

Transitioning ESTS

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Abstract

Contributions to this issue focus on a wide range of domains and problematics—environment, extractivism, air pollution, climate change, digitalization, automation, care, surveillance—that offer a thought-provoking commentary on the many issues that inhabit contemporary intersections of science, technology, and society. It seems more than ever, we need sharp analyses that can help us understand, too, the ways global and national power struggles leverage and impact specific knowledge communities. We also give our thanks to our funders and reviewers that have helped sustain a creative volume for 2024!

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Keywords

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Introduction

Welcome to the final issue of Volume 10!

We begin by drawing attention to the new call for editorship for *Engaging Science, Technology, and Society (ESTS)*, that is currently open. The present editorial collective will complete their tenure at the end of 2025. The Society for Social Studies of Science (4S), the publisher of *ESTS*, is inviting applications for a new editorial team. As a society-owned and run diamond open access journal, *ESTS* provides a unique avenue to experiment with and articulate the cutting-edge of STS and reflect on how the field should develop. During our editorship, we have emphasized deepening transnational, open access, and pedagogical commitments in the field and led with the STS insight that these fundamentally require the development and maintenance of supporting infrastructures.

During our editorship, we have been able to collaboratively and consistently strengthen the journal's transnational and pedagogical focus and increase our publication capacity. We have sought to support the development of STS communities in different parts of the world and also continually experimented with novel forms of scholarly communication in an attempt to understand how STS scholarship can best respond to changing demands on scholarship today.

We also write this at a time when our colleagues in the United States, and many around the world, are deeply affected by authoritarian actions that have upended research; defunded people and projects; and exerted pressure on institutions from government agencies to universities to root out activities, including teaching, that engage themes of diversity, equity, inclusion, justice, climate change, culture and more. In the face of this, we strive to support each other and believe that scholarly projects like *ESTS* can and will continue to foster community and solidarity.

It has been an incredible privilege and learning opportunity for our editorial collective to have been responsible for steering the journal since 2020, and we look forward now to seeing further developments and rearticulations of *ESTS* in the hands of new editors.

- **Deadline to apply** is March 31, 2025. More details can be found at the following [link](#).

Issue 10.3

Together, contributions to this issue focus on a wide range of domains and problematics—environment, extractivism, air pollution, climate change, digitalization, automation, care, surveillance—that offer a thought-provoking commentary on the many issues that inhabit contemporary intersections of science,

technology, and society. It seems more than ever, we need sharp analyses that can help us understand, too, the ways global and national power struggles leverage and impact specific knowledge communities.

This issue includes seven *Original Research Articles* (ORAs) and one *Perspectives* contribution. *Original Research Articles* by Sophia Jaworski (2024) and Thomas De Pree (2024) examine the invisibilization of local knowledge in dominant technoscientific paradigms. In *A Tkaronto Archive about Atmospheric Volatility*, Jaworski traces the emergence and regulation of petrochemical-derived gas emissions in Toronto from the post-World War period into the 1980s. Building on feminist science and technology studies scholarship, Jaworski explores how material registers of petrochemical harm have been invisibilized through technoscientific logics within a permission-to-pollute system. In *The Production of Geological Regions—Grants Uranium District* (2024), Thomas De Pree deploys Gayatri Spivak’s notion of “ab-use” to read historical background papers of geologic memoirs against the grain, drawing out the physical and material dispossession resulting from uranium mining in northwestern New Mexico.

In *Farmers’ Creativity and Cultivated Senses*, Dimas Dwi Laksana (2024) also focuses on local knowledge, in the form of farmers’ embodied knowledge, positing it with the potential for epistemological shifts that can offer “alternative thinking about the practice of alternative agriculture” (ibid., 68). For Laksana, farmer’s embodied knowledge presents a challenge to the hierarchy of expertise in the context of Indonesian government-led efforts to pursue alternative agriculture. In dialogue with *Seeds of Knowledge* (ibid.), Yunita Winarto’s ethnographic account of non-pesticidal agricultural management based on research in Java in the early 1990’s, Laksana demonstrates the dynamic nature of farmers’ learning experiences as they interact with other farmers, extension workers, and scientific institutions, and how these become sites of contestation to the seemingly totalizing authority of government institutions promoting alternative agriculture.

In *Industrial Excess* (2024), Caroline Anna Salling and James Maguire focus on an increasingly prominent source of energy consumption, vast datacenters that are powering digital economies globally. In their article, Salling and Maguire examine the infrastructure plan to connect Facebook’s® datacenter to the heating system in Odense, Denmark, with the goal of channeling excess heat from the datacenter into the municipal heating system. Following utility workers in Odense, Denmark, the authors nonetheless demonstrate the impossibility of eliminating industrial excess, and how infrastructural plans of the kind they analyze shield the pollution impacts of what they call “digital industrialization” at the municipal scale even as they expose its climatic consequences at a transnational scale.

In *Harmful Intentions in Airport Security Processes* (2024), Sylvia Kühne and Bettina Paul examine continuities between human-centred security measures at airports and their envisioned automated equivalents in the laboratory in Germany. Drawing out epistemological differences between *baselining* in human-centered and *ground truthing* in automated approaches to pursuing airport security, the authors highlight the relevance of both tacit and explicit knowledges, albeit in different ways, in each case. Ultimately, they highlight that

automated airport security is unlikely to be a foil to the biases that human-centered approaches are often criticized for.

