

<http://somatosphere.net/2018/02/book-forum-tracing-autism.html>

Book Forum—Des Fitzgerald's *Tracing Autism*: Uncertainty, Ambiguity, and the Affective Labor of Neuroscience

2018-02-06 15:33:23

By Todd Meyers



Des Fitzgerald writes of his book, *Tracing Autism*, “This is a book about scientists talking about their own practice, in tones that are beset by ambiguity, uncertainty, complexity, and even some anxiety” (9). This is true, and after reading the book one might find the description a little understated. By now the idea that neuroscience, any science, is fraught

with uncertainty and complexity is the baseline for science studies and kindred fields of study. In [Tracing Autism: Uncertainty, Ambiguity, and the Affective Labor of Neuroscience](#), Des Fitzgerald uses this insight as a point of departure and puts these concepts to work—to trace the work they do—in (and through) the words of his scientist-interlocutors. Words are key. He structures his chapters around quoted speech which he amplifies through his interpretations, reflections, restatements, and rebuttals, which makes the book feel like part transcript, part therapy session notes, and part eavesdropping on a wholly intriguing conversation. The following are a diverse and careful set of commentaries on *Tracing Autism*—we hope you enjoy.

Commentaries:

[**The Unicorn and the Trash Bag: A Defense of Wariness**](#)

[Elizabeth Fein](#)

Duquesne University

[**What Can We Do with Uncertainty?**](#)

[Matthew Wolf-Meyer](#)

Binghamton University

[**Social Science vs. Neuroscience? Epistemologies and Stereotypes**](#)

[M. Ariel Cascio](#)

Institut de recherches cliniques de Montréal (IRCM) and McGill University

[**Feeling Autism Neuroscience**](#)

[Michael Orsini](#)

University of Ottawa

[**Beyond “Paranoia” and “Reparation”: Tracing Autism Neuroscience**](#)

[Francisco Ortega](#)

University of Rio de Janeiro

Reply:

[**Bad Surprises**](#)

[Des Fitzgerald](#)

Cardiff University

[Download book forum](#)

AMA citation

Meyers T. Book Forum—Des Fitzgerald's Tracing Autism: Uncertainty, Ambiguity, and the Affective Labor of Neuroscience. *Somatosphere*. 2018. Available at:
<http://somatosphere.net/2018/02/book-forum-tracing-autism.html>.
Accessed February 8, 2018.

APA citation

Meyers, Todd. (2018). *Book Forum—Des Fitzgerald's Tracing Autism: Uncertainty, Ambiguity, and the Affective Labor of Neuroscience*. Retrieved February 8, 2018, from Somatosphere Web site:
<http://somatosphere.net/2018/02/book-forum-tracing-autism.html>

Chicago citation

Meyers, Todd. 2018. Book Forum—Des Fitzgerald's Tracing Autism: Uncertainty, Ambiguity, and the Affective Labor of Neuroscience. Somatosphere.
<http://somatosphere.net/2018/02/book-forum-tracing-autism.html>
(accessed February 8, 2018).

Harvard citation

Meyers, T 2018, *Book Forum—Des Fitzgerald's Tracing Autism: Uncertainty, Ambiguity, and the Affective Labor of Neuroscience*, Somatosphere. Retrieved February 8, 2018, from
<<http://somatosphere.net/2018/02/book-forum-tracing-autism.html>>

MLA citation

Meyers, Todd. "Book Forum—Des Fitzgerald's Tracing Autism: Uncertainty, Ambiguity, and the Affective Labor of Neuroscience." 6 Feb. 2018. Somatosphere. Accessed 8 Feb. 2018.<<http://somatosphere.net/2018/02/book-forum-tracing-autism.html>>