EDITORS' NOTE:
TAKING A LOOK AT SURVEILLANCE STUDIES

Scholarship on surveillance—the process of watching, monitoring, recording, and processing the behavior of people, objects, and events in order to govern activity—has been a mainstay in both classic and contemporary sociology. From classic work by Karl Marx, Max Weber, and Georg Simmel to more contemporary work by Erving Goffman, Anthony Giddens, Michel Foucault, Gary Marx, and James Rule, sociological studies of how individuals, groups, organizations, communities, societies, and nation-states engage in surveillance and the consequence of their engagement have been central to addressing larger questions about social order and social control. Cognate disciplines, especially history, political science, criminology, and communications, have shaped how sociologists understand surveillance; likewise, the sociology of surveillance has influenced how scholars working in other disciplines understand the social organization of "watching" and "monitoring" as well as being "watched" and "monitored" in a plethora of contexts throughout history and cross culturally.

In the modern context, surveillance studies are closely related to the study (sociological and otherwise) of social arrangements, policies, and practices connected to governance and militarism, technologies of identification and information management, consumer control and protection, human health and welfare, and crime control. In each of these domains, as well as others, surveillance operates at both the micro and macro levels. At the micro level, it is a venue through which people are sorted, classified, and differentially treated, while at the macro level, social structures are formed, institutionalized, and occasionally challenged and changed. Clearly then, sociology's horse is a major contender in the surveillance race. As Monahan (2006) makes clear in a recent book on surveillance in everyday life, "from bio technologies in airports and borders, to video surveillance in schools, to radio frequency tags in hospitals, to magnet strips on welfare food cards, surveillance technologies integrate into all aspects of modern life, but with varied effects for different populations" (p. *x*).

Thus, we decided to use *Contemporary Sociology* as a forum to direct attention to surveillance as a sociological matter with significant, timely, and pressing public policy implications. As Haggerty and Ericson (2006), luminaries in the study of surveillance studies, recently explained in *The New Politics of Surveillance and Visibility,* "surveillance raises some of the most prominent social and political questions of our age" (p. 3). On the national front, for example, the Domestic Surveillance and the Patriot Act coupled with the Bush administration's prideful reliance on warrantless wiretaps raises serious questions about the proper role of government in a free society. In the consumer protection (and demise) realm, unbeknownst to most Corvette drivers, a palm-size microcomputer embedded in the Corvette air-bag system—a black box technically called an "event data recorder" (EDR)—is capable of collecting and downloading data on the driver's behavior, including speeding, weaving, breaking, and routing patterns. These data can—and indeed have been—used against the driver in criminal proceedings, which in turn inspired Barry Steinhardt from the ACLU to comment, "We have a surveillance monster growing in our midst" (Roosevelt 2006) and *Newsweek* to report, "Few Americans realize that their cars can tattle on them" (p. 58). In line with this Orwellian intrusion, the use of public video surveillance and other visual technology by public and private entities is heralded as a reasonable way to discourage crime and, when it does occur, to detect criminals. Increases in surveillance are promoted as a way to enhance physical health, promote national security, ensure fair play in a variety of institutional settings, and, quite literally, monitor pets, children, sex offenders, and workers alike and find them when they are missing. To quote Haggerty and Ericson (2006) again, "surveillance is a feature of modernity" (p. 4) that has "expanded and in the process become more multifaceted and chaotic" (p. 21). It is a "tool used for some of the most so-

cially laudable as well as condemnable ends" (p. 22).

Therefore, from our point of view, surveillance is a particularly compelling empirical window through which to examine a slew of interesting topics, including what Goffman called "people-processing," the workings of the state and systems of inequality, the social organization of governance, cultural dispositions, and the promise of criminal justice delivered as well as the threat of justice denied. To interrogate surveillance as a set of processes and structures that shape social life and attendant public policy, we contacted experts in the field of surveillance studies and secured their assistance with identifying books that, when combined, speak to an array of issues raised by the study of surveillance. Once compiled, we presented this list of books to scholars from whom we solicited review essays and asked them to review a subset of books on this list and, in some cases, books added to the list. Our featured symposium in this issue, "Taking a Look at Surveillance Studies," which serves to review sixteen books, is the result.

We are pleased to publish book review essays by David Lyon, Elia Zureik, John Torpey, and David Cunningham and a "meta review" by Gary Marx. Combined, these essays cover considerable territory, along the way commenting on the place of sociology in the study of surveillance, the workings of a "surveillance society," the politics of surveillance, the tension between national security and democracy, the role of surveillance technology in mapping out consumer behavior, emergent ways of profiling specific subpopulations, the distinction between "thick" and "thin" forms of surveillance as well as "visible" and "invisible" forms of surveillance," the globalization of surveillance, "function creep" as an operational dynamic of surveillance, the panoptic effect on social behavior, the use of surveillance to suppress political dissent and counter surveillance to engage "contentious politics," and directions for future advances in the field of surveillance studies. We thank each of the authors for agreeing to write a review essay for the featured symposium, delivering it on time, and contributing to our effort to inspire more sociological dialogue on this important issue.

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Roosevelt, Margot. 2006. "Psst., Your Car is Watching You: An Electronic Snoop May be Recording your Driving—Is it a Boon to Safety or an Invasion of Privacy?" *Newsweek* August 14, p. 58–59.

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A SYMPOSIUM ON
SURVEILLANCE STUDIES

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Sociological Perspectives and Surveillance Studies: "Slow Journalism" and the Critique of Social Sorting

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Surveillance Studies is on the academic agenda (Monaghan 2006) and it has found its home, above all, in sociology. This is not because sociology simply gives a shelter to all and sundry but because the concern with how some watch over, supervise, monitor, record, and process the behavior of others has always been a sociological one. It appeared in the work of Karl Marx, Max Weber, and Georg Simmel and continued with figures as diverse as Erving Goffman and Zygmunt Bauman. Michel Foucault, whose work on surveillance and discipline has probably stimulated more debate than anyone, has not only straddled disciplines, but also has been discussed extensively in sociologies of surveillance.

In the past thirty years, several sociologists have made key contributions to Surveillance Studies, including James Rule (1974) on government and business surveillance of citizens and consumers, Gary Marx (1988) on police surveillance and new technologies, and Clive Norris and Gary Armstrong (1999) on the rise of closed-circuit television (CCTV). At the same time, important contributions have been made by those in cognate disciplines such as Shoshana Zuboff (1988) in organization studies, examining surveillance in the "informated" workplace or Oscar Gandy (1993) in communications, exploring database surveillance of consumers. Today Surveillance Studies thrives on the work of scholars from many disciplines, but the sociological perspectives are always crucial (Lyon, forthcoming).

Surveillance Studies is expanding as a disciplinary area, and sociological perspectives form a significant part of its theoretical and methodological toolbox, but it is also the case that studies of surveillance have much to offer sociology. This is a two-way street

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CCTV and Policing: Public Area Surveillance and Police Practices in Britain, by **Benjamin J. Goold.** New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2004. 260 pp. $120.00 cloth. ISBN: 0199265143.

The Glass Consumer: Life in a Surveillance Society, edited by **Susanne Lace.** Bristol, UK: The Policy Press, 2005. 259 pp. $13.19 paper. ISBN: 1861347359.

No Place to Hide, by **Robert O'Harrow.** New York, NY: Free Press, 2005. 368 pp. $15.00 paper. ISBN: 0743287053.

The Soft Cage: Surveillance in America from Slavery to the War on Terror, by **Christian Parenti.** New York, NY: Basic Books, 2003. 273 pp. $14.00 paper. ISBN: 0465054854.

Everyday Surveillance: Vigilance and Visibility in Postmodern Life, by **William G. Staples.** Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2000. 189 pp. $27.95 paper. ISBN: 0742500780.

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that, in my view, ought to be kept open to traffic in both directions. This argument has several dimensions: important perspectives from other disciplines, but fed through Surveillance Studies, are needed in sociology (and I have in mind studies of "space" and perhaps "vision" in particular, which Staples discusses). Sociological analysis in classic areas such as social class or social control may benefit—and may need some recalibration—from surveillance research. This is a strong implication of the Lace book, among others. Surveillance Studies tends to have a close relation to social practices and policies of governance, study of which could also galvanize

sociology. One important aspect of this is the relation between sociological and journalistic accounts, and as I suggest in relation to Parenti's and O'Harrow's work, there are lessons from good journalism that sociology could learn with profit, especially in areas of urgent social-political concern.

Each of these books is quite different in character, but the one that started life as a PhD thesis—Goold's—is the most doggedly empirical. Goold starts by examining what it might mean for UK streets to be "under surveillance," but quickly sets things out theoretically by asking how far David Garland's (2001) and Anthony Giddens's (1985) work might contextualize a theme like this. Using Garland, one might view CCTV as part of a shift from state to local responsibility for crime, producing increasingly risk-based policing and an emphasis on local governance. From Giddens's point of view, for whom totalitarianism is an "extreme focusing of surveillance," one might worry about the cumulative effects of rapid CCTV expansion. Civil libertarians—like the promoters of CCTV might have said—often exaggerate what CCTV can do. True, even the simplest can collect a mass of information. But this does not on its own contribute to what many have seen as a long-term shift towards a more authoritarian, disciplinary UK.

