

Monitoring information on addictions - sources and tools
23rd Elisad Annual Meeting - 2011



DOCUMENTING FOR COMMUNICATING

Fiorenzo Ranieri

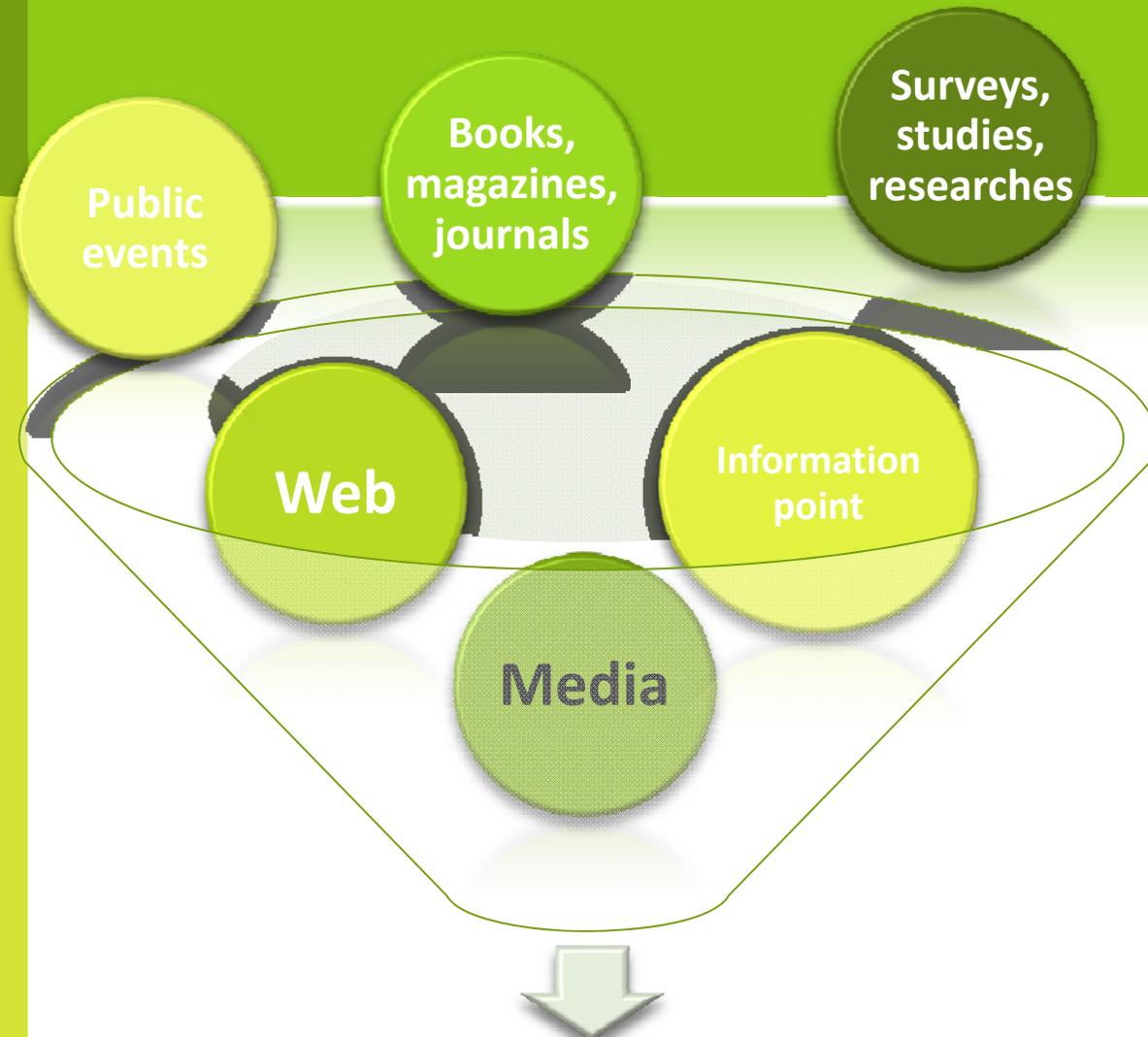


INTRODUCTION

Knowledge and its documentation has been a property of experts like scholars, scientists, doctors and others for many centuries. In the era of reflexive modernity, the relationship between information and mass has changed, especially in vital sectors such as health. Documentation is now much more than a tool for just the experts, it is a real form of social communication, that can be bad or good, part of the flow or on the edge of civil life.

