

The Social Sciences And Rationality Promise Limits And Problems

Advances in the social sciences are used to uncover cognitive foundations of social decision making.

Originally published: New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983.

In a career spanning sixty years, Sir Karl Popper has made some of the most important contributions to the twentieth century discussion of science and rationality. *The Myth of the Framework* is a new collection of some of Popper's most important material on this subject. Sir Karl discusses such issues as the aims of science, the role that it plays in our civilization, the moral responsibility of the scientist, the structure of history, and the perennial choice between reason and revolution. In doing so, he attacks intellectual fashions (like positivism) that exaggerate what science and rationality have done, as well as intellectual fashions (like relativism) that denigrate what science and rationality can do. Scientific knowledge, according to Popper, is one of the most rational and creative of human achievements, but it is also inherently fallible and subject to revision. In place of intellectual fashions, Popper offers his own critical rationalism - a view that he regards both as a theory of knowledge and as an attitude towards human life, human morals and democracy. Published in cooperation with the Central European University.

A comprehensive book on the emotions considering the full range of theoretical approaches.

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First published in 2002. Routledge is an imprint of Taylor & Francis, an informa company.

Originally published in 1986. All students of social science must confront a number of important philosophical issues. This introduction to the philosophy of the social sciences provides coherent answers to questions about empiricism, explanation and rationality. It evaluates contemporary writings on the subject which can be as difficult as they are important to understand. Each chapter has an annotated bibliography to enable students to pursue the issues raised and to assess for themselves the arguments of the authors.

Herbert Simon's renowned theory of bounded rationality is principally interested in cognitive constraints and environmental factors and influences which prevent people from thinking or behaving according to formal rationality. Simon's theory has been expanded in numerous directions and taken up by various disciplines with an interest in how humans think and behave. This includes philosophy, psychology, neurocognitive sciences, economics, political science, sociology, management, and organization studies. The Routledge Handbook of Bounded Rationality draws together an international team of leading experts to survey the recent literature and the latest developments in these related fields. The chapters feature entries on key behavioural phenomena, including reasoning, judgement, decision making, uncertainty, risk, heuristics and biases, and fast and frugal heuristics. The text also examines current ideas such as fast and slow thinking, nudge, ecological rationality, evolutionary psychology, embodied cognition,

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and neurophilosophy. Overall, the volume serves to provide the most complete state-of-the-art collection on bounded rationality available. This book is essential reading for students and scholars of economics, psychology, neurocognitive sciences, political sciences, and philosophy.

This comprehensive discussion of the problems inherent in constitutional democracy will be of interest to students in a variety of social sciences.

In this lucid and engaging introductory volume on the nature of society, Roger Trigg examines the scientific basis of social science and shows that philosophical presuppositions are a necessary starting point for the study of society.

Kei Yoshida critically assesses five different theoretical approaches to cultural interpretivism and conclusions on rationality. This book reveals the need for a cogent solution to the problem of rationality and urges social scientists to interpret symbolic systems' or agents' intentions as well as explain the consequences of human actions.

This book contributes to the developing dialogue between cognitive science and social sciences. It focuses on a central issue in both fields, i.e. the nature and the limitations of the rationality of beliefs and action. The development of cognitive science is one of the most important and fascinating intellectual advances of recent decades, and social scientists are paying increasing attention to the findings of this

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new branch of science that forces us to consider many classical issues related to epistemology and philosophy of action in a new light. Analysis of the concept of rationality is a leitmotiv in the history of the social sciences and has involved endless disputes. Since it is difficult to give a precise definition of this concept, and there is a lack of agreement about its meaning, it is possible to say that there is a 'mystery of rationality'. What is it to be rational? Is rationality merely instrumental or does it also involve the endorsement of values, i.e. the choice of goals? Should we consider rationality to be a normative principle or a descriptive one? Can rationality be only Cartesian or can it also be argumentative? Is rationality a conscious skill or a partly tacit one? This book, which has been written by an outstanding collection of authors, including both philosophers and social scientists, tries to make a useful contribution to the debates on these problems and shed some light on the mystery of rationality. The target audience primarily comprises researchers and experts in the field.

