



The Representation of

Surveillance Society in Dystopian Novels and Contemporary Society

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Abstract

This thesis examines the representation of surveillance and totalitarian societies in the dystopian novels *1984* (1949), *A Scanner Darkly* (1977), and *The Circle* (2013), from three different decades throughout history. This representation will be investigated through the Power/Knowledge scheme as presented by Michel Foucault as well as Fredric Jameson's theory of The Political Unconscious. This thesis analyses the hegemonic ideologies imposed by totalitarian regimes as an attempt to create docile, conformed bodies that further allows the regime to sustain and maintain its power over society. Furthermore, the thesis analyses the correlation between the political and historical circumstances that not only played a prominent role at the time of the novels' publication, but also in contemporary society, which enters into the notion that dystopian novels often function as cautionary warnings. The findings of the analyses are thought-provoking when considering the parallels that exist in relation to contemporary surveillance societies and their application of technological devices through which the government interferes and limits the private life of its citizens. This is especially applicable to the global pandemic of COVID-19, where the notion of surveillance and its usability is greatly discussed. The conclusion to be drawn is that surveillance societies and totalitarian systems are utilised as a way to assert and maintain power over people.

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"Big Brother is watching you..."

Introduction

“Under observation, we act less free which means we effectively are less free.”

– Edward Snowden

In 2013 it was published that American whistle-blower Edward Snowden had leaked top-secret documents from the National Security Agency - N.S.A - that showed how the American government was spying on its citizens (MacAskill). Some of the things revealed, amongst other things, were that several telephone companies provided the N.S.A with their customers' phone records, and that the N.S.A held the right to request user data from companies such as Google, Microsoft, Facebook, and Apple. Moreover, it was further revealed that the American government did not spy on their own citizens only, but several world leaders and foreign governments were objects of surveillance as well. The extent of the surveillance performed by the N.S.A may have come as a shock to the world; however, the notion of government surveillance and implementation of control, power, and discipline are not a new trend known to society.

Nearly 70 years after the publication of the classic novel *1984* by English author George Orwell, the trends of surveillance, power, and control present in the story are still valid themes in today's society. Orwell was influenced in his writing by the totalitarian dystopian novel caused by a decade of political chaos. More precisely, Orwell's novel was rooted in a hatred to the totalitarian and political authority of Adolf Hitler and Joseph Stalin as well as the communist revolution in Russia and the fascist government in Spain (“1984: George Orwell's road to dystopia”). The novel functions as an overwhelming warning of things to come, if society lets things slide in regard to political and ideological warfare, therefore, the novel belongs to the dystopian genre of literature. Ultimately, it is not difficult to imagine Edward Snowden in the same position as the protagonist in *1984* working at the Ministry of Truth where the normality of things, such as the undisguised surveillance of mail and letters, hides the ominous truth of reality. This corresponds with Snowden's statement regarding the surveillance performed by the N.S.A of telephone calls, data, e-mails, and texts respectively: “The NSA specifically targets the communications of everyone. It ingests them by default.” (Sorkin). This plays perfectly with the fact that George Orwell has lent his name to a universal shorthand, the term ‘Orwellian’ which is utilised to describe a “political system in which a government tries to have complete control over people's behaviour and thoughts” (“Orwellian”). George Orwell



then has become the epitome of anything repressive and totalitarian by default.

This project originates from an interest in government surveillance and disciplinary power and how they affect societies. Therefore, this master thesis wishes to account for the representation of government surveillance within three selected dystopian works by applying the notion of power and knowledge established by French philosopher Michel Foucault. Moreover, Foucault's interpretation of English philosopher Jeremy Bentham's Panopticon will contribute to an understanding of surveillance and disciplinary measures, and how they combined execute power. Finally, in order to analyse the political, social, and historical aspects of the selected novels: *1984* by George Orwell (1949), *A Scanner Darkly* by Philip K. Dick (1977), and *The Circle* by Dave Eggers (2013), Fredric Jameson's theory on the Political Unconscious will be featured in order to reveal their underlying ideologies (Barry 160).

French philosopher Michel Foucault is best known for his work with the notion of power and its relationship with knowledge. Part of Foucault's occupation with power is to highlight the power struggles that have come to form the basis for human sciences and furthermore, how these have come to influence the modern subject. Foucault argues that discourse of knowledge throughout history is manifested as embodiments of power relations (Edgar et al. 265), and thus will be a large contribution for the upcoming project. Surveillance is arguably a politically and morally loaded activity which influences every aspect of the everyday lives of people. Jeremy Bentham devised in the 18th century a unique penitentiary model known as the Panopticon that aimed to achieve a one-way communication with the hopes of preventing or limiting violence and opposition to power (Bentham 1, 35).

Additionally, in order to account for the underlying foundations of the forces of power and discipline present within the literary works, it is relevant to plunge into the political, social, and historical events that spark the creation of a dystopian novel. This will be done through American Marxist-critic Fredric Jameson's theory on The Political Unconscious presented in *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act* (1981). As a political extension to his theory, Jameson asserts the priority of interpreting literary texts in light of their historical context, which will assist in the investigation of the contemporary social context from which the dystopian novel predicts the future.

The theories presented will thus enable us to answer the following thesis: *How is Michel Foucault's theory on panoptic surveillance, within the Power/Knowledge scheme, manifested/ apparent/asserted within the dystopian literary works from three different periods in time, and moreover how is the development of government surveillance evident in today's society.*

For the analysis, the narratives chosen for this project are *1984* (1949) by George Orwell, *A Scanner Darkly* (1977) by Philip K. Dick, and *The Circle* (2013) by Dave Eggers. The time span between the three novels will contribute to map out not only dystopian genre instances



(or deviances) but will also enable us to establish which contextual issues lurk beneath the surface in the individual literary work.

The choice of George Orwell's novel is motivated by the fact that it is today considered a classic example of dystopian (and political) fiction, centring on the consequences of totalitarianism, government surveillance and repressive forces within society. Therefore, this literary work is deemed a fine example of dystopian fiction and will further function as a point of departure within the investigation of the development of not only dystopian fiction, but also the development within the representation of government surveillance.

Nearly thirty years later, Philip K. Dick published his semi-autobiographical dystopia *A Scanner Darkly*, with its centre of attention on a drug-misuse epidemic within a highly intrusive police surveillance. The choice fell on Dick's dystopia due to its ideal temporal location, as analysing two novels nearly sixty years apart leaves a great temporal gap that we wished to minimise. Therefore, the choice of *A Scanner Darkly* is founded on the desire to gain insight and to delve into the political, social, and cultural problematics during the 1970s.

Finally, this project will include the totalitarian dystopian novel *The Circle* by American author Dave Eggers, the most recent of the three works, being published in 2013. Therefore, the novel arguably represents some of the cultural and social problems of contemporary society in the Digital Age.

Ultimately, the project seeks to provide a contemporary discussion of the use and need for surveillance in society, and further which effect this has on the people involved. Does surveillance contribute to more freedom and safety in society or is it simply another way for the government to maintain control and power over the population and their contact with the outside world? In relation to this problem, the discussion will throw light on the utilisation of surveillance and power in the management of the global pandemic caused by COVID-19. More precisely, how privacy is compromised for the benefit of the public health and prevention of further spreading of the disease. The project seeks to investigate whether contemporary society is inching towards an Orwellian society that monitors and controls the freedom and behaviour of its citizens through repressive technology.



The Dystopian Genre in Literature

According to the Oxford dictionary, the term 'dystopia' refers to "an imaginary place or state in which everything is extremely bad or unpleasant" ("Dystopia"). The Hungarian author Erika Gottlieb, in her literary work *Dystopian Fiction East and West*, accounts for the understanding of dystopia through the notion of salvation and damnation; "In the modern scenario salvation is represented as a just society governed by worthy representatives chosen by an enlightened people; damnation, by an unjust society, a degraded mob ruled by a power-crazed elite" (Gottlieb 3). The former describes a utopia, an earthly or heavenly paradise. The latter describes a dystopia, a dictatorship of hell on earth, "the worst of all possible worlds" (Gottlieb 3).

This project will utilise the definition of utopia meaning an imagined heavenly paradise where everything is perfect, and dystopia meaning a dictatorship of hell on earth where everything is extremely bad or unpleasant. Furthermore, this project will use the term dystopia as encompassing both the negative utopia and the anti-utopia. This will be done on the basis that a compiled understanding of the dystopian genre creates the comprehension that dystopia should be regarded as both a cautionary tale and warning of contemporary real-world problems, as well as a warning against the consequences and outcome of a utopian project.

The understanding of dystopia arose as an evolution from a post-Christian genre where the central drama was concerned with faith as a conflict between damnation and salvation by deity. However, in our existing modern secular age, the drama has shifted to a conflict focusing on the salvation or damnation of humanity by society in the historical arena (Gottlieb 3). According to American-Irish academic, literary, and cultural critic Tom Moylan, the real-world roots of dystopian fiction are "[...] largely the product of the terrors of the twentieth century... [such as] exploitation, repression, state violence, war, genocide, disease... and the steady depletion of humanity through the buying and selling of everyday life." (qtd. in Booker 3). Keeping this in mind, dystopian fiction is arguably defined as a subgenre of science fiction that utilises a negative portrayal of an alternative society as a way to generate a new judgment of real-world societies (Booker 5; Claeys 136). More precisely, according to American professor Keith Booker, for a work to be deemed dystopian, it needs to foreground the oppressive society in which it is set as a way to critique another society, typically that of either the reader or the author. In other words, the reader should transfer the critique of the bleak dystopian world described to that of their own (Booker 5). Dystopian literature



grew more dominant in the 20th century, seeing as utopian literature became problematic as a result of the rise of political and social problems in society. Embodied in the literature of the societal and political crises was the phenomenon of modernism (Booker 2). The three philosophers and great thinkers Karl Marx, Friedrich Nietzsche, and Sigmund Freud together created the intellectual background to modernism by “all in their own ways [introducing] exciting ideas that could be used to envision brave new worlds of the future, while at the same time providing warnings that the future might in fact be dark indeed.” (Booker *Dystopia* 2). More precisely, there existed an increasing concern that modernity would lead, not to utopian dreams, but rather dystopian nightmares (Booker *Dystopia* 4). Dystopian literature then, is arguably utilised as a way to discursively construct and critique real-world problems by “placing them within the defamiliarizing context of an extreme fictional society.” (Booker et al. 65).

A common description of the dystopian fiction is that of cautionary tales, most often present in children’s literature which illustrates foolish and naughty characters with vices such as stubbornness, laziness, and curiosity and their trials and punishments as they disobey parental or societal authority (Joosen). Cautionary tales are arguably utilised as a method to form and achieve docile and obedient children; however, cautionary tales can also be applied to the notion of dystopias, seeing as dystopias at their core do not solely concern themselves with a particular government or technology, but rather the very idea that humanity can be formed and moulded into a fitting entity. More precisely, it can be said that dystopian literature is employed as a way to exaggerate existing societal problems and further illustrate an opposition to, amongst other things, social control, surveillance, punishment, and power relations that contradict individual desires. The common trend in dystopian literature is the notion that social control and power ultimately have the upper hand and seek to uphold and regulate behaviour, imagination, thought, and desires, which allow for limited individualism. This control and power are generated through official institutions such as the government, schools, churches, the police, etc. (Booker et al. 65).

Dystopian literature can arguably be regarded as “strategies of warning” that force its readers to acknowledge what the future may hold for generations to come if the flaws in our own society are not eradicated (Gottlieb 4). Gottlieb further argues that dystopian literature projects the fear residing in its writers: That the society depicted in their works could become reality if such flaws are not unmasked – namely a totalitarian dictatorship as experienced in the historical reality of Eastern and Central Europe and the USSR respectively (Gottlieb 7).



Gottlieb's Seven Dystopian Characteristics

By examining different representative works of dystopian literature (Huxley's *Brave New World*, Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451*, Vonnegut's *Player Piano*, and Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale*) (Gottlieb 7), Gottlieb has assembled an overview of a number of characteristics that present themselves in dystopian novels.

The first characteristic that is presented in *Dystopian Fiction East and West* is the “push and pull between utopian and dystopian perspectives”. What this means is that within the created world of a dystopia, there is an existence of a dream or abused promise of a utopian future. More precisely, what was dreamed or imagined as a utopia ended up as a fascist utopia with little appeal and grave consequences for humanity, seeing as a utopia was designed “exclusively for a master race but also a dream envisaging the elimination or domination of “inferior races” – the larger portion of humanity” (Gottlieb 8).

