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From cybercrime to cyborg crime

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From Cybercrime to Cyborg crime

An exploration of high-tech cybercrime, offenders and victims
through the lens of Actor-Network Theory

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An exploration of high-tech cybercrime, offenders and victims
through the lens of Actor-Network Theory

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Prof. dr. B. van den Berg

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“It is good to have an end to journey toward; but it is the journey that matters, in the end” (Ursula K. Le Guin)

This dissertation is an exploration of high-tech cybercrime from an actor-network theory lens. When I started this research project some years ago, cybercrime was still a rather underexplored topic in criminology. This has changed rapidly within the last few years. Cybercrime has become an important research topic on the criminological agenda, both nationally and internationally, and this will probably remain so in the future. With my dissertation¹ I hope to make a valuable contribution to the criminological understanding of high-tech cybercrime and to stimulate further theoretical debates on the role of technology in crime.

This PhD research, like any other one I suppose, was definitely a journey, a metaphor that I also use in this dissertation. Throughout this research I found some new interesting paths and directions, but I also encountered some obstacles and delays on the road. One thing is for sure: engaging yourself with actor-network theory can be both a blessing and a curse. Apart from an intellectual challenge, a PhD project is a mental and even physical contest. The last few miles are, of course, always the

¹ This PhD research was funded by the University of Groningen, Faculty of Law.

toughest. I am therefore very delighted that this journey has come to an end. Of course, it should be underscored that this was definitely not a solo-journey. To speak in 'Latourian terms' already, various other actors were involved in enabling, shaping and accomplishing this PhD project. For now, I would like to mainly stick to the 'human' ones.

First of all, I would like to thank my promotores René van Swaaningen and Berend Keulen for their guidance, inspiration and patience throughout the years. I am particularly grateful for the fact that René, who actually got involved in a later stage of this PhD, gave the research project a new and positive boost. His enthusiasm and persistence encouraged me to successfully complete this PhD project and gave me the confidence to really 'carry on' and 'bring it on'. The exact same thing could be said for my co-promotor and daily supervisor Martina Althoff, on who I could always count. Apart from her enthusiasm, dedication and insightfulness, she gave me a lot of useful advice and guidance concerning how to manage and organize a PhD project. I would also like to take the opportunity to thank Wolter Pieters, who was co-author of two articles in this dissertation. It was a great pleasure for me to cooperate with him and his critical input I highly appreciate. I also would like to thank the members of the assessment committee for their time, assessment and constructive feedback. The final product, this dissertation, could not become 'a fact' without their effort and judgment.

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