SOCIALISATION OF OFFSHORE WIND TECHNOLOGY: SCIENTISTS AS AGENTS OF SOCIALISATION

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OFFSHORE WIND ENERGY IN NORWAY

Photomontage by Vestavind Offshore

POLITICAL RHETORICS

Minister of petroleum and energy Åslaug Haga (2008):

«Offshore wind mills have the potential to become the new oil».

Minister of petroleum and energy Terje Riis-Johansen (2009):

«Today we are writing history. Offshore wind power can be Norway's new energy and industrial adventure. With this act [the offshore energy act] and strategy, the government ensures that in the future we can create a new industry with green jobs based on our offshore experience».

Minister of petroleum and energy Ola Borten Moe (2011):

«It makes no sense to me to use lots of tax billions to build a wind farm offshore only because it has to be offshore».

SOCIALISATION OF TECHNOLOGY

Handbook on the Socialisation of Scientific and Technological Research

Social Sciences and European Research Capacities (SS-ERC) Project

Edited by Wiebe E. Bijker and Luciano d'Andrea

SIXTH FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME
Citizenship and governance in a knowledge based society

- Bijker & d'Andrea (2009)

- Embedding new technology into society

- Socialisation agents

RESEARCHERS AS AGENTS OF SOCIALISATION

"**Researchers should ensure that their research activities are made known to society at large** in such a way that they can be understood by non-specialists, thereby improving the public's understanding of science. Direct engagement with the public will help researchers to better understand public interest in priorities for science and technology and also the public's concerns" (European Charter for Researchers, 2005).

"We wish to stimulate to more and better science communication. To share knowledge with the society around us is a central part of our social mission. […] **The responsibility for communication lies with the individual researcher**" (Bovim, 2013).

IT'S TIME TO **RETHINK** EVERYTHING
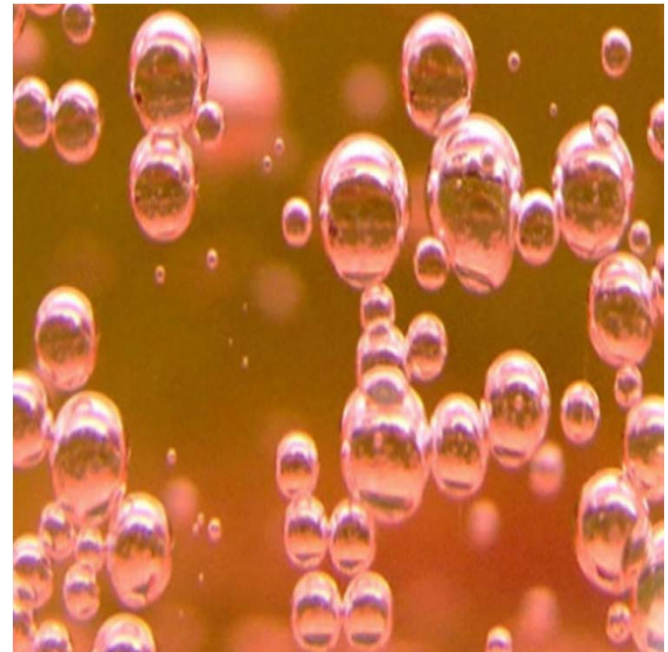
Picture by depone, www.flickr.com

OFFSHORE WIND SCIENTISTS AS SOCIALISATION AGENTS

- Imagined publics

- Socialisation strategies

IMAGINED PUBLICS*

- Scientists' construction of the public(s)

- Imagined publics may influence:

  - Technology design
  - Implementation and decision making
  - Interactions with the public(s)

* Imagined Lay Persons (IPL)
Maranta et al. (2003)

OFFSHORE WIND AS SUBLIME TECHNOLOGY AND OBJECT OF FEAR

o Ambivalent, contradictory narratives about the public(s)

Narrative 1:
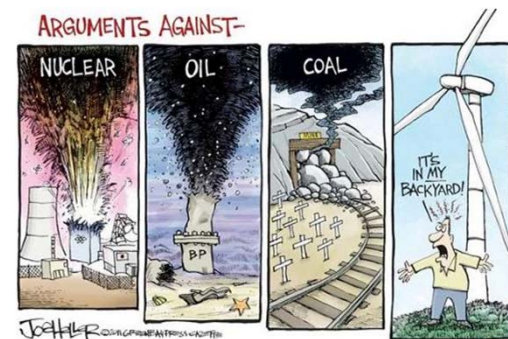
"Out of sight, out of mind"

Picture by Jøran Pecher

Narrative 2:

Economic concerns

$$$

Narrative 3:

"Not in my backyard" (NIMBY)

OFFSHORE WIND SCIENTISTS' SOCIALISATION STRATEGY I: OUTREACHING

- People need knowledge → facts

- Then they will be positive towards the technology (public accept)

- Knowledge/facts have to be disseminated

- One-way communication (deficit model)

Scientist   Information Facts →   Public
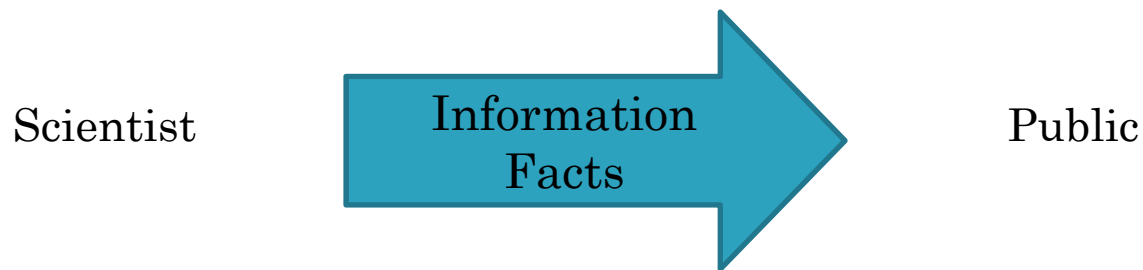
*"As scientists we should not proselytize. We should be neither for nor against wind energy. **We should just get out facts".***

OFFSHORE WIND SCIENTISTS' SOCIALISATION STRATEGY II: OUTSOURCING

- Others should do the job…

- Because we don't have time and resources

- Because we don't have the competences

- Because our research is not relevant

- Because it's not part of our job as researchers

"I don't really have time to go out and shake hands in the streets. Yeah, it's not our job."

"It's not without risk to involve yourself, and I know that many refuse to do it because of that. They don't dare to enter the debate because it is a tough debate and you get put on the spot, so you get somehow attacked a little bit. Very quickly, you get into a defensive position. No, it is a scary field. It is safer with science, we can relate to that».

OFFSHORE WIND SCIENTISTS' SOCIALISATION STRATEGY III: DISEMBEDDING

- Offshore wind technology does not need to be socialised

- Society is not relevant for technology development

- Technology development happens outside of society → technical challenges

- Othering/alienation between scientists and the public(s)

SUMMARY

- Socialisation of new technology is necessary

- Offshore wind energy: socialisation challenge

- Scientists as agents of socialisation

  ➢ doesn't work

CONCLUSION

- Scientists' role in socialisation

➢ What should be socialised?

➢ Who should socialise?

- Technology policy

➢ Think socialisation

➢ Strategies, actors, arenas context dependent

➢ Strategies for desocialisation?