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## Surveillance and Tyranny: The Dismantling of the Private and Public Spheres of American Democracy through the Use of Surveillance by Tyrannical Forces

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Surveillance and Tyranny: The Dismantling of the Private and Public Spheres of American  
Democracy through the Use of Surveillance by Tyrannical Forces

Senior Project Submitted to  
The Division of Social Studies  
of Bard College

by  
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## Introduction

As a result of an immense division amongst the people of the United States, trust that was once held for one another continues to face abandonment, with engagement in discussion being viewed less as a means of community building and instead, as spaces purely for the vehement defense of oneself. With open discussion serving as an indication that the public sphere is functioning through democratic means, holding value within the ideas brought forth by each voice, the inability for it to operate in this manner indicates somewhere along the way, the private sphere was attacked. As a signal of democracy, free and open discussion must hold a presence in the public sphere. When open discussion becomes absent within the public, it indicates that there is an unwillingness to introduce oneself to new ideas and perceptions, thus causing one to become stuck in their own beliefs and adopt a stagnancy in thought. Examining the private sphere as the precursor to the public, through its ability to produce thoughts which influence public action, the inability for individuals to engage in open discussion free from suppression indicates that the private sphere was dismantled. This concern leads to this project, calling for the investigation into the ways in which the private and public spheres have been dismantled in pursuit of tyranny. With the loss of open discussion serving as a signal that a democratic regime is failing, I will analyze the ways in which the employment of surveillance by tyrannical forces operates to undermine the conditions of open discussion. The invasion of the private sphere eventually means a loss of the ability to act freely within the public sphere. Discussion is no longer valued for its ability to bring those in disagreement together when the public sphere is dismantled, as people hold less of an interest in having their perceptions challenged. Instead, discussion is valued for its ability to maintain and grow the voices of the



already powerful through the suppression of other voices. This project shows that surveillance is a precious tool for tyrants, with its ability to dismantle the variety of opinion heard within the public sphere as a result of its invasion of the private. This claim will be explored in depth within this project.

This framework leads to this project, where I will be attempting to understand the ways in which surveillance is used by tyrannical forces to dismantle the private and public spheres of American democracy. First, I introduce the theoretical framework that the arguments of this project will rest upon in Chapter 1. In Chapter 2, I will explore the ways in which a sole tyrant abuses surveillance through the case of Richard Nixon and Watergate. Then in Chapter 3, focus will be placed on the rule of the majority post-9/11 and the ways in which the public opinion influenced systems of surveillance.

Chapter 1 details the theoretical framework that serves as the foundation of this work. I begin with an explanation of the ways in which the private sphere serves as a precursor to the public sphere. In explaining this, I argue that the dismantling of the private sphere results in an ineffective public sphere which abandons open discussion and free action. The understandings of the private and public sphere and their relationship to open discussion are framed through Hannah Arendt's *On Revolution*. In analyzing this relationship, I argue that their coexistence is a product of and necessary support for democratic rule while their dismantling effectuates tyrannical rule. After examining the ways in which tyranny will be situated within this work, I move on to how tyrannical power is reliant upon surveillance for its growth in power. With a focus on surveillance, I then briefly analyze how a tyranny of majority and tyranny of one

employ surveillance as a means of dismantling the private and public spheres through the instillation of fear within others.

In an exploration of this paranoia fueled by surveillance, Michel Foucault's work *On Discipline and Punish* creates the framework for understanding how the fear which results from the use of surveillance becomes a means of forcing others into submission. Placing a more specific focus on his analysis of how the design of the Panopticon promotes the submission of people, the ways in which the invasion of the private lead to an inability to act within the public are revealed. As an aspect of Foucault's ideas, I highlight the ways in which surveillance functions on a multifaceted level, not simply existing between one larger and one smaller force. In examining this, I address how this factor of surveillance heightens the paranoia associated with it, through the ways in which the anonymity of it conceals the identities of those who are watching. I then lay out the two cases I will be examining in order to grasp a better understanding for how surveillance is used by tyrannical forces to dismantle the private and public spheres. These two cases involve the tyranny of one and tyranny of the majority. Tyranny of the one will be represented by Nixon's involvement with Watergate, while tyranny of the majority will be examined through the rule of majority opinion post 9/11 and the influences it had upon surveillance enacted on Muslims and journalists by the government and media.

Chapter 2 explores the role of a sole tyrant in the dismantling of the private sphere, with a specific focus on Nixon's role within Watergate. Nixon will be analyzed as a figure who brought personal interest into governmental office, holding most concern with maintaining and expanding his power through deceptive means. Ultimately resorting to an authoritative control in his handling of Watergate's aftermath, the tyranny which Nixon attempted to inflict is revealed.

The argument made that Nixon's developing tyranny relied on surveillance, will be supported through the writings of *On Revolution* and *Truth in Politics* by Hannah Arendt. Both of these works find their way into the discussion of how Nixon invaded the private sphere and in doing so, broke down the public sphere, leaving the ability to freely act to himself. The eventual fall of Nixon will be addressed through the ways in which surveillance was turned back onto Nixon. Through this, the dynamics between Nixon, his administration, the media, and the people will be examined. The work's of Roger Boesche and Giovanni Giorgini, with their interpretations of Aristotle and Machiavelli's understanding of tyranny, will be used as a framework for drawing connection between Nixon's rule and that of a tyrant. Looking at how Nixon empowered his tyrannical control through surveillance, I will analyze how this created the breakdown of the private sphere, with the safety intended to be found within it lost. Through this analysis, Nixon's desire to lead through his own personal interests is revealed, supporting the notion that Nixon was acting tyrannically, using his elected power to pursue his personal agendas rather than the concerns of all else.

Chapter 3 focuses on the role of the majority as a tyrannical force after 9/11 and the ways in which majority public opinion influenced the use of surveillance by the government and media corporations. I begin the chapter by framing the majority's role as a tyrannical force through Alexis de Tocqueville's reflections on the rule of a majority within *Democracy in America*. Then transitioning to how the majority grows its power through the acceptance of groupthink, creating a public sphere which suppresses the voices of the minority. To better understand the ways in which suppression of the minority leads to the rise of a tyrannical majority, I turn to John Stuart Mill's work, *On Liberty*. To analyze the ways in which the majority invaded the private sphere,

focus is drawn to the surveillance of Muslims. Drawing from Michel Foucault's ideas surrounding the Panopticon, the ways in which the infliction of surveillance upon Muslims in both the private and public spheres was intended to promote their submission to the majority will be analyzed. The majority's influence within the government is then explained through the anti-Muslim rhetoric and institutionalized uses of surveillance upon Muslims. In an analysis of the media's role within the rise of the majority as well as surveillance, I first focus on the relationship between the media and the majority and then examine the relationship between the media and the government. In looking at the dynamic between the media and the government, I explore how the government manipulated and enacted surveillance via embedded journalists during the Iraq War, treating them as an exemplary site for reflecting upon the loss of private judgement in order to censor and control information reaching the people and therefore further fueling the majority's pro-patriot and anti-Muslim beliefs. In examining this, I will focus on the dynamics between the military and embedded journalists, to reveal how the journalist's dependence on the military for survival caused them to be vulnerable to exploitation. The military exploited this vulnerability in order to force the journalists into submission, resulting in them reporting on whatever was fed to them by the Pentagon. Causing a loss of private space for the journalists, they no longer had the ability to form their own judgements or criticisms of current events, instead they were left perpetuating the rhetoric of the Pentagon through their reports.

Through the focus on these case studies, the ways in which surveillance is used by tyranny to dismantle the private and public spheres will be explored. This paper will then reveal the ability for surveillance to render individuals helpless through the destruction of free thinking

in the private sphere and free action in the public, enabling tyrannical forces to rise to power without facing effective resistance.



## Chapter One: Theoretical Framework

The private and public spheres of human life, as they function under the United States government, have become increasingly indistinguishable. The public sphere has historically been a space designated for one to be able to act politically in front of others and therefore exercise one's freedoms. The backbone of the public sphere is the private sphere. The freedoms offered up by democracy cannot fully be actualized without the existence of a private space where the people are able to retreat to. It is within this space that one holds the ability to sit with their own ideas, free from public scrutiny and thus exercise the ability to have an independence in thought. But equally, without the public sphere, these actions of the private become meaningless to the functioning of a democratic state. An absence of an effective public space creates a situation where there is hesitancy in bringing forth new ideas and thoughts that were developed within the private, with the hesitancy resulting from the scrutiny these ideas may face when revealed to others. The public sphere is then a space where the individual ideas formed within the private are able to be brought forth and pushed by others. It is therefore within the public sphere where crucial debate occurs as the voices of many are able to be heard (Arendt 2006). In her work *On Revolution*, this is what Arendt sees as a practice of freedom under democracy. To act freely is thus defined as the ability to have a private space where one can form their own opinions and beliefs and then to bring those ideas out into the public where they can be heard and tested by the individual ideas of others. The loss of a public space is therefore dangerous to the freedoms exercised in a democratic polity. Without the coexistence of public and private, a democratic society can easily fall victim to tyrannical rule, whether that be through one sole perpetrator or a majority.

While these two spheres are distinct from one another, with the private being more of a precursor to the political action of the public, it is essential to recognize the symbiotic relationship they hold in terms of exercising political freedoms. The ability to retreat to the private sphere and engage with personal ideas is a political action just as much as vocalizing those ideas to others within the public sphere is. It is within the private where one is able to find a sense of security for themselves. Amidst this security, there is freedom to engage with new thoughts. The beliefs that one forms within the private are what become actualized when brought forth to others. Rather than the act of debating personal ideas with others serving as a marker of political freedom, freedom is first found in the possession of a private space. To engage with the private sphere is to therefore act politically through freedom of expression. Within this space, we express our thoughts to our own critical eye in an attempt to make something coherent out of them. When this private space is threatened, the freedoms that democracy is grounded in are equally threatened, as the ability to freely express ideas to others becomes increasingly risk bearing.

Democracy functions on the basis that each citizen has the power to come together under one collective and then make laws based on collective judgements and a search for consensus as to what this collective needs. In this process, there will naturally be conflicting views, yet due to its pluralistic nature, democracy would not function without this conflict of views and beliefs. Through the understanding of Arendt, politics is denoted by the ability to act within a public sphere. Arendt says "For politics is not concerned with private, but with public affairs, and it is only in public that actions have meaning." (Arendt 2006, 240). Acting within the public sphere is unlike confronting oneself in the private, as public action holds much more meaning as a result



of its ability to more directly impact a collective. Action within the private only concerns the individual confronting their own thoughts and ideas, therefore it does not impact the political realm until those ideas are brought to the public. While Arendt addresses politics as the ability to act within the public sphere, the private sphere still holds importance within politics. Without the private sphere, there would not be a functioning public sphere, creating a loss of ability to act politically. Arendt explains "What the American Revolution had done was not to destroy monarchy but to create the unprecedented possibility of a republic, in which the freedom of the public realm was guaranteed by the freedom of the private" (Arendt 2006, 238). The private sphere therefore upholds the public, serving as its foundation through its ability to allow individuals to generate their own ideas to bring into action within the public. When the private sphere is threatened, the public sphere is as well. In order to preserve the ability for people to act politically, the private sphere must be defended.

In order to protect this, the standard must be set that private spheres remain intact or else the threat of any one type of viewpoint gaining a majority preference will arise. When majority preference becomes the standard by which one lives, the basis of democracy is threatened by tyranny. The protection of the private sphere is then vital in order to ensure freedom of thought and protection against tyrannical forces. Within the private sphere, where one is able to engage in thought freely, they enter a deeply personal space where they are able to find and figure out the basis upon which the rest of their thoughts will grow. Without this experience, one risks falling victim to the opinion of the majority. While one of the products of freedom of thought within the private is often tension and conflict in the public, the loss of this private space would be a more significant loss than to have disagreements. The nature of thought differs greatly from person to

person, resulting in thought potentially being born out of hatred and prejudice. While these thoughts can turn violent when transformed into action within the public sphere, the existence of them further solidifies the need for the maintenance of the private sphere. The private creates a space for those who are victims of violent action to build up their own thoughts and in return, their own power. This then enables the oppressed to have a space to be momentarily free from the wrath of others, one in which they can protect and give validity to their own thought and then be better equipped to confront the public sphere.

With the private sphere serving as a precursor to the public, it is essential to protect and uphold spaces for its existence in order to protect freedom against tyranny. In a sense, the private sphere is then where freedom is born. When this is not protected, there no longer exists a space for individuals to develop and sit with their own ideas and as a result, one is more prone to fall victim to the beliefs of others. What becomes most essential within this system is not just challenging the ideas of others but challenging one's own thought through the acceptance of critique. As the private and public spheres continue to blend together, the ability to engage with a system that challenges ideas in pursuit of progression becomes increasingly difficult. Arendt explains that

Freedom, on the other hand, has shifted places; it resides no longer in the public realm but in the private life of the citizens and so must be defended against the public and its power. Freedom and power have parted company, and the fateful equating of power with violence, of the political with government, and of government with a necessary evil has begun. (Arendt 2006, 128).

With the blending of the public and private sphere, the two are no longer protected as separate entities. Arendt explains how freedom has shifted to something now found within the private sphere. There lies a much greater stake in protecting the private in order to protect freedom

alongside it. Arendt goes on to warn that when freedom and power are no longer in conversation with one another, evil begins to be seen as necessary for the functioning of the government. In relation to the blending of the public and private spheres seen within American life today, the act of this blending itself is the product of the necessary evil that acts of surveillance, individual or institutional, are deemed to be.

The tensions often created between the varying beliefs found within the public sphere are an indicator that democracy is functioning, serving to produce new ideas and challenge old ones. However, when tension becomes increasingly absent, it is often a precursor to the silencing of vulnerable voices, indicating that there is a disconnect between the functioning of the private and public sphere. A contributor to this disconnect can be understood as existing through acts of surveillance, by either a majority or sole leader. The deconstruction of the private sphere, and in return the public, through surveillance, can be understood as an act of tyranny, as freedom of thought and action are stripped away from individuals. The fact that tension is never entirely absent from the political world, reflects the hope that there is a force which still is resisting the complete domination of tyranny.

The use of surveillance can be understood as a system of control in which the government uses varying methods to exert an authoritative power over its people through the embedding of fear into daily life. Surveillance often operates as an invisible entity. It does not exist as one tangible being, instead it presents itself within a multitude of manifestations. Built on the belief that one reality must hold precedence over all others, tyranny often resorts to deception in order to gain the submission of the masses. Deception in this sense allows for people to feel as though surveillance ultimately serves to protect them and their freedom. The

disillusionment that this deception rests on does not hold permanency and ultimately will lose those who felt moved by it once the deceitful nature of it is revealed in light of truth. Standards for surveillance are often reflective of biases which are a result of fallacies produced by some form of a majority opinion or a political leader. Once these biases lose validity, the deception will no longer be able to hold them up and therefore the basis that the surveillance rests on will come under strain.

