

# Chapter 19

## Surveillance and Privacy: Examining the Complex Interplay Between National Security and Individual Freedoms

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### **ABSTRACT**

*This chapter analyzes the tension between surveillance practices and privacy rights, focusing on how social media platforms and governments navigate this balance. By employing library and document analysis, reviewing legal documents, policy papers, and case studies related to surveillance and privacy this study adopted a Thematic Analysis. Findings show that balancing surveillance and privacy is challenging due to conflicting priorities and legal frameworks. Another major findings is that Governments often face criticism for overreach, while social media platforms must navigate complex legal and ethical issues. The chapter as discussion, highlights the need for clear and balanced policies that protect privacy while addressing security concerns. It also considers the impact of surveillance on user behavior and public trust. This chapter recommends developing balanced regulatory frameworks that address both privacy and security concerns, increasing transparency in surveillance practices, and engaging with stakeholders to ensure that privacy protections are upheld.*

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## INTRODUCTION

The task of intelligence and police services to collect data in the name of national security to protect against crime, terrorism, and espionage is a legitimate state interest. Over the past two decades, studies like Lyon and Wood, (2020), Herbst et al. (2021), Sharma, (2021) however, representing the relentless expansion of counter-terrorist and criminal surveillance, combined with the ever-evolving data-driven economic models, has created an explosive surveillance cocktail that has only begun to be understood by our society. From the traditional practices of past, such as postal interception, to the cutting-edge digital surveillance methods that now monitor vast amounts of data online, the capability to surveil has exponentially expanded. Advancements in surveillance technology have enabled nation-states to exert greater control over their populations. As Brayne (2020) argues, these technologies have allowed governments to create “vertical structures of influence and dominance.” Lyon and Wood (2020) echo this sentiment, noting that surveillance systems form a “chaining link of aspects along a continuous spectrum of power relations. Herbst et al. (2021) further emphasize the pervasive nature of surveillance in contemporary society. They contend that mass surveillance, primarily conducted by governments and intelligence agencies, has reached such a scale that it not only threatens individual privacy but also raises ethical and moral questions about the limits of state power. Cunliffe (2021), Zuboff (2022), and Zuboff (2023) explore the implications of mass surveillance for individual autonomy and societal values. They argue that understanding the extent to which surveillance intertwines with our lives is crucial for preserving our freedoms and maintaining a balance between security and personal liberties. “As we navigate this brave new world, understanding the implications of mass surveillance becomes an essential facet of safeguarding our collective freedom and maintaining the delicate balance between security and personal liberties.

According to Prince et al. (2021), the opacity surrounding data monitoring methods has grown, making it challenging to maintain adequate checks on the necessity and timing of such monitoring. Beck et al. (2021) further argue that the tension between national security needs and individual freedoms has intensified with the rise of global terrorism and data-driven economies. Crocco et al. (2020) emphasize that prior to modern digital advancements, surveillance was largely confined to traditional telecommunications systems, such as postal and telecommunication networks. Pregowska et al. (2021) provide a historical perspective, noting that surveillance practices evolved from watchmen and basic newspapers in the 15th century to more sophisticated methods with the establishment of the modern postal system in the 18th century, which granted states access to private correspondence. Kendall-Taylor et al. (2020) add that the partnership between state and private sector actors has

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