



Signage and Surveillance: Interrogating the Textual Context of CCTV in the UK

Mark Cole¹

Abstract

The UK is one of the most surveilled societies in the World. CCTV systems prevail in both private and public space. Since 2000, a Code of Practice has required that signage is clearly deployed to advise of the existence of those systems wherever they are in use. Throughout 2002, examples of that signage were captured photographically, culminating in an exhibition of this material in October of that year. While arguing that the signage works closely in conjunction with the technological systems to which it refers, this paper focuses on this textual superstructure, using a Foucauldian approach as a means of shaping the discussion. It concludes that the signage itself has a number of possible effects. Most significantly, it argues that these texts, outwith the technological structures to which they refer, actively and substantially facilitate the 'automatic functioning of power'.

Introduction

For the UK citizen, the glassy stare of CCTV surveillance is a constant of urban life. Cockfield (2002) notes that "[T]he average British citizen is photographed or caught on video an astonishing eight to three hundred times a day." This is a view borne out by Norris and Armstrong (1999) who observe that "...it is unlikely that any urban dweller, in their role of shopper, worker, commuter, resident or school pupil can avoid being passively or actively monitored by camera surveillance systems." (42)

In the US, it is perhaps only in recent times that there has been a broader general acceptance of the need to engage in wide and general surveillance of the American populace. An indication of just how far that process has progressed is contained in a newspaper report of 11 August 2003 where it was explained that students turning up to school in Biloxi, Mississippi, would find CCTV in each and every classroom. ('Who's watching the class?', USA Today, Monday 11/08/03: 7b)

¹ Independent Photographer and Researcher, 14 The Gables, Cooden Close, Bromley, Kent, BR1 3TR.
<mailto:spatialawareness@whsmithnet.co.uk>

By and large, the British citizenry has unquestionably accepted the growth and preponderance of this type of surveillance as a public good. Interestingly, in the late 1930s in Britain, the Mass-Observation projects subjected the populace to careful scrutiny. As Highmore (2002) notes “In over a thousand file reports and a similar number of boxes of raw materials can be found the strangely ordinary documents of everyday life. Accounts of nightmares; meticulously detailed records of drinking habits in Bolton pubs (timed to the second with a stopwatch); pages and pages of diary records; thoughts on margarine – such items make up just part of the archive of everyday life generated by Mass-Observation.” (75)

This intense surveillance attracted press attention. In an anthology of Mass-Observation material, a facsimile of an article from a June 1938 edition of a publication called *Everybody* has been reproduced, written by Marion Dewhirst. In it, the author notes that “...the chances are you have been Mass-Observed and *don't know it* ...” She goes on to state that

The originators of [Mass-Observation] reasoned that if a body of information were available as to *why we do and say certain things, how we behave in special sets of circumstances, this would help us know ourselves and other people better.*” The headline, in a prefiguration of the signage that is analysed here, reads “They may be watching you.”

(Calder and Sheridan, 1984: 17 – All emphases in the original)

Alongside what appears to be a general willingness to accept scrutiny amongst the British, there has also been a contemporary acknowledgement among the populace that CCTV will impact positively on crime in the areas in which it is installed. This view apparently continues to prevail, despite a growing body of evidence that throws into question its efficacy in this regard (Armitage, 2002). There seems little doubt that this blasé attitude among the vast majority of the population towards surveillance is partly determined by the general anxiety about crime and disorder that exists in the UK.

What is particularly noteworthy in all of this is the fact that the expansion of surveillance in the UK took place with little or no regulation until March 2000, when the Data Protection Act came into force. Interestingly, though, that regulation has assumed a relatively ‘light touch’ approach in this regard, with the Information Commissioner producing a set of stipulations around the use of CCTV in the form of a code of practice.

Included in this code is the requirement that, in keeping with the First Data Protection Principle, “Signs should be placed so that the public are aware that they are entering a zone which is covered by surveillance equipment.” (France, 2000) The code goes further in this regard, insofar as it specifies the information that should be contained in these signs. Hence, it is expected that signs should include “...a) Identity of the person or organisation responsible for the scheme. b) The purposes of the scheme. c) Details of whom to contact regarding the scheme.” A legalistic formulation within the code does provide a dispensation for CCTV users not to provide signage in this way but, broadly speaking, the criteria relate to surveillance in order to facilitate the collection of evidence of “...specific criminal activity.”

