

[Previous post](#)  
[Next post](#)

448

48

52

Tweet

Share

# Oops! Air Force Drones Can Now (Accidentally) Spy on You

By [Spencer Ackerman](#)

[Email Author](#)

May 8, 2012 |

12:56 pm |

Categories: [Air Force](#), [Drones](#), [Spies](#), [Secrecy and Surveillance](#)

Follow [@attackerman](#)

Like

Send

1105 likes. [Sign Up](#) to see what your friends like.



*Photo: U.S. Air Force*

As long as the Air Force pinky-swears it didn't mean to, its drone fleet can keep tabs on the movements of Americans, far from the battlefields of Afghanistan, Pakistan or Yemen. And it can hold data on them for 90 days — studying it to see if the people it accidentally spied upon are actually *legitimate* targets of domestic surveillance.

The Air Force, like the rest of the military and the CIA, isn't supposed to conduct “nonconsensual surveillance” on Americans domestically, according to an Apr. 23 instruction from the flying service. But should the drones taking off over American soil accidentally keep their cameras rolling and their sensors engaged, well ... that's a different story.

“Collected imagery may incidentally include US persons or private property without consent,” reads the instruction (.pdf), unearthed by the secrecy scholar Steven Aftergood of the Federation of American Scientists. That kind of “incidental” spying won't be immediately purged, however. The Air Force has “a period not to exceed 90 days” to get rid of it — while it determines “whether that information may be collected under the provisions” of a [Pentagon directive](#) that authorizes limited domestic spying.

In other words, if an Air Force drone accidentally spies on an American citizen, the Air Force will have three months to figure out if it was legally allowed to put that person under surveillance in the first place.

Not all domestic drone surveillance is that ominous. “Air Force components may, at times, require newly collected or archived domestic imagery to perform certain missions,” the Air Force concluded. Acceptable surveillance includes flying drones over natural disasters; studying environmental changes; or keeping tabs above a domestic military base. Even those missions, however, raise “policy and legal concerns that require careful consideration, analysis and coordination with legal counsel.”

The potential trouble with those local intelligence missions is once the drones' powerful sensors and cameras sweep up imagery and other data from Americans nearby, the Air Force won't simply erase the tapes. It'll start analyzing whether the people it's recorded are, among other things, “persons or organizations reasonably believed to be engaged or about to engage, in international terrorist or international narcotics activities.” Suddenly, accidental spying provides an entrance point into deliberate investigations, all done without a warrant.

And it doesn't stop with the Air Force. “U.S. person information in the possession of an Air Force intelligence component may be disseminated pursuant to law, a court order,” or the Pentagon directive that governs acceptable domestic surveillance. So what begins as a drone flight over, say, a national park to spot forest fires could end up with a dossier on campers getting passed on to law enforcement.

All this is sure to spark a greater debate about the use of drones and other military surveillance migrating from the warzones of Iraq and Afghanistan back home. The Department of Homeland Security — which is [lukewarm](#) on its fleet of spy drones — is expanding its use of [powerful, military-grade camera systems](#). And [police departments across the country](#) are beginning to buy and fly drones from the military. Now the Air Force's powerful spy tools could creep into your backyard in a different way.

There's an irony here. The directive is actually designed to make sure that Air Force personnel involved in surveillance don't start spying on their fellow citizens. It instructs that “Questionable Intelligence Activities ... that may violate the law, any executive order or Presidential directive” have to be reported immediately up the chain of command. But what's most questionable might be the kind of local spying the Air Force considers legit.

- [Related](#)
- [You Might Like](#)
- [Related Links by Contextly](#)

W

DHS Uses Wartime Mega-Camera to Watch Border



DHS Doesn't Want Its New Spy Drones



Even DHS Is Freaked Out by Spy Drones Over America



Homeland Security Wants to Spy on 4 Square Miles at Once



Air Force's 'All-Seeing Eye' Flops Vision Test [Updated]



