
Acknowledgments

This book began with a snap. In 2003 I was working in a post office in Brookline, Massachusetts, as a letter carrier. During my first day on the job, I noticed another worker methodically putting on latex gloves before picking up the mail. *Snap*. A nearby coworker must have noticed my confusion. He leaned over and offered a tart explanation: *anthrax*. And then we all went about our day and delivered the mail. That morning offered a glimpse into how terrifying fears and moments of disruption become translated into routine practices. The anthrax attacks that had run through the postal system were, at this point, roughly 18 months in the past. Yet traces still lingered. That morning stuck with me. Although I did not know it at the time, this book started that day.

This project would not have been possible without the support and mentorship of a large number of people and institutions. This book began as my doctoral project at the Department of Communication at the University of California, San Diego (UCSD). My advisor and mentor Robert Horwitz is the inspiration for this book. I would not have been able to write it without his assistance, encouragement, and wisdom. Robert was my first and best reader. I owe him more than I can pay. While at UCSD I started working with Lewis Branscomb. Lew helped me rethink my doctoral project at a time when I was grasping for a direction. Lew continued to provide unfailing support as I left UCSD and began my academic journey. The text was substantially revised during fellowships at Stanford University's Center for International Security and Cooperation (CISAC) and the Harvard Kennedy School's Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs and at my current academic home, Northeastern University's Communication Studies Department. At Stanford I had the privilege of working closely with Charles Perrow. Perrow's work was and remains a key touchstone for my thinking. Getting to work with Chick was an honor and thrill that I cherish. His comments on the text

were invaluable. At Harvard, Venkatesh Narayanamurti provided a new intellectual role model and a welcome academic home. Venky's support helped this book become a reality. His constant push to consider all sides of an argument and never lose sight of the larger issues and stakes at play was an important guiding force. My colleagues at Northeastern have been inspiring. Keeping up with them is not an easy task.

During the preparation of this book, I received significant comments and feedback. I would like to thank Michael Schudson, Akos Rona-Tas, Gary Fields, Lynn Eden, Mariano-Florentino Cuéllar, Whitfield Diffie, Susan Landau, and Bruce Schneier for their comments on early drafts and chapters. My thinking on these topics has been significantly shaped by a number of current and former colleagues. I would like to particularly thank Joe Nye, Jim Waldo, Bill Hogan, Jack Goldsmith, Lucas Kello, Vivek Mohan, Zach Tumin, Benoit Gaucherin, Nazli Choucri, Fred Turner, John Downer, Rebecca Slayton, Ted Lewis, Rudy Darken, Thomas Mackin, J. R. Osborn, Lyn Headley, Stephen Flynn, and Jennie Stephens. Administrative support from Gayle Aruta, Jamie Llyod, Karin Vander Schaaf, Patricia McLaughlin, Sarah Donahue, and Angela Chin was indispensable. Early iterations of the arguments in this book were presented at the annual conferences of the Society for Social Studies of Science, the National Communication Association, the International Communication Association, and the Society for the History of Technology, as well as during presentations to the Harvard Electricity Policy Group and the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners. The various participants at these discussions offered useful and challenging feedback. At MIT Press, Katie Helke extended a great deal of patience and expert editorial suggestions; Justin Kehoe offered timely advice and excellent assistance. Series editors Geoffrey Bowker and Paul Edwards provided sharp comments and feedback that made this book better. Various anonymous reviewers also provided insightful suggestions that were incorporated into the text. All errors and mistakes are my own.

An earlier version of chapter 4 appeared as "Creating a Secure Network: The 2001 Anthrax Attacks and the Transformation of Postal Security" in the *Sociological Review*. The short discussion of E-COM in chapter 2 is expanded in my earlier article "The Premature Death of Electronic Mail: The United States Postal Service's E-COM Program, 1978–1985" in the *International Journal of Communication*; a discussion of some of the governance issues noted in chapter 6 previously appeared in my article "Regulating Cybersecurity: Institutional Learning or a Lesson in Futility?" in *IEEE Security & Privacy*.

A number of awards supported various aspects of this work, including fellowships and grants from the University of California, San Diego; the Institute for Research on Labor and Employment at the University of California, Los Angeles; CISAC, Stanford University; the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, Harvard Kennedy School; and the Smithsonian National Postal Museum/National Philatelic Exhibitions of Washington, DC (NAPEX). Early-stage preparatory work was funded, in part, by the Office of Naval Research under award number N00014-09-1-0597. Any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Office of Naval Research.

Finally, and most importantly, I would like to thank my family and friends. Their warmth, kindness, and love are deeply appreciated. Growing up in a lively and curious household was a gift. For that and much more, I have my parents and brother to thank. I dedicate this book to Erin, Veronica, and Indigo. Their support, encouragement, and love make this and everything else possible. Words cannot express how lucky and grateful I am.

This is a section of [doi:10.7551/mitpress/10541.001.0001](https://doi.org/10.7551/mitpress/10541.001.0001)

Letters, Power Lines, and Other Dangerous Things

The Politics of Infrastructure Security

By: Ryan Ellis

Citation:

Letters, Power Lines, and Other Dangerous Things: The Politics of Infrastructure Security

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DOI: [10.7551/mitpress/10541.001.0001](https://doi.org/10.7551/mitpress/10541.001.0001)

ISBN (electronic): 9780262357777

Publisher: The MIT Press

Published: 2020

The open access edition of this book was made possible by generous funding and support from Arcadia – a charitable fund of Lisbet Rausing and Peter Baldwin



The MIT Press

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The open access edition of this book was made possible by generous funding from Arcadia—a charitable fund of Lisbet Rausing and Peter Baldwin.



This book was set in Sabon by Westchester Publishing Services.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Ellis, Ryan, author.

Title: Letters, power lines, and other dangerous things : the politics of infrastructure security / Ryan Ellis.

Description: Cambridge, Massachusetts : The MIT Press, [2020] |

Series: Infrastructures | Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2019025809 | ISBN 9780262538541 (paperback) |

ISBN 9780262357777 (ebook)

Subjects: LCSH: Infrastructure (Economics)--United States--Security measures.

Classification: LCC HC110.C3 E456 2020 | DDC 363.11/93880973--dc23

LC record available at <https://lccn.loc.gov/2019025809>