

Privacy & Surveillance

Understanding the roles of privacy & surveillance in society



This course will explore the effects of surveillance technologies from the everyday devices to the most sophisticated. It will analyze the effects of technology on society, culture and law. Students will gain insights into the impact of surveillance and technological

empowerment on communication. Through the study, analysis and application of privacy & surveillance theory the participant will develop a firmer understanding of the role of surveillance on society and its impact on privacy.

The question of privacy is always connected to people's ability to snoop. The discussion of privacy began to become serious with the development of cheap, portable cameras in the 1880s. Since then our ability to spy on each other has grown exponentially. And our privacy has inevitably declined. The purpose of this course is to explore and analyze what privacy is, and

should be, in the age of everyday technology (such as, social media, smartphones, drones and cheap DNA tests). The course will explore the actions of governments, corporations and neighbors to deepen our knowledge in the rights we have, while opening up for the discussion about the rights we may need in the future.

Dr Mathias Klang

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Office hrs by appointment via Zoom or phone

Tip [How to email your professor](#)

Schedule

Mo - Th 1-4pm

The link to Zoom

<https://fordham.zoom.us/j/8897318580>.

Course Material All reading material will be available on the BlackBoard course page or as links in the syllabus.

How this course works

This course is divided into five modules. The **first module** is intended to provide the fundamental theories of privacy and surveillance so that the course participants have the tools with which to analyze the coming Modules. Following this, each Module will attempt to explore the ever-expanding zones of privacy where the **second module** deals with privacy and the body, the **third module** is privacy in relation to the home and family, the **fourth module** is privacy and surveillance in the city, and finally the **fifth Module** deals with privacy and surveillance in relationship to our devices.

These divisions are not to be understood as separate from each other, but rather as a way in which we can focus the work of the course as we explore and analyze the ever-changing theory and practice of privacy and surveillance.

This is an online class scheduled Monday - Thursday between 1-4pm. We will be using a mix of meetings via Zoom (for lectures & discussions) and asynchronous tools (for assignments & exams).

Monday (First week is shorter as it begins on Tuesday)

- Part 1 Theory presentation
- Part 2 Individual assignment
- Part 3 Theory Discussion

Tuesday

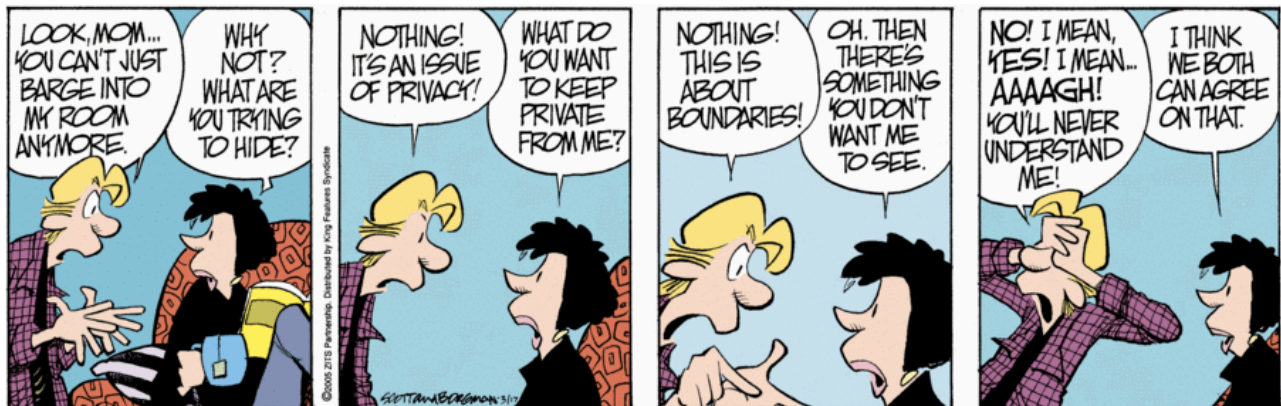
Media Exercise

Wednesday

Literature & Theory discussion

Thursday

Module Exam



Graded Exercises

Monday class exercise 20 points (total 100 points)
 Tuesday Media exercise 50 points each (total 250 points)
 Wednesday Readings 20 points per module (total 100 points)
 Thursday Exam Max 50 points each (total 250 points)

TOTAL COURSE POINTS 700**Grade Scale Percentage**

The final grade for the course is based on the following percentage scale:

A 94 or above A- 90–93
 B+ 87–89, B 83–86, B- 80–82
 C+ 77–79, C 73–76, C- 70–72

Readings

Assigning readings is never an easy task. There is so much that is good and important to read for you to understand the complexities of privacy and surveillance. My goal has been to choose a good mix of theory and practical application.

