

Article

Theorizing Surveillance in the UK Crime Control Field

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Abstract

Drawing upon the work of Pierre Bourdieu and Loic Wacquant, this paper argues that the demise of the Keynesian Welfare State (KWS) and the rise of neo-liberal economic policies in the UK has placed new surveillance technologies at the centre of a reconfigured “crime control field” (Garland, 2001) designed to control the problem populations created by neo-liberal economic policies (Wacquant, 2009a). The paper also suggests that field theory could be usefully deployed in future research to explore how wider global trends or social forces, such as neo-liberalism or bio-power, are refracted through the crime control field in different national jurisdictions. We conclude by showing how this approach provides a bridge between society-wide analysis and micro-sociology by exploring how the operation of new surveillance technologies is mediated by the “habitus” of surveillance agents working in the crime control field and contested by surveillance subjects.

Keywords

capital; crime control; resistance; surveillance

Issue

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1. Introduction

Surveillance, defined as the “collection and analysis of information about populations in order to govern their activities” (Haggerty & Ericson, 2006, p. 3), has always been a central feature of policing and criminal justice. This includes the “direct supervision” of subject populations in prisons and probation work and the accumulation of “coded information” (Giddens, 1985) which began in the nineteenth century when fingerprints, photographs and files were collated by criminal justice practitioners. Over the last two decades however the advent of computer databases, surveillance cameras and other technological advances are said to have given rise to a “new surveillance”¹ (Marx, 2002) comprising of “surveillant assemblages” (Haggerty & Ericson, 2000) which operate well beyond the confines of the central state. In an attempt to make sense of these de-

velopments, the theoretical literature has been dominated by Foucaultian and Deleuzian-inspired perspectives on “discipline” (Foucault, 1977) and “control” (Deleuze, 1992). As Lyon (1993, p. 655) points out, for many writers “the idea of exploiting uncertainty in the observed as a way of ensuring their subordination has obvious resonance with current electronic technologies that permit highly unobtrusive monitoring of data subjects in a variety of social contexts”. For other writers, the disciplinary model of surveillance eventually proved too inflexible “to organize the mobile labour forces and financial flows of complex information economies” (Bogard, 2012, p. 33). Thus, while for some writers the emergence of new surveillance technologies is consistent with the “disciplinary power” and “self-governing capabilities” identified by Foucault (Staples & Decker, 2008), for others disciplinary power has been replaced with “modulation” which works through models, simulation, codes, statistical tracking, and new methods of social sorting (Bogard, 2012, pp. 32-33).

¹ For Gary T. Marx (2002, p. 12), new surveillance refers to “the use of technical means to extract or create personal data”.

The central argument presented here is that the Foucaultian and Deleuzian-inspired literature outlined above does not adequately address the *politics of surveillance* by explaining why or how new surveillance technologies have come to play such a central role in contemporary society and in particular how they have become central to policing and criminal justice. As Haggerty (2006, p. 34) points out, in the Foucaultian literature, “the movement of panoptic principles into new settings” is “often presented as entirely frictionless” and lacking any “sense of a surveillance politics”. Similarly, Deleuzian-inspired accounts of the emergence of networked and flexible forms of control in response to the global system of capital (Bogard, 2006) operate at a very high level of abstraction and consequently fail to explore how wider global trends or social forces, such as neo-liberalism or bio-power, are refracted through the crime control field in different national jurisdictions. To address these questions, we situate the emergence of new surveillance technologies within “fields of struggle”, defined by Bourdieu “as a structured space of positions in which the positions and their interrelations are determined by the distribution of different kinds of resources or “capital” (Thompson, 1991, p. 14). We begin at the macro level by showing how globalizing forces and wider social changes are filtered through the “field of power”² in different national jurisdictions. Next, we argue that the demise of the Keynesian Welfare State (KWS) and the rise of neo-liberal economic policies in the UK has placed new surveillance technologies at the centre of a reconfigured “crime control field” (Garland, 2001) designed to control the problem populations created by neo-liberal economic policies (Wacquant, 2009a). Finally, we show how field theory provides a bridge between society-wide analysis and micro-sociology by showing how the operation of new surveillance technologies is mediated by the “*habitus*”³ of surveillance agents and surveillance subjects. But first we explain how and why we intend to use this approach to make sense of contemporary developments.

2. Why “Field” Theory?

In an early paper entitled, “The Genesis of the Bureaucratic Field”, Pierre Bourdieu (1984) extends Max Weber’s definition of the state as an institution “which possesses a monopoly over the legitimate use of (physical) violence”, by adding that the bureaucratic field “also monopolizes the use of ‘symbolic violence’” (Ben-

² The “field of power” refers to “the upper reaches of the social class structure where individuals and groups bring considerable amounts of various kinds of capital into their struggles for power” (Swartz, 2004, p. 12).

