

SOMETHING TO HIDE

WRITERS AND ARTISTS AGAINST
THE SURVEILLANCE STATE



ACTIVISM TOOLKIT



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“Something to Hide” is a public education program designed to provoke reflection on the ways in which unchecked government surveillance threatens artistic and intellectual freedom. It aims to expand the constituency committed to protecting those liberties and to help build a broad movement for reform.

Modeled on a series of events first organized by the ACLU and PEN American Center, the “Something to Hide” program is meant to counter the oft-heard slogan that “if you have nothing to hide, you have nothing to fear.” The “Something to Hide” program is meant to underscore that *all* of us should value privacy—that *all* of us have thoughts and ideas and experiences that we want to keep to ourselves—and that human dignity requires retaining a degree of control over what we disclose about ourselves and what we don’t. The program is meant to help people think more deeply about why privacy is valuable, about the implications of government surveillance for the freedoms of speech and expression, and about what we might do to protect these liberties.

This toolkit will provide you with the basic materials needed to stage your own “Something to Hide” event.

HOW TO USE THIS TOOLKIT

You can use this toolkit to galvanize local audiences by hosting events designed to spread awareness and spark meaningful conversations about the everyday effects of government surveillance on the lives of ordinary people.

“Something to Hide” can be tailored to suit any venue or audience, large or small. You can hold your event in a theater, your local public library, a bookstore, a university lecture hall, or in your living room, and it can be as formal or as informal as you’d like. You can assign to readers the excerpts we offer in this toolkit or you can invite readers to select their own texts. Alternatively, to encourage the participation of local writers, you might suggest that participants read selections from their own work. You can find photos from past events at <https://www.aclu.org/STH-photos> and a video is available at <http://cs.pn/1eo9UyN>.

If you’d like some assistance planning your Something to Hide event, here are a few ways we can help:

1. PEN American Center can put you in touch with local writers who would like to take part. Contact info@pen.org for more info.
2. The national ACLU can connect you with your local ACLU affiliate and reach out to other groups that may be able to help advertise your event. Contact somethingtohide@aclu.org for more info.
3. The American Booksellers Foundation for Free Expression can connect you with local booksellers to help develop your event. Contact info@abffe.org for more info.
4. The American Library Association celebrates Choose Privacy Week the first week in May and maintains a website: www.chooseprivacyweek.org. ALA can connect you with your local public library and also provide programming ideas.

Even if you don’t need our help, we’d love to hear about your event! Contact us at somethingtohide@aclu.org to let us know what you’re planning, to send photos, or with any questions.

Read on for more background on NSA surveillance. In the “tools for action” section of this toolkit, you’ll also find samples of visuals we have used to advertise our events in the past, and draft language for a petition that participants can sign calling on their legislators to rein in the surveillance state.

BACKGROUND

The National Security Agency's surveillance activities have expanded dramatically in the years since September 11, 2001. Recent disclosures have shown that the government is engaged in dragnet surveillance both here at home and abroad. Virtually every detail of our online lives—and many details about our lives offline as well—are being tracked and recorded in government databases.

The government's new surveillance programs are enabled by two sweeping laws that Congress enacted in the name of national security: the USA Patriot Act and the FISA Amendments Act (FAA). While the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court (FISC) is supposed to oversee the government's surveillance activities, it operates in near-total secrecy through one-sided procedures that heavily favor the government. We provide some basic information about these two laws in this toolkit, and you can visit www.aclu.org/nsa-surveillance for more background.

Surveillance gives the government easy access to information that reveals the details of our lives—details ranging from the most mundane to the most intimate: where we worship, whom we love, which political causes we support. Pervasive monitoring has a chilling effect on free speech, inhibits creative expression and intellectual inquiry, and alters our political discourse. An October 2013 survey of 500 American authors showed not only that writers are increasingly worried about being targeted by government surveillance, but that a significant portion are engaging in self-censorship by avoiding research on controversial topics, choosing not to engage in sensitive conversations, and declining to pursue particular topics and stories out of fear of scrutiny by the U.S. government. (Read PEN's report at <http://www.pen.org/chilling-effects>.)

What is the National Security Agency?

The National Security Agency is one of the U.S. government's largest and most secretive intelligence agencies. Created in 1952, the NSA operates under the authority of the Department of Defense. It is charged with two missions: 1) protecting the security of our national communications systems, and 2) collecting, managing, and analyzing foreign signals intelligence.

Why is the NSA a threat to civil liberties?

