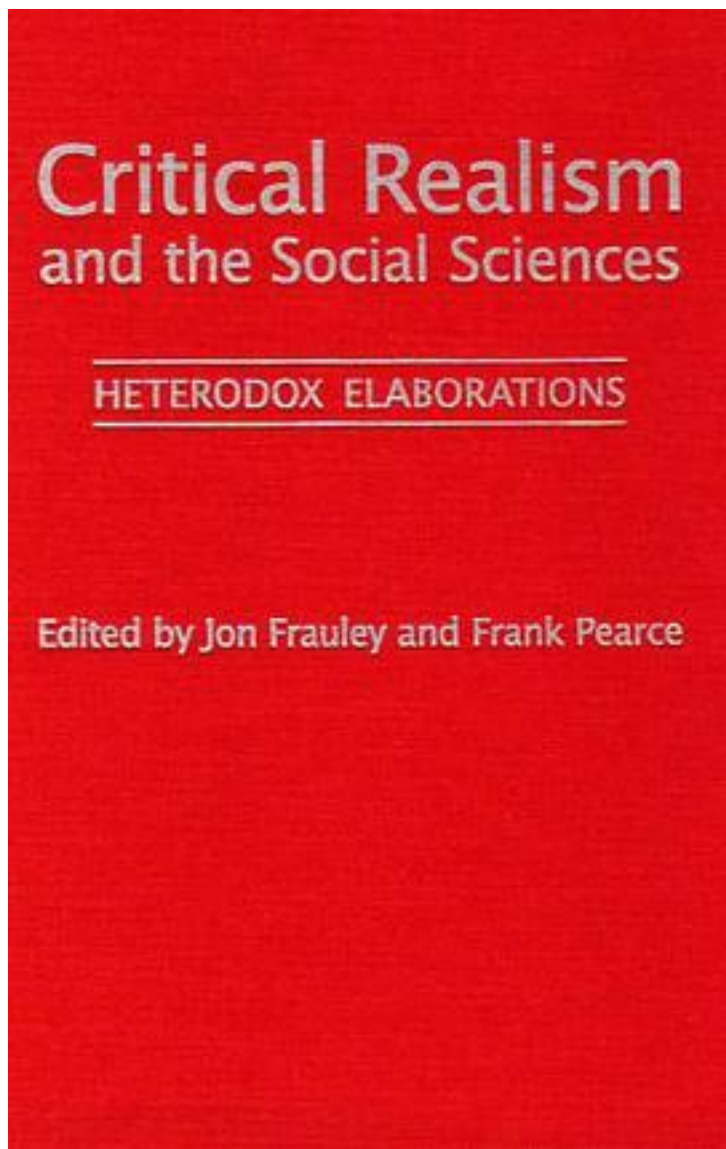


Critical Realism and the Social Sciences



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Critical realism is a distinct school of thought in philosophy and the social sciences that has been expanding and growing in significance over the past three decades. It offers important insights into the nature of both our social and natural world, and the nature of the social sciences by challenging conventional notions of the relationship between empirical experiences, actual events, and causal mechanisms. Critical Realism and the Social Sciences brings together contributors from both sides of the Atlantic, all of whom engage with tenets of critical realism, juxtaposing them with traditional representations of social scientific enquiry. United in the belief that the conceptual systems hitherto relied upon affect our styles of thought, ethical choices, political orientations, and so on, the contributors explore realism in relation to other currents of theoretical thought, thus suggesting a basis for evaluation and further elaboration of critical realism. As a whole, the volume seeks to show how this particular approach provides a way to better understand many aspects of social existence, from human attributes to the interrelatedness of human activities and the natural world. In this much-needed study, critical realism is carefully examined, sympathetically assessed, and creatively developed by authors from diverse disciplinary backgrounds.

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