³ Habitus refers to the “set of *dispositions* which incline agents to act and react in certain ways” (Thompson, 1991, p. 12).

son, 2005, p. 93). For Bourdieu, symbolic violence is the power to “constitute the given” (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 170) and refers to the state’s “ability to make appear as natural, inevitable, and thus apolitical, that which is a product of historical struggle and human invention” (Loveman, 2005, p. 1655). From this perspective, the development of bureaucratic administration and the use of “civil registration and related forms of state identification of individuals are at the core of modern states’ capacity to exercise symbolic power” (Loveman, 2005, p. 1679). In this respect, Bourdieu’s early paper on the state complements the work of other social theorists who have documented how surveillance originally emerged in the context of state bureaucracy, policing and government administration (Dandeker, 1990; Lyon, 1994). However, while Bourdieu used field theory to explore a wide-range of semi-autonomous and increasingly specialized spheres of action, such as the fields of politics, religion, and cultural production, he did not write about the “crime control field” (Garland, 2001) which makes up a key component of the “right hand of the state” (Wacquant, 2009a, p. 289; see also Page, 2013), nor did he have anything to say about the emergence of a “surveillance society” which has seen surveillance proliferate well beyond the bureaucratic field to become a routine and mundane feature that is “embedded in every aspect of life” (Lyon, 2001, p. 1). In recent years however a number of writers have used field theory to analyse penal transformation in the age of neo-liberalism. Didier Bigo (2000, 2002), for example, has outlined the emergence of a transnational field of security professionals across the European Union involved in the “management of unease” (Bigo, 2002, p. 64). This approach has also been used by Dupont (2004, p. 85) who draws upon Bourdieu’s notion of “capitals” (economic, social, cultural and symbolic) to explore how these resources can be “used as strategic assets to acquire or maintain a dominant position within security networks”. Garland (2001) meanwhile combines “field” theory with “governmentality” (Foucault, 1991) to argue that recent transformations in policing, punishment, sentencing and crime prevention “can best be grasped by viewing them as interactive elements in a structured field of crime control and criminal justice” (Garland, 2001, p. x). Finally, Wacquant (2009) has drawn upon Bourdieu’s distinction between the “left hand” of the state (e.g. education, health, social assistance) and the “right hand” of the state (e.g. police, justice, and correctional administrations) (Bourdieu, 1998, p. 2) to examine the fusion of penal policy and welfare policy to manage the problem populations generated by neo-liberal economic policies.

One of the recurring criticisms levelled at Bourdieu’s writings on the “bureaucratic field” is that he tends to generalise from the case of the (strong and centralised) French state and consequently “fails to speak to those in the Anglophone world who have ex-

perienced over thirty years of the rolling back of the state by neo-liberal governments” (A. Scott, 2013, p. 65). From this perspective, notions of “nodal governance” (Johnston & Shearing, 2003) or “governmentality” (Foucault, 1991) are much more suitable for theorizing the emergence of “surveillant assemblages” (Haggerty & Ericson, 2000) which operate beyond the confines of the bureaucratic field. However, following A. Scott (2013), we argue that it possible to use Bourdieu’s parochialism (regarding his generalisation from the “strong” French state) to counter our own (Anglophone) parochialism regarding the “weak” neo-liberal state (A. Scott, 2013). In this respect, Bourdieu’s writings on the bureaucratic field provide a means of critically engaging with the Foucaultian and Deleuzian literature which underestimates how neo-liberal strategies of privatization can serve to strengthen the position of political elites (A. Scott, 2013). From this perspective, law and order campaigns and the introduction of new laws and surveillance measures “reassert the authority of the state and shore up the deficit of legitimacy officials suffer when they abandon the mission of social and economic protection established during the Fordist-Keynesian era” (Wacquant, 2010, p. 198). At the same time, this approach avoids economic reductionism or conspiracy theory⁴, focusing instead on how social fields emerge as the result of on-going struggles between actors whose aim is to set “the rules that govern the different social games (fields) and, in particular, the rules of reproduction of these games” (Wacquant, 1993, p. 42).