Goold's book deals with impact of CCTV on policing, and from his research he believes that the all-too-prevalent dramatic dystopianism should be downplayed. CCTV as he sees it is "little more than an adjunct to more traditional modes of policing" (p. 213). The mistakes of "political rhetoric and academic speculation" (as he calls them) that Goold labels "techno-policing" come largely from a species of technological determinism that infects research and is then amplified by civil libertarians. Goold found little change in the organization and working culture of the police and argues that until these alter, CCTV will not play a major role.

Such conclusions are helpful although they have to be placed alongside others, particularly those that have attempted to generalize across a number of regions and countries. Ericson and Haggerty, for instance, investigating police use of CCTV (in the context of other technologies) in Toronto, suggest that police organization and working culture are actually changing, especially as

risk communication becomes a central goal of police work (Ericson and Haggerty 1997). And Norris and Armstrong's work (in the UK), to which Goold also alludes, is similarly empirical in thrust, but also raises more critical questions about the long-term impact of CCTV, in the UK context.

Susanne Lace's book is an edited collection of papers around the theme of consumer surveillance. For her, the "surveillance society" is most clearly visible in the "personal information economy" (and is analyzed sociologically by Perri in the first chapter, to good effect) that has spurred economic growth in a number of countries since the relative decline of heavy industries by processing data on purchases and preferences. Efficiency, even the saving of lives in the health sector, may be improved using personal data effectively, but Lace's concern is with the potential for the misuse and abuse of data as well as its appropriate uses. Because the analysis provided by this book is geared towards the policy field—in both private and public agencies—Lace shows how the discourses of privacy and data protection that have predominated as guides to analysis will no longer suffice. She stresses that the social risks of personal information use have become central.

This book deals with the sorting capacities of database marketing that have important implications for sociological analysis. Increasingly, demographic details of the neighborhoods where we live, information gleaned from the "clickstreams" of internet surfers and profiles built, for instance, from supermarket loyalty card use and related data are used to place consumers into categories from which lifestyles will be inferred and judgments will be made. That such judgments are consequential for life chances is an important observation made by several authors in this volume, including those for whom policy "solutions" are the main thrust. In a chapter on data use in credit and insurance, for instance, Harriet Hall comments on the "unfair outcomes" of these practices that lead to targeting of consumers and discrimination against and exclusion of certain persons from insurance protection.

Staples's book also examines matters of social sorting, although his is a more general approach to what he calls "vigilance and visibility in postmodern life." Like Goold and

Lace, Staples refuses to examine surveillance as a "highly coordinated, state-driven Big Brother monopoly over the practice of watching people," choosing rather to focus on "the microtechniques of surveillance and social control that target and treat the body as an object to be watched, assessed, and manipulated" (p. ix). His overarching argument is that modern conditions are being overlaid by postmodern conditions, a situation of which this new surveillance is both a symptom and a source.

In this concise book, which would serve well as a surveillance primer, particularly for a U.S. audience, Staples focuses on what he calls "meticulous rituals of power" (p. 11). These feature technology-based, body-oriented, local and everyday forms of surveillance that are nevertheless very wide-ranging. Not merely "deviants," "suspects," or other familiar targets, but everyone is touched by this new surveillance. Staples makes his contrasts clear between the modern and the postmodern, by starting with modern conditions, exemplified by Foucaldian discipline. But he does not argue simplistically that the one is supplanting the other; rather, new regimes are emerging that challenge, work alongside, and sometimes replace the modern. He spends a chapter examining "the gaze and its compulsions" that move from actual vision to many other technologically mediated means of "knowing about" persons including dataveillance, audio systems, and even psychographics. More time could be spent exploring the significance of the privileged "eye" in surveillance studies, but Staples moves on to the centrality of the body to the new surveillance, and to specific questions of how the digital world of internet technologies offers many fresh opportunities for surveillance.

Staples rightly advises that as a general rule in sociology we should "forget Big Brother" (p. 153), that this image of an "external" surveillance power is no longer appropriate. Surveillance power is bi-directional, and is more-often-than-not triggered by us. We are involved in, and may actively support contemporary surveillance practices and processes. Anticipating that many readers will find this conclusion unsettling, especially as many of the practices he outlines may be read as socially negative, Staples concludes that just as all are involved in the prac-

tices, involvement should be knowledgeable, critical, and sometimes resistant. Written before 9/11, it may well be that Staples would revise some of his judgments about the power of state surveillance within today's "war on terror."

The metaphors and images of surveillance—such as "Big Brother"—make all the difference between paranoid conspiracy theorists and more nuanced sociological analysis. Although Christian Parenti never discusses his choice of title, *The Soft Cage,* it is fairly evident that this is a play on Weber's "iron cage" of modern rationalization. Relentless bureaucratic logic is replaced by the logic of software and of what Gilles Deleuze calls "audio-visual protocols." The "soft cage" is the "surveillance society" (p. 200). It is constructed, rather like Weber's iron cage, of accumulated myriad small instances of practices and not of some malign intention to entrap or immobilize. Although he does not comment on this except by implication, the soft cage is often a story of unintended consequences. Paradoxically, while Parenti's is a popular treatment, he frequently falls back on sociological sources and authorities, suggesting that the quest for explanation is most likely to be satisfied here.

He ranges the vast historical sweep from eighteenth century slave passes to the current "war on terror" and finds some strong and significant lines of continuity between the two. The black minority in the antebellum old south were the ones most likely to find themselves identified and even tagged in ways that made quite clear the "non-person" status of Africans. But in 2002 it was again immigrant groups—illegal immigrants—who found themselves under arrest, detained, and even shipped off to "holding facilities." Arabs, Iranians, South Asians, and Pakistanis and indeed anyone of "Middle Eastern appearance" could expect to be targeted as "terror suspects," once again based on identification data. The role of categorization for risk management purposes within "national security" regimes is entirely dependent upon surveillance.

Although this book is popular (if not racy), the categories in which Parenti works with are sociological ones. If Staples responds to the jibe that sociology is "slow journalism," Parenti slips unapologetically into the journalist's style. The advantage of this

is that he can make wide-ranging historical and analytic connections. These focus especially on the ways that minority groups are most frequently targeted by surveillance systems—while the disadvantage is that the work sometimes strays close to sensationalism. It also reads like a tale of new technologies of surveillance—the "highway as panopticon," the "digital leash," and "camera land" hint at a dominant role for technique. It is difficult to write really popular sociology without succumbing to the temptations of journalistic polarization, but Parenti makes a serious effort to do so.

There is no mistaking Robert O'Harrow's purpose in writing *No Place to Hide*. It is critical investigative journalism in the best possible tradition and is accompanied by a documentary film—the last to feature the late Canadian ABC anchor Peter Jennings—with the same title. Would that sociologists could learn both from the combined carefulness and critique of O'Harrow and from his achievement in further exposing the issues in a visual, made-for-TV format. The theme of the book is not surveillance-in-general, but the massive and systematic harnessing of already existing surveillance capacities in the post-9/11 war on terror.

It is a gripping story and one that is assiduously documented at every turn. O'Harrow starts with the crucial six weeks following 9/11 and shows how companies dealing in personal data—for whom gathering and merging information is their bread-and-butter—were first to capitalize on the American tragedy in New York and Washington; how identification technologies were sought as an early measure; why the integration of databases in "Total Information Awareness" and then in "Matrix" was seen as a central goal; how database marketing corporations such as Choicepoint are vital allies of Homeland Security; why biometrics has been pushed as a "solution" and why Homeland Security also felt it had to rely on ordinary citizens to be the government's "eyes and ears" as well. The most important contribution made by this book is to show the extensive collusion between corporate and law-enforcement actors in the war on terror. The profits are huge and the solutions are often woefully inadequate, even on simply technical grounds.

O'Harrow leaves readers to draw their own conclusions. His chapter about "good guys, bad guys" reminds us of the simplistic divisions of the post-9/11 world that assumes we can tell which is which and that clamping down on those assumed to be in the latter group is justified in the current "state of exception." But this chapter also looks at evidence for the dubious practices of some police and intelligence officers who have responsibility for handling sensitive personal data and, at the cases of clearly mistaken identity, people who have been erroneously included in anti-terror sweeps and who have a hard time demonstrating their innocence (so much for its presumption in these days of "extraordinary measures"). His afterword is far from sanguine about the prospects for a world in which the consequences of the "data revolution" for surveillance—of ordinary people, you and me—have not yet been grasped.

But does O'Harrow's work fall foul of Goold's strictures about technological determinism, rhetoric, and speculation? No, I don't think so, because O'Harrow is really building resources for a political economy of surveillance (see ACLU 2004) rather than simply "reading off" surveillance capacities from technical specifications. Indeed, one might argue that Goold would do well to include such a political economy in his study of CCTV in the UK. Not only do CCTV companies pressure politicians and police departments to procure their equipment, but the police often use commercial criteria, especially from insurance companies, to make their assessments and guide their priorities.

Such associations between public and private agencies, noted extensively in the field of criminology as elsewhere, is writ large in sociologies of surveillance. One of the interesting features of this is the commonalities between technical systems devised for one purpose, but are then used for others. Military software migrates to the marketing realm, for instance, only to be recycled for law enforcement purposes. This is one of the key issues for sociological analysis in an "age of information," that "technology," usually in the shape of software, has to be integrated into social analysis. The concerns of Lace and Staples regarding everyday consumer surveillance, for example, are merged in O'Harrow's study. The latter shows clearly (and in ways that invite further sociological investigation) how consequential the proliferation

of personal data and the personal information economy are for life-chances in a time like the "war on terror."

