Sociology 190
Surveillance Cultures
Fall 2021

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Seminar meetings: Thursdays, 10-12 — Social Sciences Building 402
Office hours: Wednesdays, 10-12 — Zoom by default, or in-person by appointment
Office hours sign-up: https://www.wejoinin.com/eiermann
bCourses: https://bcourses.berkeley.edu/courses/1506720

The collection of personalized and statistical data is a widely used technique of state power, a prerequisite of the digital economy, and a byproduct of everyday interactions on online platforms. In this course, we will develop a sociological perspective on what can collectively be called "surveillance cultures".

We will do so by complicating four common claims: (1) surveillance is a distinctly (post-)modern and digitally enabled form of social control; (2) the collection of personal and statistical data has become indiscriminate and ubiquitous; (3) being watched is now a widely accepted way of life that elicits little resistance; and (4) being visible is a form of imprisonment that undermines personal freedom. Each of these claims captures something important about surveillance in the contemporary world — but each can also simplify to the point of distortion. By complicating these four claims, we will link the study of surveillance to questions of state power, contemporary capitalism, racial and social inequality, and the constitution of the socially situated self.

We will pursue two aims simultaneously: First, we will seek to develop a deeper empirical understanding of surveillance regimes and their social significance. Second, we will make sense of this empirical reality by familiarizing ourselves with the language of social theory. The theoretical perspectives we encounter throughout the semester will sometimes be in tension with one another, and it will be our task to articulate our (dis)agreements through weekly discussions and to render the course readings useful to our own engagement with the world.

The syllabus foregrounds examples from the United States, but surveillance is neither a uniquely American nor an exclusively digital phenomenon. We will consider several historical and non-Western cases during our classroom discussions, and students are encouraged to develop final papers that push beyond the scope of the syllabus.

Course readings

All course readings will be provided in electronic form on bCourses or as links in this syllabus. You do not need to purchase any books.

COVID-19 attendance policy

We will follow campus rules regarding in-person meetings and indoor masking. Chancellor Christ has announced in-person instruction as "our default" for Fall 2021, and we will follow this rule. We may have to adjust how we interact on short notice if campus rules change.

Soc 190 is a discussion-style seminar, so I expect you to be present in person for our weekly meetings.

Please inform me in advance if you cannot attend class. You are allowed two absences, but I will deduct participation points if you miss more than two seminars.

However, I understand that some students may want to minimize physical interactions. Office hours will be over Zoom by default, although you are welcome to request an in-person meeting with me at any time during the semester.

Seminar meetings and participation

We will meet once a week for two hours. Please be prepared to discuss, compare, and critique the course readings. I will sometimes give brief lectures to orient our discussion and clarify difficult readings, but the focus will be on a free and frank exchange of ideas. I will facilitate those discussions and ensure that we cultivate a learning environment where everyone's voice is heard.

If you find it difficult to speak in class, I encourage you to meet with me individually. I can help you to speak with greater confidence.

Disabled Students Program

If you have a documented need for special accommodations, please forward your DSP letter as soon as possible to work out the necessary arrangements. If you require DSP-related deadline extensions, you will still be expected to meet the extended deadline.

E-Mail and Office Hours

I can easily be reached by email. While I'll do my best to reply quickly, sometimes my work will prevent me from getting to your emails as promptly as I'd like. Fear not: A response is coming!

You can also sign up for my weekly office hours at *wejoinin.com/eiermann*. You do not need a set of fully formed questions to attend office hours. If you find a reading particularly interesting, if you want guidance on an assignment, or if you are hesitant to speak in class and prefer a more individualized setting, I hope that you will come to see me.

Assignments and grading

This seminar is organized around weekly discussions and culminates in an independent research paper. The assignments are designed to facilitate those discussions and to aid your paper-writing.

The final paper can take two forms:

1. You may choose to write an empirical paper that takes a detailed look at one specific surveillance regime. This will require some empirical research about the origins, development, implementation, legitimation, or impact of such a regime or about the resistance it has sparked. You will use theoretical readings from the syllabus to interpret the data you gather.

2. You may also choose to write a conceptual paper that develops a sociological perspective on privacy and surveillance, using empirical examples only to illustrate your conceptual claims.

