Knowledge and Space

Volume 15

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Knowledge and Space

This book series entitled "Knowledge and Space" is dedicated to topics dealing with the production, dissemination, spatial distribution, and application of knowledge. Recent work on the spatial dimension of knowledge, education, and science; learning organizations; and creative milieus has underlined the importance of spatial disparities and local contexts in the creation, legitimation, diffusion, and application of new knowledge. These studies have shown that spatial disparities in knowledge and creativity are not short-term transitional events but rather a fundamental structural element of society and the economy.

The volumes in the series on Knowledge and Space cover a broad range of topics relevant to all disciplines in the humanities and social sciences focusing on knowledge, intellectual capital, and human capital: clashes of knowledge; milieus of creativity; geographies of science; cultural memories; knowledge and the economy; learning organizations; knowledge and power; ethnic and cultural dimensions of knowledge; knowledge and action; and mobilities of knowledge. These topics are analyzed and discussed by scholars from a range of disciplines, schools of thought, and academic cultures.

Knowledge and Space is the outcome of an agreement concluded by the Klaus Tschira Foundation and Springer in 2006.

More information about this series at http://www.springer.com/series/7568

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Knowledge for Governance

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Chapter 3
Knowledge of Governance as Knowledge for Governance: Spatialized Techniques of Neutralization

Michael Scott

Governance is a key concept in the social sciences (see Bevir, 2011). It refers to processes of intersectoral, interorganizational modes of networked steering that lead to collaborative and negotiated decision making (Rhodes, 1997). For sociospatial researchers, knowledge for governance evokes images of governmental knowledge of populations and their attitudes, technical knowledge of space and its physical properties, formal and informal bureaucratic processes of problem definition, and the creation of knowledge through stakeholder engagement to address pressing social issues. This rendering of governance has a normative inflection. When done well, governance generates more equitable, socially just, and consensus-derived decision making through the integration of diverse stakeholder voices and technical expertise.

Nevertheless, behind governance lurks government (MacLeod & Goodwin, 1999). Legal systems, public funding, and bureaucratic rationalities often cast a shadow over noble normative aims. Governance as an activity then emerges as a domain of negotiation and contest within state-managed systems. Here, actors aim to advance interests through reference to state power, which they call upon to enact, arbitrate, or legitimate governance-derived decisions. Therefore, governance is performed at the cultural-institutional interstices of, in Weber's (1978) terms, authority and legitimation. Outcomes must be enacted (via state authority), and they must be seen as just (legitimate). In these settings, actors assume that the best technical or scientific knowledge enables authoritative action and is woven into narratives, arguments, and framings to legitimate decisions (Hajer, 2001).

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But is knowledge for governance primarily technical or expert? Or does governance require managing representations, stakeholder voice, and impressions? How might knowledge of how to speak and debate within governance processes emerge as a form of *knowledge of governance*, *for governance*? How can such knowledge *of* how to argue be deployed to legitimate socially contentious decisions? Although there is an extensive literature on knowledge uses in governance (e.g., Nursey-Bray et al., 2014), which includes critical studies of ways of knowing and the governance of knowledge (van Buuren, 2009) as well as the uses of nonknowledge and the unknown in governance (McGoey, 2012), the following further problematizes the image of *knowledge for governance* as a consensual input into collaborative decision making.

In this chapter, I investigate how governance actors legitimate contentious coastal land developments. I do so using qualitative data and the articulation of two contrasting literatures: techniques of neutralization from the sociology deviance (Sykes & Matza, 1957) and theorizations of spatiality—social produced space—from human geography (e.g., Massey, 2005; Soja, 1989). As Boiral (2016, p. 754) notes, techniques of neutralization involve "the release of information aimed at rationalizing and legitimizing, through different types of socially acceptable arguments." From an argumentative perspective, these techniques are a form of *knowledge of governance* used to debate, deflect criticism, and neutralize opposition (Fischer, 1990). Researchers using techniques of neutralization in sociospatial research have recently considered ethical and sustainable consumption practices (Antonetti & Maklan, 2014; Hansmann, Bernasconi, Smieszek, Loukopoulos, & Scholz, 2006; Harris & Daunt, 2011; Johnstone & Tan, 2015; Yeow, Dean, & Tucker, 2014), wildlife crime (Enticott, 2011), and corporate social responsibility and industrial production (Boiral, 2016; Fooks, Gilmore, Collin, Holden, & Lee, 2013; Meyer & Höllerer, 2016; Stuart & Worosz, 2012; Talbot & Boiral, 2015; Teh, Ahmed, & D'Arcy, 2015). Yet the intersections of knowledge, governance, and techniques of neutralization in land use governance have yet to be considered. This is puzzling because techniques of neutralization provide a frame to explore how legitimating rationalizations are deployed without questioning the environmental impacts of the land use planning.

