OPEN TO AMBIGUITY

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SOME EXPECTATIONS

- Openness will reduce disagreement, because:
  - Publics want more information
  - More information will promote informed debate
  - More informed debate will increase support for science
- And perhaps, that openness is a new issue?

SOME REFLECTIONS

- On the history and politics of openness
- On different registers of openness
- On public engagements with expertise
- On the risks and benefits in openness

HISTORY AND POLITICS OF OPENNESS

Georg Simmel (1896) 'The Secret and the Secret Society'

- *"publicity's invasion of the affairs of state … [is to] such an extent that, by now, governments officially publish facts without whose secrecy, prior to the nineteenth century, no regime seemed possible"*

Openness is part of a continual process of political transformation:

- It is not just (even primarily) about the *content* of communications,
- It pertains to *relations* between producers and consumers of information
- changing *institutions* to ones that are able to perform transparency
- creating new institutions and procedures whose role it is to *monitor* these relations

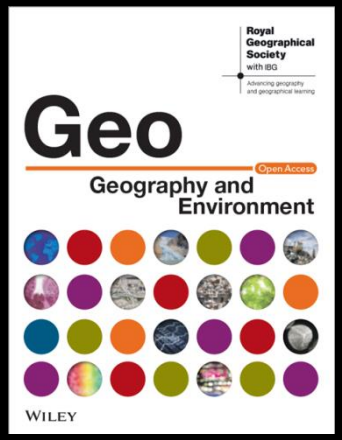
SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH ON OPENNESS IN ANIMAL RESEARCH

Pru Hobson West and Carmen McLeod (University of Nottingham)

Elisabeth Ormandy (University of British Columbia)

- 'Transparency and openness about the use of animals in research, and why their continued use remains necessary, helps to improve our overall understanding about the issue, enables an informed public dialogue and help to mitigate anxieties and misunderstandings'. (HO, BIS, NHS, 2014)
- '…We believe that if people could see the real suffering that goes on inside UK laboratories – instead of the sanitised version that usually gets broadcast by the media – the real majority would be those in opposition to animal testing' (Alistair Currie, BUAV, cited in Morelle, BBC News, 2006).
- *Openness operates as a further platform for the continuation of existing debates in this context*

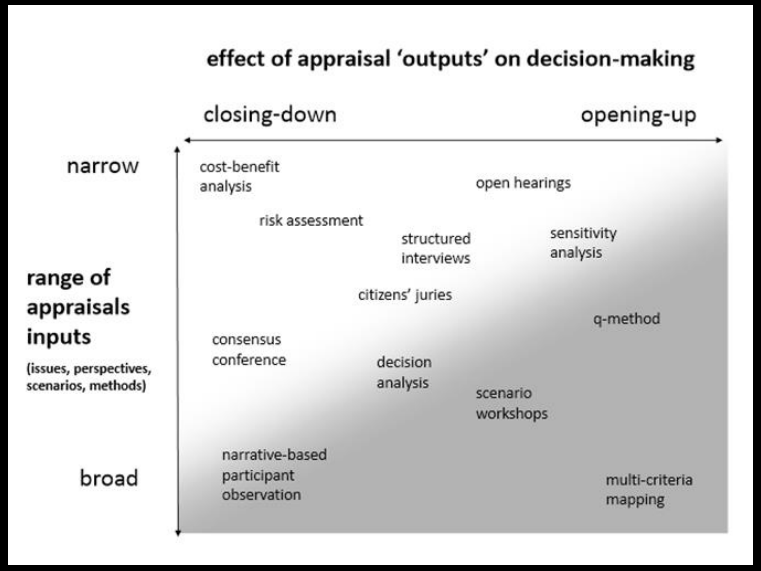
REGISTERS OF OPENNESS



Personal involvement in some institutional transformations around openness:

- Open Science
  - Open access publishing
  - Studying data and resource sharing
- Open Innovation
  - Opening up policy appraisal
- Open Engagement
  - Public engagement with science

OPENING UP TO PLURAL VALUES IN HEALTH POLICY



Characteristics of appraisal methods.
Source: Stirling et al. (2007, p.57)

http://www.multicriteriamapping.com/
See also Burgess et al 2007

Multi-Criteria & Deliberative Mapping:

- Participatory form of technology appraisal developed by Stirling, Burgess and Davies
- Evaluates range of options in complex decisions
- Open to different framing of options and assessment criteria from participants
- Involves citizens and experts in a parallel process, including workshop allowing engagement between them
- Includes quantitative outputs of option appraisal and qualitative analysis of process
- Provides a context for exploring public discussion of science and animal research outside of 'pro' and 'anti' positions