The use of field theory outlined above we argue provides a useful theoretical framework for examining the *politics of surveillance* in the UK crime control field. However, there are two caveats to our use of this approach to theorize current surveillance practice. Firstly, while much of the criminological literature has focused on state surveillance and policing, this is too restrictive for an analysis of the new surveillance which increasingly operates across state and non-state institutions. To avoid this limitation we use Garland’s (2001) broader definition of the “crime control field”. This includes “the formal controls exercised by the state’s criminal justice agencies and the informal social controls that are embedded in everyday activities and interactions in civil society” (2001, p. 5). This more expansive conception of the crime control field allows us to examine the social impact of new surveillance in both the penal sector of the bureaucratic field (e.g. prisons, probation and policing) and in the wider society which has seen

⁴ As Bigo (2000) has argued in the context of the emergence of a European security field, “there is no cabal—be it based within a faction of politicians, or of police officials, or both—conspiring to undermine civil liberties and increase the powers of police agencies. Rather, a field has emerged which is the result of on-going struggles between actors” (Bigo, 2000, p. 90).

new surveillance measures introduced in schools, universities, shopping malls, airports etc. (Simon, 2007). Secondly, the question of how those on the receiving end of surveillance experience and respond to being monitored has received relatively little attention (although see Marx, 2003). For instance, in his account of how penal sanction and welfare supervision have merged “into a single apparatus for the cultural capture and behavioural control of marginal populations”, Wacquant (2009a, p. xix) explains how his approach “does not survey efforts to resist, divest, or divert the imprint of the penal state from below”. To address this issue we draw upon recent ethnographic research designed to explore how a diverse range of groups experience and respond to being monitored by the new surveillance technologies that are currently used in the crime control field (McCahill & Finn, 2014). We situate the emergence of surveillance within “fields of struggle”, arguing that the distribution of various forms of “capital”—economic, social, cultural and symbolic—operate as a range of goods or resources that structure the dynamics of surveillance practices and power relations in the crime control field. By doing this we also extend Bourdieu’s conceptual toolkit by introducing the term *surveillance capital* to illustrate how surveillance subjects utilise everyday forms of cultural know-how acquired through first-hand experience of power relations to challenge the very same power relations. However, before we examine the micro-politics of resistance, we need to situate the emergence of new surveillance in a wider political context.

3. The Global Diffusion of Surveillance—The Case of CCTV Surveillance Cameras

As Murakami Wood (2009, p. 181) has argued, generalised descriptions of a surveillance society often underplay the “immense cultural and geographic variety of surveillance *societies*” (emphasis added). Bourdieu’s work is useful here because he “explodes the vacuous notion of ‘society’ and replaces it with those of field and social space”. For Bourdieu, “fields of struggle” are relatively autonomous social spaces “that cannot be collapsed under an overall societal logic” (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 17) such as “modernity” or “post-modernity”, or, we might add, the “surveillance society”. Globalizing forces and wider social change, for example, are always filtered through the political and juridical fields of different national jurisdictions. Comparative work conducted by criminologists on the uneven global diffusion of the “new punitiveness⁵ may

⁵ As Nelken (2005, pp. 220-221) points out, while new surveillance “cannot be classified as ‘stigmatizing punishments’...there would be a strong argument for taking them into account in terms of the way they tend to replace expenditure on more “social” forms of prevention, and the

be useful here for exploring the diffusion of new surveillance. For instance, in their comparative study of criminal justice in twelve different countries, Cavadino and Dignan (2006) constructed a typology of political economy which showed major differences between neo-liberal (USA, South Africa, England and Wales, Australia, New Zealand), conservative-corporatist (Germany, France, Italy, and the Netherlands), social democratic (Sweden and Finland), and oriental-corporatist countries (Japan). In short, they found that neo-liberal countries were more punitive (exhibiting higher prison rates, lower age of criminal responsibility, and adoption of privatization policies), followed by conservative corporatist, social democratic and oriental corporatist (in Lacey, 2008, pp. 44-45). These findings have been supported by Lacey (2008) in her “comparative institutional analysis” which showed that Liberal Market Economies (LMEs) (especially the UK and USA) adopted more exclusionary criminal justice systems than Coordinated Market Economies (CMEs) (north-western Europe, Scandinavia and Japan).

Any attempt to address similar questions in relation to the global diffusion of new surveillance would require systematic comparative research. However, there are one or two studies that allow us to raise some tentative questions or hypotheses that may guide future research. For instance, while research conducted on the rise of CCTV surveillance in Europe by the Urbaneye project found a general diffusion of surveillance cameras throughout European society, the growth of these systems in countries such as Germany and Norway was restricted due to the contrasting legal and constitutional environments of the juridical fields (see Norris, McCahill, & Murakami Wood, 2004, p. 121). Thus, while the legal context in the UK is extremely permissive, privacy rights in CMEs such as Denmark and Norway are constitutionally enshrined. The latter also have strong data protection regimes to regulate the introduction and use of new surveillance measures such as CCTV surveillance cameras (see Norris et al., 2004, p. 121). The uneven proliferation of “new surveillance” must also be situated in a wider socio-economic context. Thus, whereas CMEs are “premised on incorporation” and “the need to reintegrate offenders onto society and economy”, LMEs are based on flexibility and innovation which means that “under conditions of surplus unskilled labour...the costs of a harsh, exclusionary criminal justice system are less than they would be in a co-ordinated market economy” (Lacey, 2008, p. 59). It is no surprise therefore to discover that the diffusion of CCTV surveillance in Europe has been more widespread in countries undergoing economic dislocation or liberalisation, such as Hungary and the UK, than it has been in “countries which have had relatively, stable welfarist-orientated government types of exclusionary messages they send to the collectivity”.