Our 'All-Seeing Eye' Sees Just Fine, Air Force Insists



Puzzle-Obsessed Brainiacs Scramble for Glory in the Game



Facebook Outlines Its Windows Phone App Plans



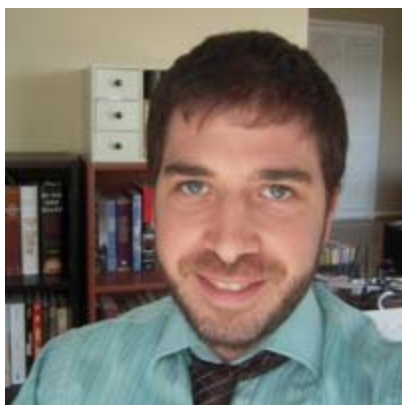
HTML5 Offers 'Scoped' CSS for Precision Styling

W

U.S. Amasses Stealth Jet Armada Near Iran



Osama is Confused by E-mail, and 5 Other Revelations from the Bin Laden File



Danger Room senior reporter Spencer Ackerman recently won the [2012 National Magazine Award for Reporting in Digital Media](#).

[Read more by Spencer Ackerman](#)

Follow [@attackerman](#) and [@dangerroom](#) on Twitter.

Tags: [Drones](#)

[Post Comment](#) | [120 Comments and 368 Reactions](#) | [Permalink](#)

[Back to top](#)

Twitter


1,144

48

Share

52

[Reddit](#) [Digg](#) [Stumble Upon](#) [Email](#)

 and 6 others liked this.  
Like

[Login](#)

**Add New Comment**



Type your comment here.

Sort by popular now ▾

**Showing 80 of 119 comments**

**AFoundingFather**

DAS - You're either the most naive person on the planet or work as a drone pilot. It's people like you who have helped whittle away the public's understanding and appreciation of their constitutional rights. Maybe you should voluntarily video tape yourself in your house (wherever there's a window), post all of your internet search history and GPS location coordinates and full audio transcripts of every conversation you ever have on Wired's comments section (just as the DOD's server farm and drone

planes are doing) so we can "decide" at a future date if you're indeed someone we'd like to slander or tie into a criminal investigation (retroactively). I sure hope you don't piss off your security contractor neighbor (whose wife you stared at too long) because the lawyers for the DOD will have 100 different excuses for accidentally sharing your private data... thanks for turning back the collective intelligence of Wired readers across the country with your post!

10 hours ago 39 Likes

Like Reply



**das**

Everything I've said in my posts is accurate, and the reasoning for the mitigation processes and minimization procedures with respect to domestic drone use — or ANY kind of domestic surveillance or intelligence operation — is to PREVENT misuse, not to encourage it by way of "accidents".

Thank you for continuing to stoke the collective paranoia of Wired readers with your post.

10 hours ago in reply to AFoundingFather 6 Likes

Like Reply

**SecurityCult**

Translation:

"Everything I've said in my posts is accurate."

I am corporate weasel and I approve this message.

"the reasoning for the mitigation processes and minimization procedures with respect to domestic drone use"

Vee Vant a kinder gentler anal probing for the people.

"is to PREVENT misuse, not to encourage it by way of "accidents"."

I veel not admeet that zee use of drrroneez eez by defeenection a meesuse.

As for accidents, I deed not read zee arteeclue.

"Thank you for continuing to stoke the collective paranoia of Wired readers with your post."

I am protecting my job security.



Oh and by the way, I'm not responding to you. I'm giving the choir a little morale boost. You sir are largely inconsequential beyond your ability to deceive the timid.

7 hours ago in reply to das 10 Likes

Like Reply



**Samuel Arkand**

It would seem that this guy gets paid by the Navy to troll the Wired comment sections and play Captain America. Or maybe life as an Information Warfare Officer at University of Wisconsin-Madison is not very busy? At least he seems to be taking that job seriously...

6 hours ago in reply to das 3 Likes

Like Reply



**das**

Sorry to disappoint, but I'm not paid by anyone to "troll" anything. Who are you "paid" by? What makes you or anyone else more "qualified" to share comments here?



6 hours ago in reply to Samuel Arkand 1 Like

Like Reply



**Samuel Arkand**

Just saying that your work as a sysadmin seems to provide a good cover for an Information Warfare Officer to work on his disinformation skills. You seem to feel obliged to defend your Orwellian military-industrial complex and nosey government on every Wired article.

6 hours ago in reply to das 3 Likes

Like Reply

**Samuel Arkand**

@DAS: Since I can't reply anymore, I'll post my response here. If you are honest, it is just time to wake up. With a government that has dissolved habeas corpus, that has indefinite detention without trial, that has massive surveillance program inside the country

and abroad, do not wave a constitution at us that has lost its meaning. You think the system will self-correct in a few decades? Hopefully you will not be one of those whose life has been crushed by the system you are helping to build up. There is nothing more anti-American than the destruction of freedom that your institutions are presiding over.

