



Targeting the Unwanted: Video Surveillance and Categorical Exclusion in Oslo, Norway^{*}

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Abstract

The rise of video surveillance in the United Kingdom, in the form of the public installation of closed circuit television (CCTV), has been seen by several scholars as a contributing factor to the increasing exclusion of unwanted categories of people from city centers, a development often referred to as the 'commercialization' or 'purification' of the city. Drawing from field observations over three years in control rooms in Oslo, Norway, this article discusses whether CCTV systems in Oslo contribute to a similar process of exclusion. To do so, I compare the open street video surveillance system with two other CCTV systems - a shopping mall and a major transport center. The introduction of open street CCTV in Oslo in 1999 did not create social exclusion, but recent developments show the possibility remains. Although drug addicts and young people were the primary targets of surveillance in all three sites studied, ejections varied considerably from site to site. The shopping mall system had a higher ejection rate than the open street system, and was therefore the system with the clearest exclusionary effects. Reasons for the different ejection rates are discussed, in particular the social structure of the site under surveillance and the organizational relationships of CCTV operators to the policing agents connected to the surveillance system.

Introduction

The extraordinarily fast growth of closed circuit television (CCTV) in western societies in general, and in Great Britain in particular, can only partly be understood as enthusiasm for a new tool of crime control. To understand the appeal of CCTV, we have to move beyond crime control discourse and look at the close relationship between the growth of CCTV and the growth of public space privatization in city centers (Reeve, 1998). The latter is related to the former in that, to create attractive and seductive consumer spaces, cities must not only reduce crime, but also forms of conduct that might 'put customers off', and in practice, this means excluding 'undesirables'. Cohen describes the aim of exclusion as being "to create purified domains inhabited by just the right groups" (1985:234). Davis (1990) argues that in Western

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societies public space is being reconstituted, not as an arena for democratic interaction, but as the site of mass consumption. CCTV is a powerful tool for just such forms of purification (Reeve, 1998; Graham, 1998).

Observation studies of surveillance control rooms (most notably: Norris and Armstrong 1999; McCahill, 2002) have found that the operators do single out and target for closer observation those they believe to be deviant, a selection more often made on the basis of appearance alone than on behavior. This leads to the repeated targeting of groups culturally linked with criminal deviance, that is, men, particularly if they are young and/or black (Norris and Armstrong, 1999: 196). Indeed, most of the people chosen for closer observation were targeted 'for no obvious reason', rather than for their criminal behavior. At the same time, Norris and Armstrong found that few CCTV operators called police officers or security guards to the scene based on these observations. CCTV was mainly used to track suspicious types virtually rather than to mobilize deployment against them actually (*ibid.*: 200). Their conclusion is that CCTV has the potential of becoming a tool of injustice through the amplification of differential and discriminatory policing (*ibid.*: 201). In contrast, McCahill found a much stronger exclusionary practice in his observation study of the CCTV control rooms in two shopping malls. Not only did he find a higher rate of deployment, he concluded that there was a fifty-fifty chance that teenagers would be ejected from the privatized space when a guard was deployed (McCahill, 2002: 146). Again, such tracking and exclusions were mainly based on the appearance of the excluded peoples rather than their behavior. According to the studies mentioned above, operators are not only looking for potential criminals, but also for potential non-consumers. Both the commercialization of public space and the policing of that space with CCTV have the effect of excluding people incapable of consuming, people who might fail to participate in or might actively disturb the main activity of the area, namely shopping.

Most of the research on CCTV systems is British, probably because CCTV has grown most dramatically in Britain over the last decade (Atkinson, 2000). The aim of this paper is to expand this research by examining the Norwegian case. In November 1999 the first open street CCTV system was established in Norway. The Oslo police put up six PTZ² cameras around the central transport station in the city center. Although six cameras represent a small surveillance system, the cameras are well placed and cover a relatively large area of downtown Oslo. The police run the open street CCTV system, and the control room is located in a local police station in the area under surveillance. However, the Norwegian railway company pays the costs both for the surveillance equipment and the locale.

