Writing for the libertarian think tank *The Reason Foundation*, contributor John Stossel makes a pointed argument against the U.S.-backed War on Drugs by explaining that it undermines harsher enforcement against what he deems “illegal” immigration. Stossel rightly notes that the U.S. government’s involvement in cartel infighting has been responsible for exporting conflict to Central American nations and that, because of these conflicts, people from those places have been forced to migrate to the United States. In addition, the emphasis on drug policing grants this merchandise a premium, fostering incentives for traffickers to undertake innovative techniques that result in higher revenue. “Drug profits give smugglers the money to do what poverty-stricken immigrants can’t: dig long, high-tech tunnels with lighting and ventilation systems,” writes Stossel. “A border fence doesn’t secure the border when immigrants—and criminals—can tunnel underneath it” (Stossel). The problem with the War on Drugs, as he sees it, is that it proves profitable for cartels, prompting them to build tunnels that not only further their profits but also open the possibility for other ways of violating state sovereignty. The issues raised by border tunnels are not only their current use for drug smuggling but also their potential for further ways of undermining the sovereignty of the United States.

Indeed, the threat of tunnels is pure potential. Reports from various U.S. agencies report that, by virtue of quantities, these structures are still relatively small sources of trafficking. These openings below the physical geopolitical boundary, with its fences, tracking technologies, and roaming vehicles, represent precisely that: an opening, in the sense of an opportunity, for the aboveground measures to be undone. Tunnels are foremost the grounds for uncertainty. From the perspective of the state, these infrastructural emergences must be contained. The threat of tunnels must be transformed from uncertainty into risk.

Tunnels, however, are unseen. As Stossel’s op-ed makes it clear, the symbolic charge of border tunnels results from the fact that their very presence already implies a breach of sovereignty, where this breach is tied to a lack of visibility and control. In this manner, border tunnels are comparable to, yet contrast with, border walls. As Wendy Brown notes, these walls are “generative of [a] theological awe largely unrelated to their quotidian functions or failures” (26). These structures command attention because of their material might even before their functionality is taken into account. Both border walls and border tunnels “generat[e] significant effects in excess of or even counter to their stated purposes,” and are expensive yet strikingly popular (Brown 27). Walls generate their theological awe because they are readily visible to anyone that visits the national borders. In contrast, tunnels remain inaccessible because they are built clandestinely and because, when found, they are shut down permanently by government agencies. The symbolic charge and political potential of narco-tunnels remains moored to their status as *infra*structure, as structuring
materialities that lie just beneath the threshold of visibility. For state agencies, transforming these underground structures from uncertainty into containable risk requires simultaneous processes of revealing and concealing. The enactment of both these processes and the negotiation of the contradictions they subtend is best achieved through mediation, namely, by virtue of media productions that simultaneously enact this disclosure and concealment.

This chapter considers one such production that mediates the dual processes of tunnel visualization and concealment as well as the discrepant temporalities of emergence and capture: the 2014 video series *What Lies Beneath* created by the U.S. Customs and Border Protection to showcase the work of the Nogales Tunnel Task Force. This case study is representative of the operations of risk management performed by state-sanctioned media productions. In what follows, I analyze these media texts not only as elements in the discursive field of border securitizations but also as media productions themselves in order to foreground the affordances, as well as the pitfalls, of mediation for the state’s management of border security. First, I consider the state’s media productions as part of the larger “border security spectacle,” drawing on the work of Nicholas De Genova, Peter Andreas, and Judith Butler to claim that much of border security is unthinkable without the processes of performativity and visualization enabled by mediation. Then, a close analysis of the videos in *What Lies Beneath* reveals the affordances and limitations that media productions have for circulating the work of border security beyond the publics immediately around the border. In particular, these videos reveal that mediation, while productive for the performance of border security, also provides openings for ideological negotiations and contradictions to emerge. Third, I argue that the mediation of tunnel security is self-referential, and it is because of this that uncertainty can be effectively transformed into risk. The chapter closes with the argument that this self-referentiality also lays the ground for the potential undoing of border security spectacle. By virtue of its reiterative performativity, the mediation of tunnel risk provides openings for further emergences, including its cooptation and critique.