ernments such as Norway, Sweden, Germany and Austria” (Norris et al., 2004, p. 121). These findings are supported by more recent research on the global diffusion of open-street CCTV surveillance cameras in Brazil (Murakami Wood, 2012), Turkey (Bozbeyoglu, 2012) and South Africa (Minnaar, 2012) which reflect a broader shift in these countries away from socially progressive polices and welfare, towards exclusionary measures directed at marginalised populations. The degree of central funding committed by the state is another key factor in the global diffusion of new surveillance. As Wacquant (2010, p. 214) points out, while the neoliberal state “embraces laissez-faire at the top”, it tends to “be fiercely interventionist, bossy, and pricey” when introducing new measures to control problem populations. Thus, between 1992 and 2002 the UK central government, through its City Challenge Competition and Crime Reduction Programmes, committed over a quarter of a Billion pounds of predominantly public money to the expansion of CCTV surveillance cameras (Norris et al., 2004, p. 112). As Doyle, Lippert and Lyon (2012, p. 6) point out, “the absence of similar driving initiatives by national governments is one factor explaining the much slower dissemination of public open-street camera surveillance in other” countries⁶.

4. The Politics of Surveillance in the UK: Managing Problem Populations

As indicated above, the legitimating factors behind the growth of new surveillance technologies include technological potential, the rise of the personal-information economy, risk management, national security, public perceptions, new laws and neoliberalism (Bennett, Haggerty, Lyon, & Steeves, 2014, pp. 10-13). In their outline of the key drivers behind surveillance, Bennett et al. (2014, p. 11) define neo-liberalism as a set of “governmental policies that stress free trade and deregulated markets”. However, as Wacquant (2009a, 2010) points out, neo-liberal policies include not only a preference for market rule, but also “an expansive and proactive penal apparatus”, “welfare state devolution and retraction”, and “the cultural trope of individual responsibility” (Wacquant, 2010, p. 197). While Wacquant used this framework to examine penal transformation in the USA, this broader sociological conception of “neo-liberalism” provides a useful conceptual framework for theorizing the emergence of new surveillance technologies in the UK crime control field. As we shall show below, the emergence of an expansive penal apparatus, welfare state retraction, and neo-liberal responsabilisation strategies are all central

⁶ As Smith (2015) points out, the neoliberal concern with economic rationalism could eventually lead to a shift from the politics of surveillance “expansion” to a politics of “diminution” as large-scale CCTV networks become a financial burden.

drivers behind the emergence of new surveillance technologies in the crime control field.

Any theory of contemporary penal change must begin by considering the wider transformation of the “field of power” ushered in by the demise of the Keynesian Welfare State (KWS) and the emergence of neo-liberalism. As a number of writers have argued, this transformation has resulted in the deautonomization of the crime control field whereby the cultural capital of criminological and legal experts has become de-valued or de-legitimated, while political capital (in relation to crime control) has become valorised⁷. As Haggerty (2004) points out, while criminal justice policy (in the USA and UK) has always been driven by political considerations, the last two decades have seen the emergence of a more explicitly symbolic politics which values political expediency above criminological research and the emergence of a technological field of expertise which has served to “displace the policy relevance of criminology” (2004, p. 222). Following the IRA bombings in the City of London in 1993, for example, a network of CCTV surveillance cameras was rapidly introduced to record traffic movement in and out of the city centre. Similar developments were reported after the attacks on September 11 in the United States when the “rush to surveillance” intensified further largely driven by developments in the political and journalistic fields (Ball & Webster, 2003). In this context, the introduction of new legislation or new surveillance technologies such as CCTV cameras is often announced at a political party conference or in the “journalistic field” before any systematic evaluation of their efficacy (see Norris, 2012, p. 254).

