

## The TED Programme: Issues and Progress in e-Democracy

Simon French  
simon.french@mbs.ac.uk

## Motivation for TED

## Fischhoff's stages for public risk management

3

## Fischhoff's stages for public participation

1. All we have to do is get the numbers right
2. All we have to do is tell them the numbers
3. All we have to do is explain what we mean by the numbers
4. All we have to do is show them that they've accepted similar risks in the past
5. All we have to do is show them it's a good deal for them
6. All we have to do is treat them nice
7. All we have to do is make them partners
8. *All of these*

4

## Original TED Vision

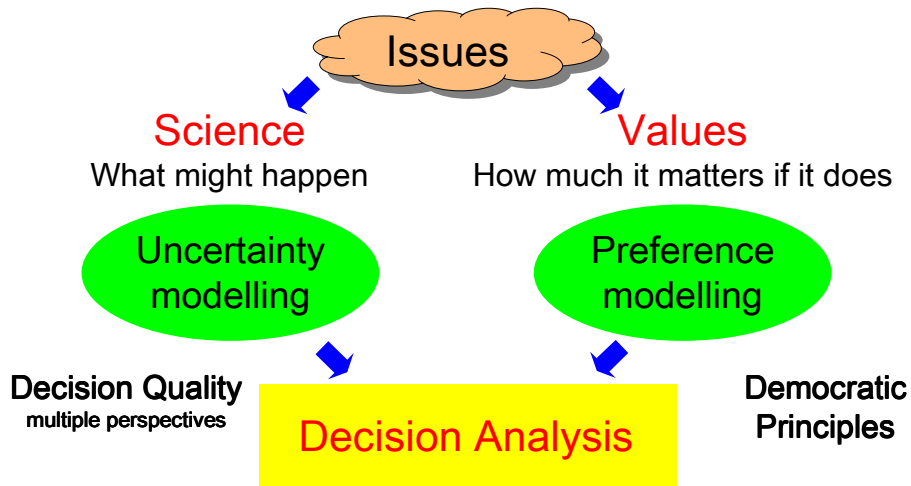
... a timely development of Bayesian methods to support societal decision making via the mechanisms of the WWW: a true step towards e-democracy rather than the e-administration techniques that so far have lain at the heart of e-government initiatives.

5

## Background

6

## Bayesian Model separates 'science' and values



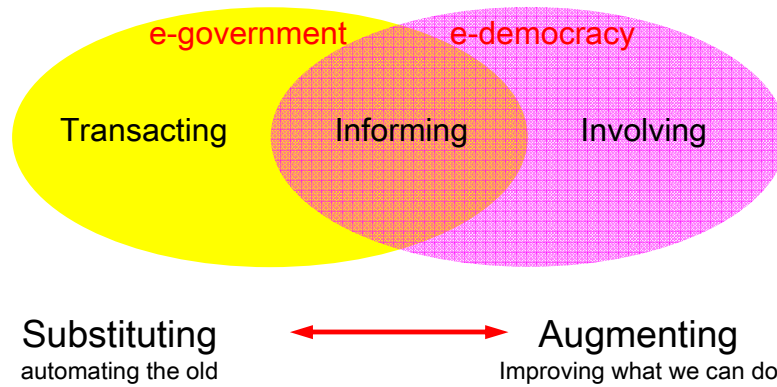
7

## Procedural vs deliberative democracy

- Procedural or representative democracy
  - people elect representatives to take decisions
  - a few democracies allow referendums (but referendums are votes not decisions)
- Deliberative, direct or substantive democracy
  - people participate in decisions
  - Athenian ideal

