

Chapter 18

Video-Surveillance and the Production of Space in Urban Nightlife Districts

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Abstract This chapter is based on a research project that examines if and how technologically mediated forms of surveillance and policing improve the safety and wellbeing of nightlife consumers whilst at the same time also contributing to processes of socio-spatial exclusion of particular groups. By interrogating the triad of surveillance and policing, wellbeing and exclusion in nightlife districts in Dutch city centers we found that the effects of video-surveillance on the production of space are complex and ambiguous. Storylines used by local policy-makers with regard to CCTV differ considerably between cities and tend to overestimate the benefits of CCTV surveillance. Moreover, consumers' awareness and knowledge of CCTV tends to be limited and only a few experiences a real sense of enhanced safety and wellbeing because of the presence of technology alone. At the same time, the effects of surveillance and policing on the exclusion of certain groups from nightlife districts are not unequivocally supported by our initial findings either.

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18.1 Introduction: The Rise of Night-Time Economies

Across Western Europe districts of nightlife entertainment are attracting increased attention in urban policy and governance, because these spaces are unique configurations of economic opportunity, pleasure and excess. In response to globalization, neo-liberalism and the decentralization of governmental power from the national to the local level, European cities have become more proactive in enhancing competitiveness and stimulating economic growth (Harvey 1989; Hall and Hubbard 1998). By trying to make the city centre a site of spectacle, consumption and pleasure, policymakers, corporate actors and other urban stakeholders hope to attract tourists, business travelers, students and others; to keep young, middle-class families from moving to the suburbs; and to become a magnet for businesses (Judd and Fainstein 1999; Miles and Paddison 2005; Schmid et al. 2011). Thus, the organization of festivals and the development of spatial clusters of bars, clubs, restaurants and cinemas are familiar governmental strategies for improving a city's attractiveness and livability. The term night-time economy, which is commonly used in the UK-based scholarly literature, is telling with regard the obvious links between nightlife, profitability and inter-urban competitiveness (Shaw 2010).

Nonetheless, compared to other forms of consumption, the governance of urban nightlife is imbued with profound ambiguity. Whilst stimulated for economic reasons, nightlife is also kept under (increasingly tight) control in an attempt to mitigate real and imagined excesses. The urban night is after all a distinctive space-time (Hubbard 2005; Williams 2008) that offers a wide range of intense emotional experiences – from pleasure, excitement and adventure to fear and distress – and myriad opportunities for the transgression of otherwise taken-for-granted social norms. Regarding such transgression, the emphasis is usually on binge-drinking, vandalism and violence (Winlow and Hall 2006; Roberts and Eldridge 2009). However, more positive forms of transgression, such as overcoming the restraint to approach strangers or impediments to free self-expression, are also significant. They allow forms of sociality and conviviality to emerge that are not normally encountered during daylight (see also Jayne et al. 2011).

The most common governmental response to the complex entanglements of economic opportunity, pleasure and excess has been the intensification of surveillance and policing in nightlife districts (Helms 2008; Roberts and Eldridge 2009): police agents, private security firms and Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) systems are among the many techniques employed to enhance the safety and wellbeing of the various stakeholders involved in urban nightlife, including (benevolent) consumers, bar and club owners and staff, police officers and ambulance personnel. Wellbeing is a widely used but elusive term that is often taken to refer to the level of happiness, pleasure and satisfaction individuals experience (Diener 2009). The meaning of wellbeing is, however, broader than personal enjoyment. Building on recent work in geography (Conradson 2005; Fleuret and Atkinson 2007; Atkinson et al. 2012), we understand wellbeing as an individually experienced but socially produced and intrinsically spatial phenomenon, emerging from – in our case – the interactions

between consumers, police officers, bouncers, club and bar owners, CCTV systems and the built environment as well as collective norms, values and customs. Space is thus taken to be actively involved in the production of wellbeing (or the lack thereof); it is not simply a passive background to the actions and perceptions of individual agents. This means that spaces of wellbeing are spaces that offer joy, self-fulfillment, self-esteem, protection from harm, and/or restoration from stress and forms of ill-health. Such spaces can also contribute to emancipation, mutual valuing and inclusivity, for instance through the reworking of prejudices about certain social groups (Fleuret and Atkinson 2007).

In the Netherlands the surveillance and policing of urban nightlife districts is increasingly undertaken in the context of what since the mid-1990 has become known as Safe Nightlife Policies [*Veilig Uitgaan Beleid*]. These policies are framed around the idea that (local) government cannot monitor and police nightlife districts on its own; club and bar owners, residents, consumers and other actors also have to take responsibility and contribute to this form of nodal governance (Van Aalst and Van Liempt 2011). Another key trend has been increased technological mediation of the surveillance and policing of nightlife districts and city-centers more generally. It is not simply that CCTV systems have become more widespread; new technological hardware, software and procedures have been introduced and piloted. Mobile cameras, computer code to manage recorded data streams, the continuous tracking of specific individuals moving through an area and real-time feedback from CCTV operators to police and bouncers ‘on the ground’ are obvious examples.

