

EXAMINING THE IMPACT OF GOVERNMENT SURVEILLANCE ON COMMUNITIES IN EAST GERMANY AND NORTHERN IRELAND IN THE 1970S AND 1980S

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I am a PHD research candidate in the school of Media in the Technological University of Dublin under the supervision on Dr Tom Clonan. My current area of research focuses on the impact and influence of surveillance on society as a whole. This paper aims to compare the historical surveillance practices used in Northern Ireland and East German Stasi during the 70s and 80s to help determine the impact of mass surveillance on the wider community.

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Abstract

With the advent of the digital age, the world is at a surveillance crossroads; past tactics, such as wiretapping, are becoming obsolete. We are hurtling towards a world in which virtual information is accessed through covert data mining. Citizens have little or no protection from this intrusion, and moreover, little is known about the ways this information is used. The impact this will have on society and its influence on how we interact and communicate have yet to be determined.

An historical look at the GDR and NI as examples of heavily monitored societies provides a unique perspective on the impact of surveillance. The main areas of focus will look at the impact on the citizen, the community, and the wider society. By undertaking a detailed examination of the literature and comparing how these two surveilled societies interacted during these periods of heavy surveillance, insight can be gained into the future impact on generations, living in the context of new advanced surveillance technologies.

This paper will compare two surveillance states—East Germany, or the German Democratic Republic (GDR), and Northern Ireland (NI) during the 70's and 80'. With this historical context the aim is to examine the roles and impacts of surveillance operations on these two communities and constructing a detailed comparison between these two surveillance societies.

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Introduction: The Context of Surveillance in Northern Ireland and East Germany

To compare surveillance strategies used in East Germany, or the German Democratic Republic (GDR), and Northern Ireland (NI), the history of and rationale for surveillance operations in each state must be taken into account. Both cases can be examined and analysed using Foucault's model of surveillance; he described traditional models as power flowing from the surveyors (government or corporate actors) to the surveilled:

In this concept, power is something possessed by an authority that is exerted over things, which can modify use, consume or destroy. (1982, p. 786)

For 40 years, the East German State Security Service, commonly known as the Stasi, had a frightening reputation for surveillance, infiltration, and terror in the GDR. Its sole objective was to control citizens and prevent the growing tide of emigration to West Germany, which nearly caused the economic collapse of the East German communist regime. By creating an atmosphere of fear, disharmony, and mistrust, the State surveillance tactics prevented the spontaneous communication and social cohesion that were critical for change. As Foucault suggested, 'People under surveillance are—as in the Panopticon—to be seen but to never know when or by whom; under control but without physical intervention' (1977, p. 204).

In contrast, the NI surveillance state had its roots in civil rights protests of the late 60's enacted in which the Catholic minority were looking to end discriminatory voting, housing, and employment policies. Their demands led to intensified political tension and intercommunity violence between the Protestant/Unionist and Catholic/nationalist communities. This, in turn, resulted in the deployment of the British Army to quell the cycles of violence, terrorist attacks, and street. The tactical aim was to end the violence and restore order through on-the-ground tactical surveillance strategies. Drawing on its colonial experience, the British establishment chose a coercive and militarised policing response to civil rights and liberties. This provocative approach exacerbated the Troubles,

essentially becoming a threat-multiplier. Numerous similarities can be drawn with today's police forces, which face increasing threats from radical elements; O'Malley and Hutchinson suggested this by noting that the 'development of police as a quasi-military form of organization and the growth of a police culture which emphasizes a form of masculine heroism' (2007, p. 385).

The Concept of the State Society

Surveillance is a form of power and control that has a direct bearing on how we live our lives, interact in our communities, and participate in our political systems. As Foucault said, 'Freedom disappears everywhere power is exercised' (1982, p. 790). This is most often at the expense of the individual because state institutions prioritise security.

One popular hypothesis among academics is that this constant surveillance will lead to a more segregated and polarised society, as suggested by Norris and Armstrong: 'It is feared that surveillance will lead to a "vicious-circle of defence". It is likely to make urban space segregated, polarised, more difficult to approach and stay in, less lively, less spontaneous and even "dead"' (1999, p. 92).

Numerous academics refer to societies that function under the governmental gaze as 'surveillance societies', a phrase coined by Lyon, who defined the surveillance network as 'societies which function, in part, because of the extensive collection, recording, storage, analysis and application of information on individuals and groups in those societies' (2007, p. 119). According to this definition, the GDR and NI societies of the 1970s and 1980s fit into the 'surveillance societies' category. However, two significant differences exist: in GDR, every citizen had the potential to be impacted by surveillance operations, while in NI, operations were split between polarised communities—that is, the Catholic nationalists and Protestant loyalists.

