

# Implementing a culture of integrity: Styles in governing research integrity in university environments

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# Research Integrity

- Research integrity seems to have moved to the top of institutional concerns => Why now? What is in need for protection and how?
- Debates strongly moved to a macro-level with a proliferation of international statements/agreements on research integrity
- However, we know much less about
  - everyday micro-practices within different institutional contexts
  - how stable conventions arise and become a legitimate “social institutions” => need for a parallel cognitive convention to sustain it (Douglas 1986; How institutions think)
  - Mid- to long-term impacts of interventions in the system



# Project

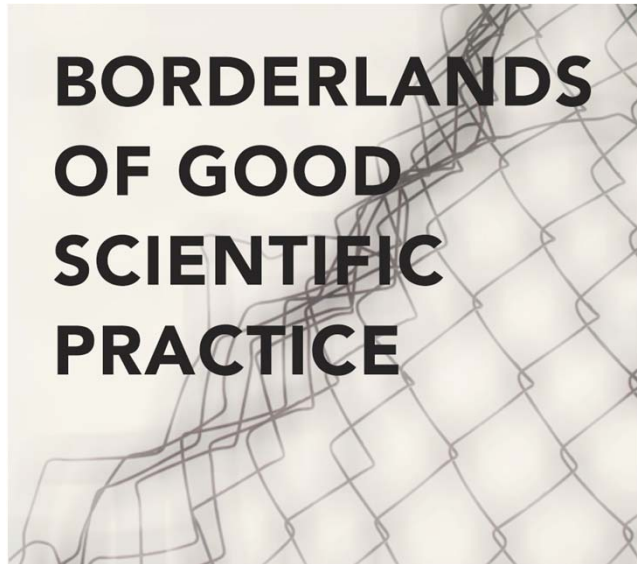
“Borderlands of good scientific practice:  
Investigating a global problem in its local versions”

Collaborator: Florentine Frantz

- Multi-sited analysis of research integrity as culture and practice
  - Media narratives
  - Institutional structures put in place to assure good practice (rules and regulation, ombudsman services, sanctions, ...) — document analysis and interviews
  - daily practices of doing “good research” — interviews and card-based engagement exercises (RESPONSE\_ABILITY)



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# Universities and their role

- Universities hold a special position in this debate: they perform research and socialize the next generation of researchers and knowledge workers.
- institutions have responded with codes of conduct and guidelines for good scientific practice (increasing the areas covered by codes; e.g. good practice in policy advice)
- we know much less: how do universities, as collectives, think and know when it comes to good scientific practice? – (how) do they become and stay, both, a value and practice collective?

⇒ explore how institutions think and act in the context of research integrity



# Of narratives and practices



# How do we share values and concerns? Narrative Infrastructures of good practice

- Narrative as the essential meaning-making/sense-making mechanism (Czarniawska 2004)
- Narrative infrastructure (Felt 2017): “a network of temporally stabilised narratives through which meanings and values of academic knowledge/work [...] can be articulated, circulated and exchanged across space and time”



# Preambels of „good practice documents“

- set both the tone and serve as important moments of contextualisation
- they make a direct relation between assuring research integrity and quality of research; yet, they never speak of “**excellent science**”, but of “**robust scientific work**”, that it “fosters the quality of scientific **work**”, it is “a prerequisite of scientific **work**”
- Relation of the university to society/the public:
  - „**the public**“ is an important reference point — generally related to issues of „recognition of scientific work“ as well as „trust in the reliability of scientific results“, „trust received by researchers and institutions of research“
  - „**society**“ is related to trust, but also more generally to the success of research and innovation;



# How do we share values and concerns?

## Narrative Infrastructures of good practice

- limited register of such narratives repeated in the context of institutions
  - **Linear rational decision model**: information on/awareness of rules of good practice will lead researchers “to do the right thing”;
  - Connected to the narrative of **autonomy**, institutions see themselves in the need of **proactive intervention only** “if something has gone **wrong**” — reaction not action/ex-post model of cleaning up
  - Focus is put on “**the next generation**” of researchers which can (still) be trained (a one time clearing idea) => unclear idea of socialisation and of cross-generational issues





# Absences: What is missing?

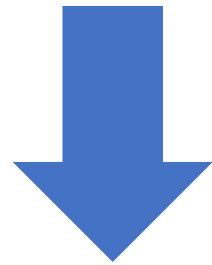
Virtually no narratives on

- the value geographies in which researchers live and which are contradictory to and competing with ideals of “good practice” — number of publications; rankings; being first; excellence; mobility; .... more generally what gets rewarded
- avoidance strategies to address transgressions publicly
- systematic precarity of work relations during socialisation phase due to the projectification of research => narrowing the registers of worth (Fochler et al. 2016)