These forms of technological mediation are widely claimed to be successful in reducing crime and disorder by politicians, policymakers and the popular press alike (Webster 2009). Systematic reviews of CCTV evaluations suggest, however, that the effectiveness of CCTV has consistently been overrated (Armitage 2002; Welsh and Farrington 2003). Concerns have also been raised in the academic literature about the extent to which technologically mediated forms of surveillance and policing may marginalize and disadvantage particular social groups: CCTV has been considered a masculine technology unable to register and respond to the forms of (verbal) harassment that tend to intimate women in particular (Koskela 2002); research among CCTV operators has suggested that their decisions about who to monitor are often informed by racist and ageist prejudices (Norris and Armstrong 1999); and computer code used to automatically detect behavior considered deviant or for facial recognition may also embody social stereotypes about race/ethnicity and particular youth cultures (Graham 2005).

The main objective of this chapter is to examine if and how technologically mediated forms of surveillance and policing really improve the safety and wellbeing of nightlife consumers whilst at the same time also contributing to the socio-spatial exclusion of particular groups from nightlife districts. Our research project interrogates the triad of surveillance and policing, wellbeing and exclusion by focusing on the different actors involved in the production of the spaces of nightlife districts in the Dutch cities of Rotterdam, Utrecht and Groningen. These three cities have been selected on the basis of differences in population composition, spatial structure of the nightlife district, and surveillance and policing practices (for more

information, see Schwanen et al. 2012). We use a mixed-method approach that considers as many relevant agents as possible, including but not limited to (potential) consumers, nightlife entrepreneurs, policymakers, CCTV operators, bouncers and police officers. Their perspectives and views are gauged and articulated via a range of research methods: repeated on-site observations during nighttime in selected nightlife districts, in-depth interviews with consumers and other stakeholders, analyses of policy documents, questionnaires among (non-) visitors of urban nightlife districts and series of participatory workshops with consumers and other stakeholders.

After outlining some of the theoretical notions and commitments guiding our analysis, we chart three complexities regarding video-based surveillance in nightlife districts. We will firstly consider how different discourse coalitions (Hajer 2005) emerged around CCTV and contributed to different surveillance practices in Rotterdam and Utrecht. Secondly, we examine the nuanced experiences and understandings consumers have regarding CCTV and how these differ from policy discourses. Finally, we discuss how the increased use of mobile devices equipped with cameras among consumers has the potential to disrupt and rewrite the relations between the watcher and the watched and introduce fundamental novelty in surveillance routines. We then briefly discuss some initial findings regarding the relations between surveillance and policing more generally and the dynamics in the character of nightlife districts as spaces of pleasure and excess, before drawing some conclusions.

18.2 Theoretical Background: An Assemblage Approach

The project draws on and brings together a range of theoretical registers from human geography, science and technology studies, sociology, urban studies and cultural studies. For the purpose of this chapter it suffices to highlight three starting points that are central to the study:

- The surveillance and policing of nightlife districts need to be understood as the outcome of distributed assemblages.
- Discourses about and the practice of such surveillance may not coincide with each other.
- It is not immediately apparent that surveillance and policing practices make nightlife districts safer and/or more enjoyable for all actual and potential nightlife consumers.

Following Deleuze and Guattari (1987) and DeLanda (2006), we understand an assemblage as a collective whose properties emerge from the relations between its heterogeneous parts. Heterogeneity is crucial: it is from the interactions of different components – human bodies, technological artifacts, codes, built structures, symbols, ideas, energies, emotions, and so on – that assemblages come into being and effects are generated. Adopting this assemblage approach has many advantages,

one of which is that there are no restrictions on the character of the elements that can become part of an assemblage. As such the notion of the assemblage does not privilege the discursive, the material or indeed any other ontological realm. Another attractive feature is that any assemblage, on Deleuze's view, is characterized by both stability and instability. This implies, among others, that the properties of assemblage are open to change: there is always an immanent possibility of ambiguity, novelty or something unexpected happening. And, as shown below, the surveillance and policing of nightlife districts is indeed an arena where continuity and change coalesce and where interactions between people and camera technologies are a source of novelty and ambiguity. We use the adjective 'distributed' in distributed assemblage in a dual sense. Not only are competencies, capacities, actions, events, meanings, and so on, usually distributed across sets of multiple elements; these elements also tend to be distributed geographically. Thus, the capacity to monitor a nightlife district weaves together many different elements, from the cameras hanging on buildings and in public spaces to IT networks through which information is transported to the control room (which is sometimes located in another city) where software developed by engineers in locations that can be as far away as Bangalore and embodied skills acquired over CCTV operators' life-course are crucial to the decoding and interpretation of the footage by those operators.

Surveillance assemblages in urban spaces in the Netherlands and elsewhere have undergone two key changes: spatial extension and technological advancement. 77 % of Dutch cities with more than 100,000 inhabitants now have (standard and static) surveillance cameras in public spaces (Schreijenberg et al. 2009) and the tendency towards 'blanket surveillance' is set to continue. Interest in and use of 'smart' cameras and 'smart' algorithms to handle and interpret data flows are also increasing. Cities are experimenting with mobile cameras (e.g. Rotterdam) and cameras equipped with sensors for recording sounds (e.g. Groningen), although success has so far been mixed (Gemeente Groningen 2011). There have also been experiments with the use of algorithms in CCTV control rooms that reduce data stream in such a way that multiple cameras can be monitored simultaneously on a single screen. For the future much is expected from facial recognition software and algorithms for the automatic detection of deviant behavior.

