

RFF - CMCC EIEE Webinar

RESPONSIBLE MODELLING

February 2, 2023 - h 2:00 pm CET

Speaker:

Andrea Saltelli, Visiting researcher at UIB-SVT,
associate researcher at Institute for Cognitive Sciences
and Technologies of the Italian National Research
Council (CNR) and academic counsellor at UPF
Barcelona School of Management

To participate to the webinar, register here: <https://rb.gy/2qeh5u>



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The politics of modelling. Numbers between science and policy

Andrea Saltelli and Monica Di Fiore Eds., OUP, to
appear summer 2023



OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Foreword, *Wendy Espeland*, Preface, *Dan Sarewitz*, chapters
by Andy Stirling, Philip Stark, Ting Xu, Jerome R. Ravetz ...

www.andreasaltelli.eu



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Where to find this talk:

A large banner image showing a terraced rice field in a valley, with mountains in the background under a hazy sky. The text "CAETERIS ARE NEVER PARIBUS" is overlaid in white.

CAETERIS ARE
NEVER PARIBUS

Mastodon Toots by @AndreaSaltelli

AndreaSaltelli 2023/1/30 11:23

"Mega-agriculture is destroying the Corn Belt and the Central Valley, which the country's food system depends on. Can midsize farms survive to save it?"

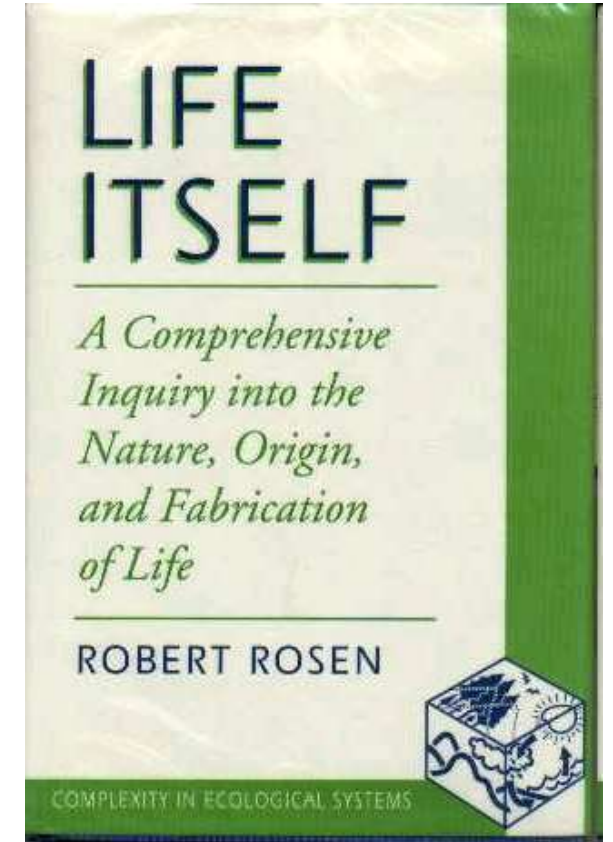
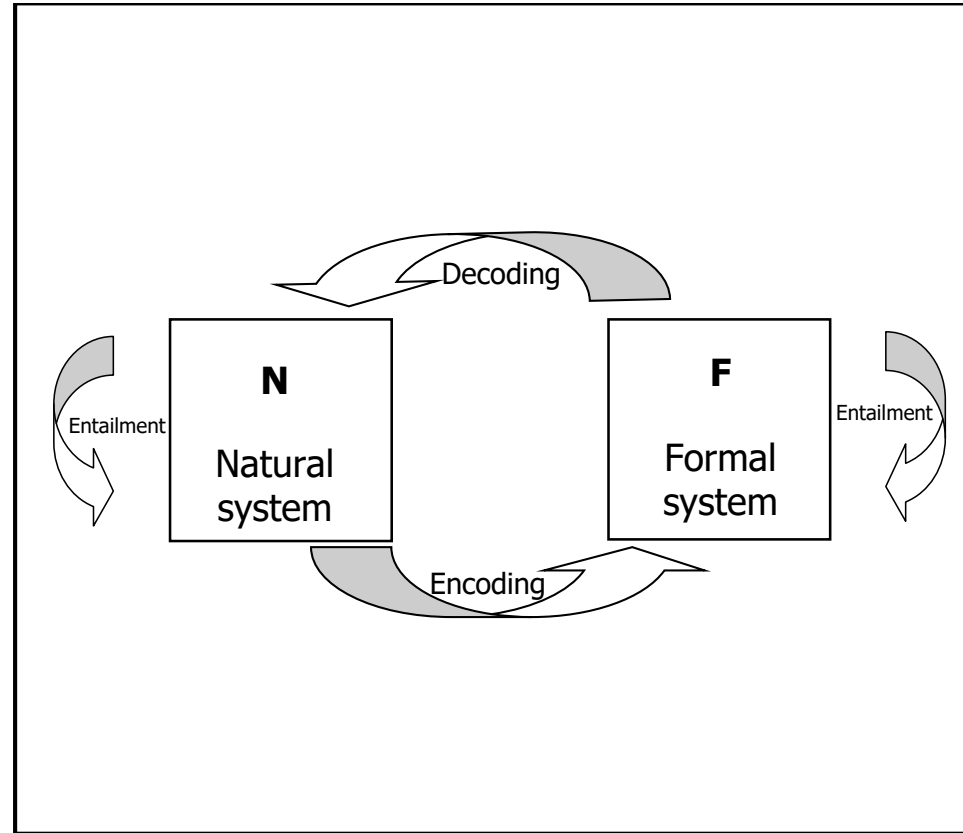
[In case you wonder: the answer is 'not likely']

nybooks.com/articles/2023/02/0

@Jeroen_van_der_Sluijs
@Martin_Pigeon

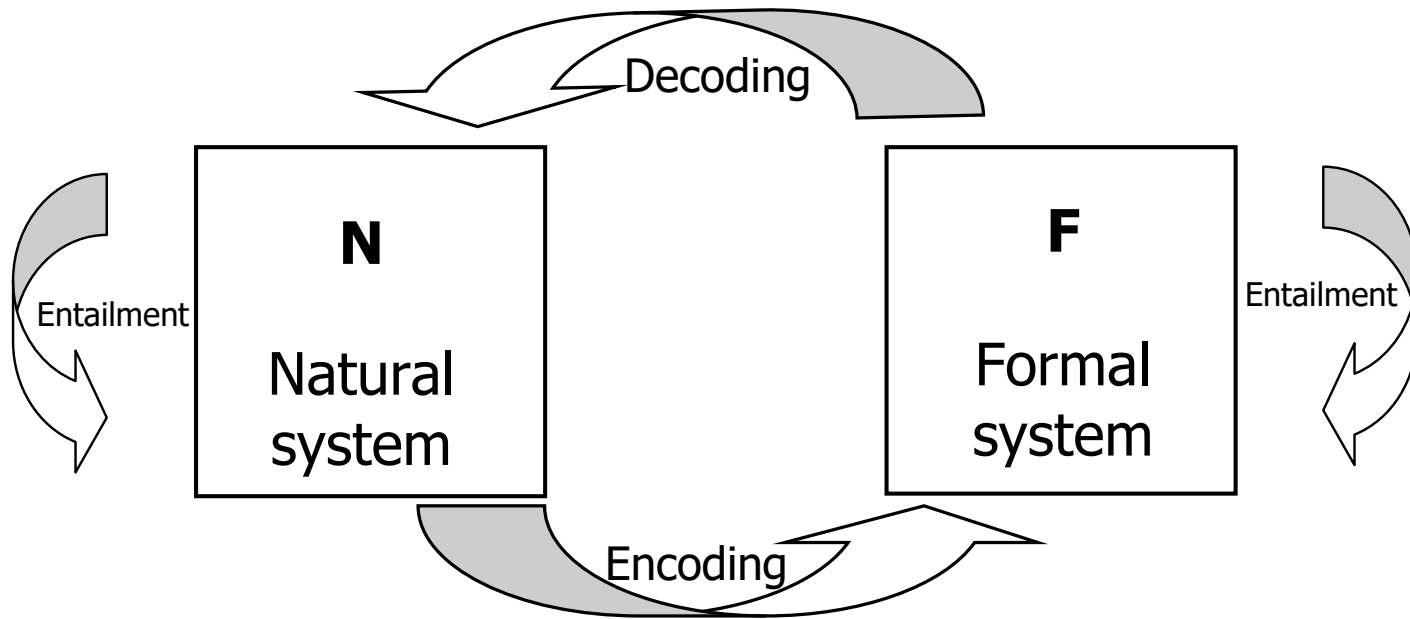
Modelling is a
craft more than
a science

Modelling as a craft rather than as a science for Robert Rosen



R. Rosen, *Life Itself: A Comprehensive Inquiry Into the Nature, Origin, and Fabrication of Life*. Columbia University Press, 1991.

Louie, A.H. 2010. "Robert Rosen's Anticipatory Systems." Edited by Riel Miller. *Foresight* 12 (3): 18–29. <https://doi.org/10.1108/14636681011049848>.



What is a model ?



Robert Rosen

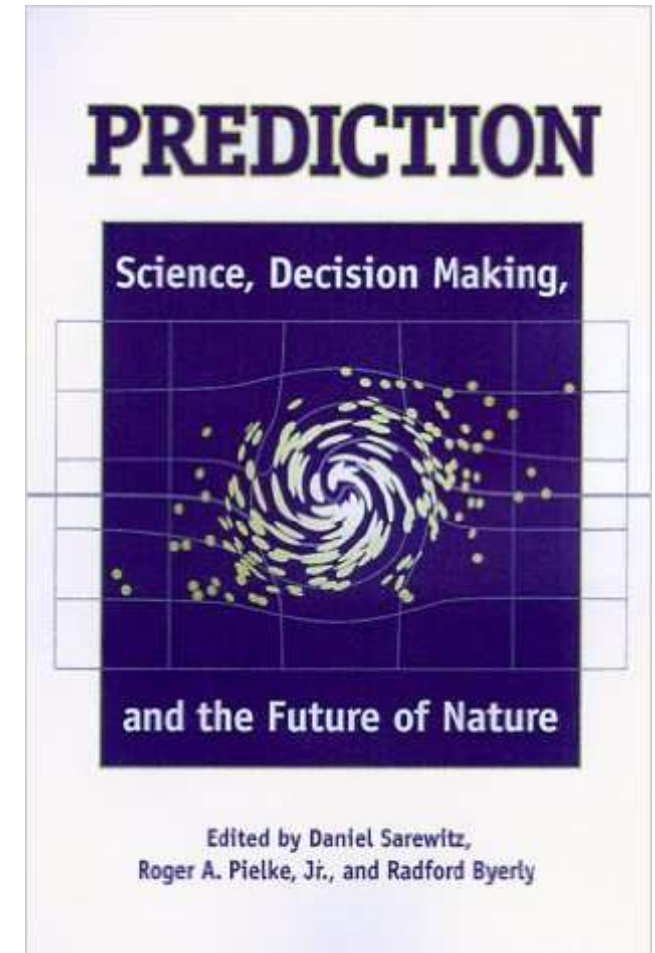
“models are most useful when they are used to challenge existing formulations, rather than to validate or verify them”



Naomi
Oreskes

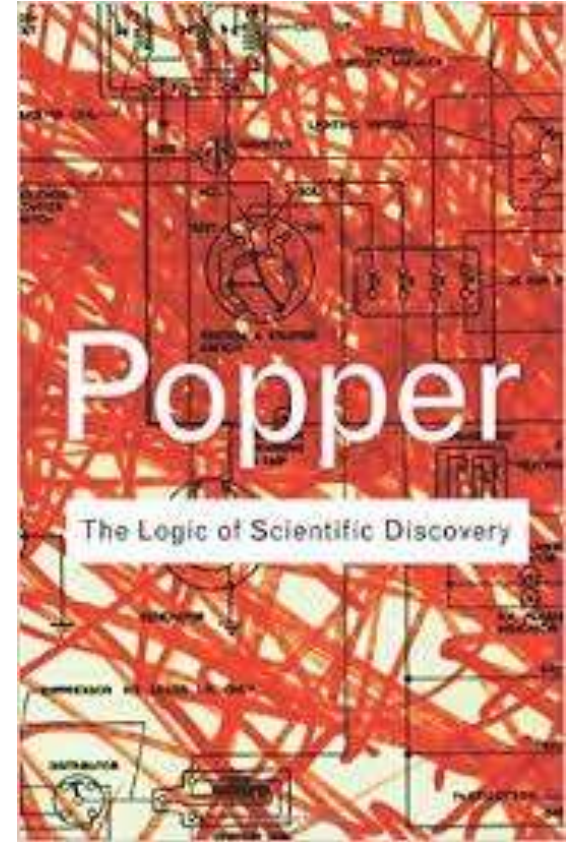
N. Oreskes, K. Shrader-Frechette, and K. Belitz, “Verification, Validation, and Confirmation of Numerical Models in the Earth Sciences,” *Science*, 263, no. 5147, 1994.

Models are not physical laws



Oreskes, N., 2000, Why predict? Historical perspectives on prediction in Earth Science, in Prediction, Science, Decision Making and the future of Nature, Sarewitz et al., Eds., Island Press, Washington DC

“[...] to be of value in theory testing, the predictions involved must be capable of refuting the theory that generated them”
(N. Oreskes)



“When a model generates a prediction, of what precisely is the prediction a test? The laws? The input data? The conceptualization?

Any part (or several parts) of the model might be in error, and there is no simple way to determine which one it is”

Models have
little memory

“[...] The process of constructing and validating [value-at risk] models is time consuming and detail oriented; normally even the people who produced the model will not remember many of the assumptions incorporated into it, short of redoing their work, which means that the client cannot simply ask then what went into it.”

E. Millgram The Great Endarkenment, p. 29

Caeteris are never paribus

Ceteris paribus or caeteris paribus is a Latin phrase meaning "all other things being equal" or "other things held constant" or "all else unchanged" (Wikipedia)

The case of DSGE, dynamic stochastic general equilibrium models

Rational expectations of agents
Efficient market hypothesis

Philip Mirowski



Philip Mirowski, 2013, Never let a serious crisis go wasted, Verso Books.

The US senate and Queen Elisabeth perplexed...



Philip Mirowski, 2013, Never let a serious crisis go wasted, Verso Books.

