



# Everyday Practice of Science: Where Intuition and Passion Meet Objectivity and Logic

By Frederick Grinnell

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Scientific facts can be so complicated that only specialists in a field fully appreciate the details, but the nature of everyday practice that gives rise to these facts should be understandable by everyone interested in science. This book describes how scientists bring their own interests and passions to their work, illustrates the dynamics between researchers and the research community, and emphasizes a contextual understanding of science in place of the linear model found in textbooks with its singular focus on "scientific method."

*Everyday Practice of Science* also introduces readers to issues about science and society. Practice requires value judgments: What should be done? Who should do it? Who should pay for it? How much? Balancing scientific opportunities with societal needs depends on appreciating both the promises and the ambiguities of science. Understanding practice informs discussions about how to manage research integrity, conflict of interest, and the challenge of modern genetics to human research ethics. Society cannot have the benefits of research without the risks. The last chapter contrasts the practices of science and religion as reflective of two different types of faith and describes a holistic framework within which they dynamically interact.

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## Editorial Review

### Review

"[Grinnell] does a lot of serious thinking aloud about big themes in science: discovery and credibility and integrity and (perhaps all the more pointedly because he is an academic biologist who works in Dallas, Texas, among the biblical fundamentalists) the nature of faith. Out of the perfectly self-effacing prose, very good things emerge, including a sense of the writer as a warm, fair-minded and thoughtful human being with a finely tuned sense of propriety. He chooses beautiful and apposite quotations from Francis Collins, Albert Einstein and the painter Joan Miro in half a page, and punctiliously includes the references."--Tim Radford, *guardian.co.uk*

"A fantastic example of science written for broad audiences. Grinnell does a wonderful job of making science relevant to those outside of a so-called academic bubble who are interested to learn more about the process. He also provides a multidimensional view of who scientists are and what drives them."--*The Intersection*, *Discovermagazine.com*

"An intelligent and very readable book in a calm voice, and it certainly should be read by anyone interested in the ongoing (and raging) dispute about the compatibility of science and religion."--Dan Agin, *The Huffington Post*

"*Everyday Practice of Science* should be required reading for any young scientist seeking a deeper and more fully contextualized understanding of science and its impact on society."--*The Quarterly Review of Biology*

### Listed in *Science News*' Bookshelf

"Drawing upon his long years of professional experience and expertise, Professor Grinnell provides an informed perspective on the subject as he demystifies the processes and provides context for understanding what science is all about and how it generally operates. *Everyday Practice of Science* is highly recommended reading for both students and non-specialized general readers with an interest in understanding how science works in or out of the laboratory setting."--*Midwest Book Review*

"Frederick Grinnell has written a book that aims to help the non-scientist understand what scientific practice looks - and feels - like to the scientists...also an excellent read for the scientist who wants an introduction to the philosophical underpinnings of (and challenges inherent within) the scientific knowledge-building

project. Grinnell offers thought-provoking observations on the ways the interests of scientists and non-scientists in our society are tied to each other."--Janet D. Stemwedel, ScienceBlogs.com

"I highly recommend *The Everyday Practice of Science* to anyone who is pursuing or even considering a scientific career. Grinnell's discussions illuminate and provoke deeper thought on aspects of practice that one may otherwise not ponder unless/until they are forced to deal with them in their own career."--Alice Kim, *Science and Consciousness Review*

"What is surprising about this book is the way it provides various avenues to engage in productive discussions about doing research....Grinnell presents a candid account of the scientific process to make it relevant to those outside academic science." -- Jose Vazquez, NYU, *Cell Biology Education Journal*

"Everyday Practice of Science is a must for every practicing researcher. To come across a book such as this, that brings such honesty and experience to the reality of practicing science is more than a treat to read, it's a must have." --Royal Society of Chemistry

#### About the Author

Frederick Grinnell is Professor of Cell Biology and founder of the Program in Ethics in Science and Medicine at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center, Dallas. He is the author of *The Scientific Attitude*.

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