



Everyday Surveillance: Vigilance and Visibility in Postmodern Life

By William G. Staples

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When we think of surveillance in our society, we usually imagine “Big Brother” scenarios with the government tracking our every move. The actual surveillance of our everyday lives is much more subtle, however, and may be more insidious. William G. Staples shows how our lives are tracked by both public and private organizations—sometimes with our consent, and sometimes without—through our internet use, cell phones, public video cameras, credit cards, license plates, shopping habits, and more. *Everyday Surveillance* is a provocative exploration of the myriad ways we are watched each day, and how this surveillance shapes our lives.

Thoroughly revised, the second edition considers new topics, such as the rise of social media, and updates research throughout. *Everyday Surveillance* introduces students to concepts of social control and incites classroom discussion about how surveillance impacts the ways we understand people and our lives at home, work, school, or in the community.

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Editorial Review

Review

William G. Staples has authored an impressive, well-written, and exhaustive historical analysis of what he terms society's ever-increasing 'culture of surveillance' and 'postmodern surveillance practices.' While extremely readable and eye opening, *Everyday Surveillance* . . . is a wide-ranging historical overview of the progression of surveillance and control tactics beginning in the 1700s and continuing all the way to the controversial surveillance tactics employed by government agencies today. . . . Ultimately, this book clearly and effectively challenges the reader to consider how technology has benefited or damaged society. Staples does not pass judgment or offer personal opinion on the techniques described throughout the book; however, he challenges the reader in the hope of creating public discourse regarding concepts of justice, transparency, societal control, and voyeurism. . . . This book should be viewed as an advanced sociological, historical, analytical, and at times philosophical discourse on a topic relevant to all security practitioners and society as a whole. (*Security Management*)

This insightful and wonderfully accessible book shows how surveillance has radically transformed just about every aspect of social life. Whether at home, school, work, or in online worlds, surveillance defines and mediates our experiences. This completely revised edition of *Everyday Surveillance* is the perfect guide for making sense of these changes and their consequences. (Torin Monahan, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill)

George Orwell was wrong. The modern problem of surveillance isn't Big Brother but the thousands upon thousands of "Tiny Brothers" that record and track our daily existence. William Staples offers a compelling account of the rise of private surveillance—complementing but also complicating the watchful eye of the State—and the equanimity with which this has been greeted by the public. (Simon Chesterman, Dean, National University of Singapore Faculty of Law)

William Staples blends sophisticated social theorizing with a keen eye for the minute ways that surveillance touches our day-to-day lives. In the process he brings to light the often otherwise invisible powers of contemporary monitoring practices. (Kevin D. Haggerty, University of Alberta)

William Staples offers an engaging, succinct, contemporary introduction to the micro-management of ever more areas of daily life through surveillance technology. While attuned to the depths of change, he does not lose sight of what remains unchanged. Ideal for a range of beginning social science courses! (Gary T. Marx, Massachusetts Institute of Technology; author of *Windows Into the Soul: Surveillance and Society in an Age of High Technology*)

Through incisive analysis, Everyday Surveillance charts the various ways that surveillance shapes the postmodern moment: from the routinized gathering of data by 'smart' technologies when we shop, work, travel, or protest, to new categories of punishment that blur the line between incarceration and freedom—where those under house arrest are subject to 'participatory monitoring' with the expectation that they come to supervise themselves. Through interviews and observations, Staples offers a 'sociology of the postmodern' that is a wide-ranging, historically grounded, and theoretically informed engagement with the techniques of surveillance and social control. (Simone Browne, University of Texas at Austin)

The first edition of William Staples' Everyday Surveillance was an instant classic which played a significant

part in establishing the field of Surveillance Studies. So it is a delight to see the publication of this almost entirely updated second edition, which not only deals with the transformations that have taken place since 9/11 but also with the increasing ubiquity of surveillance in everyday life through social practices, culture and technology. This is absolutely essential reading for anyone who wonders exactly how it is that surveillance came to be everywhere in our lives. (David Murakami Wood, Queen's University, Canada; Editor-in-Chief, Surveillance & Society)

The beauty of this book? It's true to its title. Surveillance is demystified. It's not an occasional or remote occurrence but an intrinsic aspect of all our everyday lives. We are challenged to understand and come to terms with a culture of surveillance in which 'Big Brother is us.' Staples guides us between the multi-faceted vigilance of digital systems and the enhanced visibility of our mundane life-paths, noting subtle shifts from modern to postmodern practices. This book deftly draws attention to the key questions that we discount to our detriment. (David Lyon, Queen's University, Canada)

Everyday Surveillance is a provocative exploration of the myriad ways we are watched each day—from internet use to public video cameras—and how this surveillance shapes our lives. The second edition considers new topics, such as the rise of social media, and updates research throughout. This is an ideal text for introducing students to concepts of social control and provoking discussion.

Review

This book is very well written. . . . It offers a fascinating chronicle of the rage to invent new forms of surveillance, as well as pithy conceptualizations that organize the empirical materials nicely. As such, it clearly meets Staples's stated goal of providing an accessible undergraduate textbook. (praise for previous edition) (*Social Forces*)

The suggestion made by *Everyday Surveillance* that a 'quiet revolution' is occurring in which we are all targets is a thought provoking one. It reminds us that we all are responsible for encouraging surveillance by being seduced by its promises, fearing the consequences without it and heralding it as society's salvation. The book flags up some new directions in which the study of visual, informational and communication technologies might profitably head.(praise for previous edition) (*British Journal of Criminology*)

Lively and engaging. Instructors looking for a sociological treatment of an interesting contemporary issue will find that this book would provoke discussion and debate among students in undergraduate or graduate courses. (praise for previous edition) (*Contemporary Sociology*)

About the Author

William G. Staples is professor of sociology and founding director of the Surveillance Studies Research Center at the University of Kansas. He is author or editor of several books, including the *Encyclopedia of Privacy* and *Castles of Our Consciousness*, both CHOICE Outstanding Academic Titles, and *Power, Profits, and Patriarchy*, winner of an American Sociological Association Section Book Award.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Thomas Kelly:

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Vigilance and Visibility in Postmodern Life will make you to always be smarter. You can feel far more confidence if you can know about everything. But some of you think that open or reading the book make you bored. It is far from make you fun. Why they might be thought like that? Have you trying to find best book or ideal book with you?

Tammi Rosado:

This book untitled Everyday Surveillance: Vigilance and Visibility in Postmodern Life to be one of several books in which best seller in this year, this is because when you read this book you can get a lot of benefit upon it. You will easily to buy this kind of book in the book retail outlet or you can order it via online. The publisher in this book sells the e-book too. It makes you easier to read this book, since you can read this book in your Smartphone. So there is no reason to you personally to past this book from your list.

Phyllis Tucker:

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Mac Cutter:

Many people said that they feel uninterested when they reading a publication. They are directly felt the idea when they get a half portions of the book. You can choose the particular book Everyday Surveillance: Vigilance and Visibility in Postmodern Life to make your personal reading is interesting. Your personal skill of reading ability is developing when you like reading. Try to choose very simple book to make you enjoy to study it and mingle the impression about book and reading through especially. It is to be first opinion for you to like to open up a book and go through it. Beside that the publication Everyday Surveillance: Vigilance and Visibility in Postmodern Life can to be your brand new friend when you're really feel alone and confuse with the information must you're doing of this time.

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