"And God Saw Everything": *Paradise, Utopia and Surveillance*

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> And God saw everything he had made, and behold, it was very good.[1]

> 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 scrutinised.[2]

The dream of paradise recorded in Genesis seems antithetical to the nightmare of total surveillance envisioned by George Orwell. Eden constitutes one of the most enduring conceptions of paradise; indeed, it helps defines the term. In lurid contrast to Edenic abundance and ease, the dystopian Oceania figures a hellish world of scarcity, pain and oppression, a world where nothing escapes the scrutiny of the Party. Yet, if God's omniscience entails not only the ability to see every thing, but also to see every one, the nightmare of total surveillance starts to leak into the dream. And omniscience implies far more than an infinite visual capacity, God's all-seeing eye functioning as a synecdoche for total knowledge. Accept this, and the business with the apple and the serpent and Eve starts to read as the first case of entrapment. Their eventual (though, of course, inevitable) expulsion from Eden constitutes history's greatest miscarriage of justice. Forced from paradise, they are condemned to lives of suffering, enmity, thorns and thistles. From utopia, they and all their offspring are forced to scrape an existence in the dystopian world East of Eden. Winston Smith at least has a hidden corner in his flat in which to hide from the prying telescreens. No such hiding place exists in Eden for Adam and Eve. Orwellian surveillance, then, proves less total and far less consequential than that carried out in the inaugural Christian paradise.

In the bulk of this article I emphasise the complex and longstanding relationship between paradise and surveillance. To do so, I focus on what might be seen as the literary equivalent of paradise, the utopia, dealing briefly with Plato's *Republic*, and then more extensively with Thomas More's *Utopia*, Bellamy's *Looking Backward 2000-1887* and H.G. Wells's *A Modern Utopia*. By examining their respective takes on surveillance, I suggest how these texts collectively might inform a richer understanding of the links between paradise and the utopia. But before

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examining these works, I address the fact that surveillance more regularly has negative connotations, suggesting kinship with utopia's 'evil twin,' the dystopia. For the general public the dominant negative view of surveillance has its source in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. This proves true even for those who have not read the book but who have absorbed its key phrases and images from public discourse. Notions such as the telescreen, terms such as 'Big Brother' and the Thought Police, and the totemic slogan 'BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING YOU' have entered the collective consciousness and embedded themselves in common speech. The label 'Orwellian' gets readily and often reductively invoked when the media reports new developments in surveillance. Fears that screens (television and computer) might in some senses 'look back' at the viewer are rich fodder for modern conspiracy theorists. The proliferation of CCTV cameras, the monitoring of internet use, the tracking of workers by way of their mobile phones, the use of facial recognition equipment at airports, the sale of database information have all helped give these fears a frightening concreteness. Not surprisingly, then, when television production company Endemol created a show that integrated surveillance and mass entertainment, they chose the name with the highest brand recognition, 'Big Brother.'

Surveillance theorists have long recognised the influence of Orwell's work on the public imagination. In one of the first scholarly studies of modern surveillance, *Private Lives and Public Surveillance*, James Rule notes that "as with most people, my first sensitivity to these issues came on reading Orwell's 1984."[3] David Lyon, one of the leading global authorities on surveillance, reveals in his classic *The Electronic Eye* that "When I tell people I am studying surveillance ... their most common reaction is to invoke George Orwell."[4] But Lyon and other critics display a certain exasperation both about the popularity of Orwell's account of surveillance and its negativity. Lyon judges that much of what Orwell projected in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* has been superseded by new technology, while Benjamin Goold cautions that if writers such as Orwell continue to dominate scholarly thinking on surveillance, "the theoretical literature of social control will become increasingly divorced from reality."[5] Peculiarly, given the fact that rapid advances in surveillance often require that surveillance theorists speculate on the as-yet unknown future, Goold argues that speculative literature should be avoided. As I explain shortly, Lyon and Goold accentuate and investigate the positive aspects of surveillance, the way it enables, organises and protects the networks and activities of contemporary life.