Aside from surveillance on a governmental level, it is important to address surveillance that functions outside of the government. This is citizen-on-citizen surveillance. Fueled by the paranoia that is projected through the general act of surveillance as a whole, citizens will turn their eyes to each other out of suspicion and then scrutinize any act they do not see in accordance with their own beliefs. Through this surveillance, private matters of citizen life are then turned into public concern, allowing the most minor of acts to be open to harsh scrutiny and in this, an environment is created where the private becomes dominated by fear of backlash and punitive action. Ultimately, surveillance exists within many different operations which I will lay out in greater detail in the following chapters, but at the core of all these efforts is the desire to instill a paranoia of being watched within those subject to it, in efforts to turn subjects docile and enable the watcher to hold as much power over them as they wish.

Tyranny of the majority holds a dependence upon surveillance for the upholding of power and control, and therefore disregards the private sphere, making it then one of the most fragile aspects of democracy. The private sphere is feared for its ability to give birth to nonconforming thought, which creates a distrust by the majority towards the private sphere. In the following chapters, I will refer to *Democracy in America* by Alexis de Tocqueville, in order to grasp a

deeper understanding of the danger that lies within tyranny of the majority. de Tocqueville explains that

It is true that the American courtiers...do not debate the question as to which of the virtues of their master is pre-eminently worthy of admiration, for they assure him that he possesses all the virtues under heaven without having acquired them, or without caring to acquire them; they do not give him their daughters and their wives to be raised at his pleasure to the rank of his concubines, but, by sacrificing their opinions, they prostitute themselves. (de Tocqueville 2000, 297).

When distrust is present, especially in the heightened levels that surveillance brings about, there is less of a willingness to open oneself up to critique. To close yourself off from this feedback is to sacrifice the sharing of opinion. The basis of critical feedback is trust that those one is engaging with are attempting to push the ideas of others for the betterment of the individual and society. Distrust and paranoia completely dismantle the symbiotic relationship that exists between the private and public spheres. Because freedom is born out of the private, when this sphere no longer functions, true freedom cannot be found within the public. In return, the public sphere becomes a place where freedom is granted to the few who are able to act politically and perpetuate further distrust amongst citizens through the continuation and amplification of surveillance. de Tocqueville explains how politicians have prostituted themselves to the public by sacrificing their opinion for a good public image. This facade of “goodness” created by politicians generates even more of the distrust I was previously describing. When an awareness is brought to the fact that politicians must keep up a certain public facade in order to improve their chances of election, genuineness is dissociated from the political for those who still held onto hope that it may have existed. The politician is then often seen by the constituent as being unable to offer any true support. These actions of conformity by a politician perpetuates the rule of a majority opinion. The majority which upholds the public opinion are those who are actively

“prostituting” the politician, shaping what they view as a good public image through the domination of their views. Politicians are then left to publicly act according to the opinions of the majority in order to remain within the cycle of power this system perpetuates.

Existing separately from governmental forces, the majority reigns over society, imposing itself outside of the forces of law. As a product of majority rule, the public sphere becomes denoted by hostility to and the suppression of the minority. Creation of social norms by the majority become adapted into society and are therefore expected to be acted upon. If one acts in a nonconforming manner, they will be subject to scrutiny. Parameters for how to act publicly are then strictly set to exclude those who desire nonconformity. The people often still have sanctity from the majority within the private, yet when the forces of the majority come to adopt surveillance as a means of strengthening their dominating ideology, the private faces invasion as well. Once the private and public are invaded by the majority, the expectation is that anyone who holds dissenting opinions will adapt their behavior in accordance to the majority and subject themselves fully to their rule.

Because this system of surveillance, as implemented within the United States, functions to break down the public and private spheres together in a manner which strips them both of their identities, there is a great inability to effectively challenge ideas. Without the tension existent between ideas, it will become impossible for the individual to first of all truly grasp what it is that their own personal beliefs are and therefore, an environment will be created where thought becomes stagnant. This stagnancy allows for the old and already accepted ways of life to be seen as the most valid and therefore become the unquestioned standards by which society lives. In order for a democratic regime to protect the notion that it is built upon and functions through the

voices of the many, the private sphere must be preserved as its own entity, separate from the public. Arendt explains a remedy to the blending of the private and public as

Where the rift between ruler and ruled has been closed, it is always possible that the dividing line between public and private may become blurred and, eventually, obliterated. Prior to the modern age and the rise of society, this danger, inherent in republican government, used to arise from the public realm, from the tendency of public power to expand and to trespass upon private interests. The age-old remedy against this danger was respect for private property, that is, the framing of a system of laws through which the rights of privacy were publicly guaranteed and the dividing line between public and private legally protected. (Arendt 2006, 244).

Previously, as Arendt explains, this blending of spheres was navigated and halted through the implementation of legislation. The government benefits from the blending of the private and public through the control it enables political officials to exert over citizens. With control as a motivation, less progressive ideology is able to dominate the political sphere through the use of this surveillance and in return, the suppression of heterodox thought begins.

In return, what is produced by this system is a hierarchical order that survives on the psychological imprisonment of those subjected to it. Those with the most power rest at the top while the more vulnerable are left struggling as they attempt to hold on to any remaining notion they have of what was once considered private, protected space. While those with the most power are often the drivers of surveillance, they too are ultimately fragile within its system. Being built and grounded upon the act of deception, surveillance has the potential to fall victim to truth, as will be further explored in Nixon's involvement in the Watergate Scandal. Pairing this with Arendt's work in *Truth and Politics*, the ways in which regimes built on disillusionment fail are revealed. She explains "Persuasion and violence can destroy truth, but they cannot replace it." (Arendt 2022, 50). Acts of persuasion must be conducted through manipulative tactics such as disillusionment and the use of surveillance, being imposed as a force which uses violence as a

penalty, whether physically or mentally. In doing so, people will be persuaded to give up freedoms in order to evade repercussions. Through this, any notion of truth which existed will vanish in light of the disillusionment employed by tyrannical forces. Despite this, these systems will eventually crumble, as the deception it was built and fed power from will no longer be able to maintain itself. The true benefits of a system of surveillance are held only momentarily by those who at that instance in time, have the most dominating opinion. The reason it holds such power is through the inherent emotional violence that comes along with surveillance through its suppression of free thought. To be willing to surveil, one must submit to carrying out certain forms of deception in order to maintain and persuade the masses that the standards they believe should be lived by and protected through surveillance. This deception lies in the fact that the anonymity of surveillance is purposefully exploited in order to create a fear amongst those subject to it.

Michel Foucault discusses these ideas of paranoia being generated through surveillance within his work *Discipline and Punish*. Foucault states that “...the surveillance is permanent in its effects, even if it is discontinuous in its action; that the perfection of power should tend to render its actual exercise unnecessary...” (Foucault 1995, 201). An environment is then created where it no longer matters whether or not the individual is truly being watched at any given moment. What becomes most important and even more important than the actual act of being watched is the idea that you are constantly being, or could be being watched. This realm that exists out of the blending of the private and public spheres is comparable to the Panopticon. In his analysis of surveillance, Foucault dissects what it means to be observed within the Panopticon, a space that was created by Jeremy Bentham in the 1700s. Foucault defines the Panopticon as being



...at the periphery, an annular building; at the centre, a tower; this tower is pierced with wide windows that open onto the inner side of the ring; the peripheric building is divided into cells, each of which extends the whole width of the building; they have two windows, one on the inside, corresponding to the windows of the tower; the other, on the outside, allows the light to cross the cell from one end to the other. All that is needed, then, is to place a supervisor in a central tower and to shut up in each cell a madman, a patient, a condemned man, a worker or a schoolboy. (Foucault 1995, 200).

The annular design of the Panopticon creates a space where there are no corners at all, something essential to the maintaining of privacy. Without corners, the ability for one to retreat or hide is no longer possible, instead one has no choice but to confront surveillance. This space is one where surveillance must be continuously considered, wearing down the individual to the point where their submission to the system is almost always guaranteed. There exists an assumed hierarchy between the watchers and the watched, with the watchers believed to hold the most power. Their anonymity grants them the ability to surveil without having to reveal their identities, generating a paranoia within those being watched, as they do not know who is watching or when.

Surveillance therefore creates difficulty for the surveilled to effectively challenge those in power without discipline being inflicted. The only other outlet for individuals to exercise any power is through their surveillance of others existent in this space alongside them, and in doing so, they are conforming to a majority rule.

The Panopticon introduces a form of discipline that is inflicted without use of physical violence. Rather than the body, the mind is targeted in efforts to create an internalization of discipline. Through the internalization of discipline, the individual subject to the Panopticon will have trained themselves to act as though they are being watched even in instances when they may not be. This creates a sense of surveillance which goes much deeper than the act of being watched by another, it generates self-surveillance within an individual. This proves beneficial to

the party carrying out the surveilling, as their subjects will be able to act according to the desires of the watchers, without the watchers needing to be present. The anonymity of the Panopticon is what allows this self-surveillance to thrive, as it instills the fear in one that they are being watched at any and all times. Once individuals develop self-surveillance, they will have created a normalization of the discipline desired by the watcher. When surveillance is inflicted on mass levels, this normalization holds the potential to generate a majority opinion, which will serve to further fuel the system of surveillance in place.

A perpetual state of surveillance is created through a multitude of forces coming together to watch one another. Seeing becomes a multi-dimensional act through which sources of power become indistinguishable. When the fear of being watched is present alongside an inability to discern who is watching at any given moment, a paranoia is created that heightens one's senses. The paranoia that an environment ruled by invisible watching promotes creates a space where there is not one hierarchical structure of watching in place, instead seeing exists within a multitude of facets. The inability to discern power is essential to the survival of this space. Foucault explains that “The Panopticon is a machine for dissociating the see/being seen dyad: in the peripheric ring, one is totally seen, without ever seeing; in the central tower, one sees everything without ever being seen.” (Foucault 1995, 201-2). Rather than surveillance being seen as separate acts, it is recognized as acting within a larger system, one with many dimensions, which ultimately serves to promote tyrannical rule. A contributor to the power surveillance holds is the ability for it to remain anonymous, the identity of the watcher and the reporter do not need to be known for punishment to be carried out. Oftentimes the individual who is carrying out the action of the punishment holds no direct relation to the watcher, they too fear being watched and

act in accordance to protect themselves. A system is then created where the individual who is implementing the original watching holds an almost tyrannical like power as everyone else submits to them out of deep paranoia. Through the invisible nature of surveillance the watcher is able to exercise a sanitized tyranny. The illusion of multiple watchers enables them to do so. Surveillance is then able to exist as an anonymous act, making the ability to hold one accountable for their infringement of another's private space almost impossible.

Surveillance has been weaponized to the point where even if one is not being watched, the feeling as though they are remains strong and therefore increases paranoia within the individual (Foucault 1995). While this creates an obvious paranoia of the other which renders collective deliberation impossible, where surveillance becomes most dangerous is its ability to create a paranoia and distrust within our own selves. Fear becomes stronger than actual physical violence in this case. Fear holds enough power to incite feelings of distrust within the self. This is where what Foucault describes as psychological imprisonment begins. Those being watched are gaslit into believing they are unable to trust their own judgements, allowing for the validity of their own opinion and experience to be easily contested by those in power, who are able to remain unquestioned. The absence of a private sphere helps to catalyze the development of this deep self distrust. When there is the existence of a private sphere, if someone has their views opposed, they can retreat to the private, and further reflect on how that opposition reshapes their views. When this space doesn't exist, there is an inability to resist views that invalidate one's own. In this case, one is left feeling a greater distrust for their own self guidance. A private space is essential to enabling this critical internal engagement. This equips one to then go out into the public. Therefore, with no secure private space to fall back into and no public space to

thoughtfully engage in, a realm is found through the space that exists between the blending of the two, serving almost like a purgatory for all within it.

Along with distrust being generated by surveillance, it also further perpetuates the rise of a majority in a more indirect sense through its dismantling of private space. With less space to privately contemplate, there is less opportunity to effectively engage with pre-existing ideas that have already been in circulation. Instead, the old becomes the norm and those who agree with that ideology find themselves promoting a majority opinion. Arendt explains that

Opposition to public opinion, namely to the potential unanimity of all, was therefore one of the many things upon which the men of the American Revolution were in complete agreement; they knew that the public realm in a republic was constituted by an exchange of opinion between equals, and that this realm would simply disappear the very moment an exchange became superfluous because all equals happened to be of the same opinion. (Arendt 2006, 83).

As Arendt explains, at the time of the American Revolution, people were wary of the idea of such a thing as public opinion. For there to be a public opinion meant there was a majority and therefore not enough push against opinions. To push against opinions of others and have your opinions challenged in return creates a space that breeds diversity in thought. The private sphere allows for reflection and an internalization, as well as assessment, of critique. On the other hand, the public is where that critique is received. With the blending of these two spheres, diversity in thought is threatened as it becomes easier and less fear-inducing for one to stick to the majority opinion. The fear of an idea being too radical in the eyes of the majority opinion results in a space where citizens are too timid to speak up and politicians are too power hungry to not conform to this majority.

Individuals are no longer joining their ideas together under the government but instead are entering a space where many are ready to be combative over even the suggestion of ideas

outside of the majority. Arendt explains that "...power comes into being only if and when men join themselves together for the purpose of action, and it will disappear when, for whatever reason, they disperse and desert one another." (Arendt 2006, 166). Surveillance has bred an environment where individuals are no longer coming together to act with one another but rather against each other through the lens of political parties. While factions seem to naturally form within systems of democratic rule, it is dangerous to adhere so strongly to one set of principles, as it hinders individuality in thought. As Arendt explains, power is lost when people desert each other. A manner in which this desertion can be understood is through the inability of individuals to be willing to critically engage with the ideas of others.

To critically engage with the ideas of others is to push and challenge them in a manner that promotes growth. When there is no willingness by individuals to do that, we have deserted one another. It is through this that the use of surveillance enables tyranny to infiltrate the public sphere as well. Arendt also explains that "All these liberties, to which we might add our own claims to be free from want and fear, are of course essentially negative; they are the results of liberation but they are by no means the actual content of freedom, which, as we shall see later, is participation in public affairs, or admission to the public realm." (Arendt 2006, 22). Within this quotation, Arendt is honing more specifically in on the idea of freedom and in doing so, equating it to participation within the public sphere.

The consequences of the blending of the public and private spheres through the surveillance which can be found in instances such as Watergate and through an investigation of the influence of the majority post 9/11, both of which will be explored in greater depth in the following chapters. Watergate exists as a case where surveillance ultimately functioned to aid the

voices of the people rather than the institution of the government, more specifically, the Nixon Administration. Initiating the original acts of surveillance within the Watergate scandal, Nixon hoped to produce an outcome that would lead to his re-election through spying on the Democratic National Convention and then altering his campaign in accordance with the private information taken. Aside from being caught in the act of breaking into the DNC, Nixon was forced to turn over tapes from the Oval Office, tapes which recorded every conversation had within the room. While they were handed over, they were heavily edited. Then creating a story which centered around the intent of deceiving the public, Nixon based his defense on disillusionment. Being grounded within deception, the surveillance ultimately turned in on itself, handing the power over after then FBI agent, Mark Felt, leaked private governmental information of the case to journalists. These findings were then published and Nixon's deception fell apart, the people now were equipped with the facts and the surveillance of the Nixon administration then turned in on itself, resulting in Nixon then being subject of surveillance and scrutiny himself. The facade which was created in order to maintain this system of surveillance could not keep up with itself and eventually fell apart and placed power back into the hands of the people. A constitutionally derived and protected power that the citizen has is through voting, therefore the ability for the public to become a space where the private of politicians are also able to be brought into created a more leveled power dynamic between the people and Nixon. Hannah Arendt describes the right to engage in a public sphere as belonging to a republic, she states

Tyranny, as the revolutions came to understand it, was a form of government in which the ruler, even though he ruled according to the laws of the realm, had monopolized for himself the right of action, banished the citizens from the public realm into the privacy of their households, and demanded of them that they mind their own, private business. Tyranny, in other words, deprived of public happiness, though not necessarily of private

well-being, while a republic granted to every citizen the right to become 'a participator in the government of affairs', the right to be seen in action. (Arendt 2006, 121).