The increased role of technologies in surveillance and policing means that the capacities, competencies and actions of surveillance and policing assemblages are likely to change with potentially significant effects for public spaces. Whatever the nature of such effects, it is important to be attentive to differences between discourses about surveillance and policing and practices 'on the ground'. Now, any discourse – i.e. the ideas, meanings and practices through which surveillance and policing are made understandable – is multiple and differentiated (Foucault 2002; Hajer 2005), and this is also true of contemporary surveillance in general and of CCTV in particular. Utopian understandings foregrounding the crime-reducing and safety-enhancing capacities of CCTV exist side by side with dystopian variants that emphasize the risks of increased social sorting (Lyon 2003), enhanced social stratification, privacy issues and the production of sterile urban spaces. It is

sometimes also suggested that CCTV has relatively little effect on events in urban spaces. At the same time, understandings of video-surveillance as a techno-fix for all kinds of urban problems remain widespread, at least in the popular media and political rhetoric. Relatively little is known about the discourses around CCTV and surveillance in nightlife districts and at the city level more generally. Given that in the Netherlands policies regarding the surveillance and policing of nightlife are formulated and implemented at the city level, one of project's goal is to develop a better grasp of local differences in the social shaping of video-surveillance.

Notwithstanding their differentiation and multiplicity, the discourses about CCTV that circulate through the popular press, political institutions and evaluative reports prepared by consultants are unlikely to emulate the complexity and ambiguity of the actual practices of (video-)surveillance and policing in Dutch nightlife districts. One objective of the research program, and indeed this chapter, is to map out part of that complexity and ambiguity. The point here is not to celebrate complexity for its own sake. We rather seek to identify and contribute to the development of new or hitherto underappreciated possibilities to make nightlife districts spaces of wellbeing as defined above for consumers, police officers, ambulance personnel, club and bar owners and staff and other relevant stakeholders.

There is an extensive literature in the social sciences in support of the notion that contemporary nightlife districts may not be places of well-being, at least not for everybody. Here we are thinking of work not only on nightlife's excesses, such as binge-drinking, alcohol-fuelled violence and vandalism (Winlow and Hall 2006; Roberts and Eldridge 2009; Jayne et al. 2011) but also on processes of social exclusion. Research has shown, for instance, that since 1990 nightlife in the centers of London and Manchester has become homogenized along lines of class and race through a variety of processes, including bouncer practices, price setting, online reservation and screening systems, dress codes, prejudices about non-western youth cultures, and the licensing practices of local authorities (Talbot and Böse 2007; Measham and Hadfield 2009). Fears have been expressed that such processes will intensify with a further shift within surveillance and policing assemblages towards mediation by advanced digital technologies (*cf.* Graham 2005), especially when in the future CCTV footage of individuals can be coupled in real time to their 'data-doubles' – the digital information on them that is stored in the databases of public authorities, corporations and possibly other actors (Haggerty and Ericsson 2000). Many of these claims, however, demand detailed scrutiny and this is another area where our project intends to make a contribution. Further analysis of exclusionary processes in urban nightlife is also warranted because the existing literature is dominated by evidence from the UK. In that country the commercialization and corporatization of nightlife premises, which is often cited as a cause for social exclusion in urban nightlife (Chatterton and Hollands 2003; Talbot 2007), is more profound than elsewhere in Europe.

In short, much is unclear about the extent to which technologically mediated surveillance and policing contribute to the production of safe and enjoyable nightlife spaces, who – (potential) consumers across different ethnic, class and other social categories; bar and club officers; staff of nightlife establishments; police officers

and ambulance personnel; local public authorities; and so on – benefits and in what ways, and who/what is excluded. Below we present some initial results and thoughts regarding these issues.

18.3 Locally Differentiated Discourses: On the Geographies of CCTV's Role in Surveillance Assemblages

The spatial extension of CCTV in city centers, including nightlife areas, is well documented in the academic literature (McCahill 2002; McCahill and Norris 2002; Hempel and Töpfer 2004; Welsh and Farrington 2009). Less is known, however, about the rationalizations and legitimizations of installing and using video-cameras in public spaces in nightlife district. We analyzed the discourses embedded in policy documents prepared by city-level and national authorities and mobilized during in-depth interviews with experts involved in Rotterdam's and Utrecht's Safe Nightlife Policies (Van Liempt and Van Aalst 2012). The focus on discourses follows from the recognition that the ideas and concepts of Safe Nightlife Policies cannot be imposed in a top-down manner and are contested in struggles about their meaning, interpretation and implementation. The fact that multiple actors debate safe nightlife in shared terms does not mean that they all have the same ideas and understandings about it. The assumption of mutual understanding that is at the base of these policies is often misplaced and tends to conceal much discursive complexity. Regarding video-surveillance, we suggest that locally differentiated discourse coalitions – ensembles of storylines (narratives in which metaphors play an important role), actors articulating these storylines and practices that are consistent with them (Hajer 2005) – came into existence around CCTV in Rotterdam and Utrecht, which has led to differences between these cities in the role video-surveillance plays in wider local policy. Utrecht and Rotterdam provide strongly contrasting examples: In the latter the camera came to be understood as an 'extra' eye on the street that is constantly watching, but in Utrecht the camera was also discussed in terms of the 'spy' putting non-criminals under surveillance. Because of this contrast, and the unequal development of CCTV in both cities, we limit the discussion to these two cities in this part of the chapter.

