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THE EFFECTS OF VIRTUAL PANOPTICISM

Emma E. East
Southeastern University - Lakeland

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The Effects of Virtual Panopticism

by

Emma E. East

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Dedication

To Lee East

Acknowledgements

Thank you, Professor Dempster, for the countless hours you poured into this research. You helped me accomplish tasks that were impossible to complete alone. I am honored to study under your teaching and mentorship. To my parents, Dan and Michelle East, and my sister, Sarah East, thank you for keeping me balanced and protecting my dreams.

Abstract

As technology further integrates into everyday life, the effects of technological advancement surface. The research contained in this thesis places philosopher Michel Foucault's ideas of the panoptic, discipline, punishment and a carceral society in a virtual reality thus creating a virtual panopticon. Adapting Foucault's theories to the present-day technological climate allows researchers to begin understanding the why behind humans' interactions with various forms of technology (e.g. iPhone usage, Smart TVs, online banking, Alexa/Echo, etc.). Additionally, virtual panopticism sheds light on the corruption of those who manipulate information online to wield power, maintain control and make money. I discuss surveillance capitalism and highlight Foucault's main influencers such as Karl Marx and Friedrich Nietzsche. By conducting a voluntary survey, participants revealed how they operate within a virtual panopticon specifically in the areas of religion, personal technology usage, literature and film and education. Since thinking directly affects actions, the importance of understanding this information is critical to interpreting modern-day culture. The goal of this research is to reveal the effects of virtual panoptical structures on thinking, while simultaneously emphasizing the need for technological accountability.

KEY WORDS: Michel Foucault, virtual panopticon, panopticism, discipline, punishment

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Chapter 1

Introduction

This thesis is an analysis of the effects of virtual panopticism. The study is centered on the manifestation of technology's effects in four areas: religion, personal technology usage (e.g., social media), literature and film and education. Chapter 1 describes the background of the study and notes potential problems while also highlighting the significance of this research. An overview of the methodology, identification of study limitations and key terms are included.

The Background of the Study

Between the conception and completion of this thesis, the Covid-19 pandemic shut down the world for months. Due to the world-wide shutdown, technology usage skyrocketed to keep pace with the demands of education, entertainment and connection with others. While this thesis developed, a civil rights movement sparked by the murder of George Floyd resulted in protests around the world. Additionally, campaigns and a presidential election occurred within this time. These societal events cannot be separated from my current research. I argue that technology and social media are more relevant today than before these events. Increased technological engagement amplifies the importance of understanding who wields the power in virtual realities.

I am remiss if I fail to mention that many researchers are beginning to claim Foucault's panopticon is an out-of-date metaphor. Scholars in this school of thought typically support synopticism rather than panopticism. However, I argue that the increase in technology usage is merely creating a more complex panopticon in which Foucault's theories of power, discipline and punishment operate. In this Information Age, Foucault's theories aid in identifying how power is wielded even when the controller cannot be seen (e.g., online shopping, social media and surveillance technology).

The Problem Statement

My research aims to reveal the corrupt structures (i.e., virtual panopticons) in place that lead to dependency on technology, specifically social media. Since legal ethical parameters cannot keep pace with technological advancements, I want to study Foucault's theories of discipline and the panoptic, so that users will know how their minds are being affected. I do not want people to sacrifice freedom out of a place of ignorance.

The Significance of the Study

This study is both relevant and significant because it affects every person who uses technology on both a personal and/or corporate level. Power, manipulation and money are all factors that when left unchecked enable individuals to hurt others. Although virtual panopticism cannot be seen physically, the effects of virtual panopticism are identifiable. Based on my research, no studies trace virtual panopticism through religion, personal technology usage, literature and film and education. Other studies may focus on one of the listed topics, however, they do not look for patterns that overlap in all four categories. I desire for my research to lay the groundwork for others to critique and build upon.

Overview of Methodology

To test the concepts mentioned above, I designed a survey of 56 questions: 4 personal profile questions (age, ethnicity, etc.), 18 religion questions, 11 literature and film questions, 9 personal technology usage questions and 14 education questions. Each question centered on the concepts of panopticism and punishment. The answers to these questions were a mixture of the Likert Scale, check all that apply and short answer. All survey participants were volunteers. Potential participants including, current university students, staff and alumni received an email with a survey link attached. The survey link was also posted in some classroom discussion posts

online to be filled out in exchange for extra credit. This methodological process is discussed in detail in Chapter 3.

Study Limitations

The most critical limitation to this study is the rate at which technology changes. By the time this thesis is complete, it will belong in the archives amongst other works which attempt to document the history of technology. The rapid changes in technology do not negate the importance of this study, I believe it substantiates my argument. Additional limitations are due to the time restraints placed on this thesis. I gathered 65 responses from my survey, but given more time, I could have collected more data. Finally, my survey was only sent out to one university in which students, staff and alumni could answer. Since the respondents were from one place, the data I collected could be skewed.

Key Term Definitions

For the purpose of this thesis, I will distinguish between a cyber panopticon and a virtual panopticon. Cyber is defined as, “relating to, or involving computers or computer networks (such as the Internet)” (Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary). A cyber panopticon implies an innocuous network in which humans maintain control. While most scholars use the term cyber panopticon, I chose the term virtual panopticon. Virtual is defined as “being such in essence or effect though not formally recognized or admitted” (Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary). Additionally, the etymology of virtual also implies masculinity and power, thus making the elusive yet present presence of the panopticon best described as a virtual panopticon (Origin and Meaning of Virtual by Online Etymology Dictionary).

Conclusion

The following chapters will include a detailed annotated bibliography that overviews Foucault's work and influencers, followed by methodology, data analysis and conclusion. Each of these chapters helps advance Foucault's theories of the panoptic, discipline and punishment by placing them in a virtual setting. I hope that by the end of this thesis readers will understand the relevance of virtual panopticism and build off this content in the future.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

Bentham's Panopticon

What follows is an annotated bibliography of research into the cyber and virtual panopticon literature that also reveals the roots and different research terms that have slipped away from Foucauldian terms and thus often go without being included in the scholarly discussions of panoptic influence. I have broken the trends in the secondary research by the following areas—Bentham's Panopticon, Foucault's Philosophies: Panopticon, Resistance, Exposure and Power, Karl Marx Influence on Foucault, Friedrich Nietzsche Influence on Foucault, Surveillance Capitalism, Donna Haraway's Cyborg Theory, Foucault's Influence on Education—and have a running commentary on their conceptual impact on my thesis writing and research. Much of these terms and concepts learned here influenced the design of my survey questions with regard to punishment, discipline, docility against faith-based notions of God's grace through Jesus, and technology usage awareness.

Bentham, Jeremy. *Correspondence of Jeremy Bentham, Vol. 4: 1752 to 1776*. Edited by Timothy L. S. Sprigge, UCL Press, 2017. pp. 225-229, <https://discovery.ucl.ac.uk/id/eprint/1558745/1/The-Correspondence-of-Jeremy-Bentham-Volume-4.pdf>. Accessed 28 March 2021.

There is no better way to understand the motives behind the Panopticon's design and structure than the words from Jeremy Bentham himself. In a letter dated 23 January 1791, Bentham describes the Panopticon prison in detail for William Pitt. Part one of Bentham's letter is titled, Outline of the Plan of Construction of a Panopticon Penitentiary House, as designed by Jeremy Bentham of Lincoln's Inn Esqr. (225). This section highlights the importance of the "keeper concealed from the observation of the prisoners" to create an "invisible omnipresence" (225). Bentham describes the cell as

“...serving all purposes: work, sleep, meals, punishment, devotion...,” and he highlights the physical structure of the panoptic prison (225). Part two is titled, *Outline of a Plan of Management for a Panopticon Penitentiary House*; he creates 16 points to further extend his ideas (226). Number 9 is a particularly noteworthy remark that states, “...convert the prison into a school, and by an extended application of the principle of the Sunday-Schools, to return inhabitants into the world instructed...” (227). Bentham’s panopticon design is critical to understanding Foucault’s adaptation of the panoptic into philosophy.

These letters spell out the foundation upon which many of Foucault’s philosophies are built upon. My research expands upon Foucault’s research thus understanding Bentham’s panopticon is a critical part of my thesis. A proper understanding of Bentham’s panopticon allows for accurate data analysis and philosophical interpretations. Bentham’s letters provide a straightforward explanation of the purpose of the panopticon giving further insight into Foucault’s philosophies. While word-for-word recall is not necessary for my thesis, understanding the history of the panopticon is helpful. Božovič, Miran. ““An Utterly Dark Spot: The Fiction of God in Bentham’s Panopticon.” *Qui Parle*, vol. 8, no. 2, 1995, pp. 83–108. JSTOR, www.jstor.org/stable/20686026. Accessed 10 Feb. 2021.

Božovič highlights Leibniz’s theory of evil which claims that “...God allows le mal moral, moral evil, only because he knows that at some point in the future it will give rise to an incomparably greater good, a good that, in the absence of this evil, would not have come about (83).” Bentham demonstrates this same idea, and he uses that philosophy “to justify punishment of crimes” (84). Special emphasis is placed on the theory of gaze throughout the article, and Božovič expands on the idea that punishment does not need pain to succeed in controlling people, but rather punishment is effective when individuals witness it. Božovič reminds readers that Bentham believed that no matter

how painful the punishment, “the victim is bound to be disappointed and dissatisfied. . .” (87). Without the observation of punishment, punishment is rendered useless; this idea converges with surveillance theory. Božovič reinforces this idea claiming that “In Bentham’s eyes, punishment is first and foremost a spectacle: it is insofar as punishment is not intended for the punished individual, but for all the others, that the execution of the punishment is a spectacle” (85). Božovič then explores fiction in the panopticon, followed by a section on gaze and voice in the panoptic. These two sections are bound together with the concept that, “Bentham creates the fiction of God in the panoptic through a gaze and a voice” (92). While the architectural structure of a panopticon is designed, the creation of a god-like presence is birthed in this setting. The illusion of an invisible omnipresent god is effective because the prisoner “cannot see that he is not seen” (97) thus the god of the panopticon sustains the system.

A thorough understanding of Bentham and the role of god in the panopticon is needed for my thesis due to the section on the effects of virtual panopticism manifested in religion. Since Foucault applied the panopticon to society, and other scholars and I apply Foucault’s panopticon to a virtual setting, the groundwork that Bentham laid is crucial to understanding and interpreting modern data. In addition to aiding in interpreting religious data, this article’s claim that punishment is best inflicted under individuals’ gazes rather than by inflicting pain poses an interesting viewpoint that must be taken into account when studying social media. My argument that the virtual panopticon is evolving beyond what has been previously accepted, will continue to adapt the theory of gaze. These ideas raise questions such as, how does the virtual barrier of electronic screens play into this idea of being watched and judged? Does the user knowingly post photos of themselves to feel like they are in control of the objectified (imagined) self? Who holds the power in social media? Do users act differently knowing that at any point any number of people could be on their social media pages? Foucault takes Bentham’s ideas and claims that the potential of being watched and punished is

powerful enough to cause an entire society to conform. Since the potential of being both watched and judged is present in social media, are users aware that they are operating in an advancing panopticon?

These are all questions that my thesis aims to answer related to Božovič's work.

Miller, Jacques-Alain, and Richard Miller. "Jeremy Bentham's Panoptic Device." *October*, vol. 41, 1987, pp. 3–29. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/778327. Accessed 10 Feb. 2021.

One of the most popular associations with the term panopticism is prisons. However, as J. Miller and R. Miller are quick to point out that, "The Panopticon is not a prison. It is a general principle of construction, the polyvalent apparatus of surveillance, the universal optical machine of human groupings" (3). J. Miller and R. Miller broaden readers' perspectives on panopticism and invites researchers to consider various applications of this principle. The article then shifts to utilitarianism which emphasizes that "everything must have a clear and explicable meaning" (5) and "nothing is without its effect" (6). Utilitarianism demands that "everything must be useable" and "must work toward a result" (7). The Millers point out that Bentham never desired for Panopticism to be only used in prison system designs, but rather Panopticism "was designed to be a school for mankind" (8). The accountability of those in power within the panopticon is maintained by the public observing their actions. (9). Miller and Miller stress that Bentham is concerned with moral improvement rather than cruel punishment (10-11). The article then covers a plethora of related topics such as the flogging machine, circumlocution, the function of the penal code, the Utilitarian Mise-en-Scene, prisons of language, the Pauper's Panopticon and Identity Police. Bentham believed that order required distinct labels which aided in maintain his philanthropic system. A utilitarian at his core, Bentham sought the maximum good for the greatest number of people while claiming that "reality is worth no more than the appearance it produces" (12).

The perspective that J. Miller and R. Miller provide on the term panopticism provides insight that is necessary for interpreting my data analysis. I am examining the effects of virtual panopticism in religion, personal technology usage, literature and film and education. Miller and Miller's article ties in the importance of utilitarian themes and reveals that while Bentham's panoptic system may appear cruel, his desire was simply philanthropic order. This article challenges my natural inclination of believing a panopticon is inherently bad. However, I believe that any attempt to control groups of people is always flawed and comes at a high cost. Miller and Miller challenge my thinking as I actively work to interpret how a panopticon has been adapting into a virtual panopticon and what the effects of this new system may be.

Schofield, Philip. *Bentham: A Guide for the Perplexed: A Guide for the Perplexed*. Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, 2009. *ProQuest Ebook Central*, <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/seu/detail.action?docID=601938>.

Schofield's book consists of seven chapters that provide a snapshot of the history of Jeremy Bentham and his work. Chapter 1 entitled, Who was Jeremy Bentham?, provides an overview of Bentham's life including his family dynamics, educational background, work and writings. Chapter 2, Which Bentham?, guides the reader through the complex history of Bentham's works highlighting various editing and publication dates. Chapter 3, The Principle of Utility, begins to lead readers into a philosophical realm. Schofield unfolds out Bentham's philosophies in an understandable way. For example, Bentham's belief that "...the desire for pleasure and the aversion to pain lie at the root of all human action..." (45) is crucial to understanding more complex philosophical debates. However, Schofield provides an excellent, accessible and engaging text which provides readers with the confidence to tackle the next concept. Chapter 4, Panopticon, dives into Bentham's Panopticon. The chapter focuses on

Michel Foucault's who popularized the Panoptic Prison by using it to "account of the transition from the early modern monarchy to the late modern capitalist state" (70). Foucault adapts Bentham's panopticon to society thus evolving the concept of Panopticism. Political Fallacies, chapter 5, shows Bentham's transition into political writings to teach people "the arts of political arguments employed by politicians whose interests were opposed to their own, and whose purpose was to deceive them" (94). Bentham's passion for defining logical fallacies led to him writing the "first major, modern work on the subject" (94). Chapter 6, Religion and Sex, provides an overview of Bentham's beliefs about Jesus, homosexuality, heterosexuality and scriptural interpretations. Bentham believes that "Marriage should not be the lifelong commitment which the Church had made it, but entered into for such specific times as suited the contracting parties" (135). Bentham's purpose in all his unorthodox beliefs was to cause people to think about life differently and ask questions. The book concludes with Chapter 7, Torture. Schofield highlights Bentham's perspective on the law specifically homing in on the struggle between liberty and security. Bentham's believed torture was acceptable only in cases where the good outweighed the bad (146). Although Bentham admits that while a set disciplinary/punishment standard for everyone seems appealing, "such an appeal merely reinforces prejudices, and is a device for avoiding serious thought" (138).

Schofield's book creates a well-rounded image of Jeremy Bentham. While many of the topics Schofield covers in her book are not directly applicable to my thesis, I plan on using Chapter 4, Panopticon. I considered using Bentham's religious views found in Chapter 6 in understanding my research, however, I feel that the panopticon and Bentham's religious beliefs are two separate entities and should remain separate for the purposes of my thesis. I cannot unravel Bentham's religious philosophies in this thesis for the sake of time, but I hope to explore

Bentham's religious philosophies in the future. Any information about the panopticon is beneficial to my research as I continue to develop the idea of a virtual panopticon.

Foucault's Philosophies: Panopticon, Resistance, Exposure, and Power

Foucault, Michel, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1977.

Michel Foucault's book is divided into three topics: torture, punishment and discipline. Though each section provides an extensive study on the philosophies behind each principle, Foucault's section on discipline supplies the largest amount of content. Under the discipline section lives Foucault's panopticon. Originating from the letters of Jeremy Bentham, the panopticon is a circular prison structure in which a tower stands in the center. This tower houses the guards or person in power, they can see into every cell, but the inmates are unable to see into the tower (195-228). One of the panopticon's goals is "to induce in the inmate a state of conscious and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power" (201). The potential of being surveilled and punished causes the inmates to conform to a standard or "norm" whether or not there is truly someone watching is of little consequence (201). The principle of surveillance mixed with punishment is internalized, inmates' actions are modified, and peace is maintained. A panopticon is not solely related to prisons but also at schools and hospitals.

