



Institute Lecture

Science's First Mistake: Delusions in pursuit of Theory

Ian Angell, Professor Emeritus, London School of Economics

Wednesday, 4th January, 2012; Time: 5:00 PM, Venue: L-1, Lecture Hall Complex

Abstract

Science is a perpetual search for new ideas, however, as Richard Feynman so rightly notes: 'everything can be wrong'. Using light-hearted and easily accessible examples, Prof. Ian Angell will point out the conceit of modernism and scientism that is grounded in the arrogance of scientific certainty. The message of his book 'Science's First Mistake' is that understanding through scientific theory, and applied via its methods, can never expose the real nature of reality. Indeed there is no such thing as 'understanding', only mere description through observation.

Science's First Mistake is to forget that its abstractions do not deal with reality. Rather, its models and theories are 'unnatural in nature' and artificial, and indeed quite absurd when viewed from outside of Science. As a controversial postscript, and although an agnostic himself, Angell will argue that the arguments of atheists like Richard Dawkins are logically indefensible, and that Religion is every bit as relevant as Science for day-to-day living, probably more so.

About the speaker

Ian Angell was Professor of Information Systems at the London School of Economics for twenty-five years, where he taught courses on technological innovation and its implications. He is a forecaster of the socio-political and business consequences of Information and Communication Technologies, with over four decades of research experience into the impact of computerization on society. On his early retirement in September 2011, he was made Professor Emeritus at LSE. He now divides his time between research, consulting, lecturing worldwide, writing books and articles, and supporting the Alumnus Office at LSE.

A fuller description of Angell's work and publications can be found at <http://www.ianangell.com>.

Tea at 4.45 PM

All interested are welcome.

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