



Ethics of quantification

historic, normative and social aspects

wrapping up

Jeroen P. van der Sluijs

UNIVERSITY OF BERGEN





numbers, indicators, visualisations

- Reveal
 - Suggest
 - Distort
 - Conceal
-
- Pitfalls of naïve counting
 - Artefactual nature of the things we count
 - Sceptical inquiry
 - The method is never neutral





Quantification & metric fixation

- Produces harm (Ismael)
- Can have profound political effects (Ted, Sid)
- Will be gamed (Jill, Ted, Andrea,)
- Misconduct (Catherine) / Crisis of Science (Andrea)
- Apathic compliance & metrical cynicism (Elizabeth)
- Undermines community (Gerald)
- Weakens cohesion (Catherine)
- Transforms [cf-07 similar experience: SfB@UiB]
 - humans & non humans are co-constructed / knowledge & agency are relational (Ana)
- Bureaucrats demand it (Ismael, Andrea)
- Producing results with methods we don't master is misconduct (Catherine)
- Not possible not to be part of the university rankings game (pro rector)
- Critics identified common root causes (Saltelli)






Issues in EoQ (Saltelli)

- Consequentialism (footprint)
- Model complexity
- Purported neutrality of technique
- Relational validity (context, purpose)

- Tame hubris
 - NUSAP
 - Sensitivity auditing
 - ...





PNS 5 Symposium

Florence 2020

Post-Normal Science



PNS 5 Symposium

Knowledge, Science Practices and Integrity:
Quality through Post-Normal Science Lenses.

University of Florence (Florence, IT)
Palazzo Fenzi-Marucelli

21-23 September 2020

As science's inter-penetration with technology, finance, politics and mass-media becomes ever more profound, new challenges arise. Scientific practices are becoming increasingly diverse — for example, as citizen science, DIY and makers movements gain prominence, and traditional, local and indigenous knowledge are (re)valued. Plurality in the forms of knowledge increases complexity. In this context, the protection of integrity and quality of knowledge includes critical thinking about science itself. New demarcations are needed, between science practices with qualities that are negotiated with society, and practices that are shoddy, entrepreneurial, opportunistic, reckless, vacuous, or outright dirty. Confronting issues at the science-technology-policy interface with PNS lenses yields something more rigorously managed than politics, less precise than laboratory science, more challenging than either of them, and with the potential to restore integrity to science practice and prudence in policy advice.



PNS 5 Symposium - Florence 2020
pns5.biostatistica.net



<http://pns5.biostatistica.net/>



(how) can we stay sane in the madhouse of metrics?

- Critical informed resistance (PNS)
- Real expertise must exploit rather than suppress diversity (Ted / Bavarian Hagen)
- Fight numbers with numbers
- How to be a responsible cyborg? (Ana)
- Even if we cannot change it, it helps to understand it (Ana)
- Craft skills with numbers
- Qualified quantities NUSAP (Adrea)