The NSA's surveillance of American citizens has greatly expanded since September 11, 2001. For over a decade, the NSA has been given unprecedented power to spy on innocent Americans without real oversight. This kind of government monitoring chills free speech, inhibits creative expression and intellectual inquiry, and alters our political discourse. Left unchecked, the NSA's dragnet surveillance threatens to fundamentally alter the relationship between the citizens of this country and their government.

What have we learned about the NSA's activities since June 2013?

The ACLU and others have long suspected that the NSA is relying on its authority to target foreigners abroad as a pretext for sweeping surveillance of Americans. Those suspicions were proven true when, on June 5, 2013, a story published by The Guardian disclosed that the government is collecting a record of every single phone call made by every single American "on an ongoing daily basis." Subsequent news reports have shown that in addition to tracking virtually all of the phone calls in the country, the government spies on a vast but unknown number of Americans' international calls, text messages, and emails. Together, these revelations have triggered a remarkable and long-overdue public debate about the legality and propriety of the government's surveillance practices.

Why should you be concerned about the NSA's activities?

An extraordinary amount of information about us is recorded—not only our call records and the contents of our correspondences, but also our whereabouts, shopping habits, finances, and more. This information paints a detailed picture of each and every one of us, exposing intimate details about our choices, friendships, romantic entanglements, political associations, religious beliefs, and medical conditions. Today, the NSA has the capability to access much of this information with minimal oversight from Congress or the courts.

The presumption of innocence is a foundation of our justice system. But today the NSA is collecting private information about all of us, even though most of us have never been suspected of wrongdoing. This places our constitutional rights to privacy, free speech, and free association under severe threat by a government that operates as though everyone's information, no matter how intimate, is fair game.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Below are brief summaries of the two laws that the government relies on to justify its dragnet surveillance programs. Links to more information are included.

PATRIOT ACT

The government claims sweeping authority under the Patriot Act to collect a record of virtually every phone call made or received on U.S. telephone networks. This program exceeds the authority given to the government by Congress, violates the right of privacy protected by the Fourth Amendment, and violates the rights of free speech and association protected by the First Amendment. The disclosures to the media by Edward Snowden have shed critical light on the scope of the government's programs. Congress and the public have yet to learn the full story, however, about how the Patriot Act is being used. Visit <https://www.aclu.org/nsa-patriot-act> to learn more about the Patriot Act.

FISA AMENDMENTS ACT

When Congress enacted the FISA Amendments Act of 2008 (FAA), the ACLU and others warned that the government would rely upon the statute to engage in dragnet surveillance of international communications, including Americans' international communications. In June 2013, The Guardian confirmed that this is exactly how the law is being used.

The Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA), enacted by Congress in 1978, generally requires the government to seek warrants before monitoring Americans' conversations. In 2001, however, President Bush authorized the NSA to launch a warrantless wiretapping program, and in 2008 Congress ratified and expanded that program through the FAA.

The FAA gives the NSA almost unchecked power to monitor international phone calls, text messages, and emails—including Americans' international communications. Recent disclosures show that the FAA is being used to collect purely domestic communications as well, that the rules that supposedly protect privacy are weak and riddled with exceptions, and that virtually every email that goes into or out of the United States is scanned for suspicious keywords.

Visit <https://www.aclu.org/nsa-faa> to learn more about the FISA Amendments Act.

TAKE ACTION

Congress has the power to rein in the surveillance state. Many lawmakers, reflecting a growing consensus against NSA spying, have indicated their willingness to work for reform. It is imperative that members of Congress know that their constituents expect them to take action to protect their privacy. Participants at your event can sign a petition, based on the language on the next page of this toolkit, targeting their representatives in Congress. (Just insert your representative's name, and add a signature form with space for names, signatures, and addresses.)

ADVERTISE YOUR EVENT

Feel free to borrow the language or imagery we have used to advertise our own events. For example, you can find a flyer from a past event at <http://www.aclu.org/sth-visuals>, or you may want to use elements of the cover of this toolkit. Adapt the format and design as you see fit. (But please leave out the logos.)



LEARN MORE

Should you want to provide more detailed information on the NSA and its surveillance programs, you can find additional resources from the ACLU at <https://www.aclu.org/nsa-surveillance>. For more from PEN on the effects of surveillance on free speech, you can visit: <http://www.pen.org/chilling-effects>. To learn more about how Section 215 of the Patriot Act threatens the privacy of your bookstore and library records and join the Campaign for Reader Privacy, you can visit: <http://www.readerprivacy.org>. The American Library Association maintains the Choose Privacy Week website at: www.chooseprivacyweek.org.

