



ROTTERDAM SYMPOSIUM DUTCH SURVEILLANCE STUDIES 19-20 JUNE 2025

Programme Symposium

AI-Imaginations and Public Safety

Symposium organized by
Marc Schuilenburg, Majsja Storbeck, Rosamunde Van Brakel
Erasmus School of Law, Rotterdam / Crime & Society Research Group, VU Brussel



AI and algorithms have profoundly reshaped the field of public safety. From the spread of deepfakes and disinformation to issues of algorithmic profiling and the increasing dependence on Big Tech: AI challenges social conditions underpinning democratic values, including privacy, non-discrimination, and an equal playfield between public and private sectors. These real risks — public values at stake and overreliance on commercial companies — do not yet receive enough attention in the debate on AI and public safety. The dominant perspective is that “everything” can be captured in data and that safety issues can be more “effectively” and “efficiently” tackled with the latest AI-tools in the service of “law & order.”

We need better AI. The goal of this symposium is to envision different approaches from the prevailing paradigm of “law & order,” with its vocabulary of “fighting” and “precautionary thinking.” To find a way forward, we need to create socio-technological imaginaries of “AI to come”: new ways of understanding, envisioning and implementing AI that promotes more equitable, humane, and sustainable societies, in which we focus on empowerment instead of repression. These AI-Imaginations can be used as critical drivers of change in our algorithmic society. To paraphrase sociologist David Lyon: “What might happen if AI were guided by an ontology of peace rather than violence, an ethic of care rather than control, an orientation toward forgiveness rather than suspicion?”



Location and Public Transportation: The Symposium is at the Erasmus School of Law, Sanders Building, in room 0-07 (Moot Court), which is located on the ground floor. Drinks are at the Pavilion, next to the pond. The nearest tram stop to the university is Woudestein, which is just a 4-minute walk away, while the closest metro stop is Kralingse Zoom, approximately a 10-minute walk. For check-in, you can conveniently use your bank pass or Apple Pay, but please don't forget to check out as well! For a map of Erasmus, scan the QR code provided, or [click this link](#).

Accommodation: We suggest considering accommodation in Kralingen, a peaceful and quiet neighborhood near the university. For hotels, Novotel (next to the university), Savoy Hotel, and Intel Hotel are our recommended choices.

Emergency contact: storbeck@law.eur.nl

 ai maps

This event is supported by the small grants scheme of the research initiative on Rebalancing Public & Private Interests and Erasmus Center of Empirical Legal Studies of Erasmus School of Law.

Erasmus
School of
Law



Thursday, 19 June 2025

Location: Campus Erasmus University Rotterdam, Sanders building, room 0-07 (Moot Court)

8:30 – 9:00 **Arrival and Registration**

9:00 – 9:15 **Welcome Address • MARC SCHUILENBURG (ERASMUS UNIVERSITY ROTTERDAM)**

9:15 – 10:00 **Keynote 1**

GPT-NL: Good Things Take Time

SELMAR SMIT (TNO, THE NETHERLANDS)

Selmar Smit is Manager Science & Technology Autonomous Systems & Decision Support at TNO. He is responsible for, among other things, the development of AI for police and defence, but is also the founder of GPT-NL, a Dutch open language model.

In the race to integrate AI, speed often wins over compliance – but at what cost? Rushing AI deployment without legal safeguards invites not just regulatory backlash but a severe erosion of public trust. Trust is crucial—especially when AI influences governmental decisions. Sovereignty matters because a black box built by entities you don't trust is a risk you cannot afford. If AI is to shape our policies, services, and societies, we must ensure it is built on legal, ethical, and transparent foundations – because good things take time.

10:00 – 10:15 **Coffee Break**

10:15 – 11:15 **Session 1: Bureaucracy and Feudalism in a Panoptic Society (chair: Marlon Kruizinga)**

From *Kafka's The Trial* to *Foucault and Sartre's theories of surveillance* and the dangers of *data feudalism*, this panel traces how power operates through opaque systems, powerlessness, enforced visibility, and corporate data monopolies—ending imagining alternative futures of transparency and collective access.

- ***Refurbishing the spatial gaze: rereading Sartre and Foucault from the point of view of AI*** • HUB ZWART (ERASMUS UNIVERSITY ROTTERDAM)
- ***The danger of data feudalism: a case for freedom of data usage in AI training*** • FILIPPO MARANI TASSINARI (KUNSTUNIVERSITÄT GRAZ)
- ***Translations of control and trial by algorithm*** • DAVID LYDON (CANTERBURY CHRIST CHURCH UNIVERSITY) [SEE OUR **WEBSITE** FOR DETAILED INFORMATION]

11:15 – 12:30 **Session 2: The Quest Fom Risk-oriented AI towards Care-oriented AI (chair: Amr Marzouk)**

The Dutch Childcare Benefits scandal is one of the Netherlands' biggest governance failures to date. This panel exposes the silencing of 'noise' in digital welfare states; and asks how we might flip the script through bottom-up approaches. It then moves to the question: Can surveillance be recalibrated as care (as explored in India) and data sharing redesigned for collective well-being (as proposed in Dutch housing policy)?

