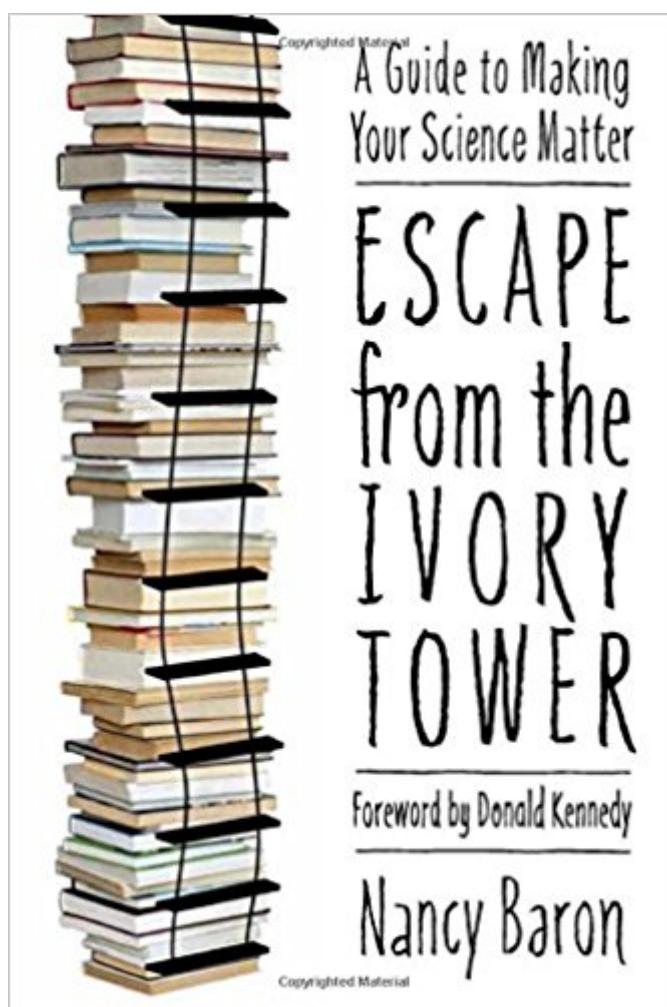


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Escape From The Ivory Tower: A Guide To Making Your Science Matter



Synopsis

Most scientists and researchers aren't prepared to talk to the press or to policymakers or to deal with backlash. Many researchers have the horror stories to prove it. What is clear, according to Nancy Baron, is that scientists, journalists and public policymakers come from different cultures. They follow different sets of rules, pursue different goals, and speak their own language. To effectively reach journalists and public officials, scientists need to learn new skills and rules of engagement. No matter what your specialty, the keys to success are clear thinking, knowing what you want to say, understanding your audience, and using everyday language to get your main points across. In this practical and entertaining guide to communicating science, Baron explains how to engage your audience and explain why a particular finding matters. She explores how to ace your interview, promote a paper, enter the political fray, and use new media to connect with your audience. The book includes advice from journalists, decision makers, new media experts, bloggers and some of the thousands of scientists who have participated in her communication workshops. Many of the researchers she has worked with have gone on to become well-known spokespeople for science-related issues. Baron and her protégées describe the risks and rewards of "speaking up," how to deal with criticism, and the link between communications and leadership. The final chapter, "Leading the Way" offers guidance to scientists who want to become agents of change and make your science matter. Whether you are an absolute beginner or a seasoned veteran looking to hone your skills, Escape From the Ivory Tower can help make your science understood, appreciated and perhaps acted upon.

