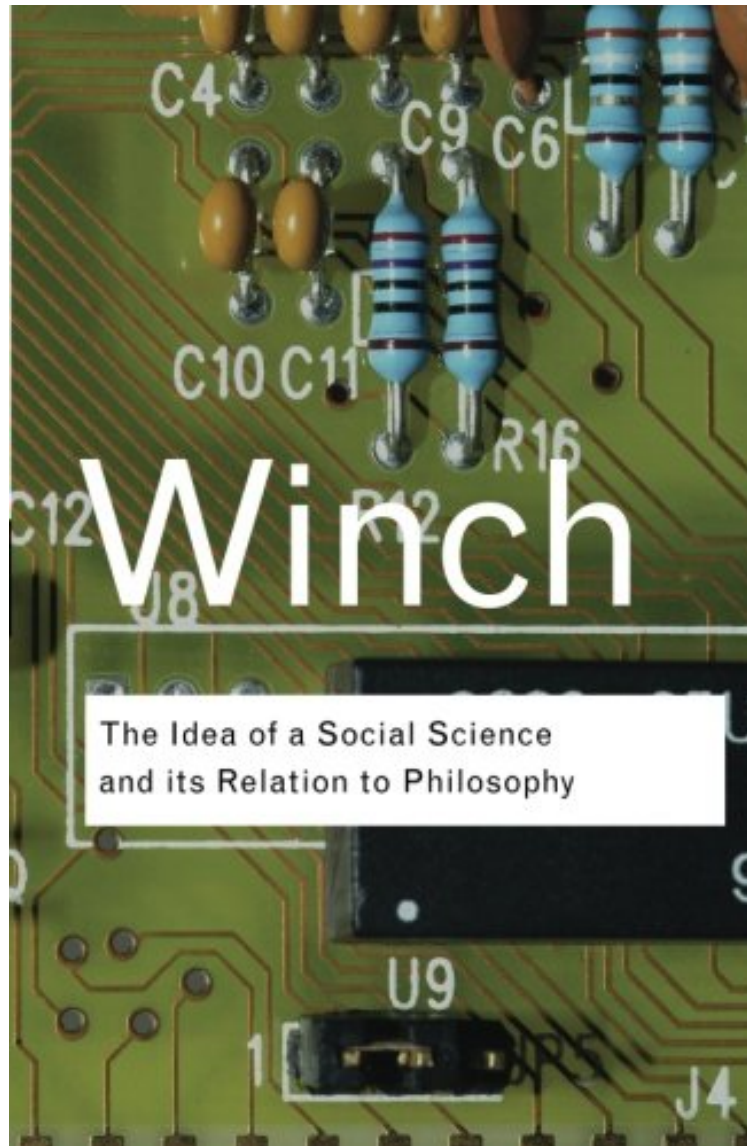


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Peter Winch

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#446523 in Books Peter Winch 2007-11-01 2007-09-03 Original language: English PDF # 1 7.79 x .38 x 5.08l, .39 #File Name: 0415423589168 pages The Idea of a Social Science and Its Relation to Philosophy | File size: 59.Mb

Peter Winch : The Idea of a Social Science and Its Relation to Philosophy (Routledge Classics) (Volume 47) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Idea of a Social Science and Its Relation to Philosophy (Routledge Classics) (Volume 47):

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Wittgenstein, Language, and the Social Sciences By James McGraw I will be brief in my review, only adding several points that may be interesting to future readers. 1.) Winch is what we call a "Wittgensteinian", meaning he is heavily influenced by the philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein. Before reading this book by Winch, I would suggest familiarizing yourself with the ideas of Wittgenstein. This may help better understand some of his main arguments and critiques. 2.) This book is a critique of the social sciences. In essence, Winch is criticizing the use of the word "science" in sociology/psychology/etc. He is not saying they aren't scientific, but that through philosophy we understand what the fundamental assumptions of science are. When we understand the fundamental assumptions of science, we see they are incompatible with the subjects of the social sciences. For example, one point Winch brings us is the use of 'generalizations.' Science is looking for generalizations. According to Winch, how do you find true generalizations among the variety found in human behavior and thought. Furthermore, one of his main criticisms is that language and human relationship are key components of our reality. 3.) For those who want a smaller and less dense version of Winch's important critique, I would suggest reading Winch's "Understanding a Primitive Society." This is an incredibly essay written using many of the themes and ideas suggested in his book. Personally, I find it more interesting and easier to understand. 17 of 22 people found the following review helpful. Persuasive and amusing By A Customer I must declare a bias; as a scientist and an analytic philosopher by training, and now a teacher in those two areas by profession, I have always been skeptical about the "social sciences." I have no doubt that they perform a necessary role and can provide great insights into human situations; but using the word 'science' raises certain misplaced expectations. Winch's monograph argues precisely this position with style and verve, holding that social concerns are properly related more to philosophy than the Natural Sciences. (Of course they may use scientific methods, but that is a different matter.) There are many historical examples, and a thoughtful introduction slightly modifying some of the polemical excesses. A thoroughly entertaining afternoon's reading!

In the fiftieth anniversary of this book's first release, Winch's argument remains as crucial as ever. Originally published in 1958, *The Idea of a Social Science and Its Relation to Philosophy* was a landmark exploration of the social sciences, written at a time when that field was still young and had not yet joined the Humanities and the Natural Sciences as the third great domain of the Academy. A passionate defender of the importance of philosophy to a full understanding of 'society' against those who would deem it an irrelevant 'ivory towers' pursuit, Winch draws from the works of such thinkers as Ludwig Wittgenstein, J.S. Mill and Max Weber to make his case. In so doing he addresses the possibility and practice of a comprehensive 'science of society'.

'Far and away the liveliest and most cogent of the responses yet made to that staid official judgement of some years ago, that political philosophy must now be presumed dead.' - Times Literary Supplement About the Author Peter Winch (1926-1997). Born in Walthamstow, Essex, Peter Winch was an internationally respected philosopher and an influential student of Wittgenstein. *The Idea of a Social Science and its Relation to Philosophy* is his most famous work.