

## **Field Philosophy: Reflections on Method and a Case Study on Peer Review**

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This presentation offers an introduction to an approach to doing philosophy that departs from well-established philosophical methods in several ways. I outline this approach – which we at UNT call ‘field philosophy’ – and contrast it with two other models of doing philosophy with which it might be confused: applied philosophy and experimental philosophy. I present a case study in field philosophy to help illuminate the abstract argument: the Comparative Assessment of Peer Review.

To preview the argument: Field philosophy begins with the problems of non-philosophers, rather than with traditional philosophical problems. Field philosophy entails working with non-philosophers (for instance, scientists, engineers, other stakeholders, and decision makers) on specific social challenges. Field philosophy is explicitly normative. Although empirically grounded, field philosophy opposes the reduction of philosophy to science (that is, methodological naturalism). Field philosophy also appeals to a different notion of philosophical rigor than traditional (20<sup>th</sup> century Western) philosophy.

I next discuss the Comparative Assessment of Peer Review (CAPR) project. CAPR is a four-year NSF-funded project (2008-2012) that examines the changing nature of the peer review processes across six public science agencies, three US, two European, and one Canadian, with a particular focus on how these agencies integrate broader societal impacts issues into the review of grant proposals. (More can be learned about CAPR at <<http://csid-capr.unt.edu/>>.) I discuss not only our approach to the research, but also how we assess our own work in terms of its broader impact. This paves the way for thinking about alternative accounts of philosophic rigor.