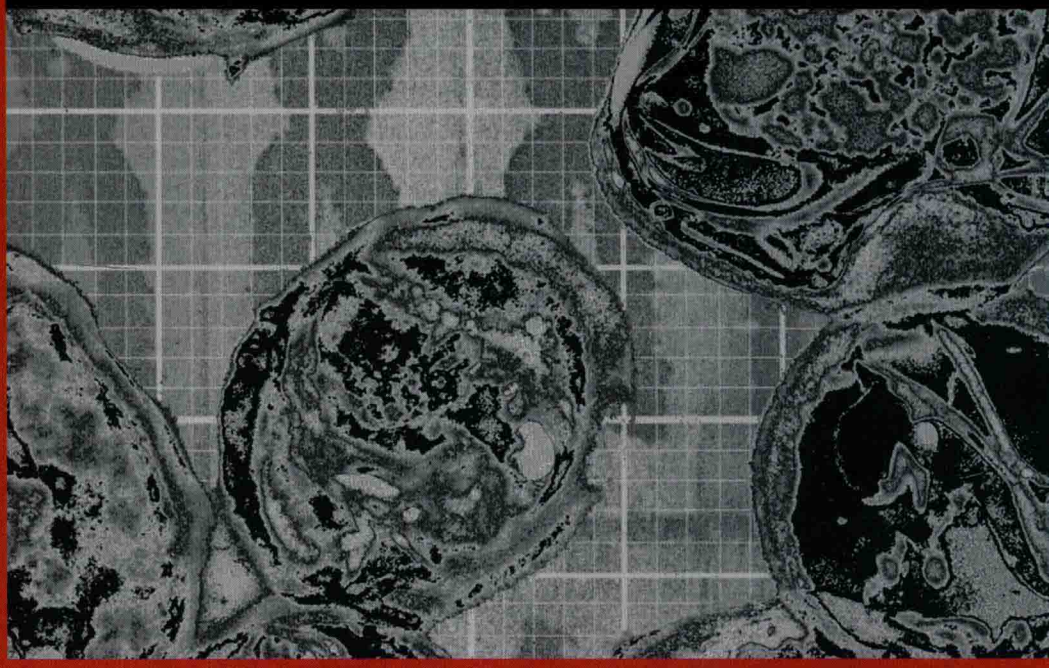
# Knowing New Biotechnologies

## Social Aspects of Technological Convergence

Edited by Matthias Wienroth and Eugénia Rodrigues



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# Knowing New Biotechnologies

The areas of personal genomics and citizen science draw on – and bring together – different cultures of producing and managing knowledge and meaning. They also cross local and global boundaries, are subjects and objects of transformation and mobility of research practices, evaluation and multi-stakeholder groups. Third, they draw on logics of 'convergence': new links between, and new kinds of, stakeholders, spaces, knowledge, practices, challenges and opportunities.

This themed collection of chapters from nationally and internationally leading scholars and commentators advances and widens current debates in Science and Technology Studies and in Science Policy concerning 'converging technologies' by complementing the customary focus on technical aspirations for convergence with the analysis of the practices and logics of scientific, social and cultural knowledge production that constitute contemporary technoscience. In case studies from across the globe, contributors discuss the ways in which science and social order are linked in areas such as direct-to-consumer genetic testing and do-it-yourself biotechnologies.

Organized into thematic sections, *Knowing New Biotechnologies* explores:

- ways of understanding the dynamics and logics of convergences in emergent biotechnologies;
- governance and regulatory issues around technoscientific convergences; and
- democratic aspects of converging technologies – lay involvement in scientific research and the co-production of biotechnology and social and cultural knowledge.

**Matthias Wienroth** is Research Fellow at the Northumbria University Centre for Forensic Science and Visiting Researcher at the Policy, Ethics and Life Sciences research centre, Newcastle University. He studies science–society relationships and the opportunities of cross-disciplinary knowledge production for socially responsible technology development.

