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THE WORLD AND HOW WE KNOW IT: STUMBLING TOWARDS AN UNDERSTANDING

EL MUNDO Y CÓMO LO CONOCEMOS: TROPIEZOS PARA UNA COMPRENSIÓN

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Abstract: ***Prof. Haack's main purpose is to spell out the key ideas—Innocent Realism, Laconicism, Foundherentism, Critical common-sensism, neo-classical legal Pragmatism—of the understanding of the world and our real but very imperfect knowledge of it that she has developed over the decades. She begins, however, by explaining what attitudes and predilections—especially, her distaste for false dichotomies—she brought to philosophy from the beginning, and what new ideas gradually evolved; and concludes with some wry reflections on the condition of professional philosophy today.***

Keywords: Innocent Realism, Foundherentism, Laconicism, Critical commonsensism, Pragmatism, Haack's philosophy.

Resumen: El principal propósito de la profesora Haack es explicar ciertas ideas claves –Realismo inocente, Laconismo, Fundherentismo, Sentido común crítico, Pragmatismo legal neo-clásico– para el entendimiento del mundo y nuestro real, aunque muy imperfecto, conocimiento de éste, ideas que la Profesora Haack ha desarrollado durante décadas. En su texto, sin embargo, Haack inicia explicando qué actitudes y preferencias –especialmente su disgusto por las falsas dicotomías– ella trae a la filosofía desde el inicio, y qué nuevas ideas fueron evolucionando gradualmente; y concluye con algunas incisivas reflexiones sobre la condición de la filosofía profesional en la actualidad.

Palabras clave: Realismo inocente, fundherentismo, laconismo, sentido común crítico, pragmatismo, filosofía de Haack.

Out of a contrite fallibilism, combined with a high faith in the reality of knowledge, all my philosophy has always seemed to grow.—C. S. Peirce.[1]

It has taken decades to build, and it's still a work in progress. But I won't dwell on the sometimes painful stretching and strengthening of intellectual muscles that was needed, or on all the dead ends, false starts, and wrong turns I took; instead, I'll sketch some core themes of the understanding of the world, our place in it, and our always-fallible efforts to figure it out that was the result of these efforts.

But perhaps, first, I should say a few words about the attitudes and predilections I brought to philosophy at the outset, and the new interests, methods, and ideas to which they led. From the beginning, I hoped to do useful, constructive work. But I never thought in terms of finding the one Big Idea that could form the basis of a philosophical system; and even when a problem proved beyond my powers at the time, I never doubted that there were genuine philosophical problems, or that they could eventually be solved—by someone, if not by me. From the beginning, too, I was very leery of anything pretentious or unnecessarily obscure; and temperamentally disinclined to jump on fashionable philosophical bandwagons. And—most, as it turns out, to the present purpose—I was always acutely aware of the dangers posed by ambiguities and false dichotomies.

But the very young, very inexperienced philosopher of those early days had a long intellectual road to travel. Although *Deviant logic*[2] and *Philosophy of logics*[3] were unusually broad for their time, they were pretty thoroughly analytic in orientation; and their agenda was set largely by the work of Frege, Russell, Quine, Tarski, et al.[4] Even a little later, when I started writing on epistemology, I still set out from familiar problems and familiar seams of literature.

Prompted in part by my reading of the old pragmatists, however, I soon began to chafe against the limitations of the analytic approach in which I was trained, and the narrowness of the highly specialized, technical issues on which it focused. I began to notice serious ambiguities masked by Quine's smoothly flowing prose[5] and hard philosophical questions left untouched

1 C. S. Peirce, *Collected papers*, Charles Hartshorne, Paul Weiss and (vols. 7 and 8) Arthur Burks, eds., Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 1931-58, 1.14 (c.1897). References to the *Collected papers* are by volume and paragraph number, followed by the original date.

2 Susan Haack, *Deviant logic*, London, Cambridge University Press, 1974; second, expanded edition, *Deviant logic, fuzzy logic: beyond the formalism*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1996.

