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Tactics

A Disability Theory of Anti-Surveillance Tactics

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Abstract: This article sketches how disabled people resist surveillance in the liberal democracies of the Global North. Since there is a dearth of scholarship on disability and surveillance, this article first overviews the surveillance state's primary mechanisms of capture inflicted on disabled people. Building on insights from queer, trans, and feminist surveillance studies, I gesture toward the need for disability surveillance studies. Second, I outline tactics used by disabled people to resist surveillance as well as tactics of my creation inspired by activist practices and recent events in social organizing. Highlighting the radicality of these tactics validates disabled people as critical knowers and makers in the efforts of anti-surveillance. Lastly, I use crip theory to contend that examining how disabled people experience and fight surveillance is insufficient to account for the ways that the disability-ability binary—as a structural set of relations—shapes the discursive and material production and execution of surveillance.

Keywords: disability, privacy, anti-surveillance, disability community, crip theory

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"A flock of surveys is a surveillance."— Sandra Beasley, "Customer Service Is."

Introduction

I have generalized anxiety disorder. When I go to urgent care with severe, painful, and random nerve damage symptoms, the nurse tells me to stop thinking about it so much. When a grapefruit-sized benign cyst appears on my spine during an MRI that I demanded due to the nerve sensations, the neurologist tells me I need to try meditation, oh, and that it's inoperable. When I ask for other options, a nurse tells me to download a yoga app sponsored by my health insurance company. I cannot do this again. I go to a new doctor. I do not consent to my medical records being transferred. I never tell the new doctor about the anxiety, the depression, or the PTSD. I start to wonder if there's a way that I can also use my language to hide my womanhood or my sexuality. This is a story of surveillance and anti-surveillance.

My personal experiences of medical surveillance, expertise in critical disability studies and feminist and queer surveillance studies, and position in varied disability communities enable me to appreciate that surveillance critically maintains the everyday machinations of the apparatus of disability, both as a medical,

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social, and political category but also as a way of living in the world. This leads me to ask: How are disabled people resisting the surveillance state? How and why has this resistance been heavily enacted through language? What can we learn from these practices about the value of crip thought for queer, trans, and feminist approaches to surveillance?

It is common among disabled people and other people with non-normative bodyminds for our voices to be overpowered by narratives and images imposed upon us in the medical system and beyond. As a result, many, me included, have been forced to lie to doctors, demand items be struck from our medical records, seek alternative sources of medical knowledge, or avoid medical care for the material harms it poses to our physical and mental well-being, not to mention our humanity. When we take these actions, we are taking some agency over the ways we are socially, medically, and even politically sorted. To argue for the importance of disabled people's resistance to surveillance and their strategic uses of language, I base my understanding of surveillance on David Lyon's theory of surveillance as not merely controlling-via-watching, but as producing and sorting subjects and their data in ways that reinforce social hierarchies and proximities to who counts as 'normal.' This idea has been valuable in identifying how surveillance works in concerts with white supremacy and anti-Blackness, cisheteropatriachy and biological essentialism and ableism (Brown 8-9; Umoja Noble 28, 34; Mirzoeff 1-14; Conrad 384-386; Beauchamp 17; Kafer & Grinberg 594; Banner & Adleman; Saltes 56).

This article will largely focus on how disabled people resist surveillance in everyday life in the anglophone liberal democracies of the Global North. I will first provide an overview of the surveillance state's primary mechanisms of capture in the Global North. Second, drawing from personal experience in and of disabled communities, I will highlight anti-surveillance tactics already employed by disabled people as well as tactics of my own creation. Inspired by J. Logan Smilges' theories of crip negativity and access thievery, these tactics largely center around strategic uses of language and 'bad' behavior, such as lying to doctors to avoid compromising information on your medical record, refusing a professional diagnosis to escape its potential consequences for citizenship, and entering incorrect data into health tracking apps to compromise the data capture of Big Tech.

