

CMST 4312
Critical Surveillance Studies

Fall 2014
3:00-4:20 PM Tues/ Thurs
Online

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Office Hours: By phone appointment

DESCRIPTION:

Surveillance has emerged as an important object of study for communication scholars in recent years. This course provides an overview of the field and covers the latest research in five key areas: interactivity, popular cultures of surveillance, peer-to-peer surveillance, biometrics, and data mining. Broadly, the course provides students with the tools to question and critically analyze the logics of risk management used to rationalize the adoption and implementation of new and old surveillance technologies. In addition to reading critical analyses of surveillance technologies, we will explore work by visual artists and activists, whose projects challenge our assumptions about and acceptance of emergent technologies and/or the return of older methods. The first unit of the course covers the promise and perils of interactivity. The second unit investigates popular cultures of surveillance like Reality Television and Social Networking Sites. Unit Three is comprised of studies that address the resurgence of older practices of surveillance, including pseudoscientific practices of surveillance like behavior detection, the neoliberal shift to citizen preparedness as a mode of self-governance, and lateral detection via live and mediated spying on one's peers and family members. Unit Four examines the surveillance infrastructures of CCTV, satellites, and drones. Unit Five covers the superficial and intensive surveillance of human bodies via biometric security technologies, biometric consumer apps, and RFID chips. The final unit explores the public controversy over data mining unleashed by the Snowden/PRISM scandal and the use of drones in warfare and commerce.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Mark Andrejevic, *iSpy: Surveillance and Power in the Interactive Era*

Torin Monahan, *Surveillance in the Time of Insecurity*

John McGrath, *Loving Big Brother: Performance, Privacy, and Surveillance Space*

Shoshana Magnet, *When Biometrics Fail: Gender, Race, and the Technology of Identity*

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

A student should be able to:

1. Demonstrate general knowledge of the field of critical surveillance studies and awareness of recent developments in scholarly thinking about contemporary cultures of surveillance.
2. Articulate critical and informed positions on the relationship between surveillance technologies and the cultures that use them.
3. Understand the relationship between power and knowledge that motivates surveillance practices and shapes the development and use of surveillance technologies.
4. Read and think critically. Articulate ideas about readings in a compelling and communicative manner.
5. Pursue independent research and share findings with the class.
6. Use technology effectively in class participation.
7. Practice facility in linking political, social, and economic factors in the development of surveillance cultures and people's voluntary or compulsory participation in those cultures.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

Since this is an online course, we will not meet physically in a classroom; however, you are expected to keep up with assigned readings, participate in online forums, and complete quizzes and exams.

If you have a disability that may have some impact on your work in this class and for which you may require accommodations, please see a Coordinator in the Office for Disability Services (112 Johnson Hall) so that such accommodations may be arranged. After you receive your accommodation letters, please meet with me to discuss the provisions of those accommodations as soon as possible.

GRADE BREAKDOWN:

Online Participation	100 points
Reading Quizzes	100 points
Midterm	150 points
Final	150 points
Total possible points	500 points

In calculating your final grade, the points you earn on each assignment will be added together, and the sum will be graded on the following scale:

A = 500 – 450; B = 400 – 449; C = 350 – 399; D = 300 – 349; F = 299 or below.

ASSIGNMENTS:

1. **READING QUIZZES:** Reading Quizzes are multiple-choice. We will have a reading quiz every Tuesday. You can take your quiz between 3:00 and 4:20 on Tuesdays. Once you start the quiz, you will have 15 minutes to complete it.

2. **EXAMS:** The Midterm and Final Exam are also multiple-choice. The exams will offer you an opportunity to take a second pass at the material covered in quizzes. If you learn from the reading quizzes that you have not covered or comprehended particular material, make a note to go back and study that material for the exams.

