**Political Ideologies: Contexts, Ideas, and Practices.**
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**Lec 36 Technocracy and Managerialism Lec 1/3 54:18**
**Definitions – Technocracy and Managerialism Definitions**
**Technocracy – History and Problems Plato's Analogy**

Well hello again everyone. We're about to move on to the tenth topic in our NPTEL Ideologies course 2019–20. And we're going to look at our, at the topic of Technocracy and Managerialism. We'll start with the subheadings for the two subtopics, that is, technocracy and managerialism, and we'll go on into the substance of them, starting today - probably take us about three lectures and then we'll do a worked example.

Right, well, Technocracy and Managerialism. We'll start with Technocracy. We'll do the main themes, the main problems; we'll look at three major risks. Those risks are: the unquestioning acceptance of technical expertise, the subordination of the political space, technocracy as a new ideology; and we'll look at the responses, the expert and the non-expert responses, to technocracy and its undoubted presence in our lives and its impact on whole societies.

So that is the first thing we'll do. We'll then go on to Managerialism. We'll look at its main characteristics; we'll look at efficiency and the claim to a body of knowledge, now those are the main characteristics of managerialism, efficiency and the claim to a body of knowledge.

It does have its problems, as we shall see. What are these? They're conceptual, in the form of targets and neutral observations and descriptions. So targets are an important feature of managerialism and cause it a problem. Neutral observations and descriptions are also a problem, but they're part of managerialism. We'll look at empirical examples of all of these problems to show you how they occur in practice, and can be very serious indeed. And we'll reach a conclusion on managerialism.

We'll then go on to a worked example of the kinds that we've done for the previous nine topics, and they're the kinds of things that we would do in, in an academic seminar with students. So I'm trying to show how we address these issues, we start with examples or empirical studies or analyses, and then look at the problems in those and draw upon other writings to help us reach some sort of conclusion or open a fresh question.

So, we're going to start with technocracy and its major risks. We'll do its major risks and its problems. So here we are. Well, technocracy and managerialism both mean different things.

Technocracy means rule by the experts. The Greek word *techne* means a craft or an art. And there are many examples of technocratic ideologies, even in ancient writings. The Athenian philosopher Plato, who we think lived from 429 to 340 BCE, advocated a form of technocracy; what does he mean by that?

He meant that only those who are fit to be trained to rule should rule. So he considered that only certain people are fit to be trained to rule, and they were the only ones who then after receiving their training should rule. Today, the word technocracy more commonly refers to or connotes rule by those with technical or professional qualifications, such as scientists or engineers. It could perhaps include doctors or other people with technical or professional qualifications.

The term technocracy itself was coined by an American engineer, William Smith, in 1919. We shall also see however, we'll see this, that people with genuine technical expertise often import their own moral and other presuppositions and assumptions into their work. And they often do that without realizing that theyre doing so. We'll examine technocracy first.

But before that, we'll look at what managerialism might mean. It is much more recent than technocracy, but it has been called a fully-fledged ideology, I draw here from Entemann, writing in 1993, and there may well be earlier references to managerialism as an ideology. It is certainly a fully-fledged ideology. In its widest form, managerialism's main principle in its widest form is that a training in management enables anyone to manage anything without any substantive knowledge of the activity they are managing. That is, they can be trained to manage without being a practitioner of the activity they're managing. Managerialist doctrines make significant claims to generalizability and to predictive authority. And managerialism raises serious questions in philosophy and political theory.

Well, let's start with technocracy. The idea of technocracy has a very long history. Plato, as we have seen, well, he proposed a, a special form of education for philosopher rulers, whom he called guardians with a capital G. Those considered fit to become Guardians would have a specially-designed education and that would be followed by fifteen years' experience working in institutions of state before they could start to take more powerful positions.

The other classes were divided by Plato into two more, in rank order, and they would be subordinate to the Guardians and would work under their direction. Needless to say, Plato's work has had an enormous amount of attention. And, in fact, the state that he advocated never seems to have come into being, he was writing, as I've probably said before, in very great

distress and anger over the fact that the Athenian state had put Socrates to death. And Plato's criticisms were of what he considered democracy today and what we would today call Athenian democracy.