6 hours ago in reply to Samuel Arkand 7 Likes Like



das

Samuel,

Look, I'm going to just say straight up: there is no "cover"; there is no secret ulterior motive. I'm speaking here based on my own personal knowledge, experiences, and views, just as I assume you are. You may disagree with me, but please don't attribute positions to me that I don't hold. I and many others take the obligation to the Constitution and to the law seriously. If you actually want to have a conversation, I'm open to it.

6 hours ago in reply to Samuel Arkand 1 Like Like

MikeGolf

Wow - and another loser thinks that those people even care. Notice how they attempt to rationalize away information the conflicts with thier fantasy world where they are more important than they really are? The simply decide that these unplesant truths come from somebody paid to lie to them.The ironic thing is that if you shut up and asked questions about the parts of the explanitions you didn't understand (instead of turning your misunderstanding into another lame conspiracy theory) you would have learned some interesting stuff about how our intelligence services police themselves.

Remember that those people doing intelligence work both fully believe in our freedoms and recognise that they themselves are a threat to the very freedoms they work to protect.

1 hour ago in reply to Samuel Arkand

Like Reply



**captwasabi**

Maybe you should calm down and get a grip? Spy drones can only record you while you are outside so this is nothing different than CCTV surveillance systems which the USSC has routinely upheld as being legal. When out in the open you do not have an expectation of privacy. So what constitutional right is being violated here? Please tell me.

Maybe you should lay off the ad hominem attacks and straw man arguments and actually try using, oh I don't know, facts?

You want to talk about turning back the collective intelligence of Wired readers? Look no further than yourself.

10 hours ago in reply to AFoundingFather 4 Likes

Like Reply



**jasno**

Bzzzzt! Wrong.

Hyperspectral imaging can generate suspicion when conventional optics wouldn't have. Who knows what else they're packing on drones nowadays. Maybe they monitor cell phone traffic in the vicinity? Explosives detectors? Even if they don't have these technologies now, they will, and it could very easily lead to the generation of false positives - ruining innocent lives in the process.

9 hours ago in reply to captwasabi 13 Likes

Like Reply

**das**

So now you're making an argument based on the technology that something might contain. Interesting.



The courts have already ruled that imaging of the interior of a property via non-visual means constitutes a search. The simple use of technology, be it binoculars or infrared imaging, on the OUTSIDE of a property — even from an airplane — has been repeatedly upheld by the courts. It sounds like you have more of an issue with the judicial system, here...

Let me get this right: what you're basically saying is that because UAS "could" have a technology, obviously they're going to use it, even if illegally? Or are you making the broader argument that more surveillance, even if not illegal per se, is a "bad thing" because it will get more people wrapped up in possibly "false positive" situations?

If the latter, I think you completely misunderstand the purpose and function of anything the military does in the air or in space with respect to domestic concerns. We have been flying manned aircraft over the US, which have the capability to perform incredibly sophisticated intelligence gathering functions, for decades. Somehow we manage to not break the law or violate the Constitution while...

[show more](#)

9 hours ago in reply to jasno 4 Likes

Like Reply

**WaterRabbit**



The problem with this "head in the sand" attitude you have is that you ignore the continuing abuses done by the Federal government. Everything about this should raise alarms. Just for some recent examples of problems: No Fly List -- No process for challenging getting added to the list, no process to determine how a person was added to the list (must be kept secret you know), extremely difficult to get removed from the list, etc. TSA (Terrorist Support Administration) -- a story everyday about the abuses from them Police -- Police routinely now bust down doors to serve a warrant instead of just knocking on the door. The abuses by police have become

so routine there are videos every day of them. ICE – shutters domains for RIAA, doesn't allow the operators of the site to even see the evidence because somehow a music site can be a threat to national security I could go on and on and on. People that have power over other people will abuse that power if there are not strict checks and penalties. Now, we are going to have drones routinely gathering data on US citizens by "accident" and you don't think there won't be abuse? The government overreach...

