



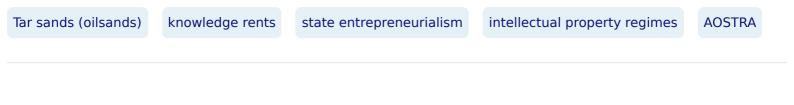


ABSTRACT

The production and transfer of knowledge are essential for producing oil. In this paper, I examine the nexus between a subnational quasi-state publicly funded hydrocarbon research program and a novel knowledge-production regime and explore how this relationship resulted in the production of oil from Alberta's oilsands. In particular, the paper highlights the significance of the Alberta Oilsands Technology and Research Authority (AOSTRA), a quasi-public institution credited with financing research, which among other finding, made the in-situ oilsands' mining method steam-assisted gravity drainage (SAGD) commercially viable. SAGD proved essential in enlarging the Province's oil reserves, but this paper focuses on AOSTRA's novel intellectual property regime. Under that regime the intellectual property AOSTRA (the Provincial government) held the licensing rights to the research it funded and commanded its future revenues. In contrast to accounts of the development of the current mode of entrepreneurial knowledge production that emphasizes the new knowledge-enclosures

of the biosphere, I suggest this was a novel system of knowledge-enclosure of the "necrosphere." I stress how this knowledge-production-transfer regime only emerged in Alberta because of the specific material characteristics of bitumen and the Provincial government's tripartite role as resource rentier, funder of the research, and owner of the resource.

KEYWORDS:



Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Sean Carlton, Francis Cody, Dean Curran, Maarten de Kadt, Mazen Labban, William Max Nelson, Darren Sjogren, Kevin Taft, and two anonymous reviewers for their comments on earlier versions of this paper. I would also like to thank Josh Rosenblatt and Adi Forkasiewicz for copyediting earlier drafts.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.



| Information for | Open access |
|----------------------------|----------------------|
| Authors | Overview |
| R&D professionals | Open journals |
| Editors | Open Select |
| Librarians | Dove Medical Press |
| Societies | F1000Research |
| Opportunities | Help and information |
| Reprints and e-prints | Help and contact |
| Advertising solutions | Newsroom |
| Accelerated publication | All journals |
| Corporate access solutions | Books |

Keep up to date

Register to receive personalised research and resources by email





Copyright © 2025 Informa UK Limited Privacy policy Cookies Terms & conditions

Taylor & Francis Group an informa business



Registered in England & Wales No. 01072954 5 Howick Place | London | SW1P 1WG