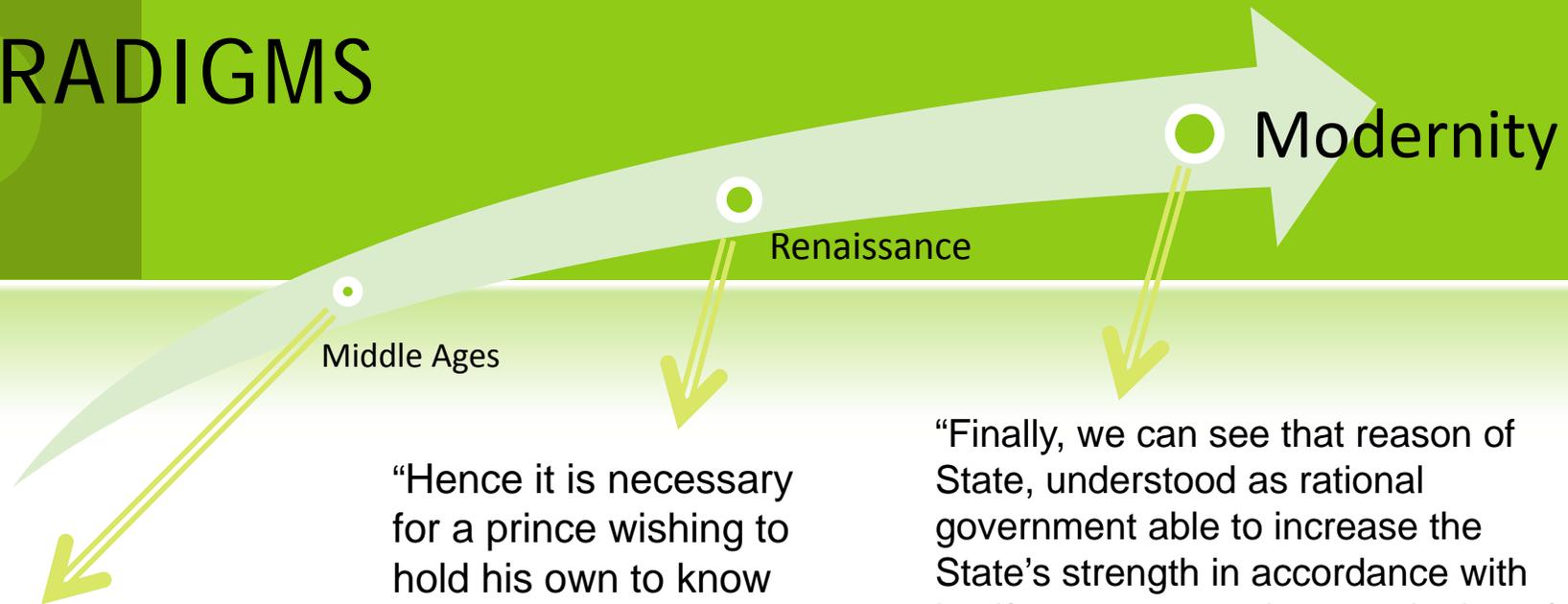


A BIG QUESTION

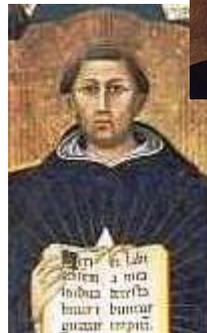


Does information really produce change?

PARADIGMS



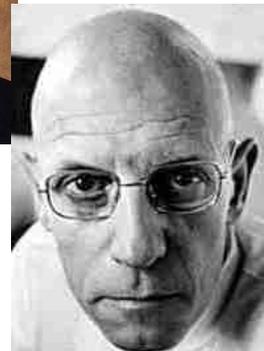
“The king must also lead men towards their finality. And what is man’s finality? What’s good for the body? No; he’d need only a physician, not a king. Man needs someone capable of opening up the way to heavenly bliss” (San Tommaso D’Aquino)



“Hence it is necessary for a prince wishing to hold his own to know how to do wrong, and to make use of it or not according to necessity”. (Machiavelli)



Renaissance



“Finally, we can see that reason of State, understood as rational government able to increase the State’s strength in accordance with itself presupposes the constitution of a certain type of knowledge. (..) Knowledge is necessary; concrete, precise, and measured knowledge as to the State’s strength. The art of governing, characteristic of reason of State, is intimately bound up with the development of what was then called either political statistics, or arithmetic; that is, the knowledge of different states’ respective forces. Such knowledge was indispensable for correct government”. (Foucault)

HEALTH POLICY



Johann Peter Frank, M. D.
hochfürstlich Sappierischen Geheimenraths
und Leibarztes,
S y s t e m
einer vollständigen
medizinischen Polizey.

