from

glass architecture | to **big brother**

*Scenes from a Cultural History
of Transparency* | SCOTT McQUIRE

The recent international popularity of the *Big Brother* television franchise has highlighted some of the ways in which concepts of public and private space are being transformed in contemporary culture. The fact that the primary scene of action in *Big Brother* is a hybrid television studio fashioned as a domestic dwelling— a 'home' in which people live while being watched by others—brings into focus many issues raised by the increasing mediatisation of what was formerly private space.[1] In this sense, *Big Brother* forms a lightning rod for the ambivalent hopes and ambient fears produced by social and technological changes which have given new impetus to the modernist dream of the transparent society. In this essay, I want to reposition the *Big Brother* phenomenon in the context of an earlier debate about domestic space which occurred during the emergence of architectural modernism in the first decades of the twentieth century. At issue then was the physical reconstruction of the home, particularly through the increasing use of glass as a design element. While glass architecture is even more prevalent in the present, its spatial impact—particularly in terms of its capacity to alter the relationship between the 'inside' and the 'outside'—has now been matched or exceeded in many respects by the effects of electronic media. By tracing the parallel between the unsettling spatial effects produced by both glass construction and the electronic screen, I will sketch a cultural logic linking the modernist project of architectural transparency to the contemporary repositioning of the home as an interactive media centre. This shift corresponds to the emergence of a social setting in which personal identity is subject to new exigencies. As electronic media have both extended and transformed the spatial effects of glass construction, they have produced significant pressures on both private space and public sphere. Heightened exposure of the personal and the private is creating unpredictable consequences, not least in the political domain.

In 1926 the renowned Russian film maker Sergei Eisenstein travelled to Berlin, where his epic film *Battleship Potemkin* screened to great acclaim. Eisenstein and his regular cameraman Eduard Tisse stayed at the Hotel Hessler, a striking example of the new steel and glass architecture sprouting up in 1920s Berlin. The experience inspired him to jot down some notes for a possible film which became known as the 'Glass House' project.[2]

In 1930 Eisenstein was in Hollywood searching for a suitable film subject to be produced by Paramount Studios. His attention was caught by an article in the *New York Times Magazine* on Frank Lloyd Wright's project for a high-rise glass tower. Returning to his earlier idea, Eisenstein was inspired to write a synopsis for the 'Glass House'.[3] It included a prologue 'Symphony of Glass' and five narrative parts dealing with the social life he imagined might be experienced in such buildings. The drama turns around the new conditions of transparency, and the fact that it is suddenly possible to see many things that were previously hidden. Part 1 is titled 'We do not see each other', because, as Eisenstein scrawls, the residents 'do not want to see each other'. Part 2 represents a change as a poet 'comes and opens our eyes'. In Part 3, the residents begin to notice each other, but 'the effect is the opposite— they put walls between each other'. The poet makes an impassioned speech which results in the formation of a 'nudiste' [sic] association. In Part 4, they begin to '*use*' the fact that they can see each other. But there is a 'tailor' faction opposing the 'nudistes' and 'competition becomes battle'. Part 5 details the rise of 'plots, plots, plots' and the eventual suicide of the poet. Eisenstein's notes conclude: 'Impossibility to continue like that smashing of the house'.

Although Charlie Chaplin thought the scenario wonderful, Paramount rejected it. Yet the idea persisted throughout the rest of Eisenstein's life. A former student, Ivor Montagu, later recalled Eisenstein's fascination with the visual possibilities: 'The camera can show them [the inhabitants of the glass building] at any angle, and the richness and multiplicity of possible angles in such a set can be instantly imagined.'[4] In 1947, the year before his death, Eisenstein returned once again to the 'Glass House' project, this time in connection with a 3-D (stereoscopic) film. The poet's suicide scene—first drafted in 1926 only a year after Mayakovsky's suicide had signalled the decline of the Soviet avant-garde and the advent of Stalinist terror— is mentioned as an example of stereoscopy used for shock effect.

While his 'Glass House' film was never made, Eisenstein's identification of the new configurations of social life and sexual desire produced by the fusion of urban density with architectural transparency recur periodically in cinema, most prominently in Hitchcock's *Rear Window* (1954), which relocates Eisenstein's collective drama onto the psycho-social plane of the individual viewer-voyeur.

The 'Glass House' concept lies dormant, awaiting future reawakenings. In 1999, Dutch production house Endemol Entertainment reinvent the concept as a reality game format under the title 'The Golden Cage', subsequently franchising it as *Big Brother*.

— GLASS CULTURE AND REVOLUTION

Around the same time that Eisenstein first conceived his 'Glass House' project in 1926, another Berlin resident, Walter Benjamin, was commencing the monumental 'Arcades' project which would occupy him for the rest of his life. The similarities between the two endeavours extend beyond the fact that both were destined to remain unfinished. Parts of Benjamin's manuscript were heavily influenced by visionary writer Paul Scheerbart's 1914 monograph *Glasarchitektur* (Glass Architecture) which spoke of the need to eliminate 'the closed character of the rooms in which we live'.[5] In his 1929 essay on Surrealism, Benjamin was moved to extol the revolutionary attributes of glass architecture:

> To live in a glass house is a revolutionary virtue *par excellence*. It is also an intoxication, a moral exhibitionism that we badly need. Discretion concerning one's own existence, once an aristocratic virtue, has become more and more an affair of petit bourgeois parvenus.[6]

Like Eisenstein, Benjamin seized the glass house, which broke so radically with the crowded domestic ambiance of the typical nineteenth-century bourgeois dwelling, as a potent metaphor for social change. In the context of widespread debates about social revolution, glass construction symbolised the total transformation demanded by revolutionary consciousness. In his essay 'Experience and Poverty' (written at the end of 1933), Benjamin elaborated his position:

> If you enter a bourgeois room of the 1880s, for all the coziness it radiates, the strongest impression you receive may well be, 'You've got no business here'. And in fact you have no business in that room, for there is no spot on which the owner has not left his mark—the ornaments on the mantlepiece, the antimacassars on the armchairs, the transparencies in the windows, the screen in front of the fire. A neat phrase from Brecht helps out here: 'Erase the traces!' is the refrain in the first poem of his *Lesebuch für Städtebewohner* [Reader for City-Dwellers].
> Erase the traces: This has now been achieved by Scheerbart, with his glass, and by the Bauhaus, with its steel. They have created rooms in which it is hard to leave traces. It follows from the foregoing', Scheerbart declared a good 20 years ago, 'that we can surely talk about a "culture of glass"'. The new glass milieu will transform humanity utterly. And now it remains only to be wished that the new glass-culture will not encounter too many enemies.[7]

For Benjamin, at least in his more optimistic moments, glass architecture was a harbinger of revolution. Moreover, he invested glass itself with some unique qualities:

