



Democracy and Expertise: Reorienting Policy Inquiry

Frank Fischer

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This book explores the role of policy expertise in a democratic society. From the perspectives of political science and policy theory, the chapters examine the implications of deliberative democratic governance for professional expertise and extends them to specific policy practices. Following the earlier lead of John Dewey, the discussion focuses in particular on the ways professional practices might be reoriented to assist citizens in understanding and discussing the complex policy issues of an advanced technological society. In doing so, it also explores how public deliberation can be improved through more cooperative forms of policy inquiry.

Adopting a deliberative-analytic approach to policy inquiry, grounded in a postempiricist, constructivist understanding of inquiry and knowledge and the participatory practices that support such an approach, the chapters draw on thriving theoretical and practical work dedicated to revitalizing the citizen's role in both civil society and newer practices of democratic governance-in particular deliberative democracy, practical work with deliberative experiments, the theory and practices of democratic governance, and participatory research. Deliberative practices are promoted here as a new component part of policy-related disciplines required for participatory governance. Calling for a specialization of "policy epistemics" to advance such practices, the second half of the book takes up issues related to deliberative empowerment, including the relation of technical and social knowledge, the interpretive dimensions of social meaning and multiple realities, the role of narrative knowledge and storylines, policy inquiry, social learning, tacit knowledge, the design of discursive spaces, and the place of emotional expression in public deliberation.

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