The second characteristic occurring in the six literary works is the concept that the protagonists have to endure and overcome a trial of a certain character. The trial illustrates the conflict that exists between “the elite's original utopian promise to establish a just, lawful society and its subsequent deliberate miscarriage of justice, its conspiracy against its own people.” (Gottlieb 10). This is exactly what the protagonists experience during their respective trials, and as a consequence the protagonists will unfailingly experience harsh punishment (Gottlieb 10). According to Gottlieb, the experience of a trial is thematically and symbolically a typical characteristic of the dystopian genre, as this allows the reader to acknowledge and assign the protagonists values such as consciousness, memory, loyalty, and selfhood - privileges that the protagonists are missing out on (Gottlieb 10). Gottlieb's characteristic regarding the protagonists having to overcome a trial of some sort corresponds with Keith Booker's notion that dystopias often portray the protagonists embarking on a voyage where they undoubtedly will be exposed to certain trials and challenges (Booker 38). Booker further specifies that the protagonist is frequently depicted as a misfit or political maverick, a character who “feels or learns to feel out of place and at odds with the generally accepted norm and values of the dystopian society.” (Booker 38). This reinforces the reader's connection to and acknowledgement of the protagonist, either through a sense of compassion or identification.

The third characteristic plays into the trial aspect of the dystopian genre, namely the nightmare vision where the protagonists realise that the dystopian society functions as a “primitive state religion that practices the ritual of human sacrifice” to obtain the elitist utopia (Gottlieb 11) rather than the rule of justice and civilised law. Moreover, despite an often highly advanced technology in dystopian worlds, there is often a regression to barbarism that is



revealed to the reader, which reinforces the nightmare vision of the dystopian genre. Gottlieb accounts for this characteristic as a *collective nightmare* where the protagonists experience a sense of loss in regard to control over their destiny and furthermore fall victim to suprahuman and atrocious forces (Gottlieb 11).

The fourth characteristic that presents itself and plays into the dystopian genre is the elimination and/or domination of the individual's privacy, feelings, family, thoughts, emotions, and sexuality (Gottlieb 11). The intention of limiting the individual is arguably to "enforce not only uncritical obedience to the state but also a quasi-religious worship of the state ideology" (Gottlieb 12). Ultimately, what was once associated solely with the individual's private world has now come under punitive control of the state/government and has been made accessible to public authorities. By limiting the privacy of individuals, the dictatorship is successful in destroying the "very core of the individual mind and personality – what remains is the pliable, numb consciousness of massman" (Gottlieb 12). Gottlieb explains that according to authors Zamiatin, Huxley, and Orwell, people should be wary about accepting such a process in society, seeing as it could potentially become an irreversible and effective reality world-wide.

The fifth characteristic evident in the dystopian genre is the need or pursuit of history, which is obtained by the protagonists by recording the past as a way of differentiating between things such as lies and truths and cause and effect (Gottlieb 12). This recording of the past can be performed either through obtaining books from the past, such as the Bible, or by keeping a diary, and by doing so, the protagonist seeks to destroy and rid the dictatorship of the isolation that has been enforced by the respective governments. This characteristic of recording the past is, according to Gottlieb, an important aspect that the dystopian authors are attempting to convey, namely that it is vital to the mental health of society to know one's history (Gottlieb 12).

The sixth characteristic that Gottlieb accounts for is the notion that the dystopian world exists as a "no-man's land between satire and tragedy". More precisely, this characteristic refers to the personal and tragic fate of the protagonist and the personal loss of a beloved, freedom, individuality, and/or privacy that exist within the strategies of political satire, and where the novel simultaneously condemns the societal issues and the fear of any consequences that may follow (Gottlieb 13). The no-man's land between satire and tragedy forces the reader to reconsider the security of our own humanity, seeing as it questions the actions and aberrations of society that we need to be aware of if we are to prevent such a reality (Gottlieb 14). Therefore, the characteristic of satire and tragedy in the dystopian genre functions primarily as a social, political, and historical message regarding society, not the universe as a whole (Gottlieb 15). Keith Booker further specifies that "the very motivation behind dystopian fiction is often an attempt to provide satirical, cautionary warnings that might help us to prevent the undesirable



events depicted in the fictions.” (Booker vii).

The seventh, and perhaps most important, characteristic of the dystopian genre is “[t]he protagonist’s window on the past: two time-planes”, which refers to the importance of a truthful approach to history (Gottlieb 15). Worth noting, however, is the fact that the history or fictional world in which the protagonist lives is different from the one the reader lives in. According to Gottlieb, the fictional world of the protagonist should rather be regarded as “a hypothetical future”, and as a result, the two time-planes are connected in a “cause-effect relationship” (Gottlieb 15). What this means is arguably that the novels create a “window on history”, more precisely, the past in the dystopian genre is arguably a representation of the reader’s present, which underlines the contrast and reality of the two planes. The dystopian author can be said to call attention to certain trends that are deemed threatening to society and humanity if these trends are not criticised or fought. (Gottlieb 15). Implicitly, this characteristic functions as a strategy of warning or as a cautionary tale in its way of exaggerating societal issues as previously mentioned.

According to Keith Booker, another recurring feature or characteristic of dystopian literature is the role and condition of women, more specifically the passivity and/or silence of female characters. Booker elaborates that women in general appear more indifferent or even content with the respective restrictions imposed on individual freedom as well as society as a whole. If women were to rebel against such restrictions or control, they would act and do so irrationally (Booker 39). This may be a result of most dystopian literature being written by male authors until the 1970s and 1980s, where female authors became a regularity to some degree.

Another, and perhaps final, characteristic of the dystopian genre is that the novels invariably conclude with a victory of the totalitarian society over the individual, and if hope or freedom is maintained, this is only possible outside the story. According to professor Rafaella Baccolini: “It is only if we consider dystopia as a warning, that we as readers can hope to escape such a pessimistic future.” (qtd. in Booker 39). It is generally conceded that the notion of dystopia becomes the predominant expression of the notion of utopia, seeing as it mirrors the enormous failures of totalitarian collectivism. The term totalitarianism was not a common term used in the English language until after the Second World War; at this point in time, the term achieved a negative connotation in the sense that sociologically and politically minded critics regarded totalitarianism as a dangerous phenomenon engrossed by evil and thereby opposed to independence and freedom (Kamenka 821). More precisely, totalitarianism refers to a systematic ‘total’ control over society, a politicisation of all aspects of everyday life, where the individual is under extreme subordination of the government (Holmes 448). Some distinguishable factors of totalitarianism that separate it from other political systems



are the importance of the ideology that strives for a perfect final state of humankind, the positive connotation and role of propaganda, the exclusionary and arbitrary identification of minority groups that are deemed enemies of the government/system, the utilisation of terror as a means of physical and psychological control, and the putatively charismatic leader of the totalitarian system (Holmes 448; Kamenka 824). Ultimately, the key aspects of totalitarianism can be summed up as “the desire for complete control over the hearts and bodies, minds and souls, of the citizens of the nation.” (Booker 119). Keeping this in mind, totalitarianism, and other political systems, play a central part in the dystopian genre, seeing as the regimes are utilised as a way to portray and critique oppressive societies generating as previously mentioned contemplations of problems within real-world societies and strategies of warning.

To summarise, the dystopian genre educates and forces its readers to reconsider the social and political trends that exist in today’s society by illustrating a fictional and nightmarish future that may well become reality if actions are not taken to prevent such an outcome. The dystopian genre furthermore assists in examining the fears of its readers: trends that may seem fictional yet realistic. More precisely, dystopian novels function as a way to critique contemporary society and assert a desire for change in its readers. Moreover, dystopian literature forces its readers to rethink their imagined perfect world, and what it would take to not only achieve, but also uphold such an idea. Ultimately the take-away of the dystopian genre is arguably that humanity is not an entity that can be moulded into an exact shape or form (Claeys 141).



Michel Foucault

Power and Knowledge

“There is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations”

– Michel Foucault

This initial quote provides a key insight to Foucault’s work: human knowledge is locked in an intimate relationship with power. Michel Foucault’s understanding of power and knowledge is crucial for this upcoming thesis, as it represents an inevitable and recurring part of Foucault’s authorship. This master thesis’ employment of Foucault’s notion of power is founded in the re-conceptualisation of the classical political sciences’ substantial understanding of power. Rather than viewing power as a resource linked to certain operations, Foucault wishes to reject the idea of individuals in power, and in doing so take away the external centre that makes up a stable point of reference within the understanding of power. In opposition to the centralised and repressive specifications concerning power, Foucault instead emphasises the productive forces of power. Power must therefore not be reduced to a negating repression of freedom and subjectivity but should instead be viewed as a productive force to which the individual, and its recognition hereof, surrenders itself.

Foucault’s decentralisation of power opens for a study of the social functions of power, including the subjectifying impact that constitute a central element in Foucault’s extensive analyses concerning the moulding of the individual. The starting point for this master thesis’ use of Foucault’s definition of power is therefore not founded on how certain individuals rule over others. Rather, the use of the term in the upcoming analysis is founded on the wish to uncover how power transforms individuals into specific subjects that the individuals are expected to identify as. Therefore, knowledge and truth also become vital and central terms, as they, according to Foucault, constitute essential components within the power and knowledge-regime which articulate the premises for individuals’ unfolding within society. Therefore, the productive elements of power cannot be isolated from society’s restrictive forms of knowledge. Instead, knowledge should be viewed in relation to a discursive practice of historical variable conditions, in relation to which Foucault is often critiqued for the rationalising immunisation



of power and truth from the world it exists within (Edgar et al. 265).

Despite a tendency to think of knowledge, particularly scientific knowledge, as operating outside of the more value-driven realm of political, social, and economic power relations, Foucault argues that the two are inextricably linked. Foucault's conception of power is rarely a matter of representative politics, the state, or the economy, but instead tends to be a question of the possibilities for self-empowerment. In one of his final works, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews & Other Writings 1972-1977*, which consists of a set of essays and interviews, Foucault expounds on the conclusions of his investigations of various social institutions such as prisons, schools, hospitals, families, "and other organised forms of social life" providing an understanding of the social control of the body and the mind (Foucault *Power/Knowledge*. Review excerpt on book cover). Foucault's interest focuses on how certain ideas of the world, and human beings for that matter, have come to dominate certain historical periods, and how such conceptions over time have come to appear natural and true. Most of Foucault's work is founded on historical analyses which seek to critically investigate the knowledge upon which society is built, for as Foucault claims, present-day knowledge is not a result of the temporary culmination-point in a progressive process of unveiling the truth of the world. Rather, present-day knowledge is merely a result of certain interpretations carried out through history, which have come to be dominating factors of society (Dreyfus et al. XVIII). In order to explain the production of knowledge and meaning within social systems, Foucault adopts the term "discourse", which is the entity that produces "practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak" (Foucault *The Archeology* 49). Foucault further explains that the discursive logic is related to the broader episteme, which is the structure of knowledge of a historical period, through which the logic emerges (Adams). In other words, discourse is a way of organising knowledge and thereby structuring the establishment of social relations through the discursive logic and the acceptance of said discourse as a fact (Adams).