There are many different forms of rationality. In current economic discourse the main focus is on instrumental rationality and optimizing, while organization scholars, behavioural economists and policy scientists focus more on bounded rationality and satisficing. The interplay with value rationality or expressive rationality is mainly discussed in

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philosophy and sociology, but never in an empirical way. This book shows that not one, but three different forms of rationality (subjective, social and instrumental) determine the final outcomes of strategic decisions executed by major organizations. Based on an argumentation analysis of six high-profile public debates, this book adds nuance to the concept of bounded rationality. The chapters show how it is socially constructed, and thus dependent on shared beliefs or knowledge, institutional context and personal interests. Three double case studies investigating the three rationalities illustrate how decision makers and stakeholders discuss the appropriateness of these rationalities for making decisions in different practice contexts. The first touches more on personal concerns, like wearing a niqab or looking at obscene art exposed in a public environment; the second investigates debates on improving the rights and position of specific minorities; and the third is based on the agreement on instrumental reasons for two kinds of investments, but the cost arguments are regarded less relevant when social norms or personal interests are violated. The Social Construction of Rationality is for those who study political economy, economic psychology and public policy, as well as economic theory and philosophy.

Rationality in the Social Sciences
The Schumpeter-Parsons Seminar 1939-40 and Current

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PerspectivesSpringer

This volume advances the research agenda of one of the most remarkable political thinkers of our time: Jon Elster. With an impressive list of contributors, it features studies in five topics in political and social theory: rationality and collective action, political and social norms, democracy and constitution making, transitional justice, and the explanation of social behavior. Additionally, this volume includes chapters on the development of Elster's thinking over the past decades. Like Elster's own writings, the essays in this collection are problem-driven, non-ideal inquiries of practical relevance. This volume closes with lucid comments by Jon Elster.

The Handbook of Rational Choice Social Research offers the first comprehensive overview of how the rational choice paradigm can inform empirical research within the social sciences. This landmark collection highlights successful empirical applications across a broad array of disciplines, including sociology, political science, economics, history, and psychology. Taking on issues ranging from financial markets and terrorism to immigration, race relations, and emotions, and a huge variety of other phenomena, rational choice proves a useful tool for theory-driven social research. Each chapter uses a rational choice framework to elaborate on testable hypotheses and then apply this to empirical research, including experimental research, survey

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studies, ethnographies, and historical investigations. Useful to students and scholars across the social sciences, this handbook will reinvigorate discussions about the utility and versatility of the rational choice approach, its key assumptions, and tools.

The first reference on rationality that integrates accounts from psychology and philosophy, covering descriptive and normative theories from both disciplines. Both analytic philosophy and cognitive psychology have made dramatic advances in understanding rationality, but there has been little interaction between the disciplines. This volume offers the first integrated overview of the state of the art in the psychology and philosophy of rationality. Written by leading experts from both disciplines, *The Handbook of Rationality* covers the main normative and descriptive theories of rationality—how people ought to think, how they actually think, and why we often deviate from what we can call rational. It also offers insights from other fields such as artificial intelligence, economics, the social sciences, and cognitive neuroscience. The Handbook proposes a novel classification system for researchers in human rationality, and it creates new connections between rationality research in philosophy, psychology, and other disciplines. Following the basic distinction between theoretical and practical rationality, the book first considers the theoretical side, including normative and descriptive theories of logical,

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probabilistic, causal, and defeasible reasoning. It then turns to the practical side, discussing topics such as decision making, bounded rationality, game theory, deontic and legal reasoning, and the relation between rationality and morality. Finally, it covers topics that arise in both theoretical and practical rationality, including visual and spatial thinking, scientific rationality, how children learn to reason rationally, and the connection between intelligence and rationality.

