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EUROSCIENCE OPEN FORUM
LEIDEN 13-16 JULY

Academic freedom? Old myths in a changed world

Andrea Saltelli
July 15 2022



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Academic freedom
under pressure from:
Authoritarian regimes &
radical social groups.
Ostracism. Merchants of
doubt. Foreign interference.
Funders' agendas...



Does academia
need
protection from
society?



Myth



Intellectual as agent of emancipation and enlightenment?
Prometheus, Rubens, 1636 – 1637, Museo Nacional del Prado

Intellectual as bearer of universal truths?
Atlas, Roman sculpture II century, Museo Nazionale di Napoli

The mission of universities has
experience significant changes in
the last ~40y ...



IMPLAUSIBLE DREAM



JAMES H. MITTELMAN



… challenging the three
‘historic/foundational’ missions of
higher education

- Cultivating democratic citizenship
- Fostering critical thinking
- **Protecting academic freedom**



IMPLAUSIBLE DREAM



JAMES H. MITTELMAN



Causes: globalization, neoliberal revolution of the 80's, new public management theories applied to public sector, international rankings ...



IMPLAUSIBLE DREAM



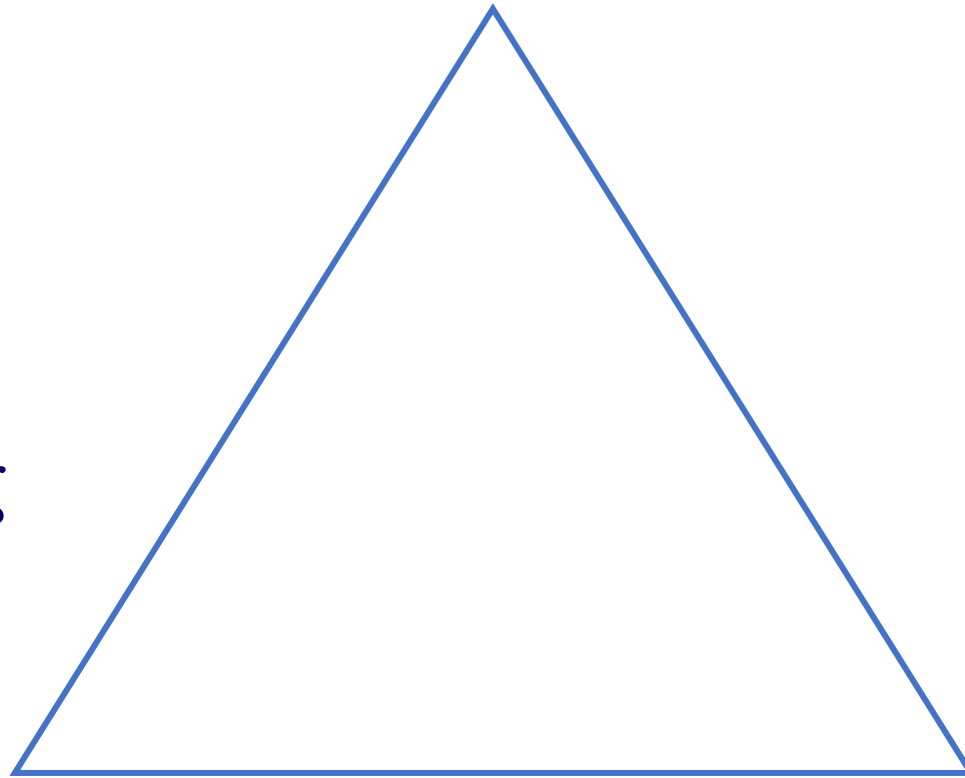
JAMES H. MITTELMAN





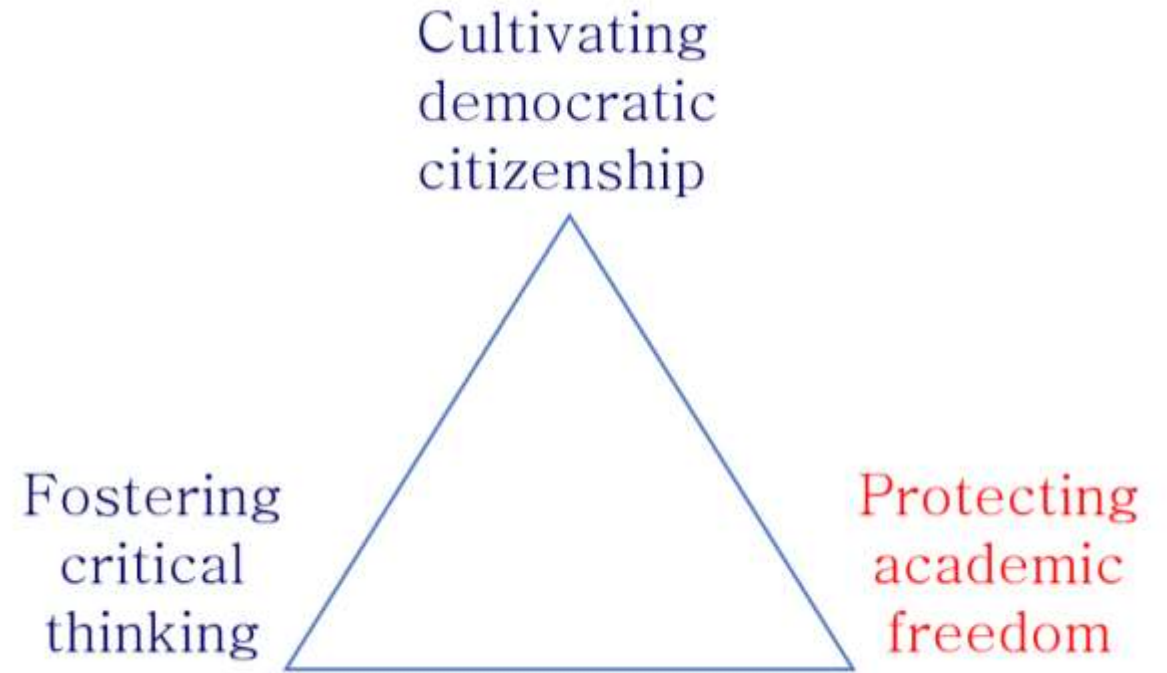
Cultivating
democratic
citizenship

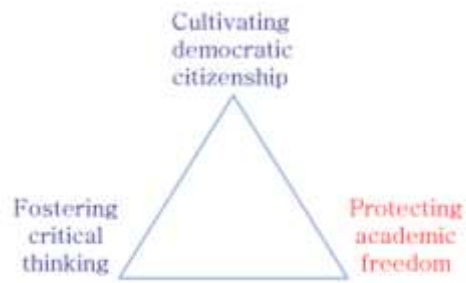
Fostering
critical
thinking



Protecting
academic
freedom

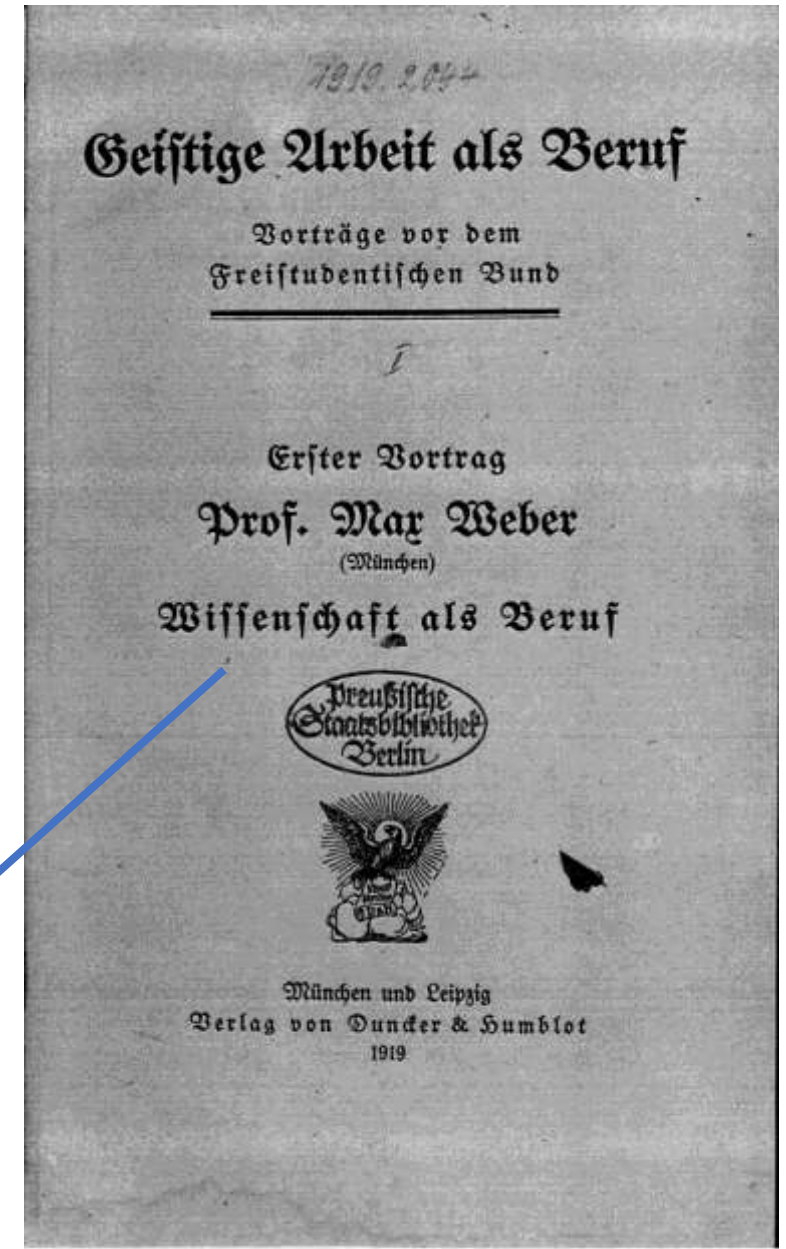
Freedom of whom
from what_[or from whom],
and to do what?