3. **INSTRUCTOR'S NOTES:** As the instructor, I will post a note to the class every Tuesday by 3:00pm. Since we are not meeting in person, these notes provide a means for me to address you on a regular basis throughout the course of the semester. The notes will appear in Moodle with that week's readings and forum. I will use the notes to: provide context for the assigned readings, offer guiding questions for you to consider while you read, and in some cases include material not covered in the readings.

You can think of the instructor's notes and Moodle forum discussions as loosely connected. Instructor's notes frame the week's readings and introduce a suggested thread for class discussion, which takes place in the forum.

4. **DISCUSSION FORUMS:** During the course of the semester, there will be a total of ten discussion forums conducted on Moodle. I will post a guiding question or set of questions on Tuesdays by 3:00pm (of the weeks we have scheduled forums). **You are expected to post a response and two replies to other students' posts by 5 pm on Thursdays.**

Participation in the discussion forums on Moodle is critical for maximizing student-learning experiences in any online course. In this course, students are required to be a part of an online community of learners who collectively interact, through discussion, to enhance and support the professional performance of each other. Part of the assessment criteria for the course includes evaluating the quality and quantity of your participation in the discussion forum.

As the course instructor, I will facilitate student discussions in Moodle forums but I will not address every single post. In most cases, I might share a related idea, intervene when the discussion goes off-track, or tie student comments together to help deepen student learning. Consequently, I will not directly answer questions in the discussion area unless they are addressed to me. I will check the discussions regularly between Tues and Thursday.

Some characteristics I consider to be part of excellent discussion contributions are outlined below. I will consider these characteristics when assessing the quality and level of student participation.

- Submit initial post(s) early in the session, and subsequent responses to the posts of other learners at timely intervals throughout the duration of the session. The goal is to have a dynamic discussion around the topic that lasts throughout the entire session.
- Posts and responses should be thorough and thoughtful. Just posting an "I agree" or "Good ideas" will not be considered adequate. Support statements with examples, experiences, or references. Be brief — keep each post and response to one or two short paragraphs. Keep in mind that fellow learners will be reading and responding to you, too.
- Posts should be within a range of 75-150 words. If a post does not meet the minimum word count of 75, I will not count it toward your grade.
- Make certain that all posts and responses address the question, problem, or situation as presented for discussion. This does not mean you should not extend the topic, but do not stray from the topic.
- Discussions occur when there is dialogue; therefore, you need to build upon the posts and responses of other learners to create discussion threads. Make sure to revisit the discussion forum and respond (if necessary) to what other learners have posted to your initial responses.
- When relevant, add to the discussion by including prior knowledge, work experiences, references, web sites, resources, etc. (giving credit when appropriate).
- Contributions to the discussions (posts and responses) should be complete and free of grammatical or structural errors.

Discussion Participation Rubric

Criteria	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Exemplary
Quantity and timeliness	Does not submit at least one initial response early in the session and/or does not submit at least two peer responses closer to the end of the session. 1 points	Submits at least one initial response early in the session, and at least two peer responses closer to the end of the session. 1.5 point	Submits one initial response early in the session, and two or more thoughtful peer responses early in the session, and more than two peer responses closer to the end of the session. 2 points
Demonstrates knowledge and understanding of content	Post(s) and responses show little evidence of knowledge and understanding of course content and applicability to lived experience. 2.5 points	Post(s) and responses show evidence of knowledge and understanding of course content and applicability to lived experience. 3 points	Post(s) and responses show evidence of knowledge and understanding of course content and applicability to lived experience, and include other resources that extend the learning of the community. 4 points
Generates learning within the community	Posts do not attempt to elicit responses and reflections from other learners and/or responses do not build upon the ideas of other learners to take the discussion deeper. 2.5 points	Posts attempt to elicit responses and reflections from other learners and responses build upon the ideas of other learners to take the discussion deeper. 3 points	Posts elicit responses and reflections from other learners and responses build upon and integrate multiple views from other learners to take the discussion deeper. 4 points
Total Points Possible: 10			

Tentative Calendar:

Some changes in the following will inevitably need to be made. Still, this should give you a rough map of the terrain ahead of us. Other than your assigned text books, all course readings are available on Moodle.