Foucault's *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* is at the heart of my thesis. By understanding Foucault's principles of gaze, power and discipline, I can translate these concepts into a modern virtual reality. To remain true to Foucault's convictions, I must understand his work. The removal of Foucault's theories from the tangible life to the technological realm does not negate their relevancy. I argue that like technology, Foucault's theories continue to evolve

making Foucault even more relevant and necessary today than in the past. A virtual panopticon maintains the same spirit as Foucault's panopticon. The question then becomes who maintains power in this invisible realm? A virtual panopticon shows the violent and gruesome ways individuals are unknowingly manipulated, however, information with no practical application does little to promote change. I include a section in my Conclusion Chapter in which I provide personal and global suggestions to begin unraveling the virtual panopticons.

Felluga, Dino. "Modules on Foucault." *Introductory Guide to Critical Theory*. 2011, Purdue U. <http://www.purdue.edu/guidetotheory/newhistoricism/modules/foucaultcarceral.html>.

Felluga's concise website breaks Foucault's complex philosophies down into history, panoptic and carceral and power. Section I, on history, provides an overview of how Foucault "adopts the term 'archeology'" Backed with Foucault's quotes, Felluga highlights four points in how Foucault uses the term archeology to distinguish the differences between "traditional history and the traditional history of ideas." Section II briefly explains Foucault's theories on panoptic and carceral society by summarizing Jeremy Bentham's panopticon. Felluga then states that the seven effects from Foucault's Panopticon are the internalization of rules and regulations, rehabilitation rather than cruel and unusual punishment, surveillance into ever more private aspects of our lives, information society, bureaucracy, efficiency and specialization. Section III, on power, begins as Felluga explains how Foucault's views on power changed throughout his life. Felluga pulls various quotes from *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* to give readers insight into Foucault's complex philosophies.

Felluga's website is invaluable to my thesis because it provides a simple overview that helps me grasp unfamiliar concepts. Understanding the panopticon is at the core of my research, aid me in bridging the gap between panopticism and virtual panopticism. In the Data Analysis

Chapter, I study the effects of panopticism, many of which are highlighted by Felluga. These effects translated to virtual setting raise questions such as, will these effects remain relevant?

Will they evolve into something new entirely? Or will they become obsolete altogether?

Behrent, Michael C. "Foucault and Technology." *History & Technology*, vol. 29, no. 1, 2013, pp. 54–104. Routledge Taylor and Francis Group, doi:[10.1080/07341512.2013.780351](https://doi.org/10.1080/07341512.2013.780351).

Defining technology is critical to comprehending the heart of Foucault's philosophies of power, the panoptic and discipline. Without understanding Foucault's definition of technology, scholars and philosophers are unable to build upon these ideas that continuously evolve.

Defining technology is critical in establishing the foundation of many of Foucault's core philosophies. To ignore the context and definitions presented by Foucault is like building a house with no foundation: it will inevitably crumble. While the intricacies of defining technique and technology in context cannot all be explained in a literature review, I provide an overview.

Behrent covers Foucault's use of the word technology throughout his entire life by dividing the plethora of information into the following sections: Technique Technologie and Technology,

Intellectuals and the Problem of Technology in Postwar France, Foucault Technology and

Humanism, 1954–1960: The Critique of Technology in the Humanist Foucault, 1961–1972:

Technique between Knowledge and Power, 1973–1979: Technologies of Power, 1980–1984:

Technologies of the Self and Conclusion: Foucault between Modernism and Postmodernism.

Behrent notes that Foucault originally uses technology and technique interchangeably, but the

term technique was the predecessor to technology in Foucault's work. The most straightforward

definition and interpretation of Foucault's technology is "...to highlight the ways in which power

relations operate – not necessarily to denounce them, but rather to challenge their professions of

neutrality (i.e. their claim to have no effects) and to compel readers to ask themselves how much

power they are willing to bear” (55). Foucault’s use of technology reveals his influencers. Foucault begins to omit the word technique as he transitions from Marxism to embracing the works of Friedrich Nietzsche.

An understanding of Foucault’s perspectives on power and the panoptic is needed to establish the foundation on which my research is based. To accurately absorb Foucault’s philosophies, a proper understanding of his vocabulary and contextual background must be established. Behrent’s work defines Foucault’s interpretation of technology with clarity and precision for researchers to utilize. My research is designed to identify trends in the virtual panopticon which emphasizes an internally regulated system of punishment in a modern-day setting. These concepts all build off of Foucault’s theories of power and punishment through technology.

Gutting, Gary and Johanna Oksala, “Michel Foucault 3.4 History of the Prison,” *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2019 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.),
 <<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2019/entries/foucault/>>.

This encyclopedia article explains Foucault’s views on prisons. Gutting and Oksala note that Foucault records the transition from public punishment such as floggings and executions to an internalized mental control. Foucault argues “that the new mode of punishment becomes the model for control of an entire society, with factories, hospitals, and schools modeled on the modern prison.” Foucault elaborates on this “modern disciplinary society” by focusing on “three primary techniques of control: hierarchical observation, normalizing judgment, and the examination.” Foucault claims that as a society “the main goal is not revenge (as in the case of the tortures of premodern punishment) but reform, where reform means primarily coming to live by society’s standards or norms.” He continues by stating, “in knowing we control and in

controlling we know.” Foucault shows that “present [penal] system... aims at both punishing and correcting, therefore it mixes juridical and scientific practice.” He then traces “the gradual shift in penal practice from a focus on the crime to a focus on the criminal.” This shift opens up the doors to “the emergence of new, insidious forms of domination and violence.”

Gutting and Oksala’s article provides a concise yet informative section on prisons. Since this section is not solely about the panopticon, a broader understanding of Foucault’s philosophy is established thus adding a deeper layer to his writing on the panopticon. Foucault’s belief that society is less concerned with public punishment but rather with reform is an extremely relevant claim that I witness through social media daily. On social media, individuals exercise little mercy when it comes to current social matters. Perhaps an explanation for this behavior is that as Foucault said, users are concerned about reform. Is there something fundamentally wrong with someone if they believe said thing? As Foucault noted, the shift in the penal system from the crime to the criminal created a new layer of manipulative violence to take place under the name of reform. Are we not seeing this idea grow as social media expands?

Martin, Glen. “The Digital Panopticon.” *Utne*, no. 202, Ogden Publications, Inc., Spring 2019, pp. 70–72.

Martin’s pithy piece explains the Digital Panopticon in an accessible and engaging way. From the start, Martin challenges the average perspective on smartphones claiming “they are a whip, a goad, a tool for vigilantes and social justice warriors alike.” This new Digital Panopticon is a “new kind of panopticon, where we have to presume that not only is the jailer always watching, but so too are our fellow inmates.” He then explains that public shaming that “has been with us since we were hunters and gatherers” has now spread into social media. Martin states that those who fail to recognize this will pay the highest of prices.

Since my survey covers a panoptical approach to social media, Martin's piece adds to my ideas while challenging me to consider new viewpoints. This piece explains why "cancel culture" is now a common and acceptable response to disagreements on social media. He claims that a Digital Panopticon allows inmates to view each other. However, I believe we must consider the fact that we rarely know when our "inmates" (whether that be friends, family, coworkers, etc) see our posts. Perhaps the jailer is the collective group of users. The reason Bentham's Panopticon isolated inmates was to prevent communication, isolate, and intensify the feeling of the gaze. How can it be then, that amid social media claiming to be used for connection and community that users feel alone? Martin's claim that inmates are allowed to watch other inmates is an interesting argument, but due to the complexity of the topic needs further explanation.

Patnernek, Margaret A. "Norms and Normalization: Michel Foucault's Overextended Panoptic Machine." *Human Studies*, vol. 10, no. 1, 1987, pp. 97–121. JSTOR, www.jstor.org/stable/20008990. Accessed 10 Feb. 2021.

Patnernek's article focuses on the overuse of Foucault's panoptic while pointing out philosophical limitations within Foucault's writings. She begins by claiming that Foucault "discards far too easily the juridical edifice which serves as an important limit on the exercise of power" (98), and she states that the "examination of the concept of power as procedure, which informs this inquiry, reveals not only theoretical limitations to Foucault's position, but also an important discrepancy" (99). Patnernek praises Foucault's analytics of power which state that we are already trapped in this system, power produces and that power and resistance occur simultaneously (99-100). She notes that Foucault distinguishes some power as "disciplinary technology and identifies its objective as normalization" (104). She later applies the term

disciplinary technology to “penal practice” while stating it “is a specific mechanism of bio-power” (112). Patnernek highlights Charles Taylor's research on Foucault, but she claims “he discounts — or at least underplays — his [Foucault's] contribution to social and political theory” (114). She also critiques William Connolly's theories of Foucault. Patnernek concludes by acknowledging that Foucault's “analytics of power allows him to outflank many of his opponents,” but “the professed neutrality of this approach undermine its explanatory and critical potential” (118). She furthers her point by saying, “With his assumption that power is 'already there,' that it cannot be justified, Foucault imputes an arbitrariness to all exercises of power” (118). Her second critique of Foucault is that despite his belief that “the power to incarcerate is one which should not be trivialized,” he does just that “by placing the prison on a continuum with the school, the factory, and the hospital” (118).

Patnernek's article focus on two issues with Foucault. First, where does power come from? Followed by, does Foucault's use of considering the prison in the same regard as schools, factories and hospitals trivialize the power to incarcerate? My thesis focuses primarily on how power is wielding therefore I don't need to understand where it originated to comprehend how it is used. While knowledge of this information would be interesting to learn, I do not believe it is critical to my work. The trivialization of the power to incarcerate pertains to my thesis. I disagree that Foucault trivializes this power by placing it with schools, factories and hospitals. In fact, I believe that it shows the importance of this power. Essentially Foucault demonstrates how this power is infused into learning, producing, repairing and punishing/reforming. Doesn't this lead us to believe that this power is more influential rather than trivialized?

Pickett, Brent L. "Foucault and the Politics of Resistance." *Polity*, vol. 28, no. 4, 1996, The University of Chicago Press, pp. 445–466. www.jstor.org/stable/3235341. Accessed 2 Feb. 2020.

Pickett explores how Foucault's philosophy of resistance manifests as a fight against limits. Though Foucault himself knew his limitless utopia would not be achieved, the desire to resist societal pressures is a trait Foucault places his hope in. Foucault claims that the best way to prevent power from being taken from an individual is to listen and learn from the marginalized in order to "unmask[s] previously hidden techniques of power" (452). Foucault states "...that one does not struggle against power to achieve justice; rather one struggles to take power" (453). The realignment of power as the top priority in humans' lives prepares the path for resistance. Power remaining the central desire of humanity morphs into various names throughout time (i.e., justice) to sustain itself. The stronger the wielder of power is the stronger the resistance must be to overcome it, or more accurately to absorb the amount of power. Foucault's philosophies lead us to the conclusion that "Power also can produce the very thing which comes to resist it" (458). Those most directly affected by a power wielder must be the ones who dismantle the limitations impressed upon themselves; "Only those directly involved in the battle can determine the method used" (455). Pickett reminds scholars that Foucault's utopia did not lie in the idea of another system or government lest the new power wielders fall into the same system they attempted to eradicate. Anywhere there can be resistance is an area that change can take place and progress made. Foucault emphasizes the importance of each individual pushing back against the limits placed upon them. Pickett concludes by identifying Foucault's own contradictory beliefs. Foucault claims that "resistance is a counter-power" and adopts an "implicit normative

framework”, but “when it comes to limiting resistance or the aesthetics of the self, Foucault repudiates that framework and refuses to place limits” (465).

Understanding the role of resistance in Foucault’s philosophies aids in interpreting my thesis survey. I crafted each question to understand the way participants are operating from a panoptical perspective, however, without proper knowledge of how resistance plays a role in Foucauldian theories, the analysis of my survey results would lack accuracy. To properly interpret Foucault’s theories of the panopticon researchers must first understand his viewpoint on resistance. In my survey participants answer questions that reveal the level of resistance or engagement with technology. Further analysis will be expanded upon based on participants' responses. By analyzing participants' responses, I hope to understand who holds the power in the virtual realm.

Presswood, Alane. “Avowal Is Not Enough: Foucault and Public Shaming in a Socially Mediated World.” *Ohio Communication Journal*, vol. 55, 2017, Ohio Communication Association, pp. 43–53.

Presswood begins her article by explaining the origins of a shaming epidemic followed by two sections on avowal in the 20th and 21st century. In society, social media is used “as a court of public opinion to persistently humiliate wrong-doers subverts their inner processing of shame and guilt and drastically undermines the traditional process of apology and redemption” (43). Presswood links this “courtroom” to an entire section titled: Power and Agency in the Cyberpanopticon. Shaming now exists under a new guise. Although shame is expressed in a different form, fallout remains. Here it becomes critical to understand the term avowal which is defined as “an embodied performance, requiring full physical and verbal commitment to convincing the audience that one is worthy of forgiveness” (45). As shaming has evolved so has

society's acceptance of avowal. Presswood uses Jonah Lehrer as an example of how technology archives the past, often emphasizing a person's worst moments. Though Foucault claims that "assurance that avowal will bring freedom or transformation," Presswood notes that "Lehrer and others like him find themselves bound more strongly than ever to their misdeeds with no hope of verbally modifying that relationship to lessen the transgression" (45). The motive behind public actions of shaming in both the physical and virtual realms "is not to convince the wrongdoer that he is redeemable or that he has learned and improved as a person, but rather that he is now and forever fallen" (46). In terms of the panopticon, these motives move individuals within the cells to "turn against each other rather than resist legitimate external mechanisms of power" thus "knowing whom to rebel against is less and less obvious" (47). Presswood concludes with a bold statement claiming, "cyberspace renders everyday citizens both knowingly and unknowingly complicit in the observation and manipulation of everyday activity" (49).

My data analysis chapter is built off of a survey that studies the panopticon's effects. Presswood's piece is useful in understanding the survey's results in the social media section. While Foucault's philosophy of avowal is not my primary objective for my thesis, understanding this concept helps enlarge my overall knowledge of the content. Her research also provides evidence that the cyberpanoptic is affecting culture. She highlights immediate changes that occur due to the translation of the physical realm into a developing culture in the virtual realm.

Sheldahl-Thomason, Strand. "Foucault and the Use of Exposure: Discipline, Ethics, and Self-Writing." *Review of Communication*, vol. 19, no. 3, July 2019, pp. 225–40. Routledge Taylor and Francis Group, doi:[10.1080/15358593.2019.1635710](https://doi.org/10.1080/15358593.2019.1635710).

Foucault's theories of discipline are inseparable from the concept of exposure. While Sheldahl-Thomason notes that Foucault rarely uses the word exposure in his early works, the

concept is present albeit not always labeled. Sheldahl-Thomason argues that “exposure is a critical component of subject formation in disciplinary society” and “...it can elucidate Foucault’s ethics as a form of resistance to power” (225). Discipline essentially strips individuals of their unique values to maintain order and “creates physical subject positions for interchangeable individuals to occupy” (229). The interchangeability of individuals is reliant on a system that consistently produces identical individuals. Conformity keeps those in control holding the power whereas individuality threatens the system. Sheldahl-Thomason focuses on three major influencers of exposure: hierarchical observation, normalizing judgments, and the examination. He explains surveillance personnel foramen and highlights the need for a normal standard to compare people to. Without a “norm,” there is no way to judge, punish, and control a person. Exposure in relation to the panopticon is discussed in detail, and the phrase “perpetual exposure” is used to elaborate on behavioral patterns seen in the subjects in the panopticon (i.e. inmates). Perpetual exposure enforces the self-regulatory concepts in thinking and changes the physical actions of the inmates. Sheldahl-Thomason develops Foucault's theory of internalized self-regulation by viewing it through the lens of exposure saying, “...the exposure of the modern subject to judgment drives the modern subject to expose herself to a set of societal values and to live those values in her life” (233). Sheldahl-Thomason then uses this information to understand the purpose and impact of self-writing. He concludes by explaining that disciplinary societies create a system in which participants monetarize themselves without revealing who is truly in control thus promoting exposure to “preserve prevalent values and to further the ends of industrial society” rather than “challenge prevalent values or how they are adopted” (233).

Sheldahl-Thomason’s article provides a framework for how exposure affects individuals in a panoptical society. My research builds on his work by analyzing the use of social media and

the willingness to self-expose. Are users aware of the inevitable effects of exposure? Do users feel that they have to expose themselves on social media to remain relevant? Does the sheer volume of users make individuals feel less exposed because it has become the accepted norm? These are all questions that my data analysis will explore. Additionally, a line between exposing what users want versus exposing what users have to must be established. Users may be agreeing to statements that they either do not understand or did not read. Awareness is of no use if actions do not follow.

Karl Marx Influence on Foucault

Fuchs, Christian. "Karl Marx in the Age of Big Data Capitalism." *Digital Objects, Digital Subjects: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Capitalism, Labour and Politics in the Age of Big Data*, edited by Christian Fuchs and David Chandler, University of Westminster Press, London, 2019, pp. 53–72. JSTOR, www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctvckq9qb.6. Accessed 10 Feb. 2021.

