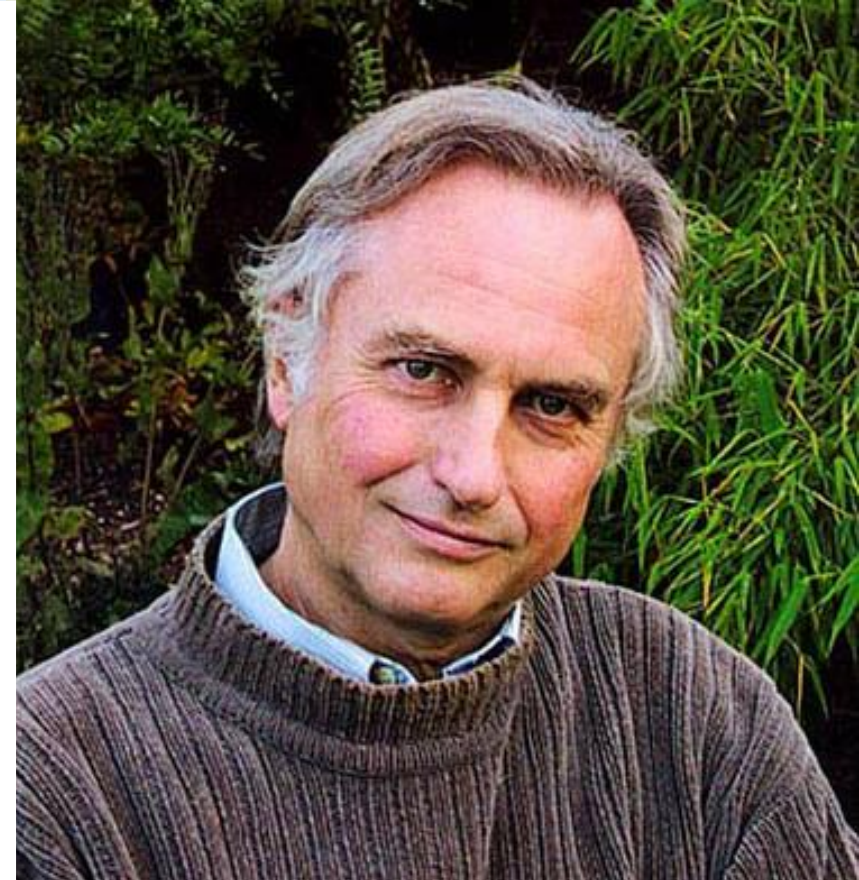


Welcome to ...



Introduction to Philosophy



# Philosophy & Science

AREN'T SCIENCE, PSYCHOLOGY & SOCIOLOGY ENOUGH?

# Common Sense, Science and Philosophy



ORDINARY  
KNOWLEDGE/COMMON SENSE



SCIENCE



PHILOSOPHY

# Definition & Characteristics of Science

Certain knowledge through causes



A close-up photograph of a large, smooth, dark rock with a bright, glowing yellow and orange pattern on its surface, set against a background of many smaller, dark, smooth rocks. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the texture and color of the glowing rock.

# Similarities & Differences Between Philosophy & Particular Sciences

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# Similarities & Differences Between Philosophy & Other Sciences ('Particular Science')

## Similarities

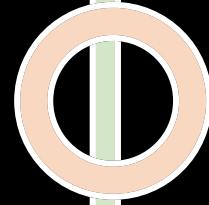
- **Material Object:** both study reality
  - Philosophy: all reality,
  - Science a particular sector of reality
- **Formal Object:** both are sciences: knowledge through causes
  - Philosophy: first, last, ultimate, deepest, universal
  - Science: immediate, proximate, particular
- **Use natural light of reason**
- **Start from principles**
  - Philosophy: 1<sup>st</sup> self-evident propositions
  - Science: metaphysical conclusions

