

### Culture and Contexts (intro from printed book)

News stories don't satisfy on a human level. We know that Guantanamo is still open, but do we really know what that means?' The idea is to experience an emotional understanding, so it's not just an intellectual abstraction.

-Laura Poitras, filmmaker

The structure, process and narrative units that make up most of the book rely on language in presenting facts and argument. In contrast, the emphasis in this unit is on forms of artistic expression. Images and music are one component of the culture of surveillance that so infuses our minds and everyday life. The symbolic materials and meanings of culture are social fabrications (though not necessarily social deceptions). They speak to (and may be intended to create or manipulate) needs, aspirations, and fears. Culture communicates meaning and can express (as well as shape) the shared concerns of a given time period and place. Surveillance technology is not simply applied; it is also *experienced* by agents, subjects, and audiences who define, judge and have feelings about being watched or a watcher. Our ideas and feelings about surveillance are somewhat independent of the technology per se.

As with the devil in Spanish literary tradition (image below) the artist can serve to take the lid off of what is hidden, revealing deeper meanings. Here the artist acts in parallel to the detective and the whistleblower:



*DETECTION. Means "taking the roof off," i.e., uncovering what is hidden. In the Spanish literary tradition, the Devil occasionally offered one of his favorites the entertainment of looking into all the houses of a town by taking the roofs off. Detectives are consequently sons' or disciples of the Devil.*

—Jacques Barzun and Wendell Hertig Taylor,  
*A Catalogue of Crime*

In the original version of the book I divided the cultural materials into two units. The first dealt with stories that can be told about surveillance. The second unit dealt with surveillance in popular culture and had chapters on lyrics and cartoons, illustrations, advertisements and art.<sup>1</sup> This and the next chapter on this webpage were cut because of space limitations.

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## **Surveillance and Popular Culture I**

### **Soul Train: The New Surveillance in Popular Music**

Videos are watching me  
But dat is not stopping me  
Let dem cum wid dem authority  
An dem science and technology  
But Dem can't get de Reggae out me head.<sup>2</sup>

-Zepaniah

Under the spreading chestnut tree  
I sold you and you sold me:  
There lie they, and here lie we  
Under the spreading chestnut tree.

-“The Chestnut Tree”<sup>3</sup>

Contemporary surveillance methods and popular culture are both distinctive kinds of soul training. The title of this chapter plays off of Michel Foucault's (1977) study of modern means of training the person to be compliant. It also reflects popular rhythm and blues and disco musical culture. “Soul Train” was a 1970s song title and a popular TV musical program. In connecting these two markedly disparate uses of the term, I call attention to the close links between surveillance and culture, and between control and entertainment. This chapter considers cultural meanings in popular music from mid-20th century until the time of the book's publication.

In considering soul training, Foucault was primarily discussing emerging modern organizational forms of control in the prison, workplace and school. Popular culture as entertainment and recreation might seem very far from the sober, hard worlds of surveillance and control. However, music along with television, film, literature and advertisements can also serve as a kind of compliance soul training along with the more familiar formal organizational structures. Such cultural forms may also serve to undermine surveillance.

In contrast to most studies of music lyrics, in which the focus is on a genre such as country and western, teen pop or rap, my emphasis is on a particular kind of lyric expressed across a variety of genres. In identifying songs, I drew on my own observations and others' suggestions and searched the Internet for songs with words such as

“surveillance,” “watching,” “police,” “FBI,” “DEA,” “video,” “spying,” “big brother,” and “privacy.”<sup>4</sup>

The chapter draws on some of the categorizations in earlier chapters, with particular attention to the goals the lyrics express. Among the most commonly reflected goals heard in the music are protection, compliance, and control, whether involving coercion or softer forms; love as a subtype of care; suspicion-driven discovery; and voyeuristic curiosity. Most of this music reflects the perspective of the male surveillance agent, although a few songs are by females seeking protection and love. After I present and discuss the songs that express those themes, I treat songs expressing the point of view of subjects and involving goals of publicity and protest. The final section considers how changes in lyrics can help us see social change.

### **Watching as Heavenly and Parental Protection**

I've got my eyes on you.

-Cole Porter

Praise of an all-knowing, controlling, protective, anti-privacy God is a central theme in religious music. Consider such songs for children, those neutral sponges waiting to absorb what the environment offers. The voice here is that of the agent of surveillance (or his or her agent). Among the best known of all surveillance songs is "Santa Claus Is Coming to Town." In this religious panopticon song, Santa "knows when you are sleeping, he knows when you're awake, he knows if you've been bad or good, so be good for goodness sake." The message here is one of control and threat: Don't be good because it is right, but be good because you will be externally rewarded for doing so, and you won't get away with bad behavior anyway. Consistent with an age of science, we even have a concern with verification, as when we learn that "He's making a list, checking it twice."

Santa instructs the child to do the right thing, implying that the child clearly knows what that is, and is capable of doing it in spite of psychological or social pressures or possession by the devil to the contrary. In visiting your town, Santa brings the notion of individual responsibility and choice along with presents.

Moving to a related genre, lullabies promising tripartite protection by God, angels, and parents are among the first things children repetitively hear, even before they can intellectually understand the words. In these songs, surveillance is a vehicle for sacred supernatural connection.

