

Symposium on *Exploring the Communication of Research across Contexts and Theoretical Perspectives*, University of Copenhagen, 9 October 2009

You are invited to participate in a one-day symposium at the University of Copenhagen on *Exploring the Communication of Research across Contexts and Theoretical Perspectives*, 9 October, 10.00-16.00.

Place: Karen Blixens Vej, Room 27.0.17., Copenhagen S.

The symposium is to be held under the joint auspices of the Network on Experts and the Communication of Knowledge funded by the Department of Media, Cognition and Communication, University of Copenhagen (<http://vidensformidling.mef.ku.dk/>) the Nordic Network for the Study of the Dialogic Communication of Research funded by NordForsk (www.dialogue.ruc.dk) and the Science and Environment Communication Section, European Communication Research and Education Association (<http://www.scienv-com.eu/>).

The symposium will explore how research within and across the humanities, social sciences and the natural sciences and technology is communicated in different contexts. In research policies internationally, there is an increased focus on the communication of research, with researchers being urged – and often required through legislation - to communicate their research via the mass media and to engage in dialogue-based activities with different social actors. Practical initiatives have been launched, such as awards for research communication and research days in which university researchers go out and talk about their research with different audiences. Practical initiatives also include “upstream” public engagement with science exercises, officially designed to further public engagement in decision-making about the direction and content of scientific developments. In addition, collaborative research between researchers and diverse social actors is promoted. In such collaborative research, the *communication of research* does not only involve the communication of finished research results to different target-groups but can be understood as the ongoing communication processes in which the collaborating actors (university researchers and practitioners) co-produce research by negotiating between different knowledge forms and expert identities.

The above research communication activities are often framed as expressions of a new, democratic form of scientific governance based on dialogue, interaction and participation throughout the research process rather than the unidirectional knowledge transfer of completed research results from researchers to policy-makers, practitioners and publics. At the symposium, research will be presented that critically examines such activities in the light of questions of scientific governance, power and democracy. The research presented will deal with examples of the communication of research in a wide range of contexts including the mass mediation of natural sciences and technology, the social sciences and environmental problems, and the communication of research-based knowledge in collaborative research. A plethora of different theoretical perspectives will be applied, including public understanding of science and public engagement with science, action research, actor-network theory, discourse analysis and dialogic communication theory. By providing a forum for discussion across these contexts and perspectives, the symposium aims to further *research* on the diverse practices of research communication.

The symposium will be organised around five presentations by invited speakers. As a participant, you will be able to attend these presentations and take part in the discussions that will follow each presentation. Immediately after the symposium, there will be a meeting from 16.00-17.30 for members of ECREA's Science and Environment Communication Section, including anyone interested in joining the Section, where we will discuss shared interests and themes that emerge from the symposium and consider ideas for future collaboration, building on those shared interests and themes.

The invited speakers and their presentations are as follows:

Bruce Lewenstein (Professor of Science Communication, Department of Communication, Cornell University) on the Public Communication of Science and Technology.

Ulla Britt Lilleaas (Professor, Faculty of Health and Sport, University of Agder) on the communication of her research in a film shown in cinemas across Norway.

Anabela Carvalho (Associate Professor, Department of Communication Sciences, University of Minho) on the negotiation of expert knowledges and identities in the discursive construction of an environmental problem.

Ursula Plesner (Doctoral Student, Department of Communication, Business and Information Technologies, Roskilde University) on an actor-network approach to studying the mass mediation of social scientific research.

Louise Phillips (Associate Professor in Communication Studies, Department of Communication, Business and Information Technologies) on the negotiation between different knowledge forms and expert identities in the dialogic communication of research-based knowledge in collaborative social scientific research.

The symposium (including refreshments in the breaks) is free of charge for all participants.

If you have any queries, you are welcome to get in touch with one of the two main organisers, Associate Professor Christa Lykke Christensen (crystal@hum.ku.dk) or Associate Professor Louise Phillips (louisep@ruc.dk).

If you would like to attend the symposium, please register by sending a mail to Christa Lykke Christensen (crystal@hum.ku.dk) by Monday, 14 September 2009. A detailed programme will be sent to all registered participants.

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University of Copenhagen, Room 27.0.17, Karen Blixens vej, 2300 Copenhagen, (Metro station: "Islands Brygge", or Bus nr. 33 or 12).

PROGRAMME

10.00-10.15: Welcome

10.15-11.05: Bruce Lewenstein (Professor of Science Communication, Department of Communication, Cornell University) on the Public Communication of Science and Technology.

11.05-11.15: Coffee break

11.15-12.05: Ulla-Britt Lilleaas (Professor, Faculty of Health and Sport, University of Agder) on the communication of research in a film shown in cinemas across Norway.