At first reading, the requirements of the code seem to be favouring the individual citizen, recognising their right to be aware of when they are being surveilled and by whom. In this sense, the signs make explicit the presence of CCTV on the basis of the view that the citizen has a right to know if, when and by whom they are being watched in this way.

However, at the most basic level, it is noteworthy that few of the examples of signage used to illustrate this article comply with the requirements of the Code of Practice. In fact, research undertaken on CCTV in London indicates that less than one-quarter of the signs in the sample were in compliance. (McCahill and Norris, 2002) The authors of the report conclude that

If these figures are an accurate reflection of the legality of the legality of CCTV systems in the capital's major businesses, it would mean that 75,124 (73%) of the CCTV systems in London's business space are illegal.

At a more theoretical level, it is the view of this paper that the signage used to advise of the presence of CCTV – whether it complies with the code or not - has another and altogether different effect, namely, it emphasises the existence of surveillance and thereby amplifies its effect. In fact, the signage that does not comply with the code might be said to have greater influence in this respect. In this sense, then, the signage operates in a similar way to that which Lyon (2002) notes in regard to surveillance itself: “Surveillance always has two faces. As well, both its intended purpose and its unintended consequences have to be borne in mind if it is to be understood properly.”

Taking this view, there are three additional ways in which this signage has impact which this paper hopes to illustrate below through the presentation of examples. First, it can serve to exacerbate further the anxiety about crime and disorder that exists in society at large. The presence of this signage seems to implicate that a culture of criminality exists that can only be contained by the use of this kind of surveillance.

Second, it can serve to accentuate social division, engendering a clear sense of ‘them’ and ‘us’. As will be shown below, the signage can operate at a textual level to include or exclude the reader. It appears to establish a binary opposition between a group in society who are intent on criminality and who need to be contained by CCTV - and the ‘rest of us’, the population at large that needs protecting from that defined sub-set.

Finally, at a more theoretical level, it works with the CCTV systems themselves to shape social space in the urban context, serving in many instances to underscore the privatisation and reconfiguration of the public domain.

This paper looks in detail at the deployment of CCTV signage and seeks to interrogate critically these texts from a perspective that might broadly be described as Foucauldian in approach. It seeks to investigate the extent to which that signage, by its social presence and texture nature, adds to what is widely presumed to be the Panopticon effect of the web of surveillance that currently exists. However, it will do this from a critical perspective, arguing that the Panopticon

concept, in its Foucauldian manifestation, is not as straightforward as appears when applied to video surveillance.

The paper draws extensively on a photographic project undertaken by the author and a colleague, Caroline Miller, which sought to capture as many examples of this signage as possible. The work took place throughout 2002 and focused primarily on the Greater London area. A selection of 40 photographs was eventually selected for exhibition in October 2002 at the Chelsea Gallery, Kings Road, London, under the title 'Watchwords: A photographic project looking at the language of surveillance.'

Some notes on approach

Michel Foucault's mobilisation of Bentham's panoptic prison model in the service of his arguments about the development of a disciplinary society seeks to extend it beyond blueprints and bricks. Instead, the Panopticon is seen to be constituted by the various discursive ways in which disciplinary power in society is created and channelled. In exploring this society, Foucault (1991) notes that the major function of the Panopticon is "...to induce in the inmate a state of conscious and permanent visibility that assures the *automatic functioning of power*." (201, Emphasis added)

However, this begs a question: to what extent does the combination of a generalised surveillance and a textual superstructure of signage advising of its action likely to facilitate this automatic functioning of power? It is difficult to argue, from either a personal or an academic perspective, that people in their everyday lives are consciously aware of the presence of cameras, let alone concerned at their effect.

