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THE PARADOX OF PREDICTIVISM

An enduring question in the philosophy of science is the question of whether a scientific theory deserves more credit for its successful predictions than it does for accommodating data that was already known when the theory was developed. In *The Paradox of Predictivism*, Eric Barnes argues that the successful prediction of evidence testifies to the general credibility of the predictor in a way that evidence does not when the evidence is used in the process of endorsing the theory. He illustrates his argument with an important episode from nineteenth-century chemistry, Mendeleev's Periodic Law and its successful predictions of the existence of various elements. The consequences of this account of predictivism for the realist/anti-realist debate are considerable, and strengthen the status of the 'no miracle' argument for scientific realism. Another significant consequence is that scientific method embodies a pervasive epistemic pluralism, according to which expert scientists who assess theories depend heavily on the judgments of other scientists. Barnes's important and original contribution to the debate will interest a wide range of readers in philosophy of science.

ERIC CHRISTIAN BARNES is Associate Professor of Philosophy at Southern Methodist University.

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To Veronica, who is my happiness

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1996 "Discussion: thoughts on Maher's Predictivism," *Philosophy of Science*, 63, 401–410.

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1996 "Social predictivism," *Erkenntnis* 45, 69–89.
1998 "Probabilities and epistemic pluralism," *British Journal for the Philosophy of Science* 49, 31–37.
1999 "The quantitative problem of old evidence," *British Journal for the Philosophy of Science* 50, 249–264.
2000 "Ockham's razor and the anti-superfluity principle," *Erkenntnis* 53, 3, 353–374.
2002 "Neither truth nor empirical adequacy explain novel success," *Australasian Journal of Philosophy* 80, 4, 418–431.
2002 "The miraculous choice argument for realism," *Philosophical Studies* 111, 2, 97–120.
2005 "Predictivism for pluralists," *British Journal for the Philosophy of Science*, 56, 421–450.

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