

Surveillance & Society

Course Syllabus

Vanderbilt University
HOD 2690 02 – Spring 2010
Tuesday & Thursday 2:35 – 3:50
Location: Home Economics 107

Professor

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Course Description

How are surveillance technologies altering social life in post-9/11 worlds? This course will explore this question by mapping the complex ways that technologies and societies interact to produce security, fear, control, vulnerability, and/or empowerment. Some of the areas covered include anti-terrorism legislation, close-circuit television (CCTV) in public and quasi-public spaces, passenger-screening technologies at airports, and a host of monitoring technologies in cyberspaces, workplaces, and the home. Readings will be drawn from the social sciences, science fiction, and popular media. Several films will be shown to facilitate critical inquiry into the shaping of popular perceptions about the future and our role in its creation. The class is designed to give students freedom to develop and express their own ideas. The course goal is for you to cultivate a technological literacy that will allow you to analyze and critique surveillance technologies as social entities.

Required Texts

1. Andrejevic, Mark. 2007. *iSpy: Surveillance and Power in the Interactive Era*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas.
2. Monahan, Torin & Rodolfo D. Torres. 2010. *Schools under Surveillance: Cultures of Control in Public Education*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.
3. Electronic Reserve Articles (+ readings on Oak).
4. UbiSurv Blog: <http://ubisurv.wordpress.com/>

Grading

On-line Journal	30%
Paper #1	20%
Final Team Project	30%
Participation	20%

[Grading Scale: A =95-100, A- =90-94, B+ =87-89, B =84-86, B- =80-83, C+ =77-79, C =74-76, C- =70-73, D+ =67-69, D =64-66, D- =60-63]

Course Expectations

Attendance: This class will be conducted with a focus on in-class discussions and activities. Because of this format, you are expected to attend all classes for the full scheduled time. Excessive tardiness will be counted as an absence. You can miss up to 2 classes throughout the semester without penalty, but you must turn in assignments ahead of time and arrange to get notes from a colleague. Your final grade will go down by 5 points (out of 100) for each additional class missed above these 2. Finally, if you fail to show up for a scheduled meeting with the instructor without canceling 24 hours in advance, your participation grade will be docked 5 points.

Reading: Complete all readings (and other assignments) prior to the class meeting for which they are scheduled. Most of the readings will be drawn from the required texts for the course or from Internet web pages. You must bring readings (or copies of them) to class for the dates they are assigned. In some cases, I may distribute photocopied readings to you in class. See the course outline below for details. Additionally, you will be expected to faithfully read the UbiSurv Blog <<http://ubisurv.wordpress.com/>> every week throughout the course.

Participation: Through communication, ideas are formed, revised, borrowed, and developed. It is through argument, description, explanation, and improvisation – within a community – that individual learning flourishes. This course requires full participation (including active listening, facilitating, note-taking, and question-asking) to create an environment of open and shared learning. An effective participant is not someone who simply talks frequently, but someone who reliably offers thoughtful insights that help others to learn.

Technology: Laptop computers and other portable technologies should be used in class only as learning-facilitation tools. During class, it is not acceptable to play games, answer email, surf the web, answer cell phones, text message, or engage in other non-class-related activities. Your participation grade will be penalized if you break this rule. Why? Not only do these practices negatively affect your learning and participation, but they also distract others and create an environment of disrespect.

Course Assignments

1. On-line Journal:

Starting in Week 2, on-line journal entries of approximately 750 words are due every Saturday by noon. Journal entries should respond to the writing prompts in the course outline (below) and be based primarily on the reading for the week. You must show that you did the reading and listened attentively to class discussion, but not, for example, by listing your reactions in a series of unconnected paragraphs: you must write a short essay that develops them as a whole.