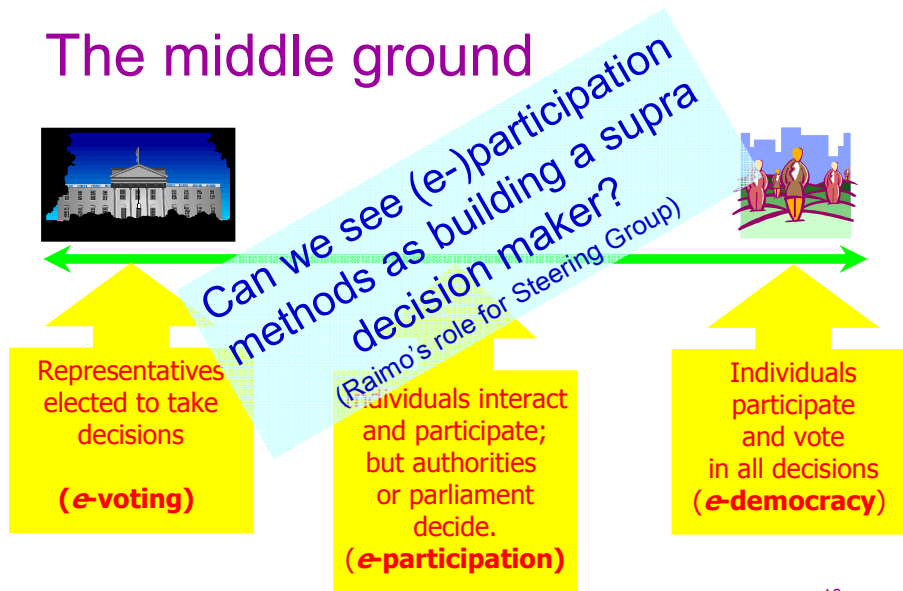
8

## From e-government to e-democracy



9

## The middle ground



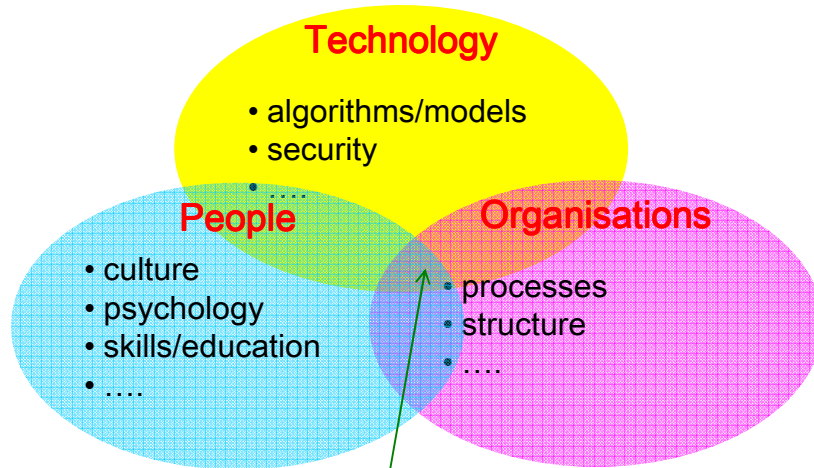
10

Real e-democracy  
will mean multiple  
everything!



How should we evaluate TED's  
approach to e-Democracy?

