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Perceptions of surveillance: Reflexivity and trust in a mediatized world (the case of Sweden)

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Abstract
Even though the field of surveillance studies has expanded during the last decade, there is still a need for studies that empirically explain and contextualize people's perceptions of the increasingly mediatized 'surveillance society'. This article provides a 'middle range' social theorization, following Giddens, as well as an updated empirical account, based on a nationwide Swedish survey, of how various forms of surveillance are perceived as social phenomena. Through factor analysis three dimensions are elaborated: state surveillance, commercial surveillance and mediated interveillance. The article argues that the realm of interveillance blurs the line between systemic and social trust, and thus calls for context-specific modes of routinized reflexivity. Whereas such modes of boundary maintenance may potentially run across social lines of division, the results suggest that the management of interveillance primarily constitutes an instance of sociocultural structuration.

Keywords
Identity, interveillance, lifestyle, media, modernity, security, surveillance

Mediatization refers to a 'meta-process' (see Krotz, 2007) through which social life becomes increasingly embedded within processes and systems of technological mediation. In a mediatized society the social meaning of surveillance becomes increasingly complex. As mediated social interaction and the instantaneous circulation of images and opinions collapse into refined techniques for consumer monitoring, the classical Big Brother model of top-down surveillance is intertwined with a number of other forms of mediated control (Deleuze, 1992; Haggerty and Ericson, 2000), some of

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which are marked by a high degree of social complicity. Whereas some researchers have stressed the extended potentials of commercial exploitation involved in these new technological infrastructures (e.g. Andrejevic, 2007), others have highlighted that the new situation may also sustain pleasurable and/or empowering social participation (e.g. Albrechtslund, 2008; Koskela, 2006; McGrath, 2004). Accordingly, the current debates tend to rearticulate classical sociological battle lines between structural determinism and individualism – indicating that social space as such is now becoming mediatized at an accentuated rate.

Whereas the field of surveillance studies has expanded considerably during the last decade (see Lyon, 2007) there are still relatively few studies that have empirically tried to map out, explain and thoroughly understand people's everyday perceptions of the increasingly complex 'surveillance society' (as a social resource, as well as a threat). The aim of this article, then, is to provide a 'middle range' social theorization, as well as an updated empirical account of how mediated surveillance systems and practices are perceived and related to the social construction of identity. In an attempt to map out these relationships between self and society, and thus also to overcome the gap between generalized theoretical claims regarding either an all-encompassing surveillance apparatus or playful consumers, the analysis will apply Giddens's (1984, 1991) perspective on structuration. In order to pinpoint the ways in which people in *different social settings* perceive *different forms of (mediated) surveillance* in their lives, the discussion will pay particular attention to the relationship between *reflexivity* and *trust*, and its negotiation within the *lifestyle* (another key concept in Giddens). Whereas the first part of the article sets out this analytical framework, integrating the Giddensian approach to structuration with contemporary media and surveillance studies (extending Giddens's view), the second part presents the results from a national Swedish survey, studying people's perceptions of integrity risks in relation to various forms of (potential) surveillance.

It is shown through factor analysis that people's perceptions fall into the three broad realms of *state surveillance, commercial surveillance* and *interveillance*. The latter realm (introduced in the theory section) is nurtured by the expanding culture of social media, in which the line between systemic and social trust is blurred. At the social level, interveillance demands context-specific modes of routinized reflexivity for coping with uncertainty. Whereas such reflexive modes of boundary maintenance may potentially run across social lines of division, the results of the Swedish survey suggest that the management of interveillance provides yet an expression of sociocultural structuration and stratification.

Reflexivity and trust in the mediatized modern world

According to Giddens's (1984, 1991) theory of modernity, processes such as secularization, detraditionalization and globalization have made the biographies of individuals less determined by structural, inherited forces – thus at the same time relatively liberated and less secure (see also e.g. Bauman, 2001; Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, 2001). This view of modern society (which can of course be specified in relation to particular sociocultural settings) does not abandon the idea of social structures, such as class,

gender and religion, shaping the dispositions of social actors. Rather, it holds that there are today an increasingly complex set of processes, power-fields and normative spaces that each social actor must cope with in order to maintain a sense of *ontological security* (Giddens, 1991).

Ontological security, according to Giddens, presupposes a certain balance between separation and integration, through which the individual's involvements in the everyday social world can take shape. Within this world, which the phenomenologists call the lifeworld (e.g. Berger et al., 1973; Schutz and Luckmann, 1973), day-to-day activities are carried out in a pre-reflexive mode; the rules and resources of various spaces of (inter)action are handled and enacted within the so-called practical consciousness (Giddens, 1991). A signature of modern life, however, is that individuals to a greater extent are faced with new and unfamiliar spaces and situations, calling for reflexive considerations in order to be adequately comprehended (cf. Berger et al., 1973). Under such life circumstances ontological security must be continuously regained through the interplay between reflexivity and routinization. This interplay, in turn, is the generative logic of the *lifestyle* (Giddens, 1991: 80–88).

