Book Reviews/Comptes rendus

DAVID LYON (Ed) Theorizing Surveillance: The Panopticon and Beyond. Portland, OR: Willan Publishing, 2006, xiii + 336 p., index.

Within the field of surveillance studies, Michel Foucault's panopticon metaphor has prevailed as a conceptual exemplar for understanding modern forms of social regulation. Theorizing Surveillance: The Panopticon and Beyond draws critically upon the question of its relevance in a post-panoptic world. Readers are thus compelled to contemplate the possibility that the panopticon might have run its course as a useful explanatory frame, particularly in light of the complex conditions of contemporary surveillance practices. Indeed, David Lyon's introductory chapter conveys a tone of ambivalence in the field around this question, noting that while the panopticon is a "rich and multifaceted concept," surveillance theorists might need to move beyond its conceptual boundaries in order to make space for new ways of thinking around the manifold functions and implications of surveillance mechanisms (4). Scholars in the field are provided here with a useful entry point for debate around this question.

What follows is a solid and instructive collection that draws upon several core themes in surveillance studies (e.g., power, normativity, resistance, subjectivity, and visibility, to name a few). It does so through alternative theoretical frameworks or, in some cases, with considerably nuanced Foucauldian interpretations of key problematics in the field. Thus, while the aim of the volume is to transcend the confines of panoptic analyses of surveillance, Foucault still finds a presence here. Mark Cole, for example, employs Foucault's "technologies of the self" to demonstrate the ways in which reflective and confessional practices are deeply embedded in programs of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) among health care professionals in the UK. William Bogard applies insights from Foucault, Deleuze and Guattari to explore lines of resistance entrenched in the very structures of surveillance assemblages themselves.

One of the strengths of this collection is that several essays theorize the function and logic of surveillance beyond limited depictions of its dystopian or deterministic dimensions. This is a critically important epistemological way forward in the field, given that the surveillance literature has tended towards a somewhat disproportionate focus on the negative properties of surveillance, often at the expense of a deeper engagement with questions of resistance and agency. In an attempt to re-think conventional assumptions of electronic surveillance schemes, Sean

Hier, Kevin Walby and Josh Greenberg take theoretical guidance from sociologies of risk and theories of moral governance to articulate how modes of resistance and counter discourses can emerge in response to CCTV monitoring programs. Kirstie Ball draws deeply upon both feminist and post-structuralist theories of the body in contemplating the ways in which resistance to body surveillance might be politicized, particularly in light of increasing uses of biometric surveillance schemes. Ball's essay is an especially strong one in this collection, insofar as she theorizes body surveillance with considerable depth and detail, juxtaposing her analysis with important questions of embodied resistance which have thus far been under-explored in the literature. Also exceptional is Gary Genosko and Scott Thompson's theoretically rich discussion, grounded in tense theory, of modes of social sorting in recent, pre-computerized history.

The essays that attend to surveillance practices from a "post-panoptic" standpoint do well in extending our thinking beyond the confines of the panoptic paradigm. Didier Bigo proposes the concept of the "ban-opticon" to describe what he calls the "governmentality of unease" that underlies, and renders routine, the exclusionary practices of profiling and containment (47). Maria Los draws upon Hannah Arendt to contemplate the extent to which some late modern forms of surveillance are becoming increasingly totalitarian in character, and delineates the parallels between "the files" of totalitarian regimes of the last century and contemporary "data doubles."

One chapter in particular is noteworthy in its rigorous attention to the post-panoptic theoretical quest of this collection, and warrants brief elaboration here. Kevin Haggerty's discussion springs from a considerable disquiet concerning the overwhelming presence of the panopticon model in surveillance studies. He is unequivocal in declaring the critical need for a remedial shift in the field. Pronouncing the panopticon outmoded, reified and "over-extended" as a conceptual tool, Haggerty delineates the ways in which it is largely irreconcilable with the complex dynamics of current surveillance practices (23). Readers are obliged, therefore, to consider the extent to which contemporary surveillance, with its multiplicity of agendas, functions and effects, actually defies a theoretical "successor" to the panopticon model. Haggerty concludes, however, with the proposal that new lines of inquiry in surveillance studies might be forged by embracing modified approaches to insights derived from studies in governance and governmentality. Indeed, the collection might have benefited by the inclusion of a response piece to Haggerty's emphatic discussion, if only to open the lines of debate around several important concerns being raised in this chapter.

While the collection overall has much to contribute to the surveillance theory, some essays demonstrate less theoretical muscularity than others. Lynsey Dubbeld's case study of cardiac telemonitoring is useful for scholars interested in empirical analyses of surveillance practices in healthcare contexts. Far too little of the discussion, however, devotes itself to elaborating upon the central claim that theories drawn from Science and

Technology Studies (STS) might serve to compensate for the analytical shortcomings in surveillance studies. Dubbeld sets forth a number of general, though somewhat diluted, concepts in STS (co-construction, multiple user perspective) but doesn't develop these concepts in greater depth. This would have been useful if only to strengthen the assertion that current surveillance theories fall short in adequately addressing the realities of telemedicine practices. Hille Koskela's chapter discusses the potential of webcams to "support active agency" (175) and challenges traditional thinking around power, subjectivity and control. Here Koskela argues for the disruptive, subversive, and empowering potential of webcams, though the discussion might have been enhanced by a more fulsome treatment of "agency" as a decidedly complex and contested concept, particularly in the context of surveillance.

As a whole, this book demonstrates a strong multi-disciplinary appeal. Accordingly, scholars from a number of fields (including Labour Studies, Criminology, Critical Security Studies and the Sociology of Health) will find relevant and useful insights here. The book might have been enhanced, however, by a more rigorous engagement with theoretical contributions drawn from Science and Technology Studies. In particular, discussions around electronic surveillance schemes, the surveillance assemblage, and forms of surveillance that encroach on the body would have been enriched by insights derived from, for example, Actor Network Theory and the Social Construction of Technology, two theoretical frameworks that are finding an increasing relevance in surveillance studies. As previously noted, themes in STS are touched upon, but in limited depth.

Finally, while the collection covers a great deal of thematic ground, only one chapter takes up, in significant depth, the enduring problem of surveillance and racial profiling. Further, there is a modest focus in this collection on the critical question of how the experience of surveillance is often predicated on citizenship. As such, the book might have been enhanced by the inclusion of a section devoted entirely to these themes. Overall, however, Theorizing Surveillance makes an indispensable contribution to the fields of surveillance studies and social regulation as a whole.

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