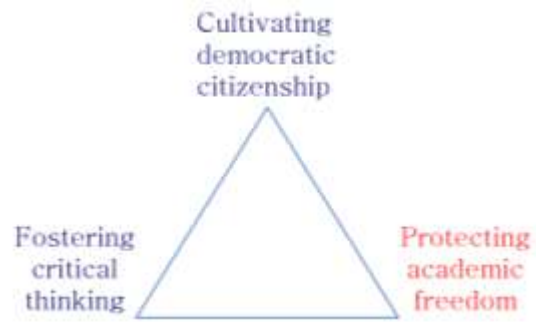




Max Weber: professors should not use their chairs to colonize young minds with their own political ideas (1917)

Wissenschaft





Later the famous controversy Dewey- Lippmann (1920's): can the public express agency?

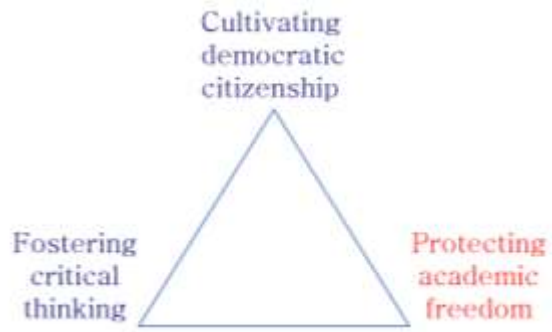


John Dewey
(1859-1952)



Walter Lippmann
(1889-1974)

See also controversy between Habermas and Luhmann early 1970's. Today revisited by Philip Mirowski:
https://www.academia.edu/42682483/Democracy_Expertise_and_the_Post_Truth_Era_An_Inquiry_into_the_Contemporary_Politics_of_STS

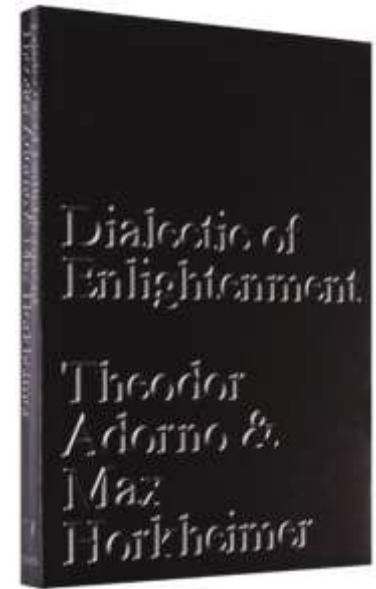


Then came the public intellectual

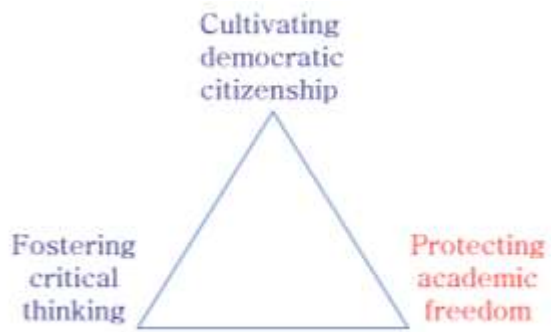
See Hall, Gary. 1996. "Answering the Question: 'What Is an Intellectual?'" Surfaces VI. <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/1064857ar>
The ideas of Baudrillard, Lyotard, Foucault, Sartre...



