

Bridging the evidence policy gap

What is the evidence?

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Bridge Team

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Outline

1. Researchers vs policy makers: *the mythology*
2. Evidence transfer: *the lessons (research/practice)*
3. Push (supply) strategies: *learning to translate*
4. Pull (demand) strategies: *'educating' policy makers*
5. Concluding ...: *where now?*

1. Researchers vs policy makers

The mythology

“... in public policy making, many suppliers and users of social research are dissatisfied, the former because they are not listened to, the latter because they do not hear much what they want to listen to...”

Lindblom, 2002

From the academic 'ivory tower' to the 'day to day' of reactive politics

- *Ask questions of little concern*
- *Speak their own language ridden with jargon*
- *Ignore context*
- *More research is required ...*
- *Doesn't it detract from doing real research?*
- *Isn't it enough just to publish a paper?*
- *Interacting with policy-makers doesn't pay the bills.*

Based on McKee & Figueras, 2006

From the academic 'ivory tower' to the 'day to day' of reactive politics

- *Want answers in bullet points ...*
- *....and quickly (usually yesterday!)*
- *Push for the quick and dirty*
- *Swayed by factors unrelated to evidence*
- *Driven by politics (& mostly) political ambition*

Based on McKee & Figueras, 2006

2. Lessons in evidence transfer

- Personal contact / interaction
- Trust
 - Directly linked to personal contact
 - Credibility (quality of research/experts)
 - Objective: neutral (non normative)
- Timeliness (key for relevance)
 - Political agenda 'windows of opportunity'
- Provide summary & recommendations

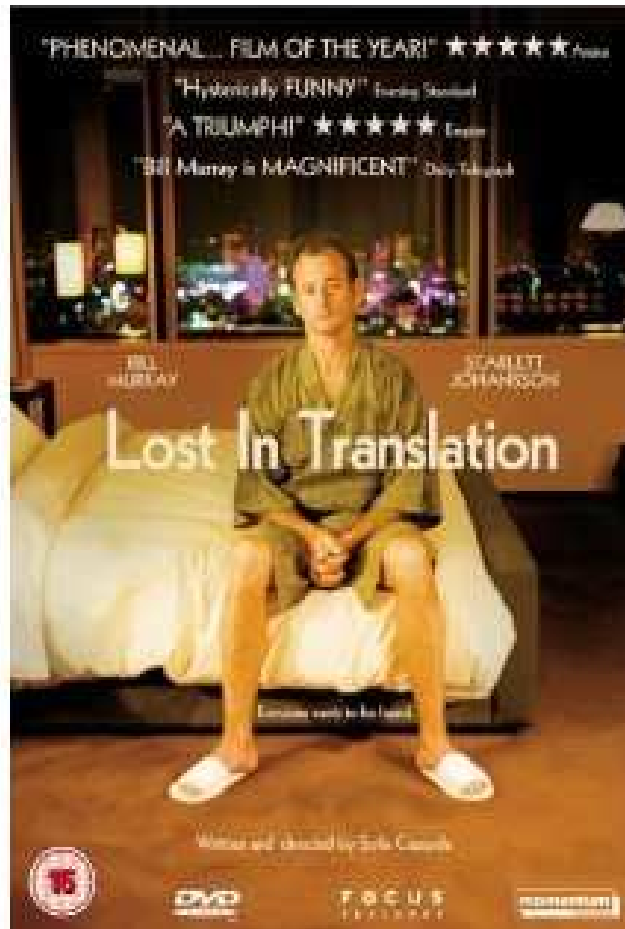
Based on Innvaer et al, 2002

2. Lessons in evidence transfer

- Client and policy question (not research) driven
- Context specific
- Accordance: evidence & policy maker thinking
 - *i.e. higher impact of research when confirms political self interest*
- Acknowledge limitations of evidence
 - Ceiling on impact
 - Aim: evidence informed decision making
 - Decision based on (not made by) evidence
 - The role of value trade-offs

3. Push (supply) strategies

Learning to translate



Surveys indicate that researchers continue to spend time identifying questions, conducting evaluations and refining methodologies rather than communicating with decision makers.