Even from the few titles reviewed here, it is clear that surveillance studies is starting to make contributions to sociology as well as vice-versa. A variety of titles has been surveyed here and each is different in style, depth, and focus. But what they have in common is a commitment to understanding—critically—the emerging surveillance society. While Staples paints with a broad "postmodern" brush and Goold digs in the specific terrain of police work and CCTV, each confronts not only analytic but ethical and political issues of some considerable import. Sociology has for a long time been aware of the significance of "sorting" mechanisms for assigning status and differentiating between groups for varying treatment. Today, however, this is achieved in computer-assisted ways and it is vital that the human and critical edge be yoked with careful analysis to ensure that sociology remains faithful to its calling in a surveillance-saturated setting.

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Surveillance Studies: From Metaphors to Regulation to Subjectivity

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Due to its pervasive nature, contemporary surveillance and privacy issues have attracted the attention of scholars from various disciplines within law, the humanities, social sciences, and computer science. The collection of books under review incorporates key writers on surveillance from both sides of the Atlantic.

Five main themes can be discerned in these books. First, there is the issue of how to conceptualize surveillance. At the centre of the debate is Michel Foucault's disciplinary model, exemplified in the panopticon metaphor that was popularized in *Discipline and Punish* (1979), and owes its origins to the 18th century political economist Jeremy Bentham. In *The Digital Person,* Solove adopts an alternate bureaucratic metaphor that draws its inspiration from Franz Kafka's *The Trial* (1937) and resonates with Max Weber's writings on bureaucracy. A central feature of this metaphor is the "dehumanizing" effects" of databases and "thoughtless" bureaucracy and its "indifference" to people's lives as they lose control over their personal information. In a phrase borrowed from Gestalt psychology that "we are more than the bits of data we give off as we go about our lives" (pp. 45–46), Solove points out that computerized data, even if accurate, is not nuanced enough to convey the true texture of the individual persona. According to Solove, "there is no diabolical motive or secret plan for domination" (p. 41), even though as he admits errors in data mining and profiling may end up ruining people's lives by denying them jobs or putting them on a watch list. The solution to the bureaucracy conundrum is not to rely on the market but to devise an "architecture" that is based on regulation of digital dossiers.

This view, which almost sees the outcome of surveillance in terms of bureaucratic indifference and neglect, is only part of the story. It is hard to reconcile bureaucratic bungling as an explanation for the federal government's domestic spying activities after 9/11, which may be inefficient but nevertheless reflect a

The Intensification of Surveillance: Crime, Terrorism and Warfare in the Information Age, edited by **Kirstie Ball** and **Frank Webster.** London, UK: Pluto Press, 2003. 176 pp. $25.00 paper. ISBN: 0745319947.

The Governance of Privacy: Policy Instruments in Global Perspective, by **Colin J. Bennett** and **Charles D. Raab.** Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2006. 354 pp. $30.00 paper. ISBN: 0262524538.

Profiling Machines: Mapping the Personal Information Economy, by **Greg Elmer.** Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2004. 179 pp. $25.00 cloth. ISBN: 0262050730.

The New Politics of Surveillance and Visibility, edited by **Kevin D. Haggerty** and **Richard V. Ericson.** Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 2005. 386 pp. $40.00 paper. ISBN: 0802048781.

The Digital Person: Technology and Privacy in the Information Age, by **Daniel J. Solove.** New York, NY: New York University Press, 2004. 283 pp. $29.95 cloth. ISBN: 0814798462.

well-coordinated, centralized surveillance program.

Complementing the panopticon model and for some writers paralleling it in importance, is the synopticon model, whereby the few watch the many with the media playing a key role in fostering what Tim Mathiesen (1997) calls the "viewer society." Aaron Doyle points out in *The New Politics of Surveillance and Visibility* that broadcasting crime episodes on television using surveillance footage has given rise to a culture of control and to making surveillance "a highly visible, shared public cultural phenomenon" (p. 221). Writing in this volume, sociologist David Lyon, a key writer on surveillance, refers to another approach which he calls the "post-panopticon," a label he attributes to

Boyne (2000). The basic idea here, in line with the writings of Deleuze and Guattari (1987), is that the post-panopticon signals a shift from the Foucauldian society of *discipline* to a society of *control* where production of social life is governed by global relations in which surveillance practices permeate geographic mobility, economic production, and consumption. For Lyon, the panopticon and the synopticon are complementary analytical concepts. The latter is a direct product of the media—television in particular. The study of surveillance, he argues, should be extended to include the impact of the media, in which surveillance has become part of "everyday" life. A final approach, suggested by historian Mark Poster (1990) long before surveillance studies flourished, describes the surveillance effect of databases as a form of "superpanopticon" in which identities are constituted.

In his contribution to *Surveillance and Visibility,* William Bogard is careful to note that the society of discipline is not being totally replaced by the society of control with its decentralized databases and data mining. There is a transition from material to immaterial forms of control: "control today is more about scanning data for deviation from simulation models than patrolling territories" (p. 60). By drawing upon the work of Deleuze and Guattari (1987), he makes the point that the society of discipline is Pavlovian in nature and oriented towards manipulating pleasure and pain, whereas the society of control operates through and against desire.

A second theme focuses on the relationship between the need to maintain national security and safeguard against the encroachment of state surveillance practices upon civil liberties. In a post-9/11 world we are increasingly witnessing the expansion of domestic surveillance using data mining techniques to profile racial and ethnic groups in search of terrorists. Following a political economy approach, Reg Whitaker, in his contribution to the edited volume by Haggerty and Ericson, sees a convergence of interests between state surveillance and the rise of the "industrial-security complex." Both sectors enhance each other's interests. Arguing in a similar vein, Jean-Paul Brodeur and Stéphane Leman-Langlois point out in the same volume that both Canada and the U.S., ambivalence to law and the rise of "high

policing" accompanied with fear and panic campaigns has led to blurring the line between citizen dissent and terrorist activities.

It is clear now that networking technology has enabled the decentralization of information and surveillance activities. By turning his attention to the transformation of the military, Dandeker (1990), one of the early writers on surveillance, describes in his contribution to *Surveillance and Visibility* the tension resulting from the inherent process of "dialectical control" in an organization that is built on a hierarchical chain of command. Military surveillance, traditionally reserved for tracking down external threats, is now being utilized domestically as in the case of the Department of Homeland Security, thus creating an additional tension between national security and democracy. Informational war with its heavy reliance on technology, according to Haggerty's contribution, may have its drawbacks in terms of information overload and the fact that the military outside the coterie of a handful of advanced industrial countries still labors under old warfare technologies. The mismatch between the speed with which information is transmitted and the nuances of events on the ground can hamper decision making. Haggerty, like other writers in his volume, has also warned against convergence between military and domestic surveillance in a post-9/11 world.

Writing in his and Kirstie Ball's edited volume, Frank Webster adopts a different stance on the relationship between the media, information warfare, and surveillance. It would be a mistake to construe a clear alliance between media and the state, he asserts. While not denying that the media does perform surveillance on behalf of the state, it is equally plausible that the media could expose global violations of human rights in the conduct of warfare. In two overlapping papers in the edited volumes under review, David S. Wall calls for new conceptual tools to deal with cybercrime, which to a large extent is handled through corporate "private justice solutions" rather than the traditional public justice model. The tendency of corporations not to divulge the extent of cybercrime, compounded with the lack of officially recorded cybercrime statistics, makes the task of analyzing cybercrime difficult.

Related to the previous theme is a third one involving the use of surveillance tech-

nology in mapping out consumer behavior, an area where invisible surveillance is strongest. Joseph Turow, in the Haggerty-Ericson volume, warns that direct marketing through customized media and loyalty cards will lead to market segmentation with pernicious effects, such as increasing the surveillance of consumers and furthering social stratification. Serra Tinic pursues the theme of consumer behavior and interactive television where marketers are able to profile the watching and buying habits of consumers. The upshot of this process is that the "televisual public space" in which "we become an aggregate of individuals instead of public citizens" (p. 322) is greatly eroding.

Greg Elmer's slim book on surveillance and consumption focuses on the need to shift the focus of surveillance from optics to spaces. This way it would be possible to complement Foucault's panopticon metaphor by introducing Gilles Deleuze's (1995) "rhizomatic diagram," which highlights the spread of what Haggerty and Ericson (1999) call "data assemblages" of personal information. Elmer calls upon researchers on consumption and surveillance to pay more attention to "diagramatic power" in which "consumers are not exclusively disciplined: they are both *rewarded* [sic] with a preset familiar world of images and commodities and punished if they attempt to opt out" (p. 49).

In a paper that appears with slight variation in the two edited volumes, Oscar Gandy turns his attention to data mining as a method to surveil and profile people. The central claim of data mining is that special statistical techniques and computer software are able to detect underlying behavioral and demographic patterns in disparate data sources about citizens and consumers to enable marketers and other decision-makers to predict future behavior of their subjects. Gandy is correct to note a point made by others in these books, namely that the power of data mining lies in its ability to use "indexical details" to differentiate and benefit certain individuals over others. It is not clear how accurate the prediction is, particularly when applied in the security arena. The only viable means to countering these surveillance trends, according to Gandy, is to mobilize public opinion against the use of data mining.