18.3.1 Rotterdam: Watching CCTV Footage 24/7

Rotterdam is the second largest city in the Netherlands with a specific local political landscape that has shifted drastically since 2000. Pim Fortuyn, who was murdered in 2002, started his political career in the city of Rotterdam and had a major influence on the shift in the city's political landscape from a strong socio-democratic tradition to a landscape dominated by a populist party (*Leefbaar Rotterdam*). Pim Fortuyn, together with the former mayor and minister of Safety and Justice Ivo

Opstelten – nicknamed ‘the Dutch Giuliani’ – promoted a policy of ‘zero tolerance’ to make Rotterdam safer. Zero tolerance is not unique to Rotterdam but the city is one of the few in the Netherlands that is openly communicating and embracing this approach. Some typical Rotterdam examples of zero tolerance policy are the introduction of so-called City Marines (*Stadsmariniers*¹) who have the power and financial means to solve concrete problems and/or to manage unsafe areas (Tops 2007), and Rotterdam’s slogan ‘Rotterdam Presses On’ – a point of reference for many other Dutch cities intent on implementing restrictive safety policies during day or night time.

In the summer of 2000 the mayor, the chief of police, the chief public prosecutor and a representative of Promotion Stadhuisplein signed the first Covenant Safe Nightlife for Stadhuisplein – the most important spatial concentration of nightlife premises in Rotterdam’s city centre. The covenant contained agreements to increase safety on the square. In the same year the first public cameras were installed in Rotterdam. The Euro 2000 and preceding football riots sped up this decision and convinced critics of its necessity. Today Rotterdam is the city in the Netherlands with the largest number of publicly installed CCTV cameras (350) (Van Schijndel et al. 2010). Camera images are watched 24/7 seven days a week and there is immediate contact between the control room and police officers on the ground. Local government has opted for standard cameras without many bells and whistles; the emphasis is on human resources rather than technological advancement. Cameras are not seen as a replacement for the police but more as an ‘extra’ eye on the street. This metaphor and the emphasis on the importance of follow-up to the viewing of CCTV footage are crucial to the discourse coalition that has emerged around CCTV in Rotterdam. Visitors to the CCTV control room are shown a film of a criminal arrested (in a rather aggressive style) thanks to live watching of CCTV footage and quick and efficient follow-up by policemen on the ground. Successes are being emphasized.

Another important element of the discursive way in which Rotterdam’s CCTV policy is described is the focus on quantitative information and ‘results’. In the city of Rotterdam as a whole around 60 incidents are observed every day using 281 CCTV cameras. For the main nightlife district, Stadhuisplein, the number is around 4 incidents per day with 14 CCTV cameras. The majority (2/3) of these observations are followed by actions on the ground by immediate assistance teams (Van Schijndel et al. 2010). In some ways the focus in Rotterdam on no-nonsense, pragmatism and efficacy in the sense of follow-up and ‘hard figures’ appears factual and scientific. However, research has shown CCTV to not be very effective in curtailing street crime and violence that occurs impulsively, such as when alcohol and/or drugs

¹The Dutch word ‘stadsmarinier’ has been invented by a Dutch psychologist, Diekstra, who argued that when policing unsafe areas the City Council should deploy the best people who should be given authority, power and financial support. He made the comparison with the military which also sends its best people to the front.

are involved (Welsh and Farrington 2009). In response to similar findings on the effectiveness of CCTV in the Netherlands by the Netherlands Institute for Social Research (Van Noije and Wittebrood 2009), the Municipal Officer responsible for CCTV in Rotterdam argued: “when cameras images are not watched, yes they are ineffective, but you cannot argue that cameras are not effective, that only means that not watching results in ineffectiveness”. In an interview with a Dutch expert on CCTV systems and policies in Rotterdam the emphasis on no-nonsense and efficacy was emphasized: “In Rotterdam we do not want to create an illusion of safety. We do not have a policy of empty boxes as in other cities. One very important pillar of our safety policy is that we watch the video images 24/7. If we think a camera is needed we put one in and once it is there we use it”.

The metaphor of the empty box is used to refer to cities that have cameras in public space but where more meaning is ascribed to the symbolic meaning of the camera than to the actual practice. In terms of technology the understanding that technology can prevent and/or reduce crime is present and produces specific effects. In Rotterdam’s control room, for instance, people are increasingly trained to recognize deviant behavior and to use the ‘extra eye’ on the street in the most efficient way possible. At present smart software is being developed to help operators select and interpret the data, although it is also recognized that using such software constitutes a real challenge in nightlife districts with many people passing by and impulsive behavior.

18.3.2 Utrecht: The Camera as a Spy

Utrecht is the fourth largest city in the Netherlands. Utrecht’s municipal council consisted at the time of writing (2011) of a coalition between the social democrats (*PvdA*), the social liberal democrats (*D66*) and the Green Party (*Groen Links*), and is more reluctant to implement restrictive safety measures than Rotterdam has been. CCTV practices in Utrecht’s nightlife district are not very different from Rotterdam in the sense that there is immediate contact between police officers on the ground and the operators in the control room. The local political discussion about CCTV is nonetheless very different from the one in Rotterdam. Privacy arguments continue to be emphasized in Utrecht and surveillance technology is often understood as dangerous and risky. The metaphor of the camera as a ‘spy’ was clearly embedded in political discussions at the start of Utrecht’s camera project. When the first public camera was installed in the city-centre in 2001, it was decided that the images would only be watched live on clubbing nights (Thursday, Friday and Saturday) in order to prevent the targeting of the ‘wrong’ people. This policy was supported using the following argument: “In Utrecht we do not want to spy on innocent citizens, we only watch camera images if there is a considerable risk that something might happen” (Municipal officer, Utrecht).

