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Policy Mutations, Compliance Myths, and Redeployable Special Event Public Camera Surveillance in Canada

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Abstract

This article examines redeployable special event public camera surveillance in the city of Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. We show how a policy discourse of situational awareness simultaneously adheres to and subverts principles articulated in the provincial privacy commissioner's privacy protection policy framework on public surveillance. Drawing from interview and observational data, we analyse how understandings of situational awareness inform policy design and how policymaking and implementation processes diverge as local policymakers tailor an imported policy framework to address tacit knowledge about public safety. Our findings contribute to the sociology of policymaking by developing empirical insights into policy meanings, mobilities, mutations, and myths.

Keywords

CCTV, policymaking, security, special events, surveillance

Introduction

Over the past two decades, the multidisciplinary study of surveillance rapidly expanded. Sociologists played a key role in developing an understanding of how contemporary patterns of surveillance grow out of modern capitalist bureaucracy and the increasingly globalized struggles between states; how they entail power struggles that fuse

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individual and societal processes; how they involve questions of power distributed across geographical spaces; and how they hinge on questions of identity, legality, and privacy (Lyon, 2007: 19–21). Indeed, the surveillance studies framework has been so influential that surveillance is often understood as 'the dominant organizing practice of late modernity' (Haggerty, 2009: 277).

The proliferation of public video surveillance occupies a prominent symbolic position in debates about surveillance and society (e.g. Doyle et al., 2011; Norris and Armstrong, 1999). Sociologists have conceptualized the expansion of public video surveillance primarily in terms of the emergence of late capitalism and neoliberal modes of urban governance (e.g. Coleman, 2004). Yet, as Marx (2007) notes, the literature on surveillance and society still requires conceptual and methodological refinement. To this end, we draw from policymaking studies – an area of sociological analysis whose compatibility has not been fully appreciated within or beyond video surveillance research – to more fully explain how public camera surveillance gains legitimacy in a specific policymaking site.

Our empirical focus is on special event video surveillance policymaking in the City of Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. Video surveillance policymaking is unique in Canada largely because of the role that privacy commissioners have played in shaping monitoring policies across Canadian cities. Not only have privacy commissioners reviewed programmes, sponsored research, and enforced compliance with privacy protection legislation,[1] but they have also published and promoted a set of standardized best practices guidelines to assist legally defined public bodies and law enforcement agencies in conducting public camera surveillance. Between 2000 and 2006, privacy commissioners designed guidelines consisting of provisions for determining need, conducting privacy impact assessments, holding public consultations, creating operational policy, and notifying the public. Standardized guidelines stem from privacy commissioners' proactive attempts to ward off undesirable privacy intrusions anticipated with the growth of public camera surveillance in the late 1990s and early 2000s; they also fill the de facto legal vacuum left by the absence of camera-specific legislation or jurisprudence (Johnson, 2011). Today, guidelines are the main policy instrument informing how monitoring programmes are designed and implemented in cities across the country.

This article contributes to growing debate about the efficacy of a standardized privacy protection policy framework on public camera surveillance by examining redeployable monitoring systems. A small literature on redeployable camera surveillance assesses crime reduction and deterrence in Britain. The British literature assesses the extent to which redeployable systems reduce crime rates in 'hot spots', claiming that redeployable systems exacerbate ongoing problems with fixed systems because they are put up so quickly that technical and operational planning is hindered. Rapid redeployment undoubtedly poses operational problems for hotspot policing, yet our data on special events monitoring (entailing long-term planning) indicate that it is not quick deployment but rather the normative assumptions informing policymakers' support for redeployable systems that contributes to operational problems.

In what follows, we present empirical findings from interviews and on-site observations conducted to investigate how Vancouver's redeployable camera system was designed and implemented in special event locations. We show how Vancouver's system

initially gained policy legitimacy – that is, a confidence among stakeholders and members of the public that policy options are justified, appropriate, and fair (Schön and Rein, 1994) – through a policy discourse of situational awareness. Reminiscent of academic findings on patterns of compliance among fixed monitoring systems (Hier, 2010; Hier and Walby, 2011; Lett et al., 2012), we demonstrate that policy legitimacy was achieved in Vancouver by adhering to, while simultaneously (and paradoxically) subverting, stipulations set out in the provincial privacy commissioner's best practices guidelines. We advance beyond previous findings by showing how policy legitimacy was strengthened as policymakers tailored an imported policy framework to address tacit assumptions about public safety. Our findings enhance understanding of surveillance and contribute to the sociology of policymaking by developing empirical insights into policy mobilities, mutations, and myths. We conclude by conceptualizing policymaking compliance myths as a unique, local expression of general policymaking processes, and by linking compliance myths to the pragmatic challenges that privacy commissioners will face as redeployable systems increase in popularity.