It would naturally be best if you could read everything all at once at the start of the module but I understand that this is not feasible. So in order to keep the flow going the idea is that by Wednesday you should have read and submitted your comments on each of the readings for the module.

For each of the readings I want you to reflect on the text and write an answer to these questions.

1. What is the author trying to argue?
2. Do their ideas feel practical/true/useful?
3. Can you relate the ideas to other media and/or life examples?

Submission should be between 300-500 words.

in class exercise

Online teaching is a convenient but (as you probably know) it is also taxing in so many ways. Everything from the learning environment to [Zoom fatigue](#) can be detrimental to active participation and engaged learning. The in-class exercise is a chance to get off Zoom and work with a practically oriented problem of concern for the module.

Media Exercise

The purpose of this exercise is to gain a better understanding of the ways in which theories of privacy & surveillance are discussed and represented in media. Each module will have an

assigned movie/episode for the participants to analyze in order to illustrate privacy & surveillance theories and practices. Your task is to watch the video and look at the ways in which the technology and narrative drive our understanding of privacy and surveillance. Questions to think about:

1. How is privacy/surveillance depicted
2. What **concepts** of privacy are illustrated
3. What technologies are seen as threats or promise?

Each media exercise submission should be between 400 - 500 words.

Exams

The goal of the course is to be as flexible possible while maintaining a brisk pace through the materials. In order to support this the course will have one exam at the end of each module, through which participants will receive feedback before proceeding with the following module.

MODULE ONE. THEORIES OF PRIVACY AND SURVEILLANCE

While privacy and surveillance are not new phenomenon the systematic academic discussion and understanding of the field is still young. This section will look at the development of privacy/surveillance in different cultural and historical contexts while presenting the theories of privacy and surveillance developed over the last century. The goal of this section is to help the participants in recognizing what privacy is, how it develops, and to better understand the theoretical underpinnings of the various aspects of privacy.

Readings module one

Westin Privacy and Freedom (1967) Chapter 1 & 2

Horne & Maly: The Inspection House (2014) Chapter 1

Media Exercise

The Truman Show (1998)

1984 (1984)



MODULE TWO. PRIVACY, SURVEILLANCE AND THE BODY

When exploring the barriers of privacy it is often easy to speak about the body as being the absolutely most intimate limit. This section will explore the ways in which the body interacts with our ideas of privacy and where the limits of surveillance are set in relation to the body. This Module will explore our ideas of modesty and our rights to either cover or expose our bodies in different settings, and how the norms and laws of the state support (or not) these desires/needs. In addition to these questions this Module will also explore the role of body parts and biometrics in relation to privacy and surveillance.

Readings module two

Allen, A. (2011). Unpopular privacy: what must we hide?. Oxford University Press. Chap 3.

Romine: Crime, DNA, & Family

Media Exercise

Gattaca (1997), Black Mirror (S4E2) Arkangel

MODULE THREE. PRIVACY AT HOME

Sir Edward Coke wrote in 1628 that “a man’s house is his castle”, expressing an idea that the homeowner has a great expectation of privacy against the state. The home is often specifically mentioned in legal privacy documents, in for example the 4th Amendment to the US Constitution we see that “The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures...” This section of the course will look more closely at the protection of privacy in the home, and we will call into question what expectations of privacy we have in our homes from the surveillance of our family, society, and the state.