As stated above, knowledge is not universal, but historically and contextually bound, and through his work, Foucault attempts to illustrate how even the most fundamental practices have a historical connection and are therefore also changeable:

[...] recourse to history [...] is meaningful to the extent that history serves to show how that-which-is has not always been; i.e., that the things which seem most evident to us are always formed in the confluence of encounters and chances, during the course of a precarious and fragile history [...] It means that they reside on a base of human practice and human history: and that since these things have been made, they can be unmade, as long as we know how it was that they were made. (Foucault *Politics* 37)



In order to comprehend Foucault's work, it is important to familiarise oneself with his applied methods introduced in his works. The political and social changes during the 1960s and 1970s had a major impact on Foucault, and he developed a method in order to look at the *causes* of the transition from one way of thinking to another throughout history, namely genealogy, which was introduced in his work *Discipline and Punish* (1977). At this point, Foucault becomes more interested in combining historical and philosophical analysis and thus creates a way of thinking about "the history of the present" (Mills 25). According to Sara Mills in her work companion to Foucault's original texts, *Michel Foucault* (2005), Foucault's turn to history has to some extent been criticised by historians for his cavalier use of historical records. However, the main aim of Foucault's work lies not within the wish to provide an explanatory framework for events of the past. Foucault's way of using historical methods is to analyse the development of academic disciplines and "to show the triumphalism of their accounts of their own history" (Mills 23). Genealogy thus assists in the investigation of power relations, which inform discourse practice. The aim of genealogy is to uncover the truth about the human body and the consequences these truths carry with them. Just as with power and knowledge, Foucault believes that the individual subject is a historical and cultural product in relation to which lies the rejection of the idea of a universal and ahistorical subject. According to Foucault, the bodies of the individuals within particular contexts are subjected to particular discursive frameworks, and can therefore not be regarded as stable and natural:

The individual is not to be conceived as a sort of elementary nucleus [...] on which power comes to fasten or against which it happens to strike, and in doing so subdues or crushes the individual. In fact, it is already one of the prime effects of power that certain bodies, certain gestures, certain discourses, certain desires, come to be identified and constituted as individuals. The individual [...] is, I believe, one of its prime effects. [...] The individual which power has constituted is at the same time its vehicle. (Foucault *Power/Knowledge* 98)

Rather than seeing individuals as steady entities, Foucault is interested in uncovering the discursive processes within which they are constituted. In light of this, it is important to emphasise that the centre of Foucault's work relies much more on the body in preference to the individual, which is considered to be an effect rather than an essence. Sara Mills argues that to Foucault, the body should be viewed as "an historically and culturally specific entity' [...] one which is viewed, treated and indeed experienced differently depending on the social context and historical period" (Mills 83). In relation to the claim that the body is forever subject to change, Foucault introduces the term 'bio-power' in which the body is approached



as an object that can be manipulated and controlled. In the objectification of the body, Paul Rabinow argues that a set of procedures is developed to conjoin the forces of knowledge and power, and thus create what Foucault refers to as ‘disciplinary technologies’, tools used to forge a “docile body that may be subjected, used, transformed and improved” (qtd. In Rabinow 17). This will further be discussed in the section “Discipline, Punish, and Surveillance”. Foucault elaborately attempts to illustrate that something as essential as the physical body, emotions, and instincts are in reality subjected to discursive processes. Through his historical analysis of madness, sickness, crime, and sexuality respectively, Foucault has been able to illustrate that the body, which at first seems to be all natural, actually makes up for nothing more than historical regulations enacted by the authorities.

Truth

In the interview “Truth and Power” from 1979, Foucault states that like knowledge, truth is not an abstract entity but “a thing of this world” that is produced by multiple constraints, techniques, and selected authorities inducing at the end the effects of power (Foucault *Power/Knowledge* 131). According to Foucault, every society has its own ‘régime of truth’, which consists of a set of practices whose function it is to enable individuals to distinguish between true and false statements (Foucault *Power/Knowledge* 131). It is such statements that underpin what is taken to be ‘common-sense knowledge’ within a society and thus accepted by society, and these statements are then distinguished from false statements by a range of different practices (Mills 74)¹. In *Truth and Power*, Foucault claims that his analyses take their point of departure in uncovering “what *governs* statements, and the way in which they *govern* each other so as to constitute a set of prohibitions which are scientifically acceptable, and hence capable of being verified or falsified by scientific procedures” (Foucault *Power/Knowledge* 112). Foucault’s interest is not founded on the liberation of truth from every system of power within the social, economic, and cultural forms of hegemony, as this, according to Foucault, is an impossible task because of the intricate connection that connects truth and power. Rather, his interest originates in detaching the power of truth in order to assert that truth is constructed and maintained through a wide range of strategies supporting and affirming the truth, but at the same time excluding alternative versions of events (Mills 75).

The primary focus of Foucault’s historical analyses lies within the period from the

¹ It is important to clarify that Foucault’s concern is not founded on setting up the notion of truth in opposition to false ideas, but simply analysing the procedures used to maintain these distinctions.



late eighteenth century to the mid-nineteenth century, a period that experienced major development within the medical sciences, in which 'Man' became the main object of knowledge. Here, Foucault is able to show how examination and dissection of the human corpse led to the beginning of medical knowledge about the processes of the living body (Mills 105). His interests lie especially in what enables certain things to be thought and said, and finally in analysing the impersonal discursive processes at work rather than the way individuals adjust themselves within discourse (106). This is a recurring theme within Foucault's work, namely that the 'truths' that sciences create also mean the *subjectification* of 'Man'. Within social sciences, the individual is directed by a range of practices and techniques that inevitably binds it to a certain identity and self-understanding. Foucault defines this formation of the individual as 'subjectification'. Related to Foucault's assumption that knowledge and the subject are constructed, one could also argue that 'subjectification' is a submission of the individual. To clarify, individual's assumption about who they are is also fundamentally connected to a certain knowledge that cannot be founded within a definite truth, essence, or identity, but merely proves to be a result of certain interpretations, then it suddenly becomes possible to problematize, or even change, those interpretations that are defined as true. Foucault's analysis aims to redirect the given understanding of the individual and the identity as natural. Rather, he urges the reader to consider the specificity of this focus on the individual, determined by the particular set of discursive structures which make the individual seem self-evident (Mills 107). The discursive structures are constituted through the above-mentioned 'regimes of truth', which make up for the accepted knowledge established in society. When discussing the notion of truth, it is important to bear in mind that truth is linked and intertwined with systems of power, which produce and sustain the truth:

[T]ruth isn't outside power, or lacking in power [...] truth isn't the reward of free spirits [...] nor the privilege of those who have succeeded in liberating themselves. Truth is a thing of this world: it is produced only by virtue of multiple forms of constraint. And it includes regular effects of power. (Foucault *Power/Knowledge* 131)

In other words, truth and power exist co-dependently, and one cannot be constituted without the other.

In opposition to most other analysts, Foucault attempts to distance himself from the notion of *economic* understanding of power, in that his analysis of social forces has been without assuming that ownership and property of capital are the most important elements (Mills 4). Truth is not a notion that stands above and independently of power. Rather, it



induces regular effects of power “in the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true” (Foucault *Power/Knowledge* 131). To Foucault, power is not something that can be possessed, owned, exchanged, lost, or conquered, but something that is practiced in a network of relations in constant battle. The relations Foucault speaks of include relations found in a variety of institutions among others the relations between teachers and students, parents and children, psychiatrists and clients, judges and criminals, men and women, etc., which all follow certain strategies and purposes. Though power is meant to be practiced through certain purposes, and even though individuals make decisions and follow certain strategies, power is not supposed to subtract into the form of certain privileged individuals or institutions, in which power penetrates from above and down through society (Foucault *The History* 85). Nor does this indicate that the strategies in question are coordinated by certain individuals or groups. Rather, power is found within silent and almost anonymous strategies that are forged over time and practiced in a variety of institutions, whether be it in the classroom, the hospital, the prison etc., in which they function as support to the superior power balance that runs through society (Foucault *The History* 85). Therefore, power is neither a structure, nor an institution, and it is not endowed to chosen individuals to possess.

Power, Foucault states, comes from everywhere and is produced from one moment to another; “it is the name that one attributes to a complex strategic situation in a particular society” (Foucault *The History* 93). In relation to this statement, Foucault asserts that, when analysing power, one must be careful not to attempt some kind of deduction analysis, focusing on power from its centre or point of emergence or in relation to its practitioner. Instead, Foucault suggests the attempt to make an *ascending* analysis of power, focusing on *how* power is practiced and to investigate the mechanisms that are at play, and finally account for which effects power entails (Foucault *Power/Knowledge* 99). Foucault rejects the idea that he is attempting to create a theory of power and insists that his work moves towards an analysis of power (Foucault *The History* 82), in which the definitions of power relations and instruments for the analysis will be provided. However, in order for the analysis of power to be constituted, Foucault asserts that it must free itself completely from a certain representation of power which he refers to as “juridico-discursive” within which lies the fundamental understanding of power (Foucault *The History* 82). This representation of power is rooted in the history of the West that essentially sees power as a negative constraint. Power is viewed as something external in relation to the object it represses (83). In *History of Sexuality: Volume 1* Foucault presents his analysis as a discussion of the history of sexuality in order to highlight the relationship between repression, power, knowledge, and sex. Foucault directs a critique against the juridico-discursive conception of power that underlies the repressive hypothesis and the idea that the theory of the law constitutes desire (Foucault *The History* 82). Moreover,



Foucault remarks that both power and sexuality rely on a common representation of power as always being incapable of invention, producing, and one that only “operates according to the simple and endlessly reproduced mechanisms of law, taboo, and censorship” (Foucault *The History* 84). To Foucault, power’s incapability of doing anything other than rendering what it dominates becomes the paradox of its effectiveness. Foucault’s point is, then, that the political conception of power is shaped by the idea that it is centred on nothing more than the statement of the law and operation of taboos. Foucault wishes to direct a critique of the juridico-discursive conception of power and therefore provides power in a wider context than that of law. This will ultimately achieve a wider understanding of the conception of power and provide a multiplicity of its nature. Foucault’s refusal of the assumption that power is essentially repressive, is rooted in the traces of the origin of social order and social change that has occurred throughout periods of history. As he claims in *The History of Sexuality*, “Where there is power, there is resistance, and yet, or rather consequently, this resistance is never in a position of exteriority in relation to power” (Foucault *The History* 95). According to Foucault, power is constituted by a continuous tension between forces of powers and resistance. Primarily, he refers to resistance within the social structure as a “anti-authority struggle[...]” in which resistance is founded on the struggle with power’s effect on people (Foucault *The Subject* 780). Ultimately, resistance emerges within the opposition of subjection, which holds a determination of reconfiguring power relations and their oppressive institutions and practices (Pollard).

Returning to the notion of the negative understanding of power, it is too narrow according to Foucault, as it prevents people from comprehending the mechanisms of power within temporary society. Therefore, he urges people to cease the temptation to describe power in negative terms: excluding, repressing, censoring, concealing (Foucault *Discipline* 194). Rather, he states one of his main ideas, namely that “power produces; it produces reality; it produces domains of objects and rituals of truth. The individual and the knowledge that may be gained of him belong to this production” (Foucault *Discipline* 194). For Foucault, the production of power contains truth and knowledge created by ‘man’. This is why Foucault urges to leave behind the traditional idea that allows one to think that knowledge exists only in the absence of power and can only develop outside of power’s injunction (Foucault *Discipline* 27). Power and knowledge imply one another, and therefore it makes no sense to talk about power relations without the correlated institution of knowledge. At the same time, one cannot discuss truth in the absence of power, because power produces truth of not only an understanding of the world, but also an understanding of the selves. Therefore: Truth is not a way of liberating oneself of power, because truth is the tool and result of power.

At the same time, Foucault stresses that the “the object of knowledge”, being the real



‘man’, has not been replaced with the soul. “The soul”, Foucault claims, “is the effect and instrument of a political anatomy; the soul is the prison of the body” (Foucault *Discipline* 30). When Foucault discusses the individual as being subjected, it is not in relation to the underlying soul or the authentic self that needs liberation from power’s repressive grip. The soul, the subject, consciousness, etc. are to Foucault one and the same object and remedy for the instances of power. When discussing Foucault, power is not something that represses subjects, but rather something that produces repressive subjectivity. In his analyses, Foucault explores multiple examples of the problematic issue of objectification/subjectification of individuals and power’s productive aspect, which contains a critique of what Foucault refers to as repressive subjectifications, which include the “insane” in *Madness and Civilisation*, the “criminal” in *Discipline and Punish*, and the “perverse” in *History of Sexuality*. The goal of Foucault’s authorships is then not to investigate power, but rather create a history of the different modes by which ‘man’ is turned into a subject (Foucault *The Subject* 778).

Ultimately, power is something that is to be understood, investigated, and criticized in relation to the knowledge-based techniques, in which they are practiced against the individual and its role within the power/knowledge techniques. The necessity of analysing power is therefore founded on the investigation of how individuals are made subjects and further repressed.

Discipline, Punish, & Surveillance

In the literary works *1984*, *A Scanner Darkly*, and *The Circle*, the authors imagined a dystopian future affected by surveillance and disciplinary power by an all-seeing entity. The works have by many been regarded as warnings or cautionary tales of the future if no attention is paid to the rate of the development of contemporary surveillance or alternative methods. On the basis of this, it is relevant to examine the novels and the development of the surveillance theories, to better understand the imagined realities and their plausible premonitions. This will be done by focusing on theorists such as Michel Foucault and Jeremy Bentham, who have concerned themselves with the notion and advantages of surveillance, power, and disciplinary measures. More precisely, this section seeks to illustrate the effects of surveillance and disciplinary power in relation to achieving conformity and docile bodies.