3 Susan Haack, *Philosophy of logics*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1978.

4 Popper and Davidson also played a role, apropos of Tarski's theory of truth; and Peirce appeared occasionally—though at the time I had no real understanding of how important his contributions to logic were.

5 Susan Haack, "Analyticity and logical truth in *The roots of reference*" in *Theoria* 42, no.2 (1977) 129-143; *Evidence and inquiry*, Oxford, Blackwell Pub., 1993; second, expanded edition, Amherst, NY, Prometheus Books, 2009, chapter 6.

by Tarski's ingenious formal results. I began to suspect that the reason the epistemological work with which I was struggling was bogged down in fruitless disputes was that everyone concerned took false dichotomies for granted. I grew bolder, braver, and more flexible: I recognized that, the analytic preoccupation with precision notwithstanding, it was sometimes helpful to begin with a vague but plausible idea—provided you could then make it less vague without at the same time making it false;[6] I began to think in terms of continuities as well as distinctions; I became readier to say, "no, sorry, I wouldn't start from here; we need a different point of departure altogether." And naturally, as I trod new paths, I found much higher ground and much broader vistas.

This wasn't a sudden conversion, but a gradual evolution. Those early books on logic were already implicitly epistemological; and there were already glimpses of broader horizons in some early papers: e.g., "Fallibilism and necessity,"[7] arguing that fallibilism is a thesis about people, not propositions, and so couldn't be expressed in formal-logical terms, and "Epistemology *with* a knowing subject,"[8] arguing that epistemology couldn't be, as Popper supposed, simply a matter of logical relations among propositions but *must* involve knowing subjects and their cognitive capacities and limitations. And then there was "Descriptive vs. revisionary metaphysics,"[9] exploring the rationale for metaphysicians' going beyond our everyday concepts and categories. So perhaps it's not surprising that I soon found myself thinking, not just about our language or our concepts, but about the world; transgressing the boundaries of the conventional philosophical sub-specialties; and eventually—prompted by the response of physicists, economists, legal scholars, and literary theorists to my work—venturing outside philosophy into the sciences, the law, literature, and beyond.

The upshot has been a huge, but of course still only partially-completed, crossword. Much is filled in only in pencil; much has been revised many times. Nothing, still, is perfectly formulated; everything, still, is potentially open to revision. Nonetheless, some key ideas have proved their worth, and seem to interlock appropriately with each other. My hope is that they reflect something of the enormous complexity both of the world and of our real, but very limited and imperfect, knowledge of it.

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[6] This was what I called, in *Evidence and Inquiry*, "the method of successive approximation." Haack, Susan, *Evidence and inquiry*, second, expanded edition, pp. 118, 139.

[7] Susan Haack, "Fallibilism and necessity" in *Synthese* 41 (1979) 37-63.

[8] Susan Haack, "Epistemology *with* a knowing subject" in *Review of Metaphysics* XXXIII. 2, no. 130 (1979) 309-335.

[9] Susan Haack, "Descriptive vs. revisionary metaphysics" in *Philosophical Studies* 35 (1979) 361-371.

Focusing on these key ideas themselves, rather than their genesis, I'll start with the world.[10]

Disputes between "realists" and "anti-realists," all the rage in Britain in the 1980s, seemed to force us to choose: *either* an understanding of "real" as "mind-independent," and an acknowledgment of something like the "fixed totality of mind-independent objects" that Putnam's metaphysical realist imagined, *or else* a conception of the world as something we somehow bring into being ourselves.[11] Transcending this dubious dichotomy, my Innocent Realism begins with the thought that there are many things (laws, kinds, our mental states and processes, etc.) which, though certainly real, aren't existent, concrete particulars; and that what "real" means is neither "independent of us," nor "independent of our minds," but something more like "*independent of what you or I or anyone believes about it*."[12]

There is one real world, Innocent Realism continues; but this one real world is a pluralistic universe, extraordinarily various and multi-faceted and yet, at the same time, unified. "Our" part of the world, the earth we humans inhabit, is just one corner of a vast universe, which may itself be only one of many multi-universes. But in this corner, besides the enormous variety of natural stuff, things, kinds, events, phenomena, laws, etc., there is also the almost unimaginable range of human beliefs, hopes, fears, etc., and a dense mesh of human creations, physical and mental, intellectual and imaginative: physical artifacts; social institutions; intellectual constructions such as languages, notation systems, concepts, and theories; and imaginative creations such as myths, legends, and folk tales, works of art, plays, poems, works of fiction, and the imagined places, people, and scenarios they introduce.

