

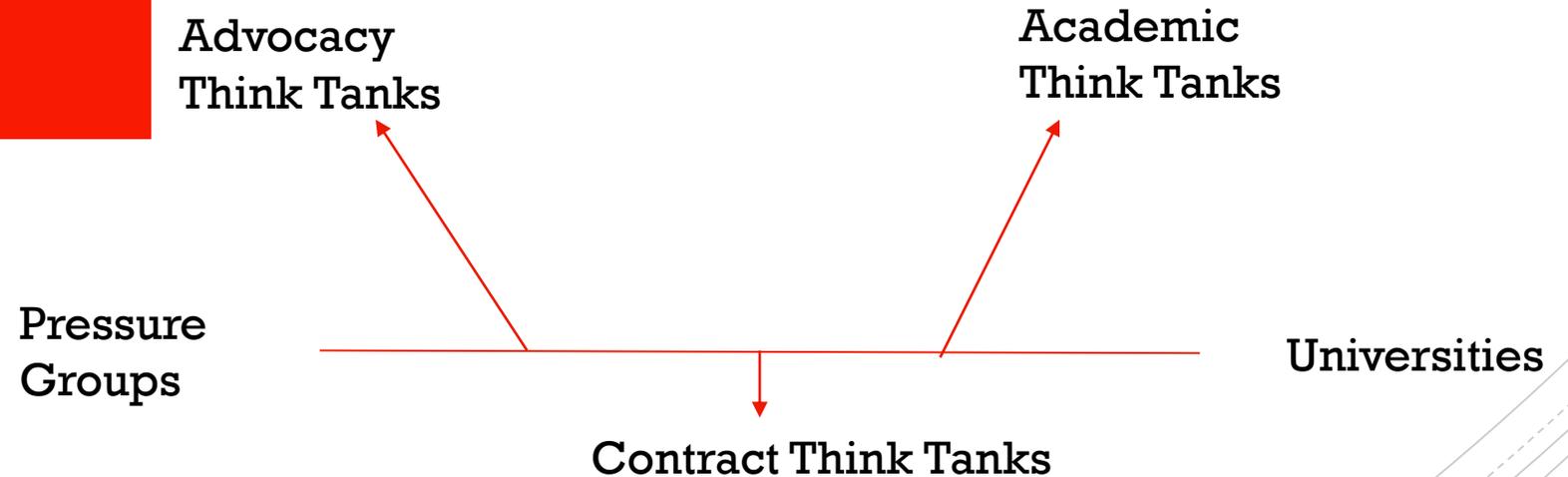
The Rise of Think Tanks: Modelling a Strategic Response for Universities

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NYC University, Prof. Andrew Rich: “...One cannot understand experts or expertise without an acknowledgement and appreciation as well of the organisation in which they are embedded.”

The Evolution of Think Tanks

- Of the 59 identifiable Australian think-tanks, 70% emerged after 2000 (Fraussen & Halpin 2017)
- 3 Types of Think Tanks:
 1. Advocacy:
 2. Contract:
 3. Academic:
- “Vanity” Think Tanks: set up by former state leaders



Assessing Impact

■ Direct/Indirect

University Impact Measurements	Think Tank Measurements
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recommendations considered or adopted by policymakers and civil society organizations• Television and media exposure (including interviews, mentions/citations/references to the institute)• Citations in parliamentary submissions• Political stakeholders and policy decision-maker attendance at conferences and events• Briefings• Legislative and policy changes• consultation by officials or departments/agencies• Briefings• Recommendations considered or adopted by policymakers and civil society organizations• Scholarly citations• Social media engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Articles published (op-eds, columns)• Television and media exposure (including interviews, mentions/citations/references to the institute)• Citations in parliamentary submissions• Political stakeholders and policy decision-maker attendance at conferences and events• Amount of events hosted and attendance levels• Website traffic• Social Media engagement (followers, 'likes', views, posts)• Scholarly citations• Publications• Legislative and policy changes• consultation by officials or departments/agencies• Briefings• Recommendations considered or adopted by policymakers and civil society organizations

Strategy 1: Restructuring

■ Publish/Perish:

- Nyhan (2015): “null findings typically are relegated to the so-called file drawer and excluded from the published record”
- The American Political Science Review: 1930s and early 1940s, twenty percent of articles in the journal were policy solution focused, and the last counting of this was down to 0.3 percent.
- In 2013 the International Studies Association proposed instituting a ban on personal blogs.

■ Multi-Disciplinary Research:

- Charles Clarke “The Too Difficult Box”

■ Training:

- Jill Lepore, Harvard historian: *“A great, heaping mountain of exquisite knowledge surrounded by a vast moat of dreadful prose.”*

Strategy 2: Collaboration

- Housing Think-Tanks:
- Scholar/Resource-Sharing
- ‘Receptive Environments’ & the ‘revolving door’

Strategy 3: Mimicking

- 1. Designing ‘Accessible’ Research
- 2. Fostering Personal Relationships
- 3. Marketing & Media Engagement
- 4. Rapid-Fire Publication & the ‘Realistic’ Solution
- 5. Funding
- May (2005) Three main roles of think-tanks
 1. to carry out the “early-warning-job”: the think-tank identifies social, economic or political trends and identified potential problem areas.
 2. The “produce-solutions-job” where the think-tank produces *realistic* solutions,
 3. The ‘produce-results-job’, where the think-tank employs strategies to ensure their solution influences targeted policy-makers
- Doberstein (2016) tested the perception of research consumed by policy analysts and critical individuals involved in the broader Canadian externalized policy advisory system framework. A randomized controlled survey revealed that academic research carried out by universities occupied a “privileged position of credibility among policy analysts” than think-tanks.

The burden for impacting public policy should be shared by universities and government