Theodor Adorno
(1903-1969)



Antonio Gramsci
(1891—1937)



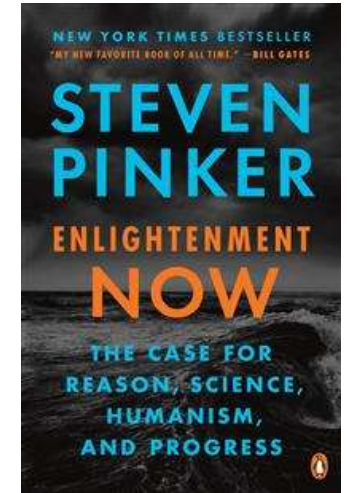
Today a different class of intellectuals

Public sphere or public bubbles?

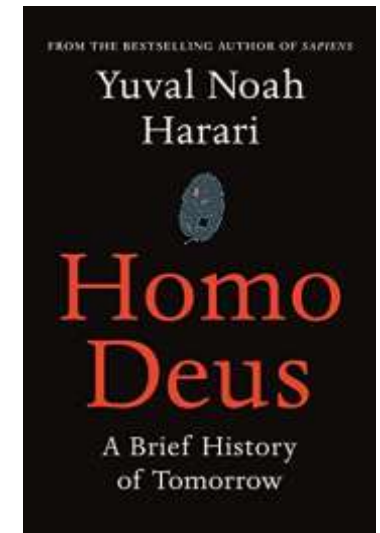
Or a different ecosystem?



Steven Pinker



Yuval Harari



The ecosystem:
institutions lose their
monopoly on truth

Saving the Real

Andrea Saltelli & Daniel Sarewitz on why the 95 THESES are back



THE NEW ATLANTIS

A JOURNAL OF TECHNOLOGY & SOCIETY

REALITY: A POST-MORTEM

◆ Whither Consensus? ◆ Life in an Alternate Reality Game ◆

A new essay series by Jon Askonas

Saving the Real

Andrea Saltelli & Daniel Sarewitz on why the 95 THESES are back

Alan Jacobs on DEMONS and why we're all going nuts

David Bentley Hart on minds in SIMULATED WORLDS

James Mumford on THERAPY beyond good and evil

Kit Wilson on READING ourselves to death

Laurence Scott on why hell is OURSELVES

Alan Rome ~ Star Trek into sadness

Gabrielle Bauer ~ Precautionary peril

Paul Dicken ~ AI & HR's unholy union

John Konichi & James Pethokoukis ~ Do Americans care about space?

NUMBER 88 — SPRING 2022 — \$10.00

TheNewAtlantis.com

Reformation in the Church of Science

How the truth monopoly was broken up

Essay

Spring 2022

We know from history that what seemed to be stable regimes of truth may collapse, and be replaced



The Last Judgment (Fra Angelico, c. 1425–1430, San Marco, Florence)



Futures

Volume 91, August 2017, Pages 5-11



What is science's crisis really about?

Andrea Saltelli ^{a, b, c, d, e}, Silvio Funtowicz ^a

Show more



Futures

Volume 104, December 2018, Pages 85-90



Why science's crisis should not become a political battling ground

Andrea Saltelli ^e

nature

COMMENT | 21 May 2019

Views from a continent in flux

Nature asked nine leading Europeans to pick their top priority for science at this pivotal point. Love, money, and trust got most votes.

Carlos Moedas ^a, Isabelle Verros ^b, Stephan Kuster ^c, Helga Nowotny ^d, Andrea Saltelli ^e, Alina Murgiu-Pippidi ^f, Jan Wouter Vastbinder ^g, Daniel B. Brooks ^h & Patrick Cunningham ⁱ



Environmental Science & Policy

Volume 106, April 2020, Pages 87-98



The technique is never neutral. How methodological choices condition the generation of narratives for sustainability

Andrea Saltelli ^{a, b, c, d, e}, Lorenzo Benini ^f, Silvio Funtowicz ^a, Mario Giampietro ^{g, h}, Matthias Kaiser ^a, Erik Reinert ^{a, f}, Jeroen P. van der Sluijs ^{a, b, h}



Futures

Volume 115, January 2020, 102491



Technoscience, policy and the new media. Nexus or vortex?

