



Scientific Realism, Empiricism, and Instrumentalism

Elliott Sober (University of Wisconsin, Madison)

ABSTRACT

Scientific Realism asserts that the goal of scientific inference is to find theories that are true in what they say about observable and unobservable entities alike. Empiricism says that the goal is more modest – to find theories that are true in what they say about observables. Instrumentalism says that the goal is to find theories that are predictively accurate. Here I'll assess some of the main arguments for and against Realism and Empiricism, sometimes using simple ideas about probability. The bottom line is to reject Empiricism and to be pluralistic about Realism and Instrumentalism.

Elliott Sober is Hans Reichenbach Professor & William F. Vilas Research Professor at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. His published output includes 11 books and nearly 300 research articles, ranging across general philosophy of science, philosophy of evolutionary biology, philosophy of mind, and philosophy of religion. His most recent book is *The Design Argument*, a book in the Cambridge Elements in the Philosophy of Religion series.



DATE AND TIME

21/22 JULY 2021

9 AM 22 Jul MELBOURNE
12 AM 22 Jul LONDON
7 PM 21 Jul NEW YORK

SEMINAR HELD OVER ZOOM

Click [HERE](#) to register.

To join our Seminar email list or for other questions, please email nevin.climenhaga@acu.edu.au.