A fourth theme relates to the debate surrounding individual versus collective dimension of privacy protection. Mindful of the liberal-democratic origins of privacy discourse with its emphasis on individual rights, Colin Bennett and Charles Raab make a major contribution in *The Governance of Privacy* (originally published in 2003) to examine the adequacy of existing privacy paradigms. They argue that privacy should be conceived of as a collective value whose enhancement is essential for maintaining democracy. The governance of privacy is subsequently tackled by Charles Raab in his contribution to *Intensifying Surveillance*. Writing from the perspective of policy analysis and using Britain as a case study, Raab examines the extent to which a myriad of governmental organizations at the national, local, and international levels that have access to personal data can best operate in an "information-age government" and be able to serve the public. Transparency, accountability, and trust are key elements in any governance policy that professes to serve the public. But above all, he counsels, it is more effective in a "joined-up government" to adopt privacy protection procedures that are coordinated, yet sensitive to the demands of each organization.

Finally, from a methodological perspective, the study of surveillance, which is heavy on theorizing and light on empirical research, could benefit if researchers pay more attention to the types of personal data and their relationship to surveillance, and if in the context, more attention is paid to subjectivity. With regard to the former, Gary Marx, through his panache for exploring the minutiae of human experience, demonstrates in his contribution to the volume by Haggerty and Ericson that surveillance is also a matter of degree depending on the type and location of personal information along concentric circles. The closer one gets to the inner circle, the more sensitive and intimate the information becomes. Gary Marx's concentric circles divide personal information into five zones from the most public form of individual and private information, to the most sensitive, unique, and core information. Altogether he identifies no less than 50 types of descriptive information which cluster around 10 main subsets covering information needed for profiling such as demographics, locational information, and temporal information; in-

formation related to networks and social relationships; mobility and behavioral information which extends to various technologies such as computers, phones, geo-positioning systems, and eavesdropping; economic behavior through monitoring consumption patterns, and bank transactions; work monitoring, and employment history; and beliefs and attitudes of individuals, through access to psychographic data, placement tests, medical records, credit ratings, etc. The more personal and intimate the information is the more likely that individuals will adopt negative attitudes towards surveillance.

In one of the most creative studies of subjectivity and everyday surveillance involving welfare mothers in Appalachia, John Gilliom demonstrates, in the tradition of James C. Scott's (1985) work on resistance by the weak, how poor women develop resistance techniques to cope with state monitoring. In his paper to the book, he shows how inadequate the abstract individual rights approach to understanding privacy and surveillance can be. His call for surveillance researchers to examine the subjectivities of people is yet to be heeded:

> Until we are able to generate sufficient research to make plausible sense of how differently situated people—welfare mothers, prisoners, students, middle class professionals—speak of and respond to their various surveillance settings, I would argue that we are fundamentally unable to define the powers of surveillance or, indeed, to devise a thoughtful account of what surveillance is. (P. 126)

The array of perspectives adopted in these writings pushes further the boundaries of surveillance studies and demonstrates the maturity of the field. There is one lacuna, however. It is regrettable that in none of the contributions under review does surveillance in the workplace come under scrutiny. This is peculiar, since worker monitoring, dating back to Karl Marx and indeed Adam Smith before him, and subsequent assembly line monitoring in the 20th century, as demonstrated ably by Harry Braverman (1974), ushered in the modern form of electronic monitoring and debates over privacy in the workplace.

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Through Thick and Thin: Surveillance after 9/11

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It is a striking fact that the English language lacks any ordinary verb form for the activities associated with the term "surveillance"; the Oxford English Dictionary informs us that "to surveil" is but a very recent derivative of the noun. "Surveillance" is defined in English—in a more or less direct translation from the original French—as "supervision, oversight." Yet, as we all know, the term "surveillance" immediately conjures up cloak-and-dagger images of spying and surreptitious observation. The lack of a verb form corresponding to the activities associated with the noun suggests that in the Anglophone world the activities we associate with "surveillance" are relatively underdeveloped, or disdained, or both. This is indeed a likely explanation of the grammatical conundrum. For example, ID cards, which are a taken-for-granted part of life in the continental European world and elsewhere, are always hotly contested whenever they are proposed in the Anglo-American scene. But the realities of a "surveillance society" are increasingly with us as well, helping to explain why the verb is making headway in our speech.

What is "surveillance"? The term evokes suspicion and opprobrium because it suggests a violation of our autonomy, our freedom to move about and to do as we wish, and this indeed it does—in the putative interests of public order, commercial transparency, and personal security. Students of surveillance often make a distinction between visible and invisible forms—the possibility that my keystrokes are being recorded as I write this, for example, as opposed to the readily identifiable security cameras that have become increasingly ubiquitous features of everyday life, at least in the richer parts of the world.

One might, however, make a further distinction between "thin" and "thick" forms of surveillance. Thin surveillance monitors our movements, our business transactions, and our interactions with government, but generally without constraining our mobility per se. Thick surveillance, on the other hand, in-

The Lesser Evil: Political Ethics in an Age of Terror, by **Michael Ignatieff.** Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005. 232 pp. $16.95 paper. ISBN: 0691123934.

Surveillance after September 11, by **David Lyon.** Cambridge, UK: Polity, 2003. 208 pp. $12.97 paper. ISBN: 0745631819.

Imprisoning America: The Social Effects of Mass Incarceration, edited by **Mary Pattillo, David Weiman,** and **Bruce Western.** New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation, 2004. 277 pp. $19.95 paper. ISBN: 08715465X.

volves confinement to delineated and often fortified spaces, in which observation is enhanced by a limitation of the range of mobility of those observed. There tend to be significant differences in the social groups supervised by the two forms of surveillance. Although today everyone is subjected to thin surveillance to some degree, it disproportionately affects the non-poor, whose actions and transactions must be facilitated as well as regulated. Access to certain spaces may be limited by thin means that require the wherewithal or the proper identity, to be sure, but departure from those spaces is normally voluntary and at the pleasure of the person in question.

In contrast, thick surveillance disproportionately affects the poor, because it is they who are disproportionately institutionalized; the element of free movement characteristic of thin surveillance is sharply reduced, if not eliminated altogether. Thick surveillance occurs in prisons, military brigs, POW and refugee camps, and similar environments. Probation, parole, surveillance via electronic tracking devices, children's welfare agencies, boarding schools and the like comprise thin variants of thick surveillance. They do not necessarily restrict movement, but they may do so, and in any case they involve a more evident narrowing of freedom than thin surveillance does. While those subjected to thick

surveillance are also subject to the thin variety, they are less likely to be exposed to thin surveillance than the non-poor because their means—and hence their actions and transactions—tend to be more limited. In short, supervision and confinement by the state tend to be much more immediate realities for these groups than they are for the non-poor, whose actions and transactions tend more routinely to be outside the purview of the state—but under that of commercial surveillance schemes.

Finally, rule violations detected by thin surveillance can result in a person's being subjected to thick surveillance, while subjection to the latter is very likely to intensify in later life the individual's exposure to the former. There are, further, the secondary punishments visited on those who have undergone thick surveillance; these include disproportionate difficulties in finding employment, earning a decent income, establishing or maintaining family life, and participation in political life. The sequestration and disruption of the life course associated with thick surveillance tend to exacerbate the difficulties that those subjected to it find in "re-integration" after release from the institutions under which they were supervised. These difficulties, in turn, often lead to behaviors that result in re-incarceration. The entire experience of thick surveillance is thus likely to have profound consequences for the attitudes toward the larger society of those subjected to it.

Since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, the problem of surveillance has assumed a prominent role in scholarly and public discussion. Yet the overwhelming focus of these discussions has been on thin surveillance, whereas what Jeremy Travis has called the "grand experiment in mass incarceration" (in Pattillo et al. 2004: 249) has generally been seen as inhabiting a separate frame. In his book on (thin) *Surveillance after September 11,* David Lyon makes the important point that the kinds of techniques we have seen implemented or proposed during that period are not novel, but rather are continuous from earlier developments. He might have added that the forms of surveillance and control with which we have become familiar in recent years are also continuous across space, having been extended from the domestic to the foreign realm—in part be-

cause of continuities in the personnel involved. It has been noted, for example, that one possible reason for the abuses of prisoners in Iraq derives from the fact that the personnel guarding them were prison guards at home in the United States, where these abusive practices are thought to be relatively common.

The context in which contemporary surveillance practices have arisen, therefore, is not simply that of "9/11." Instead, it is comprised both of steady efforts to improve and enhance thin surveillance—including over outsiders wishing to penetrate American territory—and of a dramatic intensification in recent years of thick surveillance as a means of controlling the domestic population. In this context, the efforts to identify at a distance those wishing to come to the territory of the United States, and the incarceration of both domestic social cast-offs and potential non-state attackers from outside, are part of a far-flung policing-cum-war machinery that is intended to protect the inhabitants of a country that experiences itself as threatened by those not enthusiastic about, or a part of, a middle-class, consumption-oriented population.