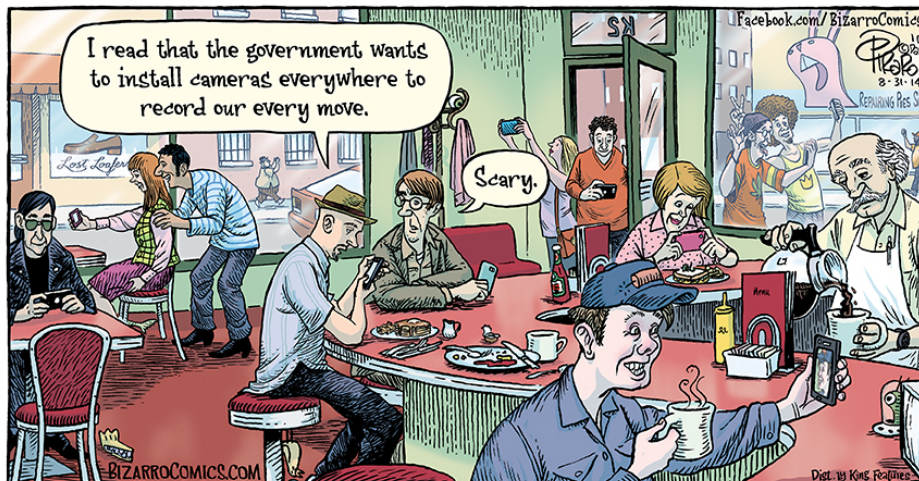
Readings module three

Shapiro (1998). Places and spaces: The historical interaction of technology, home, and privacy.

Rapoport (2012) The Home Under Surveillance

Media Exercise

Rear Window (1954), The Lives of Others (2006)



MODULE FOUR. SURVEILLANCE IN THE CITY

Large concentrations of people with different backgrounds, norms, and needs are a challenge to privacy. In order for collectives of people to function together certain compromises have to be made – the question therefore becomes one of balance of rights and needs. In order to maintain well-functioning cities, the state needs to enforce norms and regulations which challenge the freedoms of individuals. This section of the course will explore the ways in which the city challenges privacy expectations and creates stresses on individuals’ ideas of what common behavior should be.

Readings module four

Andrejevic et al (2024): Granular biopolitics

Selinger & Durant (2021): Amazon’s Ring

Media Exercise

Minority Report (2002), Enemy of the State (1998)

MODULE FIVE. OUR DEVICES, PRIVACY AND SURVEILLANCE

Digital mobile technology provides users with a wide range of convenient and practical applications that have changed many facets of our behavior. However, this convenience comes at a cost to our privacy. The ability of technology companies to gather and analyze huge amounts of data creates a new challenge to our understanding of privacy. The goal of this Module is to explore the many ways in which the technology upon which many of us rely has had widespread implications on our privacy and enabled a massive private surveillance industry to flourish.



