

Scientific Realism and the Inevitability of Science

Sankey, Howard (2007) Scientific Realism and the Inevitability of Science.

Full text available as:

[PDF](#) - Requires a viewer, such as [Adobe Acrobat Reader](#) or other PDF viewer.

Abstract

Abstract: This paper examines the question of whether scientific realism is committed to the inevitability of science or is consistent with claims of the contingency of science. In order to address this question, a general characterization of the position of scientific realism is presented. It is then argued that scientific realism has no evident implications with regard to the inevitability of science. A historical case study is presented in which contingency plays a significant role, and the appropriate realist response to this case study is indicated. Finally, it is argued that, when conjoined with a reliabilist theory of method, realism does have implications for the inevitability of science.

Keywords: Scientific realism, contingency, inevitability

Subjects: [General Issues: Realism/Anti-realism](#)

ID Code: 3718

Deposited By: [Sankey, Howard](#)

Deposited On: 11 December 2007