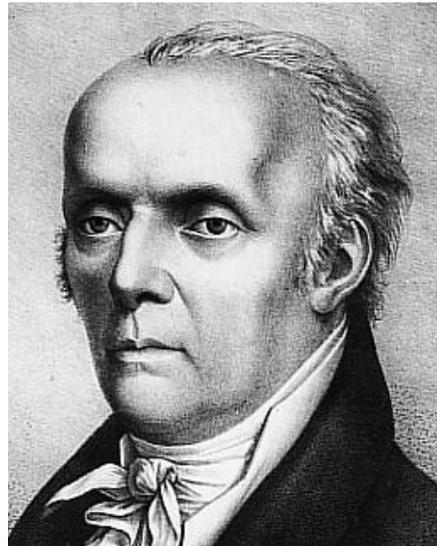
Zweiter Band.

Von der außerseligen Zeugung, dem geistlichen Wirth-
gehören und andern Wirthhandlungen der uneheligen
Kinder, von der physischen Erziehung des Neuge-
borenen bis zum erwachsenen Bürger.



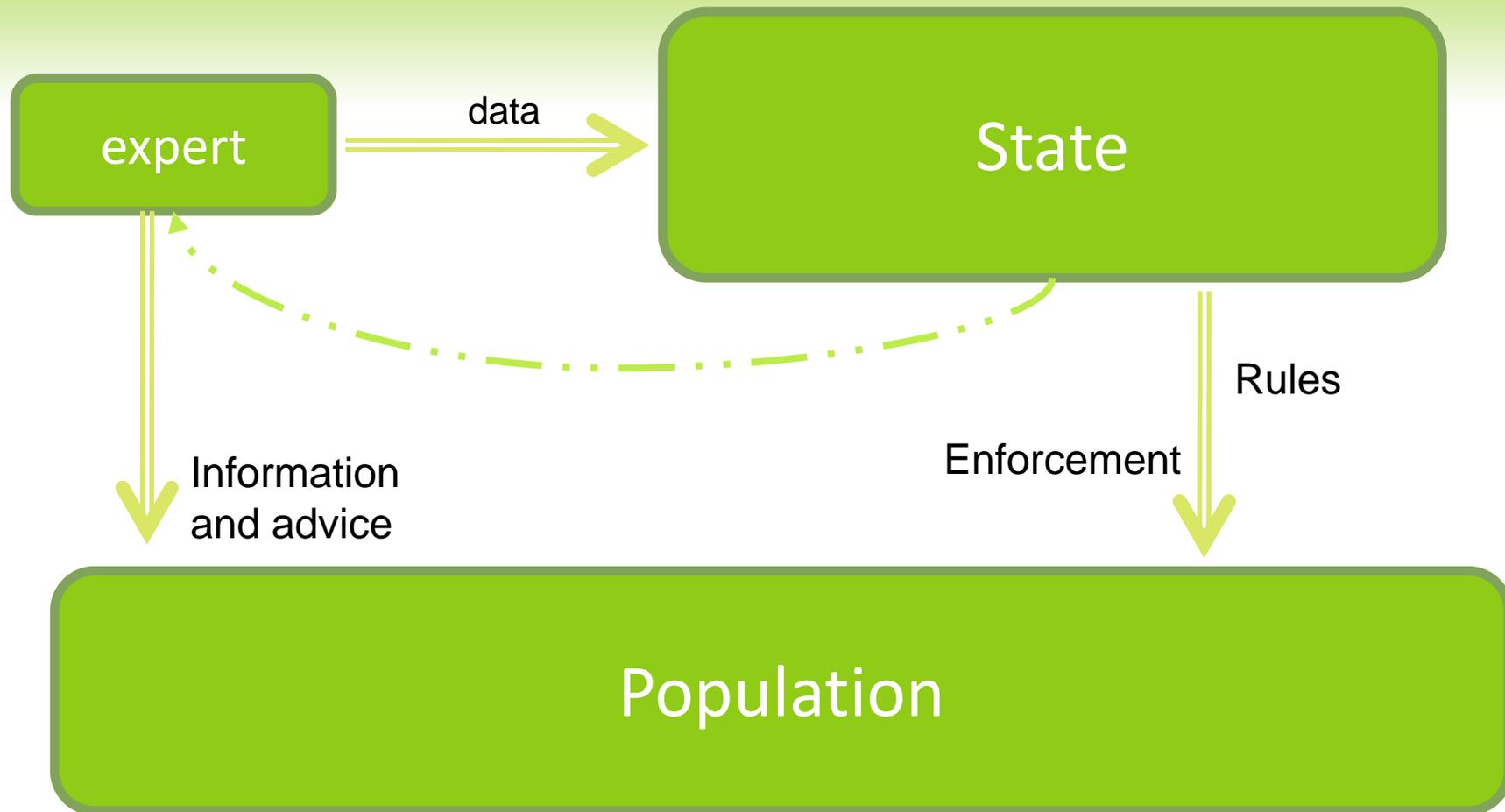
Mannheim,
bei E. F. Schwan, kays. fürstl. Hofbuchhändler,
1780.

