pursuit of scientific knowledge the relation between problem solving and scientific discovery the relative values of the syntactic semantic and pragmatic view of theories in understanding theory construction and the relation between ampliative inferences heuristic reasoning and models as a means for building new theories and knowledge Through detailed arguments and examinations the volume collectively challenges the orthodox view's main tenets by characterizing the ways in which the different stages are logically temporally and psychologically intertwined As a group the chapters provide several attempts to answer long standing questions about the possibility of a unified conceptual framework for building theories and formulating hypotheses

The Relationship Between a Model-building Problem-solving Classroom and Conceptual Change Learning John S. Lemberger, 1995

Theory Construction in Second Language Acquisition Geoff Jordan, 2004-01-01 Recently many SLA researchers have adopted a postmodernist approach which challenges the assumption that SLA research is a rationalist scientific endeavour The resulting epistemological arguments plus problems of theory proliferation contradicting theories and theory domain hinder progress towards a unified theory of SLA Theory Construction in SLA addresses these problems by returning to first principles it asks whether there is such a thing as reliable knowledge what is special about scientific method and how we can best explain SLA It is the first book to use the philosophy of science in order to examine the epistemological underpinnings of SLA research and evaluate rival theories of SLA Part One explores the central issues in the philosophy of science defends rationality against relativists and offers Guidelines for theory assessment Part Two examines different theories of SLA and evaluates them in terms of how well they stand up to the Guidelines

Formal Theory in Sociology Jerald Hage, 1994-01-01 A group of renowned sociological theorists analyze why the attempts to make sociological theory formal in the 1960s and early 1970s failed This becomes not only an unusual and interesting analysis in the sociology of knowledge but several of the articles move to the level of analyzing the entire discipline explaining why positivism did not take hold and what are the distinctive characteristics of sociology as a discipline Anyone interested in sociology as a discipline and more specifically sociological theory will find interesting analytical models

Mathematics Education as a Research Domain: A Search for Identity Anna Sierpinska, Jeremy Kilpatrick, 2014-02-19 No one disputes how important it is in today's world to prepare students to un

derstand mathematics as well as to use and communicate mathematics in their future lives That task is very difficult however Refocusing curricula on fundamental concepts producing new teaching materials and designing teaching units based on mathematicians common sense or on logic have not resulted in a better understanding of mathematics by more students The failure of such efforts has raised questions suggesting that what was missing at the outset of these proposals designs and productions was a more profound knowledge of the phenomena of learning and teaching mathematics in socially established and culturally politically and economically justified institutions namely schools Such knowledge cannot be built by mere juxtaposition of theories in disciplines such as psychology sociology and mathematics Psychological theories focus on the individual learner Theories of sociology of education look at the general laws of curriculum development the specifics of pedagogic discourse as opposed to scientific discourse in general the different possible pedagogic relations between the teacher and the taught and other general problems in the interface between education and society Mathematics aside from its theoretical contents can be looked at from historical and epistemological points of view clarifying the genetic development of its concepts methods and theories This view can shed some light on the meaning of mathematical concepts and on the difficulties students have in teaching approaches that disregard the genetic development of these concepts

Problems in Second Language Acquisition Michael H. Long, 2017-09-25 Second language acquisition has an identity problem It is a young field struggling to emerge from the parent fields of education and applied linguistics In his new book Problems in Second Language Acquisition Mike Long proposes a way to help second language acquisition develop a systematic and coherent focus using the philosophy of science as the lens The volume is neatly organized into three parts theory research and practice This structure allows a focus on areas of SLA of interest to many in the field These include theory proliferation and comparative theory evaluation the Critical Period Hypothesis and negative feedback and the practice of synthetic language teaching The controversial volume will be of interest to researchers educators and graduate students in second language acquisition applied linguistics TESOL and linguistics programs It may be recommended as additional reading for an introductory SLA course in order to stimulate class discussions

Systematic Theology as a Rationally Justified Public Discourse about God Michael Agerbo Mørch, 2023-01-23 For centuries it has been discussed whether systematic theology is a scientific discipline But it is not obvious what is meant by either systematic theology or scientific discipline Michael Agerbo Mørch presents an understanding of systematic theology as a tripartite discipline and science as a rationally justified public discourse about a given topic Systematic theology is shown to meet the most generally accepted criteria for scientific work since its theories can be tested and even falsified in an intersubjective setting This can be done by the most proper tool we have for assessing and comparing scientific theories which is coherence theory Therefore even though systematic theology is a distinct and normative discipline it is not compromising for its theories because it can present its theses in a transparent way that can be checked and criticized by peers and compared to relevant alternatives As such the book shows that

systematic theology is a scientifically strong discourse that meets accepted criteria to the same degree as other disciplines

The Heuristic View Emiliano Ippoliti, Fabio Sterpetti, 2025-10-01 This volume offers a series of thought provoking analyses that explore non mainstream perspectives on knowledge acquisition and scientific discovery A central theme across many of the contributions is the heuristic conception of method a view that finds its philosophical roots in Imre Lakatos's work in the philosophy of mathematics and more distantly in Platonic notions of philosophical inquiry Knowledge acquisition is frequently conceptualized as a form of problem solving and problem solving is typically regarded as a rational endeavor However the dominant view in the philosophy of science has long held that scientific discovery resists systematic explanation in terms of logic and rationality If an alternative account of discovery grounded in these terms can be developed it would represent a significant theoretical advancement The essays collected in this book critically assess the promise and limitations of such non standard accounts and they investigate the possibility of framing scientific discovery within a logical and rational framework This volume will be of particular interest to scholars in the philosophy of science epistemology philosophy of mathematics and philosophy of logic as well as to scientists engaged in theoretical inquiry and graduate students working in these or related areas

Theories of International Trade Adam Klug, 2006-09-27 This book presents the results of a thorough survey into the different theories of international trade Conducted by the Israeli economic historian Klug before his untimely death in 2000 and now available for the first time

Scientific Cognition, Semiotics, and Computational Agents: Essays in Honor of Lorenzo Magnani - Volume 2 Selene Arfini, 2025-09-19 This book the second of two volumes focuses on scientific cognition computationalism and scholars reception of what Lorenzo Magnani named eco cognitive views on the mind The authors of these chapters address complex questions which regard in part Magnani's contributions in the field of model based science the role of inferential models in mathematics the transformations and possible applicability of Charles Sanders Peirce's and Immanuel Kant's concepts and insight into current understanding of scientific progress and the still unsolved questions regarding the methodological steps that take researchers to scientific discoveries Some contributions also address the problematic understanding of artificial agents as intelligent how cognition can be discussed within the limits of computationalism and how the eco cognitive perspective on the mind also affects the conception of scientific reasoning and socially constructed phenomena The book is of great interest to those interested in epistemology philosophy of science mathematical logic and AI

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