Crucially, the coastal zone is an inherently contested space and thus an exemplary site to explore the spatialized techniques of neutralization in governance settings. As the meeting point of land and sea, the coast affords multiple human uses including recreation, conservation, and aesthetics. The coast is also habitat and ecosystem linked to species reproduction. Moreover, the coast is a site for capital valorization through land development underscored by the cultural draw of living by the sea. Yet, under anthropogenically accelerated climate change and sea level rise (SLR), storm surges now impact the coast in greater frequency and intensity, reclaiming private and public property, while threatening infrastructure and ecosystems. In such locales, the interaction of state control of coastal land use (through planning institutions) and diverse stakeholders offers insights into the enactment of knowledge *of* governance, *for* governance.

I develop this analysis over four sections. First, I review the qualitative methods and the South Australian cases. Second, I outline land-use planning as a governance institution, the techniques of neutralization, and spatiality. In the following section,

I illustrate how actors adapt the techniques of neutralization using spatial metaphors that refer to the political-juridical, economic, and ideological dimensions of coastal land use. In the final section, I propose a metatheme in these spatialized techniques of neutralization: the ongoing privileging of time over space.

Methodology

This research was a component of an Australia-wide CSIRO project (2010–2013) investigating the social and cultural barriers to the uptake of scientific knowledge into costal decision making (Clarke et al., 2013). As part of the South Australian research cluster, my focus lay on land-use planning institutions, social networks, and the cultural narratives operating within these (Scott, Balaev, & Clarke, 2018; Scott & Harvey, 2016). South Australia has a long history of employing land-use planning to protect and manage its coastline, which varies from high energy Southern Ocean zones to low energy gulf waters. Not only was it the first Australian state to account for SLR in its development setbacks (the permitted distance of the built environment to the coastal zone), it is also recognized as having transparent and well-governed planning systems (Harvey & Caton, 2010).

South Australia's planning framework regulates coastal land use. Under the "Development Act" (Government of South Australia, 2014), a state agency, the Coast Protection Board (CPB), oversees coastal planning, development, protection, and restoration. It provides advice and direction on coastal matters to the Minister for the Environment, the state planning authority (the Development Assessment Commission or DAC), and local government authorities (LGAs or local councils). In general, LGAs assess coastal development proposals with reference to the relevant section of the Development Plan. Coastal LGAs must also give regard (but not legally adhere) to CPB policy on setbacks and coastal flooding hazards (Coast Protection Board, 1991). These scalar planning arrangements guided the research design. In June 2011, a focus group with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) identified cases that were:

- Examples of key coastal development decisions
- An initial list of the key actors and organisations involved in these planning decisions
- Examples where scientific knowledge of coastal processes influenced the decision
- Examples where scientific knowledge on coastal processes where not accounted for in the decision

Following the focus group, researchers selected four case studies of coastal developments exposed to SLR risks: a coastal retirement apartment complex and a surf club redevelopment on Adelaide's metropolitan coast (whose extensive white sand beach is managed by costly sand carting), a regional coastal resort, and a large peri-urban coastal township development on a flood plain adjacent the Gulf of

St Vincent. They selected all cases on the basis that they were relatively recent (within the past six years), so that interviewees could recall the events and processes. Moreover, these examples of coastal development are paradigmatic cases (Flyvbjerg, 2001, p. 80). They highlight the more general characteristics of land-use governance and the uses of knowledge. Here, contests over coastal development and the projected risks from SLR provide an *exemplar* of the narratives circulating within land use governance. If the techniques of neutralization were deployed in the South Australian case—where the planning system is robust and transparent—they would be likely to be deployed elsewhere.