But between Orwell and our contemporary world looms September 11, 2001, a date that reconfigured the co-ordinates of surveillance. The so-called 'War on Terror' instigated a massive increase in the presence of surveillance in ordinary

life, and a simultaneous intensification of surveillance rhetoric in political and popular discourse. Border protection and questions of national security and insecurity became election issues. Certain religious and ethnic groups suddenly were targeted as dangerous, or at least suspect. The vaguely utopian hopes of a 'new world order' proclaimed by George Bush in the early 1990s were swept aside by his son's dystopian (if not apocalyptic) vision of an endless war against evil. New technologies and procedures have been rapidly and often controversially introduced into the processes and forms of liberal democracies in order to screen potential or perceived threats, and therefore (the argument goes) to protect the public. Liberals such as Christian Parenti, who see in the curtailment of civil liberties, again invoke the imagined dystopia of Orwell, and the imposition of new surveillance measures the prospect of "omniscient and omnipotent state and corporate power."[6] In this blighted world paradise gets lost, perhaps permanently.

Against this negative assessment of surveillance, theorists such as Lyon and Goold accentuate the positive implications and the benign or beneficial consequences. Goold focuses on CCTV and policing in Britain, noting its effect in bringing down certain forms of public criminality. But he argues against the deterministic view that increased visual surveillance of public spaces necessarily entails some sinister plot or outcome. "We are," he argues, "in fact a long way from living in an 'Orwellian' state,"[7] explaining that the police themselves are diffident about incorporating the new technology into their practice. Actual police are far less ominous or effectual than Thought Police. David Lyon's research has a much broader sweep of interests, but essentially he argues that the wholly negative reading of surveillance is both limited and politically paralysing. For him, "Orwell's dystopia finally leaves us with an almost unrelenting pessimism."[8] Lyon argues that surveillance in the modern world involves less scrutinising of bodies than tracking of information. The computer has replaced the camera as the chief surveillance technology, although the latter has not disappeared. But in the interactive and highly mobile contemporary world, the capacity of computers to record, collate, scrutinise and transmit personal information in hitherto unknown quantities and at lightning speed constitutes a more efficient and effective form of surveillance. It remains essential to the smooth running and organization of contemporary society.

Lyon argues that surveillance in this mode allows us easy access to products and services. Consumer capitalism depends on purchasing by computer or phone, by way of credit cards. The latter, along with other forms of identification linked to databases, establish our identity in a world where many of the people we interact with are strangers. In this environment, our digital identity, or 'digital double,' can often be more important than our actual physical presence. All this information

can and is scrutinised, often by agencies and agents we know nothing of, but most of us accept this as the price of entry to the promised paradise of endless consumption. The surveillance of personal information also allows us access to an array of services, benefits and facilities, enabling us to get paid, use libraries, collect social welfare, pay our taxes, vote. Little wonder then that the title of Lyon's 2001 update on the state of play in surveillance was titled *Surveillance Society*,[9] suggesting the ubiquity of surveillance in our lives. Given the lack of widespread panic at these changes, the title also announces majority acceptance of such a society.

Lyon's account, while not setting up contemporary surveillance society as a utopia, at least counters the unremitting dystopian perspective. Writers of utopias, though, have long integrated what we would now recognise as surveillance elements into their visions of earthly paradises. Before looking at specific examples, some links between utopias and paradise need to be established. While these links are not as firm as the generic bonds between utopias and dystopias, they are, as Frank and Fritzie Manuel note, discernable and significant:

> Though utopia proper remains the creation of the world of the Renaissance and the Reformation, the visions of two paradises (Eden and the World to Come) . . . have so tenacious a hold on Western consciousness that they are a constant presence — in multiple variations — in all subsequent utopian thought. The history of paradise is a prolegomenon and perennial accompaniment to utopia without which the powerful emotions that infuses the experience can never be captured.[10]