This area is going through rapid economic and cultural changes, with new shopping malls, a new opera house, new hotels, and new office buildings popping up. Yet, while shopping malls and commercial interests are prominent, this is also the area where numerous addicts come every day to buy and sell drugs in Oslo.

Has open street CCTV in Norway contributed to a commercialization of public space such as the British literature describes, by excluding non-consumers from the surveilled area? A

² PTZ stands for Pan Tilt Zoom, i.e. fully functional cameras with the ability to both pan, tilt and zoom.

development towards public space commercialization in the city center of Oslo can be seen, with shopping malls replacing former public squares and city center retailers increasingly joining forces in order to compete with the large shopping malls outside the city center. On the basis of the British literature and the urban development process in Oslo, my hypothesis for this paper was that the introduction of the first open street CCTV system in Oslo in 1999 would contribute to increased exclusion of the unwanted, purification of the area under surveillance, and cooperation among the police, retailers, and property owners to effect such exclusion and purification. Certainly, city center retailers and other agencies in the area expected such an effect, with one property owner stating that “We want a bright, nice city center. The police’s video surveillance cameras tell the people ‘Feel safe, we are looking after you.’”³ In another news article another property owner says he hopes that the totality of video surveillance both in public space and in the shopping malls will “reduce crime and scare away the drug addicts”⁴. Interestingly, however, such purification and exclusion did not take place in the publicly owned space of the Oslo city center for the first three years.

As part of my investigation into the impact of CCTV on Oslo’s city center, I spent 260 hours observing the observers in the control room of the only open street CCTV system in Oslo. In addition, as part of the UrbanEye project⁵ (Lomell, Sætnan, and Wiecek, 2003), I conducted some minor observations outside of this publicly sponsored system in some private CCTV systems in Oslo: in a shopping mall (21 hours) and in a transport center (24 hours), both of which were in the immediate area of the open street system.

Frequency of Targeting in Three Oslo CCTV Systems

Before analyzing the new open street system, I will present one main difference between the three systems that I studied in Oslo; namely, the variation in how frequently the systems were used.

Various aspects of the size of a surveillance system—that is the number, type, and placement of cameras and monitors; the monitoring hours; the size of the space under surveillance—say something about the potential surveillance intensity of the system. If one counts just the number of cameras in the Oslo open street CCTV system, it seems small. Indeed, with only six cameras, it is miniscule in comparison to the transport center CCTV system, which with its 300 cameras is one of the largest in the country, or the shopping mall system, with 100 cameras.

The actual surveillance intensity, however, depends on how the systems are used. Do operators stare blankly at the screens? Do they turn their backs and perform other tasks? Or are they proactive, zooming in on suspects and tracking them? The UrbanEye-project called the latter

³ From the Norwegian newspaper *Aftenposten* 25.11.99 (my translation).

⁴ *Aftenposten* 07.02.99 (my translation)

⁵ UrbanEye is a comparative European research project on video surveillance in public accessible space. It is realized by a multidisciplinary team of researchers from seven European countries and funded within the 5th Framework Programme by the European Commission. For details and findings see: <http://www.urbaneye.net>

targeted surveillances (TS), any episode in which an operator took control of the cameras (by zooming, panning, or switching among stationary cameras to follow a subject) for at least thirty seconds. For each such episode, I took notes, and after the shift filled out a data sheet recording who or what was watched, why, and what (if anything) was done to follow up on what was seen.

The frequency of targeted surveillances indicates how intensively the systems were used. Important differences arose in the frequency of use among the sites, as shown in *Table 1*, which shows the number of targeted surveillances observed per site/per hour of observation time:

	Observation hours	Targeted surveillances (TS)	No. of TS per hour
Shopping mall	21	61	3,0
Major transport center	24	35	1,5
Open street	30 ⁶	78	2,6
Total	75	174	2,3

Table 1: Oslo CCTV systems observed

As the table makes clear, the shopping mall system was the most actively used, with an average of 3 targeted surveillances per hour. The major transport center was the least actively used, with only half the number of targeted surveillances per hour, 1.5 TS per hour. Although the transport center had the largest surveillance system, it also had the busiest control room, with operators responsible for many other tasks in addition to surveillance. In other words, the number of cameras is not sufficient for showing the intensity of surveillance in an area. Active use of six cameras can be more intensive than limited use of 300.

