



McGill
University

Foundations & Philosophy of Science Unit

1983.12.12

Mr Dick DeShaw
Kingston, Ont.

Dear Mr DeShaw

Thank you for your letter of the 1st and the accompanying typescripts.

You overestimate me: I could not possibly pass competent judgment on your work. I am just a physicist turned philosopher and with an interest in theoretical sociology. I know nothing about sociotechnology (which is where I place social work).

Consequently I don't dare comment on your work, except to say that it shows a clarity far above the average in social science, and that I was flattered, though somewhat skeptical, about your using my semantics. Maybe you are right in stressing the importance of semantics to clarify the (often muddy) ideas in social science. However, I would have thought that methodology would be even more important. (See Vols. 5 and 6 of my Treatise, devoted to epistemology and methodology.)

Finally, concerning the possibility of publishing your work at Reidel's: although it does discuss some foundational issues, it is mainly a work in sociotechnology, so I doubt that it would fit into the EPISTEME series which I am editing for Reidel's. In any case I am not competent to pass judgment on it. Therefore I suggest you try a social science publisher such as Jossey-Bass.

However, should any of the social science publishers reject your work for being too concerned with methodological or semantical matters, send it to me once completed and I'll have it refereed by a couple of sociologists interested in foundational matters, to see whether we might squeeze it into the EPISTEME series.

With best wishes, I remain

Sincerely

Mario Bunge