A passage from Genesis on the Garden of Eden gets included in the authoritative collection, *The Utopia Reader*.[11] One its editors, the leading scholar, Lyman Tower Sargent, contends elsewhere that early expressions of utopianism can be found in the Old Testament and in Hesiod. He suggests that from the first debates "utopian literature had separated into two strands: utopias brought about without human effort, such as Hesiod's Golden Age or Eden, and utopias brought about through human effort, such as the *Laws* of Plato."[12]

Sargent later adds Plato's *Republic* to the list of utopias brought about by human effort[13] and this text provides the starting point for discussing the interaction between the utopias, paradise and surveillance. Plato constructs his republic on the foundation of justice, but recognises that this ideal needs to be maintained, and if necessary enforced, in the practical operation of society. Therefore, he creates a supervisory class, the Guardians, who both rule and administer the republic. In terms of surveillance and the maintenance of the ideal society, the most interesting aspect lies in the metaphor Plato choses to describe the Guardians;

Socrates asks Glaucon: "Don't you think . . . that the natural qualities needed in the well-bred watchdog have a certain similarity to those which a good young man needs for guardian duty?"[14] He then goes on to list these qualities: keen perception, strength, courage, the capacity to be "gentle towards their fellow citizens, and dangerous only to their enemies." Socrates suggests that the latter quality reveals a philosophical disposition.[15] Trained from an early age to put the welfare of the state ahead of their own interests, the Guardians are selected after being put under intense scrutiny. They are, then, the products of a surveillance system that they perpetuate on the broader society. For Plato, the Guardians' unquestioning acceptance of the structure and ideology of the republic inoculates them from corruption and power seeking. In the real world, as opposed to the ideal world, chosen or self-appointed guardians too often have needed strict guarding.

While Plato places his scrutinising Guardians at the apex of the Republic, Thomas More builds surveillance into the very architecture and the town planning of Utopia, each of whose 54 cities "as far as the location permits, all of them built to the same plan."[16] As David Harvey explains, "the internal spatial ordering of [Utopia] strictly regulates a stabilized and unchanging social process."[17] The static world created or imposed by the organization of social space is reinforced by the way the doors to Utopia's houses "open easily and swing shut automatically — and so there is nothing private and exclusive." The lack of privacy built into the very forms of the buildings is replicated in social norms that value work and abhor sloth:

> There is no chance to loaf or kill time, no pretext for evading work; there are no wine bars, or ale-houses, or brothels; no chances for corruption; no hiding places; no spots for secret meetings. Because they live in the full view of all, they are bound to be either working at their usual trades or enjoying their leisure in a respectable way. Such customs must necessarily result in plenty of life's good things, and since they share everything equally, it follows that no one can ever be reduced to poverty or forced to beg.[18]

For More, the ideal of equality replaces Plato's justice as an important determinant of utopian thought, but in both instances the population requires constant surveillance in order to maintain the ideal. Significantly, too, the respective ideals on which the societies are based generate distinct surveillance operatives: Desmond Lee describes the elite Guardians as a combination of "Government and Army-Executive-Police,"[19] a force sanctioned by law to uphold justice; by contrast, Utopian equality requires the co-operative activity of all citizens in its surveillance regime.

Harvey's account of the organization of space in Utopia suggests a further dimension: "Put crudely," Harvey argues, "spatial form controls temporality, and imagined geography controls the possibility of social change and history."[20] Both the Republic and Utopia, like many a paradise and many a utopia, are to an extent ahistorical. Like Eden, they have a 'back story,' a narrative of their coming into being, but once completion has taken place they are all largely immutable. Of the three, Utopia, which trades and occasionally fights with other nations, might potentially change. But Raphael Hythloday, the fictional traveller who tells his tale to Thomas More, ends his account by declaring that

> the institutions they have adopted have made their community most happy and as far as anyone can tell, capable of lasting forever ... As long as they preserve harmony at home, and keep their institutions healthy, the Utopians can never be overcome or even shaken by their envious neighbours, who have attempted their ruin, but always in vain.[21]

As I have suggested, one of the institutionalised and important aspects of Utopian life remains the way members of society keep each other under scrutiny so as to prevent or eradicate sloth, immorality and corruption. These activities preserve internal harmony, and with it a form of static perfection; presumably without surveillance, harmony and therefore Utopia itself might collapse. The same might be said, then, of Eden, the Republic and Utopia: the price of paradise is eternal vigilance.