--All Through the Night  
Sleep, my child, and peace attend thee,  
All through the night;  
Guardian angels God will send thee,  
God is here, thou shalt not be lonely

...Tis not I who guards thee only  
...Night's dark shades will soon be over,  
Still my watchful care shall hover.  
God with me his watch is keeping,  
All through the night.

--Lullaby and Good Night  
...Lullaby and good night, thy mother's delight  
Bright angels beside my darling abide  
They will guard thee at rest.

A song such as "Jesus Loves His Little Children" promises surveillance as care/protection and control.<sup>5</sup> The former is particularly needed when the subject is sleeping; the latter when he or she is awake and faces temptation. Such watching is omnipresent and omniscient.

...Jesus sees His little children  
When they fold their hands to pray;  
And however softly they may whisper,  
He can hear each word they say.  
Jesus sees into the hearts of children,  
Ev'ry thought that's good or ill;  
And he knows the ones who truly love Him,  
Those who long to do His will;  
Like a shepherd, Jesus watches  
Over them both night and day,  
As he safely guides their little footsteps,  
So that they don't go astray.

In a more modern vein the Goldcoast Singers

"...don't care if it rains or freezes  
Long as I got my plastic Jesus  
Riding on the dashboard of my car

### **Protective Lovers**

A similar secular theme is the yearning for protective surveillance by a lover. Until recently, females were much more likely to sing such guardian-quest songs than were males. Consider the familiar song "Someone to Watch over Me":

Looking everywhere haven't found him yet...  
There's a somebody I'm longing to see,  
I hope that he turns out to be  
Someone to watch over me...

I'm a little lamb who's lost in the woods  
I know that I could always be good  
To one who'll watch over me...

Won't you tell him, please, to put on some speed  
Follow my lead, oh, how I need  
Someone to watch over me

In "Inside of Me," Madonna expresses a near magical faith in the protective power of the lover:

I keep a picture of you  
Next to my bed at night  
And when I wake up scared  
I know I'll find you there  
Watching over me

Such songs are the passive expression of a hope or a plea, rather than an active seeking out of the individual. In contrast to this version, in which the female desires to be the subject, the male version involves surveillance agents who have prowess as active protectors, watchers, and discoverers. But in both types, we see the use of surveillance (whether desiring it or applying it) by the individual rather than the organization.

Watching over can have both a metaphorical and a sexual meaning (also seen in movies, as the agent peers at a defenseless sleeping love or a desired subject). This can be seen with Emerson, Lake, & Palmer in "Watching Over You":

Sleep tight, sleep tight.  
Know everything is alright.  
And tonight I will be here  
Watching over you.

### **Looking for Love and Loving (and Other) Looks**

The many male search songs are consistent with the traditional culture's emphasis on males' aggressively seeking females. In their 1957 song, "Searchin'," the Coasters express a common ballad theme—the search for true love. Unlike later songs, this is not a threat, nor is it bragging. The actions are motivated by neither an untrustworthy femme fatale, nor by the desire to gratify a secret obsession. Instead, the song represents a statement of determination, optimism, and yearning as the singer proclaims that he will "find her"—the ideal woman.

The Coasters compare their dogged hunt to that of the relentless detective. They are like the Northwest Mounties and will bring in the ideal woman "someday." "Sherlock Holmes, Sam Spade, Sergeant Friday, Charlie Chan, and Boston Blackie" have nothing

on them. Their words make an explicit link between the male gaze and the gaze of the professional surveillant.

Decades later, the surveillance in "On Every Street," by Dire Straits, involves locating a particular individual. The song refers to the tracks increasingly left by inhabitants of an electronically and chemically marked world: "There's gotta be a record of you someplace, you gotta be on somebody's books" and "somewhere your fingerprints remain concrete." This involves a sadder, less hopeful search than that of The Coasters; perhaps the yearning is deepened because the singer knows exactly what he has lost.

Other romantic songs focus not on watching to find, but rather as an expression or generator of love. Here, there is none of the suspiciousness and hard-edged, obsessive watching, and/or covert surveillance seen in some songs. Something special and even sacred is revealed by the magical powers of the look.

This is clearly seen in the music and theme of Alfred Hitchcock's *Rear Window* (1954).<sup>6</sup> The syrupy theme song done by Bing Crosby, "To See You Is to Love You," is a traditional ballad of adulation, attesting to the powers of the love object. Here, the mere sight of the woman is sufficient to make the infatuated singer love her. Real watching and fantasy merge. "To see you is to love you and you're never out of sight." She has invaded and colonized his mind. Her charm means that the male singer sees her "anyplace I look" (referring to more than her geographical location and perhaps to his x-ray vision fantasies) and "I see you all the time."

A related idea, involving the relationship between love and seeing/watching, is found in the common expression, "I can't take my eyes off of him/her." Similarly, Frankie Valli sang, "At long last love has arrived...you're just too good to be true, can't take my eyes off of you."

In its reciprocal and freely chosen form, watching (or better, its kin, gazing) is highly valued in our culture and is a means of expressing/experiencing love and appreciation. The look can be a way of honoring the other. Recall Humphrey Bogart's canonical, "here's looking at you, kid" in the film *Casablanca* (1942), as he peers into Ingrid Bergman's eyes. It is integral to flirting.