Because the private lives of citizens have become completely subject to governmental intervention, the ability for these citizens to intervene within private governmental affairs brings back some power to the citizen, representing the ability for surveillance to function democratically. While the case of Watergate involved many instances of watching, it ultimately served to uphold democratic principles by having citizens be able to act politically in the public sphere through their push for Nixon's impeachment and therefore, dismantle the tyranny he attempted to inflict.

Operating in a manner which more serves the government and majority rule is the functioning of the surveillance within the media post 9/11. As briefly touched upon, the majority infiltrated the public and private spheres in a tyrannical manner, as they used forces of surveillance to remove the power and freedoms Muslims held. With the government promoting a similar agenda, the forces both held great influence over the press. Rather than upholding truth as the highest value, stories became fabricated to suit the opinions of the majority and perpetuate the lies that they came to believe as a result of 9/11, such as racist ideologies against Muslim groups. Embedded journalism was a practice that came to be used to spread war propaganda, with the government intensely controlling what was reported. This has created an environment that Tocqueville would explain as

When the traces of individual action upon nations are lost, it often happens that the world goes on to move, though the moving agent is no longer discoverable. As it becomes extremely difficult to discern and to analyze the reasons which, acting separately on the volition of each member of the community, concur in the end to produce movement in the old mass, men are led to believe that this movement is involuntary, and that societies unconsciously obey some superior force ruling over them. (Tocqueville 2000, 564).

As surveillance becomes increasingly normalized through its infiltration into daily life, its presence will become less jarring. When something becomes normalized it is subject to far less questioning. Because surveillance already perpetuates the blending of the private and public, there is no space to question the normalization of surveillance. The normalization of surveillance combined with old ideologies are therefore detrimental to democracy. The heart and lifeline of a democratic regime is its people. Power should continuously flow between the people and the institutions which serve them rather than consolidating within one or the other. A democratic regime cannot expect to remain within the lines of democracy if it holds reliance upon a surveillance system to uphold and maintain its power.





## Chapter 2: Nixon and Watergate

In the midst of campaign efforts for the 1972 presidential election, incumbent Richard Nixon was devising plans, alongside some of his closest associates, to go through any means necessary in order to secure his re-election, especially in light of the release of the Pentagon Papers, classified documents that were leaked and published just a year prior, detailing incriminating information about the United State's involvement in the Vietnam War. Serving under the guise of the Committee for Re-Election of the President, these associates quickly became leading actors in what would become known as the Watergate Scandal, a series of events that became notorious for exposing the corruption that was underlying American democracy. The origins of the scandal can be traced back to Nixon's Committee for Re-Election of the President, with it often being referred to as its acronym, CRP. Those serving on this committee included G. Gordon Liddy, a former FBI agent, and John Ehrlichman, who's formal title was the Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy. Together, these two devised a scheme to disrupt the Democratic Party's campaign through illegal means. These plans were then brought forth to and ran past other leading members of CRP: John Dean, Jeb Stuart Magruder, and John Mitchell, all of whom held political power through the Nixon Administration. John Dean served as Nixon's counsel, Jeb Stuart Magruder held the position of director of CRP, and lastly, John Mitchell, was the acting Attorney General, ultimately resigning to become the chairman for CRP. The initial ideas Liddy and Ehrlichman brought forth for the operation against the Democratic Party were deemed to be too intense and required a revision on their part and once this revision was completed and approved, the plans for the break in of the Democratic National Headquarters, located in Washington D.C. at what was called the Watergate Complex, began.

Before the infamous break in, where the men directly involved were all caught and arrested by police, there was one before which occurred on May 28, 1972. A few weeks before this break in took place, James McCord and E. Howard Hunt Jr., both formerly having held positions as officers in the CIA, were assigned to assist the CRP. As part of their duty to the CRP, they brought in Alfred C. Baldwin III, a former FBI agent, to aid in the carrying out of the break in and in its aftermath. He would also be the one who directly did the listening in on the phones that the CRP wiretapped. We are then brought to May 11, 1972, when Baldwin was checked into a motel directly across from the DNC Headquarters. His staying in this motel was crucial to the plan, as it would serve as a look out place and therefore also a mechanism for communication between the burglars and Baldwin. The plan was to wiretap the phones of Larry O'Brien, the chairman of the DNC and Robert Spencer Oliver, who served the Association of State Democratic Chairmen as the executive director. The wiretapping proved to be semi-successful in the CRP's efforts, as Oliver's phone was properly wiretapped, but not O'Brien's. Eventually, any physical evidence that existed of this break in would be burned and destroyed by Magruder. As a result of the wiretapping mistake with Oliver's phone, the second break in began to be planned, this time with the desire to infringe further upon the privacy of those within the DNC.

Carried out on June 17, 1972, the second break in happened, an event which would lead to the eventual resignation of Nixon. James McCord, Frank Sturgis, Bernard Barker, Virgilio Gonzalez, and Eugenio Martinez were appointed to carry out the break in, with the expectation that they would continue to wiretap phones as well as take photographs of classified documents belonging to the DNC. Less anticipated by the CRP was Frank Wills, a DNC security guard, who would notice the tape they had placed over the latches of doors which provided entry way into

the offices. After the discovery of the tape in the early morning hours of June 17th, Wills removed it, only to find it replaced by new tape when he returned to check it again. After this discovery, Wills called the police. The police arrived shortly after Wills' call and much to the dismay of the CRP, their lookout man Baldwin failed them, as he was busy watching a movie in the motel. Eventually he did notice the police cars and sent a message to the burglars through a radio, but his efforts to warn them were unsuccessful, as they came after the police had already detained them.

Soon after the news broke to the public, Nixon and his administration acted swiftly, working furiously to dissuade any discourse that the break in was related to him. This would begin Nixon's failed attempts at concealing the true nature of what happened, getting him caught in a web of lies that eventually left him in a position where he had no choice but to resign. Under the commands of Nixon, H. R. Haldeman who served as the chief of staff, was told to impede the investigation being conducted by the FBI into the break in through the CIA. It was later revealed through the tapes retrieved from the White House, that only a few days after the incident, Nixon directly ordered the FBI to stop any investigation efforts. In order to hamper any more suspicion that was developing amongst the public, Nixon went out to publicly say his counsel, Dean, had investigated the matters and found no relation between the burglary and the White House.

In September and October of the same year, the *Washington Post* released bombshell articles which revealed that journalists were in conversation with an anonymous source coming from within the government and that through this person, they learned the true nature of the scandal. The reports from the *Washington Post* revealed the close connection Nixon had to the scandal as well as releasing information about the funding of the break in and CRP coming from

laundered sources. Nixon dismissed these claims and questioned their reliability by pointing to the fact that there was only one press reporting this and that this press was historically more liberal. Soon after the release of these reports was the 1972 election, which Nixon won, winning all electoral votes except those coming from Massachusetts, reflecting the lack of concern the public had over the scandal. Eventually this lack of concern would be disrupted by the televised trial of those involved in the break in.

In January of 1973, the burglars were all put to trial alongside Liddy and Hunt, with McCord and Liddy being the only to not plead guilty. Despite some pleading not guilty, all seven men were ultimately found to be guilty. Between the trial and sentencing, which took place on March 23, 1973, the judge received a letter from McCord. In this letter, McCord revealed the case had been one that fell victim to perjury, going on to explain how those involved were forced to plead guilty. With the fate of their sentencing in the hands of the judge, he made a compromise that if each defendant spoke truthfully, their sentences would face reduction. Also facing scrutiny from the Senate now, with a 77-0 vote deciding to create a special committee to investigate Watergate, the White House attempted to maintain control of the narrative that they had no involvement whatsoever. As the trial and Senate hearings were underway, Nixon still continued to hold the facade that there was no involvement on behalf of the White House by repeatedly saying there was no current employee in the White House who was involved in the break in.

On April 15, 1973, after Dean, Haldeman, Ehrlichman, and Mitchell were brought in the wake of McCord's letter, Dean had a private meeting with Nixon. In this meeting, noticing Nixon's behavior was unusual, Dean grew suspicious. It was not until the end of the meeting, when Nixon gestured Dean over to a corner and whispered to him, asking if he was wrong to tell

Hunt he would promise to grant clemency to him that Dean felt as though he was being recorded. It was this encounter that became the pivotal point in uncovering the truth of the scandal and bringing it finally to an end. A few months later on June 25, Dean went on to testify to the Senate that he had suspicions that Nixon had recording devices in his office and was recording every conversation had. Prior to this, on April 30, a few weeks after Dean's strange meeting with Nixon, Nixon called for the resignation of Dean, Ehrlichman, Haldeman, and his Attorney General at the time, Richard Kleindienst, bribing them with money to remain silent. He wanted to wipe the White House of anyone who had the potential to speak against him and reveal his cover up of the scandal. In a further attempt at concealing the information about the scandal, Nixon hired a new Attorney General, Elliot Richardson, on the same day he fired Kleindienst. Kleindienst's advocacy for a proper investigation into Watergate is what provoked Nixon's decision, as once Richardson was in power, Nixon assigned him to create a counsel that would serve to investigate Watergate.

Nixon's attempts to conceal the truth were coming to an end with the arrival of May 17, when what was called the Ervin hearings began in the Senate. Distrust of Nixon only grew more and more as these hearings were televised on numerous stations, available for the public to see. All of Nixon's efforts to conceal Watergate were destroyed on June 25, when Dean was up to testify. Along with speaking of Nixon's true involvement and role in the scandal as well as its concealment, Dean mentioned his belief that Nixon had recording tapes in his offices. He was the first to publicly make this claim and while it was taken with shock, there were questions about the validity of this accusation. It was not until July 16, that the use of tapes by Nixon was officially confirmed. On this day, Nixon's former White House staff member, Alexander P.

Butterfield, revealed that the President did in fact record all of his conversations in secret. It was then learned that not only did Nixon record his conversations in the Oval Office but also in the Executive Office, the Lincoln Sitting Room, Camp David, and the Cabinet Room. After this news dropped, the focus of the hearings then became Nixon's tapes. Soon after learning this, the Senate issued a subpoena on the tapes but were met with the refusal of Nixon to turn them over. To Nixon, the turning in of these tapes would be an infringement upon his executive privilege and instead offered to hand over transcripts of the recordings. Archibald Cox, serving as a special prosecutor, refused to be given transcripts and continued to push for the release of the tapes. Nixon went to Richardson and ordered him to fire Cox, initiating what became known as the Saturday Night Massacre, the dreadful day of October 20, 1973. Richardson refused to fire Cox after Nixon's order and instead resigned. The pressure of firing Cox was then placed upon William Ruckelshaus, the deputy Attorney General. Nixon was met with Ruckelshaus's resignation after ordering him to fire Cox. Not giving up on his desire to fire Cox, Nixon turned to Robert Bork, the then Solicitor General, who fulfilled Nixon's request and fired Cox.

Under the pressure and outcries of the public, Nixon agreed, just a few days after the Saturday Night Massacre, that he would release the tapes. Instead, Nixon gave to Congress more transcripts and continued to withhold the tapes. In the heat of Nixon's refusal to provide the tapes, the case was taken to the Supreme Court in *United States v. Nixon* and on July 24, 1974, the Supreme Court ruled that executive privilege does not protect Nixon from handing over the tapes. A few days later on July 27, the House Judiciary Committee voted to impeach Nixon. On August 5, in defeat, seven of the nine tapes that the judge requested were handed over. Once the tapes were received and listened to, it became apparent that one had eighteen and a half minutes

of conversation edited out of it. Rather than face impeachment, Nixon publicly addressed the nation through a broadcast on August 8, announcing his recognition. Even after all was said and done, Nixon still never admitted to his involvement in the scandal or its role in his resignation and instead was absolved of all charges against him through Ford's pardon.

When considering the Watergate scandal in relation to surveillance, it is imperative to distinguish the particular instances of surveillance from one another in order to grasp an understanding of how it functions on a more multifaceted level, and in this case, creates tensions between the functioning of democracy and those who subject themselves to it. To understand this, we must first recognize the driving factor of what would eventually become the scandal of Watergate, the release of the Pentagon Papers. Detrimental to Nixon's public image, the Pentagon Papers revealed what was intended to be hidden from the public, the ways in which the United States was unjustly involved in the Vietnam War and made use of lies in order to create the deception that this was a war that had no other choice than to be fought. In the wake of the release and with a presidential election on the horizon, the fragility of holding the presidency was deeply felt by Nixon, reducing him to a state of vulnerability, where the conclusion was born that in order to maintain his power, there was no other choice but to pursue illegal action. It could be said that ultimately, their efforts in drawing attention away from Nixon's relation to these papers was successful, but not in the ways at all intended, as the Nixon administration only delved themselves deeper into a web of deceit, which they were unable to properly maintain, resulting in the eventual downfall of the administration in its entirety.

What grew to be most important to Nixon at this time was the maintaining of a perceived innocence, with anything that proved to be damaging to his appearance being seen as the



ultimate threat to his re-election, shielding the tyrannical nature of his efforts from the people. Understanding that he truly held no innocence in these matters, deception became the manner in which he created an image of integrity for himself. Choosing to carry no concern for the means in which his innocence could still be maintained, while also attempting to ensure his re-election, Nixon deployed some of his closest colleagues to carry out his dirty work for him, thus creating the CRP. The intensity of Nixon's concern with maintaining power was so incredibly strong that not only was he willing to abuse the democratic systems that even enabled him to have power in the first place, but he also abused the trust his colleagues held in his loyalty when agreeing to serve in the CRP and his administration. In his work, *Aristotle's 'Science' of Tyranny*, Roger Boesche explains how Aristotle viewed the dynamics of the tyrant and those around him as, "In tyranny...the relationships...resemble the relationship of a master to household servants..." (Boesche 1993, 14). Already in the initial act of creating the CRP, Nixon's tyrannical motives were revealed. Those around him, meant to serve as collaborators within his administration were not viewed as such by Nixon, instead their role was reduced to that of a servant, carrying out the commands Nixon implemented. The collaborative nature intended to be promoted through a system of checks and balances was neglected by Nixon in pursuit of his own private interests. His imagined end goal of using these men and winning re-election is therefore able to be seen as being born out of purely selfish motives, motives which caused him to act out of personal convenience rather than righteousness. Within her work, *On Revolution*, Hannah Arendt addresses how the desire to rule out of private interests is a factor of tyranny, "...tyranny, whereby tyranny was understood to be the form of government in which the ruler ruled out of his own will and in pursuit of his own interests, thus offending the private welfare and the lawful,

civil rights of the governed.” (Arendt 2006, 121). In this decision to allow his private interests to invade the political realm, which belongs to that of the public, Nixon’s dishonor held for the private spaces of all others was made obvious. On a political level, it is his duty to serve as a representative of all Americans, and in doing so, promoting the general good. To involve private interests in presidential affairs is to discredit this notion, placing highest priority upon his interests in a space that is designated to uphold common welfare. As a result, the public then becomes a sphere absent of diversity and communication, turning towards chaos in the midst of the lack of unity that was instilled through the neglect of a common good. Inspecting these decisions further, it becomes obvious that Nixon's disregard for anyone outside of his own self did not just stop at the manipulation of his colleagues, those he is meant to collaborate and manage the role of president with, but more drastically, with the public and private spheres that the democracy of the United States rests upon.