The notion of surveillance is not something new or recent, and the term ‘Surveillance society’ was first used in 1985 in regard to social analysis by communication professor Oscar Gandy and was subsequently developed in the works of David Lyon (Wood “The Surveillance



Society” 179). Surveillance has continually increased as a transdisciplinary narrative and as a part of the public discourse (Wood “The Surveillance Society” 180), and according to David Lyon, “Since time immemorial, people have ‘watched over’ others to check what they are up to, to monitor their progress, to organize them or to care for them.” (Lyon 22). Surveillance should arguably be acknowledged as a paradox in the sense that it is most often associated with crime, national security, control, constraint, and the probing eye; however, people also find social benefit in surveillance when it comes to welfare, salary, or overall safety (Lyon 5, 222). The modern take on surveillance originates from specific institutions such as the government and the army, and their history embedded with military and war-related activities and surveillance intended to procure “national security, military supremacy or the defeat of an aggressor” (Lyon 5, 29). The military utilised surveillance as a form of disciplinary methods to create effective armies of soldiers, and the states used it to organise and discipline populations in new ways, with new goals, and with new techniques and methods. This made a great impact on the state and its businesses in regard to organising working conditions and health services, amongst other things, but also for the subjectivity of the individual. The control of the state was organised with the intention of establishing a connection between the will and desire of the individual and the desire for control, constraint, and resource utilisation (Sørensen et al. 185). However, surveillance has grown to concern itself with all areas of life, seeing as it developed in such subtle ways that it has become an institutionally essential and pervasive feature of social life (Lyon 24). Factoring into this, surveillance should be regarded as a means of social control that is managed by society’s compliance with the current social order, and according to Lyon, this is “intrinsically bound up with power”, seeing as people are progressively kept under surveillance and ‘watched’ (Lyon 4, 26). Surveillance and power can therefore be said to, not necessarily be synonymous with one another, but rather go hand in hand.

In this connection, it is important to note that the concept of power can have various meanings. As mentioned in the previous section “Power and Knowledge”, Foucault regards power as an entity constituted through knowledge, implicitly truth. However, Foucault’s understanding of power can also be associated with “the exercise of force or control over individuals or particular social groups by other individuals or groups.” (Edgar et al. 264). According to this statement, power is believed to be something that is extrinsic to the nature of individuals as well as society. This understanding of power is important to include when concerning oneself with the notion and analysis of surveillance and power, as it provides a different perspective to the understanding of power, namely power as existing, and not as something that is exercised over groups or individuals. More precisely, Foucault believes that power is “constitutive of both relations which exist between groups and hence equally of individual and group identities themselves.” (Edgar et al., 265). Ultimately, power can be said



to be a major source of social discipline and conformity, something that arguably enters into the notion of the superego from Austrian neurologist and founding father of psychoanalysis, Sigmund Freud. Freud created a model of the mind (psyche) and human nature which consisted of three aspects, namely the ego, id, and superego, which could assist in analysing, explaining, and understanding the fundamental aspects of humans (Storr 60).

The first aspect, the id, is regarded as the unorganised, emotional, and primitive part of the mind. The id, according to Freud, “[...] is governed only by the most basic, primitive principle of mental dynamics: avoidance of ‘unpleasure’ [...]” (Storr 61). More precisely, it can be said that a characteristic of the id is that it is less concerned with the pursuit of pleasure than it is with the avoidance of pain. The second aspect, the ego represents the consciousness of the human mind, namely reason, common sense, and “the power to delay immediate responses to external stimuli or to internal instinctive promptings.” (Storr 61). The ego can further be described as a bodily ego, seeing as the ego functions as a mediator between the id and the external world. On account of this, it can be deduced that the primary function of the ego is that of self-preservation. The last aspect of the mind is that of the superego, which refers to the internalisation or introjection of authority constructs; what is commonly known as conscience. This conscience or internalisation of authority is formed during childhood within a child’s dependence on parental authority (Storr 62; Storey 96). As children grow older, they are met with other authoritative voices in society as well as ethical and cultural ideas, which we acquire them to learn to recognise that they can no longer idealise themselves, but rather that an ego-ideal exists which does not always conform to the ego of the child. As a result, Freud believes that the superego devotes itself to self-observation as a way to determine to which extent the ego conforms, or falls short, of the ego-ideal (Storr 63). Ultimately, humans are born with an id, whereas the ego is something that is developed during the encounter with culture, which consecutively creates the superego. This means that the ‘nature’ of humans is governed by culture, and that the superego requires socially accepted behaviour that conforms to the norms rather than individual urges; known as the struggle between the ‘pleasure principle’ and the ‘reality principle’. If an individual cannot live up to the expectations or demands, they can, as a result, experience guilt and anxiety, or even be subjected to punishment (Storey 97).

Taking Freud’s notion of the human mind into account, the aspect of the superego arguably serves as a way to sustain, impose, and internalise discipline and self-observation within the individual. Furthermore, it is relevant to discuss whether the superego can be utilised as a way to impose and reinforce power over certain individuals. This asserts itself within Foucault’s notion of discipline, punishment, and surveillance, seeing as Foucault believes that power is equally constitutive of the relation between groups and individual and group identities.



Foucault argues that surveillance has become the preeminent method of power, and that surveillance has obtained status as a central feature of modernity (Storey 137). A key point to Foucault's take on power is that it is not solely constitutive of social reality and subjectivity, but that power also transcends politics and regards power as a socialised and embodied everyday phenomenon (Edgar et al. 265). As previously mentioned in the section "Power and Knowledge", Foucault holds varying understandings of power, power constituted through knowledge and truth, and power achieved through the exercise of surveillance and control. In regard to the latter, Foucault's studies examine the structures and/or institutions that enable power to be maintained, such as prisons, the medical profession, legislation, and state punishments (Barry 179).

PUNISHMENT

In his work *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (1977), Foucault accounts for the evolution of punishment and discipline during the 18th and 19th century, where it changed from a public spectacle with the purpose of generating manipulable and docile bodies by use of torture, mutilation, pillory, and execution, to something that, during the 19th century, took place out of the public eye, as public discipline and punishment were regarded as shameful and revolting (Smith 9). Though a need for punishment and discipline still existed, society sought out better and more humane ways of exerting dominance. This was achieved by replacing brute force with surveillance and monitoring (Foucault *Discipline* 73). Punishment, then, has become something that has evolved from being centred on torture as a technique of pain, to a way of asserting power and dominance (Foucault *Discipline* 9, 15).

Punishment, as a result, was no longer defined by brutality, but rather employed as a way to get people to conform and reform from deviant behaviour. This was acquired by employing surveillance, monitoring, discipline, and classification of society and its people. This is made clear when considering that, according to Foucault, the development of the prison system and state punishment focuses on "the body as the subject of discipline" (Edgar et al. 32). This can be said to refer to the perception that the body is moulded and disciplined through structures of power and surveillance, whether the surveillance is actual or imagined. The body, therefore, can be regarded as a product of social construction and constraint, as well as an instrument and effect of power (Edgar et al. 32). However, rather than relying on any sort of external constraints and public punishments, Foucault is of the opinion that modern social institutions engage in disciplinary practices which "ensure that life continues in a regularized manner" (Lyon 7). Surveillance and power arguably intend to institute a relation, or more



specifically, create a divide between an object and a subject. On the basis of this, “surveillance is required to be carried out ‘properly’, ‘for legitimate purposes’, and ‘only where necessary’.” (Walle et al. 197). Michel Foucault regards the notion of state as an all-powerful and all-seeing entity, which enters into the pervasive image of the state as playing into the idea of ‘panoptic’ surveillance (Barry 169). Furthermore, Foucault is of the opinion that “modern society is itself a ‘disciplinary society’ in which techniques and strategies of power are always present.” (Lyon 26). With this, Foucault believes that though this may have originated in specific institutions such as prisons, armies, and factories, the influence of this permeates the nature of social life. The panoptic state then upholds its surveillance through discursive power rather than by physical force and intimidation (Barry 169).

JEREMY BENTHAM

The concept of a panoptic state originates from the English philosopher Jeremy Bentham who imagined a unique penitentiary, known as the Panopticon: a one-way form of communication that aims to internalise surveillance and limit or prevent opposition and violence. This is done through means of control, discipline, and manipulation of individuals through involuntary surveillance (Walle et al. 194). According to Bentham, the Panopticon is an imagined architectural annular building to achieve an illusion of constant surveillance without confirmation of any such thing. This was achieved by the annular building with cells facing towards the centre of the building, in which the building functioning as a watchtower is located (Bentham 35). The windows of the watchtower therefore overlook the prison cells, and by use of backlighting, the inspector can observe every single cell without making their existence known. This allows for the previously mentioned one-way surveillance that ultimately becomes internalised (Foucault *Discipline* 200). The internalised surveillance of the Panopticon is, according to Bentham, thus achieved:

I will single out one of the most untoward of the prisoners. I will keep an unintermitted watch upon him. I will watch until I observe a transgression. I will minute it down. I will wait for another: I will note that down too. I will lie by for a whole day: he shall do as he pleases that day, so long as he does not venture at something too serious to be endured. The next day I produce the list to him. - *You thought yourself undiscovered: you abused my indulgences: see how you were mistaken. Another time, you may have rope for two days, ten days: the longer it is, the heavier it will fall upon you. Learn from this, all of you, that in this house*



transgression never can be safe. (Bentham 16).

Based on Bentham's statement, it can be deduced that the prisoners as a result will begin to monitor themselves and their transgressions. The prisoners will be convinced that the watchtower is constantly occupied, and they are therefore constantly surveilled. The inspector in the watchtower will ultimately become unnecessary, as surveillance becomes internalised.

The watchtower, implicitly the observatory aspect of the Panopticon, allows for the efficient ability to penetrate the behaviour and mind of the observed, seeing as, according to Foucault, "knowledge follows the advances of power, discovering new objects of knowledge over all the surfaces on which power is exercised." (Foucault *Discipline* 204). Foucault ultimately utilised the Panopticon to illuminate the proclivity and subjugation of disciplinary power. Bentham, on the other hand, intended and aimed for the Panopticon to establish a sense of transparency within society. More precisely, Bentham's idea for the Panopticon originates from a utilitarian desire, namely, to create a society that focuses on the greatest good for the greatest number of people. Bentham supported a strict sense of societal control and surveillance as a way to achieve this happiness. This alludes to the notion that utopia and dystopia are closely linked as discussed above on page 4. The ethical theory of utilitarianism is believed to have originated from Bentham himself. Utilitarianism refers to the belief and moral conduct that the right course of action is the one that maximises the utility of happiness for the greatest number of people. Consequently, actions are deemed either good or bad, right or wrong in relation to the amount of general happiness that is increased or diminished in people (Blackburn). However, utilitarianism should not be confused with egoism, seeing as the utilitarian mindset regards the scope of consequences. Utilitarianism strives to maximise the overall good, which refers to others as well as oneself. Moreover, no one's happiness counts more than someone else's, therefore, utilitarianism can be said to be characterised by agent-neutrality and impartiality (Driver). Ultimately, the notion that people can be controlled and constrained through power and discipline becomes evident when considering Bentham's perception that "nature has placed mankind under the governance of two sovereign masters, pain and pleasure" (Bentham 1). This furthermore enters into Freud's notion of the human mind where the id of the individual is more concerned with the avoidance of pain than the pursuit of pleasure, which conforms to Bentham's utilitarian principles, equivalent to the moral conduct that aims to maximise the overall good and thereby minimising the overall pain.

The notion of the Panopticon, however, does not come directly from Bentham himself, but rather mediated through other theorists, including Michel Foucault, who reinterpreted the Panopticon into a social theory and concept known as Panopticism. This theory focused



on discipline, punishment, and surveillance as a concept rather than a figurative model, seeing as the inspected as well as the inspector would find themselves locked in the same surveillance mechanism, enabling the discipline of everyone involved, irrespective of being in a cell or not (De Angelis 205). According to Foucault:

The major effect of the Panopticon [is] to induce in the inmate a state of conscious and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power. [S]urveillance is permanent in its effects, even if it is discontinuous in its action; that the perfection of power should tend to render its actual exercise unnecessary... [T]he inmates... [are] caught up in a power situation of which they are themselves the bearers... He who is subjected to a field of visibility, and who knows it, assumes responsibility for the constraints of power; he makes them play spontaneously upon himself: he inscribes in himself the power relation in which he simultaneously plays both roles; he becomes the principle of his own subjection. (Storey 136)

The quotation refers to the power of the Panopticon, namely that the inmates never know whether they are being watched or not, and as a result, they learn to internalise the surveillance as though they are constantly watched (Storey 137). This enters into Sigmund Freud's notion of the superego, where surveillance and discipline become internalised seeing as the id and the superego corresponds and conforms to societal norms as previously mentioned. Arguably, parallels may be drawn between the superego and the Panopticon, seeing as the superego can find itself mirrored in the structure and function of the Panopticon, namely the attempt to normalise and control the behaviour of the individual. The superego can be regarded as the inner 'voice' or 'eye' of an individual, which uncovers bad behaviour whether it is acted upon or remains a thought. Therefore, the superego and the watchtower of the Panopticon can be regarded as metaphors of each other, as both have the power to influence an individual's behaviour and intentions to act. Individuals that follow the pleasure principle, can see themselves required to work against their own interest to adhere to the ego-ideal so as not to stand out or appear abnormal to others. The superego as well as the Panopticon ultimately contribute to the self-disciplining and self-surveillance of its subjects on the grounds that constant awareness of the societal norms reinforces a consistent notion of punishment and judgement within the individual (Foucault *Discipline* 201). The superego, then, can be regarded as an internalised Panopticon where the individual acts in agreement with the three aspects of the human psyche. Worth noting, however, is that Freud's and Bentham's theories are not identical, rather they share similar views on the nature of humanity and how disciplinary measures ultimately affect and function inside the human. The principal metaphor used



when regarding surveillance and power is most often that of the Panopticon (Walle et al. 194). The reason being, according to Foucault, that the Panopticon epitomises the disciplinary network of society that is not only evident in one institution, but in all aspects of everyday life. Seemingly, the Panopticon functions as a generalizable model for defining power relations and social control, and arguably the Panopticon can be said to be “a diagram of a mechanism of power reduced to its ideal form” (Storey 137).