J.P. Frank (1779 – 1790):
“System einer vollstaendigen
medicinissche Polizei”



Between the seventeenth and eighteenth century we attended to the development of statistical methods and epidemiological studies based on the theory of probability. They were essential for planning health strategies. Politicians and administrators increasingly used the concept of "population", in constant interaction with the concept of "environment". The first essays on public health were written. To look after people's health became a duty and the interest of the state. This was the beginning of modern health policy.

THE EXPERT AND THE STATE



PERSUASIVE COMMUNICATION

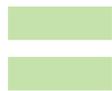


expert

Persuasive communication

Population

Health
behaviours



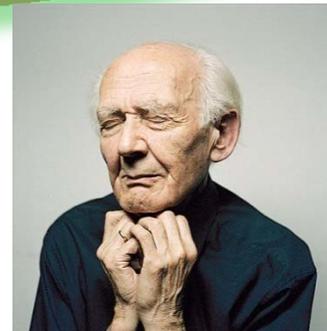
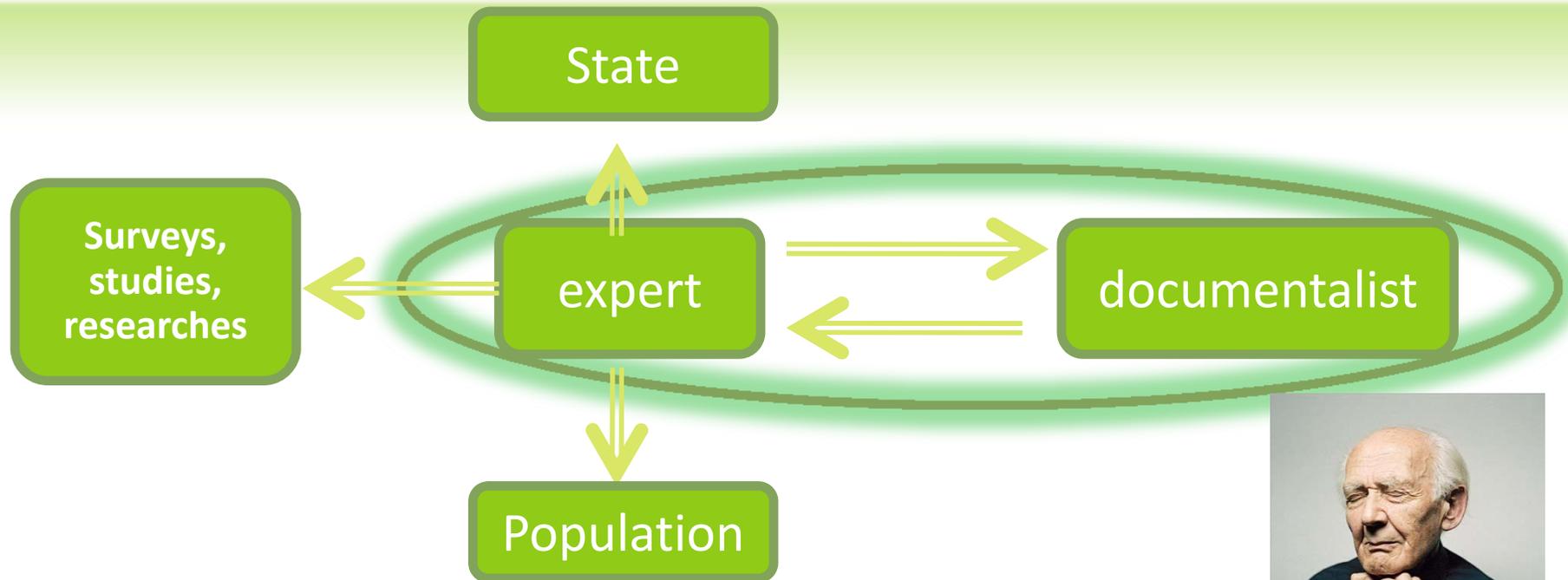
Reducing
risk
behaviours