Data collection took place between July 2011 and May 2012. From the list of cases, I identified potential respondents in three ways. First, the DENR focus group provided a list of potential interview subjects. Second, a Factiva search of media articles on the selected cases highlighted political and community actors. Third, I identified additional individuals through a search of secondary data: publicly available policy documents, development plans, CPB Reports, council submissions to developers, the South Australian Hansard, surf lifesaving club annual reports, draft plans, architectural plans, and submissions to the state's DAC.

With this snowballing process (Noy, 2008), I was able to identify 47 actors, of which only two declined to participate. I conducted semistructured interviews lasting between 30 and 90 min, allowing respondents to extensively recount their subjective experiences in coastal governance. I then transcribed and analysed the interviews using NVivo, and deductively coded the data along the themes of the techniques of neutralization (discussed below) and further analyzed them through reference to spatial concepts.

Land-Use Planning, Techniques of Neutralization, and Spatiality

Land-Use Planning

Land-use planning requires elaboration, as it is a pivotal institution in the governance of coastal developments. Theoretically, land-use planning and its attendant mapping create property rights. Following Polanyi (1957), land is one of the fictitious commodities (the others being labour and money). These are fictitious for they do not easily lend themselves to commodification, and thus exchange in the market economy. Furthermore, land cannot be expropriated without the risk of short- or long-term degradation, negative externalities, or unintended consequences on adjacent areas. Formalization in property law and planning bureaucracies is necessary to secure land's continued social uses and future valorisation via market exchange (Harvey, 1978). In urban contexts, land development often occurs through *growth coalitions* between property developers and state or municipal power (Logan & Molotch, 2007). Crucially, land use planning undergirds urbanisation and is one of

the few economic development levers available to Australian states operating under the pressures of competitive federalism, ongoing deindustrialization, and the need to attract investment.

Carving up the earth's surface under state authority planning creates different zones. Land-use planning is about "what goes where" (Taussik, 2007). Zones regulate what development constructions—or protections—occur in that space. Still, zoning and development is not a technocratic procedure of high modernist planning. Instead, this institutionalization of land means planning is called upon to meet "concrete, multiply-determined objectives that could contain various social processes simultaneously" (Krippner, 2002, p. 804), including the triple bottom line of social, economic, and environmental benefits (Elkington, 1999). As such, planning does not necessarily predetermine development ends. New developments involve governance and networked decision-making that brings together legal processes assigning rights with social assessments of the proposed development's risks and benefits. Here state actors and LGA planners coordinate a range of knowledge holders: engineers, scientists, politicians, community groups, NGOs, and other stakeholders with an interest in the site and its adjacent uses (see Scott et al., 2018).

State planning organizations also establish due processes, which are a game and an incentive structure to be engaged (North, 1990). Land's fictitious nature and its multiple uses means no planning policy can cover every contingency a development proposal might present, nor account for changing political economic or environmental conditions under which developments are proposed. There is an art to aligning, negotiating, and, importantly, legitimating land-use development at controversial sites. This requires knowledgeable and reflexive actors engaging in negotiations and the deft marshalling of various forms of evidence to enact authority over the use of space. Planning's legitimacy then rests upon "a belief in the legality of enacted rules and the right of those elevated to authority under such rules to issues commands" (Weber, 1978, p. 215). Because the future is (relatively/somewhat) unknown, development proposals in contentious locations are as much about the production of belief in the authority of the planning system as they are of technical knowledge. Development decisions can therefore be justified in multiple ways—economic, sociocultural, or environmental—with no form of knowledge as ultimate arbiter; what planning assessors call "a balanced decision" (Scott & Harvey, 2016). In opening this discursive space for heterogeneous, yet socially acceptable narratives, the techniques of neutralization emerge as a form of knowledge *of* governance.