[e.g. Stryer et al 2000]

BRIDGE

- Scoping Study of Approaches to Brokering Knowledge and Research Information to Support the Development and Governance of Health Systems in Europe
- Focus
 - Systematic review
 - Organizational models for knowledge brokering
 - Knowledge brokering
 - Information packaging (IP) mechanisms
 - Interactive knowledge sharing (IKS) mechanisms



Systematic Review

- 126 studies met all eligibility criteria
 - All Observational studies – Need to move to evaluations
1. Interactions researchers and policymakers
 - hence IKS
 2. Timing/timeliness
 - hence rapid-response IP/IKS
 3. Accordance between evidence and policymakers' and stakeholders' thinking
 - hence IKS, which can identify accordance

Description / Comparison of European Experiences

- 165 organizations in EU and EFTA MS met eligibility criteria plus 203 some criteria
- Use many (2-6) IP mechanisms
 - Traditional (e.g., research reports) but some quite innovative (e.g., rapid-response policy briefs)
- Use fewer (1-2) IKS mechanisms
 - Traditional (e.g., conferences), but quite innovative (e.g., personalized briefings and policy dialogues)
- 30 organizations in EU/EFTA in depth interviews

Matching form to function

Organizational Models

- How is it governed? *Representation (e.g policy makers) in its govern.; transparency; independence*
- How is it managed staffed? *Accountability for its KB mandate; size, mix and capacity of staff for KB*
- How its resources are managed and allocated?
Explicit priorities, appropriate funding for KB
- How it collaborates? *Networks, linkages with policy making, stakeholder organizations*

Communicating clearly

Information-packaging (IP) mechanisms

- What it covers? *Relevant policy issue and its multiple features: problem, options, implementation,...*
- What it includes? *Draws on synthesized (global) research, incorporates tacit knowledge*
- For whom it's targeted? *Policy makers & stakeholders, also involved in the review.*
- How it's packaged? *Decision relevant, understandable language, grade entry.*
- How its use is supported? *Brought to target audiences*
 - Summary of an article/report (single study or systematic review); Compendium of summaries, Issue note, Policy brief, Policy dialogue report,...
 - Newsletters, Annual reports, Blogs,...
 - Presentations, Audio podcasts, Video podcasts, ...

HEN/Observatory Policy Briefs

- Focus to policy makers needs
- Address practical (key) policy questions
- Targeted and opportunistic
- Implementation considerations
- Not normative / lessons on policy options
- 1 / 3 / 25 structure
- Timing
- E.g. Briefs for EU presidencies



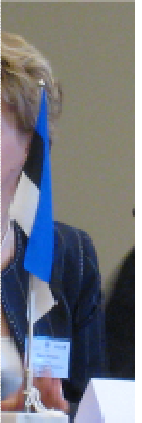
Learning from one another

Interactive knowledge-sharing (IKS) mechanisms

- What it covers? *Relevant policy issue and its multiple features: problem, options, implementation,...*
- What it includes? *Draws on systematic information, incorporates tacit knowledge, views and experiences*
- For whom it's targeted? *Policy makers & stakeholders, explicitly related to a policy process.*
- How it's organized? *Proactive identification of participants, equal contribution, pre-circulation of info*
 - *Informal discussions, network meetings*
- How its use is supported? *Captures insights, brought to target audiences*
 - *Online discussion forums / briefings (webinar), training workshops, personalized briefings, policy dialogues.*

OBS Policy Dialogues

- Key strategic questions / policy windows
 - ‘Rapid reaction triggers’
- Demand driven / supply induced
- Co-organised with policy makers
- Target small group of senior policy makers
- Evidence on alternative options
- Emphasis on implementation
- Evidence as a neutral platform for consensus



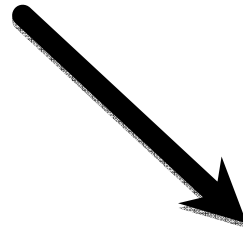
3. Push (supply) strategies

Sticks and carrots to translate

- Requirement in research funding
- Knowledge brokers / train researchers
- Policy impact in research assessment exercise

