

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

Induction and Intuition in Scientific Thought is a long title for so small a book, but I found no way of defining its subject matter more succinctly. These Lectures began in my mind in the form of a question: why are most scientists completely indifferent to—even contemptuous of—scientific methodology? Put generally, the answer could only be “because what passes for scientific methodology is a misrepresentation of what scientists do or ought to do.” I therefore thought it important to explain what is wrong with the traditional methodology of “inductive” reasoning, as I see it, and to show that the alternative scheme of reasoning associated with the names of Whewell and Peirce and Popper can give the scientist a certain limited but useful insight into the way he thinks.

Like most scientists, I never write on subjects outside my own unless I am expressly asked to do so. I am therefore specially grateful to the American Philosophical Society for having invited me to deliver the Jayne Lectures in Philadelphia in the spring. The lectures are printed in the form in which I delivered them, with references, explanations, and digressions added in the form of notes.

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