Citizen Impact

In a surveillance society, the concept of the individual is ignored to justify the state's exertion of control over the collective. Due to the emphasis that the state placed on loyalty, preference is often given to those groups deemed to be good or compliant citizens. As Foucault argued in *Surveillance and Power*, 'The state is envisioned as a kind of political power which ignores individuals, looking only at the interests of the totality or, I should say, of a class or a group among the citizens' (1982, p. 782). In *Discipline and Punishment*, Foucault took this a step further by showing how modern governments replaced the clumsy, inefficient power of the monarch with a system of general surveillance that 'produces a self regulating citizenry with the individual exercising this surveillance over and against himself' (1979, p. 155).

The long-term impact on an individual under constant surveillance is fear, mistrust, and self-censorship, which have led many people targeted by surveillance to retreat deeper into their private life as they spheres as they move away from community engagement to becoming more become family centric. As Kirstie Ball explained in her seminal *Exposure: Exploring the Subject of Surveillance*, the 'subject appears in the panopticon: as a mere shadow or outline only assumed to be reflexive, internally focused and self-regulating' (2009, p. 644).

In GDR, self-censorship became a measure of self-protection that people applied to all facets of life because they believed that everything they said was monitored. As Bruce explained, 'East Germans also practiced self-censorship in other, more private areas, including mail and telephone, where it would be very unlikely for East Germans to speak openly for fear of Stasi interception' (2010, p. 156). This form of self-censorship also affected the citizens of NI, often as a result of the ever-increasing violence in both the communal and private life rendering people unable to communicate, speak, and interact freely. As Dermot Feenan pointed out, 'The only others with such mobility were the police and army.' Within his developing awareness of a 'culture of political surveillance and confessional communities', he added, 'I had to constrain the body as well as the voice. Finally, in order to know, I had to become expert in demonstrating that there were things, places, and people I did not want to know' (2002, p. 148).

The literature examining surveillance issues in both GDR and NI emphasises how a sense of mistrust dominated citizen interactions and how this impacted citizens' ability to express their opinions liberally. In the case of GDR, Barbara Miller said:

Although IM (Unofficial Informers) had not only been physically omnipresent, they had helped to create a general atmosphere of distrust and conspiracy which had ensured that many a critical sentiment was never voiced lest it should be reported to higher powers. (1997, p. 253)

In both the GDR and NI, many testified that a cloud of suspicion and fear hung over communities as a result of constant state surveillance. Philipsen noted this in his work documenting the GDR revolution: 'This was an ever-present fear; somehow it permeated all walks of life; this haunting fear that you could be arrested anytime right off the street. The Stasi heard everything, knew everything, were everywhere, and everybody knew that' (1998, p. 158). In GDR, the Stasi threat also produced a certain discourse that fuelled fear and small acts of defiance and resistance, such as mocking the alleged eavesdroppers on the telephone or speculating on perceived spies among colleagues.

In their work on surveillance societies, Lyon and Marx make continuous reference to the theory that in a securitised state, everyone is perceived as a risk, and this notion usual takes the place of the reasonable-cause

model of policing: 'Reasonable cause gives way to categorical suspicion where, for example, police may stop and search vehicles in a given locality' (Lyon, 2003, p. 89). This concept of reasonable cause played a crucial role in policing practices in NI and the GDR and prevented many citizens from exercising their right to due process. In NI, the violent backdrop against which people lived often compounded this fear of surveillance. Feldman discussed this issue in *Political Terror and the Technologies of Memory*:

The risks of violent recourse, imprisonment, being on the run, or equivalent retaliation were negligible for Sean. By simply living a life of non-involvement in Belfast he could also, at any time, become the object of loyalist assassination, police interrogation and torture, and shoot-to-kill 'arrests'. (2016, p. 59)

Whyte examined the work of Rosemary Harris, an anthropologist who studied a rural community near the NI border, and observed the feelings of mistrust on both sides of the divided community: 'She found that, despite a careful courtesy in everyday relations, deep mistrust and grotesque misconceptions existed on both sides of the community divide' (1976, p. 273). This sense of fear often had long-lasting mental health consequences. Regarding the GDR, Bruce stated, 'Certainly, there were real, long-term mental health consequences similar to post-traumatic stress syndrome to having been a Stasi target and which are being treated in dedicated clinics in Germany today' (2010, p. 150). In his report regarding NI Policing, Wilson came to the similar conclusion that a combination of constant state surveillance and increasing violence led many to suffer lasting mental health issues: '24 per cent of women and 17 per cent of men in Northern Ireland have a mental-health problem—rates over 20 per cent higher than in England or Scotland, due to excess unemployment, social deprivation and the "Troubles" overhang' (2016, p. 137). This element is more relevant in today's every encroaching use of surveillance powers. This can be seen clearly in the example of Bush's use of the Patriot act, which provided over arching surveillance provisions, the details of which were leaked by Edward Snowden. This legislation went on to be used in the highly publicised cases of Chelsea Manning and Reality Winner who were subsequently jailed for leaking information on crimes they witnessed in their work for the security forces.

