

# SCIENCE AND ETHICS

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<p>Science can (also) be studied as responsible and rational human activity, guided and legitimated by its own <i>normative system</i>: a finite and ordered set of norms and values for agents in a given field of activity. Such <i>norms of inquiry</i> are needed for a <i>rationality requirement</i> of science, which also presupposes a partial agreement on (acceptance of, respect for) these norms between scientists and their social environment. The notions of scientific accountability, autonomy, and freedom of inquiry are elucidated by means of an action-theoretic definition of science and by a certain use of the distinction between <i>internal</i> methodological) and <i>external</i> norms of science.</p>		
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<p>It is argued that the opposition of nature and ethics ought to be overcome by the cooperation of scientific and ethical studies. Beyond that, theoretical, practical and specifically political reasons suggest a serious examination of the possibilities for an ethical orientation derived from evolutionary biology. So far, however, the conceptual connexion between evolutionary facts and ethical norms appears to be insufficiently understood. Given that, suggestive connexions offered by biological thinkers need critical examination, especially of their hidden historical conditions and their potentially dangerous political implications.</p>		
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<p>There are old and convincing arguments for intellectual liberty in all of its forms — freedom to think, to speak, to publish — based on assumptions that we who have been brought up in Western democratic countries take for granted. Two major arguments are particularly powerful. The first I shall call the Utili-</p>		

tarian argument which, in its simplest form, says that without intellectual liberty any Party and any government will harden into an exploiting class, a tyranny. The Kantian argument is that, quite apart from its value to society, intellectual liberty — Kant calls it autonomy — is absolutely indispensable to the integrity of the person. In this paper I defend the Kantian approach. The philosophical-epistemological question “How do you *know* autonomy is a good thing?” remains unanswered. No further foundation can be given.

Lars BERGSTRÖM: On the Value of Scientific Knowledge 53

Presumably, most scientists believe that scientific knowledge is intrinsically good, i.e. good in itself, apart from consequences. This doctrine should be rejected. The arguments which are usually given for it — e.g. by philosophers like W.D. Ross, R. Brandt, and W. Frankena — are quite inconclusive. In particular, it may be doubted whether knowledge is in fact desired for its own sake, and even if it is, this would not support the doctrine. However, the doctrine is open to counter-examples. The main counter-argument is that the doctrine has implications which are morally unacceptable.

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The problems that I address concern the morality and rationality of decisions with respect to the application and practice of science. Formally, the situation is a standard decision theoretic one in which one has a set of alternatives and a set of outcomes. The standard solution is to maximize expected utility. This formal simplicity conceals considerable philosophical complexity. The most obvious is — whose expected utility should we maximize? The second is — are there any moral constraints on what utility assignments we shall allow? The principle of rationality I am assuming is that a rational decision should be based on the total information available. Failure to cooperate in effecting such an amalgamation is subversive with respect to this overriding principle of rationality. It is a fundamental principle of truth seeking. Given the *prima facie* moral obligation to seek truth, failure to cooperate is *prima facie* immoral as well.

Myles BRAND: Interpersonal Practical Reasoning ..... 77

According to one version of the Causal Theory, an action is a mental or bodily event caused by an intention to act. Deliberate action requires prior planning. The practical syllogism is inter-