In crip queer feminist spirit, I will not strive toward totality or vague universals. When I speak from the "I" and "my" in this essay, I refuse a vulgar standpoint criticism nor do I attest to myself being able to speak for the shifting, infinitely heterogeneous groups of people that compose disability communities. In fact, any approach to surveillance must confront partiality, in light of both the 'black box' of many digital surveillance systems (e.g., algorithms) and the inherently fluid, shifting nature of non-normativity as a concept. I focus on the Global North for three primary reasons: 1) to leave space for scholars and activists in and of the Global South, as well as of different political and technological landscapes in the Global North, to identify anti-surveillance practiced by disabled people in their respective geographies, 2) to break up the idea of 'disabled people' as some monolithic group with uniform modes of resistance and proximities to surveillance and its material and ontological risks, and 3) the chosen localized perspective here is anything but exceptional, yet, having a more focused cultural, political, and geographic focus will promote approaches to both surveillance and disability that refuse universals and account for the ways that surveillance—as a process of social creation and sorting per Lyon—differently function to partially produce the category of disability and people's relationship to disability, among other categories such as gender, class, and race.

Highlighting the radicality of these tactics will help validate disabled people as critical knowers and makers in the efforts of anti-surveillance and highlight the ways that disabled people encounter the surveillant gaze. This will begin to address the dearth of literature on surveillance in disability studies and disability perspectives in surveillance studies. In doing so, it will emphasize the valuable role of rhetoric in anti-surveillance tactics.

Disability Surveillance Studies

Queer, trans, and feminist approaches to surveillance have been foundational in both showing the constitutive roles of sexuality and gender in surveillance practices and logics as well as imagining means of resisting surveillance and unearthing the minoritarian knowledges absent from surveillance studies (Kafer & Gringberg 592-959; Gill 148-152; Dubrofsky & Magnet 1-20; Abu-Laban 50-54; Beauchamp 1-17). In each approach, the body and bodies and its proximity to processes of normalization—with special emphasis on Foucault's work on the measuring, categorizing, and policing of bodies to a prescribed set of ideals that aid the smooth functioning state and economic power. Before sorting and categorizing subjects, surveillance produces subjects, however. This section gestures towards the need for a disability surveillance studies that builds upon and speaks to queer, trans, and feminist surveillance studies because these prior fields of knowledge and their respective frameworks differently examine how surveillance contributes to core issues in disability studies: the production of the idea of abnormality vs normality and how those ideas materialize, particularly around ideas of the body and how bodies can exercise mobility differently in different spaces.

Disability surveillance studies should attend to how surveillance can be a process of negotiating and creating bodies and subjectivities. In his groundbreaking study of how trans people experience surveillance, Tony Beauchamp details how surveillance is a process of fluidity in which "fixed, ahistorical, or easily read markers of deviance" are also "active interpretations that … can shift according to context" (77). In a disability context, we might consider the algorithmically curated targeted health advertisements that appear on people's social media feeds and assume their impairments by selling them a certain product or service. The point of these systems is never accuracy or properly capturing the needs and identities of subjects. Rather, surveillance is a means of creating data doubles that stand in and are used to act upon and influence the people they represent. The data double, sometimes known as the shadow self, is an informational profile built to represent each surveilled subject. Rita Raley quotes Roger Clark in describing how the data double is produced through

> processes of disassembling and reassembling. People are broken down into a series of discrete informational flows which are stabilized and captured according to pre-established classificatory criteria. They are then transported to centralized locations to be reassembled and combined in ways that serve institutional agendas (127).

Take, for instance, the doctor—seeing only an idea of me based on my medical records through the sexist, ableist, and racist epistemologies of Western medicine— who could only see my anxiety and not my nerve disorder, for instance.

To understand and trace the material impacts of the categories produced by medical surveillance, such as diagnostic categories, feminist surveillance studies are necessary. Feminist approaches have highlighted the quotidian nature of surveillance, treating it more as part of the infrastructure of everyday life and the domestic than an exceptional, sensationalized practice of wiretapping and WikiLeaks or simply top-down relations (Gill 148). It has also drawn our attention to how ideological structures such as patriarchy are necessarily entwined with surveillance. As Laurie Penny has said, "the fight for the principles of free speech, the fight against surveillance and the fight for a society where whistleblowers are protected, is a feminist fight." Examining how ableism, for instance, is reinforced by privacy and surveillance norms can help illuminate how surveillance is a complex infrastructure of control that normalizes itself and naturalizes the social categories it produces by working in tandem with hegemony.

