Article

The Home Under Surveillance: A Tripartite Assemblage

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Abstract

The home is perceived as an enclave of privacy and retreat from the proliferation of surveillance technologies in the spaces of public and semi-public life. Yet the past years have seen a rapid growth in the development and marketing of smart surveillance systems for domestic use that promise to protect both family and property. As a result, the understanding of 'home' as a place for respite and as an enclave of autonomy is being challenged as residents find themselves continuously under observation. This study reads the experience of surveilling and of being surveilled within one's private domain as different from that of being watched and monitored on the street, in the mall, or at the office. With the understanding that new *assemblages*—namely social entities constructed from heterogeneous parts—are formed as humans engage with new technical artefacts, it becomes apparent that a unique tripartite amalgamation of technology, humans and space/place is brought into being by the installation of domestic surveillance systems by residents in their homes. Moving beyond approaches that examine the social contexts from which these technologies emerge and their cultural consequences, the current study investigates the new ontologies of home, technology, and of surveillance itself rewritten in the automated, smart home. Surveillance is shown as altering the notion of home as *place*, and of setting the home as the site of action and activity. Moreover, an ontological shift takes place in our understanding of surveillance as many of its binary paradigms are destabilized.

Introduction

The surveillance of daily life, made possible through the implementation of ubiquitous and ambient technological systems and apparatuses, is permeating the spaces of the everyday. As CCTV and its counterparts infiltrate urban public spaces, as cameras find their way into enclosed workspaces, commercial and institutional facilities, and as the movement of pedestrians and drivers is continuously monitored and documented, there is little respite from the ever-present watching eye that registers the living of daily life. Today, in many parts of the developed and the developing world, one's self and one's actions are continuously and constantly watched, monitored and documented on the street, in the office, at the bank, on the train.¹ Set in opposition to public and semi-public spaces, the home is perceived as an enclave of privacy and retreat, a bastion of seclusion and isolation. Yet as residents of the home find themselves increasingly more responsible for their personal safety and well-being, and as elderly and infirm residents require on-site health monitoring and services in order to continue living at home, surveillance and monitoring technologies are also, inevitably, finding their way into the most private of places—our dwellings.

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¹ In Britain alone there are over 4 million video cameras scanning streets, parks, and government buildings. Surveillance systems are installed in nearly two-thirds of New York class A buildings. See <http://www.surveillancetechnology.com/> (accessed December 1, 2011).

Academic research on surveillance in the public sphere is growing rapidly. With academic journals offering a platform for current research, and with the proliferation of academic departments dedicated to various social, geographical, legal, and media-related questions raised regarding the promulgation of surveillance in daily life, surveillance stands out as a defining feature in the establishment of contemporary society but also of contemporary personhood.² From the classical theoretic positions of Marx, Weber, Foucault and Goffman, through the more recent works of Lyon (1994, 2003, 2006), Lianos (2003), and Haggerty and Ericson (2000, 2006), surveillance has been defined as the ‘...focused, systematic and routine attention to personal details for purposes of influence, management, protection or direction’ (Lyon 1994: 14). Indeed, as most contemporary theorists would maintain, surveillance is bound to power and to its distribution and augmentation, and is in coherence with prevailing social agendas, ideologies, and forms of governance. It is therefore understood as interlocked in social mechanisms of the nation-state (Giddens), as a disciplinary mechanism (Foucault and Rose), and as advancing the permeation of global capitalism within a ‘society of control’ (Deleuze) and through ‘surveillant assemblages’ (Haggerty and Ericson).

Within current research, many of the questions posed by researchers are binary by nature, as they present dualistic paradigms that juxtapose one set of concepts to another. Thus, for example, research centres on the collection and storing of data and the generation of knowledge made possible through the adaptation of new surveillance technologies on the one hand, and on the flow of information as it circulates according to logics embedded in structures of organizational power (Castells 1996), on the other. Another juxtaposition pertains to the omnipresent gaze of surveillance technology as it fosters social classifications between those watching and those being watched (employers versus employees, for example), but also brings about the amalgamation of subject and object as the act of being watched (of being objectified) becomes essential in the establishment of subjecthood (Foucault 1995). Other foci of research on surveillance include the new social and political practices brought about by the digitalization of surveillance technologies (Graham and Wood 2007), and surveillance as a socio-spatial control mechanism used to marginalize the Other (Coleman 2007). The monitoring of non-normative populations—in itself a form of surveillance—has also prompted research on surveillance as policing (as, for example, on prisoners under house arrest) and as a form of care (in the case of nursing homes and assisted living facilities).

In its adaptation to home use, surveillance technology retains many of the traits that characterize similar apparatuses used in the public sphere. Yet because it is voluntarily installed by residents in order to monitor themselves, their family members and their property, and because it challenges readings on boundary and privacy—the very bedrocks of the liberal home—this technology changes and is changed through its installation in the domestic setting.³ It, in other words, becomes both a manifestation and an agent of meaning that is formed by its users and by its locale. Hitherto, domestic surveillance has not been approached as a distinct ontology of surveillance; instead, surveillance has been understood as primarily a social phenomenon taking place in the public realm. The integration of surveillance into the rearticulation of domestic privacy and its impact on the experience of being at home and interacting with technology has not yet been examined, and is what the current study sets out to do.