Research certainly indicates that, when quizzed, two-thirds of respondents were able to identify some location with which they were acquainted where a CCTV camera was located (Honest and Charman, 1992). But that is somewhat different to being influenced by the presence of such technology, in the way in which Foucault describes. An alternative explanation might be that the impact of CCTV on people is profoundly deep and subconscious, but that seems like theoretical wishful thinking that contains within it more than a whiff of the elitist concept of 'false consciousness'.

Certainly, it seems appropriate to observe that such surveillance, taken in this instance to mean a total complex of technological hardware (cameras, wires and screens), the act of watching by a person or persons in a control room where images are monitored, and the panoply of textual features that this paper intends to highlight, shapes and delimits social space in both the private and public domain.

Following on from this, it is significant for our analysis that Foucault (2000) observes that "Space is fundamental in any form of communal life; space is fundamental to any exercise of power." (361) This usefully makes the connection between space and power. Moreover, Foucault notes

elsewhere that “Territory is without doubt a geographical notion, but it’s first of all a juridico-political one: the area controlled by a certain kind of power.” (Foucault, 1980: 68)

This paper takes the view that the complex of surveillance, as defined above, serves as a technology of power. Specifically, while not acting in a Panoptical manner, as theorised by Foucault in regard to the disciplinary society, such surveillance captures and defines the subject in terms of location and action in social space. Moreover, this act of subjectification, noted as a key aspect of those technologies that generate power/knowledge, is greatly accentuated by the presence and character of the signage that resides within that complex. In essence, then, the analysis of the artefacts contained within this paper argues that the texts themselves (linked with but separate to the video surveillance networks too which they refer) serve to create the human subject as a thing susceptible to measurement, assessment and categorisation.

But the subjectification of individuals through this kind of classification is simply one small aspect of the proposed effect of the Foucauldian Panopticon, in regard to video surveillance. Indeed, it is the case that this action is key to the operation of power/knowledge in the disciplinary society. However, If CCTV is not facilitating the automatic functioning of power, which is to say, if it is failing to render docile the bodies which stray into its gaze, then what is it actually achieving?

When Foucault seeks expressly to define panopticism, he talks of

“...a form of power that rests not on the inquiry but on something completely different, which I will call the examination...With panopticism, something altogether different would come into being; there would no longer be inquiry, but supervision [*surveillance*] and examination... A constant supervision of individuals by someone who exercised power over them – schoolteacher, foreman, physician, psychiatrist, prison warden – and who, so long as he exercised power, had the possibility of both supervising and constituting a knowledge concerning those he supervised.” (Foucault, 2002: 58-9)

In simple terms, Foucault talks of this new knowledge as one in which it is no longer a question of trying to find out what has happened. Instead, the focus is on deciding who and what is normal – and who or what is not. In that sense, the way in which CCTV is used to highlight ‘undesirables’ in shopping malls or in open street systems is significant. But it is significant in so far as its focus is not on engendering ‘normality’ across the whole population that passes through its panoptic gaze; instead, it seeks to pathologise particular individuals or groups – for example, teenagers and, in particular, black youth. It is concerned not with the automatic functioning of power but with the exercise of power.

Interestingly, then, surveillance can be said to be facilitating the exercise of the sort of power that Foucault alleges preceded the arrival of the disciplinary society; put simply, it appears to be an instrument that allows for the speedy and direct action of power on the body. For example, in my local shopping mall, it assists the security staff to identify and locate particular people for physical exclusion. In this sense, then, it heralds a return to the sort of visible and corporeal

power that Foucault describes in such grisly detail in the opening chapter of *Discipline and Punish*. (Foucault, 1991: pp 3-7)

Before turning our back on the idea of CCTV as a Panopticon that encourages the automatic functioning of power, we might note Virilio's (2000) observation that "Just as one is not bothered by the dials and lights on a car dashboard or by the lighting in a shop window, so one is not really troubled by the 'broadcasting' or 'diffusion' area of a video camera. That area is solely *what is lit up*, and not the 'theatre' or site of a cinema performance screened at some distant location." (2) In this sense, then, CCTV can be seen to be little more than an extension of street lighting. Invariably, street lighting is noticed solely in its absence, that is to say, when a lamp post is broken and where the urban landscape is therefore darker and thence more threatening.