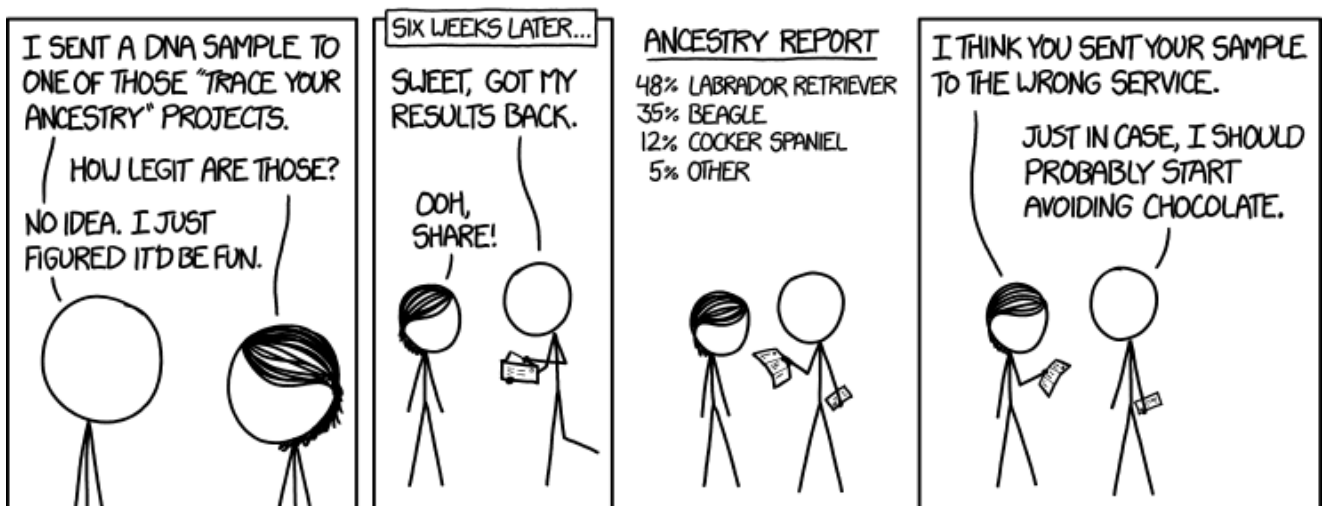
Readings module five

Zuboff (2015) Surveillance Capitalism

Cinnamon: Social Injustice in Surveillance Capitalism

Media Exercise

Citizenfour (2014), Black Mirror (S3E1) Nosedive



Effort.

While it may seem odd to include in a syllabus, your effort is a required component of this course.

The federal definition of course credit hours assumes a minimum of “two hours of out-of-class student work per Module for a semester hour.”

According to this metric, a student should assume at least six hours of out-of-class work per Module for each 3-credit course.

Academic Honesty.

Academic Integrity/Plagiarism:

The following is a university-wide policy and those violating it will be subject to failure of the course. If you have any question concerning the plagiarism policy or about documentation of sources in work you produce in this course, come talk to me. Now that you have read this syllabus email me a book recommendation.

University Statement on Academic Integrity

A University, by its nature, strives to foster and recognize originality of thought. Originality can only be recognized, however, when people acknowledge the sources of ideas or works that are not their own. Therefore, students must maintain the highest standards with regards to honesty,

effort and performance. As a Jesuit, Catholic University, Fordham is committed to ensuring that all members of the academic community strive not only for excellence in scholarship but also for integrity of character. In the pursuit of knowledge and personal development, it is imperative that students present their own ideas and insights for

evaluation, critique and eventual reformulation. As part of this process, each student must acknowledge the intellectual contribution of others.... Violations of academic integrity include, but are not limited to, plagiarism, cheating on exams, falsification, unapproved collaboration, and destruction of library materials. For further details,

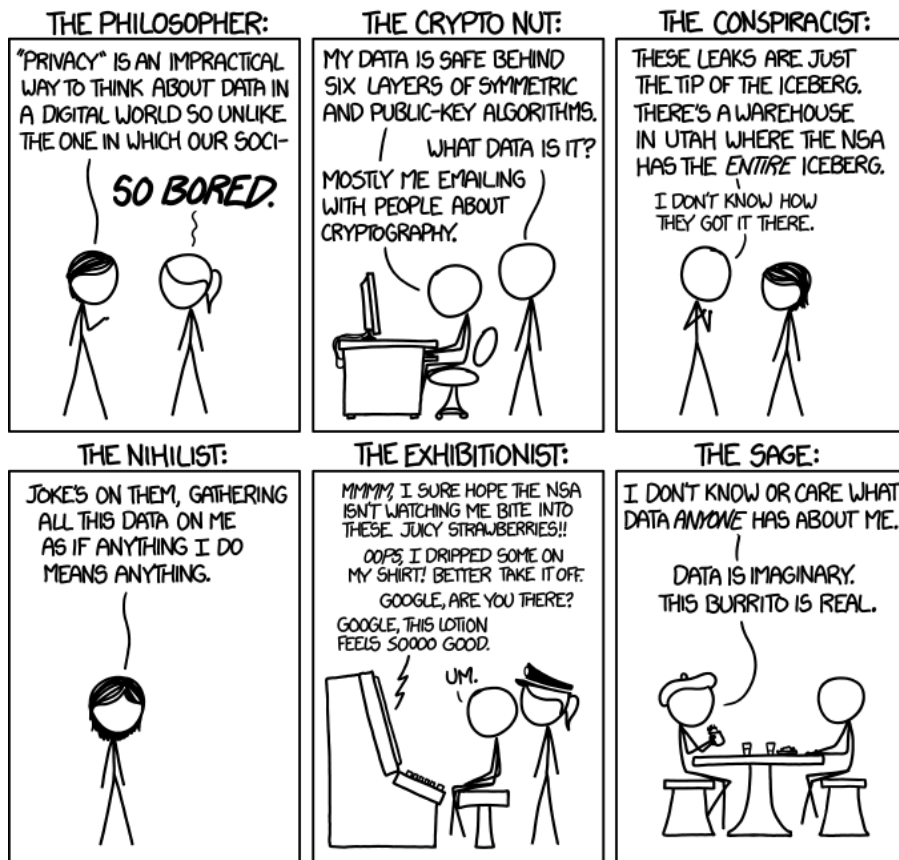
consult the Standards of Academic Integrity on the University website.”