It is this study’s contention that while domestic surveillance systems may be tailored in scale but remain technologically similar to their public counterparts, they are actors in a different kind of spatial experience once they monitor the home. They partake in a different kind of *assemblage* [as coined by Deleuze and Guattari (1988) and developed in De Landa (2006) and Haggerty and Ericson (2000)], namely in an

² Well-established academic journals include *Surveillance & Society*, *The Information Society*, *Communications, Law, and Policy*, and *New Media and Society*, as well as others.

³ Such changes would not take place in cases in which residents do not know they are under surveillance as, for example, when landlords monitor tenants or stay-at-home elderly or infirm residents are unaware of being continuously monitored.

alternative set of open relations among heterogeneous elements that operate together. The assemblage's properties emerge through the interactions between its natural and cultural parts, parts that are defined by the totality to which they belong; they are constituted by the relations between one another. The surveilled home takes on the qualities of a site-user-technology assemblage composed of 'discrete data flows of an essentially limitless range of other phenomena such as people, signs, chemicals, knowledge and institutions' (Haggerty and Ericson 2000: 608). Within the surveilled home, concepts such as *home*, *dweller*, and *surveillance* take on new meaning as they operate in unison.

Surveillance Technologies in Home Use

The first obvious place for camera coverage is the main entry way to your home. This will make screening who's at your front door before you open it much safer. This can be particularly true if you have kids who open the door every time the doorbell rings. Knowing who's on the other side before anyone opens the door can bring great piece of mind...If you have small children who like to play in the yard a system of security cameras is a great way to keep an eye on them and spot anyone who may come into your yard. You can also monitor any suspicious activity that may be occurring on or near your property and report it to the proper authorities. Further if you use a baby sitter regularly cameras inside the home will allow you to make sure that your kids are being properly cared for. In this day and age you can never provide enough safety for your loved ones.⁴

'A haven in a heartless world' (Lasch 1979), the home retains inimitable characteristics that set it apart from the public and semi-public spaces that constitute daily life and are open to continuous scrutiny. Connoting personal autonomy, privacy, and retreat, the home is understood as a singular kind of space.⁵ Merging Dutch domesticity of the 17th century, English notions on comfort of the late 18th century, and 20th century American readings on convenience and consumerism, Rybczynski (1986) sees modern homes as the concretization of nostalgia, intimacy, domesticity, commodity, efficiency, austerity, comfort, and wellbeing. The home '...has served and continues to serve as a key locus for distinguishing between the public and the private,' Shapiro (1998: 275) claims. As a sanctuary, the home allows one to temporarily set the world aside, to withdraw: '... if I were asked to name the chief benefit of the house, I should say: the house shelters daydreaming, the house protects the dreamer, the house allows one to dream in peace' (Bachelard 1994: 6). The ability to dwell, as Bachelard understands, is made possible through reverie.⁶

To allow for dwelling to take place, one must first distinguish between that which is inside and that which is outside. To dwell, in other words, is to set boundaries born of the binary opposition that defines the ontology of two separate realms—public and private. Bollnow (1961) situates the 'outer' in opposition to the 'inner' as he juxtaposes the breadth, strangeness and the alluring sense of distance of the outer zone to one's consciousness of the narrowness, familiarity, and limits of the inner one. Aries and Duby (1991) distinguish between the accessibility of individuals as they inhabit public workspaces and the ability to be visually and tangibly unreachable when withdrawn in private ones. As they point out, it was new technologies and the changing nature of industry that made the severing of public from private possible, with workplaces moving out of homes and divisions between 'internal' domestic labour and 'external'

⁴ From <http://i-homesecuritysystems.com/implementing-a-home-security-camera-system>

⁵ In distinguishing *house* from *home*, Tognoli (1987) proposes five differing attributes: Centrality—it is a primary territory that one leaves and returns to; Continuity—bound to permanence and stability; Privacy; Self-Expression and Personal Identity; and Social Relationships.

⁶ There are, of course, other readings of the home that see it as a site of labor, as well as subjugation, dominance and even violence towards women and children, prompted by the very walls that cut it off from the public eye. Indeed the home as the embodiment of hierarchy and structures of authority—contrary to public spaces that are the realm of equality (though accessible only to men)—appears as early as in Ancient Greece, Hannah Arendt argues in *The Human Condition*. However, as this study focuses on the image of home and its connotative, though clearly idealized, levels, these readings will be set aside.

labour being set. Thus, while visibility is bound to the ‘outside’, homes allude to the hidden, and ‘...hidden things and places help to situate the boundaries of the self and help to gain confidence in one’s own capacity to control one’s “inner self”’ (Serfaty-Garzon 1986: 11). The home, in other words, binds privacy to identity and to a delineation of boundaries of the self, offering a ‘selective control of access to the self’ (Palen and Dourish 2003).