**Border Security as Mediated Spectacle**

Border studies scholars have long argued that borders consist of complex social interactions and negotiations, constituted by tensions between practices of border crossing and border reinforcement (See Mezzadra and Nielson; Vila). Maintaining borders requires not only physical structures and acts of violence but also the continuous symbolic reassurance that those are implicated in the larger ideological investments of state sovereignty and national strength. Nicholas De Genova refers to these connections as the Border Spectacle, the persistent and repetitive implication of the “materiality of border enforcement practices in the symbolic and ideological production of a brightly lit scene of ‘exclusion’ ” (De Genova, “The ‘Crisis’ ”). Since bordering practices include a negotiation between inclusion and exclusion, the spectacle consists in foregrounding exclusionary tactics in a visually striking manner while maintaining the inclusionary ones within its shadow. The symbolic and ideological construction of this scene of exclusion demonstrates, validates, and legitimizes “the purported naturalness and putative necessity of [such] exclusion” (De Genova, “Spectacles” 1181). De Genova’s commitments lie in theorizing the implications of these bordering practices for national politics and international policy surrounding human migration. His theoretical framework, however, also applies to other transnational flows. In the case of drug trafficking, border spectacle consists of visualizing the violent aspects of combating cartels and individual smugglers while effacing the fact that most of the drugs flowing into the United States pass unacknowledged through regular ports of entry because of bureaucratic inefficiency or systematic corruption. Departing from and extending De Genova’s framework, this chapter pursues two claims about the constitution of border spectacle, particularly as it relates to securitization and the management of risk.

First, border security spectacle is a media spectacle. The enactment of this spectacle through media productions allows it to scale up its reach, stakes, and effects. The border spectacle De Genova
names remains tied to the images that shape, form, and contour it. Further, as Guy Debord argues, “the spectacle is not merely a matter of images, nor even of images plus sounds. It is whatever escapes people’s activity, whatever eludes their practical reconsideration and correction” (9). Mediation thus mobilizes the spectacle of border security for publics who are geographically removed from the border region. For one, these publics have no access to the material geopolitical border except through media. At the same time, these removed publics may not know of, or may not care about, the practicalities of border enforcement in everyday life. On some level, the mediation of border security functions to efface the material effects that such security measures have on border populations. Through media productions, state agencies and other stakeholders can foster the discourse of “national security” as tied to border enforcement techniques while ignoring the environmental, economic, and human consequences of these enforcement techniques.

Second, border security spectacle is performative in the sense defined by Judith Butler as a “discursive practice that enacts or produces that which it names” (13). The crucial insight derived from Butler’s theorization is that power does not exist as such but emerges from reiterative action, which not only grants power but also signals its instability. Media becomes a useful tool in the performance of border security by re-producing the practices of enforcement and policing continuously and across dispersed publics. Border security practices acquire their “naturalized effect” by virtue of this reiteration, yet it is also because of such repetition that gaps and fissures “are opened up as the constitutive instabilities in such constructions” (Butler 10). Because border security is performative, it is bound to be fraught with inconsistencies and fissures. Its own constitutive performativity gives the lie of its undoing.

Political scientist Peter Andreas gestures toward the performative aspect of state securitization when he characterizes border policing as a “ceremonial practice,” where policing is less a means to an end than an end in itself (11). Andreas argues that law enforcement, particularly at the border, includes an instrumental role concerned with the defense of physical boundaries and an expressive role tasked with reaffirming moral boundaries. Often times the expressive role of such enforcement supersedes its instrumental goals. In fact, border enforcement campaigns can fail in their instrumental roles while remaining highly successful in their expressive ones. The rhetoric of border security championed by nativist movements and the politicians who cater to them exemplifies this privileging of expressive enforcement. In this manner, tunnel security stands as one endpoint within a long line of security spectacles that include heavy patrolling with vehicles and animals, brutal routine arrests, and inhumane incarceration practices. The measures proposed by such movements may be impractical or counterproductive, and their execution often faulty. Still, by going through the motions of performing border security, the state perpetuates the maxim about protecting its borders, a notion that then can trigger further mobilizations. The mediated construction of border security spectacle thus derives its effectiveness—its effects and its ability to deliver those effects—from the fact that it is performative.

