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Surveillance/History

Sylvia Tomasch

In 2005, Kirstie Ball and Kevin Haggerty posed a challenge to make studies of surveillance more multidimensional. This essay sets out to do just that. Its five theses argue that making connections between historical and Surveillance Studies can promote thinking and discovery beyond traditional disciplinary boundaries. This essay illustrates how concepts familiar to surveillance scholars can be brought to bear on times and places beyond the contemporary West. In so doing, Surveillance Studies specialists may be encouraged to temper presentist and technological biases, while early period researchers may be stimulated to consider possibilities raised by studies of surveillance today. By examining intelligence gathering in newly conquered England (11th c.), social sorting by the medieval Church (13th c.), systematic monitoring of a female English mystic (15th c.), security concerns in revolutionary France (18th c.), and cartographic surveillance in occupied Ireland (19th c.), this essay suggests how utopian movements across centuries may employ similar surveillant modalities, particularly to identify and combat "enemies," whether religious or political. In addition, by historicising the word "surveillance" this essay helps to reveal connections between the history of surveillance and surveillance in history.

Secrecy and Surveillance in Medieval England. SPELL: Swiss Papers in English Language and Literature 37. Ed. Annette Kern-Stähler and Nicole Nyffenegger. Tübingen: Narr, 2019. 21-41.

My title, "Surveillance/History," is not meant to suggest that "surveillance" and "history" are synonyms but rather that the two, inevitably, go hand in hand.[1] There is no history that does not contain surveillance; there is no surveillance that occurs outside of history. Yet this intimate connection has not, for the most part, been explored. Past instances, when noticed by surveillance scholars, have too often been dismissed, the implication being that non-technological or non-systematic or pre-capital forms do not really count as surveillance (Weller). What is gained by imposing such limitations is a concentrated focus on surveillance systems today, but what is lost is a longer perspective that can inform contemporary discussions in often surprising ways. And what is true for surveillance scholars is also true for early period researchers: investigating surveillance before the modern age allows us to reconsider crucial elements of, say, the Middle Ages that might otherwise remain unnoticed. To these ends, restrictive conceptualisations of surveillance would seem to be unnecessarily limiting and perhaps even dangerous. In this essay, therefore, I argue that it is time to see surveillance and history together and anew.

Perhaps paradoxically, it may actually be easier to speak about surveillance in the past than about surveillance today, for we are so overwhelmed with surveillance at the present moment that there is no pure place to stand and survey its many modes and operations. I am reminded of Jacques Derrida's "Il n'y a pas de hors-texte": "there is no outside-text" or, more commonly, "there is nothing outside of the text" (158).[2] It is tempting to declare that when it comes to surveillance, too, there is no outside of, or beyond, the systems we ourselves have established and within which we live. Every day, it seems, we learn more about wiretapping, WikiLeaks, Edward Snowden, the NSA, Google algorithms, and Facebook fakes; we are aware of warrantless searches of citizens, enemies, and allies; we are careful about identity security and identity theft; and we accept, even expect, a range of routine surveil-

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[1] I am indebted to Annette Kern-Stähler and Nicole Nyffenegger for the invitation to speak at the 2018 SAMEMES conference on "Surveillance and Secrecy in Medieval and Early Modern England" (University of Bern, 13-14 September 2018). Portions of earlier versions of my talk were presented at meetings at Arizona State University, the Humanities and Technology Association, the New York Meds, Rutgers University, and the Modern Language Association. I am grateful for the helpful feedback received at all of these meetings and particularly from Sealy Gilles.

