Impact of social media on surveillance culture

Evaluating the Impact of Online Social Networking on Surveillance Culture

Online networking sites such as YouTube, Twitter, Facebook or Instagram are being used immensely as of late. Their prevalence gives new chances for information accumulation by the state and privately owned businesses, which calls for an increase in primary and hypothetical research on web-based networking media surveillance. The terms online networking and social media were created to portray the correspondence, group, and cooperative characteristics of websites, such as Blogger, social network websites such as Facebook and video facilitating stages such as YouTube. Regardless of the fact that there has been a considerable measure of build up about these terms, principally centred around how they provide platforms for new business and promoting opportunities on the web, there are societal impacts of these innovations that should be researched (Ellis et al, 2013). This essay will analyse current theory regarding the rising impact of social media onsurveillance cultureand discuss the frighteningly accurate foretelling's of theorists whose work pre dates the social media revolution. Ultimately, displaying the argument that social media has given surveillanceculture a platformto manifest and grow and that this ultimately changes the behaviour of the affected generations.

Numerouscurrent meanings of surveillance define a process of " data accumulation andhandling, and then again procedures of forming practices (controlling, overseeing, administering, managing, affecting or directing practices)" (Fuchs2011, p. 41). Societalsurveillance includes the accumulation, stockpiling, preparing, and evaluationof information about people or groups of people by a performing artist topropel the latter's

objectives. Foucault (1997) recognises that knowledge ispower and in order to gain and maintain power institutions use surveillance. Through methods such as data collecting, governments can turn something ascomplex as human behaviour into chunks of data. Monitoring people throughnumbers in order to maintain social order. However, throughout this essaysurveillance culture will be defined through theorists such as Deleuze (1992)and Haggerty & Ericson (2000) because in their respective researches thereis an understanding that surveillance is not just limited to institutions asFoucault (1997) suggests. In fact, surveillance is more networked now; astechnology and globalisation has advanced people have become freer moving andhave bigger networks. This has caused a power shift in surveillance that meansthat people are now more than ever able to monitor their peers' behaviours. This is a culture of surveillance because it has grown to such a large scalethat people have become reliant on it, particularly in the example of onlinesocial network because now huge chucks of our personal and social life areonline and to step out of this leaves us ostracised.

Online networkingcan be utilised as a successful apparatus for socialisation. Numerousindividuals want to use new types of online networking sites keeping in mindthe end goal to be included in this new format of community. It is essential tounderstand the criticalness of the connection between organisations and the public. Extraordinary consideration ought to be paid to the way technology includespeople in surveillance culture because their impression of the public is as an initialform of surveillance (Dinev et al, 2008). Subsequently, social media allows foreffortless control of the participants. As recent research suggests, the features of onlinenetworking

can influence young people. Anderson (2009) highlights the vastamount of data that becomes available to researchers through the new field ofsocial media, particularly in relation to violence, and how this is used toinform policy making. This clearly indicates the effect social media has had onsurveillance culture in what could be seen as both a positive and negativemanner. To expand, it could be thought that a new platform in which data can beretrieved without knowledge of the participants often makes for richer and morereliable findings, which could be a possible benefit to policy making. However, this essay will show that because this data is often taken from youths andutilised by those in power (Anderson, 2009), it means that the youngergeneration have no way of informing policy that directly affects them and theirlifestyles. With this in mind, social media clearly provides a space forsurveillance culture to overlook a whole generation and calls for more debatein issues such as protection and privacy.

The issue ofsurveillance and privacy in the online networking world is talked broadly aboutin scientific studies. Teenagers may view surveillance on social networkingboth in a positive and negative attitude (Stuart and Levine, 2017). However, isimperative to recognise that surveillance online is not merely two-fold, asadvertising for afore mentioned sites incorrectly suggest, interacting onlineis not just you being surveilled by your networked connections and vice versa. It is on the other hand, a method for large-scale organisations to surveil thepublic. It is notable that following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001; government surveillance has expanded particularly in the United States. Thesemeasures incorporate an enthusiasm

for social networking online (Marks, 2006). Government enthusiasm for online networking is straightforward, to profilepossible offenders and terrorists, it is essential to consolidate an extensivevariety of data about individuals. This data incorporates social relations, sharedexercises, friend networks, and individual information about politicalperspectives, religious convictions, sexual preferences, and inclinationsconcerning regular day-to-day routines. Therefore, social media has clearlyfuelled surveillance culture by providing an opportunity for data to be easilyand unknowingly collected and manipulated accordingly.