Building on this everydayness, we may turn towards Michel Foucault's theory of the panopticon and its emphasis on the surveilled subject internalizing the surveillant gaze and projecting it upon themselves and others. That is, surveillance embeds itself with psyches and social attitudes, such as ableism, sexism, and other forms of implicit or explicit bias as well as mechanisms of self-regulation and maintenance. This might be why disability and privacy are incompatible, perhaps even antithetical, in the eyes of ableism. The history of disability is punctuated by fraught stories of unwilled exposure. Disability history scholarship from Michael Rembis, Susan Schweik, Rachel Adams, and Rosemarie Garland-Thompson, among others, has documented these histories from forced medical experimentation on disabled people or in the name of eradicating disability, laws banning disabled people from occupying certain public spaces, the advent of the 'freak show,' and even the everyday stares inflicted on disabled people. In all, disabled people are treated as sites for the public to consume rather than part of the public.

When it comes to either actively or passively resisting surveillance, it is tempting to presume that non-normative subjects that do not fall into binary categorizations can show the fissures of surveillance systems and the normative logics by which they operate. Although it would be premature of us to romanticize either as naturally revolutionary and to stake such a claim would ignore the plethora of scholarship, such as that from Lisa Duggan and Jasbir Puar, that describes how LGBTQIA+ identities and queerness are smoothed into capitalist and state projects of control. Examples of technologies that are adopted despite operating on flawed, limited logics of gender, for instance, include biomimetic body scanners relying on binary and biologically essentialist ideas of gender or automatic gender recognition technology (see Beauchamp; Keyes). While these scanners indeed fail to accurately capture people who fall outside of binary gender scripts, the scanners are not broken by the presence of non-normativity. This failed recognition often leads to more surveillance in the form of body searches (Waldron & Medina). Ellen Samuels has further noted the affinities between trans and crip bodies for how they are framed as "anomalies" in the eyes of the U.S. security state wherein both are cast as outside the biological norms of "safe" citizens, thereby serving as justification for additional surveillance (153). In agreement with these analyses, later in this article, I also will propose that, in certain contexts, leveraging and perhaps even exaggerating the porousness and uncontrollability of the bodymind holds important potential to disrupt surveillance systems and logics.

While I focus on disability and disabled people here, a larger aspiration of this article is to crip surveillance studies. "Crip" is both a politics and an analytic grounded in values and experiences from disability studies and disability justice. Primarily, this lens aims to de-center ability as the arbiter for determining value and values orientations, aesthetics, embodiments, bodies, and other modes of being and doing that have been cast outside the norm and ideals, such as slowness, partiality, submission, negativity, irrationality, and so on. The deployments of crip from Allison Kafer, Robert McRuer, J. Logan Smilges, and Eunjung Kim animate my work here. Crip can do something "disability cannot," which here I primarily understand to be getting us beyond a strict identitarian focus in/on surveillance (Smilges 9). Further, crip enables us to operate from a place of a more universal-local understanding of disability where we do not assume who or what counts as disabled and instead attend to the very systems and knowledges that constitute the shifting contours of 'disability.' Further, if surveillance is a practice of producing and sorting subjects, why resort to yet another strict identitarian-based way of evaluating surveillance and imagining anti-surveillance?

Why Language?