The argument of the ‘considerable risk’ made it difficult for the city council to sell this policy. The first evaluation of camera surveillance in Utrecht showed that

the target that was set at the beginning of the video surveillance project – a 10 % drop of crime rates – was not met (Gemeente Utrecht 2002). With this finding the legitimacy of the CCTV policy was immediately contested and challenged. The relative low frequency of violence related to going out in Utrecht made it difficult to continue this policy. On the other hand, when during student induction week a student was partially paralyzed as a result of a serious fight in 2008, the ‘solution’ was immediately framed around CCTV: the boy’s parents, for instance, claimed in the media that their son could have been saved had a camera been in place. In fact, there had been a camera covering the location of the accident, but on a Wednesday evening the images were not watched live. After this incident the mayor increased the surveillance hours for CCTV so that images are now watched every night of the week (Mo–Wed 6:00 PM–2:00 AM, Thu–Sa 2:00–6:00 PM, Su 2:00 PM–2.00 AM). This provides one example of how the human impact frame (Barnard-Wills 2011) is often used effectively to legitimize surveillance measures. Emphasis is in that case placed on people who would have been saved by surveillance.

Although camera surveillance, especially in public spaces, has been an important focal point in the public debate on privacy in the Netherlands in general, the Dutch have more or less accepted the phenomenon (Nouwts et al. 2005). Even if camera surveillance contributed little to a reduction in crime rates, the sense of security among citizens did appear to increase and in this way camera-surveillance may have enhanced wellbeing. The argument of greater security has also been used by politicians in Utrecht to continue CCTV surveillance of public space. In Utrecht there were at the time of writing 87 public cameras. Nonetheless, the decision in 2009 by Utrecht’s city council to freeze this number and to discuss more intensively their necessity, effectiveness and the safeguarding of legal rights shows that the storyline around the metaphor of the camera as a spy has persisted and continues to generate effects. The general impression that cameras were never removed after installation was an important trigger for this ruling. The number of incidents observed by cameras in Utrecht is not published, which in itself is already an interesting difference between the two cities. Unpublished data from Utrecht police show that the rate (20 %) of follow-up activity by assistance teams on the ground is rather low (20 %) and that the majority of observed incidents were disorder related, including among others public urinating and public drunkenness.

In short, we have identified different discourses in the cities of Rotterdam and Utrecht. Using Barnard-Wills’ (2011) terminology, we can describe these as discourses of ‘appropriate surveillance’ and ‘inappropriate surveillance’, respectively. The first draws on discourses of crime prevention and safety and security, the latter on privacy and personal liberty. In Rotterdam CCTV has become a municipal safety policy tool supported by the police, policy officials as well as the mayor. CCTV is considered an additional tool in daily policing that generates few constraints. In Utrecht opposition to CCTV is much more embedded in local policies. The main political actors, including the mayor, are openly communicating their criticism on CCTV.

18.4 Nuanced Understandings of CCTV: On How Consumers Experience and Understand Video-Based Surveillance

As shown above, it is often assumed that CCTV has a direct impact on behavior, safety and wellbeing in public spaces. There is, however, very little in-depth understanding of how CCTV is actually experienced and perceived in the midst of action by users of public spaces. We therefore designed short on-site interviews in which 84 participants in Rotterdam's and Utrecht's nightlife were directly confronted with various forms of video-surveillance, including CCTV, between 10:00 PM and 2:00 AM on several Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights in 2010. Participants were confronted with the availability of CCTV surveillance in situ. We first examined their awareness of CCTV and then asked whether the fact that cameras had been pointed out to them altered their feelings of safety. From the responses to this question we were able to derive valuable insights about how participants thought CCTV worked and affected their safety (more details available in Brands et al. 2014; Timan and Oudshoorn 2012). The results from this part of our research indicate a number of contradictions regarding CCTV.

First, participants' awareness of CCTV turned out to be more layered than initially thought. CCTV awareness cannot be understood in a crisp and dichotomous manner and is better conceptualized as having multiple gradations (Brands et al. 2014). There were consumers who: (1) had no knowledge of CCTV presence; (2) assumed CCTV would be present but had no clue as to where or when; (3) knew there was CCTV on the square where the experiments took place but could not pinpoint any; and (4) could pinpoint individual cameras. Secondly, participants' knowledge of how CCTV worked was often limited, although a few had a deep understanding of CCTV practices. The limitations on participants' knowledge are evident from the observation that few of them knew if and/or when footage was watched live. This was even true of Rotterdam in spite of this city's 24/7 watching policy.

Thirdly, and most significantly, only a small subset of the participants experienced a sense of clearly enhanced safety because of CCTV presence; indifference to this form of video-surveillance was the most common response. Most participants understood CCTV as a passive 'recording' device that is instrumental to catching a perpetrator after a crime has taken place but that can do little 'in the heat of the moment' of an unpleasant encounter or as a safeguard against crime. This finding concurs with previous studies (Koskela 2003; Klauser 2007). On the other hand, the majority of participants believed that CCTV is most beneficial in terms of enhancing safety when the images are watched live and immediate action is taken. One participant from Utrecht who highlighted the importance of live watching explained that "such a camera, if it is watched continually, then you know that it's safer here". Another participant said: "I think that it does make a difference

for people if they see and experience that filming actually has an effect (...) Not so much the immediate film but more the feeling of safety it gives that immediate [human] action will follow” (Brands et al. 2014).