Techniques of Neutralization and Spatiality

Sykes and Matza (1957) developed "techniques of neutralization" in the sociology of deviance to differentiate the narratives "delinquents" used to justify their norm- and law-breaking behaviour. Sykes and Matza argue that techniques of neutralization are a learnt response allowing delinquents to reconcile the conflicting demands of their primary subculture with the external demands of the norm- and law-abiding

community. As part of deviant subgroups, delinquents recognise the social pressures to conform but also possess a willingness to break laws in which they too believe. Therefore, if society's formal rules are qualified and flexible, how can they be bent in some ways but not broken? Here the techniques of neutralization are a means to deflect, remould, and recast criticism from the justice system and society. They include:

1. Denial of responsibility: the appeal to external forces beyond the actor's control. Injuries are produced by circumstance and the actor denies personal accountability by claiming to have been "hopelessly propelled" into a situation; one is "acted upon rather than acting" (Sykes & Matza, 1957, p. 667).
2. Denial of injury: pivots on the legal distinction between "acts which are wrong in themselves and acts which are illegal but not immoral" (Sykes & Matza, 1957, p. 667). The question is has anyone been physically hurt by the deviant acts, such as graffiti or brawls between willing parties? Although counter to the law, the action does not cause significant harm.
3. Denial of the victim: when the delinquent accepts responsibility for their actions the victim can be denied. Any injury sustained is downplayed, for the victim might have deserved it or becomes transformed into a wrong doer. Awareness of the victim is further weakened if the deviant behaviour is against property. Where there is no immediate physical harm to owners, there is diminished awareness of the victim.
4. The condemnation of the condemners: involves "a rejection of the rejecters" (Sykes & Matza, 1957, p. 668). This rationalization deflects claims against the deviant by shifting doubt on to the motives and behaviours of those who disapprove. Here cynicism is expressed towards those upholding society's norms, casting them as "hypocrites, deviants in disguise, or impelled by personal spite" (p. 668). The delinquent, in effect, has changed the subject of the conversation in the dialogue between his own deviant impulses and the reactions of others; and by attacking others, the wrongfulness of his own behaviour is more easily repressed or lost from view (p. 668).
5. Appeal to higher loyalties: a process of articulating a devotion to smaller subgroups who are claimed to be more important than wider society: family, friends, and cliques. The actor does not reject all norms, but rather makes claims to group "norms that are higher or more pressing" (Sykes & Matza, 1957, p. 668).

In identify these neutralizing techniques, Skyes and Matza do not suggest that any one possesses ultimate efficacy, or carries more weight in determining justice outcomes. Instead, techniques of neutralization emerge as a way to place doubt upon an opponent's arguments while allowing the wrong doer to identify with societal norms. Therefore, unlike Schopenhauer's (2004) "Art of Being Right," techniques of neutralization are not explicitly about winning debates but are discursive strategies to diminish the social opprobrium of accusations, and subsequent penalties, when the accused is aware they have violated social norms. As Sykes and Matza (1957, p. 669) claim, these techniques are only "tangential or glancing lows at a dominant normative systems rather than creating an opposing ideology." Their use allows actors to

drift between value systems—wider social norms and subcultural values (Mooney, 2007)—while providing a context dependent explanation for deviant behaviour. However, a telling critique of techniques of neutralization is that they cannot explain the causes of deviance, only actors' *post-factum* explanations, rationalizations, and justifications for rule breaking (Cavanagh, Dobash, Dobash, & Lewis, 2001).

My contention is that these neutralization techniques emerge as a form of knowledge of governance to legitimate, rationalize, or deflect critiques in contentious coastal governance processes. In this milieu they are spatialized. Here, I adopt a broadly materialist interpretation of spatiality which recognises that space "is socially produced, exists in both substantial forms (concrete spatialities) and as a set of relations between individuals and groups, an 'embodiment' and medium of social life itself" (Soja, 1989, p. 120). Material spatiality then creates dialectical, recursive, and reciprocal sites for action through the interplay of social processes and geophysical space (Massey, 2005). From this perspective, spatiality is constituted through overlapping domains: political-juridical (the institutions regulating space such as planning, interwoven political systems of scale and territory), economic (space as a site for the creation of investment and profits, production and consumption), and ideological (the symbolic use of space—the coast as a cultural expression of *freedom* and *nature* or of *progress* and *development*). No single domain is determining. Within these domains, spatiality is also metaphorical, for it contains a multiplicity of potential social uses and meanings, and paradoxical, as it is produced by different knowledge forms and is consequently simultaneously knowable and unknowable (Kitchin, 2009). This kaleidoscopic spatiality creates numerous opportunities to deploy the spatialized techniques of neutralization in the governance of coastal developments.