TELL CONGRESS

ACT NOW

TO END THE SURVEILLANCE STATE



Photo Credit

Since Edward Snowden exposed the NSA's massive internet and telephone spying programs, momentum is building to rein in the surveillance state. The NSA's dragnet spying goes far beyond what is permitted under the Constitution, and it must be ended.

Now is the time to turn up the pressure on Congress, which blindly gave the NSA too much spying power in the first place. We need to stand together and send our representatives a crystal clear message: Americans stand opposed to this blatant abuse of power.

Tell Congress to end the secret surveillance state—sign the petition demanding they end unconstitutional surveillance under section 215 of the Patriot Act and section 702 of FISA immediately.

Congress provided the legislative vehicles for the NSA's massive spying programs—and it's time to roll them back.

The recently disclosed NSA spying programs present a grave threat to democratic freedoms.

Act now to back legislation that ends unconstitutional surveillance under the Patriot Act and FISA.

**READING
#1**

“Let America Be America Again” is a poem written by Langston Hughes and published in 1938. It was often cited as a justification for his surveillance by the FBI due to his leftist political views.

Let America be America again.
Let it be the dream it used to be.
Let it be the pioneer on the plain
Seeking a home where he himself is free.

(America never was America to me.)

Let America be the dream the dreamers dreamed—
Let it be that great strong land of love
Where never kings connive nor tyrants scheme
That any man be crushed by one above.

(It never was America to me.)

O, let my land be a land where Liberty
Is crowned with no false patriotic wreath,
But opportunity is real, and life is free,
Equality is in the air we breathe.

(There’s never been equality for me,
Nor freedom in this “homeland of the free.”)

Say, who are you that mumbles in the dark?
And who are you that draws your veil across the stars?

I am the poor white, fooled and pushed apart,
I am the Negro bearing slavery’s scars.
I am the red man driven from the land,
I am the immigrant clutching the hope I seek—
And finding only the same old stupid plan
Of dog eat dog, of mighty crush the weak.

I am the young man, full of strength and hope,
Tangled in that ancient endless chain
Of profit, power, gain, of grab the land!
Of grab the gold! Of grab the ways of satisfying need!
Of work the men! Of take the pay!
Of owning everything for one’s own greed!

I am the farmer, bondsman to the soil.
I am the worker sold to the machine.
I am the Negro, servant to you all.
I am the people, humble, hungry, mean—
Hungry yet today despite the dream.
Beaten yet today—O, Pioneers!
I am the man who never got ahead,
The poorest worker bartered through the years.

Yet I'm the one who dreamt our basic dream
In the Old World while still a serf of kings,
Who dreamt a dream so strong, so brave, so true,
That even yet its mighty daring sings
In every brick and stone, in every furrow turned
That's made America the land it has become.
O, I'm the man who sailed those early seas
In search of what I meant to be my home—
For I'm the one who left dark Ireland's shore,
And Poland's plain, and England's grassy lea,
And torn from Black Africa's strand I came
To build a "homeland of the free."

Excerpt from Langston Hughes, "Let America Be America Again," from *The Collected Poems of Langston Hughes*, published by Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. Copyright © 1994 the Estate of Langston Hughes. Reprinted by permission of Random House LLC and the Estate of Langston Hughes.

READING #2

An excerpt from The Handmaid's Tale, Margaret Atwood's 1985 novel about a dystopian society in which women are under constant surveillance by spies and informants in their midst.

A group of people is coming towards us. They're tourists, from Japan it looks like, a trade delegation perhaps, on a tour of the historic landmarks or out for local color. They're diminutive and neatly turned out; each has his or her camera, his or her smile. They look around, bright-eyed, cocking their heads to one side like robins, their very cheerfulness aggressive, and I can't help staring. It's been a long time since I've seen skirts that short on women. The skirts reach just below the knee and the legs come out from beneath them, nearly naked in their thin stockings, blatant, the high-heeled shoes with their straps attached to the feet like delicate instruments of torture. The women teeter on their spiked feet as if on stilts, but off balance; their backs arch at the waist, thrusting the buttocks out. Their heads are uncovered and their hair too is exposed, in all its darkness and sexuality. They wear lipstick, red, outlining the damp cavities of their mouths, like scrawls on a washroom wall, of the time before.

