The point of the example, rather, is that methodological rules are not justified instrumentally. This can be seen by dropping talk of aims and goals altogether, and restoring Q and R to 'elliptical' form:

> Q': Prefer double-blind to single-blind experiments.
> R': Prefer single-blind to double-blind experiments.

We all agree that Q', not R', is the justified methodological rule. But its justification has nothing to do with its instrumental efficacy in realizing some cognitive aim. Q' is justified, not instrumentally, but *epistemically:* double-blind experimentation provides better *evidence* for a drug's efficacy than single-blind experimentation, because it controls for an additional source of possible error (namely, bias created by researcher expectation transmitted to subjects and manifested in the placebo effect). The fact that double-blind experimentation controls for this possible source of experimental error, which single-blind experimentation does not, establishes that R' is less well justified than Q'. R''s unjustifiedness is not a function of instrumental efficacy: as the example above illustrates, single-blind experimentation can be plausibly thought to be more instrumentally efficacious than double-blind experimentation, with respect to plausible research goals. However instrumentally efficacious single-blind experimentation might be, however, double-blind experimentation controls for an additional source of possible bias/experimental error, and so affords stronger evidence for a drug's efficacy, than single-blind experimentation; for that reason, Q' is the justified methodological rule here. This would be so even if the research community adopted the goals articulated in R — that is, even if we adopted those goals, we would be more justified in believing that drug/therapy D really works if the evidence for that belief stems from double-blind experimentation than we would be if our belief was based on numerically equivalent data stemming from single-blind experimentation. Our belief about D is better justified in the first circumstance because double-blind experimentation provides better evidence for such claims and is more epistemically forceful; methodological rule Q' is more justified than R' because it affords greater epistemic weight than R' to the results of experiments of the sort it urges. The justification of methodological rules is an epistemic, not an instrumental, matter: in general, a rule is justified insofar as it confers warrant to the results of experiments conducted in accordance with its directives.[4]

In some circumstances we might be pragmatically justified in utilizing the less justified R', for example when we have an overriding interest in testing a large number of drugs/therapies and can tolerate a real but small experimental

[4]The justification of methodological rules proceeds in accordance with relevant epistemic principles; in the case under discussion, the principle might be something like 'A methodological rule is justified insofar as it maximizes the probability that experimentation conducted in accordance with it leads to true (or valid) results'. Of course there is much more to be said about such principles and their epistemic status.