Increasing
protective
behaviours

"The ancients teach us that if we want to communicate an idea, we have to present it using suitable manners. The technique of persuasion was typical of a democratic republic like Athens. A tyrant has no need to persuade, he forces with his whip. But where the government needs free consent, persuasion becomes a normal tool".
(Eco)

EXPERT AND DOCUMENTALIST: A “SYMBIOTIC” RELATIONSHIP?

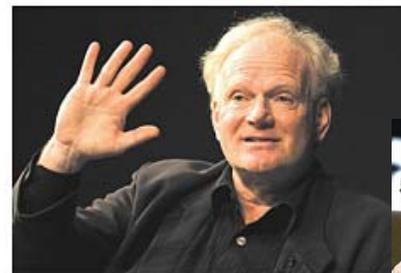


In this system, typical of **solid modernity** (Baumann), people believed that “expert systems” and Science were certain to control risks. The expert was the main client of the documentalist. The mission of the documentalist was that of providing resources to the expert. Normally there was no direct contact with the population.

THE LOSS OF TRUST

Towards the end of the XXth Century, in the middle of what Baumann called "**liquid modernity**", the expert discovered that part of the population did not agree with his/her advice. Sometimes people were indifferent to recommendations, other times they showed great aversion.

Experts have tried to study the (obscure) reasons behind these behaviours (lack of persuasive communication, individual psychological mechanisms, "bias" during the process of decision..). These studies have helped, in part, the expert, but not completely. What has happened is that part of the population have lost trust in the expert. They now want to find information about risks by themselves. It is one of the consequences of **reflexive modernization** (Beck, Giddens, Lash)



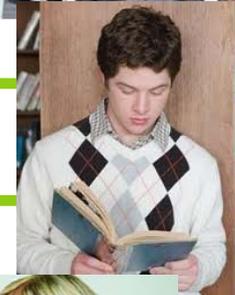
WINNERS OF REFLEXIVITY

Facing risks (e.g. health risks), **reflexive people**:

