

AJASN Newsletter

February 2018

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Feedback to Kate Delaney
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Thanks to Dr Bob Frame, &
 Dr Louise Osborne

Public service (& related)

GovLab have published their findings on [best practices from around the world](#). This systematic review of '[nudge interventions](#)' suggests the field is greatly limited in its ability to 'provide process level explanation of these interventions and to summarize their boundary conditions; so, effectiveness of the different interventions across different domains of applications cannot be predicted.' This paper explores how emerging technologies combined with new managerial techniques and tools can enable government leaders to break some of the most enduring [trade-offs](#) governments face (for e.g. compliance costs vs. regulatory burden.)

A [paper](#) (Centre for Policy Development) reports on research that shows Australians have an appetite for democratic renewal and substantial policy reform. This [podcast](#) is about the question 'Does government get the right advice.' The idea was also discussed in this [article](#) (Martin Parkinson.) According to the latest edition of the [Edelman Trust Barometer](#) Australia has experienced a 10 percentage point drop in trust across its institutions. If it wants to [gain legitimacy](#) with the public, the Government must show how it uses evidence in policy making. The 'Life in Australia™' Historic Events Survey was [released](#).

A [pilot study](#) concludes 'we shouldn't assume that corporations paying less tax is good for shareholders in Australia.' The UK National Audit Office commissioned the Tax Administration Research Centre (TARC) to explore the relationship between taxpayer's experience and tax compliance outcomes through a series of controlled experiments. Results and conclusions have just been published in this TARC [paper](#).

The number of US and UK residents [choosing to live in New Zealand](#) has risen sharply since the election of Donald Trump and the UK's Brexit vote, according to new migration figures. The NZ Government plans to measure success with wellbeing measures in the [2019 Budget](#) (i.e. not just GDP.)

The OECD released the newest Services Trade Restrictiveness Index ([STRI](#)) showing increasing restrictions in services trade. A companion paper [STRI Policy Trends up to 2018](#) provides an overview of key policy developments affecting trade in services from 2014 up to today.

The latest edition of the [Global Go To Think Tank Index Report](#) is available.

A new sub-committee of Cabinet – the Digital Transformation and Public Sector [Modernisation](#) Committee – has been created. This [paper](#) says ongoing proliferation of poor quality regulations contributes to Australia's economic malaise. This [article](#) discusses stakeholder comments on the Senate inquiry into digital service delivery.

This [article](#) discusses how to use loose network ties (*like* AJASN) to seek new ideas and innovative solutions to complex problems. UK think tank Nesta explored building an [experimental culture](#) in governments. This [study](#) examines experimentation in the business modeling process, unpacking three different roles of experimentation: learning, signaling, and convincing.

Neil deGrasse Tyson [says](#) that the time is fast approaching when world governments will need to make a choice: either they will accept science and proceed into the future or cling to their beliefs and face their demise.

A [study](#) suggests aerospace, automotive, and pharma manufacturers may face declines of up to 10 percent if trade gets difficult between the UK and EU.

ANZSOG [speech](#) transcript: on the importance of trust underpinning sound governance. Here is a [collection of views](#) from former senior officials on the loss of capability in the public sector.

Potential Harms from Automated Decision-Making		
Individual Harms		Collective / Societal Harms
Illegal	Unfair	
Loss of Opportunity		
Employment Discrimination E.g. Filtering job candidates by race or gender/health information	Insurance & Social Benefit Discrimination E.g. Higher termination rate for benefits eligibility by religious group	Differential Access to Job Opportunities
Housing Discrimination E.g. Landlord relies on search results suggesting criminal history by race	Education Discrimination E.g. Denial of opportunity for a student in a certain ability category	Differential Access to Insurance & Benefits
Economic Loss	Credit Discrimination E.g. Denying credit to all residents in specified neighborhoods ("redlining")	Differential Access to Housing
Differential Pricing of Goods and Services E.g. Raising online prices based on membership in a protected class	Narrowing of Choice E.g. Presenting only ads on for-profit colleges to low-income individuals	Differential Access to Education
Social Detriment	Network Bubbles E.g. Voted someone to opportunity or evaluation based on "who you know"	Economic Loss
Dignitary Harms E.g. Emotional distress due to bias or a decision based on incorrect data	Constraints of Bias E.g. Candidate's perceptions of career prospects based on search results	Differential Access to Credit
Loss of Liberty	Individual Incarceration E.g. Use of "recidivism scores" to determine prison sentence length (legal status uncertain)	Differential Access to Goods and Services
		Filter Bubbles E.g. Algorithms that provide only familiar news and information
		Stereotype Reinforcement E.g. Assumption that computed decisions are inherently unbiased
		Confirmation Bias E.g. All-male image search results for "CEO," all-female results for "teacher"
		Increased Surveillance E.g. Use of "predictive policing" in police priority neighborhoods maps
		Disproportionate Incarceration E.g. Incarceration of groups at higher rates based on historic policing data

Education, science & technology

A [meta-analysis of innovation](#) shows breakthroughs occur most often when conventional wisdom from one field is combined with a smidgen of insight from some unlikely place. Innovators are typically curious, persistent & like searching things out. This survey of [public sector innovation](#) in Denmark found that 13% are direct copies while 60% are inspired by or adapted from other people's work.

