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Technologies of Control: Surveillance and Socialization in Total Institutions and Broader Society

This seminar will trace the development of technologies of control that were originally developed to secure 24/7 regulation of the bodies of inmates in total institutions. How do these technologies of control, namely surveillance and socialization, operate within contemporary institutions of confinement, and how have they crept out into larger societies to regulate aspects of everyday life?

Sociologist Erving Goffman coined the term 'total institution' to describe situations of 24/7 bodily control within a confined space, specifically in the context of a mental asylum. Because total institutions require 24/7 regulation of the bodies they confine, a number of methods of social order and control have been developed and implemented in prisons, hospitals, and asylums. Most notably, Jeremy Bentham conceived of the Panopticon as the ideal method of achieving control and conformity within a prison. In the Panopticon, inmates are aware of the possibility that they are being watched at any given time, and adhere to institutional regulations and expectations in order to avert suspicion or disciplinary action. Michel Foucault expanded on this idea in *Discipline and Punish*, emphasizing the harsh behavioral effect of constant surveillance. In this seminar we will analyze socialization and surveillance as methods of control within contemporary total institutions and in broader society. Further, we will explore how technologies of control perpetuate systems of oppression such as white supremacy, patriarchy, and capitalism.

Some of the questions we will ask are: What does it mean for society at large to take on some of the characteristics of total institutions? How do technologies of control operate differently within confined institutions versus 'open' society? Ultimately, discovering how these technologies of control have developed both within and outside of total institutions will allow us to begin asking *why* these technologies of control exist in the first place. Are they meant to maintain social order or adherence to basic governing rules, in a strictly utilitarian sense? Or do technologies of control take on a more insidious character in societies, working to enact and reconstitute hierarchies of power and authority? Are there particular sites of surveillance that target and discipline specific populations by creating boundaries of identity and enforcing rules of social conduct?

The syllabus is organized in such a way to pair foundational, theoretical texts ("A") with more contemporary applications or criticisms of the theory ("B") within each section. This will allow participants to situate theoretical concepts like Foucault's Panopticon within contemporary conversations about phenomena such as mass incarceration and racialized surveillance. Further, this structure will allow participants to evaluate the usefulness of foundational theories for

explaining and understanding contemporary phenomena. For instance, we will ask whether Foucault's notion of the 'disciplinary society' accurately describes this moment in history, or if we have moved into a 'society of control' as Gilles Deleuze argues.

This seminar appeals to students from a wide range of disciplines. The texts are drawn primarily from sociology, anthropology, critical theory, philosophy, and political science, and are paired with the arts and visual media through the incorporation of experimental film and documentary. Questions of hierarchy, social systems, and power relations within total institutions will be particularly interesting to students of sociology and anthropology, while theories and concepts such as the Panopticon and utilitarianism will generally interest students of critical theory and philosophy. Political science students will be interested in questions of state power in enacting policies of control, such as NSA domestic surveillance and constitutional issues like Fourth Amendment claims against blanket surveillance. Students of art history and architecture will be interested in how the built environment of prisons and asylums can produce social control or facilitate surveillance. Students of history will be interested in the historical development of institutions like prisons and asylums. Philadelphia historical sites such as the Friends' Asylum and Eastern State Penitentiary have been the subject of historical digital humanities projects in Special Collections at Magill Library. Our seminar could potentially take a field trip to Eastern State Penitentiary to think about how its architectural design influenced socialization and control for its inmates. Students of computer science will be interested in questions of how the digital age has shaped both corporate and state surveillance, and how community organizers and 'hacktivists' have fought back. Students of film, media, and visual culture will be interested in how total institutions are captured and explored through multimedia. Students of psychology could explore the behavioral and social psychology impacts of mass surveillance and other technologies of control. Further, students of Gender & Sexuality Studies and Africana Studies will be interested in the gendered and racialized forms surveillance and socialization take. Finally, because this seminar will be useful for understanding hot button issues like mass incarceration and domestic surveillance, many students with a curiosity and desire to understand current events could find an interest in this seminar.