Uncovers the methodological principles that govern interpretive change.

For the last forty years, two claims have been at the core of disputes about scientific change: that scientists reason rationally and that science is progressive. For most of this time discussions were polarized between philosophers, who defended traditional Enlightenment ideas about rationality and progress, and sociologists, who espoused relativism and constructivism. Recently, creative new ideas going beyond the polarized positions have come from the history of science, feminist criticism of science, psychology of science, and anthropology of science. Addressing the traditional arguments as well as building on these new ideas, Miriam Solomon constructs a new epistemology of science. After discussions of the nature of empirical success and its relation to truth, Solomon offers a new, social account of scientific rationality. She shows that the pursuit of empirical success and truth can be consistent with both dissent and consensus, and that the distinction between dissent and consensus is of little epistemic significance. In building this social epistemology of science, she shows that scientific communities are not merely the locus of distributed expert

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knowledge and a resource for criticism but also the site of distributed decision making. Throughout, she illustrates her ideas with case studies from late-nineteenth- and twentieth-century physical and life sciences. Replacing the traditional focus on methods and heuristics to be applied by individual scientists, Solomon emphasizes science funding, administration, and policy. One of her goals is to have a positive influence on scientific decision making through practical social recommendations.

"An excellent guidebook through different approaches to social science measurement, including the all-important route-maps that show us how to get there." - Roger Jowell, City University "In this wide-ranging collection of chapters, written by acknowledged experts in their fields, Outhwaite and Turner have brought together material in one volume which will provide an extremely important platform for consideration of the full range of contemporary analytical and methodological issues." - Charles Crothers, Auckland University of Technology This is a jewel among methods Handbooks, bringing together a formidable collection of international contributors to comment on every aspect of the various central issues, complications and controversies in the core methodological traditions. It is designed to meet the needs of those disciplinary and nondisciplinary problem-oriented social inquirers for a comprehensive overview of the methodological literature. The text is divided into 7 sections: Overviews of methodological approaches in the social sciences Cases, comparisons and theory Quantification and experiment Rationality, complexity and collectivity Interpretation, critique and postmodernity Discourse construction Engagement. Edited by two leading figures in the field, the Handbook is a landmark work in the field of research methods. More than just a 'cookbook' that teaches readers how to master techniques, it will give social scientists in all disciplines an

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appreciation for the full range of methodological debates today, from the quantitative to the qualitative, giving them deeper and sharpen insights into their own research questions. It will generate debate, solutions and a series of questions for researchers to exploit and develop in their research and teaching.

In recent decades, rational choice theory has emerged as the single most powerful, controversial claimant to provide a unified, theoretical framework for all the social sciences. In its simplest form, the theory postulates that humans are purposive beings who pursue their goals in a rational, efficient manner, seeking the greatest benefit at the lowest cost. This volume brings together prominent scholars working in several social science disciplines and the philosophy of science to debate the promise and problems of rational choice theory. As rational choice theory has spread from its home base in economics to other disciplines, it has come under fierce criticism. To its critics, the extension of the explanatory model mistakenly assumes that the logic of economic rationality can explain non-economic behavior and, at its worst, commits the ethnocentric error of imposing Western concepts of rationality on non-Western societies and cultures. This volume includes strong advocates as well as forceful critics of the rational choice approach. However, in contrast to previous debates, all the contributors share a commitment to open, constructive and knowledgeable dialogue. Well-known advocates of rational choice theory (Michael Hechter, Michael Smith, Chris Manfredi) explicitly ponder some of its serious limitations, while equally well-known critics (Ian Shapiro, Mario Bunge) strike a surprisingly conciliatory tone in contemplating its legitimate uses. Vociferous critics of neoclassical economics (Bunge) favorably discuss sociological proponents of rational choice theory while two economists who are not particularly anti-mainstream (Robin Rowley, George Grantham) critically

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assess the problems of such assumptions in their discipline. Philosophers (Storrs McCall) and sociologists (John Hall) alike reflect on the variable meaning of rationality in explaining social behavior. In the introduction and conclusion, the editors survey the current state of the debate and show how open, constructive dialogue enables us to move beyond hackneyed accusations and dismissals that have characterized much previous debate.

