

# Clinical Psychology and the Philosophy of Science

By William O'Donohue

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The motivation for this volume is simple. For a variety of reasons, clinical psychologists have long shown considerable interest in the philosophy of science. When logical positivism gained currency in the 1930s, psychologists were among the most avid readers of what these philosophers had to say about science. Part of the critique of Skinner's radical behaviorism and thus behavior therapy was that it relied on, and thus was logically dependent on, the truth of logical positivism—a claim decisively refuted both historically and logically by L.D. Smith (1986) in his important *Behaviorism and Logical Positivism: A Reassessment of the Alliance*. ?

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## Clinical Psychology and the Philosophy of Science By William O'Donohue Bibliography

- Rank: #767977 in Books
- Brand: Brand: Springer
- Published on: 2013-05-11
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.25" h x .44" w x 6.10" l, .87 pounds
- Binding: Hardcover
- 144 pages

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## **Editorial Review**

### Review

From the reviews:

"William O'Donohue, accordingly, deserves our praise in making a serious effort to cross disciplines?but especially disciplines as messy as psychology and philosophy...For O'Donohue, there are insights to be gained from each of the writers that he considers, as well as from postmodernism, and there is currently no consensus among philosophers on what might replace logical positivism. He concludes, accordingly, that one must be open to a "pluralism of perspectives" (p. 3). This conclusion is safe if it means that we need to assess the criticisms of the prevailing approaches and seek to frame them into a coherent philosophy of science. Given that psychology is a mansion with many rooms, O'Donohue avers that it may not be possible to construct a coherent philosophy of science that illuminates psychology. But some, at least, of the insights?even of postmodernism, fundamentally a philosophy of antiscience?are present in writers in very strong philosophy of science traditions."

Peter T. Manus

October 9, 2013, Vol. 58, Release 41, Article 5

PsycCRITIQUES

### From the Back Cover

Is psychology really a science? If it is not a science as physics or chemistry is, can it be a science of another kind? Does the discipline play by valid scientific rules? Can we prove this? These questions have been debated for over a century, and clear-cut answers have yet to find consensus.

Proposing provocative new directions in critical thinking, *Clinical Psychology and the Philosophy of Science* asks readers to revisit what they know--and especially how they came to know it. Offering a concise guide to the central concepts philosophy uses to make sense of science, this readable treatise persuades philosophers of science to look critically at the foundational problems of psychology, and clinicians to re-examine the theories and assumptions that fuel their approaches to their work. The author makes a robust case for multiple viewpoints as not only a necessity, but also a source of strength befitting living schools of thought. The book argues that the ongoing tensions between psychology and philosophy benefit both sides as it:

- Identifies the major methods of philosophical inquiry.
- Sets out key questions in the philosophy of science of relevance to psychology.
- Explains the contemporary role of epistemology.
- Analyzes the impact on psychological inquiry of Popper, Kuhn, and their critics.
- Dissects Skinner's behavioral theory of science.
- Considers philosophical problems in the APA's code of ethics.

For professionals in both disciplines, *Clinical Psychology and the Philosophy of Science* is an elegant vehicle for their intimately related fields to meet each other halfway, and a springboard for the continued evolution of both.

## About the Author

William O'Donohue earned a Bachelor's degree in psychology at University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. He went on to study clinical psychology at SUNY at Stony Brook earning a Master's degree in 1982 and a Ph.D. in 1986. He then earned a Master's degree in philosophy in 1988 from Indiana University Bloomington. He was an assistant professor of psychology at the University of Maine, Orono from 1987 to 1991. In *Harrington v. Almy* the United States Court of Appeals for the First Circuit found that a penile plethysmograph test ordered to be administered by O'Donohue as a precondition of employment was a violation of a Maine police officer's rights under the Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution. In 1996, he was appointed Director of Sexual Assault Prevention and Counseling Services at University of Nevada, Reno. O'Donohue founded CareIntegra with colleagues in 1999 and serves as CEO. O'Donohue has been critical of the use of forensic evaluations administered to litigants in child custody disputes. He told the *New York Times*, "Psychologists don't have the knowledge to do what they attempt to do when they do custody evaluations," adding that custody decisions are more about competing values than scientific findings when determining a child's best interest.

## Users Review

### From reader reviews:

#### **Helen Thibodeaux:**

What do you consider book? It is just for students since they are still students or the idea for all people in the world, the particular best subject for that? Only you can be answered for that question above. Every person has different personality and hobby for each and every other. Don't to be compelled someone or something that they don't want do that. You must know how great as well as important the book *Clinical Psychology and the Philosophy of Science*. All type of book would you see on many solutions. You can look for the internet methods or other social media.

#### **Dana Hanley:**

This book untitled *Clinical Psychology and the Philosophy of Science* to be one of several books which best seller in this year, here is because when you read this guide you can get a lot of benefit on it. You will easily to buy this kind of book in the book retailer or you can order it by means of online. The publisher with this book sells the e-book too. It makes you more readily to read this book, because you can read this book in your Cell phone. So there is no reason to you personally to past this reserve from your list.

#### **Sharron Marty:**

Spent a free time to be fun activity to accomplish! A lot of people spent their down time with their family, or their own friends. Usually they performing activity like watching television, about to beach, or picnic within the park. They actually doing same thing every week. Do you feel it? Will you something different to fill your personal free time/ holiday? Might be reading a book may be option to fill your no cost time/ holiday. The first thing that you'll ask may be what kinds of reserve that you should read. If you want to try out look for book, may be the book untitled *Clinical Psychology and the Philosophy of Science* can be excellent book to read. May be it is usually best activity to you.

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