

# Security Games

## Surveillance and Control at Mega-Events

Edited by Colin J. Bennett and Kevin D. Haggerty



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Kevin D. Haggerty



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*Security Games: Surveillance and Control at Mega-Events* addresses the impact of “mega-events” – and especially the Olympic Games and the World Cup – on wider practices of security and surveillance. “Mega-events” pose peculiar and extensive security challenges. The overwhelming imperative is that nothing should go wrong. There are, however, an almost infinite number of things that can “go wrong”; producing the perceived need for pre-emptive risk assessments, and an expanding range of security measures, including extensive forms and levels of surveillance. These measures are delivered by a “security/industrial complex” consisting of powerful transnational corporate, governmental and military actors, eager to showcase the latest technologies and prove that they can deliver “spectacular levels of security” to protect the brand image of the country or city in question. As the authors demonstrate, these events have become occasions for experiments in monitoring people and places, and as such, important moments in the development and dispersal of surveillance, and the more routine monitoring of people and place. As the exceptional conditions of the “mega-event” become the norm, *Security Games: Surveillance and Control at Mega-Events* provides a glimpse of a possible future that is more intensively and extensively monitored.

**Colin J. Bennett** is professor of political science at the University of Victoria. In addition to numerous articles, he has published five books, the latest being *The Privacy Advocates: Resisting the Spread of Surveillance*. He is currently co-investigator on a large international project entitled “The New Transparency: Surveillance and Social Sorting.”

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## Preface

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“Mega-events” such as the Olympic Games and the FIFA World Cup are now monumental cultural spectacles that pose peculiar and extensive security challenges. The world’s attention focuses on a host nation or city, eager to project the best of impressions and thus attract future investment and tourism. The overwhelming imperative of “destination marketing” produces a pervasive sentiment that “nothing should go wrong.” There are, of course, an almost infinite number of things that can “go wrong,” producing extensive and pre-emptive risk assessments, and an increasing number of security measures, including wide-ranging forms and levels of surveillance.

Furthermore, organizers such as the International Olympic Committee (IOC) or the International Federation of Association Football (FIFA) now place extraordinary conditions on host cities and nations, which must make elaborate and expensive promises with respect to security. The Athens Games in 2004 had the highest documented security costs at \$1.5 billion USD. Current estimates for Vancouver/Whistler suggest that around \$1 billion CAD was spent on security arrangements. A “security/industrial complex” consisting of powerful transnational corporate, governmental and military actors, is eager to showcase the latest technologies, secure lucrative contracts, and deliver these various measures. At the same time, citizens tend to be more tolerant of abnormal security precautions, which they might oppose in other contexts. Local public officials often capitalize on these opportunities, treating them as an occasion to conduct real-world tests of new information systems and to implement their wish lists of measures unattainable in more normal conditions.

Mega-events have thus become opportunities for experiments in monitoring people and places, and important moments in the development and dispersal of surveillance. They are crucibles for governmental anxieties and microcosms of larger trends and processes. Through the mega-event, we can observe the complex ways that unique combinations of technology, institutional motivations, and public-private security arrangements produce security practices. In this process, the surveillance infrastructure established for one mega-event expands and becomes the standard for the future. The “Security Games” consequently have both international and domestic legacies.

There are powerful transnational forces leading to higher levels of securitization and surveillance from one event to the next, and an increasing standardization of security practices that transcend temporal, national and cultural borders. At the same time, these powerful forces are mediated by local conditions. The FIFA World Cup is not the Olympics. London is not Tokyo is not Atlanta is not Beijing is not Vancouver. Local political, administrative, cultural and economic factors also shape the experiences on the ground and the more general perceptions and legacies.

The chapters in this collection are all in one way or another concerned with this interplay between the global and the local. They focus on sporting events, rather than other international spectacles such as Expos or G8 summits. The collection offers historical and spatial comparisons through case studies of the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens, the 2006 World Cup in Germany, the 2006 Winter Olympics in Torino, the 2008 European Championships in Switzerland, the Winter Olympics in Vancouver/Whistler 2010, the future 2012 Olympic Games in London and the sequence of mega-events which have occurred in Japan since the 1964 Tokyo Olympics. The collection originates in a research workshop held in Vancouver November 20–21, 2009 just two months before the Winter Olympic Games. Scholars, policy makers and activists from many countries in Europe and North America convened to discuss questions related to the impact of mega-events on security and surveillance. This workshop was organized under the auspices of the New Transparency Initiative, a large multi-disciplinary and international project funded through the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.