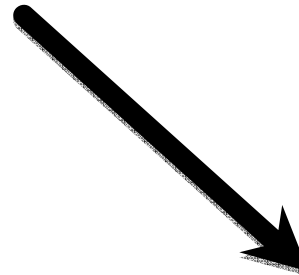
Understanding the policy decision making process

New Knowledge



In an ideal world

Policy Makers



Improving evidence use relies heavily on understanding the policy decision making process

Policy Change

20
JUL

What Socialized Medicine Looks Like in England

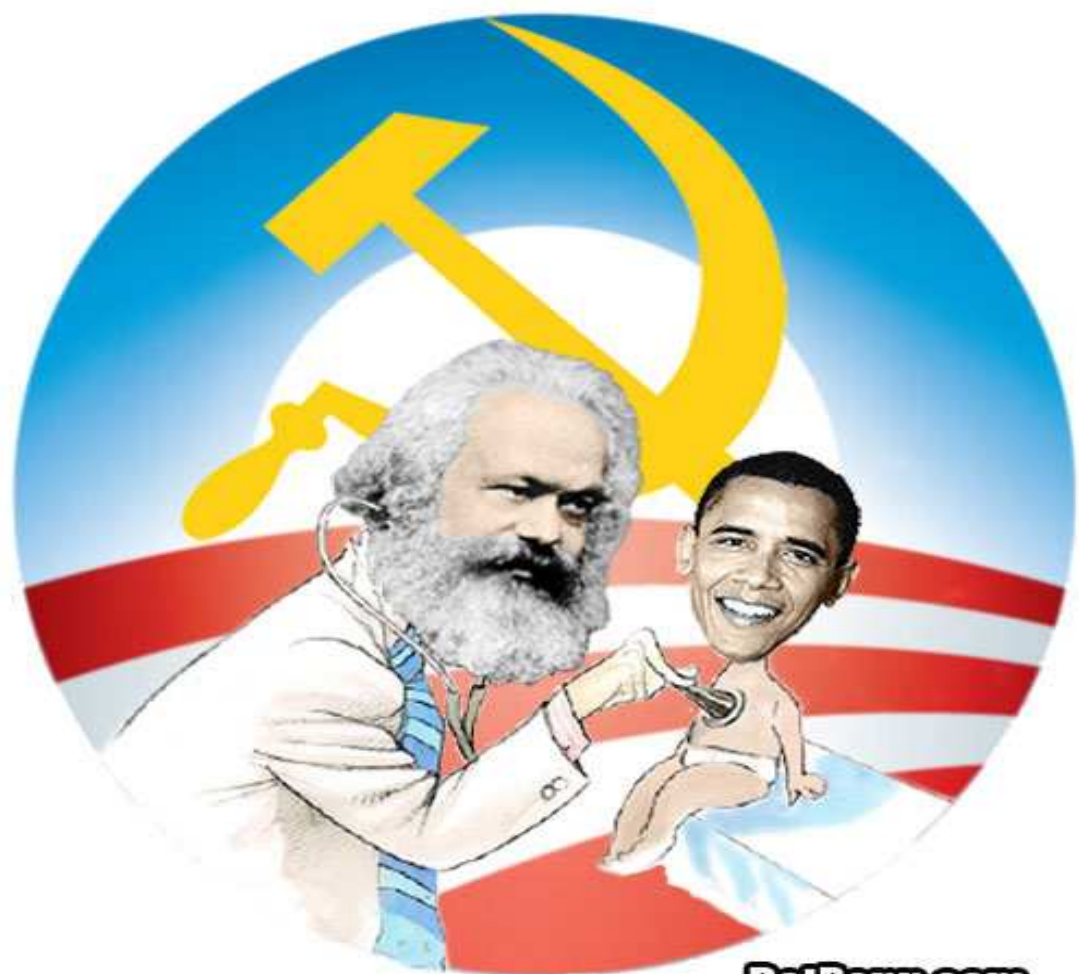
Posted by MacRanger as [Health Care](#)

It seems to be the problem?