12.05-13.00: Lunch

13.00-13.50: Anabela Carvalho (Associate Professor, Department of Communication Sciences, University of Minho) on the negotiation of expert knowledges and identities in the discursive construction of an environmental problem.

13.50-14.00: Coffee break

14.00-14.50: Ursula Plesner (Doctoral Student, Department of Communication, Business and Information Technologies, Roskilde University) on an actor-network approach to studying the mass mediation of social scientific research.

14.50-15.00: Coffee break

15.00-15.50: Louise Phillips (Associate Professor in Communication Studies, Department of Communication, Business and Information Technologies), on the shift to dialogue in the communication of research-based knowledge.

16.00-17.30: Meeting of ECREA Section members - discussion of ideas for future events and collaboration. New members very welcome!

19.00- : Dinner

The symposium (including refreshments in the breaks) is free of charge for all participants. Lunch and dinner are at the participants' own expense.

Abstracts

Bruce Lewenstein: *Models of Research Communication.*

In recent years, the international community concerned with “public understanding of science” has adopted new language. Instead of “popularizing” science or trying to create “science literacy,” the community now talks about “public engagement in science,” “*culture scientifique*” (in French), or “*apropiación social de ciencia*” (in Spanish). This new language tries to suggest that science is not something pushed onto an unwilling public, but instead is something that the public desires and eagerly takes up. In this talk, I will highlight some of the assumptions underlying this new language and approach. In particular, I will show that many people (especially within the scientific community) who have taken up this new language do not understand the deep political implications of giving the public authority over science. I will not argue for or against either the older “deficit model” that focuses on delivering information or the newer “engagement model” that focuses on dialogue and discussion. Instead, I will try to show how they can be understood both by researchers and by practitioners if – and only if – everyone involved in research and practice understands the relationships of power and authority that are at stake.

Ulla-Britt Lilleaas: *Dialogue and participation in research and short film*

As an example on exploring the communication of research across contexts and theoretical perspectives I will show a short film – “Tempo!” - based on my research on dual-career-families with small children. The methodological approach in the research project was influenced by the concepts "Dialogue and participation", which means a dialogue between the researcher and the participants, and a dialogue between the participants. In the subsequent film project, dialogue took the form of an ongoing communication process in which the collaborating actors (researchers, the filmmaker, film actors, financial supporters, the film audience, etc.) co-produced research by negotiating between different knowledge forms and expert identities. The purpose of my presentation is to investigate how and to what extent a film can act as a platform for discussions of dialogue and participation, governance and power, in the communication of research with other researchers in the field.

Anabela Cavalho: *Communicating knowledge on climate change: mediations and social representations*

The presentation will begin with an overview of key aspects and problems of the media coverage of climate change in the last two decades. This will be followed by an analysis of how scientific knowledge and the social status and credibility of science and scientists have been reconstructed and recontextualized in radically different ways in order to promote or refute certain worldviews. Processes of reframing scientific knowledge in the discourse of social actors, such as politicians, activists and business, will be discussed. Finally, inferences will be drawn for social representations of climate change.

Ursula Plesner: *Beyond the media logic: Successful translations and strong actors in the mass mediation of social scientific knowledge*

Studies of the use of research-based expertise in the mass media often demonstrate how experts are used to confirm journalists’ angles on particular stories or how research-based knowledge claims are twisted. Both among practitioners and science communication scholars, such practices are often explained with reference to a pervasive ‘media logic’. ‘The media logic’ is constructed as governing choices and interactions of researchers and journalists. This presentation critically examines the use of the term ‘the media logic’, and presents Actor-Network-Theory as an approach opposed to such generalizing explanatory devices. It is argued that ANT is particularly suited to capturing the variety and complexity in researcher/journalist interactions and the treatment of research-based knowledge in the media.

Louise Phillips: *Analysing the shift to dialogue in the communication of research-based knowledge: a study of the tensions in collaborative research*

Tensions have been identified in the shift to “dialogue” whereby researchers produce and communicate research-based knowledge in interaction with different social actors. This presentation will bring together 3 perspectives on those tensions - science and technology studies analyses of public engagement, action research and dialogic communication theory in a case-study of

collaborative research about virtual worlds. The focus is on how tensions are articulated in the communication processes in which the collaborating actors (university researchers and practitioners) co-produce knowledge by negotiating between different expert-identities and knowledge forms. The analysis explores the balancing-act between imposing control on the research process and opening up for a plurality of voices, and concludes with a discussion of the value of a reflexive approach for the analysis and design of dialogic research communication.