Many of the anti-surveillance tactics outlined here are rooted in strategic uses of language and deciding which rhetorics to foreground. When I speak of 'language,' I include all and any systems of communication that a person may practice. Language is the stuff of world-building and world-destroying. As Jay Dolmage has outlined, disability and language have a tenuous relationship due to the ways that linguistic and language norms of 'proper speech,' oralism, and anti-mutism have prevented the full access of disabled people in various spaces and systems. The disabled subject has also been theorized to shore up the limits of language and representation as well as serve as a site to understand and value the expansiveness of ways of languaging (Quayson 1-5; Henner & Robinson 7-37). At the same time, language is an expanse of potential access frictions between non-disabled and disabled people as well as between disabled people. Since surveillance studies, at least partially, studies the relationship between "power and information collection" (Andrejevic xxi), I will show throughout this article that disabled people often reframe rhetorical situations of surveillance in strategic ways to protect themselves and their privacy and/or to disrupt the surveillant gaze. As such, this article attests to the view that the language we use can indeed have a material impact on the world. I work in the same spirit as numerous disability studies scholars who have shown that rhetorical resistance, especially when done collectively, can be an effective catalyst for societal change and transgressive, anti-ableist action (Wheeler; Mann; Smilges).

Surveillance in the Global North

This section will map out three major vectors of surveillance and detail how they interact with, and even produce, disabled people and ideas of disability. I use the term 'Global North' with awareness of its limitations and how the term can potentially flatten differences within countries included in the symbolic region, such as the United States, Japan, the United Kingdom, Australia, and others. Indeed, it is a shortcoming of this article that I do not have the space to survey cultural and political differences in understandings of privacy across the Global North, for instance. Here, I find the term useful as disabled people in the Global North experience different kinds of threats to privacy and types of surveillance due to the lesser prevalence of armed conflict, imperial interventions, and economic disparity than in the Global South. With focus on liberal democracies of the Global North, I also use to the term to zone in on how disabled people experience and fight surveillance within political systems that boast freedom and inclusion.

State surveillance

From citizenship requirements to voting rights, disabled people are routinely tested for their proximity to normativity and such testing ultimately determines their levels of rights and access in state systems. Numerous scholars and activists have been vocal about the ways that disability is either assimilated into the hegemonic ideas of a good citizen or made to suffer if they cannot or refuse to assimilate. In either case, disabled people's fit for assimilation is tested by surveillance. At the time of my writing, seven EU countries (Bulgaria, Denmark, Estonia, Hungary, Lithuania, Portugal, and Slovenia) indirectly deny voting rights to people with intellectual disabilities by requiring a guardian to accompany them to vote but also only allowing one person in the voting booth at a time, for instance (Vasques)1. Disabled people's access to both privacy and rights is especially fraught in welfare systems. In November 2023, the UK government proposed a plan to allow the Department of Work and Pensions to access the personal banking information of state benefit claimants, many of whom include people on disability benefits, migrants, and refugees. ("DPDI Bill: New 'Welfare Surveillance'").

On the ground, disabled people are prone to heightened police surveillance. In the U.S., nearly half of the people killed by the police are disabled (Perry & Carter-Long). Disabled people of color, particularly Black disabled people, are at heightened risk of such violence. Counter to the (racialized) stereotypes of disabled people as innocent, passive, and in need of protection, "abled people have been fantasizing about the dangers of evil crips for centuries" (Smilges 42). These fantasies are critical to structural ways that disabled people are cast as untrustworthy, "shaping everything from welfare programs to truancy laws to the definition of citizenship" (42). State surveillance of disabled people highlights the uneven distributions of stigma

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[1] This article was planned and written between February to August 2024.

and fear projected onto disabled people along the lines of class, race, gender, sexuality, and citizenship status.

Medical surveillance

The medical system is built upon the logics of surveillance as sorting and risk assessment. As Olivia Banner and David Adleman note in their cripping of surveillance, by drawing on the work of Simone Brown, the visual field in which surveillance operates is both racializing and normalizing, typifying and classifying bodies into hierarchical categories, much like traditional systems of classification in western medicine. For instance, the clinical gaze, argues Alex Haagaard, is a key site where the category disability is produced, and where it is decided which differences 'count' as abnormal.