Fuchs begins by addressing the "claim that surveillance has become post-panoptic" by many scholars due to their belief in surveillance resulting in the decentralization of power (58). While these scholars "argue that Foucault's Panopticism should be theoretically smashed," Fuchs counters that these "approaches disregard the emergence of surveillance technologies collect Big Data in many places" (58). He contends that "data is networked and controlled by two central panoptic collective actors capital and the state" (58). Fuchs explains that although Big Data utilizes "algorithms that use instrumental logic for calculating human needs can automate human activities and decision-making in order to meet those needs," Big Data does not have ethics and morals (59). The lack of moral and ethical standards sets data commodification up for "new social inequalities and intensifies the exploitative tendencies of the Internet" (59) which manifest in a variety of ways. For example, Fuch

argues that “Trump uses social media as a tool for spreading right-wing authoritarian ideology” (66) thus enforcing the idea that social media contains powerful potential. Since digital capitalism knows no inherent moral structure and thus promotes further exploitation, Fuchs states, “We need alternatives to Big Data analytics; we need critical digital media studies instead of computational social science” (59). This new digital capitalism poses an even larger threat of exploitation because this is a “new foundation for autonomous realms that transcend the logic of capitalism” (62). The internet houses social media which is “is a realm of symbolic, communicative and ideological struggle” (65-66). Within social media websites and apps, users reveal information that Big Data does not forget, a looming threat.

Fuchs’ article provides validity to the reality of a virtual world. Digital capitalism shows the evolution of many Karl Marx theories similar to how Foucault’s panopticon evolved into a virtual panopticon. Marx's influence is evident in Foucault’s thinking and work, and this article provides the beginning stages of defining how Marx’s influence on Foucault adapts into an every-advancing technological reality. Fuchs provides an excellent article defending the relevancy of Foucault’s panopticon which brings ethics into consideration. The ethical dilemmas are at the core of my thesis. While I do not set aside chapters to address the ethical issues that arise from a virtual panopticon, my research provides an access point for individuals to begin making their own decisions and challenge their thinking.

Friedrich Nietzsche Influence on Foucault

Rorty, Richard. “Foucault/Dewey/Nietzsche.” *Raritan: A Quarterly Review*, vol. 9, no. 4, Rutgers University, Raritan, Spring90 1990, p. 1.

This article explains the varying perspectives of Foucault from the French versus American point of view. For example, Americans view Foucault as an influential philosopher similar to John Dewey. In contrast, the French view Foucault as heavily influenced by Nietzsche. These influences are evident in Foucault's desire to "serve human liberty, but he was also, in the interest of his personal autonomy, trying to be a faceless, rootless, homeless stranger to humanity and to history" (1). Rorty sees Foucault as someone who "wanted to do good to his fellow humans while at the same time having an identity which had nothing whatever to do with them. He wanted to help people without taking their vocabulary as the one in which he spoke to himself" (1). Foucault walked the line between desiring to be an individual yet inspire others to do the same. Understanding the goal of a liberal society is key to understanding Foucault. The purpose of a liberal society "is not to invent or create anything, but simply to make it as easy as possible for people to achieve their wildly different private ends without hurting each other" (1). Foucault intended to find his own freedom, but in practice, "the attempt to break down the distinction between the private and the public sphere is characteristic of a long-standing tradition in social philosophy" (1).

This article outlines the intentions of Foucault while paying homage to some of his greatest influences. While not directly impactful to my thesis, this article expands my knowledge of Foucault. This article also causes readers to think about how they wish to address virtual panoptical issues. Should people focus on individual solutions? Would legal parameters around things such as digital capitalism, social media marketing or Big Data solve some of these issues? Or should individuals make their own decisions and hope to influence those around them? Much like Foucault, individuals must decide which method they wish to practice if they wish to effect change.

Thiele, Leslie Paul. "The Agony of Politics: The Nietzschean Roots of Foucault's Thought." *The American Political Science Review*, vol. 84, no. 3, 1990, pp. 907–925. JSTOR, www.jstor.org/stable/1962772. Accessed 10 Feb. 2021.

Understanding Nietzsche's influence on Foucault remains a challenge for scholars to continue debating to this day. Foucault himself "paid much homage to Nietzsche and claimed to be, if not following in his footsteps, at least making use of the light of embers still aglow on the path" (914). Thiele explores how Nietzsche's glorification of struggle plays a huge role in Foucault's political thought. Additionally, Foucault borrows Nietzsche's ideas such as, "the nature of genealogical study; the violence of (the origins of) truth; the cruelty, malice, and passion of the will to knowledge; and the sacrifice and self-sacrifice of the subject in the endless deployment of the will to truth" (915). Thiele notes the importance of what Foucault called the "Nietzsche's hypothesis" that claims "The proposition that truth is produced in the struggles and wars that amalgamate it with power and that at the basis of power relations lies the hostile engagement of forces,..." (915). Foucault saw humanity as having no set "stable identity" thus he rejected conformity to standards deemed normal. Both Foucault and Nietzsche claimed that the "alternative to passive nihilism entailed an artistic perspective" (915). However, both Foucault and Nietzsche understood that "Truth is not the discovery of dispassionate inquiry but the product of fierce struggle, the spoils of a victor" (916). One key difference between the two philosophers lies in their involvement in politics. Nietzsche focused internally, attempting to "order his soul" which "led him to disdain and depreciate politics" (923). In contrast, Foucault embraced politics and promoted "the will to struggle" (923).

Thiele's article unravels the relationship between Foucault and Nietzsche's works. I plan on applying Foucault's perspective of societal norms and consider this in interpreting my survey data. Foucault's ideas of struggling also function in my data analysis as my survey questions are panoptical

in design, meaning each question is designed through a lens of punishment, discipline and/or being watched. Foucault's value of struggle may be an interesting concept to consider when interpreting how survey volunteers responded.

Surveillance Capitalism

Campbell, John and Matt Carlson. "Panopticon.Com: Online Surveillance and the

Commodification of Privacy." *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, vol. 46, no. 4, 2002, Broadcast Education Association, p. 586. doi:[10.1207/s15506878jobem4604_6](https://doi.org/10.1207/s15506878jobem4604_6).

Campbell explores the phrase: the commodification of privacy. He claims that both the Panopticon and the Internet use ads to "appraise individuals and populations for various purposes of control" (587). Information technologies used in workplaces, which include "monitoring of e-mails and phone calls, genetic screening, and closed-circuit video cameras" also led to an increase in watching, recording, and assessing online marketplace activities (587). Under a capitalistic society, this surveillance continues to grow due to the obvious benefits for businesses. The more a company understands its client's patterns, the more information it can use that information to make money. Surveillance reduces uncertainty in the workplace and marketplace and thus minimizes risk (587, 590). The virtual engagement of users with a business creates an invisible authority which leads to Foucault's theory of "self-surveillance" (589). Campbell uses the term consumerist Panopticon to explain how "individuals are not necessarily aware of the degree of inequalities in their relationship with suppliers" (592). Refusal to participate in the consumerist Panopticon leads to "a very subtle threat of coercion by cultivating in the consumer the sense of losing out" (592). Campbell asserts that privacy is no longer a matter of personal rights, and this leads us away from individual privacy (592). Furthermore,

Campbell claims that individuals are operating in a system “shaped by inequalities of power” (603) in which corporations hold the power (603). Resistance to this power is challenging since an identifying power-wielder is hidden through cyberspace, and the presence of their power still leads to individuals unknowingly modifying their behavior (603).

The commodification of privacy is a huge concern that demands immediate action. In my thesis, I provide research to help individuals understand how they are being used and manipulated for things such as Big Data in a consumerist panopticon. My study will demonstrate the effects of operating in these powerful systems. Campbell’s research provides a framework for individuals to understand what is happening to them and the price of breaking free from panoptical systems. People are faced with ethical and moral dilemmas sustained by a consumerist panopticon. I take into account a consumerist panopticon while exploring the effects of a virtual panopticon.

Couch, Danielle L., et al. “COVID-19—Extending Surveillance and the Panopticon.” *Journal of Bioethical Inquiry*, vol. 17, no. 4, Dec. 2020, pp. 809–14. *Springer Link*, doi:[10.1007/s11673-020-10036-5](https://doi.org/10.1007/s11673-020-10036-5).

Couch’s article explains the expanded surveillance methods justified in use due to Covid-19. While many articles have been published about surveillance and the panopticon, Couch claims that due to Covid-19 a “different type and extent of surveillance [that] has been deployed in response to it” (1). Although “surveillance is a core function of all public health systems,” (2) the expansion of surveillance also strengthens the power of the panopticon. The growth of this panopticon is built on fear rather than facts. Now we see the introduction of “biosurveillance” that was “formerly reserved for the maintenance of state and national security” (3). Another important factor in this increasingly strengthen panopticon is that it is not a secret, “its very

conspicuousness and its dependence on the active participation of the individuals subject to it guarantees what Foucault referred to as their ‘own subjection,’ enforced through internalized self-surveillance and self-disciplinary practices” (4). The concerns and dangers that once grew in response to increasing surveillance is now accepted as the new normal (4). Campbell claims the increase in surveillance “will persist—not the laws and regulations but the social and cultural ways of living, the behaviors, and the embedded emotional and psychic responses” (5). He concludes by encouraging critical dialogue about “the normalization of the extended surveillance,” since the effects of increasing surveillance will “fundamentally reshape the structures of the societies” (5).

This article provides relevant context for my thesis. The survey was sent soon after the Covid-19 pandemic, thus the results would have been different pre-Covid. This information provides evidence that supports my argument that increased surveillance and virtual panopticism are unethical. In my Conclusion, I include a section on practical ways to resist the ever-encroaching virtual panopticon. By combining the relevant content in this article with my possible solutions to resist these forces, I have a strong argument with the beginning steps of a solution. Since defining the ethical parameters of surveillance technology is an evolving topic, my research is intended to be used as the starting point.

D’Urso, Scott C. “Who’s Watching Us at Work? Toward a Structural–Perceptual Model of

Electronic Monitoring and Surveillance in Organizations.” *Communication Theory*

(1050-3293), vol. 16, no. 3, 2006, International Communication Association, pp. 281–

303. doi:[10.1111/j.1468-2885.2006.00271.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2885.2006.00271.x).

D’Urso begins his article claiming that the USA Patriot Act began the increase of surveillance that continues to this day. While this does not seem necessarily bad, America

reflects “a greater willingness within society to accept monitoring and surveillance today” 283. This should raise suspicion since the Patriot Act was birthed out of fear and confusion. Checks and balances are needed to protect individual’s rights. The two areas in conflict are the “employees’ right to privacy and an organization’s desire to control their employees” (285). Employers depend on monitoring and/or surveillance to remain in control (286). D’Urso cites a study by Flanagan in which EM/S, Electronic Monitoring and Surveillance, “increased levels of stress and mistrust, decreased job satisfaction and quality of work, and worsened customer service. Health problems such as stress, high tension, headaches, extreme anxiety, depression, anger, severe fatigue, and musculoskeletal problems were also reported” (287). If the end goal of employers is “improved productivity” (287), then EM/S may be counteracting the employer true intention. D’Urso then includes sections on the panopticon metaphor, the information panopticon and the electronic panopticon. Following these sections, D’Urso outlines a structural-perceptual model of EM/S. These models identify “types of panoptic effects” which paints “a more precise picture of panoptic effects and their potential impact on a variety of workplace outcomes” (299).

D’Urso’s article parallels with Couch’s Covid-19 article. Both pieces point to a willingness to abandon freedom for a sense of safety. D’Urso provides an overview of the advancements of surveillance that will continue if actions are not taken to defend personal privacy. The greater question then becomes can we reclaim what has already been taken from us? My thesis serves as a starting point for individuals to gain awareness of what is happening, who is manipulating power and what we can do to fight back. I present individual solutions and suggest the need for legislative action to strengthen privacy protection.

Manokha, Ivan. "Surveillance, Panopticism, and Self-Discipline in the Digital Age."

Surveillance & Society, vol. 16, no. 2, 2018, Open Journal System, pp. 219–37.

doi:[10.24908/ss.v16i2.8346](https://doi.org/10.24908/ss.v16i2.8346).

Manokha begins his article exploring the idea of "technologies of the self" meaning, "the manner in which panoptic settings make individuals perform on themselves without coercion, different operations and exercises of power..." (220). Although many who study surveillance believe the Panopticon is an inadequate metaphor, Manokha disagrees and claims that modern surveillance forms "produce a setting, the description of which as panoptic is even more valid than it was with respect to Western societies of the nineteenth and twentieth century" (220). Building off of the panopticon metaphor, Manokha utilizes the chilling effect which is, "used to describe changes in behavior made by individuals, aware of being under surveillance, to be in conformity with the perceived norms or expectations of the surveyors" (228). The chilling effect parallels many of Bentham and Foucault's theories such as self-discipline and technologies of the self (228). One example of the chilling effect is that "users are aware that what they say or post on their profiles will be read or viewed by different categories of people" in other words, a "peer-to-peer" observation (228). The second example of this effect is found in "specific issues or categories of people" (229). Foucault's power of gaze can be applied in both of these examples. Manokha claims that "Today the situation is much closer to Bentham's dream of having identity visible on all individuals with names tattooed on their skin as facial recognition and geolocation technologies increasingly allow to track virtually every individual's movement" (231). He concludes by again stating the relevancy of Foucault despite many scholars' disagreement.

In my Data Analysis Chapter, I research the effects of social media which cannot be separated from surveillance technology. This article provides evidence that the panopticon metaphor remains relevant. Although my thesis focuses primarily on an individual's unawareness of the panoptical structures in which they operate, the chilling effect provides a potential area of future study. The assertion that Foucault's power of gaze can be impactful on both the individual and collective levels contends that the further technology advances the more intricate panoptic systems become. Further research into these areas may aid in finding solutions to the present overused surveillance methods.

Prior, Helder. "Democracy Is Watching You: From Panopticism to the Security State." *Porto*

Alegre, vol. 22, no. 1, 2015, *Famecos Magazine, Media, Culture and Technology*, pp. 32–58.

Who is affected by surveillance? According to Prior, "surveillance is a daily practice that involves individuals without these realizing it" (34). Surveillance exposes "the daily encounters with bureaucratic activity and with the desire for efficiency, control and coordination of the gigantic security systems that underpin the modern world" (34). The panopticon uses surveillance to correct any "deviant from the norm" to maintain order (37). Prior uses Gilles Deleuze's analysis to gather a better understanding of the Security State. Deleuze coins the term "mutation of capitalism" in which "capitalism that no longer focuses on the pursuit of capital gains by the logic resulting from maximizing sales and reducing costs of production, but in marketing" (40). Evidence of this concept arises in social media and various forms of technological marketing. This marketing relies on "the data accumulation on the individual's characteristics as a consumer" (41). Prior claims that individuals are "visible in a way that Bentham couldn't predict" because. "technology transcends space and dissolves time because the

past can be, at any time, summoned by small devices that record and memorialize the events” (41). Access to technological devices that preserve data blurs the lines between public and private life thus paving the way for people to accept “the States and corporations collect, process, classify and store personal data, ignoring old limits” (44). Prior reveals that most privacy is given up when framed as “political security” (46).

Prior’s emphasis on political security in exchange for freedom is relevant due to the Covid-19 global pandemic. His research on the panopticon maintains the “norm” is a concept that I use in my data analysis section. By viewing the answers to my survey question, I can define what the normalized standard is. Prior’s article demonstrates the need for further study in the realm of virtual Panopticism because it is affecting reality. My research zooms in on concepts such as education and social media that Prior provided an overview of.

Richards, Neil M. “The Dangers of Surveillance.” *Harvard Law Review*, vol. 126, no. 7, 2013, pp. 1934–1965. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/23415062. Accessed 10 Feb. 2021.

Although an increase in technology makes life easier in many ways, Richards identifies that “the digital technologies that have revolutionized our daily lives have also created minutely detailed records of those lives (1934). While initially, this does not pose a threat, such a shift must be monitored: “In an age of terror, our government has shown a keen willingness to acquire this data and use it for unknown purposes” (1934). Richards argues three main points in his article: “First, we must recognize that surveillance transcends the public/private divide (1935), second, we must recognize that secret surveillance is illegitimate and prohibit the creation of any domestic surveillance programs whose existence is secret. Third, we should recognize that total surveillance is illegitimate and reject the idea that it is acceptable for the government to record all Internet activity without authorization (1935-1936), fourth, we must recognize that

surveillance is harmful (1936). The increase of surveillance also “increases the risk of blackmail, coercion, and discrimination” (1936). The issues lie not only in the data collected but “because of the ways data in one area can be linked to other areas and analyzed to produce new inferences and finding” (1939). Currently, surveillance is “legal unless forbidden” with “limited protections against government surveillance” (1942). Perhaps the even more alarming realization is that “Truly secret and unexpected surveillance, from this perspective, might appear not to violate our intellectual privacy at all” (1952). This information leads Richards to conclude that, “surveillance must be constrained by legal and social rules” (1964).

