

# When will people resist surveillance?

First they need to notice it, then identify the source

Avelie Stuart and Mark Levine  
University of Exeter



## Privacy Dynamics:

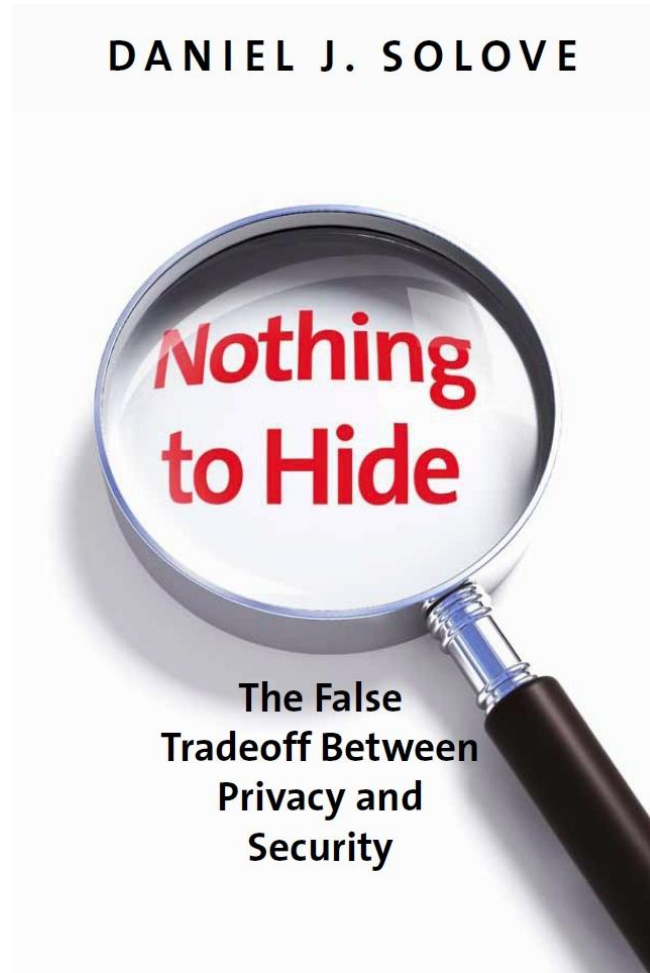
Learning from the Wisdom of Groups  
EPSRC Grants: EP/K033522/1 | EP/K033425/1 | EP/K033433/1

# The Day We Fight Back

## AGAINST MASS SURVEILLANCE

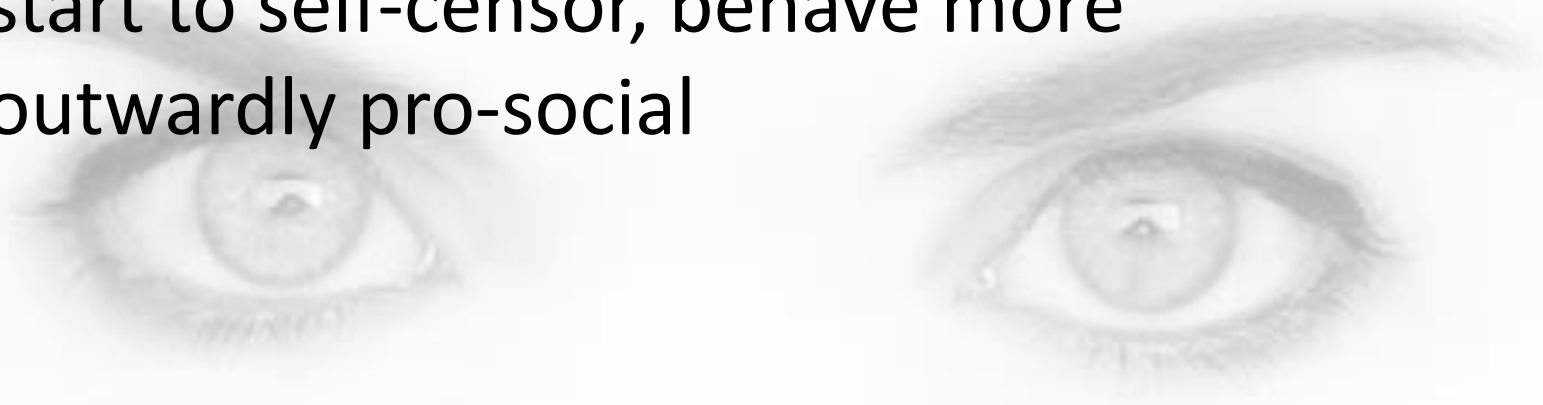


# Discourses of privacy



# Surveillance and political psychology

- When people feel they are watched, they start to self-censor, behave more outwardly pro-social



