Crime Prevention and Security Management

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Editors

National Security, Surveillance and Terror

Canada and Australia in Comparative Perspective

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Foreword

The social sciences, perhaps especially in the past two decades, are replete with analyses that announce a new sociopolitical order in which familiar institutions, apparatuses and legalities are transformed in form or function. Many of these theories reflect directly on questions of security, surveillance and antiterror initiatives. Perhaps most famously, the Risk Society thesis envisaged an entirely new modernity in which global, unpredictable and catastrophic risks undermined the family, nation states, trades unions and even scientific expertise. A series of security-related spinoff theories foresaw the transformation of police into security-informatic brokers, mapped out the transformation of criminal justice around risk-based mentalities, envisioned the rise of governmental 'precautionary' logics that assumed worst case scenarios and formed themselves around merely imagined disasters. Elsewhere, a new age of exceptionalism has been identified in which a contagion of camps strips human and civil rights from problem people and imposes upon them a regime of bare life. In other writings, national borders as geopolitical places collapse, as the division between internal and external security is undermined and surveillance and militaristic forms once primarily reserved for extra-national security are turned inward. Globalisation, the 'new terrorism,' asymmetrical warfare, the aftermath of 9/11, a clash of civilisations and a myriad other more or less spectacular emergencies and tragedies are found to be root causes of totalised shifts.

These are not just the sensationalist fantasies of ambitious ivory tower academics. Many of them are borrowed or developed from government think-tanks, commissions, policy pronouncements, 'revolutions in military affairs' and so on. As well, no one can doubt that new forms of terrorism have required marked changes in border-security practices; analyses of global warming stimulate programmes for rendering cities and infrastructures 'resilient'; new technologies enable mass surveillance on a hitherto unimaginable scale; and so on. Almost all of these are worthy of concentrated empirical analysis and theoretical attention. The problem lies not in identifying emergent and troubling developments so much as in magnifying these into all-pervasive, unprecedented, irreversible, catastrophic and irresistible sea changes. Sometimes they are mere straws in the wind: police have not been transformed by risk—at least not in ways envisioned. Sometimes they are plain wrong: 'camps,' epitomised by Guantanamo Bay, turn out to be heavily regulated spaces where sovereignty is hide-bound. Sometimes they turn out to be relatively easily controllable: Ebola, Avian Flu and other 'global pandemics' were managed into mainly local epidemics of limited lethality. Sometimes resistance is effective, as in many instances where CCTV cameras have been uninstalled. The future, we might say, is a foreign country and our theories may not work there.

This is why, arguably, analyses of security and securitisation should be progressively insulated from grand conceptions of global or institutional transformation because these later usually become both politically and theoretically problematic. This strategy already has been suggested with respect to that master variable 'neoliberalism' that was used to explain almost every disliked political change since 1970 and which has turned out to be, at best, a kind of greasy, portmanteau term: hard to pin down and carrying a lot of hidden baggage. Such broad concepts and visions may be useful at first, when certain changes need highlighting and outlining, but they become a hindrance once it becomes necessary to focus analysis to gain theoretical and political traction with specific developments. In the domain of security and surveillance, what are no longer necessary are sweeping generalisations backed up by carefully selected examples that ignore or understate complexities and counter-trends. We need more detailed studies that work meticulously in the shadow cast by

the grander utterances. That is, theoretical depictions of the risk society, or the state of exception or whatever, may inform analysis, but ongoing research studies should not strive to illustrate or instantiate these 'theories,' nor should they be structured around such accounts. Almost inevitably this will lead to further selection and omissions of convenience to the theoretical account and its advocates, but effectively handicapping a politics that seeks to engage with specific jurisdictions and the formation of what Foucault terms 'strategic knowledge.'

A volume such as this, that focuses on two specific (but comparable) polities and that seeks to explore particular lines of development within and across these, is especially timely and welcome. It develops a form of analysis that should not be understood as 'local' or 'particular' but rather as *precise*. As well, because of the array of 'securitising' techniques, apparatuses and contexts that are explored—from border policing to indigenous politics, from police powers to the 'intelligence community,' from the legislative change to private security—it cannot be dismissed as 'narrow.' It is, collectively, of very considerable *scope*. This is not the 'scope' of grand transnational generalities, but the scope that takes in a range of specific settings, a scope that complements precision. When brought together in one volume the wide ranging but specific and precise studies produce awareness of diversity and complexity while nevertheless recognising broader tendencies—for they are no more than that—that are sheltered under grander pronouncements on sovereignty, securitisation and surveillance.

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November 2015

Series Editor's Introduction

In this volume, Randy K. Lippert, Kevin Walby, Ian Warren and Darren Palmer have put together an impressive range of chapters and marked out new territory in the analysis of the response to terror; you will not find the issues covered in this book available in one volume anywhere else. The book is based on a comparison of the approaches of two countries—Australia and Canada—that have amassed considerable experience on security issues but which until now have received much less attention than the UK and the USA. While Canada and Australia share similar histories, socially and economically, including links to the British Commonwealth and common law traditions, the authors attend to some of the distinct differences that have a bearing on and shape the nature of the response to terror, for example, while Australia is without a *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* or *Bill of Rights* this is not the case in Canada.

More than this though, as the editors note, the book draws on a range of approaches and theoretical frameworks from a wide variety of disciplines, facilitating a more detailed critical analysis than has been undertaken hitherto. This book will walk you through the varying interpretations of the word 'security,' as well as the roles of different security actors at national and local level. You will read about the ways in which these actors sometimes work in harmony to provide a security blanket, and sometimes work in conflict to create security gaps, all of which are rarely acknowledged and much less subjected to scrutiny.

The book is divided into three parts and in each the editors summarise and guide you through the main issues. The first part introduces the issues affecting the expansion of securitisation through, for example, increased partnership work in response to the differing risks to national security. There are many implications and the crucial role of balancing security with people's right to privacy features prominently. The range of ideas covered in the first part of the book is developed in Part 2 with the inclusion of a selection of insightful and empirically based case studies. The expansion of security is reflected here in the examination of Corkill, Brooks and Coole's 'language groups' used by security actors, but also by Walby, Lippert and Gacek in their assessment of the considerable overlaps in behaviour between different security actors through their imaginative use of Freedom of Information requests as a research tool.

The final part focuses on dilemmas in national security, surveillance and terror, looking at accountability, privacy, sovereignty and legitimacy, topics that are common to both countries. You will learn about a security measure that is of increasing importance but only rarely discussed; unmanned aerial devices (UAVs), as well as a specific security programme, the Canadian-US Shiprider programme which seeks to remove a significant barrier—the country border—to law enforcement. There is much that other regions, and authorities at different levels, may learn from this.

This text provides rich insight and new thinking from disciplines that are often seen as marginal to this topic, and in countries that have much to contribute to our need to better understand how the world, locally and nationally, can respond more effectively to the threats posed by terror while remaining true to the principles of freedom and privacy. For students of security, it must be remembered these are not just important democratic rights, but fundamental aspects, perhaps the most important ones, of what constitutes good security practice.

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