Like the enormous variety of artifacts they have enabled us to create, our thoughts and ideas make this part of the world even more remarkably complex than the rest. And, while everything is anchored in natural reality—in the architecture and functioning of our brains, in the physical material of buildings, books, boats, and so on—this is not to say that it's all, ultimately, explicable by physics. In the Innocent Realist conception, all the stuff there is in the world is physical, and of course subject to physical laws; nevertheless, there's much more to understanding the world than even a hypothetical completed physics could give us.

[10] The notes should enable readers to keep track of when key ideas were introduced, when they were modified and amplified, and so on.

[11] Here I set aside consideration of the many variants of realism and anti-realism, which are explored in detail in Susan Haack, "'Realism'" in *Synthese* 73 (1987) 275-99; and "Realisms and their rivals: recovering our innocence" in *Facta Philosophica* 4, no.1 (2002) 67-88.

[12] Susan Haack, "The world according to innocent realism" (first published in German in 2014), in Julia Göhner, Eva-Maria Jung, eds., *Susan Haack: reintegrating philosophy*, Berlin, Springer, 2016, pp. 33-55.

A person's believing something, for example, involves his having complex, multi-form dispositions to behavior, verbal and non-verbal. But, though these dispositions are neurophysiologically realized in his brain and central nervous system, their *content* comes, not from these physical characteristics, but from their associations with things and events in the world around him, with words in the person's language, and from the relations, in his linguistic community, of those words to these things and events.[13] While our senses are part of our biological inheritance, our cognitive capacities, innate *in potential*, develop only by means of our interactions, especially our verbal interactions, with others. So, even though the only *stuff* there is, is physical, understanding our intellectual abilities requires a complex socio-historical story that will take us far beyond physics. As I said in *Defending Science*—though at the time I had no idea how much work it would take to spell this out!—"It's all physical, all right; but it isn't all physics."[14]

Our beliefs, theories, etc., are the result of our fallible, fumbling human efforts to describe the world, to explain, to predict. Many, doubtless, are false; and even those that are true can represent only a tiny part of the truth. Understanding truth, however, requires us to steer clear of old disputes between "objectivists" and "relativists," which, again, seemed to force us to choose: *either* truth is simply "correspondence to the facts," *or else* it isn't objective at all, but relative to a society, a theory, or a scientific paradigm[15]—or perhaps, as some postmodernists suggested, there is simply no such thing.

My Laconicist approach to understanding truth transcends this false dichotomy, beginning with the thought that there is just one, unambiguous, non-relative truth-concept: whatever a belief, claim, theory, etc., is about, what it means to say that it's true is simply that it says that p, and p—or, more idiomatically, that the world is as it says.[16] But the world is rich, complex and multi-faceted; so there are many different truths about it, in many different,

[13] Susan Haack, *Evidence and inquiry*, chapter 8; *Defending science—within reason: between scientism and cynicism*, Amherst, NY, Prometheus Books, 2003, chapter 6; "Belief in naturalism" in *Logos & Episteme* 1, no.1 (2010) 1-22; *Scientism and its discontents*, Rounded Globe, 2017, available at https://roundedglobe.com/books/038f7053-e376-4fc3-87c5-096de820966d/Scientism%20and%20its%20Discontents/.

[14] Susan Haack, *Defending science*, p.160. See also *Scientism and Its Discontents*; "Brave new world: nature, culture, and the limits of reductionism," in Bartosz Brozek, Jerzy Stelmach, and Łuckasz Kwiatek, eds., *Explaining the mind*, Kraków, Copernicus Center Press, 2018, 37-68, forthcoming 2018.