Against this background, the contributors to *Imprisoning America: The Social Effects of Mass Incarceration* perform the signal task of calling attention to the social meaning of the expansion of thick surveillance in recent years. It is widely understood that the penal consequences of the "war on drugs" have been to institutionalize much larger numbers of offenders—mostly poor and disproportionately minority—than had been the case prior to the 1980s. Less well-known is the huge amount of collateral damage this may be doing to our society. The contributors show that the impact of incarceration is hardly limited to the criminal offender, but spreads out into his or her family and community, and indeed to the nation as a whole. The latter point is made poignantly by Uggen and Manza in their analysis of felon disenfranchisement. Illuminating an under-appreciated aspect of "American exceptionalism"—namely, its extensive disenfranchisement of criminals—they show that laws barring felons and ex-convicts from voting has probably changed the outcome of a number of presidential and other national-level elections in recent years. More generally, they demon-

strate that, because of the sociological characteristics of the incarcerated population, felon disenfranchisement laws "dilute the political power of African Americans, males, and poor and working-class U. S. citizens and, by extension, the communities to which they return" (in Pattillo et al. 2004: 194). The volume draws our attention to the dramatic consequences of the shift previously identified by David Garland (2001) as one from "penal welfarism," with its normative expectation of rehabilitation, to various forms of "punitive segregation" from social life.

For those subjected to thick surveillance, with its attendant undermining of ties to society, their exclusion makes re-integration difficult and may well lead to embitterment as well. This is true not only in domestic settings, where recidivism is the more likely outcome than successful re-entry. As one Arab commentator put it with regard to the prisoners held in U. S. military facilities in Cuba as "enemy combatants," "Guantánamo is a huge problem for Americans. . . .Even those who were not hard-core extremists have now been indoctrinated by the true believers. Like [in] any other prison, they have been taught to hate. If they let these people go, these people will make trouble" (Golden and Van Natta 2004). Indeed, upon release, several Afghan detainees returned to the battlefield as commanders or fighters for the Taliban. Similarly, observers of Spanish prisons have found that radical Islamists regard the jails as prime recruiting grounds as well (McLean 2004).

The growing pre-occupation with "security" noted by Garland well before September 11 has of course only intensified since that date. The stress has been on finding more effective ways to identify terrorists and to keep them from doing harm. The most controversial instances of this, perhaps, involve the Bush administration's secret program to monitor telephone communications of suspected terrorists or their sympathizers (mostly) outside the United States. To the extent that the "war on terror" is not actually a war at all, but a policing (and ideological) effort, such investigation might seem reasonable enough. The problem is that there already existed a law—the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act or FISA (1978), initially instituted to rein in the CIA after the Vietnam War—according to which such surveillance was thought to be

regulated. In keeping with its broad interpretation of presidential powers in the aftermath of September 11, 2001, however, the administration chose not to submit these surveillance procedures to the strictures of FISA. When, after much hand-wringing about the appropriateness of publishing the story, the *New York Times* chose to report on the existence of the program, the nature and extent of thin government surveillance under the rubric of the "war on terror" became the subject of intense public scrutiny.

Michael Ignatieff's *The Lesser Evil* is an attempt to analyze the nature of the terrorist threat and the terms on which it should be countered. As befits a candidate for high government office (Ignatieff is now a Liberal Member of Parliament in Ontario who aspires to become the Canadian Prime Minister), he seeks to identify the parameters of what one might call an "ethic of responsibility" regarding government responses to terrorism. Ignatieff's main message is that democratic accountability is both the essence of what makes our way of life worth defending and the only way to determine which policies are acceptable in an intrinsically open-ended "war on terror." To the Bush administration's circumvention of FISA, Ignatieff's response would seem to be clear: "So long as 'a decision for secrecy is not itself secret,' secrecy can be controlled" (p. 11). Indeed, writing well before the revelation in late 2005 of the administration's wiretapping program, he argued that while "there is no alternative to secrecy in intelligence operations," FISA "provides an example of the ways in which covert activity with risks of rights violations can be made subject to judicial review" (p. 134).

Ignatieff's exploration of the limits of legitimacy in confronting terrorism are more compelling than David Lyon's discussion of surveillance after September 11 because Ignatieff insists more strongly that we cannot escape making decisions about the possible curtailment of liberties: "The belief that our existing rights and guarantees should never be suspended is a piece of moral perfectionism" (p. *vii*). Ignatieff regards his approach as one pursuing "the lesser evil," however, because "there is an equal danger in the belief that the threat is so great that anything we do to fight terrorism can be justified" (p. *viii*). In view of the fact that most Americans, at least,

appear prepared to allow some of their civil liberties to be clipped in the government's pursuit of terrorists intent upon harming them, Lyon's discussion seems slightly over-wrought; indeed, one imagines that a fascination with Orwellian dystopias might predispose one to a preoccupation with surveillance in the first place. To be sure, civil liberties are being infringed, and as Ignatieff points out, it is usually *their* freedoms, not *ours,* that are undermined in emergencies. Here Lyon's effort to demonstrate that heightened surveillance—especially of the high-tech variety—may be both oppressive and ineffective is salutary.

Moreover, there seems to be some confusion on Ignatieff's part about whether this is a "war" or an "emergency." He is perfectly aware that "terrorist emergencies are not the same as wartime ones" (p. 27), and that the "war on terror" is no traditional contest between roughly matched sovereign antagonists. Yet much of his argument depends on the notion that we are in a "state of emergency," and this would appear to be very much a matter of perspective. Reasonable people could well disagree about whether we are in a situation that warrants the suspension of civil liberties that might be acceptable in other contexts. Needless to add, the government has a great deal more to say than most ordinary people about whether or not that situation obtains, and the Bush administration has clearly used this sort of rationale repeatedly to justify the extraordinary measures it has taken. Ignatieff analyzes historical terrorist plots and movements, and finds that none of them has ever toppled a liberal democrat way of life; he insists that the abrogation of the rule of law in an effort to defend oneself against terrorists can only help the latter achieve their goals.

But how long can a government go on justifying its actions by insisting that it is trying to confront an emergency? Without some way of identifying when the emergency is over, it is impossible to say whether certain measures are justified. One thing that is never permissible, however, is the detention of people defined as *groups*; such steps can only be taken against named individuals. Accordingly, Ignatieff reminds us, the arrest and profiling of various ethnic or religious groups is never acceptable, no matter how great the purported emergency.

These three books highlight the power and consequences of surveillance in a society increasingly concerned of late with security at all costs. They also call attention to the different kinds of surveillance—thick and thin—that are being mobilized to obtain this security. Though the two have marched in tandem in recent years, one suspects that the social and fiscal costs of the explosion of thick surveillance will contribute in due course to its scaling back. In contrast, as David Lyon rightly points out, thinner forms of surveillance, once put in place, are—like the bureaucracies they serve—more difficult to dismantle.

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Surveillance and Social Movements:
Lenses on the Repression-Mobilization Nexus

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Police monitoring of law-abiding activists at protest events. A CIA-sponsored program dedicated to investigating financial transactions. An NSA initiative to collect data from massive numbers of domestic phone calls. The Pentagon's aborted Terrorism Information and Prevention System, TIPS, and Total Information Awareness programs. The USA Patriot Act. Over the last half-decade, American citizens have been bombarded with a dizzying array of issues and controversies related to state surveillance initiatives. While the potential impact of surveillance activities is widespread—some claim, for instance, that the recent NSA program sought to obtain data from *every* call placed in the U.S.—its effects are most squarely centered on settings that pose a challenge to the institutional political status quo.

It is clear that such efforts have enormous potential effects on the shape of political contention, and that these effects emerge in multifaceted ways. Rich historical accounts offer a window into these complexities. Take Jeremy Varon's *Bringing the War Home,* a compelling and nuanced chronicle of New Leftist militancy in the U.S. and Germany during the 1960s and 1970s. Varon focuses on two organizations in particular: the Weather Underground (WU) in America and the West German Red Army Faction (RAF). While not a comparative study per se, he uses these two juxtaposed cases to develop a layered analysis of how activists in both countries came to embrace violent revolutionary action, and how varied interactions with the state and civil society shaped their distinct trajectories.

Policing agencies in both nations employed a variety of means to actively monitor and disrupt the WU and RAF. Surveillance—through wiretaps, agent observation of public events, illegal break-ins, and infiltration by informants and provocateurs—constituted the meat of the state's repressive efforts, at least in the U.S. Varon notes that, even before the Weatherman organization went un-

The Suppression of Dissent: How the State and Mass Media Squelch US American Social Movements, by **Jules Boykoff.** New York, NY: Routledge, 2006. 288 pp. $80.00 cloth. ISBN: 0415978106.

Repression and Mobilization, edited by **Christian Davenport, Hank Johnston,** and **Carol Mueller.** Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2005. 328 pp. $75.00. cloth. ISBN: 081664425X.

Bringing the War Home: The Weather Underground, the Red Army Faction, and Revolutionary Violence in the Sixties and Seventies, by **Jeremy Varon.** Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2004. 407 pp. $21.95 paper. ISBN: 0520241190.

derground, the FBI had identified at least 270 of its members, nearly a third of whom were marked on the Bureau's "Security Index" for detainment in the case of national emergency. Agents and informants also "diligently recorded the identities of the 300 or so people in attendance" at a Weatherman-sponsored conference in 1969 (p. 158). Despite considerable safeguards in place to prevent infiltration, in at least three cases informants successfully gained access to radical collectives. In such instances, informants typically operated as provocateurs, encouraging violent activities for which participants were then arrested. After their move underground in 1970, FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover designated the Weather leadership subjects of "intensive investigation," and three Bureau officials were later indicted for their resulting authorization of a series of break-ins (known as "black-bag jobs") designed to gather information about suspects' whereabouts.