The evolution from spectacle to surveillance can be said to turn “the whole social body into a field of perception” (Storey 137). This refers to the notion that the Panopticon creates a functioning and sustaining power relation that automatizes and deindividualized power on the grounds that the mere illusion of surveillance can obtain the same effect on individuals as the real thing (Foucault *Discipline* 202). On the basis of this, the Panopticon is believed to be an effective mechanism that succeeds in tracking and modifying the behaviour of individuals. The aspect of surveillance can be utilised as a way of asserting power, penetrating, modifying, and scrutinising to enforce the norm and behaviour of individuals without the need to exert extreme punishment and power (Foucault *Discipline* 204). Moreover, the notion of Panopticon as a form of power is “organised around the norm, in terms of what [is] normal or not, correct or not, in terms of what one must do or not do.” Foucault regards society’s integration of the Panopticon as a fundamental aspect of normalisation of behaviour and surveillance (Storey 137). Normalisation is to be understood as techniques that enter into the bodies of individuals and groups, and which form their behaviour and conduct in accordance with certain norms. Consequently, the norms in question are reproduced and regarded by the individuals themselves, not as produced, but rather as necessary and natural norms which enter into Foucault’s notion of Truth as previously mentioned (Taylor 52). Moreover, Foucault considers disciplinary power and the Panopticon as successful co-operators, seeing as the Panopticon illustrates the proclivity of disciplinary power perfectly (McMullan). Both disciplinary power and the Panopticon aim to accomplish a complacent and efficient society where the subjects enforce discipline on themselves and thereby modify their behaviour in accordance with the notion of surveillance (Foucault *Discipline* 215).

The notion that the Panopticon exists to create subjects that uphold the idea of constant surveillance is reinforced by Jeremy Bentham’s opinion that the Panopticon should be regarded as a representation of the eye of God, which generates the impression of an omniscient gaze. More precisely, the watchtower of the Panopticon creates the illusion of an all-seeing watchful eye, constant and intimately present in the mind of the inmates. The concept of an all-seeing power that enforces discipline and control without physical punishment is constructed with the notion of governmentality originally formulated by Michel Foucault, seeing as, according to Bentham, punishment is “less intended for the punished, i.e. the guilty person, than



it is for everyone else, i.e. the innocent [...]” (Bentham, 4). The term Governmentality is constructed by means of the words ‘government’ that refers to the conduct and/or activity used to guide, affect, or shape the behaviour of people, and ‘rationality’ referring to a way of thinking in a systematic and clear manner. In correlation, the two terms, or more precisely Governmentality, seek to achieve a state system that ensures a clear and knowable comprehension and conduct of the population, along with a way to classify, manage, and administrate individuals and groups in order to identify and control them (Huff). Worth noting is the fact that Governmentality is commonly believed to concern willing participation by the governed (Huff). Governmentality, then, can be categorized as an approach to power that emphasises and controls people’s behaviour by means of positive reinforcement rather than sovereign power. More precisely, Governmentality is a way for authorities to control people’s control over themselves and others. Power, then, should be regarded as a productive way of promoting certain behaviour in the governed (Andersen et al. 346). Authority in this context should not solely be considered that of the Head of the government or state as a super-human agent, but rather any one person or authoritative figure/state in position of power. Keeping this in mind, the notion of authority and state is weaved into people’s way of life, and thereby the borders between the governed and the governing has become blurred. As a result, norms, and behaviour function as a way for state and government systems to control and form people in a way that is consistent with how people see themselves (Mills 49).

Rather than concerning himself with *who* has articulated certain thoughts throughout history, Michel Foucault’s work is concerned with *what* enables individuals to think and speak in certain ways. Foucault’s interest lies in analysis of the operating discursive processes of power and knowledge that come to determine the individual. For Foucault, power is something that is to be understood, investigated, and criticized in relation to the knowledge-based techniques, in which they are practiced against the individual and its role within the power/knowledge scheme. The necessity of analysing power is therefore founded in the investigation of how individuals are subjectified.



Fredric Jameson

Before diving into the interrelationship between Michel Foucault and Fredric Jameson, it is important to establish that both function as intellectual historians and primary academic sources throughout this project. Crucial to establish is that this project has a humanistic interest in preference to a historical one, meaning that the extensive volume of Jameson's authorship and historical approach as a Marxist critic, will and cannot be accounted for.

Since the interest of this project lies within uncovering how the selected literary works account for the underlying social and political foundations of the forces of power and discipline, it has been established that the notion of discourse developed by Foucault is relevant for the analysis of the three texts. Even though Jameson dismisses the idea that the shifting in social forms occurs in the "shadowy and mythical entity Foucault called 'power'" (Jameson 410), but rather occurs through the material processes of capital itself, Foucault's notion of the power/knowledge regime does however, to some extent, intersect with the Marxist critique that Jameson presents, namely that social formations are subject to constant change throughout history (Tally Jr. 122). Through his authorship, Foucault investigates how discursive social formations emerge throughout history, as well as accounts for the general character of modern societies and the social processes that organise, structure, and condition everyday life within those societies. According to Samuel Ndogo, when authors write a story, they are in essence engaging in a discourse. This is what Jameson refers to as a symbolic act, a notion that offers ways of considering texts in relation to their historical context.

This project intends to employ Jameson's theory in the reading and analysis of the three literary texts, focusing on the political, social, and historical aspects of discursive frameworks through which they are constructed. Deriving from Jameson's notion of the political unconscious, the aim is to examine the relationship between the literary work of the respective individual author and the state of its contemporary society.

The Political Unconscious

In his work *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Symbolic Act* (1981) Fredric Jameson proposes a concept that enables one to articulate the implicit political dimension of creative works. First proposed in 1981, The Political Unconscious adapts Sigmund Freud's notion of



wish-fulfilment and Lévi-Strauss's notion of the savage mind (i.e. *pensée sauvage*) to construct the hypothesis that creative work can be seen as a *symbolic* solution to real, but unconsciously felt social and cultural issues, which an author of a text attempts to solve unconsciously (Jameson xiii). The task of the analyst, then, is to reconstruct the original problem for which the text as symbolic act is a solution. Jameson strongly emphasises that this type of textual criticism is not a question of the meaning of a particular text, but rather why it exists in the form it does. Jameson sets the tone of the book using the slogan "always historicize" (ix), indicating that one cannot read a text without connecting it to its political and historical context. Therefore, Jameson introduces a set of codes and categories that the analyst should apply in his interpretation of a given text.

Jameson's presupposition for this critical approach is that "we never really confront a text immediately, in all its freshness as a thing-in-itself" (Jameson ix), rather, texts are read through previous interpretations or pre-established methods within interpretive traditions (ix). This leads to Jameson creating a method in which the interpretation of a text becomes the object of study, for, as Jameson states, "interpretation is [...] an essentially allegorical act, which consists in rewriting a given text in terms of a particular interpretive master code" (x). To Jameson, "interpretation is not an isolated act, but takes place within a Homeric battlefield, on which a host of interpretive options are either openly or implicitly in conflict" (xiii). Jameson's standpoint is founded within the tendency of today's contemporary theory to rewrite text from the past in terms of a post-modernist conception of language. "[A]ll history is contemporary" (2), however this does not support that all history is *our* contemporary history; to Jameson, the main issue arises when the analyst's epistemological break begins to displace itself in time according to one's own current ideas (2). Throughout his work, Jameson outlines key issues concerning narrative, questions of historicity, and interpretation, and argues that the political interpretation of a literary text should not be regarded as supplementary to other interpretive methods, but rather as "the absolute horizon of all reading and all interpretation" (1).

In the first chapter of his book, "On Interpretation", Jameson briefly illustrates how psychoanalysis will become an important tool in the arrival at the notion of the 'unconscious', while at the same time stressing that the Freudian psychoanalysis itself is in crucial need of historicising, as he himself views psychoanalysis as a system of thought only made possible with a particular "psychic fragmentation since the beginnings of capitalism" (Jameson 47). However, after such a radical historicising, it is not possible to transcend from the individual psyche to the political unconscious, namely because of the centre of the Freudian interpretive system; the conception of 'wish-fulfilment' or 'desire'. Desire, Jameson states, is posited as the core of our being as individual subjects (50) and it is locked "in a problematic of the individual subject and the individual psychobiography" (51). Therefore, Jameson aims at arriving at a



theory of the political unconscious, which will only be possible by arriving at a metaphysical theory of desire that will be able to transcend the problematic of the individual (53). For this, Jameson moves from Freud to Northrop Frye's archetypal system, which is re-worked into a historically thorough model for textual interpretation. On the doctrine of *The Political Unconscious*, Jameson recognises the importance of transcending "individualistic categories and modes of interpretation" (53). Like Freudianism, the archetypal system ascribes the value of desire, while additionally showing interest for the analyst to conceive the function of culture within social terms (54).

In the section of the *Political Unconscious*, "On Interpretation", Jameson presupposes that only a genuine philosophy of history will be able to account for the specificity and difference of the past while imparting the solidarity of the past's "polemics and passions, its forms, structures, experiences, and struggles" (Jameson 2) apart from those of the present. He proceeds, establishing that only Marxism will be capable of providing a coherent interpretive framework through an ideological analysis, and it will further provide a resolution to the issue of historicism as mentioned above. By applying the Marxist method, one is able to recover the importance of historical matters. For analysis of the literary text, Jameson proposes a Marxist method of literary and cultural interpretation, primarily through dialectical re-reading and historicising of Northrop Frye's archetypal system presented in his essay "Archetypal Criticism: Theory of Myths", which will assist in "conceiving [...] the function of culture, explicitly in social terms. In his work, Frye re-joins religious symbolism which involves demystification and debunking of religious myths and phenomena (55). Just as Frye applies religious symbolism to uncover the meaning of texts and cultures resistant to its outlook, so too will a political hermeneutic, suggested by Jameson, provide insight in the revolutionary processes in repressive cultures and periods of time (Makaryk 381).

Only Marxism, Jameson claims, will be able to comprehend the totality of History itself. However, the historical past and its relation to current reality can only be grasped if they are comprehended as part of one great collective story that depicts the fall of humankind from an original abundance that results in humanity's need for narrative and interpretation. However, many elements for that literary work have been suppressed and distorted and this is what becomes the preoccupation with the concept of the political unconscious; "History can be apprehended only in textual form; in other words, like the concept of time and space, 'narrative' is fundamental epistemological categories that structures our experience of the world and represents in its form the contours of human desire" (381).

Jameson defends the Marxist approach as the "ultimate semantic precondition for the intelligibility of literary and cultural texts" (Jameson 60). At the same time, he stresses that in order to carry out this interpretation, a text must take place within three concentric



frameworks, which mark a widening out the sense of the social ground of a text; first is the notion of political history, “in the narrow sense of punctual event and a chronicle-like sequence of happenings in time” (60); second is the notion of society, “in the now already less diachronic and time-bound sense of a constitutive tension and struggle between social classes” (60); and third is the notion of history, “now conceived in its vastest sense of the sequence of modes of production and the succession and destiny of the various human social formations, from prehistoric life to whatever far future history has in store for us.” (60)

These frameworks, or “semantic horizons” (Jameson 60), political history, society, and history are to be viewed as moments of the process of literary and cultural interpretation and may, as Jameson notes, be the dialectical equivalents of what Frye calls ‘phases’ within the rereading and reinterpretation of the literary text (61). The frameworks will provide a method of literary and cultural interpretation through historicising of Frye’s archetypal system, which begins with acquiring a specific understanding of the text and its political history.