As Nixon’s main motives in initiating the CRP can be understood as the maintal of power, it is also then understood that any notion of respect for the system of checks and balances became completely irrelevant to his desires. Serving only as obstacles in his pursuit to power, Nixon held minimal care for these systems in place. Any form of regard for these systems of power were abandoned in pursuit of tyrannical values, thus proving that concern for the private sphere was not one which Nixon held. If it were not for checks and balances, there would be no integrity given to the private sphere, all matters would be conducted within the public, for it is in the private where freedom is born and then transferred into the public, where one uses it to assert agency, especially in political matters. Hannah Arendt describes the importance for the success of a tyrant in the dismantling of this system, within her work *Truth and Politics*,

...the question is whether power could and should be checked not only by a constitution, a bill of rights, and by a multiplicity of powers, as in the system of checks and balances, in which, in Montesquieu's words, '*le pouvoir arrête le pouvoir*'—that is, by factors that arise out of and belong to the political realm proper—but by something that arises from without, has its source outside the political realm, and is independent of the wishes and desires of the citizens is the will of the worst tyrant. (Arendt 2022, 23).

The interests of Nixon did not reside within the political realm, instead his own personal matters were granted priority and in turn, infected the political. This became detrimental to the wellbeing of the country, as the private sphere must be protected and cherished by democratic regimes, especially when there is the assumption that citizens need to act publicly in order to keep these systems of government alive.

With the invasion of the private sphere through surveillance, as Nixon is guilty of conducting, there is an even greater vulnerability to the public sphere. Unfortunately, Nixon viewed the private sphere as being one which he was allotted access freely to, giving no concern for the consent of all whom he was violating. The private became the biggest threat to Nixon, as it was the sphere in which voters were able to realize their freedom and develop their agency. Arendt explains, "Freedom, on the other hand, has shifted places; it resides no longer in the public realm but in the private life of citizens and so must be defended against the public and its power." (Arendt 2006, 128). Invasion of the private then became the most precious goal for Nixon and the CRP, for in his vulnerability, he realized that despite all the powers granted to him through presidency, the one area he was not admitted access to was the minds of others. The attempts by Nixon and the CRP to gain access to this deeply private space was perceived to only be achievable through means of corruption, thus enacting the scheme that was Watergate. Having the CRP at his disposal ultimately proved to be most beneficial to Nixon in his attempts to remove himself from the scandal, allowing him to surveil without any initial repercussions.

Through this, Nixon is then revealed as being at the core of these surveillance efforts, maintaining a hiddenness for himself that was not allotted to his team. Surveillance became to Nixon, the means in which one upholds power. Often acting invisibly, surveillance provides those initiating it with the ability to abuse power without ever having to be visible in it. Sending a group of men to wiretap the DNC and therefore removing himself from the physicality of the act, Nixon was able to deny his involvement and continue the growth of deception that his power was resting upon. In this sense, he almost holds himself above surveillance, benefitting from his own decisions to surveil and believing he could do so without ever having to physically act himself, existing instead as a recipient of the information brought forth from the surveillance. Once the scandal runs too deep and Nixon himself becomes the subject of surveillance, he is not willing to be subject to this system in the manner that he hoped it would work out for him and instead turns to further use of deception. Arendt explains, “Persuasion and violence can destroy truth, but they cannot replace it.” (Arendt 2022, 50). With the threat of truth resisting just upon the horizon, Nixon grasped onto all he could to maintain his power for as long as possible, even if it meant increasing deception in every effort possible to destroy the force that was truth. Despite this, lies are never able to take the place of truth, they can only maintain themselves for so long until they must be refurbished and replaced with even deeper falsehoods. Nixon’s power resided within his use of deception once Watergate became public knowledge, dooming his tyrannical efforts.

The break-ins at the DNC headquarters on both May 28 and June 17 of 1972 serve as the ultimate portrayal of Nixon’s desire to protect his image and win the presidency in a manner through which his innocence could be maintained and his image not permanently scorched.

Through this, he made it obvious that the integrity of free and fair elections held no place of concern for him or his colleagues. Complicating the dynamic between the surveillers and those surveilled, the men who planned the break in and those who physically carried it out, all held positions of power within the government, with the exception of one of the men who was a locksmith from Miami, employed by the CRP to help. This then was a case of governmental figures spying on other political figures, creating an abuse of the system from within. Despite this occurring within the political realm, which is associated with the public sphere, this still is a violation of the private, as these were private offices involving the private matters of a particular group. While the public has every right to surveil the government, given that the people are the ones who grant power to these officials, the DNC exists separately from this. They are not elected by the people, therefore have no obligation to offer the same transparency as an elected official would. In this distinction, it can also be noted that because the DNC does not hold the power to directly enact policy, Nixon holds more power over them, resting at the top of this hierarchy, even above his own men. As mentioned before, surveillance would not function without this one dominant figure controlling all, Giovanni Giorgini mentions this through his analysis of Machiavelli in his work, *The Place of the Tyrant in Machiavelli's Political Thought and the Literary Genre of the "Prince"*, stating that "...danger lies in the situation when one 'assumes extraordinary authority'..." (Giorgini 2008, 239). As seen in the downward spiral that led to Nixon's resignation, through his implementation of one sole authority, himself, the principles which protect democratic regimes from tyranny faced a grave threat. The public and private spheres of citizen life were granted no concern amidst the promotion of Nixon's sole rule, one which held no concern for legality or morality.

Despite the legality of Nixon's actions being absent, on a deeper human to human level, it encourages a complete disregard for one's right to freely think. To not have this space is to place unjust restrictions on individuality. The maintaining of individuality and developing a sense of oneself separate from the public is crucial to create an environment where freedom feels as though it can be found and practiced. Arendt speaks to the importance of this space, "...since thought is the silent dialogue carried on between me and myself, I must be careful to keep the integrity of this partner intact; for otherwise I shall surely lose the capacity for thought altogether." (Arendt 2022, 29). When freedom of the private is cherished, the freedom of thought so deeply associated with it transfers into the public where diversity of ideas exist in a plethora. Without the ability to conduct this type of thinking in private, the ability to enter the public with original thought perishes. In order to protect the public sphere and the diverse influence it carries, efforts must be put into making sure the private is given priority. If the private is lost, so is the opportunity for free thought. Free thought holds vitality through its fostering of diversity of ideas when brought forth into the public realm. Crucial to the progressive nature of democracy, diversity in thought is the mechanism that supports its growth. When diversity in thought is no longer seen with value, the public falls victim to majority opinion, one which can create a stagnancy and dissuade growth. In relation to diversity of thought, Boesche says, "To hope that human beings can flourish and achieve greatness under tyranny is very much like hoping that an oak tree can grow tall without sunlight, and thus Aristotle despised tyranny not just because it is brutal, but most of all because it murders in human beings precisely what Aristotle regarded as most beautiful, the natural tendency to grow towards greatness." (Boesche 1993, 4). Tyranny stunts growth. If growth exists anywhere outside of a tyrant's own development of power, it is

automatically a threat to that regime, because through growth, power is accessed. Tyranny's livelihood is promoted by the submission of the masses, therefore in order to hold his power, Nixon had to create a forced submission of others through the tool of surveillance. Surveillance's attack on the private sphere destroyed the security and sense of freedom one finds within it, leaving individuals with the inability to feel agency without fear. If the private sphere ceased to exist and all matters of life were handled publicly, there would be no choice but to submit to the masses and in doing so, adhere to the majority opinion. Arendt explains

Hence, according to Madison, 'it is of great importance in a republic, not only to guard the society against the oppression of its rulers; but to guard one part of society against the injustice of the other part.' to save 'the rights of individuals, or the minority...from interested combinations of the majority' (Arendt 2006, 138).

Without adhering to the rule of the majority, the autonomy of those belonging to the minority will be reduced. The harm in this is first, the submission to a majority opinion would be one that would not be possible without some feeling as though these views are being forced upon them. The refusal to submit to the views of the masses in a regime that has no private sphere can easily appear as fatal to that system which is enabling it to function, and therefore one who defies will be met with backlash and possibly further infringement upon any little bit left of what once was private.

Although the use of surveillance under Nixon has proven to be detrimental to the sacredness that belongs to the private sphere, there still exist forms of surveillance which function without infringement upon the private, as seen through the example of the DNC security guard. Serving without conscious intentions of increasing his position or power through his actions, the security guard noticed tape that was placed on the latches of doors leading into the DNC, initially suspicious but not holding enough concern to act, he removed the tape. When he

returned and there was tape replaced in the same position, he then decided to call the police, who upon inspection, found the five burglars. While he was simply fulfilling the duties of his job, it involved the use of surveillance nonetheless. Serving to protect the privacy of the DNC, this use of surveillance served to protect privacy. Able to be defined as a form of bottom up surveillance, through his actions, the guard dismantled any immunity to consequence that Nixon and the CRP felt they had, causing them to realize that they are susceptible to forces outside of their own.

In spite of unsuccessfully breaking into the DNC on the second occasion, June 17, the first break in proved to be semi-successful in its efforts. Achieving what they intended to do, the CRP were able to wiretap two phones, one belonging to Larry O'Brien and the other to Robert Spencer Oliver. Oliver's phone was the only one which was properly taped and as a result, heavy focus was placed on his conversations. Claims state that most of these calls were between Oliver and his romantic interests, calls which the CRP would intently listen to, even though these calls had no relation to campaigning and would not provide any true sustenance for Nixon's efforts. The nature of these calls and their inability to provide any effective resources for Nixon's campaign further solidifies the notion that their infringement of the private sphere was conducted as though morals did not exist. With a disrespect for morals being asserted through tyranny, Giorgini states, "Tyranny determines not only the end of a genuine political life...but also the corruption of morality." (Giorgini 2008, 242). Nixon's lack of regard for the integrity of the private sphere for all other than himself, is his disrespect of morality. With these phone calls amounting to nothing other than personal affairs, Nixon and his team had no genuine reason to be surveilling the DNC. These calls proved nothing effective for Nixon, the only outcome of them being a heightened distrust for the government once the scandal was made public. The



negligence of morals was then actively destroying the country, removing trust once held in democracy and its leaders to protect the common good. With neither party participating in these calls having consented to be listened to, holding these conversations with the belief that their matters were private, they no longer were able to access a space where their privacy was respected as such. The sense of ease found through the knowledge that there are private spaces in which one holds the ability to freely retreat, was then completely shaken up.

Once the first break in was completed, plans for a second were made with no hesitancy, as there was now a desire to steal classified information. Caught taking photographs of the DNC's classified documents, the burglars ultimately failed to complete the task, yet there still existed that original intent to breach privacy further. When considering these documents, it is important to recognize that even though the public may not know the exact reason, there is always a purpose in classified documents remaining classified. Under the desires of those who produce these documents, the classification of them implies that they are not yet ready to face public evaluation. It is within the private sphere when these matters are intended to be decided and worked upon, until there may be a point it feels ready to leave the private. Even if the individual ultimately decides it is best to let this information only live in the private and never reach the public, the private offers this right. The ability to make these decisions in the first place, having a space to do so without any influence of the public is an example of the sanctity of the private sphere. Through the private we can be afforded to make these decisions and choices, evaluating what it is we even want to bring forth into the public sphere, and it is our right in free thinking to do so. The private provides a certain autonomy to individuals that is often lost within the public, "Kant...stated that 'the external power that deprives man of freedom to communicate

his thoughts publicly, *deprives him at the same time of his freedom to think' ...*" (Arendt 2022, 14). Facing scrutiny from the tyrannical force of Nixon, the freedom to think was not one which he felt should be allotted to his opponents. Using hostility and force to dissuade those of the CRP from testifying against him, Nixon hindered their ability to communicate publicly and in return, threatened the sanctity the private offers them. The public and private spheres hold an intense dependence upon one another, neither being able to achieve their greatest potentials without the other.

After the second break in, one of the first pushbacks seen against the Nixon Administration in the aftermath was the presence of the media and their inclination to raise questions over what exactly occurred. These matters that Nixon had hoped to keep secret were now brought to the forefront of American life and through this, turned the role of the watcher now onto the citizens. With a shift starting to take place amongst the power structures in place now that journalists had their focus on the break in, Nixon's power as the surveiller began to diminish. Amidst the unpredictability of what will happen next, Nixon grew increasingly paranoid and as a result of this rise in paranoia, began to deepen his abuse of power, this time in a much more public way as compared to the veil of secrecy that surveillance engulfs one in. In relation to Machiavelli's views on tyranny, Giorgini explains, "For all ancient and modern examples show that tyrants live a wretched life, continuously haunted by fear, and are held in contempt once dead." (Giorgini 2008, 255). The root of this entire scandal can be reduced to fear. Nixon feared losing power over what the public perception of his image would be, letting that fear guide him to extremes, blinding him from the fact that the very same fear which started it all would be the one which led to his demise. Acting out of fear in an attempt to protect power,

Nixon ordered for investigations on Watergate to be shut down, trying desperately to exempt himself from the scrutiny he would face under the justice system and from the eyes of the public. Holding the power of revealing the truth or raising enough concern that the truth is sought out by the masses, the media became an enemy of Nixon. Ultimately though, with the break in having failed and speculation rising, Nixon desperately attempted to shut down any suspicion that he had a part in it. Transitioning from the attempts to surveil, Nixon turned to deception to uphold the notion that he was innocent and in return, still maintain a chance at re-election. As Arendt discusses the topic of truth, she states “...truth has a despotic character. It is therefore hated by tyrants, who rightfully fear the competition of a coercive force they cannot monopolize, and it enjoys a rather precarious status in the eyes of governments that rest on consent and abhor coercion.” (Arendt 2022, 23). In the true nature of a tyrant, feeling a looming threat of being held accountable for his abuses and as though his control of the situation was being quickly diminished, Nixon continued to evade the truth. Truth became the new enemy, for it is through the devices of truth that the unlawful power Nixon now rested his presidency upon would be revealed in its entirety. If there is one thing a tyrant desires most when it comes to the maintaining of their sole power, it's to hold on to the public facade that this power is righteous. These efforts to conceal the truth and avoid accountability are then able to be understood as a means in which Nixon protected what he believed was his right to a concentrated governmental power, a power which would find home solely in his hands.

