# Chapter 5
# Why Watch?
## Security

## ABSTRACT

*The most popular justification for surveillance has been providing security to the ones being watched. Most institutions and people who are involved in the process of surveillance have argued that having the information about the narratives allows the watcher to create a more secure environment. This argument allows the watcher to institute different methods of watching for the different contexts of surveillance showing that all the watching eventually makes the ecosystem more secure.*

## INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I look at the most common rationale for surveillance – security. First, I offer an overview of the notion of security in general terms to understand why security is a fundamental need. Next I offer the way in which security is used as the reason to watch within the four contexts of surveillance explained earlier. I conclude with the notion that security is connected with the other reasons for surveillance.

The outcome of surveillance is the construction of a narrative. In every instance of surveillance the outcome is to gather a better understanding of the entity under observation. This narrative is made up of a set of data points which are usually collected using tools that can be deployed at various levels of sophistication based on who is watching. However, the primary difference between different forms of surveillance is based on the sophistication of the technology deployed to watch. In some ways, the technology that is used to do the watching is inconsequential other than the details of the story that can be constructed from the data. Those with better technology can construct a more detailed and elaborate narrative. For instance, the narrative about an incident produced by the person (P) capturing the acts of the law enforcement institution (I) in a P2I situation might be made up of unsophisticated smartphone cameras videos but it could tell as compelling a story as one constructed with the use of spy cameras that capture images in great detail. The level of details of the story could have an impact on the effectiveness of the story but the act of constructing the story begs the question: Why even construct the story? More elaborately, it is important to understand the motivation behind constructing the numerous stories that result from the rapid growth of surveillance technologies as discussed earlier.

The next few chapters offer some of the key rationale that are utilized to justify the construction of the narratives through the various processes of surveillance. I use examples from past notable cases of surveillance and the way in which those instances have been supported by the "watcher" to suggest that there are certainly powerful reasons to engage in the process of surveillance to gather the data to collect the stories. The most common rationale for surveillance revolves around the notion of "security." The use of security as a rationale for surveillance is an especially meaningful because surveillance is meant to be covert. Much of what has been discussed thus far deals with the situation where the act of surveillance, be it gathering data about individuals or the process of photographing land masses from the sky is meant to be done without the knowledge of the watched. Thus a public rationale for the acts of surveillance are only needed when the watching process has been discovered by either the watched or another independent group who is monitoring the watcher or the act of surveillance is discovered

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