

# Escalating U.S. Police Surveillance after 9/11: an Examination of Causes and Effects

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## Abstract

In recent years U.S. police have been given greater surveillance powers in response to perceived threats from crime, drugs, and terrorism. Several legal and criminal events have facilitated a reevaluation of the balance between police surveillance authority and civil privacy protection. In the post-9/11 era, changes in federal law, court interpretation of privacy safeguards, and technological advances have expanded the circumstances and methods by which the police may engage in surveillance of civil activities. This paper examines the factors contributing to the escalation in police surveillance and its effects on privacy rights and civil life. The analysis suggests that increasing police surveillance has diminished individual privacy protections and impacted aspects of civil life.

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# Platform & workflow by OJS / PKP

*Surveillance & Society* 6(4) 2 Beauchamp: Artful Concealment and Strategic Visibility The notion of “concealment” via medical intervention remains tied to legal gender as well, a link made clear by the fact that most states deny changes of gender on identity documents without proof of irreversible “sex reassignment surgery.” Echoing this perspective, legal cases dealing with violence against gender variant individuals often revolve around the victim’s responsibility to disclose their trans status or birth-assigned sex. Such cases imply or outright claim that the individual’s dishonest concealment of their “true” sex was the root cause of the violent actions taken against them. The US government increased military operations, economic measures and political pressure on groups it accused of being terrorists, as well as on governments and countries accused of sheltering them. October 2001 saw the first military action initiated by the US. The USA PATRIOT Act of 2001 was passed soon after the attacks, giving law enforcement agencies sweeping search and surveillance powers over US citizens without a warrant. This led to the creation in 2002 of the Information Awareness Office (IAO), led by John Poindexter. The attacks also had immediate and overwhelming effects upon the United States population. Many people paid tribute to the police officers and fire fighters who died during the attacks by wearing NYPD and FDNY hats. Escalating U.S. Police Surveillance after 9/11: an Examination of Causes and Effects\*. William Bloss. 1. Abstract In recent years U.S. police have been given greater surveillance powers in response to perceived threats from crime, drugs, and terrorism. Several legal and criminal events have facilitated a reevaluation of the balance between police surveillance authority and civil privacy protection. This paper examines the factors contributing to the escalation in police surveillance and its effects on privacy rights and civil life. The analysis suggests that increasing police surveillance has diminished individual privacy protections and impacted aspects of civil life. Introduction. Views of surveillance and privacy have changed dramatically in recent years.