



Remote Control: Asymmetric Entanglements of Bodies and Machines

Lecture by Lucy Suchman

Wednesday, May 22, 2013, 5 p.m.
Raum A 300

Invitation

Drawing from reports in investigative journalism, military documents, and critical scholarship, Lucy Suchman examines connections between the emphasis in military and security discourses on keeping “our” bodies safe through so called network-centric warfare, and the project of cutting the networks that might bring wars too close to home. The lecture will examine conjoinings of persons and machines within the military-industrial-media-entertainment network. The focus is on the logics and material practices of remotely-controlled weapon systems, particularly armed drones and weaponized robots, focusing on the concept of “situation awareness” as a central legitimizing premise.

Lucy Suchman offers the beginnings of an argument regarding the inescapable tension between a commitment to distance, and to the requirements of “positive identification” that ensure the canons of legal killing. This tension holds not only for those involved in command and control of the front lines, but also for those of us responsible as citizens for grasping events in which we are, however indirectly, morally, politically and economically implicated.

Lucy Suchman, Professor of Anthropology of Science and Technology in the Department of Sociology at Lancaster University, and Co-Director of Lancaster’s Centre for Science Studies is a guest in the Research Unit Cultural Sources of Newness. Her research focuses on ethnographic, interdisciplinary and participatory interventions in new technology design, as well as critical engagement with discourses of innovation and newness.

To register, please reply by May 21, 2013, to Chris Reinelt: chris.reinelt@wzb.eu.

The WZB provides child care during the lecture. If you are interested, please respond by May 15, 2013, indicating the number of children and their age.