Modern technological surveillance is key to understanding how power operates within a virtual panopticon. Richard’s article provides insight into the corruption of surveillance, and he points out areas of vulnerability for those that are being surveilled. These same issues and vulnerable positions remain true in surveillance and a virtual panopticon. In the data analysis chapter of my thesis, I will identify common trends and patterns that arise in a virtual panopticon. These trends can then be furthered studied and can lead to solutions for the fight against invasive surveillance and virtual panopticons.

Donna Haraway Cyborg Theory

Haraway, Donna. “A Cyborg Manifesto.” *Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century*, in *Simians, Cyborgs and Women: The Reinvention of Nature* (New York; Routledge, 1991), pp.149-181.

According to Haraway, a cyborg “is a cybernetic organism, a hybrid of machine and organism, a creature of social reality as well as a creature of fiction.” She furthers her point by claiming that “the boundary between science fiction and social reality is an optical illusion.” Due

to technological integration, Haraway states: “we are cyborgs.” Three important factors surface due to this revelation: “the boundary between human and animal is thoroughly breached, our machines are disturbingly lively, and we ourselves frighteningly inert and the boundary between physical and non-physical is very imprecise for us.” To reach a place of acceptance of this new cyborg reality, individuals must not be afraid “of permanently partial identities and contradictory standpoints.” Despite the immediate pushback individuals feel when reading Haraway’s work, evidence of a cyborg reality already encompasses the world. For example, “Writing is pre-eminently the technology of cyborgs, etched surfaces of the late twentieth century.” Haraway furthers this idea of writing to fight against phallogocentrism and push feminism forward. However, Haraway makes a point to address the consequences of a cyborg reality; she warns “Our bodies, ourselves; bodies are maps of power and identity. Cyborgs are no exception. A cyborg body is not innocent; it was not born in a garden; it does not seek unitary identity and so generate antagonistic dualisms without end (or until the world ends); it takes irony for granted.” She concludes by contending that the fragmentation of ourselves (i.e., cyborgism) refutes “totalizing theory” and argues “the social relations of science and technology means refusing an anti-science metaphysics, a demonology of technology, and so means embracing the skillful task of reconstructing the boundaries of daily life, in partial connection with others, in communication with all of our parts.” Creating a way for each part to communicate to other parts in addition to being heard by the whole is “a dream not of a common language, but of a powerful infidel heteroglossia.”

Haraway’s Manifesto fuses the medical and feminist implications of spreading technology. She claims that we are all cyborgs due to the use of technology (e.g. social media) resulting in the fragmentation of ourselves. In my data analysis section, I analyze the results with

this framework in mind. The wide range of topical data forces users to answer out of their fragmented section. For example, a person's religious conviction might not be evident in their stance on literature and film. My research will reveal patterns of how these fragments interact or disconnect with each other, offering a social critique.

Foucault Influence on Education

Landahl, Joakim. "The Eye of Power(-Lessness): On the Emergence of the Panoptical and Synoptical Classroom." *History of Education*, vol. 42, no. 6, 2013, pp. 803–21. Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, doi:[10.1080/0046760X.2013.832408](https://doi.org/10.1080/0046760X.2013.832408).

Landahl tracks the history of discipline through the classroom beginning with a disciplinary technology that few people might consider: "the gaze of the teacher" (804). Landahl analyzes the gaze of the teacher through "Foucault's concept of the panopticon and Mathiesen's concept of the synopticon" (803). This article begins with the fact that school surveillance was "primarily a human endeavour" (803), and proceeds to explain that "the panopticon was based on an asymmetry that made one part visible and another invisible, making power tantamount to seeing without being seen" (805-806). The evolution of the classroom into a place with technological integration results in the classroom operating as both a panopticon and a synopticon. Landahl continues research by studying teaching manuals, specifically pointing out relevant comments in these manuals such as, "the teacher was constantly exposed to the pupils... be aware of his/her appearance" (815). The article then launches into how "The gaze meets the blackboard and the overhead projector" and "pupils recognize [ing] discontinuities of surveillance" (816). The advancements of technology in the classroom were centered on maintaining gaze, however, Landahl notes that "a central contrast to the panoptical model has to

do with the degree of visibility on the part of the teacher” (819). Though the classroom and panopticon are not identical in structure or function, many of the same principles remain true in both settings.

Understanding the history of the panopticon in an educational setting is vital for my data analysis since a quarter of my survey is dedicated to education. This article points out specific differences between a panopticon and a classroom while also distinguishing which principles operate well in both settings. In my data analysis chapter, this information is important in interpreting data accurately. I also look to advance this research since technology is advancing in the classroom far quicker than ever before. The results of this increase in technology provide may new information to aid in classroom management or content creation.

Lazaroiu, George. “Besley on Foucault’s Discourse of Education.” *Educational Philosophy & Theory*, vol. 45, no. 8, 2013, pp. 821–32. *EBSCOhost*, doi:[10.1080/00131857.2013.785092](https://doi.org/10.1080/00131857.2013.785092).

Lazaroiu claims that “power and knowledge directly imply one another” (823). He cites Olssen who believes that “Foucault’s consistent materialism has theoretical implications for the analysis of social and educational systems” (824). Foucault’s concern with freeing the self is shaped by “the system of knowledge and power that we are born into and raised within” (827). According to Foucault, “we should identify and fight the forces that turn us away from our life experiences, we must be vigilant about the effects on us of everything we participate in, and we should examine our understanding of our practices and our acts of power and their effects (our society operates for the benefit of specific people)” (827). In education individuals feel a conflict between what they have experienced and who they should be. Since “technologies have been part of culture and society and instrumental in questions of self-formation,” (828) scholars

must begin to adapt Foucault's theories of education to the present times. Lazaroiu notes that this process is complex since "no power relation is simply one of total domination" (829). Lazaroiu concludes by encouraging further study into areas such as "Foucault's analysis of discourse, his notions of governmentality and disciplinary power, his thinking about the relations of subjectivity and truth, and his changing understandings about the self" (830).

Outlining the educational implications of Foucault's theories in a current setting is not for the faint of heart. Foucault's theories combined with the meticulous aspects of technology spark an endless amount of research. Since my education is a part of my Data Analysis Chapter, I wish to provide an overview of how virtual panopticism affects students. However, due to time restrictions, I am unable to provide an in-depth look into many of Foucault's theories. Perhaps this can serve as an opportunity for future study.

Sheehy, K, Ferguson, R. "Learning in the Panopticon: ethical and social issues in building a virtual educational environment." *International Journal of Social Science. Special Edition: Virtual Reality in Distance Education*, 2(2) pp. 25–32.

Sheehy and Ferguson record the results of creating a virtual reality in which they conduct educational spaces. The group in this experiment, the Schome group, used a platform called Second Life (90). In this space, a place named Schome Park became the "virtual representation of learning spaces for the real world and also explore new learning practices" (90). The first group of 150 people ages 13 to 17 began the trial (90). Sheehy and Ferguson note the many challenges of creating a virtual world including ethical issues, informed consent, staff issues, shaping the world and inclusion in virtual worlds (92-93). Virtual realities "have the potential to increase access for some disadvantaged groups, but they are not inclusive in themselves" (95). Intentionality is key in the developmental process of virtual realities. Sheehy and Ferguson

conclude by claiming that “wisdom gained from dialogic experience in cyberspace between participants and researchers will serve as a basis for future ethical work regarding the boundaries of participation in virtual distance education and scholarly observation” however they warn that set-in-stone guidelines may not be enough to address the complex issues that can arise (95-96).

Virtual realities exist on various levels ranging from social media sites to platforms like Shome Park. The ethical concerns raised by Sheehy and Ferguson are an issue for platforms as they continue to grow. My thesis adapts Foucault’s panopticon into a virtual panopticon. Through my research, I hope to shed light on ethical issues rooted in virtual panopticism. I offer the beginning steps of practical solutions in hope of inspiring individuals to be aware and take action against their abusers.

Waycott, Jenny, Celia Thompson, Judithe Sheard, and Rosemary Clerehan. “A Virtual

Panopticon in the Community of Practice: Students’ Experiences of Being Visible on Social Media.” *The Internet and Higher Education*, vol. 35, ScienceDirect, 2017, pp. 12–20. doi:[10.1016/j.iheduc.2017.07.001](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.iheduc.2017.07.001).

This article explains a study that sought to uncover “opportunities and challenges associated with social technologies used for student assessment across learning and teaching contexts” (14). The researchers used “the lens of the community of practice framework and the notion of a virtual panopticon” to analyze the result of 20 university students whose work was made accessible online through social media (12). The conclusions posed both positive and negative outcomes; “students experienced benefits, such as being part of a cohesive learning community, but also felt conflicted about how much of their work and themselves they wanted to share” (12). This article dives further into research by designating sections for the social media in higher education, virtual panopticon and communities of practice to be explored. This study

emphasizes Foucault's theory of panopticism through E. Wenger's "Communities of Practice: Learning, Meaning, and Identity." Wenger's research explains "how connections are made between members of a community who are united by common objectives, activities and practices" (13). This study's data analysis revealed "four overarching themes, which we [they] aligned with the dualities in Wenger's framework: (1) Boundaries of visibility (designed and emergent); (2) audience (local and global); (3) creation of learning artifacts (participation and reification); and (4) learning community (identification and negotiability)" (15). In conclusion, this study supports the idea that place student's work online is similar to "a virtual panopticon" (19). The practical application for this research falls to lecturers; they "need to be able to build a community of practice together with their students where degrees of visibility can be negotiated so that fears of exposure can be offset by feelings of group belonging and trust" (19).

This article is useful in the social media and education sections of my data analysis. Though my data is not focused on trends that relate to Wenger, Foucault's theory of gaze is relevant to my research. Since this study incorporates Foucault's theories, I can build off of the research already established in this piece. While interpreting my data, I will keep in mind the fear of exposure and the importance of trust. These concepts concerning social media provide endless opportunities for social critiques. Additionally, despite my survey being an anonymous voluntary project, individuals may have been affected by fear of exposure when participating.

Chapter 3

Methodology

This chapter is primarily concerned with establishing the parameters in which my survey was designed and used while also providing an overview of the methods I used in my data analysis chapter. This context brings validity to the concept of virtual panopticism. Additionally, I highlight specific procedures and tools used to complete this study.

The Research Context and Participants

My study was completed at a university in Florida. My survey questions were sent out to students who attended this university in addition to staff and alumni who were also permitted to access the link. Students and staff could also access the survey through Sona. The survey was open from November 13th, 2020 to March 22nd, 2021. Subjects who took this survey ranged in age from 18-55. Figure 1 presents the ethnic breakdown of subjects.

Figure 1:



70.8% of subjects were female, and 29.2% of subjects were male.

Instruments Used in Data Collection

My study consisted of 56 questions which were submitted and approved by the Institutional Review Boards (IRB). The consent form was attached to the survey link, and the subjects were all volunteers. Since this survey is conducted through email, participants that do not engage with technology will be unable to participate.

Procedures Used

I conferred with Professor Marlon Dempster, and together we tailored 56 questions from a panoptical viewpoint. These questions aimed to determine the motive behind an individual's preferences in the categories listed above. I conducted an email survey at Southeastern University. This survey was sent to Southeastern University professors, alumni and students. Students and staff could access the survey through Sona. Additionally, some classes posted the link to the survey in discussion forums and offered extra credit in exchange for filling out the survey. There are 56 questions divided into four categories: religion, personal technology use, literature and film and education. I divided the survey into these categories to establish a broad understanding and emphasize the far-reaching effects of virtual panopticism. The design of this survey is intentional; it aims to reveal the significance of the virtual panopticon by highlighting the correlations between these topics. Since this survey is conducted through email, participants that do not engage with technology are unable to participate.

Data Analysis

Once the information is gathered, I will analyze the data and explore the impact of technology on students and professors on issues such as technology dependency, technology access and the rewards and punishments associated with engaging in technology usage. A copy

of the initial contact email, consent form and survey questions are also included within the appendices.

Foucault's panopticon evolved from a metaphor representing the suppression of many by a small number through the means of punishment to a virtual panopticon in which individual users are the capital that is mined, traded and sold. With the increase in technology, the principle of Foucault's panopticon is not only relevant but arguably magnified through this new medium in which virtual panopticism was born.

I received 65 to my 56 questions. Due to time restraints, I reduced my data by removing short answer questions. Instead, I focused my energy on analyzing the data provided through questions whose answers were either check all that apply or the Likert Scale. I chose to display figures, charts and tables based on what method most clearly presented the data. Many questions in this survey were designed to show conflicting answers, contrasting results were most effectively presented through figures, tables or charts. I analyzed the results by looking at trends reaching across all four categories in addition to in-depth analyses on each topic. I will look at the results through the lens of Foucault's panopticon, power and discipline.

Summary of Methodology

My survey aims to further research explaining how virtual panopticons alter life. Specifically, this survey will demonstrate how the virtual panopticon affects an individual's thinking. Based on the survey questions, participants will reflect to what extent the virtual panopticon integrates into religion, personal technological choices, literature and film and education. This information will show the connection between Foucault's virtual panopticon and the impact of technological infiltration throughout our modern-day lives though users are typically unaware of the severe ramification of engaging in constant technological use. Once

individuals understand the importance of the virtual panopticon, then further actions can develop from this foundation (i.e., creating ethical parameters).

Chapter 4

Data Analysis

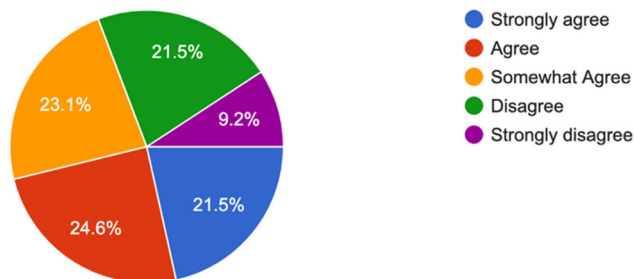
As explained in chapter 1, this analysis seeks to understand how the unseen virtual panopticon affects subjects' decisions and beliefs thus making them more reliant on a system they aren't aware of. This chapter is divided into five sections: religion, personal technology usage, literature and film and education. Under each topic, I provide the data acquired followed by an analysis. I conclude by analyzing all four topics and identifying common patterns. A total of 65 subjects participated in this survey which contained 56 questions. Results are analyzed through the lens of virtual panopticism. As mentioned in the introduction, the term virtual panopticon places the power within the technological system, humans feel secure by possessing an illusory control. In contrast, a cyber panopticon implies that humans are simply engaging in a network in which they hold all the power.

Religion

When asked about their conception of Jesus, all subjects either somewhat agreed, agreed or strongly agreed that Jesus forgives all sins. Interestingly, when asked if God punishes all sins diverse results followed as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2

When I have formed my conception of who God is through reading the Bible or hearing about God in sermons, discussions or media repr...e punishes all sins no matter what the sin is.
65 responses

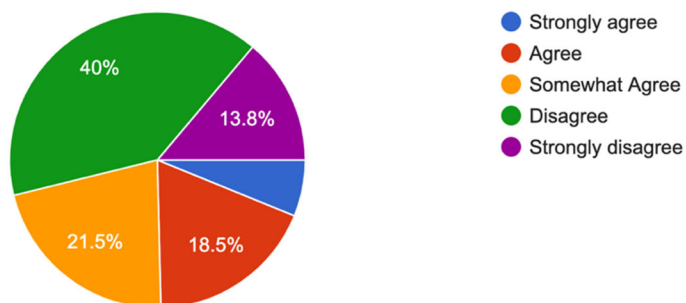


69.2% view God as a punisher which implies that God is watching with the intention to judge. This belief is traced back to the internalization of the panoptic which emphasizes punishment. Essentially, 69.2% support the theology of atonement through punishment. 21.5% strongly agree with this statement revealing that this percentage is fully engaged in panoptic thought. The 24.6% believe God is punitive. 23.1% are unsure in their belief, but they lean towards the idea of a punishing God. Only 30.7% of subjects believe that God does not punish all sins thus implying they believe in a gracious and forgiving God. This data shows a clash between the internalization of panoptic principles exhibited in culture with the story of Jesus in the New Testament. In scripture, Jesus acted based on grace thus leading to my conclusion that two potential factors are at work here. First, people may not be reading Scripture, and second individuals are reading their cultural perspectives into the gospels.

Subjects also posed conflicting views when asked how much they agreed with the statement: “I need to be involved in direct leadership in my church to act on my Christian beliefs.” As shown in Figure 3, a significant portion of users strongly disagree with this statement.

