

On Vulnerability and Trust

New PERITIA Special Issue

To trust a scientist, an expert, or a politician is to accept that you are vulnerable to their will. You put yourself, to some extent, into their hands, risking being harmed. **What if the ethical demands of those in such a position of power are not taken seriously?**

This premise is one of the central aspects of PERITIA's research. We examine how vulnerability may affect our trust relationship with science and expertise. For example, do we pay enough attention to the anger, resentment, or anxiety when citizens refuse to follow medical recommendations? **Is this vulnerability related to a knowledge gap, a conflict of values, or our own emotions?**

A new [PERITIA special issue](#) edited by UCD researchers Maria Baghramian, Danielle Petherbridge, and Rowland Stout explores these and more questions. Published in the International Journal of Philosophical Studies (Taylor and Francis), nine articles address what Annette Baier (1986) called the "varieties of vulnerability" to understand the various forms of trust in society.

[Read the introduction](#)

Highlights

- To **understand the affective nature of trust**, we recommend Andrew Kirton's [article](#). Does our vulnerability when trusting others relate to our social need of belonging to a group?
- How can vulnerability be prevented when acquiring knowledge from **social media**? An interdisciplinary [collaboration](#) by social epistemologists and computer scientists examines the nature of epistemic vulnerability within the virtual networks of social media.
- What is the role of emotions when **distrust in science** emerges? Katherine Furman argues our interactions with science are not an emotionally neutral experience as she explores [two real-life cases](#): a HIV/AIDS campaign in South Africa and the 2013-2016 Ebola epidemic.

Insights from PERITIA's Research

Social Media, Trust, and Covid-19 in The Netherlands

A new [article](#) by PERITIA investigators [José van Dijck](#) and [Donya Alinejad](#) was published in the journal Social Media and Society. The authors examine the role of social media dynamics in the public exchange of information between scientists, government, mass media, and citizens during the first four months after the Covid-19 outbreak in the Netherlands.

Video of the Webinar “Who to Trust on Covid-19?”

Nearly 300 participants joined our PERITIA experts in a discussion on the role of expertise during this pandemic. If you missed it, you can [watch it now](#).

Recreating a Climate of Trust

“A climate of trust depends not just on science-based expertise, but also on complete openness, transparency, and accountability from those in decision making positions”, argue our PERITIA colleagues Maria Baghramian and Shane Bergin in an [op-ed](#) in the Irish Times.

How can we make Expert Advice more Democratic?

To formulate high quality, non-biased, accountable, and plural expert advice, one solution may be designing multidisciplinary committee-based advice, suggests PERITIA investigator Cathrine Holst in the SAPEA “Science for Policy” podcast. [But even then, things are not easy](#).

Trust in Expertise in a Changing Media Landscape

PERITIA Virtual Conference

18-19 March, 2021

Registration is now open for a series of talks and a roundtable discussion by leading scholars in the field. They will share their thoughts on how best to assess, establish and maintain the trustworthiness of expertise in a rapidly changing media environment.

[Register](#)

Behind the Scenes

PERITIA cannot be explained without its partners. The Policy Institute at King's College London, directed by [Bobby Duffy](#), is leading the research on measuring trust in expertise with survey data. The core objective of their work is collecting data necessary to underpinning the overall findings of PERITIA. Two objectives drive their work: 1) to understand trends in existing measures of trust; and 2) to generate new data on institutional trust in Europe.

Learn more about their work [here](#). We highly recommend their [survey series](#) on public trust in the UK during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Our Science Communication Corner

A Vaccine Against Misinformation?

We all had this “cranky uncle” who knew better than a scientist at our family table. If the day is cold, he sees evidence of climate change not happening. When he spots uncertainty, he prefers to deny all evidence, calling all science a hoax. Five minutes later, he will be applauding his new drone developed thanks to cutting-edge research. The scientist and cartoonist John Cook has recreated our cranky uncle in an entertaining and humorous game that exposes the misleading techniques of science denial. You can finally tell this moustachioed uncle [why he is wrong](#).

Did you know...?

One in Three People Exposed to Covid Anti-vax Messages

Anti-vaccine information flies quickly. One in three people in the UK (34%) say they have seen or heard messages discouraging the public from getting a coronavirus vaccine, and anti-vax voices are using social media to amplify their messages, shows a [new study](#) by our partners from the Policy Institute at King's College London.

Proudly a Horizon 2020 Research Project

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 870883. The information and opinions on this website and other communications materials are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the European Commission.



*Some rights reserved *|CURRENT_YEAR|* *|LIST:COMPANY|*, Some rights reserved.
|IFNOT:ARCHIVE_PAGE| *|LIST:DESCRIPTION|**

Our mailing address is:

|HTML:LIST_ADDRESS_HTML| *|END:IF|*

Want to change how you receive these emails?
You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#).

|IF:REWARDS| *|HTML:REWARDS|* *|END:IF|*