I stop walking. Ofglen stops beside me and I know that she too cannot take her eyes off these women. We are fascinated, but also repelled. They seem undressed. It has taken so little time to change our minds, about things like this.

Then I think: I used to dress like that. That was freedom.

Westernized, they used to call it.

The Japanese tourists come towards us, twittering, and we turn our heads away too late: our faces have been seen.

There's an interpreter, in the standard blue suit and red-patterned tie, with the winged-eye tie pin. He's the one who steps forward, out of the group, in front of us, blocking our way. The tourists bunch behind him; one of them raises a camera.

"Excuse me," he says to both of us, politely enough. "They're asking if they can take your picture."

I look down at the sidewalk, shake my head for no. What they must see is the white wings only, a scrap of face, my chin and part of my mouth. Not the eyes. I know better than to look the interpreter in the face. Most of the interpreters are Eyes, or so it's said.

I also know better than to say yes. Modesty is invisibility, said Aunt Lydia. Never forget it. To be seen—to be seen—is to be—her voice trembled—penetrated. What you must be, girls, is impenetrable. She called us girls.

Beside me, Ofglen is also silent. She's tucked her red-gloved hands up into her sleeves, to hide them.

The interpreter turns back to the group, chatters at them in staccato. I know what he'll be saying, I know the line. He'll be telling them that the women here have different customs, that to stare at them through the lens of a camera is, for them, an experience of violation.

I'm looking down, at the sidewalk, mesmerized by the women's feet. One of them is wearing open-toed sandals, the toenails painted pink. I remember the smell of nail polish, the way it wrinkled if you put the second coat on too soon, the satiny brushing of sheer pantyhose against the skin, the way the toes felt, pushed towards the opening in the shoe by the whole weight of the body. The woman with painted toes shifts from one foot to the other. I can feel her shoes, on my own feet. The smell of nail polish has made me hungry.

"Excuse me," says the interpreter again, to catch our attention. I nod, to show I've heard him.

"He asks, are you happy," says the interpreter. I can imagine it, their curiosity: Are they happy? How can they be happy? I can feel their bright black eyes on us, the way they lean a little forward to catch our answers, the women especially, but the men too: we are secret, forbidden, we excite them.

Ofglen says nothing. There is a silence. But sometimes it's as dangerous not to speak.

"Yes, we are very happy," I murmur. I have to say something. What else can I say?

READING #3

From Nineteen Eighty-Four, George Orwell's seminal novel on the dangers of totalitarianism in the modern world. Published in 1949, the novel has left an indelible mark on popular culture and remains widely cited for its portrayal of social control. It was referenced in a December 2013 federal court ruling, in which Judge Richard Leon used the term "Orwellian" to describe the NSA's call-tracking program.

Suddenly he started up with a shock of horror. The sweat broke out on his backbone. He had heard himself cry aloud:

'Julia! Julia! Julia, my love! Julia!'

For a moment he had had an overwhelming hallucination of her presence. She had seemed to be not merely with him, but inside him. It was as though she had got into the texture of his skin. In that moment he had loved her far more than he had ever done when they were together and free. Also he knew that somewhere or other she was still alive and needed his help.

He lay back on the bed and tried to compose himself. What had he done? How many years had he added to his servitude by that moment of weakness?

In another moment he would hear the tramp of boots outside. They could not let such an outburst go unpunished. They would know now, if they had not known before, that he was breaking the agreement he had made with them. He obeyed the Party, but he still hated the Party. In the old days he had hidden a heretical mind beneath an appearance of conformity. Now he had retreated a step further: in the mind he had surrendered, but he had hoped to keep the inner heart inviolate. He knew that he was in the wrong, but he preferred to be in the wrong. They would understand that—O'Brien would understand it. It was all confessed in that single foolish cry.

He would have to start all over again. It might take years. He ran a hand over his face, trying to familiarize himself with the new shape. There were deep furrows in the cheeks, the cheekbones felt sharp, the nose flattened. Besides, since last seeing himself in the glass he had been given a complete new set of teeth. It was not easy to preserve inscrutability when you did not know what your face looked like. In any case, mere control of the features was not enough. For the first time he perceived that if you want to keep a secret you must also hide it from yourself. You must know all the while that it is there, but until it is needed you must never let it emerge into your consciousness in any shape that could be given a name. From now onwards he must not only think right; he must feel right, dream right. And all the while he must keep his hatred locked up inside him like a ball of matter which was part of himself and yet unconnected with the rest of him, a kind of cyst.