Disabled people are often forced to comply with medical surveillance as they rely on the medical system for necessary medical knowledge and treatment. Or, in the case of involuntary detainment—from psychiatric institutions to prisons—disabled people are not even given the fantasy of choice in how they comply with medical surveillance. With the turn to telehealth, health and hospital management systems, and biotechnologies, new opportunities for surveillance arise. Some trusts of the UK's National Health Service (NHS) have begun using a covert, omnipresent video surveillance system called Oxevision, for one. The system runs 24 hours a day, always recording patients, even during sleep. It tracks patients' heart rates, attempts to leave their beds, and any visitors into their rooms. It is unclear whether patients consented to such invasive, totalizing surveillance (Pring 2021). The rationale for using this system may be for patients' benefit, however, to strip patients of their privacy rather than take a less invasive security measure is indicative of larger assumptions about who deserves privacy.

Beyond the confines of hospitals, disabled people's health needs prompt them to confront other forms of surveillance. In many situations, disclosing private health information enables access that otherwise would not be available, such as receiving a certain accessibility support. Karen Reilly notes that disabled people are incentivized by material needs to engage in systems that may also exploit them for data and otherwise threaten their privacy. Social media platforms, for instance, are vital spaces of friendship and communication for disabled people who cannot engage in in-person social environments and these platforms have proven to be critical for knowledge-sharing about safety during and beyond the COVID-19 pandemic. Yet, to engage in these systems at all is to, at least partially, submit to the platform's extractive data tactics.

Surveillance capitalism

Shoshana Zuboff uses the term "surveillance capitalism" to describe a prediction-centered business model that aims to modify consumers' behaviors. This is done by harvesting personal data, and then using it as raw material for marketing and product research on how to dictate consumer behaviors. To surveillance capitalism, people are both consumers and commodities. Disability and healthism are particularly key to surveillance capitalism due to the rise of "diagnostic advertisements" where users experience health product marketing on their algorithmically curated social media feeds, such as an advertisement for an anxiety management app on one's TikTok "for you" page (Gaeta). It does not if the targeted users are disabled. The ads signal the creation of a disabled data double that is then projected onto real users and that data double becomes the basis for the type of behavioral interventions inflicted on users.

State surveillance and medical surveillance, as crudely outlined here, are about "monitoring bodies against normative ontological standards, classifying 'abnormality' and problematizing 'abnormal bodies' as risky" (Saltes 55). Surveillance capitalism is where that 'abnormality' is assimilated as a site of economic opportunity and where curative rhetorics can be projected onto users' consumption habits.

Disability Resistance to Surveillance

This section outlines a few acts of anti-surveillance practiced by disabled people. These acts are drawn from disability studies scholarship and my first-hand experience in disability communities. These divergent scenes were chosen as they complement each other in demonstrating the agency of disabled people as well as the ways that any anti-surveillance tactic must be vectored through an intersectional lens to identify its effectiveness and risks.

Self-Diagnosis and Claiming Disability

Putting aside debates about the legitimacy of self-diagnosis, it is evident that self-diagnosis is extremely strategic for people who need to bypass the legal, social, and medical consequences that may arise with formal diagnosis. Indeed, a formal diagnosis can enable access to various treatments, services, supports, and more, but it can also greatly foreclose a person's social and geographic mobility and rights. Australia and New Zealand, for instance, have historically tended to reject migration applications due to applicants' high medical needs, especially around mental differences (Meekosha 674-75). Along these lines, Devon Price—an autistic sociologist and autism blogger — has advised autistic people to rethink getting a professional diagnosis if they plan to migrate to another country, as the formal diagnosis may put the success of their application at risk. Due to these constraints, self-diagnosis can serve as an effective way to bypass situations where disclosing a formal diagnosis may impede one's access to desired institutions and services.

Alongside self-diagnosis is the question of claiming disability or using disabled as a way to describe oneself. To desire to be recognized in the category of disability may even be understood as a privilege in certain contexts. Many people with an impairment, may, for reasons of safety and decreased risk of even more social stigma, disidentify with or deny the label as applicable to themselves. For instance, Sami Schalk has identified how many Black people with impairments have historically refused disability identity and labels for numerous reasons. This could be read as a way to avoid the multiply stratifying surveillant gaze that comes with being both Black and disabled, alongside other oppressed identities. The material stakes of such refusal are high when we consider the relationship between Blackness, disability, and police violence, with over half of police violence victims being disabled (Abrams).