Figure 3

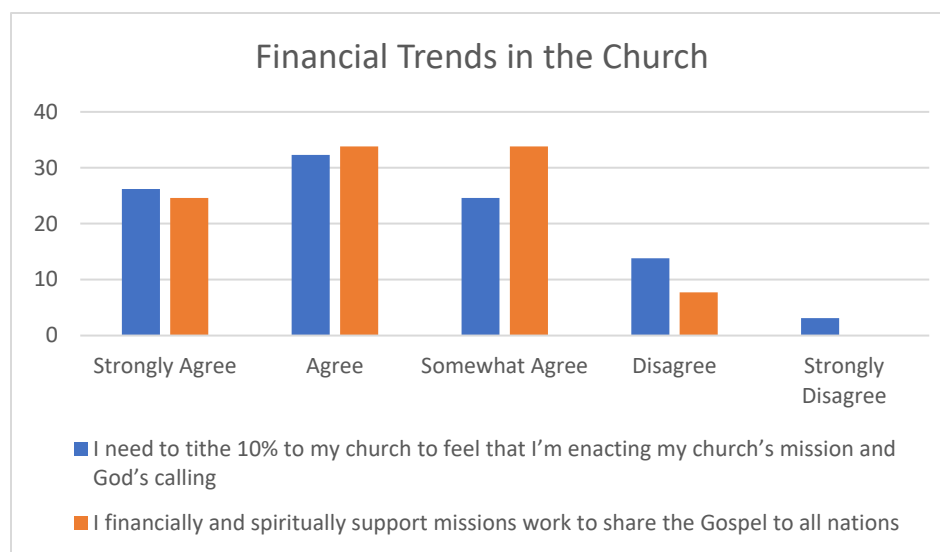
I need to be involved in direct leadership in my church to act on my Christian beliefs
65 responses



58.3% of subjects do not believe they need to be in direct church leadership. I define direct church leadership as serving on staff and/or volunteering. This evidence points to Foucault's theory of docility. Referring to figure 2, over 60% of subjects view God as a punisher. The concept of discipline links to the idea of docility. Expounding on this idea, subjects whether knowingly or unknowingly are shying away from serving in direct leadership in the church because being seen leads to being judged. Judgment leads to punishment which subjects try to avoid. However, this data reveals an inconsistency between the New Testament, in which all believers are called and qualified to serve God, and culture, which has internalized Foucault's panopticon in religion thus subjects are expressing fear and perceiving judgment as a normal characteristic of religion despite the message that Jesus himself speaks in the New Testament Scriptures.

When asked I need to tithe 10% to my church to feel that I'm enacting my church's mission and God's calling versus I financially and spiritually support missions work to share the Gospel to all nations, subject percentages trended similarly (see figure 4).

Figure 4



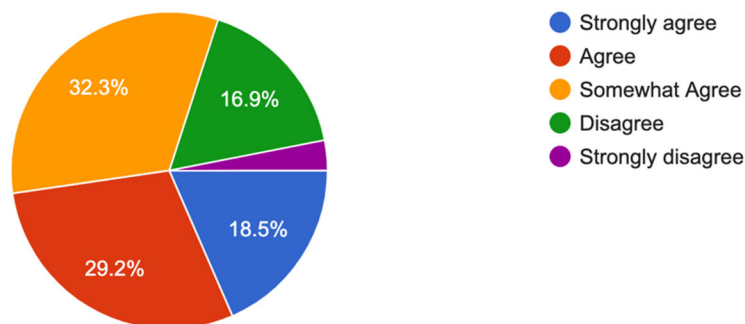
Both tithing 10% to support the church and financially supporting missions work support Foucault's theories of production. There is statistical evidence that subjects internalized Foucault's concept of production to be contributors and therefore valuable to society. Tithing 10% emphasizes the importance of domestic concern (e.g., a subject's home church), while financially supporting missions highlights the valuing of strangers. The two questions received similar percentage trends which demonstrate resistance to culture (i.e., the fragmentation and separation of people, only caring for you and your group) and express the values taught in the New Testament. However, the higher percentage of "somewhat agreeing" to financially supporting mission provides evidence that fewer people are as passionately committed to missions as they are convicted to tithe 10%. Within these two questions, subjects demonstrate three main Foucauldian thoughts. First, the idea of production to find value is evident. Second, a fear of God's judgment and punishment serves as motivators. Thirdly, subjects may give simply because it has been modeled before them or asked of them thus enforcing the idea of docility yet again.

The next section moved away from financial donation and into the giving of time. Figure 5 provides evidence of the varied responses. When asked I need to be involved in my community and/or volunteer to help my neighbor with their needs to materialize my Christian beliefs, the largest percentage, 32.3% somewhat agreed.

Figure 5

I need to be involved in my community and/or volunteer to help my neighbors with their needs to materialize my Christian beliefs.

65 responses



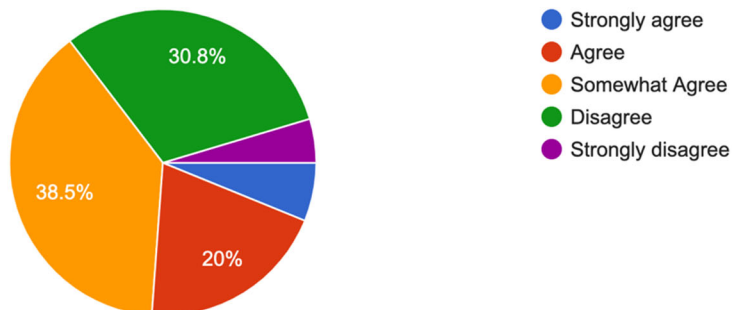
Subjects again demonstrate the blending of Foucault’s principles of panopticism with the calling of Christianity. Despite the verse such as John 15:12-13 which plainly states, “This is my commandment: ‘Love each other in the same way I have loved you. There is no greater love than to lay down one’s life for one’s friends’” (*NLT Parallel Study Bible*, John 15:12-13). I suspect that the hesitancy shown in these results stems from the latter section of this statement: “to materialize my Christian beliefs.” The feeling of fear draws out docility. Foucault’s metaphorical panopticon creates the perfect atmosphere for understanding this concept. The feeling that subjects are being watched combined with a fear of punishment—both ideas which have been substantiated by the evidence above—leads to apathetic actions which are all based on a perception of God.

The transition from religion within the church to public and political realms demonstrates a wide range of convictions. When asked to respond to the statement, “I need to be involved in my political party as a voice and/or volunteer to assure that my moral convictions are respected and acted upon,” the majority of the subject marked somewhat agree.

Figure 6

I need to be involved in my political party as a voice and/or volunteer to assure that my moral convictions are respected and acted upon.

65 responses



Marking somewhat agree implies a level of unsureness that reinforces underlying insecurity.

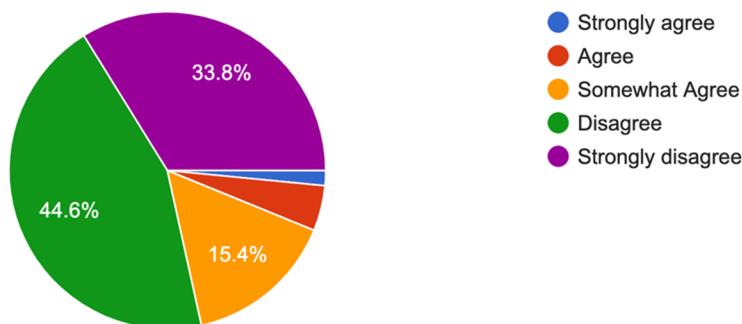
This lack of confidence points to the conflict between Christians claiming to “Do not love this world nor the things it offers you, for when you love the world, you do not have the love of the Father in you” (1 John 2:15). However, the question above provides evidence that subjects are blending their religion with their culture, and a significant part of culture rests on the government. In other words, 38.5% of somewhat agree subjects find themselves in a moral conundrum. Confusion and fear lead to apathy. In turn, subjects are unlikely to act based on questions they haven’t established answers for. Unsureness in both religion and culture (specifically government and politics) creates a double layer of complacency, subjects will not fully commit to either religion or culture thus leading to them feeling as though they don’t belong to either. Displacement leads to a survival mode mentality which can cause a narcissistic tendency due to a fixation on survival.

To test how subjects felt about publicly expressing their political beliefs, I asked how much they agreed with the following statement: “I need to motivate others around me to be moral citizens by campaign signs/bumper stickers/window stickers.”

Figure 7

I need to motivate others around me to be moral citizens by campaign signs/bumper stickers/window stickers.

65 responses



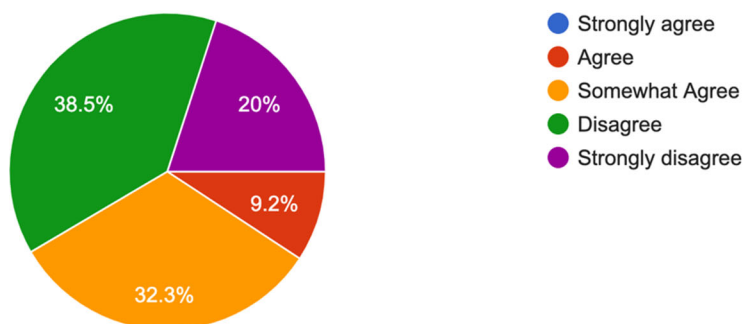
Foucault explains the panoptic as a system in which control is directly related to gaze (or the idea of an omniscient gaze). Despite the subjects’ beliefs on the campaign, the majority of subjects did not want to advertise their beliefs. There is safety in keeping secrets because the unknown information cannot be wielded to manipulate individuals. If someone cannot see something, it therefore cannot be judged. If subjects did not care about being judged, they would express their opinions freely. The consequences of judgment are often too great and not worth the risk. Also consider that the campaign might be considered moral or even just, however, subjects remain complacent.

To examine the difference between asserting individualizes convictions publicly versus displaying beliefs communally, I included the statement: “I need to motivate others around me to be moral citizens by joining public protests” (see figure 8)

Figure 8

I need to motivate others around me to be moral citizens by joining public protests.

65 responses



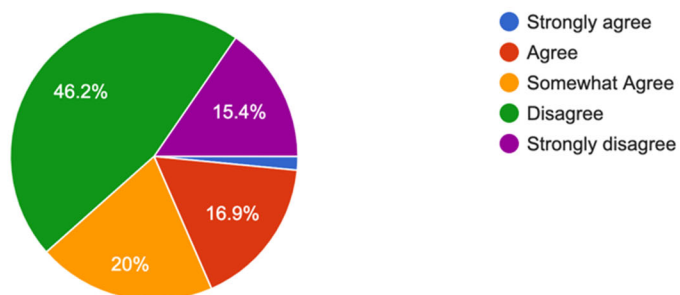
I suspect that the data for this question was directly impacted by the recent events in 2020. There is a fairly equal split between those who somewhat agree and agree (41.5%) and those who disagree and strongly disagree (58.5%). I conclude each section represents conformity to their group. For example, if someone is in a house or friend group in which they all promote protesting then subjects will conform and vice versa. The clear divide also reflects the conflicting political agenda, news sources and social media posts. The fear of being seen dictates the subjects' actions.

To test how committed subjects felt about family and friends who disagree on political issues, I asked, "I need to make sure that family and friends who are duped by other political parties are converted to better ways of thinking." The results seen in figure 9 show that 61.6% of subjects either disagree or strongly disagree with the statement.

Figure 9

I need to make sure that family and friends who are duped by other political parties are converted to better ways of thinking.

65 responses



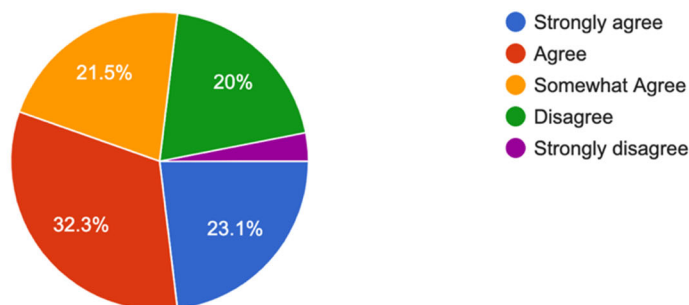
This data leads me to conclude that although subjects believe in punishment, they do not wish to be the punisher. However, from a panoptic perspective, the one who punishes is the one who holds the power. This idea implies that subjects are willing to exchange power/control for family and friends despite their disagreements. I believe this acceptance of family and friends coexists with the strong belief in punishment and judgment because subjects are content to exist in security rather than take responsibility and claim power.

As shown in figure 10, there is no one consensus on what the role of police in criminal activity should be. This question is designed to test whether subjects' view of public punishment aligns with their Christian belief God punishes all sin.

Figure 10

I believe that criminal activity should always be handled by the police.

65 responses



55.4% of subjects believe that criminal activity should always be handled by the police. This question pinpoints subjects' ideas of fairness, judgment and grace. Only 3.1% of subjects strongly disagreed. Culture is saturated with punishment and discipline, but the question then becomes how should Christians respond to public punishment? Less than 25% of subjects disagree with the statement above. Here Christians' theology and political views are aligning, a judgmental God who punishes all sins and the need for a police force to handle all criminal activity. Subjects are subjected to punishment since panopticism is accepted in culture; here the familiarity with punishment provides a feeling of safety because it is all subjects have ever known. This familiarity affects the way subjects think thus leading to a blending of theology and politics. It is important to note that Jesus did not align himself with the politicians of his time. As demonstrated in the New Testament, Jesus focused on love and withheld punishment even when it was justified. Despite Scripture, the data suggests that theology is not separated from Foucault's theories of punishment.

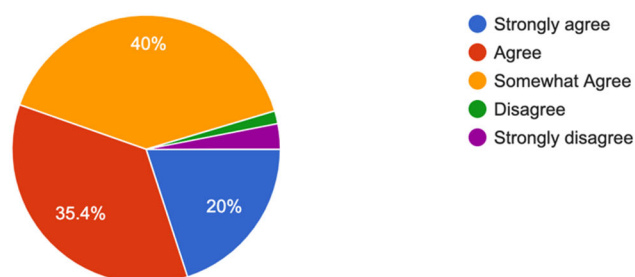
To understand how subjects feel about those who believe in opposing values, I posed the statement: "I need to be quiet and still and listen to opposing ideas and be assured that my friends and family are in a process of working out their own beliefs" (see figure 11). This

statement tests the concept of self-control and the need to reflect individually, a principle demonstrated by Jesus.

Figure 11

I need to be quiet and still and listen to opposing ideas and be assured that my friends and family are in a process of working out their own beliefs.

65 responses



95.4% of subjects agreed to the statement listed above. This high percentage indicates that subjects understand the importance of patience and thinking before they act. However, I must note that this question is easy to answer “correctly,” but it is difficult to live out. I suspect some subjects answered what they believed to be the “right” answer because they knew that someone would be assessing the survey answer. Despite the anonymity of the survey, subjects may have felt uncomfortable selecting what they believed to be the “wrong” answer. I propose this caveat because based on previous questions, subjects have internalized panoptic philosophies and thus lean towards punishment and judgment. Those beliefs create tension with this question because the ideas do not align, indicating that some other factor is at play.

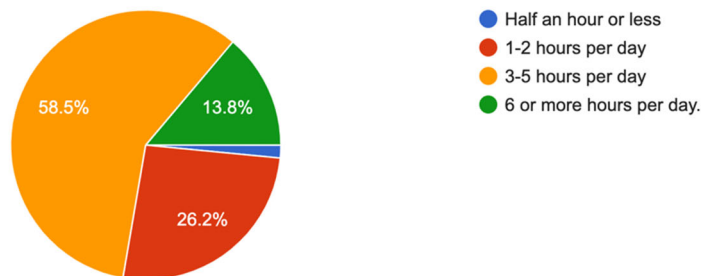
Personal Technology Usage

To better understand the role of technology in subjects’ everyday life, I posed the question: How long is the average time you spend on your phone? As seen in figure 12, considerable hours are spent engaging with technology with only 3.1% of subjects spending an hour or less on their phone.

Figure 12

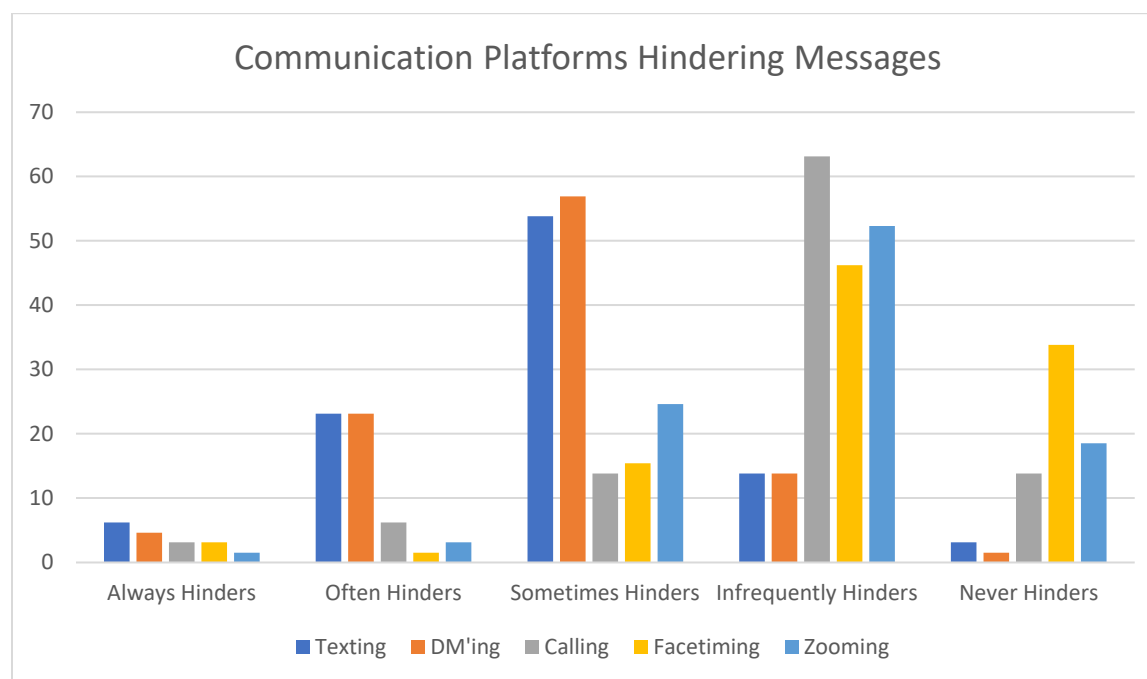
How long is the average time you spend on your phone?