In a country and western song that endures and endears because it touches a universal experience and the play of infinite regress, Buck Owens sings:

I was looking back to see  
if you were looking  
back to see  
if I was looking back to see  
If you were looking back at me  
...And the way that  
she was stacked  
I wish I'd 've had a Cadillac

... You were cute as you could be  
standing looking back at me  
and it was plain to see that...  
I'd enjoy your company

In "Potential new boyfriend" Dolly Parton sings:

Got my eye on a boy  
He's eyeing me back  
It's looking real good  
This could be it.

In "Hey Good Lookin'", Hank Williams' pursuit is successful with no need to look further<sup>7</sup>:

... No more lookin'  
I know I've been taken  
how's about keepin' steady company  
... Say hey good lookin'  
whatcha got cookin'  
how's about cookin' something up with me

In Mel McDaniel's, "Baby's Got Her Blue Jeans On," down on the corner, "everybody's lookin', as she goes by, they turn their heads and they watch her till she's gone." However:

She can't help it if she's made that way,  
She's not to blame if they look her way,  
She ain't really tryin' to cause a scene,  
It just comes naturally, lord the girl can't help it.

In 1956, The Four Lads openly reflected on the theme in "Standing on the Corner" as they watched the girls go by:

Haven't got a girl  
But I can wish  
So I'll take me down to Main street  
And that's where I select  
My imaginary dish...  
Brother you can't go to jail  
For what you're thinking  
Or for that woo look  
In your eye

This behavior of course is often unwelcome, even if it is difficult to criminalize and even more difficult to prevent.<sup>8</sup> Consider the early somewhat feminist response offered by Hank Williams to the male gaze in "Hey Good Lookin'":

I got a little gal that wears her hair up high,  
The boys all whistle when she walks by.  
why don't you mind your own business...  
Well, if you mind your own business, you won't be  
minding mine.

Some songs sing of a darker, unseen, and unreciprocated voyeuristic watching. Its very secrecy reflects the watcher's power. In "Watching Alice," Nick Cave & The Bad Seeds sing:

Alice wakes  
It is morning  
She is yawning  
As she walks about the room  
Her hair falls down her breast  
She is naked and it is June  
Standing at the window  
I wonder if she knows that I can see...

In Queensryche's unsettling song, "Gonna Get Close to You," the singer says that "outside your balcony I have a room with a view and I'm watching you." He knows, "when you're alone, I know when you turn out the light."

In Lizzy Borden's "Voyeur," there is a similar theme: "I'm watching you, you're in my sights. I know you so well, I know your every move." This song has an element of compulsiveness ("I can't stop watching you"), and the singer is distraught "because you don't even know me." However, although not stated, as long as he is unknown, he cannot be rejected or be in trouble for his behavior.

With increased feminist and lesbian consciousness, we now have songs of women watching men and other women, as well as contradictory messages to stop watching or that watching doesn't matter and bring it on. The music video of "Whatta Man" by Salt N Pepa is in some ways a contemporary inversion of the 1950's "Standing on the Corner," noted above, in the way it objectifies the male.

My man is smooth like Barry, and his voice got bass  
A body like Arnold with a Denzel face...  
He dresses like a dapper don, but even in jeans  
He's a God-sent original, the man of my dreams

Natalie Imbruglia in "I've Been Watching" recounts:

I stand at an open window  
I see everything there is to see  
I've been watching you



Melissa Etheridge, in “Watching You,” sings:

I was watching your window from here below  
I think I just might stay here all day cause I gotta do  
something ...  
And if you don't want me, I don't know what to do  
But oh keep watching you until I see right through

In *Girls Aloud*, “Big Brother” appears as a welcomed voyeur, meeting exhibitionist needs for attention:

Big brother's watching me  
And I don't really mind  
I like him, watching me...  
He likes me  
Watching him watch me all night

Rather than bringing pleasure, the acts of watching and listening can of course be the vehicles for receiving the bad news. In contrast to the joy of watching expressed in some songs, the singer in the “Two Silhouettes” is concerned “that there is something going on,” and as he arrives at his girlfriend's house, “what did I see through the bedroom light; Two Silhouettes, standing face to face.” He then “turned away, didn't wanna see.”<sup>9</sup> Similarly Luther Allison in “Watching You” doesn't like what he sees:

Watching you baby, watching you all the time...  
Watching you destroy yourself woman,  
All you do is sit around drinkin' wine

In “Watching Me Fall,” The Cure's descent is narcissistically observed:

Yeah I've been watching me fall  
For what seems like years  
Watching me grow small  
I watch me disappear.

“Watching in Silence” by Circle II Circle, suggests a visual chronicling of apocalyptic events:

See me as I fly  
So high in the night...  
I'll watch the world  
As it goes down  
It's buildings crumbled to the ground

## Suspicion-Driven Surveillance

Suspicion-driven watching is reflected in early rhythm and blues and rock and roll music. It involves boasting about the lover's super-surveillance powers to discover unfaithfulness. Such songs contain an implicit threat and may be intended to deter.