The key point here is that modern society provides, and necessitates, an increasingly diversified array of *lifestyle sectors*, or what in this article will also be called *sectors of reflexivity and trust*. 'A lifestyle sector', Giddens (1991: 83) writes, 'concerns a time-space "slice" of an individual's overall activities, within which a reasonably consistent and ordered set of practices is adopted and enacted.' Lifestyle sectors are thus the routinized and relatively bounded (in time and/or space) domains of expressivity through which the lifestyle as a whole is reproduced. While the overall arrangement of the sector is taken for granted, implying that there is trust in how people normally act, and in the modes of operation of various regulatory systems, the individual actor must also reflexively establish certain routines for coping with potential alterations.

In this article, when discussing lifestyle sectors as 'sectors of reflexivity and trust', two analytical dimensions are at stake. First, we are dealing with the dimension of *social* reflexivity and trust. In most lifestyle sectors the individual encounters a certain constellation of fellow social beings; many or few, familiar or unfamiliar, depending on the type of sector. While some sectors are marked by a high degree of uncertainty, and thus a need for reflexive modes of 'image management', others can be described as the 'back stages' of social life (Goffman, 1971). Typically, as we are getting accustomed to a certain sector, and routinize our modes of behaviour within that sector, a sense of complicity and trust is also established – trust in the social rules and conventions, as well as in other people's willingness to act in accordance with those structures (Giddens, 1991: 51–52).

The second dimension is *systemic* reflexivity and trust. This dimension does not pertain directly to other people, but to the societal systems through which social life is administered – notably what Giddens calls *abstract systems*. As he asserts, 'the abstract systems of modernity create large areas of relative security for the continuance of day-to-day life' (Giddens, 1991: 133). Giddens then refers to a range of phenomena such as monetary systems, technological infrastructures and various standardized systems of expert knowledge, which altogether enable the joy and comforts of modern lifestyles. All those systems depend on trust. In order to integrate in the modern world, the social actor

must count on the predictability and correctness of those systems. However, abstract systems *can* fail; they *can* function in seemingly obscure ways – and as social actors we regularly have to learn how to cope with entirely new systems, or reinventions of older ones, also within pre-established lifestyle sectors.

The mediatization process in general, and the accentuated social saturation of digital media forms in particular, affect both these dimensions of reflexivity and trust. As will be suggested in the following section, one of the main consequences of the mediatization process is that the *dimensions* as well as the *sectors* of reflexivity and trust are increasingly defined, maintained and interwoven through technological mediation, generating, among other things, highly ambiguous conditions and experiences of surveillance.

Mediated surveillance and interveillance

Surveillance is a crucial theme in Giddens's writings on modernization. In his 1987 book *The Nation-State and Violence* Giddens points out how surveillance during the 18th–19th centuries was an integral part of the centralization of administrative power that led to the abolishment of traditional states. By 'administrative power' Giddens means the '*control over the timing and spacing of human activities*' (Giddens, 1987: 47, emphasis in original). Surveillance, in this view, refers both to the collation and integration of information, and to more direct supervision, and these two forms of surveillance regularly reinforce one another (see also Giddens, 1991: 15).

Giddens's perspective on surveillance is thus mainly concerned with the modern state, and its increasingly sophisticated abilities to monitor the social lives of a population. Administrative surveillance is seen as a key dimension of modern society, as significant as those of industrialism and capitalism. In the present study, however, in which we are concerned with how different social groups relate to a range of potential means of surveillance, a broadened understanding has to be accommodated. This partly stems from the fact that the very logics of rationalized data management and social supervision, which Giddens discusses, can be found in, and is increasingly expanding to, broader areas of society. Notably, during the late modern era the rationalized monitoring of social subjects has been revolutionized within the commercial sector, more than anywhere else, in the shape of computer-assisted profiling and targeting of consumers (e.g. Gandy, 1993). Furthermore, as of today, processes of mediatization and digitization continue to blur the pre-existing lines of division between various sectors of surveillance, leading thinkers such as Haggerty and Ericson (2000) to apply Deleuze and Guattari's 'assemblage' metaphor for making sense of the ambiguities of contemporary surveillance.

In short, the 'surveillant assemblage' refers to the interlinking of a plethora of surveillant technologies into combined systems for elaborating personal data into meaningful information for commercial, administrative and other purposes. In contrast to Giddens's more confined and rationalist view, the notion of assemblages also actualizes the fact that social subjects are drawn into the systems of surveillance through their own desires – notably as consumers – for control, self-expressivity and voyeuristic entertainment (Haggerty and Ericson, 2000: 616).

Still, if we relate Haggerty and Ericson's conception of the surveillant assemblage to Giddens's work on abstract systems, we might explore an integrated position – one that fits the general appearance of late modernity. Albeit not explicitly elaborated in Giddens's original writings, the idea of increasingly technologized abstract systems of control opens for a broader and more complex understanding of surveillance. Whereas these systems pertain to a diverse range of lifestyle sectors, what they have in common, as stated above (Giddens, 1991), is that they guarantee a sense of predictability and security on behalf of social actors, while at the same time operating as the platforms of surveillance measures. Abstract systems in general, and standardized media infrastructures in particular, may thus be seen as institutional preconditions for the constitution of surveillant assemblages – whether we study online shopping, family vacationing, everyday commuting, or any other lifestyle sector. Both the assemblage metaphor and Giddens's notion of abstract systems thus advance complicit agency – stressing either desire or trust – as the reproductive precondition for systemic structures of surveillance (see also Christensen, 2011).