UNIT ONE: Interactivity

- August 26 Welcome and Introduction to the Course
- August 28 Mark Andrejevic, *iSpy: Surveillance and Power in the Interactive Era*
Introduction and Ch2: "Three Dimensions of iCulture"
- September 2 Rachel Dubrofsky, "Surveillance on Reality TV and Facebook: From Authenticity to Flowing Data"
- September 4 Chung and Grimes, "Datamining the Kids"

UNIT TWO: Popular Cultures of Surveillance

- September 9 Mark Andrejevic, Introduction to *The Work of Being Watched*
- September 11 Dubrofsky, Rachel E. (2007). "'Therapeutics of the Self': Surveillance in the Service of the Therapeutic." *Television and New Media* , 8(4).
- September 16 Rachel Dubrofsky, *The Hunger Games: Performing Not Performing to Authenticate Femininity and Whiteness*
"The Hipster Racism of Reality TV"
(http://www.salon.com/2013/07/16/the_hipster_racism_of_reality_tv/)

UNIT THREE: Behavior Detection, Preparedness, and Lateral Surveillance

- September 18 Torin Monahan, *Surveillance in the Time of Insecurity*
Introduction and "Securing the Homeland"
- September 23 Torin Monahan, *Surveillance in the Time of Insecurity*
"Twenty-Four Hour Exceptions" and "Situational Awareness"
- September 25 Mark Andrejevic, "The Discipline of Watching: Detection, Risk and Lateral Surveillance"
- September 30 Andrejevic, "Reading the Surface: Body Language and Surveillance"

- October 2 Fall Break
- October 7 Hall, “Unwitting Performances of Transparency”
- October 9 Joshua Reeves, “If You See Something, Say Something”
- October 14 Marita Sturken, “Weather Media and Homeland Security”
- October 16 Midterm Exam

UNIT FOUR: Surveillance Infrastructures

- October 21 John McGrath, *Loving Big Brother*
 “An Ideology of Crime” and “Perverting Privacy”
- October 23 Lisa Parks, Introduction to *Down to Earth: Satellite Technologies, Industries, and Cultures*
- October 28 Martin Dodge Chris Perkins, “The ‘view from nowhere’? Spatial politics and cultural significance of high-resolution satellite imagery”
- October 30 Lisa Parks, “Digging into Google Earth: An analysis of ‘Crisis in Darfur’”
- November 4 Michael Crutcher and Matthew Zook, “Placemarks and Waterlines: Racialized Cyberscapes in Post-Katrina Google Earth”

UNIT FIVE: Surveillance and Bodies

- November 6 Magnet, *When Biometrics Fail*, “Imagining Biometric Security”
- November 11 Magnet, *When Biometrics Fail*, “Biometric Failure”
- November 13 Torin Monahan, *Surveillance in the Time of Insecurity*, RFID chips
- November 18 NCA
- November 20 NCA
- November 25 Magnet and Rodgers, “Stripping for the State”
- November 27 Jasbir Puar, *Terrorist Assemblages*, “The Turban is Not a Hat”

UNIT SIX: Data Mining and Drones

December 2 Monahan, Ch 9 in Surveillance in the Times of Insecurity

Watch: Exclusive: DN! Goes Inside Assange's Embassy Refuge to Talk WikiLeaks, Snowden and Winning Freedom

December 4 Jeremy Packer and Joshua Reeves, "Romancing the Drone: Military Desire and Anthropophobia from SAGE to Swarm."

<http://notabugsplat.com/2014/04/06/a-giant-art-installation-targets-predator-drone-operators/>

(http://www.washingtonpost.com/business/capitalbusiness/amazon-manufacturers-want-federal-permission-to-test-commercial-drone-use/2014/08/08/3ecc6c00-1f1f-11e4-ae54-0cfe1f974f8a_story.html)

December 9 FINAL EXAM (3:00-5:00 PM)