65 responses



With a day only consisting of 24 hours and 72.3% of subjects spending 3-6+ hours on their phone a day, I conclude that subjects are integrating technology into everyday activities at an alarming rate. I suspect that few people sit down and solely use their phone for 6+ hours a day. The thorough integration of technology into life conditions the brain to operate under virtual panopticism like a virtual filter. Evidence of virtual panopticism is evident in the religion section of this data analysis chapter; I conclude that spiritual formation is linked directly to phone usage since evidence points to subjects' theology is influenced by their cellphone usage. The only way to separate cellphone usage from spiritual development is if subjects completely compartmentalize their lives which is potentially possible. This data poses other insights. For example, if subjects post on social media about their involvement in church or other "spiritual" activities, then subjects demonstrate a longing for proof of belonging, another form of docility. Individuals do not need to prove anything unless they feel they will be judged.

Figure 13 breaks down five communication methods and ranks which ones are the best for clear communication. Note that DM'ing and texting, though both written forms of communication, rank the highest on often hinders the intention of your message.

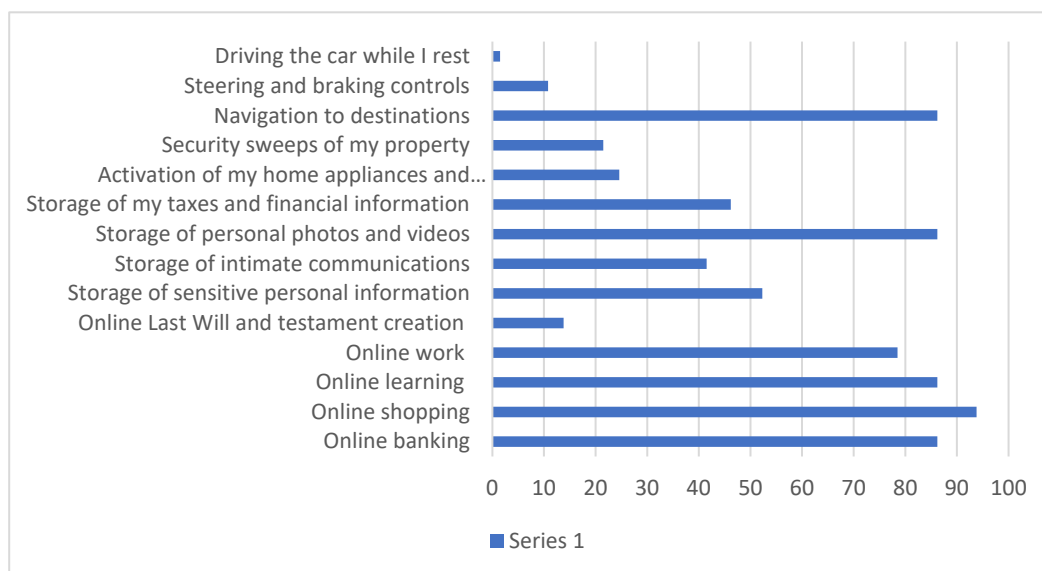
Figure 13

The evidence presented in figure 13 suggests that written words (e.g., text and DM'ing) are the most commonly hindered method of communication, I suggest that this stems from the inconsistent and unpredictable interpretation of written words. Note the significant difference between zoom and facetime. While both methods of communication rely on a video format, zoom is designed to be used in a social group setting. In contrast, Facetime is primarily used in an individual setting. Evidence suggests that video format in a social setting is less effective than in an individual setting. The basis for this inconsistency is sourced from several different things. Firstly, many individuals use zoom in an academic setting which provides a formality in which Facetime does not operate. Additionally, many users may turn their camera off when using zoom thus preventing the gaze of the teacher and other students. This ties directly to Foucault's theories of gaze. While subjects may claim something such as, "I didn't want to get ready for zoom." What they are communicating is if they are not seen, they will not be judged. If they are

not judged, then they will not be punished. In the later portions of this data analysis, I discuss the panoptic in an educational setting; zoom is an extension of that research. Evidence also shows that calling infrequently hinders the intention of a message. I believe this is likely because subjects are hesitant to put words into writing. Written words are proof that can be used against individuals, or subjects lack true conviction in their written message. Written messages bring up issues of surveillance, trust and privacy. While subjects may not consciously feel that someone else may read their messages (besides the intended recipient), evidence points to the modification of their behavior due to the internalization of the panoptic.

In addition to communication, technological devices are used in various aspects of life. To understand the extent of this integration I asked subjects to select all that the statements that applied to their lives. Figure 14 tracks the results of these statements.

Figure 14



The highest percentages fall in the categories of online shopping, navigation to destinations, storage of personal photos and videos, online learning, online banking and online work. Notice these categories indicate that technology is thoroughly integrated into personal, educational/informational and work settings. There are no boundaries separating technology

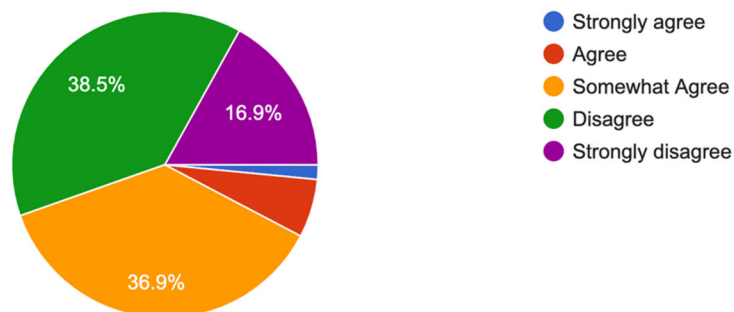
from certain areas of life. Without ethical boundaries set up in both the design of algorithms and surveillance, subjects unknowingly have welcomed virtual panopticism into every area of their life. Virtual panopticism poses an even greater threat than a physical panopticon because there is no limit as to how many cells can fit within the structure. The virtualization of the panopticon provides an infinite landscape to continuously constructing cells in which subjects are willingly yet unknowingly walking into.

Since subjects link their lives with technological devices, I aimed to understand how individuals utilize social media platforms. The results revealed conflicting opinions which are shown in figure 15.

Figure 15

I need to make sure to voice what is right in my community through social media.

65 responses



55.4% of subjects do not believe that they need to voice what is right in their community through social media. I conclude that despite subjects' deep trust in technology (figure 14), subjects are

less likely to use these platforms to voice their true beliefs because subjects trust technology over human judgment.

Social media blends many of Foucault's principles. For example, when subjects post they are subjecting themselves to the gaze of not just their intended audience but also those who happen to find their page or are shown the post from a friend. Once something is posted there is no way to keep a running list of every person who sees it. Subjects modify their behavior on social media to conform and therefore avoid judgment. Social media operates as a virtual panopticon; users are unaware of when they are being seen or watched, but they understand that there is always the potential for being surveilled. Who holds the power in social media depends on who you ask. For example, surveillance ethics is concerned with the companies themselves (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, TikTok, etc.). However, the users on these platforms wield enormous amounts of power as they each play the role of both the one in the central tower, the guards, and the one being surveilled, the inmate. No wonder social media breeds conflict. Users are constantly switching between being punished and punishing. One moment users feel as though they have power, the next moment they feel powerless and vulnerable. Note the conflicted 36.9%. These subjects have not worked out the purpose of social media in their lives.

Literature and Film

This section's focus is primarily on the intended purpose of film and literature. For example, in chart 7 subjects show that their perception of literature and film is primarily to entertain and distract rather than involve moral convictions.

Figure 16

The role of literature is to:	demonstrate proper behavior and moral convictions so that readers learn to overcome life's challenges	entertain and distract people from their daily tensions.	awaken people to the wrongs of society and model ways to intervene for justice	deceive readers in believing that society can be changed for the good by individual actions.
Strongly Agree	3.1%	15.4%	7.7%	3.1%
Agree	24.6%	36.9%	21.5%	16.9%
Somewhat Agree	44.6%	35.4%	56.9%	32.2%
Disagree	23.1%	10.8%	13.8%	41.5%
Strongly Disagree	4.6%	1.5%	0%	6.2%

This data shows that subjects are not reading or watching literature/films from a didactic perspective. This passivity leads to acceptance of propaganda which leads to a disproportionate distribution of power. A few people holding power controlling a large group of people is a sign of panoptic power which Foucault outlines in his work. This passivity also raises concerns from a theological perspective. The data highlights the connection between film and literature to personal decisions and thought processes. The data suggest that considering entertainment as a mere fun activity with no lasting impact is incorrect.

To further pinpoint the effects of entertainment outlets, I asked subjects to answer when was the last time they read a book, watched a play, read a poem, watched musical theater or watched a movie. The answers have been listed in figure 17.

Figure 17

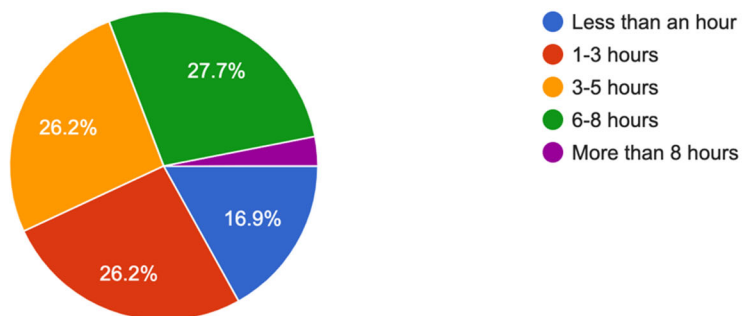
When was the last time you...	read a novel or book?	watched a play?	read a poem?	watched musical theater?	watched a movie?
Never	1.5%	15.4%	9.2%	10.8%	0%
Within 4 or more years	1.5%	21.5%	4.6%	24.6%	1.5%
Within two years	13.8%	18.5%	13.8%	13.8%	0%
Within a year	16.9%	24.6%	20%	15.4%	4.6%
Within the past 6 months	66.2%	20%	52.3%	35.4%	93.8%

Film, the most passive form of entertainment, ranked significantly more frequently engaged with than written texts. The passivity of subjects creates the perfect dynamic for indoctrination. If subjects do not check films for content, then the creators of these films are given far more power than subjects suspect. Despite subjects viewing literature and films as entertainment, storylines provide a powerful narrative in which readers/watchers naturally conform, especially because subjects offer little to no resistance.

Since television is the most passive form of entertainment, I asked subjects to highlight how many hours they watch television a week. While content varied considerably, nearly 30% of subjects fell in the 6-8 hours. The result statistics are listed in figure 18.

Figure 18

I watch television---Netflix, Hulu, Disney +, Amazon Prime---how many hours per week?
65 responses

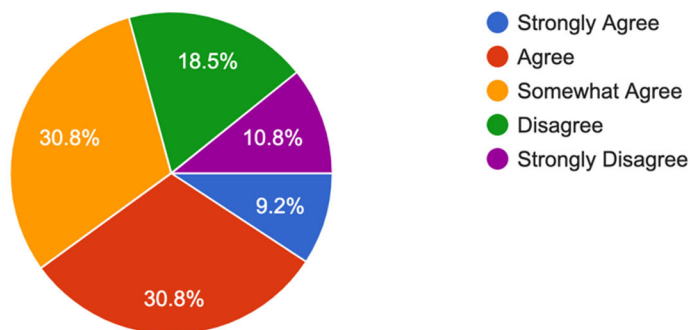


53.9% of subjects spend anywhere from 3-8 hours watching television per week. As I established in the previous question, television reinforces passivity. I argue that passivity extends beyond the hours physically spent in front of a screen. What subjects do not realize is that the mind is shaped by storytellers. The storytellers, the few, control the audience, the many. I must mention that there is a valid argument that the audience influences the films. However, distinguishing between who influences who is impossible to pinpoint.

Finally, I created a question to determine the relevancy of literature versus the influence of television and video games. Figure 19 highlights the unsureness of 30.8% of subjects.

Figure 19

The role of literature has been replaced by film, television and video games.
65 responses



The replacement of literature—a form of entertainment that requires thinking—with film, television and video games—forms of entertainment that require little engagement—emphasizes the importance of subject awareness. Note that while video games require a strong degree of engagement, the various storylines are set before subjects' input. The increase in complacency in entertainment reveals a gaping hole in which anyone who gains popularity can fill regardless of their qualifications or moral convictions.

Education

I would be remiss to study the effects of virtual panopticism on culture if I failed to highlight this influence on education. Surveillance within the classroom, social dynamics and classroom content are all factors that are influenced by virtual panopticism. To begin, I needed to establish the different results between educational content and educational experiences; the results are listed in figure 20.

Figure 20

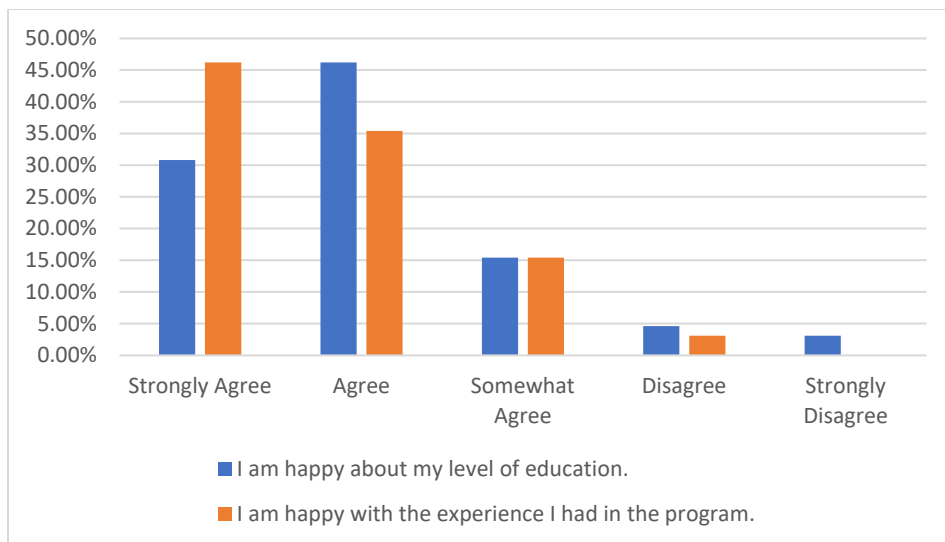
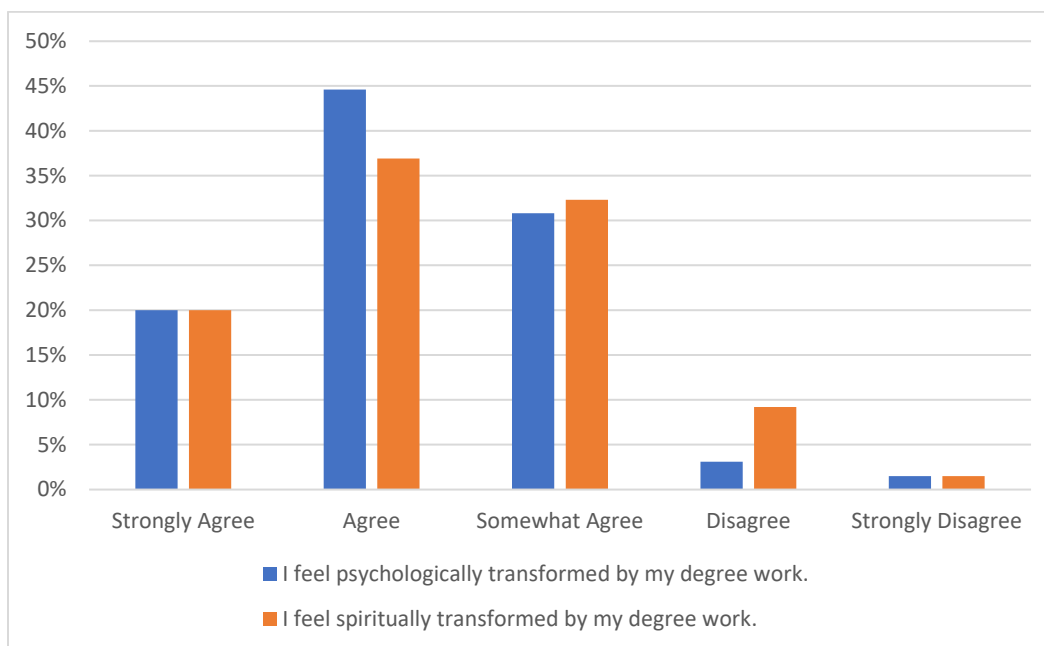


Figure 20 shows that subjects strongly agree that their experiences within a program brought more happiness than their satisfaction with their level of education. Subjects who strongly agree to any statement are full of passion and conviction. Notice the shift from strongly agree to agree. More subjects agree that they are happy about their level of education than their experience. This data proposes two conclusions. First, experiences deeply impact subjects because experiences are built off of relationships thus leading to a higher number of “strongly agree.” Second, subjects are more likely to “agree” that they are pleased with their educational level because educational levels are not solely dependent on relationships. The classroom consists not only of friends/peers but also content, classroom structure, etc. Foucault writes that factories, schools and barracks resemble prisons (Foucault 228). If the panopticon is applied to this data, I conclude that subjects' positive experiences stem from relationships, a key factor often missing in a classroom setting due to the panoptical structure. Panopticons thrive off isolating individuals to control, critique and punish. The data supports the claim that the structure of classrooms by methods of student isolation results in less happiness for subjects, however, isolation keeps the education system under a semblance of control.

