St. Francis Xavier University
Department of Sociology

SELECTED TOPICS IN THE SOCIOLOGY OF SURVEILLANCE AND SOCIAL CONTROL (SOCI 435)

Fall 2016
Lecture Room: Annex 113A
Mondays 8:15am – 9:30am; Thursdays 9:45am – 11:00am

Instructor: Dr. Stephen Marmura
Email: smarmura@stfx.ca
Office Hours: Tuesdays 10:00am – 1:00pm; Thursdays 1:00pm – 3:00pm;
Fridays 12:00pm – 1:00pm; or by appointment
Office: Annex 111C

Required Texts (available in bookstore)**:**

David Lyon (2007) *Surveillance Studies: An Overview*, Polity Press.
CSPI Coursepack

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Surveillance – watching and being watched – has always been integral to human societies. However, only during the modern period have its applications and techniques become so wide-ranging and multi-layered. In contemporary, information-based societies such as Canada, digitized forms of personal data-collection and observation have become implicated in virtually all aspects of life. In the course of activities as mundane as shopping, Web surfing, obtaining health care or simply walking down the street, we invariably expose ourselves to some form of surveillance, providing others with information about such matters as our physical characteristics, patterns of movement, personal tastes and financial standing. At the same time, surveillance often remains invisible or obscure. We are rarely certain as to who is collecting information about us or why, what state agencies or corporate institutions might gain access to it, or what such access might ultimately mean in terms of our life experiences. Likewise, privacy has become an elusive concept, with greater personal 'visibility' the apparent cost of full participation in society. This course considers the changing character of surveillance practices from a critical, sociological standpoint. We explore their historic origins, primary drivers today, relationships to processes of social inclusion and exclusion, and the related opportunities and risks posed for individuals and groups in their varied roles as workers, travelers, citizens and consumers.

Evaluation:

Class Participation: 10%
Take Home Exam: 30%
Student Presentations: 20%
Research Paper: 40%

Please see requirement and assignment descriptions at end of syllabus.

COURSE OUTLINE

Note: all readings (except Lyon) are included in the course reader

Week 1) Introduction to Course

Sept. 8

Week 2) What is Surveillance and why study it?

Sept. 12, 15

Lyon: *Introduction*
Lyon: *The Watched World Today*

Week 3) Surveillance and Modernity

Sept. 19, 22

Lyon: *Spreading Surveillance Sites*
Lyon: *Explaining surveillance*

Week 4) Surveillance Dystopias: Ancient and Modern

Sept. 26, 29

Harris: *The Hydraulic Trap*
Los: *The Technologies of Total Domination*

Week 5) Everyday Surveillance and the Problem of Privacy

Oct. 3, 6*

Solove: *"I've Got Nothing to Hide" and Other Misunderstandings of Privacy*
Marwick: *The Public Domain: Social Surveillance in Everyday Life*

*Take Home Exam handed out in class – returned in class Oct. 13

Week 6) Surveillance in the New Economy

Oct. 10 Thanksgiving Day (no class)

Oct. 13 Take Home Exam returned to me in class

Film: *Big Brother; Big Business*

Week 7) cont.

Oct. 17, 20

McStay: *Profiling Phorm*
Andrejevic: *Monitored Mobility in the Era of Mass Customization*

Week 8) Surveillance as Social Sorting

Oct. 24, 27

Bowker & Star: *The Case of Race Classification and Reclassification under Apartheid*
Graham & Wood: *Digitizing surveillance: categorization, space, inequality*

Week 9) Surveillance in the Workplace

Oct. 31; Nov. 3

Goold: *Public Area Surveillance and Police Work: the impact of CCTV on police behaviour and autonomy*
Moore: *The Quantified Self: What counts in the neoliberal workplace*

Week 10) Surveillance after 9/11

Nov. 7, 10

Parenti: *Fear as Institution: 9/11 and Surveillance Triumphant*
de Lint: *The Security Double Take: The Political, Simulation and the Border*

Week 11) Surveillance, Media and Popular Culture

Nov. 14, 17

Mathiesen: *The Viewer Society: Michel Foucault's 'Panopticon' revisited*
Andrejevic: *The Webcam Subculture and the Digital Enclosure*

Week 12) Surveillance and Public Opinion

Nov. 21, 24

Marmura: *Security vs. Privacy: Media Messages, State Policies, and American Public Trust in Government*
Tukfeckci: *Engineering the public: Big data, surveillance and computational politics*

Week 13) Information Overload?: Surveillance, Prediction and Big Data

Nov. 28; Dec. 1

Haggerty: *Visible War: Surveillance, Speed, and Information War*
Andrejevic: *The Big Data Divide*

<center>COURSE REQUIREMENTS</center>

Class Participation: 10%

Small, seminar-style classes provide students with a unique opportunity to engage in class discussion and reflect in depth upon the course material. To benefit fully from this opportunity, keeping up with course readings and attending classes regularly are essential. Students will be expected to arrive in each class with several talking points pertaining to the reading for that day. They should take the form of observations, question or comments concerning examples or arguments from the readings which you think hold particular significance (and why!). Some readings are quite challenging and your talking points may sometimes take the form of requests for clarification concerning a particular concept or line of thought. There is nothing wrong with this as it may lead to productive class discussion. My main concern is that you are taking the readings seriously and reflecting thoughtfully on their content. Talking points will not be handed in. Rather, this is an informal way to help ensure that all students have the opportunity to share ideas, pose questions and contribute to discussion.