Arguing for the performative, mediated ontology of border securitization does not imply that this practice belongs only to a semiotic realm. There are material consequences to all these security measures such as the destruction of precarious ecologies for nonhuman animals and the deaths of hundreds of migrants across the desert. None of these consequences, however, contribute to “national security” or the protection of sovereignty as defined by state agencies. Border securitization is foremost a spectacle and a performance even as the practical measures purported to achieve it have negative, and often tragic, externalities. Deconstructing the mediation of uncertainty into manageable risk within border security productions does not preclude addressing the physical consequences that security enforcements brings about. Instead, breaking down such mediations serves to begin articulating the fissures within the state security apparatus. As a limit case where the spectacularization of risk dwarves the material importance of their threat, mediations of underground border tunnels unearth the ideological negotiations and contradictions contained within border security spectacle.
What Lies Beneath within Border Media Networks

*What Lies Beneath* is a 2014 video series created for the U.S. Customs and Border Protection’s magazine *Frontline*, a digital publication that features stories about the agency in multimedia formats. The series showcases the work of the Nogales Tunnel Task Force, an interagency group dedicated specifically to tracking and shutting down tunnels around the border. It consists of six videos, three photo slideshows, and written excerpts from interviews with Kevin Hecht, the Deputy Patrol Agent in charge. Hosted both on the Custom and Border Protection’s website, each of these videos centers around one issue related to the Tunnel Task Force’s efforts: experience of working on the team, the different team roles, job satisfaction, their use of technologies, the types of tunnels they find, and tunnel wildlife.

In and of itself, *What Lies Beneath* does not appear to have a wide reach, but this series of videos remains illustrative of the authorized messaging promoted by the state, a message that then extends further through its mediations across other channels. The message from the official state campaign becomes replicated in, for instance, local news reports on border tunnels from ABC and CBS affiliate stations as well as the National Geographic documentary television series *Border Wars* (2010–2015). Across these various other outlets, the same personnel, tropes, and, most importantly, ideological negotiations surface and circulate to a variety of media publics. Such recursivity gives life and shape to an expansive *border media network*, a system of institutions and media productions that circulate images about bordering practices and social relations. *What Lies Beneath*, like most government-sponsored media production, functions as an originary text that hopes to spread across media networks in order to foster particular discursive commitments. Analyzing this series of videos as a media production thus reveals the performative spectacle of border securitization while at the same time making salient the ideological contradictions inherent therein.

*What Lies Beneath* foregrounds the performative aspects of border security and enforcement by promoting the idea that the tunnel shutdown initiatives it showcases are solely responsible for a decrease in infiltration. Despite mentioning that “traffickers are nothing if not inventive,” there is no allusion to the possibility that the reduced number of tunnel discoveries could be due to better circumvention practices. The performance of security captured in these videos purports to be reassuring in and of itself. The expressive role pursued by this media campaign is therefore performative in the sense that the work of this series of videos is “to enact or produce that which it names” (Butler 13) to bring about border securitization through its mediation. The performativity of mediated border security stands in for securitization itself.

The performative aspect of tunnel shutdown proves especially crucial because, quantitatively, tunnels are not the most significant form of drug smuggling into the United States. The former head of the Border Patrol’s Nogales Station in Arizona, Gary Widner, readily admits that tunnel trafficking is but a fraction of the smuggling activities across the border. Although he has reinforced the importance of tunnel interdiction efforts in his multiple press interviews, he also notes that smuggling organizations adapt quickly and creatively to these efforts (Woodhouse). Furthermore, anthropologist Howard Campbell argues that the majority of drugs actually cross through ports of entry. Indeed, the 2017 Executive Orders to increase Border Patrol hires at the same time that Anti-Border Corruption Act protections are dismantled will likely result in more bribes to CBP officials and smoother trafficking through regular ports of entry (Frosch and Meckler; Raff). Campbell suggests that the Border Patrol’s interest in finding and shutting down tunnels has less to do with the amount of drugs that pass through them than with their symbolic value: “[w]ith the Department of Homeland Security spending billions of dollars annually on agents and technology, smugglers outwitting their efforts with shovels and pickaxes doesn’t look good” (qtd. in Woodhouse).