As Garland (2001) points out, the developments outlined above are also related to the demise of penal modernism which has witnessed the emergence of punitive law enforcement policies alongside risk-based strategies of social control. For Garland (2001, pp. 105-106), these developments are the result of “a new criminological predicament...the normality of high crime rates and the acknowledged limitations of the criminal justice state”. The response to this predicament in the “crime control field” has resulted in a series of policies that are highly contradictory. Garland notes that on the one hand the state appears to be attempting to reclaim the power of sovereign command by the use of phrases like “zero tolerance”, “prison works”, and “three strikes”. However, at the same time there has been an attempt to face up to the predicament and develop new pragmatic “adaptive” strategies including the “commercialization of justice” and a redistribution of the responsibility for crime control (2001, p. 113). While Garland (2001) sees these devel-

opments as a schizoid and disjointed response from the state to a new “criminological predicament”, Wacquant (2009a, p. 301) argues that it is “a predictable organizational division in the labour of management of the disruptive poor”. From this perspective, the rapid introduction of “new surveillance” technologies following highly mediatised crimes fits neatly with the “sovereign state” strategies of “denial” and “acting out” (Garland, 2001) that are manifest in the “political” and “journalistic” fields, while the emergence of actuarial regimes characterised by pre-emption, surveillance and intelligence-led policing chimes with the “adaptive strategies” (Garland, 2001) found in the penal sector of the “bureaucratic field”.

As a number of writers have shown, the new surveillance practices and technologies that have been introduced in the UK are disproportionately directed towards those shorn of economic and cultural capital. In recent years, for example, probation policy in the UK has seen the widespread use of standardized assessment tools that are used to classify and “separate the more from the less dangerous” (Feeley & Simon, 1992, p. 452). These developments have facilitated the introduction of intensive supervision and surveillance programmes directed at “prolific” or “persistent” offenders which utilise compulsory drug testing, criminal profiling, electronic monitoring and police databases. As Norris (2007, p. 156) has shown, the construction of this expansive surveillance apparatus in the bureaucratic field is used to monitor those shorn of capital, typically “an unemployed, drug-using male, under the age of 21, who is likely to have been in local authority care, been excluded from school and have few, if any, qualifications”. Similar developments can be found in the context of “bureaucratic welfare” regimes where a plethora of new surveillance technologies have been introduced to monitor the welfare poor (Gilliom, 2001; Wacquant, 2009a). Welfare claimants in the UK and USA are surrounded by a range of surveillance technologies and programmes that intimately oversee their eligibility for work, leisure patterns and family status. In the United States, for instance, it has become increasingly difficult to distinguish the welfare office from the probation office:

Welfare offices have borrowed the stock-and-trade techniques of the correctional institution: a behaviourist philosophy of action à la Skinner, constant close-up monitoring, strict spatial assignments and time constraints, intensive record-keeping and case management, periodic interrogation and reporting, and a rigid system of graduated sanctions for failing to perform properly (Wacquant, 2009a, p. 102).

The other central feature of neo-liberal regimes identified by Wacquant (2010) is the cultural trope of individual responsibility. In the crime control field, this in-

⁷ The exception here of course is the influence of “new right” criminologists such as James Q. Wilson which chimes with neo-liberal thinking (see Haggerty, 2004).

volves an attempt by the state to devolve the responsibility for surveillance onto individuals and organisations. For instance, over the last two decades the CCTV Challenge Competitions and Crime Reduction Programmes devolved the responsibility for crime control in the UK on to local public-private partnerships. Moreover, empirical research in UK town centres has shown how these public-private CCTV systems can be co-opted for central state purposes and used to target “known criminals”, “suspected drug addicts”, and those “wanted” for the breach of bail conditions (Coleman, 2004; McCahill, 2002; Wakefield, 2003). More recent examples of responsabilisation include the Anti Money Laundering/Counter Terrorism Financing (AML/CFT) and e-Borders surveillance regimes (Ball et al., 2015). The former requires banks and building societies to monitor customer transactions and report any suspicious activity to the Serious Organized Crime Agency, while the latter requires airlines to collect passport data in advance of travel and transfer it to the UK Border Agency for screening against watch-lists (Ball et al., 2015, p. 21). Once again these surveillance regimes do not fall equally on all populations as customer activities and financial transactions are incorporated into information infrastructures which support the identification of criminals and terrorists (Ball et al., 2015).

5. Surveillance Practice: “Habitus” and “Field”

As Ball et al. (2015) have argued, surveillance theorists have tended to provide either society-wide analysis of the emergence of a surveillance society, or micro-sociological accounts of local dynamics and resistance. However, the nature of the connection between the two levels of analysis “has not been theorised in surveillance studies in a thoroughgoing way” (2015, p. 25). The work of Bourdieu may be instructive here as his entire approach to sociology was partly an attempt to develop a new direction in social theory that would steer a course between what he considered the excessive “voluntarism” of the philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre and the excessive “structuralism” of the anthropologist Levi-Strauss. What must be explained, according to Bourdieu, “is always choice within a structured situation that individuals do not themselves consciously structure” (in Couzens Hoy, 2005, p. 119). From this perspective, the actions and choices of individuals are shaped by “the internalization of the objective patterns of their extant social environment” (Wacquant, 2005, p. 137) and by the position they occupy in any given field. In an attempt to apply this approach to the study of penalty, Joshua Page (2013) has argued that abstract theoretical accounts of penal transformation often fail to consider the intervening mechanisms that translate social-structural phenomena into penal practice. From this perspective, macro-level social transformations are always retranslated into the internal

