EWIS 2019 Call for Papers

Global reconfigurations of science, technology, and security

Workshop Convenors:
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Science and technology play a key role in the social and political changes that our societies undergo, and yet critical reflection on this role has historically been a side-conversation in the fields of international relations (IR) and security studies. This is in contrast to the work done in science and technology studies (STS), which has a long history of unpacking the social and political within scientific and technological systems. STS, however, has infrequently engaged in a sustained fashion with the IR and security studies community. This has changed over the last decade, as several researchers from these communities have tried to cross the divide, particularly in the field of critical security studies (CSS). A traditional IR focus on, for example, defining the appropriate regime for governing nuclear weapons is being opened up to study much more complex configurations of technologies and security challenges, and logics of doing security.

The proposed workshop will focus on these new configurations of science, technology, and security and unpack how our societies think of and deal with new technologies in the context of contemporary threat politics. For example, current developments in biology and computing subvert many basic assumptions about the practices of knowledge production, innovation, and the role of the state in ensuring security. This workshop will bring together researchers at the intersection of IR, CSS, and STS to develop new ways of productively analyzing science and technology governance in the age of preparedness and globalized insecurity. By doing so, the workshop seeks to further the debate on integrating STS concepts and approaches to security studies and open the debate on how IR and security studies can enrich STS and the research on science and technology governance.

The workshop will create a common ground for STS and CSS by drawing on their experiences with these cross-disciplinary themes:

- First, what are the relations between the critical and the "traditional" positivist approaches to security/ science, technology & society? What strategies do we share to cross this divide?

- Second, how is critical research understood in STS, IR and CSS? Is there common ground or not about what it means to do critical work and what is the relevance of critique?

- Third, what is the context of the turn to practice? How do we relate to and engage with the world of practice, how do we reflect on these relations, and how does this engagement shape the concepts and methods used in our research?