[show more](#)

8 hours ago in reply to das 8 Likes

Like Reply



**archimboldo**

Don't get me wrong, I believe there are abuses in every human endeavor from sales clerks to psychologists to priests to police to defense workers, but frankly I find some of your extreme claims a bit hard to believe. And I realize we don't all save references to things we read and can't always reproduce them, but I think for big claims you have some obligation to give citations. For example,



"TSA (Terrorist Support Administration) -- a story \*everyday\* about the abuses from them." What kind of abuses are so common? Were they charged? List 3 different ones from the last 3 days.

"Police \*routinely\* now bust down doors to serve a warrant instead of just knocking on the door." What do you mean by routine? Their usual practice?

"videos every day of them" List 3 different ones from the last 3 days.

7 hours ago in reply to WaterRabbit 2 Likes

Like

**archimboldo**

"Google it yourself." Argh, well I thought I would try one of your claims and see if it warranted checking out the others: the routine breaking of doors to serve a warrant. Found this: "The police can bust down a person's door and a person can't evade the warrant simply by refusing to answer the door or come out. The police have to knock and loudly announce that they are the police and they have a warrant. If after a reasonable period of time, which isn't much, the police may bust down the door in an attempt to apprehend the person and execute the warrant."

Failed to find it is a routine way to serve warrants. The law for this came into being, apparently because enough drug dealers and other unsavories would just not answer the knock. In most cases, as far as I can tell, the police just come back later - often multiple times.

6 hours ago in reply to WaterRabbit 1 Like Like



**SecurityCult**

**archimboldo** Google it yourself. Denial by claim of extreme claim is just the kind of ridiculous claim that denial claims can't be supported by.

7 hours ago in reply to WaterRabbit Like

**SecurityCult**

Google Google Googling your wifi.

The fact is corporations are already doing what people are afraid they might do.

You're just too sheltered to see US corporations selling to dictatorships around the world.



It's already happening.

If you want to stick your head up your butt, feel free. But you don't get to stick your hand up everyone else's butt to compensate for not being able to see.

WE DON'T WANT TO BE SAFE.

WE JUST WANT TO NOT BE HARASSED BY A BUNCH OF DESK JOCKEYS WITH JOYSTICKS SO THEY CAN EARN A LIVING OFF OUR ACTIVITIES.

WE DON'T WANT SOME CRUSADING MORON TO GET IDEAS OF WHAT THEY ARE ENTITLED TO KNOW AND DO.

WE ALSO DO NOT WANT THE CHILLING EFFECTS ASSOCIATED WITH BEING WATCHED.

You are otherwise irrelevant to this discussion.

7 hours ago in reply to das 1 Like

Like Reply

**SecurityCult**

You are a moron.

The definition of outside is:

1. Exposure to the elements.
2. Elements are not managed by any entity beyond the green tentacle Amazons who made the Big Bang happen, cuz man I'd like to bang some green tentacle Amazons.

Having drones everywhere makes the outside an inside place.

It is precisely the drone people who are selling paranoia and fear otherwise we wouldn't have them in the first place.

I DON'T WANT TO BE SAFE.

I DON'T WANT A PERFECT WORLD.

I DON'T WANT JUSTICE AS EASY AS USING A VENDING MACHINE.

I DON'T WANT TO CATCH ALL THE BAD GUYS.

I WANT TO LIVE AND THAT MEANS NO UNMANNED FLYING DEBRIS OVER MY HOUSE. CUZ IT'S RETARDED.

Your mistake is assuming no one would challenge your entire premise.

7 hours ago in reply to captwasabi

Like Reply



**J. Christopher Doss**

Can't Drones record audio?

10 hours ago in reply to captwasabi

Like Reply



**MikeGolf**


Actually - DAS knows what he is talking about. I suggest that you shut up and you might learn something.

1 hour ago in reply to AFoundingFather

Like Reply



**BillCornelius**

 I don't understand your comment, why would recording and publishing the authors personal data help the random public to make better decisions? Lack of privacy is already a problem and the point of the article. would you do it?

when a new technical ability or law allows tighter control or allows the ability to re-interpret existing laws or technologies, it opens a new pathway for someone to impose their narrow ideals on everyone (remember GW?). even if nobody sees it, or acts on it immediately, it's still there for someone with less scruples to use later. It's in our best interests to challenge anything that could limit whatever freedoms we have, however vague or obtuse, because it's just those things (like corporate personhood, and private prisons) that once legally accepted, are difficult to erase later on.

