

"Liberté, égalité, fraternité" in a post-1984[*1984] era.
A field guide for dummies, the hoodwinked and technology buffs.
by Ricardo C. López
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I have noticed that the latest advances in technology have taken society off guard. Generally, people don't have a clear sense of what "metadata", encryption, a Faraday cage, Radio-Frequency identification (RFID) and many other technical terms mean, nor do they have an idea of what President Obama could have possibly meant when he evasively said:

"... *no one is listening your telephone calls* ..." [*Obama].

If we don't have a basic understanding of how such technologies work, we won't be able to see the far reaching implications that their abuses have on our lives from a wide ranging societal level down to each of us individually. Even Laura Poitras who was detained by the Austrian police during a flight transfer in Vienna for "*having a threat score that is off the Richter scale*" would (just?) "*remove their cellphone batteries and place them in the refrigerator*" ... [*Poitras].

For society (as it pertains to us all) to prosper in a healthy way, there are essential tenets that must be upheld, such as respect for the physical integrity of its constituent individuals, as well as their right to free thinking, speech and assembly, including the ability to question authority and the capacity to dissent their rulers' determinations. One of the fundamental pillars underpinning these principles is **-privacy-**, which politicians and police have done away with using modern communications. U.S. Senate Intelligence Committee chairwoman Diane Feinstein, supposedly overseeing the 1984-like policing apparatus, herself admitted:

"*I am not a high-tech techie, but I have been told that is not possible*" [*DF]

"that" meaning the kind of excesses and abuses that so-called "intelligence agencies" in the U.S. (and apparently the world at large), as well as all business entities which maintain private personal records, from your consumer patterns, conversations with your family and friends to your medical records.

Most people, thinking that the technical underpinnings of such matters are too complicated for them to understand, tend towards simplistic movie-like narratives and illusions framed by visual cues on their computer screens while trying to comprehend issues relating to information security. Thus being oblivious about the ramifications relating to running society as if "1984" had been written as a political manual instead of a futuristic manifesto. Those with a technical background do not have the patience and temperament to explain to common folks out there what is going on and why they should care in terms and language they can understand. People with more of a liberal arts/humanities background rarely grasp the technicalities of it all and choose to rely on what they "*have been told*".

I have spent a great deal of time trying to explain to friends and acquaintances, as well as on message boards:

<https://id.guardian.co.uk/profile/rclopez/public>

various issues relating to excessive control, policing and repression. Yet, as friends and colleagues have told me, it would be best if I actually write a book about these matters. I think I would be an ideal author to write about such themes, because:

1) I was born and raised in an overt police state (Cuba) as part of a family excelling and creative musicians and artists and high-profile political dissidents (former "communists" later imprisoned by Castro), I went to school in Stasi-ruled East Germany (Technical University Dresden/School of Physics 1982-1986) and worked as a data analyst/tech monkey on information theoretic issues (ghost phenomena) relating to solid states Physics.

2) My family lived under strict surveillance (including regular visits from the state security to our schools to monitor "how the children of the counterrevolutionaries were doing"). Since I was a little boy, my (politically) left-leaning and (philosophically/morally) quite anarchic mother made me very much aware of these

issues from an early age. My mother, who did part of her high school at Bethune-Cookman College in Daytona Beach, FL in the early 1950's, used to play the piano as if all tunes were somehow part of the same, never foster hate or moral alliances one way or the other. She would take her three children to church Sunday mornings (baseball time for all kids in my neighborhood) and made us take communion classes in the Cuba of the 1960s (times in which people would give standing ovations to Castro speeches in movie theaters in trances of collective madness)! In those days of feverish collective frenzy, any other ideology on the side of Marxism-Leninism, including regular church-goers and practitioners of religions of African ancestry, was persecuted but not outlawed, partially, it seems to me, as a way to keep the persecution machinery in business.

As a little boy I just wanted to play baseball and hated being forced to do otherwise. The few times I dared to ask my mother why, she explained to me: "*I simply don't trust the idea of some politicians controlling people's thoughts*" and that thing about "*everybody having to think and be the same*" (of which a little boy couldn't understand an iota). She would constantly (almost abusively!) make me think for myself. How nice having a super mom!

3) I have always loved to read (as a teen I lied to my girlfriend in order to hide away with a good book, I would still do that!). Eventually, I became a multilingual writer/published poet[*Pyramiden][*English/Gitmo poem]:

<http://hsymbolicus.wordpress.com/category/gedichter/> (Pyramiden)

<http://hsymbolicus.wordpress.com/category/poems/> (lies ...)