> It is no coincidence that glass is such a hard, smooth material to which nothing can be fixed. A cold and sober material into the bargain. Objects made of glass have no 'aura'. Glass is, in general, the enemy of secrets. It is also the enemy of possession.[8]

This passage is critical in understanding the role of glass architecture in Benjamin's thought. In it, he not only aligns glass with the exposure of bourgeois hypocrisy and the negation of commodity fetishism, but, crucially, with the vector of new media. This last connection can be seen more clearly by briefly recollecting the thrust of his famous 'Artwork' essay of 1935, in which he attributed the destruction of the auratic properties of the work of art to the 'technical reproducibility' introduced by the camera. Benjamin contended that this triggered an epochal shift in the social relations of the image, privileging 'use value' over 'cult value', and thus creating the potential for reconstructing aesthetics on the basis of politics. In designating glass objects as lacking 'aura', Benjamin positions glass architecture in a similar 'progressive' role. Like the camera, the function of glass is to liquidate cultural tradition, reshaping the entrenched social relations of domestic space. Benjamin's strategic association of domestic transparency with the aesthetics of new media such as photography and film also lays the ground for understanding the parallel between glass architecture and electronic screen media which has grown clearer in ensuing years. If, as Benjamin suggests, lack of aura is a function of spatial ambiguity arising from the erosion of uniqueness, glass walls accentuate this condition, destabilising the border of the room as much as the bounds of the home.[9]

— Utopia in glass

Both Eisenstein's and Benjamin's evocation of glass architecture as a catalyst for social transformation form part of a broader modern movement in which glass construction was adapted to the new public spaces of the emergent mass consumer society. The first large scale use of sheet glass appeared in the Parisian Arcades at the end of the 1820s, creating the interior streets which inspired Benjamin's *Passagen-Werk*. A similar design principle utilising glass and iron was adapted onto the world stage in the huge structures showcasing industrial commodities for the burgeoning circuit of great exhibitions and world's fairs. Most famous was Joseph Paxton's pioneering Crystal Palace of 1851, which exerted enormous influence on both practical and symbolic levels.[10] It not only inspired the most elegant architectural solution to the emerging urban problem of the multi-line railway station, resulting in sweeping iron and glass structures which have been rightfully hailed as the true cathedrals of the nineteenth-century metropolis, but seized the popular imagination concerning an architecture appropriate to the future.[11]

These utopic possibilities were extended by the 'Glass Chain' group which gathered in Germany around architect Bruno Taut and critic Adolph Behne in the period of ferment after the Great War.[12] Like Benjamin, they were inspired by Scheerbart's *Glasarchitektur* of 1914. If Taut's famous 'Glass House' pavilion erected at the Werkbund Exhibition of 1914 had manifested the symbolic potential of glass, Behne argued that the postwar potency of glass culture should be measured by its practical ability to generate social transformation.

> It is not the crazy caprice of a poet that glass architecture will bring a new culture. *It is a fact.* New social welfare organizations, hospitals, inventions or technical innovations and improvements—these will not bring a new culture—*but glass architecture will …* Therefore the European is right when he fears that glass architecture might become uncomfortable. Certainly it will be so. And that is not its least advantage. For first of all the European must be wrenched out of his cosiness.[13]

Attacking the enclosed 'cosiness' of bourgeois domestic sensibilities rapidly became a staple of the architectural avant-garde. By the 1920s, many leading architects were producing glass designs, as well as some actual buildings. As Walter Gropius (founder of the Bauhaus) wrote: 'glass architecture, which was just a poetic utopia not long ago, now becomes reality without constraint'.[14]

One of the most enthusiastic advocates of glass construction was the great modernist proselytiser Le Corbusier. Corbusier's famous preference for the horizontal window was legitimated by its capacity to reconfigure the boundary between interior and exterior, allowing free passage of light and air, and potentially erasing the difference between inside and outside.[15] Referring to his 1923 Geneva Villa (one of his earliest designs emphasising the horizontal window), Corbusier argued: 'A window eleven metres long brings the immensity of the outer world into the room, the unadulterated totality of a lake scene with its tempestuous moods or gleaming calm.'[16]

While the horizontal window allowed markedly greater openness in domestic space, it was only a way station en route to the complete elimination of the walls. By the early 1930s Le Corbusier was advocating the 'window-wall' as a key element of domestic design, acknowledging that: 'The horizontal window and finally the "window wall" have brought us to a point that has nothing in common with the past'.[17] With the window-wall, every home had the potential to become a glass house, and the sense of physical enclosure that had hitherto characterised dwelling space was at serious risk of becoming a purely nostalgic point of reference.

— The politics of transparency

Siegfried Giedion, arguably the most influential interpreter of modern architecture, equated the indeterminate boundaries created by glass construction with the Cubist destruction of

centred perspective. For Giedion, the new glass architecture amounted to 'an epochal move away from Renaissance spatiality'.[18] This air of epochal change inevitably meant that glass construction was frequently invested with overt political connotations. In describing his (ultimately unsuccessful) design for the proposed League of Nations Building, Hannes Meyer, who had succeeded Gropius at the Bauhaus, declared:

> If the intentions of the League of Nations are sincere, then it cannot possibly cram such a novel social organisation into the straitjacket of traditional architecture. No pillared reception rooms for wearied monarchs but hygienic workrooms for the busy representatives of their people. No back corridors for backstairs diplomacy but open glazed rooms for public negotiation of honest men.[19]

An even broader set of connections was made on the other side of the Atlantic by Sheldon Chaney in his influential *The New World Architecture* (1930):

> Many times I have mentioned the word 'openness' as an ideal of the new home building. I use the word with more than a spatial connotation. It seems to me that there is going on a freeing process in regard to both our physical and our mental lives. While the old walled-in house, the essentially castle-refuge sort of structure, is giving way before less-confined living space, women are discarding most of their clothes, and human minds are freeing themselves slowly from old superstitions, old limiting religions, old narrowly selfish motives. This is a general coming-forth—which seems to me calculated for the better health and the greater happiness of mankind.[20]

Faith in openness and transparency forms one of the pillars of architectural modernism. It also supports the modern political ideal of representative democracy, in which the media's role of disclosure and exposure has been enshrined in the notion of the 'fourth estate'. The close connection many at the time perceived between the social function of modern media, the aesthetics of the new architecture and the emergence of a more general 'openness' in society was succinctly summed up by renowned photographer Edward Weston:

> Only with an effort can the camera be forced to lie: basically it is an honest medium, so the photographer is much more likely to approach nature in a spirit of inquiry, of communion, instead of with the saucy swagger of self-dubbed 'artists'. And contemporary vision, the new life, is based on an honest approach to all problems, be they morals or art. False fronts to buildings, false standards in morals, subterfuges and mummery of all kinds, must be, will be scrapped.[21]

Confidence in the technological renovation of social life by what Moholy-Nagy influentially dubbed the 'new vision' was widely shared by the avant-garde of the 1920s and 1930s.