The consequences for actions on social media, particularly in younger people are not always understood. For instance, thetransferring of their private data to social media websites and the outcomesmight be adverse. In a classroom study, Barnes (2006) highlighted thatattitudes towards social media in youths show that they do not feel aconnection between what they post online and real world consequences and viewonline networking as a separate diversion from the real world. Barnes (2006)demonstrates the connection between web-based social networking and youths in away, which highlights the negative impacts of online networking. As well asthis, this study highlights the lack of education around surveillance cultureon social media that in turn, gives it a bigger platform to go unnoticed; ifpeople do not expect their data to be misused they are unlikely to refrain fromgiving it up.

Andrejevec (2002) indicates the way that thesurveillance issues concerning online networking usage cannot be taken as an absenceof privacy for the users because the data is already available to be used bythe organisations that do. However, Barnes (2006) highlights that surveillanceculture is

infringing on privacy because the lack of education around theprivacy rights of these sights allow these organisations some degree ofautonomy. Therefore, highlighting the lack of control placed on surveillanceculture and the lack of control the public having from being utilised by it.

Social media networking can carry a hint ofprivate correspondence with it because of its situational and ordinarycharacter, yet intervened public platforms are not private. This situation is afocal piece of the discourse concerning surveillance and it is particularlyevident regarding accessible data on social media. Most network websites requestthat their clients give personal details; this data is requested during socialnetwork correspondence stages. As such, the required data to profile individualsis not something “ concealed that must be revealed or recovered utilising fancyequipment, human operators and such” (Heidegger 1977, p. 6). Individuals themselves are making this datapublic, free for everyone to access and are therefore fuelling surveillanceculture.

Online socialcommunication can have genuine adverse outcomes and has, in this way, offeredan open door for various worries from moral frenzies to paranoid fears (Greenop, 2007). This has prompted talks of security and education; youths clearly shouldbe given training on implicit rules concerning online exercises to figure outhow to secure their selves. Without a doubt, numerous threats prowl in the worldof social networking, incorporating possible security intrusion, misuse ofequity given false data and, not slightest, the threat of predators who feelthe need to hurt youngsters. These threats are genuine and ought to be dealtwith. But, critics

assert that the training and the security discourse isadditionally an ethical frenzy (Fisher and Lyytinen, 2016).

Greenop's (2007)mention of paranoia highlights how surveillance culture, particularly since thesocial media age is changing what it means to be human. Foucault highlightsthat the idea of what it means to be human is a recent term and is one that ischanging drastically, it is worth noting that Foucault was not writing at atime where social media had reached its peak but the growth in atechnology-dependant culture was already apparent. A rising dependence on technology is directlylink with mental health issues and the rise of a more neurotic population. Twenge and Campbell (2009) argue that culture in American culture has shiftedfrom focusing on community to money and the results mean that a higher numberof younger people are likely to experience poor mental health. Furedi (2006)claims that a neurotic population is desired by the state and that fear levelsare being deliberately raised in order to create anxiousness, which in turn, makespeople easier to control. To expand, dependence on social media and technologyas a whole could arguably be making the population more complacent insurveillance. Terms such as " you have nothing to fear, if you have nothing tohide" are often used as a way of normalising mass surveillance and a highlytechnologically dependant community will be more neurotic and anxious andtherefore easier to surveil.

