

A climate of dialogue

Andrea Saltelli, Living with Climate Change, CONFERENCE 8–9 May 2023, University of Bergen, Norway



Plato surrounded by students in his Academy in Athens. Mosaic (detail) from the Villa of T. Siminius Stephanus, Pompeii, 1st century B.C. Roman National Archaeological Museum, Naples, Inv. No. 124545. Source: [Wikimedia Commons](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Plato_in_his_Academy.jpg)





Coming Out Soon: The politics of modelling



Praise for the volume

"A long awaited examination of the role —and obligation —of modeling."

Nassim Nicholas Taleb, Distinguished Professor of Risk Engineering, NYU Tandon School of Engineering. Author, of the 5 -volume series *Incerto*.

"A breath of fresh air and a much needed cautionary view of the ever-widening dependence on mathematical modeling."

Orrin H. Pilkey, Professor at Duke University's Nicholas School of the Environment, co-author with Linda Pilkey-Jarvis of *Useless Arithmetic: Why Environmental Scientists Can't Predict the Future*, Columbia University Press 2009.

"The methods by which power insinuates itself into models, and facilitates their portability and amendments, are diverse and sometimes insidious: that is one reason why the range of

Mastodon Toots by

@AndreaSaltelli



AndreaSaltelli

2023/4/29 7:55

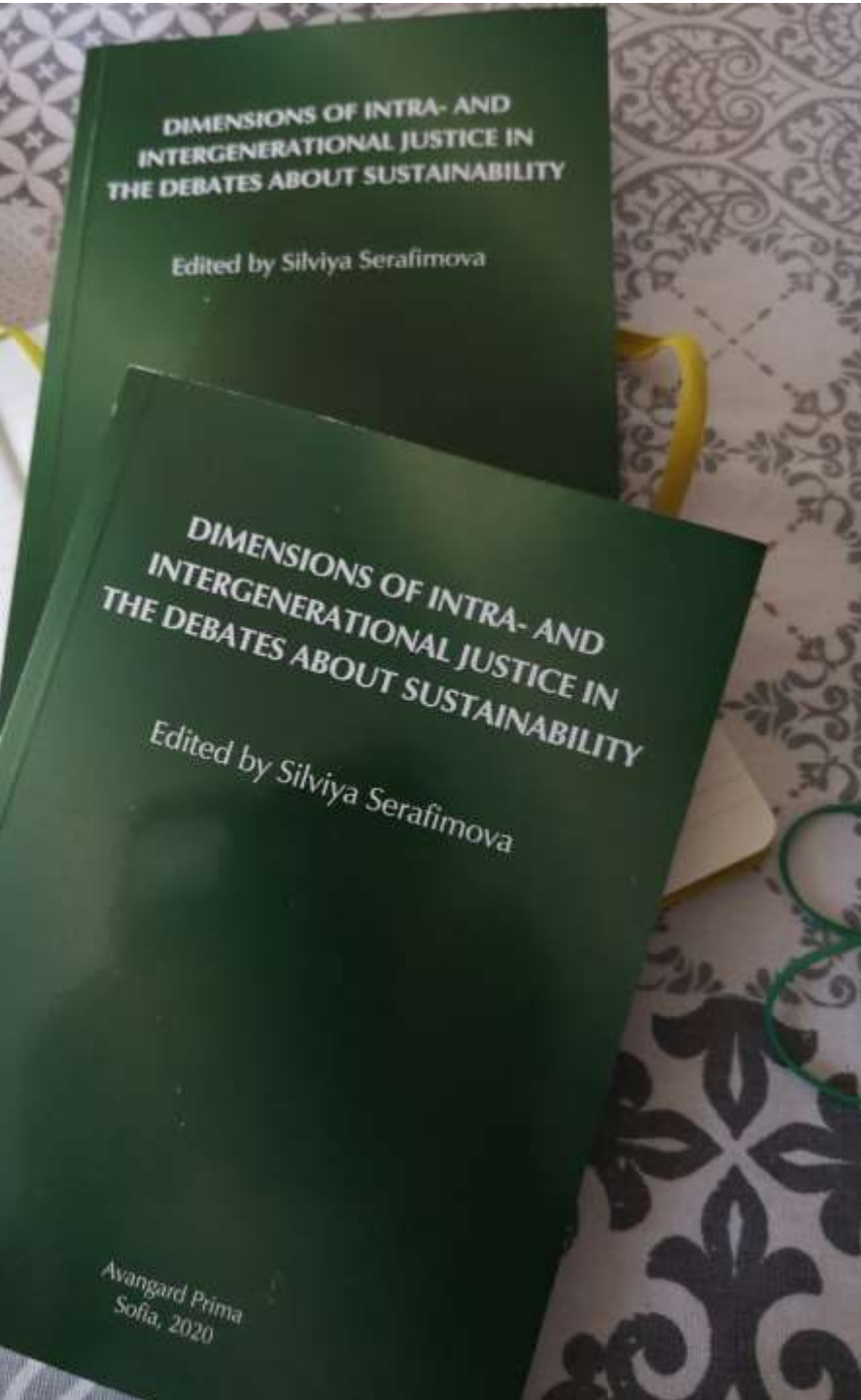
"Using the methods developed in the #PNS tradition one discovers how never as with the present pandemics have numbers, and the attendant activities of measuring and modelling, taken centre-stage. Yet these numbers, often delivered by academics and media alike with extraordinary precision

