

OPEN CALL FOR PARTICIPATION

Workshop on Surveillance & Empowerment

March 20-22, 2009; Vanderbilt University; Nashville, Tennessee, USA

This workshop will bring together transdisciplinary and international scholars studying the social implications of contemporary surveillance with a particular interest in the complexities of empowerment. In the surveillance studies literature, there have been significant contributions on social sorting, digital discrimination, privacy invasion, racial profiling, sexual harassment, and other mechanisms of unequal treatment. In contradistinction, this workshop seeks to explore the potential of surveillance for individual autonomy and dignity, fairness and due process, community cooperation and empowerment, and social equality. Key to this inquiry will be questioning the extent to which surveillance can be designed, employed, and regulated to contribute to democratic practices and/or the social good.

The very framing of the workshop in terms of “surveillance and empowerment” begs the question of empowerment for whom and for what purposes. Thus, we seek to provoke a broad discussion about the ways in which surveillance practices may unfairly embody advantages for some groups over others and to explore alternatives. To this end, the workshop organizers seek to include as many different voices as possible, from as many different countries as possible.

Given the diversity of scholarly interest in and approaches to surveillance, the workshop will be structured around discussion themes that individuals from any disciplinary background can participate in. Possible research areas might include (but aren't limited to):

- Surveillance in post-authoritarian societies – toward restrictions and counters to the unleashed surveillance of former regimes.
- Ubiquitous computing environments that provide care for the dependent and elderly.
- Social networking tools employed by social movements.
- Surveillance of environmental toxins and waste management.
- Monitoring of energy consumption at any level.
- Surveillance of corporations, government agencies, or political parties by watchdog groups.
- Policies for ensuring privacy, accountability, and transparency with video or other surveillance systems.

The findings of the workshops will be disseminated by means of a special issue of a journal, such as *Surveillance & Society* or *Theoretical Criminology*, or as an edited book.

Travel stipends, food, and lodging will be provided for all participants. Participants will be chosen to provide a balanced representation of both junior and senior scholars, disciplinary training, and international perspectives. **Graduate students and participants from outside the U.S. are especially encouraged to apply.**

Potential participants should submit:

1. A 500-750 word abstract that discusses how your current and/or future research fits with the proposed workshop theme of surveillance and empowerment, and
2. A two-page curriculum vitae or resume, listing your relevant publications and experience.

Deadline: January 5, 2009

Submit materials to: workshop@publicsurveillance.com

Full papers will not be required in advance of the workshop. Article submissions for the journal will be requested in the months following the workshop (at a date yet to be determined). Should we decide to pursue an edited book as an outcome of this workshop, we will ask participants to submit titles, abstracts, and brief biographies.

We will select and notify participants by January 20, 2009. For more information, please contact Torin Monahan (torin.monahan@vanderbilt.edu) or visit www.publicsurveillance.com/workshop.html.

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The Workshop Committee
(Torin Monahan, Gary T. Marx, Simon A. Cole, Jill A. Fisher)