Redeployable Public Camera Surveillance

In contrast to the large international literature on fixed public camera surveillance, a small criminological literature exists on redeployable camera surveillance in Britain. The earliest study by Gill and Loveday (2003) focuses on the potential deterrence effects of redeployable cameras by interviewing 77 convicted male offenders. The researchers ask offenders whether camera surveillance influenced their decisions to offend, specifically probing the differences that redeployable systems make. Only 2.6 percent of respondents report that redeployable cameras would be more of a deterrent than fixed ones in the context of dealing drugs. Although 41.5 percent of respondents discuss an offence where cameras were installed, just 2.59 percent report that cameras acted as a deterrent to offending.

In a later study, Gill et al. (2006) investigate drug-related redeployable systems in three London boroughs. They begin with the assumption that redeployable systems enjoy the advantage of being able to strategically (and quickly) target crime hot spots. Yet, by examining the organizational and physical design of systems, they find fault at all stages in the implementation process, rendering an overall assessment of the crime reduction and prevention by redeployable cameras impossible. In some ways, the problems that Gill et al. identify with staffing, equipment, finance, communication channels, and technology mirror recurring problems that programme managers encounter with fixed systems. Gill et al. argue, however, that redeployable systems exacerbate challenges associated with fixed systems because of their impermanence.

Waples and Gill (2006) elaborate on the design challenges associated with temporarily installed systems by assessing how redeployable monitoring programmes are managed. They review rationales for using two redeployable systems, including the increased mobility of law-breakers and the desire for more flexible approaches to camera surveillance use by law enforcement agencies. They also assess control room design and camera placement, and interview camera operators and planners. Waples and Gill conclude that redeployable systems neither reduce crime nor increase feelings of safety, and that a

number of policy-managerial problems shared among redeployable systems require further consideration. The problems they identify include planning (e.g. system capabilities, camera type, time of installation), control room operations, system design, funding, and formulating realistic objectives. Similar to Gill et al., Waples and Gill conclude that redeployable systems are more complex than static ones because they are installed and removed with considerable speed, demanding special attention beyond fixed systems.

Camera Surveillance Policymaking

It follows from the literature on redeployable systems that the interconnected ways in which the capabilities of monitoring programmes are interpreted, policies are designed, and systems are implemented pose implications for the results they achieve. These findings are consistent with research conducted on fixed systems, yet the redeployable literature points to additional technical and operational challenges (e.g. locating a stable power source, gaining access to buildings and poles, connecting camera equipment to a communications infrastructure). Irrespective of the diverse insights that criminologists have gleaned into the effectiveness of monitoring programmes across different settings (see Welsh and Farrington, 2009), analyses of public camera surveillance – be they based on fixed or redeployable systems – have only begun to address the policy dimensions involved in designing, implementing, and legitimizing systems.

Webster's (1996, 2004, 2009) work on policy diffusion and convergence among fixed systems in the UK is an important exception. Webster argues that, although fixed monitoring programmes were initially developed in the absence of formal government regulations and controls, standard approaches to self-regulation of operations steadily developed through policy networks composed of service providers, police, and politicians. Ranging from the stated intentions of monitoring systems to the formation of codes of conduct, an agreed-upon set of standards developed from the non-governmental camera surveillance policy environment to shape the administrative structure of monitoring systems by according with fair information and data gathering principles.

In many ways, Webster advances understanding of public camera surveillance by pushing analysis to the policy level. In some other ways, Webster's analyses resemble contributions to conventional policy studies – including ones focused on crime control policy (e.g. Jones and Newburn, 2007) – that are concerned with patterns (not processes) of policy diffusion and transfer. Argumentation in conventional policy studies focuses on how large-scale public policies are transferred within clearly defined policy settings (based on clearly defined, shared problems) and how they diffuse across formal organizations in a relatively predictable manner. Policymakers are depicted as rational institutional actors who carefully weigh the pros and cons of policy alternatives before adopting (converging) policy initiatives (Nicholson-Crotty, 2009). To be sure, Webster's work confronts certain assumptions found in conventional policy studies. His methodological strategy, however, is to read off formal policy documents and promotional materials to search for patterns of policy convergence.

We opt for a different, albeit supplementary, analytical approach that focuses on how camera surveillance policy can take on unique substantive meanings in specific policymaking sites, and how policy meanings can mutate when imported policy frameworks

are interpreted in and applied to local settings. Instead of focusing exclusively on how policy design and implementation processes are influenced by formal rules and routines that tend toward homogeneity, we examine how systems of meaning within a specific policy site emerge and how policymaking and implementation processes diverge in the context of policy mobilities, mutations, and myths.