Although not quite as actively used as the shopping mall CCTV system, the open street CCTV system was actively used, with the one operator proactive in finding people to watch. This was partly due to the control room's single functionality, unlike both the shopping mall and transport center control rooms. The open street operator was expected to focus all attention on surveillance, thus initiated many targeted surveillances. In fact, the incident of targeted surveillances in the open street system is increasing: in 2000 there were 1.3 TS per hour; in 2001, 1.4 TS per hour; and in 2002, and 2.6 TS per hour. This trend is important to watch, and illustrates the changing function of the open street system, as I will comment more on below.

We can see from *Table 1* that the systems differ in frequency of targeting, but do they also differ in who and what is targeted? The next section will shed light on the targeting and exclusionary practices of these three sites. Initially I was expecting the open street system to be focused on criminal incidents, such as drug dealing, violence, and robbery. I expected the shopping mall system to focus on shoplifting, and the transport center system to focus on protecting travelers,

⁶ In the following comparisons between the three CCTV systems in Oslo, I will only use part of my observation data from the Open street system, namely the data collected as part of the Urbaneye study. The remaining observation data will be presented in my doctoral thesis in spring 2005.

for instance, from pickpockets. Concerning exclusionary practices, I expected the shopping mall system to be exclusionary, the transport center to be less so, and the open street system to have exclusionary tendencies, at least concerning the drug scene in the surveilled area, where I expected a zero tolerance policy. In order to explain this expected tendency, I will briefly present the open street system and the area under surveillance.

Open Street CCTV: Targeting the drug scene

The open street system covers a busy stretch of public space. The public squares and six city blocks are packed with workers on their way to or from work, shoppers, tourists, and/or 'pub crawlers,' depending on the hour and day of the week. In addition, one corner of the square in which the major transport center is located is the main site for drug traffic in Oslo. This corner is called 'Plata' in Norwegian, and on an average day up to 100 drug addicts at a time gather in that corner in order to buy and sell drugs.

This drug scene is highly visible and targeted in the open street CCTV system. Nearly half of the targeted surveillances (46 %) in the open street system were about drugs. At first glance, this may seem to confirm my expectation that the open street system would be a tool for 'purifying' the city center. By concentrating on the drug scene, the new open street system made 'the unwanted' the primary target of its panoptic gaze. Yet, as we soon will see, all this targeting seldom lead to a deployment.

When operators at any of the sites were asked what they looked for on their screens, their first answer typically was that they scanned the screens for anything 'out of the ordinary,' anything that disrupted the normal picture. As mentioned above, the major drug scene in Oslo is located in the open street surveillance area. During the daytime, the major 'disturbance' in the operator's picture was the addicts gathering in one spot in order to buy and sell drugs. These drug activities formed a main target of surveillance when nothing else was going on in the area because they were at once ordinary for the setting and illegal. Yet, these drug activities were seldom more than virtually targeted because, although the surveillance system was concerned with illegal drug sales and use, the police until recently had the policy of tracking down major drug pushers rather than small-time users or sellers. The operators gradually came to concentrate their attention on preventing the recruitment of young addicts. Ironically, then, young people seen for the first time 'hanging around' in the surveilled area were more likely to be deployed against than long-time drug users openly buying or selling drugs. The operators actively followed young people hanging around in the drug scene area and often succeeded in getting police officers to go out, get the targeted youth's identity, and warn them off. The identity information would then be fed into a police register on young people controlled in that area. Meanwhile, they left the small-time users and sellers more or less alone, preferring to have them gather within range of the cameras rather than drive them to places where it would be harder to keep an eye on them. Until recently, the police strategy toward the drug scene has been to contain it in a defined and carefully controlled space.

