Towards an Institutionalist Sociology of Responsible Innovation

“Responsible Innovation” is held as a collective noun which appears to be performing an important integrative function. But within this integrating logic, internal variants are visible, not least through the lens of historical antecedents. This presentation will offer a preliminary sketch of these clustered “framings” and “frameworks” of RI from historical origins to contemporary settings, and will identify the architects and proponents of the different variants.

The presentation argues that the proliferation of micro-level initiatives of RI that we witness can be understood as a dialectical process combining the integrative logic mentioned above with variety-generation. It offers, as one contribution to the task of developing explanatory theory of RI, some building blocks for an institutionalist sociology of responsible innovation, and invites discussion and alternatives to the propositions put forward.

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