Please note that class participation provides the foundation on which other course components rely. The material in this course will be new to most of you and regular participation is necessary for you to better appreciate it. We also depend on class discussion to support and reinforce student presentations. Irregular attendance will result in either the partial or complete loss of the participation grade. We will go over this policy in more detail during the first week of class.

Take Home Exam: 30%

A mid-term take-home exam will be handed out in class on October 6th and will be due *in class* on October 13th. As Oct. 7th is a study day and Oct. 10th is a holiday, this gives students more than ample opportunity to complete the test regardless of other commitments. Further instructions and comments regarding the exam will be discussed in class.

Late policy: Please note that unlike the case of assignments where extensions may sometimes be granted and where a penalty is deducted for late papers, *no take-home tests will be accepted after the due date*.

Only hard-copies will be accepted.

Student Presentations: 20%

Each student will give a presentation of roughly 20 minutes based on a reading from the course. Presentations will take place during and/or after week seven (depending on the number of students enrolled) with one or two presentations per class. How the presentation is approached may depend in part upon the nature of the reading. In many cases the theoretical issues explored within the paper will require most of the presenter's attention. In other instances, students may wish to extend the discussion to other substantive cases not dealt with in the reading but which relate directly to central ideas or examples discussed within it. In either case your presentation should entail more than a just a straightforward summary of the article, but also involve evaluation of the material in question and consideration of its relevance to other ideas and/or examples considered in the course. for We will pursue these points further in class.

Students may present their material however they wish (e.g. through use of overheads, power-point, black board or simply by talking), but must create a short (roughly 2 – 3 page handout) for distribution in class. The latter should include main summary points and highlights pertaining to the most important issues and concepts raised in the reading, and their relevance in relation to exiting trends and/or other issues raised in the course. Be as explicit as you can in this regard and organize your hand-out carefully as it will provide me with a key source of reference and recall when evaluating your presentation. You should also include at least one question designed to generate class discussion. The professor and students will also ask questions of presenters. The idea is that the presentation will provide a starting point and lead-in for more general group discussion on that day.

Research Paper: 40%
Due date: Dec. 5 (to be handed in during my office hours – hard copy only)

Each student is required to hand in an 8 – 10 page research paper dealing with a surveillance topic which holds particular interest to them. This paper is to be handed in to me during my office hours on December 5. The topic may, but need not relate either to the topic which you presented on or to one of the issues you considered in a response paper. At least five academic sources (books or journal articles) must be consulted for this assignment. These may include articles or chapters (and/or the books from which they came) used in the course reader.

A good paper should include attention to specific case studies and/or examples pertaining to the topic you have chosen, relevant controversies surrounding it, and attention to the theoretical and (possibly) methodological approaches most relevant to it. In particular, students should make clear which approaches to the issue they consider to be the most insightful and productive.

Late policy: Barring exceptional circumstances, 2% will be deducted from the final grade for any assignment per day late including weekends. No papers will be accepted after Dec. 17.

Resources:

The resources referred to below will help you locate information concerning your specific research interests. Of these, the online journal *Surveillance & Society* will likely prove to be your single most useful and extensive resource. It features articles about many aspects of surveillance, dealing with theoretical, substantive and methodological, issues. Visit this Web site early in the course as it will likely prove valuable in helping you select a topic and gather useful material for your research paper.

In addition to S & S, the following academic journals are available online and sometimes include surveillance related articles:

> Information, Communication & Society (ICS)
> Ethics and Information Technology (see Issue 3)
> Democratic Communiqué
> New Media & Society
> Media, Culture & Society

Other academic (non-journal) online resources:

> The Surveillance Project
> The New Transparency
> Roger Clarke's Dataveillance and Information Privacy Home-Page
> Web site of Gary T. Marx
> Activist Intelligence and Covert Corporate Strategies

Web sites offering an activist, public interest, and/or civil rights perspective:

> Electronic Privacy Information Center (EPIC)
> Canadian Internet Policy and Public Interest Clinic (CIPPIC)
> Privacy International
> Privacy.org (news page jointly sponsored by EPIC & Privacy International)