Well, Plato was very clear that people needed to be trained to rule, they'd have a particular type of education designed for that, they'd then have to do fifteen years in institutions or institutions of state before they could start to take more powerful positions. So, technocracy has a very long history. The idea of it has certainly been with us for, well, two thousand years and more.

Well, what about the main themes? Plato likens the Guardians to ships' captains. With their training and navigation and ship handling, as well as their knowledge of the winds and tides and seasons, they're experts in commanding their crews and sailing their various routes. That's Plato's own analogy, it's a famous one. This is potentially an attractive idea, and there's no doubt that we have relied on experts of one kind or another since ancient times.

For example, I mean, we rely on doctors, navigators, builders and architects, scientists of all kinds, engineers, farmers, and of course tradespeople such as plumbers and electricians. We might, I should add, well, not be able to survive in our current societies without, in today's societies without plumbers, electricians, and mechanics.

Now one result of the existence of technical expertise is the relation, the question of the relation between the technical expert, and the wider polity, the wider society, the wider political system. Technical experts are of course members of the wider polity, that's stating the obvious in a sense, but the relationship between them in the light of their technical expertise is a very difficult one to characterize. The idea of technocracy has been part of, for example, optimistic and even utopian visions of society, though for several decades now, it has often been seen as a form of political pathology, or as the informing principle in dystopic accounts of society, including powerful novels and films.

Well, very few societies, if any, have been totally technocratic. There have been novels like Yevgeny Zamyatin's *We*, published in 1924, which have characterized dystopic and tightly controlled societies which are run by technocrats and ideologues. And there've been other works; probably the most famous example of that kind of novel is George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, which was first published in 1949.

The technical experts have had, nevertheless, have had a colossal impact. For example, in the framing of nuclear policy, agricultural policy, and many other areas of great public importance. By the way, the impact and at times near-control that technical experts have had on things like nuclear policy and agricultural policy have been documented by some very serious research work.

Well in fact, there, there's nothing new about the idea that technical knowledge usually involving the use of machines can be used to create a new society in which technical education and the use of machines would enable us to have far greater amounts of leisure time. This is often put forward; philosophers such as Tommaso Campanella, and Francis Bacon, raised such possibilities in the seventeenth-century. And more recently, well, among those who developed or maintained such themes were Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Henri de Saint-Simon in the eighteenth-century. Saint-Simon in particular proposed that an élite class made up of scientists, engineers, industrialists and planners would provide technical knowledge, which would enable us to solve social problems and thereby create a rational order. I draw those arguments, those comments from Gunnell, who published a paper in 1982, on technocracy. Well, there are other examples of technocracy and of technocracy in practice. For example, in the decade or so after the war, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, no I'm sorry, it was a decade or so before the war, was very keen on the idea that technical knowledge and technical expertise be put towards creating a better society.

We won't go into the issues of technocracy, democracy and technical authority around the creation of the Tennessee Valley Authority around that time, and if I'm not mistaken, after the war, but that matter has had considerable attention and considerable interest from scholars of technocracy. Ultimately it failed, but, seems to have failed because the schemes devised for it seemed not to be suitable for local conditions and local issues. This also has been documented as happening in the Soviet Union, where major agricultural schemes initially succeeded but then failed because they could not accommodate local questions of climate, soil, and other, other technical issues - climate, soil, local weather, variations in weather, water supply and so on, do raise technical issues. But these, these technocratically design schemes did not seem to be able to accommodate these. We don't need to go into detail over those here. The details are publicly available elsewhere.

Now what are the problems in the idea of technocracy? If we take technocracy as in informing principle, an ideological principle, of society; what are the problems we're likely to encounter?

There are several. The first is that of whether political and social issues are problems of the same kind as technical problems. In a famous paper, the philosopher Renford Bambrough points out that Plato's sea-captain may know all about handling ships in different conditions and sailing different routes in different seasons, and so on. But that other people, such as political leaders, or ship owners and merchants, decide which routes are to be sailed, and which cargoes are to be carried, and whether to send ships to trade or to war, and so on.

Bambrough wrote that paper, it's called 'Plato's Political Analogies', published that paper in 1956. Now it's true that the decisions on which routes to sail, which cargos to carry and so on may very probably involve technical factors, but ultimately, they're never based solely on technical factors. And, it's not at all clear how anyone could become an expert in all matters of the political or on all businesses and trades. Indeed it's not clear, as we shall see in the section on managerialism and the arguments on managerialism, we shall see that it is not clear if there can even be a body of knowledge of the kind Plato thinks his Guardians can have.

