

Example of scientific realism essay

[Art & Culture](#)



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Philosophy of science

Scientific realism can simply be defined as the perception that the true world is the one defined by scientists. A scientific realist trusts that science does play a major role in defining the actual composition of the world. The question that comes to mind is whether the scientific realist also believes that science thrives in its endeavor of describing the real world. This kind of question is rather complicated and coming up with a sound answer to it will actually take a considerable amount of time. According to Smith, the best way to come up with the answer to this question is to first ignore it for a short time then scrutinize the realist's attitude (Godfrey-Smith 2003, p. 24). The manner in which human beings define the world which they live in has generated varying opinions. The basic general perceptions that individuals have towards the world is that it is everything that surrounds them and it does not matter that people think about it. Science philosophers have argued that this kind of perception is void and denies human beings a better understanding of what the world really entails (Godfrey-Smith 2003, p. 24). To better understand this general view of the world, it is important to know that reality does not entail the concepts of language and thought. This notion is quite true but it ought to be clearly comprehended since words and thoughts are actually real and they do exist in the world. Additionally, language and thought have fundamental functions in the entire world. Among the many reasons why people talk and think is to make sense of everything and change their environment. Therefore careful analysis must be conducted when a realistic defines the world as that which lacks thought and language. Smith tries to define "common sense realism" by stating that

human beings live in reality that contains a structure that survives separately and is not affected by what individuals do or say. According to the realist, individuals have varying perspectives towards the world regardless of the fact they reside and socialize with it.

Debates concerning whether human beings should believe the concept of “scientific realism” or not have continued to gain momentum. Some argue that a lot of ideas have changed in the field of science and hence it is appropriate to expect incorrectness in these theories at some point. This kind of argument is referred to as “the pessimist meta-induction (Godfrey-Smith 2003, p. 24). The pessimists illustrate their arguments using theories such as “caloric” and believe that these models have ceased to exist. The optimists on the other hand illustrate their arguments using scientific concepts such as genes and atoms which they believe to exist. Smithy argues that theories can either be successful or not depending on the circumstances with which they are operate in (ere 2006, p. 32).

This author argues that the many interactions that these theories might encounter with the world might alter the validity of these theories. He adds that as long as these theories have the correct structure, then they can gain correctness even if they are wrong about the kind of ideas they propel.

Success in science does not necessarily entail the truthfulness of theories. Despite the fact that science is supposed to provide accurate definitions of reality, it should be understood that this exercise is quite broad in the sense that different scientists utilize diverse representations.

According to Giere, science is basically a practical inquiry (2006). Giere has contributed a great deal to the many changes that are being experienced currently in the philosophy of science. This author utilizes scientific

approaches to raise questions that are philosophical in nature. This author states that science is constructed by human beings and portrays the world in an objective way. This author develops what is referred to as “perspective realism” where he compares scientific explanations to color. The scientific description gets hold of only those reality aspects that are selected. These reality aspects are not just components of the world as they are perceived in themselves but they are fragments of the world viewed in varied perspectives.

Giere uses maps to put across his message and explains that drawings truly characterize the world but these symbols are conventional such that they are influenced by interest and are hardly precise or rather whole. Giere argues that colors are not actual objects. They are rather associations or interaction between the human visual structure and world aspects. Some scientific theories such as Maxwell’s equations have no real connection to the world but models founded on the ideas of this theory can be utilized in coming up with claims concerning particular world phenomenon. “

Perspective realism” somehow provides a solution to the ongoing debates in the philosophy of science. Similar referenced could be directed towards scientific theories which showcase the world based on narrow outlooks (Giere 2006, p. 32).

The argument in favor of scientific realism is that human beings should conclude that the best explanation is in the things they see. The scientific realist argues that the world is best defined by the theories of science. For instance, the scientific realist might find aspects such as genes, molecules, atoms and many others to be real. At the same time it is notable that entities such as molecules could be unobservable yet science insists on facts. In my <https://assignbuster.com/example-of-scientific-realism-essay/>

opinion, I find this argument unconvincing. I believe that it is not right to convey the scientific realist stand, in a manner that solely relies on the correctness of scientific theories. The question that comes to mind is what if the scientific models or theories are erroneous or deteriorate with time? Then the scientific realist stand will definitely be incorrect. Nevertheless, human beings have no reason worrying whether the scientific theories might turn to be false. This does not mean that scientific theories ought not to be granted much consideration. It only implies that it is appropriate to have doubts sometimes or rather exercise cautiousness and realize that there are possibilities that these theories might not be true.

Studies reveal that many individuals believe that science provides objective facts. However, philosophers, historians and even sociologists argue that these facts were provided in contexts that have long undergone tremendous change. It is not easy to tag scientific concepts as outdated because this kind of knowledge has been influenced by human forces. The practice developing theories and observing both depend on different perspectives. This thus renders scientific knowhow dependent. Following such arguments it is clear that scientific perspectives have undergone enormous change especially in the modern times. The many perspectives concerning science generate various ideas regarding its extent and nature. All in all, there is conformity in the fact that science entails human actions such as observing, analyzing interpreting and many others.

Reference List

Godfrey-Smith, P. 2003, Theory and reality: an introduction to the philosophy of science.

<https://assignbuster.com/example-of-scientific-realism-essay/>

Chicago, CA: University of Chicago Press.

Giere, Ronald, N. 2006, Scientific perspectivism. Chicago, CA: University of Chicago Press.