For Le Corbusier, the importance of the window and architectural transparency was not only aesthetic and hygienic: above all, it signified the end of superstition and irrationality. The belief that rational housing would give birth to rational society courses through his work. This moral dimension returns us to the 'revolutionary virtue' of glass architecture identified by Walter Benjamin and dramatised by Sergei Eisenstein. For Corbusier, the choice was simple: ARCHITECTURE OR REVOLUTION.[22]

Others were less convinced. The point at which the 'openness' necessary for legitimate scrutiny spills into an authoritarian demand for visibility marks a structural ambivalence inhabiting the joint projects of architectural and political transparency.

— Pitiless light

Criticism of the new architectural fashion for larger windows and greater structural openness was coextensive with its emergence. As early as 1888, Cornelius Gurlitt, who began a discussion on windows by citing Goethe's dying words, 'More light', complained:

> [T]he large window has joined the room too intimately to the outside world; human skill in creating large and entirely transparent panes by means of which the dividing line for the eye between the room and the outside world is blurred has increased too much for it not to have impaired the room's artistic seclusion.[23]

Likewise Baillie Scott, writing in 1912, lambasted the fashion for bigger windows in English suburban villas:

> Even from the outside we can see the colossal breaches in the walls which, like shop windows, are calculated for their external effect ... Inside a pitiless blinding light that destroys all peace and sense of security.[24]

But the most damning indictment of the 'pitiless' nature of modernist transparency was composed not by an architect, but by Russian writer Yevgeny Zamyatin in his extraordinary novel *We*. The book's unhappy publishing history is scarcely surprising, given that it was written in 1920–21 amidst the flowering of Soviet constructivism, and, like it, was rapidly overtaken by the socialist realist orthodoxy of Stalinism.[25] A forerunner of Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Zamyatin's dystopic tale is set in a futuristic city in which all buildings, and even the pavements, are entirely made of glass. As a result, personal space has largely disappeared. In its stead, life is ruled by the exigencies of the 'Time-Table', under the watchful eyes of the Guardians and the Benefactor, with only two hours per day nominally set aside for personal time.

The one exception to this regime of omnipresent surveillance is sex, but it too is rationally organised, with participants allotted specific days and times. The protagonist D narrates:

At home I stepped hurriedly into the office, handed in my pink coupon and received the certificate permitting me to lower the shades. This right is granted only on sexual days. At all other times we live behind our transparent walls that seem woven of gleaming air—we are always visible, always washed in light. We have nothing to conceal from one another. Besides, this makes much easier the difficult and noble task of the Guardians. For who knows what might happen otherwise? Perhaps it was precisely those strange opaque dwellings of the ancients that gave rise to their paltry cage psychology. "My [*sic!*] home is my castle". What an idea!"[26]

In Zamyatin's novel, the exposure of the bourgeois interior widely seen as a precondition for social revolution has become an overexposure which eradicates the architectural and political space for individual subjectivity. In fact, Zamyatin's conceit recalls the thrust of Benjamin's observation about the nineteenth-century interior: 'The interior is not only the universe, but also the étui [case or protective covering] of the private person'.[27] If the perforation of this covering initiates the decomposition of an historically constituted mode of subjectivity, the essentially *political* question remains as to whether its loss should be mourned. In other words, does the increased visibility of what was once the private domain erode qualities that are more than mere functions of what Benjamin dismissed as 'petit-bourgeois' sensibility?

— ## From glass windows to screen walls

By the 1960s, openable windows began to disappear in commercial buildings.[28] While hermetically sealed buildings had appeared as early as Frank Lloyd Wright's Larkin Building in 1904, and were a favourite theme of Le Corbusier in the 1930s, their generalisation as an architectural staple was symptomatic not only of an increasingly regimented International Style, but also of the gradual displacement of the traditional functions of the window by other technologies such as artificial lighting and air-conditioning.

In Paul Virilio's evocative chronology, the history of the window can be divided into three phases.[29] For Virilio, the first 'window' is an entrance or door: the single opening with the primary purpose of allowing the passage of occupants which is common to cave and room alike. Following the door-window is the light-window which was so central to the aspirations of architectural modernism: a specialised opening designed primarily to facilitate the movement of light and air rather than bodies and things. However, once the glass window begins to lose its traditional functions of illumination and ventilation, its pre-eminent modern function as defined by Le Corbusier and his peers comes to the fore: to frame the exterior as a view or *image*. As a result, the window's effect in creating spatial ambiguity is greatly accentuated. With the 'picture window' or window-wall, the boundary between the inside

and outside of a structure is effectively marked by an image. In this context, it is not surprising that the convergence between window and screen gains momentum. In the last decade, as electronic screens have assumed increasing responsibility for articulating physically discrete spaces, the transformation of Corbusier's window-wall to screen-wall has started to appear on architectural agendas everywhere. One high-profile example is the Bill Gates mansion in Seattle, which deploys multiple large wall-screens to display the host's digital art collection. But the appearance of plasma screens and digital projection systems as mainstream consumer electronics items presages a much wider application of the wall screen as an architectural element.[30]

What is perhaps most significant in this context about Virilio's classification of the screen as the 'third window' is that he emphasises not the continuity, but the extent to which the electronic window *ruptures* the spatial order of its predecessors. What we see through the screen-window is no longer restricted by locale or bound to a stable, centred perspective. Unlike the 'view through the window' given by the earlier tradition of European landscape painting, the electronic image is inherently mobile and infinitely restless. Like the moving cinema image whose codes it borrows in some respects, the electronic screen carries an image composed of a montage of discrete fragments; unlike film, it can also depict live events in 'real time'. In short, the live screen interface of television and computer constitutes not only a new mode of representation, but institutes a new order of subjective experience, one which has proved capable of transforming the notion of the 'eye-witness' into an uncertain currency.

Implanting this inherently *active* window at the heart of domestic space establishes a new dynamic affecting modes of social interaction and urban inhabitation. In Saskia Sassen's terms, electronic screens constitute quintessential 'frontier' zones:[31] they are 'windows' which work to redefine the borders of a room as much as the frontier of a nation-state. A contemporary room equipped with a television screen or networked computer monitor is immediately drawn into a wider spatio-temporal orbit in which the lines demarcating the local and the regional from the national and the transnational are increasingly blurred. The social practices and modes of interaction which screen-windows sustain produce novel spatial flows overlapping the more traditional orders of spatial experience, including the architectural, the urban and the territorial. Borrowing from Guy Debord, this can be described as the emergence of a new psycho-geography, which vastly increases the complexity of mapping contemporary processes of cultural affiliation and patterns of collective belonging.