Given these practical considerations, tunnels prove a privileged structure for the mediation of risk for a number of reasons. Because of their material sophistication, the “theological awe” of
tunnels is not only representational, but also partially grounded in their physical characteristics. One implication of this material–representational convergence is that tunnels allow a concrete problem-and-solution approach. A tunnel is found, a construction company is brought in, and the tunnel is shut down. Closing one tunnel can cost between 30 to 100,000 dollars, and involves using concrete with a high level of bonding. Because of this, local companies in the border cities normally cannot perform these jobs. National construction companies then bid for the highly lucrative contracts to shut down tunnels, and local companies must ally themselves with the right bidder to provide local support (Prendergast). For state institutions, this clear-cut, business-oriented approach proves beneficial as a security strategy. Although smuggling through ports of entry is more pervasive, addressing these problems requires broader, more complex, and more time-consuming solutions that are also less amenable to become spectacles of border security. The closure of each tunnel, instead, is always an open-and-shut occasion.

A second implication is that tunnels allow the performance of border security as a preventive move. Municipal governments and CBP agents emphasize the “closing” of tunnels that are still inoperable, long from being finished. The closure of these tunnels becomes significant because of their potential use in the future. The potential threat of tunnels does not need to be assumed since there is an actual physical proto-structure that could eventually become a threat, and that these officials can render through media productions. Tunnel shutdowns provide a reassuring performance of prevention: they assume an ability to assess threats empirically, identify their causes, and provide testable solutions (Massumi 8). This practice likewise speaks to what Rey Chow calls “the preemptiveness of seeing as a means of destruction,” a logic emerging from the post-World War II moment where visualization becomes tantamount to control under the regime of perpetual war (32). It is therefore not difficult to see why state investment in Tunnel Task Forces and tunnel detection technologies has increased even as their relatively low importance for trafficking remains the same (Office of National Drug Control Policy). What Lies Beneath exemplifies how mediation mobilizes the physical characteristics of tunnels in service of the spectacle of border security.

At the same time, these media productions contain multiple negotiations and contradictions embedded within their authorized messaging. For instance, by focusing on the Tunnel Task Force as an entry into exploring underground border tunnels, What Lies Beneath deflects the “technological awe” of trafficking tunnels from those who build them to those who shut them down. Sophisticated tunnels are complex structures designed and built by expert engineers trained in mining industries. Often, these structures include elevators, electric lights, ventilation ducts, and disguised entry and exit shafts; they can reach as deep as 70 feet; and they are tall enough for an adult to walk through. Thus, these take years to build and require substantial economic investment. However, there is no indication of this aspect in What Lies Beneath. Although one of the videos recites the Department of Homeland Security categorization of tunnels into rudimentary, sophisticated, and interconnected, overall the campaign ignores any details of how these tunnels differ in terms of composition and technical expertise. Instead, tunnels become structures that arise all on their own but must be shut down lest they actualize their potential threat. The mediation of tunnels within this campaign thus perpetuates myths about the asymmetry of technological innovation. By ignoring the complexity of the structures they seek to shut down, the state agents present themselves as cutting-edge technology users while narcotraffickers remain unsophisticated criminals with elementary tools.

Still, the specter of emergence haunts these mediated displays of control. The foregrounding of tunnel interdiction efforts begets a paradoxical stance: since these structures are underground and hidden, they must be made visible, but only briefly and only so that their shutdown becomes a significant event. Geographer Cynthia Sorrensen argues as much when she examines the content of press releases from national security agencies. Between 2003 and 2012, almost half these press releases repeated the total tally of tunnel discoveries every time, yet neglected to account for the widely aleatory numbers year to year. These reports also characterized the prevalence of tunnels as
a response to the stronghold on surface border protection. Notably, almost all press releases included a detailed description of the structure of these tunnels: the reinforced wood paneling, the electric lines, the ventilation systems, the complex pulley entry/exit systems. From this content analysis, Sorrensen concludes that “since the subterranean space is less visible than the surface, security agencies [must] demonstrate knowledge and therefore security through descriptions of the physical characteristics of tunnels” (342). Mediating border security likewise consists of this two-part process. First, media makes the state of insecurity visible by shedding light on the fact that sophisticated tunnels exist. At the same time, the mediation of insecurity includes within itself the performance of security, such as the act of shutting down the tunnels that have just been made visible. This dynamic is evident in What Lies Beneath when visualizing tunnel shutdown presents the drop in the number of tunnels found as an effect of this demonstration of security. In doing so, however, these videos also serve as visual demonstrations of the sophistication and “technological awe” of the tunnel being shut down.