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Source: work on intergenerational justice edited by Silviya Serafimova

<http://www.andreasaltelli.eu/file/repository/SerafimovaBook.pdf>



Chapter 3, A
Climate of
dialogue, with
Paul-Marie
Boulanger

Climate Etc.

[← Road to Climate Neutrality](#)

[Assessment of climate change risk to the
insurance sector →](#)

A climate of dialogue

[https://judithcurry.com/2021/
02/12/a-climate-of-dialogue/](https://judithcurry.com/2021/02/12/a-climate-of-dialogue/)



Taken up by Judith
Curry on her blog

Paul-Marie and I agree on a lot of controversial issues (e.g. on vaccines), but we disagree on the relative importance of climate change on a scale of impending calamities.



The present dialogue explores this disagreement in a style which remains – to the best of the authors’ capacity, pacated.



Source: [pngtree.com/](https://www.pngtree.com/)

Me: Science's epistemic authority is today staked on a sense of urgency of impending climatic catastrophe which is irresponsible



Paul-Marie Boulanger: Climatic action is urgent in view of our responsibility to future generations

Me: An accelerated exit from a fossil fuel dominated energy mix is both unfeasible and undesirable

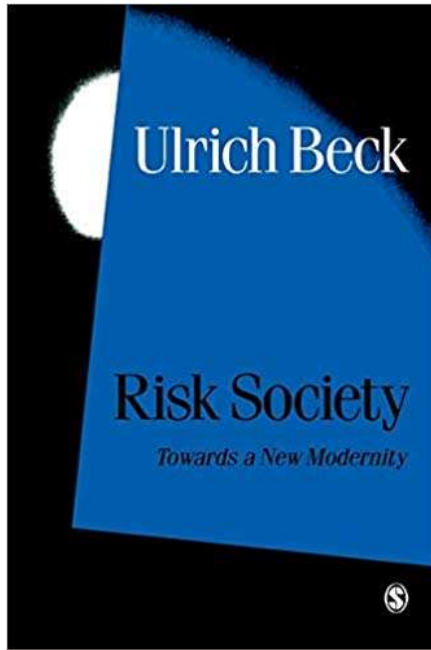


P-MB: This exit is instead an objective to pursue with renewed political determination

Me: science cannot prove that climate is more urgent than the Gaza strip, or pollinators decline, or too-big-to-fail banks, [and today war in Europe] and I disapprove of those fellow scientists who seem engaged in trying to do precisely that



Ulrich Beck
(1944 –2015)



1992 (1986)

Me
talking

“Scientists act as if they held a lease on truth, and they must do this for the outside world, because their entire position depends on it [...]
what they are doing is changing the conditions of social life and hence **making policy by their own means**”

“Scientists …making policy by their own means”

…at the same time while their monopoly of truth is broken up

Reformation in the Church of Science. How the truth monopoly was broken up

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

P-MB: IPCC on the other hand, with its emphasis on “consensus” – in violation of existing Mertonian norms (organized skepticism) – has perhaps contributed more harm than doubt.