— Reinventing the glass house

In retrospect, it is apparent that the modern glass-walled house was already a media device of sorts. As Beatriz Colomina has pointed out, Le Corbusier's description of controlling the

flow of light through a 'glass wall … equipped with "diaphragms" for shutting out light at will' effectively conceptualises the modern home as a camera pointed at Nature.[32] Conceiving the home as a camera framing a view was undoubtedly a radical move in the 1930s, and offered Le Corbusier a powerful metaphor for legitimating the universality of design to which he aspired.[33] However, while Le Corbusier conceived the glass-walled houses primarily as a device which enabled its sovereign inhabitants to see 'their' view outside, visibility inevitably cut both ways. This reverse gaze was already apparent to Zamyatin—and to anyone who actually lived in a glass-walled structure.

In retrospect, it is also evident that the modernist glass house offered a spectacle waiting to be filmed. Or, better still, televised. Endemol's reinvention of Eisenstein's 'Glass House' concept gave it the novel twist that their experimental domicile could be watched live over an extended period of time. The distinctive facet of television has always been its ability to relay remote events live into the home. The parallel between television and the modernist function of the glass window-wall gave television its common soubriquet of 'window to the world'. Turning that window back onto the home itself has long been a staple of television programming, producing numerous genres exploring domesticity and family life, from drama and soap opera to documentary, life-style and beyond.

While Endemol's *Big Brother* houses are not glass houses in any strict architectural sense, they bring to life the sort of project Eisenstein envisaged in the 1920s.[34] Eisenstein's enthusiasm for 'the richness and multiplicity of possible angles in such a set' returns in *Big Brother*'s marketing slogan extolling the number of cameras surveying their trademark houses, leaving no space in which to hide. Of course, Endemol's houses didn't need to have glass walls to achieve this end. Miniaturised concealed cameras could have produced the basic effect of total surveillance, using the techniques of 'virtual transparency' developed in prototype surveilled spaces such as prisons and shopping malls. However, the mirror-glass walls used in Endemol's design gave the camera crews far greater flexibility, particularly in achieving close-ups.

This has proved important in the hybrid visual style adopted on *Big Brother*, mixing surveillance with soap, and moving between 'amateur' and 'professional' codes. As Bernadette Flynn has pointed out:

> In its visual coverage, *Big Brother* vacillates between a distinctly surveillance camera point of view in its wide aerial shots from the ceiling to the eye-level close scrutiny and direct address of participant film-making. In so doing, it reinforces and valorises both the voyeuristic and the intimate aspects of its programming. This splices together notions of social control and visual neutrality associated with surveillance—with ideas of intimacy and subjectivity associated with the domestic camcorder (albeit simulating them through the extensive professional camera and recording apparatus).[35]

This melange of camera styles reflects *Big Brother*'s hybrid status in other respects: it mixes not only genres, but media platforms and cultural references to extend the modernist project of architectural transparency beyond its previous parameters.

— Alone with big brother

Part of the frisson of Endemol's creation rests on its playful appropriation of George Orwell's notorious vision of a totalitarian society. In Orwell's novel, published on the cusp of the mainstreaming of broadcast television, it is significant that the telescreen is not a portable box like a television set, but a structural element of the wall. It can be neither avoided nor shut down; it is simply part of every living space.[36] Like today's Internet, the Orwellian telescreen allowed both transmission and reception: the key difference is that Orwell imagined a network which is extremely centralised. In place of peer-to-peer communication, there is merely a reverse channel constructing a Benthamite panoptical surveillance system. Efficient functioning of the system, as Foucault described so meticulously in *Discipline and Punish*, depends upon coupling the asymmetry of the gaze to the uncertainty of actual supervision. If these structural conditions are met, surveillance is apt to be internalised. For Orwell, this psychological transformation is the primary fact of social life under Big Brother:

> There was of course no way of knowing whether you were being watched at any moment. … You had to live—did live, from habit that became instinct—in the assumption that every sound you made was overheard, and except in darkness, every movement scrutinized.[37]

Echoing Zamyatin's *We*, the outcome in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is an almost total loss of private space. The exception to the rule occurs when the protagonist, Winston, is able to locate an architectonic blind spot in his home:

> [F]or some reason the telescreen in the living room was in an unusual position. Instead of being placed, as was normal, in the end wall, where it could command the whole room, it was in the longer wall, opposite the window … By sitting in the alcove and keeping well back, Winston was able to remain outside the range of the telescreen … It was partly the unusual geography of the room that had suggested to him the thing that he was now about to do.[38]

This stolen private space becomes the place in which Winston's inner voice first emerges from its internal clamour, manifesting itself in that most individual undertaking: the writing of a personal diary.

Gradually, other cracks seem to emerge in the totality of surveillance. When Winston and his secret lover Julia find a place to meet, they rent a room in the prole quarters in the older part of the city.[39] Prole apartments are bereft of telescreens, a lack which is compensated by the possibility of privacy.[40] According to Charrington, the old man who rents them the room

(and is later unmasked as a member of the feared Thought Police): 'Everyone wanted a place where they could be alone occasionally'.⁴¹ Being 'alone' in this context means finding a space for personal expression and individual subjectivity, whereas being with others meant wearing a mask of stultifying social conformity.

Today we might be moved to ask: have these coordinates fundamentally shifted? In the lead-up to the second Australian series of *Big Brother* in 2002, 27,000 prospective contestants applied to live for thirteen weeks in a fully surveilled space in which (almost) every action and reaction would be open to public scrutiny. The international popularity of *Big Brother* suggests that social attitudes towards surveillance have changed markedly. How does the condition that Orwell narrated as a totalitarian nightmare transpose itself into popular entertainment in barely two generations? Or, perhaps more pertinently, what does such a shift reveal about contemporary attitudes to private space?

— The publicity of the private

The salient point about Endemol's *Big Brother* is not simply its fusion of the distributive function of electronic media with the design principles of glass architecture, but its promotion of a new mode for the public viewing of private life. Clearly this change did not occur overnight and a number writers have offered useful overviews of the key precursors, which include older documentary forms such as cinema verité and direct cinema, 'fly-on-the-wall' reality television and docu-soaps, as well the general trend towards what Jon Dovey has called 'first person media'.⁴² Two close forerunners in terms of their focus on life 'at home' were the 1973 television series *An American Family* made by PBS in the United States and the BBC–ABC co-production *Sylvania Waters* shot in suburban Sydney in 1992. Both these programs used also used 'real people' (or non-professional actors) to create multi-episode prime-time docu-soaps situated principally in domestic space.