There are no doubts about the ocular truth implied in a Marx brother's line in *Duck Soup* (1933), "who you gonna believe, me or your own eyes?"<sup>10</sup> This is an individual form of suspicious surveillance rather than a government or private-sector organizational form.<sup>11</sup>

In 1956, in "Slippin' and Slidin'," Little Richard has been "peepin' and hidin'" to discover his baby's jive, and as a result he "won't be your fool no more." Bobby Vee sings that "the night has a thousand eyes" and that these eyes will see "if you aren't true to me." If he gets "put down for another" or told lies, he warns, "I'll know, believe me, I'll know." The Who more directly imply the possession of extrasensory powers when they sing, "There's magic in my eyes."<sup>12</sup> The singer knows he has been deceived because as he sings, "I can see for miles and miles and miles and miles and miles." Hall and Oates sing about the inability to escape their "Private Eyes," which, while "looking for lies," are "watching you. They see your every move." The Doors sing about, "a spy in the house of love" who "can see you and what you do" and who knows your dreams and fears, and "everywhere you go, everyone you know." In "Lyn' Eyes" the Eagles sing:

You can't hide your lyn' eyes  
And your smile is a thin disguise  
I thought by now you'd realize  
There ain't no way to hide your lyn' eyes

The Alan Parsons Project makes direct use of technology to discover lies and to tell the deceiving lover to "find another fool" because "I am the eye in the sky looking at you, I can read your mind." Freddie Hart sings, "If fingerprints showed up on skin, wonder who's I'd find on you."

The classic song of this type is "Every Breath You Take," written by Sting, who reports that it is about "the obsessiveness of ex-lovers, their maniacal possessiveness" -- written after a divorce. While Sting reports that he reads Arthur Koestler, who wrote about the dangers of totalitarianism, he says his song is personal, not political. The female is warned that the singer will observe her faked smiles and broken bonds and vows. The song is about surveillance, ownership, and jealousy.<sup>13</sup>

While the song does not mention technological supports for the omnipresent and omnipotent surveillance it promises, it is easy to connect it with contemporary tools. One can hear the song to suggest an encyclopedic list of the means that were coming into wider use in the 1980s:

Every breath you take [breath analyzer]  
Every move you make [motion detector]  
Every bond you break [polygraph]  
Every step you take [electronic monitoring]  
Every single day [continuous monitoring]  
Every word you say [bugs, wiretaps, mikes]  
Every night you stay [light amplifier]  
Every vow you break [voice stress analysis]  
Every smile you fake [brain wave analysis]  
Every claim you stake [computer matching]  
I'll be watching you [video, drones]

Songs about watching by individuals contrast with those about the watching of organizations. In Tom Paxton's haunting, satirical words in "Mr. Blue," we hear from the all-knowing "we":

Good morning Mister Blue, we've got our eyes on you.  
The evidence is clear, that you've been scheming.  
You like to steal away; and while away the day.  
You like to spend an hour dreaming.  
What will it take, to whip you into line?  
A broken heart?  
A broken head?  
It can be arranged.

Along these same lines of watching by organizations is the song, "The Chestnut Tree," which appeared at the start of this chapter and which begins on a discordant note on the telescreen in the 1984 version of the film *1984*, as Julia and Winston come to betray each other. But surveillance subjects also have songs, the theme we turn to next—first, those that express resignation, and then those that protest.

### **Subject Chronicles: There is No Escape**

In contrast to the songs in which surveillance agents brag and/or threaten of their prowess and process are chronicles of organizational surveillance that subjects experience. These subjects often express resignation and an implied moral directive. The singers, while hardly apostles of law and order and maximum security, conclude that resistance is likely to be futile and that the best response is to follow the rules. In "I fought the Law," for example, Sonny Curtis of the Crickets sings:

Breakin' rocks in the hot sun  
I fought the law and the law won

Or consider the instructions of Ice-T in "Pain":

Jail cells know me too damn well  
Seems like I've built on earth my own personal hell  
No matter how high I climbed, somehow I always fell  
I guess a lot of players got this story to tell  
...Custody haunts my dreams, nightmares of capture  
Paranoid of surveillance, phobia of cameras  
My banks bigger, but so are my fears  
...No matter who you trust, you simply cannot win  
It's always fun in the beginning  
But it's pain in the end

Nelly in "Utha Side" speaks similarly to a dealer in trouble:

I heard your clientele is doin well  
I see you boomin out the S-T-L...  
Now the feds knocking at your door, you took the bait  
They got taps on your mobile phone  
They do surveillance all around your home  
Now ya pawnin' everything ya own  
Calling on your partners for a loan  
No more slip and sliding on the chrome  
Your good days have come and gone  
I tried to tell you

Judas Priest, in "Electric Eye," sings of the awesome power of the technology from which, "There is no true escape" and "There's nothing you can do about it." It is unlikely that these heavy-metal pioneers are advocates of such surveillance, but the satire--if that it is--is all too muted.

Ja Rule in "Watching Me" asks, "Are ya watching me? They be watching, niggas they be watching, keep watching ...And hustlers ya'll keep slanging. We stuck in the game wit not a lot to gain but everything to lose." This pessimistic resignation contrasts with songs more clearly of a protest nature, which are considered next.

### **Warnings About and Resistance to Surveillance**

Protest is a rich, yet often veiled, theme in popular culture. The field hollers and shouts of slaves contained encoded messages of resistance, and their connotations of biblical words in hymns have often been noted. The labor songs of Woody Guthrie and Peter Seeger and groups such as The Almanac Singers and the Weavers were more direct.

