Technoscientific activisms: Collective action with, against, and beyond the burden of proof

Dr. Tomás Criado

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Schedule</th>
<th>Mondays, 13:00 - 14:30</th>
<th>MCTS, room 270</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6.11.2017</td>
<td>Technoscience and collective ‘action’ beyond heroism</td>
<td>Tomás Criado</td>
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<tr>
<td>13.11.2017</td>
<td>Counter-expertise 1</td>
<td>Tomás Criado</td>
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<td>20.11.2017</td>
<td>Counter-expertise 2</td>
<td>Tomás Criado</td>
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<td>27.11.2017</td>
<td>Translating 1</td>
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<td>4.12.2017</td>
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<td>11.12.2017</td>
<td>Issues</td>
<td>Tomás Criado</td>
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<td>18.12.2017</td>
<td>Cosmopolitics 1</td>
<td>Tomás Criado</td>
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<td>8.1.2017</td>
<td>Cosmopolitics 2</td>
<td>Tomás Criado</td>
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<tr>
<td>15.1.2017</td>
<td>Self-experimentation 1</td>
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<td>22.1.2017</td>
<td>Self-experimentation 2</td>
<td>Tomás Criado</td>
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<tr>
<td>29.1.2017</td>
<td>Preparation of the final presentation (Homework)</td>
<td>Tomás Criado</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.2.2017</td>
<td>Final group presentation</td>
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Description of the seminar

This course will seek to provide an introduction to the wide STS literature providing insights on the transformation entailed by the irruption of many groups and collectives in the once sacred space and activities of science and technology production. From the participatory engagements of lay people in expert-driven processes—such as citizen science—to articulations of counter-expertise and evidence-based activism—such as the work on affected communities, concerned groups, embodied health and environmental justice activism to engage in conversations with experts—many of these practices and activities are not only transforming the who and the how of technoscientific production, but also its spaces and outputs. Hence, the main idea of this course would be to chart STS accounts on technoscientific activisms, paying minute attention not only to the complex distributions and attributions of agency they entail, but also to the particular relations these forms of collective action have with the burden of proof and different forms of ‘truth politics.’
Course Information

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Advanced Topics in STS</th>
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<tr>
<td>Course No.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Monday 13:00-14:30</td>
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<td>Place</td>
<td>MCTS, Augustenstr. 46</td>
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<td>Room 270</td>
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<td>Language</td>
<td>English</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lecturer</td>
<td>Dr. Tomás Criado</td>
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<td>Resources</td>
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<td>Creditable to</td>
<td>Master’s program in STS</td>
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<td>Credits &amp; Requirements</td>
<td>3 ECTS</td>
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<td>Final group essay of 8,000-10,000 words, composed by the slight rewriting of the 1,500-2,000 word essays written per bloc:</td>
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<td>DELIVERABLE A: 26.11</td>
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<td>DELIVERABLE B: 10.12</td>
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<td>DELIVERABLE C: 17.12</td>
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<td>DELIVERABLE D: 14.1</td>
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<td>DELIVERABLE E: 28.1.</td>
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<td>Final deliverable: 12.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Consultation</td>
<td><a href="mailto:tomas.criado@tum.de">tomas.criado@tum.de</a></td>
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Methodology

Students will be asked to work in ‘groups’ (3 people per group being the ideal number) in which they will select and analyse a particular dispute, issue or mobilisation, searching to apply the contents of the course to dialogue with their case study as a way to identify the particular mode of ‘collective action’ at stake.

The first task, beyond grouping, will be to discuss the title/name and mode of ‘collective’ these groups want to be addressed as, something which will bear on the 4 particular outputs required from the group (5 essays– one per bloc of texts, each having a maximum of 1,500-2,000 words, the first one including a detailed description of the phenomenon–, ideally using an online text editor, allowing their compilation in a final single 8,000-10,000 words essay), but also on the grading system.

For instance, two possibilities modes could be: (a) a collective entity–where all texts should bear the mark of such collective trace, not distinguishing between people and their arguments, and being graded as a single entity; (b) a concatenation of free individuals–identifying who said what, and receiving individual marks. But students are free to choose their particular mode of collective address, which could even change from output to output in a dynamic fashion.
• How to understand collective action from an STS standpoint? Science, Technology, and Social Movements.
• The ANT challenge: (1) the role of controversies to open up a 'non-modern' and 'agnostic' tale of collective action; (2) a focus on 'hybrid collectifs,' or how to chart forms materially heterogeneous forms of composition, delegation, distribution and attribution of agency; (3) an 'irreductive' account, or why we should focus not only on 'action', but also on 'passion' to go beyond heroism.
• The specificities of 'technoscientific activisms:' Acting with, against or beyond the burden of proof and the mobilization of technical issues.
• A program for the course: Through a detailed attention to the literature of ANT/STS on collective action and social movements, we will try to identify 'operations' of technoscientific activism whereby particular 'actors' appear as relevant or are attributed or granted relevance.
• A constant corollary in the back of our minds: What can activism learn from STS, and STS from activism?

Key readings

Further or background reading

13.11.2017
Counter-expertise 1

• Operation: Counter-expertise
• Main actor: Laypeople or the Anyone

Key readings
20.11.2017 Counter-expertise 2

- Operation: Counter-expertise
- Main actor: Laypeople or the Anyone

Key readings


27.11.2017 Translating 1

- Operation: Translating
- Main actor: Emergent concerned groups

Key readings

• Operation: Translating
• Main actor: Emergent concerned groups

Key readings


11.12.2017 Issues T. Criado

• Operation: Issues
• Main actor: Publics

Key readings

• Operation: **Cosmopolitics**
• Actor: **Victims and Diplomats**

**Key readings**

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8.1.2018 Cosmopolitics 2 T. Criado

• Operation: **Cosmopolitics**
• Actor: **Victims and Diplomats**

**Key readings**
15.1.2018  Self-experimentation 1  T. Criado

- Operation: Self-experimentation
- Main actor: Hackers and self-managed guinea pigs

Key readings

22.1.2018  Self-experimentation 2  T. Criado

- Operation: Self-experimentation
- Main actor: Hackers and self-managed guinea pigs

Key readings