Haggerty and Ericson (2000) emphasise that surveillance culture is dependant on the rise of networked communities, with so many people on social media it becomes easy for everyone to surveil each other and therefore surveillance is not only a tool of large scale institutions but

common practice for everyone. There are contending policy, media, and social talks stating that women ought to keep up their privacy within their online presence, yet all the while should openly exhibit themselves online in a specific, gendered way; either as mindful or as popular (Ball et al, 2009). In the meantime, “ as self- showing as private and capable, it is normal for females to increase social capital from freely self-displaying as socially acknowledged, which includes uploading photographs and having numerous online contacts – immediately contrary to the desires of self- restriction and privacy” (Ball et al 2009, p. 356). These contradictory desires are authorised by social surveillance, where females who do not give in to the societal pressure receive negative judgment or even provocation from other users on social media (Bailey, 2013). It is therefore clear that social media as a way of enforcing behavioural norms has impacted surveillance culture.

Taking intoconsideration the discourse with regards to online interpersonal networking, aconventional and rather contrary origination of surveillance is renderedobsolete. If surveillance is related to the intrusion of one’s privacy and is predominatelya method of discipline (Foucault, 1997). By this definition surveillance isenforced by structures, for example, the Panopticon. The Panopticon is ametaphor for surveillance in which the disciplined are watched at all times andcannot see the watcher. This instils a sense of fear and theoretically enforcesorder. However, the issue is that it does not appear to sufficiently portraythe desire to be surveilled with regards to online networking via social media(Lyon 2006; McGrath 2004). Social mediahas impacted surveillance culture in such a way that it has becameparticipatory and something to be desired, as long as the perception ofyourself you

present is desirable. The ethical frenzies, paranoid fears, andthe challenges in comprehending why individuals really would need toparticipate in online social communication all mirror this tragic view onsurveillance. It is the reason behind the talks of privacy and instruction andalso for the possibility that clients are either performing risk examinationsbefore establishing a profile on the social media website or just are not awareof enough regarding the prowling threats of surveillance.

The visual illustration ofsurveillance offered by the Panopticon infers a spatial chain of command wherethe observer is situated over the one being observed. However, this might notbe taken as surveillance being fundamentally a power dynamic in which theobserver is in control of the observed. In fact, surveillance can be viewed asa levelled relationship even for the individual under surveillance, either throughopposition (McGrath, 2004) or as exhibitionism (Koskela, 2004). Furthermore, surveillancecan be conducted by both the watcher and watched, as depicted by Andrejevic(2005) who has presented the idea of horizontal surveillance. Despite the factthat Andrejevic does not explicitly build the association, horizontalsurveillance appears to be a helpful idea to shed light on specific parts of socialmedia as everyone who is being surveilled is also surveilling others.

Counter arguments in regards to surveillance culture could see it asenabling, as the observing encourage better methods of building personality, meeting companions and partners, along with associating with people outside ofyour social circle. This progresses the part played by the client fromuninvolved to dynamic, given that surveillance in this setting provides someautonomy to

the user. Online media communication in this way representssurveillance, “ as a shared, enabling and subjectivity formulating exercise – isin a general sense quite social” (Solove 2007, p. 745). The act of online interpersonal interactioncan be viewed as enabling, as it is an approach to connect with otherindividuals and develop connections deliberately. However, it is critical to notconsequently accept that the practice of networking, which these sites dependon, is just a product for exchanging. It is in fact a form of surveillanceculture that extends on Deleuze’s (1992) belief that surveillance is no longerabout monitoring those separate to us but a method of collecting data from theeveryday and social media is a perfect way of gathering this.

To conclude, this essay has demonstrated an understanding ofsurveillance culture is an advancement of surveillance in which beingsurveilled has become participatory. This is due to human beings becomingincreasing technology-dependant. Particularly through the example of socialmedia the impact of surveillance culture has been explored. Firstly as areadily available source of data which is used to both monitor and adapt thebehaviours of a society by institutions and secondly as a way of encouraging participatorysurveillance in turn, causing a complacent attitude towards surveillancecultural. The impact of social media was also shown to deeply affect humanbehaviour in general, creating a more neurotic and anxious population, which asexplained by Furedi (2006), makes people easier to control and in turn, makesthe aims of surveillance culture easier to accomplish.

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