Our analytical approach is inspired by two innovations in policymaking studies whose compatibility has not been hitherto fully recognized in the policymaking literature. First, we draw from Yanow's (1992, 1993, 1996, 2000; and see Yanow and Schwartz-Shea, 2006) interpretive explorations of 'how a policy means'; that is, inquiry into how policy accrues meaning, how meanings are transmitted among policy stakeholders, and how they are tacitly shared. The interpretive perspective on policymaking introduces a set of sociological questions about how policy meanings are communicated in situational-specific contexts and how policymakers enact a set of myths to justify, rationalize, and legitimize their actions.

As Yanow explains, policymaking and implementation processes entail a range of actors and artifacts both immediate to and distant from policy sites that contribute to and are influenced by policy myths. Policy myths represent neither fabrication nor mysticism but rather speak to the ways in which policymaking processes fill silences in discourses about public policy matters that are difficult to articulate beyond tacit knowledge shared among local stakeholders. Policy myths direct attention away from equally valued but contradictory societal principles embodied in a given policy, by holding competing values in a 'tension of temporary resolution and direct[ing] attention elsewhere' (Yanow, 1992: 399). In the process of making policy and enacting myth, local stakeholders enact and react to policy language, legislative frameworks, and programmatic best practices by interpreting (often in divergent ways) antecedent documents, paradigms, norms, and decrees to address and respond to regional challenges and local contingencies. In this way, the policymaking process operates like a text 'through which members of the polity tell themselves who they are and what they value. Part of the work of implementation analysts, then, may be to construct these texts, by turning tacit knowledge into explicit critique' (Yanow, 1993: 43).

Second, our analytical approach draws from recent contributions to critical policy studies (e.g. McCann and Ward, 2012; Peck, 2011; Peck and Theodore, 2010; Temenos and McCann, 2012). Contributions to critical policy studies supplement (if not replace) conventional policy studies' emphasis on policy learning and transfer with a focus on policy mobilities (or imported policy frameworks) and their associated mutations. The processes involved in transferring policies across spaces are not explained in terms of the voluntary adoption of the best performing policy models, but rather the easiest, fastest, most politically expedient ones (McCann, 2011).

What is especially important about the policy mobilities approach are the ways in which 'fast policies regimes' (Peck, 2011) entail the pragmatic borrowing of extra-local policy frameworks by local policymakers. Although imported policy frameworks direct policymaking attention to standard frameworks for interpreting problems and enacting solutions, policymaking processes always involve a 'local politics of policy mobilities' (Temenos and McCann, 2012). When extra-local policy frameworks are interpreted in local contexts, policy meanings can mutate into a form that only loosely resembles (or rhetorically adheres to) their initial form.

The policy mobilities approach provides insights into the ways in which best practices policy models act as both a practical and political resource in local policymaking processes. On the one hand, mobile policy frameworks afford policymakers a degree of practical policy legitimacy by providing realistic, efficient, ready-made frameworks based on the authority and expertise of extra-local consultants, professionals, and practitioners. On the other hand, mobile policies afford local policymakers a degree of political policy legitimacy by providing a discursive frame in which to translate the specificity of local problems into commonly agreed standards of conduct (Temenos and McCann, 2012). Notwithstanding the important conceptual and political insights made by critical policy studies scholars, there is a tendency in the literature to theorize about the broad forces that give rise to policy mobilities (e.g. transnationalism, neoliberalism) at the expense of empirically exploring the meaning-making processes involved in policymaking at the local level (but see Temenos and McCann, 2012). In what follows, we examine the site-specific dimensions involved in tailoring an imported policy framework on privacy protection to address tacit beliefs about maintaining public safety.

Research Design

Our study entails an empirical examination of how Vancouver's redeployable system was designed and implemented. We focus on how a broad range of 'texts' influenced local policymaking processes, with a particular interest in the enduring, albeit rhetorical influence of one mobile 'master text': standardized provincial privacy protection guidelines.

To understand how system policy was designed, we conducted pre-monitoring interviews with policymakers responsible for designing and implementing the system. The purpose of pre-monitoring interviews was to learn why a redeployable system was adopted and how it was developed in the context of privacy protection guidelines. Pre-monitoring interviews enabled us to gather planning and operational documents and to build rapport with programme managers/gatekeepers to gain access to the control room during special event monitoring.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with policymakers. A formal interview was held in December 2010 and follow-up, pre-event interviews were held in August and November 2011. Interviews entailed recorded, open-ended sessions oriented toward understanding how the monitoring programme was designed. Our interview schedule included questions about partners, cost, privacy protection consultation, communications with provincial agencies, and system design.

