

Synopsis

Scientific Literacy and the Myth of the Scientific Method (View detail page) ASIN: 0252064364

Book Information

Series: Illini Books

Paperback: 192 pages

Publisher: University of Illinois Press (May 1, 1994)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0252064364

ISBN-13: 978-0252064364

Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.5 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.7 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (7 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #1,183,650 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #66 in [Books > Science & Math > Experiments, Instruments & Measurement > Microscopes & Microscopy](#) #912 in [Books > Science & Math > Experiments, Instruments & Measurement > Methodology & Statistics](#) #5969 in [Books > Science & Math > History & Philosophy](#)

Customer Reviews

Very valuable discussion of science; science, technology, & society (STS) I consider this short book by Professor Bauer a must read for any person, scientist or non-scientist, who wants a concise but thorough discussion of the way science works, and of the myth, really ideal, of the scientific method, and most importantly, of what the author calls STS: science, technology, and society. I found the book remarkable because Professor Bauer is a practicing scientist, yet he delineates a philosophy of science from a very objective, dispassionate point of view. While he rightly praises science much in the last chapter, most of the rest of the book focuses not only on the limitations of science and scientific knowledge, but which sciences really are and are not scientific as he defines it. Clearly the fact that Professor Bauer has been the dean of arts and sciences at Virginia Tech has given him a balance between science and the arts, and has allowed him to see science both as an insider and an outsider. Thus the main thrust of the book is to show that what is most vital for the layperson is not to attempt to become "scientifically literate," which the author claims would be a very time-consuming task, even for a college student, but rather to see that science is a human activity whose theories and models are limited not only because scientists are human, but because almost without exception scientific "truths" are at some point superseded by better "truths," a process which

repeats itself ad infinitum. It is therefore far better for the layperson to try to understand science's relationship to technology and society.

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