

A General Case for Scientific Realism... and for Anti-Realism

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A view has emerged in the last few years that has shaken the foundations of the scientific realism debate. According to this view, which has rapidly been gaining ground and which we here brand 'particularism', general arguments for or against scientific realism or anti-realism are doomed to fail. The war will be won or lost instead on the many battlefields where particular arguments and considerations reign supreme. Without doubt, this view has a lot going for it. In what follows, we explore the pros and cons of both particularism and generalism. More polemically, we make the case that despite their various faults, general arguments still offer much promise in the epic war between realists and anti-realists. To be precise, we argue for a type of generalism that heeds some of the lessons emerging from particularism without conceding the claim that details are the alpha and the omega in establishing the correct epistemic attitude towards hypotheses and their posits.