Spatialized Techniques of Neutralization

Denial of Responsibility: Political-Juridical Structures

Actors in coastal land use governance recognize the larger political-juridical structures bearing on their actions. These can thwart, obstruct, or constrain efforts to incorporate protective measures, alter development proposals or to stop environmental protections outright. In its spatialized form, the denial of responsibility is a deferral to broader planning processes, their bureaucratic limitations, and the pro-development logics of growth coalitions. As an LGA planner laments in an interview, the scalar hierarchy of planning means "[s]tate government are the ones who have ownership of our development plan and we're the ones who try to fit it in." To neutralize complaints over coastal development, state planners who make final assessments deploy this technique. Their repertoires for action are circumscribed by external planning hierarchies, zonings, and regulations that are beyond their control:

… we don't design the development, we don't select the location but we get a copy of the application with the design and that determines the nature of the development and the application process we follow and we make the assessment on that against the plan, and then make recommendations to accept, amend, or reject the application. (State planner)

… the [land use zone] document might be old, deficient, very general, it may not be worded in a way that is easily understandable, it might be open to interpretation—it doesn't matter; that is what we have and that's what we have to work with. (State planner)

Here, denial for responsibility for future environmental impacts is conjured through reference to due process: Hopelessly propelled by legitimate procedure, the state planners reached a balanced decision regarding the development. A strident critique of this mode of neutralizing is that it limits accounting for exceptions. This is presented by actors less central to the making of coastal development decisions—scientists and engineers who provide expert advice:

… [planners and bureaucrats] tick the checklist—if they get away from the checklist mentality and work towards a decision, in other words become involved in a process rather than being the police of the process, then I think they'll have a much better [outcome]. (Consultant, environmental scientist)

Moreover, advocates of environmental protection see planning assessments weighted towards valorizing the coast as economic space. Inversely, an iteration of the denial of responsibility is that the marshalling alternative forms of evidence to counter development proposals are burdensome:

… I think economic and environmental arguments are considered differently, probably in the community as well as government, and economic arguments of 'this is going to be the benefit' are fairly quick to be accepted, whereas the environmental argument is often, I'm exaggerating here for effect, 'well prove that four different ways.' There is a different burden of proof required for environmental arguments and environmental issues than there is on economic ones—that's my personal view not a departmental view—I will make that clear! (State engineer)

Overall, this spatialized neutralization deflects environmental or future risks that cannot be managed within the existing political-juridical domain of planning assessment. This allows planners and other governance actors to claim that they are acted upon by larger structures and systemic forces. Overlapping with the denial of responsibility is the coast as an economic space.

Denial of Injury and Victim: Legitimating Economic Spatiality

Implicit in planning is the ongoing use of the coast as economic space. Materially, new developments benefit private users through land price appreciation and LGAs through rate inflation, whereas recreation hubs such as surf lifesaving clubs carry positive economic and social externalities. Hence, an urban LGA planner seeking to implement prudent coastal development recognises economic pressures (while engaging in a denial of responsibility):

> The barriers [to implementing environmental protections or blocking coastal development] are poor [meaning legally weak] state government policy for the coast. We don't have much to stop development. There is really nothing in any of the state government policies that we have to draw from to put in our development plan, stopping development. Development is always going to happen but it's a matter of mitigating the issues that go with it. That's all we can ever do. There is no policy to re-establish the [sand] dunes when a house reaches the end of its life.

In addition, the shorter term pressures for using coastal space for economic action follows the political imperatives of *growth coalition* driven economic development. As an LGA planner managing the development of a new coastal township notes:

> All the big projects are in [politically] marginal seats. [We] can't do anything as development plans are under the control of state governments. The Economic Development Board is mostly real estate developers and people who invest money.

