

Lessons from mundane governance

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Lessons from mundane governance

- The problem
- Technologies contain politics
- Certainty trough
- Mundane governance

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The problem

- How best to govern the welfare state?
- How should governance be done?
- Formal approaches (NPM and “evidence based” analyses) do not deliver
- Reliance upon “objective” measures can be misleading
- Quick fixes do not work
- Formal models of governance can make things more complicated, not less
- Eg performance targets for A&E departments

Need for a new approach

- Need for new sensibilities for understanding governance
- Look at how governance is actually done, in everyday practice
- Science and technology studies (STS) shows that over reliance on formal models can have negative consequences
- Eg discovery of pulsars
- Eg laboratory construction of scientific facts
- Need to study how science is done in practice, not how philosophers tell us it should be done
- Science succeeds despite the rules of scientific procedure, not because of them

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Technologies contain politics

- What seems like a neutral tool in fact embodies politics: a series of choices, decisions, positions and interests
- This is politics you can't avoid! - politics with a small p, not party politics
- The politics are not obvious, except in case of disaster or controversy

Eg Nimitz highway collapse 1989



In some sections, the two levels of the freeway were stacked like pancakes.

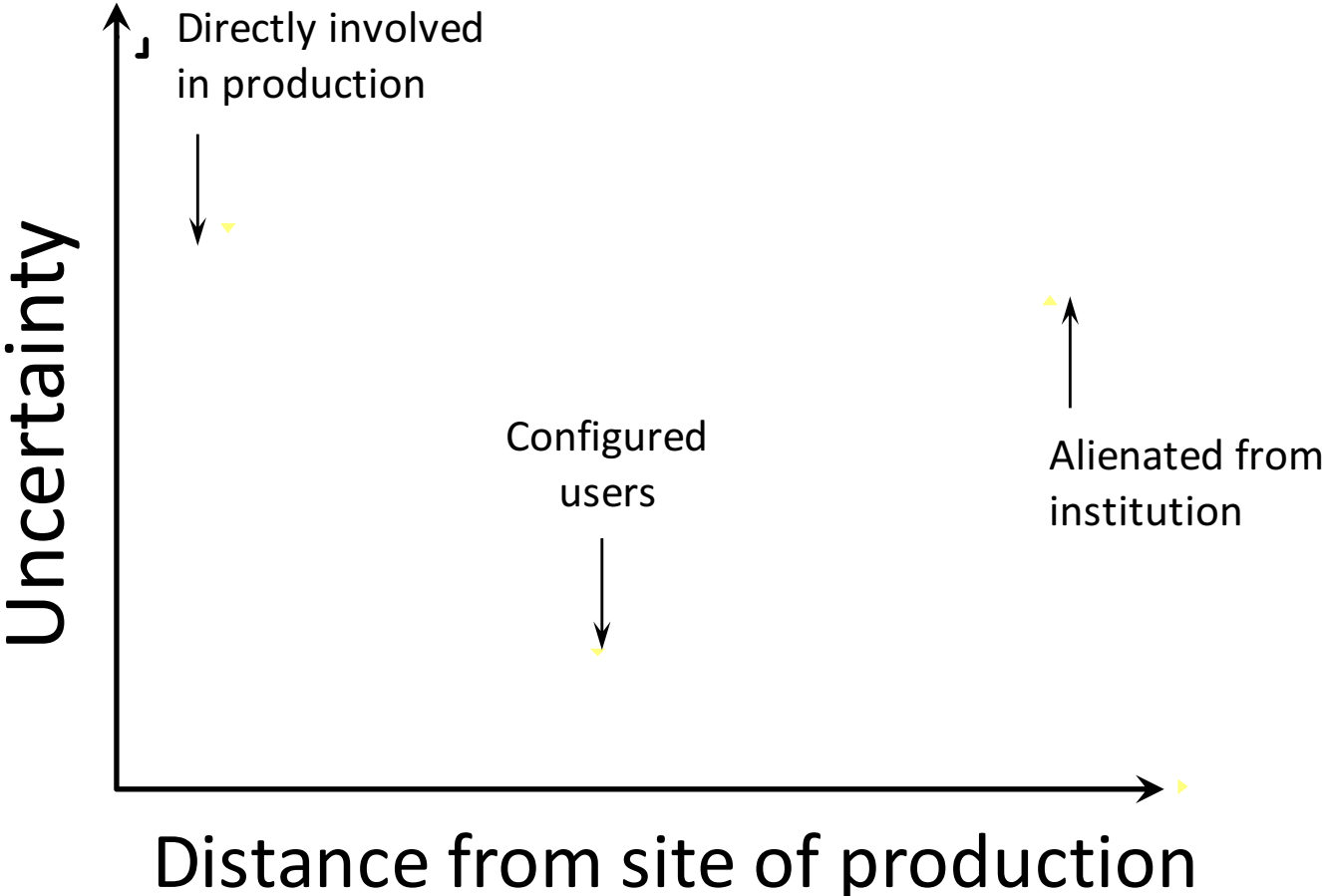
Eg Moses' bridges on Long Island



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The Certainty Trough



The certainty trough

- Confidence in accuracy of ICBMs varies/is socially distributed
- Confidence in any cultural artefact (rulebook, guidelines, targets, procedures) is socially distributed
- Important to identify where different parties sit along the curve
- Different parties have a whole range of different interests, values, concerns

