

## Knowledge from Fiction

In this paper, I deal with a particular genre of literary fictional works that is often labeled “realist fiction” (although I do not wish to rule out *a priori* that some of the considerations in this paper are applicable, perhaps with some modifications, to non-realist fictional works as well). The questions I want to deal with are the following: Can we gain knowledge from fictional works? If so, what kind of knowledge, and how is it possible? Is the knowledge-enhancing function of such fictional works (if such there is) just a sort of side effect or is it something essential for the appreciation of these works?

I argue that readers not only can gain knowledge from fictional literary works, but that the epistemic value of a fictional work is relevant for the overall value of the work in question, even if the work is valued explicitly from the point of view of a typical reader of fiction (that is, not, for instance, from the point of view of a sociologist, psychoanalyst or historian).