[2] Unknown to me before I presented this talk, Adam Hammond cited Derrida's phrase in a similar context, noting that for some contemporary novelists "there is no escaping" "the networked present" (206).

lance, from website cookies to airport security. Online searches for "surveillance" (on February 10, 2019) yielded these results:

> Amazon: 50,000 items, including security cameras (indoor, outdoor, wearable, computerised, hidden, car, nanny, etc.), other electronics, and videos, etc., with books alone amounting to more than 7,000 items;
>
> Google: 233,000,000 items;
>
> JSTOR: 148,000 mentions of the term, including 10,180 for "surveillance Middle Ages";
>
> *New York Times*: four articles explicitly using the term "surveillance" in the previous 24 hours, 64 articles in the previous seven days, and 151 in the prior month on a wide range of subjects, including spying on activists and journalists; solving crimes through CCTV; border security; facial recognition software; eavesdropping by home technologies; human rights violations; advances in artificial intelligence; spy satellites; international censorship of social media platforms; cameras as weapons of imperialism; and more.

So the first difficulty in speaking about surveillance is that we are like fish swimming in a surveillance sea: it is hard to perceive, let alone understand, the medium in which we all live and breathe.

Named the "surveillance society" by David Lyon, this is the state in which we all – especially our "data" or "digital doubles" – are continually "data-veilled," "sous-veilled," "counter-veilled," etc. (for definitions of terms used throughout this article, see Marx; *Routledge Handbook*; *Surveillance Studies*). In fact, it is this very ubiquity that has made surveillance, in so many instances, seem natural. Of course, while surveillance *in its technological forms* is not "natural" in the sense that it is manufactured, it is also true that surveillance, in and of itself, most certainly *is* natural, perhaps even necessary, in that it is an essential element of human relations, both in and to society and in and to the natural world. In all times and all places, there has always been and, as long as there are human beings, there always will be surveillance.

This brings us to the second difficulty in speaking about surveillance. If the first difficulty is its ubiquity (the fact that we speak of surveillance while we are under surveillance), the second is its historicity. For me, the challenge is how to speak about surveillance not merely as a concerned citizen of the digitally connected modern world but also as a medievalist. Although scholars of the Middle Ages have considered issues relating to surveillance under a variety of topics, such as secrecy

(Lochrie), spectacle (Enders), violence (Nirenberg, Bale), conflict (Turner), and power (Arnold), few do more than mention the term. (Wojtek Jazierski and Sara Lipton are two exceptions, as are David Rosen and Aaron Santesso for the early modern period). Perhaps this is not utterly surprising, given that there is no one word, in any medieval language I know of, which encompasses the full range of today's "surveillance." In Middle English, for instance, the various meanings of present-day "surveillance" are spread among a wide variety of terms, which include:

> *surveien*: 1. (a) To *examine* the condition of (sth.), inspect; also, oversee (sth.), supervise;
>
> *overwaiten*: 1. To look after (sb.), supervise, watch over;
>
> *wissen*: 1. (a) To instruct (sb., oneself, a person's thoughts), enlighten, advise, admonish; also, guide the actions of (sb.), direct; (b) to give instruction or advice; also, teach (sb. about sth.) [. . .] 4. (a) To exercise leadership or authority over (sb. or sth.), supervise, rule [. . .] (b) to exercise control over (sth.), control, manage;
>
> *weien*: 4. (c) to examine (someone's actions, character, etc.) with a view to correction [. . .] (d) to judge (sb. or sth.), evaluate, pass judgment on;
>
> *wacchen*: 2. (a) To stand guard, keep watch, maintain a defensive surveillance [. . .] 3. (a) To observe visually, look on; ~ after, look closely at (sth.); ~ on (upon), keep a close eye on (sb. or sth.), watch; (b) to keep (sb.) under surveillance, observe. 4. (a) To be vigilant, be on one's guard against danger or harm; (b) to take note of (sth.), pay attention to. (*MED*)

None of these is fully congruent with the modern term, and yet we know that surveillance occurred in many forms throughout the Middle Ages. Inquisitions sought out, identified, and corrected heretics. The canons of the Fourth Lateran Council mandated specific modes of worship, marriage, and dress and prohibited others. In *The Canterbury Tales*, Chaucer's Parson is described as circulating throughout his parish, always ready to invigilate his far-flung flock. *The Rule of Saint Benedict* laid out the goals and conditions of the cloistered life. Venetian façades were decorated with *bocche dei leoni*, carved open-mouthed lion heads ready to receive anonymous denunciations of neighbours, enemies, friends or family. And cathedrals, monasteries, and castles were designed to require or hinder certain kinds of social interactions. We do not need a

single label to see all of these as expressions of the impulse towards surveillance.