Now there's another problem with technocracy, and that is that technocrats, or rather, those who possess technical knowledge or expertise, are also people brought up and living in human societies and cultures. That may seem as if I'm stating the obvious, but we do need to be reminded of it in this context. What does it mean? It means that people with technical knowledge or expertise, live and work in contexts which involve and express ideas of appropriate conduct, manners and so on ,and they have, they also have careers to make an advance and often protect in face of technical and organizational political issues of which they might not approve or which might threaten their positions.

One result is that technocrats often and sometimes deliberately make decisions which are already permeated, they make technical decisions which are already permeated by political and moral factors. Many even carry out much of their professional work in ways which are heavily influenced by such factors. And they may not even realize the ways these factors shape their decisions.

Experts themselves do not operate in what has been called a social vacuum. I've drawn that term from the work of Abraham and Sheppard on technocracy, published in 1997 and from Centeno or Centeno, published in 1993. But, of course, the matter of the, the moral and political and cultural context in which possessors of technical knowledge or expertise live and work can only be examined in respect of particular examples or case studies, even though wider

questions do arise from the case studies, and there is a good deal of published material on this. We might have the chance to look at an example or two as we proceed.

Now there are three major risks of technocracy. We need not be at all surprised that technical experts have often had very great influence on major policies and decisions. The relation between the technical experts and the rest of the body politic, including citizens, elected representatives, and public servants, is never going to be easy, but unless we as citizens engage seriously with the experts, we run and our entire societies run at least three major risks.

The first one, the first risk, is the unquestioning acceptance of technical expertise. This is the risk that we rely unquestioningly on those who possess technical authority. We could make enormous mistakes by doing so. Indeed, political power often seems to gravitate towards technological elites, I've drawn that from Gunnell's paper, 1982. Now this tendency to gravitate towards technical elites seems to hold even when the concept of technical expertise is itself expanded, that is, expanded to include those in higher managerial positions who may not themselves be qualified in the particular sciences or applied sciences that we're dealing with.

For example, Indian public-enterprise managers have been described as being solely interested in whether the economy could be run in, I quote "An efficient, disciplined and rational manner, and as making no normative comments whatever about ideologies such as socialism or capitalism." That's drawn from Waterbury's work 1992, cited in Centeno, whom I mentioned earlier. Centeno, of course, published in 1993.

Now, the risk of the technocratic approach, over the matter of accepting technical authority, is that, the major risk here is that technical experts come to dominate our public institutions and political processes. At worst, their expertise would be inaccessible to the public. And it would be put beyond accountability to us. We might well be excluded, furthermore, from holding the experts to account even for their grossest and deadliest errors. There are examples of those - we might have the chance to look at one or two as we proceed.

Well the third major risk of technocracy is the subordination of the political space. And well, I beg your pardon, I should say the second risk, the subordination of the political space. So, this second risk is that the technology, or rather the technological expert, becomes in effect autonomous. And the political space therefore becomes structurally subordinate to decisive factors and forces over which the public and public institutions and representatives have no control. Now, [would] of course, by political space I also include society and culture rather

themselves. The point is that the way the space would then become subordinate to decisive factors and forces - that is, the decisions of the technical experts, and we would have no control over them.

That kind of takeover may not happen often but it has certainly caused serious concern. No less a person than the United States President Dwight D. Eisenhower warned of the dangers posed by this. In his valedictory address in 1961, he devised the term 'military-industrial complex'. And in the same speech, his valedictory address before he left office - he was succeeded by John F. Kennedy - in the same speech, in the valedictory speech, President Eisenhower said that public policy could itself become the captive, I quote, "The captive of a scientific-technological elite".

He added that the danger would persist. Eisenhower there is quoted by Gunnell, in Gunnell's paper in 1982, the speech was made in 1961. So, could there be compensating factors? Yes, one factor, one compensation here, may be that we've identified such dangers, many people have done. But technical experts don't have a single overriding interest or set of concerns, or only very rarely have a single overriding interest or set of concerns or interest which make them into a single class.