Possible Speakers:

Simone Browne (University of Texas, Austin)

Jill McCorkel (Villanova University)

Damien Sojoyner (University of California, Irvine)

Films and Television:

I Thought I was Seeing Convicts, Harun Farocki

The Creators of the Shopping Worlds, Harun Farocki

The Farm: Life Inside Angola Prison, Jonathan Stack

Breaking the Cycle, Finnish Broadcasting Company Yle

Out in the Night, Blair Doroshwalther

The Prison in Twelve Landscapes, Brett Story
Orange is the New Black, Jenji Kohan, Netflix Series

Possible Field Trips:

Eastern State Penitentiary
Glen Mills Schools
Special Collections archives on the Friends' Asylum

Preliminary Syllabus

Section 1. The Prison in Disciplinary Societies

- A. Foucault, Michel. *Discipline & Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. Translated by Alan Sheridan. New York: Vintage Books, 1995. (selections)
- Bentham, Jeremy. *The Panopticon Writings*, edited by Miran Bozovic. London: Verso, 2011. (selections)
- B. McCorkel, Jill. *Breaking Women: Gender, Race, and the New Politics of Imprisonment*. New York: NYU Press, 2013.

Section 2. The Asylum as Total Institution

- A. Goffman, Erving. "On the Characteristics of Total Institutions," in *Asylums: Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patients and Other Inmates*. New York: Anchor Books, 1961.
- Foucault, Michel. *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason*. Translated by Richard Howard. New York: Vintage Books, 1988. (selections)
- B. Yanni, Carla. *The Architecture of Madness: Insane Asylums in the United States*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007. (selections)
- Michael Welch. 2015. "Architecture Parlante," pp. 79-108 in *Escape to Prison: Penal Tourism and the Pull of Punishment*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Lorna Rhodes. 2004. "Controlling Troubles," pp. 21-60 in *Total Confinement: Madness and Reason in the Maximum Security Prison*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Dubrofsky, Rachel E. (2007). "'Therapeutics of the Self': Surveillance in the Service of the Therapeutic." *Television and New Media*, 8(4).

Section 3. Conformity and Socialization in Schooling

- A. Moran, Dominique. *Carceral Geography: Spaces and Practices of Incarceration*. New York: Routledge, 2016. (selections)
- Wilson Gilmore, Ruth. "Fatal Couplings of Power and Difference: Notes on Racism and Geography." *The Professional Geographer* 54, no. 1 (2002): 14-24.

Olivier Razac, *Barbed Wire: A Political History*, trans. Jonathan Kneight (New York: New Press, The, 2003), Introduction; 5–22; 50–69; 70–84.

B. Meiners, Erica. *Right to be Hostile: Schools, Prisons, and the Making of Public Enemies*. New York: Routledge, 2007. (selections)

Sojoyner, Damien. *First Strike: Educational Enclosures in Black Los Angeles*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2016.

Section 4. Racialized Surveillance

A. Lyon, David. *Surveillance Studies: An Overview*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007. (selections)

Dandeker, Christopher. *Surveillance, Power and Modernity: Bureaucracy and Discipline from 1700 to the Present Day*. Polity Press, 1990. Chapter: “Bureaucracy, Surveillance and Modern Society”, pp. 1-36.

B. Browne, Simone. *Dark Matters: On the Surveillance of Blackness*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2015.

Parenti, Christian. *The Soft Cage: Surveillance in America from Slavery to the War on Terror*. New York: Basic Books, 2003.

Cartwright, Lisa, and Marita Sturken. *Practices of Looking*. Oxford University Press, 2009. chapter “The Myth of Photographic Truth”, pp. 16-26.

Magnet, Shoshana. *When biometrics fail: Gender, race, and the technology of identity*. Duke University Press, 2011.

Section 5. Big Data and the Security State

A. Deleuze, Gilles. “Postscript on the Societies of Control.” *October* 59 (1992): 3-7.

B. Greenwald, Glenn. *No Place to Hide: Edward Snowden, the NSA, and the US Surveillance State*. New York: Metropolitan Books (2014). (chapters 3 and 4)

Lally, Nick. “Crowdsourced Surveillance and Networked Data.” *Security Dialogue* 48, no. 1 (2017): 63-77.

Currah, Paisley and Tara Mulqueen. “Securitizing Gender: Identity, Biometrics, and Transgender Bodies at the Airport.” *Social Research* 78, no. 2 (2011): 556-582.

Zuboff, Shoshana. “Big Other: Surveillance Capitalism and the Prospects of an Information Civilization.” *Journal of Information Technology* no. 30 (2015): 75-89.

Marcel O’Gorman. 2015. “Telephone, Pager, Two-Way Speaker, and Other Technologies of Betrayal,” pp. 37-59 in *Necromedia*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

“The Secret Surveillance Catalogue” on theintercept.com (multimedia)