To understand how system policy was implemented, control room observations were carried out. Control room observations entailed observations and shadowing. First, one researcher conducted ethnographic observations of the monitoring environment. Fieldnotes arranged as an 'ethnographic diary' were kept pertaining to calls from police dispatch centers or official visits and requests for video surveillance footage and the general goings-on in and around the monitoring station. Second, camera operators were 'shadowed' (Goold, 2004; Norris and Armstrong, 1999). The purpose of shadowing was to observe the extent to which system protocols and objectives are realized in practice and to assess the extent to which monitoring practices accord with policy design.

Pre-monitoring interviews and control room observations were conducted during two large special events where redeployable cameras were used. The first event (Event A) is an annual seven-day summer festival. The family-friendly festival attracts more than one million people. The main attraction is a fireworks display spread over three evenings. We conducted pre-event interviews and control room observations for three days in August 2011 when the cameras were activated (during fireworks displays). All monitored activity – total of 19.5 hours – was observed.

The second event (Event B) was a four-day, family-friendly sporting festival held in downtown Vancouver in November 2011. We conducted pre-event interviews and control room observation for three days. We also conducted interviews and observations with a mobile security ground team composed of three city police officers. It was anticipated that officers would be equipped with iPads capable of displaying camera images. Communications malfunction forced the team to rely on earpieces to communicate with the control room supervisor. All monitored activity – total of 11 hours – was observed (monitoring was initially planned for 22 hours over three days).[2]

Redeployable Camera Surveillance in Vancouver

Temporary redeployable cameras have been used to attend to public safety concerns at special events in the city of Vancouver since 2002. From 2002–8, private security vendors were contracted to conduct annual public safety monitoring at special events. City representatives perceived monitoring conducted by private security vendors to be ad hoc, costly, and poorly organized (e.g. challenges associated with mounting cameras, finding IP providers, establishing wireless links). To address concerns pertaining to limited camera coverage at special events, the city adopted their own redeployable system in 2009.

Efforts to develop the system – which is composed of 10 industry-tested IP-based mega-pixel cameras equipped with wireless transmitters and an earthquake resilient control room – began in the previous year when the city was offered funding from the Solicitor General of British Columbia to participate in a video surveillance pilot programme aimed at exploring the use of public-area video surveillance in high crime areas.[3] Provincial funds were not allocated to subsidize a redeployable system per se but representatives in Vancouver decided to establish a 'comprehensive mobile CCTV solution focused on public safety and event management' (City of Vancouver, 2009).[4]

According to representatives of the Office of Emergency Management (OEM), the purpose of the Temporary Event Management and Public Safety System (TEMPS) is to enable situational awareness rather than to conduct surveillance for crime detection. Situational awareness is a concept that was first associated with enemy awareness during the First World War (Gilson, 1995). The term became popular in the context of air safety in the 1980s. Situational awareness implies perception of spatial and temporal elements in the physical environment, but also includes a dynamic, momentary, and human interpretation of the past, present, and future significance of situations (Stanton et al., 2001). Today, situational awareness is an amorphous term informing the management of a range of complex systems (e.g. military responses, nuclear management). It also shapes public and scholarly understandings of surveillance (Monahan, 2010). In Vancouver, situational awareness is used as an organizational metaphor pertaining to crowd management at

special events and emergency response operations in the event of a natural disaster (e.g. a flood or earthquake).

Planning and Design

When the TEMPS was formally proposed to the Solicitor General in 2009 (a condition of provincial funding), the OEM stated that all policies and operational procedures will be in strict accordance with the provincial Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, the standardized best practices guidelines published by the privacy commissioner, and the city of Vancouver's policy on Video Monitoring Procedures for Open Public Spaces (City of Vancouver, 2005). The city's policy is based on the contents of the privacy commissioner's guidelines; it outlines the responsibilities of the City Manager (and, necessarily, the OEM Director) for conducting public video monitoring. Among other things, the responsibilities include ensuring the development of a rationale and terms of use for each system used in the city.

The process of designing policy and legitimizing the system entailed an effort to not only adhere to but also extend the provincial guidelines. OEM representatives expressed interest in exceeding the expectations presented in guidelines in an attempt to develop an example of best (or better) practices that other cities could follow. Guidelines state that surveillance should be used as a last resort only after conventional means of achieving the same law enforcement objectives are demonstrated to be substantially less effective. They also state that the benefits of surveillance should substantially outweigh any diminution of privacy; that public bodies must be prepared to justify the use of surveillance on the basis of verifiable, specific reports of incidents of crime, public safety concerns, or other compelling reasons; that a privacy impact assessment should be completed and sent to the Executive Director of the privacy commissioner's office for review and comment;[5] that the public body should consider carrying out consultations with relevant stakeholders; and that privacy intrusion should be minimized.

