

SO258-15 Surveillance and Security: Race, Class and Gender

26/27

Department

Sociology

Level

Undergraduate Level 2

Module leader

Nisha Kapoor

Credit value

15

Module duration

10 weeks

Assessment

100% exam

Study location

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

The intensification of surveillance in recent years has led to a proliferation of popular, political and intellectual discussion, where the reach and purpose of surveillance, its technological and material forms, its relationship to capitalism, and its role as a normalised state/ social disciplinary device have all been debated. In this module we will engage with some of these discussions and consider the growth of surveillance in relation to the growth of the data society. We will move away from normative conceptualisations of surveillance and security which tend to frame such trends as being relatively recent, solely centred in technological developments, and homogenous in their implications. Rather, this course will employ feminist, critical race, and postcolonial theory and perspectives to examine the ways in which race, gender and class thinking inform how surveillance is organized and deployed, as well as underlie the legitimization of surveillance practices. So through the course we will explore the multiple forms and operations of surveillance in contemporary society, examine the historical roots of and motivations for surveillance, how power operates through surveillance practices and the ways in which these practices create, reinforce and augment social structures of oppression.

Module aims

The module aims to engage students in debates relating to the role and uses of surveillance in the burgeoning data society. In particular we will consider the role of surveillance technologies for data governance, data capitalism as well as theorise surveillance cultures within contemporary social mediated life.

It aims to enhance students understandings of the symbiotic relationship between surveillance and security.

It aims to enhance students understandings of the digital data society and economy.

Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

Week 1: Introduction/ Surveillance, Security and Data Societies

Week 2: Surveillance, Data and Capitalism Part 1

Week 3: Surveillance, Data and Capitalism Part 2

Week 4: Surveillance, Security and Population Governance Part 1

Week 5: Surveillance, Security and Population Governance Part 2

Week 6: Reading Week

Week 7: Cultures of Surveillance

Week 8: Cultures of Surveillance

Week 9: Counter-Surveillance, Protest and Resistance

Week 10: Summary workshop/ Time for assessment discussion

Learning outcomes

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- Have developed knowledge and understanding of the social and historical constructions of surveillance practices, and their racialized, gendered and classed dimensions.
- Be able to identify, evaluate and critically analyse appropriate sociological theories relating to the study of surveillance and security including the purposes, practices and technologies of surveillance, and its race, gender and class dimensions.
- Be able to explain and critically engage in political and intellectual debates on surveillance, security and securitisation. Be able to organise and present oral arguments, carry out a formal presentation and facilitate classroom discussion in seminars. Be able to organise and present written information clearly and coherently through their exam writing. Develop their research and organisational skills by using library e-journal and other on-line resources.

Indicative reading list

[Reading lists can be found in Talis](#)

[Specific reading list for the module](#)

Interdisciplinary

Though the module centres a Sociological focus, it will cover literature and debates pertinent to students interested in studying politics, governance and political economy.

International

The module will draw on empirical examples and case studies from global contexts, thus broadening students horizons and reflecting the diversity of the student body in the classroom. It will also draw on a range of theoretical and scholarly texts from academics writing from and about a number of different national contexts.

Subject specific skills

To demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the development of the social and historical constructions of surveillance practices, and their racialized, gendered and classed dimensions.

To be able to apply theoretical concepts and ideas to empirical case studies and different forms of security and surveillance.

To demonstrate critical analytical skills for interrogating and evaluating key concepts, theories and empirical research relating to security and surveillance techniques and technologies.

To engage with sociological theoretical texts on surveillance and security.

Evaluate strengths and limitations in theoretical approaches to surveillance and security and its racialized, gendered and classed dimensions

Transferable skills

Undertake independent, desk-based research skills.

Gather appropriate library and web-based resources that are appropriate for UG level 5.

Make theoretical, methodological and empirical evaluations and use the available evidence to construct and synthesise an argument in oral and written form.

Demonstrate effective time management skills.

Work effectively both independently and as part of a team.

Manage complex information and demonstrate critical analytical skills.

Study

Study time

Type	Required
Lectures	9 sessions of 1 hour (6%)
Seminars	9 sessions of 1 hour (6%)
Private study	74 hours (49%)
Assessment	58 hours (39%)
Total	150 hours

Private study description

Students are expected to prepare for seminars each week by reading the core set reading listed in the module reading list and available via the module moodle site. In addition, time will be spent preparing for the two module assessments- an individual recorded presentation and end of year exam.

Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

Assessment

You must pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Students can register for this module without taking any assessment.

Assessment group B

Weighting Study time Eligible for self-certification

Assessment component

Centrally-timetabled examination (Online)	100%	58 hours	No
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- Online examination: No Answerbook required

Reassessment component is the same

Feedback on assessment

An exam feedback sheet will be used to deliver feedback on exam questions.

[Past exam papers for SO258](#)

Availability

Courses

This module is Core optional for:

- Year 3 of ULAA-ML33 Undergraduate Law and Sociology

This module is Optional for:

- Year 2 of USOA-L301 BA in Sociology
- Year 2 of USOA-L314 Undergraduate Sociology and Criminology

This module is Option list A for:

- Year 5 of ULAA-ML35 BA in Law and Sociology (Qualifying Degree) (with Intercalated year)
- Year 4 of ULAA-ML33 Undergraduate Law and Sociology

This module is Option list D for:

- Year 2 of UHIA-VL13 Undergraduate History and Sociology
- Year 2 of UHIA-VL15 Undergraduate History and Sociology (with a term in Venice)