Besides this volume, another product of this workshop was a signed declaration drawing attention to the fact that “recent Games have increasingly taken place in and contributed to a climate of fear, heightened security and surveillance; and that this has often been to the detriment of democracy, transparency and human rights, with serious implications for international, national and local norms and laws.” Among other things, the declaration called for “a full, independent public assessment of the security and surveillance measures, once the Games are over, addressing their costs (financial and otherwise), their effectiveness, and lessons to be learned for future mega-events” (Vancouver Statement, 2009).

We are grateful to the authors for the professional and timely way in which they prepared drafts and responded to our editorial suggestions. We would also like to thank the other participants in the research workshop whose work does not appear in this volume. Colin Bennett would also like to thank his Australian colleagues for the stimulating intellectual environment at the Cyberspace Law and Policy Centre University of New South Wales in Sydney, where he spent time in 2010 editing this collection. We thank Bryan Sluggett, Ariane Ellerbrok and Temitope Oriola for their editorial assistance, as well as Colin Perrin from Routledge. We gratefully acknowledge financial support provided by the SSHRC Major Collaborative Research Initiative grant for “The New Transparency” project.

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# Introduction

## Security games: surveillance and control at mega-events

*Colin J. Bennett and Kevin D. Haggerty*

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At the time of editing this collection, the 2010 FIFA World Cup was taking place in South Africa. The following was proudly proclaimed on the government's World Cup website:

Some R665 million will be spent on procuring special equipment, including crowd-control equipment, crime scene trainers, unmanned aircraft, helicopters, 10 water cannons, 100 BMWs for highway patrol and up-to-date body armour. About 300 mobile cameras will also be used. There will be four mobile command centres at a cost of around R6 million each. These centres will feature high-tech monitoring equipment, which will be able to receive live footage from the airplanes and other cameras. These investments will continue to assist the police in their crime-fighting initiatives long after the World Cup is over.

This same webpage reported that 41,000 officers from the South African Police Service would be deployed during the event, with dedicated World Cup 2010 police stations in close proximity to each of the stadiums.

(South Africa, FIFA 2010)

It might be tempting to respond that South Africa, with its authoritarian history, would be expected to produce such an excessive security response. As the papers in this volume illustrate, however, there is nothing particularly remarkable about the scale of this security effort, something that is now common in host countries with more established democratic traditions. Elsewhere we have witnessed: increased use of video-surveillance at prominent and vulnerable sites; uses of secure perimeter fencing; criminal background checks for employees, volunteers and athletes; vehicle monitoring; the use of radio-frequency identification devices (RFIDs) on passes and tickets; biometric identification measures; satellite monitoring; the designation of special "fan zones" for collective viewing of events; the regulation of protest and dissent; overhead unmanned aerial vehicles; mobile fingerprinting identification systems; and enhanced controls at land, sea and air borders. Each mega-event now exhibits a "total security" effort akin to planning and deployment in times of war. Sometimes the parallel is made explicit; Chinese

officials declared in February 2008 that they had entered the “combat phase” of their preparations for the Beijing Olympics (Beijing 2008).

From the vantage point of the local organizers, officials and public, “their event” is often viewed as unique. To some extent each is. But each World Cup, Olympic Games, Expo, G8 or G20 summit or other “mega-event” is also part of a broader process through which various institutions and officials learn and pass on lessons about security to their successors. International organizations such as the International Olympic Committee (IOC) or the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) act as centralized brokers of that knowledge. Each event, therefore, tries to improve on its predecessors, and each must now deliver “spectacular security” (Boyle and Haggerty 2009), increasingly coordinated and militarized, with strong continuities across time and place. How has this situation come about, and what are the implications for our communities, our civil liberties and our democracies?