Dangers of mathematization of economics



Wolfgang Drechsler



Erik S. Reinert



Paul Romer



Philip Mirowski

W. Drechsler, "On the possibility of quantitative-mathematical social science, chiefly economics," *J. Econ. Stud.*, vol. 27, no. 4/5, pp. 246–259, 2000.

E. S. Reinert, "Full circle: economics from scholasticism through innovation and back into mathematical scholasticism," *J. Econ. Stud.*, vol. 27, no. 4/5, pp. 364–376, Aug. 2000.

P. Romer, "Mathiness in the Theory of Economic Growth," *Am. Econ. Rev.*, vol. 105, no. 5, pp. 89–93, May 2015.

Mirowski, Philip. 2013. *Never Let a Serious Crisis Go to Waste: How Neoliberalism Survived the Financial Meltdown*. Verso.



UCL Institute for
Innovation and
Public Purpose



WORKING PAPER
WP 2021/07

Altered States: Cartesian and Ricardian dreams

Erik S. Reinert

Tallinn University of Technology

UCL Institute for Innovation and Public Purpose

Monica di Fiore

Institute for Cognitive Sciences and Technologies, Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche

Andrea Saltelli

Open Evidence Research, Universitat Oberta de Catalunya (UOC)

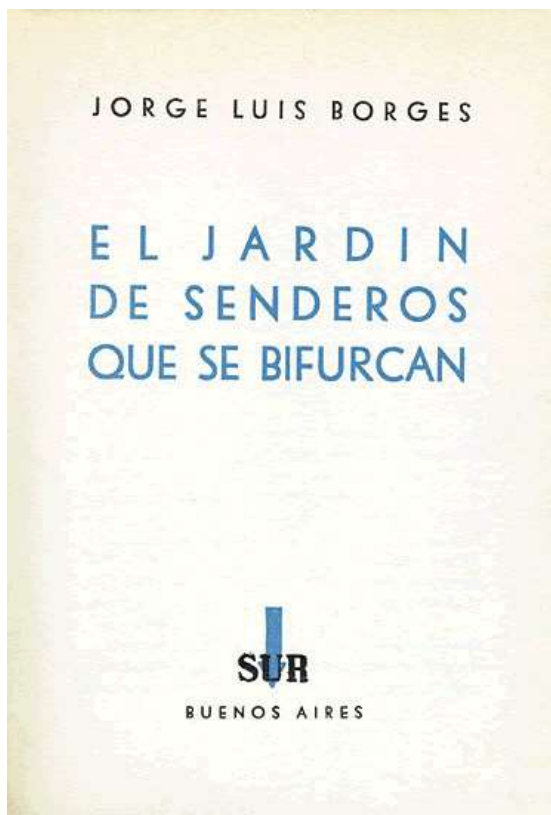
Jerome R. Ravetz

Institute for Science, Innovation and Society, University of Oxford

Fishing
expeditions,
forking paths ...



Jorge Luis Borges
(1899–1986)



Taking different
narratives within the
same novel like Ts'ui Pên



The garden of forking paths: Why multiple comparisons can be a problem, even when there is no “fishing expedition” or “p-hacking” and the research hypothesis was posited ahead of time*

Andrew Gelman[†] and Eric Loken[‡]

14 Nov 2013

The garden of forking paths: Why multiple comparisons can be a problem, even when there is no “fishing expedition” or “p-hacking” and the research hypothesis was posited ahead of time*

Andrew Gelman[†] and Eric Loken[‡]

14 Nov 2013

Why this matters?



PNAS

RESEARCH ARTICLE

SOCIAL SCIENCES

 OPEN

Observing many researchers using the same data and hypothesis reveals a hidden universe of uncertainty

Edited by Douglas Massey, Princeton University, Princeton, NJ; received March 6, 2022; accepted August 22, 2022



“Will different researchers [73 teams] converge on similar findings when analyzing the same data?

...

...teams’ results varied greatly, ranging from large negative to large positive effects”

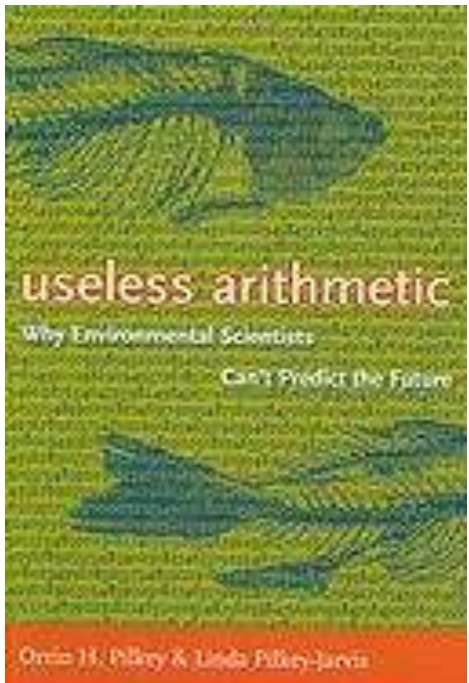
(Massey et al. 2022)

Don't confuse the map with
the territory

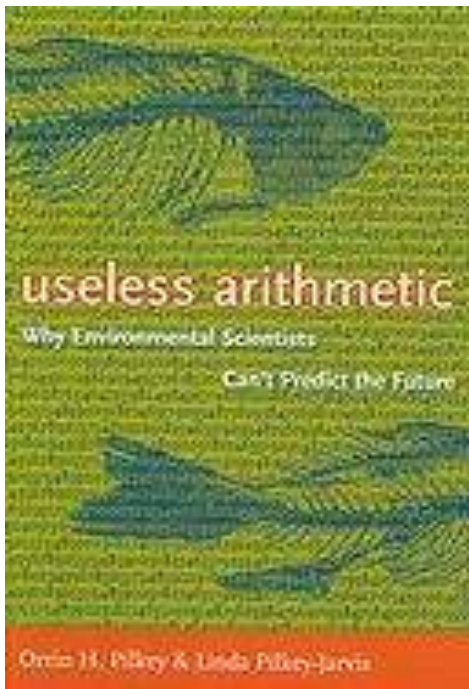
If you do, sensitivity analysis will not save you



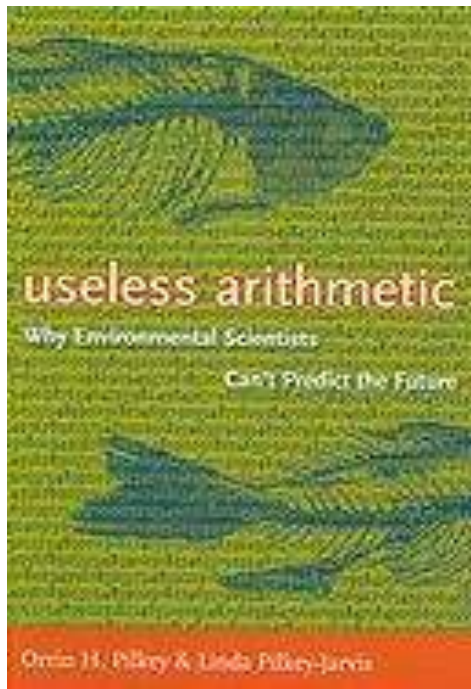
Orrin H.
Pilkey



Useless Arithmetic: Why Environmental Scientists Can't Predict the Future
by Orrin H. Pilkey and Linda Pilkey-Jarvis, Columbia University Press,
2009.



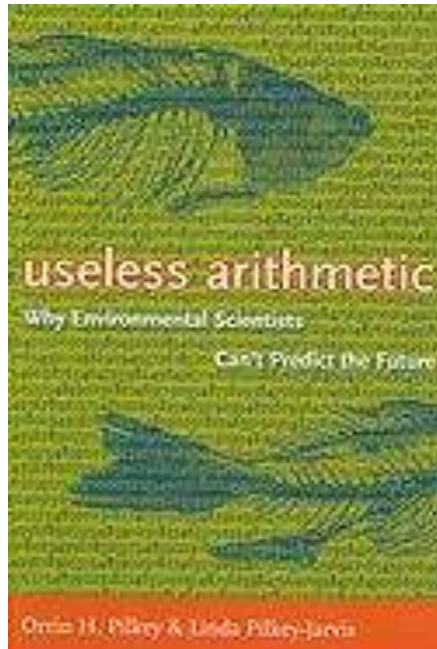
<<It is important, however, to recognize that the sensitivity of the parameter in the equation is what is being determined, not the sensitivity of the parameter in nature>>

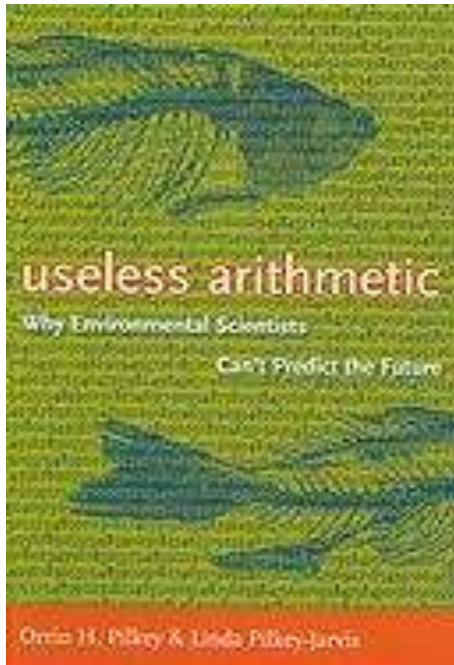


<<...If the model is wrong or if it is a poor representation of reality, determining the sensitivity of an individual parameter in the model is a meaningless pursuit>>

One of the examples discussed concerns the **Yucca Mountain** repository for radioactive waste. TSPA model (for total system performance assessment) for safety analysis.

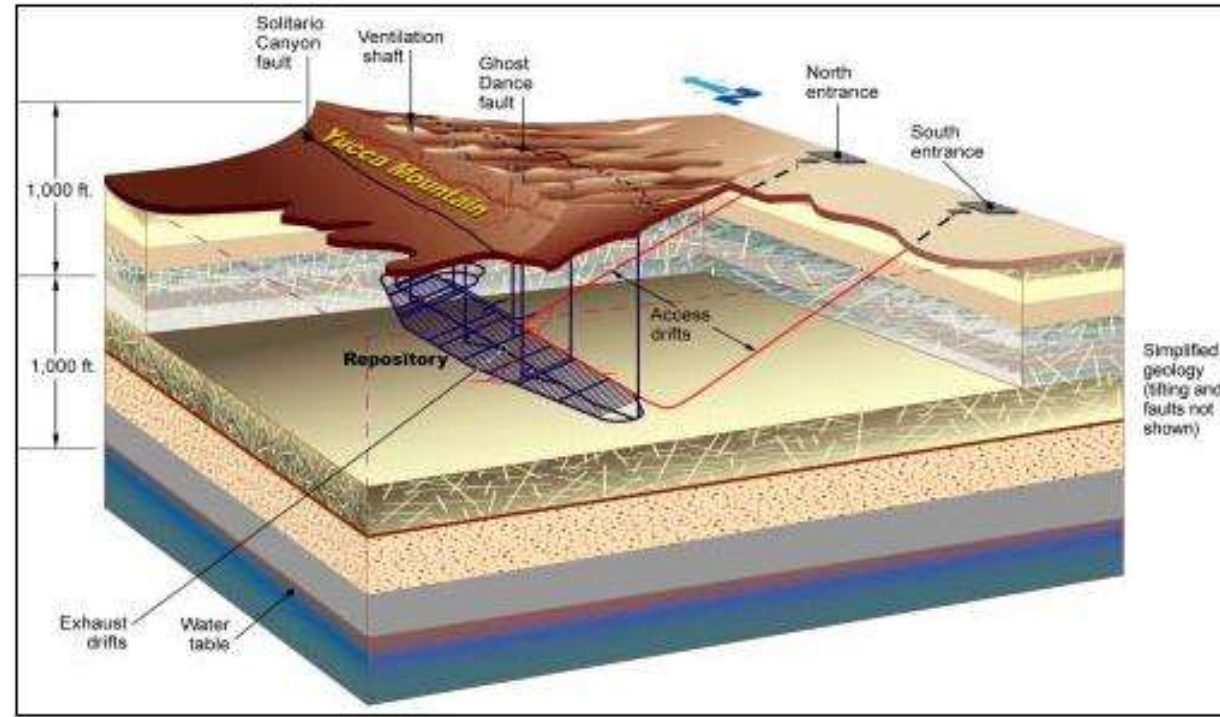
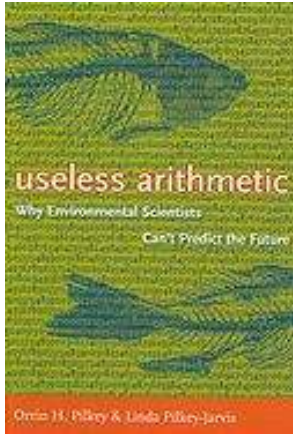
TSPA is Composed of 286 sub-models.





TSPA (like any other model) **relies on assumptions** → one is the low permeability of the geological formation → long time for the water to percolate from surface to disposal.



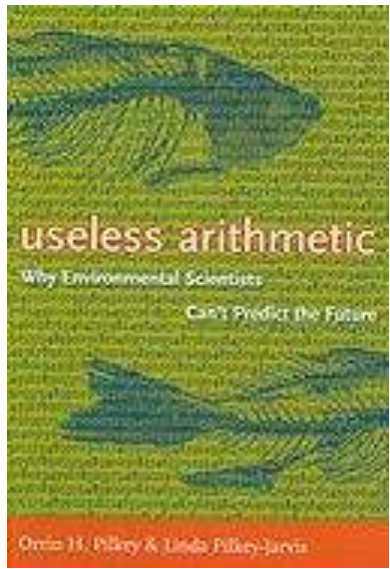


The confidence of the stakeholders in TSPA was not helped when evidence was produced which could lead to an upward revision of 4 orders of magnitude of this parameter
(the ^{36}Cl story)

Type III error in sensitivity: Examples:

In the case of TSPA (Yucca mountain) a range of 0.02 to 1 millimetre per year was used for percolation of flux rate.

→... SA useless if it is instead ~ 3,000 millimetres per year.



“Scientific mathematical modelling should involve constant efforts to falsify the model”

→ Organized skepticism (as per CUDOS)

Communalism, Universalism, Disinterestedness, Organized Skepticism, from sociology of science, Robert K. Merton.