[15] Here I set aside consideration of the many varieties of relativism, which are explored in detail in Susan Haack, " Reflections on relativism: from momentous tautology to seductive contradiction," in Susan Haack, *Manifesto of a passionate moderate*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1998, pp. 149-66.

[16] Susan Haack, "The unity of truth and the plurality of truths" (2005), in Susan Haack, *Putting philosophy to work: inquiry and its place in culture*, Amherst, NY, Prometheus Books, 2008; second, expanded edition, 2013, pp. 53-68 (text) and pp. 271-273 (notes).

and not always inter-translatable, vocabularies. And while many of the truths about the world are objective, not all are. What *makes* a claim true, after all, depends on what it's about: so, for example, what makes a claim about the atomic structure of gold true is quite independent of us, while what makes a claim about the current price of gold true isn't; it depends on what people will now pay for gold. So, while *truth* isn't relative, some *truths* are—i.e., true only with respect to some place, some time, some jurisdiction, etc.

Lucky guesses that just happen to be true, however, don't qualify as knowledge. Such knowledge as we have of the world has been won by paying attention to the evidence—to what we see, etc., to what we have already figured out, and to the reports of others about what they have seen, etc., and what they have figured out. But even in the most ordinary of everyday circumstances we sometimes find we need to make an effort to seek out evidence, and to work out where it points. Such efforts are never guaranteed to get us true answers; and of course we may arrive at the truth by sheer guesswork. By and large and on the whole, however, the more seriously and thoroughly we seek out evidence, and the more honestly and carefully we judge it, the better our efforts at figuring things out will be—and the more likely, eventually, to succeed.

Now, however, we stand in need of an account of what evidence is, and an understanding of what makes it stronger, and what weaker. But here, too, old disputes—this time, between foundationalists and coherentists—seemed to force us to choose: *either* a conception according to which evidence includes experience as well as reasons (background beliefs) in an essentially one-directional structure of inference, direct or indirect, from basic beliefs founded in experience to derived beliefs, *or else* a conception that takes account exclusively of coherence relations among our beliefs.[17] My Foundherentism escapes this false dichotomy, avoiding the difficulties of both the traditional rivals while accommodating their insights. It departs from the coherentist picture, because it acknowledges that the evidence for empirical beliefs includes experience as well as reasons; but it also departs from the foundationalist picture, because it recognizes that the structure of evidence isn't essentially one-directional, but multi-directional and ramifying—more like a crossword puzzle than a mathematical proof.

The reasonableness of a crossword entry depends on how well it fits with the clue and any intersecting completed entries; how reasonable those entries are, independent of this one; and how much of the crossword has been completed. Similarly, how good a person's evidence is with respect to some proposition, and hence how reasonable his believing it is, depends on how well his evidence supports the claim; how secure the presumed background

[17] Here I set aside consideration of the many variants of foundationalism and coherentism, which are explored in detail in Susan Haack, *Evidence and inquiry*, chapter 1.

knowledge on which he relies is, independent of the claim in question; and how much of the relevant evidence his evidence includes. Whether, and if so to what degree, evidence supports a claim depends in turn on how well evidence and claim fit together in an explanatory story. Evidence may be supportive (positive), undermining (negative), or neither (neutral); and while a belief will be *more* justified the more independently secure positive evidence is, it will be *less* justified the more independently secure negative evidence is.

Ultimately, all our knowledge of the world depends on our experience of it, i.e., our perceptual interactions with it. To understand this, though, we must cut through controversies about whether perception is, or isn't, propositional, and recognize that, while someone's seeing, hearing, etc., something is an *event*, and so can be neither true nor false, neither fallible nor infallible, a person's *judgment* about what he sees, etc., *is* propositional, and so either true or false and—because it always involves interpretation in the light of what he already believes—inevitably fallible.[18] So foundherentism is not only thoroughly gradational, taking the quality of evidence to be always a matter of degree; it is also thoroughly fallibilist, acknowledging that no belief is ever fully and completely justified.