increase the number of questions to ask the expert



compare opinions from different experts

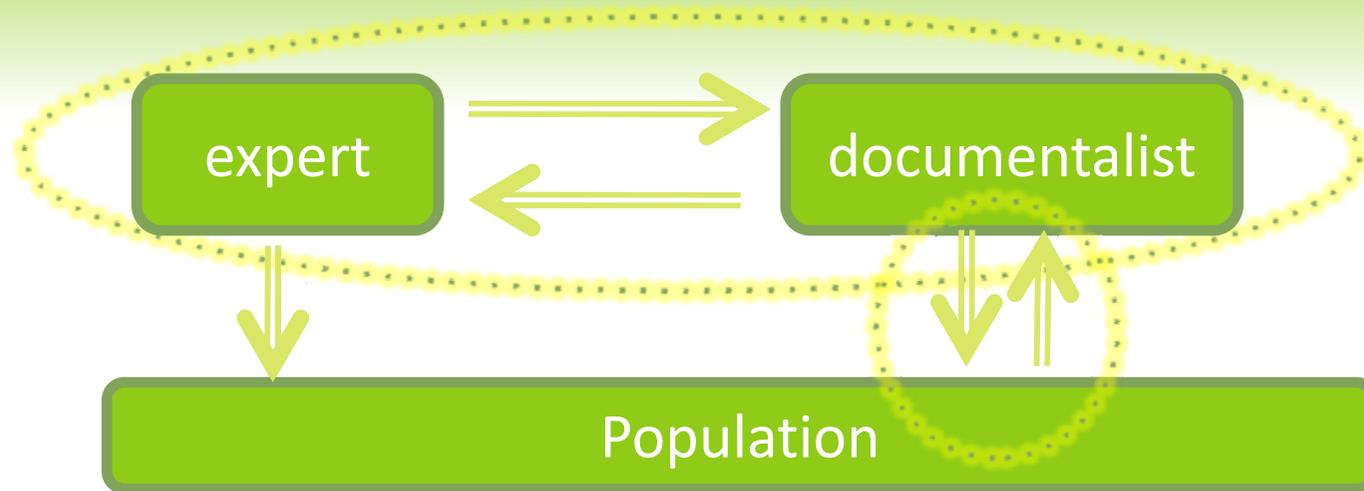


find documents and data by themselves



The relationship between part of the people and the documentation changes. It becomes direct (where and when possible).

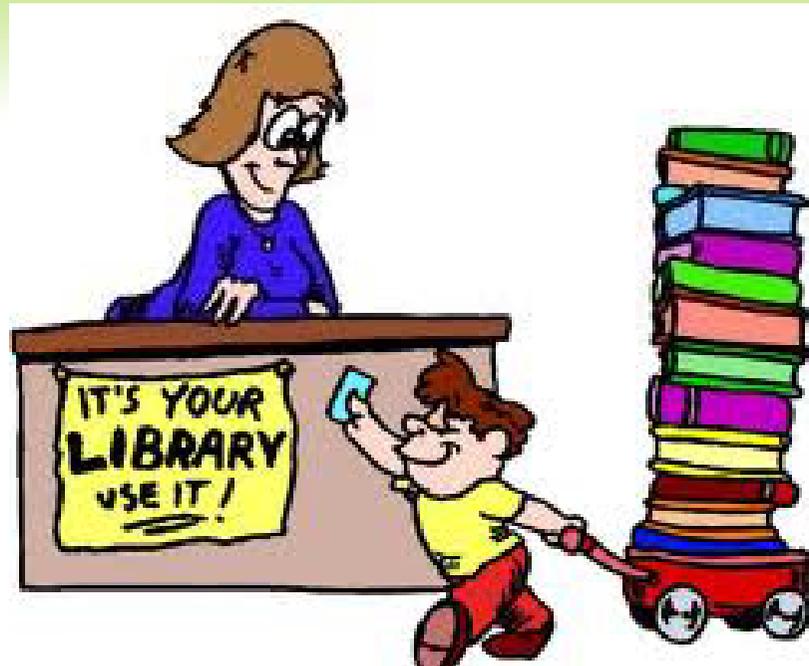
NEW PATHS TO KNOWLEDGE



New requests and new users have led documentation centers, libraries and information points to answer questions like:

- Who are my clients?
- Are my documents open source?
- Which criteria do I use when selecting my documents?
- Which are the communication channels to access my resources?

DOCUMENTATION = COMMUNICATION



More than in the past, the setting up of a documentation center is a form of communication and also the documentation made available is a form of communication. It is particularly true if the library is part of an institution: the organization becomes a piece of the social image of the service, sometimes with contradictions (e.g. : "we want talk to you but.. you can't read our books").

LOSERS OF REFLEXIVITY

“Losers of reflexivity” are unable to use modern technology to communicate and are excluded by new forms of knowledge. They create new subcultures following paradigms based on other values like increasing cohesion and sense of belonging to their own group.