These quotes illustrate that from a consumer perspective technology alone cannot reduce nightlife’s excesses. The eye of the camera needs to be complemented by human vision. It is the real-time presence and activity of a human-machine hybrid that is required, for it is the operator who can mobilize police officers and others who can provide true assistance and enhance perceptions of safety. It appears that only if competencies are distributed in a dual sense that video-surveillance can help to enhance safety: the non-human camera needs to work in tandem with the human operators and police officers, and the CCTV operator room ‘far’ away from the consumer needs to collaborate with police officers in close proximity of that consumer. From a policy and governance perspective, thinking about the relations between CCTV and experienced safety through the lens and logic of assemblage theory may assist in maximizing the safety benefits of video-surveillance.

18.5 Redefining Vision: Consumers’ Own Surveillance Practices in Nightlife Districts

So far the discussion has focused on static CCTV cameras but this is only part of the story: personal media devices (PMDs), including mobile phones equipped with cameras and pocket-size photo and film cameras, are used increasingly by police officers and private security guards as well as nightlife consumers and have the potential to act as surveillance technologies. In Rotterdam, for instance, police vans and cars and the helmets worn by police officers on bikes are increasingly equipped with mobile cameras. Consumers’ use of PMDs to record images has, of course, been discussed by academics before. Mann et al. (2003), for instance, coined the terms *sousveillance* and *inverse surveillance* to denote the watching by citizens rather than institutionalized organizations. The use of PMDs devised by citizens is often, and perhaps usually, for leisure rather than surveillance purposes. Consumers can, however, use PMDs to monitor the practices of specific people in a nightlife district, such as fellow consumers, police officers and private security guards (including bouncers). The multiplication of recording devices in nightlife districts has potentially profound consequences for the surveillance enacted by distributed assemblages. On the basis of initial research within our project (as described in Timan and Oudshoorn 2012), it can be argued that this multiplication inserts a dual openness in existing surveillance assemblages.

A first sense of openness pertains to the destination and use of camera footage. One interesting result reported by Timan and Oudshoorn (2012), who compare the experience of various forms of video-recording in public space by nightlife consumers in Rotterdam, is that the destination of CCTV footage was clear to participants. However, the recording of images with a mobile camera triggered

uneasy responses, primarily because the destination of footage was uncertain. This raised privacy concerns (which did not exist for CCTV) among participants and made them feel more 'surveilled'. Indeed, Timan and Oudshoorn contend that PMD usage by consumers needs to be thought of as Open-Circuit Television (OCTV) because recordings may travel much further than CCTV recordings: OCTV footage may remain stored within the mobile device, sent to others, downloaded to a personal computer or uploaded to the Internet. Whilst CCTV recordings usually move from the public sphere (the nightlife district) to the private (the control room), OCTV footage tends to travel in the opposite direction: from more intimate and private situations in specific public or private spaces to the public domain. However, the distinction is not always so sharp: after riots at Rotterdam's *Stadhuisplein* in the summer of 2012, CCTV footage was for example broadcasted on TV and uploaded to the internet, which led to a number of youngsters turning themselves in at the police station voluntarily. In general, however, the juxtaposition of CCTV by public authorities and OCTV by consumers offers a useful heuristic, among others because of the much stricter legal requirements and protocols with regard to video-surveillance by public authorities.

A second sense of openness that mobile cameras introduce into surveillance assemblages pertains to agency and subjectivity. A critical difference between CCTV and OCTV is that the latter grants greater agency to nightlife consumers and citizens more generally. In CCTV technologies consumers and citizens are configured as passive subjects, whereas OCTV cameras configure them as active participants. The shift in capacities due to the invasion of PMDs into nightlife districts means that the traditional relation between the watcher and the watched is rewritten with potentially profound consequences. OCTV can be used to complement and extend the 'official' surveillance assemblage. This is at least what the Netherlands Ministry of Interior seeks to achieve through a publicity campaign to convince citizens who witness violence against relief workers, such as ambulance personnel, to submit film footage of these wrongdoings to the authorities. OCTV footage has also been instrumental in reconstructing what exactly had happened during riots at a beach party in *Hoek van Holland* (Flight and Hulshof 2010). However, OCTV can also be used to criticize and question the legitimacy and justice of the actions of police officers, bouncers and other formal surveillance agents against consumers and other citizens. In June 2012, for instance, a video clip of the actions of a female police officer in Rotterdam was published on YouTube. The footage showed clearly how the officer repeatedly kicked a drunken man who did not defend himself. Her male colleague stood on the side, watched and did not interfere. The clip caused considerable public outrage and led to an internal inquiry by Rotterdam's police force. With the further growth of OCTV new forms of accountability for institutionalized organizations may come into existence.

However, the democratic potential of OCTV should not be overrated (Timan and Oudshoorn 2012), at least not in the short term. During the previously mentioned on-site interviews with nightlife consumers in Rotterdam and Utrecht OCTV and CCTV were associated with different subject positions for the participants. With OCTV, more so than with CCTV, participants became passive victims of the unclear

intentions of the person making the recording. The uncertainty regarding intentions and use of the footage resulted in a form of ambiguity and even subordination that may temper OCTV's democratic potential. While the use of PMDs in nightlife districts is likely to increase in the coming years, the wider range of intentions and possible uses of OCTV vis-à-vis CCTV may continue to complicate the extent to which mobile devices can contribute to the empowerment and wellbeing of nightlife consumers. Further research will have to demonstrate how PMDs help to shape consumers' experiences of nightlife districts and wellbeing in the present and near future.