One day they would decide to shoot him. You could not tell when it would happen, but a few seconds beforehand it should be possible to guess. It was always from behind, walking down a corridor. Ten seconds would be enough. In that time the world inside him could turn over. And then suddenly, without a word uttered, without a check in his step, without the changing of a line in his face—suddenly the camouflage would be down and bang! would go the batteries of his hatred. Hatred would fill him like an enormous roaring flame. And almost in the same instant bang! would go the bullet, too late, or too early. They would have blown his brain to pieces before they could reclaim it. The heretical thought would be unpunished, unrepented, out of their reach for ever. They would have blown a hole in their own perfection. To die hating them, that was freedom.

Excerpt from NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR by George Orwell. Copyright © 1949 by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company, renewed 1977 by Sonia Brownell Orwell. Reprinted by permission of Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company and the Estate of Sonia Brownell Orwell. All rights reserved.

READING #4

From Little Brother, Cory Doctorow's bestselling and award-winning novel, a favorite among young adults, about four tech-savvy teenagers who, in the aftermath of terrorist attacks in San Francisco, defend themselves against the government's attacks on their basic rights and freedoms.

You might be wondering at this point what dark secrets I had locked away on my phone and memory sticks and email. I'm just a kid, after all.

The truth is that I had everything to hide, and nothing. Between my phone and my memory sticks, you could get a pretty good idea of who my friends were, what I thought of them, all the goofy things we'd done. You could read the transcripts of the electronic arguments we'd carried out and the electronic reconciliations we'd arrived at.

You see, I don't delete stuff. Why would I? Storage is cheap, and you never know when you're going to want to go back to that stuff. Especially the stupid stuff. You know that feeling you get sometimes where you're sitting on the subway and there's no one to talk to and you suddenly remember some bitter fight you had, some terrible thing you said? Well, it's usually never as bad as you remember. Being able to go back and see it again is a great way to remind yourself that you're not as horrible a person as you think you are. Darryl and I have gotten over more fights that way than I can count.

And even that's not it. I know my phone is private. I know my memory sticks are private. That's because of cryptography message scrambling. The math behind crypto is good and solid, and you and me get access to the same crypto that banks and the National Security Agency use. There's only one kind of crypto that anyone uses: crypto that's public, open and can be deployed by anyone. That's how you know it works.

There's something really liberating about having some corner of your life that's yours, that no one gets to see except you. It's a little like nudity or taking a dump. Everyone gets naked every once in a while. Everyone has to squat on the toilet. There's nothing shameful, deviant or weird about either of them. But what if I decreed that from now on, every time you went to evacuate some solid waste, you'd have to do it in a glass room perched in the middle of Times Square, and you'd be buck naked?

Even if you've got nothing wrong or weird with your body and how many of us can say that? you'd have to be pretty strange to like that idea. Most of us would run screaming. Most of us would hold it in until we exploded.

It's not about doing something shameful. It's about doing something *private*. It's about your life belonging to you.

They were taking that from me, piece by piece. As I walked back to my cell, that feeling of deserving it came back to me. I'd broken a lot of rules all my life and I'd gotten away with

it, by and large. Maybe this was justice. Maybe this was my past coming back to me. After all, I had been where I was because I'd snuck out of school.

I got my shower. I got to walk around the yard. There was a patch of sky overhead, and it smelled like the Bay Area, but beyond that, I had no clue where I was being held. No other prisoners were visible during my exercise period, and I got pretty bored with walking in circles. I strained my ears for any sound that might help me understand what this place was, but all I heard was the occasional vehicle, some distant conversations, a plane landing somewhere nearby.

They brought me back to my cell and fed me, a half a pepperoni pie from Goat Hill Pizza, which I knew well, up on Potrero Hill. The carton with its familiar graphic and 415 phone number was a reminder that only a day before, I'd been a free man in a free country and that now I was a prisoner. I worried constantly about Darryl and fretted about my other friends. Maybe they'd been more cooperative and had been released. Maybe they'd told my parents and they were frantically calling around.

Maybe not.

The cell was fantastically spare, empty as my soul. I fantasized that the wall opposite my bunk was a screen, that I could be hacking right now, opening the cell door. I fantasized about my workbench and the projects there—the old cans I was turning into a ghetto surroundsound rig, the aerial photography kitecam I was building, my homebrew laptop. I wanted to get out of there.

I wanted to go home and have my friends and my school and my parents and my life back. I wanted to be able to go where I wanted to go, not be stuck pacing and pacing and pacing.

