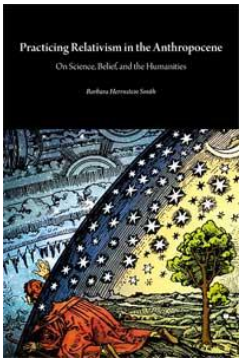
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Practicing Relativism in the Anthropocene: On Science, Belief, and the Humanities

Smith, Barbara Herrnstein



Practicing Relativism in the Anthropocene. Cover.

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Smith, Barbara Herrnstein. *Practicing Relativism in the Anthropocene: On Science, Belief, and the Humanities.* London: Open Humanities Press, 2018.

Barbara Herrnstein Smith addresses a set of contemporary issues involving knowledge and science from a constructivist-pragmatist perspective often labeled "relativism." Practicing that relativism, she argues, does not mean refusing judgment or asserting absurdities but being conscious of the existence and significance of contingency, complexity, and multiplicity.

Rejecting classic and neorealist views of knowledge and human cognition, Smith describes important alternative accounts in cognitive theory, science studies, and contemporary philosophy of mind. The "relativism" commonly associated with these alternative accounts, she maintains, is a chimera—part straw man, part red herring. Objections to the position so named typically involve crucially improper paraphrase of empirical observations of variability and contingency or dismaying inferences improperly drawn from such observations. (Text from Open Humanities Press)

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The Critical Climate Change series addresses the current sense of depletion, decay, mutation, and exhaustion which calls for new modes of address, new styles of publishing and authoring, and new formats and speeds of distribution. Edited by Tom Cohen and Claire Colebrook, the series aims to publish, in a timely fashion, experimental monographs that redefine the boundaries of disciplinary fields, rhetorical invasions, the interface of conceptual and scientific languages, and geomorphic and geopolitical interventions.

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https://www.environmentandsociety.org/sites/default/files/key_docs/smith_2018_practicing-relativism-in-the-anthropocene.pdf

Further readings:

- Emmett, Robert, and Thomas Lekan, eds."Whose Anthropocene? Revisiting Dipesh Chakrabarty's 'Four Theses,' " *RCC Perspectives: Transformations in Environment and Society* 2016, no. 2. doi.org/10.5282/rcc/7421.

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