Such music can inspire and sustain commitment. Songs such as "We Shall Overcome," and "I Shall Not Be Moved," and more recent songs, such as "Oh Freedom" and "Blowin' in the Wind," were vital to the civil rights movement. In such protest songs, we hear the voice of the individual subject of surveillance or of a third party telling about it. A central theme is that "they are watching us and it's wrong." It can be

wrong for a variety of reasons: threats to liberty, racism, injustice (especially with respect to false accusations and lack of due process), inequality, and the chilling effects of being spied on and the loss of privacy.

Judas Priest, in "Electric Eye," offers an analytic summary of key aspects of the new surveillance involving omnipresence, omnipotence, accuracy, invisibility and uninformed and involuntary subjects. Surveillance watches "all the time," probing "everything you do" and "all your secret moves," while offering "pictures that can prove." The song links knowledge with power: "I feed upon your every thought and so my power grows." People think they have private lives, but they should "think nothing of the kind."

Jill Scott in "Watching Me" offers varied examples that suggest the comprehensiveness of contemporary observation:

Satellites over my head  
Transmitters in my dollars  
Hawking, watching, scoping, jocking  
Scrutinizing me  
Checking to see what I'm doing  
Where I be  
Who I see  
How and where and with whom I make my money  
What is this??  
... Se-cur-i-ty  
Video cameras locked on me  
In every dressing room On every floor  
In every store  
...Direct TV  
Am I watchin' it or is it watchin' me

Siouxsie and the Banshees, in "Monitor," sing of a "monitor outside for the people inside," which "offers both a "prevention of crime, and a passing of time." The duality of surveillance as control and entertainment is reminiscent of Orwell's *1984*, in which a video device linked mass surveillance with mass communication. Having no control over being seen or over what agents see, individuals are doubly controlled.<sup>14</sup>

Video technology provides a means for joining narcissism, exhibitionism, and voyeurism, and this connection surfaces in popular cultures. For example, Fish, in "The Voyeur," sings of "private lives up for auction," information overload, and living vicariously through the mass media. As in Peter Sellers' character in *Being There* (1979), the individual's persona is formed by reflecting back what he sees on television. Negative reactions to video invasions of personal space are very much tempered by the allure of being seen. The narrator identifies with media stars and fantasizes that he is also a celebrity. Rather than mourning over privacy lost, here we have, "hey ma look at me:"

I like to watch as my face is reflected in blank TV screens.  
The programmes are over, I like to pretend that that's  
Me up there making headlines, camera close-ups  
Catching my right side. I don't care if it's only a moment  
As long as it's peaktime, just as long as all of  
My friends and family see me, the world  
Will know my name –come on down.

Yet concerns over lost privacy are also common. In "Fingerprint File," the Rolling Stones complain about "feeling followed, feeling tagged" and "it gets me down." Also in a rare, direct attack, they sing, "There's some little jerk in the F.B.I. a' keepin' paper on me ten feet high." Concern is expressed over "listening to me on your satellite," informers who will sell out and testify, and "electric eyes." Listeners are urged to be suspicious, lie low, and watch out. The song ends in a whisper: "These days it's all secrecy, no privacy."<sup>15</sup> The singer does not acknowledge the links between secrecy and privacy.

Rockwell feels "like somebody's watching me and I have no privacy." His song, "Somebody's Watching Me," begins with a synthesized voice asking, "Who's watching me?" The narrator is just an average man who works "from nine to five," and all he wants "is to be left alone in my average home." The listener is led to ask, "Why would anyone want to monitor him?" Ordinary people, we come to see, can also become targets, not simply those who might deserve to be surveilled. The reason might be an out-of-control system, incompetence, or logic of random application to create deterrence through uncertainty.

Anyone can be watched or a watcher. Rockwell asks if the watchers are neighbors, the mailman, or the IRS. These realistic questions give rise to paranoia. He wonders if the persons on TV can see him and he is afraid to wash his hair -- "'cause I might open my eyes and find someone standing there." Note the picture of an eye inside a tv set in the next chapter on images.

Nor does Sy Kahn in "Who's Watching the Man" understand why he is a target, because he pays taxes and doesn't vote or criticize. He reports a truck with a telephone company sign next to his house—even though he has no phone--and new wires on his roof. He wonders about three men in his barn "trying to read my electric meter through a telescope" and about someone living in his TV set. Kahn poses a classic endless-regress issue for social control theory in asking, "Who is watching the man who's watching the man who's watching me?"

In the songs discussed above, subjects are watched for no reason. In other songs, there is a reason, but it is viewed as illegitimate. Surveillance is based only on general stereotypic characteristics associated with lower status. Bob Dylan's "Subterranean Homesick Blues" offers an early example of categorical searching based on age profiling.

Youth are watched, whether or not they have actually done anything wrong. Given covert surveillance involving a "man in a trench coat," microphones planted in the bed, and telephone taps, a warning is offered: "look out kid, no matter what you did." To avoid surveillance, young listeners are told not to wear sandals and to try to be a success.

Rather than discriminatory targeting, the protest may involve an overall surveillance goal. "Spy in the Cab" by Bauhaus protests meters that record the driving behavior of truckers. "Hidden in the dashboard the unseen mechanized eye" with "a set function to pry," brings a "coldly observing" 24-hour "unblinking watch."

In "The Smoke Police," The Intended sing:

Undercover smoke police  
sulk in holes and corners  
they do not warn you openly  
like a cop in uniform does ...  
Who knows if they will ask to smoke,  
thus hoping to entrap you?

