

University of Groningen

The sound of high winds

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I want to express my sincere gratitude to a number of people.

Foremost is Diek (prof dr ir H Duifhuis) who for 20 years has been a true, though most of the time distant colleague, and who immediately responded positive to my request to be my promotor. The same, but for a shorter period, holds for my second promotor Ton (prof dr A J M Schoot Uiterkamp). Both were very confident in my capacities and my work and they also allowed me to change the subject without much ado.¹ “The point is, Frits”, they lectured me, “that you demonstrate your scientific capability, the subject as such is not that important”. And it is not by obligation that I also mention my wife Luci, who for two years gracefully took most of my share in cooking and household chores.

There are some others I would like to commemorate. My colleague Aart van der Pol who was always interested in new work and new ideas and sharp in his comments. Terry Mazilsky, one of the beleaguered residents, who read the first and the final chapters for language and clarity. My friend Dorothé Faber with whom I discussed my work from a very different, non-technical perspective. And the students and secretaries who had to abide with too little attention devoted to them and me again and again forgetting things. I hope they felt I did try to support them even though I was busy or being elsewhere in my thoughts. Much the same goes for my daughters Inge and Maya, who will meet me at the end of this period as my beloved paranympths.

Two organizations have supported my research. The province of Groningen has subsidized the measurement project at the Rhede wind farm to support the residents and thus helped to produce a report and after that a scientific publication on the effect of atmospheric stability. The British Renewable Energy Foundation gave a grant to elaborate my thoughts on

¹ Originally my thesis was to be about Sound monitoring in quiet areas, and Diek, Ton and I discussed the nature of sound and quietness and our response to it; this changed when I became ever more involved in wind turbines.

the beating character of wind turbine sound, which led to my second publication on wind turbine noise. The KNMI gave support by providing data that helped me prepare the presentation about the wind statistics.

My Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences allowed me to spend half of my working time for two years on this promotion. Unfortunately there was no money for a substitute, so I had to fit my usual work in the other half of the time. It has been busy sometimes, but I am lucky to have work that I like (well, most of it) and is worthwhile, so I never count the hours from 9 to 5. It is, I think, significant that I have a position in a University based Science Shop, because that position enables me to spend time on projects for the benefit of citizen groups with no net financial return. This book shows that citizens may need the help of science to support their claims and improve their situation, which is not available elsewhere except perhaps at high costs. On behalf of the people I have helped I am grateful our University and Faculty are still firm supporters of the Science Shop idea.¹

¹ Don't count your chickens before they are hatched! At the time this book was finalized, 21 years after the Science Shop for Physics started, it was announced that because of large financial deficits the Faculty executive board proposed to close down all four faculty science shops.