Shopping mall and Transport center CCTV: Targeting the 'scruffies' – for 'no obvious reason'

As noted earlier, I expected that surveillance activities in the shopping mall would be about preventing theft from the stores and their customers. But, as already suggested by the British studies about CCTV's use in purifying public spaces, in nearly half of the cases (48 %) the reason for targeting was not about crime. In many cases, they targeted a person even if the person did not behave in an unruly or suspicious way and even if the location was not one where the operators expected trouble. If the operator did not offer any explanation, I coded these cases as 'no obvious reason' for targeting. This 'no obvious reason' – targeting was based on a perception about the person's ability to consume or to annoy potential consumers, and this perception was based on the person's appearance. The operators would probably not describe the reason for targeting in these cases as 'no obvious reason'. They would probably justify the targeting with the appearance of the targets, that they looked poorly dressed or that they looked like drug addicts. This was sufficient reason for targeting according to the operators standards in both the shopping mall and transport center. Visibly poor people were targeted, identified by their ragged or unfashionable clothing, lack of hygiene, or gaunt look. Such people, just by entering a mall or transport center, even when walking steadily and not acting unruly or disorderly, were targeted. If these people appeared to be visibly influenced by drugs and/or alcohol, this was coded as 'unruly/disorderly/nuisance behavior'.

At the major transport center, targeting of scruffies also turned out to be a major activity (34 % of all TS), but not all the time. When the operators scanned the seating areas, they always stopped when they saw someone scruffy sitting there, even though they seldom were a nuisance.

The various reasons for targeting across the various sites reflect both the explicit and implicit function of the different systems, and also some major differences between the contexts surrounding the systems. But despite major differences, in all three systems drug addicts/scruffies were the main object for targeting.

From targeting to exclusion

Watching someone on the CCTV system can be seen as a passive and unobtrusive form of intervention. Video surveillance becomes far more noticeable when observation becomes a basis for deployment and practical intervention. And for CCTV to contribute to increased social exclusion, it is not enough that some categories are targeted more than others are. This targeting must also have the consequence of excluding the unwanted.

The systems varied considerably when it came to deployments and effects, or outcomes, of those deployments. In total, 36 % of the targeted surveillances resulted in a deployment. Site by site, deployments as a percentage of targeted surveillances ranged from 22% at the open street system via 46 % at the major transport center, to 69% at the shopping mall.

This variation in rate of deployment shows that the open street system, while highly proactive on the first stages of a targeted surveillance, i.e. proactive in finding persons to watch, is not very interventionist when it comes to deployment. The open street system is not so much discreet as understaffed on and/or un-integrated to the deployment end. It is only the police who are mandated to act in the field of view in the open street system. If the police are busy with other tasks, then there is not much point for the operators to call for a deployment to incidents they have spotted on the screen -- not unless the incident constitutes an emergency situation. There is therefore a high deployment threshold in the Open street system. Furthermore, the video operators are not themselves police officers and have therefore little authority with the police.

However, once there is a deployment, in many cases the target is arrested. This was the case for over a third of deployments from the open street system. The shopping mall, on the other hand, has a very high rate of deployment, most of which end in ejections.

The table below shows the outcomes of the deployments:

	Shopping mall	Major transport center	Open street
Target(s) let go	21 %	25 %	47 %
Target(s) made to leave (ejected)	36 %	31 %	6 %
Targets(s) arrested	2 %	6 %	35 %
Don't know	41 %	38 %	12 %
Total	(n=42) 100 %	(n=16) 100 %	(n=17) 100 %

Table 2: The outcome of the deployment

The most 'serious' outcome; someone being arrested, accounted for 35 % of the deployments at the open street system, but the most common result was that the target was let go. Most of these 'let go's' involved police officers getting personal data (name, birth- and social security number) from young people who were hanging around in the area. So although the targeted people were 'let go', the targeting had important outcomes, in that the young persons, probably without knowing, were registered in a police database. Information gathering turned out to be an important activity in the open street system.

In contrast with the open street system, at the shopping mall and transport center, scruffies were not only under active surveillance as soon as they entered the area, but they were also more frequently ejected from the place. When operators at the mall and also at the transport center saw a scruffy, they reacted instantly by calling the security guards, and the security guards immediately approached the scruffies. Here is one typical example:

Early on our first afternoon two scruffies/apparent addicts enter the mall. The operator immediately calls the security guard who then approaches them and talks to them. The operator follows the situation on camera. The security guard then calls back on the radio that, "They are not high; they said they were here to shop, so I will let them have a look around." However, the guard follows them around, the camera also. Half a minute after they "get to look around" they leave the mall. The guard calls on the radio that; "They are on their way out, so you can follow them with the camera." The operator calls the guard after they have left the premises. The whole episode lasts for four minutes.