logic of “fields” and mediated by a field-specific “habitus” which refers to “an internal set of dispositions that shape perception, appreciation, and action” (Page, 2013, p. 152)⁸. Thus, while “macro-level, structural trends affect practice (what agents do and what decisions are made)...they do not do so automatically and without mediation” (2013, p. 154). Similar arguments can be made in relation to the crime control field. For instance, empirical research on “surveillance practice” in a range of settings has shown that despite the decline of the penal welfare model, those working within the “left hand” of the state have often opposed the measures introduced by the “right hand” of the state (Bourdieu, 1998, p. 2). In Australia, for example, practitioners working within “welfarist” working cultures obstructed the introduction of public-space surveillance cameras (Sutton & Wilson, 2004). Similarly, research has shown how “welfare agency staff assisted clients in bettering the surveillance system” through the use of “head nods (yes) or shakes (no) as the client responded to questions during intake interviews that were logging data into the system” (Gilliom & Monahan, 2012, p. 408). At the micro-level of probation practice, meanwhile, it has been shown that the “Right hand” of the state is not always aware of what the “Left hand” is doing as “risk-based” discourses are filtered through the occupational concerns of front-line practitioners who continue to be guided by the old “welfare” mentality rather than the “risk” mentality (Kemshall & Maguire, 2001).

As the neo-liberal state attempts to devolve the responsibility for crime control, new surveillance agents have entered the crime control field bringing with them a “habitus” that shapes the way new surveillance technologies are applied in practice. For instance, empirical research on the use of CCTV surveillance cameras in a shopping mall in Riyadh found that surveillance monitoring was filtered through the religious norms and social mores of those operating the systems. In this context, private security officers who recently left their tribal village used cameras not to target groups of “flawed consumers”, but to target “singles”, groups of males suspected of engaging in “courtship” behaviour in a sex-segregated society (Al-hadar & McCahill, 2011). In the UK, ethnographic research on the operation of CCTV systems on mass private property has shown how some corporate actors continue to work with the old “welfare” mentality, empathising with the plight of local working class youths (McCahill, 2002). One study on the use of CCTV surveillance cameras in a shopping mall situated on a deprived council estate in the north of England, reported how low paid, low status, working class security officers refused to pass on the names of “wanted” persons identified on camera

⁸ The difference between “habitus” and “field” was characterised by Bourdieu “as the difference between the feel for the game and the game itself” (Couzens Hoy, 2005, p. 110).

to the local beat officer (McCahill, 2002). More recently, ethnographic observations of encounters between “flawed consumers” and private security officers in an English shopping mall revealed that despite receiving “life-time” banning orders, marginalized groups utilised social capital (i.e. collusion with private security officers) to gain access to public services that were provided on private property (McCahill & Finn, 2014). Thus, while the crime control field may have changed dramatically in recent years “neither the ‘culture of control’ nor the ‘new penology’ have fully taken root in the heads and habitus of penal agents” (Page, 2013, p. 158), or in the heads of “private” actors who often find themselves monitoring their own locales and workplace situations (McCahill, 2002)⁹.

6. Surveillance, Capital and Resistance

One of Bourdieu’s central contributions to social theory was to demonstrate that it is not only “economic capital” (i.e. money or property) that functions as a determinant of social position, but also “social capital” in the form of networks and social relationships, “cultural capital” such as education, skills and cultural knowledge, and “symbolic capital” which designates the authority, knowledge, prestige, or reputation that an individual or group has accumulated (Bourdieu, 1986). While previous research has shown how these forms of capital can be mobilised by the institutional actors conducting surveillance (Dupont, 2004, p. 244), this section draws upon ethnographic research to show how the subjective experience and response to surveillance is also shaped by the distribution of capitals (see McCahill & Finn, 2014). For instance, our research has shown that relatively privileged groups, such as “middle class” protesters or police officers, utilised economic, social and cultural capital to evade or contest surveillance in various ways. Protesters utilised social capital (e.g. personal contacts with senior police officers, lawyers, MPs, local councillors, journalists, and associates working in the “privacy” movement) and cultural capital (e.g. knowledge of the law) to challenge surveillance through the courts, or to discover the “fate of their data” through Freedom of Information requests. Similarly, police officers and security officers working under the gaze of CCTV surveillance cameras utilised social and cultural capital to manage not just *when* they appeared on CCTV, but also *how* they appeared on camera. In this case, knowledge of either operating the systems or visiting control rooms, ena-

bled plural police actors to avoid the gaze of surveillance camera operators by locating themselves in “blind spots” when patrolling the shopping malls or streets. Alternatively, plural police actors would visit surveillance camera control rooms to review footage, reflect on their bodily comportment, and modify their behaviour in future “face-to-face” interactions (McCahill & Finn, 2014).