- ***Noisy encounters: (auto-)ethnographic reflections on legal advice encounters in the Dutch digital welfare state engagement*** • RANA KUSEYRI & GERWIN VAN SCHIE (UTRECHT UNIVERSITY)
- ***Surveilled and classified: rethinking data, welfare, and justice from the ground up*** • MARIJKE ROOSEN (OSLOMET)
- ***From urban surveillance to urban care: care-full justice in the age of AI*** • UDIPTA BORO, FRAN MEISSNER & KARIN PFEFFER (UNIVERSITY OF TWENTE)
- ***Automate with care: case-study into housing corporations and neighborhood livability*** • NANOU VAN IERSEL (ERASMUS UNIVERSITY ROTTERDAM)

12:30 - 13:15 **Lunch**

13:15 – 14:30 Keynote 2

Can AI Surveillance learn from Medieval Surveillance?

DAVID LYON (QUEENS UNIVERSITY CANADA)

David Lyon is professor emeritus at the Department of Sociology and Law at Queen's University and is the former director of the Surveillance Studies Centre. Credited with spearheading the field of 'Surveillance Studies', he has produced a steady stream of books that began with *The Electronic Eye* (1994) and continued with *Surveillance Society* (2001), *Surveillance after September 11* (2003), *Surveillance Studies* (2007), *Identifying Citizens* (2009), *Liquid Surveillance* (with Zygmunt Bauman, 2013) and *The Culture of Surveillance: Watching as a Way of Life* (2018).

Finding adequate alternatives for AI surveillance depends on the concerted effort of many, who recognize the need for relational, caring, just and accountable practices. Historical records suggest that, while social sciences focus on modern practices, European surveillance actually emerged in medieval times. This is not a nostalgic approach to a lost "golden age" but an exploration of how the original features of such surveillance regimes – under the "eye of God" – offer clues as to how today's AI surveillance could learn from history.

14:30 - 15:30 Session 3: Inclusive AI Futures: Centering New Voices? (chair: Jair Schalkwijk)

This panel reimagines inclusive AI beyond human-centric ('human-in-the-loop') frameworks. Is it possible to imagine AI as an agent *itself* reshaping decision-making dynamics? And what about more-than-human stakeholders like seagulls, and 'the voice of nature' more broadly amid the climate crisis?

- **AI as a collaborative actor in decision-making** • CHIARA MANARIN (ERASMUS UNIVERSITY ROTTERDAM)
- **Advancing more-than-human AI-cologies** • FRISO VAN HOUDT (ERASMUS UNIVERSITY ROTTERDAM), GABRIELE JACOBS (ERASMUS UNIVERSITY ROTTERDAM) & GINGER COONS (WILLEM DE KONING ACADEMY, ROTTERDAM)
- **Letters from nature** • PETER VAN DER PUTTEN (LEIDEN UNIVERSITY)

15:30 – 15:45 Coffee Break

15:45 – 16:45 Session 4: Fiction, Futures and History (chair: Gabriele Jacobs)

Myths, metaphors and speculation come together in this panel to explore AI's cultural and political dimensions – from the ancient *Golem myth* and *Speculative Fiction* as a method to tackle AI power, towards the historical and geopolitical context that underpin it.

- **The Golem-myth and conceptions of humanity and safety in AI discourse** • CARINNE ELION-VALTER (ERASMUS UNIVERSITY ROTTERDAM)
- **Three paths, one goal: the pacifying power of AI in a triologue** • YELIZ FIGEN DÖKER, HABIBE DENIZ SEVAL & ETIENNE VALK (THE DIGITAL CONSTITUTIONALIST "DIGICON" SCIENCE FICTION TEAM)
- **Socio-Technical Imaginaries and the Symbolism of Surveillance in Smart Cities** • STEPHANIE GARGALIA (VUB BRUSSELS)

17:00 – 18:30 Drinks & Small Bites at Maaskantine

Plantagelaan 2, 3063 NG Rotterdam

Friday, 20 June 2025

Location: Campus Erasmus University Rotterdam, Sanders building, room 0-07 (Moot Court)

8:30 – 9:00

Arrival with Coffee

9:00 – 9.15

Welcome Address • ROSAMUNDE VAN BRAKEL (VUB BRUSSEL)

9:15– 10.00

Keynote 3

AI and Information Politics: Identifying Cracks of Possibility

MAREILE KAUFMANN (UNIVERSITY OF OSLO, NORWAY)

Mareile Kaufmann is professor at the Department of Criminology and Sociology of Law, University of Oslo. Kaufmann's current work consolidates and further shapes the field of digital criminology with a specific focus on data practices. Her latest book is *Making Information Matter* (2023).

The two most prominent tropes of co-creative agency are that of *expertise*, focusing on the role of professionals and science in socio-technical assemblages, and that of *dystopia*, the rise of control-societies that can no longer rid themselves of harmful technologies operated by a select few. While both have become key to understanding the powers of technology, we are left with two issues: information technologies are so abstract that only few can steer them, and their often built-in surveillance logic can easily be abused. This talk focuses on the ways in which *non-professionals* have agency in shaping technologies, and how we can de-code the *ethics* of computation, thus creating openings for the affirmative politics of making a difference in informationalized societies.