18.6 Surveillance, Policing and the Production of Spaces in Nightlife Districts

Having considered differentiations and ambiguities in video-mediated surveillance assemblages in the previous sections, we now turn to how surveillance and policing more generally are implicated in the production of space of nightlife districts. As already indicated in the introduction, we understand space not as a passive and static container in which actions unfold and meanings are created. Space is rather the outcome of ongoing encounters and interactions of people, artefacts, buildings, other forms of materiality, ideas, symbols, emotions, and so on. It is an assemblage of assemblages (of which the surveillance assemblage is but one) and intrinsically dynamic: interacting changes occur at a wide range of time scales. Therefore, ethnographic observation of what happens and changes in a nightlife district over the period of a night and a week offers a useful and insight research method, and two researchers in our team carried out systematic observations at strategically selected sites with the nightlife districts of Groningen, Utrecht and Rotterdam between 10:00 PM and 5:00 AM during nine Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights in March-April 2010. Those nights were chosen because they attract the largest and different crowds: Thursday is the typical student night out, whilst Fridays and particularly Saturdays attract more school-going adolescents and (full-time employed) younger adults. Details of procedures and methods are available in Schwanen et al. (2012). Suffice it to say that the researchers systematically registered visitor characteristics (gender, ethnicity, age, etc.), features of the surveillance and policing in place, events that occurred, weather conditions, sounds, smells and expressions of disorderliness at four sites in various intervals during the night. The collected information provides rich and nuanced accounts of how the atmosphere and character of nightlife changes in the course of a night and is highly differentiated spatially within each nightlife district.

On one level it is tempting to conclude that Rotterdam's style of surveillance and policing is successful in enhancing safety and wellbeing. With the exception of public drunkenness, such disorderliness as vandalism, public urination, substance abuse and littering was observed less frequently than some discourses about urban nightlife's excesses would make us believe in either Groningen, Utrecht or

Table 18.1 Ethnicity, nightlife district visitors and surveillance agents, by city

	Share of resident population from non-Western descent ^a	Share of non-white visitors in total number, per 10-min interval			Average number of police officers, per 10-min interval		
		All non-white	Arabic	Afro-American	Police officers	Street wardens	Bouncers/private security
Groningen	10 %	15.4 %	7.5 %	3.4 %	1.35	0.00	1.95
Utrecht	22 %	11.2 %	5.3 %	2.4 %	1.45	0.02	1.55
Rotterdam	37 %	42.2 %	18.7 %	11.1 %	1.35	0.27	5.33

^aObtained from municipal websites

Rotterdam. They were nonetheless observed least frequently in Rotterdam. This difference coincided with much greater numbers of street wardens, private security guards and bouncers were much more common in Rotterdam than in the other two cities (the number of police officers did not differ much across the three cities). Interventions into the behavior of consumers by police and bouncers also occurred rather infrequently and these were distributed evenly across the three cities, but the character of interventions was different in Rotterdam. A pro-active, zero-tolerance approach was visible on the street and the surveillance assemblage clearly orchestrated via modern communication technologies and CCTV.

At another level our research also indicates that causal relations between surveillance and policing and the character of nightlife may be more complex. Rotterdam's nightlife district attracts considerably fewer consumers than Groningen's although more than Utrecht's the average number of observed consumers per 10-min interval was 124 in Rotterdam against 268 in Groningen and 92 in Utrecht. Rotterdam's lower level of disorderliness vis-à-vis Groningen appears to be at least in part a consequence of smaller crowds. Also relevant in this regard is that consumers in Rotterdam dwelled and traversed the nightlife district in cars rather than on foot or by bike than in Utrecht and Groningen.

Our analysis does not support the notion that more surveillance and policing in general leads to exclusion in nightlife districts along lines of ethnicity, given that Rotterdam is also the city with the most ethnically diverse consumer population (Table 18.1). On the other hand, further analysis of the collected information reported in Schwanen et al. (2012) indicates that surveillance and policing are related in complex ways with the ethnic diversity of nightlife district's consumer populations. Controlling for differences in location (city and site within each city), we found higher levels of ethnic diversity among consumers to be associated with more police officers but also with a lower presence of bouncers. Inferring causality from these findings is not straightforward; however, on the basis of qualitative research in the Dutch cities of Apeldoorn and Arnhem (Van Aalst and Schwanen 2009), they may well indicate that to avoid trouble, youth from Arabic and Surinamese/Antillean descent keep away from the surroundings of

nightlife premises where access is controlled by bouncers. Whilst more in-depth and ethnographic research into these matters is needed, our work so far suggests that it is important to consider police and security guards (including bouncers) separately when addressing questions of exclusion in nightlife districts.