Many theorists have argued that constant surveillance has a chilling effect on people's ability to speak freely and may stunt their development and the ability to interact freely. Until the consequences of surveillance are seen, the true extent of its power cannot be understood:

Citizens cannot, in effect, legitimate laws that result in the mass and pervasive surveillance of the population based on the potential that one person may be a danger; such surveillance practices would stunt the individuals' development and the development of the communities that individuals find themselves within, as people limit what they say to avoid experiencing the (unknown) consequences of their speech. (Parsons, 2015, p. 16)

Due to this atmosphere of mistrust and citizens' inability to express their true selves, people in NI resisted telling the truth, as Kevin Myers described in *Watching the Door*:

Everyone lied in Northern Ireland . . . Everyone, without exception: republicans, loyalists, soldiers, police—everyone. Lying is easy in such a place. It is the default mode to which everyone turns when there is no consensus about truth. In the absence of an agreed reality, truth is whatever you're having yourself. (2008, p. 117)

Now as then, this can lead to the blanket acceptance of the surveillance state, as can be seen in the case of China's rolling out of the social credit score. This system, which was put forward with little opposition, can determine whether a person's loan application is approved, or whether they can travel outside the nation's borders. Many refer to this as the institutionalisation of the individual—due to the state's exertion of power over citizens. Foucault argued as follows:

Forms of institutionalization: these may mix traditional pre-dispositions, legal structures, phenomena relating to custom or to fashion (such as one sees in the institution of the family); they can also take the form of an apparatus closed in upon itself, with its specific loci, its own regulations, its hierarchical structures which are carefully defined, a relative autonomy in its functioning (such as scholastic or military in-situations); they can also form very complex systems endowed with multiple apparatuses, as in the case of the state, whose function is the taking of everything under its wing, the bringing into being of general surveillance, the principle of regulation, and, to a certain extent also, the distribution of all power relations in a given social ensemble. (1982, p. 792)

The impact of surveillance and repression was often supported by intimidation and physical repercussions for those who expressed an alternative opinion to that of the state. This was the case for both NI and the GDR. In NI, physical intimidation was more blatant. In his analysis of NI, Feldman found that although one might not have been directly involved in the violence, one could have become unwittingly embroiled in it. In the GDR, there was a subtle, psychologically erosive effect that occurred over time through interference with people's life choices. (2016, p. 65)

In the GDR, the surveillance state and subsequent intimidation often led to the intentional breakdown of the targeted individual. The surveillance of the targeted individual entrapped not only him or her but also his or her relations and everyone with whom he or she communicated, thereby granting the surveyor the potential power to exert influence over the targeted individual's close relationships. As Justice Brandeis *Olmstead v United States* in 1928, which was the first wiretapping case in the Supreme Court, argues, 'The tapping of one man's telephone line involves the tapping of the telephone of every other person whom he may call, or who may call him' (Brandeis, 1928).

In a surveillance state, the control exerted on citizens often forces them to become compliant, and the need to adapt to the regime and live a normal life becomes a survival mechanism. Parsons takes this further, arguing that this constant state of control through surveillance leads to the dissipation of social bonds; hence, in the need to live a normal life, citizens learn to adapt and accept the limits of the surveillance state, complying with and working within its limits: surveillance ‘weakens the bonds needed for populations to develop the requisite relationships for fostering collective growth and inclusive law-making’ (Parsons, 2015, p. 2).

Citizens’ compliance in the face of physical and physiological methods of control in both NI and GDR was essential to the securitisation strategies of both states. In NI, citizens’ compliance was fundamental to restoring law and order, and in the context of the GDR, it was vital in guaranteeing the state’s stability and survival. The individual, therefore, ceased to exist in the eyes of the state and was replaced by a set of judgments based on a set of behaviours and partial information that someone with control and power deemed hostile. These judgments were often made in secret without the knowledge of the targeted person or with any type of context taken into account:

Past activities can be queried to determine the relative hostility of a person, their intentions, or their past activities and communications partners, and without a person being able to rebut or contextualize their past behaviours. They are effectively always subject to secret evaluations without knowing what is being evaluated, why, or the consequences or outcomes of the evaluations undertaken. (Parsons, 2015, p. 3)

In the case of NI and GDR in through the 70’s and 80’s, many citizens attempting to lead normal lives in these surveillance societies remained largely unaware of the true extent of the pervasive nature of surveillance operations. These ordinary citizens were not seen as a threat and were largely unaffected by the surveillance operations therefore no one person could be identified as the watcher. As Bell pointed out in her exploration of surveillance and everyday resistance, ‘It may also be the case that individuals are ambivalent towards surveillance because there is sometimes no identifiable “watcher” or perceivable “control” being asserted’ (2009, p. 3). What ensures discipline simultaneously erodes confidence, and guilt and embarrassment guarantee (self-)control. As Tabor wrote, ‘The very idea of surveillance evokes curiosity, desire, aggression, guilt, and, above all, fear—emotions that interact in daydream dramas of seeing and being seen, concealment and self-exposure, attack and defence, seduction and enticement’ (2001, p. 135). In today’s social media world how data is being used and misused is now coming to the public forum, however people who use these tools continue to be complacent about the data they share. This may be due to the fact that citizens today are unaware of the consequences the misuse of personal information can have, because as in the case of the ordinary citizen in NI and GDR they have not experienced the impact.