In none of these cases is the price deemed too high. In the twentieth century however, with works such as Yevgeny Zamyatin's We, Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*, Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale*, the dystopian mode of the utopian genre tends to dominate, and in each of these texts surveillance plays a determining factor in the maintenance of dystopia. This negativity provokes theorists such as Lyon or Goold to attack the reductive representation of surveillance in such speculations. But there are important instances where writers construct fictional utopias containing surveillance elements that are presented in the positive terms of Lyon and Goold. Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backward 2000-1887* (1888) and H.G. Wells's *A Modern Utopia* (1905), both recognised classics of the genre, show different forms of surveillance facilitating freedom and helping to distribute material plenty. In *Looking Backward*, Julian West falls asleep in the harsh and competitive capitalist world of Boston in 1887, a world he compares to

> a prodigious coach which the masses of humanity were harnessed to and dragged toilsomely along a very hilly and sandy road. The driver was hunger, and permitted no lagging ... Despite the difficulty of drawing the coach at all along so

> hard a road, the top was covered with passengers who never got down, even at the steepest ascents … Well out of the dust, their occupants could enjoy the scenery at their leisure, or criticise the merits of the straining team.[22]

Fantastically, he wakes in the Boston of the year 2000 to find class antagonism and exploitation swept aside. Instead, a highly organised and technically advanced society prevails, one enjoying both social harmony and universal prosperity. This miraculous transformation results from the centralisation of manufacturing and administration under government control, so that ultimately the nation became a single industrial unit. As a consequence, resources were used more efficiently, the workforce being redeployed as a unified 'industrial army.' As West comes to realise, in the one hundred thirteen years he has been asleep, Americans have "applied the principles of military service … to the labor [sic] question."[23] As Dr. Leete (West's chief guide in Boston) tells him, a key to the society's success has been a new social spirit in that "the solidarity of the race and the brotherhood of man, which to you were but fine phrases, are to our thinking and feeling ties as real and as vital as physical fraternity."[24] Thrilled by a utopian future in which the most pressing problems of his own century have been solved, West declares that were he return to the nineteenth century, his friends "would every one of them admit that your world was a paradise of order, equity and felicity."[25]

West here understands a fundamental principle, that in the America of 2000 order takes precedence over equity and felicity. This places his utopia squarely in the category of those built by humans, but it also ensures that it has an underlying (and unconsidered) surveillance aspect. As I noted earlier, surveillance in the work of recent theorists such as David Lyon centres less on potentially oppressive visual scrutiny than on the collection and deployment of information, much of it personal. This information, encoded on credit and identity cards can then be used to facilitate commercial transactions and allow access to social services. Something similar applies in *Looking Backward*, where West hears that

> a credit corresponding to his share of the annual product of the nation is given to every citizen on the public books at the beginning of the year, and a credit card is issued him with which he procures at the public warehouses, found in every community, whatever he desires whenever he desires it.[26]

Because in the state-run monopoly of the future the profit motive has been abolished, the credit card system, Leete informs West, "totally obviates the necessity for business transactions of any sort between individuals and consumers."[27] We are very close here to the reality of the contemporary surveillance society investigated by Lyon, a world in which transactions and interactions are virtual rather than face-to-face. In both instances, cards linked to an individual identity

help satisfy the desire for consumer goods. The obvious difference lays in the fact that today the credit card functions as a key instrument of consumer capitalism, rather than as the equal dividend of the nation's productive wealth.