In this new edition of his critically acclaimed book, Jon Elster examines the nature of social behavior, proposing choice as the central concept of the social sciences. Extensively revised throughout, the book offers an overview of key explanatory mechanisms, drawing on many case studies and experiments to explore the nature of explanation in the social sciences; an analysis of the mental states - beliefs, desires, and emotions - that are precursors to action; a systematic comparison of rational-choice models of behavior with alternative accounts, and a review of mechanisms of social interaction ranging from strategic behavior to collective decision making. A wholly new chapter includes an exploration of classical moralists and Proust in charting mental mechanisms operating 'behind the back' of the agent, and a new conclusion points to the pitfalls and fallacies in current ways of doing social science, proposing guidelines for more modest and more robust procedures.

This volume presents for the first time a collection of historically important papers written on the concept of rationality in the social sciences. In 1939-40, the famed Austrian economist Joseph A. Schumpeter and the famous sociologist Talcott Parsons convened a faculty seminar at Harvard University on the topic of rationality. The first part includes their essays as well as papers by the Austrian phenomenologist Alfred Schütz, the sociologist Wilbert Moore, and the economist Rainer Schickele. Several younger

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economists and sociologists with bright futures also participated, including Alex Gerschenkron, John Dunlop, Paul M. Sweezy, and Wassily W. Leontief, who was later awarded the Nobel Prize for developing input-output analysis. The second part presents essays and commentaries written by today's internationally noted social scientists and addressing the topic of rationality in social action from a broad range of perspectives. The book's third and final part shares the recently discovered correspondence between the seminar principals regarding the original but failed plan to publish its proceedings. It also includes letters, not previously published, between Richard Grathoff, Walter M. Sprondel and Talcott Parsons on the rationality seminar and the exchanges between Parsons and Schütz.

In this work, Peter Breiner explores the implications of Max Weber's political sociology for political judgment and democratic theory. In the process, he rejects what is problematic and retains what is valuable in the theorist's political thought and then uses the results to elaborate upon and extend democratic theory. Breiner demonstrates the tension between the subjective and objective dimensions of Weber's logic of rationality, and describes how Weber exploits this tension in judging the feasibility of social and political forms such as socialism, radical democracy, capitalism, and the nation. Breiner develops a concept of participatory democracy from within Weber's logic of power and legitimate domination. Unlike any of the many existing arguments for participatory democracy, it claims that direct participation in politics requires that citizens be willing to take moral risks and take responsibility for the paradoxical outcomes of political action. The book situates Weber in relation to great political theorists of the past, such as Thucydides, Machiavelli, Rousseau, and Gramsci, as well as engaging some of the most important Weberian scholarship.

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Rigorous, tightly argued, and concise, the volume will interest both political and social theorists: the former because of the focus on judgment and participatory democracy and the latter for the author's thorough and novel treatment of Weber.

The last decades have seen major reformations in the philosophy and history of science. What has been called 'post-positivist' philosophy of science has introduced radically new concerns with historical, social, and valuative components of scientific thought in the natural sciences, and has raised up the demons of relativism, subjectivism and sociologism to haunt the once calm precincts of objectivity and realism. Though these disturbances intruded upon what had seemed to be the logically well-ordered domain of the philosophy of the natural sciences, they were no news to the social sciences. There, the messy business of human action, volition, decision, the considerations of practical purposes and social values, the role of ideology and the problem of rationality, had long conspired to defeat logical-reconstructionist programs. The attempt to tarne the social sciences to the harness of a strict hypothetico deductive model of explanation failed. Within the social sciences, phenomenological, Marxist, hermeneuticist, action-theoretical approaches vied in attempting to capture the distinctiveness of human phenomena. In fact, the philosophy of the natural sciences, even in its 'hard' forms, has itself become infected with the increasing reflection upon the role of such social-scientific categories, in the attempt to understand the nature of the scientific enterprise.