In that song, plainclothes enforcement is seen as sneaky. Because subjects have no warning, they face the danger of entrapment. In addition, the song reflects knowledge of the organizational process of goal displacement (e.g., as seen in parking enforcement in which a strong latent goal is revenue) when it asks, "will they make a busybody cause into a city cash cow?"

Concern over social control is a major theme in rap songs. Yet, as with graffiti wall art, the emphasis is most likely to be on direct coercion, harassment, and arrest at the hands of uniformed patrol officers, rather than with the more subtle forms of surveillance. N.W.A. in "Fuck Tha Police" call attention to age and style:

Fuckin with me cuz I'm a teenager  
With a little bit of gold and a pager  
Searchin' my car, lookin' for the product  
Thinkin every nigga is sellin narcotics...

For Anti-Flag in "Police Story," the target is race and age:

Patrol man cruising in his car at night  
Just looking for some homeys he can rough up in a fight  
Pulled over 3 kids in a total rage...  
The cops they did it just cause those kids color and their  
age

Trick Daddy in "Watch the Police" adds targeting by dress style and location to age and race. Unlike some rap songs, where the emphasis is on not getting caught for drug dealing and related activities, here it is on not being framed.

Watch the police when I'm rolling through the projects  
My pants sag so I'm labeled as a suspect  
Who be the boys in blue, the authority  
To arrest me cause I live in a minority....  
Watch the police  
In my hood, they'll pull you over  
And put dope on you and bring you to jail

In "The Men in Blue," Prince Paul talks of corrupt police, informing, and faked evidence:

New York's largest crew, it's the Men in Blue  
we stick together like glue and make lies come true...  
if we make this connection,  
I'll give you protection....  
'cause I plant what I want on any crime scene  
I keep my hands clean, you know what I mean.

In the early rock and roll song "Framed," The Robbins offer a first-person account of victimization by an informer rather than the police. The lead singer is put in a police lineup and realizes he is a victim of "someone's evil plan. When a stool pigeon walked in and said, 'That's the man.'" In the political and commercial climate of the 1950s, it was easier to talk of betrayal by an informer than by police.

Other songs go beyond bringing the news about potential abuses and urge active resistance. As Rakaa Iriscience bluntly puts it:

No questions  
I pledge resistance to the grass  
That hides the snakes of America  
so they watch it, now I walk with caution...  
Under heavy surveillance  
They might call you a traitor if you want something greater

In "Del's Nightmare," Del the Funky Homosapien observes:

...They give us a white Jesus to appease us.  
We talk among ourselves and hope nobody sees us...  
The slave master watching over you,  
But ain't nothing gonna stop me and my crew!

Tupac Shakur in "All Eyez on Me" will do what he desires in spite of being scoped:

...Live my life as a Boss playa (I know y'all watching)  
(I know y'all got me in the scopes)  
Live my life as a Thug nigga  
Until the day I die



Black Bomb, in “Police Stopped da way,” notes that social control exists for the body and the mind and it will be resisted:

Police for everything...  
Police for da crimes...  
Police for da mind  
Stop da way

When you think I'll surrender  
You get it wrong  
I will not stay in you shit  
When you think you'll get my mind  
You get it wrong  
I prefer to start a fight  
You get it wrong

Jill Scott in “Watching Me” illustrates the neutralization moves of refusal and blocking: discussed in Chapter 6.

Excuse me miss  
May I have your phone number and your social security?  
Who me?  
When all I came to do is buy my double or triple A  
batteries  
Please  
I decline!!!  
...I'm gonna build me a lead house  
Keep them satellites out

With respect to drug testing Mojo Nixon applies Nancy Reagan's "Just say no" to his defiant "I Ain't Gonna Piss in No Jar." He can be fired from his job, but something more important can't be robbed "my freedom and my liberty." He urges everybody to go to Washington. If "they want our piss we ought to give it to 'em. Yeah, surround the White House with a urinary moat." <sup>16</sup>

Eric Carmen's “Lost in the Shuffle” is reminiscent of philosopher Herbert Marcuse's (2002) critique of the illusion of freedom in ostensibly democratic countries.

You know you pay your taxes and you work all day  
But you better watch out for the CIA  
“Cause they're putting together a dossier on you  
And now I'm glad I'm livin' in the land of the free  
Where I can speak my mind if I don't agree  
But it seems like it really doesn't matter  
What I say or do  
'Cause I feel I'm lost in the shuffle

Anti-Flag in “Police State in the USA” also suggests that things are not as they seem. Anti-Flag responded to the fall of communism by observing similarities between elite control in the East and the West:

Politicians from the West claim the police state’s dead  
But what of the police state in the West?...  
The government controls everything you do  
With police and fed watching over you...  
It’s a big brother state, it’s the same as the East  
The cops protect the rich and corporate elite  
Police State in the U.S.A.

In “Privacy Invasion,” Exploited draws a parallel between physical and mental invasion and pessimistically suggests it’s too late:

You're led to think we're free, a democratic race  
Told of equal rights; well that's just not the case...  
Too late to shut your curtains, they've caught you unaware  
They're not at your window man, they're sitting in your  
chair  
A privacy invasion of the head

In an uncommon juxtaposition, Dead Prez, in the song “Police State,” expresses the traditional bourgeois concern with privacy, as well as noting the role of surveillance in sustaining inequality.

