

Unique FBI Surveillance Methods of the Past | Philadelphia Independent Media Center

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Unique FBI Surveillance Methods of the Past

By Nicholas Evans

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An article from the National Public Radio website explains FBI surveillance methods of the past.

The interesting article is titled: FBI Surveillance Team Reveals Tricks Of The Trade by Dina Temple-Raston. 1.

Some people may think FBI surveillance consists of an agent dressed in a black suit who follows someone around on foot or in a black car. However, past FBI surveillance is quite different from what some people may think it is.

The article mentions:

"Turn on any cop show, and the surveillance always seems pretty straightforward. There are always a couple of guys in a van and maybe another two in a car outside some apartment building. But the truth is, real surveillance is much more subtle..."

However, in fact:

"..The FBI has an entire army of people whose sole job is to do surveillance... the secret isn't about being a master of disguise. Instead, it is all about blending in.

"When a target comes out of the bodega with a cup of coffee, they don't see where we are, or they don't see our people... Our people look so ordinary, they just look over them."

The article gives an example:

"..for example, that guy with the flat-top haircut who looks like a cop could be one of the people following you. In fact, there are some scenarios in which the FBI wants you to think he's actually following you. But what you probably won't see is the roster of other people who are with him. Those people, the members of the FBI's Special Surveillance Group team, or SSGs.."

The FBI methods are quite unique:

"First of all, you would spread out... You wouldn't stand in a parade behind the guy."

"...We usually key on something, whether a bright color she has on or a particular item that might be unique... We relay that to other team members so they can see her when she comes to the next corner, so they would be able to identify her...the team would set up some sort of "picket surveillance" in the surrounding area'....

"... 'A picket surveillance would have the team covering all the subway entrances. They would be stationed at various corners...the team would radio ahead with information.

SSGs have all kinds of techniques, and they all have catchy names like Picket and Web or Leapfrog. Leapfrog is kind of what it sounds like: SSGs will follow a target up to a certain point, then pass him off to another group up ahead, and then leapfrog to pick up the surveillance farther down the street'...

"When operating under Leapfrog surveillance...they would be telling the people ahead that the target was coming up to them. 'They should be telling us the next movement, so you don't have to run and pullback, and run and pullback,' she says. 'That's kind of obvious, especially if there is a possibility that someone could be watching you from the rear.'"

In an interesting twist, the undercover agents bring various wardrobes to use:

“And, he says, you'd have a team dressed for the occasion. SSGs carry entire wardrobes in their cars — a business suit in case they need to go to Wall Street, gym shorts in case surveillance requires them to go for a jog through Central Park...

...some SSGs who travel with a bicycle in their trunk so that at a moment's notice they could ride through the streets of New York pretending to be a messenger... They are prepared for anything..”

This type of unique surveillance originated:

“...as an FBI experiment in New York City in the 1970s. The pilot project was so successful that it went nationwide...” and more recently “surveillance requires more political savvy, more finesse.”

Body language of the surveilled person can be read by the FBI:

"You could just tell by his body language whether he was surveillance-conscious... You could just tell by his body language and the way people related to him whether he was in the middle of a crisis...

...when he used to get mad, he used to talk a lot more with his hands; he used to be very very physical with his hands..."

With these certainly unique methods of surveillance, there may be some possible unintentional situations as a result, such as:

-A little more control over the surveilled individual's immediate surroundings by the FBI

-The surveilled individual could be viewed by some as exaggerating about being followed by many undercover agents, when in fact, they were describing their surveillance experience accurately!

-There is a tiny chance the surveilled individual could have been harassed under these types of interesting surveillance tactics. See COINTELPRO 2. and the FBI's documented past record on harassment of peace leader Martin Luther King Jr. and many lesser or little known organizations and individuals

-It may be good if psychiatrists learn about the FBI's past surveillance methods in order to prevent a possible wrong diagnosis on someone (ie. possibly as delusional) when they were really describing the surveillance methods (ie. ...the entire army... FBI's Special Surveillance Group team or the SSG's)

In the small chance that someone may find themselves in a similar situation and feel a little stress, they may be interested in trying some methods that are scientifically validated by Harvard (ie. The Relax Response or the Sedona Method) to lesson stress or be free from stress.

Most people, being brought up in a culture full of symbolic representation, may try to think themselves out of the situation. However, thinking so much may actually add to the small stress the person may be feeling.

For people interested, one option that I think may be helpful is to try the Sedona Method 3. or the Relaxation Response. 4.

These methods focus on clearing the mind of most thought or eventually all thought. However, clearing the mind of thought doesn't mean not to think. It means people can choose what they want to think with a clearer, sharper mind and free from distracting thoughts.

Being free from distractions of thought they would rather do without, an individual can go and accomplish whatever goals (family life, relationships, school or anything else including being under surveillance) they set out to do, and do it with a clearer and sharper mind.

Someone once asked “Who really controls the world?” An intelligent responder stated “The average person is in control. Without the work of average people, the current system could not continue.”