So that we might begin to comprehend more fully what it means to speak of and under surveillance *historically*, the rest of this article presents some specific examples of surveillance from the Middle Ages through the nineteenth century. Taken together, the five general theses set out here argue that to consider surveillance we must also consider history. To do this we need to become familiar with the workings of surveillance in history and we need to historicise the study of surveillance itself.

Thesis 1: When we speak of surveillance, we also speak under Surveillance – and that has always been true.

As already noted, being under surveillance is an inevitable consequence of living in the modern world. Whether we call it "digital surveillance," "biometric" or "algorithmic surveillance" or "the electronic superpanopticon," surveillance is everywhere and impossible to avoid. Like Marlowe's Mephistopheles we can declare, "Why this is hell, nor am I out of it" (*Doctor Faustus* 1.3.76). But if we ask whether such ubiquity was also true in earlier periods, the answer has to be a resounding yes. For the issue is neither simply one of technology, i.e., new digitalisations that we invent or submit to, nor just a matter of individual choices or circumstances. At bottom, the issue is this: what does a society require of its members and what measures is it willing to employ to ensure their cooperation? Those very questions are explored in our first example, a non-technologically sophisticated but nonetheless exemplary instance of medieval surveillance, *The Book of Margery Kempe*.

This fifteenth-century, female-authored spiritual autobiography centres on Kempe's struggles with multiple, pervasive systems of surveillance: in her home, in her town, in churches, in the streets, and during her many pilgrimages. In her *Book*, Kempe reports repeated clashes with episcopal authorities, but her difficulties with contemporary surveillance systems go far beyond these alone. Throughout her *Book*, her speech, her comportment, her visions, her dress, her travels, her companions, her marital relations, and even her ability to get her "tretys" ("treatise," l. 1) properly written down are all noted, monitored, investigated, supervised, controlled, contested, praised, permitted, admonished, required or forbidden: the very symptoms of a robust surveillance apparatus. Repeatedly, she is enjoined to keep silent, stay at home, be less emotional, less talkative, less conspicuous, and more obedient, and, above

all, keep her tears and her visions to herself. Yet, following the grace she seeks, she cannot comply, and the resultant "sorwe" ("sorrow," l. 796) permeates every aspect of her life, down to the most mundane.

Kempe's *Book* recounts her struggles to be accepted as a true mystic. Famously recursive and non-linear, it is also a *cri de cœur* against far-reaching and deeply disturbing attempts to police her life and her text during a time and a place when only limited kinds of resistance were available to her. As Lynn Staley notes, reading the records of clerics who interacted with Kempe "leaves an overpowering impression of ecclesiastical surveillance and regulation of what to a twentieth-century American are the details of private life" (173-74). Substitute "electronic" for "ecclesiastical," and fifteenth-century surveillance begins to look very much like surveillance today.

Thesis 2: Surveillance happens in history – but whose history?

Surveillance is very much a matter of perspective. In any era, it is not necessarily negative: hospital patients need monitoring; melting icebergs need measuring; crime needs investigating; children need supervising. As Chaucer writes in the "Physician's Tale,"

> Ye fadres and ye moodres eek also,
> Though ye han children, be it oon or mo,
> Youre is the charge of al hir surveiaunce,
> Whil that they been under youre governaunce. (ll. 93-96)

> You fathers and you mothers also as well,
> If you have children, be it one or more,
> Yours is the responsibility for all their supervision,
> While they are under your governance.

But at what point does supervision or governance become something not quite so "friendly"? For instance, if a teacher reads her students' on-line class posts, is that surveillance? If she proctors their exams, is that surveillance? If a father monitors his ten-year-old's friends on Facebook, is that surveillance or just sensible parenting? If social workers inspect welfare recipients' income or household composition, is that fiscal and social responsibility or an intrusive breach of privacy? In the United States, the gathering of data on gun ownership has been understood as a positive, a neutral, or a negative activity, simply a matter of information or an instance of government-instigated unconstitutional surveillance

(Haughney). Although Christian Fuchs argues that defining surveillance as anything other than negative is "completely useless for a critical theory" and "politically dangerous" (9), I would counter that, without denying issues of power and domination, ignoring the contingent or relational nature of surveillant perspectives and the ways they can shift (individually, collectively, technologically, and historically) can be dangerous too.