"A man must be downright crazy to doubt that science has made many true discoveries," Peirce wrote in 1903.[19] Indeed; our knowledge of the world has been enormously extended and amplified by the work of the sciences. Philosophers have often thought that what made the success of the sciences possible was a special method of inquiry more powerful than our everyday procedures; and for much of the twentieth century philosophers of science were preoccupied with trying to articulate what this supposed "scientific method" is. The result, however, was seemingly endless internecine disagreements between inductivists and deductivists, confirmationists and falsificationists, game-theorists and Bayesians, etc. Radical dissenters in the philosophical community, skeptical of logical models of scientific inference, began to draw attention to "meaning-variance," changes in the meanings of theoretical terms; ambitious sociologists of science began to draw attention to the role of power, politics, money, and rhetoric in determining what scientific theories get accepted, supported, lauded, funded, etc. The supposed rationality of science, both radical parties suggested, is simply an illusion.

Once again we seemed to be forced to choose: *either* the success of the sciences stems from their distinctive scientific modes of inference and the stable scientific vocabulary in which these inferences are expressed, *or else*, as scientists choose between incommensurable theories, they are predominantly influenced

[18] Susan Haack, "How the critical common-sensist sees things" in *Histoire,Épistémologie, Langage* 16, no.1 (1994) 9-33.

[19] C. S. Peirce, *op.cit.*, 5.172 (1903).

not by evidence but by extraneous social factors. But the assumption that science can live up to its aspiration to tell us how the world is only if it has a distinctive, logical method was mistaken, as was the idea that we must choose *either* a deferentialist logical picture of science *or else* an cynical sociological one. The radicals' premises were true; but the conclusion they drew didn't follow.

Yes, as those philosophical radicals reminded us, scientific languages, like natural languages, are constantly evolving; old terms gain new meaning, and new terms are introduced. And yes, this is one reason why formal, syntactical conceptions of scientific method, which require a fixed and stable vocabulary, fall short. (In fact, this should already have been clear from the "grue" paradox: since "all emeralds are green" and "all emeralds are grue" have the same logical form, the difference must lie in their content.) But shifts and changes of meaning don't necessarily undermine the reasonableness of scientific inquiry; indeed, they can contribute to it. As Peirce puts it, meaning grows as our knowledge grows, and this growth of meaning in turn contributes to the further growth of knowledge, as "men and words reciprocally educate each other."[20] Imagination, cognitive flexibility, and adaptability are more important in serious scientific work than formal rules; and adapting the vocabulary of science so it more nearly approximates the contours of the world and captures real kinds of thing, stuff, etc., more exactly, makes for real intellectual advance.

Yes, as those radical sociologists of science reminded us, scientists are only human; and, like the rest of us, they sometimes get sloppy and cut corners, ignore inconvenient evidence, or lazily take the path that seems personally, professionally, or politically most advantageous. What scientific theories get accepted doesn't always depend on how good the evidence is; commercial, political, and professional pressures can, and sometimes do, distort the process. Nevertheless, there is more to the sciences than *just* politics, power, and rhetoric; and scientific inquiry really *is* a rational enterprise—at least in the very modest sense that, fallible and imperfect as it is, on the whole and in the long run the way it goes about its business is appropriate to its goal of explaining events, processes, and phenomena, natural and social.

My Critical Common-sensism is so-called because it recognizes that scientific inquiry is continuous with the most ordinary of everyday inquiry. There are no special modes of inference or special procedures used by *all* scientists and *only* by scientists. Like the rest of us, scientists make informed guesses about possible explanations of something puzzling, check these guesses against whatever evidence they have or can obtain, and then use their judgment whether to stick with this conjecture for now, modify it, or drop it and start over. What's distinctive about scientific inquiry isn't that it uses a peculiar method, but that, over many generations, scientists have found ways to

[20] C. S. Peirce, *op.cit.*, 7.587 (c.1867).

amplify and refine everyday procedures of inquiry: devising physical tools to extend our unaided evidential reach, intellectual tools to describe the world more accurately and to refine our intuitive assessments of the worth of evidence, and social arrangements to discourage sloppy or dishonest inquiry, encourage inquirers to pool their evidence, etc. This is what explains how, for all its failings, scientific inquiry has been as successful at it has.