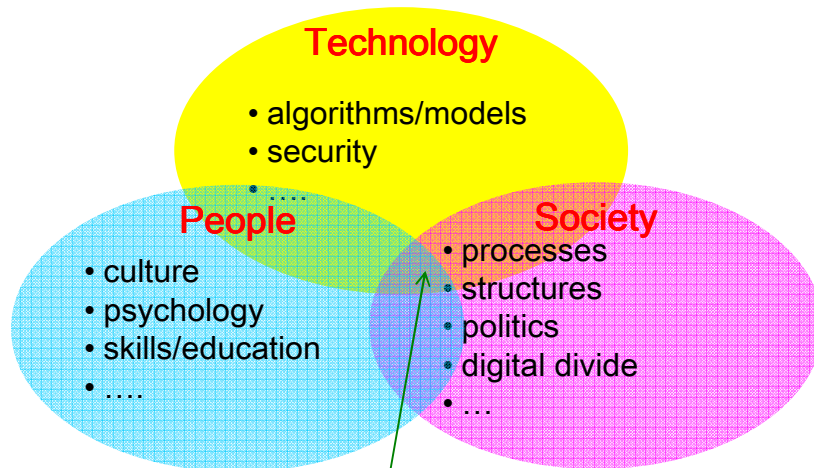
# Information Systems



Domain of information systems

13

# e-Democracy

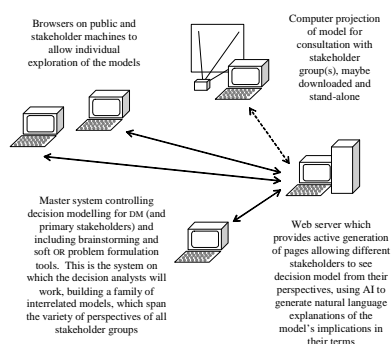


Domain of e-democracy

14

## Oops! Original TED Vision was primarily technological

... a timely development of Bayesian methods to support societal decision making via the mechanisms of the WWW: a true step towards e-democracy rather than the e-administration techniques that so far have lain at the heart of e-government initiatives.



15

## At least the technology has moved forward well within TED ...

- e-Voting
  - Austrian workshops
- Systems
  - Quixote, ENG, VOTON, Parbud, ...
- Algorithms and models
  - Strathclyde/Prague workshops; visits

## But what about the People and Societal Issues?

French, Rios Insua and Ruggeri paper discusses this

16



## TED Workshops

- **Setting Directions**, Ireland, Dec. 2002.
- **Multicriteria aspects**, Spain, June 2003.
- **Multiple participant decision making**, Czech R, May 2004
- **e-Voting**, Austria, June 2004
- **Graphical Models**, UK, August 2004
- **e-Participation and environment**, Finland, May 2005
- **e-Participation**, Austria, June 2005
- **HCI**, UK, November, 2005
- **e-Voting**, Bregenz, Austria, August 2006
- **Young researchers meeting**, Czech R, September 2006
- **Preferential voting**, France, October 2006
- **Facilitation issues**, Manchester, UK, Nov 2006
- **Enhancing public administration**, Switzerland, March 2007

A discernable move towards 'softer' people and societal issues 17

## People

- My Mum!
- She has never understood my research
- She is totally non-mathematical
- Will she use the tools that we are developing and promoting?
- She is *not* atypical
- I am!
- You are!!!



18

## HCI Issues

Not just

- Usability: accuracy of use

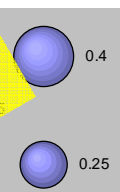
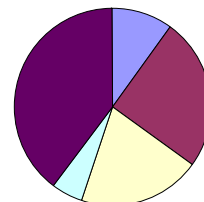
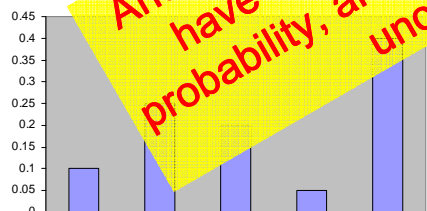
But also

- Understanding of output
- Cognitive processes

19

## Visual Representation of Probabilities:

Which visual representation of probabilities in a web deployed MCDA tool would communicate relative uncertainty best?



**And remember most of the public have difficulty understanding probability, and dislike talking about uncertainty**

ZU

## How do we convey/explain decision analyses?

- Currently we are thinking of using the format of decision analytic packages.
  - Buttons and functions
- But maybe we want to think in terms of an animated story/report
  - E.g. Mathematica or WinBUGS workbooks

21

## HCI Issues

Not just

- Usability: accuracy of
- But also
- Understanding of
  - Cognitive processes
  - Behavioural decision studies

**Is it ethical to explain things in a manner which may predispose the reader's choice?  
One person's clarity is another's spin!**

22

## Societies are ...

### ... not composed of clones

- Individuals differ in many ways
  - Preferences and values
  - Philosophy/Ethics
  - Culture
  - Ability
  - .....
- People may even be non-Bayesian by choice!!!

23

## Cultural Theory

**Individualist/Entrepreneurs:** risks present opportunity, save those that threaten freedom of choice and action within free markets

**Hierarchists:** fear threats to social order and believe technological and environmental risks can be managed within set limits.