# Focus group leads

- Visibility of surveillance technology
  - Surveillance symbols are increasingly everywhere; but also increasingly, we cannot see surveillance



# Focus group leads

- Who is doing it? Why are they doing it?
  - Social identity and surveillance
    - O'Donnell, et al., 2010 found that people who feel attachment (identity) to their city support surveillance if they believe it is for their safety
    - Surveillance can also undermine the relationship if people believe it shouldn't be there (e.g. Ellis, Harper & Tucker, 2013; Subašić, et al., 2011)

N=154, M<sup>age</sup> = 20.5, 76% female

# Study 1 - Survey



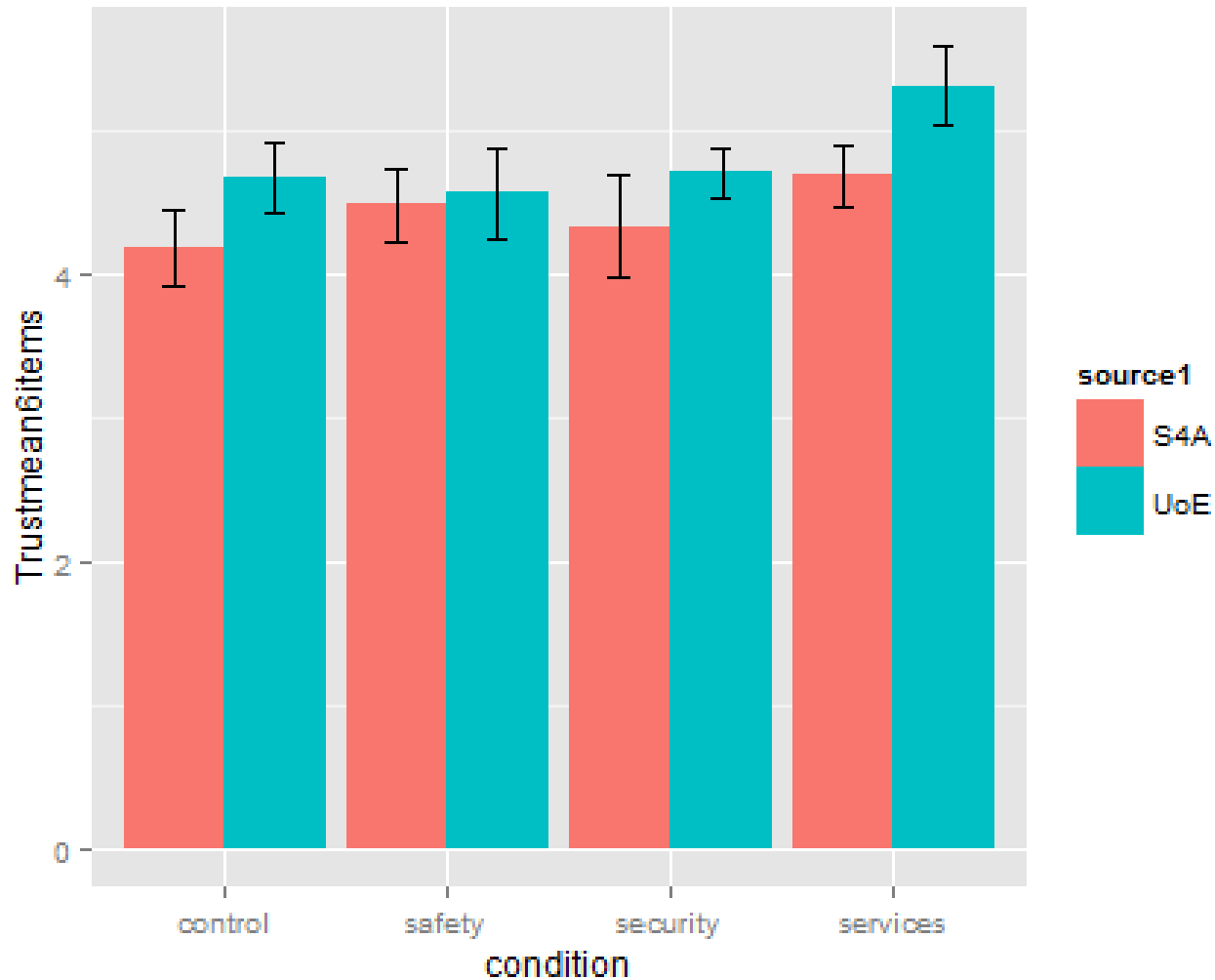
- “The University is embarking on an initiative to use location-tracking on student phones...”
- Manipulated ingroup (the university)/outgroup (private security company) audience
- Manipulated the reason for the surveillance – safety, security, services, and a control (no reason) condition
- Asked them if they would be willing to be a beta tester



# Study 1

- We expected:
  - People to be willing to be a beta tester if they identified with the university, and trusted the initiative
  - To be less trusting when surveillance was being implemented by an outgroup than ingroup
- Our predictions were not met





- UoE services condition most trusted
- Outgroup not distrusted – seen as credible/legitimate?