In fact, perspectives on surveillance situations are often eerily *Rashomon*-like, with each perspective revealing contrasting "truths." A map, for instance, may present itself as factual, merely a literal surveying, but after the pioneering work of Brian Harley, few scholars of cartography today would argue that maps are anything but "perspectival": they are biased, subjective, culturally constructed, self-interested "lies" (to use Mark Monmonier's word) that surveil the territory they survey. In the Middle Ages, for instance, "the great world maps [. . .] served to remind us of the plan of God" (Mittman, 8) – and of his all-seeing eye. In a very different vein, we can note the proud claim of today's OSi, Ordnance Survey Ireland, a unit of the National Mapping Agency of the Republic of Ireland:

> Between 1829 and 1842 Ordnance Survey Ireland completed the first ever large-scale survey of an entire country. Acclaimed for their accuracy, these maps are regarded by cartographers as amongst the finest ever produced. As the national mapping archive service for Ireland, OSi has captured this and later mapping data in a digitised format. These maps are particularly relevant for genealogy or those with an interest in social history.

Contrast this self-presentation with the very different take on the same social history presented in Brian Friel's 1980 play *Translations*, which dramatises the dislocations and destruction of Irish culture caused by this very same English survey of Ireland. In the play, when one small fictional Donegal community is surveyed in 1833, its places are renamed, its people are displaced, and their educational systems, their customs, and even their pasts are overlaid and lost. When "Bun na hAbhann" becomes "Burnfoot" (Act II) and "Baile Beag" becomes "Ballybeg" (Act III), such renaming is a synecdoche for an Ireland simultaneously colonised, anglicised, and de-gaelicised. In other words, it is thoroughly reshaped and redefined through acts of surveillance.

Similarly, the document recording the results of the *Domesday Survey* of 1086 also has various names, very much dependent upon perspectives. The organisation for the survey as well as its level of detail were remarkable: seven groups of commissioners, every landholder, panels of

jurors in every town, all concerned with the answers to the same set of questions, including the names of manors, ownership under kings, the size, the taxes, the number of plough teams, the number of freemen, villeins, and slaves, the amount of woodland, etc. ("Survey"). The very names for the document itself indicate the variety of views about it. As Stephen Baxter writes,

> During the lifetimes of William the Conqueror and his sons, royal officials described it using more politically correct language. They called it a "descriptio (survey) of all England," the "king's book," the "book of the Exchequer," and so on. But writing in the late 1170s, Richard FitzNigel [. . .] explained that it was popularly known by a very different name: "The natives (i.e., Englishmen) call this book Domesdei that is, the day of judgment."

Indeed, the native perspective on the Normans' achievement was less than celebratory, as set out in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* ("The Domesday Book, 1086"):

> The king [. . .] sent his men all over England into every shire to ascertain how many hundreds of "hides" of land there were in each shire. He also had it recorded how much [. . .] each man who was a landholder here in England had in land or live-stock, and how much money it was worth. So very thoroughly did he have the inquiry carried out that there was not a single "hide," not one virgate of land, not even – it is shameful to record it, but it did not seem shameful for him [William] to do – not even one ox, nor one cow, nor one pig which escaped notice in his survey.

In modern terms, the Domesday survey was a data-collecting technology *par excellence*, centuries before the term "data" entered English and when the technology in question was wax tablet and stylus or parchment and quill pen. As this *Chronicle* entry shows, even in the eleventh century it was recognised that while in the *abstract* information (or data) may be innocent, in *practice* it can be deployed with a purpose. In Liam Thompson's phrase, the *Domesdei* survey was England's "first great act of surveillance."