This aspect of surveillance has also been debated in more recent writings on mediated surveillance. A recurring theme, albeit interpreted in diverging ways, is that media interactivity (understood as the users' active involvement in content generation and exchange) goes hand in hand with extended opportunities for information storage and control on behalf of the service providers. Surveillance thus becomes part of the very technological architecture, generated through the automatized aggregation of user activity. Whereas new media such as online social networking sites or mobile navigation applications, as well as electronic smartcards, and so on, allow for increasingly personalized forms of consumption, they also create a state of 'interactive surveillance'. This state entails the production of what Andrejevic (2007) from a critical perspective calls the 'digital enclosure', referring to 'the creation of an interactive realm wherein every action and transaction generates information about itself' (Andrejevic, 2007: 2) – a 'digital lifeworld' of 'soft' surveillance (see also Abe, 2009; Kim, 2004; Staples, 2000).

The objective here is not to assess which ideological reading of 'surveillance society' is the most accurate one. Since the focus of this study is on people's *perceptions of surveillance* the key point is rather that new interactive affordances, paired with the digital linking of various surveillance systems, result in increasingly *ambiguous* social conditions. Under such conditions emancipatory experiments of the self (cf. Koskela, 2006; McGrath, 2004) and industrial exploitation of that same self (cf. Andrejevic, 2007) are potentially intertwined within a shared technological architecture. Similar ambiguities can be discerned at the most mundane levels of everyday media use, the most obvious example being the realm of social media, where people's communicative identity work, via inbuilt monitoring tools, drives capitalist processes of accumulation.

In light of this new situation, several theorists have pointed to the saturation of surveillant logics into the fabric of social life – basically people's mediated watching of one another, notably via various screen technologies. Andrejevic (2005), for instance, has discussed these processes in terms of a commercially invoked, and exploited, realm of 'lateral surveillance'. Clearly, these tendencies need to be taken into account when studying people's perceptions of integrity threats within the overarching context of 'surveillance society' (cf. Humpreys, 2011). However, when speaking of people's mutual

practices of mediated expressivity and control, through for example online networking and content circulation, this article will use the term *interveillance* instead of surveillance. The reason for this is twofold. First, contemporary forms of *mutual* online expressivity, sharing and observation are to be understood as the outcome of identity work, and a desire for integration, rather than as an ambition to systematically supervise and control other people's activities. Second, since the concept of surveillance points to a certain relation of power, a relation between those *watching over* and those being watched, the horizontal monitoring of everyday activities, in its basic form, follows a more open-ended social logic.

It is important to stress here, however, that the conceptual distinction between surveillance and interveillance does not deny that more structural relations and experiences of surveillance may emerge between social subjects and groups. Nor does it rule out the observation, put forward by Andrejevic and others, that such lateral processes are embedded within dominant technologized and commercialized systems of surveillance. The flourishing *culture of interveillance*, in which people enjoy following the activities of others as well as the automatized reflections of their own 'data doubles' (Haggerty and Ericson, 2000), can best be understood as an extension of late modern society, through which people's fundamental desire for ontological security and social recognition becomes the raw material for the expansion and internal integration of consumer-/surveillance society.

The distinctions introduced here may now be connected to the empirical topic of this study. To put it schematically, while the exercise of administrative (mediated) surveillance, that is, institutionalized monitoring systems including everything from early modern forms of state-control to recent elaborations of commercial data aggregation, necessitates *systemic reflexivity and trust* on behalf of social subjects, the emerging regime of interveillance also, and more significantly, necessitates *social reflexivity and trust*. While the former points more squarely to the perception of risks associated with technological and organizational processes, the latter also pertains to risks associated with how other people make use of the tools and symbolic contents (texts, images, sound) of interveillance. What is instrumental, then, is that the architecture of the digital media system, especially social media, contributes to the convergence of those two dimensions.

Some previous studies

How do people under various social conditions negotiate the relationship between reflexivity and trust in the face of mediated surveillance and interveillance? There are indeed a growing number of studies exploring similar research agendas, notably within a qualitative framework. For example, in a critical study of the Japanese social networking site (SNS) mixi, Abe (2009) found that the technological structure fostered an intricate tension between network sociality (Wittel, 2001), meaning the extension and management of social relationships, and security gaining closure. As this intersectional lifestyle sector was managed in order to maintain a sense of trust, the boundaries of privacy also had to be reflexively protected, implying the avoidance of letting strangers into the privatized sector.