It's not clear that technical experts form a single class. Rather is it the case that the organizations in which they work become the holders of power based on technical expertise. But these organizations themselves have to vie and compete for power and influence in the political space, even if they do wield enormous political and financial power. I owe that point to Gunnell, but what he's saying, what Gunnell is saying, is that, technical, technical experts are not a single class, and the organizations in which they work themselves have to take that place have to get influence and perhaps power and then use it, and possibly be held account for it in a wider space.

But there is a problem with this kind of analysis. It neglects or even conceals the extent to which what we take to be technical authority itself often embodies ideological commitments. Some of these have occasionally been brought to light. For example, in the late 1950s, the Ford Foundation effectively established technical rather than institutional change as the guiding principle in Indian agriculture. This even resulted from a specific plan. I have drawn a detailed analysis of this from work by The Research Unit on Political Economy, and this analysis was published in 2003. It is as far as I know, freely accessible on the net.

What the, this group, the RUPE Group identified was that in the 1950s the Ford Foundation used technical expertise rather than institutional change as the main principle for Indian agriculture; they were heavily involved in it. So, this meant that institutional change was replaced by technical proposals. Institutional change may well have expressed very different ideological commitments from those which were propagated and imposed by the Ford Foundation. [This,] they could have involved, institutional change could have involved the redistribution of land or the reshaping of public institutions to provide farmers good support and advice services. Those kinds of issues were sidelined in favor of seeds technology, chemical fertilizers, and pesticides. And rich farmers in irrigated areas received subsidies, generous credit terms, price incentives, and so on.

By the way, that's also been commented on or that kind of issue is being commented on by my former colleague P. Sainath, in a lot of his writings, including his writings, from the time he was the *Hindu*'s agricultural correspondent on the national newspaper the *Hindu*. Now the kind of thing that the RUPE Group have identified, that is the sidelining of institutional reform, social change, changes in the ownership of land and so on. Institutional reform, institutional change was sidelined in favor of technical methods, seed technology, chemical fertilizers, pesticides, and subsidies to rich farmers in, subsidies for rich farmers in irrigated areas and so on, price incentives, credit terms, and so on. This had World Bank approval.

Now the selection of farmers for the trials focused on already successful farmers. It's a practice called cherry-picking. It was no accident, because it would have been essential to show success, especially in the early stages, in order to get later political approval. Cherry-picking of this kind is very common in such schemes particularly where large scale, often technical schemes, are planned, success has to be shown. So very often, the trials are carried out in areas which are likely to succeed anyway. Now cherry-picking has been documented elsewhere. I've drawn here from a paper by Clarence Stone, published in the journal *Ethics* in 1983, analysing a number of public policy institutions and public services, or reviewing work on the workings of public institutions, public services, and of course I wrote about this in my own Ph.D. thesis, and have written about it since then. You will find the citation in the set book.

But what was the impact of the Ford Foundation strategy on India's agricultural policy?

The Ford Foundation policy was soon, soon and I quote from the Rupee report,

> "It was soon adopted by the Indian government with far-reaching effects. Agricultural production of rice and wheat in the selected pockets grew immediately. Talk of land reform, tenancy reform, abolition of usury, and so on, were more or less dropped from official agenda (never to return). But the initial spectacular growth rates eventually slowed. On the average, agricultural culture production all-India has grown more slowly after the Green Revolution than before. And in much of the country, per capita agricultural output has stagnated or fallen. Today, even the Green Revolution pockets are facing stagnation in yields."

That was the RUPE report in 2003, and that's the end of the quotation. What it's it saying in effect, is that, the trials in the selected pockets were completely unrepresentative of what actually happened. Of course, talk of land reform and tenancy reform and so on and of the financially informal credit system disappeared. They were dropped from the official agenda. And, according to RUPE, were never to return. But the technical strategy adopted by the Ford Foundation and supported by the World Bank simply could not be replicated across all India. Agricultural production all India as RUPE say, has grown more slowly after the Green Revolution, since Green Revolution than it did before. Well, you may want to look up the update factor figures on that, the update in figures and so on. Please do so if you wish.

Well, what about the idea of technology as a new ideology? This is a third risk. The risk here is that science and technology themselves come to constitute what has been called a new legitimating ideology in its own right. This then conceals or masks certain forms of social domination. At worst, technique takes over humanity itself. Now that sense of the spread and power of technology as a pervasive ideology, and that is an ideology which does not just permeate our thinking but comes to constitute our entire sensibility, that sense of the spread and power of technology as becoming the form of our entire sensibility has been articulated in great detail, often by famous philosophers of recent or relatively recent times.