The ways in which Nixon abused the use of surveillance not only remains evident in its disregard for the upholding of the private sphere, but also through the attempts to stop anyone outside of himself from initiating surveillance, truly proving to serve the tyrant's rule as the sole

ruler. It is essential to the survival of tyranny that the power be concentrated within one individual, Boesche explains, “If, however, the rulers govern only in their own private interests, then they pervert the proper purposes of government, and rule by one becomes tyranny...” (Boesche 1993, 1). Private interests being brought into the political realm by an elected official threatens democracy’s ability in maintaining and protecting a public sphere which allows for the enactment of freedom and the private which births freedom. The defense of these two spheres then is able to generate concern for the common welfare of all citizens. Still allowing himself to be led by private interest, neglecting his presidential duties, the FBI was ordered by Nixon to stop investigations into the break in, using the CIA as a means to get them to do so, working hard to conceal all he could in pursuit of maintaining his public facade. Then when the *Washington Post* released the report on their investigations into the matter, prompting Nixon to publically denote the validity of the article, dismissing it as just belonging to a liberal post. Further investigation was pursued through the trials of the burglars, yet, as always, Nixon worked furiously to remove himself from any dialogue occurring around the break in. Building his image of innocence on the basis of deception proved to be Nixon’s biggest mistake in the aftermath of the break in, as he had no true solid ground to stand on, eventually becoming suffocated by his own lies. With no evidence for his lies to be rooted within, it proved difficult to maintain a story that holds the power to exist without the ability for one to poke holes right through it. Despite all the efforts put forth by him to conceal his involvement, the truth eventually came out and he was finally perceived by the public as what he feared all along, corrupt. His facade of innocence met its end when those of the CRP testified to the Senate on national television. Now, not only facing surveillance from the government, Nixon was left subject to the public. It was discussed earlier

how through his desire to surveil, Nixon served purely selfish means, not caring that he subjected some of his closest associates to legal trouble and in doing so, the ruining of their public image, all while he held the luxury of remaining unscathed. In their confessions of the truth, the power Nixon asserted over them was now placed back into their hands, as they were now in control of the narrative. Nixon's tyranny then failed as it was built on deception and purely psychological, and did not initiate the use of physical abuse that tyrants must in order to truly maintain power. Through Aristotle, Boesch explains what defines a tyrannic rule, "Ultimately, Aristotle defined a tyranny as...the political order that most denies human beings their highest psychic and biological needs." (Boesche 1993, 22-23). Nixon's employment of tyranny was purely psychic, he entered and threatened the psyche of the nation by invading the private sphere. The private sphere is the one space where the psyche finds true solace, away from external pressure present when one is in front of a crowd. It is where through freedom, agency is developed and therefore power. It is easy to get people to submit through means of physical violence, because even amidst physical violence, one can still retreat to their mind. The true threat, especially for Nixon, was within the private, his greatest desire was to control the manner in which others thought and perceived, which he was able to attack, but in neglecting to attack biological needs as well, the people still held on to some form of power, resulting in Nixon's inability of becoming a complete tyrant.

It is naive for one to assume they can engage in a system of surveillance without the recognition that they too may be subject to it, as assumed by Nixon. The involvement of the people in generating pressure to surveil Nixon became revealing of the high regard he held for himself as a result of his refusal to allow for the surveillance of himself after so egregiously

holding a lack of regard for the privacy of those he was meant to be serving and protecting as president. In his attempts to absolve himself of all accusations, despite them being true, he has placed himself above the law and therefore above the democratic regime in which he was meant to serve. Surveillance is then no longer a convenience to Nixon once it holds no more personal benefit but instead promotes his incrimination. His desperate attempts to evade this only reflect how deeply selfish his motivations were as president of the country. Invading the privacy of others was deemed fine until it was turned back around and his world was being called to be exposed to all the rest. In doing so, the public sphere was acting as intended, as voices were joining together in an effort to uncover what truly occurred at the DNC break in. As Nixon's paranoia in this particular period was mentioned before, with the public sphere now being an incubator for discourse about the DNC break in, Nixon had to place restraints on the private sphere. Through this, shutting down any suggestion that he was involved and any further investigation into it and assuming a tyrannical role, firing all those who did not obey his every command and replacing them with people whose obedience was certain, something which would come to be known as the Saturday Night Massacre. Nixon's attempt to hold office became increasingly tyrannical as he was manipulating the system to his own accord rather than holding faith in the electoral system to elect who the constituents want. Not only did Nixon reject the integrity held in the electoral system, but more revealing of his tyrannical nature was his ability to so easily turn to deeply manipulative tactics in order to maintain power. At points, manipulation was no longer necessary for his exercise of power, as seen with the Saturday Night Massacre, at this point, Nixon simply asserted his power through commands, only accepting those who followed his every word. It was at this point that surveillance of Nixon by the people

became more than important, especially to the integrity of the private sphere. This surveillance by the people was not conducted with the intention of increasing power through undemocratic means, rather it was a way for power to be given back to the people, those who are intended to be the basis of a democratic system. In order for the people to remain informed and therefore have a means for placing pressure on Nixon, journalism became crucial to this case. Surveillance in this sense was not being used with the intent of manipulation but rather to reveal the truth and in doing so, reveal the abuse of power which Nixon implemented when he decided to carry through with the bugging of the DNC.

Nixon's refusal to be surveilled under the same system he held faith in is unable to be defined as anything else but a complete disregard for the privacy of others and revealing of his true motivation, personal interest. Arendt states, "The only remedies against the misuse of public power by private individuals lie in the public realm itself, in the light which exhibits each deed enacted within its boundaries, in the very visibility to which it exposes all those who enter it." (Arendt 2006, 245). As mentioned, the manner in which Nixon's power was combated was therefore through the public sphere. The ability of individuals to act together as an entity, recognizing that a general good was in danger and needed to be reasserted, acted in public to turn surveillance upon Nixon, not quitting until he succumbed to the pressures. By turning his private interested public, the public sphere functioned as it is intended and met Nixon with critique, holding him to no higher standard than anyone else who brings forth their ideas to the public. If one is going to hold a position of such power, one in which was given by the people and whose role is to protect the general will and promote it, using surveillance as a means of protecting one's own self and expecting it to not be turned right back around will do nothing but further the

divide between the people and governmental institutions. Ultimately resulting in an environment that harbors distrust and creates an even more vulnerable private sphere. Watching the television, typically in the privacy of their own homes, people had the ability to access the senate hearings involving the scandal. This space proved to be so important to the upholding of the private sphere, especially in wake of Nixon's disregard for it, because it was within this space that people came to feel that Nixon was not serving his role as president. In saying this, I must also admit that I am sure that despite the televised hearings, some people still held support for Nixon. While it is up to the individual to determine their standing on this matter, it cannot be denied that the ability for them to even come to such conclusions and stand by their belief was as result of them having a private space where these beliefs could be considered. Evading further use of surveillance by the state and people, Nixon refused to hand over tapes he secretly recorded of his conversations with others when demanded by the Senate. While the recordings of these conversations that were thought to be private by the other parties involved in a whole new breachment of the private by Nixon, what becomes more telling of his inability to allow himself to be subject to the same systems he uses against others is his refusal to hand over the tapes in their entirety, even when demanded to by the Supreme Court. Once the Senate called for his impeachment as a result, rather than allowing himself to face justice, Nixon felt resignation to be a better choice, avoiding any responsibility, still holding onto innocence, and dying with the facade that he did nothing wrong.

Due to the political nature of the actions that have come to define Watergate as well as Nixon's role as President of the United States, it is difficult to remove these acts of surveillance from their existence within the public sphere. Filling the role as President, any matters that



Nixon dealt with in the political sphere inherently belonged to the public, yet through his decision to enact his private interests within this sphere, Nixon turned to tyranny, not accepting a protected private for anyone but himself. It was through the public sphere that Nixon was able to get elected, as a result of citizens acting by voting, therefore as an elected official, any political matters he may deal with are obligated to occur within the public or else the principle that democracy is sustained through the voices of the people will crumble. Nixon attempted to corrupt this notion when he made the decision to try and conceal political matters within the private sphere, ultimately failing to successfully do so and resulting in surveillance turning in on himself. When constituents no longer can conceive of actions occurring in the political sphere by their elected officials, the political has become divorced from the public and in return, made into a mechanism that strictly upholds undemocratic notions of power. In recognizing that maintaining power through undemocratic means was Nixon's desired outcome of wiretapping the DNC, it becomes obvious that his concerns were not considerate of the public sphere, he held no concern for its integrity, attempting to dismantle the distinction between the public and private and in return, destroy the freedom and agency of the people. Existing as a place where political action is understood as achievable, the public sphere serves as a space where power is intended to rest amongst the hands of the many, especially within a democratic regime. In neglecting this notion, Nixon's desire to maintain power resulted in him no longer acting in accordance with democratic ideals and in return, relying on systems of deception and power abuse.



### **Chapter 3: Tyranny of the Majority Post-9/11**

Turning towards the ways that tyranny can exist through a majority rather than just one individual, this chapter will discuss the majority rule post-9/11 and ways it held influence over American institutions. In examining this, focus will be placed on how public opinion influenced the use of surveillance by the government and media, reinforcing dominating rhetoric. Putting a specific focus upon the heightening and domination of anti-Muslim rhetoric after 9/11, I will analyze how surveillance was inflicted upon Muslims in order to destroy any security they felt within the private sphere, ensuring the suppression of their voice. Exploring this use of surveillance, I will analyze the government and media's use of it. After looking at the ways these institutions used surveillance against Muslims, I will examine surveillance between the government and media, focusing on embedded journalism in order to uncover the manner in which journalists lost the ability to practice private judgment as a result of the Pentagon's forced censorship of their reports on the Iraq War. Each of these examples will be framed around the influence the majority's pro-patriot and anti-Muslim beliefs had over their functioning.

#### **Tyranny of the Majority**

Having discussed how tyranny can exist through one sole perpetrator, its ability to exist through a more pluralistic force, the majority, must be recognized as well. Nixon, serving as a sole tyrant, acted to maintain and strengthen his own personal power. Tyranny of the majority functions through a slightly different means, where priority is given to the interests of the majority, resulting in institutions then offering support to that majority in an attempt to maintain power. An example of this would be the enactment of policy that aligns with the interests of the

majority, with politicians using the majority to their benefit in hopes of being re-elected. The majority quickly comes to be a source of great power within a society, as it is their concerns which come to be reflected most. With the needs of the majority being most catered to, true consideration of minority opinion quickly falls through the cracks and is deemed not worthy of discussion. While disagreement will always be inherent to life, the absence of discussion is a great danger to democratic life and therefore brings the threat of the majority becoming a tyrannical force.

An environment which is dominated by a majority introduces a new form of restriction of voice amongst all those belonging to the minority, a restriction which is brought about through the societal implementation of intense scrutiny of any thought outside of the majority opinion, excluding nonconforming voices from the public sphere. A particular danger of rule by majority opinion is that it does not hold the ability to be checked in the same manner that law is, therefore the scrutiny it inflicts on the minority is harder to protect against. Unjust law holds the promise of one day being dismantled, but when actions are deemed socially acceptable, there is extremely limited power in restricting them when they belong to a majority, especially when the basis of the actions are prejudiced. Any hope that policy may be created to protect the minority against the majority is often rare, as majority opinion typically shapes and holds greatest influence over the type of policy passed. In his work, *Democracy in America*, Alexis de Tocqueville outlines how deeply a majority's influence can operate within the political realm,

When an individual or a party is wronged in the United States, to whom can he apply for redress? If to public opinion, public opinion constitutes the majority; if to the legislature, it represents the majority, and implicitly obeys its injunctions; if to the executive power, it is appointed by the majority, and remains a passive tool in its hands; the public troops consist of the majority under arms; the jury is the majority invested with the right of hearing judicial cases; and in certain States even the judges are elected by the majority.

However iniquitous or absurd the evil of which you complain may be, you must submit to it as well as you can. (de Tocqueville 2000, 211).

When there is one dominant ideology existing amongst public opinion, this opinion becomes incredibly influential within institutions, shaping the ways in which they employ their power. Deriving some of their power from majority rule, politicians have little incentive to support the voices of the minority and therefore are often reluctant to combat the power of the majority, and if they attempt to do so, they face ostracization from their colleagues. Because it is the majority opinion which dominates the public sphere and in return dismantles the ability for effective discourse to be had, minority opinion does not have the same access to the political world. There is the potential for politicians to bring the needs of the minority to political conversation, yet they are often unable to reach any effective conclusion, as the political realm is one which belongs to the public and as long as the public is dominated by majority opinion, these concerns over minority needs will have limited life in the world of policy making.

The main perpetrator of tyranny of the majority is the inability for there to be effective discussion amongst disagreeing parties. One is pushed further and further away from the potential of holding deliberation when institutions begin to align themselves with the majority and in doing so promote groupthink. The majority is then fed only information which supports their interests, reducing their ability to step outside of these ways of thinking and consider the views of the other. John Stuart Mill discusses the dangers which lie in majority power within his work *On Liberty*. In this text, he states “The fact, however, is, that not only the grounds of the opinion are forgotten in the absence of discussion, but too often the meaning of the opinion itself. The words which convey it, cease to suggest ideas, or suggest only a small portion of those they were originally employed to communicate.” (Mill 2003, 72). When the importance of discussion

is dismissed and left neglected, the integrity of one's own opinion is also lost. To hold faith in any one particular view, the view which opposes it must be considered as well, for if it is not, there is no true basis for that opinion to stand on. When disagreement is handled through the act of discourse, a case in which both sides allow themselves the space to be open to another perspective, one will either leave feeling more strongly in their view or will see validity in the other side and therefore adjust their ideas accordingly. Regardless of the outcome, the act of listening and taking conflicting opinions into true consideration, will produce an environment in which one will understand more deeply why they feel as though they must stay loyal to their beliefs or will allow for the merging and formation of new ideas. Through this act, the integrity of one's opinion strengthens in ways the submission to groupthink could never allow for. Groupthink negates diversity of thought, allowing people to consume and adopt opinion without the task of thinking, producing a majority which will blindly follow what is promoted as being in their interest. Aware of this, and using it to their manipulative advantage, institutions will promote groupthink in efforts to maintain support from the majority and therefore grow their own power.

Majority opinion holds its beginnings within the public sphere, with its rule and power originating in society rather than the government. While the influence of the majority increases greatly when it's adopted by political institutions, the basis of its power rests in its societal control and is able to survive solely within that realm itself. Mill explains the ability for the majority to function separately from the government,

Society can and does execute its own mandates: and if it issues wrong mandates instead of right, or any mandates at all in things with which it ought not to meddle, it practises a social tyranny more formidable than many kinds of political oppression, since, though not usually upheld by such extreme penalties, it leaves fewer means of escape, penetrating much more deeply into the details of life, and enslaving the soul itself. (Mill 2003, 7-8).