This distinction between tech savvy state agents and unsophisticated criminals does not segue into a deeper engagement with the technology itself. Instead, the campaign as a whole de-emphasizes the centrality of technology in favor of foregrounding labor. This aspect is particularly notable in the video titled “Tell Us About the Robots?” Although the video’s framing question makes it seem like it focuses on the newly acquired robots for tunnel exploration, the voiceover and editing undermine this focus by foregrounding the Tunnel Task Force agents in action. In the voiceover, Deputy Agent Hecht states that, despite the advantages that robot scouting provides, the work that agents perform remains the same. At least one agent must go into the tunnel and verify that it reaches beyond the geopolitical border for the agency to take action in shutting it down. Likewise, the editing undermines the potential viewer’s fascination with the robot’s activities: brief shots from the robot’s camera perspective are quickly intercut with shots of officers handling the machine, laying the cable for it, and operating the mobile unit controls (see Figures 19.1a and 19.1b).

Decidedly non-technophilic, this video reinforces the idea that it is human agents who do the work of tunnel closure while the technology itself, no matter how advanced, are mere tools that remain useless without the intrepid agents.

Such foregrounding of labor over new technologies signals a tension within the production aims of these videos. State agencies have an interest in showcasing all sorts of border security measures, whether technological or human. The individual workers on the forefront of these measures, however, have a stake in reasserting their indispensability to the security apparatus. High-tech solutions to border surveillance and policing attract the attention of politicians and technophilic publications (Madrigal). Against such enthusiasm, these videos evidence the efforts of Border Patrol agents to cast their expertise by suggesting that only humans can perform the inordinate tasks of tunnel security. Agents restate the centrality of their work within the industry of border security to counter the narrative propagated by contractors that tunnel robots will bring about revolutionary changes in border policing (Lockheardt).

Of course, this anxiety over technological solutions replacing human labor is an issue for a great number of professions. As John Caldwell argues, media allows workers to become more self-reflexive about their roles in production at times when the pace of technologically motivated obsolescence accelerates (14). Media productions about production open up a space where workers can reinstate their indispensability within their industry. In the case of What Lies Beneath, this resistance to the displacement of labor by technologies occurs within the same productions aimed at showcasing the technologies for border policing. The mediation of border security enables these contradictions to coexist and circulate across border media networks.

What Lies Beneath thus functions as a “behind-the-scenes” feature, a type of programming that revolves around providing audiences with privileged access to the inner workings of an industry. While not new, behind-the-scenes features have multiplied in recent years because of the affordances of digital platforms for release of content. These features perform a marked form of industrial
reflexivity: they aid in the self-definition of the industry by showcasing the uniqueness of technical expertise and the industry insiders’ complete control over finished product. Not unlike Hollywood’s behind-the-scenes features, What Lies Beneath also aids in propagating the myth about “how hard it is to get into” a particular line of work (Caldwell 284–285). In the video centered on the job experience of Tunnel Task Force agents, Hecht’s voiceover explains that crawling into tunnels to inspect them is mired with claustrophobia, darkness, and various unknowns that “play mind games with you.” Throughout, images of cramped spaces and dark recesses of the tunnels reinforce his remarks (see Figure 19.2a). Hecht admits that it is not a job for everyone since some people naturally freeze. Instead, those agents that do participate must have “a desire to do it.”
Resonating with the agent’s words about the job’s “adrenaline rush,” a shot includes a Tunnel Task Force agent climbing down a ladder into a tunnel, then turning to look at the limitless drop below (see Figure 19.2b).

At once, this video foregrounds the mystery of border tunnels, evoking the agents’ pleasure in exploring “what lies beneath,” and perpetuates the myth of the extraordinary individual, depicting these agents as uniquely prepared to carry out these explorations.

The myth of exceptionality promoted by this series is unique to the work of finding and closing off underground tunnels. Agents can distinguish themselves from the vast, and growing, cohort of border security personnel. Propagating this notion about the exceptionality of the work of Tunnel Task Forces both upholds and undermines the effectiveness of border security spectacle. On one
hand, this series upholds border security spectacle because it reinforces tunnels as a significant threat and the mediation of their closure as an effective means of securitization. On the other hand, propagating the myth of unique individuals undermines such spectacle by implying that the border security apparatus, as metonymically represented by its individual agents, may not always be prepared to deal with overhyped threat. By casting their expertise as tacit knowledge that cannot be found in all agents, the Tunnel Task Force further reveals the contingent aspect of tunnel security, dependent on finding unique individuals within the dwindling numbers of the Border Patrol. Amid reports that CBP has failed to meet the hiring increases mandated by the White House (Stenglein; Tanfani), the myth of the exceptional individual brings into relief the very obvious limitations of the organization as a whole. The dual upholding and undermining of the aims of border security spectacle, a contradiction without resolution, results from and circulates because of this spectacle’s mediated nature.