To mitigate paradoxical norms—governance as protecting property from environmental risk; governance as enabling built development—the denial of injury and the denial of victim overlap. Both create a distinction between acts that are wrong in themselves and acts that are illegal but not immoral: no significant physical or individual harm arguments are developed. When deployed at sites where projected SLR will impact on new developments, these techniques deny future injuries and victims through an appeal to a wider, and more diffuse, social group. SLR will impact other communities so why restrict economic development at this site? For example, a LGA councillor supporting the large peri-urban township development dismisses SLR projections through reference to other communities that might be affected:

> … but a lot of the project [township development] is above places like [an adjacent industrial and residential] Peninsula, which are actually below the levels of where most of this development is. So if we do have the problems of the rising sea levels it is going to hit a lot of other areas first!

Likewise, for a representative of a surf life-saving club redevelopment abutting the Adelaide metropolitan coast:

> … we've done what we can to observe what the [state planner] said. One of their comments was that 3-meter waves will hit the building. If that is going to happen then the whole metropolitan coast will be in danger so you can't prepare against that. Although it might sound ridiculous to those that live along here, you simply can't prevent that if it is going to happen and the whole state would be under threat, not just us. I said, 'If you feel our building is under that sort of threat then you had better tell everybody that lives along the coast line to sell now and don't expect your kids to inherit the building, the house, on the seafront because it won't be there.' (Private developer)

Such statements could be interpreted as a denial of capability—the inevitability that SLR cannot be held back. However, this denial of victim and injury invokes a tacit socialization. Here the projected injuries of new developments become parsed through appeals to a generalized coastal community, present and future. Potential injury and victim caused by a new coastal development can be denied; if everyone else on the coast is affected, there is no specific victim or injury. There is disaster.

Therefore, the ongoing use of the coast as economic space can be legitimated by broadening the victim base, which is further diffused through reference to future uncertainty. Debates over the coast as economic space then broaden out into ideological clashes between pro- and anti-development actors, and the condemnation of condemners.

The Condemnation of the Condemners: Ideological Spatiality I

This technique is a brazen "rejection of the rejecters" (Sykes & Matza, 1957, p. 668). It calls into question the motives and behaviours of those who disapprove. This could be disapproval over developments or disapproval over pro-environmental/prudential development positions within governance settings. These techniques were widely articulated. Although descending into sophisticated name-calling, this technique echoes the metaphorical and paradoxical dimensions of the coast; its symbolic uses can be presented in different ways. Two indicative examples from pro- and anti-development MPs illustrate how ideological interests are condemned, first through reference to the uncertainty of coastal science, and second through growth coalition solidarity. The state MP managing the development process of a surf lifesaving club, whose location on a promenade sees it buffeted by storm surges, states:

> One thing I know for certain is that if I whacked half a dozen (coastal) scientists in this room we might come up with six different views, and the one thing they will all agree on is the need for more funding for research. What we often see is scientists being pitted against each other as opposed to an agreed position. The advocates for not doing anything will always say 'but we need more research.' (State MP)

Meanwhile, a state MP opposing a periurban township development on a coastal flood plain argues:

> I've made many speeches in parliament about the conflict of interest [the state government] has under the GAI—the Growth Areas Investigation. They did the major study for government for areas for growth on the outskirts of the city [including coastal zones]. They did that work for government and at the same time they represented private developers who had been buying up land on the fringes … for ages. Then, surprise, surprise they happen to recommend to government that areas that their clients owned were suitable for urban development! (State MP)

By making the self-interest within putatively transparent governance practices hyper visible, these MPs are condemning their opponents' motives. Scientists want more money, growth coalitions want to consolidate power over space. Broadly, pro-development groups can condemn by pointing to the coast's paradoxical nature—it is known and unknown—whereas antidevelopment groups condemn growth coalitions that privatize profits and socialise costs. In governance debates, they offer archetypical counterweights over the valorization of coastal space. A similar strategy appears in appeals to higher loyalties.