Robert K. Merton
(1910–2003)

P-MB: One problem is the hybrid nature of IPCC
'speaking for science', and seeking consensus

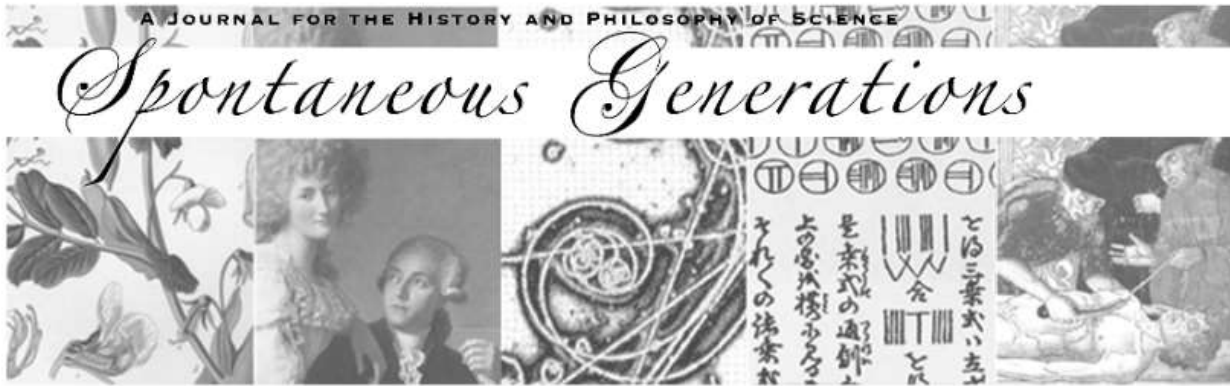
The scepticism 'compressed' by IPCC erupted in
the media that adopted a false equivalence between
science and dissenters

P-MB: about IPCC seeking consensus →

The scepticism ‘compressed’ by IPCC erupted in the media that adopted a false equivalence between science and dissenters

...with some help from
e.g. the Koch brothers





What are climate scientists to do?

Author(s): Evelyn Fox Keller

Source: *Spontaneous Generations: A Journal for the History and Philosophy of Science*, Vol. 5, No. 1 (2011) 19-26.

Published by: The University of Toronto

DOI: [10.4245/sponge.v5i1.15165](https://doi.org/10.4245/sponge.v5i1.15165)



Evelyn Fox Keller

The real problem is the media's obsession with 'balance' which over-represent the positions of the skeptics

Climate science

Climate scientists first laughed at a 'bizarre' campaign against the BoM - then came the harassment



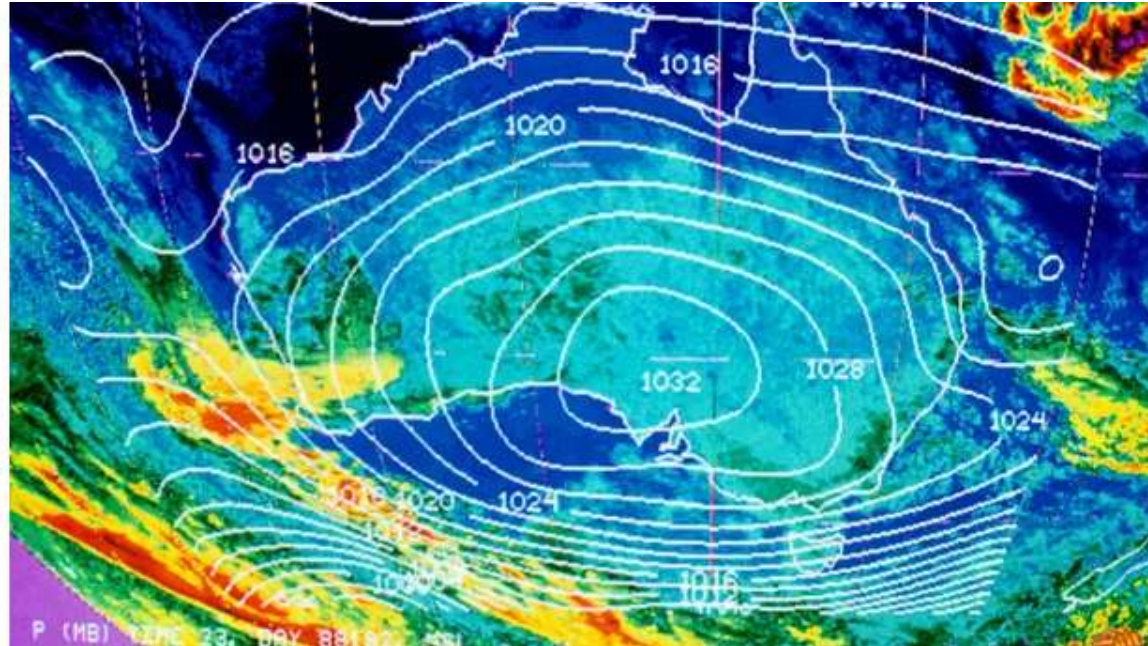
Graham Readfearn

@readfearn

Sat 6 May 2023 21.00 BST



137



The Guardian

May 6th, 2023:
scientists
harassed and
becoming sick
because of
sceptics

Me
talking
(today)

