

Ethics of Surveillance, Power and Citizenship.

Kieron O'Hara
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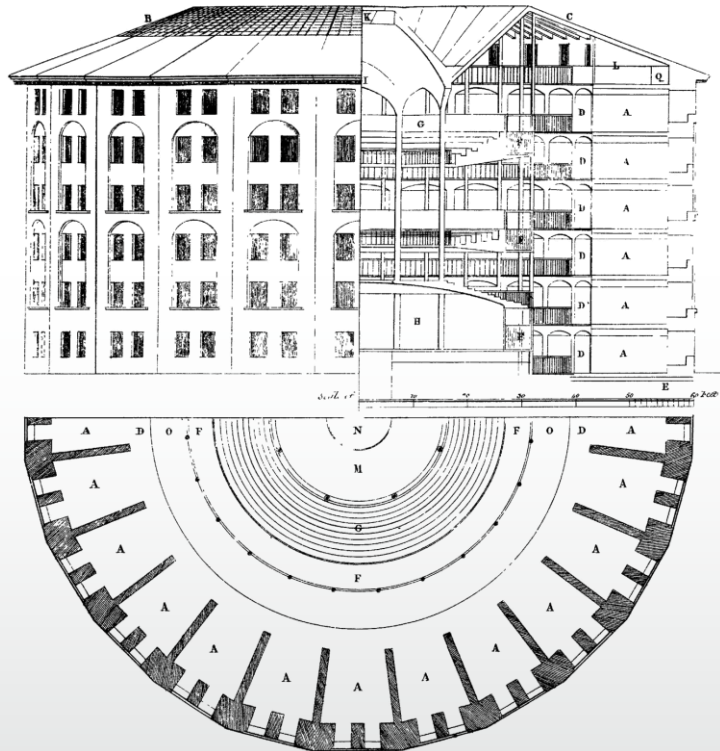
The Orwellian World of Data Mining



Or the wrong picture



The Bentham-Orwell Model



- Bentham's *Panopticon*
- *Nineteen Eighty-Four*

From
<https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/1/11/Panopticon.jpg>

BOM Metaphysical Principle

- We are always visible

BOM Empirical Principle

- We are not always being watched

BOM Epistemological Principle

- We don't know when we are being watched

BOM Institutional Principle

- The apparatus of surveillance is harnessed to a violent regime of constraint and punishment

BOM Teleological Principle

- The purpose of the BOM is to allow 100% human surveillance to scale

1984 and 2018

1984	2018
Always visible	Always visible
Not always watched	Always watched
Don't know when watched	Do know when watched
“If you want a vision of the future, imagine a boot stamping on a human face – forever”	If you want a vision of the future, imagine receiving mildly irritating advertisements all the time – forever
Human surveillance	Machine surveillance

It's More Like This

- Ethical considerations not characterised by coercion
- The situation with respect to privacy is non-trivial
- The ethical picture is consequentialist

Ethical Considerations

- It's not about coercion
- Transparency
- Consent/autonomy
 - Exit
- Purpose
- Social aspect
 - Confidentiality

Privacy Considerations

- All surveillance is a breach of privacy
- Modernity: individuality expressed through choice
 - Surveillance where privacy is expected
 - Privacy is a value of modernity
 - The ethics of 1984 are straightforward
- Digital modernity: individuality expressed through personalisation
 - Personalisation precludes privacy
 - The ethics are not straightforward

The Consequentialism of Big Data

- Data mining is all about consequences
 - Predictions
 - Statistics
 - Probabilities
 - Large populations
- Ethical tendency to consequentialism
 - Does this intervention make the world measurably better?
- Big data as ethically self-evaluative

Three Cases

- Different ethical situations in
 - Business
 - Academe
 - Government

Business

- The driver is the exchange
- Should be a win-win
- Are the terms of the exchange hidden?
 - What does the business gain?
 - What does the consumer exchange?
- What are the externalities?
 - How do we price them in?

Academe

- The driver is curiosity
 - Although increasingly within applied contexts
- Assumptions about data subjects' interests
 - They have no direct say
- Is this framed as Luddite v progressive?
- Outcomes?
 - Training data v intervention

Government

- The driver is the public good
- Defined as?
 - Favourable statistics?
 - Defined by whom?
- The citizen
 - Can vote
 - Denied exit
- Framing: what is the role of the norm?
 - Is it the citizen's duty to improve the stats?

Google's 7 Principles

- Sundar Pichai, one week ago
 - <https://blog.google/topics/ai/ai-principles/>
- 1. Be socially beneficial
 - ‘Beneficial’ defined by whom?
 - Consequentialism
 - Society gains
 - The consumer? Data subject? Citizen?
 - Where does human dignity fit?

It's All About Power

- 2. Avoid creating or reinforcing unfair bias
- 3. Be built and tested for safety
- 4. Be accountable to people
- 5. Incorporate privacy design principles
- 6. Uphold high standards of scientific excellence
- 7. Be made available for uses that accord with these principles

It's All About Power

- 2. Avoid creating or reinforcing **unfair** bias
- 3. Be built and tested for **safety**
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Tocqueville's “Immense and Protective Power”

- “It works readily for their happiness but it wishes to be the only provider and judge of it”



Conclusion: Human Dignity

A MEANS TO AN END



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