Of course, how one understands and names themselves cannot fully protect them from how they are identified, such is the case for physically disabled people or disabled people who do not have the cognitive capacity to carry out such decision-making processes. Carefully and strategically deciding which categories to align oneself and in which contexts is an anti-surveillance practice as it involves negotiating how we become visible and are made visible. This is perhaps why the popular autism blog StimPunks writes that "Self-diagnosis is not just "valid" — it is liberatory. When we define our community ourselves and wrest our right to self-definition back from the systems that painted us as abnormal and sick, we are powerful and free" ("Autism"). Recognizing the choices to claim and self-diagnosis as anti-surveillance, and that these choices may not be consciously understood as anti-surveillance, shows that anti-surveillance is an embedded and implicit part of the discourses and practices of disability communities. To achieve the feeling of being "powerful and free" means trying to evade or disrupt the surveillant gaze.

Lying and Theft

When I lie to HR and mark 'not disabled' on employment forms, I am protecting myself from invasive questions and ableist assumptions. When I purposely neglect to tell doctors about my previous diagnoses out of fear of stigma, I am protecting a certain image of myself that might actually get fair treatment. When I am burnt out and lie to get out of work meetings, I am protecting my access needs, or what Smilges calls "access thievery:" the act of stealing access. Lying and theft are important tools of anti-surveillance, and each has its risks. Social attitudes about disability are haunted by the figure of the faker, also known as the disability benefit scammer. Disabled people are sometimes forced, or at least highly motivated to lie in the current medical and social system that demands disability be visible and consistent in order to be valid (Moses).

If surveillance is intractable to the medical system, why not take what is ours from a system that is supposed to care for us? In this case, we are stealing access and care from systems that thrive on scarcity and austerity politics—systems that tell disabled people they are too much. This may not combat surveillance or protect privacy per se, but it does mark a careful rhetorical negotiation that disabled people undertake to maintain a sense of autonomy in an exploitative surveillant system and at least protect themselves from being 'sorted' into incorrect or even harmful categories.

Masking and Hiding

Around the world, in the era of CCTV, facial recognition technology, and drone surveillance, it has been common practice for protesters to hide their faces while at public demonstrations and practicing social unrest. It is a common suggestion in safe protesting guides as well ("Protest Safety Tips;" "What to Do at a Protest"). While masking during the COVID-19 pandemic was, and still is in some locations, a suggested or required government order, masking threatened the smooth functioning of the surveillance state as racial justice, and police abolition protests broke out in numerous countries after Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin killed George Floyd in May 2020. This marked a turning point in what it meant to hide your face as a protest as protestors turned out in masses wearing personal protective equipment in the form of cloth masks to limit the spread of COVID-19. Whereas wearing facial coverings during protests did not begin with disabled people's calls for community masking, the dual function of community care and hiding one's identity has transformed masking into disability anti-surveillance. The merit of masking lies not in its effectiveness but in the ethos behind it. European Digital Rights, for instance, has found that standard PPE face masks are not fully successful at helping individuals evade facial recognition systems ("Can a COVID-19 Face Mask"). This does not diminish the calls of disabled people and allies to wear masks during protests as a dual form of protection.

During the writing of this article, as protests for ceasefire and justice for Palestinian life spark up around the world, the UK Home Office announced a ban on facial coverings at protests, with the risk of a fine or jail time ("New Protest Laws"). It is one of many European countries to impose such a ban. At a time when nearly the entire world has experienced the effects of an airborne viral pandemic, this ban also prevents community care in the form of masking and thus marks the need for new ways to keep one another safe at protests while also protecting ourselves from state surveillance.

