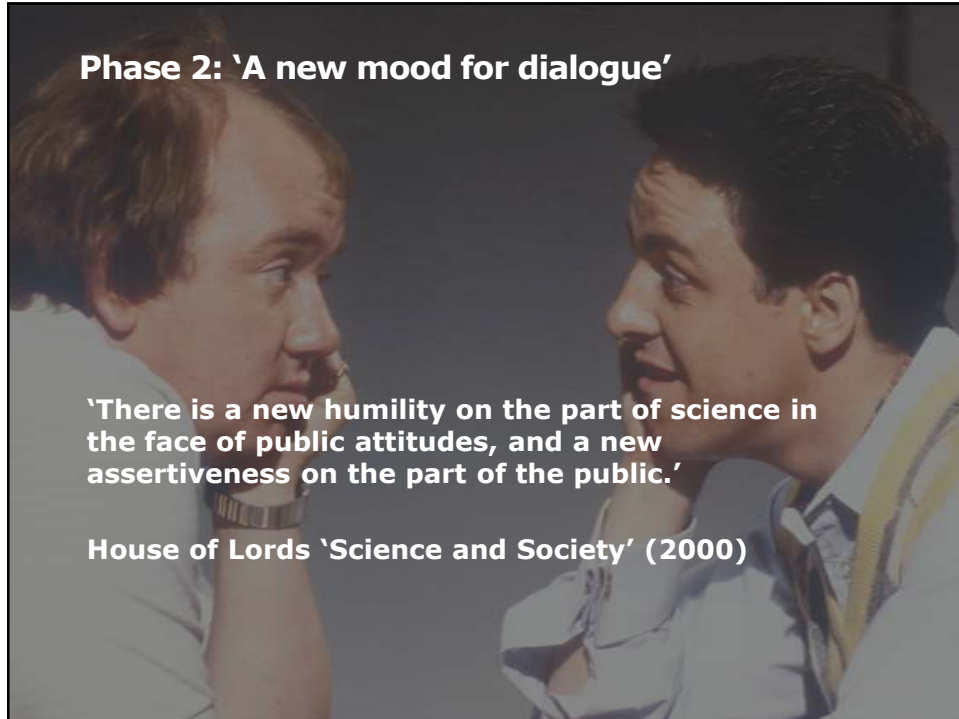


Phase 2: 'A new mood for dialogue'

'There is a new humility on the part of science in the face of public attitudes, and a new assertiveness on the part of the public.'

House of Lords 'Science and Society' (2000)



Phase 3: Upstream engagement

'We have learnt that it is necessary with major technologies to ensure that the debate takes place 'upstream'...' Lord Sainsbury, July 2004



Bright spots

- Sciencewise - more systematic approach to experimentation – linked across government
- Beacons for Public Engagement
- Increasing leadership from the Research Councils
 - EPSRC Societal Issues Panel
 - EPSRC – Nanotechnology for Healthcare (2008) – linking public engagement to funding priorities
 - BBSRC – stem cells
 - BBSRC/EPSRC – Synthetic biology dialogue
 - BIOS role in £8m EPSRC Imperial Centre for Synthetic Biology
- New wave of 'citizen scientists' – Richard Jones, Marcus du Sautoy, Mark Lythgoe, Paul Freemont/Dick Kitney
- Gordon Brown's Romanes Lecture, 27 February 2009. Cameron next?



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Tuesday, July 07, 2009

5

Areas for improvement

- Outsourced engagement – government as commissioner rather than participant in the dialogue process?
- Where/how to deal with emerging technologies that cross disciplinary and departmental boundaries (e.g. syn bio – DoH lead)
- Persistence of deficit models of the public e.g. 1st draft of the 'Vision for Science and Society' strategy. Importance of more critical and reflective forms of engagement.
- Building incentives into research careers e.g. the Research Excellence Framework
- Linking across the innovation system – TSB etc.
- Private sector R&D – still a black box
- Reduction of external pressure – NGOs, think tanks etc. Awaits the next 'condensation point'?



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Tuesday, July 07, 2009

6


Mixed messages

Loss of leadership?

Where next for the government vision? 5 'expert' groups



The Role of Thin
Pr



Opportunities/priorities

1. Use the present intense focus on economic impact and strategic priorities to open up a wider debate about the social, public and cultural value of science

e.g. Royal Society inquiry into 'The Fruits of Curiosity: science, innovation and future sources of wealth'

Questions of *direction* and *outcome* as well as scale – opening up a richer politics of science and innovation?

2. Move from one-off 'projects' to more systematic and continuous dialogue and social 'intelligence gathering' e.g. Danish Board of Technology, Commission for Emerging Technologies



3. Broaden notions of expertise

Old model

- Closed
- Homogenous
- Hubristic
- Demanding public trust
- Expecting consensus and prescription
- Managerial control
- Presenting the evidence

New model

- Open
- Diverse
- Humble
- Trusting the public
- Expecting plural and conditional advice
- Distributed control
- Presenting evidence, judgement and uncertainty

