**Article Analysis**

**Shopping centre tracking system condemned by civil rights campaigners**

**Note to teachers:** Vocabulary given can be used to help explain unknown words/phrases, to ask the client for synonyms to show understanding, or to ask client to find a synonym for the word/phrase given in the definition

E.g. Can you find a synonym for ‘*locate*’?

**Précis:**
This article discusses how some shopping centres plan to use new technology that can track shoppers’ movements from their mobile phone signals. This will enable shopping centres to analyse consumers’ habits and movements. The ‘Footpath Scheme’ is intended to improve the shopping experience for customers as well as enable shopping mall’s directors to provide a better service. Civil rights campaigners and consumers believe it’s an invasion of privacy, and are not happy that customers aren’t informed, asked for consent or given the chance to opt out.

**Cultural references:**
- Surveillance – to maintain social control, monitor threats and prevent / investigate criminal activity. Methods – CCTV cameras, interception of internet traffic or phone calls, biometrics. Threat to political and/or personal freedom?

- George Orwell’s novel ‘1984’ – portrays a fictional totalitarian surveillance society. « *Orwellian* » is a common term to describe mass surveillance technologies.

- ‘Big Brother Watch’ [http://www.bigbrotherwatch.org.uk/](http://www.bigbrotherwatch.org.uk/) is a British civil liberties and privacy pressure group. It campaigns on issues including CCTV, freedom and privacy online. The name comes from the dictator in Orwell’s 1984. « *Big Brother is watching you .»

- Mobile phone tracking – see ‘Going further’


- « A product which can gather information on pedestrian behaviour 24 hours a day 365 days a year using mobile phone technology. » The FootPath privacy policy states that "FootPath™ works by detecting a randomly generated, frequently changing signal from your mobile phone". The same privacy policy
says that "our detector units do not allow us to obtain your telephone number, to listen to any of your calls, read any SMS messages read or sent by you, or to log details of any calls or SMS messages made or received by you. Neither does any of the information received allow us to identify you or any group of individuals." The company's CEO says because the system knows where you are, a next step will be the possibility of sending you targeted shopping vouchers by text. But how could they send a text without knowing your phone number?

-Privacy International https://www.privacyinternational.org/
« defends the right to privacy across the world and fights surveillance and other intrusions into private life by governments and corporations. »

-CCTV (closed-circuit television) - in the U.K. there are reportedly more cameras per person than in any other country in the world. UK police forces routinely seek CCTV recordings after crimes. In London, a Metropolitan police report showed that in 2008 only one crime was solved per 1000 cameras. An article in CCTV Image magazine estimates that the number of cameras in the U.K. is 1.85 million – an average of one camera for every 32 people in the U.K. The Cheshire constabulary estimated the number of surveillance cameras at 4,200,000 – one camera for every 14 people.

-The film ‘Minority Report’ is set in a future where police are able to arrest murderers before they commit their crimes. There is a scene in the film where citizens’ biometric data is linked to their consumer choices.

-The film ‘Gattaca’ portrays a society that uses biometric surveillance to distinguish between people who are genetically-engineered « superior » humans and genetically natural « inferior » humans.

-Flockr: http://www.goflockr.com/about_us
sends ‘good deals’ to your phone when you visit a shopping centre

**Headline:**
(If article hasn’t been read beforehand) What do you think the article talks about?
Do you think a shopping centre tracking system is a good idea? Why/Why not?

**Photo caption:**
NB: mistake in spelling ‘throughout’
pinpoint – locate
Why do you think the monitoring system is called ‘Footpath’?
How does the monitoring system work?
Are you surprised that the monitoring system can locate shoppers at a range of 2 metres?

1:
*come under fire – exposed / subjected to critical attack*
Where is the system installed?
How does the system pick up data?
Who has criticized the system?
Do you agree with the consumers and civil rights campaigners?
Have you heard about this technology? Can you think of other examples?

2:
synonym for *shopping centre? mall*
Why are such systems implemented?
What sort of data can they collect?
How do shopping centres justify this monitoring?
According to the shopping centres, why is it not an invasion of privacy?
Do you think such a system is important? benefits customers? retailers?
Who does it benefit most?