Within the first framework of interpretation, Jameson emphasises that the text, the object of study, is still to be understood within the limits of its “narrowly political or historical” horizon (Jameson 61), in which the text will occur simultaneously with the individual literary work or cultural artifact (62). Within this phase, the centre of attention lies within the immediate historical context of the work. It is important to mention that Jameson distinguishes this form of interpretive analysis from other forms of interpretation (such as ‘explication de texte’ or New Criticism) by positing that the individual work is to be understood as a ‘symbolic act’. In his description of the individual text as a symbolic act, Jameson introduces a model of interpretation proposed by Claude Lévi-Strauss in the essay “The Structural Study of Myth”, in which he describes the famous phrase ‘imaginary resolutions of real contradiction’ which states that the basic interpretive principle lies within the idea that “the individual narrative, or the individual structure, is to be grasped as the imaginary resolution of a real contradiction” (62). To elaborate, putting a text into context will not be sufficient for the interpretation of the latter, but involves a rewriting of the literary text “in such a way that the [text] may itself be seen as the rewriting or restructuration of a prior historical or ideological *subtext* [...] being understood that that ‘subtext’ is not immediately present as such [...] but rather must itself always be (re)constructed after the fact” (66). The first framework is not interested in analysing the text for the purpose of its meaning, but instead conceiving it in terms of what it *does*, as a symbolic act. This means that the individual text is to be read against the political history as subtext. The same subtext is, paradoxically, fraught with social contradictions, as the literary work “brings into being that very situation to which it is also, at one and the same time, a reaction” (67). Jameson further elaborates by stressing that “whilst the literary text or cultural object articulates its own situation, it also textualizes itself, encouraging the illusion that the



situation of the text did not exist before it itself was created” (67). Simultaneously, this does not involve the questioning of the reality of history, for, as Jameson declares, history is not a text, it is “fundamentally non-narrative and nonrepresentational” and he further highlights “that [history] can be approached only by way of prior (re)textualization” (67). By explaining the literary text as a symbolic act i.e. an imaginary solution to a real social conflict, one is then able to delve into the next semantic horizon: That of the social.

Jameson describes that within the social horizon, the framework is widened to include the social order and class struggle as determinant of the text i.e. revealing individual phenomena as social facts and institutions (Jameson 69). While retaining the framework of the social contradiction and dialectic analysis, the object of study has moved from the individual text to an analysis of a collective and class discourse, in which the text has the function of the utterance. Within this horizon, Jameson argues, the object of study will prove to be *ideologemes* “the smallest intelligible unit of the essentially antagonistic collective discourses of social classes” (61). Within Marxist theory, classes must always be perceived in relation to one another, and the ideal form of class relationship and class struggle is dichotomous, as seen in the relationship between the dominant class and the labouring class (69). Jameson defines this type of class structure as ‘dialogical’, but an antagonistic dialogue. Social classes are and must always be viewed in relation to each other, and therefore, the ideology of a class is dependent on the opposing class, because its ideological value is defined in the very opposition to the opposing class. A text is not the *product* of ideology but is to be viewed as a *necessity* of ideology (Pagano 34), and without a direct referent, the text is endowed “with an imaginary freedom from those constraints that are generally imposed on the subject in everyday life” (34). For Jameson, this social structure consists of antagonistic forces struggling for domination. However, as Tullio Pagano states, only one hegemonic voice can be heard, as the voice of the oppressed class is silenced in the dominant mode of representation (34).

Hegemonic discourse is the *product* of antagonistic dialogue because it consists of a class struggle in which two classes’ discourses fight each other “within the general unity of a shared code” (Jameson 70). Within this social framework one is able to uncover that the seemingly monologic discourse is always composed by other suppressed voices, which the ideological screen tends to harmonise (Pagano 34, 35). However, to carry out the analysis of the social framework, one has to extend the interpretation to the point where the ultimate contradiction between two classes becomes visible, and in order to carry out such analysis, Jameson states that one needs to look at the ideologemes. According to Jameson, an ideologeme manifests itself as “a pseudo-idea - a conceptual of belief system, an abstract value, an opinion or prejudice - or as a proto narrative, a kind of ultimate class fantasy about the ‘collective characters’ which are the classes in opposition” (Jameson 73). This means that the basic



requirement for an ideologeme is to be both narrative and concept, and the ideologeme is thus the part of an ideology that tells a story while also making claims. Jameson uses Nietzsche's theory of *ressentiment* as his prime example, the process of which the oppressed take revenge by forcing back on the oppressors own submissive ethics on themselves, as the oppressors can be viewed as the cause of their inferiority, and are therefore to be blamed (73). The framework of class struggle and its antagonistic discourses, Jameson states, are not the ultimate form of Marxist analysis (73, 74). Having accounted for both the object of the political (symbolic act) and the object social (ideologeme and class discourse), both entities now move toward a final transformation within the third horizon, also termed within Marxian tradition as a 'mode of production'.

Within the last framework of horizon, Jameson characterises the final transformation of individual text and the ideologeme as the formation of an ideology which is "the symbolic messages transmitted to us by co-existence of the various sign systems, which are themselves traces or anticipations of modes of production" (Jameson 62). This horizon seeks to discover a series of codes and sign systems that characterise the larger unit of society. Jameson here argues that within the final horizon the individual text is restructured "as a field of force" (84) in which the codes of the mode of production can be registered and apprehended (84). The individual text and its ideologies are thus transformed and can now be termed as 'ideology of form', in which symbolic messages are read in relation to the dominant mode of production. A mode of production can be capitalism, feudalism, communism, socialism, etc. and it covers the dominant way of thinking within social and economic arrangements, which therefore makes it essential to Marxist theory (75). Mode of production can further be described as the conception of historical stages that have a dominant cultural or ideological code that is particular to a certain mode of production (75). Within Marxism, history is to be understood as "the determinant succession of distinct modes of productions" (Edgar et al., 212). Mode of production consists of a distinctive interrelationship of forces and relations of production, and these are to be analysed in terms of their associated structures of economic arrangement (213). Forces of production are the productive capacities available to a society (128) and include technologies such as machines and tools, and physical and intellectual skills of the population (128, 129). According to Marx, the forces of production are in a continuous development due to their productive capacity throughout history. According to Edgar et al., the conflict that arises between the developing forces of production and the static economic, political, and legal organization of society causes social change. Ultimately, the development of forces of production will result in overthrowing the existing social order (128). Jameson argues that a schematic conception of historical stages includes within it a form of 'ideological coding' that is specific to each mode of production (Jameson 75). Jameson states that the



object of study constructed in the final horizon cannot consist of a single mode of production, but instead draws on recent historical experience and is therefore designated as ‘cultural revolution’, which he describes as a “moment in which the coexistence of various modes of production becomes visibly antagonistic, their contradictions moving to the very centre of political, social, and historical life” (81). The object of study within the third horizon is not a singular mode of production but instead it is the transformation of the individual text in the two previous horizons that evolves into the ultimate object that is the cultural revolution. The task of the analysis, Jameson argues, is thus “the rewriting of its materials in such a way that this perpetual cultural revolution can be apprehended and read as the deeper and more permanent constitutive structure in which the empirical textual objects know intelligibility” (83). The result of the third horizon is the reconstruction of the individual text, “a field of force in which the dynamics of sign systems of several distinct modes of production can be registered and apprehended” (84). To Jameson, history is a necessity, and he further elaborates that “[h]istory is what hurts , it is what refuses desire and sets inexorable limits to individual as well as collective praxis, which its “ruses” turn into grisly and ironic reversals of their overt intention” (88). Essentially, to Jameson, literature is not real; History is. And when the two collide, literature is the one that must step aside. To elaborate, literature is based in its interrelation to the objectivity and accuracy of history, not on its own intrinsic values.

The focus of *The Political Unconscious* lies not within uncovering the meaning of a text, but rather questions why the text exists in the form that it does. Jameson’s hypothesis claims that literary texts are imaginary solutions to the social and cultural issues of contemporary time, which the author of the text have attempted to solve unconsciously. When attempting to analyse and interpret a text from a cultural and critical point of view, the task of the analyst becomes to grasp the text in relation to history and thus solve the original issue for which the text functions as a solution in the form of a symbolic act.

Conclusively, combining Foucault’s theory of the Panopticon and Power/Knowledge scheme with Jameson’s theory of *The Political Unconscious* that assists in mending the gap between theoretical speculation and textual analysis, will assist in investigating the representation and development of government surveillance. Furthermore, the combination highlights the underlying contemporary cultural and social problems the author unconsciously attempts to bring attention to. Finally, the exposition of the dystopian genre produces an empirical standpoint, which assists in foregrounding the literary characteristic for the dystopian genre during the analyses of the three narratives.



Analysis

1984

The novel *1984* by author George Orwell, published in 1949, has been deemed one of the most terrifying, yet brilliant, novels ever written. This is due to the portrayal of a nightmarish perception of a totalitarian government in a fictionalised version of London where people are robbed of any attempt of individuality by means of control, surveillance, and constraint. Moreover, Orwell's ability to predict things before they happen, such as the pervasiveness of television and technology and the distortion of language, is contributing to the haunting reality of the novel as a cautionary dystopian tale.

SETTING

The world in Orwell's story has been compartmentalised into three super-states constantly at war with each other, though it is never clear who is at war with whom. The three super-states are: Eastasia which includes China, Japan, Korea, and Northern India; Eurasia which includes the Soviet Union, implicit the better part of Europe; and Oceania which covers the entirety of America, Oceania, and the British Isles. The novel takes place in London, which falls under the super-state Oceania and has been appointed capital of the province known as AirStrip One.

All three super-states are considered totalitarian dictatorships with each of their own philosophy. Oceania's philosophy is English Socialism, better known as Ingsoc, Eastasia's philosophy is translated into Death Worship but better known as Obliteration of the Self, and Eurasia's philosophy is Neo-Bolshevism (Orwell *1984* 205). Despite the conviction that the states hold their own philosophies, they ultimately share social systems and philosophies that are barely distinguishable from one another seeing as:

[e]verywhere there is the same pyramidal structure, the same worship of a semi-divine leader, the same economy existing by and for continuous warfare. [...] Their lives are dedicated to world conquest, but they also know that it is necessary that the war should continue everlastingly and without victory. (Orwell *1984* 205)



According to the statement, it can be argued that the states utilise the never-ending warfare as a way to maintain and continue their surveillance and control of the citizens and thereby uphold their sense of power. This conception of Oceania controlling its citizens is further reinforced when considering the fact that the totalitarian government has created their own language known as Newspeak which is deemed the official language of the state that should supersede Oldspeak, most commonly known as Standard English. Through Newspeak, the government is able to control the population by limiting and managing the words and discourses the citizens are allowed to use, and thereby discouraging free thinking. The language of Newspeak had been devised with the intention to meet the needs of the ideology and philosophy of Ingsoc, and perhaps more importantly as a way to render any other mode of thought impossible (Orwell 1984 312). Oldspeak, or Standard English, is regarded as a dynamic and diverse language notorious for adopting new words that allows for a broadened awareness and knowledge for its speakers. Newspeak on the other hand loses words and limits the language as a way to remove any words that represent opposing or contradictory concepts of the Ingsoc philosophy and ideology. One such instance of word-control is the elimination of the word bad which becomes “ungood” because it is the exact opposite of “good” so there exists no doubt. By limiting the expressiveness of the language, the government succeeds in creating minds that are more easily controlled (54). The whole aim of Newspeak is conclusively to narrow the range of thought and thereby eliminate thoughtcrime, seeing as there exists no words to render such actions possible (55). Ultimately, the government has deployed certain tools and techniques in society to break down the individual’s capacity for independent thinking, individuality, and resistance. This notion is further reinforced when considering the three distinct social classes of Oceania, namely the Inner Party, the highest social group, who lives in relative comfort at the top of society with servants and access to certain luxuries; the Outer Party who holds very little control over their property and personal space and lives in dilapidated conditions; and lastly the Proles as the lowest social group who lives in slums where the party does not provide any form of support or opportunity, yet the regime does not attempt to exert any form of control either.

Another way the regime exerts and maintains their control over people is through the four megastructures that make up Oceania, more precisely the Ministry of Love, the Ministry of Peace, the Ministry of Plenty, and the Ministry of Truth (6). Worth noting however, is that the names of the ministries are misleading, as a matter of fact, they can be said to hold the opposite function and meaning than their names imply. The Ministry of Love is in charge of law and the appertaining enforcement through punishment. Offenders are identified through surveillance and spies and penalised by means of punishment and torture. The Ministry of Peace maintains and controls Oceania’s warfare both internally and with the other super-states.