Appeal to Higher Loyalties: Ideological Spatiality II

In criminology literature, appeals to higher loyalties refer to gangs, brotherhoods, or immediate family whose interests are placed above the law or societal expectations. This approach then acts through reference to an alternative value system carried by subgroups. In its spatialized form, this occurs through the privileging of subgroups along paradoxical ideological scales. One iteration of this technique is to displace critiques over environmental risks through a claim to the higher loyalty of the local community as the ideologically privileged scale. Here, a pro-development LGA councillor mixes the condemnation of condemners with the high loyalties of local community:

> … because of this vocal minority (referring here to community environmental activists) drive things, the [planning] bureaucracy listens to them. But we didn't just have the vocal minority but a whole range of people, which gave us what I call 'the real people,' and not just self-appointed activists. As I say, I work with the people. Activists are vocal and dishonest. (LGA councillor)

An alternative higher loyalty is the belief in science and rational communicative action. The subgroup loyalty is to specialist expertise that is increasingly questioned in "post-truth" public and political discourse (see Kelly & McGoey, 2018). Yet, the higher loyalty to global scientific authorities can legitimate planning:

> There is public scepticism, but if you are presenting a project, like the (coastal resort) project or something like that, you include in your information that you've considered the IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) guidelines and things like that. These recommendations that you're putting forward go to government departments or local council or something like that. And while there may be a lot of scepticism in the community in general, you don't get that back from government departments or local council … It's all done to get development approval on projects. (Consulting engineer)

Appeals to higher loyalties—or the other neutralizing techniques—are no guarantor of success in reaching objectives. They emerge in *on-the-ground* planning process where debates descend into a series of governance tropes or ritualistic manoeuvres to signal towards, and call to account, the actions of opponents. They are a gesture to say: "We know what you are doing and this argument/rationalisation might not change the development process, but you should be aware that we know what you are doing."

Within these examples, there is of course slippage between narratives and practices, blurred lines of authority and condemnation, and multiple, imperfect paths to legitimation within coastal planning systems. There are also evolving governance networks, ongoing tension between technical knowledge and planning systems, and the incessant economic pressures on land use, which means governance is a painful, state-managed process of negotiation. Here, the spatialized techniques of neutralization are but one component of a suite of tacit tools used in negotiations. What these techniques then intimate is a spatial meta-narrative: the neutralizing of space through reference to time.

Neutralizing Space Through Time?

Human geographers view the space-time dialectic as a core theme and organising paradigm. Nevertheless, these two concepts are not created equal in either academic or everyday narratives. As Soja (1989) argues, too often space is subsumed under time; time is active and becoming, space is dead and inert—the physical crystallization of time. In studies of global capitalism, such as Harvey's work from 1989, capital's accumulation dynamics are the annihilation of inert space (distance) by time through new technologies and institutional convergence, whereas land simultaneously provides a *spatial fix* to rounds of capital investment. Massey (2005) is more moderate in her claims, yet sees the space-time dialectic as coconstituting:

> Here the representation of space takes place through its convening into a temporal sequence. The challenge of space is addressed by the imagination of time … (modernity is one space viewed through time) … The real import of spatiality, the possibility of multiple narratives, was lost. The regulation of the world into a single trajectory, via the temporal convening of space, was, and still often is, a way of refusing to address the essential multiplicity of the spatial. It is the imposition of a single universal. (p. 71)

One implication of Massey's argument is that this modernist privileging of time over space becomes folded into spatialized techniques of neutralization. This occurs through a double hermeneutic (Giddens, 2013), that is, both academic ontology and common sense, with the actors involved in land-use governance evincing a geographical imagination. In this quasifolk knowledge of coastal governance, actors recount space as *time-indifferent*. Regardless of its unique and relational spatial histories, actors viewed coastal space primarily as physical space to be remade for immediate or future uses. A pro-development LGA councillor summarizes this time-space ethos:

> … is the world going to stop because [coastal development] happens? No. So why worry about what way the sea-level is going to do! It becomes insignificant on a day-to-day basis of what's happening in my life and what may happen in the next generation. After that we don't care enough about the following generation.

