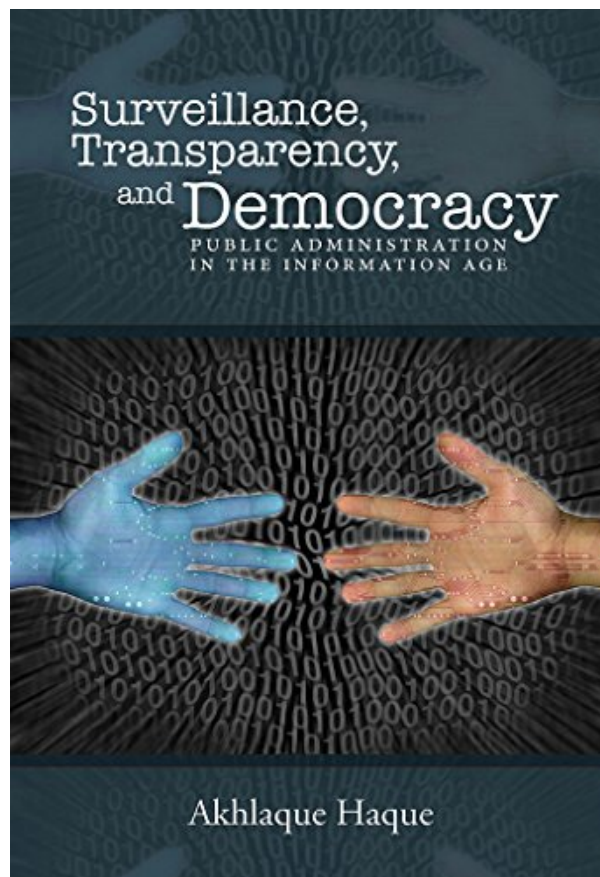
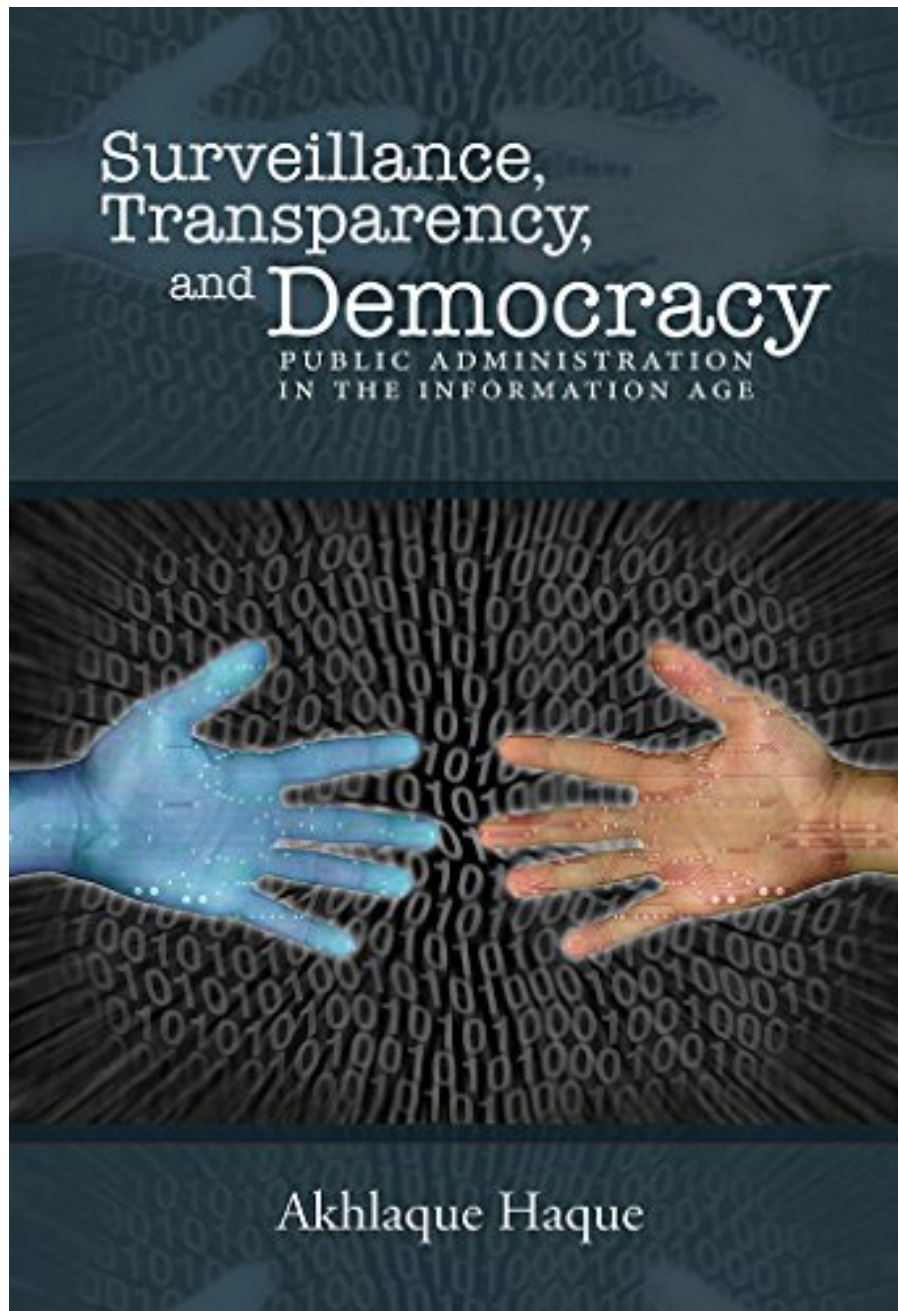


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Review

"Surveillance, Transparency, and Democracy addresses a key question for today's public administrators. The Janus-faced nature of emerging social media and IT breakthroughs are apparent. On one face, these technologies can both liberate societies and individuals and give citizens a more meaningful voice in public policy-making. On the other, the very same technology can stifle, monitor, and control individuals, agencies, and societies in unprecedented ways. Haque makes a clarion call for scholars and practitioners not only to be alert to the 'two faces' of technology but also to take steps to ensure that what de Tocqueville called 'democratic administration' triumphs over the field's dominant focus on bureaucratic administration."