Steve Rayner

Rayner, S., 2012, Uncomfortable knowledge: the social construction of ignorance in science and environmental policy discourses, *Economy and Society*, 41:1, 107–125.

Rayner's (2012) strategies to deal with
“uncomfortable knowledge”.

Denial, Dismissal, Diversion, Displacement



Model based

Rayner, S., 2012, Uncomfortable knowledge: the social construction of ignorance in science and environmental policy discourses, *Economy and Society*, 41:1, 107–125.

Displacement: “The model we have developed tells us that real progress is being achieved” (The focus is now the model not the problem).

Rayner, S., 2012, Uncomfortable knowledge: the social construction of ignorance in science and environmental policy discourses, *Economy and Society*, 41:1, 107–125.

Example of displacement: Chesapeake Bay Program (CBP) modelling work

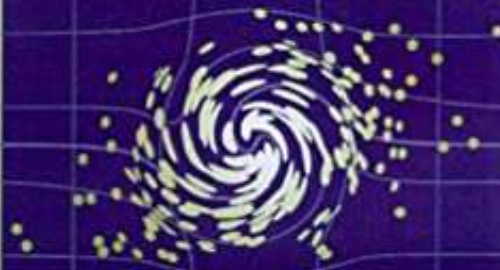
“Bay models are used to track nutrient loads to ensure the cap is not exceeded”

➔ The model results – rather than the actual measurements, become the substance of use

Rayner, S., 2012, Uncomfortable knowledge: the social construction of ignorance in science and environmental policy discourses, *Economy and Society*, 41:1, 107–125.

PREDICTION

Science, Decision Making,



and the Future of Nature

Edited by Daniel Sarewitz,
Roger A. Pielke, Jr., and Radford Byerly

Model GENESIS for beach erosion



**US Army Corps
of Engineers®**

Manipulated to support coastal-engineering projects

It neglected the role of extreme event

Sarewitz, D., Pielke, R. A. & Byerly, R. *Prediction: Science, Decision Making, and the Future of Nature* (Island Press, 2000).

Beware the size of your
model

Mind the conjecture of O'Neil



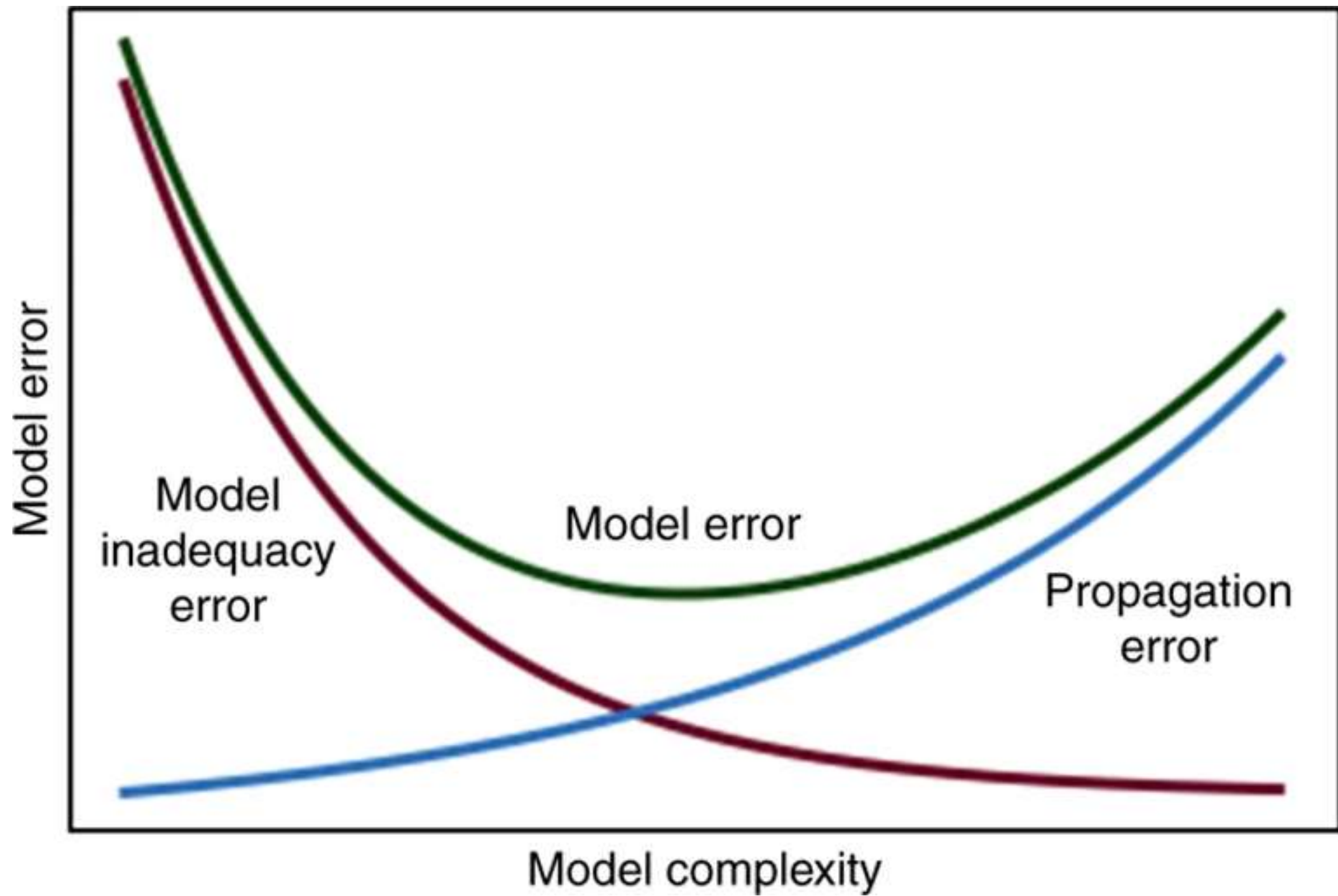
Comment

Open Access

Published: 27 August 2019

A short comment on statistical versus mathematical modelling

Andrea Saltelli 



Conjecture by O'Neill, also known as Zadeh's principle of incompatibility, whereby as complexity increases "precision and significance (or relevance) become almost mutually exclusive characteristics"

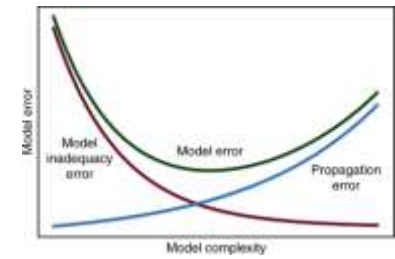
In M. G. Turner and R. H. Gardner, "Introduction to Models" in Landscape Ecology in Theory and Practice, New York, NY: Springer New York, 2015, pp. 63–95.

L. Zadeh, "Outline of a New Approach to the Analysis of Complex Systems and Decision Processes," IEEE Trans. Syst. Man. Cybern., vol. 3, no. 1, pp. 28–44, 1973.

Models with higher effective dimensions tend to produce more uncertain estimates

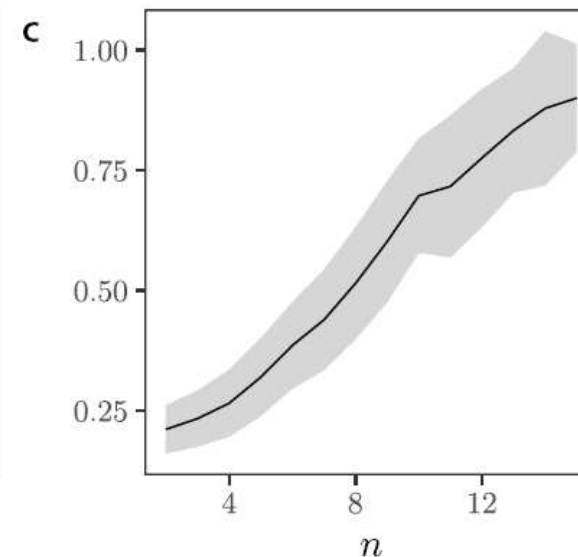
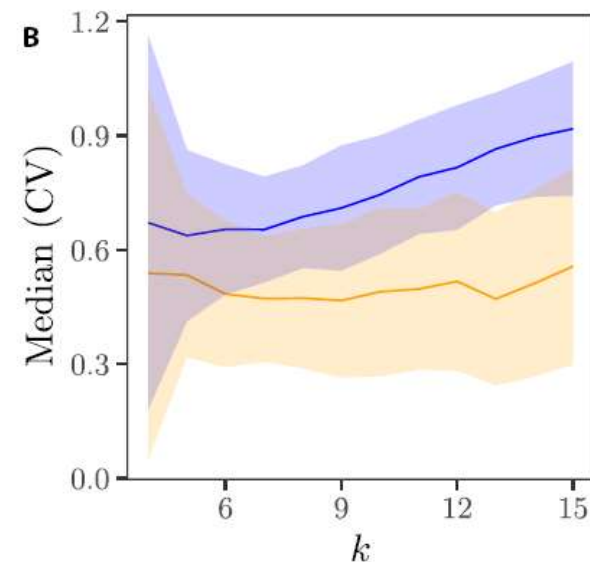
ARNALD PUY, PIERFRANCESCO BENEVENTANO, SIMON A. LEVIN, SAMUELE LO PIANO, TOMMASO PORTALURI, AND ANDREA SALTIELLI

SCIENCE ADVANCES • 19 Oct 2022 • Vol 8, Issue 42 • DOI: 10.1126/sciadv.abn9450



Empirical test
using the SA-
based concept of
effective
dimension

Interactions Up to the k th order Up to the n th order for $k = 15$



Five ways to ensure that models serve society: a manifesto

Pandemic politics highlight how predictions need to be transparent and humble to invite insight, not blame.

>260 references
SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION
1. Additional information and references



Illustration by David Parkins



nature



nature

Andrea Saltelli , Gabriele Bammer, Isabelle Bruno, Erica Charters, Monica Di Fiore, Emmanuel Didier, Wendy Nelson Espeland, John Kay, Samuele Lo Piano, Deborah Mayo, Roger Pielke Jr, Tommaso Portaluri, Theodore M. Porter, Arnald Puy, Ismael Rafols, Jerome R. Ravetz, Erik Reinert, Daniel Sarewitz, Philip B. Stark, Andrew Stirling, Jeroen van der Sluijs & Paolo Vineis

3 modellers Lo Piano, Puy, Saltelli

2 experts models and society Pielke, van der Sluijs

3 statisticians Mayo, Stark, Portaluri

2 statactivistes Bruno, Didier

2 economists Kay, Raynert

1 epidemiologist Vineis

2 sociologists of quantification

Espeland, Porter

3 STS scholars Bammer, Sarewitz, Stirling

1 philosopher Ravetz

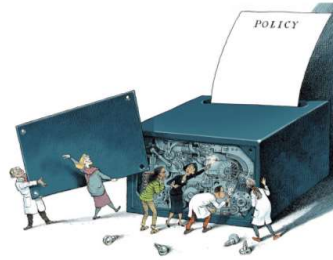
1 historian Charters

1 political scientists Di Fiore

1 expert RRI - Open Science Rafols



COVID-19 policies dictated by
'science' with two digits precision
in the presence of fundamental
uncertainties



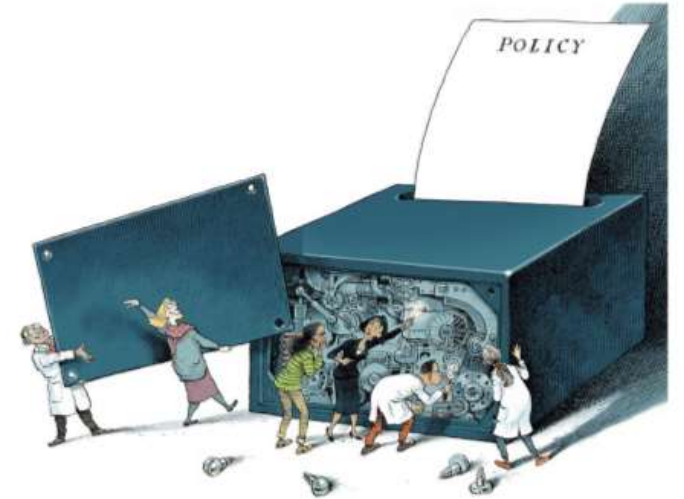
Undocumented research code used
as a policy tool (chameleon models)



Pfleiderer, P. Chameleons: The Misuse of Theoretical Models in Finance and Economics. *Economica* 87, 81–107 (2020).

COVID has put mathematical models in the limelight

→ Power & controversy



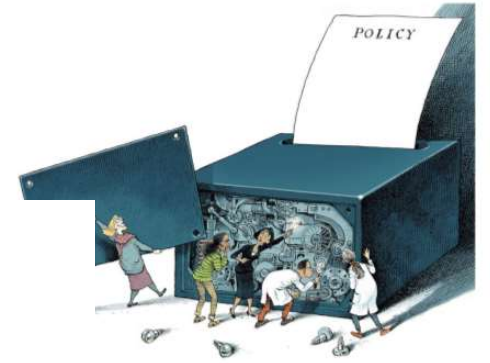
Power

The New York Times

Behind the Virus Report That Jarred the U.S. and the U.K. to Action

It wasn't so much the numbers themselves, frightening though they were, as who reported them: Imperial College London.

Landler, Mark, and Stephen Castle. 2020. Behind the Virus Report That Jarred the U.S. and the U.K. to Action – The New York Times.