Video surveillance, which, in the UK context and for the purposes of this analysis, is a technological *and* textual assemblage of power, can be said to have a number of effects that clearly relate to the Foucauldian notion of panopticism. However, it cannot truly be said to be facilitating the automatic functioning of power in so far as there does not seem to be much (if any) evidence that docility is being engendered through its operation among those who are subjected to its gaze. Indeed, it might be argued that the signage that exists in this regard might be a more effective panoptical device in terms of creating that sense of permanent supervision.

Where video surveillance does have an effect is in terms of its classificatory power. Here, the cameras are capable of picking out and tracking the 'Undesirables' in public or semi-private space. Such identification then allows for the exercise of base corporeal power, where people deemed unsuitable are escorted out of and excluded from particular social spaces. But, as we shall see, the signage also seeks to categorise those who come into the purview of the surveillance assemblage into good and bad, them and us, the normal and the Other.

Of course, such a binary opposition disguises the complexity of the matter. These two categories top and tail a complex and shifting continuum. For example, I might be an habitual shop-lifter who suffers a morbid fear of assault in the street. My attitude towards CCTV, then, is likely to be self-interested and profoundly ambivalent. But this is an important point, because it reinforces the fact that CCTV works to subjectify us all – and this effect is greatly amplified by the presence of signage that exists in support of CCTV systems, as the rest of this paper will seek to demonstrate.

Looking for signs

In reviewing the material from the Watchwords project in order to decant down to a reasonable show of 40 prints, a taxonomy of the signage that supports surveillance became apparent. This simple act of categorisation was primarily undertaken on the basis of what the authors took to be the purpose and/or effect of those notices (or, to be more candid, the effect that they felt on the basis of viewing the material and having the subject to it, when undertaking the photographic work).

The authors began to apply the following schema to their analysis of the material, where the notion of text is taken to mean any assemblage or graphic or written material that lends itself to interrogation:

1. **Statements of fact**, wherein it seemed as though the text sought to dispassionately convey warning of the presence of cameras;
2. **Permeation**, meaning that the signage (regardless of the qualities of the text) had been absorbed into the urban landscape (or where an effort had obviously been made to effect such an absorption);
3. **Statements of inclusion**, where the sign spoke primarily to a population category that might be defined, on the basis of its message, as 'law-abiding' and which was invariably reduced to the concept of 'public';
4. **Statements of exclusion**, in which the focus is on a population category that is seen to be 'Other than the public' and therefore a primary focus for the cameras, due to the supposed criminal tendencies harboured by those who constitute such a group;
5. **Double-coded statements**, which, using the formulation mobilised by Jencks (1991: 108) in regard to post-modern architecture, speak both to the 'public' and the criminal 'other' at the same time, offering reassurance to the former and threat to the latter.

Statements of fact



Much of the signage in support of CCTV seeks simply to advise, in a relatively dispassionate fashion, that such a system is in operation in a given space. The example in *Picture 1* stood on the concourse of London Victoria railway station and attempts to convey an air of impartiality in terms of the delivery of its message. In this example, an almost sculptural artefact is pressed into the service of advising the streams of commuters of the operation of such surveillance. But these statements of fact can be carried equally well by a scrappy sheet of paper, home produced by the proprietors of a convenience store. In all cases, however, the text is constructed in a way that seems, at least superficially, to be entirely neutral.

Picture 1

Permeation*Picture 2*

Psychogeography was defined by the situationists as “The study of the specific effects of the geographical environment, consciously organized or not, on the emotions and behaviour of individuals.” (Andreotti and Costa, 1996: 69) *Picture 2* (above) shows how messages about video surveillance are increasingly being absorbed into the socio-spatial fabric of the urban environment. This innocuous carousel, which appears in the High Street of Bromley in Kent each Christmas, cannot be left without this statement emblazoned on its protective awning. The extent to which this type of permeated message impacts, in contrast to those that blatantly stand out from the cityscape, is questionable. But it seems inescapable that the way in which an apparently innocent diversion for children has incorporated this statement could be said to degrade urban life from a psychogeographical perspective.

