

10.7.2026

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Title

Where are the missing masses? : the quasi-publics and non-publics of technoscience

Publication year

2012

Source/Footnote

In: Minerva. - 50 (2012) 2, S. 239 - 254

Inventory number

32645

Keywords

Wissenschaft und Staat ; Wissenschaft und Gesellschaft

Abstract

The paper offers a political-philosophical analysis of the state and publics in the age of technoscience to propose three distinct categories of publics: scientific-citizen publics constituted by civil society, quasi-publics that initiate another kind of engagement through the activation of ?political society,? and non-publics cast outside these spheres of engagement. This re-categorization is possible when the central role of the state in its citizens? engagement with technoscience is put upfront and the non-Western empirical contexts are taken seriously by Science, Technology and Policy (STP) studies. The paper argues that in most of the world the state maintains a political contract with technoscience to form a functional coupling as the state-technoscience duo, which shapes public engagement with science through different functional modalities of government. Civil society is the sphere of legitimate engagement and participation in technoscientific issues for the scientific-citizen publics. The quasi-publics choose to be in the shady zone of political society establishing a paralegal relationship with the state-technoscience duo, while the non-publics come into being due to conditions of extra-legality created by the duo. The non-publics are implicated in the political

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community paradoxically as an excluded category who cannot be included in deliberation because of their status as being expelled from political community in a 'state of exception.' The paper proposes that the scientific-citizen publics are mobilized in contrast to the quasi-publics and with reference to the non-publics, helping STP studies to identify the 'missing masses' of technoscience. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)