In another study, Best (2010) could identify diverging, and socially structured modes of coping with the growing ambiguities of mediated surveillance. These modes ranged from hedonistic indulgence with various forms of interveillance, and the appraisal of personalized modes consumption, to routinized pragmatism, even sentiments of fatigue and apathy. As one of Best's (2010: 19) Canadian informants stated: 'Why bother filling my head with this worry when there is nothing I'm gonna be able to do about it, aside from – obviously – pulling myself out from all these things, which you can't really do, so … yeah.' This quote highlights the necessity of trust, and the limits of reflexivity, which has also been reported in other studies (see e.g. Humphreys, 2011; Kim, 2004).

Still, there is a need to further scrutinize how these routinized modes of coping, as well as people's underlying perceptions of various forms of surveillance, are related to the social structures of society. Some important results in this regard have been presented by Fuchs (2009, 2010), who in an Austrian survey could establish the relationship between social background (class context) and university students' perceptions of surveillance in the realm of SNS. Fuchs found that those groups who came from more privileged family backgrounds in urban areas tended to be better informed about surveillance issues related to their SNS use. He also found that students within the social sciences and the humanities were more critical than those within the natural sciences. However, in Fuchs's study the increasing use of SNS contributed to a more uncritical attitude, suggesting that: 'If one uses information and communication technologies frequently and does not see any immediate evidence of being under surveillance, then one might become more trusting in online platforms in particular and in the harmlessness of surveillance in general' (Fuchs, 2009: 64). The following sections of the article will further illuminate and problematize those issues in a broader demographic context, through the analysis of a national survey conducted in Sweden in 2009.

Three statistical risk dimensions

The national Society Opinion Media (SOM) survey is carried out every year by the SOM Institute at Göteborg University, Sweden. The postal questionnaire, which the present analysis is based on, was sent out in autumn 2009 to a random, statistically representative selection of the Swedish population aged between 16 and 85 years, altogether 3000 people. The total number of respondents answering the questionnaire was 1657. The Secure Spaces project, which this study is part of, formulated a couple of questions dealing with security and surveillance in the context of new media. One of the questions, which will be dealt with here, was formulated as follows:

In your opinion, to what extent is there a risk that the following phenomena may violate people's personal integrity?

The question was followed by a list of 12 items for the respondents to rate in terms of perceived risk level (see Table 1).

Whereas this question for obvious reasons cannot grasp the situated coping mechanisms of everyday life, and does not pertain in a linear manner to the complexity of identity creation, it does contribute to a broadened understanding of how people in different social contexts relate to different forms of surveillance, and how the expanding realm of interveillance is judged in comparison to more systemic threats.

Table 1. Perception of various integrity risks in society (percentages).

	Estimated risk					Answers (*N*)
	Very high	Rather high	Rather low	Very low	Cannot tell	
Debit/credit card transactions	12	20	29	24	15	1587
Transactions online	11	19	29	23	17	1578
Camera surveillance of public places	10	17	35	31	7	1584
Mobile phone photography	15	26	31	16	13	1581
Usage of web-camera	13	23	28	16	21	1566
Distribution of private images via Internet	41	31	11	5	13	1583
Social online media	20	29	17	6	27	1566
Email	4	10	36	33	18	1568
Mobile phones	4	10	34	37	15	1578
Opinion polls	4	7	32	42	15	1576
Linking of public personal registers	13	21	28	21	17	1587
International police cooperation	5	11	29	36	19	1586

Source: The national SOM survey 2009, Göteborg University.

The general outcome of the question is presented in Table 1. It is possible to cluster the phenomena according to three 'levels' of risk. Highest risk (marked in grey) is related to 'new' media, and to the circulation of private information enabled by those media. The one phenomenon most significantly associated with integrity risks is the distribution of private images online, which can be interpreted as the most extreme expression of the increasingly interactive, converging and ephemeral character of digital media. The second level contains forms of surveillance that are to a greater extent institutionally sanctioned and controlled: public camera surveillance, linking of registers and electronic transactions online or via debit/credit card. The third risk level comprises phenomena that are either highly integrated and naturalized in everyday life, such as mobile telephones and email, or pertaining to very specific, and clearly delimited sectors of society – international police cooperation and opinion polls.

Advancing a general interpretation of this pattern, one could say that there are three factors pertaining to the very constitution and appearance of surveillance that affect people's perception of integrity risks: (1) the everyday familiarity and adaptation to technology, (2) the private nature of the information, especially in terms of visual representation, and (3) the level of institutionalization, and thus control, of certain technologies and systems. Whereas institutionalized surveillance systems such as public cameras and integrated systems for online shopping may be perceived as simultaneously abstract and omnipresent, their applications do not depend on the judgement of private individuals, but follow certain rules and regulations. Table 1 thus suggests that the general level of trust is higher within the realm of top-down surveillance than in those realms that are saturated with the increasingly ephemeral culture of interveillance – a division that corresponds to the distinction between systemic and social trust.

Table 2. Factor analysis of integrity risks (factor loadings).