In the GDR, as a result of the covert characteristic of surveillance operations, many who were unaffected by the Stasi were unaware of the extent to which it had penetrated and controlled civil society. Only when the wall came down and the Stasi files on the surveillance operations carried out during this period were made public did the full scope of Stasi operations become known.

2. Community Impact

In pre-digital eras, snooping, eavesdropping, gossiping, and otherwise furtively gathering information about people in whom one was interested was normal. In *Eavesdropping: An Intimate History*, John Locke chronicled countless examples of people overhearing others, peering through keyholes or over ladders, and snapping photographs on the street, all of which were part of what he called ‘the lifelong quest for all humans to know what is going on in the personal and private lives of others’ (2010, p. 6).

The extent to which government surveillance permeated the everyday lives of GDR citizens has been well documented. Many studies have noted that surveillance targets who opt to disengage with their community because they could no longer trust their neighbours; insecurity and indifference followed. This erosion of confidence in the support of one social network ultimately led to a breakdown of the community in its traditional sense, as Helen Nissenbaum described in *Privacy in Context*:

The norms that can be violated are themselves developed based on force of habit amongst persons and their communities, their conventions, as well as a ‘general confidence in the mutual support’ of information flows that ‘accord to key organizing principles of social life, including moral and political ones.’ (2009, p. 231)

The impact of surveillance does not automatically mean a complete shutdown of communication with others; rather, it has an altering effect on the types of conversations citizens are willing to have, as they feel less free to express their true thoughts publicly. Cohen suggested the following in *Examined Lives: Informational Privacy and the Subject as Object*:

While the monitoring of such communications will not end all conversations, it will alter what individuals and groups are willing to say. Such surveillance, then, negatively affects communicative processes and can be critiqued on its capacity to stunt or inappropriately limit expressions of private or public autonomy. (2000), p. 1426)

Noting the breakdown in community bonds in the GDR, Bruce implied that for many, ‘the idea that there was a sense of community in East Germany that has since evaporated, is common in some circles of East Germany today’ (2010, p. 157). Further, when describing life in the GDR in *The File*, Timothy Garton Ash depicted this sense of suspicion and insecurity that became an everyday fact of life: ‘“Suspicion is everywhere,” I wrote. ‘It strikes in the

bar, it lurks in the telephone, it travels with you in the train. Wherever two or three are gathered together, there suspicion will be” (2009, p. 72).

This atmosphere in the GDR was compounded by the general perception that the enemy was everywhere, as the noted academic historian Mary Fulbrook observed in her work on the GDR and twentieth-century dictatorships: ‘There was a more general atmosphere of suspicion and on occasion well-grounded fear with East Germany too in context where the class enemy was held to be everywhere’ (1992, p. 323).

Communities often became built on and around the sanctuary of the church, and numerous dissident groups, usually comprising oppressed and harassed young Christians, sprang up from these open spaces. One example is the case of Protestant pastor Christian Führer, a leading figure and organiser of the 1989 Monday demonstrations in GDR, which eventually led to the collapse of the state in 1990. The church mostly remained independent from the state, allowing people this elusive freedom; however, it was infiltrated by Stasi informers, resulting in vocal members becoming surveillance targets, which led to the limiting of their life choices:

Young Christians in particular generally preferred to lead their social life within the circles of the ‘Young Parish Community’ (Junge Gemeinde) members of which were subjected to considerable harassment in the early 1950s, with negative consequences for plans to study or pursue careers in the GDR. (Fulbrook, 1992, p. 333)

The regime made a conscious attempt to fabricate and manipulate public opinion at all levels of community activity. The division created among East German citizens not only affected had a corrosive effect on personal and family bonds as well as on the external community relationships. As Major stated, ‘the sudden amputation of the two halves of Berlin sliced through innumerable personal bonds and family ties’ (2010, p. 127).

As a result of the lack of trust in the wider community, many ordinary citizens often had to change their outward political views out of fear of denunciation and backlash for voicing any opposition to the political regime. According to Fulbrook, ‘Political instability and radical changes of regime meant that Germans frequently had to change their outward allegiances or at least adapt their behaviour patterns in order to pursue what they had constructed as their personal life projects’ (1992, p. 9).

In NI, fissures between Catholics and Protestants caused these divided communities to become more entrenched within themselves. In many cases, these communities provided protection from the on-going violence that the state failed to provide, and this allowed for extreme elements within the community to exert control over it.