READING #5

Rant, by Liu Xia, a Chinese poet and artist. Liu Xia has been under house arrest since her husband, Liu Xiaobo, a prominent human rights activist, was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2010. He is currently serving an 11-year prison sentence.

I'm the soul in the body
of the man named Nijinsky.
Gaunt, I eat little, only
what the spirit feeds me.
I hate having a bloated
stomach. It inhibits dancing.

I'm afraid of crowds,
of dancing for them—
they demand a joyful jig
but joy is death. They feel
nothing but want
my life to match theirs.

I stay home to avoid
the crowds. Shutting
myself up in one room,
I stare at the walls and ceiling
to feel a life in this prison.

I'm a philosopher who thinks
with my body, I'm biological
theater, non-fiction, the body
of spirit whose language is
poetry. I am prosody.

Sleeping pills don't work,
and alcohol doesn't work.
I'm exhausted and want to stop
but this spirit in me won't permit it.

I need to go, to go
to some great height and look down.
I need to go until I reach that height
I need to go.

RANT by Liu Xia. Reprinted by permission of Tienchi Martin-Liao for Liu Xia, Ming Di & Jennifer Kronovet (translators).

READING #6

An excerpt from “Freedom to Write,” a lecture the Turkish Nobel laureate Orhan Pamuk delivered as part of PEN’s World Voices Festival of International Literature in 2006.

... So let me tell another story that might cast some light on the shame and pride I felt twenty years ago while I was taking Miller and Pinter around Istanbul. In the ten years following their visit, a series of coincidences fed by good intentions, anger, guilt, and personal animosities led to my making a series of public statements on freedom of expression that bore no relation to my novels, and before long I had taken on a political persona far more powerful than I had ever intended. It was at about this time that the Indian author of a United Nations report on freedom of expression in my part of the world—an elderly gentleman—came to Istanbul and looked me up. As it happened, we, too, met at the Hilton Hotel. No sooner had we sat down at a table than the Indian gentleman asked me a question that still echoes strangely in my mind: “Mr. Pamuk, what is there going on in your country that you would like to explore in your novels but shy away from, due to legal prohibitions?”

There followed a long silence. Thrown by his question, I thought and thought and thought. I plunged into an anguished Dostoevskyan self-interrogation. Clearly, what the gentleman from the UN wished to ask was, “Given your country’s taboos, legal prohibitions, and oppressive policies, what is going unsaid?” But because he had—out of a desire to be polite, perhaps?—asked the eager young writer sitting across from him to consider the question in terms of his own novels, I, in my inexperience, took his question literally. In the Turkey of ten years ago, there were many more subjects kept closed by laws and oppressive state policies than there are today, but as I went through them one by one, I could find none that I wished to explore “in my novels.” But I knew, nonetheless, that if I said “there is nothing I wish to write in my novels that I am not able to discuss,” I’d be giving the wrong impression. For I’d already begun to speak often and openly about all these dangerous subjects outside my novels. Moreover, didn’t I often and angrily fantasize about raising these subjects in my novels, just because they happened to be forbidden? As I thought all this through, I was at once ashamed of my silence, and reconfirmed in my belief that freedom of expression has its roots in pride, and is, in essence, an expression of human dignity.

I have personally known writers who have chosen to raise forbidden topics purely because they were forbidden. I think I am no different. Because when another writer in another house is not free, no writer is free. This, indeed, is the spirit that informs the solidarity felt by PEN, by writers all over the world.

Sometimes my friends rightly tell me or someone else, “You shouldn’t have put it quite like that; if only you had worded it like this, in a way that no one would find offensive, you wouldn’t be in so much trouble now.” But to change one’s words and package them in a way that will be acceptable to everyone in a repressed culture, and to become skilled in

this arena, is a bit like smuggling forbidden goods through customs, and as such, it is shaming and degrading.

... I have related all these stories to illustrate a single truth—that the joy of freely saying whatever we want to say is inextricably linked with human dignity. So let us now ask ourselves how “reasonable” it is to denigrate cultures and religions, or, more to the point, to mercilessly bomb countries, in the name of democracy and freedom of thought. My part of the world is not more democratic after all these killings. In the war against Iraq, the tyrannization and heartless murder of almost a hundred thousand people has brought neither peace nor democracy. To the contrary, it has served to ignite nationalist, anti-Western anger. Things have become a great deal more difficult for the small minority who are struggling for democracy and secularism in the Middle East. This savage, cruel war is the shame of America and the West. Organizations like PEN and writers like Harold Pinter and Arthur Miller are its pride.