	Risk dimension		
	Commercial surveillance	State surveillance	Interveillance
Transactions online	.843	.143	.232
Debit/credit card transactions	.840	.128	.196
Email	.690	.386	.159
Mobile telephone	.652	.465	.126
Linking of public personal registers	.088	.809	.185
International police cooperation	.217	.813	.196
Opinion polls	.329	.663	.053
Camera surveillance of public spaces	.176	.595	.226
Distribution of private images via Internet	.047	.105	.823
Usage of web-camera	.220	.204	.785
Social online media	.228	.164	.694
Mobile phone photography	.156	.170	.753
Explained variance	22 %	22 %	22 %

Note: Those respondents who answered 'cannot tell' have been excluded from the selection. The factor analysis is pursued as a principal component analysis with Varimax rotation according to Kaiser's normalization criteria.
Source: The national SOM survey 2009, Göteborg University.

Through factor analysis it is possible to draw some further conclusions in this regard. As shown by Table 2, the items related to social media and image circulation constitute a separate ‘risk dimension’, labelled *mediated interveillance*. Applying this term is obviously an act of theoretical abstraction and simplification, boiling down to the methodological shortcomings of statistical data reduction techniques. Nevertheless, considering the fact that the constitutive items capture the social (dis)trust in other people’s moral judgements, rather than estimations of systemic reliability, there appears to be good enough empirical substance for such a tentative labelling. Two additional dimensions can be identified. The first one revolves around *commercial surveillance*, integrating the two items related to electronic/digital transactions together with email and mobile telephone. Here one must keep in mind, though, that the two latter phenomena are ranked very low in terms of risk, and attain a less significant position within the factor dimension. The final dimension, labelled *state surveillance*, represents an answering pattern where integrity risks are foremost associated with monitoring activities initiated by public institutions in general, and by the state in particular. Whereas the dimension commercial surveillance clearly involves aspects of interactive surveillance, state surveillance is a dimension that calls to mind the modern centralization of administrative power, as discussed by Giddens (1987).

Following the theoretical discussion above, these statistical dimensions make sense as indicators of different *dimensions* of reflexivity and trust, even though we are not dealing with any pure, or transparent, representation of social coping mechanisms. What we are able to measure are foundational social orientations that, in turn, condition more situational articulations pertaining to different (lifestyle) *sectors* of reflexivity and trust.

In order to grasp how the three dimensions are affected by various structural factors in society this study applies the so-called regression method (via the SPSS software) for turning them into dependent variables (see e.g. DiStefano et al. [2009] for a closer description of this method). The individual value on the new variable indicates, based on the respondent’s answering pattern, where on the factor he/she is positioned. For each of the new factor variables the grand mean is 0, which implies that one can estimate to what extent different groups deviate from the total selection. In this study positive mean values indicate that a certain group attributes higher integrity risks to the particular dimension than the selection as a whole, while the opposite goes for negative mean values. The three following sections will present results that illustrate the significance of (1) sociopolitical factors, (2) levels of basic social trust and (3) adaptation to social media.

Surveillance and social structuration

People’s perception of integrity risks can to some extent be explained through basic demographic variables, such as age and gender. Women associate interveillance with integrity risks to a greater extent than men do, which is expressed above all in relation to digital image circulation. The other two dimensions do not follow any obvious gender pattern, even though men are more sceptical with regard to public camera surveillance than women are. Older people are in general more sceptical, or anxious, when it comes to surveillance issues than younger people, with public camera surveillance being the only exception to the rule. Among young people (16–25 years) camera surveillance is perceived as an integrity risk to the same extent as web-cameras and social media. An

explanation, supported by qualitative studies (e.g. Best, 2010), could be that younger people, sometimes called the 'digital natives', sense that they are in control of their uses of social media technologies, having naturalized certain modes for coping with potential integrity threats. Public camera surveillance, on the contrary, and notably in schools and other educational settings, constitutes a more coercive and uncontrollable threat to personal integrity.

What is important to look deeper into, though, are the ways in which the perceptions of integrity risks reflect the processes of social stratification and reproduction in society, even articulating a gap in terms of reflexivity *and* trust. Educational level and subjective class position (measuring what social class the respondents themselves believe they belong to) are important indicators here, showing that people in status positions are less anxious about integrity risks. This relationship is particularly strong within the realm of commercial surveillance (Figure 1), expressing the social significance of secure economic life conditions in which electronic modes of transaction are naturalized. Similar results have been reported from international surveys (e.g. Bellman et al., 2004). The pattern is not as clear-cut regarding the other two dimensions, though, and when it comes to mediated interveillance people with higher education are even more concerned than those with intermediary education.

In this context, however, the pattern can be further specified if we take into account people's ideological orientations, occupational sphere and interests. We then find that