The most fundamental stipulation appearing in the guidelines – and the one most relevant to policy design – pertains to verification. The guidelines call for surveillance to be verified as a last resort based on clearly articulated law enforcement needs or other compelling reasons that minimize privacy intrusion. The justification for the TEMPS – situational awareness – did not adhere to the privacy commissioner's stipulation to provide 'verifiable, specific reports of incidents of crime or public safety' per se, yet the OEM cited public safety and crowd management as 'compelling reasons' to conduct undifferentiated monitoring of crowds. Nor did the OEM turn to public safety monitoring as a last resort. Policymakers argued that the system is designed to conduct public safety 'monitoring' rather than 'surveillance'; they claimed that there are no significant privacy implications posed by a temporary situational awareness monitoring system that neither records nor stores images (the system is intended to communicate with security personnel on the ground to coordinate crowd management and emergency response).

The OEM's interpretation of guidelines pertaining to verification illustrates how policymakers do not typically adopt imported policy meanings based on a singular, easy-to-identify legislative or best practices intention, but rather enact multiple meanings and interpretations that are tailored to address tacit knowledge about local needs and

aspirations. Whereas the guidelines stipulate that surveillance should be used as a last resort in cases where conventional means of achieving the same law enforcement objectives are insubstantial, the OEM reconfigured the policy language to conceptualize the TEMPS as a programme used for neither surveillance nor law enforcement reasons. In this way, the 'mobile' privacy protection policy framework mutated in the context of local policymaking to address and legitimize the tacit aims of the OEM in a manner that on the surface adhered to, yet paradoxically subverted, the intentions of the guidelines to justify public camera use for law enforcement needs based on verifiable instances of crime as a last resort.

Policy Implementation

Despite the fact that the OEM established a formal policy rationale for the TEMPS in 2009, operational policy continued to mutate in the context of a 'surveillance legacy' (encompassing monitoring equipment and operational policy) acquired in the aftermath of the Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games (hereafter the Games) that the city hosted in February/March 2010. As the TEMPS was being designed, the city both received and provided additional funding to enhance infrastructure and purchase recording equipment in preparation for the Games. The latter supported 84 city-operated cameras distributed across the city-center, as well as a camera attached to a police helicopter, where images were shared with the Vancouver Police Department. In contrast to terms of use rationalizing the TEMPS (i.e. non-recorded special event and emergency response monitoring), policy for the Games entailed recording and storage of surveillance images for 21 days to address security risks and maintain public safety.

The OEM's use of the TEMPS to conduct recorded public camera surveillance during the Games is neither surprising nor unjustified. In accordance with city and provincial privacy protection policy, an operational policy detailing regulations on control room access, staffing, conduct, staff duties, and data recording/sharing was assembled prior to and specifically for the Games. What is important for our purposes is how, following the Games, a second policy mutation occurred, whereby the monitoring policies (and equipment) designed specifically for the TEMPS and the Games were informally or unofficially integrated.

The integration of 'monitoring' and 'surveillance' policy conditioned a disjuncture between policy design and implementation based on tacit understandings pertaining to the need for and the requirements of public safety monitoring at special events. The OEM's justification for situational awareness (rather than surveillance) – which remained as the governing rationale of the TEMPS following the Games – is predicated on the claim that focused targeting of specific groups does not take place and that only aerial camera angles are used to inform public safety and emergency response activities. Our findings from control room observations during Event A partially support this claim. The primary use of the cameras during Event A was to filter crowds through the streets in the aftermath of fireworks displays. In addition to managing crowd movement, cameras were used over the three-day period to respond to and address several public safety concerns: locating a pathway for an ambulance, directing support staff to a person experiencing breathing difficulties, identifying a downed person, and responding to a person

experiencing an epileptic seizure. The majority of the time cameras were used to indiscriminately scan the crowd for signs of public safety concerns.

In addition to conducting public safety monitoring, however, camera applications during Event A were supplemented by several instances of surveillance. For example, during regular crowd scans, the cameras were used to search for 'gangbangers' by examining hand gestures and a perceived lack of interest among event goers at fireworks displays. Several instances of targeted monitoring took place but targeting was not transmitted to security staff on the ground. Similarly, cameras were regularly used to target 'aggro' (i.e. aggressive) groups of young men whose actions (pushing, shoving) attracted the focused attention of the camera operator but targeting was not transmitted to ground personnel.

Our findings pertaining to reliance on group-specific visual cues are consistent with other studies of surveillance camera targeting practices (e.g. Norris and Armstrong, 1999). What is unique about targeting practices during Event A was the periodic reliance on 'Tweets' rather than support staff on the ground to inform targeting practices. OEM staff entered keywords such as protest, riot, and stabbing into Trendsmap – a service that provides a graphical representation of both the frequency and geographical origin of tweets containing certain keywords. On at least one occasion, cameras were trained on an area based on information sourced from Trendsmap texts.