Conflicts, when questions of urgency, stakes, values and uncertainty collide

Rush Limbaugh

“Wild-Ass Covid numbers
... The minute I hear
anybody start talking about
models and modeling, I
blanch”



Rhodes, Tim, and Kari Lancaster. 2020. “Mathematical Models as Public Troubles in COVID-19 Infection Control: Following the Numbers”, *Health Sociology Review* 1–18. doi: 10.1080/14461242.2020.1764376

POSTED ON [NOVEMBER 30, 2021](#) BY [EDITOR](#)

Conservative MP Bob Seely slams Professor Ferguson's failed Covid Modelling

A 15 m tirade the model's track record from foot and mouse disease to COVID-19



<https://prismdailynews.co.uk/2021/11/30/conservative-mp-bob-seely-slams-professor-fergusons-failed-covid-modelling/>

Mind the assumptions

Assess uncertainty and sensitivity

Mind the hubris

Complexity can be the enemy of relevance

Mind the framing

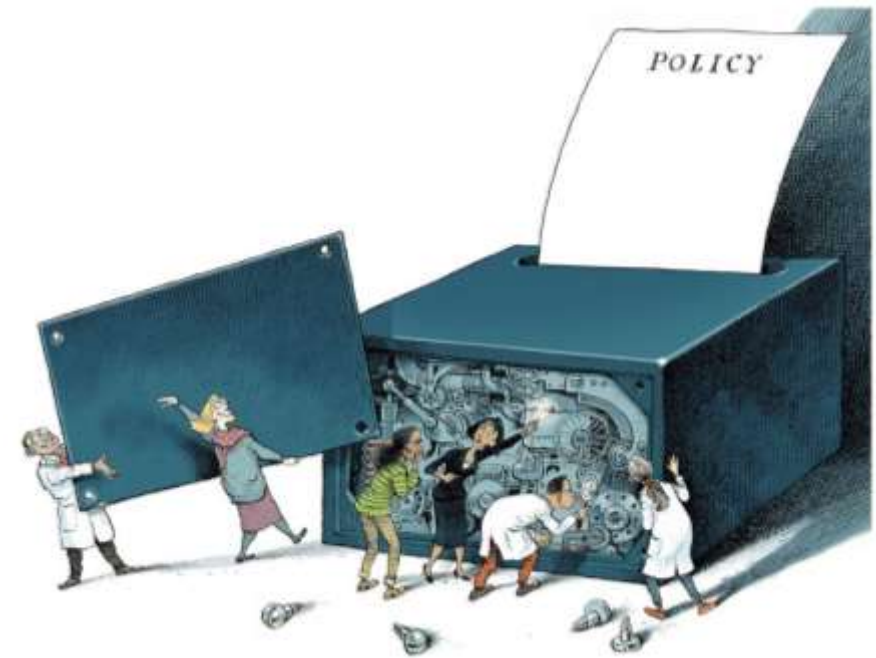
Match purpose and context

Mind the consequences

Quantification can backfire.

Mind the unknowns

Acknowledge ignorance

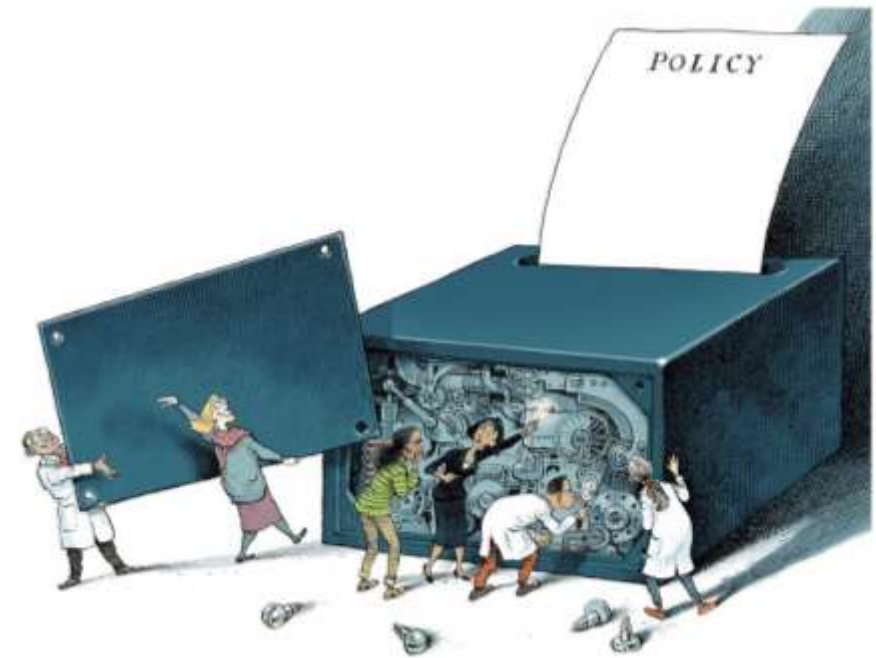


Mind the assumptions

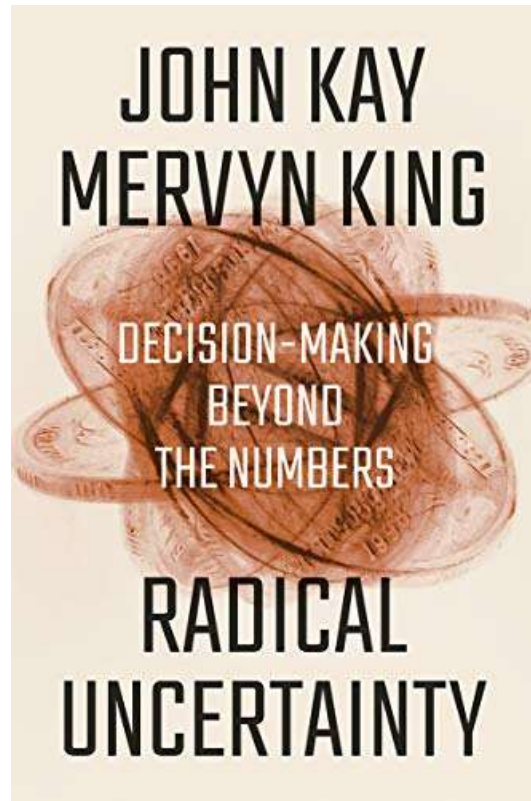
Assess uncertainty and sensitivity



... models require input values for which there is no reliable information...



Models ask as input information which we don't have – The case of WEBTAG



John Kay

WebTAG: Annual Percentage Change in Car Occupancy (% pa) up to 2036

Journey Purpose	Weekday					Weekend	All Week
	7am-10am	10am-4pm	4pm-7pm	7pm-7am	Weekday Average		
Work	-0.48	-0.4	-0.62	-0.5	-0.44	-0.48	-0.45
Non - Work (commuting and other)	-0.67	-0.65	-0.53	-0.47	-0.59	-0.52	-0.56

Source: J. A. Kay, “Knowing when we don’t know,” 2012,
https://www.ifs.org.uk/docs/john_kay_feb2012.pdf

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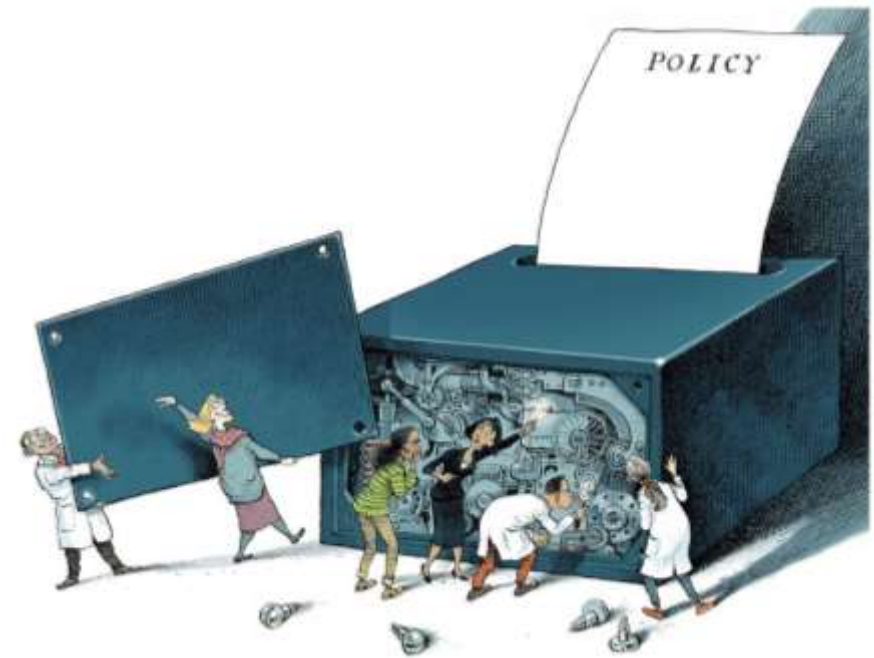
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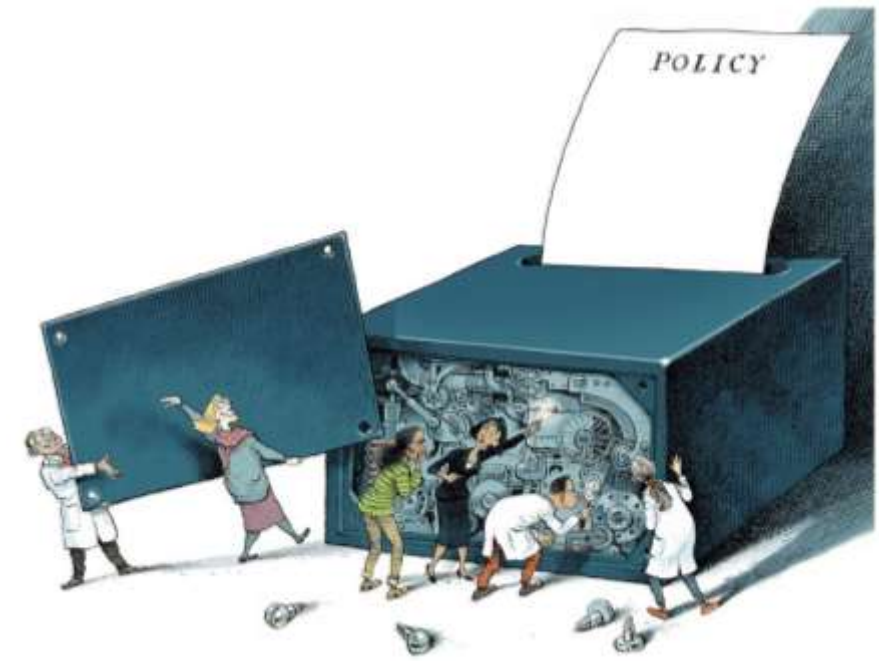
Acknowledge ignorance



Mind the hubris

Complexity can be the enemy of relevance

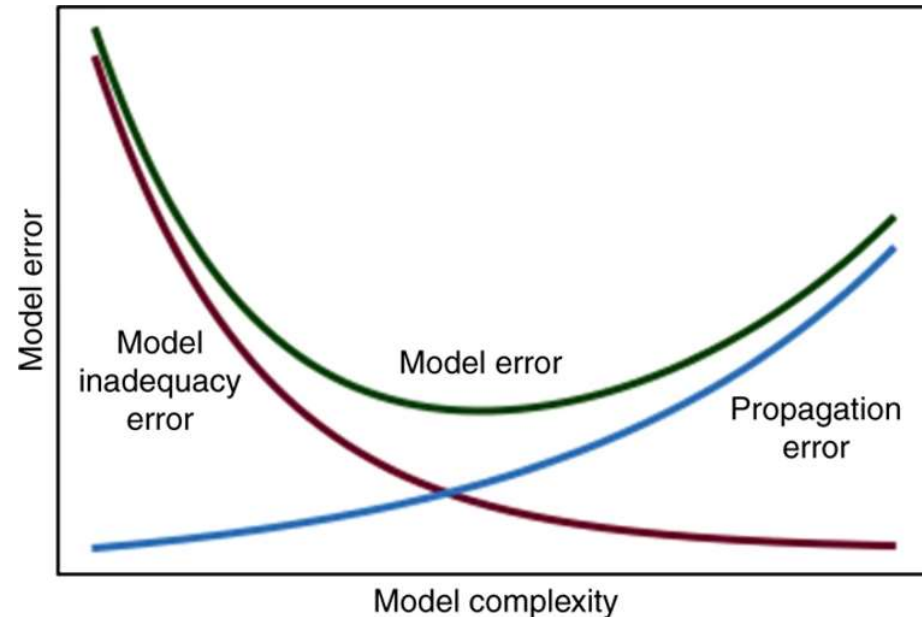
... many are seduced by the idea of adding complexity in an attempt to capture reality more accurately, but ...



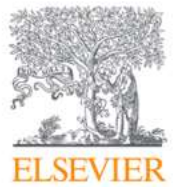
SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

1. Additional information and references

>260 references



‘expected utility’, ‘decision theory’, ‘life cycle assessment’, ‘ecosystem services’ ‘sound scientific decisions’ and ‘evidence-based policy’ ... profusion of digits, promises of accuracy



Research Policy

Available online 21 December 2022, 104709

In Press, Corrected Proof ?