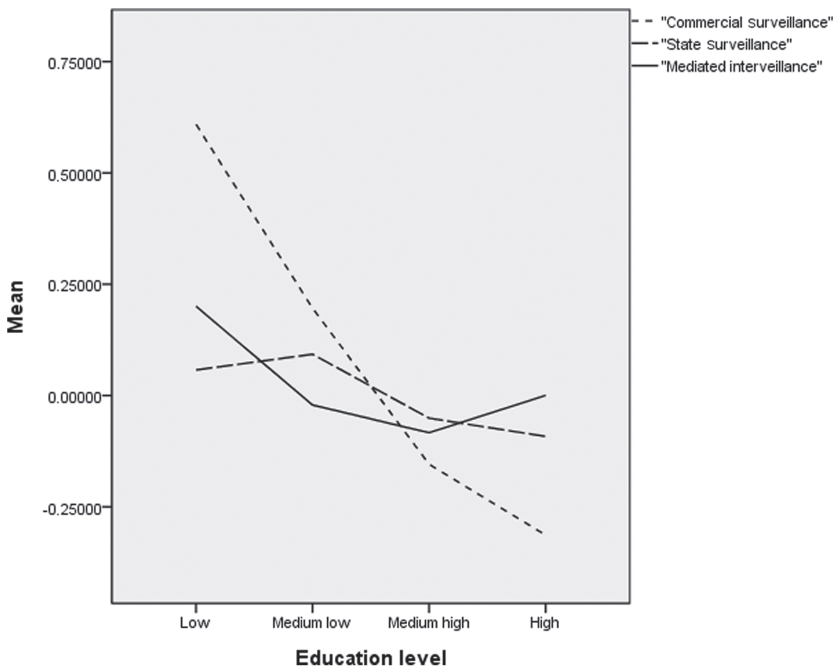

Figure 1. Relationship between risk perceptions and education level (means).
Source: The national SOM survey 2009, Göteborg University.

people working within the cultural and educational sectors of society (with the exception of media and marketing jobs), having a left-wing ideological orientation (Figure 2) combined with an interest in culture rather than new technology (not presented in figure), express more sceptical attitudes towards mediated interveillance. Except for the ideological dimension, which implies an increased trust in societal and social systems towards the right side of the political spectrum (affecting all three risk dimensions), there also prevails a gendered tension field between economic and cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1984 [1979]) when it comes to interveillance. Groups with strong cultural orientations and progressive political ideals tend to question surveillance society at large, and when it comes to interveillance this tendency is foremost articulated among women.

A somewhat paradoxical result here is that both cultural capital and lower social status seem to foster resistant attitudes. However, these patterns expose the shortcoming of survey studies with fixed answers, and can be explicated if we relate them to findings from qualitative studies, such as the aforementioned work by Kirsty Best (2010). We might then conclude that the results shown in Figures 1 and 2 partly conceal the distinction between what Best calls an 'apathetic public sentiment', identified among informants with little social power, which in the SOM survey appears as a general distrust in abstract systems as well as the Other, and a more culturally and ideologically grounded reflexivity. The latter, as also suggested by Fuchs (2009, 2010), attains an intellectual and ethical bias, questioning the pervasiveness of abstract systems. It is worth noting here

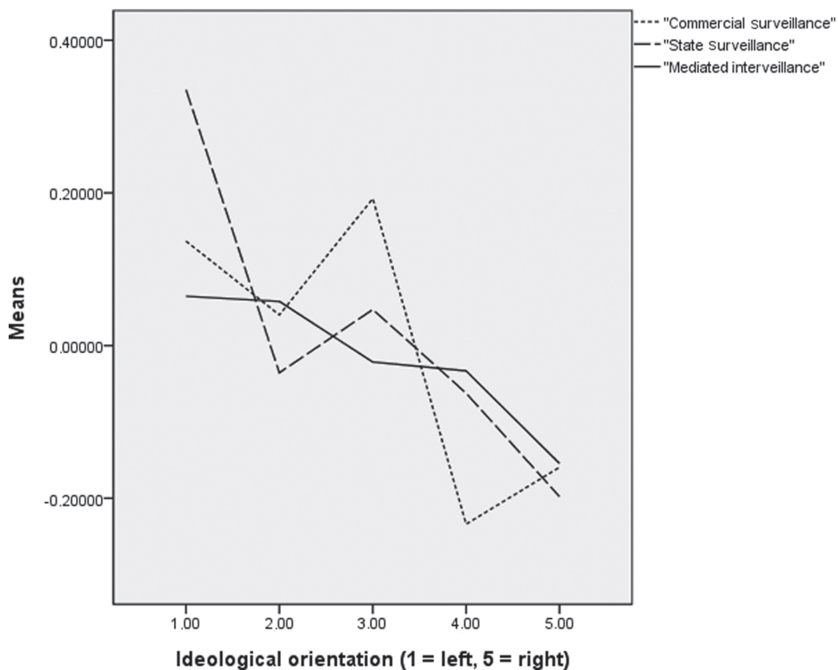

Figure 2. Relationship between risk perceptions and ideological orientation (means).
Source: The national SOM survey 2009, Göteborg University.

that the combination of political and cultural interests (not presented in figure) further accentuates the integrity concerns raised in relation to state surveillance and mediated interveillance, underscoring that these considerations are shaped at the intersection of ideological values and practical experience. Whereas cultural and political interests indicate a societal engagement where personal integrity is a supreme value, the interest in new technology rather corresponds to the pragmatic (and presumably practically grounded) view of everyday mediated surveillance, which Best (2010) found in her interview study.

