

A social responsible PLACE

Robert Merton, John Ziman and the historical roots of research ethics in science and technology.

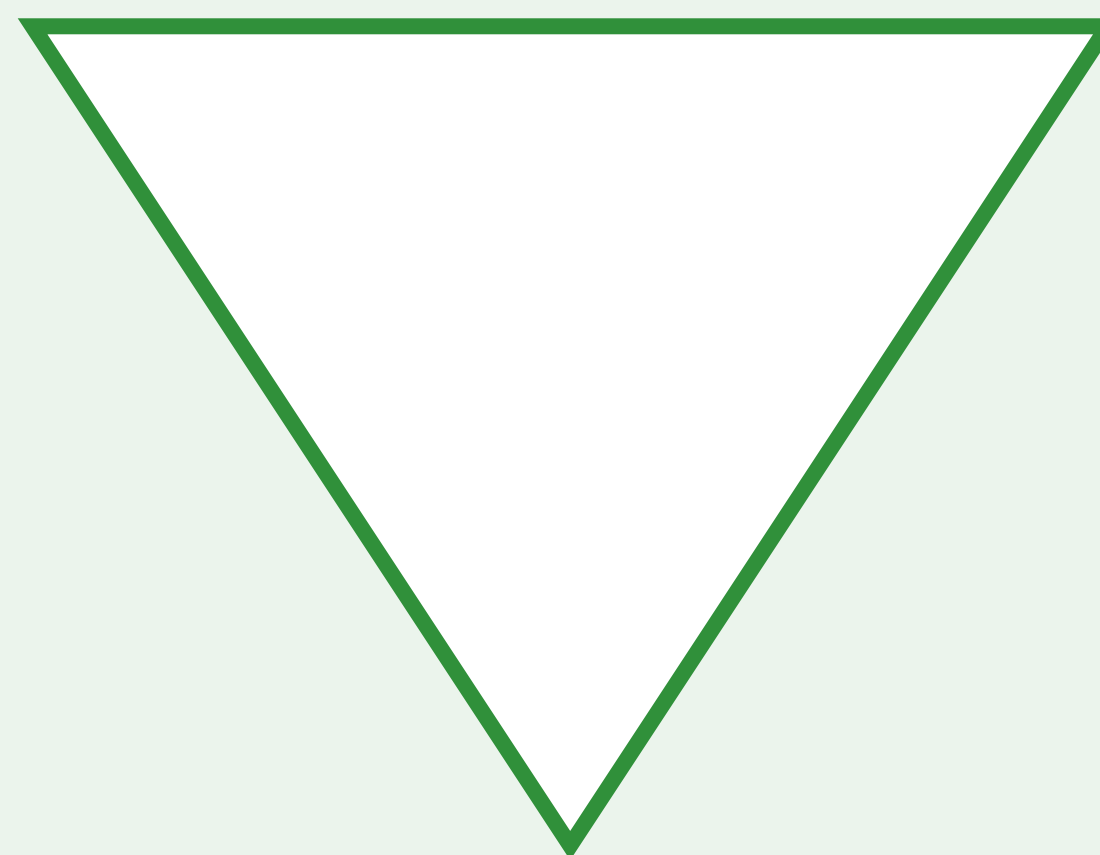
THOMAS ØSTERHAUG, director. The National Committee for Research Ethics in Science and Technology

John Ziman argued that the scientific ethos, as formulated by Robert Merton, does not fit today's academic reality. Academic science is giving way to post-academic science. How does this break with the academic tradition affect the ethical norms of science?

Academic science:

Communalism
Universalism
Disinterestedness
Originality
Scepticism

CUDOS



PLACE

Post-academic science:

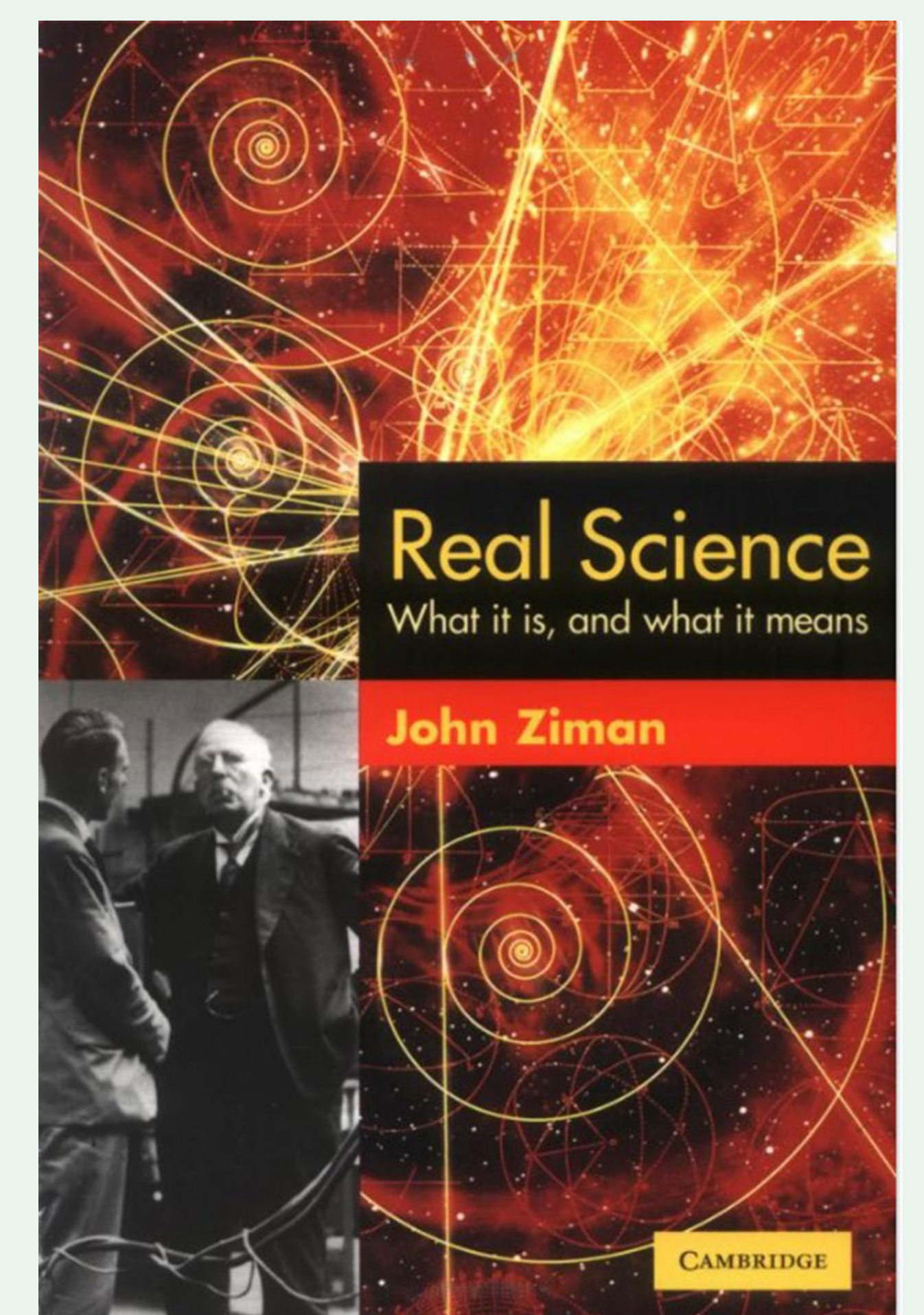
Proprietary
Local
Authoritarian
Commissioned
Expert



Social responsibility

Social responsibility of science – historical development

1. Defense of democracy
2. Dual use, misuse of science
3. Precautionary principle, sustainability



Ziman argues that post-academic science is more in touch with society than academic science, and therefore have to be more socially responsible. Similar argument about ethics: Ziman understands research ethics as the consequences of science on society, i.e., Merton's ethos of science has no actual ethical dimension.

Ziman's lack of historical context causes him to miss the point that Merton's work was a response to Nazi-Germany's use of science. The social relations of science is at the very center of the scientific ethos.

- Science has changed
- The social organization of science has changed
- Research ethics has changed

We need to study the development of research integrity in its historical context.

References:

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