A system of internal vigilance and social control: in order to successfully ‘watch the enemy’. The central argument here is that the inter community conflict in Northern Ireland fostered external surveillance of the ‘Others’ community and in turn necessitated and facilitated the internal surveillance of one’s own community. (Zurawski, 2005, p. 499)

This created a power shift from state to community; this system of community surveillance in NI reflects the two faces of surveillance that Lyon (2001) identified: care and control. In this case, these communities perceived this exertion of control as providing a much-needed sense of security. ‘The effect on the watching, intelligence and surveillance were paramount for these systems, which served as social control and an instrument of power as well as a life insurance for the people in these neighbourhoods’; any outside influence was seen as a threat, and ‘to watch your own was part of the strategy for social order within the community. Any activities that might have threatened its integrity had to be controlled and eventually sanctioned’ (Zurawski, 2005, p. 505).

Thus, there developed an environment in which everyone was watching everyone. Zurawski explained:

While watching the other was important and for some people involved a necessity, it also meant that at the same time they were being watched by themselves—not only by the perceived enemy, but also by their own communities. Being a traitor or an informer to the police was among the biggest fears for many and among the most important reasons for suspicion of the police and thus for establishing ‘alternative’ systems of justice and policing within the community to ‘watch your own.’ (2005, p. 504)

Tim Pat Coogan, a renowned reporter author, in his book *The Troubles*, observed that ‘For one thing, I have noticed that the various communities that were under attack are much more closely knit than ever before. You have young people, and elderly people, all closely knit’ (2002, p. 103). This ultimately had a divisive effect on the building of understanding, trust, and community cohesion, which further fuelled the segregation of Catholics and Protestants. This encouraged the ‘them and us’ mentality that dominated the mindset of working class communities on both sides of the divide. ‘In all of these working-class streets, there of course existed a strong sense of “them and us” and a concomitant fear that the “them” would be returning to stage a Clonard-style repeat performance’ (Coogan, 2002, p. 124). This communal division was used as an instrument to mobilise community support for the extremist agenda for both loyalists and republicans. The timing of the punishments meted out by these groups was carefully planned to garner maximum attention and reinforce strategic goals. Feldman pointed out the following:

The PIRA will manipulate the timing of punishment violence in order to mobilize community support revealing that paramilitary punishment is a mnemo-technique reserved for special times and political moments dedicated to the performance and display of cathartic communal memory on the bodies of others. (2016, p. 65)

This led to tight-knit communities closing themselves off to any outside contact. This siege mentality, which resulted from a lack of trust in the security forces, enabled intercommunity bias because alternative voices and

opinions were not encouraged. From his time undertaking research involving a prolonged participant observation in the nationalist and republican parts of Belfast during periods of high-level political conflict, Burton indicated that there were ‘physical dangers as well as challenges in accessing tight-knit communities’, also noting ‘his developing awareness of a “culture of political surveillance” and “confessional communities.”’ He reported, “I had to constrain the body as well as the voice. Finally, in order to know I had to become expert in demonstrating that there were things, places, and people I did not want to know’ (1979, p. 79).

In 2012, a wide-reaching study was conducted in NI on the attitudes of citizens currently living in the shadows of the peace walls; this study revealed that although the atmosphere among communities is improving, people are not yet prepared for the walls to come down. Most believe that the peace walls should come down in the future (58%). More concerning is the fact that over a fifth of the respondents living closest to the peace walls (22%) thought that they should remain as they are. This atmosphere of fear and distrust remains in the psychic backgrounds of these communities. Byrne, Gormely-Heenan, and Sturgeon suggested the following:

These attitudes were underpinned by expressed fears of potential ‘loss’ of community; a fear of violence; and a fear that the police would be unable to maintain law and order in the event of the ‘constant problems’ that might result from the walls being removed. Indeed, 17% of respondents living closest to the walls said that they would try to move away if the walls in their areas were to come down. (2015, p. 17)

Criminological theories of informal social control also extend to the role of ‘surveillance’ by residents and the ‘norms of conduct’ by which residents are regulated. Brewer and Rodgers (1997) concluded that ‘political violence’ has ironically protected NI from some of the ‘worst vagaries of community breakdown and dislocation witnessed in Britain’s inner cities’ (1997, p. 216).

As was the case with NI, the modern surveillance state runs the risk of creating polarised communities, especially when profiling individuals becomes a normal method of surveillance and security. Graham took this a step further, suggesting that this control through surveillance will have an altering effect on community and societal behaviours, as people have to make compromises when navigating these controlled spaces: ‘Surveillance is used to monitor the groups, whose visual appearance is interpreted as somehow deviant, producing a particular type of “normative space-time ecology”’ (1998, p. 491).

In NI, the idea of the ‘other’ was accelerated by pre-existing ethnic, religious, and political differences. Therefore, in a surveillance society, what was diverse now became polarised, divided, and radicalised. Similar comparisons can be drawn from the perceived Islamist threat today. Norris argued that the power provided by systems and techniques of surveillance encourages and fuels community division: ‘It is a “powerful tool in managing and enforcing exclusion”’ (2003, p. 267). This gives rise to the justification of the securitisation of these communities, as Starr et al. suggested, because surveillance ‘gives rise to a security culture; which can have devastating impacts on inclusivity, solidarity, bonds of friendship and community’ (2008, p. 262).

