

Surveillance \neq
love

Alternatives to Surveillance

Instead of surveillance, experts recommend:

- Having open, honest conversations about online safety before issues arise¹
- Teaching children critical thinking skills to evaluate online content and interactions
- Establishing family values and expectations around technology use
- Using parental controls to set appropriate limits on content and screen time¹
- Building trust through communication rather than covert monitoring

By focusing on education, communication and appropriate boundaries, parents can help keep children safe online without resorting to invasive surveillance tactics that may ultimately backfire.

Surveillance \neq
Safety



by
Heady Writing

I've been thinking about this issue for a while...

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- Dr Lee E. Skallerup

COLLEGE READY WRITING

A blog about education, higher ed, teaching, and trying to re-imagine how we provide education.

Surveillance State

September 16, 2013 · 8:55pm
by Lee Skallerup Bessette

I've studied and taught dystopias. I've made the case to students about the lessons of the various classics of dystopian fiction, including the ever-present Big Brother, to use George Orwell's term for it, that keeps each dystopian society running smoothly: someone is always watching you. We've turned it into somewhat of a joke these days, with reality TV shows called "Big Brother" allowing us to voyeuristically "spy" on houseguests and make them compete for money (Hunger Games, anyone? Or rather, The Running Man?). But we also use surveillance in the name of "security," a euphemism I think Orwell would have both appreciated and abhorred. As he wrote in a letter, "the ends will justify the means," for better or for worse.

I've written before about how I'm trying to teach my children responsible digital citizenship when it comes to their online identity. But I wasn't prepared for a question from my 4-year-old son the other night before bed: "Can we get cameras for the house like the ones we have at preschool? So you can watch me all the time?" I was floored. I tried to explain to him that I respected him and his sister's privacy and their autonomy, that they were allowed, in fact needed, to have lives that were separate from myself and their father. I told him that I trusted him and his sister, and that this was one of the ways that I showed them that trust, as well as respect. This is all very heavy for a 4-year-old, and he didn't quite understand why it was ok to have cameras watching him all the time and preschool and not ok (or even desirable) at home.

well, it wasn't, but you see...

What are we afraid of?

readywriting @readywriting.bsky.social · 17h

It's clearly not healthy for us and in the long run, not healthy for our kids. Like, I get there is little we can control so this gives us some sense of control and security but...does it really?



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Would parents have embraced these technologies during the Cold War when we were all convinced that nuclear bombs would fall from the sky at any moment? Was their existential fear different from ours?



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So like, I want to convince people to stop, to put the cameras and trackers and spyware away and let their kids (and themselves) fucking just *live*.



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What if... this isn't about them but about you?

Even Chat GPT knows
it's harmful!

Summary Beta

9 papers analyzed

These studies suggest that parental surveillance can undermine trust and child autonomy, cause stress and fear, and lead to negative social and emotional outcomes.

Surveillance of children by parents can have several negative consequences:

Trust and Relationship Issues

Spying on children undermines trust and can damage the parent-child relationship ¹. When children discover they are being monitored without their knowledge, they often view it as a violation of trust and privacy ¹. This can lead to resentment and a breakdown in open communication between parents and children.

Developmental Impacts

Constant surveillance can hinder a child's development of independence, self-confidence, and decision-making skills ¹. Children need some privacy and autonomy as they grow to develop these important abilities. Excessive monitoring may teach children to be overly secretive or stealthy rather than learning to make good choices on their own ¹.

False Sense of Security

Relying on surveillance technology can create a false sense of security for parents ¹. While monitoring may reveal certain online activities, it does not actually prevent risky behaviors or teach children how to navigate online dangers. Having open conversations about internet safety is more effective than covert monitoring ¹.

Privacy Concerns

Surveillance infringes on children's privacy rights and can expose sensitive information about them and their friends ¹. As children get older, they need increasing privacy to develop their own identities. Constant monitoring denies them this important developmental space.

It wasn't always like this.

"Come home when the street lights
come on..."

This was an actual T.V.
ad...



What happened?

Seriously ... WHAT HAPPENED



Are we, though?

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I think part of the problem is that parents are centering themselves and their needs in the moment over the long-term impact on the kids mental health and well-being. Which...shocking.

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So like, surveillance parenting is as selfish as some forms of laissez-faire parenting where having a kid doesn't interrupt the parents' lives almost at all.

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And I get that many of us didn't want to recreate the indifference or outright narcissism of some of our parents, but showing love through spying seems counter-productive?