Bellamy's credit card system has other utopian implications. The sharing of the annual product of the nation between all citizens reinforces the equity that Julian West applauds. Importantly, the wealth of the nation gets equally divided among men and women. This aspect surprises West, who first asks whether women receive credit cards at all. When told that they do, he supposes the credits given them would be "smaller, owing to the frequent suspension of their labor on account of family responsibilities." Leete replies:

> oh, no! The maintenance of all our people is the same. There are no exceptions to that rule, but if difference were made on account of the interruptions you speak of, it would be by making the woman's credit large, not smaller. Can you think of any service constituting a stronger claim on the nation's gratitude than bearing and nursing the nation's children?[28]

The credit card system also allows women to hire, from the state, assistance around the home in times of emergency, sickness or renovation, to which West exclaims: "What a paradise for womankind the world must be now!"[29] But in reality the whole society benefits from the credit system, for while each citizen initially gets an equal share, all unused credit at the end of the year gets 'turned into the general surplus.' To West's criticism that this does not encourage individual saving, Leete replies that the accumulation of personal wealth is unnecessary in the America of 2000: "No man has any more care for the morrow … for the nation guarantees the nurture, education and comfortable maintenance of every citizen from the cradle to the grave."[30]

The credit card system, along with its utopian consequences, also carries surveillance implications. Cards, remember, are issued to every citizen on the public books. This necessarily requires a centralised database on which the purchase of services (such as home help) as well as goods is recorded. Since these are deducted from an individual's card, it functions as a de facto identity card. West is informed that doctor's fees are also collected via credit cards (114), as, presumably, are all other social services. There are clear efficiency gains in such a system, especially given the extensive and universal welfare provided, and the lauded social harmony argues against the misuse of this information. Certainly, Bellamy seems not to have considered the possibility of misuse. The reality, however, of a centralised state bureaucracy having control of, and access to, huge amounts of personal information on all its citizens might concern a modern surveillance theorist. As I noted, the enormous power of the computer to record, retrieve and collate information becomes pivotal to contemporary surveillance society. Since Bellamy's

fiction predates the large-scale introduction of computers by nearly a century, he can of course be excused for not predicting this scenario. Still, as the *Republic* and *Utopia* both show, utopias are heuristic texts that continue to provoke responses well after their publication date. In critically interpreting *Looking Backward* we can acknowledge its initial context as well as consider the ramifications of its vision today.

Certainly in its own time Bellamy's highly centralised paradise, with its beguiling mix of welfare state and material prosperity, proved immensely popular and influential. As Alex MacDonald explains, within a decade of its publication in 1888 it had sold over a million copies, spawned many similar texts as well as utopian societies around the globe.[31] It was not universally applauded, however, the first notable critic being William Morris. In an early review of *Looking Backward* he argues that

> there are some Socialists who do not think that the problem of the organization of life and necessary labor [sic] can be dealt with by huge national centralisation, working by a kind of magic for which no one feels responsible; that on the contrary it will be necessary for the unit of administration to be small enough for every citizen to feel himself responsible for its details ... [and] that individual men cannot shuffle off the business of life on to the shoulders of an abstraction called the State.[32]

Morris went further than mere criticism of Bellamy's utopian vision — he created his own, *News From Nowhere* (1890), itself a successful and influential text. Morris's counter to Bellamy was based not on a centralised industrial state, but on small communities functioning almost at the level of medieval artisans. Gone is the bureaucracy, the organization and the materialism of America in 2000, to be replaced in Morris's 2102 by a seemingly anachronistic post-capitalist world Clive Wilmer has described as a "rural paradise."[33] In such a world, political power is defused and dispersed. As Frank and Fritzie Manuel put it: "There are no snakes in Ireland and no Government in Nowhere."[34]

