



Fiction and Scientific Modeling

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 William Bennett Munro Memorial Seminar
 Division of the Humanities and Social Sciences
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Most scientific models are not physical objects. But, what sorts of entities are they? What is truth in a model? And how do we learn about models? In this paper, I argue that models share important aspects in common with literary fiction and that theories of fiction can, thus, be brought to bear upon these questions. In particular, I argue that the "pretense theory" of representation as developed by Kendall Walton has the resources to shed especially illuminating light on models. Introducing Walton's account, I outline the suggestions it offers and develop a general picture of scientific modeling based on it.