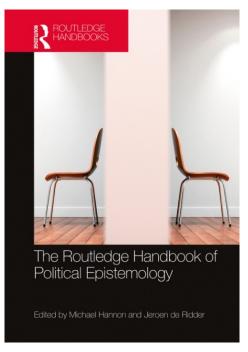
Communication of Expertise in Crisis

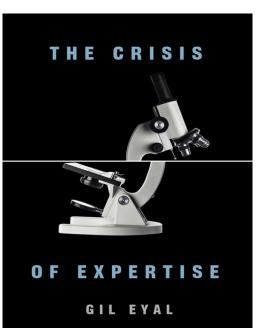
Prof. Caspar Hirschi University of St. Gallen

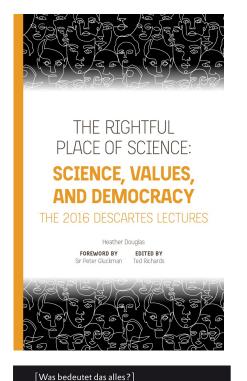
Politics vs. Science: A quick comparison of two systems





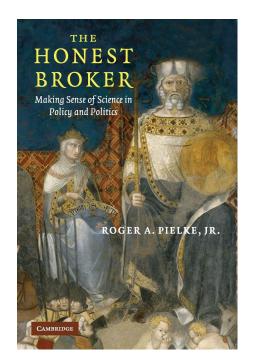




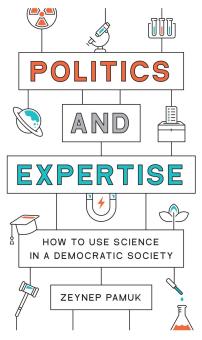




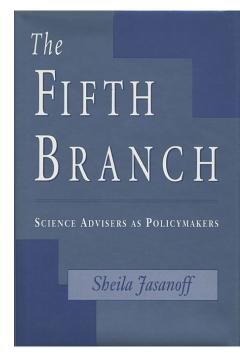
Alexander Bogner



There is longestablished interdisciplinary research on the role of expertise in democracies, which is politically relevant but too rarely consulted by politicians and experts alike.









SIMILARITIES between Democratic Politics and Scientific Research

 Rule-based process: results are only accepted if they have been produced through established procedures.

 Fundamental belief in open debate: regulated and peaceful dispute is seen as a prerequisite for good decisions.

• Ideal of collective intelligence and shared power: fundamental distrust in concentration of power in a single institution or person.

politicians and scientists have a shared interest: good data.

<u>DIFFERENCIES</u> between Democratic Politics and Scientific Research

Democratic Politics

- Main objective: exercise of power by creating majorities
- Dominance of "what-should-bequestions"
- Main forms of conflict: Diverging interests and clashing values
- Dominant ways of conflict resolution: compromise and/or vote

Scientific Research

- Main objective: Advancement of knowledge through scientific cooperation and competition
- Dominance of "what-is-questions"
- Main forms of conflict: contradicting knowledge claims and priority disputes
- Dominant ways of conflict resolution: validation or falsification

Interim conclusion I

"Science cannot tell us what we should do – it provides the best empirical claims available with which to make decisions, but it cannot provide the normative claims with which to proceed."



THE RIGHTFUL PLACE OF SCIENCE:

SCIENCE, VALUES, AND DEMOCRACY

THE 2016 DESCARTES LECTURES

Heather Douglas

FOREWORD BY

EDITED BY

Sir Peter Gluckman

Ted Richards



Interim Conclusion II

If democratically elected politicians "follow" the recommendations by scientific experts in their decision making, it's not because they value evidence higher than other things (such as values, interests etc.), but because they believe that there is broad agreement between the experts' recommendations, their own government programme and societal priorities.

Contrasting forms of scientific policy advice in Switzerland depending on policy field, crisis type and scientific disciplines



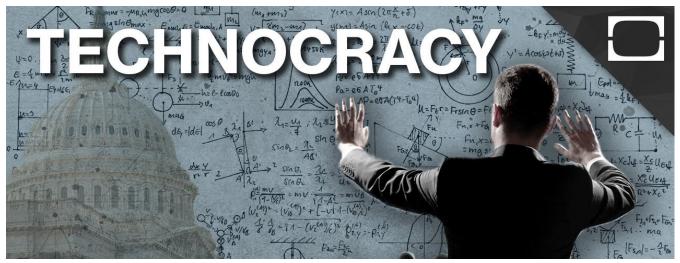
Anhang

Expertenbericht



Wissenschaftliche Politikberatung in Krisenzeiten in der Schweiz: Eine Analyse der Finanzkrise, des Fukushima-Unfalls und der Covid-19-Pandemie

Verfasst von Caspar Hirschi, Johanna Hornung, Dylan Jaton, Céline Mavrot, Fritz Sager und Caroline Schlaufer zuhanden des Schweizerischen Wissenschaftsrates SWR





This classic juxtaposition only works to a limited extent especially in times of crises.



