

Acknowledgements

This study was made possible through the generous support of the James Martin Award. James Martin's foresight and continued commitment to furthering research at Oxford University and elsewhere deserve much praise. My research stays at Berkeley, CERN and in the Russian European North would not have happened without financial assistance from the Mønsted Foundation, CERN/Imagination Lab, Oticon, Nordforsk and Brorson's Travel Scholarship for Young Scientists. Thank you.

In recognising that I am far from the only one having contributed to this piece of research, I face a similar dilemma to that of network analysts; where to cut the network? My 'cuttings' are undoubtedly imperfect, and reflect my own ignorance and forgetfulness pertaining to all the help I received in the process. My gratitude is deep-felt, even if I have not managed to acknowledge it properly.

Steve Woolgar has been a brilliant adviser throughout this study. How reassuring it has been to learn that wisdom, rigour and academic success can actually be combined with an insatiable appetite for doing things differently. Of the many things I have learned from him, what I appreciate the most is probably the ability to treat everything as an 'ethnographic experience,' be it queues, fines or fierce criticism. That is a very valuable skill to have on a life-long reflexive journey, albeit a skill that can always be developed further.

Thanks to Daniel Neyland, Mette Toennesen and Linsey McGoey for agreeing to read through my drafts and having the diplomatic abilities to say something appreciative in return. To Jerome Ravetz for his infinite patience, listening skills and insightful comments. To Sara Ward for skilfully tying things together in the Martin Institute, which is a difficult task when you are dealing with the unruliest of tribes, that of academics. To Albert McGill for many a useful piece of advice and not least an infectious appreciation of the finer things in life. To Claus Jacobs, and family, for hosting me in Switzerland and showing confidence in my work at a time when it was much appreciated. To

Sue Dobson, Marjolein van Asselt, Angela Wilkinson, Rafael Ramirez, Steve Rayner, James Tansey and Steve New for keeping me on track at various stages in the programme. To Sarah Whatmore and Geoffrey Bowker for asking such good questions and providing many words of encouragement in the viva voce. To Anna, Barbara and the rest of the catering staff for perfecting the 'Toennesen Hot Chocolate' – sugar can indeed serve as an excellent substitute for motivation. To the early mornings on the Isis, the football pitches and the running paths of Oxford for allowing me to engage in activities that did not require too much thinking.

My endless gratitude goes out to Maja Korica, who provided good karma and managed to cope with me when the thesis turned me into a moody teenager or a grumpy old man (if only you would start helping yourself as much as everyone else around you, football head!). To my fellow passengers in the DPhil room, namely Samuel Evans, in partnership with whom I have been climbing and tumbling down the hills of academia – one pushing the other at different stages in time (when you get your doctorate, I promise to teach you how to play squash).

To my ever-supportive family, who were far away, yet the thought of a safe haven always accompanied me. The thesis is dedicated to my grand mother, who unfortunately did not live long enough to celebrate with me. "Isn't it nice when we youngsters get together?" – I would like to be able to say similar things upon reaching the late 80s.