Yet such privacy, as Palen and Dourish emphasize, is a dynamic and dialectic process, one conditioned by experiences and expectations and always under negotiation and management ‘involving combinations of social and technical arrangements that reflect, reproduce and engender social expectations, guide the interpretability of action, and evolve as both technologies and social practices change’ (2003). While information technologies with a growing presence in many homes compel a rearticulation of privacy and of where its borders lie, attempts to permeate the boundaries of the home are in no respect new, nor do they dictate the use of technological artefacts. Indeed, houses have been spied upon, actions monitored and conversations eavesdropped throughout human history.⁷ Guided by not only curiosity but also by the desire to regulate and normalize behaviour, and even to protect those deemed vulnerable within the home, incursions of domestic privacy have rendered the home a social site and one that is never completely severed from the public gaze. Ultimately, the very moment in which the boundaries of dwelling are set is also the very moment in which they are pierced, allowing for a continuous interchange between inner and outer. As public permeates private, the idealized notion of home as ‘our corner of the world’ (Bachelard 1994: 4) is challenged once the domicile is also seen as a locus of discipline and self-discipline, and as a site for processes of social normalization.

In a modern, neo-liberal perspective, surveillance practices, in addition to being a form of social control, are also established for the benefit of those being surveilled. For Rose (1996), the installation of security technologies in the home serves as a form of *governmentality* by defining a range of control techniques and mechanisms that signify the dispersion of power not as a linear, top-down dissemination but rather as a horizontal diffusion within and throughout social institutions. Characterized by the subject’s sense of his own agency, self-government ‘...integrates subjects into a moral nexus of identifications and allegiances in the very processes in which they appear to act out their most personal choices’ (Rose 1996: 57-58). The home, consequently, takes on the qualities of a moralized and moralizing space as residents voluntarily monitor themselves and their families and as they willingly open their family life to continuous inspection. Similarly to the school, for example, the home becomes a site in which social discourses are internalized and in which individuals learn to govern themselves. Kawash (2000) equally sees the home as the site for the interpolation of subjects, noting how it functions as a symbolic and affective locus for the virtues of heterosexuality, sexual reproduction, work ethics, individual responsibility, sobriety, and consumption.

While security considerations prompt the installation of surveillance technologies in public and semi-public spaces, these systems have also found a growing demand among customer service providers (recording the preferences of consumers, for example), and in the medical profession (for example, as in monitoring devices for patients with Alzheimer’s disease). Dramatic, however, is the proliferation of surveillance technologies in home use. Closed-circuit television and video surveillance systems, originally installed in banks, casinos and airports, have been adapted for domestic use and are part of a rapidly expanding market of surveillance systems and equipment. Systems that have entered a growing number of Euro-American homes also include networked cameras, infrared and ultrasonic detectors, photo-electric beams, glass break detectors, and smoke, heat and carbon monoxide detectors. Particularly appealing to consumers are systems that monitor the behaviour of children and their nannies while at home, and those that observe domestic property when owners are absent. As one website that sells surveillance systems and products states, the purpose of these technologies is to ‘...deter, or detect illegal activity, as well as serve to ensure the physical safety of loved ones’; the site also lists the following possible uses for these

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⁷ For more see John Locke’s (2010) *Eavesdropping: An Intimate History*.

technologies in home use: door entrance monitoring/video intercoms, recording home parties, baby/child monitoring, looking in on baby sitter, monitoring a backyard pool, keeping watch over a bedridden loved one, observing unsupervised repairmen, catching vandals destroying property, lawsuit prevention against 'slip and fall' scam artists, and keeping an eye on pets.⁸ Another website summarizes:

[h]ome surveillance allows you to identify who is at the front door; be alerted via phone when an intrusion takes place; keep watch over your home and property while away via the internet; easily identify trespassers and intruders; record with motion-sensor or time-specific recording; keep tabs on children or home employees while away; replay specific recorded material by date and time; and remotely watch over nurseries and sick rooms.⁹

While privileging the visual, sound-based and biometric technologies that 'read' the materiality of the human body have also become part of the cache of surveillance technologies marketed for domestic use.¹⁰

While most domestic surveillance systems are used primarily to fend off external and internal threats—particularly those pertaining to security and health—these do not exhaust the list of contemporary technologies that open the home to continuous scrutiny. In the field of domestic entertainment for example, new systems such as TiVo that documents and tracks television viewing habits and Kinect, an in-home game controller operated through gesture and command, reads dwellers' habits and preferences.¹¹ While their appeal lies in their ability to address more accurately residents' predilections and to be more responsive and enjoyable to use, these systems assume many of the characteristics of surveillance systems as they not only monitor data but have the capacity to record and analyze it.

In terms of actual performance, domestic systems operate similarly to those installed in non-domestic spaces. Thus, for example, in surveillance technologies for both public and private use the compilation and analysis of collected data takes place off-site from the area being surveilled. Moreover, systems are designed to identify and singularize the exceptional, the non-normative, thus partaking in the exclusion of the Other. In both public and private installations, being 'read' (watched, heard, measured) may take on a disciplinary dimension. Nevertheless, while the use of surveillance technologies in the home exemplifies the adaptation of a technology, with little mechanical alteration, from one spatial setting to another, these technologies promulgate different layers of meaning as they partake in the distinct spatial experience that is the home. As a result, the questions that arise concern not what surveillance technologies *do* (since what

⁸ See <http://www.vigilanceandsecurity.com/> (accessed December 2011)

⁹ Taken from <http://www.surveillancetechnology.com/articles/camera/home-surveillance-camera.htm> (accessed November 2011).