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66% since 1997

- Daniel Martin and Cher Thornhill, *Ap*

- NHS 'failings' over elderly falls
- March 25, 2009 [BBC]
- Learning disabled 'failed by NHS'
- Nick Trigg, March 24, 2009 [BBC]
- Cancer survivor confronts the health s
- Lyndsay Moss, March 21, 2009 [The
- Culture of targets prevents nurses from
- Chris Dawson, President of the National

4. Pull (demand) strategies *'Educating' policy makers*

- Linkage and 'exchange'
 - “the process of ongoing interaction, collaboration, and exchange of ideas between the researcher and decision-making communities” (CHSRF)
 - Multi-professional networks, secondments and exchanges
- Policy staff trained in research appraisal
- Research use as a decision making requirement
- Policy advisory committees involving researchers

Ettelt and Mays 2010, Linking Health Services Research Policy in Europe

Yet... Role of interpersonal networks

- Networks that share professional background, experience, political similarity, psychological identification, geographical proximity
- Face to face network exchanges are key

“.... most individuals do not evaluate an innovation on the basis of scientific studies of its consequences... instead, most people depend mainly upon a subjective evaluation of an innovation that is conveyed to them from other individuals like themselves who have previously adopted the innovation. (...) So diffusion is a very social process.”

Rogers, 2003, *Diffusion of Innovations*

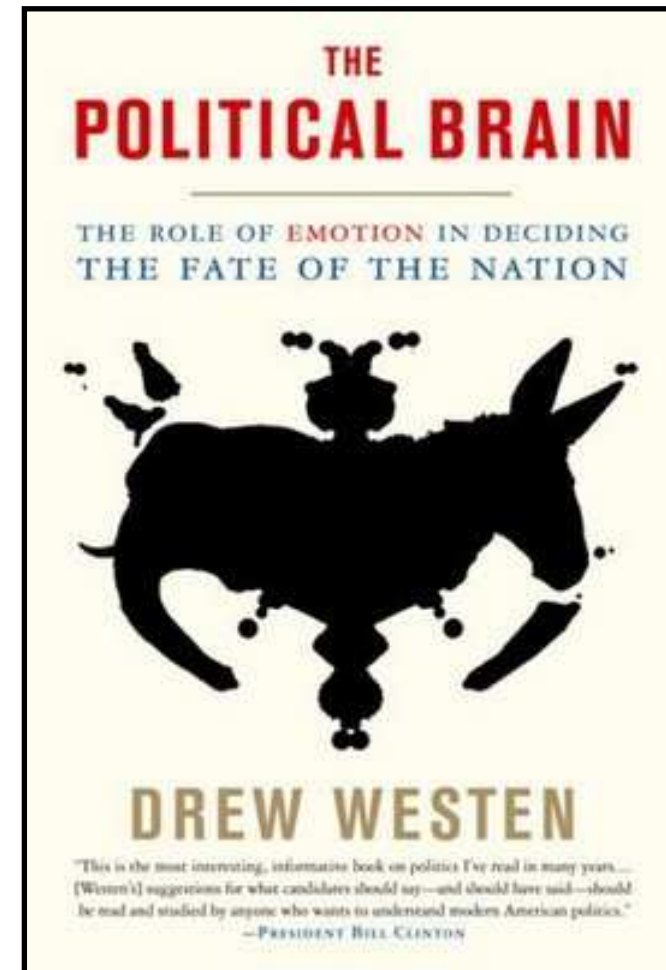
Yet...Motivated political reasoning

- Prior attitude effect, confirmation and disconfirmation bias ,..

Taber & Lodge, 2006

- PET scanning of brains of 15 Democrats and 15 Republicans
- Clearly contradictory statements perceived less contradictory when coming from their own party
- Brain switch off / on centres for positive and negative emotions