# Tension between a “model of management” and a “model of good care”

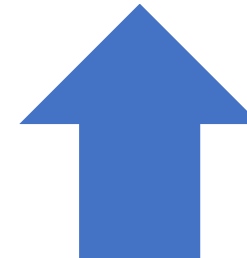
model focusing on response-ability;  
reflexivity on how we practice  
knowledge making; process  
orientation; values in research



management

model of account-ability; only what can be counted counts; value of research (impact, transfer, ....); formular-ization & creation of a bureaucracy of virtue

care



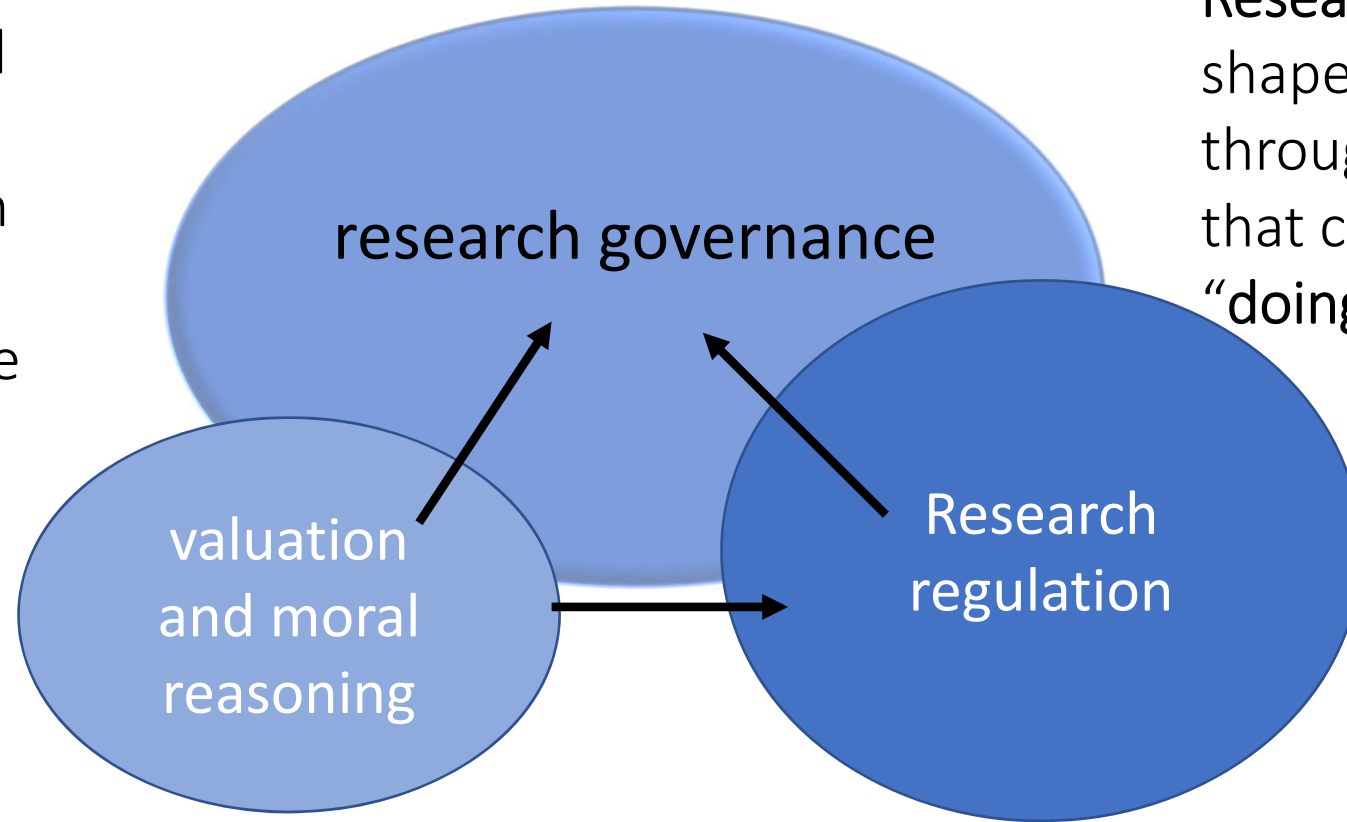
# Care

- answers to the fuzziness and fluidity of research processes and practices in a fast developing and rapidly innovating science system (managerial approaches alone cannot respond to them in a sufficiently flexible manner)
  - puts the relational aspects of good practice at the centre — Douglas on “How institutions think”, but also a cross-generational conversation
  - focus on processes of **enculturation** — which never happens solely through taking one class; challenge of mobility and massification of higher education, of “interrupted lives” in science
- => Attention to the “integrity conditions”



# Experimental approaches to governing research integrity

Valuation (evaluation) and moral reasoning in research shape regulation and governance; assumptions on legitimate values, rights, duties and responsibilities should be carefully considered; “doing the right things”



Research regulation: shapes governance through formal rules that can be sanctioned; “doing things right”

Research governance is more than the practice of establishing and implementing policies, procedures, and (moral) standards for the responsible development of research.



# Concluding reflection

- to organize **experimental governance processes**
    - systematically question own assumptions and practices,
    - treat solutions as incomplete and to be changed, and
    - engage in an ongoing, mutual readjustment of ends and means triggered through comparing with other approaches to achieve a common goal.
- ⇒ we will need to organize collective learning (and invest the time to do so) of how to best govern research.
- ⇒ need to better understand what we do when implementing measures to foster good research practice through accompanying studies

