STI Studies

Science, Technology & Innovation Studies
Vol. 2 (2006), No 2 (November)

Content

ISSN: 1861-3675

www.sti-studies.de

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Editorial
Next Generation Technologies

This second issue completes the first entire volume of the STI Studies. Additionally, the volume includes the first special issue of our journal. When we launched the journal in summer 2005, it was still an exciting question whether we would be able to attract a reasonable number of good papers. A total of thirteen articles published this year, however, shows that there is need of a peer reviewed online journal addressing social research on science, technology, and innovation. Admittedly, we are sometimes struggling to complete an issue in time. Coping with the reviewers' recommendations and stipulations is time consuming and causes delays on the side of the authors. But we have committed ourselves to take the peer review process seriously. Thanks to responsible and thorough reviewers the peer review has turned out to be a valuable and well functioning instrument for achieving high quality but at the same time resulted in several rejections and many "revise and resubmit" decisions.

The issue contains three papers which deal with next generation technologies – and apply different strands of sociological theory as well. In his contribution *Stefan Kaufmann* explores the transformation of the military in the information age, especially the decentralization of the organization, which is triggered by the utilization of smart technology and the networking of electronically equipped units. *Andreas Lösch* shows in his paper, how highly futuristic visions of nanotechnology can serve as a means for the facilitation of communication between different actors involved, even if they cannot be directly related to strategic interests. Finally, *Johannes Weyer* deals with the question of governance of hybrid systems, since smart technology allows for the creation of new systems' designs, e.g. in form of the combination of central and decentralized control, which now is on the agenda in modern aviation.

All these case studies try to take a look into the future of modern societies, which obviously will be shaped by a new type of technology, that can be labelled "next generation technology" – not only because it differs clearly from currently used technology, but also because it allows to create new types of social organizations, where the "social" and the "technical" meet and interact in an unexpected way.

Future issues of STI Studies will continue to explore these paths.

Ingo Schulz-Schaeffer

Raymund Werle

Johannes Weyer