**Egalitarians:** fear risks to the environment, the collective good and future generations.

**Fatalists:** do not knowingly accept risks but accept what is in store for them.

24

## Building participation and deliberative democracy

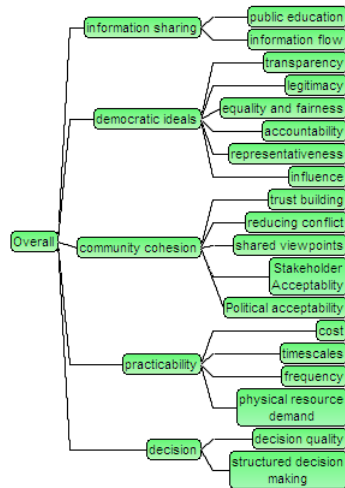
25

## Processes of participation & direct democracy

- There is no *best* instrument
- We need to develop a process in which several instruments ('e' and non 'e-') are *blended* into a hybrid process
  - E.g. a mix of web-sites with information and decision analyses, plus stakeholder workshops, plus postal consultation, plus ...
- No design methodology
  - Little comparative data
  - Little real clarity on objectives
  - Will there be interaction effects?

26

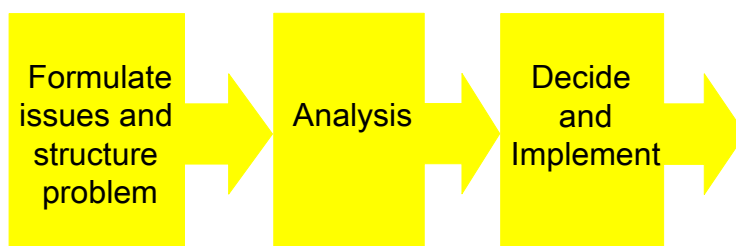
## Possible objectives in design of participatory process



- If we take a democratic ideal perspective, principles matter most.
- If we take the perspective of participatory deliberation, the choice is based upon more pragmatic attributes

27

## 'The' decision making process as part of direct democracy



Different participation instruments may be appropriate at each stage

- perceptions
- Sense making
  - Ask questions
  - Soft OR/PSM

- Build understanding
- Answer questions

So

- Social process of deliberation, acceptance and implementation

28

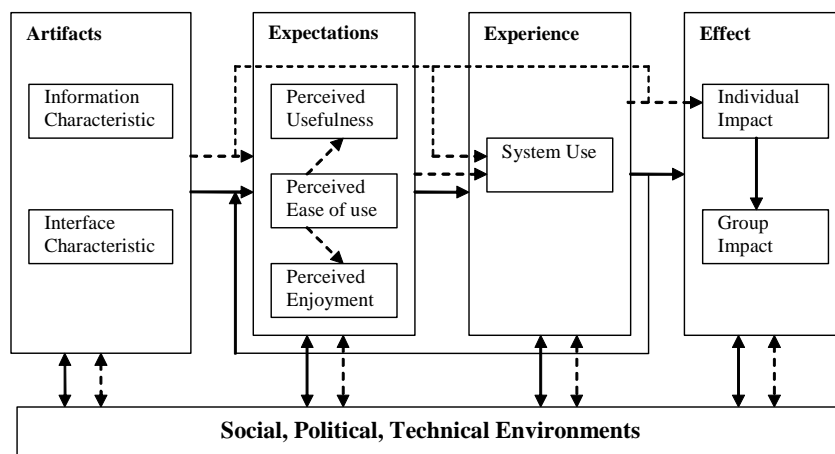
## Kersten's points

- Scalability
- Capability
- Time and Will
- Reward/Motivation
- Communication
- Co-ordination
- .....

29

## How do we evaluate e-democracy?

Zhang after DeLone and McLean



30

## Comments?

31

## Fischhoff's stages for public participation

1. All we have to do is get the numbers right
2. All we have to do is tell them the numbers
3. All we have to do is explain what we mean by the numbers
4. All we have to do is show them that they've accepted similar risks in the past
5. All we have to do is show them it's a good deal for them
6. All we have to do is treat them nice
7. All we have to do is make them partners
8. All of these

Science:  
what might happen

Values:  
how much it matters if it does

32