When will people resist surveillance?

First they need to notice it, then identify the source

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The Day We Fight Back

AGAINST MASS SURVEILLANCE
Discourses of privacy

Nothing to Hide

The False Tradeoff Between Privacy and Security

DANIEL J. SOLOVE
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)
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

$N=154$, $M^{\text{age}} = 20.5$, 76% female
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

N= 85, Mage= 20.8, 66% Female
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

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 ($M=.45$), $F = 7.28$, $p = .009$, $\omega^2 = .07$

No main effect for light

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

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References