Excerpt from PEN Arthur Miller 2006 Freedom to Write Lecture, delivered by Orhan Pamuk, copyright © 2006 by Orhan Pamuk, English translation copyright © 2006 by Maureen Freely. Reprinted by permission of Orhan Pamuk and Maureen Freely.

READING #7

From Edwidge Danticat's Create Dangerously: The Immigrant Artist at Work. Danticat's collection of essays depicts the exile's experience of writing a means of connection and expression of protest.

There were many recurrences of this story throughout the country, book and theater clubs secretly cherishing some potentially subversive piece of literature, families burying if not burning their entire libraries, books that might seem innocent but could easily betray them. Novels with the wrong titles. Treatises with the right titles and intentions. Strings of words that, uttered, written, or read, could cause a person's death. Sometimes these words were written by Haitian writers like Marie VieuxChauvet and René Depestre, among others. Other times they were written by foreign or *blan* writers, writers like Aimé Césaire, Frantz Fanon, or Albert Camus, who were untouchable because they were either not Haitian or already long dead. The fact that death prevented one from being banished—unlike, say, the English novelist Graham Greene, who was banned from Haiti after writing *The Comedians*—made the “classic” writers all the more appealing. Unlike the country's own citizens, these writers could neither be tortured or murdered themselves nor cause their family members to be tortured or murdered. And no matter how hard he tried, Papa Doc Duvalier could not make their words go away. Their maxims and phrases would keep coming back, buried deep in memories by the rote recitation techniques that the Haitian school system had taught so well. Because those writers who were still in Haiti, not yet exiled or killed, could not freely perform or print their own words outright, many of them turned, or returned, to the Greeks.

When it was a crime to pick up a bloodied body on the street, Haitian writers introduced Haitian readers to Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex* and *Antigone*, which had been rewritten in Creole and placed in Haitian settings by the playwright Franck Fouché and the poet Felix Morisseau Leroy. This is where these writers placed their bets, striking a dangerous balance between silence and art.

How do writers and readers find each other under such dangerous circumstances? Reading, like writing, under these conditions is disobedience to a directive in which the reader, our Eve, already knows the possible consequences of eating that apple but takes a bold bite anyway.

How does that reader find the courage to take this bite, open that book? After an arrest, an execution? Of course he or she may find it in the power of the hushed chorus of other readers, but she can also find it in the writer's courage in having stepped forward, in having written, or rewritten, in the first place.

Create dangerously, for people who read dangerously. This is what I've always thought it meant to be a writer. Writing, knowing in part that no matter how trivial your words may seem, someday, somewhere, someone may risk his or her life to read them. Coming

from where I come from, with the history I have—having spent the first twelve years of my life under both dictatorships of Papa Doc and his son, JeanClaude—this is what I’ve always seen as the unifying principle among all writers. This is what, among other things, might join Albert Camus and Sophocles to Toni Morrison, Alice Walker, Osip Mandelstam, and Ralph Waldo Emerson to Ralph Waldo Ellison. Somewhere, if not now, then maybe years in the future, a future that we may have yet to dream of, someone may risk his or her life to read us.

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READING #8

An excerpt from Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck's Academy Award-winning film The Lives Of Others (2006), a German drama about the invasive and repressive monitoring of East Berlin by the Stasi, East Germany's secret police.

Reader #1: (Oberstleutnant Anton Grubitz, Stasi Officer and Wiesler's superior)

Reader #2: (Hauptmann Gerd Wiesler, Stasi Captain)

Reader #1:

Wiesler, I'm glad you're here. I have to show you something. "Prison Conditions for Subversive Artists Based on Character Profile." Pretty scientific, eh? And look at this: "Dissertation supervisor: A. Grubitz." That's great, isn't it? I only gave him a B... They shouldn't think getting a doctorate with me is easy. But this is first-class. Did you know that there are just 5 types of artists? Your guy, Dreyman, is a type 4. A "hysterical anthropocentrist." Can't bear being alone, always talking, needing friends. That type should never be brought to trial. They thrive on that. Temporary detention is the best way to deal with them. Complete isolation and no set release date. No human contact the whole time, not even with the guards. Good treatment, no harassment, no abuse, no scandals... nothing they could write about later. After 10 months, we release. Suddenly. That guy won't cause us any more trouble. Know what the best part is? Most type 4s we've processed in this way never write anything again! Or paint anything, or whatever artists do ... And that without any use of force ... Just like that! Kind of ... like a present. What brings you here? Developments with Dreyman?