We emphasize nonetheless that the effects of surveillance and policing on the exclusion of certain ethnic groups from nightlife districts appears to be relatively modest in the cities we have examined. Turning to Utrecht once more is instructive here. Table 18.1 shows that its nightlife district is disproportionately ‘white’, in particular compared to the city’s resident population. The type of nightlife premises on offer is a key factor here. More so than in Rotterdam and Groningen bars, clubs and restaurants are oriented towards students and younger urban professionals who live in and around the city and are largely white. The area around the Neude and Janskerkhof squares offers very few premises specifically targeting consumers from Arabic or Antillean/Surinamese descent, and the few pubs with a vernacular style in the vicinity of the Neude do not attract as many people as the student-oriented bars and clubs. The orientation of Utrecht’s nightlife on students is no coincidence. One club owner in Utrecht we interviewed was very clear about the type of customer he preferred: *‘I like students to come to my bar. They know how to handle alcohol, they know their limits, they are quite mature and they know how to make a good party’*. Interviews show that the city council supports this orientation, given that keeping ‘troublemakers’ out of Utrecht’s nightlife district is one of its top priorities. In sum, our research so far suggests that the exclusion of non-white youth from Utrecht’s nightlife district operates more through the supply of nightlife premises than through surveillance and policing.

18.7 Conclusions

It is evident that technologically mediated surveillance and policing, and video-surveillance more specifically, are no techno-fix that helps cities to successfully juggle the economic opportunity, pleasure and excess dimensions of nightlife districts. Our research complements and extends previous research that has argued that the effectiveness of video-surveillance in reducing disorderliness and enhancing safety and wellbeing in urban spaces is often overrated. It does so by highlighting three sets of complexities and ambiguities. The first of these pertains to the policy arena: the storylines (Hajer 2005) used by policy-makers with regard to video-surveillance differ considerably between cities. As a result of this, the belief in and overrating of CCTV’s effectiveness among policymakers and other stakeholders in urban governance vary across geographical space. Our analysis of Utrecht and Rotterdam suggest that the histories of local political constellations (e.g. which party is leading the debate and city government at critical moments in time) and local issues and concerns are the drivers of this spatial variation. At any rate, our results indicate that the claim that policymakers in general overestimate the benefits of CCTV surveillance is best avoided.

With regard to nightlife consumers, our research shows a remarkable heterogeneity in terms of understandings of the relations between video-surveillance, safety and wellbeing. Indifference and (mild) skepticism nonetheless prevail when it comes to the extent to which CCTV surveillance can enhance perceived safety amongst our research participants. Whilst this aligns with some earlier work (Koskela 2002; Klauser 2007), our research also shows that there is a discord between the skeptic discourses among consumers and the storylines dominating the discourse of policy-makers and politicians in Utrecht: for consumers the issue is not so much privacy related but CCTV's (perceived) incapacity to intervene or reduce harm when they (are likely to) become a victim of crime. This is, we believe, a finding with clear policy relevance, for it suggests that there are limits to the degree to which surveillance and policing by humans 'on the ground' can be substituted by digital surveillance. From a consumer perspective, insofar as surveillance and policing are capable of making nightlife districts safer and spaces of wellbeing, it needs to consist of visibly human agents. Based on our results to date, we are tempted to argue that the role of CCTV cameras should be no more than a complement and source of support to the actions of the police and private security guards already present in (the vicinity of) the nightlife district.

The third set of complexities and ambiguities concern video technology itself. Whether a camera is static or mobile and who uses it is likely to have an influence on how it is perceived, understood and experienced by nightlife district consumers. With the mobilization and multiplication of cameras in nightlife districts and the increased use of mobile recording devices among consumers as well as police officers and private security guards, a focus on how CCTV helps to produce spaces in nightlife districts is limited at best; mobile cameras should be given equally sustained attention. The use of mobile cameras not only enhances the complexity of the relations between surveillance and policing, wellbeing and exclusion (especially when they are used by nightlife consumers); it is also potentially unsettling. It allows new configurations of watching and being watched to emerge and it raises concerns about the purpose and destination of the recorded footage. The latter not only redirects debates about video-surveillance and privacy; it may also complicate the relations between camera use in nightlife and wellbeing on a range of timescales. Footage recorded by consumers on nights out can end up on the internet and shape an individual's opportunities for self-fulfillment and self-esteem at later points in time. Potential employers searching the internet for footage of applicants constitute only one example of how OCTV can shape the relationships between consuming nightlife and wellbeing across timescales that exceed the night out.

In short, the effects of video-surveillance on the production of space are complex and ambiguous, and thinking about these effects using the concept and logic of assemblage helps us to make sense of that complexity. The idea that (more) video-surveillance will enhance safety and wellbeing in nightlife districts for the (vast) majority of nightlife consumers is not consistent with our findings. At the same time, all too dystopian understandings of video-surveillance and policing as excluding certain groups from nightlife districts *tout court* are not equivocally supported by our initial findings either. Certain surveillance practices do seem to contribute to

the social exclusion of non-white youth from nightlife districts but such effects are geographically differentiated: they appear to vary from city to city and between sites and premises within a single city. In a way the relations between exclusion and surveillance are similar to those between safety and wellbeing on the one hand and surveillance on the other: the effects of surveillance are local, context-dependent, set in wider place-specific processes and difficult to generalize across space and time.

It is nonetheless clear that further research into the relations between video-surveillance and policing, wellbeing and safety, and socio-spatial exclusion in nightlife districts is required. Agents other than consumers, policy-makers and cameras should be considered, including police officers, bouncers, CCTV operators and technology developers. Further use of ethnographic methods is also needed, as are surveys among larger numbers of nightlife consumers than can be considered with in-depth interviews. Finally, the experiences of people who might potentially visit those districts but for some reason do not do so should also be explored. Our current research addresses these and other issues and will allow us to shed further light on the relationships between surveillance and policing, wellbeing and exclusion in urban nightlife districts.

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