FBI spying on us through the radio antennas  
And them hidden cameras in the streetlight watching  
society  
With no respect for the people’s right to privacy

I’ll take a slug for the cause like Huey P...

And the jobs don’t ever pay enough

So the rent always be late.  
Can you relate?  
We living in a police state

In The Broadways’ “Police Song” we see the counter-intuitive suggestion that social control may threaten rather than protect public safety, and they call attention to the parallels between control in prison and in society more broadly.

...Tell me is this security, do we need protection from the  
police?  
we need to reassess the power vested in authority

and social control threatens public safety; do you feel safe?  
...I had a dream that my whole town had turned into a  
prison  
a cop on every corner but I don't feel too safe  
feels like I'm in jail

Similarly in "Bang Bang," Young Buck asks, "...Why you mad at me? The Government's the Drug Dealers." Jill Scott in "Watching Me" suggests that surveillance is misplaced:

You busy watching me, watching me  
That you're blind baby  
You neglect to see  
The drugs coming into my community  
Weapons in my community  
Dirty cops in my community  
And you keep saying that I'm free

A few satirical songs make a joke of surveillance, perhaps de-clawing it in the process for some listeners. In "Talkin' John Birch Paranoid Blues," Bob Dylan parodies the surveillant's search for communist conspiracies. The problem is not surveillance, he says, but the supposed cleverness of the communists in evading detection, which requires extreme investigative means. In a social process endemic to the truly paranoid, the failure of strong measures to find subversives proves the need for even stronger measures. Communists are looked for "under my bed," "in the sink and underneath the chair," "up my chimney hole," even "deep down inside my toilet bowl," "in my TV set," "the library," and among "all the people that I knowed." He ends up investigating himself.

The 1985 film, *Spies Like Us*, is based on incompetent CIA aspirants who get caught cheating on the entrance exam.<sup>17</sup> Unbeknownst to them, they are hired to be used as bait against the Russians. In the film's theme song, Paul McCartney sings:

Hey don't feel afraid  
Of an undercover aid  
There's no need to fuss  
There ain't nobody that spies like us

### **Lyrics Can Track Social Change**

Songs, like other art, usually reflect their time and place. This offers a way to see (and hear) social and technical change. With respect to film, for example, changes in the "state-of-the-art" surveillance used by (and upon) Gene Hackman in the 25 years between the films *The Conversation* and *Enemy of the State* is noteworthy.

Bessie Smith in her 1923 rendition of “T’ Ain’t Nobody’s Business” offered a libertarian plea consistent with the Warren and Brandeis (1890) emphasis on the importance of a right to privacy that involves being “let alone” by others apart from any technology.

If I go to church on Sunday  
And I honkytonk all day Monday  
Ain’t nobody’s business if I do

In contrast, in 1949 Hank Williams in “Mind Your Own Business” complained about misuse of the telephone and about other individuals, rather than governments or corporations, invading privacy:

Oh, the woman on our party line’s the nosiest thing  
She picks up her receiver when she knows it’s my ring  
Why don’t you mind your own business

By the 1990s REM, in Star 69, sings about the ability to trace the last telephone number dialed in what could almost be an ad for the phone company’s call trace service:

You don’t have to take the bar exam to see  
What you’ve done is ignoramus 103  
...I know you called, I know you called,...  
I know you hung up my line  
Star 69

The singer assumes that the caller will not neutralize through entering \* 67 and block the number.

Paul Simon in the 1960s said of “Mrs. Robinson,” “We’d like to know a little bit about you for our [presumably manual] files” and in “America”, with the cold war in the background, sang of the spy in a gabardine suit whose “bow tie is really a camera.” Several decades later he was writing about, “lasers in the jungle” and “staccato signals of constant information” in “The Boy in the Bubble.” Still later songs are concerned with DNA and microchips. Compare Tom Paxton singing in 1967 about abstract concerns over an Orwellian dystopia to his more concrete songs in the early 2000s about “Homeland Security.”

In 1956 Bob Dylan wrote a song “I’m Not There” and it was correct that after he left he wasn’t. But by the 1990s his song “I’m still here” seemed more fitting; even if in the embodied sense a person leaves, their personally identifiable remnants remain and they may be able to know what is said and done in their absence as a result of recording and transmitting technologies.

In a period of rapid technological change, jokes and songs, and even personal photographs<sup>18</sup> of what is strikingly new, often quickly become dated as their shocking, humorous or satirical punch is undermined by reality. This process by which the novel

becomes commonplace and surprise converts to boredom is common in popular culture. Note how mundane Dick Tracy, who thrilled generations of comic fans with his two-way wrist watch radio, now seems. Consider as well songs from the 1970s and 80s with what at the time seemed a paranoid in suggesting that the TV camera one watches might be looking back at the watcher. Now, with webcams, video-phones, and systems for monitoring television viewing, this is science not fiction.

Beyond music, culture communicates about surveillance through film, television, novels, and plays as well as via topics explored in the next chapter, such as cartoons and jokes, bumper stickers, T-shirts, advertisements and visual representations.

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<sup>1</sup> In using the term culture of surveillance Staples (2014) emphasizes legitimating ideas and related behavior rather than the elements of popular culture.