While the FBI has done some wonderful things, (such as finding kidnapped individuals ect.) if the majority of people choose to create a practical society based on freedom, federation, democracy and equal opportunity, 5. perhaps they

will be free of the need of a state and its need to spy with organizations like the FBI. Perhaps such highly intelligent people in organizations such as the FBI could join in the new voluntary organizations designed around mutual aid and freedom. On holding power of society, the majority of people always have a choice!

About the author:

Nicholas Evans is interested in anthropology, history and economics. He prefers peaceful and/or gradual change.

Bibliography and footnotes:

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NPR (National Public Radio) is an internationally acclaimed producer and distributor of noncommercial news, talk, and entertainment programming.

<http://www.npr.org/about/>

2. AARC Public Library Contents. Book II: Intelligence Activities and the Rights of Americans. Final Report of the Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities. United States Senate, 94th Congress, 2nd Session, April 26 (legislative day, April 14), 1976. [AKA "Church Committee Report"]. Retrieved June 20, 2009 from: http://www.aarclibrary.org/publib/contents/church/contents_church_report...

Regarding Martin Luther King Jr:

"When King learned he would be the recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964, the FBI decided to take its harassment of King one step further, sending him an insulting and threatening note anonymously. A draft was found in the FBI files years later. In it the FBI wrote, "You are a colossal fraud and an evil, vicious one at that." The letter went on to say, "The American public ... will know you for what you are -- an evil, abnormal beast," and "Satan could not do more."

Christensen, Jen. FBI tracked King's every move CNN: CNN.com. Dec. 29, 2008. Retrieved June, 20, 2009 from:

<http://www.cnn.com/2008/US/03/31/mlk.fbi.conspiracy/index.html#cnnSTCVideo>

3. The Sedona Method. Scientific Evidence that Using The Sedona Method May Result in Emotional Wellness The Sedona Method: Sedona, AZ. Retrieved on June 20, 2009 from <http://www.sedona.com/html/scientific-evidence.aspx>

"A pilot research study was conducted on The Sedona Method by Dr. Richard J. Davidson of the State University of New York in collaboration with Dr. David C. McClelland of The Department of Social Relations at Harvard University. Dr. Davidson has been associated with some of the best research in the field of stress reduction, and Dr. McClelland is an internationally known authority." The study details excellent improvement in heart rate, blood pressure and reduced muscle tension

This study below shows that positive people tend to be healthier than people with negative attitudes.

"...the manner in which people attempt to understand or explain the causes of stressful or adverse life events—particularly the use of a pessimistic explanatory style—can significantly undermine their psychological and physiologic functioning^{4,15-17} or adversely affect the course of an illness.¹⁸ Furthermore, animal research has suggested that learned helplessness, a prototype of pessimistic explanatory style, may lower immune system responsiveness and enhance tumor growth.^{19,20}...

...optimists are less likely to develop depression and learned helplessness... with fewer tendencies to self-blame and catastrophic thinking."

TOSHIHIKO MARUTA, MD; ROBERT C. COLLIGAN, PHD; MICHAEL MALINCHOC, MS; KENNETH P. OFFORD, MS .. 'Optimists vs Pessimists: Survival Rate Among Medical Patients Over a 30-Year Period' Mayo Clinic: Mayo Clinic Proceedings. 2000 Retrieved June 22, 2009 from:

<http://66.102.1.104/scholar?hl=en&lr=&q=cache:p6e9ulhOU7EJ:http://www.ma...>

4. The Benson-Henry Institute for Mind Body Medicine. The Relaxation Response. Massachusetts General Hospital: Boston, MA. Retrieved on June 20, 2009 from

http://www.mbmi.org/basics/whatis_rresponse.asp

"In the late 1960's, in the same room in which Harvard Medical School's Walter Cannon performed fight-or-flight experiments 50 years earlier, Herbert Benson, MD found that there was a counterbalancing mechanism to the stress response. Just as stimulating an area of the hypothalamus can cause the stress response, so activating other areas of the brain results in its reduction. He defined this opposite state the "relaxation response.""

Please see: <http://www.relaxationresponse.org/> and http://www.mbmi.org/about/clip_rr.asp

5. For information about a federated, directly democratic society with equality of opportunity please see:

McKay, Iain. An Anarchist FAQ Oakland: AK Press., 2008. It is also available on-line here:

<http://www.infoshop.org/faq/index.html>

The AFAQ has been regarded as "...very comprehensive..." by Graham, Paul; Hoffman, John. Introduction to Political Ideologies London: Pearson/Longman. (2006) pp 109 And as an "exemplar of the principles..." of community governing by Harvard resident fellow Joseph Reagle in: Why the Internet is Good - Community governance that works

well Berkman Center for Internet and Society: Harvard Law School

(1998) Retrieved June 20, 2009 from: http://cyber.law.harvard.edu/archived_content/people/reagle/regulation-1...