¹⁰ As advertised in consumer venues and reviewed in academic and professional journals, surveillance technologies in the home may be divided into the following categories according to their designated tasks (though some apparatuses and systems may clearly fall concurrently into a number of categories):

- Systems that continuously observe particular zones (rooms, outdoor spaces, thresholds) and architectural elements (doors, windows, gates) in order to prevent unwanted and unaccepted access/penetration into dwelling areas;
- Systems that monitor undesired and disorderly behaviour within the home, such as those of service providers (nannies, hired caregivers, etc.) and family members (teenagers);
- Systems that simulate/replace humans in their capacity as caregivers (who monitor and supervise the elderly, infirm, handicapped, and young);
- Systems used as deterrents (mostly against intrusion by unwanted strangers) and in order to record and store data;
- Systems that monitor the presence of residents in order to adjust ambient conditions accordingly.

¹¹ In Slate Magazine's 'Your Kinect is Watching You,' the author points out the need to inform gamers that not only they but non-gamers as well can be recognized and categorized at a high level of accuracy once they move in front of the apparatus. With an advanced sensor situated in the prime living space of many new homes capable of recognizing voices, faces and body movements, can Microsoft's promise 'Don't worry, we won't peep' really quell concerns regarding continuous visibility? For more see 'Your Kinect Is Watching You,' by Jeremy Bailenson in Slate Magazine, March 7, 2012, at http://www.slate.com/articles/technology/gaming/2012/03/kinect_research_the_amazing_disturbing_things_your_gaming_console_can_learn_about_you_.html and 'Microsoft Says Kinect Won't Invade Your Privacy' by Stephen Totilo, at <http://kotaku.com/5681521/microsoft-says-kinect-wont-invade-your-privacy>.

they are *doing* is relatively the same), but rather what meanings they bring forth and how they alter knowledge and discourse pertaining to the home and to the experience of dwelling.

Rereading Home as Space/Place

Characterized by personalization and marking, homes are set apart by the sense of security and stability they evoke and by their allusion to control; homes, therefore, are experienced primarily as places rather than as spaces. Serfaty-Garzon (1985) states: homes embody both the making and the taking place. The home as place entails ‘the differentiation and qualification of space’ (9) to allow for both ‘making place’ and ‘taking place.’ In fact, Serfaty-Garzon sees the home as embodying the transformation of space into place. Kawash, similarly, correlates between home and place by negation, as she examines the absence of home, seeing homelessness as the ultimate placelessness: ‘the homeless are forced into constant motion not because they are going somewhere, but because they have nowhere to go. Going nowhere is simultaneously being nowhere...’ (1998: 327-328). *Dwelling*, as the etymology of the word would imply, thus refers to the presence of physical shelter but also to the ability to linger, to be—even if temporarily—placed.

What is the nature of *place*, and in what respects does it differ from *space*? Drawing on a compilation from the writings of various theorists, place may be defined as particular, somewhere, defined through content, of use value, connoting security, enabling one to pause, familiar in its everydayness, empirical (Aristotle), rendered safe with the aid of surrounding people, defensible, reproducing material life and the site for bottom-up opposition. In contrast, *space* is general, everywhere, defined through geometry, of exchange (measurable) value, connoting freedom, allowing for movement, impersonal, unempirical (Aristotle), rendered safe through the use of surrounding cameras, open to attack, related to rationality, bureaucracy and the state, and the site for top-down political processes.¹²

Influenced by the writings of Heidegger, Casey (1997, 2009) undermines the post-Kantian dominance of space over place and argues for the primacy of place, seeing it as that in which all being can be found. In regards to the chasm between them, he sees space and place as signifying alternative orders of reality (2001b: 404). Casey reads space as ‘...the encompassing volumetric void in which things (including human beings) are positioned, and “place” to be the immediate environment of my lived body—an arena of action that is at once physical and historical, social and cultural’ (2001a: 683). While space alludes to a void, places are, by nature, inhabited by people. Thus, a place is where an entity ought to be (as when it is ‘in its place’) or where it stops moving (as when it has ‘reached its place’). Place marks the site where entities attain presence and come to be; it is, therefore, tied to the notion of belonging for both inanimate and animate entities. ‘Places are doubly constructed: most are built or in some way physically carved out. They are also interpreted, narrated, perceived, felt, understood, and imagined’ (Gieryn 2000: 465). This dual understanding of place as both enclosed, bounded space and as derived from a phenomenological experiencing—the term is in fact contingent on the very act of experiencing by the subject—lends the concept its complexity as it alludes to both the objective and the subjective.

As surveilling technologies enter the home, space/place complexity is not resolved; on the contrary, these technologies destabilize the notion of home as *place*. Time is also altered as surveillance technologies enable stored images to become permanent and timeless, and situate the home in a network of visibility and timelessness. Seen from practically anywhere (through internet access, for example) and at any time of day, the home as place becomes segmented into observable, monitored, deterritorialized spaces detached from singular, unique and unrepeatable time and from the tangibility of site. The concrete walls of the home—barriers that define the confines of the domestic retreat, of the private—are replaced by

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¹² The comparison draws primarily on the works of Yi-Fu Tuan’s in *Space and Place* as reviewed in Taylor (1999), Lefebvre’s (1991) *The Production of Space* and Malpas’ (2006) *Heidegger’s Topology: Being, Place, World*.

incorporeal informational barriers that continuously monitor and document. Recorded and collected, captured domestic images can be accessed anywhere, at any time.