Discussion

Against misleading technocratic precision in research evaluation and wider policy – A response to Franzoni and Stephan (2023), ‘uncertainty and risk-taking in science’

Andy Stirling ✉



Andrew Stirling

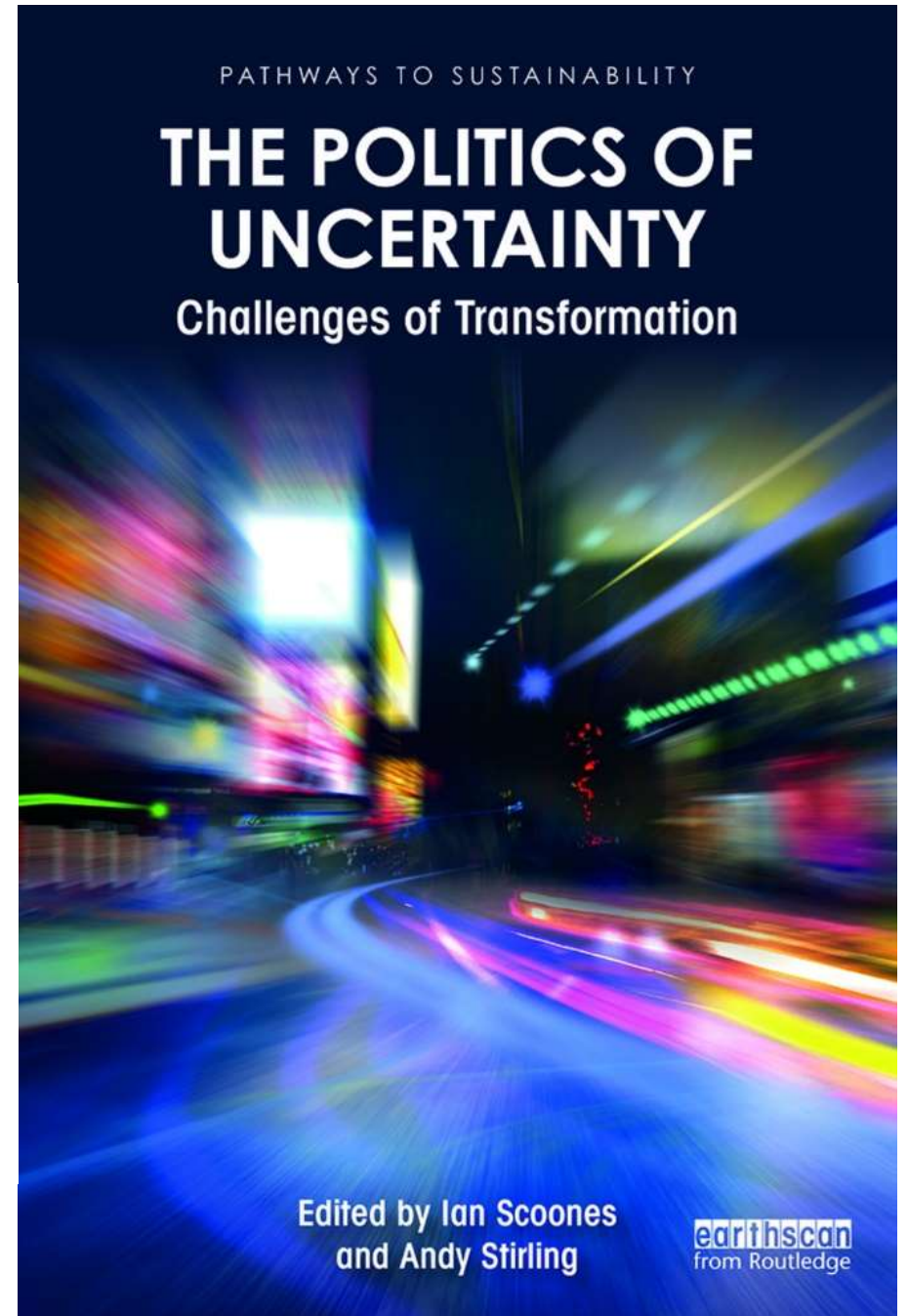
On reductionism

4

THE UNRAVELLING OF TECHNOCRATIC ORTHODOXY?

Contemporary knowledge politics
in technology regulation

Patrick van Zwanenberg



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Mind the framing

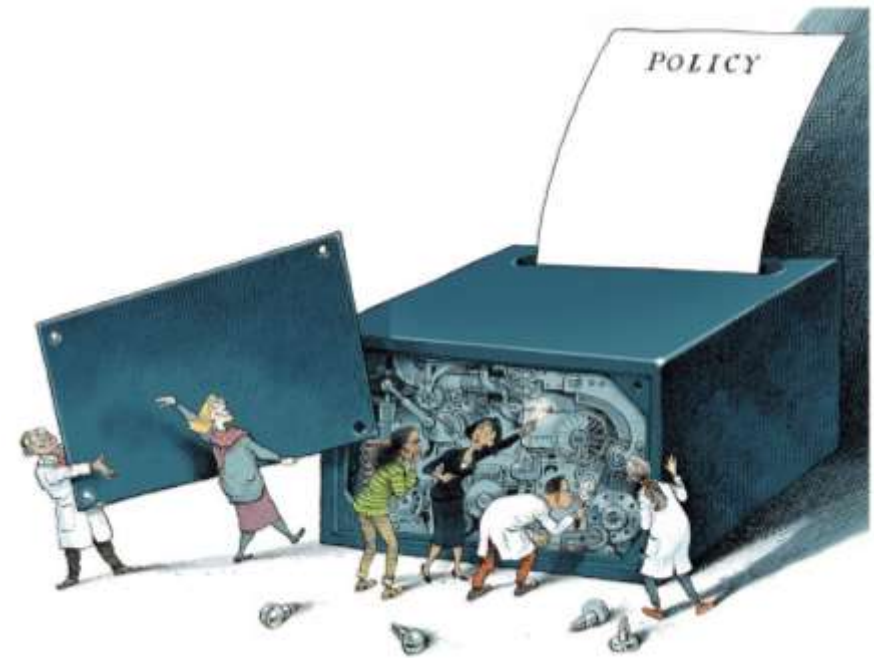
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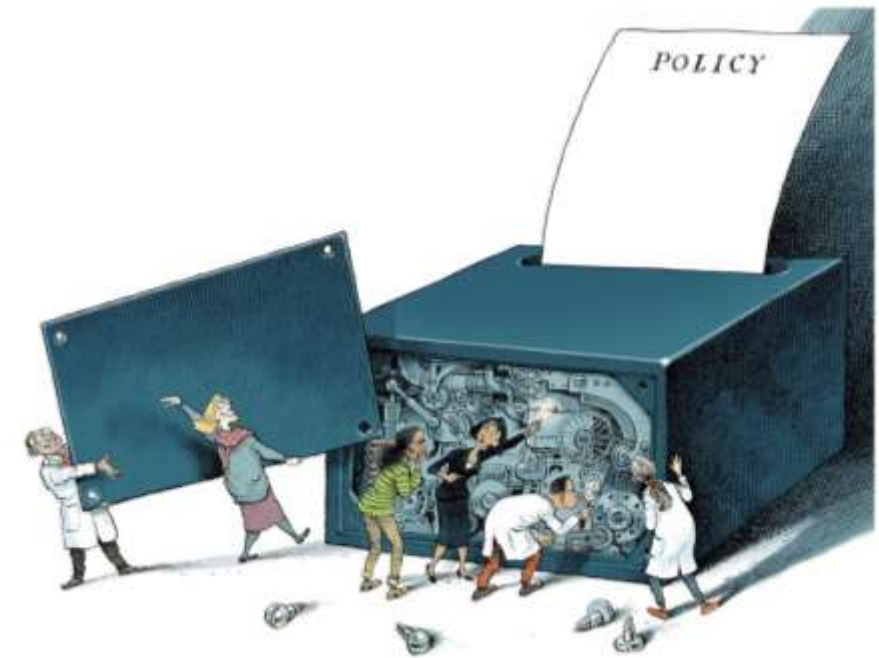
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… models will reflect the interests, disciplinary orientations and biases of the developers…

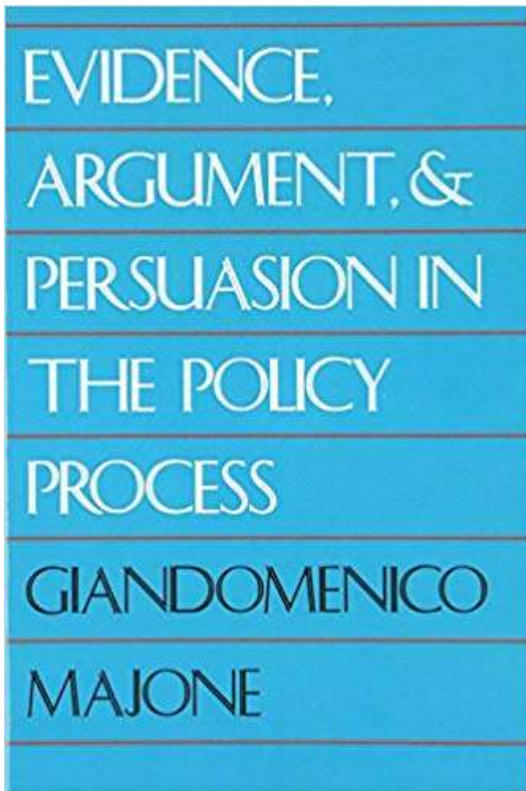
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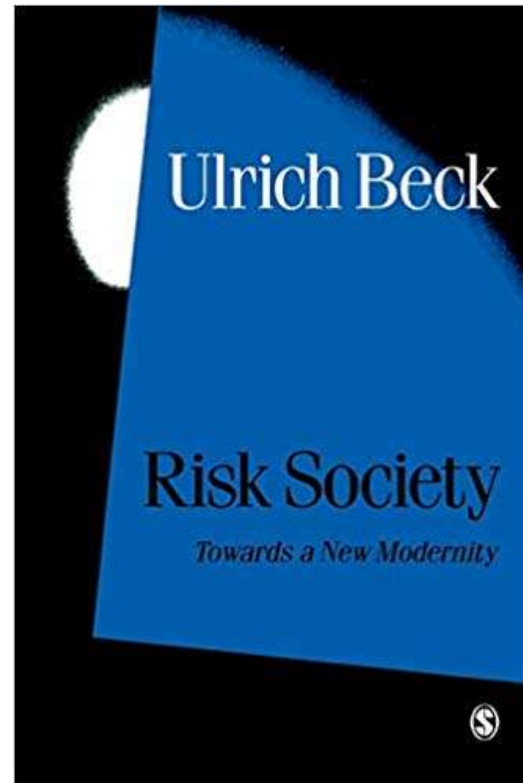
From Ulrich Beck to Giandomenico Majone: the technique is never neutral



Ulrich Beck
(1944 –2015)



1989



1992 (1986)



Environmental Science & Policy

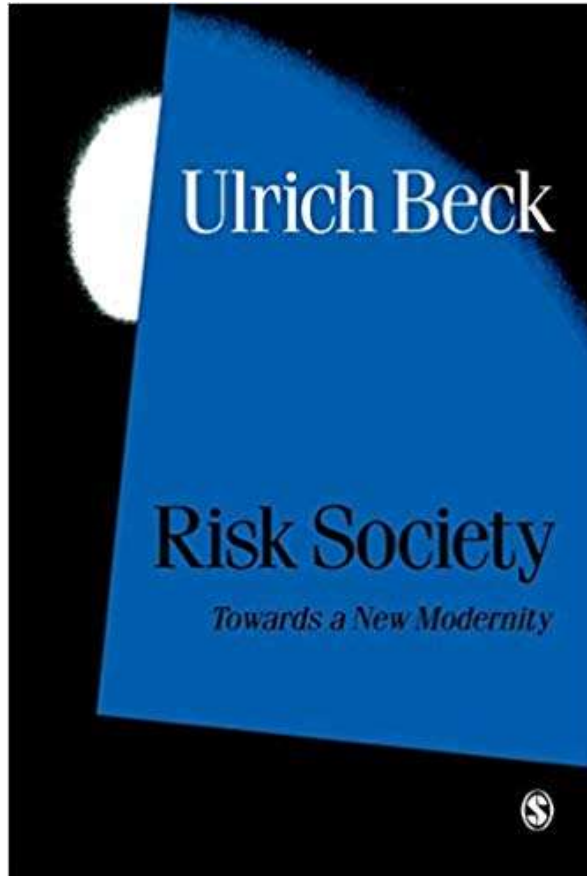
Volume 106, April 2020, Pages 87-98



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

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

“It is not uncommon for political programs to be decided in advance simply by the choice of what expert representatives are included in the circle of advisers.”



1992 (1986)



Ulrich Beck
(1944 –2015)

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



Environmental Science & Policy
Volume 106, April 2020, Pages 87–98



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

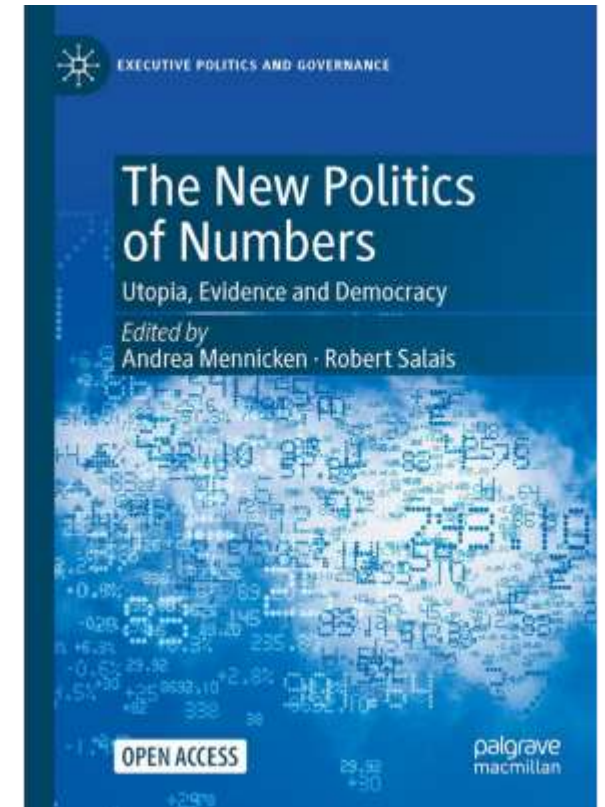
Combine more lenses, including Post-normal science (PNS), Bioeconomics, and Non-Ricardian economics

Since the technique is never neutral a technical proof of quality is illusory without a parallel investigation of normative quality

Technical Quality

Normative quality

How the numbers of neoliberalism (New Public Management) constitute a regime of a-democracy; the example of indicators of employment



Salais, R. (2022). “La donnée n’est pas un donné”: Statistics, Quantification and Democratic Choice. In *The New Politics of Numbers: Utopia, Evidence and Democracy*, Andrea Mennicken and Robert Salais, Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 379–415.



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Assess uncertainty and sensitivity

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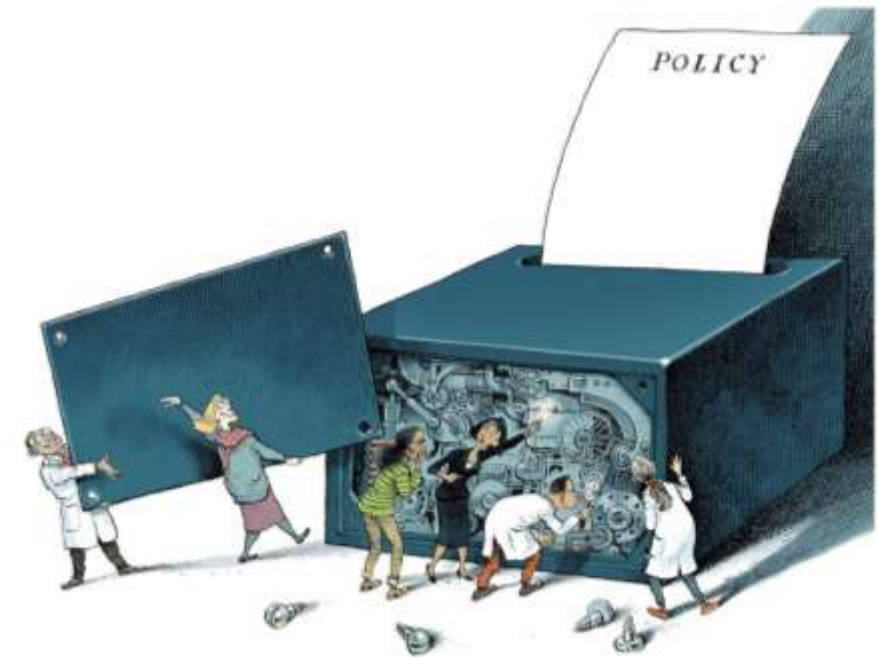


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Quantification can backfire.