Trust and adaptation

Given the theoretical assumption that people's perceptions of the three risk dimensions also say something about their sense of social and systemic trust (pertaining to the issue of surveillance and integrity), it is worthwhile also to look at how these patterns are related to trust in general, and to see whether the adaptation to new media technologies may lead to altered perceptions of integrity risks. In the SOM survey there is one question, primarily aimed at analysing Putnam's (2000) theories of social capital, in which the respondents have been asked to indicate along an 11-point scale (0–10) to what extent they think it is possible 'to trust people in general'. Here, the variable is applied as an indicator of basic social trust.

Social trust is a dimension that more or less transcends the above discussion on ideological determination. Comparing those two variables one finds that the sense of basic social trust is fairly similar across the political spectrum. The only exception to the rule is that social trust is weaker among people who position themselves in the very middle, having 'neither left- nor right-wing' sympathies – a condition which is due to the fact that this group contains not merely 'voters at the political centre' but also, and perhaps more significantly, groups that are politically disengaged, sometimes socially marginalized. The results pertaining to social trust thus insert a partly new dimension to our analysis.

Figure 3 shows that social trust primarily affects people's perceptions of state surveillance and commercial surveillance. Increased social trust is strongly related to a weaker perception of integrity risks along these two dimensions. This result seems reasonable. Both electronic transactions and various forms of state surveillance constitute explicit manifestations of abstract systems, which are expected to operate in the same manner in all social contexts and without any agentic influences in terms of moral considerations (except for the underlying reasons for the implementation of the systems as such). As discussed earlier, trust in those abstract systems is an absolute requirement for the continuity of modern lifestyles, and may thus be related to whether the individual subject feels secure in his or her social environment in general.

However, the perception of mediated interveillance is not affected at all by the level of social trust. This may seem paradoxical. Even though digital (social) media to a great extent also integrate abstract systems for smooth connectivity, symbolic exchange and mobility, the risks that are explicitly stated in the SOM survey primarily pertain to the social and moral judgements of Other people. In the context of surveillance, thus, the question of whether it is possible to 'trust people in general' is a more significant predictor of systemic trust than of social, interpersonal trust. One reasonable explanation for

this contradictory result is that the realm of interveillance calls for a contextual, or perhaps *sectorial*, kind of trust that is qualitatively different from the kind of pre-reflexive trust that pertains to abstract systems and society at large.

This explanation can be supported in an interesting way if one looks at the combined statistical influence of education and social trust (not presented in figure). As shown by Figures 1 and 3, the influence of these two variables looks quite similar. As to the combined effect within the realm of interveillance, however, there is a strong linear relationship between increased social trust and a less pronounced perception of integrity risks among people with lower education (without any co-variation with age), while social trust is a non-significant explanatory factor among those with intermediary and higher education (the relationship even tends to go in the opposite direction). Also when it comes to the other risk dimensions, commercial surveillance and state surveillance, social trust is a less significant factor among people with higher education. The pattern thus suggests that people with higher education, who generally attain a greater degree of familiarity with the new media landscape, technologically as well as socially and discursively, make their judgements based on practical experience and routinized reflexivity rather than on a pre-reflexive sense of (dis)trust (see also Fuchs, 2009, 2010).

At this stage, finally, one must also consider the impact of media habits; the social adaptation to certain sectors of reflexivity and trust. As expected, there is a positive relationship between regular use of social media and a declining risk perception regarding mediated interveillance (Figure 4). A similar relationship can be noted for commercial

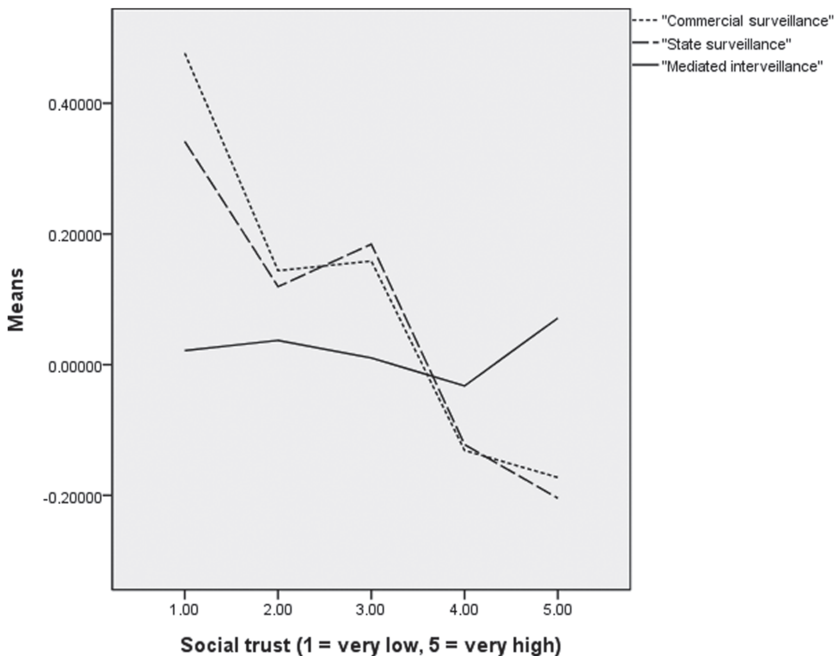

Figure 3. Relationship between risk perceptions and social trust (means).
Source: The national SOM survey 2009, Göteborg University.