Building off the previous question, I asked subjects to evaluate the experience with education through psychological and spiritual lenses.

Figure 21



The data suggests that subjects were more uncertain about the term spiritually in comparison to the term psychologically. Subjects ranked psychological transformation far higher than spiritual transformation. I conclude that since psychology relates to the mind and spirituality relates to the heart, the evidence in figure 21 highlights subjects' willingness to deal with matters of the mind over matters of the soul. I argue that this stems from the internalization of panoptic structures. For example, subjects are compartmentalizing their beliefs and what they learn in the classroom. In contrast, when subjects engage in entertainment through literature and film there is no separation or compartmentalization (see figure 16). I believe the difference in engaging in a classroom versus literature/film stems from the differences in the panoptic versus virtual panopticon. The classroom structure, grading of work and teacher/professor's ultimate authority

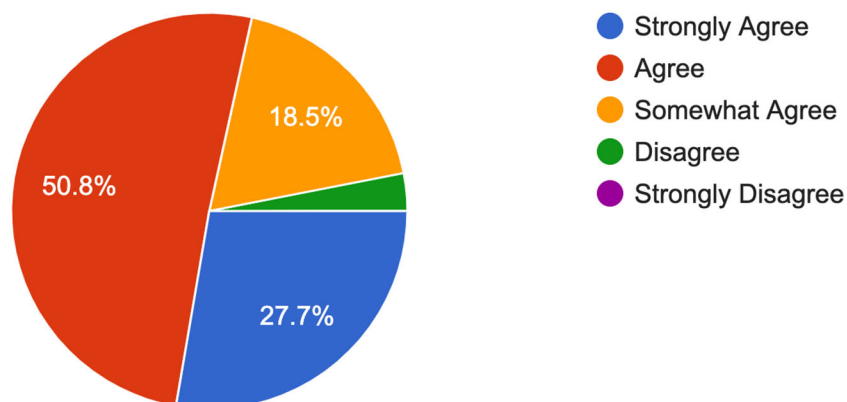
marks a traditional panoptic structure at work. In contrast, the virtual veil disguises panoptic structures at work in film and literature despite their influential power.

Once subjects establish how transformed they feel by their education, I began to unravel how the subjects felt in specific areas. 97% of subjects felt that because of their education, they feel better informed about challenges to world views (see figure 21).

Figure 21

Because of my education, I feel better informed about challenges to world views

65 responses



Although subjects claimed to be more psychologically transformed rather than spiritually transformed, nearly all subjects felt better informed to challenge world views. Since world views are how individuals see reality, I suspect challenging these notions needs to take place on a spiritual level to affect the deepest and truest change. Figure 20 shows that subjects separate their education from their soul yet figure 21 shows that subjects feel better informed to challenge world views. I suggest that subjects possess an illusion of power. Though they feel informed, their education remains in their mind and not their soul. However, this illusion of power creates a comfortable place in which subjects feel in control yet safe. The panoptic structures never need

to fear rebellion if the inmates are comfortable enough to remain in their cells willingly. This data suggests that education allows subjects to feel prepared, but education also insults individuals from the real world thus keeping them safe in their cells.

How much does educational influence depend on students? Figure 22 shows that subjects all either somewhat agree, agree or strongly agree that education is directly related to what students put into it.

Figure 22

I believe that education is what one puts into it.

65 responses

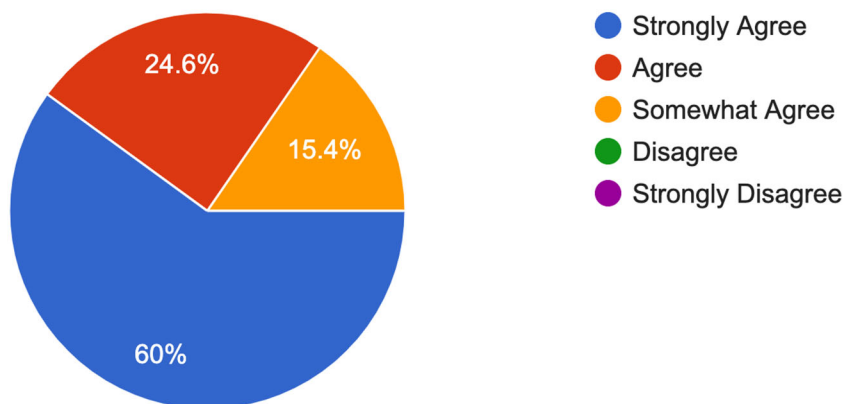


Figure 22 is a prime example of Foucault's theory of production. 84.6% of subjects agree or strongly agree that education is dependent on the student's effort. The panoptic structure creates the mindset of if a person is not producing, then they are not valuable. The data aligns with this philosophy. Figure 22 is evidence that the panopticon model is incorporated into the education system.

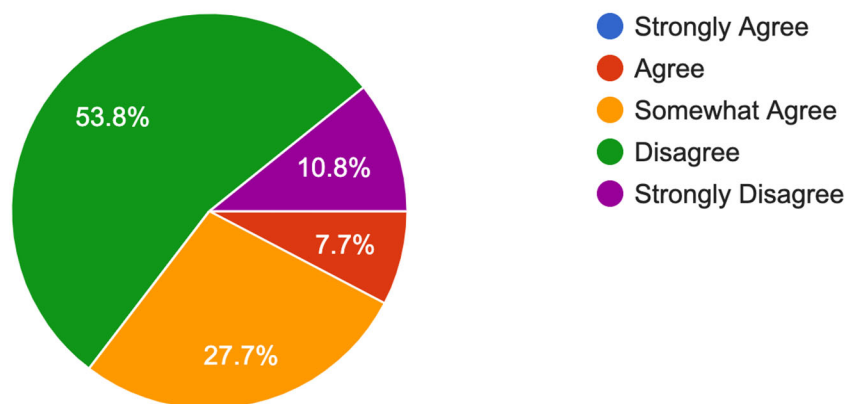
To assess the importance of education, I asked subjects to respond to the statement: "I believe that education is overblown." I predicted that since the subjects are unaware of their

participation in an educational panopticon, they would view education as an important part of their life.

Figure 23

I believe that education is overblown.

65 responses



I must reemphasize that subjects consist of students, staff and alumni from one university. Since the subject pool is centered around a university, subjects are inclined to disagree that education is overblown since they have invested years of their lives and substantial money into this system. Due to the facts listed above, I believe the data from this question is skewed. 64.6% of subjects disagree or strongly disagree that education is overblown. I suggest that this high percentage is due to subjects' personal experiences. Additionally, figure 21 revealed that subjects feel better equipped to challenge world view due to their education, thus creating a sense of power through knowledge. The panoptic runs off knowledge, and knowledge is collected through gaze, punishment and various other methods. Since education provides a feeling of power, it is no wonder that 64.6% of subjects view education in a positive light, they are conditioned to chase power to feel safe. In contrast, 35.4% of subjects do agree or somewhat

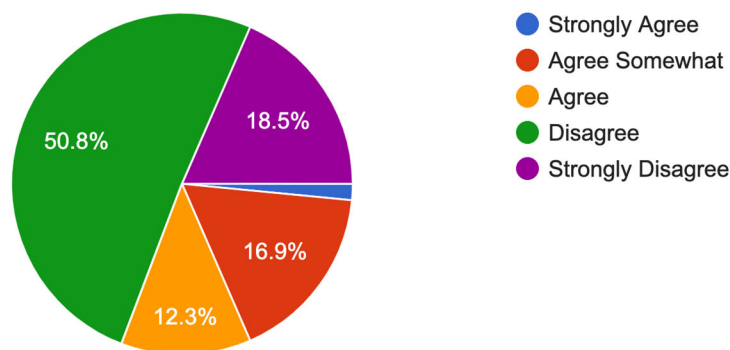
agree that education is overblown. The subjects that make up this significantly lower percentage may feel as though they have failed in education by either not producing enough (e.g., maintaining a certain GPA), or they may not have bought into the educational system as a whole. In education, students are either in classes or they are not, thus leaving little gray area for students to exist.

To incorporate the concept of virtual panopticism into the educational realm, I asked subjects if the quality of education was not affected negatively by online or technology means of transmission: Blackboard-style environments, Zoom, Google Meetings, etc. The answers are summarized in figure 24.

Figure 24

The quality of education is not affected negatively by online or technology means of transmission: Blackboard-style environments, Zoom, Google Meetings, etc.

65 responses



Teaching through technological platforms such as Zoom removes the extraneous non-panoptical elements in education. For example, classroom dynamics such as peer-to-peer friendship and professor mentorships are removed or greatly altered when education is taught strictly through technological platforms. Zoom, Google Meetings and Blackboard-style environments reveal

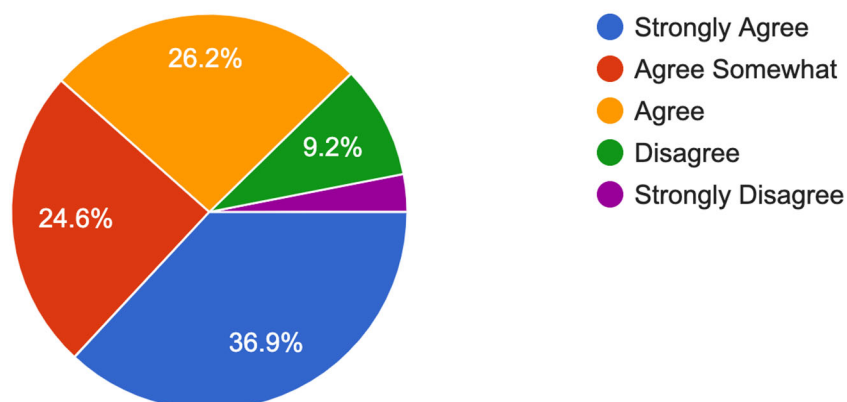
provide evidence that group socialization is limited through technology. Technology highlights the panoptic structures and removes non-panoptic structures such as relationships within the classroom, the fun stuff etc. 69.3% of subjects claim that the quality of education is affected by technological means of transition thus leading me to conclude that while virtual panopticism is not the preferred teaching method, subjects continue to accept it because the educational system is panoptical in nature (e.g. if you don't log on to zoom for class, you will be punished by receiving a bad grade.)

After assessing subjects whether subjects embrace or reject education centered on technological platforms, I desired to see if subjects felt similarly about integrating technology as a tool in education. I accomplished this idea by asking if the quality of education is enhanced by technological aids, and the results are summarized in figure 25.

Figure 25

The quality of education is enhanced by device programs such as Grammarly, Zotero, and Google.docs

65 responses



87.7% of subjects believe programs such as Grammarly, Zotero and Google. docs enhanced the quality of education. Based on this evidence I conclude that when technology can be utilized to

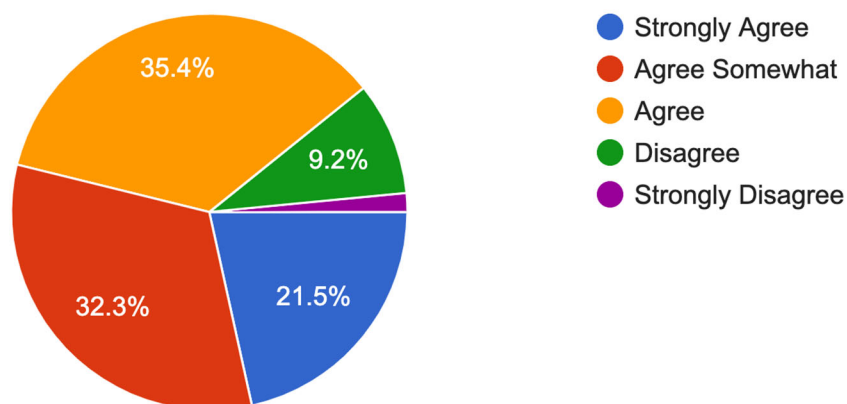
make a subject more productive, it is viewed in a positive light. These programs all assist students in their work. According to Foucault, people must produce in order to contribute to society. If education is run like a panopticon, then anything that aids students in producing will be viewed as a tool. The evidence recorded in figure 25 supports this claim.

Figure 24 and figure 25 show the splitting differences between education being taught from a technological platform source and education being enhanced by technology. The results revealed the necessity of human connection despite the panoptic structures at play. To examine the line between human connection and technology, I crafted the statement, “Human connection is still possible through platforms like Facetime, Skype, Zoom, Facebook and Instagram. While a small percentage disagreed with the statement, a large percentage revealed their unsureness (see figure 26).

Figure 26

Human connection is still possible through platforms like Facetime, Skype, Zoom, Facebook, and Instagram.

65 responses



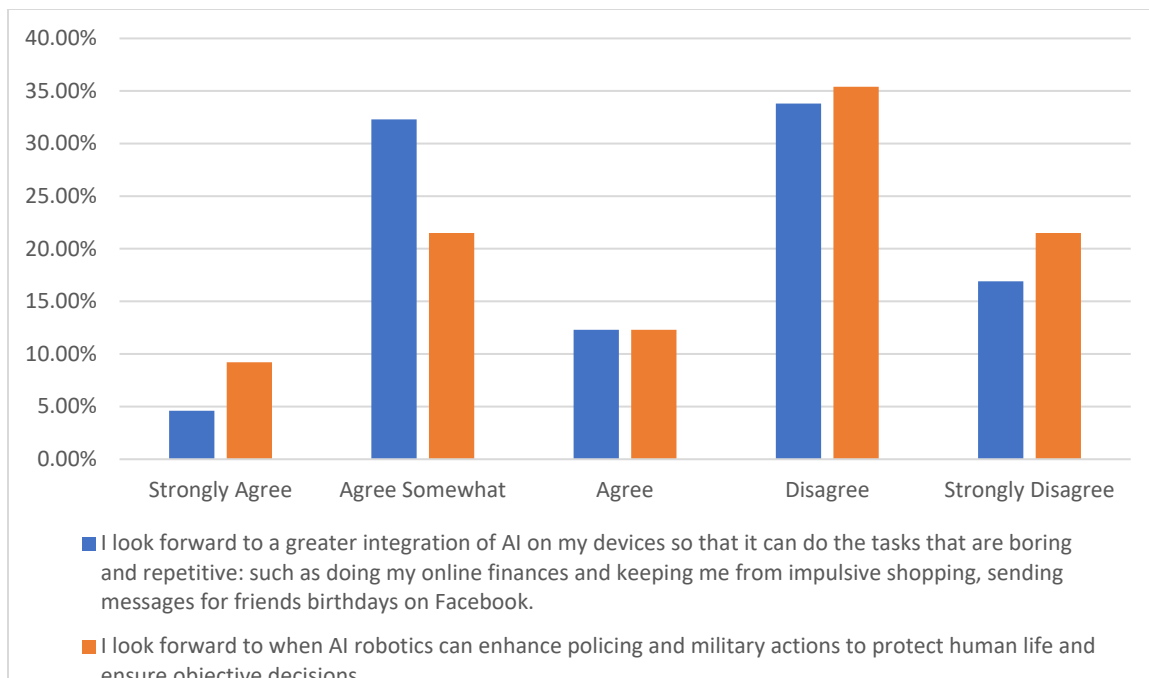
89.2% of subjects believe that human connection is possible through technological platforms.

However, defining the parameters of human connection through technological platforms is

difficult. For example, figures 24 and 25 reveal how conflicting technology can be in an educational setting. Based on the evidence throughout this chapter, larger social settings existing solely on technological platforms are enjoyed far less and result in worse educational quality. I argued that this evidence pointed to an important marker of virtual panopticism: isolation. However, the data in figure 26 shows that subjects feel a human connection is possible through technological platforms. I believe all these ideas can co-exist. Since there is no clear indication or research on how human connection translates through technology, the vagueness and abstractness allow the virtual panoptic to remain while creating a version of community in which users feel some type of human connection. I do not have the time or space to pinpoint the differences of human interaction in person and through technology, but a further study may reveal important details for this concept. The feeling of some sort of human interaction through technological platforms keeps users comfortable enough to remain in their cells while ultimately keeping the virtual panopticon alive. Like so much of social media, the virtual panopticon relies on individual's perceptions. Perceptions do not need facts or truth to be formed, thus allowing the virtual panopticon to operate in a vague space.

