

Everything said and done? The role of the humanities and social sciences in nuclear waste governance

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Where innovation starts

Outline

- I. Introduction
- II. Nuclear Waste Research in the Social Sciences and Humanities:
Where do we stand?
- III. Anything left to do? Some Outlines of Research Desiderata
- IV. Too High Expectations?
The Future Role of Social Sciences and Humanities in Nuclear
Waste Governance
- V. Conclusions

Introduction

I. Research Background :

I. Chernobyl

II. Nuclear History

II. ENTRIA / Environmental Policy Research Centre (FU Berlin)

I. German Nuclear Waste Commission

II. Public Debates on Dose Limits

III. TU Eindhoven: Technology, Innovation & Society

I. NIRG, Nuclear History and Ethics

Nuclear Waste Research in the Social Sciences and Humanities: Where do we stand?

I. Nuclear Risk and Modernity

I. Beck's Risk Society (1986)

II. Charles Perrow's Normal Accidents (1984)

II. Public Perception of Risk / Participation / Acceptance-Acceptability

I. Salomon et al (2010)

III. Ethics: Future Generations / Justice

IV. History / Anthropology: Site Marking, Individual Case Studies

Anything left to do? Some Outlines of Research Desiderata

- I. Historization of the Field of Public Perception of Risk**
 - I. Institutions, Persons, Networks, Funding**
 - II. Uptake of Research Results through Stakeholders**
 - III. Scientists as Stakeholders, their Shaping of the Discourse**
- II. Historization of Nuclear Waste**
 - I. Nuclearity (Hecht) → (Geographical) Power Scales**
 - II. (Changing) Social Definitions of Waste**
 - III. Nuclear Singularity**

Too High Expectations? The Future Role of Social Sciences and Humanities in Nuclear Waste Governance

- I. **The German Nuclear Waste Debate: Calls for a Stronger Role of the Humanities and Social Sciences**
 - I. “We need historians to be able to move forward!”
 - II. “We need social scientists to bridge the front lines!”
- II. **How do these expectations align with the reality and internal logics of the academic system?**
- III. **What if the research does not deliver what the stakeholders wish for?**
- IV. **Who should pay for it? Where are the limits of academic independence?**

Conclusions

- I. A huge amount of research results is already available.**
- II. There could be still a lot done, in particular in terms of the historization and contextualization of this very research.**
- III. New academic research will not automatically result in new and promising strategies for nuclear waste governance.**
- IV. Very likely, it will rather raise new questions and increase the complexity instead of providing clarity and simplification.**
- V. Thus, the stakeholders of the nuclear waste debate should be more considerate of the role they attribute to academic research in the social sciences and humanities.**

Thank you !