There's no *guarantee* that the sciences will always progress; and even when they do, their advance is apt to be ragged, uneven, and unpredictable. And whether, and if so how fast, science progresses depends in significant part on the environment in which it is conducted, which may be more, or less, hospitable. For—unlike such physical helps to inquiry as microscopes and telescopes, and unlike such intellectual helps as statistical techniques, computer programs, etc.—the social mechanisms to encourage creativity, honesty, evidence-sharing, etc., are very susceptible to pressure both from within the sciences and from the larger society. There need, after all, be no rivalry between the philosophy and the sociology of science; the two can, and should, work together, philosophy articulating what makes inquiry better or worse conducted, and sociology exploring what environments are more, and what less conducive to successful—imaginative, thorough, honest—inquiry.

The helps to inquiry that generations of scientists have devised extend their evidential reach, refine their assessment of where it points, stiffen their respect for evidence, and encourage them to share their evidence with others in the field. Because, given the success of the sciences, the words "science," "scientific," etc., are often used honorifically, some people imagine that scientific evidence must be something very special, something unique. But that's not true: the evidence with respect to a scientific claim or theory, just like the evidence with respect to any empirical claim, combines experiential evidence and reasons in the usual ramifying, multi-dimensional foundherentist structure. But the evidence with respect to a scientific theory is usually even more complex and even more ramifying than any individual's evidence; it is usually dependent on instruments; and it is almost always the shared resource of many inquirers, perhaps over many generations.

To say this is not to align myself with either side in disputes between "individual" and "social" approaches to epistemology. If the warrant of scientific claims rests ultimately on experience then, since it's individuals, not groups, who have experience, it seems the best approach must be individual; but if scientific claims are normally warranted by evidence accumulated by many people, it seems the best approach must be social. But here too there is habitable middle ground. The evidence with respect to any scientific claim or theory is, indeed, virtually always the shared resource of many people—sometimes vast distances or many years, or even centuries, apart. But, though it is ultimately anchored in the experience of individuals, the strength of the evidence

for scientific claims depends on how justified each individual is in his confidence that the other scientists on whose work he relies, the instruments on which he, or they in turn, rely, … etc., are reliable.[21] The warrant of scientific theories is social, but this is not to say either that it depends on "social values" or that it depends exclusively on the evidence of groups of scientists working together; and it depends on networks of more and less justified mutual confidence, but this is not to say that it is a matter of simple, blind "trust."

You may wonder whether my approach accounts for social-scientific, as well as natural-scientific inquiry. Well, as you might expect, the Critical Common-sensist repudiates *both* the idea that the social sciences use just the same (supposed) scientific method the natural sciences do, *and* the competing idea that the social sciences have their own peculiar method. But it accommodates the social sciences comfortably enough. Like inquiry in the natural sciences, inquiry in the social sciences is continuous with everyday empirical inquiry. The specialized tools and techniques used in the social sciences, however, are mostly different from those used in the natural sciences; and the explanations it seeks are intentional explanations, i.e., explanations in terms of people's beliefs, desires, fears, etc.,[22] rather than explanations in terms of physical forces.

Moreover, while the objects of social-scientific inquiry—social institutions, roles, rules, etc.—are certainly real, they are also socially constructed, brought into being by things people do; and, while they are independent of what any individual believes about them, they do sometimes depend in part on what people in the society concerned believe about them—as the viability of a currency depends on people's confidence in its viability. This is one reason why the integrity of the social sciences is even more susceptible to some kinds of pressure, especially political pressure, than the integrity of the natural sciences.

By now it should be obvious that, as the subtitle of my *Defending science*—"*between scientism and cynicism*"—signaled, Critical Common-sensism repudiates not only the cynicism of those who denigrate the supposed achievements of the sciences, but also the scientism of those who continue to assume that understanding what made those achievements possible requires us to identify the supposedly distinctive forms of "scientific inference," and deny any role either to meaning-change or to social factors. But of course scientism takes many other forms besides the myth of "scientific method," among them: trying to reduce other disciplines—legal or literary scholarship, for example, or philosophy itself—to sociology, biology, neuroscience, or some other scientific field, and even denying the legitimacy of non-scientific disciplines.