This [article](#) 'What's ahead for education policy in 2018' points to a number of about to be released reports that will inform policy debates this year. McKinsey applied analytics to data from the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA), administered by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and produced [six reports](#) on how to improve educational outcomes.

The U.S. National Science Foundation and the National Science Board have just released their biennial [Science & Engineering Indicators](#), describing the state of American technology. The report's main conclusion: China has become or is on the verge of becoming a scientific and technical superpower. ([Related](#) article)

A new [meta-analysis](#) found that students who were enrolled in ECE (early childhood) programs showed increased high school graduation rates, reduced special education placement, and reduced instances of grade retention. A [new report](#) compiled research on 115 early childhood interventions (programs) and found that 102 made a clear and positive difference in young lives.

This [opinion piece](#) says employers are guilty of *degree inflation*, requiring lofty academic bona fides for jobs that don't really need them. This [paper](#) presents a UK contractor's view of the future university.

A [study](#) claims algorithms that predict criminal reoffending may be ineffective.

A team of about 100 university and industry scientists [published](#) their priorities for the United States' satellite programs, identifying what data they most want the government to beam back from space.

[The AI Index](#) from Stanford measures how much progress has been made in artificial intelligence. AI-driven technology might lead to humans making [more serious mistakes](#).

George Soros [criticised](#) tech "monopolies" such as Facebook and Google, calling them a threat to democracy.

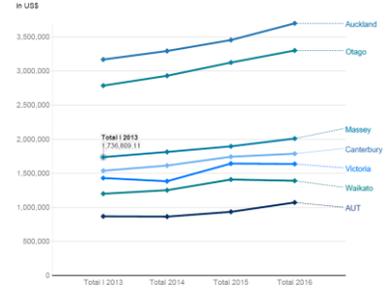
The World Economic Forum (WEF) launched the [SkillSET portal](#) – it is intended to help users acquire the skills and education to adapt to an increasingly digital workplace.

The U.S. National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) released a draft report – [NIST Interagency Report \(NISTIR\) 8202: Blockchain Technology Overview](#).

Here is Frank Chen of a16z's 'The Autonomy Ecosystem' [presentation](#). He looks at how self-driving vehicles impact everything from the justice system to value chains.

ICYMI: A [report](#) on 'Corporate Surveillance in Everyday Life'

University spending on subscriptions (2013-2016)

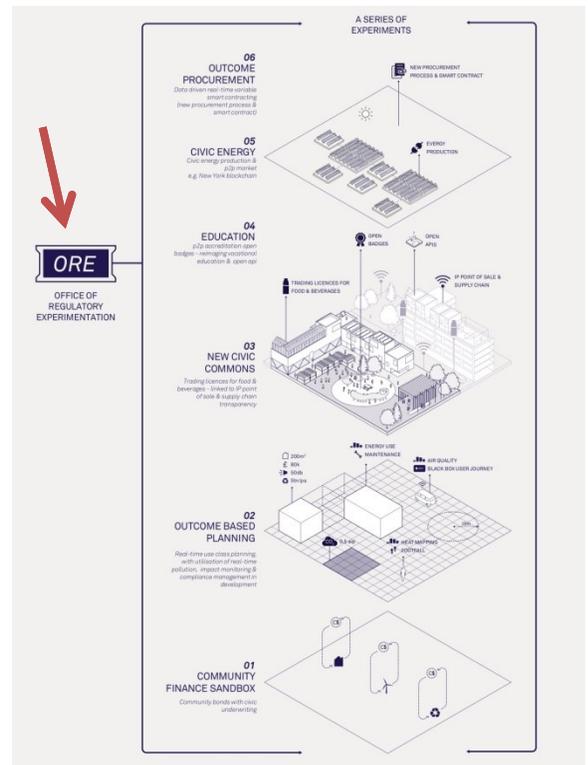


Preliminary analysis of spending by seven New Zealand universities on subscriptions to four journals (Elsevier, Springer, Wiley and Taylor & Francis) between 2013 and 2016.