Rationality contains a selection of the best contemporary writing on one of the central issues in the philosophy of social science. The contributors address themselves to questions which have increasingly become the subject of a many-sided

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debate between philosophers, sociologists and anthropologists: How are we to understand the beliefs and actions of other men in other cultures? Can we translate the meanings and the reason of one culture into the language of another. This volume is essential reading for courses on the methodology and philosophy of social science and is so arranged that the student is introduced step by step to the cut and thrust of scholarly debate. 'The Social Sciences and Rationality' considers how rational choice theory has emerged as the single most powerful and controversial theoretical framework for all the social sciences. The contributors discuss both the merits and demerits of the theory.

The evolution of a set of fields—including operations research and systems analysis—intended to improve policymaking and explore the nature of rational decision-making. During World War II, the Allied military forces faced severe problems integrating equipment, tactics, and logistics into successful combat operations. To help confront these problems, scientists and engineers developed new means of studying which equipment designs would best meet the military's requirements and how the military could best use the equipment it had on hand. By 1941 they had also begun to gather and analyze data from combat operations to improve military leaders' ordinary planning activities. In *Rational Action*,

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William Thomas details these developments, and how they gave rise during the 1950s to a constellation of influential new fields—which he terms the “sciences of policy”—that included operations research, management science, systems analysis, and decision theory. Proponents of these new sciences embraced a variety of agendas. Some aimed to improve policymaking directly, while others theorized about how one decision could be considered more rational than another. Their work spanned systems engineering, applied mathematics, nuclear strategy, and the philosophy of science, and it found new niches in universities, in businesses, and at think tanks such as the RAND Corporation. The sciences of policy also took a prominent place in epic narratives told about the relationships among science, state, and society in an intellectual culture preoccupied with how technology and reason would shape the future. Thomas follows all these threads to illuminate and make new sense of the intricate relationships among scientific analysis, policymaking procedure, and institutional legitimacy at a crucial moment in British and American history.

This book argues that, to be healthy, human beings should love nature and stay in balance with it as much as possible. In other words: do not unbalance nature so that your own balance is not disturbed. The best and healthiest way for human beings to live is to find balance in life and nature. In this regard,

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the book discusses useful, nutritious, functional foods, nutraceuticals and antioxidants, and how natural molecules, which are provided by nature, can be the best medicine for human beings. At a molecular level, stress is defined by the presence of unbalanced free radicals in the body. Most diseases – especially type 2 diabetes, which accounts for the majority of diabetics – can be traced back to this problem. Our scientific evidence indicates that type 2 diabetes isn't just a disease resulting from sugar, but also from stress. The book seeks to promote a healthier lifestyle by considering the psychoemotional dimension of wellness. And finally, it contends that good sleep is at the root of health and happiness for humanity, and that unbalanced free radicals are expelled from the body during restful sleep. The authors hope that this book will be a helpful guide and source of peace for readers, especially given their need for inner calm during the COVID-19 pandemic, and that the suggestions provided will show them the way to a better life. Prevailing economic theory presumes that agents act rationally when they make decisions, striving to maximize the efficient use of their resources. Psychology has repeatedly challenged the rational choice paradigm with persuasive evidence that people do not always make the optimal choice. Yet the paradigm has proven so successful a predictor that its use continues to flourish, fueled by debate