The Ministry of Plenty manages the rationing of things such as money, food, entertainment, and goods of the population. And lastly, the Ministry of Truth controls the offered information to the citizens and furthermore produces and releases propaganda (6). In overall terms it can be deduced that the totalitarian regime of Oceania is ferociously effective at enhancing their own power and control while simultaneously being miserably incompetent at supporting and providing for their citizens. The incompetence and mismanagement of the regime when it comes to its citizens is evidently manifested in the poverty, hunger, and disintegration of London. Something that supports the notion that the novel takes place in London is the mention of memorable buildings and places known to London, such as the St. Clements and St. Martins church (101, 102). By mentioning and referring to known places in and around London that is now in a state of disrepair, the novel introduces and illustrates the passing of time. More precisely, this action alludes to the notion that the past undoubtedly represents the present of the reader, and that the novel takes place several years in the future, a characteristic that is commonly used in the dystopian genre (Booker 2). The title of Orwell's novel *1984* further alludes to the fact that the story takes place in the year 1984, 35 years into the future from the novel's publication in 1949. Another indication that the novel occurs in 1984, is that the protagonist, Winston Smith, writes the date "April 4th, 1984" in his acquired secret diary (Orwell *1984* 9). However, Winston declares that he has no way of knowing whether this is the correct date or not, seeing as the government – the Ingsoc Party - controls and rewrites history as they see fit, and according to Winston, "there [exists] no record outside your own memory" (38). Winston however believes it is the year 1984, because he is fairly sure that he is thirty-nine years of age, having been born in either the year 1944 or 1945 (9).

As previously mentioned, the fact that the regime controls and detains the knowledge from its citizens is applicable to the understanding of dystopian fiction. The understanding of dystopias as a dictatorship of hell on earth – "the worst of all possible worlds" is manifested and emphasised in the dark, gloomy, and pessimistic tone and mood of the novel. This contributes to the notion that dystopias function as a cautionary tale and warning of how miserable and abominable life for the readers would be if forces such as the totalitarian regime of Oceania are allowed to continuously prevail. The tone and mood of the novel are further enforced through the description of respectively noise, smell, and lack of privacy that the protagonist experiences. An instance where the senses are present and utilised to enhance the gloomy, dark, and pessimistic mood is in regard to food and indulgences such as cigarettes and alcohol. An example could be during Winston's lunch hour at his workplace, the Ministry of Truth:

Winston took up his mug of gin, paused for an instant to collect his nerve, and gulped the oily-tasting stuff down. [...] He began swallowing spoonfuls of the



stew, which, in among its general sloppiness, had cubes of spongy pinkish stuff which was probably a preparation of meat. (Orwell 1984 53)

The quote amplifies and supports the unsatisfying and poor quality of not only food, but especially life as a whole, the citizens experience under the totalitarian regime. Another instance is when Winston attempts to smoke a cigarette: “half the tobacco promptly fell out onto his tongue, a bitter dust which was difficult to spit out again” (Orwell 1984 107). Both the former and the latter quotations echo the hopelessness and indifference of the protagonist, as well as the all-consuming dystopian and cautionary mood and tone of the novel. Worth mentioning is that during the secret meetings between Winston and the character Julia, the novel also presents a warmer and more peaceful atmosphere which is arguably ascribed to a more calm and tranquil tone and mood. During one of their meetings, Julia and Winston picnic with pleasures such as real coffee, jam, sugar, and soft bread, pleasures that belong to the pre-Party life (147) creating a softer and slower pace of the novel in the midst of chaos and hopelessness. However, it can be argued that the interruption of the gloomy and pessimistic mood functions as a cautionary tone seeing as the picnic alludes to, for contemporary readers, a time during the Second World War where such pleasures were contraband luxuries. Furthermore, the shift between a cautionary and pessimistic tone to a merrily and warm and back again enforces in the reader that nothing in society and life is secure and forever. The shift warns the reader that sudden changes are unpredictable, and further warns of the miseries and hardships that may be introduced if totalitarian regimes are not, in some way or another, restricted from evolving.

NARRATIVE FORM

George Orwell, as mentioned in previous sections, based his novel on his own experiences with wartime challenges. Challenges such as food shortage, governmental control, and political policies as well as the reality of war hysteria, family destruction, as well as the pursuit and oppression of “free thinkers”. Issues and doctrines that can be said to be creatively bound up with the doctrines and agendas of the totalitarian regime of Oceania in 1984. Therefore, all things considered, the novel 1984 arguably functions, not only as a dystopian fiction, but also as a political satire seeing as the novel utilises ridicule, irony, and humour as a way to illustrate and criticise the politics and totalitarian regime in Orwell’s imagined world.

The novel follows a linear narrative structure divided into three parts: part I, II, and III. The fact that the novel follows a linear structure enforces the experience of the reader seeing as they follow the development of the protagonist’s dehumanisation with him which establishes



a sense of tension and sympathy between the reader and the protagonist. Though the novel proceeds in a linear chronological narrative, there are cases of flashbacks which illustrate Winston's earlier life, such as his childhood with his mother and younger sister (Orwell 1984 31), his disastrous marriage with his wife (69), and his career at the Ministry of Truth (6). The flashbacks Winston experiences occur as memories triggered by certain events and actions that take place in his present life, which contributes to the readers' sympathy for Winston seeing as the readers experience and bear witness to the protagonist's life in a repressive and controlling society that offers few pleasures and very little comfort. The exact time span of the novel is difficult to determine on the grounds that phrases such as "Weeks or months must have passed" (287), "The beatings grew less frequent" (253), "He did not know how long he had been there[...]" (238), and "For a week after this, life was like a restless dream" (116). The phrases indicate the passing of time without any specific mentions of dates or years which may have assisted in clarifying the exact time span of the novel. However, certain actions, such as Winston's courtship and meetings with the character Julia (124) together with Winston's arrest made by the Thought Police (230), which occurs throughout the novel, alludes to the notion that several months have passed.

Moreover, Orwell employs certain narrative strategies as a way to establish a feeling of fear and terror within the reader in regard to the concept and utilisation of power in the futuristic world of Oceania. The portrayal of power in the novel is extreme, bordering towards nightmarish, on the grounds that it forces the reader to rethink the frailty of individuality that is exposed in the face of the evil existing within society. This is achieved through the narrative perspective or point of view of the novel where Orwell positions the reader beside, if not within, the mind of Winston. This way of positioning the narrative, more precisely limited third person, increases the feeling of fear and terror seeing as the reader is introduced and (almost) allowed direct access to the feelings and thoughts of Winston. This becomes evident during, among other things, Winston's imprisonment:

It might be two or three hours ago that they had brought him here. The dull pain in his belly never went away, but sometimes it grew better and sometimes worse, and his thoughts expanded and contracted accordingly. When it grew worse, he thought only of the pain itself, and of his desire for food. When it grew better, panic took hold of him. There were moments when he foresaw the things that would happen to him with such actuality that his heart galloped and his breath stopped. He felt the smash of truncheons on his elbows and iron-shod boots on his shins; he saw himself grovelling on the floor, screaming for mercy through broken teeth. (Orwell 1984 240)



The above paragraph is undoubtedly composed in third person; however, the perspective of the passage illuminates the feelings, thoughts, viewpoints, and sensations of Winston. The paragraph generates a sensation that the reader is in the immediate vicinity of Winston, but also that the reader experiences or registers Winston's thoughts simultaneously with himself as they occur. Accordingly, the reader can be said to regard the world through Winston's perspective, more precisely, the narrative of the novel is focalised through Winston. As a result, descriptions and physical appearances of characters or places are filtered through Winston's mind and reactions. For example, while it is possible to relay some of the personalities, feelings and thoughts of the characters Julia and O'Brien when they converse with Winston, their spoken words are not to be trusted given the fact that they are simply Winston's interpretation of their words. The narrative strategy of reversing the initial meanings of words contributes to undermining Winston's sense of reality, and consequently the comprehension of the powers working against him is enhanced. An instance where power is exercised over the protagonist is when Winston and Julia are first exposed and later captured by the Thought Police:

We are the dead, he said.

We are the dead, echoed Julia dutifully.

You are the dead, said an iron voice behind them. (Orwell 1984 230)

The quote illuminates the inhumane entity of the Party's all-seeing and all-powerful surveillance exerted over its citizens. Ultimately, the quotation highlights the power of the regime, power that monitors and controls the individuality and minds of the characters in the novel. More precisely, it can be said that the above mentioned quotation firmly states that the government can assume power and control over the mind of the individual, accordingly, no place of refuge exists for the citizens of Oceania if even their minds can be breached. This raises the question of whether Winston's possible thought of rebellion, in part II of the novel, is his own original and voluntary conviction, or the rebellious thoughts simply have been planted in Winston's mind by the Ingsoc party, as a way to prove and illustrate their power and superiority. Consequently, the individuality and freedom of the citizens of Oceania can be regarded as mere illusions which are reinforced by narrative strategies.

Another narrative strategy utilised by Orwell to emphasise the sense of terror and fear that the novel conveys to its readers is that of linguistic techniques. Moreover, Orwell illuminates his comprehension of the allegories and ideologies of the totalitarian regime of Oceania while simultaneously allowing the reader to form their own impression of the events occurring throughout the novel. Orwell achieves this by following the rule of limiting the vocabulary to the bare minimum which through the dreariness of the language emphasises



and mirrors the blandness of the world in *1984*. We learn about the world in *1984* through simple and deadpan yet thought provoking explanations which sustain the down-to-earth and dull life for the citizens of Oceania. This becomes evident through Orwell's way to effectively describe both the regime and Big Brother by means of a limited vocabulary which all the same influence the readers. Orwell utilises adjectives to describe Big Brother and the regime of Oceania, examples of such adjectives could be: "filthily dirty" (Orwell 1984 238), "morally superior" (283), and "cumbersome" (100). These sordid adjectives contribute towards the bleak conception of the society in *1984* without the need for complex and progressive vocabulary. Another instance where limited vocabulary comes into play is during Orwell's explanation of the events and frame of mind where he employs potent verbs to verbalise his own understanding and opinion of the antics of the novel increasing the influence and impact of the reader's comprehension. The utilisation of potent verbs results in a forceful and emotional response within the reader, which functions as a thought-provoking conduct seeing as the readers are forced to rethink their understanding of morale and ethics alike. Furthermore, Orwell employs imagery to create certain emotions or reactions from the reader. This becomes evident in relation to the glass paperweight Winston buys at the old antique shop. The paperweight arguably symbolises the past, a time where beauty was beauty simply for the sake of it. More precisely, the paperweight symbolises a time in history where individuality was expressed through a love of beautiful things, art, and creativity, things that have all been removed or destroyed by the totalitarian regime. At the end of Part II when Winston and Julia are arrested by the Thought Police, the paperweight is shattered on the ground: "There was another crash. Someone had picked up the glass paperweight from the table and smashed it to pieces on the hearth-stone." (232). The shattering of the paperweight undoubtedly represents the shattering of Winston's freedom and privacy, but also his notion of individuality and yearning for memories of the past. Additionally, Orwell's utilisation of imagery in the novel helps in creating a visual comprehension of what is happening, moreover, this allows the reader to make his/her own conclusions of the situation and perception of the events. An imagery that generates emotions within the reader is where the character of O'Brien, an Inner Party member, describes the vision for the future of Oceania:

There will be no love, except the love of Big Brother. [...] There will be no curiosity, no enjoyment of life. All competing pleasures will be destroyed. But always – do not forget this, Winston – always there will be the intoxication of power, constantly increasing and constantly growing subtler. Always, at every moment, there will be the thrill of victory, the sensation of trampling on an enemy who is helpless. If you want a picture of the future, imagine a boot stamping on a human face – for ever.



(Orwell 1984 280)

The quote assists the reader in achieving a sense of the world of Oceania within the novel, but also the world outside of it. The quote sculpts and influences the comprehension of the future of not only Oceania, but also challenges the individuality and freedom of the citizens involved. The narrative tone during the novel is inflected with tragedy and terror as well as satire, which especially is manifested in the pictorial descriptions of violence. Ultimately, the narrative strategy contributes to create an alarming and creepy emotion which allows for the story to unfold in a detached manner where the reader is forced to compose their own notion of the effects of the novel. The narrative strategy is furthermore reinforced when it comes to the introduction of Julia's sexual history: "She had had her first love affair when she was sixteen, with a Party member of sixty who later committed suicide to avoid arrest." (Orwell 1984 137). The statement is instrumental in creating a detached and disturbing sensation within the novel, while simultaneously applying some dark humour and satire to the story. This is especially evident when considering the fact that sporadic sexual relations are deemed a disgusting operation and rebellion against the Party, meanwhile, desire or any impure thoughts are considered thoughtcrimes (69, 71). The statement, and arguably Winston and Julia's relation, can furthermore be regarded as a rebellious act intensifying the sense of satire within an otherwise dreary and detached reality.