3 hours ago in reply to AFoundingFather

Like Reply

**maddcribbage**

Your post is the equivalent of a Kim Kardashian break up article in a tabloid...and it gets dozens of likes.

Nice, Wired comments section. Nice.

Like Reply

**<Work At Home, Parent Link>**, <== Click here For More Read

One of my familiar share his experience about online work, he told me the secret that last couple of days, he got approximate 1500\$ through internet work, I was so inspired that I just Would you like to share the link

⇒ ► **startbytoday.blogspot.com**

5 hours ago in reply to AFoundingFather

Like Reply



**John**

[illegible]

11 hours ago 13 Likes

Like Reply

**Joe**

Wait until Americans start shooting at drones.

11 hours ago 12 Likes

Like Reply



**jasno**

I suspect it's only a matter of time before Anonymous or some lone hacker starts jamming or hijacking them.

9 hours ago in reply to Joe 4 Likes

Like Reply



**das**

Yeah, that'd be almost as cool as "Anonymous or some lone hacker" jamming or hijacking a manned military aircraft flying over the US. Still trying to understand the perverse fascination with the notion that drones are somehow "evil" because they don't have a pilot in them. And yes, I am more than aware of the myriad arguments surrounding drones vs. conventional manned aircraft, but drones can do nearly anything a manned aircraft can do, and vice versa. Do you also think we should prevent US F-16s from flying over US territory? Or would it be nice if hackers could take down US military aircraft, because, you know, they have the CAPABILITY to violate your rights, and therefore MUST be doing so?

9 hours ago in reply to jasno 3 Likes

Like Reply



**SecurityCult**

"Or would it be nice if hackers could take down US military aircraft, because, you know, they have the CAPABILITY to violate your rights, and therefore MUST be doing so?"

TSK. TSK. Oh sheltered one, I don't need proof to defend my rights. I only need doubt.

Proof is for prosecuting.  
Doubt is for protecting.

Capisce?

6 hours ago in reply to das 1 Like

Like Reply





**SecurityCult**

They are evil because they DO have a PILOT. What kind of moron are you?

It's just that the pilot, be it a person or software, doesn't have to experience the risks and self-doubt associated with being in the field.

There's not going to be any Pat Tillman or Smedley Butler or Shamar Thomas in the drone industry.

I doubt you even know who any of them are you sheltered little wheel running gerbil.

6 hours ago in reply to das

Like Reply



**SecurityCult**

We'll more likely make them do circles and loop de loops or have a demolition derby in the sky.

Oh and all that crap about SCADA. Yeah it's bullshit. I tip my hat to your vigilance against stupidity.

6 hours ago in reply to jasno

Like Reply



**das**

Yeah, because that will be about as legal as shooting at, say, a manned military aircraft that is flying over American territory.

10 hours ago in reply to Joe 2 Likes

Like Reply



**Thatoneguyinthesuit**

Hah, depends on the drone itself. Some of them do fly quite high. 50k

3 hours ago in reply to Joe

Like Reply

**Wayne Lambright**



When the government puts one finger in your a\*\*, expect two fingers. Say no to government fingers

9 hours ago 9 Likes

Like Reply



**angry\_frank**

Invalid

Honestly the fact of the matter is that the government can do anything it wants with impunity, including and up to making you disappear. The 9/11 attacks have corrupted our ethical and moral compass to a point past recognition. The one thing the government has learned from Vietnam is that no matter how bad civil unrest and protest gets, a movement without political clout will get no where. If you wait long enough it will be buried in the river of current events.

AT&T was caught tapping local us phones what happened when the public found out..Nothing.

Big protests for the Iraq war, what happened?...we went to war and spent a Trillion dollars.

Iraq war was based on fabricated intel, 5000 Americans gave their lives. Was anyone indicted?

Congress squandered Homeland security money, while high risk states had their funding cut

Afghan war was underfunded, undermanned, took 9 years to find Bin Laden.

400 Billion handed to Investment banks that gambled on toxic assets, anyone arrested for that?

The NSA has a new mega center for spying on Americans.

Apparently Americans can now be detained indefinitely with secret evidence.

Are the Drones any surprise?

Just to highlight how screwed up...

[show more](#)

7 hours ago 6 Likes

Like Reply

**Daren\_Gray**, Banned by Boing Boing



Are there still adults left on this planet who actually believe that civil rights in any way impinge, hinder, or are even peripherally germane to \*ANY\* of the decisions, or daily activities of the global intelligence community?