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across the social sciences over why it works so well. Intended to introduce novices to rational choice theory, this accessible, interdisciplinary book collects writings by leading researchers. *The Limits of Rationality* illuminates the rational choice paradigm of social and political behavior itself, identifies its limitations, clarifies the nature of current controversies, and offers suggestions for improving current models. In the first section of the book, contributors consider the theoretical foundations of rational choice. Models of rational choice play an important role in providing a standard of human action and the bases for constitutional design, but do they also succeed as explanatory models of behavior? Do empirical failures of these explanatory models constitute a telling condemnation of rational choice theory or do they open new avenues of investigation and theorizing? Emphasizing analyses of norms and institutions, the second and third sections of the book investigate areas in which rational choice theory might be extended in order to provide better models. The contributors evaluate the adequacy of analyses based on neoclassical economics, the potential contributions of game theory and cognitive science, and the consequences for the basic framework when unequal bargaining power and hierarchy are introduced. This volume brings together a diverse group of authors who have been associated with Robyn

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Dawes over the years. The breadth of topics covered reflects Dawes's wide-ranging impact on psychological theory and empirical practice. The two themes of rationality and social responsibility are well developed in the book. Dawes had always urged investigators to take seriously the question of how individuals can reconcile self-interest (i.e. rationality) with the collective good (i.e. social responsibility). The area of judgment and decision-making poses a similar challenge: here, rational judgment is the most responsible judgment because it minimizes errors. To attain rationality in this domain, individuals need to accept the limitations of their own intuitions. This volume presents an up-to-date overview of how far psychological science has come in its struggle to reconcile what is true with what is good. Each chapter is a stimulus for new research and a reminder not to forget the hard-won lessons of the past – in particular, those taught by Robyn Dawes.

Choice is a key concept of our time. It is a foundational mechanism for every legal order in societies that are, politically, constituted as democracies and, economically, built on the market mechanism. Thus, choice can be understood as an atomic structure that grounds core societal processes. In recent years, however, the debate over the right way to theorize choice - for example, as a rational or a behavioral type of decision making

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- has intensified. This collection provides an in-depth discussion of the promises and perils of specific types of theories of choice. It shows how the selection of a specific theory of choice can make a difference for concrete legal questions, in particular in the regulation of the digital economy or in choosing between market, firm, or network. In its first part, the volume provides an accessible overview of the current debates about rational versus behavioral approaches to theories of choice. The remainder of the book structures the vast landscape of theories of choice along with three main types: individual, collective, and organizational decision making. As theories of choice proliferate and become ever more sophisticated, however, the process of choosing an adequate theory of choice becomes increasingly intricate. This volume addresses this selection problem for the various legal arenas in which individual, organizational, and collective decisions matter. By drawing on economic, technological, political, and legal points of view, the volume shows which theories of choice are at the disposal of the legally relevant decision-maker, and how they can be operationalized for the solution of concrete legal problems. The editors acknowledge the kind support of the Fritz Thyssen Foundation for an exploratory conference on the subject of the book.

This 1996 book argues that behind the diverse methods of the natural sciences lies a common core

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of scientific rationality.

Bill Starbuck reflects on the challenges associated with social science research - the limits of rationality, the lack of reliability in many research findings and the social shaping of research agendas, cultures and judgements. He discusses some of his own research projects and various methodological debates.

This textbook by Martin Hollis offers an exceptionally clear and concise introduction to the philosophy of social science. It examines questions which give rise to fundamental philosophical issues. Are social structures better conceived of as systems of laws and forces, or as webs of meanings and practices? Is social action better viewed as rational behaviour, or as self-expression? By exploring such questions, the reader is led to reflect upon the nature of scientific method in social science. Is the aim to explain the social world after a manner worked out for the natural world, or to understand the social world from within?

The concepts of rationality that are used by social scientists in the formation of hypotheses, models and explanations are explored in this collection of original papers by a number of distinguished philosophers and social scientists. The aim of the book is to display the variety of the concepts used, to show the different roles they play in theories of very different kinds over a wide range of disciplines, including economics, sociology, psychology, political

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science and anthropology, and to assess the explanatory and predictive power that a theory can draw from such concepts.

"Bartley and Radnitzky have done the philosophy of knowledge a tremendous service. Scholars now have a superb and up-to-date presentation of the fundamental ideas of evolutionary epistemology."

--Philosophical Books

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