Further, in the everyday, masking serves another purpose: to hide one's facial expressions and block the ableist stare. Rosemarie Garland-Thompson understands staring as "the effort to make sense of the inexplicable, to craft a narrative of recognition from incoherence." Staring is a process of social sorting as well, one that is particularly imposed on people who diverge from social norms. For people with facial differences or neurodivergent people who struggle to meet social decorum expectations, masking can offer a sense of freedom from the ableist stare and thus the surveillant processes of being reduced into coherent narratives.

Anti-Digital Surveillance

Here, I encourage us to understand surveillance as a process of determining not only who is seen and how, but what is seeable and when. This final section offers a few prospective crip tactics for confronting surveillance in the age of digital everything. These tactics are crip in that they defy and refuse the ableist logics at the heart of surveillance logics and systems, therefore showing the desirability of disability.

The Mad Rant

Taking Smilges' cue to sit with bad crip feelings, I propose we crips use our digital spaces to complain, yell, scream, and overshare in ways that defy the logics of normative reason and ableist, sexist, and racist expectations of 'appropriate' expression. Since "predictive models fed by surveillance data necessarily reproduce past patterns. They cannot take into effective consideration randomness, 'noise,' mutation, parody, or disruption unless those effects coalesce into another pattern," then why not be loud and unreasonable? (Conrad 385). Anti-surveillance must include attempts to disrupt the hegemonic regimes of visuality. Here enters the power of what I call the social media "rant" in the form of unrestricted disabledness and Madness. The social media rant defies social media norms, which often mirror the 'real-world' of largely white, cishet, able influencers and other public figures who amassed thousands, even millions of followers, resulting in their words and images claiming significant digital space. I am inspired by La Marr Jurelle Bruce's work on Blackness and madness, in particular his call to center "mad subjectivity" by taking seriously the ramblings, rants, and cries of people marked as mad, a deeply racialized designation (50). Vital to Bruce's "Mad methodology" is to not fetishize the madperson as "resistance personified" and "defy and deform the grammars of hegemonic Reason" (51). For Bruce, Blackness is central to the formation of mad subjectivity. The centrality of Blackness and anti-Blackness in histories of defining reason and unreason, or rationality and irrationality, doubly functions as a reminder about the uneven ways that people, particularly Mad and otherwise 'unreasonable' people, can safely ramble, rant, and cry in physical and digital spaces. It also reminds us of the racialized and ableist ways that people's rantings will be perceived as more or less legible and valid, which makes them all the more important to amplify.

Part of any Mad-justice-inspired anti-surveillance is to attest to the potential validity of voices that have been suppressed by state surveillance mechanisms—including policing, institutionalization, and incarceration— as well as by surveillance's social sorting processes wherein voices are categorized into levels of risk, opportunity, and authority per state and capitalist projects of systemic discrimination and hegemonic control. So, what happens when we refuse to succeed to the norms of social media sociality and communication and instead occupy as much visual digital space as possible with our unconstrained disabledness and Madness? And if we do so in ways to make this a collective act of solidarity, where our rants, ramblings, and cries come to occupy a critical mass of noncompliance with ableist and racist norms?

Here, I suggest we occupy digital spaces and feeds with rants, rambles, and longings that cannot be neatly categorized as they evade the normative meaning-making processes that underlie automated and autonomous systems. Further, visually, on the screen, rants take up space and disrupt normative patterns of social media interaction and expression. They capture attention. If we see one, we should retweet, share, like, and engage by all means to amplify the visibility of disabledness that refuses compliance and assimilation.

Dataset Fuckery

The U.S. Supreme Court's overturning of Roe v. Wade in 2022 raised more public critical consciousness of the policing of reproduction and bodies, especially as many states made legislative efforts to criminalize abortions altogether. In the months following, a slew of horror stories plagued U.S. media, many of which revolved around digital surveillance of people's reproductive processes and decisions. Period tracking apps came under fire due to the sensitivity of the data they collect and how this data could now be used to monitor people's reproductive status.