Varon reaches a number of conclusions about how such state action impacted the trajectories of each group. State repression, he suggests, "caused those skeptical about vio-

lence to seriously contemplate it and those persuaded of the need for violence to take the radical leap into action" (p. 3). In Germany, "[h]ad the state's reaction been less severe, the RAF's armed struggle might neither have endured so long nor become so brutal" (p. 254). In the U.S., the "traumatic effect" of state violence provided a motive for Weather adherents' increased militancy during the late 1960s (p. 162). The move by the Weather Underground toward "symbolic damage" and away from violence against human targets prevented the sort of massive program of state repression witnessed in Germany (p. 174).

We can also infer dynamics more closely tied to surveillance: that Weatherman's move underground was in part to escape monitoring by police and FBI, and that this move did in fact significantly reduce the latter's ability to surveil the group. Paradoxically, however, this shift expanded the overall scope of the state's surveillance activities as agents increasingly relied on less fine-tuned metrics to locate Weather adherents, focusing on broad networks of above-ground family and friends as well as a wide range of locales (communes, countercultural centers, etc.) deemed likely to shelter underground suspects.

All are provocative conclusions, and not inconsistent with the specific evidence presented in *Bringing the War Home*. But how do we know whether such findings are systematically valid, or whether similar dynamics hold in other cases? Such model-building is not Varon's goal; he is squarely focused on the specific contexts surrounding the WU and RAF, and in the book's introduction he clarifies that, while engaging with some of the social movement literature, he "does not speak its distinctly sociological causal language" (p. 18). Indeed, his use of oral historical accounts is intended to provide "representations of the past generated through the subjective work of memory . . . and not the 'objective' reconstruction of the past" (p. 16). When confronted with the thorny issue of specifying the impact of the antiwar movement on U.S. policy, he "doubts whether a method could even be devised for rendering such a judgment" (p. 147) and instead employs the biographical account of a single activist to represent his sense of the role played by militants in such outcomes.

Fair enough, as his methodology yields a nicely textured portrait of the WU and RAF. His detailed account of activist experiences also provides a window into the multivalent interactive nature of political contention. But it is difficult to have it both ways, to focus on close readings of subjective experiences while also drawing out general conclusions that beg for more systematized analysis. This latter task, of course, has traditionally fallen to sociologists and political scientists. Have they fared any better in their efforts to develop general explanations for the impacts of surveillance against political challengers?

The issue of surveillance and its effects has long been subsumed by a broader concern with the bidirectional relationship between state action and dissident mobilization: the so-called "repression-mobilization nexus." For at least the past decade, the real action in this literature has been primarily in journals, with few attempts to integrate and extend existing insights within book-length analyses (though exceptions include Cunningham, 2004; della Porta and Reiter, 1998; Stanley, 1996). Further, findings have lacked consistency, with surprisingly little cross-disciplinary conversation. *Repression and Mobilization*, a recent volume edited by Christian Davenport, Hank Johnston, and Carol Mueller, is a welcome corrective to this trend. The volume is a product of a 2001 conference at the University of Maryland that brought together many influential thinkers in several social science disciplines, and its contents represent the most significant advance in collective knowledge on the topic in some time.

In his introduction, Davenport astutely assesses the field and suggests possibilities for its advancement. Most importantly for our purposes, his essay identifies a key dynamic that has steered past research away from detailed analysis of surveillance: the move toward aggregated, multi-form indicators of "repression" as the object of analysis. To the extent that this approach has predominated over close study of specific repressive forms (including surveillance) as bounded phenomena, its implicit foundation has been what contributor Charles Tilly labels the "classic cost-benefit conception" of the impact of repression on mobilization and vice versa (p. 224). Within such a framework, repression is viewed as a cost imposed by au-

thorities on dissidents, leading to invariant conceptions that the allocation of repression decreases mobilization and, conversely, that mobilization predictably generates a repressive response from authorities. Davenport shows that exploration of the second relationship (i.e., mobilization causes repression) has yielded the expected finding, while studies of the impact of repression on subsequent mobilization have produced less consistent results.

In his view, these empirical regularities/irregularities are problematic, as both have been produced in the presence of significant analytic blind spots: an overly-narrow conception of repressive and dissident forms, reliance on a small number of fixed cases and data sets, and a simplistic view of the role played by media coverage. What to do? If the volume's take-away lesson can be boiled down to a single idea, it would be to *disaggregate* analyses to recognize the unique as well as recurrent features of varied political environments, dissident repertoires, repressive forms, and path-dependent temporal and spatial dynamics. Davenport argues that analysts should view the repression-mobilization nexus interactively, employing explanatory concepts derived from the social movement literature's political process tradition—i.e., political opportunities and threats, mobilizing structures, and cultural frames (see McAdam, 1982; McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald, 1996; Tarrow, 1998).

The remainder of the volume is effectively an argument for complicating this baseline model. Insights explicitly or implicitly tied to surveillance dynamics abound. Clark McPhail and John McCarthy highlight the fact that surveillance operations and other repressive tactics are not static or uniform—they in fact vary by, and diffuse across, local policing jurisdictions in predictable ways. Gilda Zwerman and Patricia Steinhoff recognize that multiple, often divergent, outcomes result from the imposition of surveillance and other repressive action, as "micro-cohorts" enter movements at differing points in the protest cycle and exhibit differing reactions to state action. Myra Marx Ferree develops the concept of "soft" repression, which emerges within civil society and hinders opposition through ridicule, stigma, and silencing—processes that often require the monitoring and labeling of dissident behavior.

But perhaps the most telling signal of the current state of the field is the fact that the two distinguished senior theorists given the "final word" in the volume—Charles Tilly and Mark Lichbach—barely mention the contributions of the preceding chapters. Instead, they concern themselves with broader issues of analysts' general orientation to the study of political conflict. Tilly suggests that students of repression and mobilization "shift their angles of vision" (Tilly, 2005: 225) to align with the mechanism-based approach he has advanced, with Doug McAdam and Sidney Tarrow, in the 2001 book *Dynamics of Contention*. The "DOC" approach recognizes that repression and mobilization are relational phenomena, both involving exchanges between dissidents and authorities. As such, it sees meaning as rooted in interactions within and between social sites, and centers analyses on episodes, or "continuous streams of contention including collective claim making that bears on other parties' interests" (McAdam *et al.,* 2001: 23–4). Its empirical program calls for "decomposing those episodes into combinations of recognizable, recurrent processes, then identifying the invariant causal mechanisms that enter those processes" (Tilly, 2005: 211–2). The goal is not to identify regularities across classes of episodes, but instead to find robust constituent mechanisms and processes that combine in varying ways to yield distinct outcomes. In short, the program "aims at explaining change and variation, not in discovering uniformity" among whole classes of episodes (Tilly, 2005: 212).

To illustrate what a DOC-style analysis might look like, Tilly concludes with a discussion of the mechanisms that constitute two varieties of collective violence, which he refers to as "scattered attacks" and "broken negotiations." Using these examples, he demonstrates that a single type of state action—e.g., the imposition of surveillance against challengers—can yield divergent effects across contentious forms. The general point is that it is likely misplaced to suggest that "a single law govern[s] the relationship of mobilization to repression" when both sides of the nexus are really shorthand for diverse sets of relational configurations (Tilly, 2005: 222). We would be better served, Tilly instructs, to break specific configurations (i.e., episodes of contention) into their constituent

processes and mechanisms, which become the sites through which particular types of outcomes emerge.

Jules Boykoff's *The Suppression of Dissent* represents a book-length treatment of a DOC-style mechanism-based approach. Drawing on a range of cases familiar to students of social movements in the U.S. (and relying, unfortunately, almost exclusively on existing secondary sources as evidence), Boykoff explains how it is that state efforts to suppress political challenges result in the demobilization of social movements in the U.S. Like Tilly, he argues that such an explanation requires the identification of distinct mechanisms through which actions contribute to the process of demobilization.

The bulk of the book is taken up by descriptive case studies involving Martin Luther King, Jr., the Black Panther Party, the Hollywood Ten, the American Indian Movement, and other activists from his self-described "deep, broad survey of suppression in twentieth and twenty-first century U.S. history" (p. 303). From these accounts he inductively identifies a set of twelve actions, or "Modes of Suppression." These Modes, in turn, lead to the demobilization of social movements through the work of five causal mechanisms: resource depletion, stigmatization, divisive disruption, intimidation, and emulation.

Curiously, Boykoff's product doesn't look much like Tilly's. While Boykoff does inductively identify his population of Modes by examining specific cases that can plausibly be conceived as episodes, he does not extend his discussion of mechanisms to explain the trajectory of particular cases of state-dissident interaction. This makes it difficult to understand how constellations of mechanisms might combine to yield change and variation in outcomes, or how the context-laden character of both sides of the struggle might interact to shape the arc of contention. While Tilly examines how particular combinations of mechanisms can explain variation, rather than uniformity, in outcomes, Boykoff asks "why do seemingly different acts produce a common effect: the suppression of dissent?" (p. 264).