These two were not ejected, but many of these 'No obvious reason'-TS's were followed up with ejection⁷. At the shopping mall we even overheard one new, inexperienced guard being told by a more experienced one that when he was guarding the main entrance, if druggies/scruffies entered, he should eject them immediately⁸.

At both the shopping mall and transport center there is a high percentage of 'don't know' in this table. My experience with the systems tells me that many of these probably resulted in an ejection, but I only coded the outcome as an ejection when I were certain about this.

The reason for the high number of 'don't knows' is that in these systems the operators often were through with the TS as soon as the security guard came to the scene. These systems were often very busy, and the operator often had other things to do. Probably because many of these TS were about scruffies being routinely ejected, the operators were also not very concerned or interested in the outcome. This was routine activity. In contrast, arresting someone is more exciting and interesting to watch, and also more important in documenting the incidents.

Much of the surveillance effort at the shopping mall was directed at excluding undesirables from the mall. Here, therefore, many were targeted and many of these targets were ejected simply because they looked unsavory. People who looked shabby were ejected even if they were shopping and paying for goods. In at least one instance, guards stood by and watched as a scruffy-looking couple paid for their purchases, and then escorted them out of the mall.

The shopping mall was clearly the site with the most merciless ejection practice. I experienced several cases where scruffies were ejected without any prior incident or situation. They were just not wanted in the mall. This was because of their appearance, not their behavior. In several incidents others (the information desk, shop staff) alarmed the operator about an intoxicated person, but when the guard reported back, they often reported that the suspects were not visibly

⁷ In all there were 21 ejections in the observation data. We registered the following reasons for these: In 52% of cases where the target was ejected, there was "No obvious reason". Another 10% were coded as "Don't know", which amounts to pretty much the same. "Unruly etc" accounted for 33% of the cases.

⁸ From field notes: Today a new, "green" guard is on duty. His is therefore given some extra follow-up, instructions, etc. Nevertheless, he does his rounds alone. When he reports that he is going down to the ground floor, the shift leader replies, "You remember what you're supposed to do on the ground floor?" He responds: "The Restaurant-round?" Shift leader: "Yes, and watch who enters. If it's a druggie or a drunk, then show them out."

intoxicated. They were scruffies, but not intoxicated. While an intoxicated person is often a nuisance to others, and can be ejected on those grounds, and whereas fashionable restaurants and hotels often have dress codes that would exclude someone clad in ragged, dirty, or ill-fitting clothes, there is no tradition for excluding people from public streets or from ordinary shops on such a basis. By excluding them from the shopping mall, this street-like space changes character; and as more and more shops are located in private malls, so too does the character of whole cities change. At the transport center, the main station of a publicly owned railway, now with several of its functions privatized and a mall within the station – such a change is perhaps even more dramatic. This was once a publicly owned space where only criminal or nuisance behavior would qualify for (temporary) exclusion.

A CCTV system is a powerful system when it comes to spotting people with certain characteristics in a crowd. A CCTV system in effect multiplies the number of security guards in a space – at least in terms of the number of ‘eyes’ watching, or the number of spots within the space being watched at any given time. If deployments are effectuated on the basis of what all those eyes see, and if deployment times are quick, then it is also as if there were more guards’ bodies, feet, and hands available.

The spaces we are dealing with here are in a grey zone, legally. The shopping mall is a privately owned public space. The owner, represented by the security guards, has a right to exclude unwanted customers; however, they need a reason for not wanting them. If you look scruffy, but in other ways do not bother the other customers (you don't smell bad, you are not intoxicated), this is not in itself a legal reason for ejecting you. The security guards know this. They need a reason for ejecting them. But the mall owners do not want scruffies destroying the exclusive image of the mall. The more attractive the average clientele in the mall, the more attractive the building is to tenants and the more valuable the property. The security guards are therefore caught between the law and their contract-holders. In the daily running of the mall, the contract-holder wins, it seems.