Places exist in relation to people; bound to locale rather than content, most camera and sensor based domestic surveillance equipment focus on areas, radiuses and zones rather than on individuals. In this respect, the siting of equipment is contingent on the physical geometry of boundaries and openings rather than on particular people or actions.¹³ Surveillance technologies thus impel the separation of motion from action (of the animate and the inanimate, such as fire or changing weather conditions), once they read movement as severed from agent and intent. With motion comparable to change, surveillance technologies operate according to a motion/stasis dichotomy that views inertia (and in the case of the home—respite, or ‘being in place’) as the normative condition, and motion as contingency. We may stay in places yet we move in spaces; surveillance technology, therefore, facilitates the reading of sites as spaces rather than as places as its *raison d’être* is tied to movement and change.

The surveilled human body, Haggerty and Ericson (2000) point out, is continuously broken down and reassembled into a virtual ‘data double’ as surveillance technologies transform it into information to be compared, analyzed and stored.¹⁴ A similar argument can be made for the creation of ‘spatial doubles’ as the home-place is collected, monitored, and documented. As they record views and images, surveillance technologies divest place from its physicality and site-specificity once they generate documentable copies of it. With place singular and space ubiquitous, place tangible and space abstract, the home takes on the characteristics of space rather than of place as its image is replicated and transferred to off-site locales. While place is contextual, space is universal; thus, recording images of one’s front and back doors or monitoring the babysitter feeding one’s children in the kitchen bestow upon these places spatial qualities as they promulgate images that are transferable to portable laptops, security companies, and off-site data banks.

Places can be defended, yet it is spaces that are monitored. Setting safety as one of their primary objectives, surveillance technologies have rendered the physical presence of humans often redundant in securing the home. The gaze becomes a synecdoche for the human body as a whole. Technologies promise a continuous, disembodied, mechanized gaze that transcends the constraints of time. Indeed, as Foucault points out, in the panopticon the actual presencing of the observer is no longer necessary. As inmates internalize the warden’s gaze, the surveillant eye is the eye of everyone and no-one. Foucault’s depiction of the plagued town of Vincennes reinforces the notion that it is disciplinary space—and not place—that is regulated through surveillance technologies that continuously monitor, identify and categorize those who are ‘normal’ and those who are not.¹⁵ What Foucault does not address, yet merits mentioning, is that the interrelatedness of space and surveillance is a mutually informative one: while surveillance may transform places into spaces, it is only through the reading of space as place that the introduction of surveillance technology is at all made possible.

As homes shift from defensible places to watched spaces, the dialectic of body-place is replaced by subject-space interrelatedness, and the human body is abstracted from territory. New technologies in the home free the body from the physicality of locale and reassemble its double in cyberspace to become a

¹³ Even so called ‘nannycams’ cover particular visible areas which the nanny inhabits and cannot trace her actions once she is absent from these monitored zones.

¹⁴ Contrary to Foucault, surveillance technologies, according to Haggerty and Ericson, first and foremost want to ‘know’ the body before they control it.

¹⁵ Foucault describes Vincennes in the following manner: ‘This enclosed, segmented space, observed at every point, in which the individuals are inserted in a fixed place, in which the slightest movements are supervised, in which all events are recorded, in which an uninterrupted work of writing lines the center and the periphery, in which power is exercised without division, according to a continuous hierarchical figure, in which each individual is constantly located, examined and distributed among the living beings, the sick and the dead—all this constitutes a compact model of the disciplinary mechanism’ (Foucault 1995).

virtual subject, a simulation. In so doing, they offer an extended reading on subjectivity that moves beyond Foucault's panoptic gaze, one that ties the formation of modern subjectivity to the disciplinary gaze of social institutions within confined environments. Surveillance technologies in the home, in contrast, not only bring the social, disciplinary, subject-producing gaze indoors, but also expand the capacities of that gaze as it both watches and simulates a decoded and deterritorialized subject. Thus, confined spaces are '...abandoned in favor of simulate controls that work with far more smoothness than the old strategies of spatial and temporal division' (Bogard 2006: 59); watching, protecting and ultimately controlling space is '...more about scanning data for deviations from simulation models than patrolling territories' (Bogard 2006: 60). Reiterating Deleuze, Bogard states that with the self no longer the locus of control, the modulated 'dividual'—'...a kind of fractal subjectivity, endlessly divisible, and upon which control can be exercised at will...' (2006: 71-71)—defines a new subjectivity ensconced by new surveillance technologies.

Fostering Agency

Viewed from a phenomenological perspective, the home connotes respite as it offers dwellers a familiar and localizable way of being that renders inactivity and a setting of the 'outside' world aside possible. Sheltered from incursion, the home provides a refuge from society and a haven for unhampered individuality as it permits one to retreat and to recollect one's self. In her discussion on Merleau-Ponty's notion of dwelling (itself indebted to Heidegger), Jacobson sees the home as the site of passivity (though she ultimately reads it as an active form of passivity), and of compliance to domestic rules and regulations that ultimately make freedom within the home possible. Domestic activity, in other words, is regulated by repetitive and pre-constituted forms of behaviour; as such, it provides the structure within which one can experience freedom (Jacobson 2009). Drawing parallels that set it akin to the body itself, phenomenological approaches such as Bachelard's and Merleau-Ponty's point to the home's singular capacity to offer inviolable self-enclosure and tie it to the formation of identity and selfhood. As such, the home is the site for where one can, first and foremost, be one's self.