Accident?

For fuck's sake.

5 hours ago 3 Likes

Like Reply



**MikeGolf**

Yes there are. And those people are in fact the members of our military and intelligence services. You see you are slandering people who on their worst day are better and more honorable people than you can ever hope to be. (And your own comments slandering people whom you know nothing about are an example as to how little honor you have.)

1 hour ago in reply to Daren\_Gray

Like Reply



**andreas**

It's depressing to watch each element of the turn-key surveillance society fall into place, under a "liberal" president, without a peep from most citizens.

Unfortunately, history has repeatedly shown that one day this government too will decide that its own citizens are the threat and will turn the MQ-9 Reapers on Americans. At first, criminal americans, then "dangerous" americans, then just "protesting" americans and then finally... just anyone who gets in the way/in their sights.

8 hours ago 4 Likes

Like Reply



**Lisa Simeone**

Let's face it -- the empire is collapsing. We're circling the drain. All this police state stuff is only going to get worse.

6 hours ago 3 Likes

Like Reply



**stsk**

... And now hiring from Google street view

11 hours ago 4 Likes

Like Reply



I read an article a few weeks ago that some of these domestic drones will be equipped with Wi-Fi sniffers. All Americans should be concerned over these "new" intelligence techniques. What if these missions are about spying on people that they don't like? 1984 is right in front of us and Orwell is shaking his finger at the governments involved.

9 hours ago 3 Likes

Like Reply



**MikeGolf**

Yea right - as if 1) anybody is going to be sniffing wifi from over 40,000 feet (Drones are limited to altitudes above those used by commercial air traffic) and 2) anybody is going to waste the money, and payload weight to install one on a drone and 3) As If They Really Cared! Here is a clue for the clueless those people not only do not know that you exist - but they also couldn't care less about you.

58 minutes ago in reply to

Like Reply



**Wayne Lambright**

SKYNET seems to be in full swing of roll-out installation.

10 hours ago 3 Likes

Like Reply



**masimons**

Don't care until they start carrying weapons. And if they start bugging me, I'll shine a couple watt laser at it and see what it does.

11 hours ago 3 Likes

Like Reply

**Rasputin**

...and get locked up in gitmo as a "domestic terrorist."

Not that I don't empathize with the sentiment... I've been considering all the interesting things you could do with model rocket engines and RF-homing sensors...

10 hours ago in reply to masimons 4 Likes

Like Reply



**Mike Stevens**

Buddy of mine shined a laser up near a helicopter and had to sit in jail, go to court and probation for year.

10 hours ago in reply to masimons 1 Like

Like Reply



**MikeGolf**

And he deserved it.

55 minutes ago in reply to Mike Stevens

Like Reply



**AlGore777**

Well seeing as how he could have blinded the pilot.... yeah that sounds about right.

7 hours ago in reply to Mike Stevens

Like Reply



**Patrick F**

So.... you're going to shine a laser at a drone when it's armed? I hope you realize you are painting a bull's eye on yourself.

9 hours ago in reply to masimons

Like Reply



**nickmeister**



We are now completely f\*cked as a country...wonder if I'll have more rights in Canada??

8 hours ago 2 Likes

Like Reply

**lostviking**

People will start shooting them down when the government starts spying on us.

8 hours ago 2 Likes

Like Reply



**Stealing Sugar**

Are they using this continually increasing surveillance state news to drive us all to revolt? When people think they are being watched, it makes them nuts. Like in the case of gangstalking, which I have been a victim of for the past three years, and like Mitt Romney said "We watched them, and we let them know they were being watched", the point of watching a person is psychological torture, so we are being psychologically tortured by the police state. If you complain about it, the first thing they do is call you delusional and tell you to see a psychiatrist, so then there is nothing you can do about being harassed and intimidated, having your vehicles vandalized, your home entered, your computer (and brain, many times) hacked, being blackmailed, and all sorts of other things they do to people.

4 hours ago 1 Like

Like Reply



**MikeGolf**

The mistake you are making is thinking that this surveillance even happens. The article was poorly researched, poorly written and nothing more than an attempt to sensationalise the issue.

Of course if the author had researched our laws covering our intelligence services he wouldn't have had a story.