Thesis 3: Surveillance has a history of its own.

We noted that "surveillance" was not a word in the English Middle Ages; perhaps even more importantly, it was not even a word in the

context with which it is most closely associated, Jeremy Bentham's Panopticon Letters of 1797. Although the word "surveillance" is often used to describe the form and function of Bentham's proposed penitentiary plan, Bentham himself did not use that word, nor could he have, as the first attested use of the *English* word "surveillance" in the sense we have been discussing *postdates* Bentham's text by five years,[3] as shown in this Google ngram (this and the subsequent ngram are made possible by Michel et al.):

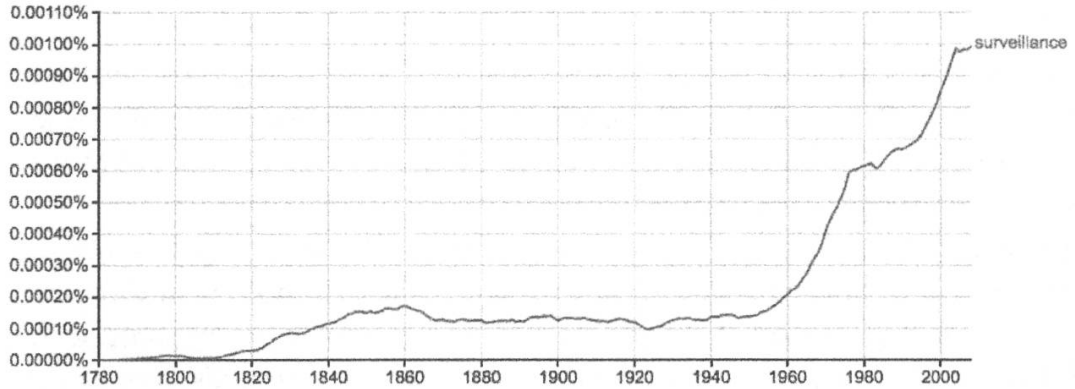

Figure 1. "surveillance" in English, 1780-2008

Furthermore, it even seems unlikely that Bentham would have used the word had he known it. For when the word arrived in English in 1802, it had connotations quite other than the hyper-rational, economical, moral, and penitential impetuses underlying his "Inspection House":

> Morals reformed – health preserved – industry invigorated – instruction diffused – public burthens lightened – Economy seated, as it were, upon a rock – the gordian [sic] knot of the Poor-Laws are not cut, but untied – all by a simple idea in Architecture! (*Panopticon Writings* XXI)

For many, the primary source of information about Bentham's panopticon is still Michel Foucault's 1975 *Surveiller et punir*, which title is usually translated as *Discipline and Punish*. This book is generally acknowledged as the foundational text of the academic field of Surveillance

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[3] *OED*: 1799: "*Monthly Rev.* 30 578 Vast *depôts* of [. . .] property [. . .] in the rooms belonging to the office of the committee of *Surveillance*." 1802: "J. G. Lemaistre *Rough Sketch Mod. Paris* xxix. 236 They are kept under the constant 'surveillance of the police'. [*Note Surveillance*, Watch, or special care]." In other words, while the 1799 instance simply refers to the French committee of that name (more on this below), the 1802 instance speaks of actions by, or on, the part of the police.

Studies (see *Foucault and Panopticism Revisited*, the third issue of the journal *Surveillance and Society*). Recently, Stuart Elden has argued that "Survey and Punish" would be a better translation than "Discipline and Punish," asserting that

> Survey has a sense of both to oversee, and to catalogue. The whole point is that discipline is made up of two elements – surveillance, of which the examination is a crucial element, and punishment. The danger of the current title is that it makes it look like discipline and punishment are discrete, when really one is contained within the other. (139)

But if we are going to change "discipline" to "survey," why not go the further step to "surveill," which certainly captures the intersection of the two elements? To know the answer to that, we need to look more closely at the word "surveillance" itself.