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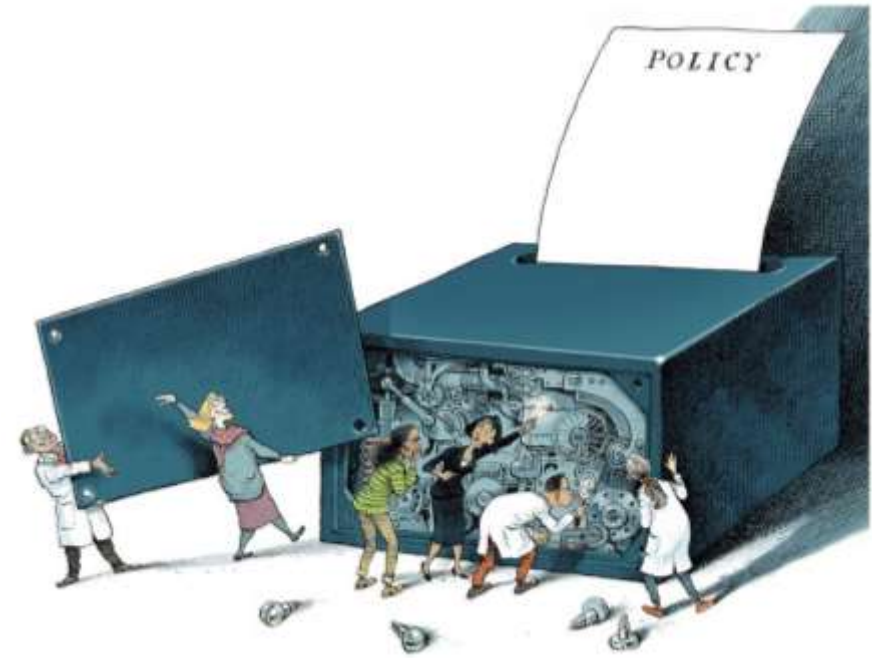
Quantification can backfire.

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WIRED MAGAZINE: 17.03

Recipe for Disaster: The Formula That Killed Wall Street

By Felix Salmon 02.23.09



$$\Pr[T_A < 1, T_B < 1] = \Phi_2(\Phi^{-1}(F_A(1)), \Phi^{-1}(F_B(1)), \gamma)$$

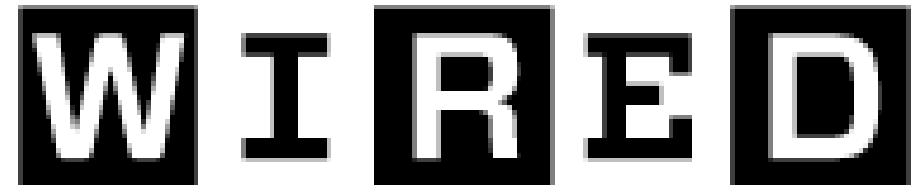
Here's what killed your 401(k) *David X. Li's Gaussian copula function as first published in 2000. Investors exploited it as a quick—and fatally flawed—way to assess risk. A shorter version appears on this month's cover of Wired.*

Here is what killed your 401(k)...

Li's Gaussian copula function ...

Nassim Nicholas Taleb, hedge fund manager and author of *The Black Swan*, is particularly harsh when it comes to the copula. "People got very excited about the Gaussian copula because of its mathematical elegance, but the thing never worked," he says. "Co-association between securities is not measurable using correlation," because past history can never prepare you for that one day when everything goes south. "Anything that relies on correlation is charlatanism."

Felix Salmon, Wired, February 2009



Source: <https://www.wired.com/2009/02/wp-quant/>

Mind the assumptions

Assess uncertainty and sensitivity

Mind the hubris

Complexity can be the enemy of relevance

Mind the framing

Match purpose and context

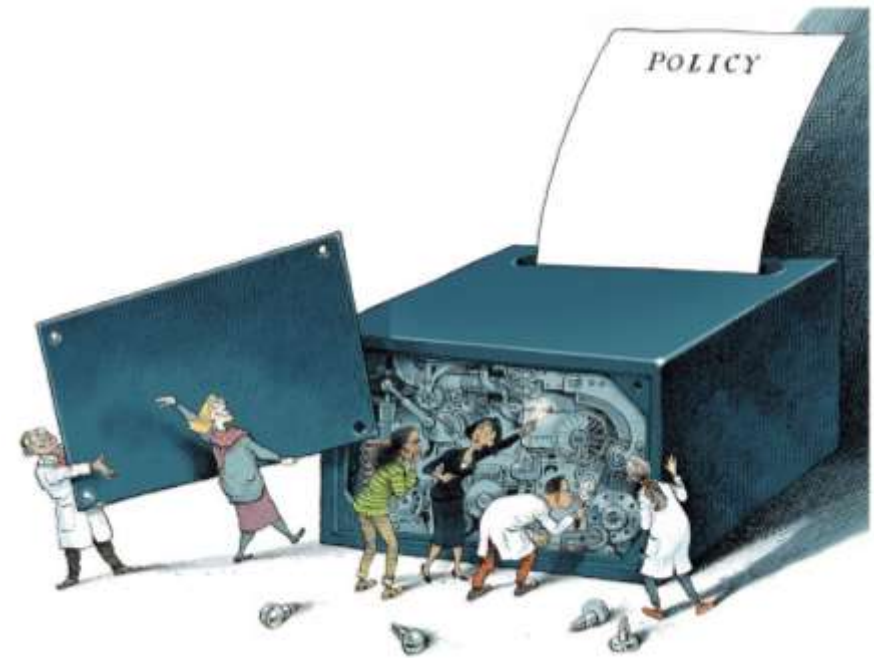
Mind the consequences

Quantification can backfire.



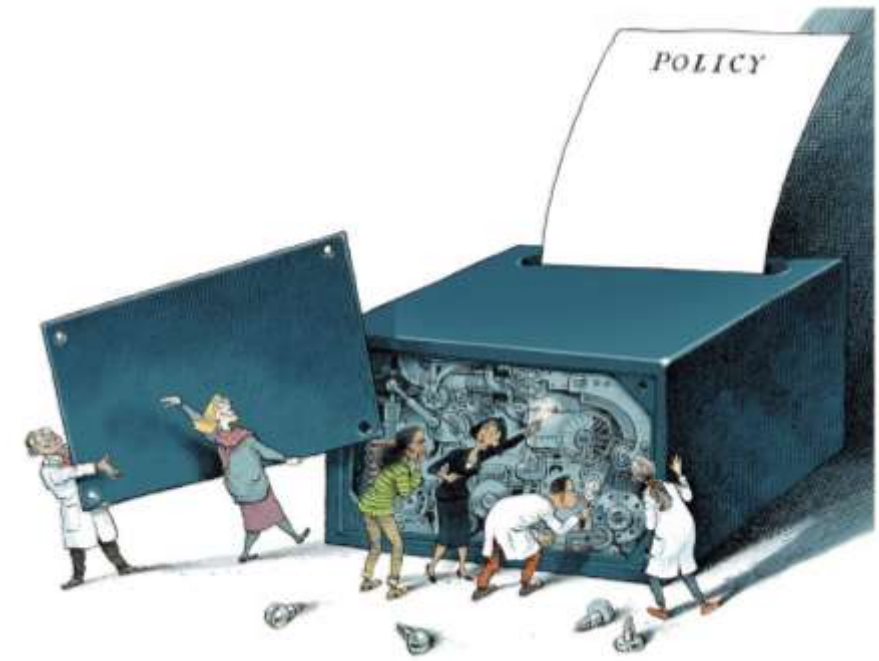
Mind the unknowns

Acknowledge ignorance



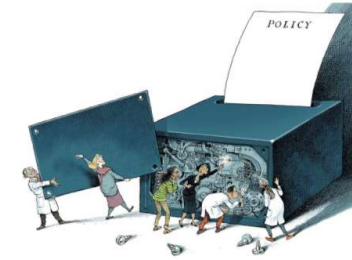
Mind the unknowns

Acknowledge ignorance



From Socrates's “knowing of not knowing” to Nicolaus Cusanus’ Docta Ignorantia was a virtue until Descartes

“There is no number-answer to your question”



Anthony Fauci

March 12, 2020, Anthony Fauci before the House Oversight and Reform Committee
https://archive.org/details/CSPAN_20200314_141500_Dr._Redfield_Dr._Fauci__Others_Testify_on_Coronavirus_Response_Part_1

The asymmetry of knowledge between model developers and society (or simply the users) calls for vigilance



Environmental Modelling & Software

Volume 21, Issue 5, May 2006, Pages 602-614



Position Paper ¹

Ten iterative steps in development and evaluation of environmental models

A.J. Jakeman ^{a, b}  , R.A. Letcher ^{a, c}, J.P. Norton ^{a, c}

Why ethics of quantification is needed now

Andrea Saltelli

Open Evidence Research, Universitat Oberta de Catalunya, Barcelona, Spain

Antonio Andreoni

UCL Institute for Innovation and Public Purpose;
South African Research Chair in Industrial
Development, University of Johannesburg, South
Africa

Wolfgang Drechsler

Tallinn University of Technology, Estonia;
UCL Institute for Innovation and Public Purpose;
Davis Center at Harvard University, United States

Jayati Ghosh

University of Massachusetts Amherst, United
States;
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Ingrid H. Kvangraven

Department of Politics, University of York

Ismael Rafols

Centre for Science and Technology Studies,
Leiden University, the Netherlands

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Tallinn University of Technology, Estonia;
UCL Institute for Innovation and Public Purpose

Andy Stirling

Science Policy Research Unit, University of
Sussex

Ting Xu

School of Law at the University of Essex



**UCL Institute for
Innovation and
Public Purpose**

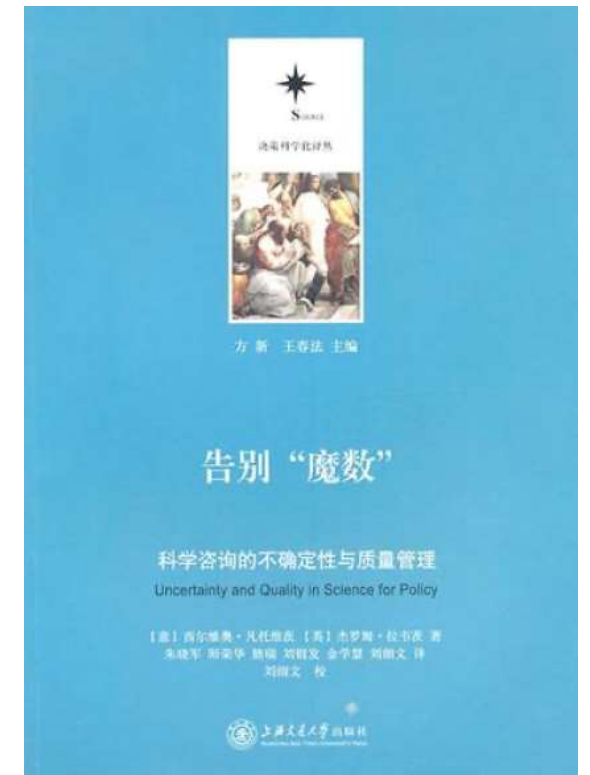
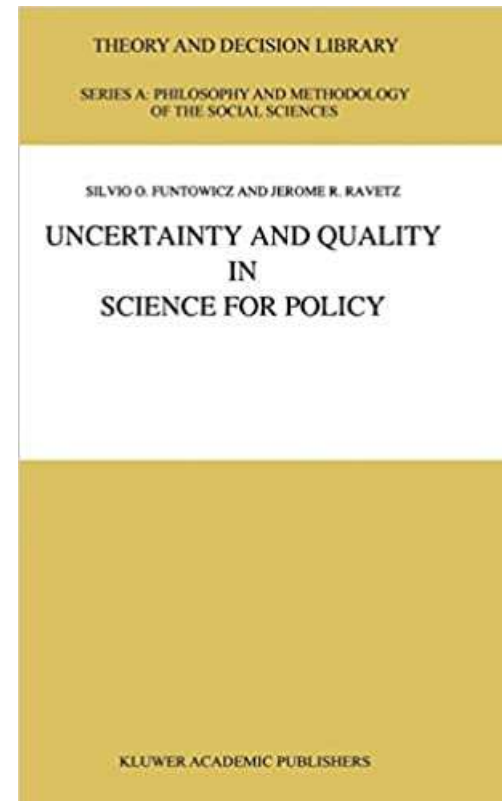
WORKING PAPER
WP 2021/05



Technical Quality → Sensitivity Analysis

Normative quality → Sensitivity Auditing

This is not far from Funtowicz and Ravetz “uncertainty and quality”