3. Societal Impact

The societal impact of surveillance has a direct bearing on the citizen’s relationship with the political system, and this, in turn, affects people’s attitudes to how they interact and engage with government institutions. As Lyon pointed out in *Surveillance After September 11*, ‘Surveillance has become a routine and mundane feature that is embedded in every aspect of life and operates in a wide range of agencies well beyond the confines of the central state’ (Lyon, 2001).

With the increasing use of surveillance techniques in modern security and policing strategy, the state’s control over these institutions appears to have grown, unlike the case of the GDR and NI; however, this power does not appear to be wielded to the same extent in contemporary society. Foucault made the following observation:

It is certain that in contemporary societies, the state is not simply one of the forms or specific situations of the exercise of power—even if it is the most important—but that in a certain way all other forms of power relation must refer to it. But this is not because they are derived from it; it is rather because power relations have come more and more under state control (although this state control has not taken the same form in pedagogical, judicial, economic, or family systems). (1982, p. 793)

Despite ever-increasing intrusions into the private sphere via new invasive technologies and laws, the impact these systems of surveillance will have on the way in which we function as a society remains unclear. In a surveillance state, the control exerted on citizens often forces them to comply with policies and actions they oppose under a free system. This has a chilling effect on socially beneficial behaviour, which results in the deterioration of our interaction with state institutions, hampering our ability to vocalise any concerns regarding the way in which our state is governed. In a recent study undertaken in 2016 by Elizabeth Stoycheff highlights this fact, as the majority of participants who were aware of government surveillance were significantly deterred from speaking out in an environment that was hostile to alternative opinion. As Parsons suggested, surveillance ‘weakens the bonds needed for populations to develop the requisite relationships for fostering collective growth and inclusive law-making’ (2015, p. 3). This is in keeping with Hirschman’s *Shifting Involvements: Private Interest and Public Action* in which he offered critical insights into the understanding of collective action. His findings maintained that, ‘Realizing that efforts to change public life are either forbidden or unrewarded, people will predictably withdraw from public affairs and pursue individual interests until such a time as an opening becomes available’ (1982, p. 101).

Surveillance can be used to justify the censorship of voices that do not conform to self-serving state narratives. As Marx argued, the surveillance of protesters conducted by the United States authorities such as in the case of the Black Lives Matters movement (LAURA LY, Mark Morales, 2019) could 'seriously distort the life of a social movement; they can serve as mechanisms of containment, prolongation, alteration, or repression' (1974, p. 403).

Much of the justification behind current surveillance practice is based on the perception that it improves behaviour and creates safer public spaces, as Bentham envisaged in his seminal work 'The Panopticon. (1787) In *The New Transparency: Police Violence in the Context of Ubiquitous Surveillance*, Ben Brucato made a similar finding: 'This preventative power, provided by the visibility cameras produce, recalls Bentham's claim that "behaviour improves when people are strictly observed"' (2015, p. 48). Foucault drew similar conclusions regarding the deep connection between surveillance and the state security apparatus, identified by Stephen Pfaff: the '[a]uthoritarian model of social organisation in which absolutist states enlisted police powers in the service of political security and popular welfare'. He went on to argue that in a surveillance state, these systems of repression work in tandem to exert control over '[a] secret police dedicated to uncovering the hidden threats to the regime from within and without took an increasingly prominent place alongside conventional agencies of social control' (Pfaff, 2001, p. 401).

For people living in the GDR, the need to live a normal life despite the repressive regime became the main focus. Major recognised this need to blend in or live under the radar in a society in which citizens are under scrutiny, stating that 'the population had to "come to an arrangement" with the regime and "make the best of their situation", simply because they had no other choice' (2010, p. 159). Political establishments and police were provided with big budgets to ensure that strict party loyalty was enforced. Their only allegiance was to the GDR's regime, which they aimed to protect and uphold regardless of whether state policies benefitted society: 'The ministry had an annual budget of 4 billion Marks, 27 separate divisions entrusted with matters ranging from party loyalty to economic surveillance and oversaw the operations of the formally separate civilian police in the Ministry of the Interior' (Pfaff, 2001, p. 392).

The close relationship between the state and the police was one of the greatest assets utilised by the GDR's governing powers and can be considered one of the main reasons the system of repression lasted for almost four decades. In *The KGB and the Control of the Soviet Bloc*, Popplewell described this deep-rooted connection between the state and police:

The close intertwining of Party and secret police apparatus was one of the main reasons why the East German regime endured for so long and with so little popular opposition. This unity between Party and security organs lay at the heart of the Stasi's work. In MfS documents, the Stasi and the Party were presented as the vanguard of society. To echo the Stasi's own words, both were meant to lead society and to shape it. (1998, p. 276)

The overt and pervasive nature of this surveillance was so divisive that it successfully silenced the voice of any dissent. Popplewell added the following:

The most important role of the local secret police of Eastern Europe was thus to spy upon their own populations. Generally speaking, the 'secrecy' of these agencies was not the key to their success. Rather by their very ubiquity they were designed to cow all potential opponents within their societies. (1998, p. 255)

The system depended on the maintenance of mystique around the state's actions. When this veil was removed, the party's power disappeared and citizens felt empowered to make life choices and take their freedom back. Jarausch described the re-empowering of GDR dissidents in his depiction of the negotiation of the unification talks: 'Krenz's dialogue policy as well as Modrow's negotiations at the Round Table recognized the opposition groups as legitimate partners. When these changes demystified the Stasi, reducing their capacity to instil fear, its power evaporated' (2014, p. 76).