Penalizing the minority outside of the law creates a new danger. When convicted under law, an individual is still allotted rights to protect them from being unfairly penalized. While this system is still victim to mass injustices, there is a formal and legitimate establishment of rights which the individual can uphold as protection. Since the majority functions on a social basis, there are no established protections within this group that are granted to those facing their scrutiny, they are left to the will of the majority. Therefore, deriving power from the suppression of public opinion that is nonconforming to the majority, the majority is able to build and maintain its strength. Within a public sphere ruled by a majority, discourse will no longer serve to build relations and instead will create a domain that expects there to be no grounds for disagreement. As a result of this, a combative environment arises out of the public sphere that no longer makes room for a variety of opinion, de Tocqueville explains that "The moral authority of the majority is partly based upon the notion that there is more enlightenment and wisdom in a group than in an individual." (de Tocqueville 2000, 217). As a majority opinion grows power, society begins to align itself with it, rejecting any upholding of individuality. The majority then believes that their word holds greater validity than an individual's, rendering individual thought as being inherently wrong since it breaks away from the social constructs set by the majority. The individual then must struggle to fight against the notion that they are powerless within society.

A sense of groupthink is therefore developed through the rise of a majority and suppression of a minority. As the diversity of ideas grows to no longer be a concern, a majority opinion is able to rise and dominate, gaining traction and infiltrating the minds of many. This promotes groupthink, where individuals no longer find value within their own unique perspective and instead get caught up in the ideas of a majority, finding more legitimacy in the words of

others and none in their own. Beliefs are then no longer developed on an individual basis but rather are regurgitations of the majority opinion. Absent of true self-reflection, the majority creates a space that is hostile towards dissenting opinions, developing and holding a complete faith in their view. Diversity in ideas is no longer a hopeful aspect of the public sphere but becomes regarded as dangerous. Creating an environment where one does not have the means to exert their voice against the majority's is the means in which the majority maintains its power, holding a reliance upon the survival of groupthink.

### **Majority Rule and the Public Sphere**

With the relationship between majority opinion and the government in mind, it is vital to address their distinctions in order to more effectively understand the ways in which they serve to dismantle the private and public spheres in general and more specifically through the employment of surveillance. The government is able to function, and does so in a more unified way, without the existence of a majority rule. Because the existence of a majority automatically denotes the existence of a minority, when a majority has influence over governmental actions, there will always be a minority who does not have that same access to power. Genuine actions will be lost between both the majority and minority, as the prevailing public opinion will be one acted upon without consideration for its own biases, something that is evaded when open discussion is engaged in. When this form of discussion is present, dialogue for the purpose of growth and improvement becomes the backbone of its understanding. The operation of the public sphere in this manner hinders any influence within policy making processes coming from one concentrated majority rule. When the government acts free from majority influence, it does not



lose any of its capabilities, it still holds its existence as an entity which serves to promote the voices of all. The government's existence is therefore independent in the manner that its survival does not rely on the presence of a majority opinion. Even when a majority opinion is present, not all within governmental institutions cave to its power. The tension that arises when politicians go against the will of the majority proves that it is a system that is able to function without the majority.

Overall, while the majority and government hold the ability to feed off of the power of one another, they are distinct forces, each serving different agendas. As an established institution, the government is regarded with more legitimacy. Majority opinions shift and take on different forms throughout different points in history, but despite the changing in opinion, the core functioning of the government has consistently remained the same. The people have always held the power to directly influence the government through the electing of its officials, yet majority opinion forms with less consideration of the people, not holding concern for the voices of all. The government exerts its influence through the making and enforcing of law, while the majority's control is exerted through the enforcement of social norms. When these two forces begin to influence and support one another is when the dangers of a majority rule become amplified. Mill further explains this point, stating that "Protection, therefore, against the tyranny of the magistrate is not enough: there needs protection also against the tyranny of the prevailing opinion and feeling...if possible, prevent the formation, of any individuality not in harmony with its ways, and compel all characters to fashion themselves upon the model of its own."(Mill 2003, 8-9). To protect individuality, and therefore, combat the rise of despotism, the conditions that enable a majority to arise and hold power must be understood in order to reduce its strength and

influence, if not, the integrity of American democracy is threatened. There exists a greater urgency to reverse the suppression of voices that result from the rise of a majority, as once the majority obtains complete power, the minority will not only face scrutiny by the majority but eventually by the government as well. The strength in numbers, that is the majority, overcomes the minority, exerting its control until the minority eventually faces submission. There is no space for the minority to escape to in order to develop their thoughts and therefore build their power. The majority shuts down any new ideas presented by the minority in an effort to keep the same information in constant circulation, in an attempt to stop any curiosity in new ideas from developing. As the views of the majority are deepened, the power of the minority grows weakened. All are then stuck in a system of a constant recycling of ideas, as the majority fears any introduction of new thought, for this would cause their rule to deteriorate as it would be exposed as not the only truth in existence. Once the majority takes control of the government, as de Tocqueville explained, opinion becomes law. When existing as opinion, the minority has an ability to still argue their view, but when turned into concrete law, what was once considered to be opinion becomes the new standard of living. Life is then structured around the ways in which the majority believes it ought to be, allowing for the suppression of the minority to transform into institutionalized oppression. As a result of this, the minority is left in a position where they are socially ostracized and not offered the same protections by the government as those in the majority are. Any violent action against a member of the minority will often find a justification, normalizing this violence while also pushing the minority deeper into a state of submission, not allowing their voices to come to the surface.

## **Public Opinion**

The tyrannical force of the majority holds its origins in public opinion, therefore dissecting its role within the public sphere is essential to understanding its eventual influence on the government post 9/11. The public sphere in this instance exists as spaces where people are able to gather to share opinions. This could pertain to physical spaces as well as non-physical spaces such as the internet. Physical spaces are more limited, as it is tied to location, yet the internet allows the public sphere to expand, allowing communication to transpire from individuals across the globe. With the development of the internet the majority opinion is then able to reach and garner the support of more than ever before, increasing its domination and power. Through the rise of the internet, there is also an increase in private spaces, as it serves as a space for individuals to learn and develop their ideas. In the wake of majority power, the minority loses access to spaces where freedom of speech was once believed to have prevailed. Effectively dismantled by the majority, the ability of the public sphere to constitute itself as a place of free expression ceases to exist. Once the public sphere is destroyed, there is a truly limited ability to check the majority. It is through the discourse found within the public sphere that perceptions are able to be brought into question and the rise of a majority is in return combatted. Mill explains the urgency of discussion amidst the rise of a majority, "However unwillingly a person who has a strong opinion may admit the possibility that his opinion may be false, he ought to be moved by the consideration that however true it may be, if it is not fully, frequently, and fearlessly discussed, it will be held as a dead dogma, not a living truth." (Mill 2003, 64). The inability to open oneself up to discussion and critique will produce an opinion that is unable to hold validity. If ideas are not continuously contested, stagnancy will infect them

and any ability to reach true progression will be abandoned. Because this space of discussion no longer exists once a majority has taken over, any ideas they represent will fail in reaching their highest potential and therefore will remain as close minded views. As discussed, this produces a society that will inevitably derive its power from the oppression of the minority.

When a majority opinion dominates the public sphere, its power is built off the fact that the minority is restricted in action, therefore to further their power, it is crucial they uphold the difficulty in the minority's ability to freely act. Discussing this danger, de Tocqueville explains "The majority therefore in that country exercises a prodigious actual authority, and a moral influence which is scarcely less preponderant; no obstacles exist which can impede...its progress, or which can induce it to heed the complaints of those whom it crutches upon its path. This state of things is fatal in itself and dangerous for the future." (de Tocqueville 2000, 207).

When the voices of the minority face suppression, the democratic regime the majority is functioning under becomes vulnerable to fatality. The ability for a majority to rise to the point where it has infiltrated the government and taken control over its forces suggests that somewhere along the way, the public sphere lost its ability to uphold the importance of discussion. When assessing the manner in how the public sphere is able to degrade in this way, it makes most sense to point to the private sphere.

As discussed earlier, serving as a precursor to the public, the private sphere is the place in which individuals serve as their own criticizers, evaluating exactly what it is they find truth in and why. In doing so, a diversity of opinions is developed, as they are sourced from individuals rather than a collective majority. As Mill explained, the constant contesting of opinions is what keeps ideas alive and prevents them from turning stagnant, maintaining these ideas as living

truths. The vitality of the private rests on its ability to provide one with complete privacy and in self contemplation, sanctuary from social ostracization. Without fear of ostracization, ideas are developed that support individuality, creating diversity of thought once people bring their private contemplations into the public. The private sphere then serves as the biggest combatter of tyranny of the majority, as it teaches one to trust in their own abilities to discern what it is they believe rather than hold reliance upon a majority to tell them. Breaking down access to the private automatically breaks down the functioning of the public sphere. When people are not allotted the power to think freely in private, there will no longer be the possibility of effective discussion in public. When open discussion is no longer present within the public, ideas become dormant, as they are unable to be critiqued and therefore are blindly accepted without consideration for why the opinion itself is one which is dominating. The public sphere becomes one that, in the absence of discussion, loses the integrity of ideas, as they become blindly accepted. Mill explains why this is so, “The fact, however, is, that not only the grounds of the opinion are forgotten in the absence of discussion, but too often the meaning of the opinion itself. The words which convey it, cease to suggest ideas, or suggest only a small portion of those they were originally employed to communicate.” (Mill 2003, 72). The inability to reflect in the private sphere upon the ideas one holds produces the public sphere which Mill describes, one that is denoted by the blind acceptance of opinions and the inability to effectively question why it is they are believed in. Without the ability to reflect upon ideas in a critical manner in the private, the beliefs which have become normalized by the majority do not face any resistance.

Communicating within a country where the private and public spheres have been dismantled will produce an environment that ceases to champion any form of progression, as

ideas will become idle and stuck within tradition, afraid of new thought. The public will be defined by majority opinion, where the true essence of ideas will no longer be understood. Instead, those a part of the majority will only understand the ideas they stand for as words, not as living breathing entities always subject to growth and change. The lack of new ideas present in the public sphere creates an inability to effectively challenge already existing ideas. It is this ineffective state of the public sphere which results from the degradation of the private. Whether or not discussion produces a change in ideas, it always prompts contemplation. That contemplation may not change minds and instead lead to a stronger belief in one's ideas, but this is not done so without contemplation. The environment created through discussion is one where the ideas of others must be heard in relation to one's own, and in return, force one to reflect upon what it is they think. This act of reflection is what drives progression and impedes majority rule, for it is the absence of reflection that allows for a majority to grow and maintain power.

### **The Surveillance of Muslims Post-9/11**

In his article, "Muslims and the Media since Post September 11", Aslam Abdullah explains the ways in which American society excluded Muslim thought and the impacts it this exclusion held, "The vast majority of Western media rely on a limited number of 'experts' in Islam and the Muslim world. The absence of diversified sources of information tends to lock the common people into a unique immutable mode of understanding Islam. Self-styled experts do their best to inculcate ordinary people's minds with their concern." (Abdullah 2009, 2). The inability to engage more deeply in Islamic thought reflects how true understanding of the Islamic culture was rejected by the majority, and in return reveals the close minded nature of their

judgments. The public sphere gave no consideration to these thinkers, instead preferring to engage in thought that had no divergence from racially fueled beliefs. The understanding of Islam was one which was rooted in stereotypes regurgitated by the majority. With the majority opinion successfully dismantling the public sphere, it only makes sense that views which confirmed their beliefs were regarded with greatest validity, and all else seen as invalid. To engage in teachings from Muslims, and for Muslims to teach about Islam would then be a form of revolt in the eyes of the public. Within his work, *Discipline and Punish*, Michel Foucault explains these actions all as being suppression through discipline

That is why discipline fixes; it arrests or regulates movements; it clears up confusion; it dissipates compact groupings of individuals wandering about the country in unpredictable ways; it establishes calculated distributions. It must also master all the forces that are formed from the very constitution of an organized multiplicity; it must neutralize the effects of counter-power that spring from them and which form a resistance to the power that wishes to dominate it: agitations, revolts, spontaneous organizations, coalitions - anything that may establish horizontal conjunctions. (Foucault 1995, 219).

The act of disciplining Muslims by the majority fits Foucault's analysis of why discipline is desired. Through the instilling of fear and use of surveillance, Muslims were heavily restricted in action, forced into submission. The counter-power, as Foucault explains it, was a fear of the minority and more specifically, the Muslim minority, which served to heighten the majority's use of surveillance. Any form of counter-power exercised by Muslims, such as the teaching of Islam as discussed earlier, threatened the power that the majority rested upon, one which was derived from disillusioned beliefs surrounding Muslim life. Employing surveillance served to be essential to the maintaining of public opinion through its encouragement of the exclusion of Muslim voices, for if the public opinion were to face criticism, the fallacies it rested upon would

eventually chip away. Through the means of surveillance, the majority therefore enforced the societal belief that Muslims were inherently dangerous and had to be forced into a docility.

The majority opinion held in the wake of 9/11 was guided by Islamophobia and anti-Brown ideology surrounding Muslims. With these views holding most power, the public sphere fostered an environment that excluded and penalized Muslims, discrediting their voices. Before the private sphere faced invasion from the majority and governmental forces, there was a place for people to retreat to for protection of autonomy and thought. While the majority opinion was on the rise, acting within the public sphere would be treacherous but those of the minority were still able to derive power from the private sphere, having a protected space in which they could retreat to and further develop their beliefs. The vulnerability of America post 9/11 served to catalyze majority control of the public sphere, as each person's voice was now being surveilled with great suspicion that any in opposition to the majority were traitors to America. The ability for this majority to take control of the public sphere was induced by the invasion of the private through surveillance. While surveillance was used on non-Muslim Americans as well, the surveillance of Muslims by the majority operated differently, resulting in a more intense surveillance, as rhetoric of the time encouraged fear of Muslims, causing the private sphere no longer offered safety in the same manner as it had before for Muslims. Surveillance became a means of controlling and attempting to shape Muslims into being submissive to the majority.

Within his work, *The Chilling Effect of Governmental Surveillance Programs on the use of the Internet by Muslim-Americans*, Dawinder S. Sidhu explains the violence endured by Muslim-Americans soon after 9/11,

In the first week following the attacks, 645 bias crimes were directed at those perceived to be Middle Eastern. In the first eight weeks after 9/11, over a thousand bias incidents were reported, including up to nineteen murders, assaults, harassment, and acts of



vandalism. The violence is ongoing. In 2006, for example, a turbaned Sikh in California was stabbed in the neck with a steak knife because, in the words of the local prosecutor, the perpetrator 'wanted to seek revenge for Sept. 11 and attack a member of the Taliban.' (Sidhu 2007, 378).

The notion held by the majority that Muslims were terrorists produced a society that allowed for the normalization of members who believed that acting violently towards individuals perceived to be Muslim was not only justifiable, but done in honor of America and all those who perished during the attacks of 9/11. While not all amongst the majority engaged in physically violent acts towards Muslims, they still held the base view that Muslims were terrorists, and therefore chose to participate in the controlling of Muslims through a different means, that of surveillance.