Westen et al. 2006



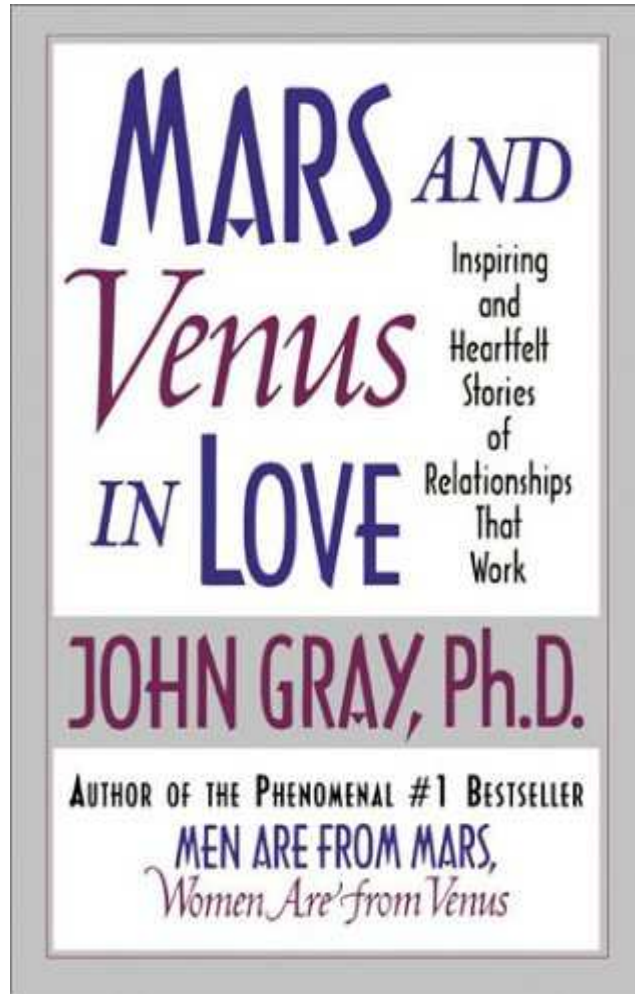
From McKee 2010

In conclusion

- Still too little emphasis on bridging research and policy
- Going beyond the anecdote
- Consensus on main lessons from Observational studies
- But move from Observational to Evaluative studies
 - more rigorous evaluation of IKS and IP mechanisms
 - role of context & its interplay with evidence transfer
 - cognitive research
 - Strengthen analysis of organizational models

In conclusion

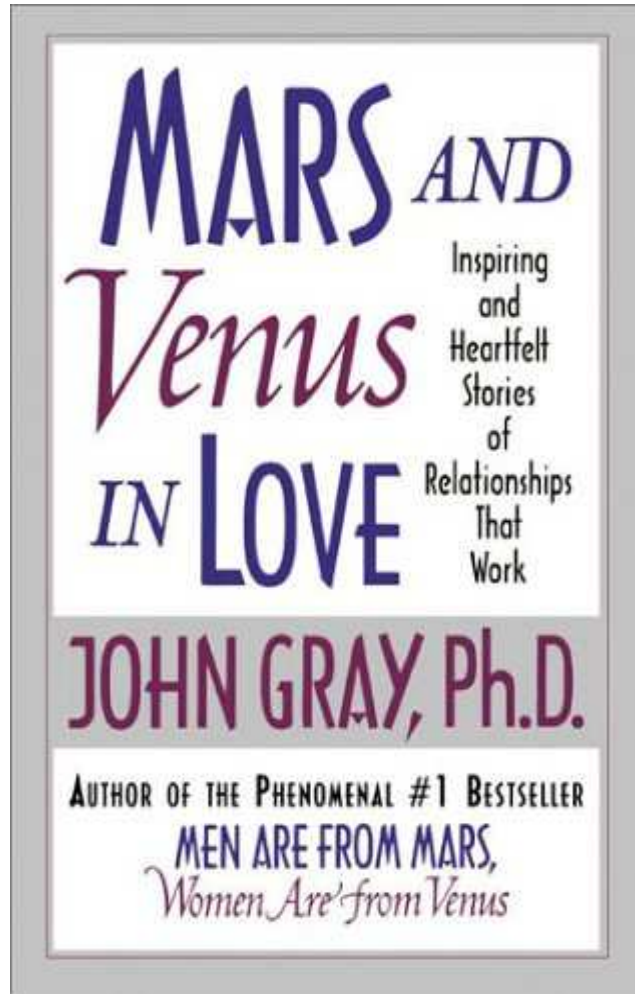
- Learn from far beyond health sector: other sectors including commercial sector
- Include as core in public health competencies
- Strengthen incentives
- Regulation in funding research to include KB
- Reform organizational structures