In contrast to preparations for public safety monitoring during Event A, a special Activation Plan was created for Event B. The Activation Plan (representing a third mutation) was assembled in the aftermath of public disturbances that took place during the Stanley Cup Playoffs in June 2011 and the concomitant Stanley Cup Riot Review (Vancouver Police Department, 2011).[6] The plan primarily aimed to strengthen situational awareness among emergency response (e.g. fire, transit) and law enforcement agencies to ensure the public safety of citizens, but it added protection of the environment and property to the understanding of situational awareness. To uphold public safety by strengthening situational awareness channels, the Activation Plan declares:

> Any City department or external agency wishing to co-locate their command post with the EOC should request this from the City's … Emergency Management … The three EOC Operations Breakout Rooms are all available for this purpose. Benefits of co-locating include quick access to CCTV camera feeds as well as cable TV feeds and more efficient communications with other departments and external agencies, while maintaining focus for your department's operations in a separate room.

Based on findings from our control room observations during Event B, the cameras were used mainly for public safety monitoring, albeit conditioned by a precautionary risk assessment framework pertaining to the potential for rioting. Most of the indiscriminant crowd monitoring was focused on a small area where pedestrians frequented. For instance, on the main day of the special event, OEM staff became concerned about large concrete blocks left on the street by food vendors after police reported that the blocks could be used as 'missiles' in the context of a riot. Cameras were used to determine how many blocks were in the streets and to assess risk. On the same day, cameras were also used to monitor activity when the main sporting event let out. The camera operator, along with other OEM members, took amusement with the antics of sports fans.

Unlike Event A, camera applications during Event B entailed few examples of surveillance. In a small number of instances, cameras were focused on youth groups whose behavior attracted attention. Cameras also periodically focused on a group of protesters associated with the international Occupy movement – city staff were concerned that sporting fans would clash with protesters (rumors circulating on Twitter also suggested potential protest activities). In one instance, cameras focused on a police officer leaning against a wall while talking on a cell phone. For the most part, staff in the control room (including the camera operator) focused their attention on the televised sporting event and other office duties rather than camera images.

In terms of the mobile unit, the primary interest of the officers was to ensure that other officers who were assigned to various posts were in the proper locations and following protocol. For instance, the unit reprimanded junior officers for not wearing special event vests and hats. For most of the evening, the patrol walked around event areas to check up on other officers. During our observations, the mobile team did not communicate with the command center. Despite the main programme aim to strengthen situational awareness through crowd management by having support staff on the ground to manage high crowd density, the mobile team left the site before the festivities ended to avoid the rush of sports fans pouring into the streets (which would have prevented the mobile team members from leaving the site with their motor vehicles).

Manifestations of Mutation

Our findings indicate that although the TEMPs was initially (and formally) designed and legitimized on the basis of a specific understanding of situational awareness, whereby non-recorded camera images would be used to coordinate emergency operations and crowd management, tacit assumptions about operational policy and public safety, conditioned by unforeseen exigencies, contributed to a set of policy mutations (which in turn acted back on and reinforced tacit understandings of situational awareness). The first mutation entailed reworking the best practices guidelines to address tacitly held assumptions about situational awareness and their concomitant privacy protection challenges. The second mutation entailed terms of reference specific to the TEMPS (predicated on tacit assumptions about 'monitoring') being merged with operational surveillance policy developed specifically for the Games. The third mutation entailed the subsequent reconfiguration of situational awareness in the aftermath of the Stanley Cup disturbance to pre-emptively respond to public safety concerns in the context of a risk assessment plan. The latter involved expanding the network of public safety personnel to include a mobile ground team composed of city police officers.

As TEMPS policy continued to mutate, at least three interconnected manifestations of mutation were observed in operational policy, all of which contributed to the continuing subversion of the very privacy protection guidelines that legitimized the system in the eyes of policymakers and city stakeholders. The first manifestation of mutation is recording and storage of camera images. The primary means of justifying the TEMPS as a system to enable situational awareness was that neither recording nor storage of images would occur. By adopting policy language that explicitly rejected recording and storage, the OEM maintained that provincial privacy protection legislation did not apply because

no personal information was being collected, used, or disclosed. Yet policy for the Games entailed recording and storage of images, combined with a clear protocol for sharing images with law enforcement agencies. As public camera surveillance policy continued to mutate during and after the Games, all special event monitoring was recorded. In contrast to stipulations set out in city policy and guidelines, separate policies were not created and no effort to revise the initial terms of reference for the TEMPS was made.[7]

The second mechanism of mutation was the installation of surveillance equipment. The provincial guidelines on layout of equipment indicate that the installation of recording equipment should be restricted to identified public areas and that it should not be positioned internally or externally to monitor areas outside a building, or to monitor other buildings, unless necessary to protect external assets or ensure personal safety. The privacy commissioner's privacy protection policy specifications are reproduced in the city's policy and in the initial TEMPS design that anticipated but did not apply to the Games (a special operational policy was created for the Games): 'Vancouver City Council has agreed to the *temporary* deployment and monitoring of CCTV, the OEM will therefore ensure that all CCTV cameras are removed in the immediate post-Games period unless otherwise directed by council' (Office of Emergency Management, 2009).