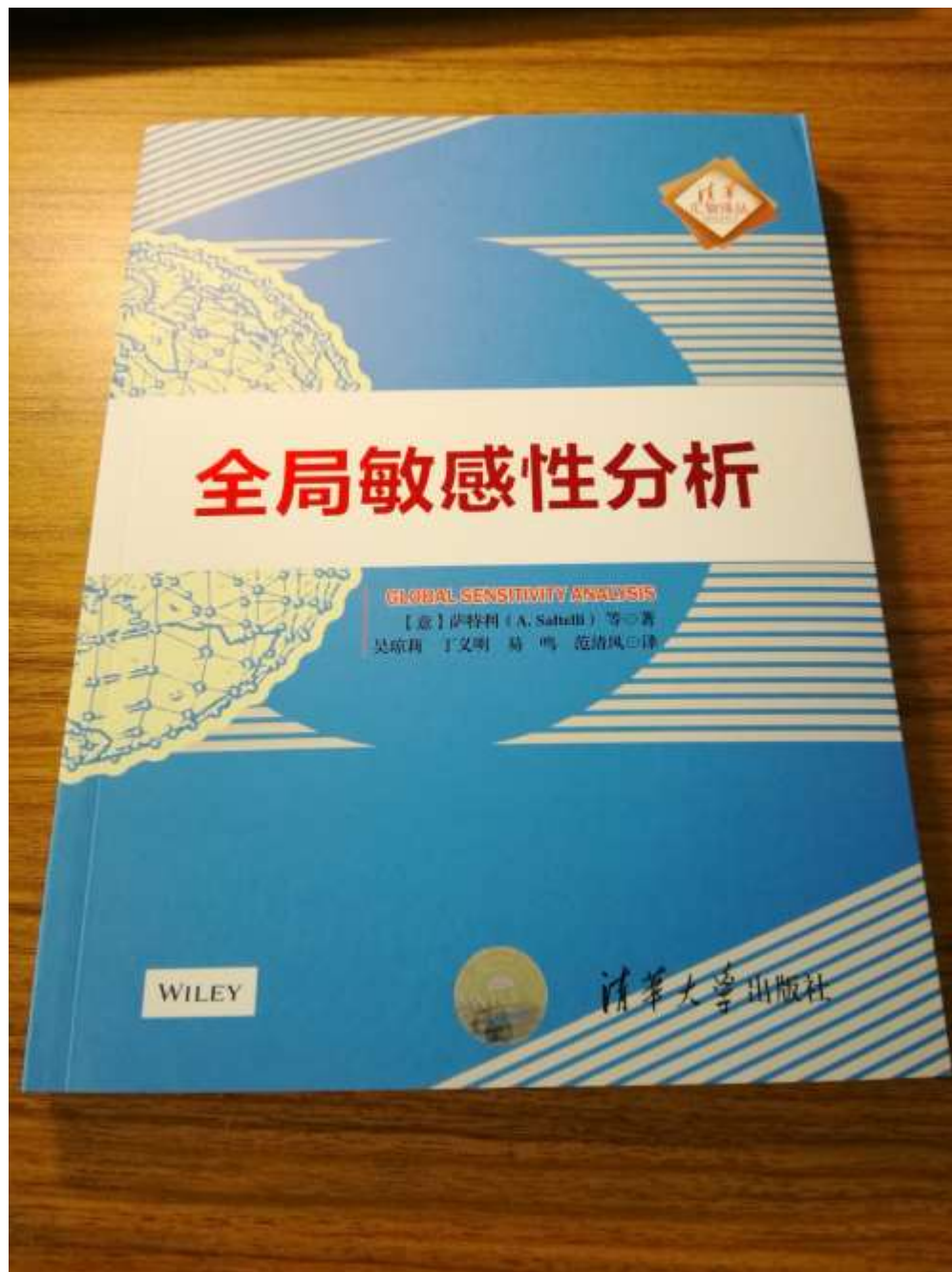
Sensitivity analysis

A. Saltelli, M. Ratto,
T. Andres, F. Campolongo,
J. Cariboni, D. Gatelli,
M. Saisana, S. Tarantola

GLOBAL SENSITIVITY ANALYSIS

The Primer

 WILEY





A. Saltelli, M. Ratto,
T. Andres, F. Campolongo,
J. Cariboni, D. Gatelli,
M. Saisana, S. Tarantola

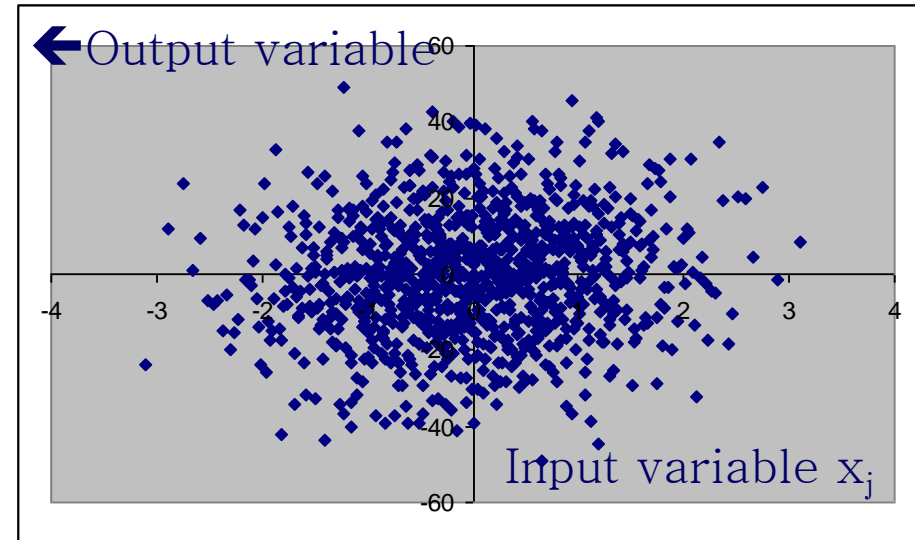
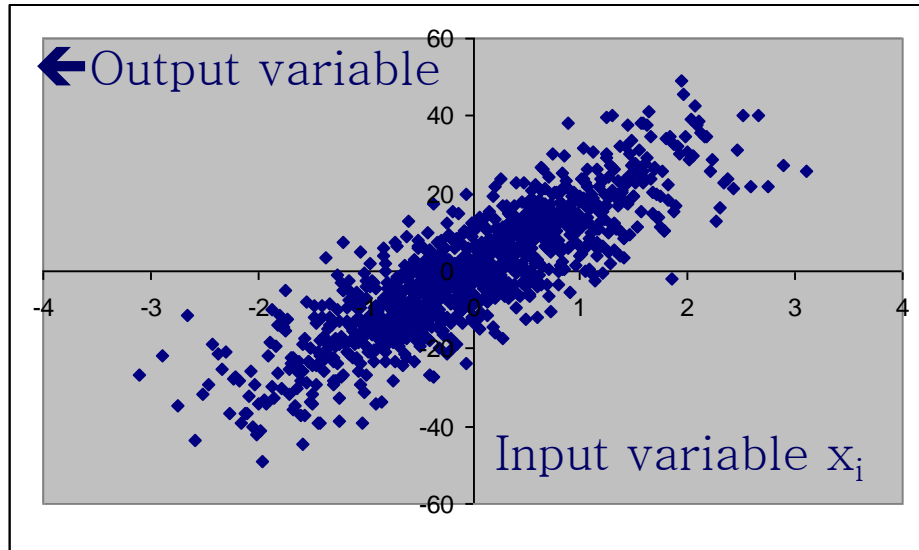
GLOBAL SENSITIVITY ANALYSIS

The Primer

 WILEY

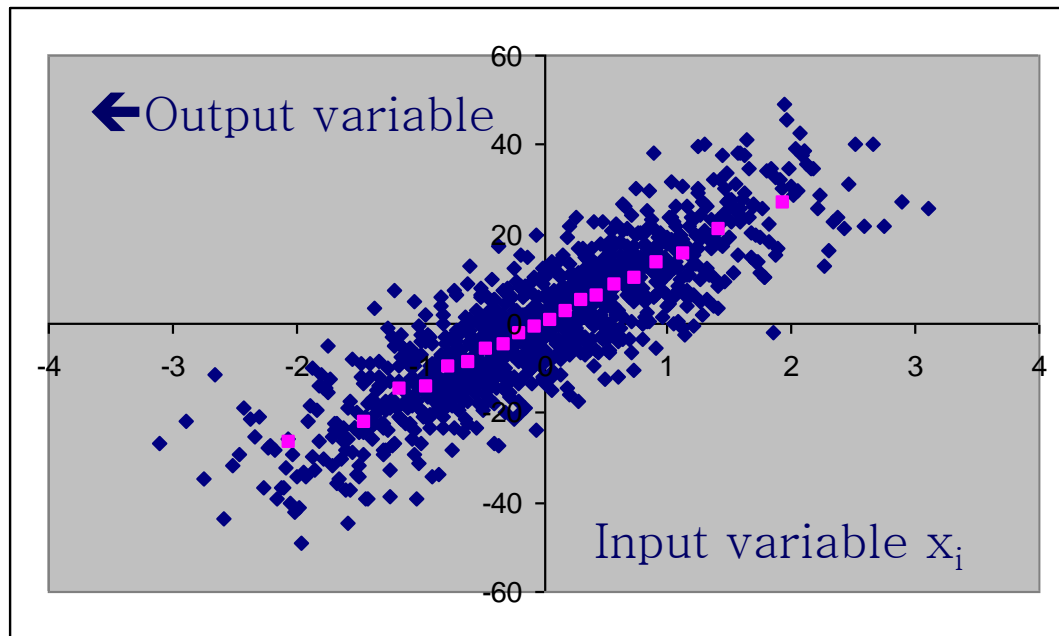
Available for free at

<http://www.andreasaltelli.eu>



Plotting the output as a function of two different input factors

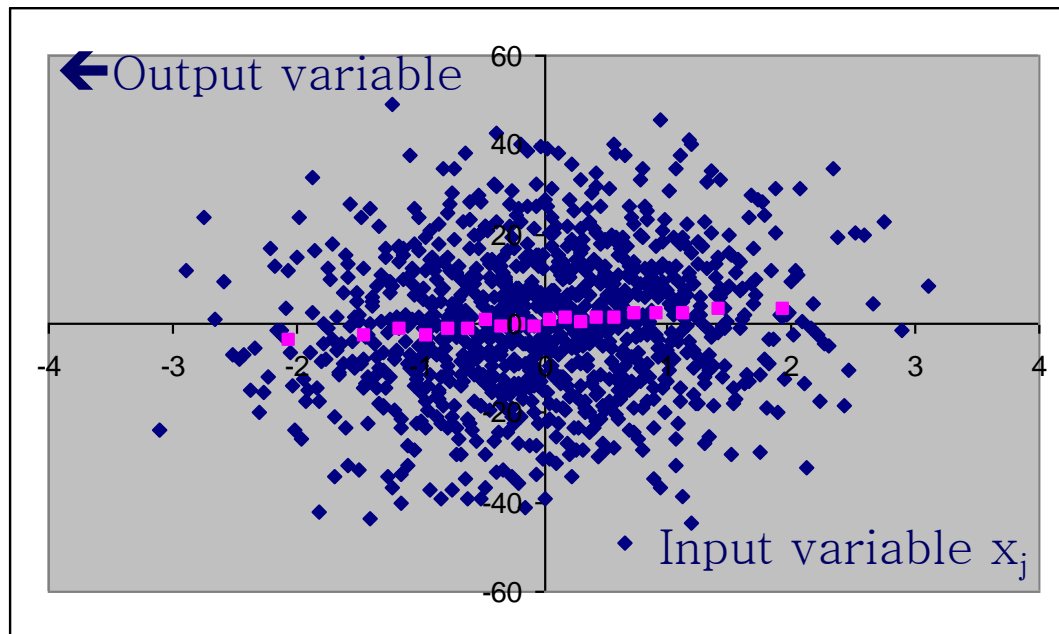
Which factor is more important?

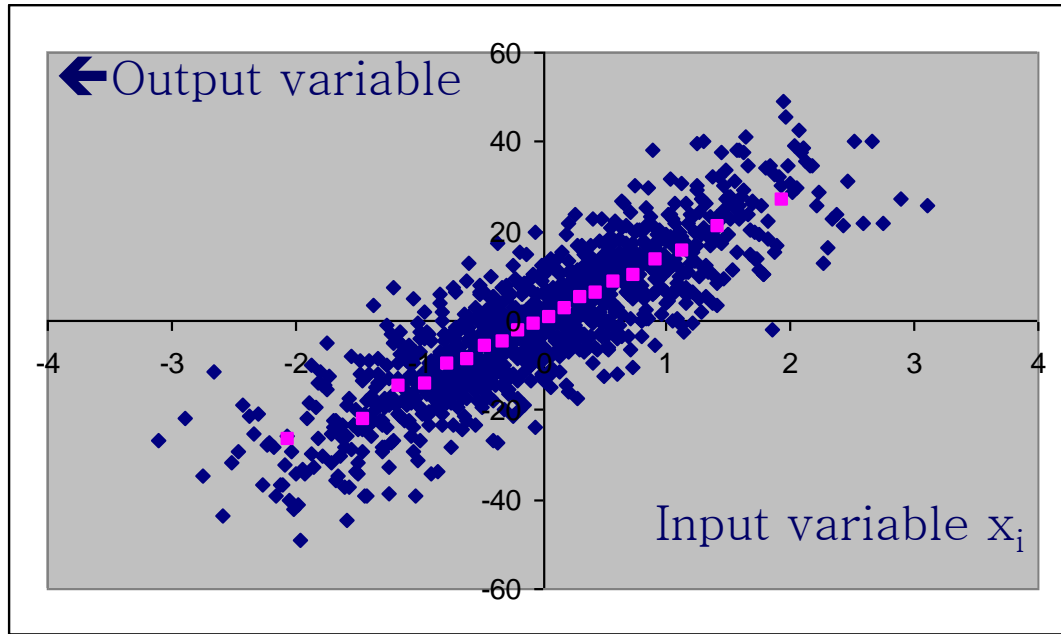


~1,000 blue points

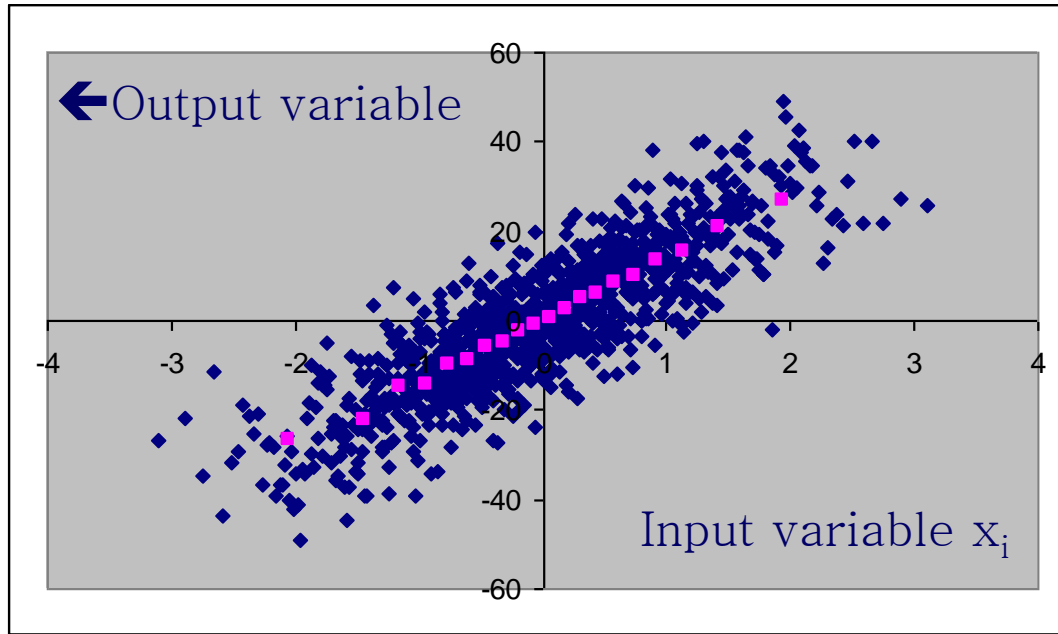
Divide them in 20 bins of ~ 50 points

Compute the bin's average (pink dots)