<sup>2</sup> However, he takes no notice of emerging technologies for brain wave reading. In similar fashion, the technique of the heroes of *Fahrenheit 451*, who preserved books from burning by memorizing them, would also be at risk, as would Truman's proud assertion in the quote that opens chapter 6 that there was never a camera in his head. More recently the theme of no books has been well expressed by novelist Gary Shteyngarat (2010).

<sup>3</sup> The lines are in Orwell's 1984 novel inspired by Longfellow's famous poem "The Village Blacksmith", about the spreading chestnut tree, Orwell has his protagonist Winston recall these words which have little to do with the original poem, although both Winston and the tree were doomed. In the film version this became a song.

<sup>4</sup> Clearly, surveillance is not a theme in most popular songs and is under-represented even in protest songs (these initially sang of class and racial injustice and more recently of war, nuclear, famine, AIDS and environmental issues). Not having taken a representative sample, I cannot say with specificity how minimal it is. The songs discussed however are representative of those found in lyric data bases and those suggested by a generationally diverse group of colleagues.

<sup>5</sup> Some observers may see a less than clarion and rigorous logic here. If these forces are so all powerful and determining (e.g., the claim that Jesus "safely guides their little footsteps so they won't go astray"), why should the individual be punished for violations? Does every social control effort protect the presumed subject? Just who sets the standards and whose interests are served when the controlled are stopped from disobeying the standards of the authoritative? In religious stories this authority is by definition just or beyond question as with Job, something not true of empirical stories. The "just trust higher authority" emphasis also can negate any concern over privacy. There are no secrets from God. As the protagonist in *Crimes and Misdemeanors* recalls, "I remember my father telling me, The eyes of God are on us always."

<sup>6</sup> In the film Hitchcock juxtaposes the professional surveillance of James Stewart as a photographer-detective suspiciously watching a neighbor's window with Stewart's more personal gazing at girlfriend Grace Kelly and in another window, a scantily clad female entertainer. The pleasure of watching is shown as an end in itself rather than a professional duty.

The film appeared at the height of a Cold War-generated climate of suspicion and as new imaging technologies such as the zoom lens became available. It contains Thelma Ritter's classic line, "We have become a nation of Peeping Toms."

<sup>7</sup> There is an ambiguity in "look". In singing, "Hey good looking", Williams clearly means that she is good to look at. But being a good looker can also suggest that one is, ala flirting or being a skilled detective, good at looking at others. Note also the several meanings in the classic, "I'll be seeing you in all the old familiar places."

7. At least that is so in the 1765 British case of *Entick v. Harrington* in which according to the laws of England simply looking does not warrant a finding of guilty of trespass. The case contrasts mere looking with physical trespass and physically taking away tangible items from a private residence. Yet several centuries later with sexual harassment legislation and employee protection laws, looking can apparently be legally regulated as well.

<sup>9</sup> This version is sung by Russ Ballard. In another version done by The Rays, when he arrives and knocks on the door he discovers that he is “on the wrong block” and overwhelmed with love, rushes to the correct address.

<sup>10</sup> Conway Twitty also reflects doubt in singing,  
“I saw her and told myself she was my dream come true  
Let my eyes deceive me from the start...  
I guess my eyes were bigger than my heart.”

<sup>11</sup> The more aggressive tone of these male songs contrasts with the self-pitying tone of female songs (note male lyrics such as, “she got the ring and I got the finger” and “she got the gold mine and I got the shaft.”)

<sup>12</sup> Their song “Who Are You?” is also very relevant re the types of personal information discussed in Chapter 4, as would be a song called, “Where Are You?” acknowledging GPS and mobile apps.

<sup>13</sup> *Rolling Stone Magazine*, March 1, 1984.

<sup>14</sup> In a British innovation, an unseen person offering verbal instructions such as “stop loitering” now accompanies some video cameras.

<sup>15</sup> This is the common confusion noted in Chapter 1. These are not necessarily opposed. Secrecy can be involved in protecting privacy when the very existence of a type of information is not known or the key to accessing information is secret (e.g., a password). Yet the secrecy of covert surveillance can also be a means of invading privacy. Whether or not something is secret refers to the empirical status of information—whether it is known or not known.

<sup>16</sup> In a 1986 telephone call to the Reagan White House from Austin, Texas during a “Urine Ball”, the party goers yelled, “We won’t drop our zipper for the Gipper”. This was under the auspice of activist-entrepreneur Jeffrey Nightbyrd, founder of a company promising over-night delivered powered drug free urine. The group’s motto, “Test your government not your urine” (<http://nodrugwar.org/history.html>).

<sup>17</sup> Consider also the theme music associated with the Pink Panther series and the misnamed Maxwell Smart in the 1960s sitcom “Get Smart.” As a bumbling secret agent working for CONTROL, Smart demonstrated a profound ineptitude. The sole of his shoe was a telephone that frequently dialed the wrong number and his jet shoes propelled him on to the roof.

<sup>18</sup> In the mid-1980s, in Bellagio, Italy, I was amazed that in order to enter the guarded estate where a conference was being held, the individuals had to stand in front of a camera at the gate and identify themselves and their purpose. The photos I took of the remote camera and automated access control enlivened lectures for over a decade. But as video became commonplace, I had to find alternative ghee-whiz surprises (easy to do given the subject).