Surveillance technologies also bring to mind physical passivity. In the public and semi-public spheres, these technologies foster a sense of suppression and objectification as the powerful continuously monitor and observe the less powerful.

Although the purpose of surveillance is supposed to be an increase in safety, its design is rather, producing uncertainty. Again, this leaves the public as passive subjects in a container: they are subjects in a position of not knowing their own being.
(Koskela 2000)

Likewise, among the central concepts that Marx (2005) alludes to in the proliferation of literature on surveillance technologies is the passivity and indifference of subjects under surveillance, one that can even extend to cooperation with these technologies on behalf of the observed as a result of ignorance, manipulation, deception, or seduction. Similarly, Fonio (2007) describes the scrutinized, 'transparent' bodies of those deemed suspicious based on ethnicity or appearance as passive and open to invasive and prolonged monitoring by CCTV operators. In the public sphere, the attribution of deviancy brings about the objectification of the observed individual as he/she is dissected into parts and pieces—a nervous twitch, a suspicious gait, an overflowing handbag. Adopting Kant's binary paradigm, it is active subjects who observe, and passive objects who are under observation.

While the space of home and the technology of surveillance may each, independently, allude to the inactivity of bodies under observation, joined together they become both cause and effect in the undermining of the home's withdrawn image. Together they set the surveilled home as a site for agency, namely for the capacity of one to act on one's own behalf. 'Purposeful action and intentionality may not

be properties of objects, but they are also not properties of humans either. They are properties of institutions [collectives of humans and non-humans], apparatuses, or what Foucault called *dispositifs*,' states Latour (1999: 192). Introna takes this point a step further in his discussion on Heidegger, and defines *co-constitutive agency* as the necessary intra-relation between the human and technology that allows both animate and inanimate players to play their parts, enabling them all to *be-in-the-world* (Introna 2007). Action and agency thus take place in the surveilled home as targets, viewers, and surveillant technology assume their meaning, as they become what they are through the enactment of their designated roles. Undercutting the one-way gaze that characterizes surveillance technologies in the public sphere, domestic technologies augment the home as a receptive, responsive, and reactive site; they do so as viewers become law enforcers and health providers, as technology—and 'smart' technology in particular—enforces protocols in response to varying domestic situations, and as targets become performers.¹⁶

As the discourse on security and care shifts to individual agency, as privatized security mechanisms replace the State's role of ensuring its citizens' safety, and as health-related surveillance technologies substitute for one-on-one health care, attention is diverted away from the contingent relations between the need for security and, for example, rising violence due to racial and social conflict or the inability of the State to provide for a rapidly increasing elderly population. The installation of domestic surveillance systems manifests the desire that the home offer impenetrable protection and safety, as well as safeguard a sense of physical and mental well-being, from that which takes place beyond its walls, allowing those sheltered in their homes to distance themselves from public life. The privatization of policing and health services, for example, necessitates a degree of specialization among users of technology in the provision of these services as they find themselves at the helm in watching over their private spaces and their family members. Required to make professional choices, residents are obliged to act, rather than to be acted upon. The use of surveillance technologies mandates decisions on if and how these technologies will be used, as well as the manner in which to respond to the data they provide. Controlling output indirectly (by hiring agencies and professionals to do so) or directly (as users respond to the environment being 'read') renders dwellers active participants in the experience of dwelling. Systems such as the bedside sound monitoring and alarm response device,¹⁷ for example, advertise their ability to react to alternations in sound as they continuously monitor individuals within the home and act as alarm mechanisms that recognize changes in the environment. Replacing in-home health providers and many off-site health services, residents and family members who make use of such technology in order to offer continuous supervision and to recognize states of emergency come to substitute for the watchful eye of nurses, caregivers, and social workers.¹⁸

Agency amongst users is also assumed through the conscious choice to be surveilled, as both what and how is monitored is controlled by the individuals whose images are circulated. Similarly to webcams, surveillance technologies at home may offer those under observation a sense of confidence and freedom that is a result of their being watched, protected, and secured.¹⁹ As Liu points out, it is the not-being-seen

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¹⁶ 'Smart' technologies refers to primarily digitalized systems that gather input, analyze and process it, and deliver outputs accordingly.

¹⁷ From www.google.com/patents/US20070024451

¹⁸ Thus, as Suzuki et al. for example show, the continuous monitoring of elderly populations with infrared sensors positioned throughout the residence may enable the early detection of dementia (Kenner 2008). In another system, master transceivers are connected to a standard telephone line and linked to cameras, enabling remote scanning of residents' locations in order to determine if they have fallen. The system can be linked to other alarm systems, so a fire alarm, for example, can generate a video call to a relative who can see and assess the situation and call for help (Miskelly 2001).