Another explanation of the high deployment- and ejection rate at the shopping mall, is that the observation/targeting and the intervention/deployment was conducted by the same people; the security guards. They took turns in observing the monitors. Video surveillance is normally characterized by separating monitoring from intervention (Norris, 2003:253). The operators watch the incident, but they have to deploy someone else to intervene. In the shopping mall, however, this separating was not very clear-cut, and this increased the deployment-rate dramatically. The deployment threshold was extremely low at the shopping mall, compared to the Open street system.

In the interviews with managers at both the shopping mall and transport center, they touched upon the issue of ejections and exclusions, but not directly. Since both the shopping mall and the transport center are very close to the city’s drug dealing scene, drug addicts and/or scruffies are a daily challenge. The manager at the shopping mall is pleased that in spite of its localization,

there is not much “crap” [his term] in the mall⁹. One security guard said: “Yes, it’s clear there are some druggies who come in here, but they come out again pretty quick.”

The CCTV manager at the transport center also admitted that, “We could have preferred that the drug scene wasn’t out there, because it brings with it a lot that we struggle with, to put it that way. They’re not always the most stable people.” When I agreed that, “No, and you’re their nearest neighbor,” the manager went on to say that, “Yes. So it’s a good thing, that we can keep track and send folks out when we see that there’s something.”

Also at the major transport center, scruffies were an issue. If a scruffy entered the premises and sat down on a bench, he or she could be approached, but not that easily ejected. There was always the possibility that they were passengers going somewhere. It also seemed as if the shops in the transport center had higher tolerance for scruffies than those in the shopping mall had. The alarm didn’t go off as soon as a scruffy entered a shop. The targeted people were also more aware of their rights. They knew they could not be that easily ejected from a transport center as from a mall. They protested, said they would report the guards to the police, etc. All in all, the transport center is more ‘public’ than the mall. It is also more attractive, because of the seating areas, public restrooms, and platforms. In the mall, there was nowhere to rest or sit down except in the cafés. Thus, not only the structures and practices of the CCTV systems, but also of the buildings themselves, affected the nature of the spaces in terms of public access.

The excluding potential of a CCTV system depends on the deployment end, and its goals. At the shopping mall, and partly also at the transport center, we saw this in its ‘rawest’ form: Categorical targeting, followed with immediate exclusion. The goal was to keep the undesirables, or as the mall manager said, the “crap”, outside. Not because they behaved disorderly or unruly, but because of their appearances. A public police serving the whole city cannot have such a geographically limited exclusionary practice. But this spring (2003) we witnessed an attempt to clean up the drug scene, and this was partly motivated by aesthetical judgments.

‘Operation Plata’

The Norwegian newspaper *Aftenposten* wrote on the 16th of March 2003 an article with the headline “Cleaning up Plata and red-light district in five weeks”, telling the readers that the police are finally going to ‘clean up’ the drug scene in Oslo. The article further says that this is a joint initiative between the local government, retailers association and the police. The initiative came from a hotel manager in the red-light district (close to the drug scene, but not in the area under surveillance), who was fed up with his customers having to pass prostitutes on their way to his

⁹ Interviewer: As contractors for operations here, are you pleased with the CCTV system?

Manager: Yes, we’re pretty pleased with it; it keeps an eye on things in the public areas here, where there is most traffic. We have the dome cameras here; they cover all of this floor and the entrances past the grocery store and from the side by the railway station – which is where traffic is heaviest. The escalators are also covered well with good dome cameras. We catch a lot of people there, those who catch them. The guards are very good; they recognize them. So it’s pretty good in here; not so much crap here, to put it that way at any rate, even if we’re in about the worst part of town imaginable.

hotel. A meeting was arranged, and they all agreed that Plata and the red-light district “can hardly be described as an aesthetic display window for the city”. The local government promised that all the addicts should get treatment, and the police promised to clean up the drug scene ‘Plata’. One of the police leaders stated that “We want the area to appear nicer and safer for those who run businesses or walk through this part of the city.”