Although many of the cameras were removed following the Games, several cameras mounted on high buildings were left in place (but switched off). The OEM subsequently activated these cameras during Events A and B. For instance, five cameras were activated during Event A. Two of the cameras were mounted on buildings in the downtown area in preparation for the Games; they were never removed. Two other high-altitude cameras were installed specifically to monitor festival activities. The fifth camera was mounted to survey crowd behavior during the Stanley Cup playoffs; it had not been removed. Four additional cameras mounted on the city's library, as well as a mobile camera mounted on a police boat, were included in the special event public safety monitoring design but not activated.[8]

Fourteen cameras were activated during Event B. Four cameras were installed at the main pedestrian entrance of the event specifically to monitor festival activities (no accompanying signage was observed by our researchers). Four other cameras were left over from the Games, and eight were permanent city cameras (not part of the TEMPS) mounted at the art gallery and library. Two of the cameras mounted at the library were internal cameras. When the OEM patched into the library, all four cameras, two internal cameras and two external ones, were activated.[9]

The third mechanism of mutation was auditing. Similar to stipulations in the guidelines pertaining to verification of use, periodic auditing conducted at irregular intervals is recommended as a key privacy protection measure. In accordance with the guidelines, the auditing component of the TEMPS was initially designed in terms of regular and unplanned audits to realize policy legitimacy. OEM officials were not clear on how audits would be conducted; they assumed a representative from the city would assess surveillance records and equipment.

The auditing component of the TEMPS began to mutate when we requested access to the control room to conduct fieldwork on monitoring practices at the Games. Following a series of meetings and negotiations, we were granted access to the control room for the Games based on the understanding that we would consult on operational policy and

function as an independent auditor. The OEM's *Guidelines for Control Room Staff* (Office of Emergency Management, 2010) created specifically for the Games states: 'we will be auditing our operations and compliance on an ongoing basis. An independent third party from the University of Victoria is performing this function and will be providing guidance regarding best practices.'

In our capacity as consultant/auditor, we submitted a detailed report on how the OEM could both meet and exceed the best practices stipulations offered by the privacy commissioner. We provided two examples for meeting if not exceeding guidelines on auditing (drawn from our broader fieldwork on fixed systems in Canadian cities). The first example was to hire or commission an independent, accredited auditor sourced from a public body (e.g. the city). The second example – the one we encouraged – was to conduct random sampling of surveillance footage. We offered a template for how to conduct the latter based on logbooks, video images, and camera uses.

Programme managers did not adopt our recommendation to conduct random sampling auditing. Instead, they used our presence in the control room during the Games to contribute toward legitimizing the TEMPS system. Our legitimizing role is exemplified in *Temporary Event Management and Public Safety (TEMPS) System Pilot: Post Project Report* (Office of Emergency Management, 2012), a report currently before council that recommends continuing the TEMPS as a public safety monitoring system and that is tied to broader debates about a permanent system in the city.

Discussion: Policy Mobilities and Compliance Myths

Our examination of redeployable camera surveillance policymaking in Vancouver illustrates how policy meanings gained legitimacy when the privacy commissioner's mobile policy framework intersected with tacit, albeit shifting assumptions pertaining to public safety and situational awareness. One of our key empirical findings concerns the ways that monitoring policy mutated based on tacit assumptions about security, public safety, and risk management. A second political finding concerns how changing policy meanings translated into otherwise unremarkable applications and how policymakers continued to enact and expand policy myths to justify system continuity. Some of the ways that the cameras have been used at the special events we observed – recording images, targeted surveillance, protest policing – raise concerns about verification and fair information and data gathering practices. But our findings highlight a disjuncture between how cameras are applied and the otherwise unremarkable results they have hitherto produced.

To explain the disjuncture between programme aims and tangible monitoring results (at least during the events we investigated), set in the context of the amount of effort that continues to be invested in rationalizing the system against privacy protection principles, Yanow's (1992) analysis of policy myths as a component of how a policy accrues meaning is instructive. For Yanow, policy myths are narratives created by policymaking agencies that divert attention away from equally valued but contradictory societal principles. Policy myths contain matter-of-fact statements presented in the form of rational goal setting and organizational mandates. They are produced, communicated through, and masked by tacit knowledge concerning the putative needs of the moment. They also arise

when policies entail incommensurable but unacknowledged values, whereby two or more equally valued but incompatible societal principles are embodied in the same policy.