Andrea Saltelli ^{a, b, c, d, e}, Paul-Marie Boulanger ^{f, g}



Futures

Volume 135, January 2022, 102860



Science, the endless frontier of regulatory capture

Andrea Saltelli ^{a, b, c, d, e}, Dorothy J. Dankel ^{h, i}, Monica Di Fiore ^d, Nina Holland ^e, Martin Pigeon ^e

The ecosystem: science/Wissenschaft & its crises: methodological, epistemological, existential, ethical, metaphysical?

The ecosystem: Darwinian fitness of bad academe

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Research



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Cite this article: Smaldino PE, McElreath R.

2016 The natural selection of bad science.

R. Soc. open sci. **3**:160384.


<http://dx.doi.org/10.1098/rsos.160384>

The natural selection of bad science

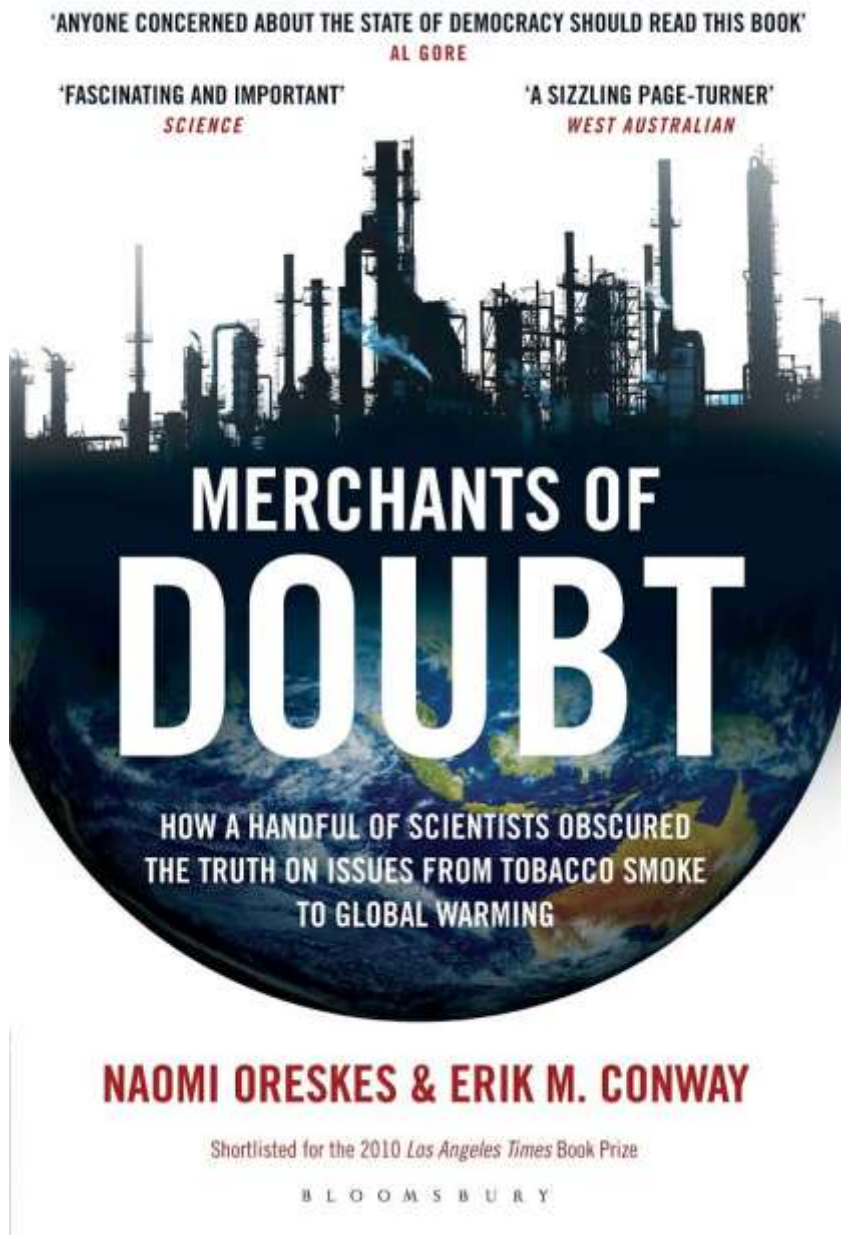
Paul E. Smaldino¹ and Richard McElreath²

¹Cognitive and Information Sciences, University of California, Merced, CA 95343, USA