H.G.Wells's *A Modern Utopia* provides another counter vision. Where Bellamy's ideal has an American origin (although "the great nations of Europe as well as Australia, Mexico and parts of South America are now organizing industrially like the United States"[35]) Wells proposes a global utopia or 'World State.' While extending the boundaries of utopia (and with that, of course the scope of surveillance) Wells adds a vital, motivating energy; having criticised most previous utopias as static and lifeless, he argues that the "modern view ... steadily intensifies the value of freedom, until at last we see liberty as the very substance of life, that it is life itself, and that only the dead things, the choiceless things, live in absolute obedience to the law."[36] Wells envisions a kinetic, endlessly creative utopia based

on freedom, a key component of which is a "migratory population … as fluid and tidal as the sea." This fluid population requires suitably fluid structures and processes, Wells recognising that "all local establishments, all definitions of place are even now melting under our eyes. Presently all the world will be awash with anonymous stranger men."[37]

Keeping track of the mass migrations of anonymous stranger men has long entailed forms of surveillance, as John Torpey points out in *The Invention of the Passport*, which traces global developments in the movement and administration of people since the French Revolution.[38] On More's Utopia, travel outside one's own location required a permit from a local official; failure to gain that permission on two occasions leads to slavery.[39] Wells proposes a far less punitive regime, but one with potentially harsh consequences. He realises that established forms of tracking migratory citizens cannot cope with the 'liquefaction' of the population, predicting instead that a modern utopian scheme would be devised "by which each and every person in the world can be promptly and certainly recognised, and by which anyone missing can be traced and found."[40] This leads to an interesting paradox, for although Wells values a dynamic modernity that promotes freedom, his rational mind requires that freedom be managed. As a consequence, he puts forward a universal system of identity papers that travelling utopians would submit whenever they arrive at a new location. The record of their arrival would be sent to a central bureau situated in Paris, which night and day would track the movement of the World State's inhabitants, cross-referencing the details with an identification system.

This system, based on "thumbmarks … and inalterable physical characteristics," has other surveillance uses. Each citizen, Wells suggests, would be assigned a "distinct formula, a number of a 'scientific name' under which he or she could be docketed," increasing efficiency. But it also provides the basis for a more extensive surveillance database, Wells arguing that the central identification system could be cross-referenced to "other indices … arranged under name, under professional qualification, under diseases, crimes and the like."[41] While Wells never fully considers how this information might be used, many modern citizens fear the collection of such personal details, let alone their deployment. Unwittingly, Wells suggests one of the main contemporary counterarguments to such a system in his throwaway phrase "and the like." In other circumstances, its open-endedness and ambiguity could conceal hidden agendas, where private, embarrassing or incorrect information might be added to a centralised bureau without the consent or even the knowledge of the subject under scrutiny. Several surveillance concerns are triggered: does the system involve the invasion of privacy? Who chooses the type of information to be recorded? Does the subject have the right to control (or even see) the information? How might the information be used, and by whom?

Wells anticipates the first concern, at least in terms of travel, noting that some will claim the right "of going unrecognised and secret wither one will." He counters that such anonymous travel will still be possible, for "[o]nly the State would share the secret of one's little concealment." Admitting that to liberals "brought up to be against the Government on principle, this organised clairvoyance will be the most hateful of dreams,"[42] Wells remains confident that the Government of his modern utopia does not constitute such a malevolent force. The World State, he explains, has been established and fashioned by a 'voluntary nobility' he names as the *samurai*, but whom he recognises has a close resemblance to "that strange class of guardians which constitutes the essential substance of Plato's *Republic*."[43] Possessing superior intellect, as well as sophisticated creative and mystical impulses and accepting a life of austerity and morality, the *samurai* are typically are "engaged in administrative work. Practically the whole of the responsible rule of the world is in their hands."[44] The qualities of the *samurai*, like those of the guardians, ensure that the state is protected and prospers, and that the information stored in the Paris bureau remains secure. Consequently, Wells readily accepts that in his utopia what he describes as the "quiet eye of the State"[45] need cause no concern.