A common refrain on Twitter was the call to disrupt period tracker apps' datasets by inputting excessive amounts of false data, particularly for cisgender men to do this work. One viral tweet from @ SantiagoMayer, a founder of a U.S.-based voting rights NGO, said "I'm a cis man I'm a cis man who just downloaded a period tracking app because if there's anything I love it's causing chaos" and continued "To clarify, this will likely do nothing to aid individuals who are subpoenaed themselves. The goal of this is to mess up data so that any law enforcement agency that purchases a database would have to waste significant resources in cleaning it up before using it." To disrupt the regimes of health data collection as a collective action holds great potential as a crip tactic for, at the very least, slowing down the surveillance state. Since surveillance systems don't aim for accuracy, per se, the least we can do is to make our data double as excessively non-normative as possible and therefore difficult to sort.

Depending on Each Other

Ableism values a fantasy of a unified, able-bodied independent self, whereas disability justice and crip theory recognize our utter vulnerability and interconnectedness with one another, human and non-human. Taking this idea to technology, we must question how much we rely on certain surveillance technologies and how we can come together to disrupt that reliance by caring for one another. The Cyborg Jillian Weise, a disabled poet and activist, writes heavily about her experiences of medical and social surveillance, arguing for noncompliance she writes

> It hasn't been easy to escape the doctors. They have so many maps of us. They're on our phones, of course. So many apps we've downloaded as parts of our bodies. But we take it all off now, all that tech unless we need some gizmo to breathe, and if we can sit, we sit; if we can sign, we sign; if we need to be carried, we carry each other.

Weise's call for collective noncompliance is a reminder that any suggestions to simply 'stop' relying on certain services, products, or institutions must confront the ableist demonization of reliance and offer alternative ways of providing for one another. In practice, this may look like manually tracking your period with a friend instead of using an app or building networks with other disabled people to knowledge share around evading the negative effects of medical surveillance.

To criply resist submission to surveillance must mean more than hiding or destroying. It also means creating systems of care that operate outside and despite the other systems we are forced to rely upon including insurance companies and hospitals. Albeit this may seem like the most obvious tactic of all— to care for each other and care for those who do not have the capacity to care back. And yet, amid calls for boycotts and the sprawling, ubiquitous nature of digital surveillance, collective and mutual care to loosen our need to submit to state and corporate-run surveillance is perhaps one of the most radical acts.

Towards Cripping Surveillance

In this article, I've proposed the need for both disability surveillance studies and crip surveillance; the former being a subfield and the latter being a framework for recognizing how disability and ableism are at the heart of many surveillance rhetorics. While they are necessarily intertwined, the primary difference lies in application. Crip surveillance can and should extend beyond the ways that disabled people experience and push back against surveillance. If we take disability to not simply be a biological condition (the medical model) or a manifestation of social design norms (the social model), but also a structural relationship to power, then we identify how ableism reproduces itself through surveillance rhetorics and begin to imagine beyond their confines and opacity. This choice is partially influenced by Kafer and Gringberg's exploration of the "productive tensions between [the] terms" queer and surveillance (594). The other influence is my research into new "intelligent" and "autonomous" surveillance technologies and how the usage of these technologies is justified by claiming they are superior to human ability, being less biased and more predictable.

So, what is crip surveillance and what can it help us to sense differently? Crip surveillance is a way of thinking with human inability, vulnerability, and unpredictability, rather than resorting to reinforcing damaging ideals of technology as all-seeing and all-knowing or appealing to hyper-able-bodied human mastery. To put another way, to crip (anti) surveillance structures and practices—a project that extends beyond this article—is to ask what it means when ability and ableness are not the defaults for analyzing and imagining surveillance and resistance. Crip surveillance re-evaluates the potential of that which ableism has rejected and marked as without value. Crip surveillance understands that bodymind non-normativity can and must have an integral, material, rhetorical, and epistemological place in resisting surveillance. And finally, crip surveillance affirms that justice and surveillance—as a system of social control and sorting—are anti-thetical no matter which subjects are co-opted in facilitating surveillance. Albeit these are only prospective ideas towards what should be an effort of collectivity. That is, to build crip surveillance and articulate what it would value and offer, the needs, voices, and practices of disabled people must first be foregrounded in conversations about surveillance and anti-surveillance.

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