Spending on journal subscriptions by NZ universities incl. for publicly funded research

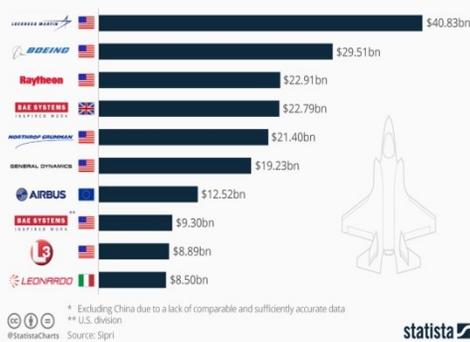


The ARUP [timeline](#) offers an insight into plausible timescales in terms of any given technology's development, from concept through to commercialisation and mass adoption.



The World's Biggest Arms Companies

Top arms-producing and military services companies in 2017*



National security

Australia is [falling behind](#) other nations and international bodies in measuring inequality, particularly the concentration of wealth. 'If there is a squeeze on middle-class wealth, as is happening in many other countries, it is likely to create greater [political volatility](#).'

Britain may impose [new taxes](#) on tech giants like Google and Facebook unless they do more to combat online extremism by taking down material aimed at radicalising people or helping them to prepare attacks.

Here is an [article](#) (p. 10) on defence procurement in Canada (and approaches to risk.) Russian hackers have phished US [defence firms](#) for tech secrets.

This [opinion](#) piece says the US National Defense Strategy 'significantly reduces the priority of counter-terrorism' and 'confirms a return to global competition with China and Russia.' Another [opinion](#) piece argues that the US will not be able to maintain its position in Asia. The U.S. released the latest (already leaked) US [nuclear posture review](#). The most significant element of the review is commitment to a whole new generation of nuclear weapons. This [article](#) questions the new nuclear posture.

According to the WEF [2018 Global Risks Report](#), the environment, cyber security and geopolitics are areas drawing the most concern. Airborne hacking stations ([drones](#)) may be a new frontier in digital crime.

The 2017 [Democracy Index](#) finds that Asia experienced the biggest decline of all regions, with its two largest emerging democracies, India and Indonesia, suffering significant declines in their scores. Here is a (fairly new) [source](#) on Geopolitical Futures with some free content (other information available via purchase/subscription.)

An [interactive map](#) on the Internet shows whereabouts of people who use fitness devices such as Fitbit [and](#) highly sensitive information about the location and activities of soldiers on military bases, in what appears to be a major security oversight. (First noticed /tweeted by an Australian student.)

Some CEOs of Australia's [humanitarian agencies](#) have unfavourable opinions about the Australian government's new [defence export strategy](#).

Turkey's recent opening of a [military training base](#) in Mogadishu to train the Somali National Army has 'raised eyebrows across the wider Horn of Africa region.'

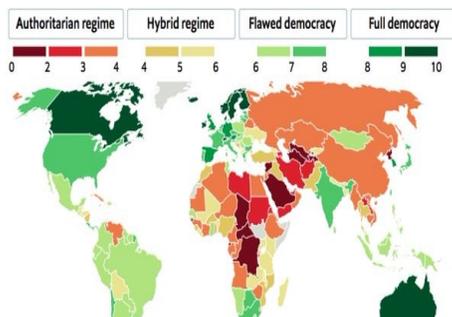
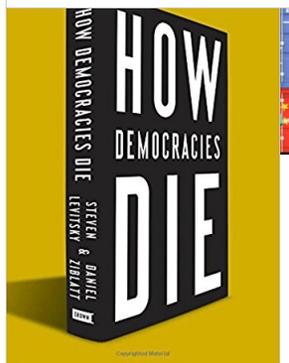
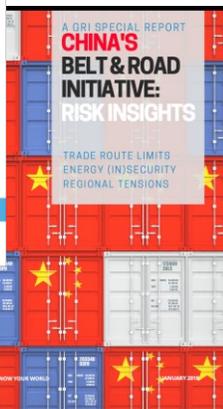
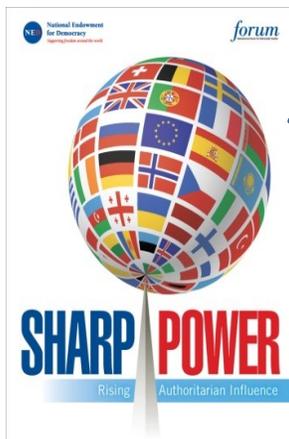
In the United States, the reported lack of trust between Congress (e.g. House Intelligence Committee) and the FBI [may impact](#) national security / intelligence sharing arrangements with other countries (like Australia.)