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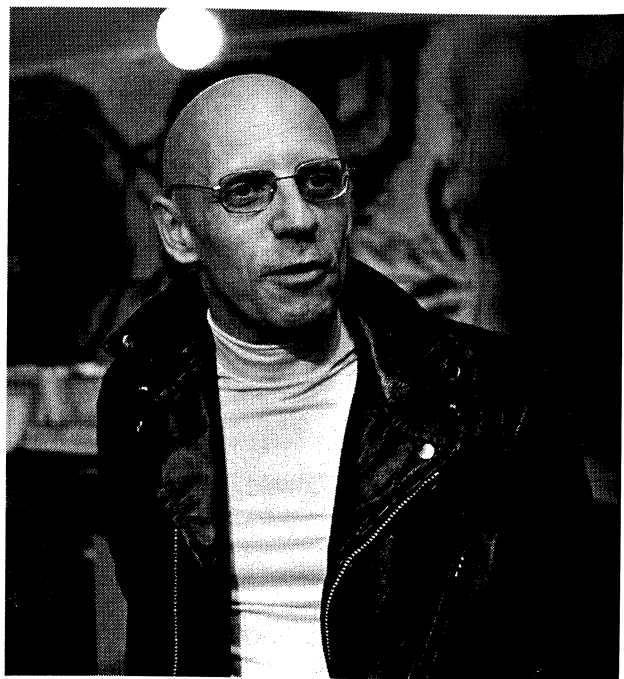


This is "luxury surveillance" +
it. Is. BAD. Go read Chris
Guilland/Hypervisible.

The conveniences promised by Amazon's suite of products may seem divorced from this context: I am here to tell you that they're not. These "smart" devices all fall under the umbrella of what the digital-studies scholar David Golumbia and I call "luxury surveillance" — that is, surveillance that people pay for and whose tracking, monitoring, and quantification features are understood by the user as benefits. These gadgets are analogous to the surveillance technologies deployed in Detroit and many other cities across the country in that they are best understood as mechanisms of control: They gather data, which are then used to affect behavior. Stripped of their gloss, these devices are similar to the ankle monitors and surveillance apps such as SmartLINK that are forced on people on parole or immigrants awaiting hearings. As the author and activist James Kilgore writes, "The ankle monitor — which for almost two decades was simply an analog device that informed authorities if the wearer was at home — has now grown into a sophisticated surveillance tool via the use of GPS capacity, biometric measurements, cameras, and audio recording." The functions Kilgore describes mirror those offered by wearables and other trackers that many people are happy to spend hundreds of dollars on. Gadgets such as Fitbits, Apple Watches, and the Amazon Halo are pitched more and more for their ability to gather data that help you control and modulate your behavior, whether that's tracking your steps, looking at your breathing, or analyzing the tone of your voice. The externally imposed control of the formerly incarcerated becomes the self-imposed control of the individual.

Hidden below all of this is the normalization of surveillance that consistently targets marginalized communities. The difference between a smartwatch and an ankle monitor is, in many ways, a matter of context: Who wears one for purported betterment, and who wears one because they are having state power enacted against them? Looking back to Detroit, surveillance cameras, facial recognition, and microphones are supposedly in place to help residents, although there is scant evidence that these technologies reduce crime. Meanwhile, the widespread adoption of surveillance technologies — even ones that offer supposed benefits — creates an environment where *even more* surveillance is deemed acceptable. After all, there are already cameras and microphones everywhere.

from The
Atlantic.
"The Rise of
Luxury Surveillance"



It starts AT BIRTH.

Read your Foucault!

to induce in the neighbor
a state of conscious and permanent
visibility
fear
paranoia
isolation
distrust

child
///

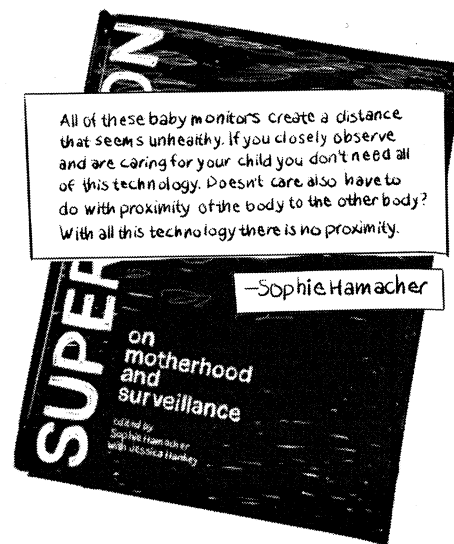
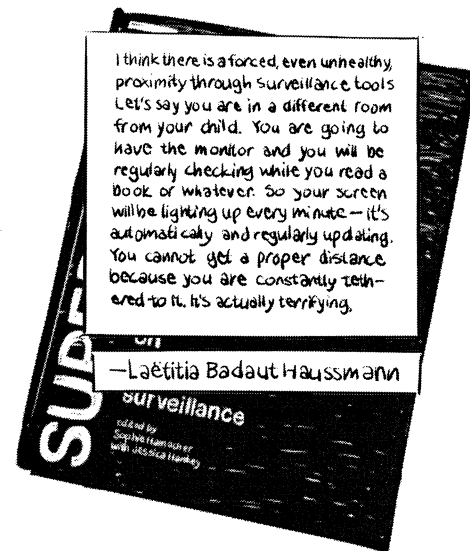
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But also like, the *privilege* it is to be able to afford all the tech and take the time necessary to quantify everything, or to have a nanny at all to be able to spy on them (usually woman, usually

radicalized). (stupid auto-correct)

December 2, 2024 at 5:10 PM



"How to Watch a Baby"
Kristen Radtke
The Verge

Do you know who else insists on constant surveillance?

More Surveillance = More safety: Zombie idea



Zombie idea: No matter how wrong, it will not DIE.

Maybe I've just read too many dystopian narratives where surveillance is a tool to control the population, instill fear, and oppress.