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Information Aesthetics 2014–2015
University of IL at Chicago

Secondary Research Guiding Questions

1) Define your topic or problem space (data is material / you decide the story)

What are all of the topics or topic areas that your team has researched individually?
Security, recycling, climate change, police, privacy, crime

What are the strongest overlaps in topic interests?
Security, privacy, climate

How might you combine two or more topic areas to add focus to your research?
Crime and security/privacy

What is your combined issue or problem?
–How crime is monitored through surveillance
–Increasing or decreasing crime rates due to more security/surveillance

What is your perspective, your hypothesis, or your point of view?
–Understanding of how surveillance and monitoring is useful but a strong fear of abuse in the system
–Technology being used to watch civilians/invasion of privacy
–Using data to pre-determine actions

What is at stake? Why does it matter?
–privacy/security
–freedom
–basic rights
–identity
–social control
–abuse of power/abuse of system

2) Define your audience

Who is affected by your issue/problem?
Citizens of Chicago

Who is affecting your issue/problem?
–Rising Violence in the city
–City Government

Who can make a change?
–Citizens
–Elected Officials

What is their perspective? Why would they resist change?
–Unaware of data/possible dangers
–Belief that it helps to curb violence

What are the competing perspectives/issues from those involved in the topic?
Most believe that it helps to stop violent crime. It also helps to solve crimes by providing video evidence.
Opponents believe that the system could be easily abused to monitor individuals illegally.

Who is an expert on this issue/problem? What do you think is his/her point of view?
David Zavattono–Deputy Director for the Chicago Department of Transportation. He is most likely in favor of these surveillance systems in Chicago.

Who can give you insights into what this issue/problem is like in daily life?
–Those affected by red light cameras (Good or bad experiences)
–City workers/ police officials that monitor or use the system

Who can give you insights into a perspective that you don't share?
Those that live in an area with a high rate of crime.

Who doesn't care about your issue/problem but should?
Majority of Chicago citizens

How is your topic/problem specific to Chicago or different in Chicago?
Chicago has the highest amount of red light camera installations in the world. Also, Chicago has one of the highest crime rates.

3) What information would influence a decision to make change? (data → information)

What data do you have on your topics?

- Some cameras are being used as blatant speed traps, sometimes even setting the speed lower than what is posted
- While safety is a concern, some question whether the cameras are being used more for revenue
- Estimated 24,000 cameras currently installed throughout the city. System includes CTA, schools CHA facilities and others operated by public bodies
- Cameras contribute to less than 1% of arrests
- Currently legislation does not exist that requires a form of transparency when dealing with city surveillance
- Influx in cameras can be linked to 9/11 and the Boston Marathon bombing
- A new city ordinance grants the Mayor power to purchase and install cameras without City Council approval or review
- Cameras have the ability to track license plates on vehicles

What appears to be most relevant at the intersection of two or more topics?
Crime and Surveillance

What data would you love to have but don't?
How exactly is Chicago's surveillance system being used and is it being abused

How might the data be seen through another topic's lens (i.e., from crime to cost of incarceration)?
Crime and traffic violation rates go down when cameras are installed. They can also help to solve crime easily and generate revenue.

What impactful projects have you seen in this problem space (could be non-data related)?
-Article for the Northwestern Journal of Technology and Intellectual Property: "Chicago's Video Surveillance Cameras: A Pervasive and Poorly Regulated Threat to Our Privacy", Adam Schwartz
-TheExpiredMeter.com gives updates on traffic cameras and how they are used.
-PhotoEnforced.com gives the location of red light cameras throughout the city and surrounding areas.
-Citizens to Abolish Red Light Cameras: Group that gives updates on new cameras and locations. Also have demonstrations to prohibit the use of cameras in the city.

4) How to best reach & affect your Audience (context/media/form)

Where do you think your audience finds data/information on your topic?
News sources. Watchdog websites

What media/communication forms do you think they use most?
Internet, word of mouth

Where in their daily lives does the topic/problem affect them most?
Traffic safety/Driving

What kind of information could influence decisions?
Crime Rates, Locations, Cost to taxpayers, Use

Where is that information now?
On some websites and local news sources. There is still little transparency when dealing with city surveillance

Where could it be? Where would it be best positioned to affect decisions?
Government websites/Public Access

Who controls data/information on this issue/problem?
The City of Chicago, Chicago Police

What new, novel, or emerging technology might be able to help deliver info on your issue/problem?
Other forms of surveillance, such as drones or tracking devices

What would be totally inappropriate?
Acts of terrorism (blowing up cameras)

What would be the best place, media, and method for convincing people to stay with the status quo?
Social Media sites

If you could convince one person to do a single thing related to this issue/problem, who would it be and what would it be?
Who: Mayor of Chicago
What: Legislate laws regarding surveillance and privacy of citizens

5) Relate your project to the OPL (purpose)

What do you think a 21st Century Library should be or do?
-Interactive learning environment
-More than a history lesson/Glorification building
-Youth center
-Area for cultural advancement
-Community oriented

-Place to share ideas and concepts

What kinds of resources should a Library make available? For whom?
Computers, Government data, learning materials, health center/education center

How could/should people access a 21c Library?
Web, physically

How can technology play a role in increasing accessibility of Library resources?
Online database, Open Source, Software used for educating/learning purposes

What's the most radical idea you can come up with for a Library program/event/resource?
Organizing a protest of government policies.

What do you think is the most successful public infrastructure in Chicago? Anywhere else in the world?
Chicago Park District, Chicago Cultural Center

Why is it successful? Who uses it? What do they gain? What do they contribute?
-Massive amount of programs (free) and public support
-Free activities and a sense of community

How could your above example be applied to your issue/problem?
Use the library as a platform for informing residents of local issues

How is your issue/problem applicable/relevant to the OPL?
It is a new and emerging issue and the concept for the OPL is to break conventions of a typical library

How is your issue/problem totally NOT applicable/relevant to the OPL?
It is still a governmental structure and the issue we are discussing here is in defense of government policies