## Differences

- **Focus**
  - Philosophy: philosophical perspective – questions and answers about deepest and ultimate realities
  - Science: study realities using own methods and perspectives that are not philosophical
- **Degree of Abstraction**
  - Natural sciences: material realities
  - Mathematical sciences: objects that depend on matter but which can be considered by the mind in total abstraction from matter. Object: quantity of being
  - Middle sciences: use maths for physical knowledge (astronomy, engineering)
  - Metaphysics: deals with realities that don't depend on matter because
    - They have no matter (eg God, angels), or
    - They can be found materially and immaterially (substance, act, potency, unity, plurality). Object: being as being
- **Pre-eminence of Philosophy:** the 1<sup>st</sup> & sublime science (knowledge through causes)
  - Reaches realm of spiritual realities (God, immortal soul, natural law)
  - Deals with all reality in light of ultimate explanations (metaphysical)
- **Unity and Multiplicity in Philosophy**
  - Universal scope
  - A science with many parts, composed of different sciences, each with its own material object (type of being). Study different degrees of being (eg Philosophy of the Human Person)
  - One in material object (study of reality) and philosophical perspective



The  
Relationship  
Between  
Philosophy and  
Science: Does  
Philosophy  
Need Science?



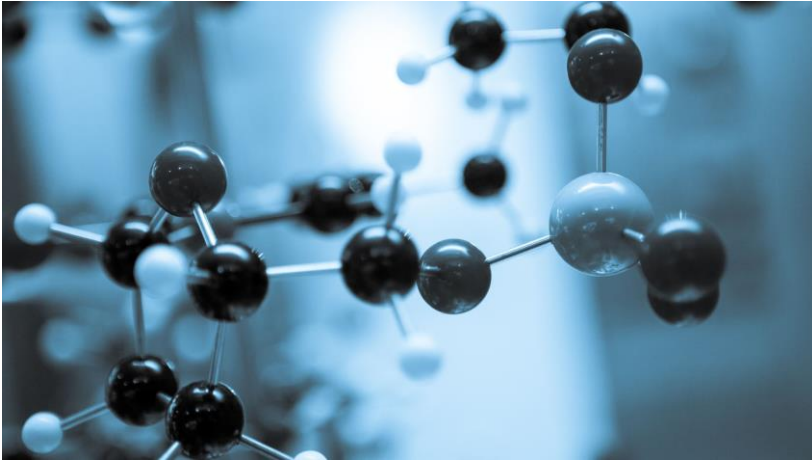
How should a philosopher treat  
science?





# The Relationship Between Philosophy and Science: Does Science Need Philosophy?

# Science and Philosophy



## Science is founded on metaphysics: uses philosophical principles.

- Sciences *implicitly* rely on notions of reality (eg medicine studies sickness in human beings without explicitly studying 'human nature').
  - Science can build on erroneous metaphysical foundations (eg psychology that regards human beings as just brains or higher animals, that can be replicated by AI).

## Guiding Role of Philosophy

- Autonomy of science: philosophy cannot replace it: science needs its own methods and perspective and has its own methods of obtaining and judging conclusions.
- Philosophy does not interfere with science, but can
  - **judge** the 1<sup>st</sup> principles it is based on, and the value of its methods
  - Classify sciences by their object and nature
- The conclusions of particular sciences are
  - not deduced from philosophy (v Descartes)
  - Not totally independent from philosophy (positivists)
  - Obtained through methods proper to each science, but the judgement of the validity of those methods requires philosophical considerations,

To advance as a scientist, the scientist does not need to become a philosopher or to ask philosophers for advice.

- But, according to Maritain, without philosophy the scientist
  - 'will not be able to take cognizance of the place or scope of his field of specialization within the overall framework of human knowledge'
  - Won't understand the foundations of his or her own science
  - When philosophy is absent we end up in chaos and a general decline of the intellect.



Isn't Science Enough? Do We Even Need Philosophy Anymore?

'Philosophy is dead' (Stephen Hawking)

Particular sciences themselves never answer philosophical questions. They study what is physical and look at proximate causes.

Scientists rely on *philosophical* principles all the time.

Method: can empirical science tell us everything about reality?

- Positivism
- Scientism [Barron](#)
- Limitations of the Empirical scientific method
- Can science answer philosophical questions?
- Can science prove or disprove the existence of God?
- Are scientists the new philosophers?