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The Roots of Reference

W. V. Quine

Lasalle, Ill., Open Court (1974)

Abstract

Our only channel of information about the world is the impact of external forces on our sensory surfaces. So says science itself. There is no clairvoyance. How, then, can we have parlayed this meager sensory input into a full-blown scientific theory of the world? This is itself a scientific question. The pursuit of it, with free use of scientific theory, is what I call naturalized epistemology. The Roots of Reference falls within that domain. Its more specific concern, within that domain, is reference to concrete and abstract objects: what such reference consists in, and how we achieve it.

Keywords

[Reference](#) [Perception](#) [Language and languages](#) [Philosophy](#) [Naturalized epistemology](#)
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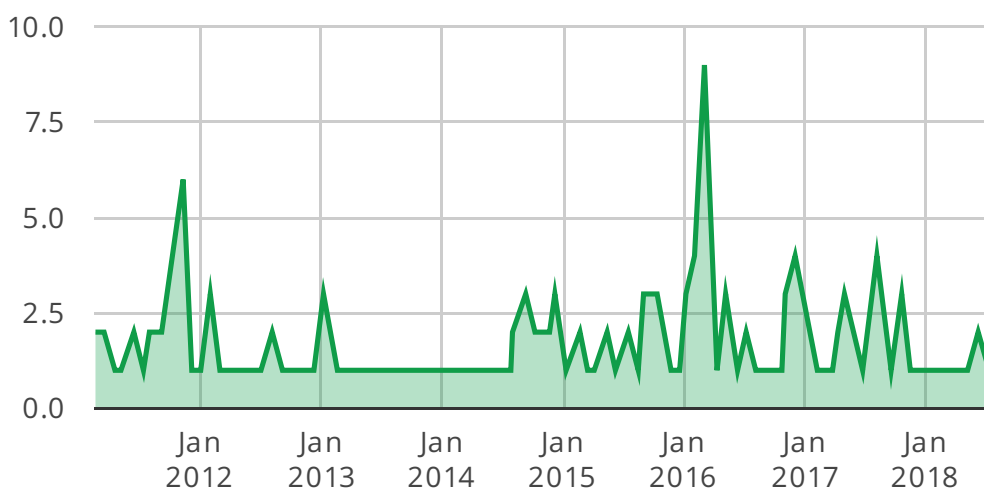
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