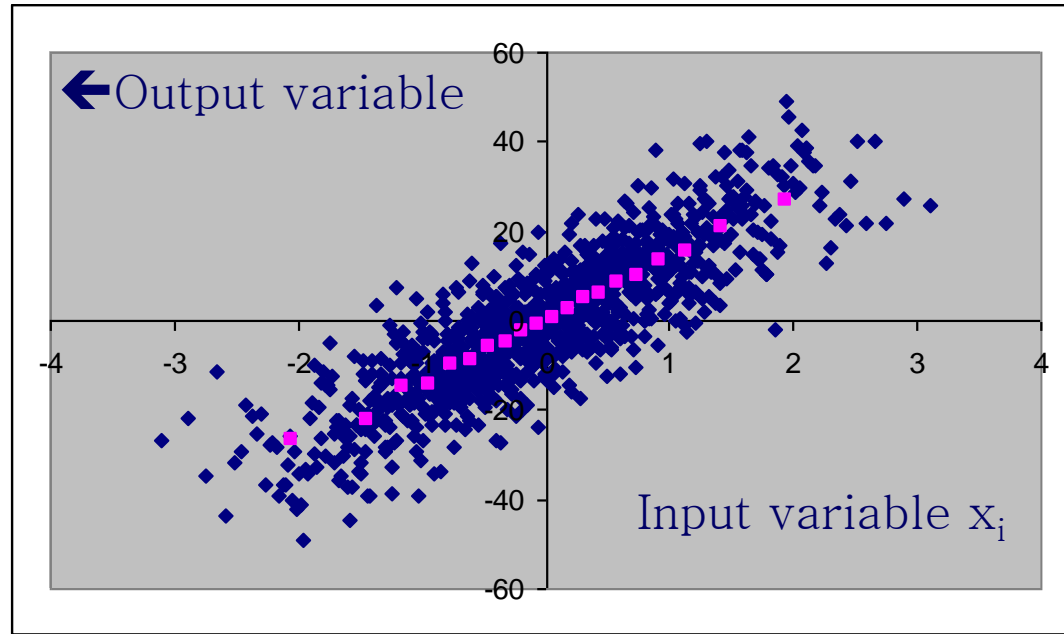


Each pink point is $\sim E_{\mathbf{x}_{\sim i}}(Y|X_i)$

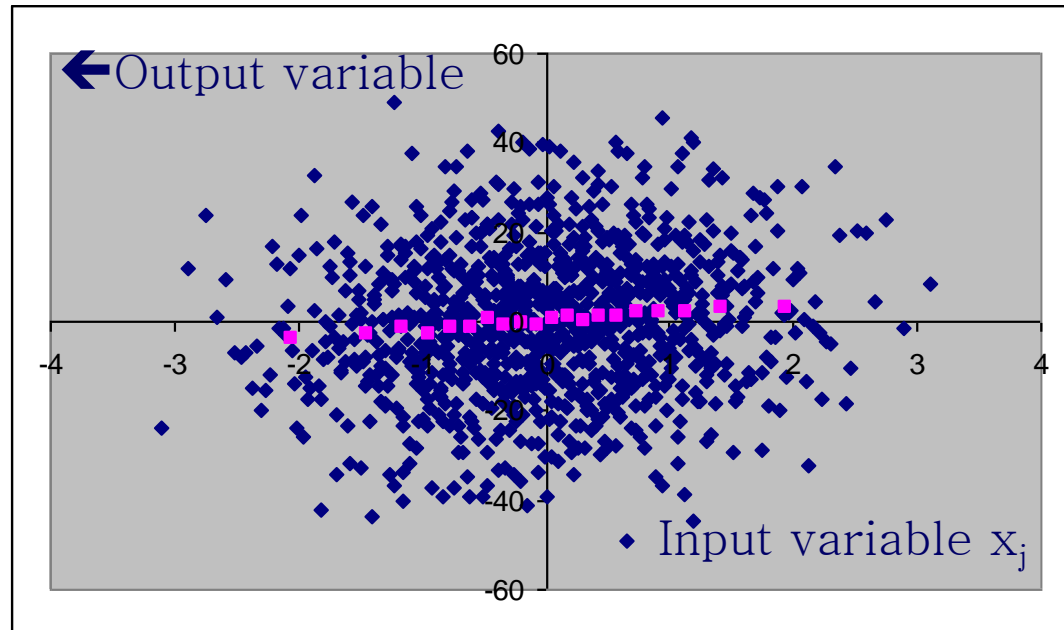


Take the variance of
the pink points one
obtains a sensitivity
measure

$$V_{X_i} \left(E_{\mathbf{X}_{\sim i}} (Y | X_i) \right)$$



Which factor
has the highest
 $V_{X_i} \left(E_{\mathbf{x}_{\sim i}} (Y | X_i) \right) ?$



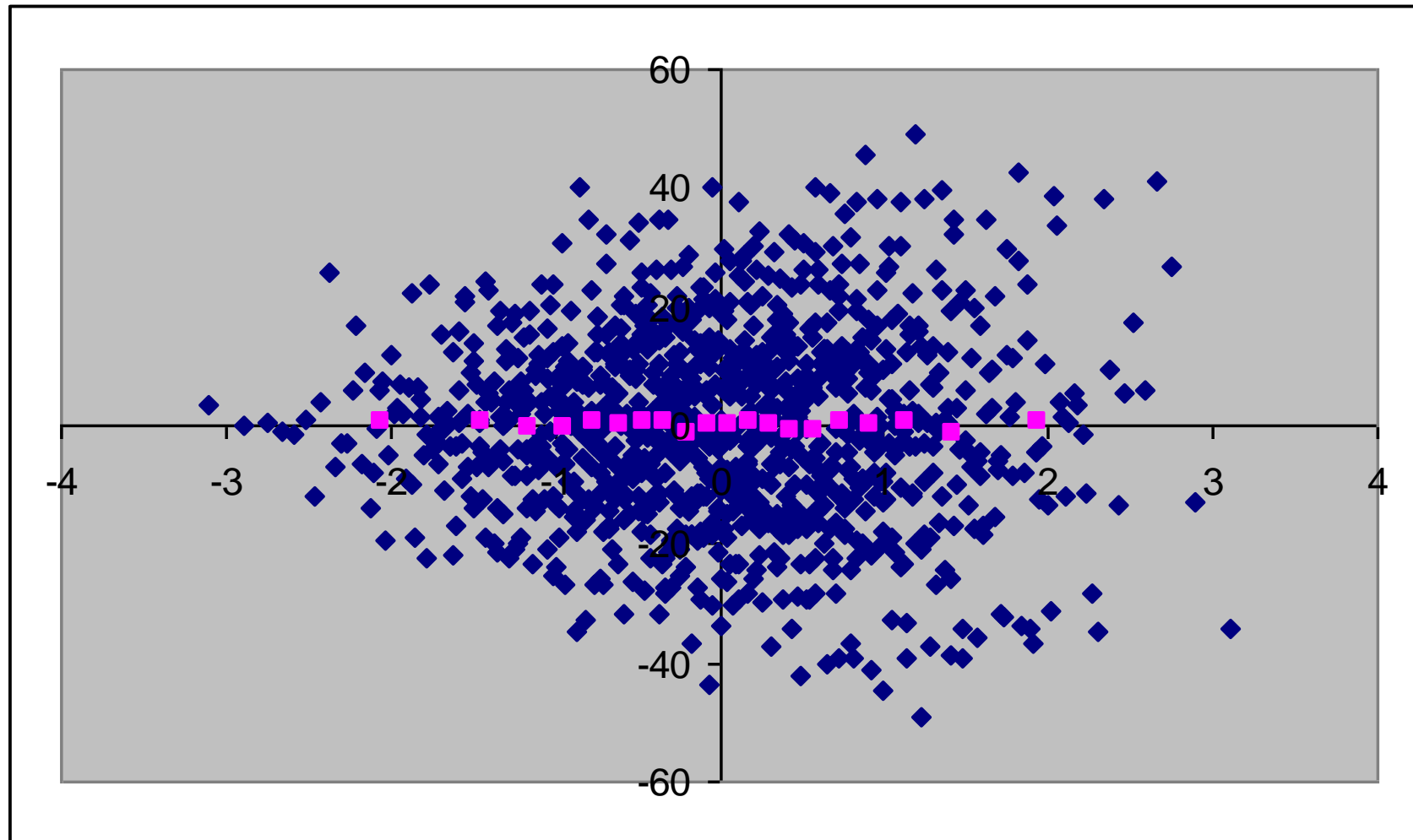
Pearson's correlation
ratio

$$S_i \equiv \eta_i^2 := \frac{V_{x_i} (\mathbf{E}_{\mathbf{x}_{\sim i}} (y \mid x_i))}{V(y)}$$

First order sensitivity index

Unconditional
variance

Is $S_i = 0$?



Sensitivity auditing

EC impact assessment guidelines: sensitivity analysis & auditing



Better Regulation
TOOLBOX

November 2021

European Commission. November 2021. “Better Regulation: Guidelines and Toolbox.”

https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/law-making-process/planning-and-proposing-law/better-regulation-why-and-how/better-regulation-guidelines-and-toolbox_en

Sensitivity auditing in the EC Guidelines (p. 563)

“Sensitivity auditing is a wider consideration of the effect of all types of uncertainty, including structural assumptions embedded in the model, and subjective decisions taken in the framing of the problem.”



Better Regulation
TOOLBOX

November 2021

The rules of sensitivity auditing

1. Check against rhetorical use of mathematical modelling;
2. Adopt an “assumption hunting” attitude; focus on unearthing possibly implicit assumptions;
3. Check if uncertainty been instrumentally inflated or deflated.

4. Find sensitive assumptions before these find you; do your SA before publishing;
5. Aim for transparency; Show all the data;
6. Do the right sums, not just the sums right;
7. Perform a proper global sensitivity analysis.

Do we live immersed in
fantastic numbers?

‘The Most Important Number You’ve Never Heard Of’

Sept. 17, 2021

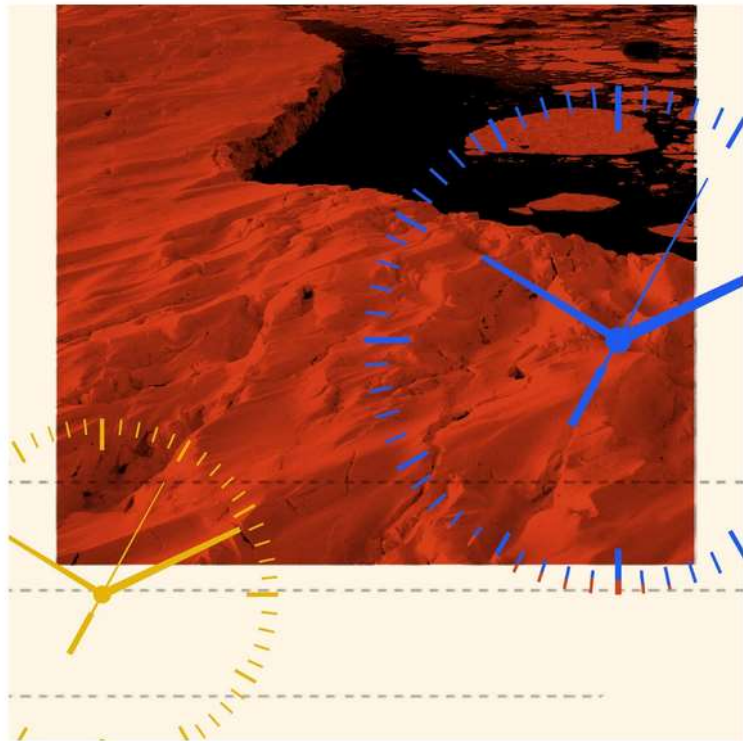


Illustration by Arsh Raziuddin, The New York Times

“social cost of carbon:

=\$56 a ton on average at a 3 percent discount rate

=\$171 a ton on average at a 2 percent discount rate”

The New York Times



The Social Cost of Carbon: Advances in Long-Term Probabilistic Projections of Population, GDP, Emissions, and Discount Rates

Kevin Rennert, Brian C. Prest, William A. Pizer, Richard G. Newell, David Anthoff,
Cora Kingdon, Lisa Rennels, Roger Cooke, Adrian E. Raftery, Hana Ševčíková,
and Frank Errickson

Working Paper 21-28
October 2021

Averaged till year 2300

Feeds into policy design

We have perhaps reached a complex epistemic state, where on the one hand ‘everybody knows’ that some numbers are pseudo-precise and that numbers can be gamed, while the game works only because most people don’t know about it



Jerome R. Ravetz

From
Epilogue: these special
models, by the editors

The politics of modelling.
Numbers between science
and policy

Andrea Saltelli and Monica Di Fiore Eds.,
OUP, to appear summer 2023



Are models ‘special’?

Unlimited repertoire of methods

Not a discipline

Escape sociology of quantification

Epistemic authority from mathematics

Consequences?



A pretence of neutrality (Luhmann's deparadoxification)

No antibodies to fight degeneration (Ravetz)

A ground for trans-science (Weinberg)

Ritual use (Gigerenzer)

Reproducibility

is a necessary
condition for



Transparency

is a necessary
condition for



Legitimacy

is a necessary
condition for



Epistemic authority



Large model

Important institution

&



Gianus Bifrons, Vatican Museum.
Source: Wikipedia Common

Different political economies of modelling



The End

Plan of the talk:

"Responsible modelling"

The talk will illustrate elements of sensitivity analysis, sensitivity auditing, sociology and ethics of quantification in relation to the use of mathematical models.