In Europa übernehmen Technokraten die Macht

Veröffentlicht am 15.11.2011 | Lesedauer: 5 Minuten

Von Fabrizio Tassinari



Mario Monti (links) und Lukas Papademos: Italien und Griechenland werden jetzt von Eurokraten regiert, die nicht vom Volk legitimiert sind





The Federal Council in a coma

Communication in the UBS Bailout in 2008

«If you have a crisis where trust is ultimately the decisive point, then you cannot communicate publicly at all. If you debate it publicly, then everyone empties their UBS account and everything collapses. (...). That is why secrecy was extremely critical.»

Member of the Expert Group preparing rescue measures for the Swiss Government.

Scientific Expertise in the Financial Crisis

- > Technocratic expertise with great secrecy: FINKRIST made up of leading figures from the SNB, FFA and SFBC (since 2002!)
- > The Federal Council is presented with a fait accompli, democratic processes are deliberately undermined in order to contain the crisis.
- > UBS rescue is understood as a one-off problem that could be prevented in the future by preventive and accompanying measures.
- > "Too big to fail">-regulations are prepared by the same expert institutions as those involved in the UBS-rescue-mission.

The Credit Suisse case fundamentally calls into question technocratic crisis management in banking crises.







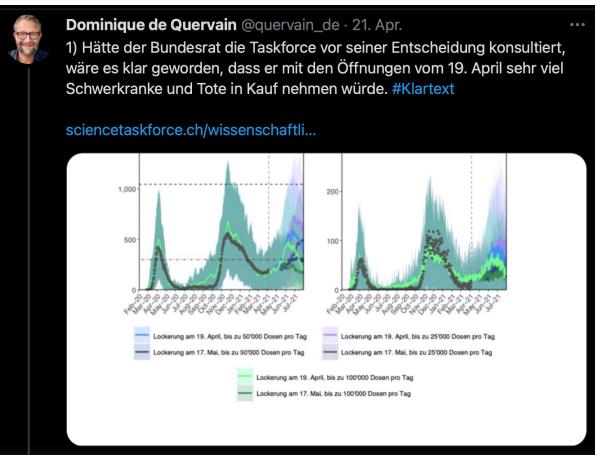
The Corona Crisis 2020-2022

Scientific Policy Advice in the Corona Crisis

- Rare event, little scientific knowledge of how to act, lack of political pandemic experience: preparatory measures are not sufficient, with Science Task Force an ad hoc advisory body with little advisory experience is set up.
- Need for immediate and drastic behavioural changes of the whole society thus high communication effort, strong presence of experts in the public in contrast to the financial crisis.
- Paradox: Although the pandemic was managed much less technocratically, the dominance of scientific voices in the media gave many people the impression of an expert rule.
- Due to the long acute phase, the value conflicts in society grew and spilled over into science.

Switzerland between direct democratic protest culture and political activism from scientific policy advisors