**The Age of the Border Security Spectacle**

In *The Age of the World Target*, Rey Chow argues that a fundamental change in the production and circulation of knowledge occurred in the post-World War II moment. The logics behind the deployment of the atomic bomb as weaponized method as well as the Cold War era’s impetus for dividing up the world resulted in an epistemic shift where visualizing—especially by technological means—became the foremost technique for the organization of control. These developments in conjunction carried implications for the reigning paradigms in theory, literature, and war, according to Chow. War in particular had become “an agenda that is infinitely self-referential,” meaning that war would no longer primarily represent other longstanding or emerging struggles. Instead, war came to represent “war itself” (Chow 33). The self-referentiality of mediated spectacle continues to frame the analysis of global conflict, and it is a central feature of the mediation of border security.

The mediation of tunnel risk represents an exemplary case in the spectacle of border security because this type of risk often signifies only itself. Shutting down all existing underground tunnels will likely not impact in any significant way the movement of drugs into the United States, the trafficking of arms to cartels in Mexico, or the migration of people across both countries. Linking the tunnels to broader, systemic causes and effects of transnational narcotrafficking or human migration quickly reveals the relative insignificance of these structures within the networks that give rise to such phenomena. Instead, the mediation of tunnel risk works to contain such risk within the structures themselves, metonymizing complex interconnected processes therein. The Tunnel Task Force videos put forth the premise that underground border tunnels are a risk because their existence is a risk. This sort of tautology is only possible because of the reliance on mediated images, as Debord explains: “the tautological character of the spectacle stems from the fact that its means and ends are identical” (8). Media productions such as *What Lies Beneath* give rise to such risk at the same time that they foreclose it. The cyclical procedure of such mediations does little to affect the material conditions of the phenomenon that it references.

However, that the mediation of tunnel risk is self-referential is not to say that it achieves nothing. As John Stossel makes clear in the op-ed cited at the beginning of this chapter, tunnels are unbridled potential for fugitive flows. These structure’s current use may be for trafficking drugs, but they also lay the infrastructure for other forms of unsanctioned movement across the geopolitical boundary. In this regard, the media productions around tunnel risk are also representative of another of the aims of border security spectacle: to foreclose futurities. Mediating the opening and closing of tunnels comes to represent the ability of the border security apparatus to address other potential threats. This process is a reassuring performance that every emergence will be met with its adequate form of control. *What Lies Beneath* allows for such reassuring performance because its focus and aim are narrow in scope. By centering the structures themselves, rather than the broader interconnecting networks that shape transnational trafficking, these media productions can figure the aims and means
of border security. These short videos then feed into the border media networks sustained by local newscasts and television documentaries, among other forms of media. Through such extended networks, the potential of tunnels, and its mediated foreclosure, becomes emblematic of the work of border security spectacle for publics near and far away.

Finally, however, the mediation of tunnel risk provides openings for further emergences by virtue of its reiterative performativity. For the unbridled potential of tunnels to be transformed into risk—managed uncertainty—this risk has to be performed, over and over again, in order to grant it (and its performers) legitimacy. Tunnel Task Forces rely on the continued potential threat of tunnels and require further mediations about the forces’ capabilities for shutting down these tunnels. Moving images give visibility to the risk of tunnels at the same time that they capture, code, and give it shape as risk. While participating in the formation of border security spectacle, these state media productions also give life to an even broader border media network, one that includes not only state-sanctioned productions but also mainstream film and television, digital projects, and activist artworks.2 Maintaining the “technological awe” of underground border tunnels in the popular imagination represents a final contradiction in the mediation of border security spectacle: figuring security practices through media productions allows for such performative securitization to become co-opted, critiqued, and potentially undone.

Notes

1 Addressing tunnel closure in this manner parallels the cultural imaginary of tunnel prison escapes, where the tunnel closure reaffirms the impenetrability of the disciplinary fortress.

2 Such a broader “border media network” also includes different forms of border spectacles that transform other types of flows into risk. See, for instance, the chapter by Heller and Pezzani in this volume.

Works Cited