winners of reflexivity

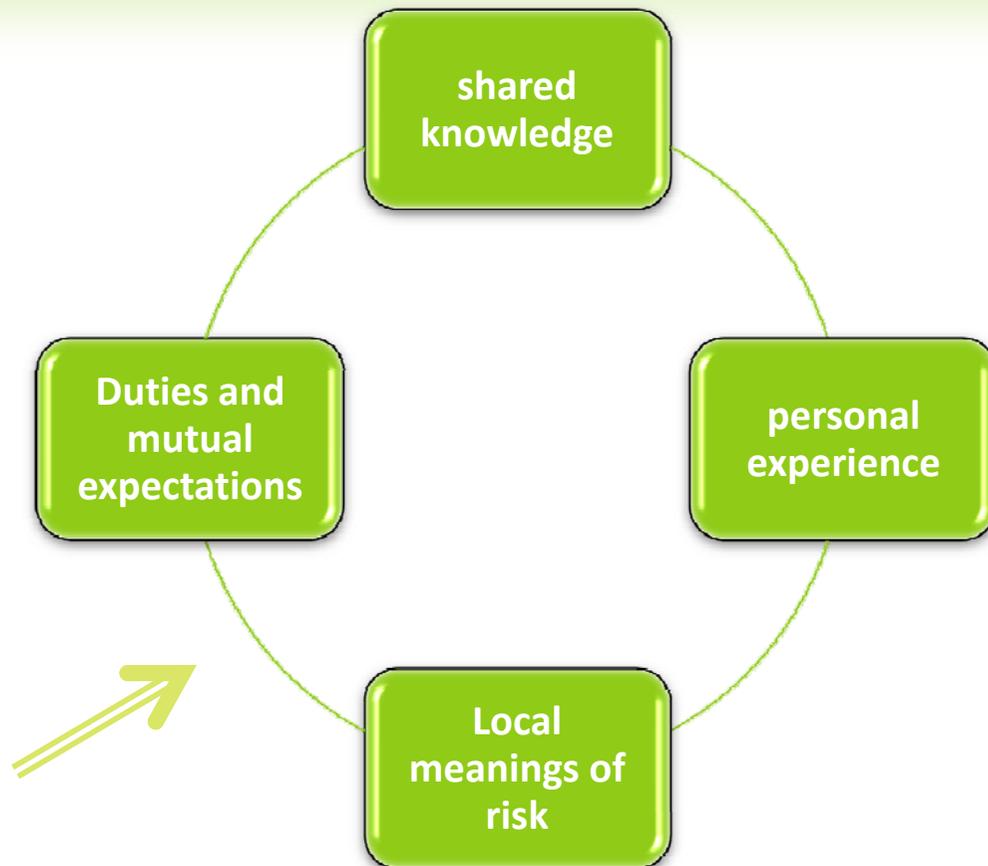
losers of reflexivity



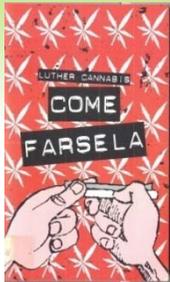
OTHER PARADIGMS, OTHER CULTURES

Losers of reflexivity may consider the expert knowledge as marginal or misleading with respect to their problems. The encounter with the specialist can be very difficult. Misunderstandings are frequent

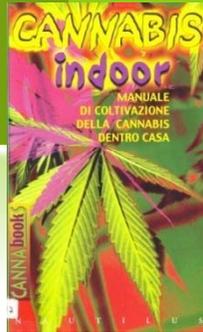
The paradigms of disadvantaged local communities are based on:



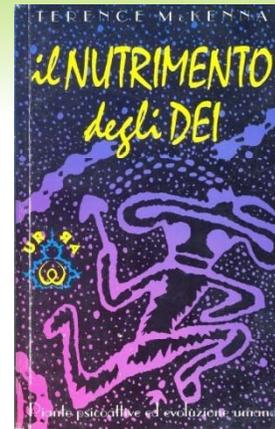
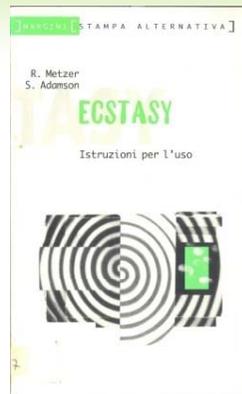
WHAT YOU CAN FIND WHEN BROWSING