# Study 2



- Only ingroup (university) audience
- Services versus scrutiny story
- Expected scrutiny condition to violate the trust relationship between student and university
  - No differences found between conditions on trust or privacy threat

# Interpretations

- Even for those concerned about the privacy implications it was not related to their identification with the university
  - The relationship with the university was not made salient?
- Might reflect the idea of ‘nothing to hide’
  - No negative implications to being watched
  - Functional invisibility

# Surveillance and prosocial behaviour

- Am I being watched?
- People known to act more pro-socially when they are being watched (e.g. Bateson et al., 2006; van Rompay, 2009)

# Surveillance and prosocial behaviour

- IV1: Camera light turns on while participant completes computer tasks
  - Control: camera present, light does not turn on
- IV2: Trust in student by the University
  - Word search with trusting or distrusting words and a sign above the computer imply mistrust or protection



S	G	C	F	C	S	D	I	A	U	I	F	A	R	CARING
P	O	O	R	H	F	T	F	S	E	R	Y	N	R	FAITH
A	S	N	G	F	E	E	A	E	E	H	T	E	T	SAFETY
H	E	F	A	N	N	L	C	E	F	C	E	A	S	CONFIDENCE
N	T	I	N	E	I	C	P	N	I	F	F	N	N	SUPPORT
A	D	D	F	N	S	R	Y	F	G	F	A	R	D	HELPFUL
F	C	E	S	E	U	S	A	I	U	N	S	S	S	CONCERN
A	R	N	R	I	P	E	D	C	S	L	N	B	R	ASSURANCE
I	U	C	A	P	P	S	C	N	N	E	T	A	A	AID
T	F	E	T	C	O	B	E	N	E	F	I	T	U	BENEFIT
H	A	S	S	U	R	A	N	C	E	P	A	C	C	
T	P	T	U	A	T	A	O	U	C	A	C	R	F	
F	N	R	E	C	N	O	C	C	D	H	F	C	G	
T	C	N	E	B	C	I	L	H	F	P	I	R	D	

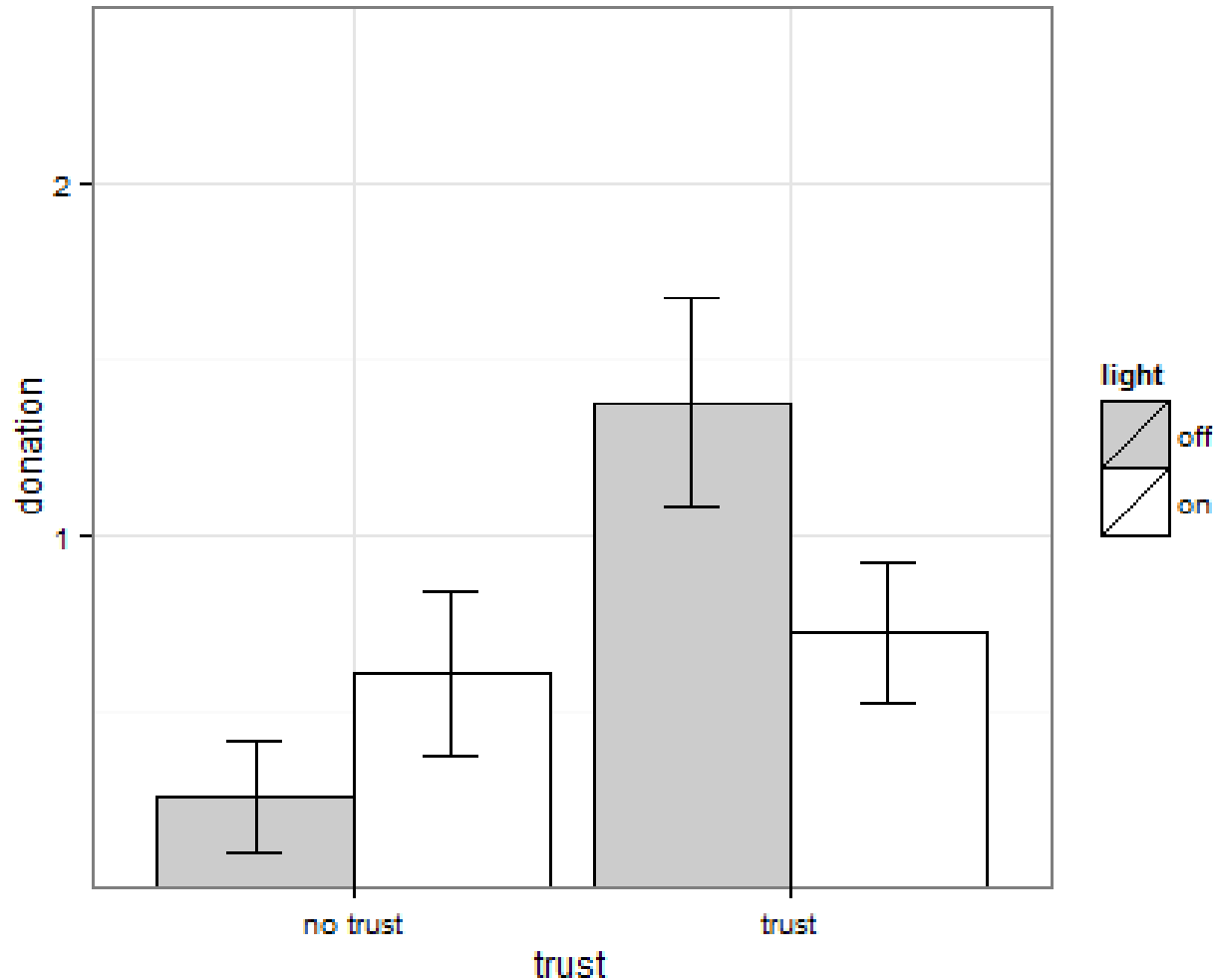
Please note: This room is currently under surveillance by the University of Exeter because students have been victim of property theft and damage.



