

THE MORALITY OF SECURITY

When is it permissible to move an issue out of normal politics and treat it as a security issue? How should the security measures be conducted? When and how should the securitization be reversed? Floyd offers answers to these questions by combining security studies' influential securitization theory with philosophy's long-standing just war tradition, creating a major new approach to the ethics of security: 'Just Securitization Theory'. Of interest to anyone concerned with ethics and security, Floyd's innovative approach enables scholars to normatively evaluate past and present securitizations, equips practitioners to make informed judgements on what they ought to do in relevant situations, and empowers the public to hold relevant actors accountable for how they practise security.

Dr Rita Floyd is Lecturer in Conflict and Security at the Department of Political Science and International Studies, University of Birmingham. Her books include *Security and the Environment: Securitisation Theory and US Environmental Security Policy* (Cambridge University Press, 2010) and her articles have appeared in journals including the *Review of International Studies*, *Security Dialogue*, and *The Journal of International Relations and Development*, amongst others.

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The Morality of Security

A THEORY OF JUST SECURITIZATION

RITA FLOYD

University of Birmingham



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To my loving family:
Jonathan,
Corin Sylvan
and
Arwen Romola

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Acknowledgements

I first had the idea for this book in 2007 at the Political Studies Association's annual gathering in beautiful Bath. My plan – at that point – was to write a book about morality and security by somehow 'going through the sectors'. Although I was never able to explain this idea clearly to anyone, I meant by it that I wanted to devise a separate morality of security for each of the sectors of security, following the pattern I employed in the concluding chapter of my PhD, later published by CUP as *Security and the Environment: Securitisation Theory and US Environmental Security Policy*. Some time later – in about 2009 – I dismissed this idea in favour of writing a book identifying security threats to the core of international society. This book was to identify when, why and how the Western core is permitted to defend against these threats. Later still I realized that before that book should be written (at approximately 30,000 words in), if indeed it ever could, I needed a general theory of morality and security. But even from that insight it took me some time to realize that this could be done by taking inspiration from the just war tradition. This right kind of impetus came from having been invited to 'The Politics of Securitization' conference at Copenhagen University, Center for Advanced Security Theory on 14 September 2010. It was here that I presented some preliminary ideas on the topic, that were later published as 'Can securitisation theory be used in normative analysis? Towards a Just Securitization Theory', in *Security Dialogue*. I would like to thank all participants at the conference for their valuable comments, and especially Ole Wæver for his support of the project and his critical feedback, but also Mike Williams for his encouragement with this project as well as Ulrik Pram Gad and Karen Lund Petersen for inviting me.

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I would like to dedicate this book to my wonderful family: my husband Jonathan and our two children Corin Sylvan and Arwen Romola. Both of whom were born during the thinking about and – in my daughter’s case – the writing of this book. This does not always make for an easy combination, but their love and affection saw me through all of it. One day perhaps, they’ll be proud of their mum for having written this book.

RF
 Tewkesbury, UK
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Glossary

The purpose of this glossary is to explain the specialist terminology as developed and used in the book. Many terms are my own; some generic terms such as ‘securitization’ correspond to the definition of the concepts used and developed in this book.

Agent-benefiting securitization = a securitization where the primary beneficiary of **securitization** is the **securitizing actor**.

Agent-caused threat = refers to a threat that is a consequence of an agent’s behaviour, but is not intended by that agent. I differentiate between two sub-types of agent-caused threats: 1) by obliviousness, i.e. when people do not realize that their (combined) actions are potentially threatening to other entities; or b) by harmful neglect, i.e. when relevant agents fail to protect against foreseeable harmful events/consequences.

Agent-intended threat = refers to a threat that is intentionally levelled at another actor, order or entity.

Agent-lacking threat = refers to a threat that does not originate from human agents (e.g. a truly natural disaster).

Aggressor = the agent or agents at the source of an agent-intended threat.

Audience = in **original securitization theory** refers to the entity that has to consent to the threat narrative contained in the securitizing move; in my version of securitization theory it refers to the addressee of the **securitizing move** which is either the agent at the source of a threat and/or the referent object of security.

Counter-securitization = a securitization launched by ‘A’ in direct response to a securitization by ‘B’.

Desecuritization = a sum of actions (a process) referring to the unmaking of **securitization**, involving the termination of security language and **security measures**.

Desecuritized state of affairs = the outcome of **desecuritization**, in which the former securitized issue is either politicized or depoliticized.

Direct lethal threat = a threat to human life regardless of the source of threat.

Evidence relative = refers to the situation when the available evidence suggests decisive reasons that the beliefs people hold about a given situation are true.

Executor of securitization = refers to **security professionals**, e.g. police, border guards, employees of private security firms enforcing security policy. In non-state securitization, divisions are less applicable and executors are (likely to be) the same as **securitizing actors**.

Indirect lethal threat = an existential threat to something other than individuals that carries (the risk of) death to people.

Just cause = in **just securitization theory**, **just cause** is made up of the **just reason** and the **just referent object**.

Just reason = prescribes the reason when **securitization** is morally permissible. In **just securitization theory**, it refers to the presence of an **objective existential threat**.

