



# Epistemology and the Psychology of Human Judgment

*Michael A Bishop, J. D. Trout*

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Bishop and Trout here present a unique and provocative new approach to epistemology (the theory of human knowledge and reasoning). Their approach aims to liberate epistemology from the scholastic debates of standard analytic epistemology, and treat it as a branch of the philosophy of science. The approach is novel in its use of cost-benefit analysis to guide people facing real reasoning problems and in its framework for resolving normative disputes in psychology. Based on empirical data, Bishop and Trout show how people can improve their reasoning by relying on Statistical Prediction Rules (SPRs). They then develop and articulate the positive core of the book. Their view, Strategic Reliabilism, claims that epistemic excellence consists in the efficient allocation of cognitive resources to reliable reasoning strategies, applied to significant problems. The last third of the book develops the implications of this view for standard analytic epistemology; for resolving normative disputes in psychology; and for offering practical, concrete advice on how this theory can improve real people's reasoning.

This is a truly distinctive and controversial work that spans many disciplines and will speak to an unusually diverse group, including people in epistemology, philosophy of science, decision theory, cognitive and clinical psychology, and ethics and public policy.

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