# Donation

- DV: They could donate from £0-3 of their participation money to student charity
- Box near door, the experimenter not present in the room

# Surveillance and prosocial behaviour



Donate more money in trust condition ( $M=1.05$ ) than no trust ( $M=.45$ ),  $F = 7.28$ ,  $p = .009$ ,  $\omega p^2 = .07$

No main effect for light

Interaction between trust and light,  $F = 4.8$ ,  $p = .03$ ,  $\omega p^2 = .04$

# Discussion

- People may donate more frequently when they are being watched, but prosociality is undermined and they donate a lower amount
- No significant mediators
  - Social identity
  - Feeling trusted by the university
  - Objective self awareness
- May not have primed trust relationship with university per se, but care/altruism instead



# Future directions

- When does the surveiller-surveilled relationship become important?
- What processes might be attributing to the donation behaviour?
- How to challenge 'nothing to hide' assumptions?

# Thank you for watching



- Thanks also to Leona Mallace for the data collection.

[a.stuart@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:a.stuart@exeter.ac.uk); [m.levine@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:m.levine@exeter.ac.uk)

@AvelieS, @Profmarklevine

# References

- Bateson, M., Nettle, D., & Roberts, G. (2006). Cues of being watched enhance cooperation in a real-world setting. *Biological Letters*, 2, 412-414.
- Ellis, D., Harper, D., & Tucker, I. (2013). The dynamics of impersonal trust and distrust in surveillance systems. *Sociological Research Online*, 18(3), 8.
- Hjelm, S. I. (2005). Visualising the vague: Invisible computers in contemporary design. *Design Issues*, 21(2), 71-78.
- Nettle, D., Harper, Z., Kidson, A., Stone, R., Penton-Voak, I. S., & Bateson, M. (2013). The watching eyes effect in the Dictator Game: it's not how much you give, it's being seen to give something. *Evolution and Human Behavior*, 35-40. doi: 10.1016/j.evolhumbehav.2012.08.004
- O'Donnell, A. T., Jetten, J., & Ryan, M. K. (2010). Who is watching over you? The role of shared identity in perceptions of surveillance. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 40(1), 135-147. doi: 10.1002/ejsp.615
- Solove, D. J. (2007). 'I've got nothing to hide' and other misunderstandings of privacy. *San Diego L. Rev.*, 44, 745.
- Subašić, E., Reynolds, K. J., Turner, J. C., Veenstra, K. E., & Haslam, S. A. (2011). Leadership, power and the use of surveillance: Implications of shared social identity for leaders' capacity to influence. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 22(1), 170-181. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2010.12.014>
- Tucker, I., Ellis, D., & Harper, D. (2012). Transformative processes of agency: Information technologies and the production of digitally mediated selves. *Culture and Society: Journal of Social Research*, 3(1), 9-24.
- van Rompay, T. J. L., Vonk, D. J., & Fransen, M. L. (2009). The eye of the camera: Effects of security cameras on prosocial behaviour. *Environment and Behaviour*, 41(1), 60-74. doi: 10.1177/0013916507309996