²Department of Human Behavior, Ecology, and Culture, Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology, Leipzig, Germany

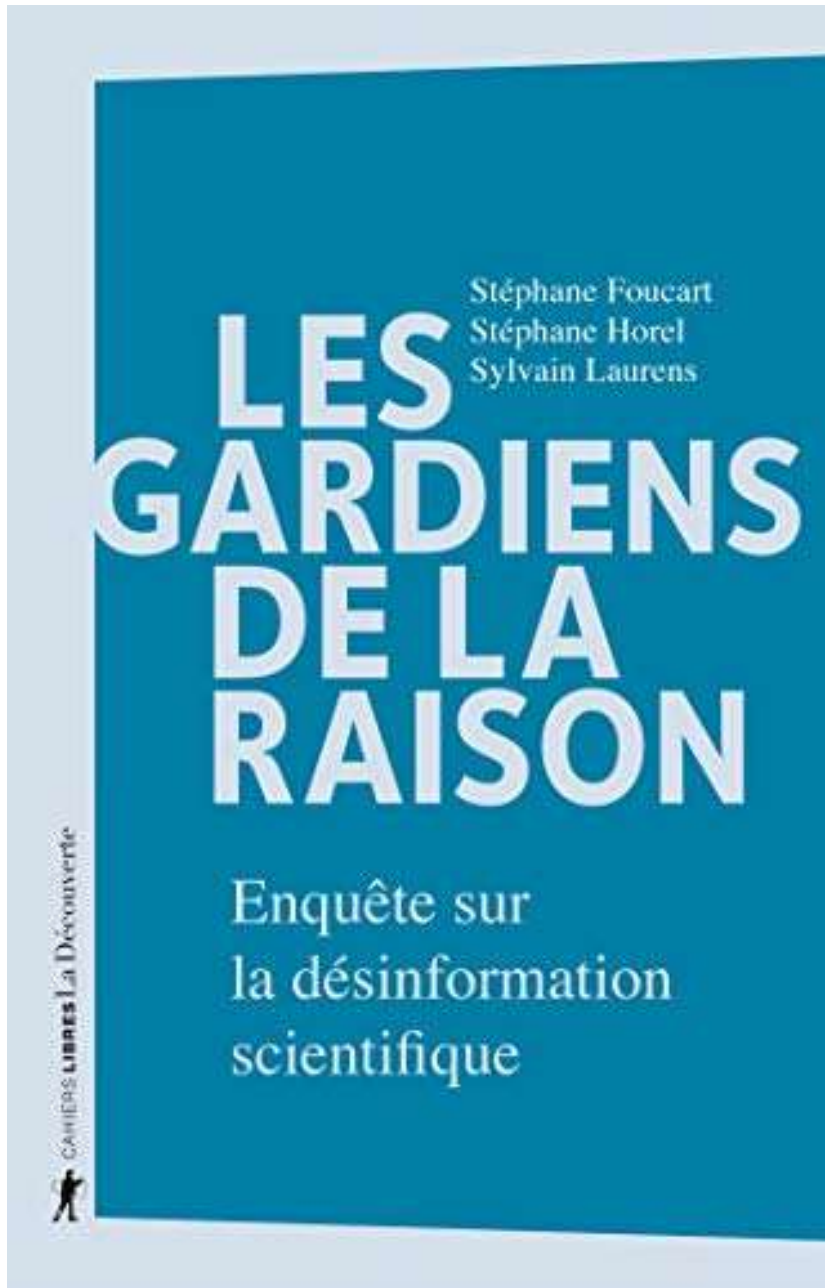
 PES, 0000-0002-7133-5620; RME, 0000-0002-0387-5377

Poor research design and data analysis encourage false-positive findings. Such poor methods persist despite perennial calls for



Naomi Oreskes and Erik M. Conway

The ecosystem: 2010 was already yesterday



The ecosystem: today is different

A new frontier of lobbying, where the new game consists in colonizing the entire space of scientific intermediation

What role, and what 'sociotechnical imaginaries' (S. Jasanoff) from academia?

