Participatory Design

What is Participatory Design (PD)?

1) what do you do when you are doing PD?

2) Structural and contextual conditions

Changing conditions ⇒ new challenges for PD

T Bratteigs slides (translated)

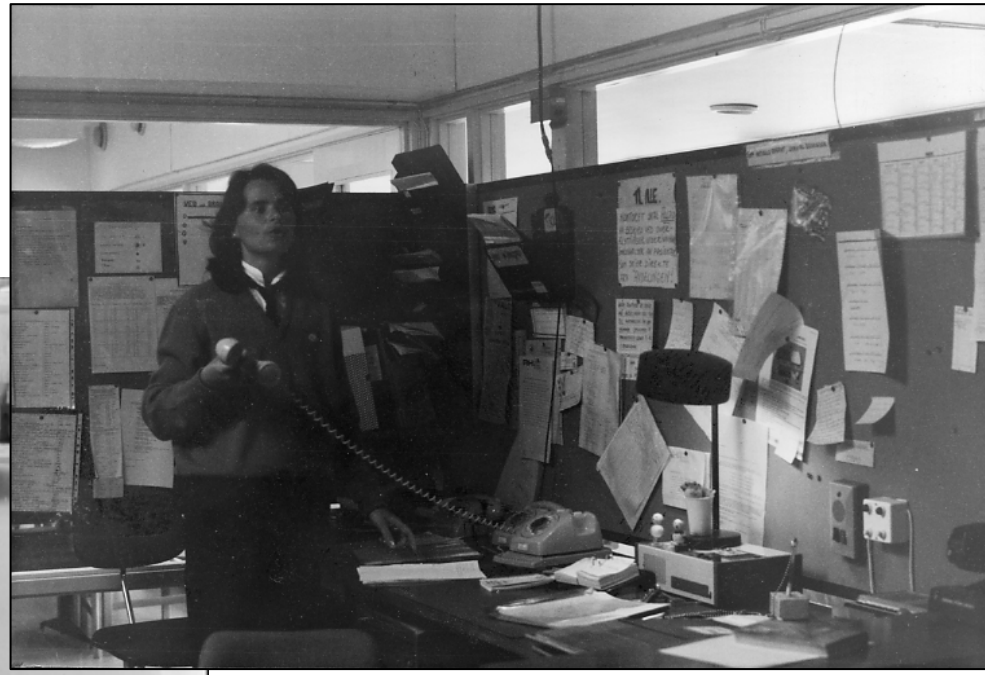
Participatory Design an example: The Florence project

- Research project 1983-1987
- Dept of Informatics (Kristen Nygaard)
  (not trade union project)
- 2 hospitals/ wards
  - asthmatic and allergic children Rikshospitalet (national hospital Oslo)
  - cardiology, Sentralsykehuset i Akershus (regional hospital outside Oslo)
- use and user perspective
- development of methods/techniques for design cooperation and mutual learning
- designed 3 prototypes in cooperation with nurses

Florence project

Mutual learning:

- what are the nurses really doing?
- how could nurses´work be supported by IT systems (computer systems)



Observations of nurses work practices

”An important lesson from the Florence project is that nurses don’t do what they say that they do”

(Bratteteig p 45, 2004)

Discussions about information and IT:

systems descriptions as means in the meeting between different logics (nurses and informaticians)

Discussions about computers in their day-to-day work:

system-presentations as a mean to develop ideas - ideas based on both logics

Discussions about the prototype

Contextual conditions for Participatory Design

= structural/contextual conditions for sharing power

- institutions for negotiations and sharing of power
  - trade unions
  - laws and regulations

- cultural and social traditions
  - ethics and values (protestant ethics)

⇒ the large LO/NAF initiative in 1960s

⇒ trade union projects in 1970s
Iron and Metal project 1970-73;
Kristen Nygaard m.fl.

