

## CCTV BABY

I

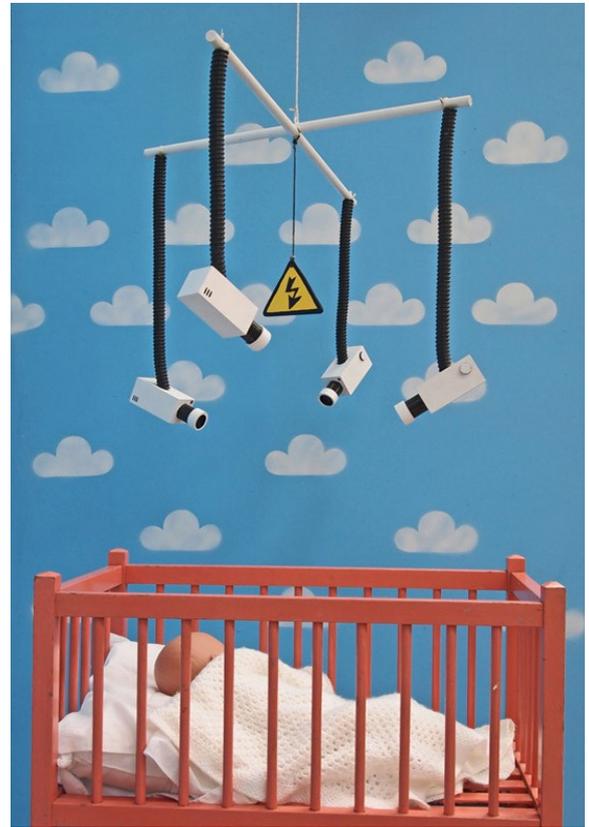
This document is a painting by British graffiti artist Banksy. It doesn't have a date, but I will assume that it's quite recent.

D

The painting shows a baby lying in its cot being watched by CCTV cameras which hang above it.

A

The artist's aim is to criticise the surveillance of society, and also to mock society for accepting so much invasion into their privacy. The image is very extreme, most people would be horrified to see something like this happen in real life. However, this piece of art has a moral message, its aim is to show how extreme the surveillance situation has become. I think that the artist is trying to remind us that we are being filmed by CCTV cameras almost all the time in public places, and that this change represents a real threat. I also think that the artist chose the image of a baby to reveal a perverse, voyeuristic side to the new culture of surveillance.



H

This work of art may be particularly interesting for people in the UK because it is one of the most "watched" countries in Europe – perhaps this is why Banksy, as a British artist, wanted to create such a shocking image. It's possible that he wanted people to react strongly to his painting and start to think more about their privacy being invaded by cameras so much of the time. It is also true that people in the UK do not protest a lot, so from this point of view it's possible that the baby in the painting represents people's innocence or ignorance about what is going on around them.

O

I find this image very powerful, although that might be because I agree with the message. I am not comfortable with the fact that I am being filmed constantly, especially at home in London where there are so many CCTV cameras. Clearly installing more CCTV cameras in public places does not help crime rates, so not only are these cameras invasive, they are also not particularly useful.

B

However, the issue of surveillance extends beyond CCTV cameras. People are also being spied on via the internet. For example, search engines such as google keep records of what people have searched for in order to allow advertisers to target certain people according to their internet identity. Possibly the most shocking thing to happen recently regarding surveillance is the plan in the UK to extend internet surveillance so that the government will be able to check who people have contacted and when, via email and skype.