However, it is not only relatively privileged groups who utilise capitals to contest surveillance in various ways. As Bennett et al. (2010, p. 29) have suggested, “rather than assume an essential unity to cultural capital”, it may be useful to explore how other forms of cultural know-how may serve to function “as sources of cultural privilege” in a range of new settings and situations. For instance, in his later work Bourdieu (2005) used the concept of “technical capital” “to refer to the distinctive assets that members of the working classes acquire through their vocational skills and pass on to their children through domestic training” (in Bennett et al., 2010, p. 29). Bourdieu (1990) also referred to the “lucidity of the excluded” to illustrate how the exclusion of marginalised groups from certain realms of privilege can often accord them a certain critical insight into the structures that oppress them (see McNay, 2000). Thus, alongside the “master” concepts of capital identified by Bourdieu, we have introduced the term *surveillance capital* to explain how surveillance subjects utilise the everyday forms of tacit knowledge that is acquired through first-hand experience of power relations to challenge the very same power relations. For instance, our ethnographic research showed how “prolific” offenders were aware that probation officers shared information with other agencies because of what they had read on the induction forms that they were required to sign. Others were aware that any information they might give away during interviews was likely to be stored on the database. One prolific offender summed it up when he said:

Like the police that work with me make out that they’re not the police and they work with probation and that, but they’re full on undercover coppers. The quicker you get to learn that the better innit? You don’t want to be an idiot and pretend that they’re not proper police (in McCahill & Finn, 2014).

Moreover, while the information stored on databases can be treated as the source of “truth” that overrides personal testimonies, some “prolific” offenders used the existence of the “file” or “database” to avoid “opening up” and answering questions during face-to-face interviews by telling drugs workers in the probation office to “go check the file”. “Prolific” offenders also used the existence of “new technologies” to evade monitoring by keeping text messages sent by the probation staff to prove that they had not missed or were

⁹ Research on the Anti Money Laundering/Counter Terrorism Financing (AML/CFT) and e-Borders regime has shown how national security surveillance regimes were filtered through the “habitus” of corporate actors who used e-Borders to explore commercial opportunities arising from the extra customer contact (Ball et al., 2015).

not late for appointments. One “prolific” offender used the data that had been extracted from his body to his advantage when he requested photo-copies of any “negative” drug tests to take home and show his partner that he was not using drugs. Family members of “prolific” offenders also used *surveillance against surveillance* to support their case when confronted by the police. One mother kept fragments of her son’s “digital persona” (electronically-recorded consumer transactions) to challenge police decisions to question or arrest her son. While *surveillance capital* may not be easily translated into other forms of “capital”, it does provide surveillance subjects with a degree of agency in local and specific settings.

As Bourdieu argued, while “those who dominate in a given field are in a position to make it function to their advantage...they must always contend with the resistance, the claims, the contention...of the dominated” (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 102). However, the French author was also well aware of the ironies of resistance and the potential for these strategies to reproduce existing social divisions. In an attempt to conceptualize these issues, he used “the term ‘regulated liberties’ to denote a more complex relation between the dominant and its subjects” (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 102). Here Bourdieu (1990) drew attention to what he described as “the unresolvable contradiction of resistance”, whereby the dominated “can resist by trying to efface the signs of difference that have led to their domination”, or they can “dominate their own domination by accepting and accentuating the characteristics that mark them as dominated” (in Couzens Hoy, 2005, p. 135). In recent years, a number of writers have drawn upon these ideas to explore the relationship between surveillance, body capital and class divisions following the shift from an industrial society organised around manufacturing and heavy industry to a post-industrial society dominated by the service sector and consumerism. In the field of employment the decline of heavy industry which valued a “type of ‘body capital’ forged through notions of physical hardness and a patriarchal breadwinner”, now seems out of step in a consumer or service economy “that values flexibility, keyboard proficiency, telephone communication skills and personal presentation” (Nayak, 2006, p. 817). The exclusion of working class males from the field of employment in post-industrial cities is compounded by exclusion from public spaces due to embodied attributes which are considered “out of place” in the new spaces of consumption. Nayak (2006, p. 821) for example has shown how the “body capital” of young working males in Newcastle led to their exclusion from clubs and bars in the city centre. He refers to how so-called “charvers” “hold their head” and “arch their backs when walking”. The targeting practices of open-street CCTV operators in UK cities are also said to fall disproportionately on those who look “too confident for their