“My biggest concern was for the health of the climate scientists. They did that work admirably and stuck with it but for a significant number it affected their health and wellbeing and their professional standing. They were concerned it was going to damage their careers.”

P-MB: Greta Thunberg indicts the economic and political elites who consciously let the situation deteriorate... It is the characteristic of youth to think that actions must be in harmony with words

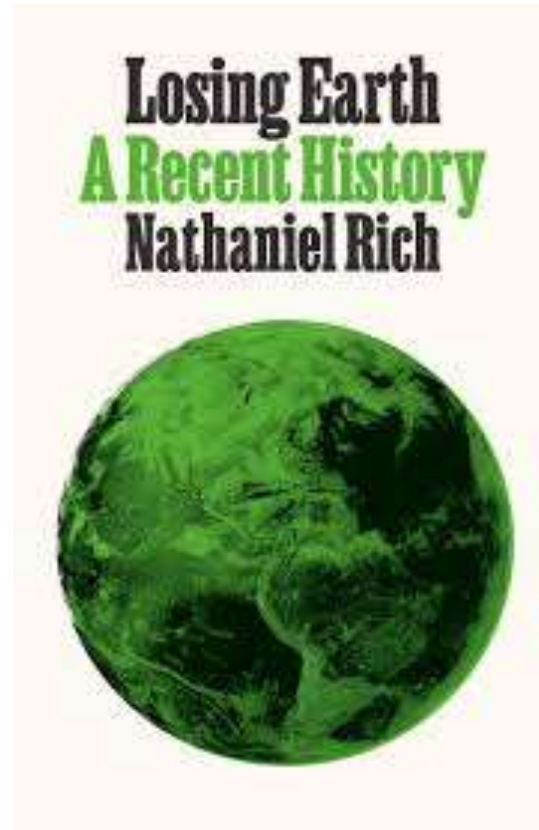


Greta Thunberg

'I want you to panic': 16-year-old issues climate warning at Davos - video

<https://www.theguardian.com/science/video/2019/jan/25/i-want-you-to-panic-16-year-old-greta-thunberg-issues-climate-warning-at-davos-video>

P-MB: All that we know now was already well known in 1979, and in the ensuing decade we lost our chance to tame the problem (Nathaniel Rich)



Me: Perhaps we could change our consumption pattern ourselves –



– irrespective of what deniers tell us to do

Me: WHO: 7 million people die every year of atmospheric pollution (outdoor and indoor)



➔ 7,000,000 reasons to reduce the consumption of fossil fuels without awaiting the climatic Armageddon

Me: A state of exception?

Increasing temperatures, sea levels, hurricanes, forest fires, climatic migrants...



Or a convenient
distraction?



Me
talking

Me: Instead of fostering ecological sensitivity, a status of climatic exception boxes ecological problem into a single planetary container, where an **odourless and colourless gas** slowly increases the temperature of the planet

This vision risks obscuring the messier aspects of our impact on the planet



Me: Since we need to fight all forms of fossil fuel we cannot fight the dirtiest, from tar sands to shale gas fracking



Me: Since we take up a fight with fossil fuels corporations we can fight less the agrochemical ones

The shocking collapse of insect populations hints at a global ecological meltdown

🐦 @GeorgeMonbiot

Fri 20 Oct 2017 12:11 BST

Insects Opinion

Insectageddon: farming is more catastrophic than climate breakdown

George Monbiot



Me: Financialization of the economy, rampant inequality, Bolsonarization of democracies, incumbent geopolitical transformation... + war, runaway technologies (viruses, IA...)



