If we limit ourselves to the physically and politically defined space of Washington, D.C. it is much easier to deal with what produces fear in the landscape of this city. This is not a democratically run city. It is more like Athens under a tyrant, Rome under a bad emperor, or Florence under a careless Medici. Local government is weak and ineffective and until recently with Mayor Anthony Williams, had not been financially responsible for almost two decades. Local government has an inadequate tax base, no representation in Congress, and no effective control over the spaces and changes Richard Longstreth has so ably described.

The District of Columbia is not a state; it is a colonial entity and has no control over the building of a beautiful capital or its transformation into what I would prefer to call a surveillance city, adapting Foucault. I say all this because behind Longstreth’s paper is a quest common among anthropologists, for the social organization that would allow the changes he describes and that many of you can go out and see immediately. We begin by reminding ourselves that this city is not part of the governance structure of the states. It is not a democracy; it is run autocratically by Congress without local representation. Even though the local license plates are by now hackneyed, their motto is correct: Taxation without representation. Nobody local voted in the landscape of fear.

Next and less easy to point out is the colonial quality of local government. It has some money, some power, and outside of the federal core of the city, some control over spaces. Colonial means variable effectiveness, a very large and controlling bureaucracy of
over 40,000 employees who are dedicated to making sure that the rules are followed. This bureaucracy takes pretty good care of the physical face of the city. However, the local bureaucracy does not control the federal presence. None does, except the federal government which in practical terms means federal agencies, far more than Congress itself.

I want to characterize how the agencies work based on my own experience with the Army Corps of Engineers, so recently famous for not building or repairing properly the levees around New Orleans. I live in the District and have since 1976. For the last seven years I have lived in a 54-year-old housing development called Spring Valley which is about four miles from the Marriott Wardman Hotel, where we are talking now. It is where American University is located and abuts the Maryland state line. It has 1200 properties in it, mostly houses. It is where I have come to understand how a landscape of fear can be built in the first place. I cite all this not to dismiss the attacks of September 11, 2001, but to frame the federal response to them.

In World War I the federal government rented the whole campus of American University, then newly founded, and some of the campus of the Catholic University of America to invent and experiment with the effectiveness of poison gases for use against the German enemy in Europe (Albright 2003; Baker 1993; Gordon et al 1994; Office of History 1994). The chemistry building at Catholic University is where Lewisite was invented (Vilensky 2005:19–15). Lewisite is the most effective and deadly of all poison gases. While poison gases were created at Catholic University which is also within the District of Columbia and about five miles from here, they were tested for effectiveness on the American University campus, then largely unbuilt as well as in the woods and fields around it in Spring Valley. All this was done by the U.S. Army.

The experiments included lobbing shells with gases (Vilensky 2005) to see if they exploded, testing gases on various tethered animals to see how they reacted, and burning arsenic candles in long rows to create clouds of poison gases which would float on the wind to the enemy. Gas masks were tried on our troops for effectiveness and as many as 10,000 soldiers were stationed in the area. It is not clear how they were affected by the experiments (D.C. Government 1996; Government of the District of Columbia 1997; U.S. Army and Support Center, Huntsville 1998; U.S. Report to the Subcommittee...2002).

Spring Valley is less than a square mile. When World War I closed, the American University Experiment Station was immedi-
ately closed and much, but not all, the equipment and residues were buried on the campus or in the surrounding woods. The locales were where shells were lobbed, pits where animals were tethered while gassed, bunkers where toxins were stored were buried. A lot of the deadly material was no doubt taken away to be destroyed. However, the Trustees of American University agreed (Spring Valley n.d.) that the Army would not have to clean up the campus if the Army gave some of its over 140 buildings built for these experiments to the school. Much was buried on the campus or not cleaned up at all.

After the Second World War, Spring Valley was further developed as a middle to upper middle-class housing development by the Miller real estate company. The homes, streets, and landscaping you see there now come from this business effort. During this business process, the land was divided into privately owned lots with houses on most.

Beginning in the 1950’s and continuing into the 1990’s, two things occurred. The Miller Company and individual homeowners and their contractors discovered by accident through ground disturbing work some of the shells, bottles, and other remains that actually still had in them the poisons used to make the poison gases (Santana 2002; Report to the Subcommittee...2002). People got gassed and very sick. Some residents claim that their relatives died from prolonged exposure (Fiala 2001) to the toxins buried in many places—which were by then home lots—in Spring Valley (Davies-Cole et al n.d.)