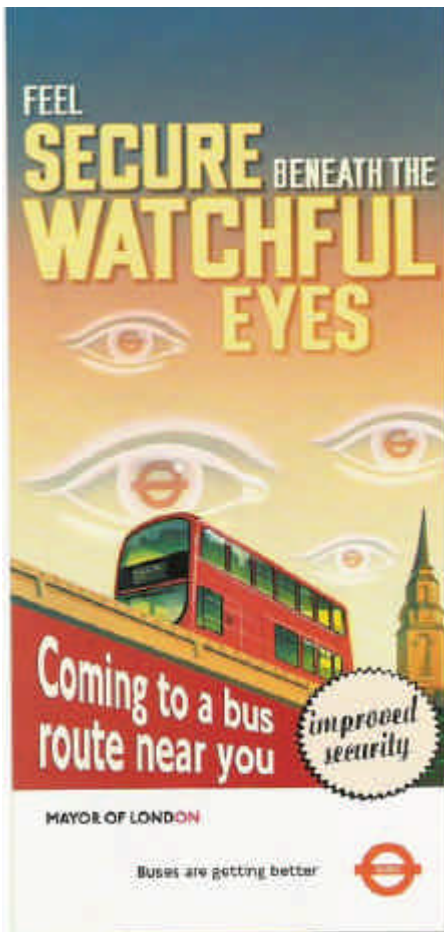
Other permeated messages include those in stores, stations and malls that utilise the livery of the company. For example, CCTV notices in Waterstones the booksellers use the same font and style as the store fascia and signage.

Statements of Inclusion

These statements, such as that shown in *Picture 3* (overleaf), seek to advise of the presence of CCTV in a way that emphasises what is taken to be the ‘public good’. This concept, of course, remains elusively slippery, with the question of who might be seen to be part of the ‘public’ and what might be taken to be ‘good’ for those who find themselves so classified resolved by the way in which each viewer interacts with such a text. The signage exists as a discursive device that seeks to realise an idea of the ‘public’ that can only be defined in contrast to a category of miscreants who will be deterred by this technology.



Picture 3



In some instances, these messages of inclusion make a straightforward appeal to the readers need for a sense of safety in the urban setting. In the example of *Picture 4*, however, we can see how the whole message, in the form of a leaflet from the Mayor of London's office, has ended up with a peculiarly Orwellian feel. This seems to be the result of the way in which stylistically this text appears as a pastiche of Art Deco posters and 1950s science fiction film posters. In consequence, it nigh on instructs us to feel 'secure', even though the sky is unsettlingly filled with disembodied eyes.

Picture 4

In *Picture 5* (overleaf) at least, the public good, in terms of definition, is made expressly clear. At an Asda supermarket in Bexleyheath, Kent, the 'public' (namely, the 'good' citizenry) is enveloped in a discourse, implicit in the text, which sets up an antagonism between customers and thieves. In effecting this, the signage manages to disentangle High Street commerce from its global (indeed, its globalised) context, and sets up a zero-sum relationship between theft and the price of goods. The CCTV is there to help all who are law-abiding to spend less on their groceries. The classification of 'them' and 'us' could not be more pronounced.



Picture 5

Statements of Exclusion



On the other side of the coin, there is signage that expressly addresses itself to the potential criminal. Invariably, these take the form of a blatant warning about the presence of CCTV. In the example in *Picture 6*, there is an interesting juxtaposition at a British railway station. An explicit separation has taken place between the ‘customer’ (a ‘good’ person worthy of the forest green signage and soft fonts that are used for the livery of the train company) and the ‘Other’, who needs to be warned off from doing anything wrong by the presence of a harsh yellow sign advising of the presence of video surveillance.