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Customer Reviews

"By challenging scientists to find and use their own voice, Nancy Baron has done more than anyone in the last decade to raise public awareness about our imperiled oceans. Her fingerprints can be found on nearly every preeminent paper and salient symposium. Not since Sir Peter Medawar published the classic Advice to a Young Scientist has so much wisdom been shared so concisely. Whether you are a scientist or writer, young or old, you don't have to read this bookâ•unless you are committed to saving our blue planet." (Larry Crowder Director, Duke Center for Marine Conservation)"At last! The definitive manual on communicating science effectively in an era of environmental changeâ•Baron's book provides the practical tools to make a difference." (Diana Wall Director, School of Global Environmental Sustainability)"In our age of information overload it is easy for research to disappear without trace. If you want yours to get noticed, read Nancy Baron's excellent guide." (Callum Roberts Professor of Marine Conservation, University of York)"Nancy Baron has been helping scientists talk to the media and to their public patrons for a decadeâ•Her extraordinary leadership has changed the lives of young scientists; here she has produced a book that will help both senior scientists and their studentsâ•to deal with journalists, interviewers, the Rotary Club, and even Congressional committees." (Donald Kennedy Editor of Science magazine 2000-2008, Commissioner of the US Food and Drug Administration)"Nancy Baron is a master of the art of science communication. Escape from the Ivory Tower is essential reading for scientists who want their work understood by the public and decision makers." (Natasha Loder science and technology correspondent, The Economist)"[Readers will] be grateful for the investment when they can pull... [the] book off the shelf in times of need. Aspiring journalists and public information officers will also find valuable insights into scientific culture and the way their own work is perceived... Escape from the Ivory Tower should be embraced by a broad scientific audience; it's impossible to predict when...you may be jolted out of your comfort zone and forced to convince the world that your data matter." (American Scientist)"In the world of science we sometimes forget that a book can be an easy, pleasant read and still teach us quite a bit. Nancy Baron knows that, and she has delivered that book. The result is unlike anything you've read beforeâ•and it is something you need to begin reading now. This is not a book for your bookshelf. It is a book for your backpack, your briefcase, your graduate students, and the trunk of your car...This is a book to be read, enjoyed, and dogearedâ•

assuming, of course, you want your science to matter." (BioScience)"Overall, this book is valuable and a worthwhile read for marine scientists. Almost all of us can improve our outreach efforts... Escape from the Ivory Tower has helpful hints for all of us interested in various levels of outreach." (Oceanography)"Even if you believe that you will never have an occasion to share your science beyond your laboratory or the kitchen table, this book may persuade you otherwise. Consider adding it to your library as an investment to bring credible science to public discourse." (Lab Matters)"I highly recommend the book as a starting point for any scientist interested in engaging the public. Baron's insight into both ends of scientific communication offers a helpful starting point for anyone interested in more effective communication with the public or with scientists." (Earthzine)"...I tend to go back to it again and again—like a cookbook you would never expect to memorize but use frequently—as I try to craft clear messages for press releases, prepare for radio interviews, or speak to policymakers about wildlife health issues." (Wildlife Professional)"No one understands scientists the way Nancy Baron does. This book helps connect the worlds of science, journalism, and policy in very entertaining and insightful ways. If you care about linking science with action, this is the book to read." (Pat Matson Scientific Director of the Leopold Leadership Program)

Nancy Baron is Outreach Director of COMPASS, the Communications Partnership for Science and the Sea. She designed and leads the communications trainings for the Aldo Leopold Leadership Program. She and her COMPASS team offer a wide range of workshops for academic scientists as well as scientists who work for the government and non-governmental organizations in North America and abroad. Her experience as a Canadian National Parks biologist and science writer inspired her to help bridge the gaps among scientists, journalists, and policymakers. An ardent naturalist, Baron has led natural history expeditions around the world. She wrote the popular introductory field guide, *Birds of the Pacific Northwest*, as a way to help people engage with the natural world.

