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Gary Marx: *Windows Into the Soul: Surveillance and Society in the Age of High Technology* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2019, 400 p., \$30.00.

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Writing is about making choices. An author must have the steadfastness to decide that there are times when one's collection of wisdom should not be conveyed to the reader. The reader who begins their journey with Gary Marx's *Windows Into the Soul* may wonder whether they could take the necessary hard decisions to abandon content to the cutting-room floor. An impatient person may have given up early on Marx and this reviewer, a former member of the U.S. Intelligence Community and long-time policy maker, almost did. The patient and reflective reader, however, will be rewarded for their perseverance because *Windows Into the Soul* offers a balanced and unique sociological look at the role of surveillance in today's high-tech society.

Who is the audience for this book? For one, it is not for readers who are hoping to learn about the means and surveillance methods in which the National Security Agency (NSA), National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA), or the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) target foreign or domestic threats. For readers who are interested in learning about the NSA, James Bamford's *The Puzzle Palace* and *Body of Secrets*¹ remain top choices. Interestingly, and for this reviewer refreshingly, there was no mention of Edward Snowden, the NSA contractor who fled with reams of NSA collection secrets, until the final chapter and nearly 300 pages into the book. And even then, the Snowden reference as you can read here—"note also the failure of massive international searches to locate Edward Snowden"—was more about the

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limitations of surveillance in finding an individual wanted on federal charges than stolen secrets or NSA outward projected surveillance. A reader interested in the Snowden affair would do better to turn various journalistic accounts such as Glenn Greenwald's *No Place to Hide*. Those interested in learning about the FBI could turn to Ronald Kessler's *The Bureau: The Secret History of the FBI* or Timothy Weiner's exceedingly well researched and sourced, *Enemies: A History of the FBI*. Those interested in NSA's use of satellites to collect imagery should read *Deep Black: Space Espionage and National Security* by William E. Burrows.² Marx does not go into any detail on collection via national technical means (NTM), and that is just fine.

The lack of any treatment of NTM is not a weakness, because the audience for Marx's book really should be the practitioner or the generalist who wants to think objectively about the broader impact technology is having on one's day-to-day life. Why the practitioner? The book is vitally important for those who want to understand the social context in which they surveil their subjects. The agents that conduct direct surveillance, whether FBI special agents or NSA technologists, policy makers who orient them, or the special judges who approve collection under the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, should read this book because it provides an essential framework for those enmeshed in discussions related to the future of surveillance. It should also be a book read by any individual who frets about advances in technology that

intrude into their private lives, whether artificial intelligence-directed tools that open your phone via facial recognition or something seemingly more anodyne like new marketing techniques that leverage personal interests to provide tailored advertisements. This book matters to these people, whether they are the subjects or agents of surveillance. Why? Because Marx's book is a reflective work. His central thesis that "surveillance is neither good nor bad, but context and comportment will influence whether it is so," permeates throughout all four sections of *Windows Into the Soul*. The book methodically lays bare simple reactionary arguments that depict the use of technology and surveillance, co-joined terms in today's high-technology society, as inherently problematic. In essence, Marx's view is that serious inquiry about surveillance and technology and its social implications must take into account the broader social environment in which these tools are deployed.

Marx's book is broken into four components. The first section, comprising the first four chapters, defines basic terms and concepts and is described as Marx prepares the reader for more in-depth discussion and analysis. The distinctions he makes between various forms of surveillance and the need to consider historical, social, and cultural context concerning the application of surveillance is particularly important for the reader to digest. It is especially important to recall later when Marx's case studies in part III take the stage.

Marx's apt descriptions of the nexus between privacy and surveillance and

the evolution of this interplay due to technological advances is particularly crucial because, without knowing, or not caring, or being willing to sacrifice personal details, many readers' personal preferences are being collected, reviewed, and disseminated for a wide array of purposes, some innocuous, others perhaps not. Every time you like a YouTube video, google a word or key term, check in to your favorite restaurant via Facebook, post an Instagram picture, or log in to an application via your favorite social media tool you are tacitly exposing yourself to surveillance. For example, marketing as a form of surveillance is well worth Marx's ink as he juxtaposes the use of marketing communication as a form of surveillance that can provide an individual some benefits or expose them to risk.

The second section, comprising only two chapters, provides additional sociological data points for the reader as Marx prepares them for the main act, the third part of the book. Why have people given up personally identifiable information so easily? How have attitudes toward surveillance softened over time? Softening, Marx contends, has contributed to the spread of surveillance since data gathering can increasingly be presented as less intrusive and invasive. Often this is a matter of choice and benefit to the subjects of surveillance, and it is with this thought that Marx moves to the politics of surveillance. He documents the steps individuals have taken to resist being surveilled and how the agents of surveillance have adopted countermoves to evade detection. Chapter five, which

documents the interactions between agents and subjects of surveillance, is a must-read for governments engaged in surveillance and for those that are trying to keep their movements, thoughts, and words away from prying eyes. The behavioral, cultural, and sociological analyses presented by Marx in part II are essential preparation for part III, the case studies chapters of *Windows Into the Soul*.

The third section contains multiple chapters that focus on case studies and what the author calls satirical stories since real-world case studies do not provide a complete picture of all the complexities and conundrums that encircle surveillance discussions. It is in these fictitious case studies that the author excels in painting a picture of surveillance challenges. In chapter eight, Marx's description of the fictitious Parents Insist on Surveillance Help, Inc. (PISHI) group that claims "if you sign up, even with no purchases, as an awareness-raising public service we will give you a facsimile of the colorful preparedness patch created by the Girl Scouts of America in conjunction with the Department of Homeland Security." Marx's PISHI is a nonpartisan group of parents who believe technologically protected families are the basic building blocks of society and, naturally, their motto is "One Nation Under Guard." After reading this chapter, you take small solace in the fact that PISHI is an outgrowth of imagination not unlike the world constructed by Margaret Atwood, where the "eye" sees all. Depending on the composition of your local Parent Teacher's Association (PTA) that solace could quickly turn to despair since some

of PISHI's ideas are not dissimilar from a PTA run amok.

In chapter 11, the story of Richard Bottoms is timely in two very contemporary ways. First, the notion of the blurring of borders both in the physical and virtual sense. The Bottoms case study is about the merging of private and government sector tools and responsibilities. How does the government leverage private sector related collection? How should it? The Bottomses of the world advocate for the seamless sharing of data between national security and private sectors. On the physical border, this is best understood by the idea of citizen policing, also known as grey policing. Bottoms believe it is perfectly acceptable that the citizens play a role on the border, but what people like him miss is the considerable risk to human rights and liberty that comes with the delegation and graying of responsibility. Marx's provocation is thoughtful in this sense as it gives rise to the reader the need to consider what may previously seem innocuous. Second, the chapter rightly discusses the phenomena of expertise moving between the public and private sectors. In the intelligence community, shifting from blue badge to green badge and back again highlights the morphing of sectors. The chapter also harkens thought to Sean McFate's recent book *Modern Mercenary: Private*

Armies and What They Mean for World Order.³ McFate, just as Marx, describes a world where private and government entities willing co-opt one another to further perceived security and commercial interests.

Marx's book on surveillance is an essential contribution to the canon of literature devoted to monitoring and its implications for society. In an ideal scenario, decision makers and practitioners working in the surveillance space can learn a lot by reading *Windows Into the Soul*. Insights gleaned from Marx can positively shape the future policies and ethical decisions that will need to be made when deploying new surveillance technology.

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