Reader #2:

That's why I'm here. I think the time has come ...

Reader #1:

For what?

Reader #2:

For us to slim down the operation. I don't want to run day and night shifts for such an uncertain case.

Reader #1:

Uncertain, eh? You don't think we'll find anything for the Minister?

Reader #2:

Maybe if we're more flexible ... If we watch 'Lazlo' outside his own four walls.

Reader #1:

Shall I give the case to Udo?

Reader #2:

I'd like to continue it myself.

Reader #1:

Why?

Reader #2:

It could produce results. I just need to plan more flexibly, when I come and go, days and nights ... Maybe he's up to something outside.

Reader #1:

Something doesn't feel right here. There's something you're hiding. Alright, I'll take Udo off the case. I can use him for this church case. Give me a request in writing. Write as a reason: "Lack of suspicious acts." And, Wiesler! A piece of advice for you: We're not at school anymore. Projects aren't about grades, but success.

READING #9

*An excerpt from a 1966 Supreme Court dissenting opinion, written by Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas, in **Osborn v. United States**, in which a secretly-recorded telephone call served as the key piece of evidence in a criminal conviction. Fifty-seven years later, the dissent reads like a prescient warning.*

We are rapidly entering the age of no privacy, where everyone is open to surveillance at all times; where there are no secrets from government. The aggressive breaches of privacy by the Government increase by geometric proportions. Wiretapping and “bugging” run rampant, without effective judicial or legislative control.

Secret observation booths in government offices and closed television circuits in industry, extending even to rest rooms, are common. Offices, conference rooms, hotel rooms, and even bedrooms are “bugged” for the convenience of government. Peepholes in men’s rooms are there to catch homosexuals. Personality tests seek to ferret out a man’s innermost thoughts on family life, religion, racial attitudes, national origin, politics atheism, ideology, sex, and the like. Federal agents are often “wired” so that their conversations are either recorded on their persons or transmitted to tape recorders some blocks away. The Food and Drug Administration recently put a spy in a church organization. Revenue agents have gone in the disguise of Coast Guard officers. They have broken and entered homes to obtain evidence.

Polygraph tests of government employees and of employees in industry are rampant. The dossiers on all citizens mount in number and increase in size. Now they are being put on computers, so that, by pressing one button, all the miserable, the sick, the suspect, the unpopular, the off-beat people of the Nation can be instantly identified.

These examples and many others demonstrate an alarming trend whereby the privacy and dignity of our citizens is being whittled away by sometimes imperceptible steps. Taken individually, each step may be of little consequence. But when viewed as a whole, there begins to emerge a society quite unlike any we have seen—a society in which government may intrude into the secret regions of man’s life at will....

Once electronic surveillance is added to the techniques of snooping which this sophisticated age has developed, we face the stark reality that the walls of privacy have broken down and all the tools of the police state are handed over to our bureaucracy on a constitutional platter... [W]iretapping and electronic “bugging” invariably involve a search for mere evidence. The objects to be “seized” cannot be particularly described; all the suspect’s conversations are intercepted. The search is not confined to a particular time, but may go on for weeks or months. The citizen is completely unaware of the invasion of his privacy. The invasion of privacy is not limited to him, but extends to his friends and acquaintances—to anyone who happens to talk on the telephone with the

suspect or who happens to come within the range of the electronic device. Their words are also intercepted; their privacy is also shattered. Such devices lay down a dragnet which indiscriminately sweeps in all conversations within its scope, without regard to the nature of the conversations, or the participants. A warrant authorizing such devices is no different from the general warrants the Fourth Amendment was intended to prohibit.

Such practices can only have a damaging effect on our society. Once sanctioned, there is every indication that their use will indiscriminately spread. The time may come when no one can be sure whether his words are being recorded for use at some future time; when everyone will fear that his most secret thoughts are no longer his own, but belong to the Government; when the most confidential and intimate conversations are always open to eager, prying ears. When that time comes, privacy, and with it, liberty, will be gone. If a man's privacy can be invaded at will, who can say he is free? If his every word is taken down and evaluated, or if he is afraid every word may be, who can say he enjoys freedom of speech? If his every association is known and recorded, if the conversations with his associates are purloined, who can say he enjoys freedom of association? When such conditions obtain, our citizens will be afraid to utter any but the safest and most orthodox thoughts; afraid to associate with any but the most acceptable people. Freedom as the Constitution envisages it will have vanished.