

Review of: "Naturalism's maxims and its methods. Is naturalistic philosophy like science?"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

This paper is thoroughly researched, clearly structured and well written. There's no mystery about exactly what it claims or what the argument is.

That said, I think it has two serious problems that prevent it from convincing. One is that naturalist philosophy is, on the paper's own account, very diverse. All the way through, the paper struggles and ultimately fails to find enough commonality in its targets to pin them all with the same critical thrust. It may be that in the end, it's only really in dialogue with Papineau.

The second problem, rectification of which would exacerbate the first, is that nobody in this discourse believes philosophy to be indistinguishable from science. Naturalist philosophers believe that philosophy is or ought to be continuous with science or in some appropriate way science-like. Nevertheless, they think that philosophy remains in some way distinct from science. (There are people who think that philosophy should dissolve into science, but that's a different crowd.) To give its targets their due, the paper must discuss the sense in which naturalist philosophers believe philosophy to be distinct from science in spite of its continuity with or similarity to. This matters, because it's here that the targets will seek their replies to the paper's argument. They will all say different things, which will make the first problem worse.