Policing and surveillance

Objectives

- Identify contemporary uses of big data in American policing
- Assess the impact of big data techniques on racial bias in the criminal justice system
- Consider the legal implications of modern data-driven surveillance techniques
- Examine how big data tools can be used to reduce police misconduct and identify underlying sociodemographic drivers of crime

Assigned readings

- Ferguson, A. (2017). *The Rise of Big Data Policing: Surveillance, Race, and the Future of Law Enforcement.* New York: NYU Press.

Optional readings

- Doorbell-camera firm Ring has partnered with 400 police forces, extending surveillance concerns
- How to Not Build a Panopticon
- Open letter calling on elected officials to stop Amazon's doorbell surveillance partnerships with police
- Amazon's Home Surveillance Chief Declared War On "Dirtbag Criminals" As Company Got Closer To Police

Response paper prompt

Amazon Ring can be a valuable new resource for police departments in their efforts to investigate and prevent crime. However the surveillance tool raises important concerns regarding individual privacy and constitutional rights against unwarranted search and seizure. Assess the potential benefits and tradeoffs of this platform. Under what circumstances would the tool be considered ethically sound?