Since *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, the quiet eye of the state has taken on more ominous connotations. For surveillance theorists, though, the collection of performance counts for much less that the uses to which it gets put. The title of a recent collection, *Surveillance as Social Sorting: Privacy, Risk and Digital Discrimination*, hints that in the real world surveillance can entail active, potentially detrimental discriminations. As David Lyon explains, surveillance systems obtain "personal and group data in order to classify people and populations according to varying criteria, to determine who should be targeted for special treatment, suspicion, eligibility, inclusion, access and so on."[46] Some of these responses ("eligibility," "inclusion," "access") are positive, others ("special treatment") are more ambiguous, while "suspicion" carries only negative connotations. Social sorting, then, does not lead to a single type of outcome. Wells, for example, argues for professional qualifications to be included, potentially making it easier to locate doctors or teachers. But the categories 'diseases, crimes and the like' which he argues should also be recorded, suggest less benign possibilities. Wells provides a chilling example of how this discrimination might work: "No doubt Utopia will kill all deformed and monstrous and evilly diseases births,"[47] reinforcing the often contentious links between utopias and eugenics.

For all this, Wells paints a vivid, detailed and often compelling picture of an energetic and (especially for the time when it first appeared) a socially advanced paradise. Given the starting point of this article, as well as its larger focus, it is worth noting that Wells incorporates a religious element in his modern utopia,

most especially in terms of the *samurai*, who take a "yearly pilgrimage of solitude" with the possible result that "men might come then to the high distances of God."[48] Utopians generally, he states, "accept Religion as they accept Thirst, as something inseparably in the mysterious rhythms of life."[49] Even so, and despite the large and recognised place Eden retains in the history of utopian speculation, Wells's imagination explicitly rejects God's first great judgement on Eve and Adam: "The leading principle of the Utopian religion is the repudiation of the doctrine of original sin; the Utopians hold that man, on the whole, is good."[50] *A Modern Utopia* denies the first great instance of social sorting, turning its back on Eden in order to built an alternative paradise, one shaped and administered by humans for humans. In doing so, Wells also excludes the all-seeing eye of God. Surveillance in his utopian world remains an activity performed exclusively by, on and for its inhabitants.

As even this brief survey of utopias has shown, surveillance in a variety of forms is encoded into the DNA of the genre. One reason for this seems obvious: utopias tend to organise and reorganise the structures, processes and people that it considers. Organization generally requires some form of supervision or, depending on the type of utopia constructed, some form of administration. Another reason might be that utopias unconsciously expose the fact that we do not trust ourselves to keep high standards of sociability and morality without scrutiny. The fact that utopias are created at all, let alone again and again, suggests that to the present day at least we have not attained or maintained for any length of time, the ideals we espouse. Paradise, alluring as it is, continues to elude us; hence, the apparent need for surveillance. I have tried to suggest that surveillance itself involves a rich and complex set of strategies, technologies, structures and responses. We need to move beyond the predominantly negative account presented by Orwell in order to understand the implications of, and the arguments for and against increasing or new forms of surveillance. Utopias (and dystopias) offer us informative ways of understanding the problems and possibilities of the topic. The diversity of the forms of surveillance they present to us provide imaginative instruction, but we need to be critically aware of aspects and consequences of surveillance that the writers themselves fail to consider. And in turn, those we might otherwise fail to consider. One of the dangers of paradise, perhaps, is that in attempting to reach it, or in mistakenly believing that we have reached it, we as individuals or as a society lose the healthy scepticism that initially caused us to questions thing as they are. Before considering paradise, then, we might first take a good look at ourselves.

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Endnotes

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[8] Lyon, 204.
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[15] Plato, 128.
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[21] More, 110.
[22] Edward Bellamy, *Looking Backward 2000-1887*, ed. Alex MacDonald. (Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview Literary Texts, 2003), 48-9.
[23] Bellamy, 80.
[24] Bellamy, 122.
[25] Bellamy, 117
[26] Bellamy, 94.
[27] Bellamy, 198.
[28] Bellamy, 198.
[29] Bellamy, 114.
[30] Bellamy, 114.
[31] Alex MacDonald, "Introduction" to ed. MacDonald, *Looking Backward*, 18-19.
[32] William Morris, Review of Looking Backward in ed. MacDonald, *Looking Backward*, 257.
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[35] Bellamy, 146.
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