I suggest, therefore, that you jot down ideas for your essays as you read for class or participate in the discussions, and afterwards step back for a moment to reflect on your overall reaction, that is, the theme for your essay. It is best to take a critical perspective for your theme. A critical perspective does not require that you be against the ideas expressed in the reading or lectures. It means simply that you have asked yourself some hard questions. What are the alternatives to your reaction? Why is your reaction better

than the alternatives? It is always important to remember, especially when the issues in question concern how we should live, that your first reaction may well be defensive, often accompanied by some intense feelings. It is appropriate to explore these feelings in your essay, though it will not always be easy to get to the bottom of them. You will need patience and honesty if you wish to get beyond the level of gut reaction and opinion to the level of justified belief.

Journal essays will be due every week except for Weeks 1, 4, 8, 9, 14, & 16. There will be a total of 10 essays in the course.

Mechanics: Post your entries to our course page on OAK (<https://oak.vanderbilt.edu/webapps/login/>) under the proper week heading (e.g. “Week 2”) in the “discussion board” section. If you compose the entry in a word processing program, please cut-and-paste the text into Blackboard rather than attaching a file. These assignments will be graded on a pass / fail basis. If you make a sincere effort, you will pass. As with everything else, feel free to check with me at any time throughout the semester if you are concerned about your progress with journal entries.

2. Individual Papers:

There will be one individually composed paper of 8-10 pages required in this course. The paper (due March 4) will be an analysis of some of the social science and philosophical articles and chapters we will be reading. It will invite a critical investigation into what we can learn from the social sciences about surveillance technologies in society, and it will ask you to make an argument for how surveillance technologies should be regulated or governed to safeguard (or bring about) civil liberties and conditions of fairness and justice. For this assignment, you will be required to mobilize 2-3 of the key concepts covered in the course and apply them to your analysis of the themes and examples in the required reading.

3. Final Team Project:

The final project will be a team-based research paper of 20 pages due April 27. Teams will decide upon their own research topics concerning technological surveillance and will thoroughly investigate them using a variety of research techniques: interviewing, photographing, mapping, observing, surveying, and – of course – reading. Some possible examples of research areas include: mapping surveillance cameras on campus or in Nashville, determining local policies for data retention and access with public surveillance, analyzing the USA PATRIOT and Homeland Security Acts, critically investigating police use of surveillance in patrol cars or elsewhere, documenting counter-surveillance groups and tactics throughout the world, etc. (See www.publicsurveillance.com/student.html for examples of past student projects in this course.) Experimentation is highly encouraged for this project, and alternative formats are welcome. Be creative and have some fun!

I reserve the right to distribute unannounced quizzes on the reading or lecture material. Any missed points on these quizzes will be deducted from your participation grade. Quizzes may not be made-up if you are absent.

Academic Honesty

In order to avoid plagiarism, your assignments must provide full citations for all references: direct quotes, summaries, or ideas. While you are encouraged to develop your thinking with your peers, you cannot use their material without citing it. Work from other courses will not be accepted in this course. Allowing your writing to be copied by another student is also considered cheating. Please review the Honor Code for complete guidelines on academic honesty: <http://studentorgs.vanderbilt.edu/HonorCouncil/>.

Gender-Fair Language

Language structures thought and action. Biases in language can (and do) naturalize inequities. Imprecise language also signifies un-interrogated values and sloppy thinking. For all of these reasons, the use of gender-fair language is expected in this course. For example, do not use words like "mankind" or "men" when referring to people in general; alternate between "she" and "he" instead of always using "he", or construct sentences in the plural instead of the singular so you can use "they" or "them" and avoid the problem altogether.

ESL/LD Students

Course requirements can be adjusted to serve the needs and capabilities of ESL and LD students. Please speak with the primary instructor during the first two weeks of class to make arrangements. Students may be advised to attend additional sessions during the instructors' office hours so they can draw comparable value from the course.

Course Schedule (subject to revision)

Week One: Introductions

Thursday, January 14: Introductory Discussion

Week Two: The Surveillance Society & Surveillance Theory

Tuesday, January 19:

Readings:

- Surveillance Studies Network. 2006. A Report on the Surveillance Society (Summary).
- John Gilliom & Torin Monahan. 2010. My Cell, My Self: Is Big Brother in Your Pocket?