In many attempts to define or explain surveillance, it has become a kind of trope in Surveillance Studies to begin with etymology, a dictionary entry on "surveillance" being frequently quoted (Minsky, Kurzweil and Mann; R. Clarke). "Surveillance," we are told, derives from the French *surveiller*, with the parts *sur-* "above, over" and *-veiller* (from the Latin *vigilare*) "to watch" (*Merriam-Webster*) – as if, therefore, the meaning of the word, let alone the concept, let alone the practice, were now settled. But if we acknowledge that surveillance itself has a history, one important element of that history is the word, and *that* history has not yet been taken into account. In its original incarnation, surveillance had as its goal something very different from Elden's "survey" or Foucault's "discipline" or Bentham's "inspection." Arising in the later stages of the French Revolution, the original goal of surveillance was, explicitly, *terror*.

Figure 2. "surveillance" in French, 1780-2008

In March of 1793, the French National Convention voted to create "special surveillance committees" charged with the supervision first of foreigners and then of all citizens when it became clear that limited scrutiny was not sufficient (Tackett 269). By the end of the year, more comprehensive committees were thought necessary, precisely in order to implement a policy of terror. As Timothy Tackett explains:

> In the weeks after September 5, 1793, the executive Committee of Public Safety had fully embraced the concept of making "terror the order of the day." In this it worked in close partnership with the Committee of General Security, the central authority overseeing arrests and repression [. . .] The two great Committees would also supervise a network of surveillance committees and revolutionary tribunals, conceived to root out hidden conspiracy and punish those who had openly rebelled against the Republic. (324-35)

Under the revolutionary regime, all elements of life were subject to "terrorisation": women were required to wear the tricolour insignia of the Republic; the Law of the General Maximum instituted wage and price controls; the calendar was radically revised and rationalised; and speech and publication were regulated to eradicate "calumniators" (Walton *passim*). Maximilien Robespierre, leader of the Committee of Public Safety before falling victim to the Terror he himself had instigated, declared that virtue and terror are necessarily inseparable:

> If the spring of popular government in time of peace is virtue, the springs of popular government in revolution are at once *virtue and terror:* virtue, without which terror is fatal; terror, without which virtue is powerless. Terror is nothing other than justice, prompt, severe, inflexible; it is therefore an emanation of virtue [. . .]

So rather than "discipline and punish" or "survey and punish," perhaps the best translation of "surveiller et punir" might be "virtue and terror." Not literally of course, but not merely metaphorically either. For Robespierre, and many who came before and after, this dyad is at the very heart of surveillance.

While we can all too easily call to mind modern and postmodern instances where virtue and terror are linked in systems of surveillance, examples from the premodern world also abound – and can be conceptualised using terms from today's Surveillance Studies. Let us consider just two common notions, "dataveillance" and "bioveillance" (a variation of "somatic surveillance"). Drawing on the work of Roger

Clarke and of Torin Monahan and Tyler Wall, I use "dataveillance" and "bioveillance" to mean, respectively, surveillance based primarily upon information garnered from a variety of texts (written, visual, situational, etc.) and surveillance based primarily on bodies, somatic processes, and associated elements, like clothing.

To understand these concepts in a medieval context, let us consider the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215, an ecclesiastical assembly convoked by Pope Innocent III in order to reform the church, set out fundamental doctrine (e.g., transubstantiation), and institute a new crusade. The organisers of a 2015 octocentenary conference state that Lateran IV's 70 decrees or "canons" covered

> topics as diverse as heresy, Jewish-Christian relations, pastoral care and Trinitarian theology as well as ecclesiastical governance. Monks and secular clergy were to be reformed, the nascent mendicant orders welcomed to the Church and diocesan bishops instructed to implement far-reaching conciliar decisions across Christendom. (P. Clarke et al.)

In other words, even though it does not use the term, Lateran IV mandated far-reaching surveillance measures, both inside and outside of the Church, targeting priests, monks, married couples, and non-Christians, among others.