Picture 6

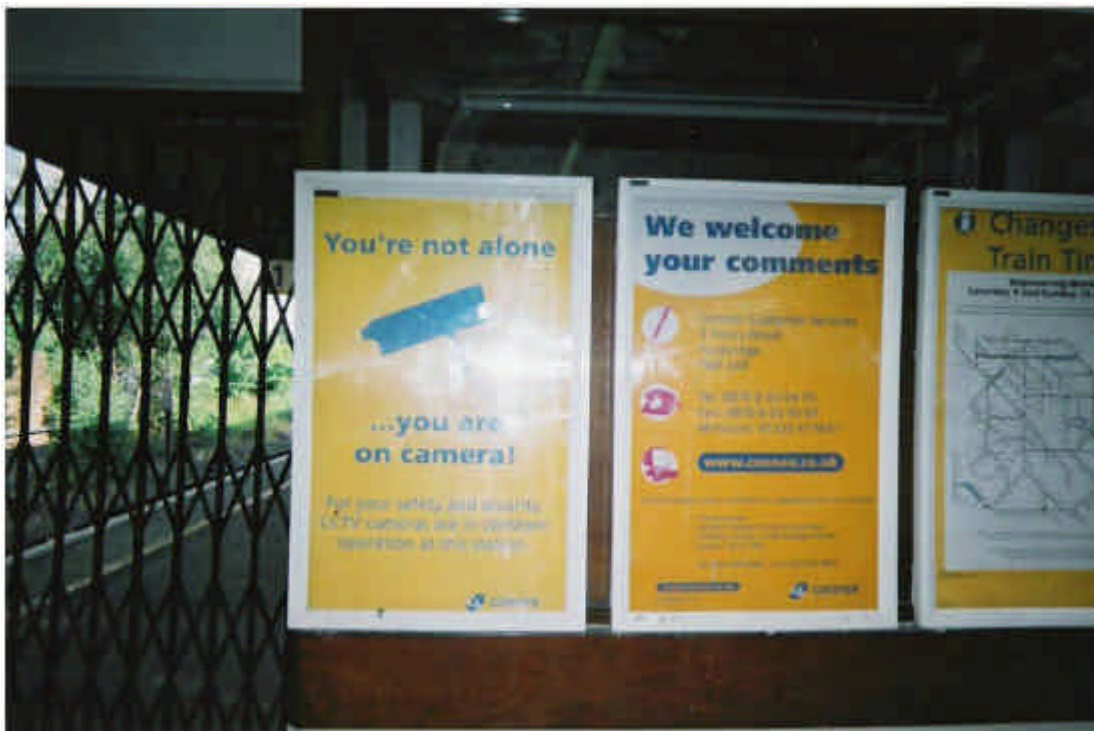
The fact that the customer signage is in the livery of the company is noteworthy. A coalition is formed here between the commercial provider and a category of legitimate consumers, who are not just part of the ‘public’ but seem to be an integral part of the company as well.

Meanwhile, anyone who might potentially use the service illegitimately or, more than that, abuse what is being provided is excluded from being a customer – and from being a member of the ‘public’.

Double-coding

Matters become more complex when messages of inclusion and exclusion are seamlessly combined in one sign. These notices can best be seen as being double-coded, as was noted earlier in the paper. In the example of *Picture 7* (below), the state of being alone is inscribed as a positive one for a potential miscreant and a negative one for a member of the legitimate ‘public’. A potential wrongdoer is seen to relish the fact of being alone, in so far as it provides cover for their criminal acts. But for the ‘public’, it is meant to be seen as threatening. (Of course, the fact that crime against the person cannot occur when someone is alone because, by definition, it takes two people to create the crime, is overlooked.)

Hence, this text is designed both to disappoint and to reassure. The reader is expected to interrogate the text on the basis of where they feel they sit in the binary opposition of ‘public’ and ‘Other’. The criminal is meant to feel warned and thwarted by the statement that they are not alone. The ‘public’ is meant to feel secure that CCTV is watching over them.



Picture 7

Similarly, in *Picture 8* (overleaf), all who fall within the electronic gaze of this Colchester, Essex, social club are invited to smile, in the way in which we are cajoled into smiling for a photograph. But the nature of that smile in this context will be different, depending on how you classify yourself. The ‘public’ is enticed to smile wryly in open acknowledgement of the fact that they are

being safely protected by this observation. The miscreant 'Other', however, is invited to smile in recognition of the fact that they are 'captured' by the video surveillance.