Among the most notable analyses and critiques of this process and this danger have been the members of the Frankfurt School, such as Max Horkheimer, Herbert Marcuse, and Jürgen Habermas - and Habermas is still writing. We need not go into detail over what it amounts to, an enormous, really enormous body of work, but one of the most accessible and well known arguments for this position is Herbert Marcuse's book, *One-Dimensional Man*, quite a short book, which was first published in 1964. It became one of the guiding and even inspirational texts for the student movements of the late 1960s. Well Marcuse's point there was that, one of

his arguments there, was that language itself is reshaped under the imperatives of technique, technical authority, and he is also very clear about this, capitalist production. Our entire conceptions of language are reshaped to the point where we may be unable to imagine anything else.

So what Marcuse is identifying, pointing out is, the risks, one of the risks of taking technical expertise for granted, taking it as completely authoritative and failing to see that it is itself politically and morally, ethically located and expresses political and moral assumptions and social assumptions in its own way.

Now, the philosophic issues arising here are certainly important. We don't need to go into them in great detail. And it's important not to take the applied sciences as forming a single body of knowledge or as taking a single type of approach. And so, it's best if we analyse technocracy in the light of particular examples. Secondly, some ideologies not only provide more space, much more space for the idea of technical expertise as a political factor, but they also create the idea of politics itself as a form of technical activity. The ideology which does this to the greatest extent is liberalism. A good example of that is provided by the framers of the US Constitution. They were almost textbook examples of ideological liberals. They even seem to have seen the creation of their new republican state as a technical task. The main point of the task was to create institutions and procedures for the limitation, regulation, and possible reconciliation of competing or otherwise incompatible interests and nothing else; nothing else.

This outlook takes the constitutional structure to be separate from the rest of society. But as a result, it takes for granted the validity of the competing claims which it has to regulate or reconcile. And it offers no conceptual resources for us to examine the concepts which those claims, embody or express. We have seen these problems in respect of liberalism earlier, but in respect of technocracy it's Gunnell's paper, 1982, which addresses, which brings these issues to light - that even the framers of the United States Constitution seem to conceive their task as a technical task and Gunnell brings to light some of the consequences some of the implications.

And this has further results in respect of technocracy, further and very significant results. One of the key issues that arises in the relation between technocratic specialists and those in the wider polity is this. It's the struggle over the very methods by which we determine the validity of the questions and the answers in the exchange between technocrats and those in the wider polity. This is the point made by Centeno in his paper in 1993.

But the point is this. We must also remember here that the technocrats or those who claim technical expertise may not be confined to the sciences or applied sciences; senior officials in international financial institutions, and their like-minded colleagues in many parts of the world, especially in developing countries, take typically technocratic or instrumentally rational attitudes, which include questioning or rejecting not just the questions, but the validity of the questions put to them from outside their purported fields of authority. Even if, even if the questions are put by those in a democratic polity, to whom the technocrats are supposed to answer. So the nature, nature of the engagement between possessors of technical knowledge and the wider public is never going to be easy. It's perhaps most accessibly illustrated by means of an example.

It's a British example and it comes from before the passage of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, but it shows the kinds of issues that arise, even though at that time, at the time of this particular piece of research, the British licensing system for pharmaceuticals was the most secretive in the western industrialized world. I've quoted that, cited that, from Abraham and Sheppard; they published in 1997.

Now, the researchers here, this was before the Freedom of, the British Freedom of Information Act 2000, the researchers conducted semi-structured interviews with 17 members - one was not a scientist - 17 members or former members of the medicines commission. Now under the Medicines Act 1968, the Medicines Commission had the task of evaluating all applications for the licensing of new drugs. The 17 interviewees made up one fifth of all who were serving on the commission, or who had served on it in the previous ten years. The researchers also interviewed a range of patients and a selection of nursing staff.

Well, what were the expert responses? Among the main findings, all but two of the 17 commission members who were interviewed, all but two of the 17, considered that there was a clear demarcation between science and social judgment, that is the, the term actually used in the published paper. But seven said that the risk-benefit analysis which was part of the decision for licensing new drugs, the risk-based, risk-benefit or cost-benefit, say-risk benefit analysis, had no scientific guidelines, and was therefore a matter of interpretation.

