



SAPIENZA
UNIVERSITÀ DI ROMA

Dipartimento di
Scienze Sociali ed Economiche

PHD IN APPLIED SOCIAL SCIENCES

GUEST SEMINAR SERIES

PANDEMIC SURVEILLANCE by David Lyon

April 29, 2021 (3.00-5.00 pm)

Pandemic surveillance is a *double-entendre* referring to surveillance in pandemic times and also to a pandemic *of* surveillance. Countries worldwide are using digital technologies and their data to reduce the impact of COVID-19—notably with so-called contact-tracing apps, but with many other systems and devices as well. Simultaneously, homes have also become intensified surveillance targets, as remote shopping, learning and working have expanded. Ordinary people are made visible to public health authorities and platform companies in unprecedented ways and each kind of organization treats citizens as they are represented by data. This affects already disadvantaged groups in especially negative ways, both nationally and globally. These factors prompt questions of power and democracy, especially in a world of surveillance capitalism, and an urgent quest for an alternative ethics and politics centred not just on data protection but on data justice.



Prof. **David Lyon** is Director of the Surveillance Studies Centre at Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario. Educated at the University of Bradford UK, Lyon has been studying surveillance since the mid-1980s. A pioneer in the field of Surveillance Studies, he has produced a steady stream of books – translated in to 18 languages – and articles starting with *The Electronic Eye* (1994). The latest is *The Culture of Surveillance* (2018) and he is completing *Surveillance: A Very Short Introduction and Pandemic Surveillance*. He has led several large collaborative research projects on

surveillance, with research funding totalling almost \$8 million. His work has been recognized in Canada, Switzerland, the USA and the UK with a number of fellowships, prizes, awards and an honorary doctorate.