3:
*opt out – choose not to be involved in / a part of*
What do campaigners disagree with?
Why do you think the campaign group is called ‘Big Brother Watch’?
Do you feel that today’s society is becoming more and more like that depicted in George Orwell’s 1984? Have his predictions materialized?
How can consumers opt out?
Is it practical to turn off your mobile phone in a shopping centre? Why not?
Would you turn off your mobile phone?
Do you think it’s normal that customers do not even know they are being monitored?

4:
Who is Pickles?
What was he pleased with?
What did he disagree with?
Do you think the data is completely anonymous?
Would you feel this scheme was an invasion of your privacy?

5:
Where are the monitoring devices placed?
Where is the data sent to?
What happens there?
In G.B. there are CCTV cameras in shopping centres and in streets. Is it the same in France?
Do you agree with this kind of surveillance?
Can you think of advantages / disadvantages / uses of this kind of surveillance?
Would you agree to complete a survey in a shopping centre about your shopping habits?

6:
*insight – understanding, perception*
How can the information help shopping centres?
Do you think this is the most effective way of finding out such information?
Is the scheme mainly intended to improve facilities and help in emergencies or for the centre to increase profits?

7:
According to Path Intelligence, what is the system unable to track?
Do you believe this?
The company's CEO says because the system knows where you are, a next step will be the possibility of sending you targeted shopping vouchers by text. But how could they send a text without knowing your phone number?
Would you mind if the monitors could detect your phone number, listen to calls, read texts or identify you? Why/ Why not?
They say that ‘privacy is not infringed’. Do you agree?

8:
Why is the word ‘However’ used?
How many countries use this technology?
Why do you think the company does not say how many or which shopping centres in the U.K. use the technology?

9:
NB: error ‘out’ => ‘our’ Can the client find the mistake?
Which shopping centre has installed the system? Where is it?
This shopping centre does tell the customer about the scheme. What’s the problem with the way they are told? (signs are small)
Would you feel reassured if you saw a sign like this?

10:
*bargain – a good buy, a discount, something bought or offered at a lower price*
*creepy – alarming, sinister*
What do shoppers think of the scheme?
Why was Dave Jones in the shopping centre?
How did he describe the system?
Do you agree with him?

11:
*shoppers needs* => *shoppers’ needs*
dwell time – how long people spend in a shop/ shopping centre
footfall – the number of people who go into a shop at a particular period of time
bottleneck – a place where there are a lot of people that causes them to slow down or stop. Note similarity to ‘embouteillage’ (traffic jam)
threat – menace, danger

Who is Wayne Pearce?
How does he use the data?
How does this improve service for the customer?
Do you think this information is important?
How does the information distinguish between someone going in many shops without buying anything, and someone who goes in one store and spends a lot of money? How is the data useful?

12:
Does notifying people that they are being tracked make it more acceptable?
What does Gus Hosein think about this technology?
What measure does he think needs to be taken? Opt-out option
Do you agree with him? Why /Why not?

**Going Further:**
Are shopping centres public or private places?
Surveillance culture – protects society from terrorists or criminals? Threat to personal/political freedom and privacy? « If you aren’t doing anything wrong then you have nothing to fear. »
CCTV
Privacy / anonymity
Smartphones, mobile phones, Oyster/Navigo cards, supermarket loyalty cards tracking individual’s movements
China has proposed using mobile phone signals to track commuters in Beijing. In the U.K. and U.S. law enforcement and intelligence services use mobile phones for surveillance. They have the technology to activate microphones in mobile phones remotely to listen to conversations that take place near to the person that holds the phone.
Ability to locate a lost or stolen smartphone.
GPS in smartphones can allow family to track children’s movements or the movements of an unfaithful husband!
Mobile phone signals can be used by 999 emergency calls to locate the caller.
Authorities like the police can obtain permission to position phones in emergency cases where people (including criminals) are missing. Gmail/Google / Facebook and other email accounts / search engines / social networks monitoring searches / comments and using data for target advertising Employers using social networking sites to collect personal data on prospective or current employees. Facial recognition, DNA, fingerprints. Stasi in East Germany (film ‘The Lives of Others’) Films ‘Gattaca’ and ‘Minority Report’—discuss the film/s and consequences for the future (if you and the client have watched one or both of them, of course!) Phone hacking – the Leveson Inquiry (G.B.), les écoutes de l’Elysée (François Mitterand, Carole Bouquet in France) Retail – promotions, customer service