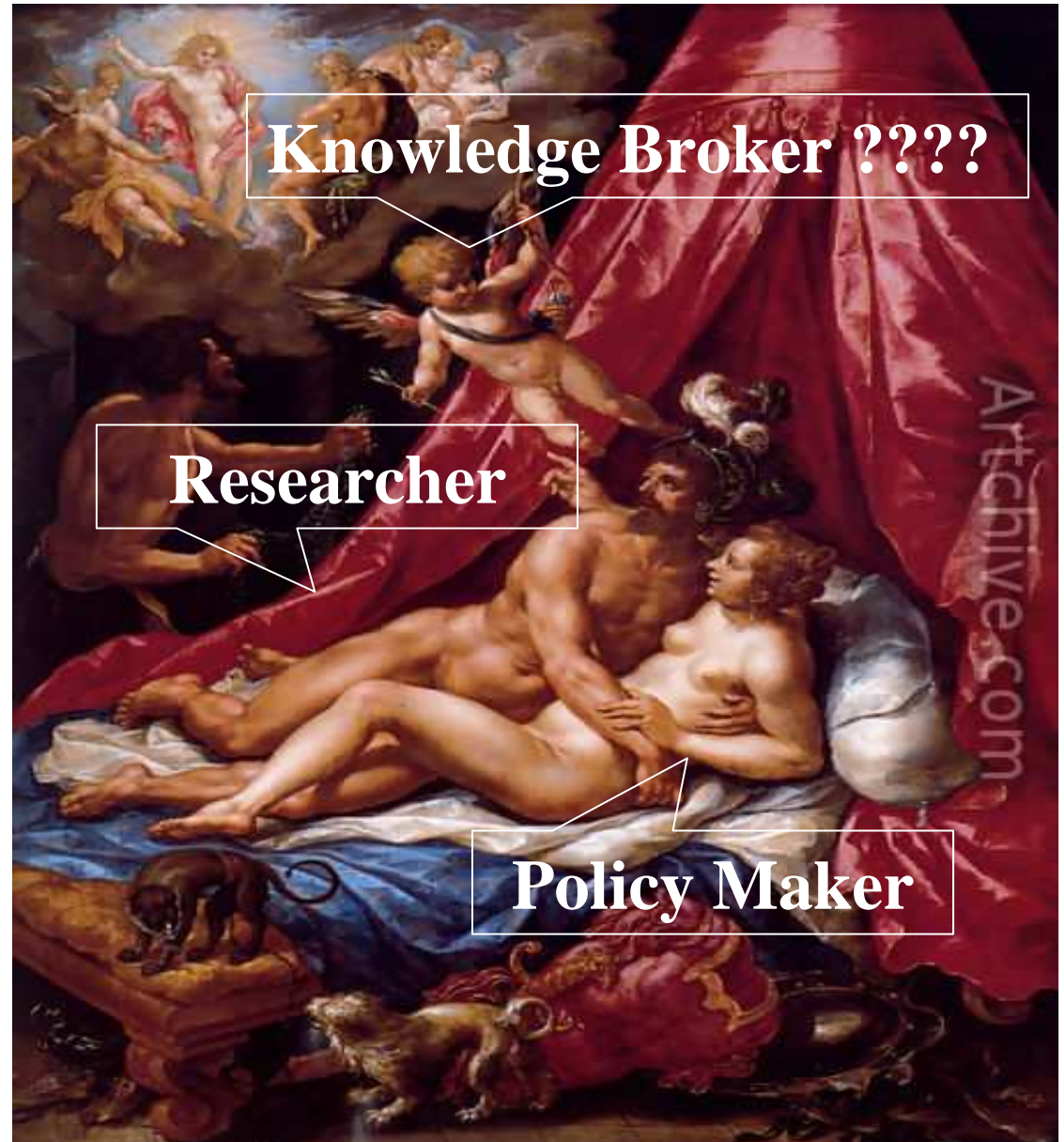
Based on Walter Ricciardi



*Hendrick De Clerck
Mars And Venus Surprised by Apollo*



Based on Walter Ricciardi



*Hendrick De Clerck
Mars And Venus Surprised by Apollo*