In *Driving into a Paywall* (2024), Aaron Shapiro and MC Forelle examine the assetization of consumer vehicles. The subscriptionalization of vehicle functionalities that is currently underway, the authors suggest, is “a novel and insidious relationship between ownership, debt, and rentiership.” In this article, Shapiro and Forelle analyze the sociotechnical and political-economic conditions that automakers are exploiting in their pursuit of profits. They also suggest that the paywalling of vehicle functionalities has far-reaching implications not just for consumers but also for “the wider ecology of automobility, including how cars are sold, repaired, and regulated.”

In *Robot Development during Covid-19* (2024), Naonori Kodate and colleagues compare and contrast the deployment and use of care robots in two residential care homes in Ireland and Japan during the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic. Through their analysis, they highlight the role of broader societal changes outside of immediate care settings in shaping which technologies of care are deployed and how.

Finally, our Perspectives contribution in this issue, *Manifesto on the Datafication of Mobility Across Borders* (2024), comes from Annalisa Pelizza and colleagues. Based on findings from a European Research Council (ERC)-funded project, “Processing Citizenship,” the manifesto outlines ten principles for policymakers and IT professionals to hold to account datafication practices and infrastructures that are increasingly being deployed to track people on the move.

Volume 10: A Year in Review

Within Volume 10, we’ve published 5 genres in: *Editorials* (2), *Original Research Articles* (15), *Engagements* (2), *Perspectives* (2), with many of these (7) pieces organized within two thematic collections on (a) *Pedagogical Intersections* (6 ORAs, and 1 Engagements), and (b) *Standards & their Containers* (7). That’s 617 pages of content in *ESTS*, and 583 pages of 74 supplementary materials in *STS-I*, (1,200 pages in total).

As always, we would like to close the editorial of this final issue of the current volume by noting our gratitude to the reviewers who have helped hone the contributions to *ESTS* this year. Their critical but generous and constructive feedback has been immensely valuable to authors and editors alike, as the articles have iterated over their development process with the journal. Below we list the reviewers who have reviewed for the journal over the past year.

Vincanne Adams
Nausheen H. Anwar
Joshua Bell
Kean Birch
Kevin Borg
Soraya Boudia

Kristin Brig
Casper Bruun Jensen
Roberta Buiani
Elizabeth Cavicchi
Xan Chacko
Erica Charters

Michele Chauvet
Henry Chavez
Elena Conis
Julia Corwin
Tomás Sánchez Criado
Flavio D’Abramo

Kim De Wolff	Heewon Kim	Helen Regis
Ana Delgado	Aya Kimura	Jorge Rojas Alvarez
Élise Demeulenaere	Nina Klimburg–Witjes	Sarah Runcie
Lyle Fearnley	Loes Knaapen	Johan M. Sanne
Megan Finn	Richa Kumar	Astrid Schrader
Clara Florensa	Hannah Landecker	Nick Seaver
Natalie Forssman	Olivier Leclerc	Matthew Shutzer
Kim Fortun	Myles Lennon	Benjamin Sims
Mike Fortun	Max Liboiron	Christy Spackman
Kathryn Furlong	Kuan–Hung Lo	Maka Suarez
Sara Giordano	Milagros Miceli	Manuel Tironi
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Kirk Jalbert	Lindsay Poirier	Susann Wagenknecht
Bianca Jansky	Anne Pollock	Ayo Wahlberg
Mythri Jegathesan	Jörg Potthast	Michel Wahome
Chihyung Jeon	Dana Powell	Wambui Wamunyu
Paul Jobin	Fabian Prieto–Nañez	Hong–An Wu
Frédéric Keck	Joanna Radin	Alexis Zimmer
Shreeharsh Kelkar	Usha Raman	
Melanie Kiechle	Aswathy Raveendran	

We would also like to acknowledge financial support, so crucial to sustaining scholar-led diamond open access publication, that *ESTS* continues to receive through the Society of Social Studies of Science (4S) and the Lyrasis fundraising campaign (2023–2027). STS networks in various universities and libraries have come forth to support *ESTS* financially through Lyrasis. We would like to thank them for enabling our journal to continue its independent and critical contributions to STS:

Cornell University
 Cornell University Department of Science & Technology Studies
 Indiana University
 Iowa State University
 Leiden University
 Massachusetts Institute of Technology

New York University
Ohio State University
Swarthmore College
University of California, Irvine
University of Chicago
University of Kansas
University of Manchester
University of Massachusetts Amherst
University of Michigan
University of Minnesota Twin Cities
University of Pennsylvania
University of Washington
VIVA, Virginia's Academic Library Consortium
VU Amsterdam
Yale University
National Yang Ming Chiao Tung University Library

Finally, with deep sadness, we pay respects to the passing of Professor Sandra Harding. Sandra Harding's work in feminism, philosophy, and STS has been pivotal to shaping STS over several decades. Harding's response to Sharon Traweek's Bernal Prize acceptance speech, "Working at the Edges of Institutions during their Transformations," (2021) featured in our Editorial Collective's first volume in 2021, and has been very influential in our thinking about publishing STS scholarship.

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