However, although it occupied similar domestic terrain, Endemol's *Big Brother* concept differed in a number of respects. Firstly, *Big Brother* is not filmed in an existing home, but a purpose-built facility functioning as a studio set for an extended game show. Secondly, the participants are not ostensibly living their 'normal' lives under the camera's eye, but are isolated in an enclosed environment, cut off from all media flows and outside interactions. While at times they are encouraged to perform for the camera (for example, speaking direct to camera in 'first person' mode for eviction nominations), they are generally expected to 'forget' the camera's existence. Thirdly, they are also subject to competition with each other, introducing an inevitable source of tension with group solidarity. Finally, and, to my mind, the most significant difference from the tradition of the docu-soap is that *Big Brother* was also able to utilise live transmission. While much of the television coverage is presented in traditional

edited packages, with live crosses exploited primarily for the weekly nomination and eviction episodes, live coverage was the staple on the Internet.

In fact, watching *Big Brother* streamed via the Internet rather than television is to watch an entirely different program. In place of the tightly edited and smoothly narrated half-hour packages of commercial television is a far looser, less directed experience. Despite the usual gestures towards 'viewer control', such as providing a menu of different camera angles which can be selected, anyone who has sat and watched *Big Brother* on the Internet for any length of time will eventually encounter what Marcel Duchamp laughingly dubbed the most radical element introduced by art happenings in the 1960s: boredom. Things meander. Narrative threads and character traits are less clearly defined. Given that boredom is the most repressed element of contemporary broadcast television, the negative 'nothing's happening' against which the dominant narrative economy of 'privileged moments' defines itself, its appearance in the webcast of a popular phenomenon deserves attention. While it may never become more than a novelty, *Big Brother*'s mobilisation of unedited real-time streaming alerts us to a trend which is assuming new significance.

As early as the 1920s, painter and film maker Fernand Léger dreamt of a film which would record the life of a man and a woman over twenty-four hours. Nothing should be omitted or hidden; nor should they ever become aware of the presence of the camera.[43] While Léger's ambition pales before the megalomania of the God-like 'director' in Peter Weir's *The Truman Show* (1998), it is interesting that he himself never made such a film, believing it would be 'intolerable' to watch. However, in the 1960s Andy Warhol took a step on the way, initiating a series of conceptual experiments in cinematic duration. Warhol filmed ordinary activities such as sleeping and eating in real time, culminating with the epic *Empire* (1964)—an eight hour film of the Empire State Building shot with a completely static camera.[44] A few years later, artist Dan Graham adapted the new technology of video to a similar experimental purpose, setting up a series of mirrored and windowed chambers in which viewer-participants could see each other both 'directly' and 'reflected', as well as on closed-circuit screens which showed live and slightly delayed image feeds. Graham's aim was to explore the new perceptual experiences and interactions sustained by the hybrid media-architecture environment he argued television and video had introduced.[45]

The significance in this context of Warhol's and Graham's practice is that, like the protagonists of direct cinema, both suspend editing in favour of uninterrupted real time coverage. From this point, it is a relatively small step to aestheticising the automated vision of the surveillance camera, which formed the mainstay of the video industry prior to the mass commercialisation of the camcorder in the 1980s. By the 1980s, surveillance camera footage was beginning to appear in video art.[46] Within a few years, similar footage was being re-packaged for commercial television (as *Funniest Home Videos*, and the like). The popularity

of these television genres is one indicator of the extent to which the presence of surveillance cameras has now been routinised and normalised.[47] But while television inevitably domesticates surveillance camera footage by presenting it in tight packages of edited highlights, the Internet doesn't have the problem of spectrum scarcity. This has led to a recent proliferation of digital cameras positioned in private homes which can be watched live on the Internet, twenty-four hours a day.

One of the first notable examples was the Web site established by Jennifer Ringley, a young Washington student, who generated enormous publicity when she began to 'live life on-line' in 1996, using a digital camera to upload images of her one-room apartment to the Web every two minutes. Since its inception, the so-called 'Jennicam' has become a thriving enterprise attracting subscriptions—and innumerable imitators.[48] While there was undoubtedly a pornographic element to public interest in Ringley, the voyeurism involved goes well beyond the simple possibility of encountering nudity. With the webcam, the fantasy of being able to observe the private life of a total stranger in all its minute details gains new momentum, as more and more 'private' spaces are opened for all to see.

While not yet entirely 'natural', it is today widely expected that intimate 'private' images are susceptible to widespread 'public' display, while 'public' events of all kinds are piped directly into what were once 'private' spaces. If this reconfiguration of public and private space is partly a technological function of the rise of sophisticated media and communication systems, it is equally the result of the growing internalisation of the surveillance potential of these mechanisms. When asked 'Why are you giving up your privacy like this?', Jennifer Ringley responded: 'Because I don't feel I'm giving up my privacy. Just because people can see me doesn't mean it affects me—I'm still alone in my room, no matter what.'[49]

— Civility and celebrity

Such a statement would have been inconceivable to George Orwell. Being alone demanded, above all, the absence of the telescreen. When the Party member O'Brien reveals he can turn off the screen in his apartment, he immediately tells Winston and Julia: 'We are alone'.[50] In contrast, contemporary surveillance is not only tolerated, but frequently sought after. As Ana (one of Jennifer Ringley's imitators and creator of the website Ana-Cam) puts it: 'I don't mind people watching, in fact I find it rather comforting, especially when I'm sleeping'.[51]

As John Tagg has argued, the camera's recording presence was long ago routinised as a sign of accession to the status of subjecthood—proof that 'I' am someone worth photographing or filming constitutes a peculiarly modern proof that 'I' exist as a unique individual.[52] What has changed in recent years is the extent to which such personal images and interactions, which hold unique significance for the individuals involved, are routinely distributed along major media and communication circuits, forging a new entertainment currency in the

process. This threshold reflects the emergence of a new understanding of the degree of personal detail it is acceptable to reveal in everyday social interaction. A quarter of a century ago in his classic book *The Fall of Public Man*, Richard Sennett argued that:

> Wearing a mask is the essence of civility. Masks permit pure sociability, detached from the circumstances of power, malaise, and private feelings of those who wear them. Civility has as its aim the shielding of others from being burdened with oneself.[53]

For Sennett, 'civility' is a social art practiced by individuals exercising reciprocal self-restraint. As Zygmunt Baumann glosses the concept:

> [civility] means, first and foremost, the provision of spaces which people may share as *public personae*—without being nudged, pressed or cajoled to take off their masks and 'let themselves go', 'express themselves', confess their inner feelings and put on display their intimate thoughts, dreams and worries.[54]

Baumann's concept of 'civil space' would seem to be under increasing threat, particularly in terms of media representations of personal life. A key indicator of this trend has been the rise of 'confessional' television programs, pioneered in the United States by *Donahue* and *Oprah*. Equally, the popularity of highly personal talkback radio, and, more recently, the explosion of chatrooms and blogs on the Internet, testify to a significant shift in what is deemed an 'acceptable' level of exposure of private issues in the public sphere. In its place has emerged an increasing tolerance of—or demand for—the revelation of the 'true self' in public. Expressing one's 'innermost' feelings is no longer a burden upon others, but a mark of respect. Openness and personal intimacy are now expected, not only from family and friends, but from sports stars, journalists and politicians alike— in fact, all those celebrity public figures we 'know' from the media. This shift highlights the manner in which increased exposure of the private sphere inevitably unsettles the customary functioning of the public domain. It also alerts us to the importance of developing new forms of discrimination in an era in which manufactured intimacy has become a key commodity of 'professional communications'.