This paper will require less empirical research, but you will need to master multiple schools of thought in order to explain, critique, juxtapose, or synthesize them. Keep in mind that this is not simply a summary — you will have to develop a distinct argument that intervenes in existing debates about surveillance and privacy.

You will do substantial work on your final paper during the semester by completing three preparatory assignments. All course assignments are double-spaced and should be submitted on bCourses.

Assignment	Description	Due Date	Weight
Attendance and participation	I expect you to attend our seminar meetings and to contribute actively to classroom discussions.		25%
4 reading response memos	1-2 page memos that discuss the week's readings. You can turn in these memos during any week, as long as they are all submitted prior to RRR week. Please upload your memos to bCourses on Wednesday evening. I will read them before we meet on Thursday and may ask you to discuss your memo during class.	Wednesdays, 8pm	5% per memo
Paper prep 1	2 pages about a surveillance regime that you find interesting (if you are writing an empirical paper) or about a theoretical puzzle (if you are writing a conceptual paper).	October 28, before class	5%
Paper prep 2	2 pages about your key findings (if you are writing an empirical paper) or about your answer to a theoretical puzzle (if you are writing a conceptual paper).	November 18, before class	5%
Paper prep 3	2-3 page outline with a summary of your argument. This should provide a detailed overview of your paper's structure, data, argument, and tentative conclusions.	December 2, before class	10%
Final paper	15-20 pages.	December 15, midnight	35%

Academic honesty

You must submit original work, cite your sources, and in no way misrepresent your work or the work of your peers. If you are unsure what constitutes cheating or plagiarism, please familiarize yourself with Berkeley's code of student conduct at *sa.berkeley.edu/student-code-of-conduct*. Remember that it is always better to hand in an incomplete assignment or to ask for an emergency extension than to submit dishonest or plagiarized work.

Campus Resources

Student Leaning Center: Located in the Cesar Chavez Student Center, the SLC offers academic support through tutoring, study groups, and workshops. Contact them at 510-642-7332.

Counseling and Psychological Services: Mental health resources are available through University Health Services. Contact the Tang Center at 510-642-9494 or after hours at 855-817-5667.

Weekly calendar and readings

August 26: Societies of discipline and control

Michel Foucault. 1995. "The Means of Correct Training." Pp. 170-177 in *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. New York: Vintage Books.

Gilles Deleuze. 1992. "Postscript on the Societies of Control." *October* 59: 3-7.

Dave Eggers. *2013. The Circle*. New York: Knopf. Pp. 59-70.

September 2: The long history of surveillance regimes

Michel Foucault. 2007. "1 February 1978." Pp. 87-110 in *Security, Territory, Population. Lectures at the Collège de France, 1977-1978*. New York: Picador.

Simone Browne. 2015. "Everybody's Got a Little Light under the Sun." Pp. 63-88 in *Dark Matters: On the Surveillance of Blackness.* Durham: Duke University Press.

Sarah Igo. 2018. "Documents of Identity." Pp. 55-64 in *The Known Citizen*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

September 9: A post-modern form of social control?

Zygmunt Bauman and David Lyon. 2013. "Liquid Surveillance as Post-Panoptic." Pp. 52-75 in *Liquid Surveillance*. London: Polity.

Kevin D. Haggerty and Richard V. Ericson. 2000. "The Surveillant Assemblage." *The British Journal of Sociology* 51 (4): 605-622.

September 16: Surveillance as a way of life

David Lyon. 2018. "Surveillance Culture Takes Shape." Pp. 1-25 in *The Culture of Surveillance: Watching As a Way of Life*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Alice Marwick. 2012. "The Public Domain: Social Surveillance in Everyday Life." *Surveillance & Society* 9 (4): 378-393.

September 23: Surveillance as a technological achievement

Sheila Jasanoff. 2004. "The Idiom of Co-Production." Pp. 1-12 in S*tates of Knowledge: The Co-Production of Science and Social Order.* London: Routledge.

David Lyon. 2003. "Surveillance Technology and Surveillance Society. Pp. 161-184 in *Modernity and Technology.* Cambridge: The MIT Press.