Everyone in GDR society was viewed as a hostile element whose trust had to be earned, thus enabling this state of perpetual paranoia. This paranoia led to the misreading of the dissented voices, who ultimately wanted to make changes within in the system rather than destroy it completely. This misreading of popular sentiment proved to be counterproductive, resulting in the downfall of the GDR: 'Fundamental misunderstanding of system-immanent dissenters like Havemann, Biermann, and Bahro, they were seen as agents of foreign subversion instead of as idealists trying to democratize socialism' (Jarausch, 2014, p. 76).

In the GDR, once the fear of those in power diminished, people felt that they could finally come together to voice their opinions and concerns publicly. The peaceful revolution, which saw the tearing down of the Berlin Wall and the overthrow of the government, occurred without a single bullet fired, and as Albrecht described in *The Role of Social Movements in the Collapse of the German Democratic Republic*, there 'no single window [was] broken during the Leipzig autumn' (1996, p. 161).

It can be said that the stability of the state and the maintenance of the regime resulted from the cooperation of the elite, the containment of dissent, and the isolation of potential opposition. The survival of the GDR depended on the success of the forced compliance of its citizens. The following is outlined in Miller's work on the GDR:

Various analyses of the average citizen's behaviour in the GDR have been proposed since 1989. Psychologist Hans-Joachim Maaz describes the East German psyche as having been characterised by a split personality . . .

This split in personality enabled East Germans to betray their private convictions in public, and explains why,

for example, well over 90% of the population went along with the farcical voting procedure. (1997, p. 187)

In NI, by comparison, many citizens in besieged communities looked to radical alternatives as they sought safety. Communities became the social environments from which paramilitaries emerged and by means of which they sustained their support. For many, the state and the army became symbols of the discrimination and violence that dominated NI communities: 'Catholic west Belfast became an occupied zone. Public buildings such as schools, recreational halls, even blocks of flats and football grounds including the Casement Park GAA ground, were all occupied by soldiers' (Coogan, 2002, p. 187).

Between 1973 and 1999, there were 2,168 'punishment' shootings and beatings. Between 1982 and 1999, the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) recorded 1,427 'punishment' beatings, which were often carried out with the knowledge of state security forces:

Alleged forms of collusion were said to include: the illicit disclosure of security information, such as photo montages (created by the military as a recognition tool for the security forces and including the date of birth and sometimes the home address of a terrorist suspect); facilitation of acts of terrorism; failure to provide adequate protection or to warn people at risk; failure to vigorously investigate terrorist incidents and provision of weaponry to terrorist groups. (Cochrane, 2013, p. 78)

As Pfaff suggested, in a surveillance society in which the state virtually eliminates the public sphere, informal ties become critically important. He stated that 'these groups often provide the only opportunity for genuine participation in public life and an opportunity to define actual interests and needs that are otherwise prohibited or ignored by the regime' (2001, p. 397).

The targeting of peaceful demonstrations alongside the disenfranchisement of the Catholic population led many to believe that engaging with the state was futile: 'What had happened in Derry had been merely a legal rerun of what the RUC had done in October 1968 to trigger off the entire conflict—i.e. trapping the demonstrators in a confined area and then attacking them—no further comment is necessary' (Coogan, 2002: 177).

The fact that the Catholic population had very little say in the day-to-day operations of the state made these communities opt out of engaging in government institutions: 'One of these "established local authorities" was Fermanagh County Council. At the time of the publication of the Macrory Report, had thirty-five Unionist councillors, while the Catholic majority was represented by only seventeen' (Coogan, 2002, p. 143).

The gerrymandering of voting boundaries in NI further created a barrier to Catholic participation in the democratic process. The voting practices in both NI and the GDR were ultimately prohibitive to citizen participation in state governance. As Flusty pointed out in his work on paranoia, this segregation and disenfranchisement of citizens is counterproductive to a health society: 'Via segregation, purification and exclusion of particular groups, surveillance encourages conflict. The urge for security "has generated a defensive arms race"' (1994, p. 49).

