

What is Science?

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What is Science? Introduction and Outline

- Why do we care about what science is?
- In part because science allows us to go beyond common sense and so some people are *experts*.
- 1. Science as Method.
- 2. Falsification.

What is Science? Science as Method

- Cannot define science in terms of truth or proof.
- Rather science is a method (goes beyond common sense, counters groupthink, etc.)
- Method of theory acquisition (context of discovery) as supposed by inductivists?
- No, includes and excludes too much.
- Karl Popper suggests the criterion of falsifiability.

What is Science? Falsifiability

- A scientific theory must be falsifiable, meaning there must, in principle, be some conditions under which it would be shown to be false.
- Note that this has nothing to do with theory acquisition, but is about theory testing (context of validation).
- Example: difference between Einstein, Freud and Marx.
- Note link to democracy.
- However, the falsifiability criterion may be too strict (or, at best, cannot be straightforwardly applied).