Thursday, January 21:

Readings:

- Michel Foucault. "The Eye of Power." CTRL [SPACE]: pp.94-102
- Jeremy Bentham. "The Penitentiary Panopticon..." CTRL [SPACE]: pp.114-119
- Kevin D. Haggerty and Richard V. Ericson. 2000. The Surveillant Assemblage. *British Journal of Sociology* 51 (4):605-622.

Journal prompt: What do the concepts of *the surveillance society*, *the panopticon*, and *the surveillant assemblage* have in common? In what ways are they different? Discuss how they apply to today's world.

Week Three: The Control State

Tuesday, January 26:

Readings:

- Timothy Druckrey. “Secreted Agents, Security Leaks, Immune Systems, Spore Wars...” CTRL [SPACE]: 150-157
- Duncan Campbell. “Inside Echelon.” CTRL [SPACE]: 158-169
- Robert Darnton. “The Stasi Files.” CTRL [SPACE]: 170-177

Thursday, January 28:

Readings:

- Torin Monahan. 2006. Questioning Surveillance and Security. In *Surveillance and Security: Technological Politics and Power in Everyday Life*, edited by T. Monahan. New York: Routledge, 1-23.
- Alfred W. McCoy. 2009. Surveillance State, U.S.A. *CBS News*, November 12.
- Alex Johnson. 2008. Surveillance video grows despite lack of evidence. *MSNBC*, June 25.

Journal prompt: What can we learn from past surveillance states? How is the U.S. in the post-9/11 world similar or different from previous surveillance states?

Week Four: Film

Tuesday, February 2:

No Readings

Thursday, February 4:

No Readings

Week Five: Abstracting Bodies and Engendering Power

Tuesday, February 9:

Readings:

- Tyler Wall. “School Ownership is the Goal.” *Schools under Surveillance*, 104-119.
- Tyson Lewis. Risky Youth and the Psychology of Surveillance. *Schools under Surveillance*, 140-158.

Thursday, February 11:

Readings:

- Victor Burgin. “Jenni’s Room.” CTRL [SPACE]: 228-235
- Hille Koskela. 2000. “The Gaze without Eyes’: Video-surveillance and the Changing Nature of Urban Space.” *Progress in Human Geography* 24 (2):243-265.

Journal prompt: In what ways can technological surveillance be thought of as being gendered? What are the risks of perceiving people, actions, or data as separate from context?

Week Six: Schools Under Surveillance

Tuesday, February 16:

Readings:

- Torin Monahan & Rodolfo D. Torres. Introduction. *Schools under Surveillance*, 1-18.
- Aaron Kupchik & Nicole Bracy. To Protect, Serve, and Mentor? *Schools under Surveillance*, 21-37.

Thursday, February 18:

Readings:

- Ronnie Casella. Safety or Social Control. *Schools under Surveillance*, 73-86.
- Valerie Steeves. Online Surveillance in Canadian Schools. *Schools under Surveillance*, 87-103.

Journal prompt: Other than fear of school violence, why is there so much surveillance in public schools? In what ways are school boundaries being transgressed by those conducting or supporting school surveillance?

Week Seven: Schools Under Surveillance

Tuesday, February 23:

Readings:

- Paul Hirschfield. School Surveillance in America. *Schools under Surveillance*, 38-54.
- Richard A. Matthew. Reading, Writing, and Readiness. *Schools under Surveillance*, 123-139.

Thursday, February 25:

Readings:

- John Gilliom. Lying, Cheating, and Teaching to the Test. *Schools under Surveillance*, 194-212.
- Pauline Lipman. "Politics by Other Means." *Schools under Surveillance*, 159-174.

Journal prompt: What role does school surveillance play in perpetuating social inequalities? In what ways is surveillance a political act?