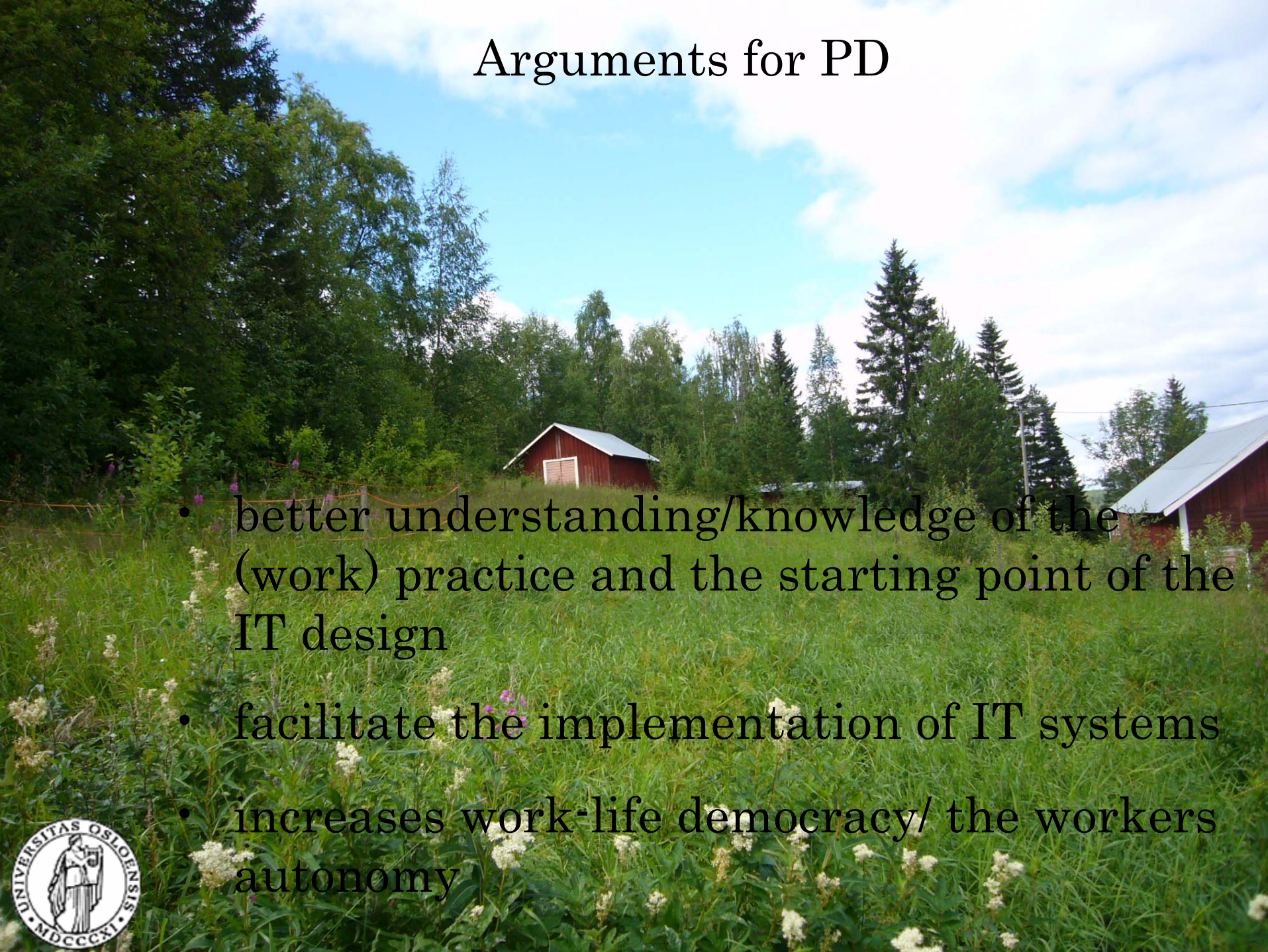
⇒ board representations
⇒ Worker Protection and Working Environment Act
⇒ the world´s first data agreement

Participation = sharing power

Applying Participatory Design

- **mutual learning** implies
  - teaching with a goal to develop an own standpoint
  - learning to see what we are observing and hearing
  - showing mutual respect is a demand
  - and to admit professional skills, qualifications and knowledge (others than the designers)
- **cooperation in design** implies
  - distribution of power in terms of design decisions
  - accepting that power and obligations intersect in changes (improvements)
  - changing (extending) the qualities (standards)

Arguments for PD



- better understanding/knowledge of the (work) practice and the starting point of the IT design
- facilitate the implementation of IT systems
- increases work-life democracy/ the workers autonomy

From government to e-government: gender, skills, learning and technology

Pirjo Elovaara Blekinge Institute of Technology
Christina Mörtberg Oslo University/Umeå University

Aim of the project

- to study learning and knowledge processes among women employed in the Swedish public sector in change
- develop and test different forms of support for learning and knowledge processes connected to the work and ICT-development
- create an arena of/for action for local re-negotiations of ICT, gender and design