‘PUBLIC TALK’ ABOUT ANIMAL RESEARCH

Davies and Burgess (2004) and Davies (2006a, 2006b)

- Primary importance of the *family* as the context for public considerations of health and care
- For many people family includes *animals* as members, leading to persistent ambiguities
- Common reference to *mass media* as a way being able to exchange ideas in social contexts, without establishing hierarchies
- Recurrent use of idea of ‘*playing god*’ or going ‘against nature’ in the absence of a formal language of ethics, but these are not absolutes
- Frequent use of what Whatmore (2006) calls a ‘*visceral vernacular*’ to communicate social anxieties around bodies
- *Strong support* for those institutions seen to reflect and support these values
- *Considerable concern* around those institutions cynical towards or threatening these values

ECHOES IN OTHER EXPERT ARENAS

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7 November 2014 Last updated at 17:27

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Woman dies after farewell to horse at Wigan hospital

Sheila Marsh was granted her final wish of seeing her favourite horse Bronwen just before her death

A cancer patient has died after a final farewell to her favourite horse outside the hospital where she was treated.

Staff at Royal Albert Edward Infirmary in Wigan granted Sheila Marsh's last wish, by arranging a visit from two of her horses on Monday afternoon.

The hospital said the 77-year-old, unable to speak properly due to illness, "gently called" her favourite horse, who then nuzzled her cheek.

Mrs Marsh, who used to work at Haydock Park Racecourse, died early on Tuesday.

The grandmother from Wigan had six horses, three dogs, three cats and other animals.

But after a farewell visit from one of her dogs last weekend, she told hospital staff of her wish to see her favourite horse Bronwen, who she had looked after for the previous 25 years.

http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-29951094

NEWS

You are in: Sci/Tech

Wednesday, 2 January, 2002, 18:54 GMT

New pig clones born

The five cloned pigs: Noel, Angel, Star, Joy and Mary

A biopharmaceutical company that helped produce Dolly the sheep has produced new pig clones.

PPL Therapeutics says the pigs, which lack a specific gene, are a major step towards using animal organs for human transplants.

The female piglets were born on Christmas Day in the United States.

They have been named Noel, Angel, Star, Joy and Mary.

"This advance provides a near term

http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/sci/tech/1738730.stm

OBJECTIVITY THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS

Davies & Burgess (2004)

- *Anne*: It's an interesting point that perhaps professionals can be limited by the scope of their knowledge. This is their job, this is what they have to do, this is what they have to perform. And often there isn't the time or the scope for lateral thinking, and perhaps thinking outside the box and, 'what if we did it this way, what if we tried doing it that way?'
- *Bianca*: The thing is when you're an expert in any field, you think so single-mindedly you forget what the real person, thinks about things …
- *Kate*: We're thinking more emotionally … We're more objective aren't we?
- *Bianca*: So if you had all these experts debating this, it wouldn't be good because they'd all be 'do this, do this'. At least we can say 'what about this…?' And they're like 'oh God, we forgot about that'. They're so down the road, they haven't got that fear anymore. But the public have. And they think 'Christ, that's what's gone wrong'.

REVERSING THE QUESTION

- The pertinent question may not be what kind of openness is likely to settle longstanding disagreements over animal research
- But what might be communicated to publics by not being open:
  - Lack of respect for public views
  - Lack of responsiveness to emerging issues
  - Lack of accountable oversight
  - Potentially risky research
- Publics understand there are asymmetries in information, but expect recognition of the importance of their roles, values and stakes
- Institutional body language is as important as the specific information communicated

OPEN TO WHOM?

Political debates about openness are reappearing as relations between public and private interests in science, health and policy are changing

- Issues for open science include (see Leonelli 2013):
  - Practical issues in data circulation
  - Funders interests in return on investment
  - Increasingly globalized science
  - Increasing commercial value of data

- There are many opportunities in openness:
  - Open access and data (post genomics)
  - Open innovation ('crisis' in pharma pipeline)
  - Open engagement (support & crowd sourcing)

- But there are risks in public support if growth in:
  - Narrowly instrumental forms of engagement
  - Perception of commercial interests in science
  - Inequalities in access to health services
  - ➢ The bigger picture for publics is not science but health, and not international competitiveness but fairness for their family, and other animals

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