This extensive security effort might be easily justified if there was a demonstrable threat of serious incident at those events, such as terrorist attacks, and a confidence in the fact that the new security measures could thwart such attacks. Troublingly, that is not the case. While terrorists certainly could target a mega-event, the real likelihood of their doing so is often a complete unknown. Analyses of terrorist activity have repeatedly demonstrated the “spatial displacement” of attacks away from hardened targets to softer, less defended areas. This has been particularly true for recent manifestations of violent Jihadi extremism (Coaffee 2009; Libicki et al., 2007). Hence, beyond a minimal threshold of basic security measures, elaborate and intense additions to the security presence at mega-events typically does little to reduce the prospect that terrorists might attack at the periphery of an event. Given the global media attention focused on such events, such peripheral attacks can still serve the terrorist’s purposes. In light of the unknown probability of such threats, and the generally recognized inability of even the most elaborate security measures to eliminate the prospect of a terrorist incident initiated by a small group of dedicated attackers, critical scholars must search more widely to try and understand the massive financial and symbolic investments in mega-event security. Contributors to this book explore the various aspects of this issue.

### **Concepts and trends**

This collection is motivated by two broad and contested concepts: surveillance and security. Both concepts have generated huge and diverse scholarly literatures. Both tend to mean one thing in academic circles, and another in popular and media discourse. That said, the two phenomena are intimately linked. While a host of technological, institutional, and human factors are involved in providing security, surveillance is now a routine component of such initiatives.

The analysis of security at mega-events occurs within a context of deepening concern about the levels and nature of surveillance, which is rendering our lives,



activities, movements and behaviors more transparent than ever before to an increasing number of individuals and organizations. In the popular mind, the word “surveillance” tends to imply video monitoring or espionage. We regard it as a far broader phenomenon that structures relations between individuals and organizations, and indeed between individuals and individuals. As David Lyon notes, it comprises “any collection and processing of personal data, whether identifiable or not, for the purposes of influencing or managing those whose data have been garnered” (2001: 2).

Several overlapping trends contribute to this condition. The first is one of routinization. As citizens engage in the typical activities of modern societies they leave traces of data behind them – booking a hotel, surfing the Internet, using a credit card, booking an airline ticket, or attending an international sporting event. A huge proportion of surveillance is now about monitoring everyday life (Lyon 2001): who we are, what we are doing and where we are doing it. Everybody surrenders his or her personal information in exchange for a range of perceived benefits. Sometimes that surrender is voluntary and transparent; at others it is more secretive and coercive. The upshot is that one does not have to be a “suspect” anymore to be a subject of surveillance.

Contemporary surveillance cannot be accurately captured either by the metaphors offered by Orwell’s “Big Brother” or that of Foucault’s “panopticon” (Haggerty 2006). It is now more fragmented and dispersed throughout different computer networks within government, outside government, and within the grey areas in between. The networked information environment has created a more diffuse and elusive pattern of surveillance, which has eroded traditional institutional and functional distinctions, and disrupted existing hierarchies of visibility. Flows of personal data now percolate through a variety of more porous, and less discrete systems: “The resultant ‘surveillant assemblage’ operates by abstracting human bodies from their territorial settings, and separating them into a series of discrete flows. These flows are then reassembled in different locations as discrete and virtual ‘data doubles’ ” (Haggerty and Ericson 2000: 605). It is disconnected and disembodied (Lyon 2001). And while these systems make people transparent to diverse audiences, it is becoming increasingly difficult to render the systems themselves transparent in hopes of curtailing or regulating them.

These trends also go hand in hand with revolutionary advances in information technology. Every year information processing becomes more powerful, and has now reached a critical threshold where it is often cheaper and more efficient to retain data than to delete it (Mayer-Schönberger 2009). Information technology is distributed and mobile, creating powerful incentives and capabilities for the surveillance of location and movement. It is miniaturized, and can be embedded in material objects, meaning that we are starting to witness an “Internet of things.” And it is increasingly associated with advances in biometric identification, where the technology is not simply “about” the body, but is increasingly part “of” the body (van de Ploeg 2003). These trends are apparent during the experimental laboratory of the mega-event, as officials yield to multiple pressures to apply the