

## **Technosecurity Cultures**

Guest Editors: Jutta Weber and Katrin M. Kämpf

'Security' has gained a central place in contemporary societies preoccupied with dangers to their future. Policymakers, researchers and mass media increasingly address a broad range of societal issues—from migration and border control to crime or public health—as 'security' problems. Various technologies are promoted as solutions to the growing demand for security (Ericson and Haggerty 2006; Bröckling et al. 2010).

This tendency has been analysed as a securitization process since the end of the Cold War. New 'threat' scenarios justified 'defence' measures, especially the expansion of military forces. Through a broader securitisation process, moreover, claims of existential threats to society justify urgent extraordinary measures (Buzan et al., 1998: 24-25; Balzacq et al. 2010; Waever 1995). As means 'to manage dangerous irruptions in the future', this strategy invests in technosecurity architectures and extensive risk-management techniques (Aradau and van Munster 2007). Indeed, 'risk' itself becomes a governance tool as well as a problem-diagnosis (Dillon 2008; Aradau et al. 2008).

Security discourses and practices focus less on an empirical, causal assessment of threats (Aradau et al. 2008). Instead they elaborate an anticipatory maximum techno-security (Mattelart 2010), e.g. by urging the pre-emption of 'unknown unknowns' (Daase and Kessler 2007). The shift in security – from a proactive to a pre-emptive and preventive mode – coincides with a search for technological superiority (Grusin 2010).

An entire 'society of security' has been facilitated by advances in surveillance technology and computer systems, handling large databases on entire populations or on specific transitory groups seen as suspicious or threatening. In techno-security culture, the invocation of such 'dangers' justifies greater control over everyone's lives. Security has been turned into a multi-fold, dynamic and complex sociopolitical practice (Holert and Terkessidis 2003; Balzacq et al. 2010). Beyond institutions and policy makers, many different agents—not just humans, but also algorithms, concepts, machines, or cyborgs—produce meanings, norms and ways of governing (Weber 2014). Thus techno-security cultures are a multi-agential process shaping knowledge, policies, power relations and experience around 'insecurity' problems.

There is a large body of research on securitization, pre-emption and risk (Aas et al. 2009; Amoore 2013; Aradau 2010; Dillon 2008; Lemke 2011a/b; Pugliese 2010). Going further, we call for approaches to technosecurity combining different fields – Science and Technology Studies (or Software Studies) with Critical Security, Governmentality Studies and/or Cultural Studies. These approaches scrutinize power relations and governance modes. They can help to analyse technosecurity as a multi-agential sociopolitical, cultural process.

Relevant fields of investigation include:

- Social sorting mechanisms embedded in algorithms, databases, border control procedures, security architectures, predictive policing, bio-security or bio-criminology
- Biopolitics of border securitization technologies
- Critical examination of bio-, and neuro-criminology technologies
- The biopolitical implications of surveillance medicine in processes of securitization
- The technologies used to classify populations as at risk or as a risk
- Detailed analyses of the deployment of risk
- Attempts to pre-mediate security via algorithms, technologies, software

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Abstracts should be sent by **01.08.2015**, as a basis to advise contributors on the focus of papers.  
Full papers should be sent by **March 2016**, though earlier submissions would be helpful. Maximum length 7000 words; the revision may be given a longer limit.

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