1. Record Nr. UNINA9910813325203321

Titolo Counterfactual thinking-- counterfactual writing / / edited by Dorothee

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Pubbl/distr/stampa Berlin;; Boston,: De Gruyter, c2011

ISBN 1-283-40304-8

9786613403049 3-11-026866-3

Edizione [1st ed.]

Descrizione fisica 1 online resource (264 p.)

Collana Linguae & litterae, , 1869-7054;; 12

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Disciplina 160

Soggetti Counterfactuals (Logic)

Philosophy - Social aspects Knowledge, Theory of

Reality in literature

Lingua di pubblicazione Inglese

Formato Materiale a stampa

Livello bibliografico Monografia

Note generali Description based upon print version of record.

Nota di bibliografia Includes bibliographical references.

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Sommario/riassunto

Counterfactuality is currently a hotly debated topic. While for some disciplines such as linguistics, cognitive science, or psychology counterfactual scenarios have been an important object of study for quite a while, counterfactual thinking has in recent years emerged as a method of study for other disciplines, most notably the social sciences. This volume provides an overview of the current definitions and uses of the concept of counterfactuality in philosophy, historiography, political sciences, psychology, linguistics, physics, and literary studies. The individual contributions not only engage the controversies that the deployment of counterfactual thinking as a method still generates, they also highlight the concept's potential to promote interdisciplinary exchange without neglecting the limitations and pitfalls of such a project. Moreover, the essays from literary studies, which make up about half of the volume, provide both a historical and a systematic perspective on the manifold ways in which counterfactual scenarios can be incorporated into and deployed in literary texts.