



Scientific Approaches to the Study of International Relations

By Jan-Henrik Petermann

GRIN Verlag Nov 2011, 2011. Taschenbuch. Book Condition: Neu. 210x148x1 mm. This item is printed on demand - Print on Demand Neuware - Essay from the year 2006 in the subject Politics - International Politics - General and Theories, grade: -, London School of Economics (Department of International Relations), language: English, abstract: Since the behaviourist turn of the 1960s, questions concerning the appropriateness and desirability of a positivist research agenda have been at the forefront of meta-methodological debate within the social sciences. The evolving 'science wars' between positivists and normativists have also presented enormous challenges to the epistemological identities and professional self-images of scholars working in the academic field of International Relations (IR). Whereas positivists maintain that the overarching aim of science is the experimentally guided explanation of empirical phenomena under 'covering laws', normativists and traditionalists hold that social scientists cannot - and, in fact, should not - emulate the causal models of the natural sciences. According to this view, it is virtually impossible to study the influences of distinct variables in complex social interactions, and statistical aggregation merely obscures the fact that the true 'causes' of events are rarely obvious in the social world. Hence, the purpose of political...



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