

Editions de Minuit, 1967). At the same time, however, notions that “retain us in” the logocentric predicament are spoken of as having “collapsed,” as we saw above.

31. Derrida, “The Principle of Reason: The University in the Eyes of Its Pupils,” *Diacritics* 13 (1983):44.

32. *The Ear of the Other*, trans. Christie V. McDonald (New York: Schocken Books, 1985), pp. 23–24.

33. “Serious Play: The Ethical-Political Horizon of Jacques Derrida,” *The Journal of Speculative Philosophy* 1:2 (1987):93–117. The quotation is from p. 111.

# VI

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## Beyond Realism and Anti-Realism



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## Comments

Nelson Goodman

Peter McCormick's pointed selection of papers by some of the writers most attentive to my work focuses on irrealism. I first introduced the term "irrealism" into my work rather diffidently in the foreword to *Ways of Worldmaking* (Hackett, 1978):<sup>1</sup>

Few familiar philosophical labels fit comfortably a book that is at odds with rationalism and empiricism alike, with materialism and idealism and dualism, with essentialism and existentialism, with mechanism and vitalism, with mysticism and scientism, and with most other ardent doctrines. What emerges can perhaps be described as a radical relativism under rigorous restraints, that eventuates in something akin to irrealism.

In *Of Mind and Other Matters* (Harvard, 1984) I add that "I am a relativist who nevertheless maintains that there is a distinction between right and wrong among theories, interpretations, and works of art," and that I am an anti-realist and an anti-idealist—hence an irrealist.

### 15.1 On Putnam's Papers (chaps. 2, 6, and 14)

Realism and idealism disagree over what is admissible in the foundation of the unique correct description of the world. Irrealism dismisses the issue, denying that there can be any such unique version. When Hilary Putnam writes (in chap. 6 above):

Goodman's two big points still hold: all species of reduction and ontological identification involve posits, legislation, non-uniqueness; and there are both different kinds of reduction and different directions of reduction. If all versions can be reduced in one way to a physicalist version . . . in principle. . . , then they can all be reduced to a phenomenalist version in another way . . . in principle,