So where does this leave us? Given the varied and inconsistent strains reviewed here, in what direction might future studies of surveillance in contentious politics productively move? First, if a common theme exists in these works, it is that we need to disaggregate concepts such as "mobilization" and "repression," and to pay closer attention to the particular ways in which surveillance as a repressive form impacts contentious episodes. Taking this recommendation seriously requires that we make explicit the features that distinguish surveillance from other modes of repression. Two recent efforts may be instructive. Earl (2003) has constructed a typology of repression, within which we can understand surveillance as fitting within classes of action that are: 1) coercive, 2) unobserved by targets and the general public, and 3) perpetrated either by private or state-based agents. Davenport (2005), in a recent journal article, has alternately focused on a single analytic dimension: the distinction between overt and covert repressive action. While surveillance of dissident targets is sometimes employed overtly, to chill or otherwise alter the behavior of challengers (Marx, 1979), monitoring more often functions covertly as a means to collect information that can later be used in a variety of ways against targets.

This emphasis on covert state action harks back to Gary Marx's (1974, 1988) seminal research on informants, *agents provocateurs,* and undercover policing, and links to an emerging concern with the patterning of surveillance-based acts, in particular the ways in which authorities allocate resources to monitor targets. Recent work has highlighted how state agencies identify targets by constructing them as such, and has shown that such constructions are shaped not only by ethnic, class, religious, etc. characteristics of potential candidates, but also by the organizational structure of policing agencies (Cunningham, 2004) and the characteristics of neighborhoods where potential targets reside (Davenport, 2005). A related concern is the impact of state surveillance—*how* such action affects activists and sympathetic publics. Boykoff argues that the presence of surveillance—whether perceived or real—can contribute to a process of demobilization through the intimidation of targets, often characterized by a feeling of paranoia. Such efforts, he asserts, also yield a body of information that can be used by state agencies to disrupt the functioning of targeted groups (pp. 281–4).

While such unique effects speak to the inappropriateness of lumping together hetero-

geneous categories of action as "repression," it is important to recognize that state agencies often simultaneously employ a *combination* of tactics to minimize dissent—e.g. aggressively policing public space, gathering extensive intelligence through covert surveillance efforts, empowering community leaders to exert social control on local residents, and so on (Caldwell, 2006). Research that brackets "surveillance" as its object of study would almost certainly miss indirect or emergent effects visible only through the contextualization of individual tactics within broader suppressive programs. In certain cases, such as with the FBI's counterintelligence programs (COINTELPROs) in operation between 1956 and 1971, state agencies have formalized the use of a diverse repertoire of tactics, self-consciously employed in concert (Cunningham, 2003, 2004). Therefore, alongside efforts to disaggregate analytic categories, we need to find ways to comprehend how tactical combinations interact to yield predictable outcomes.

Is a mechanism-based approach the best way to do so? The question is at the core of current debate in the field of contentious politics as a whole, reflected by the seeming gulf between Tilly's approach and the contextualized political process agenda advanced by the other contributors to the Davenport *et al.* volume. In that book's concluding chapter, Mark Lichbach promotes a strategy to bridge these perspectives. Lichbach is not troubled by the use of mechanisms to generate dynamic causal accounts that demonstrate how relationships between inputs and outcomes operate. He is, however, wary of research programs organized around the identification of salient mechanisms, as the exhaustive listing of these mechanisms can easily expand indefinitely, creating "an interminable make-work project" (Lichbach, 2005: 233).

To prevent such chaotic proliferation, Lichbach suggests that researchers should embed their mechanisms within larger organized systems of knowledge (i.e., logically-consistent combinations of mechanisms) and employ "stylized facts" and "historical narratives" to evaluate them empirically. Such an agenda may be one way to take the DOC challenge seriously—i.e., to give attention to the largely unexamined relational transactions lodged within the causal arrows of social science models—without discarding the underlying political process approach that has guided the field for the past two decades.

Such an effort can have broader-reaching effects as well, moving theoretically-inclined social scientists toward the center of policy-based dialogue surrounding the varied impacts of surveillance initiatives. These debates are of course pivotal to understanding how states can preserve the security of their citizens. Equally important, sophisticated analyses can also demonstrate how surveillance efforts can chill citizens' ability to lawfully express dissent, posing a threat to acts vital to the practice of democracy.

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Desperately Seeking Surveillance Studies: Players in Search of a Field

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We are at any moment those who separate the connected or connect the separate.

—Georg Simmel

In its current state, the sociological subfield of surveillance studies reminds me of the joke that began an editorial letter of rejection I received as a beginning scholar:

A poor man saves and saves and is finally able to buy his first suit. A rich relative seeing him in it says, "that's nice material, have you thought of having a suit made from it?"

The previous reviews suggest the richness and variety of this budding field. There is indeed something happening here! In calling for better conceptualization, the reviewers would no doubt agree with songwriter Stephen Sills who wrote, "what it is ain't exactly clear." I will elaborate a bit on the field's needs and, consistent with brother Georg's observation above, suggest some ways of hopefully making it clearer.[1]

Not long ago, one could fit all of those interested in social studies of surveillance into a phone booth. That possibility is gone (along with the phone booth). David Lyon (forthcoming), in a comprehensive overview, observes, ". . . surveillance studies started to emerge as a coherent sub-disciplinary field towards the end of the twentieth century." As both scholar and organizer, Lyon has played a major role in this beginning.

Now there is a vibrant and growing international network of scholars interested in surveillance questions. There are new journals, special issues of, and many articles in, traditional journals and frequent conferences. Between 1960–69, *Sociological Abstracts* listed just six articles with the word "surveillance." From 1990–99, 563 articles were listed, and if current trends continue, there will be well over 1000 articles for the decade ending 2009. In 2005–06 alone, five significant edited sociological books were published with scores of contributors and many more monographs and edited volumes are on the way. Major public policy commission reports appeared in Britain and the U.S. (Surveillance Studies Network 2006; National Research Council 2007). However, a boom in research does not necessarily mean an equivalent boon.

As in that other famous case, it is premature to conclude "mission accomplished," let alone even consensually identified. The field is strongest in its historical and macro accounts of the emergence and changes of surveillance in modern institutions and in offering an abundance of nominal (if rarely operationalized) concepts. Terms such as surveillance, social control, privacy, anonymity, secrecy, and confidentiality tend to be used without precise (or any) definition and are generally, not logically, linked. There are also case studies, usually at one place and time, involving only one research method and one technology, such as CCTV. Worse, as Torpey notes in his review, there is no

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[1] Space limitations require a minimalist treatment here. A fuller annotated version of this review and various articles developing the argument are at garymarx.net.

good English term conveying the full meaning of surveillance nor is there an adequate word for it as a verb (spell-check does not like *to surveil*).

For the systematic, comparative, contextually, and empirically focused social analyst, much of the current work—while often elegantly phrased, exploratory, and useful in offering background knowledge, raising issues and sounding alarms—remains conceptually undernourished, non-cumulative, and non-explanatory (at least in being conventionally falsifiable) and is either unduly abstract and broad, or too descriptive and narrow. The multiple dimensions that are usually built into ideal type terms such as "surveillance society," "the new surveillance," "maximum security society" (Marx 1985, 1988), dossier society (Laudon 1986), dataveillance (Clarke 1988), l'anamorphose de l'etat-nation (Palidda 1992), panoptic sort (Gandy 1993), ban-opticon (Bigo 2005), thick and thin surveillance (Torpey this review), and many more related concepts noted in the longer version of this article, need to be disentangled.[2]

A further weakness of the field involves omission. Most studies deal with contexts of conflict, domination, and control involving surveillance *agents* and *organizations* (almost all of the books chosen for review in this symposium). Yet surveillance as a fundamental social process is about much more than modernism, capitalism, bureaucracy, computer technology, and the aftermaths of 9/11. A zero-sum, social control, conflict game involving the unilateral, effective, and unchallenged power of the hegemons does not define the universe. Additionally, the extensive use of surveillance in other settings for goals involving *protection, management, documentation, strategic planning, ritual* or *entertainment* is ignored. Goals are too often simply assumed. Their frequent lack of clarity and multiplicity is disregarded. Likewise, surveillance *subjects* and uses by *individuals* (e.g., in familial contexts or by voyeurs) are neglected, as is the interaction between agents and subjects. Surveillance culture, which so envelops and defines popular consciousness, also tends to be understudied.

The sum of sociological surveillance studies is unfortunately not yet greater than the individual parts. To take topics studied by the reviewers, it is not initially apparent how research by Lyon on mobile telephony, Zureik on work monitoring, Torpey on passports, and Cunningham on political repression constitute a coherent field of inquiry, let alone recent studies for which the "s word" is central on topics as varied as welfare eligibility, anonymity, bots, the internet and political polls, e-government, cardiac patients, abandoned DNA, or reality television, to sample just a few recent articles. We have little quantitative data on the frequency and correlates of abuses or trend data on the individual's overall ability to control personal information.

A field needs greater agreement (or well-articulated disagreements) on what the central questions and basic concepts are, on what it is that we know empirically and what needs to be known, and on how the empirically documented or documentable can be ordered and explained, let alone some ability to predict the conditions under which future developments are to be expected. Moving towards these objectives must be the next step in the sociological study of surveillance.

Amidst the sweeping claims (whether of dystopians, utopians, ideologues, single case study over-generalizers, or one-trick pony theoretical reductionists), we need to reach agreement on definitions and specify dimensions, structures, and processes related to surveillance. Conclusions, whether explanatory or evaluative, require identifying the dimensions by which the richness of the empirical world can be parsed into dissimilar or fused into similar analytic forms that are systematically studied. To paraphrase a country and western song, "there is too much talk [aka meta-theory] and not enough research."