The ecosystem: an epistemic ladder for regulatory capture – each step in need of academic expertise

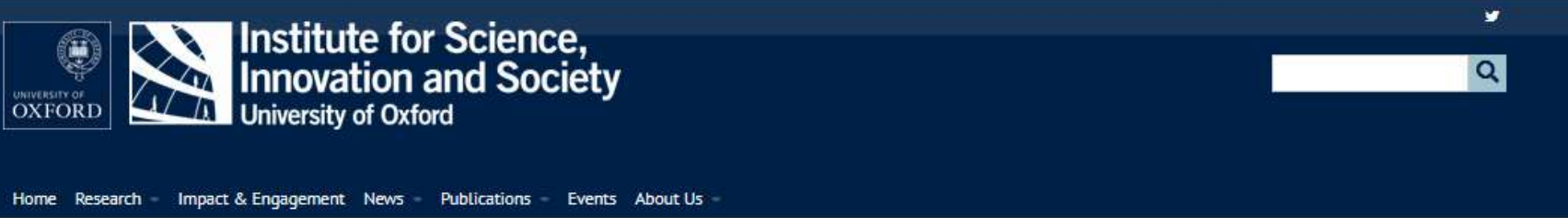
- Epistemic. Invalidating the inference or the methods
- Institutional. Delegitimising and/or ‘colonising’ institutions
- Political. Promoting a worldview where the very idea of regulation is undesirable

Science, the endless frontier of regulatory capture

Andrea Saltelli ^{a,*,} Dorothy J. Dankel ^{b, c,} Monica Di Fiore ^{d,} Nina Holland ^{e,} Martin Pigeon ^f



The ecosystem: the proletarianization of the research labour force



Home > Post-Normal Science Symposium: Address by Jerome Ravetz

Post-Normal Science Symposium: Address by Jerome Ravetz

Reflections on 'informed critical resistance, reform and the making of futures'

15 November 2018



<https://www.insis.ox.ac.uk/article/post-normal-science-symposium-address-jerome-ravetz>

PNS4 Symposium, 15-17 November 2018

*Post-normal science as a movement:
between informed critical resistance, reform and the
making of futures*

On 15th November 2018, our very own Jerome Ravetz made a virtual appearance at the fourth **Post Normal Science** (PNS4) Symposium, taking place in Barcelona.

Enjoy Jerry's rousing address here.

Content for the address can be found [here](#).

Video production by [WhiteTingleMediaProductions](#)

The ecosystem: academia
as a pillar of evidence based
policy?

**Evidence based
policy**

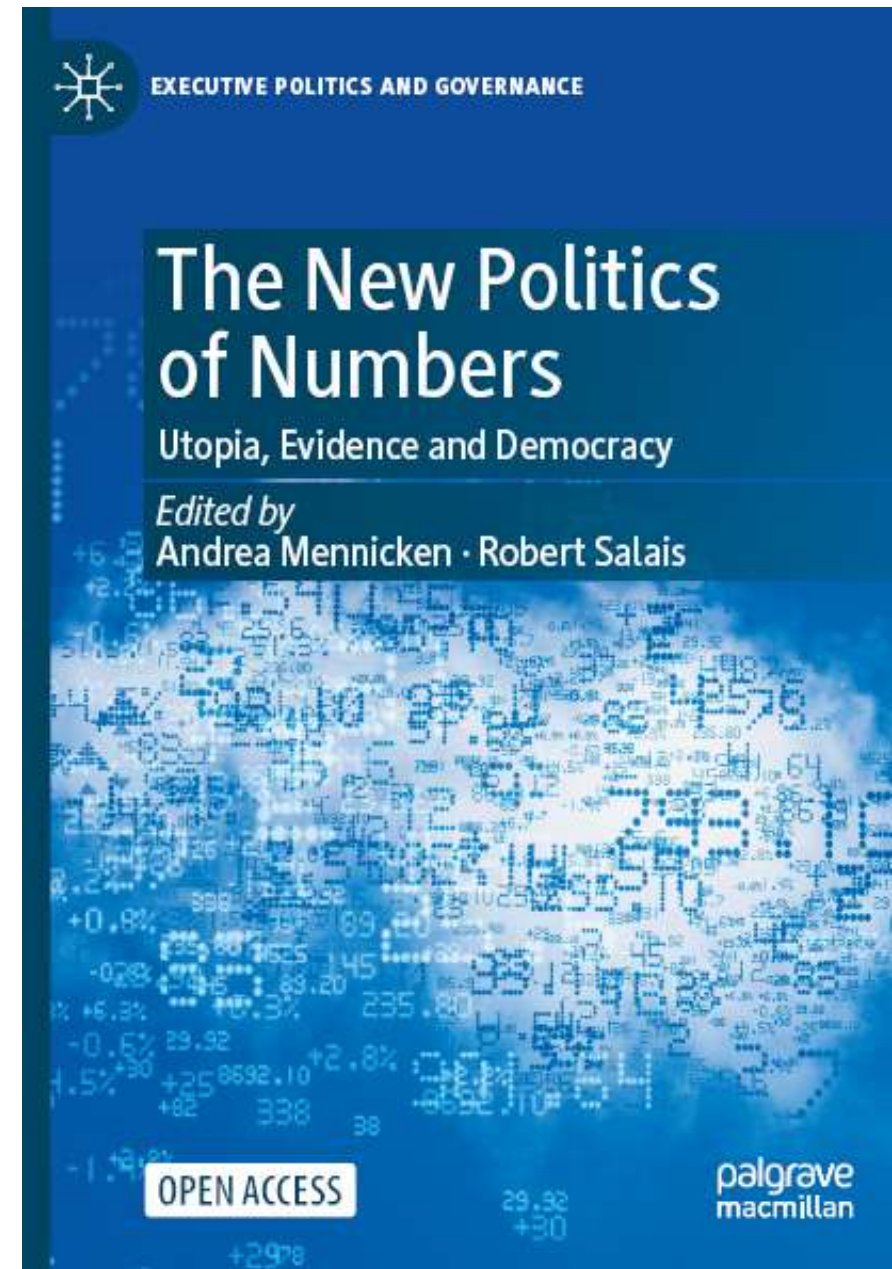
**Statistics (creating
things that hold
together for the
solution of
practical
problems)**