P-MB: there is no point in opposing 'worths' (environment, democracy, ...) None is inherently more legitimate/justified



Me: simplistic images of an economy which can be made circular, or rapidly decarbonized, against historical evidence of past transformations

Special Feature: Editorial | [Open Access](#) | [Published: 23 March 2023](#)



The more things change, the more they stay the same: promises of bioeconomy and the economy of promises

[Dennis Eversberg](#) , [Philip Koch](#), [Rosa Lehmann](#), [Andrea Saltelli](#), [Sabaheta Ramcilovic-Suominen](#) & [Zora Kovacic](#)

[Sustainability Science](#) **18**, 557–568 (2023) | [Cite this article](#)

1103 Accesses | **8** Altmetric | [Metrics](#)



Me: Mathematical models predicting the damage in dollars from hurricanes and draughts up to the year 2300

COMMENT · 24 JUNE 2020

Five ways to ensure that models serve society: a manifesto

▼ nature



What will a future historian say? (Me)

... Looking at the XXI century's mix of wars, social and environmental catastrophes, technological disruptions, she might ask:

Why did humans elect the greenhouse effect as the existential threat of the epoch?

What will a future historian say? (P-MB)

... she will say instead: Why whilst having all the information concerning the risks of climate change we decided to let go because Western way of life is not negotiable?

If you found this exchange interesting check

SSRN

Pandemic Luhmann

13 Pages • Posted: 30 Apr 2020

[Paul-Marie Boulanger](#)

Institut pour un Développement Durable (IDD)

[Andrea Saltelli](#)




University of Bergen



Futures

Volume 115, January 2020, 102491

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

[Andrea Saltelli](#)^{a b}  , [Paul-Marie Boulanger](#)^c 

Show more 

CONFERENCE

Living with Climate Change

International, cross-disciplinary conference in Bergen 8–9 May 2023. #Climlifel



How about
“Living less
with
climate
change”?

The End



<https://mstdn.social/@AndreaSaltelli/>

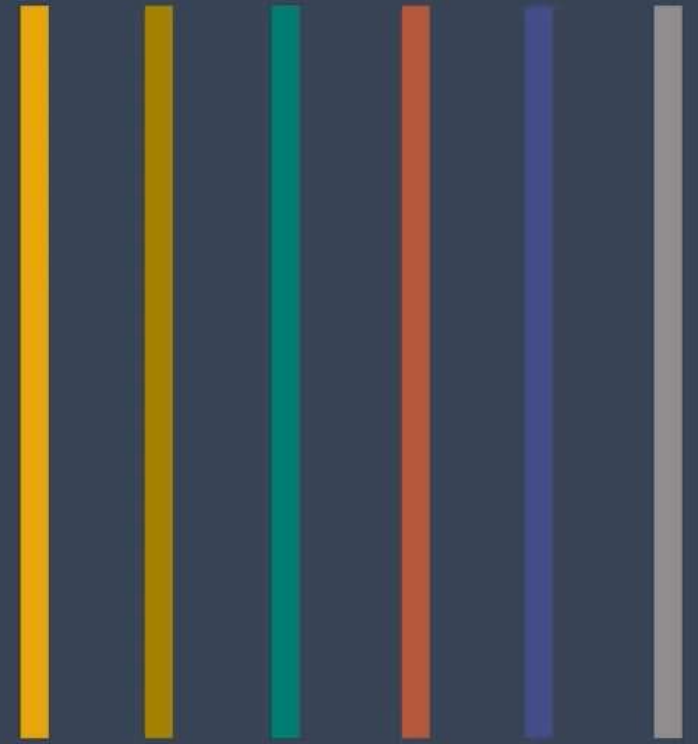
The presentation will reflect on a recent **dialogue** on climate change. Two authors contended there about the urgency of the challenge posed by **climate change**, and about the different roles of science, policy, media and society in debating how to cope (Saltelli & Boulangier 2021).

One contentent argued that science's epistemic authority is today staked on a sense of urgency of impending climatic catastrophe which he sees as irresponsible; the other considers climatic action urgent in view of our responsibility to future generations. While one contentent considers that an accelerated exit from a fossil fuel dominated energy mix is both unfeasible and undesirable, the other sees it as an objective to pursue with renewed political determination. The reflection also touches on the role of **mathematical modelling** in climate science (Saltelli *et al.* 2020; Saltelli & Di Fiore 2023) and on the **post-truth** debate (Saltelli & Sarewitz 2022).

Orders of worth

ON JUSTIFICATION ECONOMIES OF WORTH

Luc Boltanski & Laurent Thévenot



Translated by Catherine Porter