— AN EMOTIONAL PERFORMANCE

The transformation of the traditional conception of the public sphere was the aim of the feminist dictum 'the personal is political', which has helped to legitimate public scrutiny of a range of previously marginalised issues, from 'domestic violence' and child abuse to individual feelings and emotional life. The new media formats such as docu-soaps and reality game shows have filtered this insight through the lens of what might be called a positivist Freudianism: the generalised assumption that getting things off your chest will be good for you. A key attraction of such formats is the charge of 'authentic' emotion that personal

revelations offer to audiences hungry for emotional connection. As Jane Roscoe put it in describing a scene from the docu-soap *Single Girls*:

> It would be difficult to argue that *Single Girls* did much more than divert and entertain, but it *was* compelling—partly because, like other docu-soaps, it presented moments of melodrama and partly because, through its construction, we were offered what I would describe as 'flickers of authenticity'.[55]

Roscoe's phrase echoes Walter Benjamin's evocation of 'contingency' as the bedrock of photo-realism.[56] Like all realisms, 'authenticity' is notoriously difficult to either define or to guarantee—it must be *felt*. The status of the authentic arouses particular concern in reality game shows, where the contestants are not only conscious of being on-camera, but are required to perform specific tasks. This demand to reconcile oscillations between 'real person' and 'performer' produces a complex combination of involved intimacy and detached scepticism, in which the audience's awareness of the contrived nature of the situation is coupled to their desire to, somehow, see the 'real person' beyond its veils. The pull of saturation coverage of private living space, as offered on *Big Brother*, is its promise of a greater haul of authentic moments and genuine emotions. Roscoe argues:

> These moments of so-called authenticity—moments when we think we see the real person— take on key importance in these new factual hybrids [such as *Big Brother*]. Such authenticity is both reassuring—linking us back to factual discourse and the real—and it is the prize in the audience game of performance, thus presenting us with a satisfying experience.[57]

Sociologists such as Erving Goffman long ago argued that all projections of a self contain performative aspects, in which individuals adopt different roles in order to adapt to new situations.[58] Recent social theory has offered a more persuasive version of this theory, liberating it from the normative status Goffman ascribes to the individual subject, and situating the development as an historical dynamic in the context of what has been variously described as 'second modernity', 'reflexive modernity' and 'liquid modernity'.[59] These appellations all refer to the emergence of a new phase of modern society predicated on heightened individualism, in which the patterns and configurations for the formation of identity are no longer self-evident or given.

In this social setting in which identity formation has become a personal 'project' of individual self-creation, the media plays an increasingly important role. This now goes beyond what might be called the traditional media function of providing a repertoire of role models supporting processes of individual and collective identification. In Baumann's terms, 'we are presently moving from an era of pre-allocated "reference groups" into the epoch of "universal comparison"'.[60] This threshold, in which older, more rigid categories of identification such

as class are being displaced by more 'flexible' forms of individual self-fashioning and constant re-evaluation, situates the critical role of feedback mechanisms to contemporary forms of social interaction. Media forms such as *Big Brother* are notable for their increasing incorporation of reflexive mechanisms critical to the dynamics of individual self-creation. Burgeoning opportunities for 'involvement', whether through the customisation of consumer preferences, or through participation as a contestant or audience member on a reality game show, routinely require the provision of personal information and the revelation of what were once regarded as 'private' feelings and emotions.

Giving up private space in the name of public entertainment may well offer a glimpse of a more open society with greater transparency in interpersonal relations. But this promise should also be seen as part of the historical process by which surveillance has been normalised in the name of minimising social risk. It constitutes a 'softer' panopticism of pleasurable viewing and consumption, complementing the 'harder' disciplinary mechanisms of computerised surveillance and social policing. This is the social condition that the *Big Brother* franchise turns into prime-time drama: a 'real life' drama dealing with the altered status of the modern 'reflexive' subject living in 'real time' media culture. It is a drama situated at the historical juncture at which the increased illumination of domestic space by media and communication technologies and the increased internalisation of surveillance mechanisms by home viewers are rapidly being normalised. It offers the spectacle of individual self-fashioning in a reflexive environment which provides numerous feedback mechanisms for evaluating success and failure in this undertaking. In this respect, it is not the various definitions of 'winners' or 'losers' which inevitably emerge which is most significant, but the gradual embedding in consciousness of the concept of public 'testing' of the performance of the private self.

The rise of the media-based 'performative' self has significantly increased the stakes of performance, as the public projection of 'personality' assumes critical political overtones. With the emergence of celebrity-oriented political systems, personal qualities and emotional integrity must be convincingly displayed by all candidates with serious aspirations. The successful politician, like the successful *Big Brother* contestant, is likely to be one able to pass the 'character test'. Scandals can only be defeated by even more complete revelations and abject public apologies. The primary need is to be able to *act with conviction*—a phrase that once meant with faith in the justice of one's cause, but today might equally be reformulated as the ability to perform the 'true self' without self-consciousness.

— Coda: and we loved big brother

Endemol's borrowing of Orwell's ominous figure seems doubly ironic now that computer processing has made the level of surveillance of which Orwell warned an achievable reality

for the first time. However, this prospect is no longer widely perceived as a threat. As Mark Andrejevic notes: 'The totalitarian spectre [has] gone, replaced by the increasingly routine, annoying but necessary intrusions of commerce in the form of the entertainment industry'.[61] Rather than the mythical, omnipotent patriarch who represents the face of the Party in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Endemol's *Big Brother* merely brings us face to face with ourselves.

In this respect, it is worth remembering that the functioning of the political system in Orwell's novel depended as much on citizen surveillance as on the physical repression of the Thought Police and their minions. The competitive structure of Endemol's *Big Brother* concept plays out its own scenario of policing through the serial ejection of household members, in which choices are justified on the basis of liking or disliking perceived personality traits. The pleasure of this game—particularly the varied media and fan discourses it engenders—resembles a classical Durkheimian exercise in achieving social solidarity. The community is united by the symbolic expulsion of the despised 'other'.