Foucault brings up this point within his analysis on the use of punishment, "...one punishes not to efface the crime, but to transform a criminal (actual or potential)..." (Foucault 1995, 127). In instilling surveillance on Muslim-Americans and anybody who was perceived through stereotype to be Muslim, the majority attempted to transform them into docile beings, who would remain under the control and watch of the majority. Any power in the hands of Muslims threatened the domination of the majority, who at this time was being fueled by propaganda and biases against Muslims and therefore guided their actions through fear. Privacy was no longer of value, if invading it meant a soothing of fear, it was seen as the utmost necessity. Punishment was then not something only carried out by law but by white supremacist ideology as well. Those not in line with patriot values faced harsh scrutiny and ridicule from those around, generating a fear of acting in ways which could be considered out of line, in an attempt to turn Muslims submissive. Any Muslims who acted in ways the majority deemed dangerous were forced to adapt their behaviors in order to be perceived as a non-threat, entering a brutal system where acting docile was crucial as a means of protection but also served to enforce the majority's belief that their acts

of violence were justified. Through this fear of violence, a suppression of autonomy rose. The private held no space for free thinking or acting, instead its existence turned public and in return, was exposed to the judgement of all. Once the private sphere began to be dismantled, the survival of the public held no chance, enabling what became known as the majority of the time to arise and infect all aspects of American life.

### **Government**

In suppressing the voices of the Muslim minority, the majority hindered any ability for effective communication to exist, becoming an evil which fueled tyranny. Truth is believed to be found in the prejudices of the majority and therefore any notion of truth existing within opposing views is completely dismantled and in turn regarded as fallacies. Mill explains that “Not the violent conflict between parts of the truth, but the quiet suppression of half of it, is the formidable evil: there is always hope when people are forced to listen to both sides; it is when they attend only to one that errors harden into prejudices, and truth itself ceases to have the effect of truth, by being exaggerated into falsehood.” (Mill 2003, 97). The majority fostered a public sphere which automatically denoted any views belonging to Muslims as being untrue. With the public sphere then facing attack through the rise and reign of a majority, there is an inability for all members of a democracy to act publicly. As a result, power dynamics shift, favoring the majority and allowing them the ability to engage in public affairs and eventually spread their influence to governmental institutions. Excluding all other opinions and being taken most serious by politicians, the majority is able to manipulate the political in ways the minority does not have access to. The political realm then is in the hands of the majority, allowing them dominance of

the public sphere. This domination of the public is of great importance to the majority, as it allows for the power to shut out any interests which would challenge and therefore harm their survival. The public then becomes a sphere in which voicing one's own opinion is not done without repercussion. Rather than upholding itself as a sphere in which one had the freedom to act, the public was now denoted by fear, discouraging even the thought of discussion.

Being amplified by the majority, anti-Muslim and pro-American rhetoric found a home within the government as the fuel which kept their rule alive, politicians who sought to increase their power submitted themselves to the majority, infiltrating governmental institutions with its influence. Promoted by powerful figures such as George W. Bush, this rhetoric became normalized and therefore grew as more believed there to be truth within it. Within his writing, "9/11, Spectacles of Terror, and Media Manipulation" Douglas Kellner explains the role Bush played in normalizing the hateful language that dominated American life on an increasing basis,

Unable to make an intelligent and objective case for a war against Iraq, Bush could only invoke fear and a moralistic rhetoric, attempting to present himself as a strong nationalist leader. Bush's rhetoric, like that of fascism, deploys a mistrust and hatred of language, reducing it to manipulative speechifying, speaking in codes, repeating the same phrases over and over... Bush's discourse also displayed Orwellian features of Doublethink where war against Iraq is for peace, the occupation of Iraq is its liberation, destroying its food and water supplies enables humanitarian action, and where the murder of countless Iraqis and destruction of the country will produce 'freedom' and 'democracy'. (Kellner 2004, 148).

Resting his argument in fear, Bush made the invasion of Iraq appear urgent and imperative, manipulating Americans into believing that war would be truly good. Through his reliance on the repeated use of phrases to garner attention and support, Bush reverted to manipulative tactics which further fostered groupthink and eventually bled into the media, where it was yet again used to appeal to the majority. Supporting the majority opinion and fueling it further through

Bush's propaganda, the government contributed to the manipulation of the people and in doing so, enabled a majority to more easily maintain power.

Like the majority, the government fed into the belief that Muslims must be surveilled in order to ensure their suppression. With surveillance now being conducted on a governmental level, its use became increasingly invasive, as the government is a much more powerful force than the majority, having access to an incredible amount of resources that the majority does not. Being supported by law, the government's initiation of surveillance further broke down the ability for Muslims to retreat to a private sphere, using technologies average citizens did not have the access to in order to track any activity conducted by one on the internet. The animosity offered by the internet was now destroyed too, leaving less and less spaces available for Muslims to act privately. Going back to the work of Sidhu, he explains the systems used by the government to enforce internet surveillance on Muslims,

The government reportedly uses Carnivore, a 'computer program [that] can read a suspect's e-mail and other electronic data on a real-time basis and print, or store the information for FBI agents to view or save as electronic evidence for prosecution.' The government also uses Echelon, a 'global eavesdropping system' that 'links supercomputers throughout the world to automatically search through the millions of intercepted messages for ones containing preprogrammed keywords or fax, telex and e-mail addresses.' (Sidhu 2007, 388).

Alongside the more social and physical based surveillance conducted by the majority, where most was rooted in the act of physically watching, the government entered a whole new realm, infiltrating the internet as well. The internet provides access to knowledge and information in ways that are accessible on mass levels, creating the fear that those who are intended by the majority to be kept docile will form power to dismantle the domination of the majority view through the exposure to varying modes of thinking online. The internet then became a threat and

turned into a tool of surveillance. Not knowing whether they are being tracked or not, Muslims now had to adjust their behavior online, fearing that certain conversations or search histories will be perceived as a threat. Individuals were not unable to freely have access to sources of knowledge on the internet without having to face the fear of being tracked and penalized. Revisiting Foucault, in his contemplation of surveillance, he explains how surveillance is able to exist in subtle ways that do not always go noticed, “Thanks to the techniques of surveillance, the ‘physics’ of power, the hold over the body, operate according to the laws of optics and mechanics, according to a whole play of spaces, lines, screens, beams, degrees and without recourse, in principle at least, to excess, force, or violence. It is a subtle power that seems all the less ‘corporal’ in that it is more subtly ‘physical’.” (Foucault 1995, 177). With the surveillance of the internet by the government serving as a more subtle form of surveillance, it is able to hold a greater amount of legitimacy in the fact that it is not outright physically violent action. It itself is unobservable and therefore incredibly difficult to effectively chastise, as any action will be directed towards an invisible source. In his analysis of Jeremy Bentham’s designing of the Panopticon, Foucault describes a building which is intended to discipline individuals by subjecting them 24/7 to surveillance by a guard who is placed in a central tower within the circular structure of the building, able to watch individuals in the surrounding cells at any given time. This is designed to promote discipline through the belief that one will voluntarily act according to the desires of the guard, as they will never truly know when they are or are not being watched, fearing the wrath of punishment through the internalization of discipline. The driving force behind the discipline instilled through the Panopticon is the ability for surveillance to exist as an invisible entity. Foucault explains that “The Panopticon, on the other hand, has a

role of amplification...its aim to strengthen the social forces - to increase production, to develop the economy, spread education, raise the level of public morality; to increase and multiply.” (Foucault 1995, 207-8). While it sounds as though this system of surveillance is beneficial to the progression of society, it is most vital to consider what forces are behind the operation. In terms of the surveillance of Muslims, the desire to strengthen social forces is the desire to strengthen forces that champion racist ideology. In strengthening these forces, surveillance serves to uphold the domination of majority opinion and the further dismantling of the private and public spheres as individuals lose their ability to practice autonomy on both levels. In achieving this suppression, the government was able to promote their agendas without fear of backlash.

## **Media**

The destruction of the public and private spheres is an act exaggerated by the media through their efforts to cater to the majority interest in the wake of 9/11, by way of surveillance and the promotion of groupthink through use of propaganda, as well as the control governmental institutions had over reporting. In this period of heightened fear, surveillance was relied upon to provide a reassurance of national security, becoming employed in every aspect of society. The media inherently employed surveillance through investigative journalism, using it as a means of exploiting Muslim communities. Through this, the media projected to the masses islamophobic rhetoric, distorting news in ways which promoted the narrative that Muslims were dangerous. With the media's invasion of the private through surveillance, and the public through its instilling of groupthink, those in the minority were left with little refuge. Power was concentrated in the majority rather than dispersed amongst all, as the public sphere was now ineffective and unable

to protect the voices of those in the minority. On top of this, the ability to discern truth from factitious stories was lost within citizens, as the news was being fueled by a desire for views, causing their abandonment of integrity, and therefore disregard for the truth. Arendt warns against harm done to the media, claiming that it is through the press that citizens are able to have any sense of where they are. Arendt states, “The telling of factual truth comprehends much more than the daily information supplied by journalists, though without them we should never find our bearings in an ever-changing world and, in the most literal sense, would never know where we are.” (Arendt 2022, 53). Existing separately from the institutions that govern through policy, the media provides citizens access to the current events, allowing them the ability to discern their stance on the matter and then act accordingly, enabling them to build their power. Without the media, people would be left in the dark, unaware of current happenings and therefore having a reduced ability to act, causing a decrease in autonomy. Arendt warns that the media will not be able to function in a manner that promotes the power of the people if it becomes subject to social and governmental pressures. The media post 9/11 is therefore the product of social and governmental influences. Wanting to attain and grow views, the media catered to social influences, manipulating the heightened distrust and paranoia Americans held for the other, whether that be towards all Americans or specifically Muslims, all were targets of fear. With regard to the anti-Muslim and pro-patriot rhetoric coming from the majority and government, the media soon championed these ideas, deepening the public’s pursuit of majority power. The media exaggerated the feelings of fear and patriotism found within an already vulnerable America, still in the wake of 9/11, ultimately allowing paranoia to consume rationality and as a result, causing destructive actions to flow rampant from forces that would become the majority.

While the media served to heighten the feelings of the majority and filter what information the government wanted to be accessible to the public, the media was subject to the surveillance of the majority and government as well. One of the most crucial forms of reporting that enabled news to be manipulated as it was, was embedded journalism. Embedded journalism involves journalists following alongside the military during an active war and then reporting on the events of that war. In the work, *In Bed with the Military: First Amendment Implications of Embedded Journalism*, Elana J. Zeide explains that “The concept behind an embed program goes against the grain of First Amendment doctrine...The military must protect against the release of sensitive information-like troops whereabouts-to wage a successful campaign. A tension between the values of free speech and security has run throughout First Amendment jurisprudence for at least half a century.” (Zeide 2005, 1310). During the invasion of Iraq, America ran a program which sent journalists overseas to Iraq to become embedded journalists, and as a product of this program, many restrictions were in place in order to regulate the reporting capabilities of the journalists. With their lives under threat, embedded journalists must place their survival completely in the hands of the military, entering a relationship that allows for incredible manipulation with little resistance. The notion that the press functions as a free entity was abandoned, creating tensions with the First Amendment as Zeide described. Forced to conform to the opinion of the government, journalists lost their ability to act publicly and critically engage with current events in private, having to completely submit any control over the information reported to the military. This form of journalism was crucial to the survival of America’s support for the war, with the media holding reliance upon the Pentagon for information and in return, the



Pentagon manipulating this need by fabricating events in order to ensure media reports fall in line with the propaganda of the time.

The use of embedded journalism also forced journalists to hold a complete reliance upon the Pentagon and therefore regurgitate intensely controlled information to Americans. The refusal to affirm the views of the Pentagon would be treacherous to the fate of the media companies covering the stories. As Zeide describes,

One embed discusses how close quarters, isolation, and fear compelled him to downplay non-combat civilian casualties and frequent gallows humor: 'The point wasn't that I wasn't reporting the truth; the point was that I was reporting the marine grunt truth-which had also become my truth.' The hermetic environment exacerbates a sense of attachment because, unlike most investigative journalists, an embed cannot revert to an outside life at the end of the day. A visceral sense of loyalty is only natural when your source is literally keeping you alive. (Zeide 2005, 1322).

Barred from access to a private space of contemplation through their constant subjection to the domination of the military, the truth which the military preached also became the truth that the journalist in this case held. The loss of a private space left journalists unable to effectively engage and critique the events of the war and decisions of the government. Their reliance on the military was a matter of life or death, creating a dire situation in which for one's survival, there was no choice but to submit.

In accordance with Foucault's views on discipline, this form of surveillance forced the journalists to adapt their behavior, abandoning their ability to critique current events in order to ensure they did not become a victim of war. In this aspect, journalism no longer existed as a promoter of free speech but as another institution that was sacrificed to the control of the majority. Subject to the will of the government and therefore the majority, journalists were stripped of their freedom to speak freely, as embedded journalists were only to report what was

given to them by the Pentagon. Kellner explains how the media worked to give platform to the views of the government “On 19 March, the media spectacle of the war against Iraq unfolded with a dramatic attempt to ‘decapitate’ the Iraqi regime...The media followed the Bush administration and Pentagon slogan of ‘shock and awe’ and presented the war against Iraq as a great military spectacle...” (Kellner 2004, 149). The power of the media as existing as an entity which was perceived to be truth bearing, provided the government with an easy means of inserting their influence further into American life. Reporting in the manner the Pentagon desired, as Kellner explains, and absent the ability to have any privacy in their reporting, embedded journalists were now victims of unjust governmental control. Zeide describes the process in the embed program of reports going under review by the military, “In practice, the voluntary nature of security review is less clear; a reporter who does not want to comply with a commander's recommendations is subject to removal at the commander's discretion for compromising operational security.” (Zeide 2005, 1317). The word of the commander then becomes most powerful and important, leaving all with the fear that if they are caught going against orders, their lives will face jeopardy. Surveillance then functions in a less direct way here, with journalists feeling as though they must alter their behavior in order to fit the commander’s desires and therefore ensures the physical safety of the journalist. The basis of the decision to remove journalists is unclear, suggesting that it was at the mercy of the interpretation of whoever was reviewing the report. If it was considered to compromise national security, and the reporter attempts to argue their point, they are removed. Any journalist who does not subject themselves to the will of the military, also now understood as being an extension of the majority,

faces removal. If they are not made docile they are to face expulsion from the embedded program, having any ability to act within the public sphere annihilated.

Censoring certain information likewise to what the Pentagon did through the media is described by Jack M. Balkin within *The Constitution in the National Surveillance State*, as “Authoritarian states are information misers because they try to keep the information they collect—and their own operations—secret from the public. They try to treat everything that might embarrass them or undermine their authority as state secrets...which lets them claim to obey the law without having to account for what they do.” (Balkin 2008, 17). The extreme censoring of information provided by embedded journalists along with the ease in which the military would remove a journalist for arguing against their decision reflects the tyrannical hold the opinion of the majority had over American life. The military became a means of ensuring only one rhetoric was heard, that of the governmental majority, whose opinion often holds influences in the majority opinion of the public. In this way, the majority has inflicted a certain control over the military, as it is at the mercy of the government and therefore influenced by the opinions held by it. Not only are journalists hindered from reporting in a critical and factually truthful manner, but the domination of majority opinion over them by the military ceases even their ability to self reflect. As described by Zeide, one embedded journalist recounted that he began to believe the truth upheld by the military was his truth as well. The destruction of the private space through the surveillance of journalists left them no ability to consider writing the truth, let alone consider what exactly it is they believe to hold most truth. The destruction of this ability only served to keep the journalists docile and enforce the power that the majority used to dominate.