Picture 8

The 'public' smiles in the way it would in the comfort and security of a family photograph. The 'Other' is expected to shrug and grin, creating a technological version of the old slang adage 'It's a fair cop, gov'. The images will contrast in the manner of a wedding picture and a police mug shot.

Lastly, in *Picture 9*, the signage is self-referential. It advises of the presence of cameras by introducing a narrative wherein a man was apprehended by the use of CCTV whilst engaged in an act of vandalism. (Interestingly, the text makes reference to the person being arrested as a result of damage done to 'equipment'. Clearly, such a catch-all term could, in this context, mean that he was interfering with the CCTV cameras themselves.) Using a 'real' example in this way – and the reader can only assume the actuality of this event on the basis of the information that is being provided because it lacks any serious substantiation – the signage assures the 'public' of the presence of video surveillance that actually realises its intention.

However, it has a similar effect with the potentially criminal 'Other', in that it provides what is ostensibly hard evidence of the effectiveness of CCTV as a means of crime detection and thereby acts as a deterrent. From a textual perspective, the 'man' in the story is a blank screen on which the 'public' may project their personalised images of the 'Other' (which may reinforce all manner of stereotypes and prejudices). Meanwhile, the potential miscreant is effectively being invited to put themselves in the shoes of the 'man'.



Picture 9

The pre-eminent sign

Video surveillance assemblages are now in existence that combine the type of signage reviewed above, CCTV technology, and a human means to monitor and react to the material being gathered. In looking at this signage, however, Baudrillard's dictum seems relevant:

Today abstraction is no longer that of the map, the double, the mirror, or the concept. Simulation is no longer that of a territory, a referential being, or a substance. It is the generation by models of a real without origin or reality: a hyperreal. The territory no longer precedes the map, nor does it survive it. It is nevertheless the map that precedes the territory [...] that engenders the territory,...., today it is the territory whose shreds slowly rot across the extent of the map. (1994:1)

Applying this to the context of surveillance, one might ask to what extent the signage now precedes the surveillance. It seems especially apposite to ask this when the signage itself seems best able to create a panoptical effect through the normative classification of its observers into 'public' and 'Other', while the CCTV systems themselves seem more useful in facilitating the physical exercise of power. By this, it is meant that the video allows police (either public or private) to prevent or detect crime through identification.

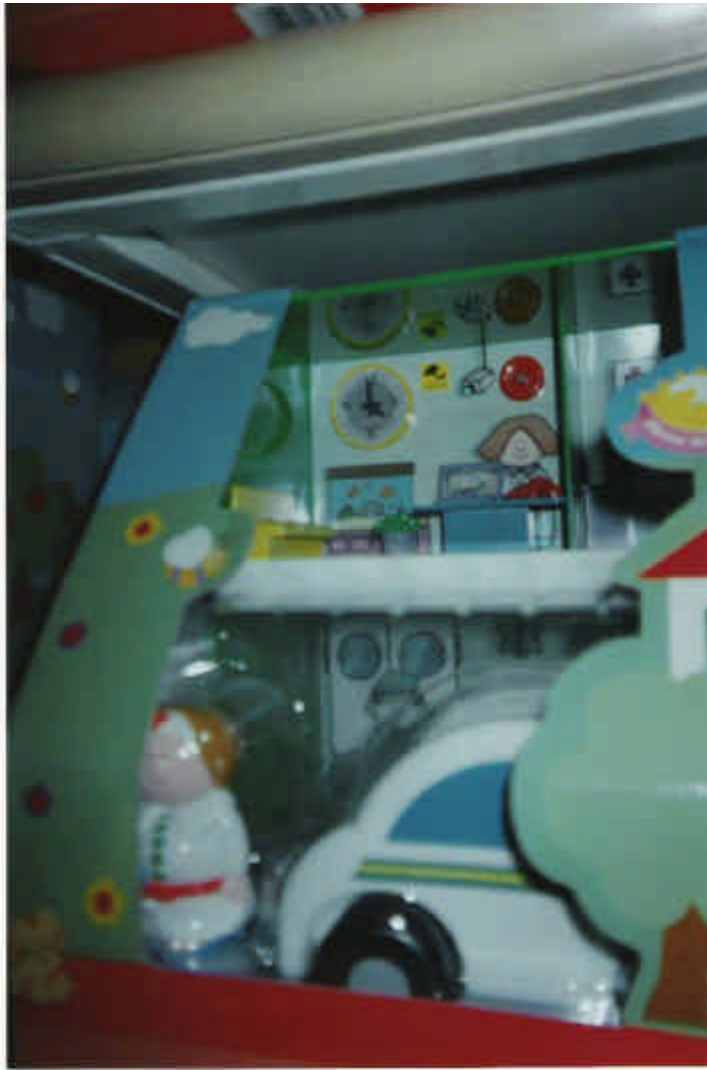
Let us take the example of a sign that simply reads "CCTV in operation". Given what has been said above about the action of these messages, it might be argued that, whether there is a system of cameras present or not, the signage will achieve its proposed effect. Moreover, it can be asserted that, in such a circumstance, the message conveyed has veracity: while there may be no cameras present, CCTV (as a technology of power) can truthfully be said to be in operation. To that extent, the map does precede the territory. Indeed, given the textual complexity of the classificatory power of the signage and assuming that it does exercise some deterrent effect, it seems that the signage is a more sophisticated mechanism than the technology which it seeks to advertise, in terms of social effect.