Second, the law required that the Army Corps of Engineers take the lead in cleaning up the toxic wastes left behind by the Army in Spring Valley. Federal law accepted federal responsibility for removing the harmful remains in the ground. This is where the landscape of fear actually begins. The key to understanding Richard Longstreth’s analysis is in removing foreignness from the source of fear long enough to understand that we are the fearful ourselves and it is Americans dealing with each other through a bureaucracy inadequately mediated by democratic processes that allows and continues a surveillance society based on fearfulness (Albright 2004).

I live in Washington and have for all the 29 years I have taught in the Department of Anthropology at the University of Maryland, College Park. While I love my university, I also love living in this city. It is a privilege to be in so beautiful a place, and beautiful in many ways. I have lived in Spring Valley for seven years and have been appointed, and then elected to the Restoration Advisory Board for the Army Corps cleanup of Spring Valley for the last five years.
Federal law requires that the concerned public be kept informed of decisions and progress in cleanup operations like these. Such cleanups are sometimes known as superfund sites but rarely involve big neighborhoods let alone one in the middle of the nation's capital. I know the matter of cleanup effort as a resident and as one of the 14 neighbors who are supposed to be told of actions and consulted before and after they are taken (Turkel 2001).

The cleanup of as many as 10% of the 1200 properties and an important part of the American University campus itself involves collaborative action between the Army Corps of Engineers, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Department of Health of the District of Columbia government (Kartman and Slonecker 2001). These groups make the decisions and people who live there usually get told of what has been done after it has been decided or actually carried out. So, we are colonials. We pay taxes and get cleaned up. It took me at least 18 months, maybe two years, to realize that the Restoration Advisory Board knew virtually nothing about the cleanup in advance. It also took me awhile to realize that the Army felt quite awkward about the citizens it was engaged with.

About a year and a half ago, the Army had suffered enough bad publicity (U.S. Report to the Subcommittee…2002) and incompetent work by its team and contractors. It put a civilian manager in charge and he has created a far more credible operation. Right now it is hard to complain.

Here is how a landscape of fear is created. It is created in the absence of democracy, not in its presence or with its processes. Landscapes of fear are actually the ground where war and its preparations are carried out. These preparations and war tactics are carried out because we have been attacked and realize we have enemies. Well, we all know that the enemies exist. We all know that large federal agencies and small city bureaucracies are filled with people who see no need to consult with ordinary citizens. Kafka told us that, not Max Weber. The flaw in all of this is too much power in one set of hands and too little knowledge and authority in the other. In the landscape of fear we have war preparations in a capital city with virtually no way to examine how fear is used to remake the historic core or the city's neighborhoods.

If the absence of knowledge and authority is one component of the landscape of fear, the other is constant surveillance. We all know there are cameras, mirrors, boxes with men watching, and parked cars all over. They are concentrated in some areas more than others so we can avoid them, or try to. Not so with the cameras, which are ever-more frequent. I raise surveillance because of the disruption in the landscapes and the ambiguity it causes. In Spring
Valley, every house and property has been mapped (Bohannon 2001). Every house is on a GIS with its stratigraphic history of build-up and cut-down in the construction process. So, every house and its land have a history in the master Army GIS. The shape of each house is accurate. Then the amount of arsenic in each house’s soil is recorded from lot by lot sampling done three years ago on all 1200 properties.

On top of all this and in a GIS (Kartman and Slonecker 2001) of remarkable dimensions are the historic maps and aerial photographs associated with World War I. Thus you can see a historical overview of your neighborhood and your own house. But you can only see it with permission and need because it is controlled by the Army which will not let just anybody browse it because, of course, there are issues of privacy and property value. These claims and restrictions are all part of the rationale of surveillance. These claims are part of the landscape of fear as well, because controlled access does not protect you or anybody else. It excludes you and everybody else.

To criticize the operation of the landscape of fear I could invoke H.G. Wells and the all-seeing apparatus of 1984. More impressive is what happened to me. The Corps’ local headquarters is a few blocks from my house, or a short walk, or a quick view through the woods. They moved on to their property a large chamber for exploding safely old bombs, that could have included poison gases. All this turned out just fine but I had no idea how this container worked and because the Corps had spent a decade and more denying both the need to clean up (Albright 2004) and their responsibility for it in Spring Valley, I didn’t trust this machine. So, I asked questions publicly. I said I lived nearby and wondered the about potential danger. The major in charge didn’t like my doubts or my questions and said back to me, “I know where you live.” This is the second component of the landscape of fear. This is not about foreigners or terrorists attacking us. This is Foucault’s surveillance society. It is also the true location of power in our democracy. This is how the landscape of fear is built and maintained.

Notes

Acknowledgements: I am grateful for guidance on this essay to Dr. Gregory Beumal and Dr. David Feary, both members of the Spring Valley Restoration Advisory Board. I am grateful to Mr. Kent Slowinski for help in assembling the citations.
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