



Introduction to Surveillance Studies

J.K. Petersen

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Surveillance is a divisive issue—one might say it is inherently controversial. Used by private industry, law enforcement, and for national security, it can be a potent tool for protecting resources and assets. It can also be extremely invasive, calling into question our basic rights to freedom and privacy. Introduction to Surveillance Studies explores technological trends, past- and present-day rationales for surveillance and surveillance devices, and current social issues surrounding them.

The book begins with a brief historical perspective on the evolution of surveillance technologies, then charts the development of modern-day devices from the invention of radar to the dawn of the Internet. Next, it describes emerging technologies—including GIS, GPS devices, Google Maps, biometric technology, surveillance cameras, global satellites, miniaturization of devices, and social media—that are challenging notions of privacy and the right of access to information. While focusing on the technology, the book also discusses surveillance as a phenomenon and what these technologies mean to our understanding of freedom, privacy, and the impact of technology on communications and the structure of society.

Enhanced with numerous photos, the book presents the pros and cons—and some of the controversy—of these increasingly sophisticated technologies, their collective impact, and what the future may hold. It is ideal for those new to surveillance; security, military, and law enforcement professionals who utilize surveillance technologies; and students of privacy, constitutional freedom, journalism, and sociology.



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