

# What Social Scientists Need to Know about the Philosophy of Science.

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<http://www.the-rathouse.com>

The good news is that scientists don't need to know very much about the topics that obsessed the philosophers of science for the last generation or two.

You just need to know enough to avoid being misled by those philosophers and by the influence of their ideas in the social sciences.

The subtext of the talk is the failure of the organizations and markets in the philosophy of science industry, and especially the downside of specialization and professionalization in the absence of performance tests that eliminate defective products in the way that collapsing bridges and falling airplanes signal problems in civil engineering and aviation.

1. Has a philosopher or method person ever been helpful for you?
2. What makes science different from non-science - arts, lit crit, law etc
3. *New Directions in Economic Methodology*. What have these guys been up to all these years?
4. The debacle of positivism and empiricism. - the failure in the market of ideas due to specialization and professionalization.
5. Popper on the absence of method and the way to go with problem solving.
6. Regulations.

Reading, writing, history, methods, policy relevance,

Big science, funding, normal science, Kealey on the economics of scientific research

## THINGS TO READ

**Popper.** Forget about scientific method, fall in love with your problem and generate lots of exciting problem children.

<http://www.criticalrationalism.net/2011/03/19/popper-on-scientific-method/>

**Colin Simkin's** introduction to Popper for economists and social scientists.

<http://www.the-rathouse.com/James/Simkin-Basic-Popper.html>

**Hamming.** How to do great research (if you really want to).

<http://www.cs.virginia.edu/~robins/YouAndYourResearch.pdf>

**Mills** on intellectual craftsmanship.

[http://www.the-rathouse.com/2010/Intellectual\\_Craftsmanshp\\_C\\_Wright\\_Mills.pdf](http://www.the-rathouse.com/2010/Intellectual_Craftsmanshp_C_Wright_Mills.pdf)

**Pete** on making a career as an Austrian without wearing leather pants.

[http://mises.org/journals/aen/aen15\\_2\\_1.asp](http://mises.org/journals/aen/aen15_2_1.asp)

**Kealey** on the economics of scientific research.

<http://www.the-rathouse.com/2010/Kealey-EconomicsofScience.html>

**Champion** on how to make research pay (in dollars).

<http://www.the-rathouse.com/2010/Aust-rural-research.html>

The economic goals which are being sought by bureaucratic reforms in higher education and research may be better achieved by promoting the tradition of wide ranging scholarship, and by fostering links between agencies involved in 'pure' and 'applied' research. Free trade also promotes effective research and development by forcing firms to become efficient or fall by the wayside.

**Barzun** on education and scholarship.

<http://www.the-rathouse.com/JacquesBarzun.html>

**Mark Blaug** on the life of a scholar

<http://www.criticalrationalism.net/2011/04/09/mark-blaug-would-be-but-not-really-popperian/>