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## Genetics and Society

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# Acknowledgements

This book is the direct upshot of a workshop held in the autumn of 2012 at the ESRC Genomics Policy & Research Forum, in Edinburgh. The engaging discussions undertaken by participants on convergence in contemporary societies were the trigger to further debate and analysis. Two years on, we are publishing this collection of what we believe to be reference studies on the theoretical, conceptual and empirical dimensions of Social Convergences. It was both a long and exciting project.

At the workshop, we wanted to hear participants' views on current developments in the field of technological convergence and were guided by two main lines of enquiry in planning the meeting: to widen the dominant – though conceptually restrictive – debate on Converging Technologies in order to render visible the social and cultural processes, practices and logics that are actively involved in the production of contemporary technoscience, and, in so doing, to grant a place to the so-far overlooked side of Social Convergences.

The book represents not only the work of those involved in the initial meeting – in fact, some of the authors only joined the book project at a later stage and some of the participants in the workshop did not take part in the book project for various reasons – but also the results of the work, goodwill and encouragement of many people who at different moments encountered this project.

The workshop drew on a variety of resources, human and otherwise. Our thanks go to the office team at the Genomics Forum that helped with the practicalities of running the workshop, and to the Genomics Forum overall, for the encouragement and financial support. Thanks are also due to the ESRC for their support of the ESRC Genomics Policy & Research Forum through grant RES-145–28-005.

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Hedgecoe at Cesagen in Cardiff and the series editors Ruth Chadwick, John Dupré, Dave Wield and Steven Yearley) and the recommendations of two anonymous referees. Our thanks also go to Helen Greenslade, the EGN editor that accompanied the first steps of the book, and to Mel Evans who supported us in the following period. At Routledge we benefited from the professional aid of the editorial team, especially Emily Briggs, who oversaw the first stages of the manuscript, Alyson Claffey, and Ruth Bradley who accompanied the book to publication.

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Matthias & Eugénia

# Contents

*List of figures* ix
*List of contributors* x
*Acknowledgements* xiii

**PART I**
**Introduction** **1**

1 An introduction to social convergences 3
MATTHIAS WIENROTH AND EUGÉNIA RODRIGUES

2 Distinguishing the umbrella promise of Converging Technology from the dynamics of Technology Convergence 12
DOUGLAS K. R. ROBINSON

**PART II**
**Dynamics and logics** **27**

3 Why so many promises? The economy of scientific promises and its ambivalences 29
MARC AUDÉTAT

4 Logics of convergence in NBIC and personal genomics 44
CHRISTOPHER GROVES

5 The convergence of direct-to-consumer genetic testing companies and biobanking activities: the example of 23andMe 59
HEIDI C. HOWARD, SIGRID STERCKX, JULIAN COCKBAIN, ANNE CAMBON-THOMSEN AND PASCAL BORRY

**PART III**
**Governance** **75**

6 The messiness of convergence: remarks on the roles of two visions of the future 77
CHRISTOPHER COENEN

7 Mapping the UK government's genome: analysing convergence in UK policy one decade into the twenty-first century 92
ISABEL FLETCHER, STEVEN YEARLEY AND CATHERINE LYALL

8 Diagonal convergences: genetic testing, governance, and globalization 105
CHRISTINE HAUSKELLER

**PART IV**
**Citizens, amateurs, and democratization** **123**

9 Do-it-yourself biology, garage biology, and kitchen science: a feminist analysis of bio-making narratives 125
CLARE JEN

10 Amateurization and re-materialization in biology: opening up scientific equipment 142
MORGAN MEYER

11 Converging technologies and critical social movements: an exploration 158
FRANZ SEIFERT

12 Rhetorics and practices of democratization in synthetic biology 174
EMMA FROW

**PART V**
**Commentary** **189**

13 Considering convergences in technology and society 191
STEVEN YEARLEY

*Index* 196

# List of figures


| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 2.1 | Convergence archetypes | 15 |
| 2.2 | NBIC and Converging Technology discourse and activities | 15 |
| 10.1 | The Open PCR machine being assembled during a workshop | 150 |
| 10.2 | Part of the instructions to hack the 'peltier' element for a PCR machine. | 151 |

# Part I
# Introduction