55 minutes ago in reply to Stealing Sugar

Like Reply



**Beckslee**

Vee haff vays to make you talck, UND YOU VILL LIKE IT!

2 hours ago in reply to Stealing Sugar

Like Reply

**IonOtter**



What's funny is that I can't read that sort of accent anymore without thinking of the Jaeger Monsters from "Girl Genius".

1 hour ago in reply to Beckslee

Like Reply



**Boredinmin**

Oops indeed. Everyone knows where this is headed.

9 hours ago 2 Likes

Like Reply



**AFoundingFather**

DAS - You must be the most naive person on the planet or a drone pilot. It's people like you who allow the public's understanding and appreciation of their constitutional rights to be whittled away to nothing. Why don't you video tape yourself, and your family, from your windows, record every conversation that takes place inside and outside you house, save and post all of your internet search history and GPS coordinates from your phone/car and provide all of your credit card receipts to this forum so we can decide to slander, or prosecute, you (retroactively) for pissing us off at a later date... And make sure not to stare too long at your DOD contractor neighbor's wife because he doesn't have to abide by any constitutional protection against unreasonable searches as provided in the 4th amendment or privacy of personal information, as provided in the 5th amendment. If you don't have any problems with the Air Force or the DOD tracking and saving this kind of information then you shouldn't have a problem posting it here... in fact, maybe Wired can set up a website so we can follow you... you know, just in case...

10 hours ago 2 Likes

Like Reply



**MikeGolf**

DAS is not niaeve - you are. DAS really does know what he is talking about and is giving you an insider perspective as to how these things work in the real world. If you shut up you might learn something.

53 minutes ago in reply to AFoundingFather

Like Reply

**quackula1**



We are losing more rights everyday. Soon there will be no more rights for citizens. Then what?

5 hours ago 1 Like

Like Reply



**Jason Rahall**

Flying the UAVs over US soil while 'armed' should also be a major concern.

7 hours ago 1 Like

Like Reply



**MikeGolf**

Armed military aircraft fly around the US all the time - why should this concern you?

52 minutes ago in reply to Jason Rahall

Like Reply



**MEPace**

LOL! First off, the Air Force doesn't even have enough analysts to process the intelligence gathered in war zones, it's not like they are conducting ISR missions in the U.S. to evaluate all Americans on their activities. Second, if they are collecting data on a natural disaster and do see a crime in progress wouldn't you want them to report it to law enforcement personnel?

10 hours ago 1 Like

Like Reply



**Rasputin**

Seriously, do people not understand the "big data" push of the US military and espionage services? The goal is to no longer NEED analysts.

And yes, the old "if you have nothing to hide, you shouldn't worry" defense. Almost as tried-and-true as "think about the children!"

No, this is yet one more erosion of our civil rights. It won't make the headlines and nobody will challenge it. But please don't try to paste a big shiny happy face on it and pretend that this turd is a rose.



10 hours ago in reply to MEPace 11 Likes

Like Reply

**MEPace**

I think you believe too much in what appears in Hollywood movies. I'd be more worried about Facebook and Google collecting data using the internet than the Government using drones.

8 hours ago in reply to Rasputin 2 Likes

Like Reply



David

I prefer the statement variously attributed to Cardinal Richelieu or Lavrenti Beria - "show me the man, I'll find you a crime"

9 hours ago in reply to Rasputin 1 Like

Like Reply



das

We'll ALWAYS need intelligence analysis, "big data" aside. And you do realize that the entire function and mission of our foreign intelligence agencies is — wait for it — FOREIGN intelligence, yes?

I know, I know — you believe that the entirety of the Intelligence Community is ignoring the law because, you know, that's just how they roll. I know you believe that the "big data" push is all about mining and searching all data, illegally and without warrants of course, even though the law specifically says that the content of communications of US Persons anywhere on the globe shall not be collected, retained, disseminated, or stored in ANY FORM unless it is done so via an individualized warrant.

Of course you ignore the fact that in the sea of communications of US Persons there is also large volumes of foreign traffic — traffic that can be collected and analyzed WITHOUT a warrant, and that in order to actually identify and target that traffic amongst all other communications, you have to actually be able to, well, identify and target it. Meaning there is a need for, oh, I don't know, equipment and capabilities to do this, which are kept secret,...