Citations.

All coursework shall be original and created by the student. Plagiarism is not tolerated. Students are required to adhere to the University Policies on Academic Standards, Cheating, and Plagiarism

For more information about how to cite see <http://klangable.com/blog/teaching/honesty-plagiarism-citations/>

OPINIONS ON INTERNET PRIVACY



ACCOMMODATIONS

Equal educational access for all students

The Office of Disability Services at Fordham University helps to ensure equal educational access and opportunity for all members of our community. In the Jesuit tradition of *cura personalis*, members of the ODS staff work individually with each student to understand his or her strengths and limitations in order to develop their most effective and comprehensive accommodation plan. Fordham will offer reasonable and appropriate auxiliary aids and services to assist otherwise qualified persons in achieving access to its programs, services, and facilities once students meet with ODS for an initial intake meeting to develop an accommodation plan directly with the student in accordance with Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Students seeking accommodation(s) should the Rose Hill Office of Disability Services, (718) 817-0655 or email disabilityservices@fordham.edu.

If you believe that you have a disabling condition that may interfere with your ability to participate in the activities, coursework, or assessment of the object of this course, please visit the Office of Disability Services, email, or call them.

Schedule.

Changes to the syllabus may be made at the instructors discretion and if circumstances require. Participants will be notified of changes via Blackboard/university email. Participants are responsible for keeping up to date with these changes.

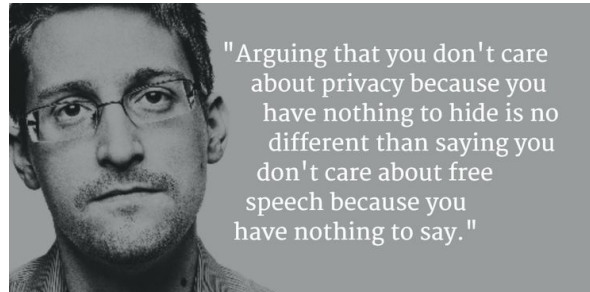
Inclusivity

All students are encouraged to speak up and participate during class. Therefore everyone in class should listen actively and respect the ideas, background, and beliefs of every member of this class. For more see <http://klangable.com/blog/teaching/inclusivity-policy/>

Writing aid

Writing is a painful, but rewarding, process. For help and tips see <http://klangable.com/blog/teaching/writing-resources/>

For a handy collection of resources to help students excel in college visit <http://klangable.com/blog/teaching/>



Writing Center.

If you struggle with the writing required in this course, please make use of the Writing Center. For more information about their services see www.fordham.edu/academics/programs_at_fordham/english/writing_center/index.asp

Counseling.

Counseling and Psychological Services: University life is full of challenges. Fordham offers support for anyone who feels like they need help dealing with the pressures of life as a student. CPS offers free individual and group counseling and psychotherapy in a safe and confidential setting. For more information about their services see www.fordham.edu/campus_resources/student_services/counseling_and_psych/index.asp

Academic Coaching.

Academic Coaching: Any student who struggles with time-management and/or organization is invited to one-on-one academic coaching sessions (typically once a Module for 45 minutes). Please contact disabilityservices@fordham.edu for more information.