And, at least in private, the experts said that scientific testing and epidemiology could not provide clear knowledge about the risks and benefits of medicines. They added that although new drugs were licensed for a particular dose, the clinical trials for the first two years tended to show that the patients were I quote, "grossly overdosed," grossly overdosed, after which, after

that, the Commission and the manufacturers would reach agreement on the dosage. Often they cut to the conventional dose to a tenth of its previous level. I don't know what scientific grounds they had for that. Does that imply that the people involved in the clinical trials, the patients, were given ten times the ultimately licensed dosage of the drug? I don't know.

None of the experts seems to have mentioned commercial pressures as a factor in the initial overdosing. Commercial pressures in the, for the, you know, behind the initial overdosing do not seem to have been mentioned. Some of the experts interviewed here did say that the publication of licensing details would be resisted by manufacturers on commercial grounds. So this is a published paper, field research, showing that what we think are tests and trials for the licensing of, licensing of drugs, may well be on, conducted on, technically unjustifiable grounds - and furthermore, many of the experts involved say they could not, even the epidemiology could not provide clear knowledge about the risk and benefits of medicines.

That's a published paper. Yes, it was published before the British Freedom of Information Act came into force, was even passed. But nevertheless, we then have to ask about the range and scope of Freedom of Information or Right to Information legislation that has been passed since then.

Well, what about public participation in the licensing process? Almost all the experts opposed it because they considered the public ill-informed. And they also thought the media contributed to public misunderstanding about the safety of medicines. It's not very different from Plato. The experts know, the public don't. Plato did not have a mass media like ourselves, but there was plenty of public discourse in ancient Athens. It's a model for, it's one of the spaces from which we inherit our contemporary concepts of the public space and democracy. But are these experts who are interviewed in this particular study, are these experts that taking an attitude that different from Plato's? Four of the experts, 4 the 17, would consider, they said, some public participation, but only within a technocratic decision-making process. Only one of them thought that citizen involvement would be part of a dynamic and educative process of the kind that occurred, for example, when AIDS activists campaigned for more appropriate drugs testing and regulation in the United States in the mid-1990s.

I should add that, it often turned out, that AIDS campaigners and AIDS activists were very much better-informed at that time than many of the doctors and others in the medical profession themselves - much better-informed about the disease and about likely counters to it or

preventive measures and, or the developing antiretroviral drugs at the time. Only as for our experts here, whom Abraham and Sheppard have written about, only one thought the secrecy enables the concealment of their decisions - that is, particularly when they were bad decisions. Only one of them thought this, the secrecy in which they worked, enabled them to conceal bad decisions. One of them did go so far as to say, that once a drug was on the market, the public became, I quote, “Part of an experiment.” Those were the expert responses to the Abraham and Sheppard study in relation to the processes and the claims to knowledge involved, *and* the studies involved in the decisions on whether new drugs are licensed for sale or not.

Well, what about the non-expert responses? The non-experts were made up of nursing staff and patients, and the patients were either receiving treatment or not. So there were three groups there: nursing staff, patients receiving treatment, and patients not receiving treatment. All three groups expressed much greater caution and scepticism about prescribing practices, and about the, I quote, “Assurances given by pharmaceuticals manufacturers about the drugs they produced.” It ‘s just as important that the patients groups emerged as being nothing like passive consumers of the drugs they were prescribed.

They wanted, but were struggling for, a much more active role in managing their treatment. They knew that many general practitioners know little about the specific clinical trials for drugs. That’s not a surprise, and not necessarily a failing, right. It’s the context in which GPs work. But the patients also knew that many GPs, I beg your pardon, the patients themselves did not think that shortcomings and problems in the drug licensing system would be redeemed by, say, having a General Practitioner on the licensing committee.

Now it’s crucial here, only the patients knew that the licensing committee did not conduct any independent testing of drugs. They only reviewed the data which manufacturers sent them. It was only the patients who knew this; they were clearly very much better-informed than the professionals who were treating them. They knew that the licensing committee, only the patients’ group, knew that licensing committee did not test the drugs themselves, they only reviewed the data which manufacturers sent them.