[21] Susan Haack, *Defending science*, chapter 3.

[22] Here I set aside consideration of the important differences among the social sciences, which are explored in detail in Susan Haack, *Defending science*, chapter 6.

Critical Common-sensism rejects them all,[23] finding it no more acceptable to *over*-estimate the sciences than to *under*-estimate them.

My understanding of the world combines in the mosaic of my philosophy with my account of our efforts to figure it out, forming a larger picture. For, like all empirical inquiry, scientific inquiry is possible only if, first, there are real kinds and laws in the world—without which there could be neither explanation nor prediction; and, second, we humans are able to perceive things and events around us, to make generalized conjectures about what might explain what we see, etc., and then to check those conjectures against further experience and form a considered conclusion. Moreover, my core ideas—Innocent Realism, Laconicism, Foundherentism, Critical Common-Sensism—have broader applications, e.g., in philosophy of law and philosophy of literature.

Foundherentism, for example, suggests that when we look at the evidentiary rules and procedures of the law, we should begin by distinguishing the epistemological values at stake if we want to arrive at factually true verdicts from the legal desiderata, such as promptness and finality of decisions, that can compete with them; and that we recognize the tension between the ramifying, quasi-holistic structure of evidence, and the atomistic, step-by-step character of legal proceedings. And Critical Common-Sensism suggests that, when we turn to the law's handling of scientific testimony specifically, we recognize that the quasi-Popperian philosophy of science the U.S. Supreme Court seemed to endorse in its landmark ruling on the admissibility of expert testimony in *Daubert* (1993)[24] was grossly unsuitable to their purpose of identifying scientific testimony sufficiently reliable to be admissible—for Popper's philosophy is nothing but a thinly-disguised skepticism; and that a more realistic, more gradualist conception of the quality of scientific evidence, such as mine, is called for.[25]

At the same time, the Innocent Realist conception of social institutions as *both* real *and* socially constructed has an obvious application to the legal systems of the world—which, indeed, constitute a whole kaleidoscope of pluralistic multi-verses in themselves. And the Laconicist idea that there is one truth but many truths resolves some issues about truth in the law: what it means to say that it is true that Florida law adopted *Daubert* in 2013 is, simply, that Florida law adopted *Daubert* in 2013. But what makes this claim true was what the Florida legislature and the governor of the state did in 2013; and, like all truths about what the law is, it makes sense only relative to a jurisdiction and a time.

[23] Susan Haack, "Six signs of scientism" (2010), in Susan Haack, *Putting philosophy to work*, second, expanded edition, pp. 105-120 (text) and pp. 278-283 (notes); *Scientism and its discontents*.

[24] Daubert v. Merrell Dow Pharms, Inc., 509 U.S. 579.

[25] Susan Haack, "Federal philosophy of science: a deconstruction—and a reconstruction" (2010), in Susan Haack, *Evidence matters: science, proof, and truth in the law*, New York, Cambridge University Press, 2014, pp. 122-155.

These ideas, akin to the legal thinking both of Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes[26] and of John Dewey,[27] are significant themes in my neo-classical pragmatist legal philosophy.[28]

Naturally, though, applying my core ideas in new areas has sometimes shown me that I needed to refine or modify them. With the help of the distinction between the imaginative and the imaginary, for example, Critical Common-sensism can acknowledge the importance of imagination in scientific work without risking assimilating science to imaginative literature. But this seems, on its face, to pose a problem for Innocent Realism. If, as apparently it does, "real" *contrasts* with "fictional," how could fictional characters, places, scenarios, etc., be real? Well: there really are fictional characters, places, and such; but these aren't real *people* or real *places*, though they are real imagined-people and real imagined-places. But then I faced an even harder problem: the status of the fictionalized versions of real people and real places sometimes encountered in works of fiction—are they real people, or not? Well, yes, and no; I needed to acknowledge that—as, for example, with the King Arthur of legend—such characters are real imagined-people based on real people.[29]