Conclusion

The signage analysed in this paper, when taken in conjunction with the technological systems and the human means of tracking material derived in this way, forms part of what has been described here as a video surveillance assemblage. The existence of signage is evidence of the state endeavouring to regulate the use of CCTV technology with the aim of ensuring the privacy of the citizen. However, this paper has argued that this signage now conspires with the surveillance itself to amplify the panoptical effect that many have ascribed to CCTV.

However, it is asserted here that the panoptical effect of these video surveillance assemblages, when using the term in a Foucauldian sense, is in no sense straightforward. In fact, it is difficult to sustain the view that the 'automatic functioning of power' is engendered by such surveillance. Clearly, more empirical work needs to be done here, but it currently appears as though the presence of video surveillance does not figure in people's reading and understanding of the learning landscape to any meaningful degree.

However, there is some evidence that surveillance equipment and, more interestingly, the signage that supports it, is being absorbed into our cultural fabric. *Picture 10* (overleaf) shows the interior of a child's toy that was sold in 2002 through Marks & Spencer, a major UK High Street store chain. The toy consisted of a number of plastic figures and model cars, presented in a decorated cardboard box that was meant to represent a small clinic or medical surgery. The interior decoration shows a receptionist, sitting at a desk, and, behind her, is both an image of a CCTV camera and a bright yellow piece of signage, advising of the presence of the video surveillance.



Picture 10

In terms of practical and personal awareness of camera presence and CCTV in general, however, It remains moot as to whether the signage that now prevails in the UK context is affecting this, in terms of raising the profile of surveillance, or whether these signs are simply absorbed into the broader semiotic environment of the city. Even William Wordsworth, writing of London on the cusp of the C19th, was moved to observe the way in which “Advertisements, of giant size, from high/ Press forward, in all colours, on the sight” (1805/1994: 690), later noting that a city’s residents live amid a ‘perpetual whirl of trivial objects’. (Wordsworth, 1805/1994: 698)

However, there is clearly one crucial aspect of panopticism that this technology does facilitate, namely its classificatory effect. The signs, as we have seen, through a number of techniques, serve to emphasise a dichotomy between the ‘public’, which is patently the norm, and the ‘Other’. In that sense, it may be argued that docility is encouraged because it is expected that we will aspire to being seen to be part of the norm, rather than willingly put ourselves into the category of ‘Other’.

When we consider the CCTV systems themselves, it is more difficult to identify their panoptical effect. Indeed, it has been contended here that such technology is better understood as a means of exercising simple corporeal power rather than the disciplinary power that Foucault argues appears in the C18th. The surveillance is used to identify bodies on which others, both public and private authorities, are invited to act: the police apprehending a criminal, identified from video footage, for example, or security guards chasing ‘undesirables’ out of shopping malls.

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