**Policy based
evidence**

**Governance driven
quantification (a
reversal of the
statistical pyramid)**

CHAPTER 12, “La donnée n’est pas un donné”:
Statistics, Quantification and Democratic Choice,

Robert Salais



Beryl L. Crowe: the insularity of the two great families of academia (social and natural) prevents meaningful action to defend 'the commons' against e.g. regulatory capture

The Tragedy of the Commons Revisited

28 November 1969, Volume 166, Number 3909

SCIENCE

Freedom of whom
from what_[or from whom], &
to do what?

Tenured or
temporary staff?

Or simply freedom to
work in a silos?

From the university's administrators? From
publish or perish? From hype? From need
to chase grants?

In whose name or
service?

Take home points

- Academia as part of the new world, with its responsibilities
- Academic freedom as part of a nexus

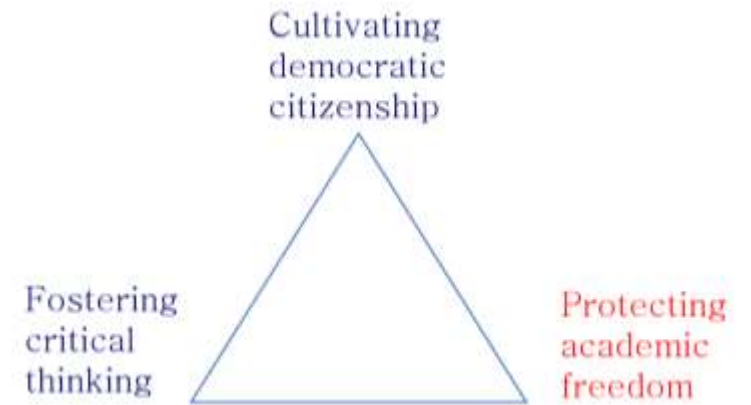


Prometheus, Rubens, 1636 - 2017,
Musée National des Beaux-Arts

Myth?



Atlas, Giovan Battista Tassi, 1700, Musée
National des Beaux-Arts



For the round table:

In the age of post-truth, a-democracy, and fragmented public sphere, ‘safeguarding’ academic freedom implies some ‘no’:

- ↓ Efficiency and excellence → fairness and diversity
- ↓ New Public Management methods and logic for HE → triad
- ↓ Standardization (international rankings) → user perspective (students and their families; areas of exclusion/invisibility; fostering the local, the creative, the diversity).
- ↓ Innovation as = “information economy for all” → (as above)



For the round table:

In the age of post-truth, a-democracy, and fragmented public sphere, ‘safeguarding’ academic freedom implies some ‘no’:

- ↓ Perverse incentives → redesign evaluation
- ↓ Autism in academia → multi- cross- and inter-disciplinarity
- ↓ “Policy based evidence” → vigilance / observatories
- ↓ “Deepening a truly functioning internal market for knowledge” → Less ERA, less market

Towards a reform of the research assessment system, EC-RTD, November 2021, doi 10.2777/707440

The End



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