

These last two lectures on persistent surveillance systems and identity and race have allowed me to really think about systems thinking in terms of my own life. Systems thinking has been applied to the real world in previous classes, like hearing about Brooke's health experience, but these two classes provided an opportunity for me to stop and reflect on how this sort of thinking might be implemented in my day-to-day existence.

My understanding of persistent surveillance and the importance of perspective has definitely changed. This discussion showed me how easy it is to agree with something, or even advocate for it, when you are not directly involved. I was a strong proponent for persistent surveillance, until I considered myself being constantly filmed and couldn't wrap my mind around it. Does being involved in the issue at hand reveal your ultimate true feelings about the topic in general? Or is it possible to simply have a *different* opinion on an issue from a distance, versus when it relates to you? Why is there often times such a gap in these feelings? We are all humans and can relate on baseline feelings about privacy and relationships. I think that most people would agree we wouldn't want our every move broadcast to the public, but then why is it so easy for us to implement this technology in far away places? I think that with distance, it becomes easier for us to make these relationships invisible and remove humane aspects from the situation. We are able to think about things as more parts of a system than as relationships. This is a common trend; I believe that people would sometimes *rather* have invisible relationships than make them visible. It is the out of sight out of mind philosophy – we feel like we are not personally responsible if we don't "see" relationships (choose to leave them invisible). This tendency frustrates me, because I feel like it should be our first instinct as humans to try and relate to other human beings. There are so many uncertainties and confusing parts and relationships and feedbacks within the system of our earth, that it seems like we should turn to things that we know we are similar to more frequently than we do.

The game about the perpetration of negative news in society really made me think about the way we interact with news in society. Media proposes one way that parts of a system are related by telling a story of certain relationships, but in reality this is only one perspective – and oftentimes does not tell the whole story. This made me wonder why we turn to news and interact with it so often. I think it is a way of connecting the parts of society and informing each other about happenings, making it a relationship itself between individual humans. However, the news is really just one perspective, not the ultimate truth. If we know that this is the case, why are we so threatened by the news being labeled as untrustworthy? This has been especially relevant in politics lately, and I have always found myself infuriated by the accusations of the press as untrustworthy, without ever thinking about why this made me mad in the first place. In reality, the news doesn't always tell the truth, or provide the full story. This is done in the stories it chooses to cover and the way the events are told – every aspect has the potential to be manipulated. But I have come to realize that labeling the news as untrustworthy is so frightening because it is the only source of shared information and knowledge that we have. Providing a perspective is the best that any human is capable of, so why should we expect anything else from our news? Just because it is from one perspective and can potentially be skewed does not mean that it is untrustworthy, it just means that its' subjective nature should be accounted for when drawing conclusions from the news.

I think that both of these topics have to do with shifting perspective and discovering unintended consequences. The main difference between the two is that with surveillance, if

you do not see something it's because it is not there. With identity and race, if something is not there it could be because you choose not to see something or don't look for it, not necessarily that it doesn't exist. Another striking difference and consequence of the transparency of surveillance is that it results in an equal playing field. It takes away all chance of bias, or of us as individuals choosing to see/ignore certain relationships. In this way it has the potential to reduce bias in society and possibly help decrease systematic racism. So much racism is perpetrated in the criminal justice system, and a system like constant surveillance could put an end to the subjectivity of this system and provide an unbiased source. Yet again, this demonstrates the importance of recognizing perspective. A black individual that has family members who have been unjustly treated by the criminal justice system might be more likely to favor this type of surveillance, versus a wealthy housewife who opposes the system because she does not want her affair to be revealed. However, even with concrete footage, people will have different perspectives on the information. I cannot think of an example of something that it is impossible to have multiple perspectives on. That is the biggest takeaway I received from these two lectures: everything changes depending on perspective.