While manipulation of current affairs was possible on all fronts of the media, embedded journalism provided access to events overseas, which were unable to be directly witnessed by American civilians. This meant their faith in receiving updates on the war on Iraq rested in the hands of the media, who were at the mercy of the Pentagon, regarding them as a reliable source of information and thus creating an environment where Americans were susceptible to heavy manipulation without having any true ability to contest it. Kellner explains how reports coming from America on the war were in contrast with reports from around the world, providing citizens with a more sanitized and propaganda fueled regurgitation of events, “On the whole, US broadcasting networks tended to present a sanitised view of the war while Canadian, British and other European, and Arab broadcasting did variously present copious images of civilian casualties and the horrors of war. US television coverage tended toward pro-military patriotism, propaganda, and technological fetishism...” (Kellner 2004, 152-53). While other broadcasting networks abroad chose to center their reporting around the horrific nature of the invasion, the United States continued to censor reality and instead continued to rely on the manipulation of information as a method of maintaining support for the war. The public remained disillusioned and those who bought into the propaganda felt as though their beliefs were justified. With the main sources of news in the country television reports that made it seem as though the war was righteous in every aspect, the ability to access dissenting information grew difficult, giving those who did not support the war less concrete evidence to grasp onto in their discourse. Related to the effects of censored media, within his writing, “Now You See Me – Now You Don't: Journalists' Experiences With Surveillance”, Anthony Mills explains, “However, it is precisely by the ability of journalists to report thoroughly, critically and in an adversarial manner... Where

such journalism is absent, diminished or under threat, so too inevitably are the right and ability of citizenries more broadly to hold manifestly dissenting views, engage in activism, embrace individuality of thought and action.” (Mills 2018, 704). Not only is the journalist’s right to self reflect and critique oneself abandoned, but the capability is not even granted to the citizen who consumes those news reports, their reliance on receiving truth rests upon the accuracy of a journalist’s reporting. When this is not provided, the citizen has no material free from majority opinion to engage with, thus feeding the public more of the majority’s propaganda, with a decreased ability to delegitimize it. The powers in place therefore did not foster an environment where discussion was encouraged, instead it was made ineffective in pursuit of a majority that supported the efforts of the government.

The media also performed a role in helping to normalize the use of surveillance, using it to garner attention from the majority. Going back to the work of Abdullah, he explains the manner in which the media gave itself the responsibility of portraying Muslims,

A recent survey by the Pew Foundation found more Americans distrustful of Islam than ever before. To them, Islam is not peace or humility; it is violence and bloodshed. Viewers and readers know what jihad is; they have watched it live on FOX. American audiences are ‘witnesses’ to people who call themselves Muslims who fight and kill in the name of a religion they call Islam. They see ‘Muslims’ killing in the name of a greater purpose on TV almost everyday. (Abdullah 2009, 1).

Rather than relying on Muslim voices to advocate for their own individual identities, the media threw all Muslims into one narrow category, rejecting any notion that they are a diverse group of people. With attention to their diversity rejected, the media formulated reports surrounding instances where people who committed violent acts were also Muslim. The Muslims that the media seeks out and chooses to surveil are then those who commit violence, and when they are surveilling any other Muslim, their prejudices predispose them to only seek out actions that fit

their definition of a Muslim. To Americans, Muslims then are shown as being a violent group of people who see killing as being justified through Islam. Not only does the media surveil Muslims in order to support their biased reporting, but the amplification of this type of portrayal of Muslims created an environment where Muslims were subject to surveillance in all aspects of society. Citizens then felt as though it was their right to serve and protect justice, surveilling any and all Muslims. Fueled by a suspicion of Muslims that became inherent to many Americans due to the rhetoric of the time, many took it on themselves to surveil and then police Muslims, on any and all basis. With the media choosing to only show Muslims who fit their preconceived idea of a Muslim, and therefore taking the act of defining such a diverse group into their hands, they reduced Islam to incredibly narrow terms. Reducing a whole group of individuals to such a strict definition takes away their humanity, making these people seem as though they hold no complexity or uniqueness. This disregard for even the recognition of diversity, reveals the increasing fear of it in America in the wake of 9/11, ultimately showing how the public sphere was so easily neglected in pursuit of a majority rule.

## **Conclusion**

Through the eventual infecting of the press by the majority and government, the power of both grew, as those who no longer had a means of existing privately were left to hold faith in the media as their source of truth. Meanwhile, the majority and government held faith in the media to maintain and deepen the destruction of the public and private spheres. The media was able to implement surveillance in accordance with the paranoia of the majority, fueling the interests of the majority in which this fear rested upon. With the majority and government coming together

as separate forces, both promoting the same opinion, a new mode of power exertion was found within the media. Foucault explains the network created by surveillance,

By means of such surveillance, disciplinary power became an 'integrated' system...it was also organized as a multiple, automatic and anonymous power; for although surveillance rests on individuals, its functioning is that of a network of top to bottom, but also to a certain extent from bottom to top and laterally; this network 'holds' the whole together and traverses it in its entirety with effects of power that derive from one another: supervisors, perpetually supervised. (Foucault 1995, 176-7).

The forces of the majority, government, and media all functioned together within a network of surveillance that allowed for the promotion of disciplinary measures to be made against anyone a part of the minority. Finding power within all three entities, more anonymity was able to be held in surveillance, as it was harder to discern which force was engaging in the watching. While all of these three forces served to essentially promote the same cause, that of the majority, a hierarchy of power was still existent amongst the three, with the government holding the most in its ability to act on global and national scales with excessive force that neither the media or majority had access to. Despite their influence upon one another, all still acted in varying and independent manners, ultimately only holding regard for their own cause. The notion that the power of democratic regimes rests in the voices of all was abandoned, as even those in positions of great power were left trying to maintain power within a dismantled public and private sphere. The merging of powers between the majority, government and media therefore strengthened the force of tyranny, ultimately leaving the government with the most power and therefore an unchecked access to the public and private spheres, choosing to destroy both.

In promoting the opinion of the majority and operating under their control, the media turned to their own devices in order to create a public definition of Muslims; to do so, journalists enacted surveillance upon Muslims. In an attempt to grow and maintain views, media

corporations were concerned with reporting on events that would heighten fear in order to grab people's attention and in doing so, bring in more views. Post 9/11, with the state of paranoia the United States was in, reports that confirmed stereotypes about Muslims received an immense amount of views, ultimately confirming the fears and stereotypes of the majority. This practice involved the surveilling of Muslims by centering reports around their lives as well as encouraging fear to be felt towards them, which in return encouraged the surveillance of them in order to ease paranoia. While also being put under surveillance themselves, and therefore being pressured to report in certain ways, journalists themselves were manipulated into promoting the majority. The majority then had their racism stay inflamed by the media. The anger felt by the majority towards Muslims also was promoted by the government, who used this instance as a means of advocating for a Surveillance State. Framing surveillance as being a necessity in order to protect Americans, the government was able to speak to the desires of the majority in their surveillance of Muslims while actively normalizing the use of surveillance. To the majority, surveillance was then seen as a means of promoting their interests, rather than a device which could be used against them, giving the Surveillance State the means to continue.





## Conclusion

Throughout American history to this very day, there has been an increasing disdain for opinion outside of one's own, leaving us with the choice to go undetected and abide by the regulations of the prevailing opinion, or hold faith in ourselves as individuals capable of discussion and thus bring forward unique beliefs, yet not without facing the aggressions of scrutiny. With the cases of Nixon and the majority post 9/11 serving different time periods, the manners in which they grasped onto power transcends any difference that their belonging to distinct moments in history offer them. The core of this similarity is surveillance. Although surveillance is multifaceted and employed through varying methods, the essence of it is deception. Those who believe themselves to be surveilled must fear the anonymity of their surveiller, unable to recognize who is watching, how, and when. The autonomy of the individual then belongs to those enacting the surveillance, as they no longer possess the ability to freely think, educate, and discuss.

Just as in the two case studies, there is an attempt to subdue Americans into docility. As we continue on a trajectory that strives for the suppression of dissenting opinions, it is vital to protect any private spaces left. Under systems of surveillance, nonconformity never holds praise, as it is the ultimate threat to forces of tyranny. Tyrants must therefore deceive individuals into believing that the coexistence of individuality and community is impossible. Nixon exemplified this belief, firing any member of his administration who went against his word, and only hiring people who were always in agreement with him. His rejection of critique allowed him to live within his own lies without having to confront any perspective outside his own. The majority rule post 9/11 dominated public opinion in such a way that anyone who went against the majority

would be ostracized for doing so. Under this form of rule, individuality is taught to be a threat, encouraging people to become victims to the mindset of groupthink. The loss of individuality denotes the growth of tyranny. The private sphere is one which fosters individuality, so when individuality is lost it is an indicator that the private sphere is no longer protected. Once a tyrant has access to the private sphere, the public follows right after, with the inability to develop individual thought in the private, resulting in the loss of free action in the public. As its survival within a democracy is dependent upon the protection of individuality within the private, the public cannot function if the private sphere was invaded. Surveillance within the two case studies was dependent upon censorship. Tyrannical power is strengthened with censorship through its suppression of voices, and therefore rejection of individuality. Surveillance, as Foucault suggests, forces an individual to conform and become docile, and this aids a tyrannical regime's survival and development. From Watergate to post 9/11, developments in technology have led to new notions of the private, but those same developments have resulted in a greater exposure of individual life to surveillance methods, via technologies such as emails, cell-phones, internet, etc.

Technology in both case studies provides a means of surveillance. While the increase in technology resulted in the increase of spaces infiltrated by surveillance, this is due to the internet's expansion of the amount of private spaces people have access to. People are able to access information in ways never allotted before the development of the internet. Having this increased access to information allows for one to educate themselves and do so through the privacy that the internet provides one with. This space allows for the development of thoughts and ideas, as one is able to have exposure to new ways of thinking and then use what they

learned to challenge their own perceptions. All of this is able to be conducted as a part of the private sphere through the anonymity provided by the internet, yet when the internet begins to be surveilled, this privacy is lost. The surveillance of the internet often coincides with censorship of any information that is nonconforming, resulting in the ability for the internet to educate being diminished, and the development of a censored reality. Once this censorship and disillusion take place of the reality that once was, there will be an inability of diverse thought to form.

As Americans face censorship through the threat of banning of Tik Tok and with women becoming subjects of intense surveillance after the overturning of *Roe v. Wade*, we must take a step back and recognize these acts for what they truly are, attempts to enforce tyrannical rule. Tik Tok bans attack the ability for an individual to educate themselves and hold an open awareness for current affairs that may not get coverage elsewhere. The public aspect of Tik Tok is attacked by the government through threats of banning and censorship as a result of the manner in which it promotes community, fearful of a space where one can engage freely in conversations with others. When there is this access to discussion, there is an exposure to thoughts that may be nonconforming, which serves as a threat to the sense of security felt by the government in its power, as their power holds root in more traditional ideologies. With Tik Tok providing information on current events that are not always covered by media companies, it is able to circulate information pertaining to things that the government may be attempting to censor. In his article, "Tik Tok is More Than 'Cute Dance Videos'", Paul Matzko explains "A quarter of young TikTok users now list the platform as a major source of news and information...For example, when local coverage from legacy news outlets failed to do more than regurgitate corporate and government talking points for days in the aftermath of the Ohio train derailment, it was TikTok

creators with local knowledge and expertise who stepped up and filled the void.” (Matzko 2023). Being able to provide the public with information separate from the rhetoric spread by media corporations and the government, we are able to access information through perspectives we have not been able to before. Our decisions and public actions are then able to be informed by the ideas developed as a product of exposure to diverse perspectives. Because this information being spread by the people is unable to be controlled by the government in the same way it holds great influence over mainstream media, it is perceived as a threat. The access to diverse perspectives allows for an individual to develop their ideas in relationship to a wide array of thought. The more voices that have a place in discussion results in a decreased ability for the government to control its people and therefore derive power from the submission of voices. Any traditional ideologies the government rests upon is then threatened, resulting in many lawmakers desiring to ban Tik Tok.

Alongside this, the current domination of the notion that the autonomy of a woman belongs to anyone other than herself is a reflection of the current dismantling of the private and public spheres. The actions regarding a woman’s body being dictated by people who live a completely separate and therefore different physical experience, reflects the lack of concern we hold for perspectives outside of our own. We have lost the belief that it is possible to form communities with those who disagree with us. Disagreement becomes the driving force behind effective communication, and without disagreement, our autonomy is lost. Within her article, “HIPAA, Privacy, and Reproductive Rights in a Post-*Roe* Era”, Carmel Shachar explains

Fertility tracking apps record a significant amount of data and could be used for surveillance of women of reproductive age. Similarly, location trackers have data about which users have visited abortion clinics, payment apps have information on donors to abortion funds, and search engines have information about abortion-related searches. Because HIPAA does not attach to these services, some companies may choose to

proactively sell these data to interested third parties or share information related to abortion services with law enforcement. (Shachar 2023).

She then goes on to provide examples of instances where companies sold location data of individuals who visited Planned Parenthood as well as citing how women have been convicted of second degree murder for miscarriages, with the evidence that led to their conviction being based on text messages and internet searches. The surveillance of women in this manner strips them of their bodily autonomy, as their actions will now be conducted through fear of being watched and punished, resulting in women who need abortions being unable to have access to proper care.

The ability for women to hold ownership over their bodies then becomes diminished through the heightened surveillance post-Roe. The traditional ideology that denotes women as being subject to the control of men is increasing in its domination, especially alongside the use of surveillance, as the voices of women are being further forced into submission. It is vital that the roles these systems of surveillance play in the development of tyrannical rule is recognized in order to resist its control by any means necessary and in doing so, ensure the survival of diversity of thought and therefore, our democracy.

As our notion of power is heavily reliant upon a fixed way of thinking, any new thought is a threat to the manner in which we perceive. The challenging of perception is therefore dangerous to tyrannical regimes, as their power rests in the construction of a single distorted reality. Allowing one's perspective to face critique accepts that no one perspective holds a complete validity over all others. As we are in a moment of heightened surveillance, we must hold on to the belief that there is solace within disagreement. In his writing *The Freedom of the Press*, George Orwell says "If liberty means anything at all, it means the right to tell people what they do not want to hear." (Orwell 1944). Disagreement has often been pointed to as the reason

for such intense division within the country and is therefore regarded with disgrace, yet it is the fear of disagreement that proves to be the issue. Our views of disagreement must be reshaped in order to recognize the ways in which engaging in disagreement combats the rise of tyranny. Disagreement must become an assurance that hope is not lost, that we have not yet given up on one another.





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