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'Science Itself Teaches.' A Fresh Look at Quine's Naturalistic Metaphilosophy

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Abstract

Quine famously holds that "philosophy is continuous with natural science". In order to find out what exactly the point of this claim is, I take up one of his preferred phrases and trace it through his writings, i.e., the phrase "Science itself teaches that …". Unlike Wittgenstein, Quine did not take much interest in determining what might be distinctive of philosophical investigations, or of the philosophical part of scientific investigations. I find this indifference regrettable, and I take a fresh look at Quine's metaphilosophy, trying to defuse his avowed naturalism by illustrating how little influence his naturalistic rhetoric has on the way he actually does philosophy.