Here are new [pictures](#) of Chinese building in the South China Sea. This [article](#) suggests New Zealand 'appears to have been a test zone' for Chinese government's political influence activities in other states. Here is a guide to China's [belt and road](#) initiative. RAND - China's army now sees [warfare](#) as a clash between opposing operational systems (not one between armies) i.e. 'victory goes to the side that can disrupt, paralyse, or destroy the enemy's system.'

A study *China 2030* outlines trends, trajectories and scenarios for [innovation in China](#) toward 2030.

The British government has [new software](#) designed to remove extremist material from social media (video only.)

France might bring back [compulsory military service](#) for young people.



A look at [democracy retreat](#) from the Economist - ... across the world 49.3 per cent of people live in some form of democracy - only 4.5 per cent live in full democracies.

Frames / framing

This study assessed change trajectories in the Big Five personality traits (neuroticism, extraversion, openness, conscientiousness, and agreeableness) using data from 14 studies including 47,190 respondents ([preprint.](#))

This [Master's Thesis](#) looks at the future of immigration to Canada and its impact on the culinary landscape.

A [new report by PwC](#) defines three separate waves of automation: the algorithm wave (encompassing the automation of simple computational tasks and analysis of structured data); the augmentation wave (automation of repeatable tasks, exchanging information through dynamic technological support, and statistical analysis of unstructured data); and the autonomy wave (automation that involves problem solving in dynamic real-world situations with responsive actions, such as driverless cars). The first wave is already under way, the second is also happening now but won't properly take off until the 2020s, and the third can't be expected to have a serious impact on labour markets until the 2030s. (Separate analysis [here.](#))

Researchers with the Royal Children's Hospital in Australia suggest that it might be time to change the span of years that define [adolescence](#) from 10 to 19 to a proposed 10 to 24 years of age.

This [article](#) explores behavioural hurdles in government organisations (relating to new technology initiatives.)

[This research](#) looked at links between increased political polarisation and disillusionment (when assumptions are challenged.)

(ICYMI) According to this [new paper](#) people with intellectual humility are open to other viewpoints and see disagreement as an opportunity to learn – early findings suggest that it may be possible to foster intellectual humility relatively easily, as least over the short term.

Forward looks

An author and a chef imagine how we'll eat if bees and fish vanish. The results: unfamiliar. ([Atlas Obscura](#))

This examines [what the future \(dystopia and utopia\) could look like](#) if there is a transition to electric, self-driving, shared cars.

PwC has four different [scenarios](#) for how companies will manage people and how people will manage their work and careers.

Spanish could disappear as a spoken language in the US. The country's non-English languages are often [lost in the third generation.](#)

FTF published a new trends outlook on the [Future of Sustainability: Living in nonlinear times.](#)

The Red Cross has published some foresight [work.](#)

Demographics, automation, and inequality could dramatically reshape our world in the 2020s and beyond says a new (US) [report](#) from Bain & Company.

The future of precision medicine in Australia: [report.](#) And, an [article](#) on the rise of AI in medicine.

A new UNDP [foresight manual](#): Empowered Futures for the 2030 Agenda.

A short blog post on the [Future of Associations.](#)



AFP (Agence France Presse) looks at 2017.

Figure 2. The six main dimensions of context defining the interaction between knowledge and policy in governmental institutions

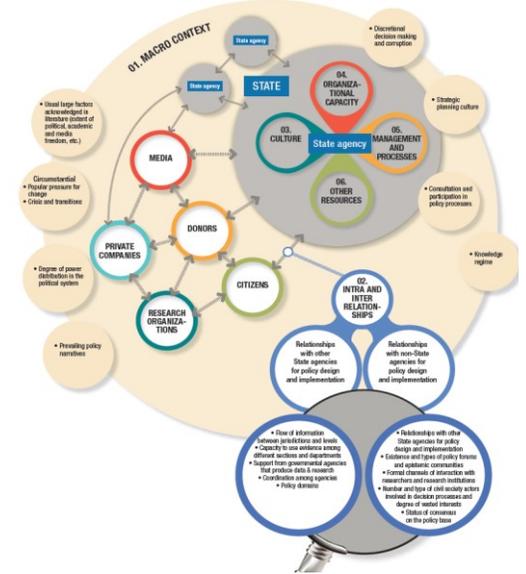
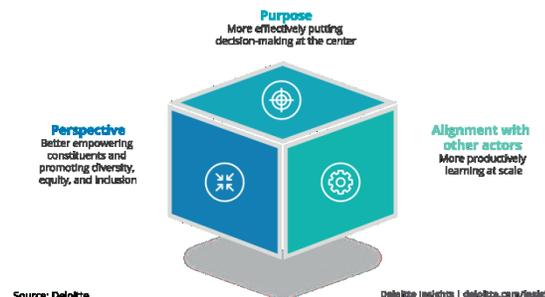