To conclude this survey, I explored how subjects felt about further integration of AI in both the mundane tasks of life and important task that require ethical decisions. Figure 27 records the responses.

Figure 27



Subjects “agreed somewhat” with the incorporation of AI into mundane tasks, however higher percentages of subjects disagreed and strongly disagreed with using AI in police and military fields. While previous statements in this chapter highlight the influence of technology on individuals’ thinking, this data demonstrates a lack of trust in technology. Subjects are more likely to accept the increase of AI in areas they deem less important. However, this familiarity in the mundane task may lead to further acceptance of more important tasks. Humans by nature resist that which is new, but the normalization of AI begins with small acceptances. Virtual panopticons need technological advancements normalized so that subjects/users/inmates will conform to a new normalized standard. This figure demonstrates the beginning phases of acceptance. Additionally, I must note that while a large percentage disagree with further integration of AI, subjects demonstrated greater acceptance of technology when the statement posed was less direct. Consider how passive subjects were when responding to literature and film, yet data suggests these areas of passivity are influencing theology, religion and subjects’

lives. Subjects are resistant to direct questions that grant technology the right to determine ethical and moral decisions yet subjects use technology to craft their own ideas of morality and ethics. Ultimately, subjects like the idea of maintaining control yet they do not wish to make all the decisions; the panoptic thrives when inmates feel confident in their power yet truly have none.

Overall Analysis

Subjects' responses to survey questions broken into the topics of religion, personal technology usage, literature and film and education revealed that virtual panopticism is prevalent in each of these areas. The effects of virtual panopticism influence the other sections, the effects of virtual panopticism are not compartmentalized.

Before identifying any further trends, I must reiterate the significance of distinguishing virtual panopticon from cyber panopticism. As I mentioned in the Introduction, the term cyber refers to "computer networks" in which users control and operate. The term virtual means "in essence or effect though not formally recognized or admitted." The term virtual best describes the current panopticons evolving with technology because these panopticons are present and effective although they are difficult to recognize and pinpoint. Virtual also suggests that users are not in control rather they are participating in something that they are not aware of and therefore they cannot control.

A prevalent trend that manifested through each of the four sections is a failure to recognize the impact of technology. Under the religion section, subjects failed to see the direct impact of social media and film on their theology despite statistical evidence that shows this happening. For example, subjects' political values and theology align despite glaring differences within Scripture and political statements. In education, subjects could identify a difference between using technology as a tool versus using technology as the main method of teaching.

However, subjects continued to compartmentalize their psychological and spiritual differences. Compartmentalization combined with an illusion of power birthed from knowledge propels panoptic ideas forward. Finally, in literature and film, subjects claim that they compartmentalize the information they gain from social media and literature and film, however, the data suggests that their theology and educational experiences rely heavily on what subject claim is merely entertainment. Conformity, the normalization of technological integrating and illusions of power manifest in each category. Each section intertwines with the others to the point that the subjects do not even recognize this.

The unawareness of the powers at work through virtual panopticism is concerning for two main reasons. First, subjects do not realize that they are supporting a system that imprisons themselves; moral and ethical boundaries do not exist within a virtual panopticon. Subjects need to be aware of how they are being treated, punished and sold. Second, those within the centralized tower, the power wielders, need to be held accountable for their inhumane actions. The virtual panopticon thrives off of ignorance and abstractness. Hidden under the cloak of unidentifiability, the virtual panopticon continues to gather strength as subjects remain unaware.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

By conducting a survey of 56 questions, I have evidence that supports the relevancy of the virtual panopticon. I found that although subjects claim to compartmentalize their lives in sections, in reality, the evidence suggests that technological integration cannot be compartmentalized. This misconception leads me to conclude that the power (and danger) of further technological integration will be embraced by users with open arms since they are operating under an illusion of power. I argue that the power of technology lies in granting users the idea of freedom without them truly having freedom.

The increase of technology is inevitable; however, new research aids individuals in understanding who is in control and how they can protect themselves from unethical manipulation. To best fight against technological manipulation, I suggest a change on both the individual and legislative levels.

Individuals can act against virtual panopticism by first learning about this structure. Identifying who controls the apps they engage with and demanding accountability by spreading awareness is a start. Individuals can also reclaim their power by taking breaks from technology, specifically, social media. I suggest taking one week off of social media a month to remind oneself how powerful and influential social media is in one's life. Individuals must protect themselves until legislation begins to set ethical parameters around technological developers and their content.

On a larger scale, I believe that legislation must be passed to prevent companies and developers from mentally manipulating users. I believe the delay in setting up better ethical boundaries in the realm of technology results from two main points. First virtual panopticism

exists in the shadows, it is unseen until someone specifically searches for it; and thus, this quality makes it difficult for people (including legislatures) to see and address. Second, technology is relatively new. We are dealing with things that have never been issues before due to rapid technological growth. I suspect that in the future, political leaders will begin to address technological mistreatment. However, I believe these issues will not make it into mainstream conversation and thought for many more years to come.

Any one of the four points addressed in the data analysis chapter provides an excellent foundation for further study. Additional sections dedicated solely to practical solutions to each issue raised throughout this thesis would bridge the gap between scholarship and practicality.

In conclusion, I have provided a general overview of how virtual panopticism is manifesting itself through religion, personal technology usage, literature and film and education. I provide evidence that points to the relevancy of virtual panopticism while considering the consequences of this structure.

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Appendix A

Initial Survey Contact Email

Hello everyone,

If you are reading this on a phone or laptop, then you are the exact person I need for my survey! My thesis focuses on the way human thinking is altered with the ever-increasing integration of technology in our everyday lives. (If you've seen the Social Dilemma, my research is focused on similar issues!) My work builds on Foucault's ideas of panopticism, discipline, and punishment.

My survey will take **15-20 minutes** to complete. Participation is completely voluntary, and the survey will close on **November 27th**.

If you have any questions, feel free to email me at eeeast@seu.edu.

Here's the link to my survey:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdhtnXiwj0JP1P-YtxhWEmn3iv14z6fMZfrNyM1mCfNvt2uig/viewform?usp=sf_link

Thank you so much!

-Emma East

Appendix B

Consent Form

You are invited to participate in a web-based online survey on nonlinear fiction preferences. This is a research project being conducted by Emma East, a student at Southeastern University. It should take approximately 10-20 minutes to complete.

PARTICIPATION

Your participation in this survey is voluntary. You may refuse to take part in the research or exit the survey at any time without penalty. You are free to decline to answer any particular question you do not wish to answer for any reason.

BENEFITS

If you are in Professor Dempster's classes, you may receive the benefits of reinforcing information that you have learned from this course. You will also receive extra credit for completing this survey.

RISKS

There are no foreseeable risks involved in participating in this study.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Your survey answers will be sent to a link in Google Forms where data will be stored in a password protected electronic format. Google Forms does not collect identifying information such as your name, email address, or IP address. Therefore, your responses will remain anonymous. No one will be able to identify you or your answers, and no one will know whether or not you participated in the study.

At the end of the survey, you may be asked if you are interested in participating in an additional interview [by phone, in person, or email]. If you choose to provide contact information such as

your phone number or email address, your survey responses may no longer be anonymous to the researcher. However, no names or identifying information would be included in any publications or presentations based on these data, and your responses to this survey will remain confidential.]

CONTACT

If you have questions at any time about the study or the procedures, you may contact my research supervisor, Professor Dempster via email at mmdempster@seu.edu.

If you feel you have not been treated according to the descriptions in this form, or that your rights as a participant in research have not been honored during the course of this project, or you have any questions, concerns, or complaints that you wish to address to someone other than the investigator, you may contact the Southeastern University Institutional Review Board by email at irb@seu.edu.

ELECTRONIC CONSENT: Please select your choice below. You may print a copy of this consent form for your records. Clicking on the “Agree” button indicates that

You have read the above information

You voluntarily agree to participate

You are 18 years of age or older

Agree

Disagree

Appendix C
Survey Questions

Participant Profile Questions:

1. Electronic Consent Form
2. Male or Female
3. Ethnicity
4. Age

Religious Beliefs

5. I think of my faith as which best descriptor of the following
 - A. Lived daily through meaningful practice
 - B. Lived each day to be aware of my sins and redeem them
 - C. Lived each day to stamp out sin where I see it around me
 - D. Casually attend church and have Christian friends
 - E. Somewhat am involved but do faith through career
 - F. Other _____

6. My conception of who Jesus--formed through reading the Bible, listening to sermons, discussing faith with family and friends, and/ or Christian media-- is that He forgives all sins.
Strongly Agree Agree Somewhat Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

7. When I have formed my conception of who God is through reading the Bible or hearing about God in sermons, discussions or media representations, I have concluded that He punishes all sins no matter what the sin is.

Strongly Agree Agree Somewhat Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

8. When I have formed my conception of who the Holy Spirit is through reading the Bible or hearing about The Holy Spirit in sermons, discussions or media representations, I have concluded that He empowers us to follow our moral convictions.

Strongly Agree Agree Somewhat Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

9. I need to pray for my country, family, friends and coworkers.

Strongly Agree Agree Somewhat Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

10. I need to be involved in direct leadership in my church to act on my Christian beliefs.

Strongly Agree Agree Somewhat Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

11. I need to tithe 10% to my church to feel that I'm enacting my church's mission and God's calling.

Strongly Agree Agree Somewhat Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

12. I financially and spiritually support missions work to share the Gospel to all nations.

Strongly Agree Agree Somewhat Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

13. I need to be involved in my community and/or volunteer to help my neighbors with their needs to materialize my Christian beliefs.

Strongly Agree Agree Somewhat Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

14. I need to be involved in my political party as a voice and/or volunteer to assure that my moral convictions are respected and acted upon.

Strongly Agree Agree Somewhat Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

15. I need to motivate others around me to be moral citizens by campaign signs/bumper stickers/window stickers.

Strongly Agree Agree Somewhat Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

16. I need to motivate others around me to be moral citizens by joining public protests.

Strongly Agree Agree Somewhat Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

17. I need to protect my community from others who might harm my neighbors and be ever-vigilant about criminal threats.

Strongly Agree Agree Somewhat Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

18. I need to make sure that family and friends who are duped by other political parties are converted to better ways of thinking.

Strongly Agree Agree Somewhat Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

19. I need to cut off ties to family and friends who cross the boundaries of Christian behavior and await the day that God will work to redeem them.

Strongly Agree Agree Somewhat Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

20. I need to be quiet and still and listen to opposing ideas and be assured that my friends and family are in a process of working out their own beliefs.

Strongly Agree Agree Somewhat Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

21. I believe that criminal activity should always be handled by the police.

Strongly Agree Agree Somewhat Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

22. I need to make sure to voice what is right in my community through social media.

Strongly Agree Agree Somewhat Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

Personal Technology Use

23. How long is the average time you spend on your phone?

- A. Half an hour or less
- B. B. 1-2 hours per day
- C. C. 3-5 hours per day
- D. D. 6 or more hours per day.

Do different types of technological communication---texting, DM'ing, calling, Facetime, Zoom, etc---hinder the intention of your message?

24. Texting

Always, Often, Sometimes, Infrequently, Never

25. DM'ing

Always, Often, Sometimes, Infrequently, Never

26. Calling

Always, Often, Sometimes, Infrequently, Never

27. Facetiming

Always, Often, Sometimes, Infrequently, Never

28. Zooming

Always, Often, Sometimes, Infrequently, Never

29. You trust electronic devices to do (check all that apply):

Online banking

Online shopping

Online learning

Online work

Online Last Will and testament creation

Storage of sensitive personal information

Storage of intimate communications

Storage of personal photos and videos

Storage of my taxes and financial information

Activation of my home appliances and environment maintenance

Security sweeps of my property

Navigation to destinations

Steering and braking controls

Driving the car while I rest

30. I don't like it when my electronic device (check all that apply):

Interprets my conversation because Siri thinks I'm searching for something

Shows me past searches through ads while I'm reading an article online

Predicts or suggests I search with certain terms or reply with certain words

Notifies me of news stories or social media stories

Automatically updates without my permission

Listens to my conversations and activates my home speaker

Offers me a coupon for a store while I'm driving near it

Tells me places that my friends are visiting

31. Provide a time that you experienced an emotional connection to a social media post.

Short Answer

Literature/Film

32. The role of film and literature is to demonstrate proper behavior and moral convictions so that readers learn to overcome life's challenges.

Strongly Agree Agree Somewhat Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

33. The role of film and literature is to entertain and distract people from their daily tensions

Strongly Agree Agree Somewhat Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

34. The role of film and literature is to awaken people to the wrongs of society and model ways to intervene for justice.

Strongly Agree Agree Somewhat Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

35. The role of film and literature is to deceive readers in believing that society can be changed for the good by individual actions.

Strongly Agree Agree Somewhat Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

36. The role of film and literature has been replaced by film, television and video games

Strongly Agree Agree Somewhat Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

37. When was the last time you found time to read a novel or book?

- A. Never
- B. B. Four years or less
- C. C. Two or less years ago
- D. D. Within this year

E. E. Within the past 6 months

38. When was the last time you found time to watch a play?

A. Never

B. Four years or less

C. Two or less years ago

D. Within this year

E. Within the past 6 months

39. When was the last time you found time to read a poem?

A. Never

B. B. Four years or less

C. C. Two or less years ago

D. D. Within this year

E. E. Within the past 6 months

40. When was the last time you found time to watch musical theater?

A. Never

B. Four years or less

C. Two or less years ago

D. Within this year

E. Within the past 6 months

41. When was the last time you found time to watch a movie?

- A. Four years or less
- B. Two or less years ago
- C. Within this year
- D. Within the past 6 months,
- E. Within the last month or more

42. I watch television---Netflix, Hulu, Disney +, Amazon Prime---how many hours per week?

- A. An hour or less
- B. 1-3 hours
- C. C. 3-5 hours
- D. D. 6-8 hours
- E. E. More than 8 hours

Education

43. Indicate your level of education that apply:

Completed Some K-12 Education and a GED

Completed K-12 Education

Completed AP courses

Completed AP courses that counted for college credit

Completed International Baccalaureate Degree

Completed a Professional Certificate

Completed Some Community College Units

Completed Community College Degree, AA

Completed up to 60 Unaccredited University Baccalaureate Credits

Completed an Unaccredited University Baccalaureate Degree

Completed up to 60 University Baccalaureate Credits

Completed University Baccalaureate Degree

Completed up to 15 Unaccredited University Master's Credits

Completed an Unaccredited University Master's Degree

Completed up to 15 University Master's Credits

Completed University Master's Degree

Completed up to 15 Unaccredited University Doctorate Credits

Completed an Unaccredited University Doctorate Degree

Completed up to 15 University Doctorate Credits

Completed University Doctorate Degree

44. I am happy about my level of education.

Strongly Agree Agree Somewhat Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

45. I am happy with the experience I had in the program

Strongly Agree Agree Somewhat Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

46. Because of my education, I feel better informed about challenges to world views

Strongly Agree Agree Somewhat Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

47. I feel psychologically transformed by my degree work

Strongly Agree Agree Somewhat Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

48. I feel spiritually transformed by my degree work

Strongly Agree Agree Somewhat Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

49. I believe that education is what one puts into it

Strongly Agree Agree Somewhat Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

50. I believe that education is overblown

Strongly Agree Agree Somewhat Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

51. Education is best when it performs the following (check all that apply)

- A. When education teaches and assesses basic skills: computation and reading and reasoning
- B. When education rewards good behavior in the learning process
- C. When education incorporates social studies in its curriculum: history, social studies, geography, and demography
- D. When education offers the inspiring stories of those who are successful: Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Edison, Guglielmo Marconi, Nichola Tesla, Alexander Graham Bell
- E. When education shows tough love to those who need to learn self-control
- F. When education offers hope for those who have been socially wronged: African-American, Latino, Asian, and Native American system racism

G. When education uses added value programs---STEM courses, Technology clubs, and FFA (agricultural)---to help students with future career paths

H. Uses classroom models to demonstrate ways to reduce, recycle, and reuse

52. The quality of education is not affected negatively by online or technology means of transmission: Blackboard-style environments, Zoom, Google Meetings,

Strongly Agree Agree Somewhat Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

53. The quality of education is enhanced by device programs such as Grammarly, Zotero, and Google.docs

Strongly Agree Agree Somewhat Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

54. The human connection is still possible through platforms like Facetime, Skype, Zoom, Facebook, and Instagram

Strongly Agree Agree Somewhat Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

55. I look forward to a greater integration of AI on my devices so that it can do the tasks that are boring and repetitive: such as doing my online finances and keeping me from impulsive shopping, sending out thoughtful messages for friends birthdays on Facebook, suggesting presents for friends or loved ones based on their Amazon wish lists.

Strongly Agree Agree Somewhat Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

56. I look forward to when AI robotics can enhance policing and military actions to protect human life and ensure objective decisions

Strongly Agree Agree Somewhat Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree