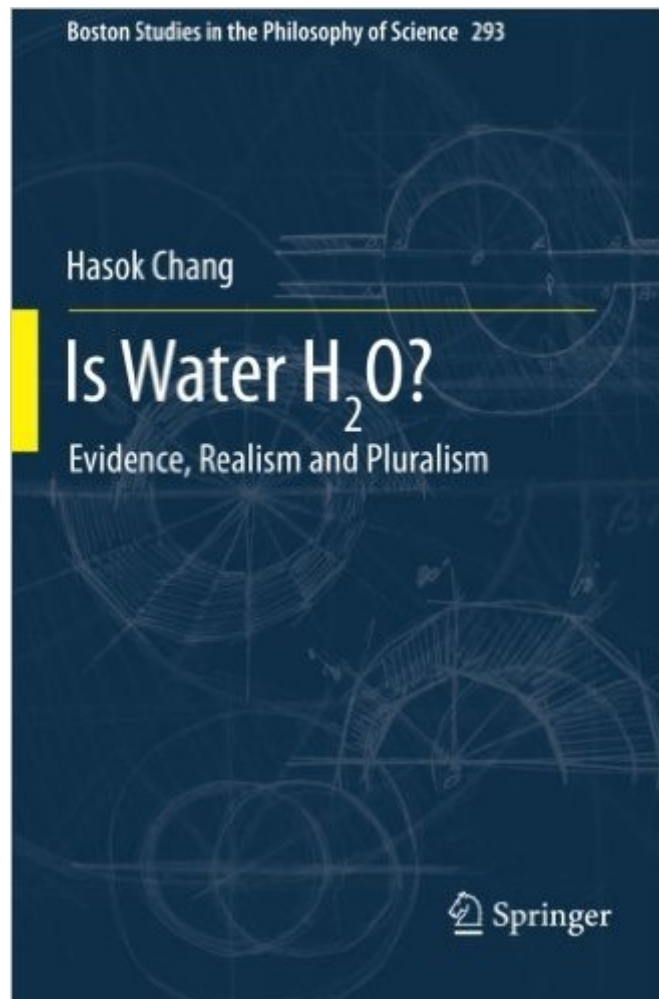


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Is Water H₂O?: Evidence, Realism And Pluralism (Boston Studies In The Philosophy And History Of Science)



Synopsis

This book exhibits deep philosophical quandaries and intricacies of the historical development of science lying behind a simple item of common sense in modern science: the composition of water as H₂O. It offers a unique new advocacy for pluralism in science.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I'm going to expand this review shortly, but having just finished it couldn't wait to say how it broke the intellectual block I've had in deciding between realism and operationalism for about forty years now. I'm not giving you much to go on, I know, but "philosophers", philosophy majors, and history of science specialists should get a lot out of this book. I'm impressed. No wonder it's gotten a good review on [Amazon](#) and recently (my cause of buying it) in "Science".
HERE'S THE EXPANSION
When I was a boy, we were basking in the afterglow of phenomenalism. It was still perfectly respectable to adhere to the likes of Bergmann, Russell, Mach and Freddie Ayer. In fact, I'm not far from there now. Kuhns became the flavor of the day, with a lot of staying power. That has resulted in some pretty outlandish claims about the relativity of science (by which I will always mean physics). And Karl Popper, of course, one of my favorites. But infusing the whole atmosphere of the late 20th century -in physics and philosophy - a kind of hard core realism became more and more acceptable. I don't know why, maybe the computer facilitating a materialist theory of mind. This took place as physics became less and less imaginable, as Berkeley would say. Indeed, today we are treated to twice yearly books by physicists themselves waxing philosophical and questioning the

correspondence of their theories with reality. Baggott, the most widely read, is but one. Chang give reading suggestions at the beginning of this book. For a quick go thru, either just to get to the philosophy part or to make it easier, he suggests a reader may skip the latter part of the first three History of the Chemical Revolution chapters. I didn't. They were quite interesting.

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