¹⁹ Rose, in *Powers of Freedom* (1999), speaks of technologies of 'securitization of identity,' in which to exercise freedom and to be able to move between various zones of freedom one must present constant proof of one's legitimate identity, that allows for both individuation and authorization. If freedom before was about the ability to dwell unobserved within the confines of one's home, surveillance technologies at home rewrite the notion of freedom and tie it into that of access.

that is often understood as a source of anxiety, with contemporary subjectivity entailing the living of life ‘perched on the boundary between public and private experience.’²⁰ To this she also adds ideologies of capitalism that encourage individuals to share details about their private lives (Liu 2011). Domestic surveillance systems also affect an additional connotative level embedded in the experience of being seen, namely the sense of power that ensues from making the conscious choice to be visible and watched. Those being seen assume power over those seeing; they do so once they no longer see themselves at the mercy of the panopticon’s anonymous guard (who may or may not be watching) but are, rather, those to decide when and where they will be observed, and by whom. As documented information is projected out to selected service providers and professionals (such as insurance companies, medical practitioners, and security personnel) situated in various locations, these in turn become viewers, an audience of sorts, and the home is transformed into a set upon which activities and events take place.

Aided by an artificial intelligence which is able to anticipate desire, the house becomes a set, equipped not only with furnishings, lights, monitors, cameras, and music but with a virtual production ‘crew’ that directs the action, provides the script, focuses the camera, and edits for the construction of meaning.

(Heckman 2008: 51)

Surveillance technologies in the home situate the private within a post-modern discourse on the voyeur gaze wherein individuals aspire to be watched (Lyon 2006). Concomitantly, the concept of privacy and the traditional hierarchies of visibility are also continuously rewritten as surveillance technologies become omnipresent (Haggerty and Ericson 2006). Displaying one’s self to the gaze of the camera becomes a means of undermining the tie between visibility and power, enabling the panoptic principle to be ‘turned into the pleasure principle’ (Weibel 2002: 218). Moreover, it assumes an ethical stance as disclosure is tied to a ‘nothing to hide’ approach. Empowering exhibitionism allows individuals to assume control over the representation of their lives, turning the living of daily life into an identity project. The JenniCAM project, which Koskela (2004) discusses, is one such project.²¹

Accessible to the constant gaze, the home acts as the site for exposure as webcams, surveillance cameras and other recording devices document residents’ most private activities in the most private of spaces. Those who voluntarily expose themselves actively engage in a surveillance culture as they fuse exhibitionism with solitude. In addition to the panoptic gaze, therefore, surveillance technologies in the home take on synoptic qualities as they manifest the desire of the few to be monitored and observed. In the home, the panoptic and the synoptic not only coexist, but feed off one another (Mathieson 1997), and while the panoptic model of surveillance offers a top-down approach in which the powerful surveill the less powerful (employers over employees, police over citizens), a synoptic reading offers a bottom-up approach in which the many watch the many (Mathieson 1997) or the many watch the few (Lyon 2006). Similarly to webcams, domestic surveillance systems, in their synoptic dimension, support particularities rather than perpetuate processes of normalization; they bring about a sense of empowerment as they are tailored to meet the particular needs of singular individuals.

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²⁰ Grounding her argument in the investigation of the transparent walls of modern architecture and its rereading on domesticity and prosperity, Liu states ‘The glass box as home asserts that its modern occupants can move in and out of public and private spaces with disarming and unprecedented ease: their happiness banishes secrets and bodily shame from the perimeter of a charmed existence’ (2011: 11).

²¹ *JenniCAM* was created by Jennifer Ringley in 1996, when she first installed a camera in her college dormitory room that documented her ordinary daily life under the gazes of the global audience on the internet. JenniCAM was to run for nearly eight years with millions of followers. For more see the discussion on Jenni’s Room in V. Burgin in *CTRL[SPACE]: Rhetorics of Surveillance from Bentham to Big Brother*, (2002) Cambridge MA and London: MIT Press, pp. 228-235).

Technology of Surveillance—Shifting Paradigms

The creation and enforcement of categories—be they of situations, individuals, or behaviour—is of essence in understanding the means through which surveillance operates (Graham and Wood 2007). As a classifying mechanism, what Lyon (2003) defines as ‘social sorting,’ surveillance is never neutral, since it establishes and promulgates normative values and is bound to hegemonic readings on the ‘good.’ That which does not fit into pre-defined normative parameters is read as deviant and thus subject to regulation and exclusion. In public spaces, for example, such expulsion of undesirable persons behaving in objectionable ways enables the ‘aestheticization’ and ‘purification’ of space; in commercial areas, those who appear unlikely to purchase merchandise (such as teenagers or the homeless) are barred from the spaces dedicated to retail, trade and commercialism (Koskela 2000).

While mechanically similar to their counterparts installed in public and semi-public spaces, domestic surveillance technologies differ in the manner by which they blur distinctions between user and the target or focus of observation. In systems catering to the wellbeing and health of elderly or infirm residents, for example, the distinction between observer and observed is nebulous when surveillance mechanisms are voluntarily installed by residents to serve as reminders or alarms. Similarly, when surveillance technologies monitor the presence of residents in order to adjust lighting and heating conditions, or when they operate entertainment equipment, show programs, play music—all according to the singular requirements of various household members—it is the target who becomes the beneficiary of surveillance. So if, as Giddens (1990) notes, modern surveillance is characterized by ever increasing distances between the observer and the observed, in the home these distances diminish dramatically.

Rather than setting in opposition one party against the other when they operate as disciplinary and ordering mechanisms, surveillance technologies in the domestic setting assume the cooperation of targets who are conscious of being surveilled—targets themselves who ultimately stand to benefit from being monitored. As a result, when one installs surveillance to monitor one’s self, one’s property and one’s family, no longer are those being surveilled visible while those surveilling remain obscure. No longer is the site under surveillance transparent and the site surveilling opaque. Subject as observer and object as that being observed are amalgamated; subject as mind and object as matter are united as one uses technology to monitor one’s self.

