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Creative Marginality

Innovation at the Intersections of Social Sciences

Mattei Dogan and Robert Pahre

Tracing the nine formal social science disciplines—political science, sociology, economics, history, anthropology, philosophy, geography, psychology, and linguistics—through their cycles of growth, specialization, fragmentation, and hybridization, Dogan and Pahre reject the notion of catch-all “interdisciplinary” research. They demonstrate that in moving from the center to the periphery of a discipline, crossing its borders and penetrating the field of another, a scholar has a better chance to innovate.

Contents: Introduction. SCIENTIFIC INNOVATION AND OBSCOLESCENCE. Defining Innovation in the Social Sciences. Patrimonies: Incremental Advance and the Distorting Effects of the Star System. The Paradox of Density. Does Citation Measure Innovation? Cemeteries for Books. FROM SPECIALIZATION AND FRAGMENTATION TO HYBRIDIZATION. Specialization in the Social Sciences. Hybridization: The Recombination of Fragments of the Social Sciences. Fragmentation by Geographical Area Versus Analytical Fragmentation. THE CRUMBLING WALLS OF THE FORMAL DISCIPLINES. The Fate of the Formal Disciplines: From Coherence to Dispersion. Why Interdisciplinarity Is a False Notion. THE INTERPENETRATION OF DISCIPLINES:

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Mattei Dogan is senior research director at the National Center of Scientific Research, Paris, and professor of political science at University of California-Los Angeles. **Robert Pahre** is assistant professor of political science at the University of Rochester.

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