Especially important for thinking about medieval data- and bioveillance are two particular decrees of Lateran IV, Canons 21 and 68. Canon 21 requires annual auricular confession:

> All the faithful of both sexes shall after they have reached the age of discretion faithfully confess all their sins at least once a year to their own (parish) priest and perform to the best of their ability the penance imposed, receiving reverently at least at Easter the sacrament of the Eucharist [. . .]. (*Canons*)

The process of confession is the elicitation of information about the state of one's soul, information that in many cases is available only to the confessant (and, presumably, God). This is the deepest sort of self-inspection – to use Bentham's term, a kind of "self-panopticon." In contrast, Canon 68 requires something very different, a distinction of peoples, specifically Christians and Muslims or Jews:

> In some provinces a difference in dress distinguishes the Jews or Saracens from the Christians, but in certain others such confusion has grown up that they cannot be distinguished by any difference [. . .] Therefore [. . .] we decree that such Jews and Saracens of both sexes in every Christian province

> and at all times shall be marked off in the eyes of the public from other peoples through the character of their dress. (*Canons*)

The bioveillant concerns of bodies and their coverings are precisely what Canon 68 was meant to address. The difference between these two canons is stark, but they share a will to surveill, through dataveillance in the first instance and bioveillance in the second.

While the line between data- and bioveillance is frequently not hard and fast (information by and about humans often deriving from their corporeality), in Lateran IV determining the state of the soul is manifestly a matter of dataveillance. Collecting information in confession is the first step in the penitential process that makes the other two steps, contrition and satisfaction, possible – and many scholars have commented on the post-1215 growth of the "confession industry" (Boyle; Biller and Minnis; Woods and Copeland). Many reformist groups in the Middle Ages resisted confession as a non-scripturally based usurpation of clerical power. But perhaps their resistance can also be understood as a refusal to participate in the collection and classification of information on the part of the beings in whom that information inheres: in other words, as a resistance to dataveillance.

In contrast, there was little resistance to the strictures of Canon 68, at least on the part of Christians. Canon 68 mandates the outward differentiation of non-Christians precisely because otherwise one cannot tell them apart – and yet the distinction was thought to be "essential" in both senses of the word: "necessary" and "inborn." The question naturally arises as to how any confusion could exist, since such fundamental distinctions ought, always, to be obvious already. To avoid that question altogether, Lateran IV proclaims that somatic difference must be made both recognisable and universal in order to be seen by everyone in every time and every place. Yellow badges and pointed hats (traditional signs of the Jewish Other from the Middle Ages onward) are bioveillant elements of a very visible and powerful order. And in this way, the *externalised* surveillance of Canon 68 complements the *internalised* surveillance of Canon 21.

In just these two canons, Lateran IV provides the basis for a successful surveillance regime, and, along with the strictures of its other canons, articulates surveillance strategies strikingly similar to those set out in the Reign of Terror more than five centuries later. Sartorial regulation, control of actions, correction through the body, calendrical impositions, prohibition of speech, punishment of adversaries, injunction against error, justification by virtue, and centralisation of power: all of these make

possible the efficient use of terror, whether in the thirteenth or the eighteenth or the twenty-first century.

Thesis 4: Surveillance systems need and produce their own enemies.

It may not be the case that surveillance systems *always* invent their enemies, but often they do, with such inventions stemming from virtuous impulses. Both Lateran IV and the French Revolution had at their cores deeply utopian visions; both believed in the necessity of conformity in order to fulfil those visions; and both developed surprisingly similar tools to achieve and enforce their ends.

For Robespierre, "all citizens in the republic are the republicans"; all others, called "conspirators," "are strangers or rather enemies." Among the perceived enemies were the peasants, the nobles, the royalists, the Catholics, the clergy, the army, the *sans-culottes*, and of course all the foreign states on which the Revolution had declared war; as well as the many revolutionary factions, including the Feuillants, the Jacobins, the Chouans, the Vendéens, the Girondins, the Enragés, the Hébertists, the Dantonists, and more. This multiplication of enemies does not mean that surveillance with the goal of terror failed; on the contrary, it means terror did its job all too well. As antagonists were identified, waves of executions followed, but even this was not enough. The Terror lasted through the ninth of Thermidor (July 27, 1794), when Robespierre himself and his closest followers were condemned in what has been called the "Thermidorian Reaction"; the next day they were guillotined. Five years later, in 1799, Napoleon Bonaparte saw his opportunity and took it: all these factions gone, all that surveillance for naught. Eight years later, in 1802 (and subsequent to the publication of Bentham's *Panopticon Writings*), the word "surveillance" appeared in English with its modern meaning.