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"Akhlaque Haque has provided us with a long overdue work focused on the role of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in a Democracy. He provides a critical linkage between the democratic traditions and values of public administration and the rapidly unfolding explosion of data and information that threatens to overwhelm the connection between citizens and their government. He ties the robust theoretical literature surrounding the dichotomy between practice and administration and infuses that research with the challenges resulting from rapid growth of data collection, analysis, and dissemination."

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"Where will our technology lead us? Transporters or Cylons? This question makes for fascinating science fiction. However, until we get the transporters, we get places incrementally, one step at a time. We are on this journey every day. How we manage today's information technology is very much a part of setting our long-term course. Public administrators have become the steward of vast amounts of data. This data has the potential to greatly improve effective decision-making and promote democratic governance. It also can

expose every aspect of our history, habits, health, and heredity to those with enough power, money or hacking skill to obtain and exploit them. Surveillance, Transparency, and Democracy implores us to make well-considered decisions regarding our stewardship of public data. The decisions we make today have immediate impact in our information-infused world. They mean even more as the precedents for life in tomorrow's information-saturated world."

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In this well-informed yet anxious age, public administrators have constructed vast cisterns that collect and interpret a meteoric shower of facts. In *Surveillance, Transparency, and Democracy*, Akhlaque Haque demonstrates that this pervasive use and increasing dependence on information technology (IT) enables sophisticated and well-intentioned public services that nevertheless risk deforming public policy decision-making. Haque sees the contradiction at the core of a public that seeks services that require a level of data collection that triggers fears of a tyrannical police state.

Haque begins by explaining that information has become a vital resource, offering a theoretical framework for its analysis. He then shows that an organization's information-gathering skill is reflected in its IT sophistication, but warns that successful IT strategies can be stunted by symbolic but shallow gestures such as the appointment of a "Chief Information Officer." He further outlines how the dependence on IT can create a reflex for IT solutions that fail to reflect the values of the citizenry they're intended to serve.

Haque posits that IT's potential as a tool for human development depends on how civil servants and citizens actively engage in identifying desired outcomes, map IT solutions to those outcomes, and routinize the applications of those solutions. This leads to his call for the development of entrepreneurs who generate innovative solutions to critical human needs and problems. In his powerful summary, Haque recaps possible answers to the question: "What is the best way a public institution can apply technology to improving the human condition?"

Haque masterfully flexes between crisp logical arguments and a deep empathy for human values. He finds apt metaphors that bring multifaceted scenarios into clear focus for experts and laymen alike. Engrossing, challenging, and important, *Surveillance, Transparency, and Democracy* is essential reading for both policy makers as well as the great majority of readers and citizens engaged in contemporary arguments about the role of government, public health and security, individual privacy, data collection, and surveillance.

- Sales Rank: #2258417 in Books
- Published on: 2015-08-31
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.00" h x .90" w x 6.00" l, .0 pounds
- Binding: Hardcover
- 176 pages

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Timely, enjoyable, helpful

By Luce

Run, don't walk, to read "Surveillance, Transparency, and Democracy: Public Administration in the Information Age" if you want to apply the tremendous assets of IT in your organization without shattering the expectations of the public for privacy and efficiency together. This book should be enjoyable for anyone who wants to know how information is changing our world today. Dr. Haque succeeds where others have failed to look squarely at the potential for dangerous misuse and the innumerable benefits of computer-generated personal data. This author recognizes both the inevitability of widespread surveillance technology and the advantages of harnessing its best capabilities within an ethical structure rooted in the needs of the people in society. In a thin and readable volume, Haque manages to lead the reader through the field's best academic literature to Best Practice solutions for problems of administration in a healthy democracy.

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it could bring great benefits to our society and increase governmental accountability to ...

By Andrew

Due to the current information explosion happening right now, Akhlaque Haque's new book, *Surveillance, Transparency and Democracy – Public Administration in the Information Age*, is a vitally important and contemporary study of the effects of this overload of information on modern day public administrators. Our world contains vast amounts of digital information which is quantitatively growing by leaps and bounds each day. The author realizes that if this information could be managed well, it could bring great benefits to our society and increase governmental accountability to its citizens. However, he also recognizes and warns of the potential misuse of this information in violating constitutional principles and values. He challenges public administrators to balance measurable information with contextual information in their decision-making process. A must read for anyone in the field of public administration and governmental service.

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Highly recommended

By JJP

If the topic of surveillance, transparency and privacy is giving you pause then this book is for you and will put your critical thinking into fast forward. With the revelations about the tsunami of data collection on private citizen and the mass data breaches both in the private sector and the governmental sector – there are many who are concerned that our democracy is threatened in this information age. It is refreshing to see a scholarly book on the subject. I found it interesting that Professor Haque stated that he not intending to settle a debate by his book, but rather to open one. If people read this book and enter this important debate, then he will have done his job. Highly recommended.

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