

CONTENTS

Preface

xi

PART I NATURALIZED METAPHYSICS

1. Ontology: scientific and meta-scientific	3
1.1 Scientific and philosophical conceptions of ontology	3
1.2 Deflationary ontology: historicism; sociology; pragmatics	8
1.3 Ontological limits: empiricism; scientific realism; metaphysics	14
1.4 Do case studies of science settle ontological disputes?	20
1.5 Examples of the robustness of ontology under cases	24

CONTENTS

2. Science and metaphysics, then and now	33
2.1 Ontology and the nature of metaphysical inference	33
2.2 Is modern science inherently metaphysical?	38
2.3 Epistemic stances regarding scientific ontology	45
2.4 Metaphysical inferences: lowercase 'm' versus capital 'M'	51
2.5 The (possible) autonomy of (some) metaphysics from science	59
3. Naturalism and the grounding metaphor	65
3.1 In hopes of a demarcation of scientific ontology	65
3.2 On conflating the <i>a priori</i> with that which is prior	71
3.3 How not to naturalize metaphysical inferences	76
3.4 Unpacking the metaphors: "grounding" and "distance"	83
3.5 On the distinction between theorizing and speculating	88

PART II

ILLUSTRATIONS AND MORALS

4. Dispositions: science as a basis for scientific ontology	99
4.1 How dispositions manifest in the philosophy of science	99
4.2 Explanatory power I: unifying aspects of scientific realism	104
4.3 Explanatory power II: giving scientific explanations	112

CONTENTS

4.4 Explanatory power III: consolidating scientific knowledge	121
4.5 Property identity and the actual power of explanatory power	127
5. Structures: science as a constraint on scientific ontology	132
5.1 Thinking about ontology in the domain of fundamental physics	132
5.2 Situating an ontological inquiry into subatomic "particles"	137
5.3 Structuralist interpretations of the metaphysics of particles	141
5.4 Reasoning about ontological bedrock: an unavoidable dilemma	148
5.5 Dissolving the dilemma: the variability of belief and suspension	158

PART III

VOLUNTARIST EPISTEMOLOGY

6. Knowledge under ontological uncertainty	167
6.1 Inconsistent ontologies and incompatible beliefs	167
6.2 Belief and ontological pluralism: perspectival knowledge?	171
6.3 A trilemma for perspectivism: irrelevant; unstable; incoherent	178
6.4 Two kinds of context-transcendent pluralism about ontology	188
6.5 Ontological explanation and contrastive what-questions	194

CONTENTS

7. The nature and provenance of epistemic stances	201
7.1 An infeasible persistence of ontological disagreement	201
7.2 Stances revisited: deflationary; empiricist; metaphysical	205
7.3 A voluntarist primer on choosing stances and beliefs	214
7.4 Epistemic stances in conflict: rationality and robustness	223
7.5 In defense of permissive norms of rationality for stances	229
8. Coda: ontology with lessons from Pyrrho and Sextus	235
8.1 Getting to the bottom of it all, while awake	235
8.2 Skeptical arguments: some Modes of Agrippa	237
8.3 A Pyrrhonian analogy: <i>isostheneia</i> and <i>aphasia</i>	241
8.4 Extending the analogy a bit further: <i>ataraxia</i>	244
8.5 A transformative epistemology of scientific ontology	247
<i>Bibliography</i>	253
<i>Index</i>	265