That is in the Abraham and Sheppard paper, it’s very well worthwhile, worth reading. Now there’s a further element in Abraham and Sheppard’s findings. It’s a political element in a wide and highly pertinent, highly relevant sense. The authors Abraham and Sheppard cite one of the

experts as saying that if a scandal arose over a given medicine, then the Central Government Minister would usually shift the blame to the relevant expert body.

That seems to confirm earlier conclusions that the role of the technocrat in modern societies makes them, the technocrat, less of a ruler than a figure to shield political elites from public pressure. Abraham and Sheppard actually makes that point. This seems to hold- for example, despite the fact that the United States is just one example, had what was at that time, 1997 or so, had a far more transparent process for drug licensing than the United Kingdom did. Even in the United States, with its much more transparent processes over these matters, even in the United States the technical experts on the licensing bodies seem to have been a potential shield for political scandal perhaps that arising from the adverse effects of medicines, bad decisions on licensing, and so on. We wonder if the experts actually knew that was one of their roles.

Well, can we draw wider conclusions from this example? We can draw some. The first is that the experts are very much located in political, legislative and commercial contexts. And even if they know this, they are still extremely sceptical about the public's capacity to understand the technical issues at all let alone parties participate in the licensing process. In effect, they seem to think that they've got a metaphorical door keeping the public out of what they do, saying 'Public Keep Out'.

Now, it's the technical experts who seem to be the most committed to maintaining their technical authority. So it becomes technocratic authority - the will of the experts shall prevail. But that authority as they themselves have said, does not extend to evaluating drugs, new drugs for risks and benefits. They say, well, the actual knowledge base for that, you know, we're not sure about that, we can't do that kind of valuation. It seems you know, their technocratic authority seems not to enable the experts to state whether the politicians or other lawmakers are responsible for bad decisions on drugs policy or licensing. Very often that comes under Official Secrets legislation or perhaps commercial secrecy around the manufacturer of drugs. There are legal protections for that kind of thing.

Well, there's a second conclusion we can derive. The first was that the experts are very much located in political, legislative, and commercial contexts and processes. The second conclusion we can derive is that if the experts consider the public ignorant and incapable of informed judgment, the experts themselves, going by their own statements seem to be equally ignorant about the very public they claim to be protecting - if not serving. In the British case, they are, the

expert committee is a public body constituted under an Act of Parliament. So the experts themselves don't seem to know that the public themselves are often very much better informed and much more engaged in, in the management and control of their own treatment. And that means knowing about the drugs they use.

Now another issue arising from the Abraham and Sheppard paper is that it, it is not clear if the expert committee concerned were even aware that they might also be serving as a shield or screen for the pharmaceuticals industry, that is, in effect if they were playing a part in preventing the development of informed and authoritative public scrutiny of the very drugs the public themselves consume. Thirdly, and the research paper concerned has shown this, the public are both less irrational and much more willing to be involved as serious participants in the whole licensing and treatment process than the experts seem to think they are. Informed public participation in a public space which takes public issues seriously could well of course generate not only better mutual knowledge between experts in the public but it could serve to generate far greater public confidence in the experts.

Now since that paper, the Abraham and Sheppard paper, was published, a lot of work has been done on situations and systems in which experts and non-experts engage in participative evaluation or participatory appraisal. This has accompanied increasing public engagement in and with science, particularly in the United States and other Western democracies. It could well be happening elsewhere too. The public, however, still tend to be excluded from what have been called core appraisal tasks, because strict separation is usually maintained between scientific analysis and public deliberation. I get that point from a paper published by Chilvers in 2008. So this strict separation in turn excludes analysis of the ways in which scientific or related forms of knowledge are created and validated. Chilvers points out that this is a failing in many current studies of participatory appraisal.

Plato might have thought that he had settled the matter of specialist training and knowledge as the foundation of political judgment and the conduct of political life. But instead, his argument opened a question which is still very much with us. And we live with the results of the ways our access to those kinds of issues is still very tightly regulated by technocratic experts, often working, whether knowingly or not, as shields either for commercial producers or for the decisions made by our elected representatives. Now that concludes my exposition of the theme of managerialism, I beg your pardon, of technocracy. We'll pause there. Our next lecture, we'll

stop there, our next lecture will be on managerialism. That's our second topic, and we'll move to that shortly.