4) I do research in Consciousness Studies/Philosophy of Mind

// __ Towards a theory of the semiotic mind-body link and its relationship to communicative selves, cultures and society

<http://hsymbolicus.wordpress.com/category/semiotics/>

and one of the issues that have always bugged me is state repression: how easily a minority of people impose their (at times very wrong) ideas to establish a political framework, termed after some "ism", getting away with large-scale societal manipulation, repression and coercion.

5) I am a teacher

<http://hsymbolicus.wordpress.com/category/teachnyc/> (fix "morale")

who doesn't really like persuasion, but rather prefers to inform students in order to make them mind and own their own freedom.

6) and, last but not least, for some reason, not totally clear to me, police have always found me to be an inordinately attractive "person of interest". I keep a blog about my experience dealing with such issues:

<http://ipsoscustodes.wordpress.com/2010/10/16/quis-custodiet-ipsos-custodes/>

The latest odd joke of the U.S. government has been making my telco (Verizon) and my ISP (ACE Innovative) stop offering services to me, effectively forcing me to use Internet services on public libraries, my church and from friends.

youtube.com + sound record + transcripts pdf

The latest draft of the content outline/topical checklist of the book's table of contents you can find here:

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ I WILL NEED TO ~ ~ ~ ~ ~

1) spend time going over material (reading and earmarking some new books + critically watching and annotating movies) that have been consumed by and are now part of the collective consciousness of the general public with regard to surveillance and repression

2) study more about state repression from a historic, comparative point of view, including non-Western societies

3) develop and maintain a web site to continue cultivating those issues (I own quiscustodiet.org)

4) develop, implement and explain interfaces for cell phones and based on the arduino

card [*arduino], as well as a live CD [*LCD] based on Debian Linux to help people gauge, monitor, protect and defend themselves against surveillance

4) book reviewers (or coauthors?)

4.1) James Tracy: social justice organizer, author

jamestracywords.com/Contact/James-Tracy.html

amazon.com/James-Tracy/e/B0064W3ZU0/ref=ntt_athr_dp_pel_pop_1

4.2) Lisa Maya Knauer: Associate Professor of Anthropology

University of Massachusetts Dartmouth | 2011 Fulbright Scholar

4.3) Joel Kovel: author | amazon.com/Joel-Kovel/e/B001I9N90Q/

4.4) Lysander Puccio: proofreader, editor

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ BUDGET ~ ~ ~ ~ ~

* buying (approximate figures)

*. some of the technical and history books (I don't own): \$250

[list of books I should study]

*. media (topical videos): \$200 (+= \$450)

*. hardware (dedicated hard drive(s)) + electronics: \$350 (+= \$800)

* 6 months dedicated work: 6 * \$1,500 = \$9,000 (+= \$9,800)

* pay reviewers: ? + ? + ? + ? =

grand total:

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ REFERENCES ~ ~ ~ ~ ~

// __ [*1984]

// __ [*Obama] June 7th, 2013/San Jose, California/White House press in attendance:

"That's not what this program is about. As was indicated, what the intelligence community is doing is looking at the numbers and durations of calls. They're not looking at names and they're not looking at content, but sifting through this so-called meta data, they may identify potential leads with respect to people that might engage in terrorism."

<http://video.msnbc.msn.com/all-in-/52139214>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KVY3mq6B-5w>

// __ [*Poitras]:

How Laura Poitras Helped Snowden Spill His Secrets, by Peter Maass

<http://www.nytimes.com/2013/08/18/magazine/laura-poitras-snowden.html>

// __ [*DF] Congressional Oversight? Dianne Feinstein Says She's 'Not A High-Tech Techie' But Knows NSA Can't Abuse Surveillance

However, even more bizarre is the following quote from Senate Intelligence Committee boss, Senator Dianne Feinstein (a staunch defender of the surveillance programs):

Feinstein said, "I am not a high-tech techie, but I have been told that is not possible."

<http://www.techdirt.com/articles/20130801/16094924041/congressional-oversight-dianne-feinstein-says-shes-not-high-tech-techie-knows-nsa-cant-abuse-surveillance.shtml>

// __ [*arduino]

// __ [*Pyramiden]

// __ [*English/Gitmo poem]

// __ [*LCD]

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