

Flaws: Shark Bites And Emotional Public Policymaking

Public policy is often made in response to emotional events, such as shark bites. These events can trigger fear and anxiety, which can lead to demands for action from the public and policymakers. However, it is important to remember that emotional reactions are not always rational, and that policies made in response to them may not be effective or even harmful.

In this article, we will discuss the flaws of shark bite policymaking, the role of emotions in public policy, and the importance of evidence-based decision-making.

Flaws of Shark Bite Policymaking

There are several flaws in the way that shark bite policy is often made.



Flaws: Shark Bites and Emotional Public Policymaking

by Christopher L. Pepin-Neff

★★★★☆ 4.5 out of 5

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- **Reactive rather than proactive.** Shark bite policy is often made in response to a specific event, such as a shark attack. This reactive approach can lead to policies that are poorly thought out and that do not address the root causes of the problem.
- **Based on fear rather than evidence.** Shark bite policy is often based on fear of sharks, rather than on evidence of their actual risk to humans. This fear can lead to policies that are overly restrictive and that do not take into account the benefits of sharks to the ecosystem.
- **Focused on short-term solutions rather than long-term strategies.** Shark bite policy often focuses on short-term solutions, such as drumlines and shark nets, rather than on long-term strategies, such as habitat protection and education. This can lead to policies that are ineffective and that do not address the underlying causes of the problem.

The Role of Emotions in Public Policy

Emotions play a significant role in public policymaking. Fear, anxiety, and anger can all motivate people to demand action from the government. However, it is important to remember that emotional reactions are not always rational, and that policies made in response to them may not be effective or even harmful.

In the case of shark bite policy, fear of sharks can lead to demands for policies that are overly restrictive and that do not take into account the benefits of sharks to the ecosystem. For example, a study by the Pew Environment Group found that shark nets in Australia have had no effect on reducing shark attacks, but have killed thousands of other marine animals, including dolphins, whales, and turtles.

The Importance of Evidence-Based Decision-Making

It is important to make public policy decisions based on evidence, rather than on emotion. Evidence-based decision-making involves using data and research to identify the root causes of a problem and to develop effective solutions.

In the case of shark bite policy, evidence-based decision-making would involve identifying the factors that contribute to shark attacks, such as the presence of baitfish, the time of day, and the water temperature. It would also involve evaluating the effectiveness of different shark bite mitigation strategies, such as drumlines, shark nets, and education.

Shark bite policy is often made in response to emotional events, rather than on evidence. This can lead to policies that are ineffective or even harmful. It is important to remember that emotional reactions are not always rational, and that policies made in response to them may not be effective or even harmful. Public policy decisions should be based on evidence, rather than on emotion.



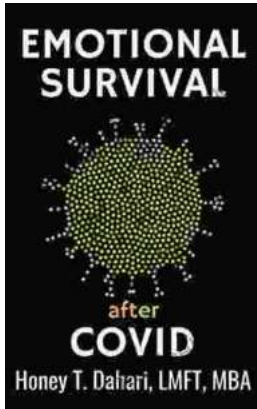
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