

Topics in Phil. of Science: Science, Knowledge, and Values

Philosophy 610

Fall 2016

Th 2:45–5:35

BB 368

A traditional conception of scientific objectivity has held that science should be value-free, that the answers it provides should depend only on the facts. A further traditional conception has held that factual findings can't themselves yield normative conclusions; in short, that is can't imply ought. On examination, however, the value-free conception of science is untenable — at least in its traditional form. Where does that leave science and knowledge? The course will look approach these issues by looking at recent debates in philosophy of science, through the works of authors such as Hilary Putnam, Philip Kitcher, and Heather Douglas.

Professor: P.D. Magnus

E-mail: pmagnus@albany.edu

Office phone: (518) 442-4223

Office: HU 257

Office hours: Tu Th 11:00–noon and by appointment

Texts: We will be reading two books and several articles. You should order the books from your preferred book seller; we won't need them for a couple of weeks. The articles will be available via Blackboard; you should print them.

- Hilary Putnam. *The Collapse of the Fact/Value Dichotomy and other essays*. Harvard University Press. 2002. ISBN 978-0-6740-1380-3

- Heather E. Douglas. *Science, Policy, and the Value-Free Ideal*. University of Pittsburgh Press. 2009. ISBN 978-0-8229-6026-3

Requirements and grading: Students should come to class prepared to discuss assigned material. Students who miss class are required to write a 1–2 page paper on one of the session's assigned readings.

Students are required to make a presentation on a course reading and a final paper presentation.

Students will write a final (10–15 page) paper.

33% Participation

33% Class presentations

33% Final paper

Presentations: Each presentation should (a) offer a summary of the central claim and argument of a reading and (b) offer some points which open class discussion. The structure of a presentation should not be an outline of the reading! It may evaluate how successful the article is or connect issues raised by the article to earlier readings in the course.

Schedule of topics

This is a provisional schedule. Specific readings may take more or less time than indicated, and we may drop some readings if this proves to be too much.

Week 1 sep 1

Introduction

Week 2 sep 8

Classical pragmatism and empiricism

William Clifford. 1877. 'The Ethics of Belief.'

William James. 1896. 'The Will to Believe.'

Otto Neurath. 1913. 'The Lost Wanderers of Descartes and the Auxiliary Motive.'

Week 3 sep 15

Historians and sociologists on values in science

Robert K. Merton. 1968 (1942). 'Science and Democratic Social Structure.'

Thomas Kuhn. 1973. 'Objectivity, Value Judgement, and Theory Choice.'

Michael Mulkay. 1980. 'Interpretation and the Use of Rules: The Case Study of Norms in Science.'

Week 4 sep 22

The Inductive Risk Argument

Richard Rudner. 1953. 'The Scientist *Qua* Scientist Makes Value Judgements.'

Richard C. Jeffrey. 1956. 'Valuation and Acceptance of Scientific Hypotheses.'

Justin Biddle and Eric Winsberg. 2010. 'Value Judgements and the Estimation of Uncertainty in Climate Modelling.'

Week 5 sep 29

Putnam on fact and value, part I

Putnam chapters 1–3

Week 6 oct 6

Putnam on fact and value, part II

Putnam chapters 6–8

Week 7 oct 13

Douglas on values and objectivity

Douglas chapters 4–6

Week 8 oct 20

Douglas on science and policy

Douglas chapters 7–8

Week 9 oct 27

Kitcher and Well-ordered Science

Philip Kitcher. 2011. 'Well-ordered science' from *Science in a Democratic Society*.

Julian Reiss and Philip Kitcher. 2008. 'Neglected Diseases and Well-Ordered Science.'

Mark Brown. 2011. Review of Kitcher.

Week 10 nov 3, No Class!

I will be at the Philosophy of Science Association meeting in Atlanta.

Week 11 nov 10

Recent contributions, part I

Gregor Betz. 2013. 'In defence of the value free ideal.'

Matt Brown. 2013. 'Values in Science beyond Underdetermination and Inductive Risk.'

Inmaculada de Melo-Martín and Kristen Intemann. 2016. 'The Risk of Using Inductive Risk to Challenge the Value-Free Ideal.'

Week 12 nov 17

Recent contributions, part II

Kristina Rolin. 2015. 'Values in Science: The Case of Scientific Collaboration.'

Sharyn Clough. 2015. 'Fact/Value Holism, Feminist Philosophy, and Nazi Cancer Research.'

Anna Alexandrova. 2016. 'Can the Science of Well-Being Be Objective?'

Thanksgiving! No class!

Week 13 dec 1

To Be Announced!

Recent contributions, part III

Kevin C. Elliott and Daniel J. McKaughan. 2014. 'Nonepistemic Values and the Multiple Goals of Science.'

Daniel Steel. 2016. 'Accepting an Epistemically Inferior Alternative?'

Daniel J. Hicks. 2014. 'A new direction for science and values.'

or

Epistemic Injustice

Miranda Fricker. 1999. 'Epistemic Oppression and Epistemic Privilege.'

David Coady. 2010. 'Two Concepts of Epistemic Injustice.'

or

Paper presentations, part I

Week 14 dec 8

Conclusion

Paper presentations