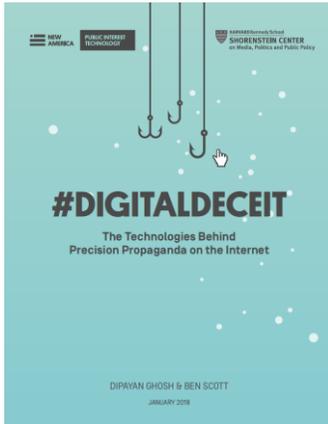
Figure 1. Defining pillars of a better future for monitoring, evaluation, and learning



Source: Deloitte.

Deloitte Insights | [deloitte.com/insights](#)

News



"A practical guide—a simple and promising way to force ourselves to do better."
—Dan Ariely, author of *Procrastinators Unleashed* and *The Upside of Irrationality*

THE INNOVATOR'S HYPOTHESIS



MICHAEL SCHRAGE

Oxford University's [Computational Propaganda Research Project](#) (COMPPOP) investigates the interaction of algorithms, automation and politics. A February [paper](#) on junk news consumption is the latest example of research published. An [article](#) on Fake News 2.0 – AI will soon be able to mimic any human voice. This post discusses [new business models for journalism](#) (highlighting the Netherland's De Correspondent paper.) This [Senate inquiry](#) looked into the current state of public interest journalism in Australia and globally.

David Cameron is to lead \$1bn infrastructure fund for [China's Belt & Road Initiative](#).

Out-going New Jersey Governor Chris Christie signed a law making it illegal to fly an [unmanned drone aircraft](#) after too many drinks.

The EU launched an effort to ensure that [all packaging throughout Europe](#) is reusable or recyclable by the year 2030.

The annual [Global Opportunity Report](#) is a global guide to opportunities for building a safe and sustainable future.

The 10th [Closing the Gap report](#) is out and a COAG [consultation](#) is underway to refresh the current targets.

This article discusses 'The silent rise of the [female-driven economy](#).'

George Soros called for [global regulation](#) of social media (internet companies.)

Web sites / reference material

The Behavioral [Evidence](#) Hub is here. A SSRN [article](#): 'Richard Thaler and the Rise of Behavioral Economics.'

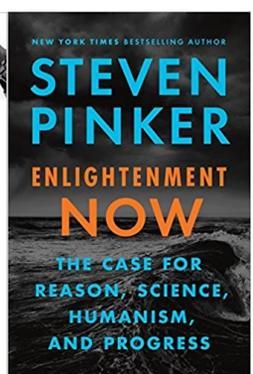
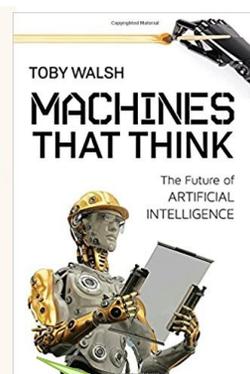
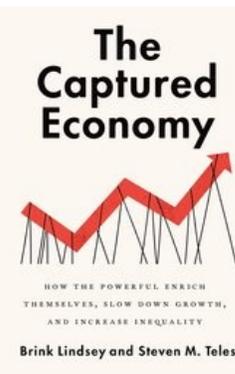
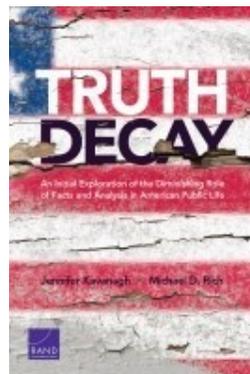
A new education website: <https://education.good.is/>. This [guide](#) provides links to resources relating to Australian schooling, policy and administrative frameworks, and state and territory government websites.

The Public Data Lab, a network of researchers, journalists and organizations, released [a field guide](#) for detecting and investigating online misinformation. Here is a [crowdsourced list of research](#) on misinformation. The [International Fact-Checking Network](#) launched [a research database](#) containing a curated list of selected studies on fact-checking and misinformation.

An OECD [report](#): Embracing Innovation in Government: Global Trends 2018.

ProQuest Dissertations and Thesis has an open access search [portal](#).

QUOTE from 1962: "A point of view can be a dangerous luxury when substituted for insight and understanding." Marshall McLuhan, [The Gutenberg Galaxy](#): The Making of Typographic Man "



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Upcoming meetings

Next meeting: **April 2018**