In contrast, historical development and private interests sees a coastal engineer call upon future levels of expertise and public funding to defend the coast. Time saves space:

> … you only have to do a quick calculation of the value of the waterfront property and then come to the conclusion—and these places are worth over a million dollars for every 15 m of frontage—once you've (got a government implementing a retreat from SLR strategy) buying those up what about the next row? The sea doesn't stop there. So hundreds of hectares of land behind the first row are subject to flooding if you give up on the front properties. You are not talking one or two rows of houses, you're talking about going back a couple of kilometres of flood-prone land on the coast—it is ridiculous to think we would even retreat. It doesn't even stack up economically. From a structural point of view you protect, you need to protect. We will just be following what the Dutch have always done for the last 100s of years; really you don't need to be a clairvoyant to work that one out.

Time is summoned to neutralize coastal risks in "place" by using claims to an unknown spatial future. Notwithstanding, the growing sophistication of computer-aided actuarial modelling, and the temporal logics of the money economy, planning systems cannot factor in all future spatial effects. SLR and climate change is an unknown, for it is based on projections (Whatmore, 2009); therefore, why put off what you can do today until tomorrow? There is no absolute certainty over the environmental or sociopolitical future, so this future cannot be privileged over the present. Moreover, in South Australia's context, planners and politicians do not have time to wait for economic development; action needs to be taken now. If coastal space is threatened by SLR, this was to be acted upon when equipped with yet-to-manifest levels of human ingenuity and finance, underpinned by new modes of consensual coastal management. Fixed space is neutralized by fluid time. Echoing Massey (2005):

> This kind of space of modernity, in other words, doesn't see space as emerging from inter-action, nor as the sphere of multiplicity, nor as essentially open and ongoing. It is the taming of the challenge of the spatial. This is a far deeper victory of time over space than the often-referred-to deprioritisation. (p. 71)

Here, such spatialized techniques of neutralization are not just cognitive rationalizations but political tools (Fooks et al., 2013). They are a performance of power to control the responses and actions of others (Dahl, 1956). These techniques can neutralize in public domains as well by recasting the political-economic pressures of scale and place. In a modernist narrative where governance actors cannot control the past but can control the future, the privileging of time instantaneously appeals to specific communities, bearing the promise of wider social good and immediate and future material benefits, and implies coastal space is tameable regardless of future geophysical processes. Yet research shows growing belief (and experience) in the effects of climate change, and growing concern that action needs to be taken now (Giddens, 2009). Closer to the spirit of Sykes and Matza (1957), actors employing such appeals to time neutralize the concerns of wider society without questioning the legitimacy and authority of coastal land governance.

Conclusion

This analysis of the spatialized techniques of neutralization evinces a methodological problem. I conducted the interviews *postfactum*; following Bourdieu (2004), when interviewed actors create stories that are semitheoretical or seek to impress the interviewer, while presenting a particular image and identity of the participant—one that conforms to their self-image. Whether these techniques and spatial metaphors are used *in situ* governance practices or only emerge as rationalizations in interviews following the event is an area for further research.

Nevertheless, in this chapter I have approached the theme of knowledge for governance from the angle of knowledge of governance—how to articulate contests in

coastal development. Bringing techniques of neutralization from the sociology of deviance to governance contexts, I have foregrounded different—and subversive—forms of knowledge. Cosituated within the formal, technical, and rational process of land development is a tacit knowledge of how to legitimate planning decisions. Actors use spatial imagery and metaphors to create neutralizing narratives: denying responsibility in the political-juridical domain; denying injury and victims to legitimate the coast as economic space; using competing ideologies of space to frame the condemning of condemners and appeals to higher loyalties; and a metanarrative privileging time over space. Such ritualistic efforts in neutralizing opponents' claims emerge not from a need to directly protect individuals or coastal space, but to deflect attention from planning arrangements and governance processes that enable—with a dull inevitability—environmentally and socially risky coastal development to occur. Hopefully, this initial dialogue between techniques of neutralization and the human geography of land governance may open new avenues for researchers in other governance settings, allowing them to explore how the techniques of neutralization circulate at the nexus of knowledge of, and knowledge for, governance.

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