

Re: Epistemology 201: The Science of Science

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robert j. kolker wrote:

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> *Daryl McCullough wrote:*
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>>
>> *It's really a totalitarian mindset, not free-thinking.*
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> *They use an operational definition. It goes "If I (the crack point)
> cannot understand something, it makes (or ought to make) no sense to
> anyone else". It is the elevation of ignorance and stupidity to a virtue.*
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> *The interesting thing is that mathematics which was conceived of very
> abstractly and with no physical or practical application in mind, has
> been drafted into the service of physics, and other sciences with good
> and useful results. For example, without the concept of probability
> (invented initially to calculate odds in card games) there would be no
> quantum theory as we know it. Without Riemannian geometry which was
> conceived to see how far Gauss' notions of intrinsic geometrical
> properties could be carried, there would be no General Theory of
> Relativity and no GPS. Without boolean algebra which was an
> algebrization of Aristotle's logic we would be hard put to design
> complicated computer components. And so on and so on. Anything no
> forbidden by inconsistency is permitted.*

Actually, applied mathematics, as used in engineering is good.
Everything else in mathematics is pure fantasy serving no purpose
but to entertain mathematicians.

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"I consider it quite possible that physics cannot be based
on the field concept, i. e., on continuous structures. In that
case nothing remains of my entire castle in the air,
gravitation theory included, [and of] the rest of modern physics."
-- Albert Einstein in a 1954 letter to Michele Besso.