In urban, public surveillance, ‘anonymity becomes the norm’ (Hannah 1997: 174); one could also add that in the public sphere the norm allows for anonymity. Yet in the home, it is the singularity and inimitability of residents that serves as the data baseline of operation. To be seen at home is desirable, while to be seen in the public sphere is to embrace exceptionality that may be interpreted as deviance. Yet to be seen entails the loss of privacy, namely the ability to determine when, how, and to what extent of information about one is communicated to others (Westin 1967) or ‘...the condition in which others are deprived of access to you’ (Reiman 2004: 197). Such loss of privacy threatens the sense of control one may have over information, as well as over physical access to one’s body (Gavison 1980). Since ‘an important aspect of the value of privacy is the ability to have a dwelling space of one’s own, to which a person is able to control access...’ (Young 2004: 168), what is to ensue when information collected through domestic surveillance loses its exclusivity and is in danger of reaching the wrong hands?²² While the home may continue to be, to rephrase Young, the material base of privacy in which one stores one’s memories and memorabilia and in which artefacts manifest choices and decisions, it will offer the tangible body diminished privacy as surveillance increases. Inevitably, the distinctions between public and private that

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²² What Langdon Winner (1977) defines as ‘function creep,’ namely the use of technology for a cause for which it was not originally intended. One such example would be cameras set up to handle traffic congestion that are ultimately used to track the movement of particular vehicles for security purposes.

characterize surveillance in the public sphere will need to be reevaluated as the home exports increasingly more data on its residents to the ‘outer’ world.

Domestic surveillance apparatuses, particularly ‘smart’ ones, must actively ‘read’ bodies under observation and go beyond the documentation of activity to an interpretive and responsive mode. So, rather than a single-purpose CCTV camera set up to monitor vehicular and pedestrian traffic at an intersection, a domestic surveillance camera can be both benevolent and disciplinary, both compassionate and castigatory. The same technology, situated in the same location, assumes different capacities that are context-contingent. As the camera becomes a proxy for human presence, its versatile nature embodies alternative interactions between observer and observed. Consequently, the camera documenting activity in a living space and accessed remotely by a parent produces different discursive meaning when the object under observation is a child and his babysitter, a teenager and her friends, or a burglar. Moreover, different focal points of observation produce different professionalized subjects who are ‘...fluid, flexible, and heterogeneous subjects—subjects that are not moulded once and for all, but capable of finely graded modulations, like partial frequencies that can be isolated and adjusted to fit a multiplicity of acoustic environments’ (Bogard 2006: 106, reiterating Deleuze).

In Conclusion

The assemblage, rooted in the work of Deleuze and Guattari (1988) and developed by De Landa in *A New Philosophy of Society* (2006) defines a system characterized by the organic unity of its components, as well as by its fluidity, exchangeability, and multiple functionality. As surveillance technologies enter the home, a unique assemblage is formed in the tripartite conjunction of site, user, and technology, where each is prescribed through its interface with the other. Site, user, and technology are far from being stable, fixed entities as the home assumes spatial characteristics that situate it in a network of spatial mobility and flux. Domestic users are not only interpolated as subjects, but also assume heightened agency as they take control over their physical environment and over the projected image of their bodies. Paradigms in the ontology of surveillance that set viewer and target in opposition to one another, that correlate singularity with threat, and that bind the apparatus primarily to purpose rather than to context, are undermined.

On a first, horizontal, axis, an assemblage comprises two segments, one of content, the other of expression. On the one hand it is a machinic assemblage of bodies, of actions and passions, an intermingling of bodies reacting to one another; on the other hand it is a collective assemblage of enunciation, of acts and statements, of incorporeal transformations attributed to bodies.

(Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 88)

Bogard (2006) views the Foucauldian panopticon as such a twofold assemblage—both machinic and enunciative. The panopticon functions as a machinic assemblage as it encloses and partitions space, segregates and connects bodies, and coordinates flows on the one hand, and as an enunciative assemblage that assigns properties to bodies as it records, names and categorizes material processes and inserts them into a discursive system of knowledge, on the other. Similarly, the surveilled home takes on the qualities of a machinic assemblage when ensconced as a protected, invulnerable sanctuary on the one hand, but as an interrelated space among a network of spaces and as the setting for new kinds of interactions between humans and technological systems, and humans with one another, on the other. It functions as an enunciative assemblage as targets of observation undergo incorporeal transformations to become agents and performers, and as technology meshes with the human to create new forms of cognition and phenomenological experiencing.

Understanding technology to be a component within an assemblage rather than an extension or improvement of human capabilities acknowledges that as such it can be detached and plugged into other

assemblages wherein its interactions would be different.²³ What is more, the surveilled home, as an assemblage, can reconstitute itself through the interaction with other man-surveillance assemblages—such as the surveilled workplace or surveilled city—and become a component in the larger assemblage of a surveilled society, a society that is continuously reshaped and redefined by the cameras, sensors, monitors and webcams that have become an integral part of it.

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²³ As an example, questions pertaining to the surveilled workplace may evoke questions regarding a changing employer-employee dialectic, or those relating to the surveilled city may pertain to new readings on citizenship and public space.

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