



Explaining Understanding: New Perspectives from Epistemology and Philosophy of Science

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What does it mean to understand something? What types of understanding can be distinguished? Is understanding always provided by explanations? And how is it related to knowledge? Such questions have attracted considerable interest in epistemology recently. These discussions, however, have not yet engaged insights about explanations and theories developed in philosophy of science. Conversely, philosophers of science have debated the nature of explanations and theories, while dismissing understanding as a psychological by-product.

In this book, epistemologists and philosophers of science together address basic questions about the nature of understanding, providing a new overview of the field. False theories, cognitive bias, transparency, coherency, and other important issues are discussed. Its 15 original chapters are essential reading for researchers and graduate students interested in the current debates about understanding.

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Editorial Review

Review

"Recent epistemology has drawn increasing attention to the upper normative dimensions of the life of the mind. At the center of these discussions has been a concern with understanding conceived of as a state superior to true belief, justified belief, and even knowledge. The present volume advances previous discussions of understanding along several fronts. It brings together leading epistemologists and philosophers of science to address such issues as the relationship between understanding and truth, the nature and structure of the justificatory element of understanding, whether understanding requires knowledge (or even belief), and much more. The volume is very well-organized and the chapters complement and engage each other in interesting and fruitful ways. It provides anyone with an interest in philosophical issues related to understanding with a great deal to think about and learn from."

Jason Baehr, Loyola Marymount University, USA

About the Author

Stephen R. Grimm is Professor of Philosophy at Fordham University. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Notre Dame, his B.A. from Williams College, and he works mainly in epistemology, the philosophy of science, and ethics.

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