

Final Project

Government Surveillance

For my final project for this class I chose to write a paper on government surveillance. I chose government surveillance because I thought it would be fairly interesting, and I didn't really have that much prior knowledge of the subject either. I wanted to write a paper on it instead of the other options because I felt that my best work could come from writing. However, I understand that this is a computer class, so I tried to make it a little more exciting and enjoyable to read by giving it not such a dry format. I hoped that it would provide readers with not just words and information, but also provide an image and a more casual look at the subject.

I found it difficult to find a place to begin with this topic. I felt that there was so much information and issues within this subject that it would take forever to cover them all. I tried to find some more recent websites and articles to use. I thought that the best thing to do would be to focus on the broad topic of government surveillance in recent years, rather than to get into specific cases. However, some of the small things I included because I felt that they were pretty interesting. I used the articles, websites, and images that I did because I felt that they all contributed a certain type of aspect of the subject. I hope to provide readers with enough information that they'll want to learn more about the subject of government surveillance and anything else they may become curious about.

In the 1970s there were a series of comprehensive examinations of the activities of US intelligence and law enforcement agencies by congressional committees. As a result, significant reforms were designed to ensure that investigations conducted by those

agencies were respectful of the Constitutional rights of Americans. After the tragedies of September 11, 2001, the

intelligence and security bureaucracy in teamed up with the former-president Bush Administration, they had capitalized on the current situation and had pushed for the elimination of many of those safeguards. Soon after, the push against anti-terrorism legislation began. The USA Patriot Act,

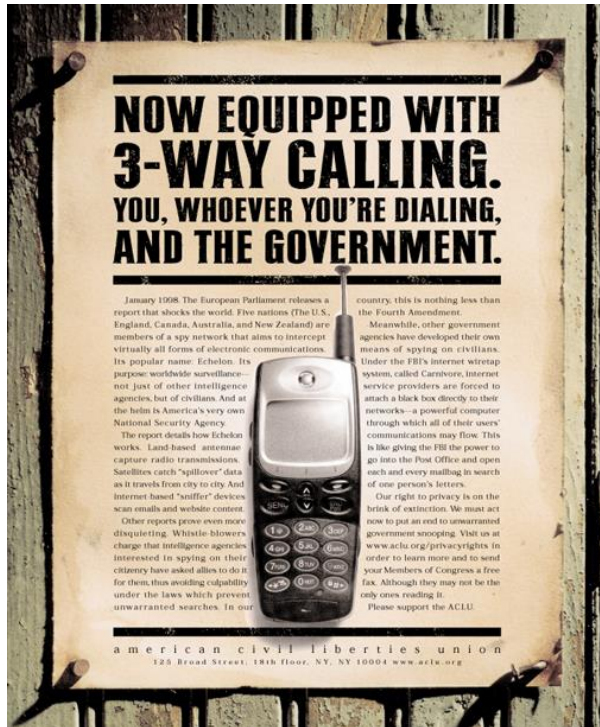
enacted in October, 2001, contained many new powers, some completely unconnected to terrorism. Congress enacted amendments to the Foreign Intelligence Act (FISA) that would prevent the original intent of the legislation. However, the Department of

Justice had introduced policies that authorized the monitoring of communications between attorneys and their clients and severely weakened the

regulations governing investigations by the Federal Bureau of Investigation. During this time, the Bush Administration was highly involved in government surveillance activities. Some say it was due to President Bushes' personal attachment to the subject.



Many of today's cell phones have tracking devices in them as well.

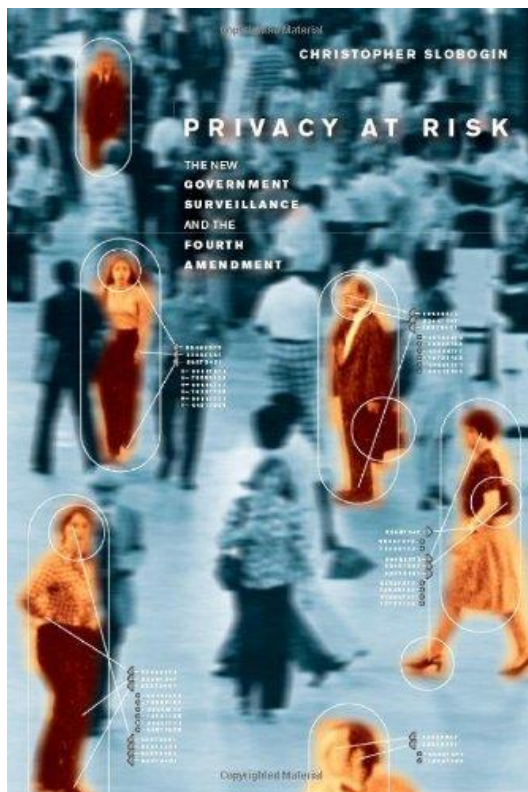


The Fourth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution protects the right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures. The U.S. Supreme Court has consistently found over the decades that surveillance is arguably close to a search, and that would mean that it would require consent from the individual or an official warrant. However, one could argue that our executive branch doesn't always abide by what the U.S. Supreme Court says. In the

past five decades, the U.S. Supreme Court has also determined that the Constitution's Fourteenth Amendment protects a personal right to privacy that is even broader than that which is guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment. In December, 2005, the *New York Times* revealed that the Bush Administration had been conducting secret surveillance of international telephone calls by way of the National Security Agency. This would be seen as a violation of the Federal Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978. The ACLU has challenged this policy in federal court.

For six decades, the global Project Echelon had been used to surveil an unknown amount of material with an unknown degree of specificity. Some defenders of the project claim that its' technology is only used for legal ways, but some have also claimed that it has easily been abused, and a few have argued that Echelon has been used to illegally assist with strategy in international business deals.

It's difficult for me to give just one question after all that I have learned. With all the things that our government does that we are not aware of, the questions seem endless. I once saw on television where it is legal in nine states for the government to come into your own driveway, put a tracking device on your car,



and they don't even have to inform you. My one question is, how much does the government really know about every-single person in America? I often feel like I'm just a statistic in this world. What are the chances that they even know who I am? I guess the only thing I can do is hope I don't ever give them any reason to monitor my behaviors, but with the way things sound they really don't need much of a reason to invade your life. It's kind of frightening when you really think about it.

References

The information in this paper was provided by the following URLs:

<http://www.cnss.org/surveillance.htm>

<http://civilliberty.about.com/od/waronterror/tp/surveillance.history.htm>

<http://msnbc.msn.com/id/33405037/>

http://www.usatoday.com/news/washington/2008-06-19-1016504555_x.htm

The images in this paper were provided by the following URLs:

<http://richardwillisuk.wordpress.com/2009/08/10/labour%E2%80%99s-surveillance-society/>

<http://astore.amazon.com/cyberighcybelibe/images/0226762831>

<http://www.churchill-security.co.uk/security-management/government-warning-over-gchq-security-firm/>

http://www.cyber-rights.org/documents/aclu_privacy.htm