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Transparency much more complex

We find the framing of science governance by Stephan Lewandowsky and Dorothy Bishop to be simplistic and lacking a firm evidence base ('Don't let transparency damage science' [Nature 529, 459-461; 2016](#)).

One of us (W. P.) attended the [Royal Society meeting](#) last year from which scientists' testimonials emerged. In using such testimonials from a narrow range of invited experts, the authors' analysis becomes biased because it disregards complex issues involved in openness and transparency (S. Jasanoff *Law Contemp. Probl.* **69**, 21–45; 2006).

They present topics they rightly identify as important, such as expertise, disciplinary boundaries and communication, as simple dichotomies. However, these dichotomies overlook extensive nuanced evidence from the social science literature about who counts as an expert, and under what conditions (see, for example, J. Stilgoe *et al. The Received Wisdom: Opening up Expert Advice Demos*; 2006).

The authors call for the research community to discuss how to govern issues around openness and transparency. In our view, it is crucial that such a debate should include a broader range of **publics**.