In surprisingly parallel ways, Lateran IV also failed to fulfil its utopian vision, with Innocent III's language in convening the council eerily presaging Robespierre's: "To eradicate vices and plant virtues, to correct faults and reform morals, to remove heresies and strengthen faith, to settle discords and establish peace, to get rid of oppressors and foster liberty" (qtd in Tanner 113). The language is strikingly similar, as is the failure to achieve the utopian ideal. After Lateran IV, as during the French Revolution, pressures from without exacerbated internal tensions; competing authorities vied for power; charismatic leaders led oppositional movements; and economic, religious, and territorial issues

came into play. In the later Middle Ages, popular religious movements led to violent suppression, yet heresies not only persisted but in fact proliferated: Cathars, Free Spirits, Fraticelli, Waldensians, Hussites, Lollards, and many more sects to come, undreamt of in the early thirteenth century. In the end, then, the great irony of surveillance is that while it may sometime create its own enemies, it does not always anticipate the one just over the horizon, the one that changes the terms of conflict entirely, whether that be the Empire or the Reformation.

Thesis 5: Surveillance studies itself must historicise – and early period scholars must attend to surveillance studies.

The presentist tendencies and technological biases of the academic discipline of Surveillance Studies have certain consequences, not only for considerations of surveillance in earlier times but also (though this is beyond the scope of this essay) for surveillance in places other than the West. Unfortunately, such attention is, for the most part, still lacking. With few exceptions, even the premier journal in the field, *Surveillance and Society*, publishes few articles addressing non-contemporary or non-Western surveillance (although a 2017 issue on "Surveillance and the Global Turn to Authoritarianism" may betoken a broadening of geographical focus). Recent work on "surveillance capitalism" (Zuboff) and the explosion of terminology in Surveillance Studies can help us better understand current ramifications of "big data," "data collection," "data storage," "data mining," and "data colonisation," even as we distinguish "sousveillance" from "coveillance," "panoptic" from "synoptic," "disciplinary society" from "society of control," and so on. But Kirstie Ball and Kevin Haggerty's 2005 challenge still resonates today:

> Merely labelling different sociotechnical relationships as "surveillance" does little to enlighten us as to the dynamics of the control, resistance, emergence and development of surveillance practices. Similarly it also does little to illustrate how surveillance is symptomatic of and a precursor to social and spatial configurations and identity formation (among other things). This would appear to be common sense, yet multi-dimensional notions of surveillance are thin on the ground. (133)

What was true then is unfortunately too often still true today – and for early period researchers as well. While this volume shows that medievalists and early modernists are beginning to take historical surveillance

seriously, in general few are familiar with the discipline of Surveillance Studies. Yet the benefits for medievalists or early modernists or other early period scholars of considering contemporary surveillance analyses and for Surveillance Studies scholars of considering historical instances are many, including the possibility of reconceptualising our primary academic disciplines. To dismiss older instances as "not really surveillance" would seem to unnecessarily narrow the field. When expanding temporal and geographical horizons is possible, why limit scrutiny of surveillance to the here and now? This too would appear to be common sense.

In this article, therefore, I have tried do my part to "thicken" the study of surveillance in a "multi-dimensional" fashion by taking into account both surveillance in history and the history of surveillance. To recognise that surveillance was a complex of ideas and actions in the English Middle Ages or that the Fourth Lateran Council might be understood as a "surveillant assemblage" or that surveillance was intimately connected to both virtue and terror at its modern origin does not merely entail an appreciation of curious relics of the past. Rather, it is to acknowledge that history and surveillance are inextricably interlinked and that attending to *both* is essential for our own speaking of and speaking under surveillance today.

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