Thorin Klosowski. "Facial Recognition Is Everywhere." *New York Times*, July 1 2020. Available at: https://www.nytimes.com/wirecutter/blog/how-facial-recognition-works/

September 30: Surveillance as a political project

Sarah Brayne. 2017. "Big Data Surveillance. The Case of Policing." *American Sociological Review* 82 (5): 977–1008.

Zeynep Tufekci. 2014. "Engineering the Public: Big Data, Surveillance and Computational Politics." *First Monday* 19 (7). Available at: http://firstmonday.org/ojs/index.php/fm/article/view/4901/4097.

October 7: Surveillance as an economic imperative

Jathan Sadowski. 2019. "When Data is Capital: Datafication, Accumulation, and Extraction." *Big Data & Society* 1: 1-12.

Shoshana Zuboff. 2019. "The Discovery of Behavioral Surplus." Pp. 63-97 in *The Age of Surveillance Capitalism: The Fight for a Human Future at the New Frontier of Power*. New York, NY: Public Affairs.

October 14: Unequal visibility

Simone Browne. 2015. "Notes on Surveillance Studies." Pi. 31-62 in *Dark Matters: On the Surveillance of Blackness*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Adriana C. Nuñez. 2019. "Collateral Subjects: The Normalization of Surveillance for Mexican Americans on the Border." *Sociology of Race and Ethnicity* 6 (4): 1-14.

Danielle Keats Citron. 2018. "Sexual Privacy." *Yale Law Journal* 128: 1904-1928.

October 21: Visibility, precarity, opportunity

Virginia Eubanks. 2017. "The Allegheny Algorithm." Pp. 127-173 in *Automating Inequality: How High-Tech Tools Profile, Police, and Punish the Poor*. New York: St. Martin's Press.

Bernard Harcourt. 2005. "Punishing in an Actuarial Age." Public Law and Legal Theory Working Papers.

October 28: Is privacy dead?

James Bamford, "They Know Much More Than You Think" *New York Review of Books*, August 2013: https://www-nybooks-com.libproxy.berkeley.edu/articles/2013/08/15/nsa-they-know-much-more-you-think/

Mark Andrejevic. 2004. "The Work of Watching One Another: Lateral Surveillance, Risk, and Governance." *Surveillance & Society* 2 (4): 479-497.

Paper prep assignment #1 due at 10am.

November 4: Resistance at the margins

David Lyon. "Hidden Hope." Pp. 173-197 in *The Culture of Surveillance: Watching As a Way of Life*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Scott Skinner-Thompson. 2020. "Containing Corporate and Privatized Surveillance." Pp. 108-138 in *Privacy at the Margins*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Laura Huey. 2010. "A Social Movement for Privacy/Against Surveillance: Some Difficulties in Engendering Mass Resistance in a Land of Twitter and Tweets." *Case Western Reserve Journal of International Law* 42 (3): 699-709.

November 11: NO CLASS because of Veterans' Day.

November 18: Visibility as imprisonment?

Ruha Benjamin. 2019. "Coded Exposure: Is Visibility a Trap?" Pp. 97-136 in *Race After Technology.* Cambridge: Polity Press.

Bernard Harcourt. 2015. "The Mortification of the Self." Pp. 217-233 in *Exposed: Desire and Disobedience in the Digital Age*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Arora Payal. 2016. "Bottom of the Data Pyramid: Big Data and the Global South." *International Journal of Communication* 10: 1681-1699.

Paper prep assignment #2 due at 10am.

November 25: NO CLASS because of Thanksgiving.

December 2: Visibility as freedom?

Thomas Mathiesen. 1997. "The Viewer Society: Foucault's Panopticon Revisited." *Theoretical Criminology* 1 (2): 215-234.

Hille Koskela. 2002. "Webcams, TV Shows and Mobile Phones: Empowering Exhibitionism." *Surveillance and Society*, vol 2, No. 2-3, Pp. 199-215.

Linnet Taylor. 2017. "What Is Data Justice? The Case for Connecting Digital Rights and Freedoms Globally." *Big Data & Society* 4 (2): 1–14.

Paper prep assignment #3 due at 10am.

FINAL PAPER due on December 15 at midnight.