In this book, Nancy Baron challenges us scientists to not only communicate our science effectively and intentionally, but to do science that matters. It's not a one-way street, where after the science is done, you get it out there. She's proposing a two-way process where you think about how your science matters before you even design your hypothesis. She takes the mystery out of what drives the media and policy world, gives you the tools to deliver your message, and provides encouragement when you've stuck your neck out there. The kernels of wisdom and tools in each

chapter are great. Pithy, funny, and dead-on, "Escape from the Ivory Tower," is a Message Box in itself. And the message is...do science that matters and get your science out there. At a time when our global environmental challenges are great scientists must contribute to the solutions. This book is a challenge to us scientists to step up and step out of the Ivory Tower. The world needs our creative ideas and results, so stop hoarding away your important results in those little-read journals and get out there and do some solutions-based science. Bottom line is: Get this book, it's essential reading for the next wave of science.

I've been through multiple media trainings and this is the perfect refresher! If you aren't lucky enough to have work pay for a media training or work with Nancy at COMPASS, this is the next best thing. The chapters on message boxes, interviewing and distilling your message are particularly helpful. For those of us used to thinking in technical terms but seeing big implications of our work in the real world, this is a how-to guide for turning that potential into reality. Of course nothing beats a personal media training, mock interviews and one-on-one coaching, but this is as close as you can get and is a great bargain at the price.

This book does a great job of drawing scientists out of the laboratory and into the limelight, and giving them the practical advice and skills they need to be comfortable and effective in its glare. The author is particularly knowledgeable, since she is both an experienced journalist and a professional communications trainer. What's more, the book offers valuable tips from prominent science journalists and policy makers; and telling stories from scientists themselves about successful, and not-so-successful, communications efforts. The book's guidance ranges from how to develop and communicate messages, to how to give effective interviews and interact with policy makers. And besides practical information, the book offers extremely useful insights into the culture of journalists and policy makers, giving scientists the understanding they need to communicate effectively across what is sometimes a considerable cultural gulf. The book is both a savvy how-to book and a persuasive "why-to" book, explaining why scientists need to escape from their ivory tower. It warns for example that those researchers who elect not to engage with journalists and policy makers to communicate their knowledge of environmental issues "may be ceding the debate to those who know far less, or arrive with a self-serving agenda that shortchanges the best interests of society and the natural world." Although the book is aimed primarily at environmental scientists, it is invaluable for any researcher seeking to reach a wider audience. In fact, given that every scientist will find it necessary to communicate his/her work more broadly at some point, this excellent book

should be on every scientist's bookshelf.

This book is an invaluable resource to scientists who are interested in increasing the broader impacts of their work. Focusing on several different aspects of outreach, including a wide range of media (from blogs through TV interviews) the book gives factual, clear and direct pointers for scientists interested in taking those first timid steps outside the lab. The book is written in a matter-of-fact style, and nearly every page has useful hints from a variety of voices. Clearly the author and her team are speaking from years of experience in helping scientists navigate the mazes of press interviews and policy outreach. I think the strongest message to scientists that this book conveys is to not be afraid to take the step outside the lab. If you do solid science this book will help you make that science matter more. If you know that your work is interesting, this book will help you share your passion with others, and if your work has the potential to improve people's lives, the environment or our understanding of how the world works, this book will help you make sure that your message gets across to the widest range of people with the least amount of distortion. I have been waiting for a book like this to help me. This book has already inspired me to reach out to non-traditional venues and has helped me become more enthusiastic about the work that I already love.

You get what you put into it. If you work through the activities from the book it will benefit you much more than just a fast read through the book. I liked it but wish I came out with a more positive outlook on science communication.

Great practical tips on how to communicate your science. It is also a wake up call for any scientist who feels that this part of their work is unimportant! One of those books that you feel has changed your viewpoint, for the better, after completion!

As a scientist from a developing country I can tell you that what the book says is true. We live in an ivory tower where publishing in scientific journals is the objective, which by the way I am convinced is the wrong objective

This has significantly changed and enhanced the way that I communicate Science to all audiences. Furthermore, it has improved my grant writing and quality of manuscripts submitted for publication. I highly recommend this book.

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