own good” or who had their “head up, back straight, upper body moving too much”, or those who were “swaggering, looking hard” (Norris & Armstrong, 1999, p. 122). In our ethnographic account of the subjective experience of surveillance in a northern city in the UK, we showed how marginalised groups responded to CCTV monitoring by covering their faces with hats and scarves, flicking “V signs” at surveillance camera operators, and throwing bricks at cameras. Of course, those who obscure their faces with clothing or who oriented their behaviour to camera operators through confrontation and abusive gestures are often singled out for further attention by surveillance camera operators (see Norris, 2003, p. 265). In this context, the body becomes both a “performance” and a “straitjacket” (Shilling, 2003) as the “bodily hexis” (dialect, accent, dress, body posture and demeanour) conveys resistant impressions that potentially leads to further surveillance and exclusion (McCahill & Finn, 2014).

7. Conclusion

The surveillance studies literature has been dominated by Foucaultian and Deleuzian-inspired perspectives on “discipline” (Foucault, 1977) and “control” (Deleuze, 1992). The aim of this paper has not been to “go beyond” Foucault or Deleuze. The work produced by these towering intellectuals is far too important for that and will no doubt continue to frame theoretical debates on surveillance for decades to come. Instead, our aims were much more modest and were simply to propose an alternative approach to the study of surveillance that replaced a discursive analysis of historical texts with empirically-informed “field” theory. As Haggerty (2006, pp. 41-42) argues, while surveillance theorists might want to embrace many of Foucault’s insights, they may also want to reserve “space for modestly realist projects that analyze the politics of surveillance or the experiences of the subjects of surveillance”. To do this, we argued, required a different approach to Foucault whose main concern was with the forms that power relations take and “the techniques they depend upon, rather than upon the groups and individuals who dominate or are dominated as a consequence” (Luke, 2005, p. 89). As Foucault (2001, p. 331) explained, “the main objective of...struggles is to attack not so much such-or-such institution of power, or group, or elite, or class but, rather, a technique, a form of power”. Thus, whereas Foucault begins with an “*ascending* analysis of power starting from its infinitesimal mechanisms’, Bourdieu gives priority to a focused analysis of the nexus of institutions that ensures the reproduction of economic and cultural capital” in the wider field of power (Wacquant, 2005, p. 145).

Drawing upon this approach, we argued that the demise of the Keynesian Welfare State (KWS) and the rise of neo-liberal economic policies in the UK has

placed new surveillance technologies at the centre of a reconfigured “crime control field” (Garland, 2001) designed to control the problem populations created by neo-liberal economic policies (Wacquant, 2009a). At the same time, however, we suggested that field theory offers the potential to examine national variations in the up-take of new surveillance technologies by showing how globalizing forces and wider social changes are filtered through the political and juridical fields of different national jurisdictions. This approach also provides a bridge between society-wide analysis and micro-sociology by showing how surveillance practice is filtered through the existing organisational, occupational and individual concerns of surveillance agents. Following this, we situated the introduction of new surveillance within “fields of struggle”, arguing that the distribution of various forms of “capital”—economic, social, cultural and symbolic—operate as a range of goods or resources that structure the dynamics of surveillance practices and power relations in the crime control field. In this respect, our analysis involved a critical engagement with two theoretical traditions—Foucaultian approaches which provide dystopian visions of the power of state surveillance while underplaying agency, and interactionist perspectives on the “everyday politics of resistance” (Marx, 2002; J. C. Scott, 1990) which often fail to consider how “the interaction itself owes its form to the objective structures which have produced the dispositions of the interacting agents and which allot them their relative positions in the interaction and elsewhere” (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 81).

To sum up therefore we have attempted to combine a macro-level analysis which explores how globalizing forces are filtered through the “field of power” in different national jurisdictions, with a micro-level analysis which shows how new surveillance measures are mediated by the “habitus” of surveillance agents and surveillance subjects. This approach, we argue, advances our understanding of surveillance politics in two ways. First, it can “act as solvent of the new neoliberal common sense that ‘naturalizes’ the current state of affairs” (Wacquant, 2009b, p. 129) by demonstrating that there are alternatives to the “bad example” set by neo-liberal countries such as the UK where the “processes of normalisation of surveillance have gone much further than elsewhere” (Murakami Wood & Webster, 2009, p. 260). Second, it provides a corrective to “top-down” surveillance theories which continue to portray surveillance subjects as “docile bodies”, rather than social actors who can contest power relations in a field that is very much skewed against them.

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Conflict of Interests

The author declares no conflict of interests.

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