10.00 – 10:15

Coffee Break

10:15 – 11:30

Session 5: Human Rights, Justice and Resilient Democracies (chair: Majsja Storbeck)

This panel examines AI's dual role in both threatening and defending democratic values – from the harms of LLM-generated verbal violence to its potential in combating hate speech. It juxtaposes cultural perspectives on AI in justice systems (from Brazilian courts to UK probation services), ending with a speculative exploration of deepfake defense strategies for future resilient democracies.

- ***Hostile by design? Reducing verbal violence and arbitrary aggression in AI for users with invisible disabilities*** • VERONIKA NAGY (UTRECHT UNIVERSITY)
- ***Safeguarding digital democracy and combatting online hate speech and extremism in the Netherlands*** • VIVIAN GRAVENBERCH (DISS)
- ***Techno-Judges and judges and probation on the spot: explorations of the impact of AI-advancements on justice systems*** • DAVID RAHO (SHEFFIELD HALLAM UNIVERSITY) & MATEUS HENRIQUE AMORIM MOURA ROCHA (UNIVERSITY OF SÃO PAULO)
- ***Algorithm-Related epistemic doom in the deepfake era: a design fiction*** • NADISHA-MARIE ALIMAN (INDEPENDENT RESEARCHER) & LEON KESTER (TNO)

11:30 – 12:30

Session 6: Rethinking AI through the Lens of Play and Power (chair: Nanou van Iersel)

Hannah Arendt wrote much about the role of play in human wellbeing. How does such play manifests in AI surveillance? And how does this dynamic intersect with power, like the historical and cultural norms embedded in technology)? Is there a way we can reorient AI toward 'conviviality': joy and agency?

- ***Exploring the role of play in AI surveillance*** • VIVIEN BUTOT (INHOLLAND UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES) & FLORIAN VAN ZANDWIJK (INDEPENDENT ARTIST)
- ***TechBros and AI mommies: TESCREAL's heteropatriarchal underpinnings*** • KATHERINE JONHSTON (STONY BROOK UNIVERSITY, SUNY)
- ***Convivial AI: feminism, anti-colonial relations and 'the tech we want'*** • SELENA SAVIC (UNIVERSITY OF AMSTERDAM)

12:30 – 13:15 Lunch

13:15 – 15:00 **Session 7: Reclaiming AI with Community-Centered Approaches** (chair: Martijn Wessels)

This panel explores the question how and whether AI can be reclaimed and demystified in a democratic manner – be it through games, the cultivation of 'bottom-up' AI, community sovereignty, or cross-disciplinary collaboration.

- *Creative technology for critical AI education* • ALIA ELKATTAN (NEW YORK UNIVERSITY/VISITING FELLOW CWI AMSTERDAM)
- *Turning surveillance on its head in low-trust neighborhoods: can AI be used to foster care instead of control?* • MAJSA STORBECK (ERASMUS UNIVERSITY ROTTERDAM)
- *Pressure and Care: Reimagining AI Governance through Decentralization and Community Sovereignty* • TAMARAKEMIEBI KORROYE & DONALD SIKPI (UNIVERSITY OF BRADFORD)
- *The HAVA-Lab Lens: human-aligned video-AI for public safety* • RUTHU ROOPARAGHUNATH, DASHA SIMONS, TOBIAS BLANKE, PAULA HELM, MARIE ROSENKRANTZ LINDEGAARD & CEES SNOEK (UNIVERSITY OF AMSTERDAM)

15:00 – 15:15 Coffee Break

15:15 – 16:30 **Session 8: Reimagining AI Governance and Regulation** (chair: Rosamunde van Brakel)

In what specific ways does AI reshape legislative frameworks, and vice versa? Are there other ways to imagine AI-regulation, particularly when R&D consistently outpaces legal frameworks?

- *AI biometric surveillance: Security, human rights and political ideologies across the global divides* • ANA MARIA CORREA (KU LEUVEN)
- *Prediction Technologies and the Socio-Legal Imaginaries of the Future* • ENRIQUE SANTAMARÍA ECHEVERRÍA & JULIE HOPPENBROUWERS (ERASMUS UNIVERSITY ROTTERDAM)
- *Zombie Legislations of Surveillance Technology: The Irish case of Facial Recognition Technology* • CIARA BRACKEN-ROCHE & IVA-NICOLE MAVRLJA (MAYNOOTH UNIVERSITY)
- *'Sexy sexy technologies' for facial recognition are too cool to consider pre-deployment impacts?* • AUSMA BERNOT, RAKIBUL HASSAN, MILIND TIWARI, PEITA RICHARDS, BRENDAN WALKER-MUNRO (GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY)

16:30 – 16:45 Farewell & Follow-Up

MARC SCHUILENBURG, MAJSA STORBECK, ROSAMUNDE VAN BRAKEL