



PERFORMANCES of VALUE

Warwick Performance and Politics Network &
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Musicians, dancers, and actors perform. Politicians perform on public stages, doctors in surgeries, teachers in classrooms. And millions perform their everyday selves, in photos, videos and texts, on Facebook and Twitter. Companies monitor the performance of their employees, stock markets register the performance of firms, indicators tell us which nations are more or less free, democratic or corrupt, and at the semester's end students are asked to evaluate their professors. Thus, more and more domains of life, and ever more activities within them, are experienced in terms of performance. From the bedroom to the boardroom, pharmaceutical companies and management consultants promise enhanced performance. We live in an era of performance anxiety.

In this lecture, I use the trope of a Top 10 list (itself a kind of performance) to produce a performance about lists and other devices (ranging from the Ten Commandments to Klout, from Randomized Control Trials to the Keynesian Beauty Contest) for conducting and expressing valuations.