4 Municipalties South of Sweden

Civil servants

Workshops

Carteographic exercise - scenarios

Cameras - walking through

Digital Story telling

Informal interviews

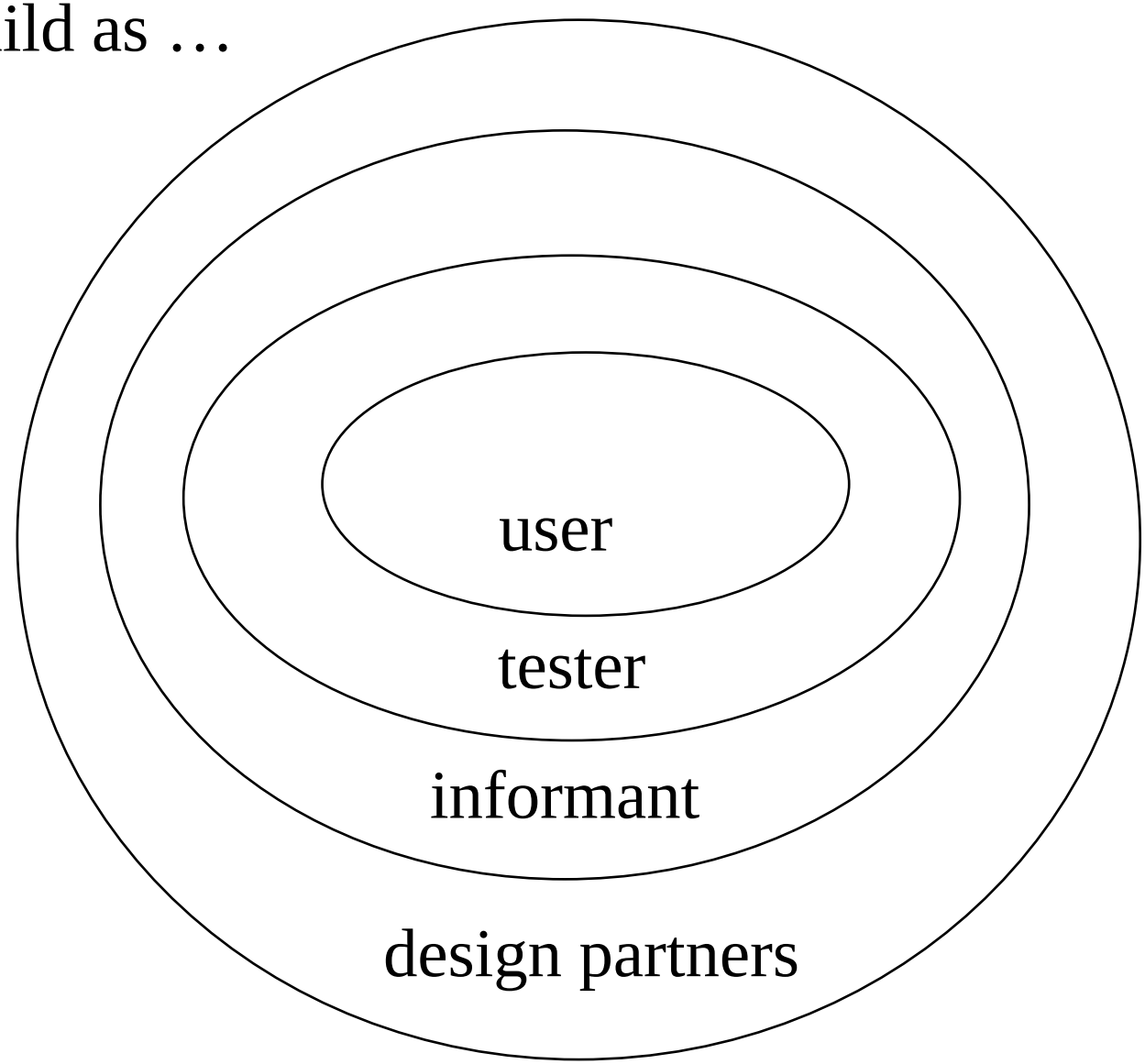

Multiple communication artefacts
Gender performance


Anna´s story
Became visible depending on PD

Methods and techniques

- document analysis
- interviews
- observations
- thinking aloud
- workshop
- future workshop
- scenarios
- prototypes

The Child as …



Druin, A (1999c) The Role of Children in the Design of New technology, HCIL Technical report No. 99-23.

What can Participatory Design be? (participation in design)

general: user participation in development of conditions that will have impact on their everyday lives

in systems design: user participation in activties in the design process that enable them to intervene in decisions that will have impact on the IT system and it impact on the (work) practice

Participatory Design is difficult

Participatory Design aim is to gain approval for design solutions in local use traditions in a way that the suggested IT system/solution can be used to change the tradition

Doing PD shapes dilemmas:

- if we want to learn users about technical choices & qualities without manipulating them
- if we want to keep the user autonomy even if one thinks their decision are bad
- if we really want to understand how users are thinking and acting as professionals, thus, to understand their standards and routines (logics)
- if we want users to respect our qualifications without consider them as the only ones or better than theirs

Why Participatory Design?

PD

- IT systems adapted to the (work) practices
- design and use intersect in changing processes
- possibilities to sustain the users/workers autonomy – also in longer perspective (overview, learning)

And:

- PD-techniques open up for understandings of the complexity in the practices or the use context
- PD is gaining approval for demands and needs of the practices core activities
- working with the definition of the problem may give new answers – and new problems
- a variety of perspectives means better and more innovative design ideas

Contemporary Society

- **Globalisation of**

  working life, of entertainment, and of systems design as an industry
  - many actors, also unknown
  - actors are shifting : intrests and roles are shifting

- **Systems design practices are divided in**
  - production of software products
  - integration and tailoring of such products in organisations

- **Cooperation and communication are increasing and are supported by a variety of technologies**

Participatory Design - in a changing world

structural/cultural layers

- global institutions compete with local (laws & regulations)
- distance to decision makers increase in global organisations
- institutions where power are shared are changing from governmental/public constructions towards market oriented bodies (competition)
- individual tailoring & services (creates surplus value on the market)

Participatory Design - in a changing world

Process layer (level)

- lack of time
- increased distances

in order to create mutual trust
&
learning various logics

- digitalisation includes articulation work
- existing solutions generates problems to be solved