Week Eight: Film

Tuesday, March 2:

No Readings

Thursday, March 4:

No Readings

PAPER #1 DUE

Week Nine: Spring Break

No Classes or Readings

Week Ten: Surveillance, New Media, and Interactivity I

Tuesday, March 16:

Readings:

- Michael Zimmer. 2008. The Externalities of Search 2.0: The Emerging Privacy Threats when the Drive for the Perfect Search Engine meets Web 2.0. *First Monday* 13 (3). <http://www.uic.edu/htbin/cgiwrap/bin/ojs/index.php/fm/article/view/2136/1944>.
- Saul Hansell. 2009. Four Privacy Protections the Online Ad Industry Left Out. <http://bits.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/07/06/four-privacy-protections-the-ad-industry-left-out/>.
- Sean Dodson. 2008. The net shapes up to get physical. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/technology/2008/oct/16/internet-of-things-ipv6>.

Thursday, March 18:

Readings:

- *iSpy*, Chts. 1-2.

Journal prompt: Explain how *the digital enclosure* operates. How is *empowerment* playing out in the world of new media? What forms of exploitation are taking place?

Week Eleven: Surveillance, New Media, and Interactivity II

Tuesday, March 23:

Readings:

- *iSpy*, Chts. 3-4.

Thursday, March 25:

Readings:

- *iSpy*, Chts. 5-7.

Journal prompt: Describe how new media is being harnessed to depoliticize the public sphere. Which – or whose – political interests triumph from these arrangements?

Week Twelve: Interactivity and Policy Recommendations

Tuesday, March 30:

Readings

- *iSpy*, Chts. 8-9.

Thursday, April 1:

Readings

- Jean-François Blanchette, and Deborah G. Johnson. 2002. “Data Retention and the Panoptic Society: The Social Benefits of Forgetfulness.” *The Information Society* 18:33-45
- Schneier, Bruce. 2008. The Myth of the 'Transparent Society'. *Wired*, March 6. Available from http://www.wired.com/politics/security/commentary/securitymatters/2008/03/securitymatters_0306.

Journal prompt: Why should one be opposed to the dominant forms of contemporary interactivity? How can new media and electronic data be managed (or regulated) to safeguard rights and foster the public good?

Week Thirteen: Knowable Bodies

Tuesday, April 6:

Readings:

- Irma van der Ploeg. 1999. The Illegal Body: 'Eurodac' and the Politics of Biometric Identification. *Ethics and Information Technology* 1:295-302
- Currah, Paisley and Lisa Jean Moore. 2009. 'We Won't Know Who You Are': Contesting Sex Designations on New York City Birth Certificates. *Hypatia* 24 (3): 113-135.

Thursday, April 8:

Readings:

- Dorothy Nelkin and Lori Andrews. 1999. DNA Identification and Surveillance Creep. *Sociology of Health and Illness* 21 (5): 689-706.
- David J. Phillips. 2005. From Privacy to Visibility. Context, Identity, and Power in Ubiquitous Computing Environments. *Social Text* 23 (2):95-108.

Journal prompt: How is identity shaped, controlled, and normalized with surveillance? What are some of the ramifications of these functions?

Week Fourteen: Film

Tuesday, April 13:

No Readings

Thursday, April 15:

No Readings

Week Fifteen: Resistance

Tuesday, April 20:

Readings:

- Institute for Applied Autonomy. 2006. Defensive Surveillance: Lessons from the Republican National Convention. In *Surveillance and Security: Technological Politics and Power in Everyday Life*, edited by T. Monahan. New York: Routledge, 167-174.
- Torin Monahan. 2006. Counter-surveillance as Political Intervention? *Social Semiotics* 16 (4):515-534.

Thursday, April 22:

Readings:

- Jen Weiss. Scan This. *Schools under Surveillance*, 213-229.
- Huey, Laura, Kevin Walby, and Aaron Doyle. 2006. Cop Watching in the Downtown Eastside: Exploring the Use of (Counter)Surveillance as a Tool of Resistance. In *Surveillance and Security: Technological Politics and Power in Everyday Life*, edited by T. Monahan. New York: Routledge, 149-165.

Journal prompt: Describe some of the ways that resistance to surveillance fraught with problems and explain why you think this is the case. From your perspective, what forms of resistance hold the most promise, and why?

Week Sixteen: Course Wrap-Up

Tuesday, April 27: **Last Day of Class**

- **Final Projects Due**