Is it only coincidence that the broader geopolitical context in which the *Big Brother* format has achieved massive popularity is one in which the place of the profoundly homeless— asylum seekers and refugees— has become an increasingly strident political issue? The mantra '*You* decide', used to advertise weekly *Big Brother* evictions, found strong resonances in the 2001 federal election campaign in Australia, fought around the issue of border protection and dominated by the Liberal Party's campaign slogan '*We* decide who comes into *our* country' (my emphasis). This concern over who belongs and who should be excluded from the national homeland forms the larger context in which the altered spatial relations produced by modern transportation and communication technologies is played out. Shifts in the balance between public and private space inevitably raise demands for new regimes of surveillance at both the 'soft' and 'hard' ends of the spectrum. The popularity of *Big Brother* might be seen as the entertainment complement to other policies of 'border protection' which preoccupy the contemporary nation-state swimming the tides of globalisation.

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1. While it is outside the scope of this essay, it is worth noting that the stricter polarisation between public and private domains that underwrites the dominant conception of the public sphere first emerged in Europe in the early seventeenth century. Terence Riley has argued that 'the privacy of the private house' grew from the early seventeenth century, as its compendium of medieval functions such as workplace and guest house were replaced by specialised structures, until the appearance of media devices such as radio in the early twentieth century. See his *The Un-private House*, New York, Museum of Modern Art, 1999, pp. 9–11.

2. See Jay Leyda and Zina Voynow, *Eisenstein at Work*, London, Methuen, 1982, p. xii.

3. Leyda and Voynow, pp. 44–5. All quotes in this paragraph are from these notes. Eisenstein had previously reworked the idea in 1928.

4. Ivor Montagu, *With Eisenstein in Hollywood*, New York, International Publishers, 1969, p. 102.

5. Paul Scheerbart, *Glass Architecture*, trans. J. Palmes, New York, Praeger, 1972, p. 41.

6. Walter Benjamin, 'Surrealism: The Last Snapshot of the European Intelligentsia', *One Way Street and Other Writings*, trans. E. Jephcott & K. Shorter, London, Verso, 1985, p. 228.

7. Walter Benjamin, *Selected Writings* (Volume 2 1927–1934), Michael W. Jennings, Howard Eiland and Gary Smith (eds), trans. Rodney Livingstone and others, Cambridge, MA and London, Belknap Press, p. 734.

8. Benjamin, *Selected Writings* (Volume 2 1927–1934), p. 734.

9. In his 'Little History of Photography', Benjamin asked: 'What is aura, actually? A strange weave of space and time; the unique appearance or semblance of distance, no matter how close it may be'. *Selected Writings* (Volume 2 1927–1934), p. 518.

10. The Crystal Palace utilised an unprecedented 400 tons of glass, amounting to one third of England's total production only a decade earlier. See Forrest Wilson, 'Covering Holes in the Wall', *Architecture*, vol. 77, no. 8, 1988, p. 95. In terms of its influence, Kenneth Frampton comments that: 'The Crystal Palace was not so much a particular form as it was a building process made manifest as a total system, from its initial conception, fabrication and trans-shipment, to its final erection and dismantling'. *Modern Architecture: A Critical History*, Thames and Hudson, London, 1982, p. 34.

11. In Chernyshevskii's famous 1865 novel *What is to be Done?*, when the heroine dreams about buildings suitable for the revolutionary society to come, she declares: 'There is a precursor of such architecture: it is the palace of cast-iron and glass built on a hill in Sydenham'. Paxton's structure was moved to Sydenham in 1852, before its destruction by fire in 1936.

12. The 'Glass Chain' correspondence between fourteen writers including Taut, Behne and Walter Gropius followed the suppression of overt political activities of the Workers Council for Art.

13. Quoted in Frampton, pp. 116–17.

14. Gropius cited in Eve Blau and Nancy J. Troy (eds), *Architecture and Cubism*, Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montréal; Cambridge, MA., The MIT Press, 1997, p. 232.

15. To increase the quantity of light in a structure made of traditional materials such as stone or brick inevitably demanded increasing the height of the windows, and therefore the ceilings, because there were strict limits to the size of horizontal perforations in load-bearing walls. Reinforced concrete altered this equation entirely, not only allowing bigger windows but greater flexibility in their positioning. Corbusier argued vehemently that the vertical window belonged to an obsolete mode of construction, a stance which led to a public controversy with his former mentor August Perret. See Bruno Reichlin, 'The Pros and Cons of the Horizontal Window', *Daidalos*, no. 13, 1984, 65–78. My thanks to Suzie Attiwill for drawing my attention to this essay.

16. Corbusier quoted in Reichlin, p. 72.

17. Corbusier, *Precisions*, trans. Edith Schreiber Aujame, London, and Cambridge, MA, MIT Press, 1991 (1930), p. 65.

18. Detlef Mertins, 'Anything but Literal: Siegfried Giedion and the Reception of Cubism in Germany' in Blau and Troy, p. 234.

19. Quoted in Frampton, p. 134.

20. Chaney quoted in Donald Albrecht, *Designing Dreams: Modern Architecture in the Movies*, New York, Harper and Row, 1986, p. 12.

21. Quoted in Susan Sontag, *On Photography*, Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1979, p. 186. Weston was part of the influential group gathered around Alfred Stieglitz and *Camera Work* in New York.

22. This is the coda added to his influential *Towards a New Architecture*. Corbusier's stance was based on his contention that existing conditions prevented workers developing an understanding of industrial labour. His solution was for the masses to claim 'their rights to a machine for living in'. See *Towards a New Architecture*, trans. F. Etchells, Architectural Press, London, 1946 (1923), pp. 256, 259.

23. C. Gurlitt, *Im Bürgerhause*, Dresden, 1888, quoted in Reichlin, p. 76.

24. M.H. Baillie Scott, *Häuser und Gärten*, Berlin, 1912 quoted in Reichlin, pp. 76–7.

25. Although first written in 1920–21, and first published in New York in 1924, *We* was not

published in Russian until 1954, and even then not in Russia. Despite the closeness of the subject matter to Eisenstein's 'Glass House' idea, it is uncertain if he ever read it. He doesn't mention it in his autobiography.

26. Yevgeny Zamyatin, *We*, trans. M. Ginsburg, New York, the Viking Press, 1972, p. 19.

27. Walter Benjamin, 'Paris: Capital of the Ninenteenth Century' (Exposé of 1935), *The Arcades Project*, trans. H. Eiland and K. McLaughlin, Cambridge, Mass., Belknap Press, 1999, p. 6. My interpolation in brackets.

