

### Call for papers

## The Political Economy of Surveillance: A Research Workshop

Open University Business School, Milton Keynes, United Kingdom

Sept 9 – 12 2010

**Funded by 'The New Transparency' Major Collaborative Research Initiative and 'Living in Surveillance Societies' EU COST Action**

The New Transparency ('NewT') and the Living in Surveillance Societies COST action ('LiSS') is jointly calling for paper proposals for a workshop on 'The Political Economy of Surveillance'.

One of the key driving forces behind the Surveillance Society is the interests and strategies of governmental and corporate organizations and their members. Whether these organizations are concerned with the control of crime, the administration of health or welfare, selling goods or managing risk, the collection, analysis and application of personal data is at the core of many of their activities. Marketing techniques designed to profile desirable 'lifetime' customers are the same as those used to detect 'undesirables' through their financial transactions and travel movements. Technologies developed by the military to control populations in times of war, diffuse into civilian usage in times of peace. Responses to government calls for surveillance and security provision, are responded to by consultancies and technology companies, backed by international capital, at the very forefront of scientific innovation and development.

At this workshop we are seeking to explore the dynamics of the international surveillance industry. Specifically, we invite abstracts for papers for a workshop on 'The Political Economy of Surveillance'. Abstracts should address any of the following issues:

- Mapping the nature and extent of the surveillance industry
- The characteristics, strategies and behaviours of private and public sector organizations which constitute the surveillance industry
- The roles played by private and public sector organizations in promoting surveillance at specific sites, e.g. mega-events, new digital media
- The interaction of market dynamics with the security and/or crime control priorities of the modern state
- Interorganizational relationships in the surveillance industry
- Understanding the military and surveillance industry interface
- The diffusion of technological innovations which have surveillance capacity between different sectors and contexts of application

- The shaping of the everyday discourse and practice of corporate and government actors by surveillance imperatives
- Regulation of the surveillance industry
- The history of the surveillance industry and its technological developments

The objective of the workshop is to examine these, and other themes, at a venue in one of the world's exemplar surveillance societies, the United Kingdom. The questions at the centre of the workshop are relevant not only for academic but for a variety of key actors involved both in developing and conducting surveillance practices. On this basis, the workshop will address issues that are critically relevant to policy-makers, regulators, non-governmental actors, private sector representatives, media representatives, consumers and employees, and will hopefully involve representatives from these sectors.

500 word abstracts for original academic papers on the Political Economy of Surveillance should be sent to the co-organizers: Dr Kirstie Ball, Open University Business School ([k.s.ball@open.ac.uk](mailto:k.s.ball@open.ac.uk)) and Professor Laureen Snider, Department of Sociology, Queen's University ([sniderl@queensu.ca](mailto:sniderl@queensu.ca)). The deadline for proposals is April 30th, 2010. Decisions on the program will be made by the middle of May. The deadline for the receipt of draft papers is August 1st, 2010. The workshop is interdisciplinary in nature, and therefore proposals from the social sciences, humanities and other relevant disciplines will be considered. Selected papers from the workshop will be considered for publication in an edited collection (publisher to be determined).

### **Abstract submissions**

When you submit your abstract, please include the following information

- Name
- Project affiliation: Whether you are a LiSS expert, a NewT team member or neither
- Institutional affiliation
- Institutional address
- Telephone number
- Email address
- 500 word abstract

We look forward to hearing from you

**Dr Kirstie Ball**  
**Professor Laureen Snider**