But already in May reports reached the media that because the police had succeeded in spreading the drug scene, the drug addicts were now spread all around the city center, shooting up in malls, shops, dressing rooms etc. The retailers association complained, the police accused the local government for not fulfilling their part of the deal, and it all ended in the drug addicts being chased *back* to Plata, by the same police officers that months before chased them *away* from Plata.

The police had all this time been ambivalent towards ‘cleaning up’ the scene, and several police officers openly protested the initiative. For the police, there are obvious advantages in having the drug scene in a place where they can be observed. The local government, and the retailers association, on the other hand, wants the drug addicts out of their sight.

During this initiative, the CCTV system was actively used, but not all the time, by the local police officers wanting to check whether there was any activity at ‘Plata’. Sometimes they went outside and chased the drug addicts, at other times they were left alone. Another part of the ‘Operation Plata’ initiative was to register all minors appearing on the drug scene, as part of the aim to prevent young people from starting a drug career. The CCTV system was actively used for this, with the operators finding young people that appeared minor, and sending the local police officers out to check their identity. The operators then registered this information in the police registers. This information was then shared with the other partners in ‘Operation Plata’, namely the local government and social services.

The ‘Operation Plata’ initiative can clearly be seen as a social exclusion experiment, with its strong emphasis on cleaning up the place. Although the operation failed, the experiment shows that the police were both willing and able in cooperating with both the local government and retailers association in these kinds of exclusionary activities. However, internal tensions within the police organization are surfacing on this matter.

Conclusion

Summing up, one can say that in Oslo, CCTV has had its most exclusionary effects in the most privatized of public space, where it is used mainly as a discriminatory tool ensuring that marginalized people are kept out of the sight of the consumers.

Ejections were a substantial result of video surveillance operations at two of the sites, namely the shopping mall and the transport center. In large part, these ejections were pre-emptive. That is to say, the majority of the exclusions were in response to appearances and categorical suspicions; only a minority of these ejections was in response to observed criminal or nuisance

behaviors or to recognized individuals known to have engaged in such behaviors on the premises on earlier occasions.

These findings confirm earlier results, mainly from the United Kingdom, that point to social exclusion from public spaces as a potential negative consequence of the spread of video surveillance (Reeve, 1998; von Hirsch, 2000; McCahill, 2002; Norris, 1999; 2003).

The limited responsibility of private security, acting on behalf of private interests, and also the relationship between surveillance operators and operators in the field of view have important consequences for the exclusionary effects of CCTV. Each of the cases we studied represented a different structure of such relationships. The shopping mall and transport center had the lowest deployment and ejection threshold, with the closest and easiest contact between operators and the security guards, while the open street system had a much higher threshold for deployment, with a more intricate and complicated line of command, with the operator being lowest in rank.

Why was the open street system not more used as a means of ‘purifying’ the public space? The most important reason was that, being part of the police organization, they had to ‘compete’ with more ‘serious’ incidents. They did not have an army of private security guards at hand; all deployments there had to be a police operation. The open street CCTV system in Oslo is run by the police¹⁰, and though one can see considerable interest in the system being used to exclude undesirables, both from the retail sector and from the local government, the daily running of the system is limited to actors in the police organization. Being a part of the police organization, one can not limit one’s interests only to the place under surveillance, as both the shopping mall and transport center could. The police officers deciding whether to intervene or deploy, know that if they chase the drug addicts out of the surveilled place, they will go somewhere else. This is seldom a concern for the local retailer or manager of a shopping mall.

Norris and Armstrong emphasize the crucial aspect of CCTV as being that the sensory limitations of the video screen and the distance between observer and observed seems to encourage the application of categorical suspicions based on a narrow range of readily observable traits (1999). This raises a concern that video surveillance may become an instrument of systematic, categorical social exclusion from otherwise publicly accessible spaces. One of the key aims of this study was to see whether such social exclusion is occurring. Social exclusion does take place, but in varying degrees across sites.

