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978-0-521-77268-6 - Making Social Science Matter: Why Social Inquiry Fails and How it can Succeed Again

Bent Flyvbjerg

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*Making Social Science Matter* presents an exciting new approach to the social and behavioral sciences. Instead of trying to emulate the natural sciences and create a kind of general theory, Bent Flyvbjerg argues that the strength of the social sciences lies in their rich, reflexive analysis of values and power – so essential to the social and economic development of society. Moving beyond the purely analytic or technical, Flyvbjerg compares the theoretical study of human activity with real-world situations and demonstrates how the social sciences can become relevant again in the modern world. Powerfully argued, with clear methodological guidelines and practical examples, *Making Social Science Matter* opens up a new future for the social sciences, freed from an inappropriate and misleading comparison with the natural sciences. Its empowering message will make it required reading for students and academics across the social and behavioral sciences.

BENT FLYVBJERG is Professor of Planning, Department of Development and Planning at Aalborg University, Denmark. He is the author of numerous publications in twelve languages, most recently *Rationality and Power: Democracy in Practice* (1998).

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# Making Social Science Matter

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*Translated by Steven Sampson*



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University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom

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[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)

Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9780521775687](http://www.cambridge.org/9780521775687)

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First published 2001

17th printing 2015

Printed in the United States of America by Sheridan Books, Inc.

*A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library*

*Library of Congress cataloging in publication data*

Flyvbjerg, Bent

Making social science matter: why social inquiry fails and how it can succeed again / by Bent Flyvbjerg; translated by Steven Sampson.

p. cm.

Includes index.

ISBN 0 521 77268 0 (hardback) 0 521 77568 x (paperback)

I. Social sciences—Philosophy. I. Title.

H61.F6144 2001

300'.1—dc21 00—023608

ISBN 978-0-521-77268-6 Hardback

ISBN 978-0-521-77568-7 Paperback

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In memory of  
Regina Flyvbjerg  
née Krakauer

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A mind that is stretched to a new idea never returns to its original dimension.

*Oliver W. Holmes*

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## Acknowledgments

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I wish to thank the many persons, organizations, and institutions who helped make this book possible. Special thanks must be given to Alan Wolfe, of Boston University, for encouraging me to translate the original Danish version of the book into English, resulting in this expanded, revised, and updated edition. I also wish to thank Hubert and Stuart Dreyfus, of the University of California at Berkeley, for their patience in interviews and discussions where I first tried out ideas that later became central to the book. Steven Lukes invited me to present my thoughts on power to faculty and students at the European University Institute in Florence, where both he and they gave me valuable feedback. C. Roland Christensen, Harvard's godfather to the case method, never failed me with support on my trek to understand and employ the case approach in research and teaching.

Thanks are due as well to the organizers, lecturers, and participants in the National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Institute, "The Idea of a Social Science, 40 Years Later," held at the University of Missouri, St. Louis, June–July 1998. James Bohman and Paul Roth generously invited me to sit in on the Institute. This provided me with the right impetus at the right time for finishing the book.

Several years ago, in preparing a paper outlining the ideas that would eventually develop into this text, I benefited from comments by Daniel Bell, Richard Bernstein, John Friedmann, Hans-Georg Gadamer, Anthony Giddens, Alasdair MacIntyre, Lisa Peattie, Martin Wachs, and Aaron Wildavsky.<sup>1</sup> My colleagues at Aalborg University, Finn Kjærdsdam and Hans Gullestrup, read large portions of a first draft of the book, and their comments were invaluable in helping improve the original Danish version. For their help at various stages in the process, I also wish to thank Erik Albæk, Johannes Andersen, Robert Beauregard, Inger Bo, Peter Bogason, Irene Christiansen, Peter Munk Christiansen, William Connolly, Mitchell Dean, Raphaël Fischler, Henrik and John Flyvbjerg, John Forester, Gary Gutting, Maarten Hajer, Gorm Harste, David Hoy, Margo Huxley, Andy Jamison, Martin Jay, Karsten Friis Johansen, Ib

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x Acknowledgments

Jørgensen, Torben Beck Jørgensen, Terry Kelly, Peter Lassman, Bruno Latour, Seymour Mandelbaum, James Miller, Peter Miller, Thomas Osborne, Morten Rugtved Petersen, Jørgen Primdahl, Tim Richardson, Neal Richman, Stefan Rossbach, Joseph Rouse, Bish Sanyal, Árpád Szakolczai, James Throgmorton, and Oren Yiftachel. Two anonymous Cambridge University Press reviewers provided highly useful comments for preparing the final version of the typescript.

The theoretical and methodological considerations in the book were developed hand in hand with empirical studies in which theory and method were put to the test and refined. I wish to thank the many persons and organizations who have placed their experiences, time, and archives at my disposal in these studies. After having developed the book's approach in a European and Anglo-Saxon context, Fred Lerise and Tum-sifu Nnkya, of the University of Dar es Salaam, and Jørgen Andreasen, of the Danish Royal Academy of Fine Arts, gave me the unique opportunity to learn in-depth about the pros and cons of the approach in a development setting.

Anni Busk Nielsen provided precious help in acquiring the literature on which this study is based. Lilli Glad and Dorte Madsen expertly transformed my many drafts into readable manuscripts.

The writing and translation of the book was made possible by grants from the Danish National Research Council, the Danish Social Science Research Council, the Cowi Foundation, and the North Jutland University Foundation. The work was also supported by the Fulbright Commission, the Carlsberg Foundation, the Denmark-America Foundation, the Egmont H. Petersen Foundation, Knud Højgaard's Foundation, and by a Christian and Otilia Brorson Travel Grant. Finally, Aalborg University and its Department of Development and Planning provided generous support.

The translation of the book from Danish into English was carried out by Steven Sampson in collaboration with me. Not only did Steven Sampson once again produce a translation of clear, readable prose; he also suggested helpful improvements in the original text. Sarah Caro and Elizabeth Howard, senior editors at Cambridge University Press, provided valuable help in seeing the book through the printing process.

Finally, I cannot thank my family and friends enough for their love and care.

I apologize to anyone I have forgotten to mention here. Responsibility for any errors or omissions in this book remains mine alone.