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Of course, there's much, much more to do. But now, looking back at how I was led from logic to epistemology to philosophy of science, philosophy of law, philosophy of literature, and so on, it strikes me very forcibly that—as, under the influence of classical pragmatism, my scope and interests have been growing ever wider—analytic philosophy has become even more out of touch with the history of philosophy and even more hyper-specialized, fragmented into cliques, niches, cartels, and fiefdoms, than it was when I began;[30] and that, as my distaste for philosophical bandwagons has grown, academic philosophy has produced them in ever-increasing numbers: "feminist" this, that and the other, "formal" everything,[31] the ever-popular Kripke-cult, the

[26] Oliver Wendell Holmes, "The path of the law" (1897), in Sheldon Novick, ed., *The collected works of Justice Holmes*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1995, vol. 3, pp. 391-406.

[27] John Dewey, "My philosophy of law," in *My philosophy of law: credos of sixteen American scholars*, Boston, Boston Law Book Co., 1941, pp. 71-85.

[28] Susan Haack, "The pluralistic universe of law: towards a neo-classical legal pragmatism" in *Ratio Juris* 21, no.4 (2008) 453-480; "The pragmatist tradition: lessons for legal theorists", in *Washington University Law Review* 95 (2018) 1049-1082.

[29] Susan Haack, "The real, the fictional, and the fake" in *Spazio Filosofico* 8 (2013) 209-217.

[30] Susan Haack, "The fragmentation of philosophy, the road to reintegration," in Julia Göhner and Eva Maria Jung, , op.cit. pp. 3-32.

[31] Susan Haack, "Formal philosophy: a plea for pluralism" (2005), in Susan Haack, *Putting philosophy to work*, second, expanded edition, pp. 235-250 (text) and pp. 310-313 (notes).

recurrent outbreaks of galloping Gettieritis, the vagueness vogue, the virtue epistemology boom,[32] the social epistemology blob, evolutionary this and that, neuro-everything, … and so forth. This is distressing; but it's also interesting, in a distressing sort of way—a startling illustration of the ways an inhospitable environment can hinder and distort inquiry.

The troubles besetting philosophy today result in part from changes in the management of universities affecting the whole academy: the burgeoning bureaucracy, the ever-increasing stress on "productivity," the ever-spreading culture of grants-and-research-projects,[33] the ever-growing reliance on hopelessly flawed surrogate measures of the quality of intellectual work, and the obsession with "prestige." They also result in part from changes in academic publishing: the ever-more-extensive reach of enormous, predatory presses that treat authors as fungible content-providers, the ever-increasing intrusiveness of copy-editors, the endless demands of a time- and energy-wasting peer-review process by now almost always relentlessly conventional and sometimes outright corrupt. But philosophers' response to all the perverse incentives that discourage serious inquiry and encourage self-promotion must also bear part of the blame: think, for example, of the decades of over-production of Ph.D.s, the pressure put on graduate students to publish while they're still wet behind the ears, the completely artificial importance given to "contacts" and skill in grantsmanship and, over the last decades, philosophy professors' craven willingness to sacrifice their own judgment in submission to the ranking gods of the Philosophical Gourmet Report.[34]

None of this makes me doubt the value of serious philosophical work. But it does make me fear that, at least in the short term, doing such work will be even more difficult and even more demanding than it would have been had the environment been less inhospitable.

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[32] See also Susan Haack, "The ideal of intellectual integrity, in life and literature" (2005), in Susan Haack, *Putting philosophy to work*, second, expanded edition, pp. 209-20 (text) and pp. 307-09 (notes).

[33] Susan Haack, "Preposterism and its consequences," in Susan Haack, *Manifesto of a passionate moderate*, pp. 188-204.

[34] Susan Haack, "The real question: can philosophy be saved?" in *Free Inquiry* 37, no.6 (2017) 40-43.