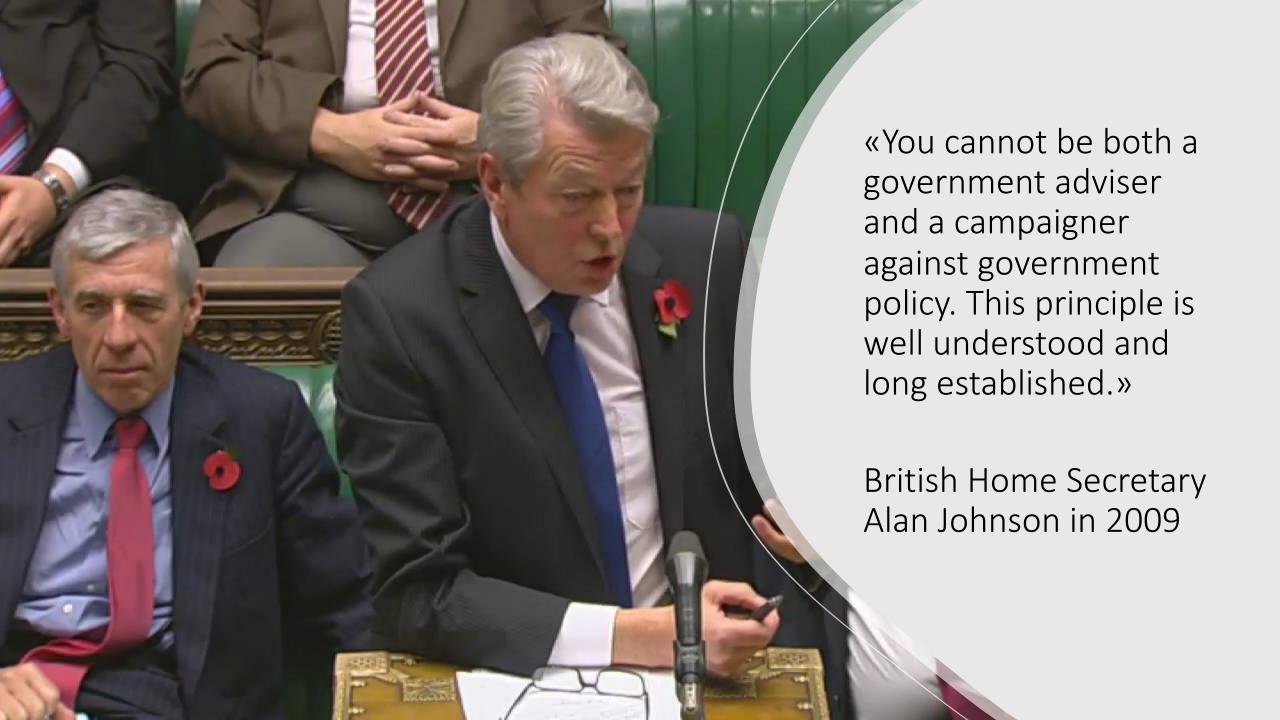


The role of experts in the media is fundamentally different from the role of experts in policy advice. It took almost a year for some members of the National Science Task Force to understand the difference.

Communication in the Corona Crisis 2020

It is more difficult to communicate simultaneously as scientific advisor to policy makers and as public expert to the media than to prepare rescue measures behind closed doors.

Consistency, caution and restraint with respect to political matters are crucial to gain the trust of both politicians and the general public.



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COMMENT 18 November 2020

Five rules for evidence communication

Avoid unwarranted certainty, neat narratives and partisan presentation; strive to inform, not persuade.

<u>Michael Blastland, Alexandra L. J. Freeman</u> ⊆, <u>Sander van der Linden</u>, <u>Theresa M. Marteau</u> & <u>David Spiegelhalter</u> ⊆







Final Conclusions

Final conclusion I

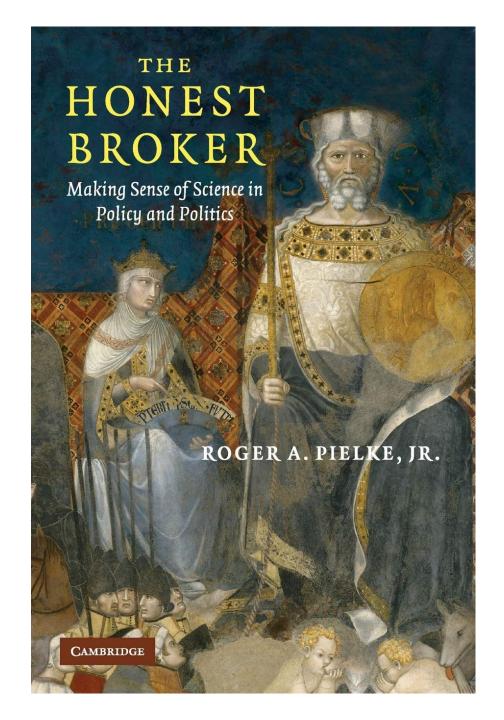
current models of science-based policymaking underrate the pluralistic character of scientific policy advice. Neither the parties involved, nor the media sufficiently acknowledge this plurality. In some policy fields, quasitechnocracy is legitimate, in others it's tabu.

Final Conclusion II

Finding the appropriate form of communication as a scientific policy advisor requires more than scientific expertise. You have to know the rules of democratic politics, reflect conflicting values and interests in your field of advice and gain experience in the political system.

Final Conclusion III

When scientific uncertainties and social value conflicts exist in a crisis, as was the case in the Corona pandemic, it is essential for the independence and credibility of scientific policy advice that it does not make specific recommendations, but rather points out the chances and risks of different policy options without taking sides itself. This is "honest brokerage" according to Roger Pielke.



Further Reading

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Questions?

