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# Follow

By David Buuck

**(a conceptual self-portrait experiment)**

I hired a private investigator to follow & photograph me at various times over a week in Jan 07, & to then send me his 'report.'

Reflections: due to cost, I was only able to retain his services for a limited time. Which meant he did not do much night-time surveillance, for better or worse... I found the rather banal results to be kinda hilarious – how much of the (this) 'writer's life' is really really boring. Still, an interesting trial run at a poetics of surveillance, where the self & its expressions (self-portraiture, autobiography, confessional poem, etc.) are increasingly crafted by other mediated means, often with our consent (i.e. what I feed 'them' thru my internet usage, electronic purchases, public movements, etc.) I am I because my little machine knows me...

sample text:

(DATE REDACTED)

10:30 am - On scene.

12:05 pm - No activity noted. Delivery truck pulls next to surveillance vehicle parked on (REDACTED) St., blocking view of residence. Surveillance vehicle moves to find alternate location.

12:10 pm - Subject vehicle, green (REDACTED), observed traveling westbound on

(REDACTED) St. toward Martin Luther King Jr. Way (MLK). Mobile surveillance initiated. Subject vehicle traveling southbound on MLK toward (REDACTED).

12:15 pm - Visual of subject vehicle lost. Surveillance vehicle delayed at red light.

12:23 pm - Visual of subject vehicle regained in area of Bay Bridge toll booth. Subject vehicle moves quickly across three lanes to FasTrak lane and proceeds onto bridge. Surveillance vehicle blocked by traffic and unable to continue.

12:25 pm - Attempt to locate subject vehicle on Bay Bridge and into San Francisco. Unable to locate subject vehicle and surveillance terminated at (REDACTED) exit from Hwy. 101.

(DATE REDACTED)

9:15 am - On scene at (REDACTED) St., Oakland, CA. No activity noted. Window coverings are closed and subject vehicle parked in driveway next to residence.

1:00 pm – No activity. No one exits or enters the residence. Subject vehicle remains parked as described. Surveillance terminated.

(DATE REDACTED)

10:30 am - Begin to depart area enroute to (REDACTED) to determine if subject departed residence on foot prior to initiation of surveillance. Subject observed through rear view mirror hurrying down front stairs and moving quickly to vehicle. Subject is a Caucasian male, mid 30's, approximately (REDACTED) tall, slim build wearing (REDACTED), brown cap, and maroon work boots. Subject carrying book bag or computer bag. Subject enters vehicle and departs area.

10:35 am - Subject vehicle parks parallel on (REDACTED) St. just north of (REDACTED) Ave., Oakland, CA. Subject exits the vehicle and walks briskly to and enters (REDACTED) on corner of (REDACTED) and (REDACTED).

11:00 am - Investigator enters (REDACTED) to determine actions of subject. Subject observed seated just inside front door and to the left at small table near window, with back to window. Subject, with (REDACTED) in hand, converses briefly with (REDACTED) seated to his right, mid 30's, approximately (REDACTED) tall with long light brown or dark blonde hair, wearing (REDACTED) with neck scarf, white (REDACTED) and blue jeans. Subject scans interior of (REDACTED) briefly. Subject appears to stare off across (REDACTED) as if in thought. Investigator departs (REDACTED) at 11:10 am.

12:44 pm - Subject observed through window standing and milling about. Photographs of movement obtained

1:52 pm - Subject exits (REDACTED) alone and scans area in all directions. He is observed milling about on the sidewalk at the corner with his hands in pants pocket to protect against chill wind. He pulls small (REDACTED) from his pocket and places in his mouth. He is looking down at sidewalk as he walks, again with hands in pants pockets. No discernable purpose of this activity is noted. Subject removes cell phone from pocket and dials. He holds cell phone to his right ear and mills about. Unable to determine if he is actually talking with anyone or simply listening. He is looking down and walking in an exaggerated manner. Subject places right hand over forehead and rubs the area of his forehead and eyes with a strong squeezing motion. Subject continues to mill about and walks several feet up (REDACTED) Ave. toward rear of (REDACTED). He turns and walks back slowly. His facial expression demonstrates contemplation, as he walks back toward the front of the (REDACTED), apparently taking no notice of the (REDACTED) and traffic as he strides by. Subject reaches the front of the (REDACTED) and lifts his head to look ahead of him. His gaze appears to be fixed in front of him as he walks northbound on (REDACTED) Ave. to the

end of the (REDACTED). Subject immediately turns about and walks slowly but with determination back to the front door of (REDACTED) where he enters at 1:57 pm and disappears from view. Photographs of Subject's activities are obtained.

2:42 pm - Surveillance is terminated