URBAN ASSEMBLAGE: THE CITY AS ARCHITECTURE, MEDIA, AI AND BIG DATA.

• Paper / Proposal Title:
THE SECUROPOLIS: reassembling urban security

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• Abstract (300 words):
The securopolis is a form of urban life in which humans enact ‘watchfulness’ (i.e. surveillance) combined with a ‘readiness for the worse’ (i.e. resilience) which is embedded into the physical and affective (i.e. emotional) fabric of the urban. The securopolis is more than a neat model of a safe, secure and sustainable city; it is a powerful influence on the underlying habitus of urban space, culture and the ontology of citizen-state relationships. To explore these tensions, the interplay of surveillance and resilience will be drawn through the well-intentioned but often wrong-headed attempts to adapt ‘perceived needs’ of the public into an emotionally laden ecology of “limited access”. Only those approved, verified and legitimised will benefit from the embedded safety and security, as efforts to reduce risk embed fear into the ontology of urban life. I argue that this reconfiguration of the urban results in a suite of emergent (and ongoing) challenges to the liberal democratic ontology. The slow (and ongoing) crumbling of which shifts the balance underpinning our traditional concepts of democratic community and ‘publicness’ towards a less free, more controlled form of urban life. Recent research into urban gentrification, militarization and the reimagined boundaries
of public/private space can be harnessed to this purpose, yet positive, pro-social opportunities for change are not yet off the table. In order to get to grips with them a different approach, with a rethinking of both the liberal democratic ontology and of 'affective governance' may be required.

- Author(s) Biography (200 words each):

Peter Rogers is Senior Lecturer based in the School of Social Science at Macquarie University (Sydney). As an interdisciplinary social scientist (theorising resilience) his work develops the importance of situated context in applying theory to policy. He has published two books on urban resilience – the Everyday Resilience of the city (2008) and Resilience & the city: Change, (dis)order and disaster (2012). More comparative research has recently drawn out tensions in the application of resilience policy across spatial scales in different countries, also comparing philanthropic governance groups with private and public sector outcomes. This work emphasizes that problematisation is not enough to create change on its own, but rather applied research requires a nuanced engagement across diverse political, social and spatial contexts. Where achieved this empowers resilience operatives to implement positive and pro-social change in practice. He has also published widely on the design, production and governance of public space – particularly on the integration of minority groups into the planning process. This feature of his work demonstrates the benefits of participatory governance more practically.