In the case of NI and GDR, both systems of surveillance had clear connections and operated hand in hand with the security services, police, judiciary, and army. Levin drew similar comparisons from the examples of many repressive regimes that exist today:

There is a clear military connection. Further, seemingly harmless surveillance technology is used in non-democratic regimes and used to police undesirable groups and movements. China, where surveillance images were used to identify the student leaders of the Tiananmen Square demonstration, provides an example of this. (2002, p. 579)

However, Foucault argued that in the modern era of the surveillance society, shows of force are obsolete because all that is required for the state to control its citizens is for the latter to know that they are being watched, as evidenced by the systems of surveillance that existed in the GDR. The 'absence of force' creates the force of our times:

There is no need for arms, physical violence, material constraints. Just a gaze. An inspecting gaze, a gaze that each individual under its weight will end by interiorising to the point that he is his own overseer, each individual thus exercising this surveillance over, and against, himself. A superb formula: power exercised continuously and for what turns out to be a minimal cost. (1980, p. 155)

The 'nothing to hide' argument is one of the primary standpoints used in the debate on the need to balance privacy and security. In its most compelling form, this suggests that people's privacy interest is generally minimal to trivial, thus making the balance against security concerns a preordained victory for security: 'When surveillance and sousveillance are both treated equally—a more appropriate state—one can say that there is "equeveillance." More typically, however, there is "inequeveillance"' (Boiler, 2013).

The individual is shaped by society, and the good of both the individual and society are often interrelated rather than antagonistic. Therefore, it is vital that democratic institutions protect the individual as much as the state. As Solove noted, 'We cannot think of ourselves save as to some extent social beings. Hence we cannot separate the idea of ourselves and our own good from our idea of others and of their good', and 'Dewey contends that the value of protecting individual rights emerges from their contribution to society' (2008, p. 761).

Norris also concluded that '[r]ather than promoting a democratic gaze, the reliance on categorical suspicion further intensifies the surveillance of those already marginalized and further increases their chance of official stigmatization' (2003, p. 266). Moreover, if surveillance is seen as 'an extension of discriminatory and unjust policing, the consequential loss of legitimacy may have serious consequences for the social order' (Norris and

Armstrong, 1999, p. 151).

Unchecked powers of surveillance are inherently toxic and corrosive to healthy democratic growth and progress. If a cost–benefit analysis is conducted, the enormous investment in surveillance ultimately benefits a tiny number in power and stalls normal, healthy growth in society. This eventually leads to such dysfunction that the society becomes unsustainable, leading to the collapse of the state, as in the GDR, or to increasingly violent retaliation, as in the case of NI. These outcomes often have worse consequences for all stakeholders than the perceived threats in the first place.

Conclusion

While the era of the modern surveillance state provides many with a sense of security, some fear that the danger lies in the potential for communities to be governed exclusively in the name of security. Marc Schuilenburg suggested that '[t]he punishment of harmful behaviour is only important when it leads to a reduction of risk' (2015, p. 37). Therefore, surveillance techniques used as part of a wider security strategy may create a disenfranchised population due to stereotype-induced profiling. It can be argued this was the case in NI, where the majority-Catholic population was seen as the potential threat. Conversely, in the GDR, every citizen who spoke out in defiance of the state was viewed with suspicion; in other words, everyone was a potential target. Therefore, one can argue, as Deleuze suggested, that in surveillance societies, such as NI and the GDR, there is a shift from Foucault's disciplinary enclosure to a fluid 'control society' (1995, p. 178–179), leading to 'ceaseless control in open sites' (1995, p. 175).

When examining the NI and GDR contexts, both surveillance state systems had the same aim of rooting out all opposition and controlling dissent and dissonance through voluntary or forced compliance: 'The function of the secret police in such regimes is not only to root out opposition and discourage dissent but to regulate the political and moral conduct of both ordinary citizens and functionaries of the state' (Pfaff, 2001, p. 400). While in NI, a secret police force was not prevalent, the British Army carried out a similar function under the guise of preventing terrorist attacks and restoring law and order.

The literature reveals that long-term surveillance in these two societies had a lasting impact on the citizen, communities, and society at large. It broke down social and community bonds, as mistrust, fear, and suspicion dominated people's lives. In this atmosphere of saturated surveillance, silence, invisibility, and anonymity became weapons of survival. From these two examples of surveillance societies, we see that surveillance can create chilling effects on free speech and free association, which are essential for democracy to thrive. Even the surveillance of legal activities can inhibit people from engaging in the judicial system itself, as in the cases of NI and the GDR, where people's faith in legal institutions was severely reduced.

In both NI and the GDR, surveillance became a part of day-to-day life, its presence becoming a normalised and accepted intrusion into the private sphere of the citizenry. As Foucault suggested, 'The broadly shared experience of being watched has been normalized, such that publics have internalized the surveillant gaze of the state' (1979). However, as Pfaff argued, the long-term acceptance of surveillance is not guaranteed, as evidenced by the historical experiences of NI and the GDR: 'Such a regime may secure compliance so long as its power seems unassailable, but once its authority is threatened it may suddenly experience a revolt that is a more accurate reflection of the popular sentiments' (2001, p. 21). Pfaff also provided a stark warning to governing powers, noting that '[f]or the most part, policymakers should focus on past examples of harm, but they should not ignore undeniable indicators of future harm' (2001, p. 21)

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