Just referent object = designates that a referent object (i.e. the entity in need of protection) is entitled to self-defence or is eligible to defensive assistance only if it is morally justifiable, and specifies that moral justifiability is tied to the satisfaction of **basic human needs**.

Just securitization theory = my variant of a theory of just securitization that focuses on the **moral permissibility of securitization**.

Morally permissible = refers to whatever actors are allowed (permitted) to do from a moral point of view in a certain context.

Morally wicked = refers to a person or collective who intentionally and without excuse deprive(s) innocent others of their basic human needs simply to further their own ends.

Objective existential threat = refers to a threat that is both real in the **evidence-relative** sense and of a magnitude that it threatens either the survival of the referent object or its essential properties/character.

Original securitization theory = refers to the **Copenhagen School's** version of securitization theory, whereby **securitization** includes a speech act (**securitizing move**), a relevant audience that has to accept the speech act, effects on inter-unit relations and the breaking free from established rules.

Reactionary securitization = a securitization launched in response to (i.e. as a reaction to) **deseuritization**.

Referent object = the thing that is threatened and hence to be protected by **securitization**.

Referent object benefiting securitization = a securitization where the primary beneficiary is the referent object identified as existentially threatened by the **securitizing actor**.

Renewed securitization = refers to a renewed securitization of an issue that was already desecuritized. Renewed securitization can be carried out by a different actor.

Restorative measures = measures put in place by desecuritizing actors in order to ensure that **renewed** or **reactionary securitization** is unlikely.

Securitization = the process whereby an issue is moved from normal politics into the realm of security politics. In this book, successful/complete securitizations tend to involve: 1) a **securitizing move** (an existential threat articulation) plus 2) **security action** (a change of behaviour by a relevant agent (the **securitizing actor** or someone instructed by the same) that is justified by the **securitizing actor** (and sometimes also by the **executor of securitization**) with reference to the declared threat). **Securitization** is possible without 1 but not without 2. However, in most cases 1 will feature even if it is not always traceable for security scholars. Moreover, **security action** can be either non-exceptional or exceptional in nature; Just Securitization Theory is interested only in **security action** as **the exception**. I refer to exceptional security action as **security measures**. Ergo, in **just securitization theory**, **securitization** is defined as the move from normal politics to the high politics of security, where the issue in question is dealt with using **security measures**.

Securitized state of affairs = the outcome of **securitization** in which the threat is either successfully averted or remains present; either way, security measures are present.

Securitizing actor = the agent whose relevant behavioural change constitutes **securitization**, or who is in a position of power over other agents who can execute security measures.

Securitizing move = generally speaking, the identification of an existential threat; in Just Securitization Theory, relevant securitizing moves are those by **securitizing actors** which amount to either warnings to agents at the source of the threat and/or promises of protection to referent objects.

Securitizing requests = rhetorical moves aimed at persuading others (usually more powerful actors) to securitize, or else make securitizing moves.

Security action = specifies that language alone is not sufficient for successful securitization; instead successful/complete securitization requires that **securitizing actors** act in response to the securitizing move. While the action taken may be either exceptional or non-exceptional, Just Securitization Theory is concerned only with **the exception**. Exceptional means in response to securitizing moves are referred to as **security measures**.

Security measures = the use of exceptional (cf.: **the exception**) means and conduct in response to a **securitizing move**.

Security practitioners = anyone involved in securitization, including the **securitizing actor**, **security professionals** and **executors of securitization**.

Security professionals = individuals working in the security provision industry (e.g. police, military, private security companies, border guards).

The exception = as far as liberal democratic states are concerned, the exception refers not to the suspension of law altogether, but rather to the situation when (new) emergency laws are passed/put into action and/or (new) emergency powers are granted that seek to govern the insecurity/crisis situation, or when a state's existing security apparatus is employed to deal with issues that are either new, or that it has not dealt with previously.

In non-state actors and autocracies, the exception refers to whatever most reasonable persons would agree constitutes exceptional means and actions, most notably perhaps, in terms of the amount of harm risked/caused or intended, and/or the level of violence employed.

Abbreviations

AfD = Alternative für Deutschland (Alternative for Germany, a political party)

AIDS = Auto Immune Deficiency Syndrome

AZBR = Arizona Border Recon

BBC = British Broadcasting Corporation

CDR = Carbon Dioxide Removal

CIA = Central Intelligence Agency

EU = European Union

HIV = Human Immunodeficiency Virus

IPCC = Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

IR = International Relations (the academic discipline)

IS = Islamic State

JST = Just Securitization Theory

LOAC = Laws of Armed Conflict

GCHQ = Government Communications Headquarters (UK)

GDR = German Democratic Republic

MEA = Millennium Ecosystem Services Assessment

NSA = National Security Agency

OSCE = Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

SANFFA = Security: A new framework for analysis

SED = Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands

TEEB = The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity

UK = United Kingdom

UNDP = United Nations Development Report

UNEP = United Nations Environment Programme

UNESCO = United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural
Organization

UNFCCC = United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

US = United States

WHO = World Health Organization

WWII = Second World War

WWF = World Wide Fund for Nature