28. See Forrest Wilson, 'Covering Holes in the Wall', *Architecture*, vol. 77, no. 8, 1988, p. 96.

29. 'The Third Window' in C. Schneider and B. Wallis (eds), *Global Television*, New York, Wedge Press and Cambridge, MA, MIT Press, 1988, pp. 185–97. See also his 'Improbable Architecture' in *The Lost Dimension*, trans. D. Moshenberg, New York, Semiotexte, 1991, pp. 69–100.

30. This trajectory has been taken up by recent speculative architectural projects such as Hariri and Hariri's The Digital House and Trudgeon and Kitchener's Hyper House, which utilise 'smart skins' as architectural surfaces.

31. Saskia Sassen, 'Spatialities and Temporalities of the Global: Elements for a Theorization', *Public Culture*, vol. 12, no. 1, p. 216.

32. Corbusier, *The Radiant City*, Faber, London, 1967, p. 44. See Beatriz Colomina, *Publicity and Privacy: Architecture as Mass Media*, Cambridge, Mass., MIT Press, 1994, pp. 311–12.

33. Le Corbusier saw his 'machines for living in' at home in any landscape: 'It is in its right place in the rural landscape of Poissy. But in Biarritz, it would be magnificent ... This same house, I should set it down in a corner of the beautiful Argentine countryside; we shall have twenty houses rising from the high grass of an orchard where cows continue to graze'. *Precisions*, p. 139.

34. It is worth remembering that the young Eisenstein was heavily influenced by Pavlovian psychology which underlies his famous notion of the 'montage of attractions'. While this suggests an affinity to the 'experimental' sensibility underlying the *Big Brother* format, it is difficult to imagine Eisenstein—who polemicised long and hard against Dziga Vertov's 'life on the run' *Kino-pravda* newsreels—advocating any form of unscripted 'performance'.

35. Bernadette Flynn, 'Factual Hybridity: Games, Documentary and Simulated Spaces', *Media International Australia*, no. 104, August 2002, p. 48.

36. 'The voice came from an oblong metal plaque like a dulled mirror which formed part of the surface of the right-hand wall ... The instrument (the telescreen, it as called) could be dimmed but there was no way of shutting it off completely'. *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1984, p. 157.

37. Orwell, p. 158.

38. Orwell, p. 161.

39. This contrast between the modern city and an ancient dwelling or room which contains memory traces, not only of another society but an atavistic identity, is common to both *We* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. It is also a device used in another classic futuristic novel of the period, Thea von Harbou's *Metropolis*, which formed the basis for her husband Fritz Lang's influential 1926 film.

40. It remains curious that Orwell didn't see the ubiquity of the telescreen extending 'downward' to the proles. However, this allows him to indulge a certain nostalgia for working class solidarity, while foregrounding the role of propaganda directed principally at an elite. To my mind, Orwell deploys a fairly crude conception of media propaganda in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. The clumsiness of the strident racial stereotypes is a striking contrast to the subtlety of his concept of 'doublethink', which offers a more promising starting point for assessing contemporary post-consumer advertising.

41. Orwell, p. 275.

42. See for example Jane Roscoe, 'Real Entertainment: New Factual Hybrid Television', *Media International Australia*, no. 100 (August 2001), pp. 9–20; Flynn, pp. 42–54; Jon Dovey, *Freakshow: First Person Media and Factual TV*, London, Pluto, 2000.

43. Léger cited in Siegfried Kracauer, *Theory of Film: The Redemption of Physical Reality*, Oxford University Press, London, 1960, pp. 63–4.

44. The films I'm referring to included *Sleep* (1963), which ran 5 hrs 21 mins, and *Eat* (1964), which ran 39 mins.

45. See his *Video, Architecture, Television: Writings on Video and Video Work, 1970–1978*, Halifax, Press of the Nova Scotia College of Art & Design; New York University Press, New York, 1979.

46. Paul Virilio points to the prize received by Michael Klier at the *Second International Video Festival* in Montbéliard in 1984 as the start of trend in which 'a sort of pancinema … unbeknown to us, turns our most ordinary acts into movie action'. See his 'Candid Camera', *The Vision Machine*, trans. J. Rose, BFI, London, 1994, p. 47.

47. Today the matrix of surveillance extends well beyond public spaces and commercial premises to webcams situated in private homes. Companies such as KidWatch and ParentWatch offer services for parents to watch their children (and their child-carers) live over the Internet.

48. The URL for Ringley's Jennicam site is <http://www.jennicam.org>. By 2001, it was reported to

attract five million hits per day. There are now hundreds of similar sites. Many are pornographic, offering pay-per-view or subscription access only. Others such as the DotComGuy were established for promotional purposes (Mitch Maddox was sponsored by DotComGuy Inc. to live online for a year from 1 January 2000, purchasing all necessities via the Internet). A company called Panopticon Inc. bought the technology used by Josh Harris in his We Live in Public project <http://www.WeLiveinPublic.com>, in which he lived in a loft surveilled by thirty-two cameras. At one stage, Panopticon announced plans to develop a commercial version that can be purchased for users to broadcast their own lives.

49. Quote from FAQ page <http://www.jennicam.org> (22 April 1999).

50. Orwell, p. 303. Ironically, this constitutes a fatal invitation to openness and trust.

51. Quoted from <http://www.anacam.com/anatomy> (accessed 4 December 2001).

52. John Tagg, *The Burden of Representation*, Macmillan, London, 1988.

53. *The Fall of Public Man: On the Social Psychology of Capitalism*, New York, Vintage Books, 1978, p. 264.

54. Zygmunt Baumann, *Liquid Modernity*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 2000, p. 96.

55. Roscoe, p. 13.

56. Benjamin wrote: 'No matter how artful the photographer, no matter how carefully posed his subject, the beholder feels an irresistible urge to search such a picture for the tiny spark of contingency, the Here and Now, with which reality has seared the subject …' *One Way Street*, p. 243.

57. Roscoe, p. 14.

58. See Erving Goffman, *The Presentation of the Self in Everyday Life*, Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1971. Joshua Meyrowitz has adapted Goffman's theory to the new social 'situations' created by electronic media in his *No Sense of Place: The Impact of Electronic Media on Social Behaviour*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1985.

59. In addition to Baumann's discussion in *Liquid Modernity*, pp. 10–15, see, for example, Scott Lash, 'Reflexivity and its Doubles: Structure, Aesthetics, Community' in Ulrich Beck, Anthony Giddens and Scott Lash, *Reflexive Modernization: Politics, Tradition and Aesthetics in the Modern Social Order*, Polity, Oxford, 1994, pp. 110–73.

60. Baumann, p. 7.

61. Mark Andrejevic, 'The Kinder, Gentler Gaze of Big Brother: Reality TV in the Era of Digital Capitalism', *New Media and Society*, vol. 4, no. 2, 2002, p. 252.