[show more](#)



9 hours ago in reply to Rasputin 1 Like

Like Reply



**MikeGolf**

Rasputin - in myne and DAS's eyes - you are a moron. We both have had expierence in this field and are speaking from experience.the

51 minutes ago in reply to Rasputin

Like Reply



**das**

Hey, this is the Wired comments section — where facts and logic don't get in the way of ignorance and conspiracy theories.

10 hours ago in reply to MEPace 2 Likes

Like Reply



**jasno**

I know right? Why would we want to think about the future when data analysis is automated and drones are in abundance? We should just trust and obey because the people in government have never abused their authority and America can do no wrong.

9 hours ago in reply to das 7 Likes

Like Reply

**das**

"I know, right?"

Oops, except that's not what I said.

This isn't an issue of vigilance against abuse. It's an issue of an utter misunderstanding of the very purpose of the procedures discussed in this article. It's turning something designed to mitigate and minimize abuse or improper collection — because it WILL happen — on its head, and acting as if it is designed to ENCOURAGE abuse.

The US can and does "do wrong" all the time. The beauty of our system is that we can recognize and correct it. Hint: this is sometimes a process that takes the intervention of the courts, and sometimes takes years or even decades, and one person's view on what is right or wrong might be diametrically opposed to another.





Your mistake is believing that if there has ever been ANY abuse, then everything must ALWAYS be abuse. Your other mistake is simplifying this down to a conspiracy theory that is some variant of "the government is out to get you", when in reality it's a lot more concerned with things like civil assistance, wildfires, and natural disasters.

9 hours ago in reply to jasno 5 Likes

Like Reply



**MikeGolf**

jasno - the iussue here is tha You Do Not Know. You have opinions that are not based in how the world really works and are doing everything you can to avoid learning something that can change that worldview.

49 minutes ago in reply to jasno

Like Reply



**Don\_Bacon**

Right, cameras are everywhere already. They'll be flying drones over nudist resorts, is all.

10 hours ago in reply to MEPace

Like Reply



**Peter Simpson**, Real Computers have switches and lights.

And they will quickly find out that the kind of people they can image nude are not the kind of people they \*want\* to image nude. The balance is tilted away from frolicking large-breasted college girls and heavily towards over-40 and over-weight guys...

//how much does it cost to replace one of those sensors?

//and since what has been seen cannot be unseen, perhaps the pilot as well?

8 hours ago in reply to Don\_Bacon 2 Likes

Like Reply

**MikeGolf**

And this is different from how the crews of manned aircraft use their optics to 'bikini watch' - how?

47 minutes ago in reply to Don\_Bacon

Like Reply



**Interracial dating**, for black Woman and white Man, or black Man and white Woman

Wanna find AN IN`TE`RR-ACIAL REL'ATI`ON-SHIP?

Here is a very nice community

..I`nter'ra'cialC`hatS^,Co\*M..

It's where black white sing-les looking for someone to enjoy their lifestyle with.

Come in and stay a while. Complete your profile. Post a message, a picture of yourself and check out the photo galleries.

Give it a try, you will find someone you like here .bv/09)\_ui\_)(\*

1 hour ago

Like Reply



**Alex McCown**

and i suppose its okay to accidentally bomb someone for j-walking

1 hour ago

Like Reply



**kuei12**

I told you war lovers this was the goal. Yup, Kuei is always right...except about that 1st wife.

1 hour ago

Like Reply



**redletterday**

I'm sure the airforce pogs don't care much about spying on you. The military is not an evil enterprise of doom. Sorry. <http://www.atwillet.com/preda...> They look so evil

2 hours ago

Like Reply



**IonOtter**

Yeah, these kids looked so cute, too! [tinypic. com /r/2wdy07d/6](http://tinypic.com/r/2wdy07d/6)

1 hour ago in reply to redletterday

Like Reply



**redletterday**

I'm sure the airforce pogs don't care much about what you are doing. The military isn't an evil enterprise of doom. Sorry to burst your bubble.

2 hours ago

Like Reply



**Beckslee**

Ooops! Right. Just like, 'oops - I accidentally read all your emails', or 'oops, I accidentally found out what sites you were visiting on the internet'. Right. Tell me another one. Watch it though.... someone might (oops!) be listening. 1984 is no longer socio-scientific fiction.

2 hours ago

Like Reply

 [Subscribe by email](#)  [RSS](#)

[Load more comments](#)

## Reactions