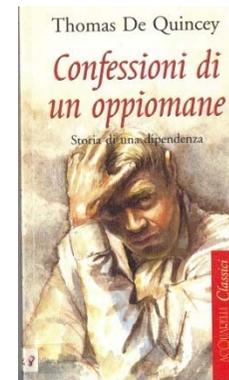
How to roll a joint



How to grow plants



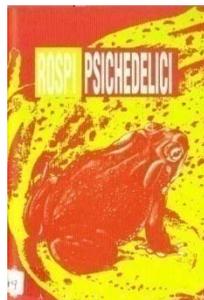
Food for gods



Confessions of an English Opium-Eater



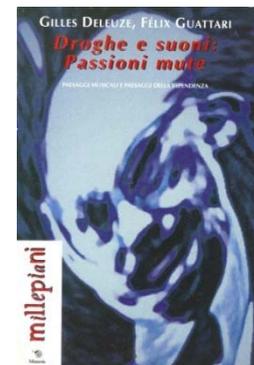
Out of the labyrinth



Frogs and mushrooms



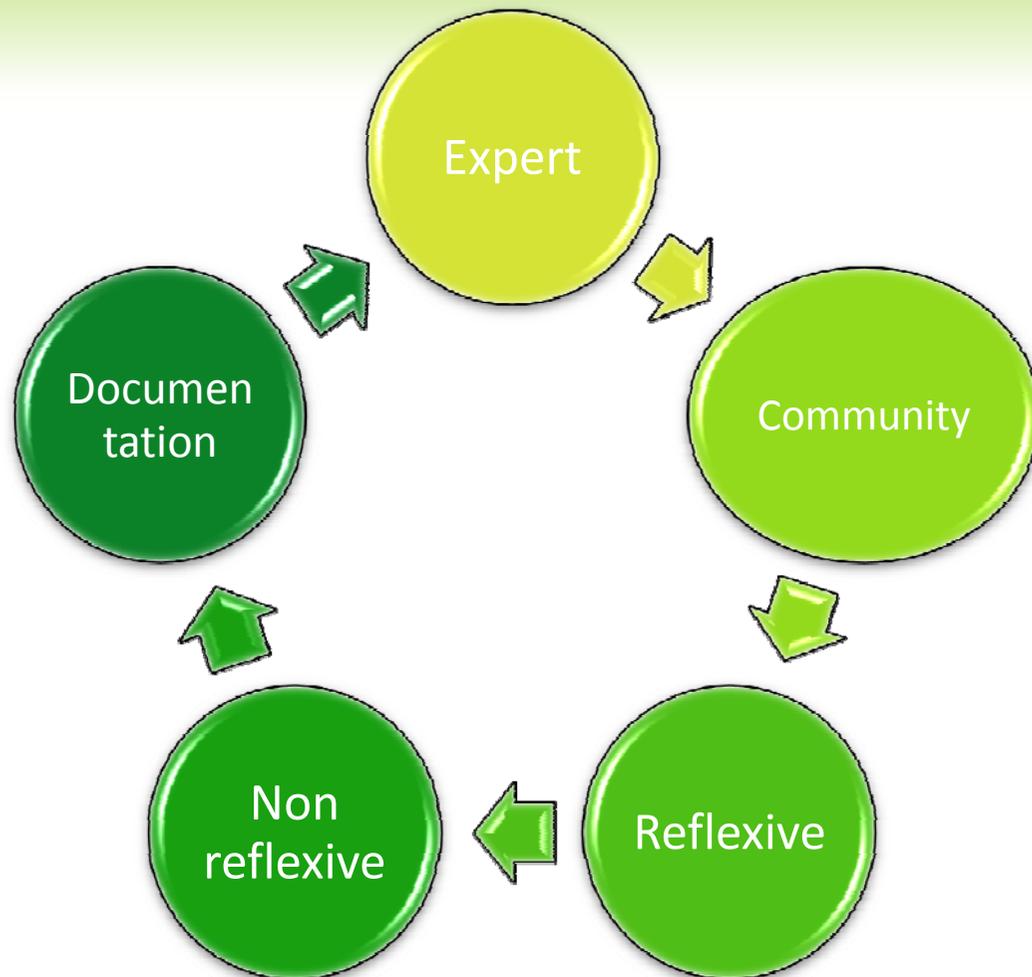
How to cook



Drugs and musicians



CO-PARTICIPATION



“The aim of knowing a community is not for the benefit of defining a more persuasive message, but to understand the meaning that risk assumes at that given moment and in that social context. Redefining the meaning of risk is only possible through co-participation.” (Lemma)



ECONOMIC CRISIS AND CULTURAL PROCESSES



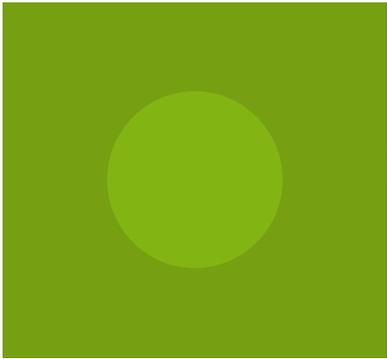
Expert activities



Independent data research



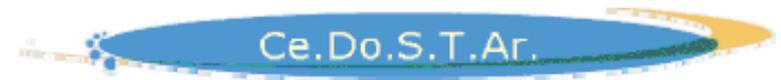
Forms of alternative cultures



European association of libraries
& information services
on alcohol and other drugs

Fiorenzo

Fiorenzo Ranieri



Arezzo - Italy