In the case of the TEMPS, an enduring policy tension concerns public safety monitoring or surveillance versus privacy protection – two valued societal principles that are often portrayed as contradictory in public discourse. Yet both principles were part of policymaking processes. The tension produced by the putative contradiction between public camera surveillance and privacy protection expressed itself through a set of policy narratives pertaining to need and programme design. More than narratives about necessity and design, the legitimacy of the TEMPS is based on an ongoing set of compliance myths – a special form of policy myth that in TEMPS policymaking entails tacit assumptions about public safety monitoring, information gathering, equipment, and auditing. As social constructions that fill silences in discourses about public safety, these compliance myths embody a tacit knowledge about rational goal setting, organizational flexibility, and the unique public safety challenges that the city is confronted with at special events.

The point of conceptualizing policymaking in terms of compliance myths is not to impugn policymakers, but rather to encourage a shift from public silences about competing societal principles to public discourse on how myths are constructed and maintained in the context of responding to tacit understandings of public safety problems and putative surveillance solutions.

If policy/compliance myths conceal the contradiction between competing but equally valued societal principles, understanding the ways that myths are constructed and transformed through tacit knowledge is a necessary part of developing productive strategies to encourage better practices and to reflect critically on the need for special event public camera surveillance. Our argument about compliance myths applies to tacit knowledge about local surveillance policies and to privacy commissioners' tacit understandings about the efficacy of their mobile policy framework. In one sense, the value of our findings on special event camera surveillance pertains to the empirical gap between policy design and implementation processes or to the ways that tacit policy meanings are crafted and institutionalized in the context of imported policy frameworks. In an additional sense, the value pertains to the challenges that privacy commissioners will likely confront as the popularity of redeployable systems increases.

Privacy commissioners, as the primary public representative charged with overseeing compliance, cannot continue to offload responsibility for best practices onto municipalities. Guidelines were developed in a different context than the settings that local policymaking processes unfold in. They were also shaped in the image of fixed monitoring systems. As we have shown, the difference that special event redeployable systems make is that, at least in Vancouver, they exacerbate problems associated with fixed systems not because of quick deployment and poor planning, as previous research on redeployable systems has suggested, but rather their normative starting point. The challenge that confronts privacy commissioners, then, is not how to make implementation better fit design frameworks. The challenge concerns the tacit understandings about special event public monitoring itself.

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Notes

1. Canadian privacy commissioners investigated several monitoring programmes at the federal and provincial levels between 1991 and 2004; the Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada (OPC) initiated a constitutional challenge against public camera surveillance in 2002; the province of Quebec's Commission d'accès à l'information held public hearings on public and private camera surveillance in 2003; the OPC funded at least four academic studies into camera surveillance between 2004 and 2011; the province of Ontario's Information and Privacy Commissioner carried out a study of the city of Toronto Transit Commission's use of video surveillance on mass transit systems in 2008; and the OPC funded university researchers to spearhead the Surveillance Camera Awareness Network in 2009–10.
2. As regards ethical considerations, in our role as consultant/auditor for the Vancouver project we disclosed that we were collecting these data not only for auditing purposes that contributed to the legitimacy of the system but for our own analyses of which this article forms a part.
3. Government funding for public camera surveillance is unique in Canada. The city of Toronto received $2 million from the Solicitor General of Ontario in 2007 to develop a public monitoring system but funding for Canadian systems has been largely confined to the municipal level. British Columbia's Solicitor General initially allocated $1 million to three cities.
4. Redeployable systems were also funded through the provincial allocation in the cities of Surrey and Kelowna, British Columbia.
5. A privacy impact assessment (PIA) was submitted to the province to satisfy funding conditions. The PIA was subsequently forwarded to the provincial privacy commissioner's office. We have been able to confirm that the privacy commissioner received the assessment, yet the OEM reports that no correspondence from the privacy commissioner was received. The privacy commissioner's office declined our repeated requests to view what they claim was their response to the submission.
6. The Stanley Cup riots entailed a public disturbance that broke out when the Vancouver Canucks were eliminated from the Stanley Cup Playoff series. Windows were broken, street fights ensued, and a number of arson-related incidents were recorded.
7. Recording and storage of images poses implications for public notification. Specific signage was posted for neither Event A nor B. Public notification signage was posted during the Games, however.
8. The OEM installed transmitting equipment for the boat camera, but it did not work. When they tried to fix it, the captain of the police boat became frustrated and blocked access.
9. The OEM had access to other city cameras through network upgrades completed in preparations for the Games.

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