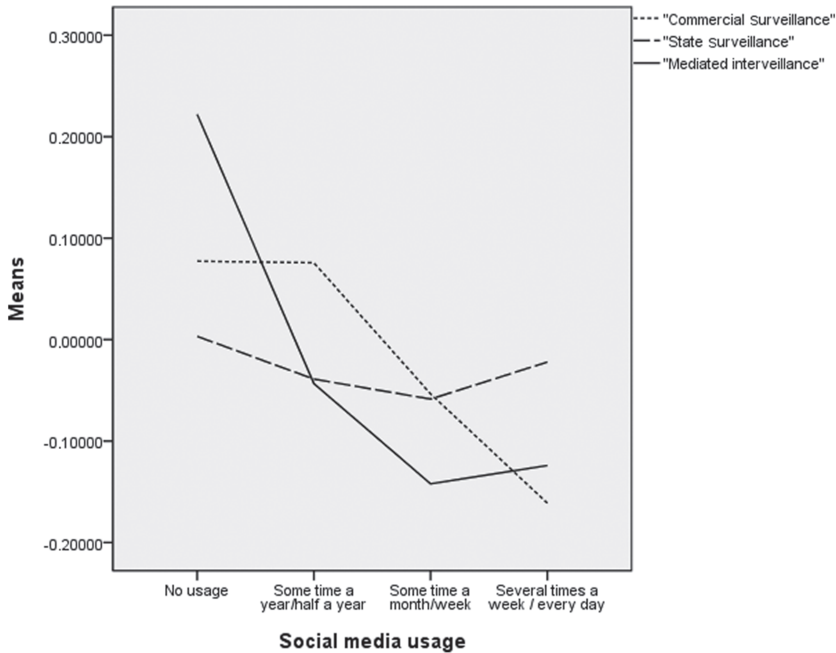

Figure 4. Relationship between risk perceptions and social media usage (means).
Source: The national SOM survey 2009, Göteborg University.

surveillance, which is not surprising, since that dimension integrates both email and online shopping (see also Bellman, 2004). What must be stressed, though, is that the mediated interveillance graph levels out, and even turns upward among the most frequent users of social media (using them several times a week, or on a daily basis). The relationship is thus not entirely linear.

One might suspect that this pattern could be explained by the large share of young persons among the most regular users, since the youngest (16–19 years) are also relatively concerned with integrity issues. However, limiting the selection to people aged 30–75 the ski-jump shape of the graph becomes even more accentuated (not presented in figure) – a result that sustains the assumption that increased adaptation to digital media space, involving direct experiences of the culture of interveillance, is paralleled by a strengthened awareness of integrity threats, articulated as reflexivity or anxiety. Scrutinizing also how the performance of different online practices influences the perception of mediated interveillance, one finds that those respondents who are most active, in terms of for instance blogging, chatting or image posting, also express strong integrity concerns. These findings problematize Fuchs's (2009, 2010) conclusion that the increasing use of SNS (among students) tends to foster uncritical attitudes, articulating an enduring 'naturalization effect' (see Kim, 2004). Our findings rather suggest that trust and reflexivity are to be understood not as opposite, but converging aspects of the everyday processes of coping with mediated surveillance.

Whereas the more precise social meaning of these results, especially the intricate balance between reflexivity and trust, must be assessed through qualitative studies, one may reasonably assert that reflexivity fluctuates not only between different social groups and strata, but also follows from practical processes of adaptation. As found in the complementary, and ongoing qualitative studies within the present project (Christensen and Jansson, 2012; Jansson and Christensen, forthcoming 2013) integrity risks become part of practical consciousness, involving certain routinized modes of coping with potential disturbances and boundary violations within different lifestyle sectors. The management of privacy then even becomes a matter of gaining and expressing context-related social status, or symbolic capital, in online as well as offline territories.

Conclusions

In spite of the analytical limitations of quantitative methodology when it comes to providing detailed accounts of situated lifestyles and everyday social complexity, this study has been able to cast light on some of the basic structural, ideological and moral mechanisms through which individual notions of (mediated) surveillance evolve. The study has thus provided an updated account of Giddens's theorization of modernity and self-identity pertaining to conditions of increasingly mediatized and interwoven modes of surveillance and interveillance.

The overarching conclusion of the survey study is that the perceptions of surveillance are linked to sociocultural power structures in society, where increased social status (capital) is linked to systemic and social trust *as well as* to context/media-specific reflexivity. This condition underscores that the everyday saturation of surveillance and interveillance involves the practical rearticulation of reflexivity gaps, as well as sociocultural distinctions, through which those who attain a sense of social security are also better equipped for making critical assessments of potential integrity threats. However, these structural patterns must not be mistaken for a simplistic view of structural determinism, but should be seen as an extension of Giddens's theory of social structuration. Accordingly, there is also an integral potential for social change through reflexive agency, which in this study can be discerned through the fact that the practical social engagements within mediated and/or mediatized lifestyle sectors, beyond their stratified manifestations, also seem to provide a basis for routinized forms of social reflexivity and critique.

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