The findings from the observation study in Oslo, especially from the shopping mall and transport center, confirms the application of categorical suspicion based on a narrow range of readily observable traits, but this is not only a consequence of the sensory limitations of the technological system and the distance between observer and observed, it is basically a consequence of the main goal of the policing activities of the place under surveillance: Keeping the place ‘clean’. The

¹⁰ In Norway there is only one police force. The organisation of the Norwegian Police is largely based on the principle of an integrated police, that is that all the functions of the police are collected in one organisation.

CCTV system is a powerful tool for targeting people on the basis of appearance, but it is not the CCTV system that constructs this policing goal in the first place.

CCTV is a powerful tool for actors with a desire to exclude undesirables from the new territories of consumption. The Norwegian criminologist Nils Christie writes in his book *Crime Control as Industry* that in the 1990s:

Poverty has again become visible. The homeless and the unemployed are out in the streets. They hang around everywhere dirty, abusive, provocative in their non-usefulness. We get a repetition of what happened in the 1930's, only more so since the inner cities have been rebuilt since then. Hiding places in slums and dark corners have been replaced by heated arcades leading into glittering shopping paradises. Of course homeless and/or unemployed persons also seek these public alternatives to the places of work and homes they are barred from. And as an equal matter of course they are met with agitated demands to get them out of sight and out of mind (1993:66).

This study supports the view that CCTV systems are being used mainly to target those groups that are 'out of place' in the new territories of consumption. Exclusionary practices vary across sites, and the more the systems are operated and influenced by private capital interest, the more exclusionary practices take place. Policing activities at the shopping mall, and also at the transport center, are very simple; Keep the place clean. The function of these CCTV systems is to help in keeping the place clean. As a consequence of this, policing and surveillance at both the shopping mall and the transport center was not information-based. It was policing 'here-and now', in its rawest form, preoccupied with the aesthetics of the place under surveillance.

The function of the open street system is more complex. But the area under surveillance in this open street system is being re-designed, 'cleaned up' and 'improved'. The drug scene, Plata, is more and more often being seen as 'out of place' in this rapidly developing area, than it was in 1999 when the Open street system started. This is contributing to a change in the goals and activities of the open street system. The increasing cooperation between local government, retailers association and the police in Oslo is beginning to resemble the British 'Town Centre Management' (Reeve, 1998:75), and if this development continues, we can expect to see new laws and new methods of control in order to manage, or rather, exclude, certain categories of people.

The gaze of CCTV is not panoptic, or all-seeing, it pre-selects its objects of control. In contrast with Foucault's use of Bentham's Panopticon, the main purpose of the semi-public or private panopticons in this study is not discipline, but exclusion. Foucault emphasized both the exclusionary *and* the inclusionary powers of the Panopticon. The Panoptic institution was exclusionary in that it segregated the deviant from the wider community, but inclusionary because segregation was aimed not merely at warehousing deviants but transforming them into 'docile bodies' to be returned to the fold (Norris, 2003:250). With this in mind, one can say that the modern, private, electronic, urban panopticon in this study is exclusionary but not inclusionary, at least not both for the same segment of the people. The CCTV systems at the shopping mall and

transport center are not panoptic, in Foucault's meaning of the word. The exclusionary practices at these two sites are much more in accordance with how the leper was managed – branding and exile, not identification and discipline.

Of course, CCTV might have an inclusionary effect on the ordinary, casual indistinct public, as 'panopticonisation', according to both Bentham and Foucault, facilitates the power of the watchers over the watched not only by enabling swift intervention or deployments to non-conformity, but also through the promotion of habituated anticipatory conformity. This effect, however, is difficult to register from the control room. From the control room of private video surveillance systems, it is the exclusionary practices that dominate the practices of surveillance operations.

The open street system in Oslo has in the last year shown a tendency towards increasing exclusionary practices towards the most unwanted categories of the people in that area, the drug addicts. But as long as the system is being kept as a police system, and the decision to intervene or deploy is being made by police officers coordinating police activities in the rest of the city of Oslo, exclusionary practices will be held to a minimum. Should the open street system become more disconnected from the public policing activities in Oslo, exclusionary practices will more likely increase. The organizational placing of the open street CCTV system in the public police force is an important factor for explaining the non-exclusionary practices of the system. Likewise, the exclusionary practices of the private shopping mall and transport center systems can be understood by their organizational placing.

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