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[2] One effort to do this involves identifying 27 dimensions by which surveillance techniques can be contrasted (Marx 2004, 2006). For theoretical and social purposes, the ability to automatically, remotely, inexpensively, and involuntarily apply sense-extending, border-breaking, soft, ubiquitous, and invisible techniques and to easily analyze, merge, and communicate results in real time is of particular contemporary significance.

Towards A Field Definition

One Marx manifesto every couple of centuries is probably sufficient, although that should not be the case for Marx jokes. Nonetheless, here I offer, in greatly telegraphed form, one way of approaching the new surveillance as it involves the collection of personal information. This approach is tied firmly to our discipline and its historical concerns from Marx, Durkheim, Weber, and Simmel and more recent concerns such as those expressed by Shils, Nisbet, Merton, and Goffman. It takes systematic account of the variation whose causes, processes, and consequences need to be understood.

One way of organizing surveillance studies is as part of a broader field of *the sociology of information*. A major area within that involves the rules about information in general, and personal information, in particular.

I suggest a situational or contextual approach that, while not denying some commonalities across surveillance behavior, emphasizes patterned differences. Central here is the identification and contrast of means, goals, role relationships, the structure of the interaction, the characteristics of the type of personal data involved (whether involving sensitive information or form such as audio or video), and cultural and social dynamics. These elements exist within a normative environment in which expectations, policies, and laws set conditions around which behavior flows. This approach yields a number of hypotheses about surveillance behavior and the *patterning* of normative expectations regarding the accessibility and inaccessibility of information (Marx and Muschert, forthcoming).

Central questions directly and indirectly connected to a normative sociology of information approach are: what are the rules governing the protection and revelation of information, how are they created, what are their consequences, and how should they be judged? Who has access to personal information and under what conditions? How do factors such as the type of physical, temporal, and cultural border, the type of relationship among actors, the roles played, the type of information involved, the form of its presentation and the characteristics of the means used, and the goals sought affect rules about information and the distribution of various surveillance forms?[3]

What does surveillance focus on—individuals, groups, organizations, or environments? And, once focused, what does surveillance look for (e.g., rule compliance, identification, eligibility, wanted persons, purity of mind or body, networks, location, communication)? What actions, if any, flow from the activity? How are results assessed? Where are the lines drawn? How valid are the instruments, both in general and as applied in a given context? What factors condition varying connections between the rules and actual behavior? How do normatively sanctioned and coercively supported data extractions (or data protections) differ from softer, seemingly voluntary (and often seductively elicited) revelations or protections? How is information treated once it has been gathered (e.g., security, repurposing, alteration, retention, and destruction)?

Borders are central factors for understanding surveillance information (Zureik and Salter 2006). Borders of course may include or exclude as they facilitate or restrict the flow of information, persons, goods, resources and opportunities. The literal and symbolic role of border surveillants as guardians, gatekeepers, spotters, cullers and sorters needs to be better understood, as well as subject responses. Most scholarly attention and indignation is on the taking of information *from* the person. But as with Orwell's telescreen, this can be joined (and also needs to be contrasted) with impositions *upon* the person—whether sound, images, smells or unwanted messages (e.g., much telemarketing and spam). Thus, it needs to be asked: Under what conditions do individuals feel that a personal border has been *wrongly crossed?* An equally important, but neglected, question is when has there been a *failure in not crossing* a personal informational border? These questions, of course, raise larger issues related to privacy.

Privacy and *publicity* as major concepts here are the polar ends of a continuum in-

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[3] There is enormous imbalance here between organizations and individuals. Anyone new to the area would do well to begin by reading Jim Rule's (1973) pioneering study.

volving rules about withholding and disclosing, and seeking or not seeking, information. The normative definition can help avoid the frequent confusion of the private and the public as adjectives describing the actual *empirical status* of information—thus leaking of information to the news media from a wiretap makes it "public," even as what is leaked is (normatively) considered to be private. Depending on the context, social roles and culture, individuals or groups may be required, find it optional, or be prohibited from engaging in these activities, whether as subjects or agents of surveillance and communication.

Rules are at the heart of privacy and publicity. When the rules specify that information is not to be available to others—whether the restriction is on the surveillance agent not to discover or less often, on the subject not to reveal or on the means—we can speak of *privacy norms*. When the rules specify that the information must be revealed by the subject or sought by the agent and that particular means are to be used, we can speak of *publicity norms*. The subject has an obligation to reveal and/or the agent has an obligation to discover and to report what is discovered. With publicity norms there is no right to privacy that tells the agent not to seek information, nor is there a rule granting the subject (or possessor of the information) discretion regarding revelation. Framed in this way, the issues of privacy and access to information loom large in sociological studies of surveillance, including the majority of books reviewed in the previous essays.

The conditions for such reporting (whether mandatory revelation by the subject or discovery by the agent) involve important variables, such as who is to be told. The audience for mandatory revelation/discovery and communication can vary from a few persons entitled to know (as with buyers and sellers bound by a contract or the reporting of signs of possible child abuse by teachers to social welfare officials) to the public at large (as with conflict of interest statements for those in public office).

A sociology of information approach emphasizing norms provides a way to link freedom of information and right to know issues with the right to control personal information. It offers a way to connect and contrast

the highly varied topics studied by surveillance scholars. David Cunningham's welcome call for disaggregation is joined by aggregation.

Surveillance Structures and Processes

Surveillance can be further analyzed by identifying some basic structures and processes. *Organizational surveillance* is distinct from the *non-organizational surveillance* carried out by individuals. The *internal constituency surveillance* found in organizations (in its most extreme form in total institutions (Goffman 1961)) contrasts with *external constituency surveillance* present when those who are watched have some patterned contact with the organization (e.g., as customers, patients, malefactors or citizens). Note also *external non-member constituency surveillance* in which organizations monitor their broader environment in watching other organizations, individuals, and social trends. Beyond organizational forms, consider *personal surveillance* in which an individual watches another individual. Here we can differentiate *role relationship* surveillance as with family members from non-role relationship surveillance as with the voyeur whose watching is unconnected to a legitimate role.

With respect to the roles played, we can identify the surveillance agent (watcher/observer/seeker). The person about whom information is sought is a *surveillance subject*. All persons of course play both roles, although hardly in the same form or degree. These changes depend on the context and over the life cycle. The roles are sometimes blurred and may overlap.

The surveillance function may be *central* to the role (detectives, spies, investigative reporters, and even some sociologists) or *peripheral* (e.g., check-out clerks who are trained to look for shoplifters, dentists who look for signs of child abuse). A distinction rich with empirical and ethical implications is whether the situation involves those who are a party to the generation and collection of data (*direct participants)* or instead involves *third parties*.

Surveillance can also be analyzed with respect to whether it is *non-reciprocal* or *reciprocal*. Surveillance that is reciprocal may be *asymmetrical* or *symmetrical*. Related to this is the need to contrast contexts of

cooperation where goals overlap or are shared, as against those where agents and subjects are in conflict. Consider also *agent-initiated surveillance* vs. *subject-initiated surveillance.* In the books reviewed by Cunningham, for example, we see governmental organizations engaged in non-reciprocal, asymmetrical, conflictual, agent-initiated forms.

Rather than being only static and fixed, surveillance also needs to be viewed as a fluid process involving interaction and strategic calculations over time. Among surveillance processes are efforts to create the *myth of surveillance, surveillance creep, gallop* and *contraction, surveillance slack,* and *surveillance commodification. Behavioral techniques of neutralization*—strategic moves by which subjects of surveillance seek to subvert the collection of personal information—can be noted. This can include direct refusal, discover, avoidance, switching, distorting, counter-surveillance, cooperation, blocking, and masking (Marx 2003).

Surveillance practices are shaped by manners, organizational policies and laws, and by available technologies and counter-technologies. These draw on a number of background value principles and tacit assumptions about the empirical world. Using criteria such as the nature of the goals, the procedure for creating a surveillance practice, minimization, consideration of alternatives, reciprocity, data protection, and security and implications for democratic values, I suggest twenty questions to be asked about any surveillance activity (Marx 2005). The more these can be answered in a way affirming the underlying values, the more legitimate the surveillance is likely to be.

In anxious, media-saturated times we must be especially attentive to public rhetoric that so effortlessly passes for profundity. One approach to this is to identify empirical, logical, and value fallacies.[4] Consider the stock line that everything changed after 9/11 and we must therefore be prepared to trade off liberty or privacy for security. Perhaps. That conclusion should on-ly be reached after careful analysis indicating: (1) that the threat has been accurately portrayed; (2) that the trade off is genuine (i.e., that the sacrifice will work); (3) it is morally justified and involves an appropriate prioritization of values (i.e., whatever is being traded off is of less worth than what is presumed to be gained); and (4) as Torin Monahan (2006) and his colleagues suggest, tradeoff talk does not lead us to ignore consequences for other important social values such as fairness, equality, innovation, and personal dignity.

Social research attentive to empirical and moral complexity may move us closer to the enlightenment promise of our discipline and leave in realm of fiction Brecht's observation that the person who smiles is the one who has not yet heard the bad news.

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4 Consider for example, a "true fiction" speech by one Mr. Rocky Bottoms to the annual Las Vegas convention of the Society for American Professional Surveillance (Marx, forthcoming).

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