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▪ Mundane governance

Increasing regulation and control in relation to everyday objects and ordinary technologies

- Recycling and waste
- Traffic: speed cameras, parking, traffic lights
- Passenger movement and security in airports



Public concern about mundane governance

- Fines for “inappropriate” recycling
- Newly issued wheelie bins contain microchips
- Speed cameras generate excessive income for the police
- Courses for re-educating speeding drivers
- Schadenfreude over failures of traffic control
- ID cards with biometric data infringe civil liberties
- Extraordinary airport security measures in response to threat of terrorists attacks: the liquid rules



Wouldn't life be grand if we could go back to the 1950s

AND BEFORE YOU SCOFF, YES IT REALLY COULD HAPPEN - Pages 28&29

THE £750,000 SPEED TRAP

That's how much was taken on one road in 2 months. Can this robbery ever be justified?

By John Ingham and Andrew Baxter

ANGRY motorists are to declare war on the Government's obsession with speed cameras.

Tired of being an easy target to raise money, they are planning a go-slow on one of the country's busiest motorways.

Their frustration emerged as it was revealed that the latest speed camera scam had trapped 12,500 motorists in just two months - raising £750,000 in fines. Motoring organisations branded the cameras, which

caught 200 drivers a day, as a "cash cow".

And they insisted that flashing speed signs would have been a better safety measure.

"It is all too easy to miss speed camera signs on a dreary day after a long journey," said Edmund King, executive director of the RAC Foundation.

"Interactive signs are as effective, if not more effective, than cameras." This is the latest blow to claims that the country's 6,000

TURN TO PAGE 4, COLUMN 1



Pope Benedict XVI blesses the world

SEE PAGES 2&3

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Airport security



Passage through the airport of objects and their persons

Governance of passenger management and security: monitoring and assessing the object-person relation

Mundane terror: ordinary objects possess potentially extraordinary properties



August 2006: EU wide change in security rules about carry on liquids



New rules for taking liquids through security

✓ Allowed

- ✓ Liquids allowed
- ✓ Maximum 100ml containers
- ✓ Transparent re-sealable bag
- ✓ Items fit comfortably
- ✓ Fastened closed
- ✓ One bag per person
- ✓ Sealed bag should fit into hand baggage
- ✓ Easily accessible for removal at X-ray

✗ Not Allowed

- ✗ Overfilled open bag
- ✗ Containers over 100ml, even if partially full
- ✗ Sharp items

Medicines, baby food and milk over 100ml must be presented for inspection at X-ray.

BAA
www.baa.com

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The following items may be placed in your hand baggage in containers up to 100ml, in the re-sealable bag.

- | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Gels <ul style="list-style-type: none">For example, hair gel, shower gel | Pressurised foams and sprays <ul style="list-style-type: none">For example, shaving foam, shower foam, tanning foam, pressurised deodorant |
| Lotions and liquids <ul style="list-style-type: none">For example, sun cream, suntan oil, suntan spray, face cream, body lotion, roll-on deodorantPerfume, aftershave | Foodstuffs <ul style="list-style-type: none">For example, water, soft drinks, yoghurt, soup, syrup |
| Pastes <ul style="list-style-type: none">For example, toothpaste, Vaseline, cream eye shadow | Liquid cosmetics <ul style="list-style-type: none">For example, liquid foundation, lip gloss, liquid mascara, make-up remover, nail polish |

The following items are allowed as hand baggage.

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Medicines <ul style="list-style-type: none">Quantity essential for your trip. For example, diabetic kit | Non-liquid cosmetics <ul style="list-style-type: none">For example solid deodorant, lipstick, powder foundation |
| Baby food <ul style="list-style-type: none">(Pastes and liquids) quantity required for your trip | |

Liquids in containers over 100ml must be packed into the baggage that you check into the aircraft hold.

Is this good governance?
Who is going to read and learn these detailed instructions?

Typology of liquids enacts the “responsible traveller” ... “with nothing to hide”

Passengers are generally compliant, but don't understand the rules

Takeaway messages

- Over reliance on formal models is misleading at best
- New approach needed
- Science and Technology Studies (STS) suggest focus on everyday governance, in practice
 - How in practice is governance actually done?
 - What choices and assumptions are embedded in “objective” measures?
- Deploy STS ethnographers as part of governance team, embedded in everyday practice
 - A fresh pair of eyes
 - An aid to sluggish imagination
 - Test out in specific regions and municipalities

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