As previously mentioned, the novel follows a limited third person narrative, more precisely the viewpoint of Winston. As a consequence, Winston becomes the sole representative of individuality and humanity as he goes through the whole spectrum of feelings during his resistance of the inhumane control of the totalitarian regime of the novel. On account hereof, the reader is limited and confined to exist within Winston's narrative, which means that when Winston experiences doubts or questions the reality of his life in the society of Oceania, so does the reader. This becomes obvious throughout the novel, especially during the imprisonment by the Thought Police: "He did not know where he was. Presumably, he was in the Ministry of Love; but there was no way of making certain." (Orwell 1984 237). The quote sustains the notion that Winston, as well as the reader, continually guesses at reality in regard to time, location, the power and control of the Ingsoc Party, the constant surveillance of the citizens, and the leaders of society. If the novel on the other hand had an omniscient narrator, the reader would have possessed a vantage point, seeing as knowledge produces or diminishes power (Foucault *Power/Knowledge* 131). The reader's and Winston's lack of information and knowledge about the Party and its power and surveillance simply intensifies the perception of the regime's power as infinite and all-encompassing.



1984 AS A SOCIALLY SYMBOLIC ACT

According to Fredric Jameson a text is always to be perceived as a socially symbolic act, therefore a text should not simply be put into context. Rather, it is important to establish the historical events and tendencies that occurred at the time the novel was written. This enters into Jameson's theory of the first horizon. What this means, is that the author of a text illustrates certain social and cultural issues that the author unconsciously attempts to offer an imaginary solution to a real contradiction that prompted its existence. The text, however, may not offer a solution, in this case, the text takes on the function of a warning (Jameson 62). On account of this, it is important to account for what went on in terms of tendencies and historical events at the time Orwell wrote *1984*. Throughout his life, Orwell experienced a political chaos that shaped his view of the world and its foreseeable future. He began writing *1984* in the summer of 1946 (Orwell *1984* v), as a commentary on the state of society in the aftermath of World War II, and the treatment of the human mind and psyche. That same year and up to 1991, the Soviet Union, the United States, and their respective allies found themselves a part of a strained conflict known as the Cold War. A period of time that was affected by "aggressive arms race, proxy wars, and ideological bids for world dominance" (Blakemore "Cold War"). The term Cold War was first used by Orwell in 1945, in an essay that attempted to illuminate the effect of atomic bombs on international relations, as a response to the atomic bombs that were released over Hiroshima and Nagasaki by the United States. During the Cold War, it became increasingly important to abide by both military strength and ideology in a fight between capitalism and communism (Blakemore "Cold War"). Keeping this in mind, it can be argued that Orwell wrote *1984* as a response to the Cold War that marked society and the mindset at the time, when he began to write his last novel. This notion is reflected in the fact that *1984* is set decades after an atomic war where the three super-states of Oceania, Eurasia, and Eastasia have implicitly agreed not to destroy each other, but simply continue in a cold war-like state till the end of time (Orwell *1984* 202). Therefore, it can be argued that Orwell employs his novel to convey a political statement that throws light on the concept that humanity will inevitably be misled by selfishness and the hunger for power. Arguably, Orwell utilises *1984* as a warning or cautionary tale, rather than a solution as previously explained by Jameson, to elucidate the totalitarian mindset and systematic abuse of power that exists within the world. Especially considering the notion that totalitarianism was central to critical thinking during the period of the Cold War, where the ideology was hostile to most ideas in relation to individualism and individual rights (Booker et al. 65). Furthermore, this can be said to play into the notion of dystopian fiction as a warning or cautionary tale of a contemporary real-world problem as



described in the previous section (Booker et al. 65). More precisely, it can be deduced that Orwell desired to bring into focus the distinctive characteristics of totalitarianism such as the suppressive structure and linguistic subtleties, seeing as totalitarianism proved alarmingly attractive to many individuals.

The linguistic subtleties are instrumental in the suffocating effect of totalitarianism as power over language contributes to the control of critical thinking and consciousness. Perhaps as a result, Orwell considered naming his novel “The Last Man in Europe ” perchance as a way to recognise the essential quality of independent thinking that distinguished man from the rest of the world (Bossche). This allows insight into Orwell’s knowledge of the political implications in regard to the use of language. In his published essay, *Politics and the English Language*, Orwell writes: “But if thought corrupts language, language corrupts thought.” (Orwell *Politics* 7), which reflects his concern of the power that language holds over the shape of reality. This manifests itself in Orwell’s invention of the language, Newspeak, to limit the range of thought and rebelliousness of individuals. Language is ultimately utilised as a way to control the personality, behaviour, and identity of people to force them to conform to the ideology and regime of society.

In relation to the events and political chaos George Orwell experienced at the time he wrote *1984*, it can be argued that the novel can be considered a socially symbolic act, seeing as it calls attention to a historical, political, or social message of society in the hopes of preventing future undesirable events as depicted in the novel. Moreover, the novel arguably functions as a cautionary tale rather than a solution, in the sense that it warns people about accepting an ideology or society that limits the privilege and individuality of people seeing as this can have an irreversible effect on reality. Ultimately, it can be deduced that Orwell attempts to warn society about the dangers that follow in the footsteps of ignorance, silence, and injustice created by totalitarian regimes.

CHARACTER ANALYSIS

In George Orwell’s novel *1984*, the reality and possibilities of the totalitarian dystopian world of Oceania are experienced through the eyes of the protagonist, Winston Smith. Throughout the novel, Winston attempts to, not only confront and resist, but also comprehend and reason with the oppression and exercise of power of the regime. This originates in Winston’s curious, kind, and pensive character enabling the reader to create a sense of relation or identification with Winston. An essential reason that readers cannot avoid identifying with Winston is the fact that he is portrayed as an ordinary and real character that allows for the reader to imagine



themselves in his place, due to the fact that Winston expresses feelings and behaviour common within all human beings. Furthermore, Winston is portrayed as a sympathetic human being which assists in providing the reader with hope and desired outcome for the novel. This is further enhanced when considering the notion that Winston is simply an innocent prisoner of a world gone wrong, which allows the reader to better understand and experience the hardship and control as exercised by the Inner Party and the Thought Police respectively. Winston's pensiveness of the world in which he exists renders it possible for Orwell to explore and elaborate on the important themes and the complex problems that manifest itself in the novel such as the psychological manipulation, physical control and intimidation, as well as the importance of memory and history. Another reason could be deduced from one of the common characteristics of the dystopian genre, namely that the protagonist is often depicted as a misfit or political maverick. According to Keith Booker, the protagonist learns to "feel out of place and at odds with the generally accepted norm and values of the dystopian society" (Booker 38). This statement plays a prominent role in the characterisation of Winston when considering that despite his kind and thoughtful demeanour, Winston also displays a rebelliousness and hate towards the regime's ideology and power which goes against the accepted behaviour and norm of the ideology of Oceania. In his rebelliousness and doubts of the regime, Winston experiences a sense of displacement and loneliness that is reflected in a moment of pensiveness: "He felt as though he were wandering in the forests of the sea bottom, lost in a monstrous world where he himself was the monster. He was alone. The past was dead, the future was unimaginable." (Orwell 1984 28). The notion that Winston stands, for the most part, alone in his rebellion against the totalitarian regime of Oceania and their domination of the privacy, feelings, behaviour and freedom of its individuals reinforces the reader's sympathy and connection and cheers him on, on his quest for the unadulterated truth. Furthermore, the conflicting emotions and rebelliousness that Winston experiences towards the regime can be said to enter into another common characteristic of the dystopian genre (Gottlieb 10: Booker 38). Winston feels contempt, hatred, and disgust towards the regime and sincerely hopes that others exist besides himself who consider themselves enemies of the Party. More precisely, Winston hopes that the rumours of underground conspiracies and Goldstein's Brotherhood truly exists (Orwell 1984 19). With point of departure in his hate and rebelliousness, Winston embarks on a voyage that exposes him to a number of trials and challenges that result in an assorted number of crimes, such as thoughtcrime (20), an illegal love affair (113, 119, 141), and indoctrination into the secret Brotherhood of Emmanuel Goldstein (177), with the sole intention of achieving independence, individuality, and freedom.

Winston's love affair with his co-worker Julia enters into yet another characteristic of the dystopian genre, namely the elimination and domination over the privacy, feelings, emotions,



sexuality, and thoughts of the individual (Gottlieb 11). In Oceania, the regime has deemed the sexual act an act of rebellion and is furthermore considered “[...] a blow struck against the Party. [...] a political act” (Orwell 1984 133). The simple thought of desire is therefore deemed a thoughtcrime (69). The intention of dominating and eliminating the individuality and privacy of the citizens of Oceania, means that the regime arguably attempts to enforce, not only critical obedience, but also a “quasi-religious worship of the state ideology” (Gottlieb 12). On account hereof, Winston and Julia’s love affair can then be regarded as a way to rebel against the Party. Moreover, Winston’s relationship with Julia throws light on some of the aspects and elements of humanity that Winston himself lacks. Julia is described as a sexual being with an intuition that does not follow the sexual codes instituted by the regime, and simply acts out of her own desire whereas Winston acts in rebellion for himself and future generations. Generally, Winston hates women, especially the young and pretty ones, seeing as they are “[...] the most bigoted adherents of the Party, the swallows of slogans, the amateur spies and nosers-out of unorthodoxy.” (Orwell 1984 12). This concept is also a common characteristic of the dystopian genre, namely that women typically are indifferent or content with the respective restrictions that are imposed in society (Booker 39). However, this may be the very reason Winston falls in love with Julia inasmuch as she rebels against the regime based on her personal desires, and not with the same intentions as Winston. This enters into Fredric Jameson’s theory of the political unconscious, more precisely the second horizon focusing on the social aspect of society. According to Jameson, texts should be understood as “utterances” which interpret and express passions and values of social formations within the text. On account of this, the text will undoubtedly present contradictions and antagonist features, a common characteristic found in the dystopian genre. These contradictions are identified through the ideologemes evident within the text, ideologemes that represent opposing views throughout the social class structures presented in the text, as mentioned in previous sections. Therefore, Julia and Winston’s love affair plays into Jameson’s notion of the social horizon, as they form an opposing character and contradictory view of the Inner Party in the sense that a person has less love to give to the Party, if they were to love other people.

Another aspect that enters into Jameson’s theory of the social horizon of contradictions is the character of Emmanuel Goldstein, the renegade of the Inner Party. Goldstein’s Brotherhood was created as a counter-revolutionary act towards Big Brother, making Goldstein the arch-rival of the totalitarian regime of Oceania (Orwell 1984 13). Therefore, it can be argued that the presence of Goldstein contributes in elucidating and displaying the contradictory oppositions and views that exist within Oceania. Keeping this in mind, the views and beliefs of Oceania are perhaps best transmitted through the slogans as determined by the Party:



WAR IS PEACE
FREEDOM IS SLAVERY
IGNORANCE IS STRENGTH (Orwell 1984 6)

The slogans of the Party arguably illustrate the ideologemes that play a prominent role in Oceania. The slogans are constructed by the Inner Party for the purpose of upholding their absolute power and control over the class structure of society ensuring the stability of the regime. However, as mentioned above, the class structure of Oceania leads to open conflict between the Inner Party and the Brotherhood. The notion of conflict in the novel manifests itself in Winston's hatred, disgust, and rebelliousness towards the regime of Oceania, which is further elucidated in a conversation between the character of O'Brien and Winston and Julia, as the latter seeks to join Goldstein's Brotherhood despite the risk of being incriminated by the Thought Police:

We want to join it and work for it. We are enemies of the Party. We disbelieve in the principles of Ingsoc. We are thought-criminals. We are also adulterers. I tell you this because we want to put ourselves at your mercy. If you want us to incriminate ourselves in any other way, we are ready. (Orwell 1984 177)

Winston and Julia believe that O'Brien is part of the secret Brotherhood and thereby engaged in a conspiracy against the regime (Orwell 1984 177). This would ultimately indicate that O'Brien, though being a part of the Inner Party, is in opposition to his own social class structure and the totalitarian regime of Oceania. However, O'Brien's participation in the Brotherhood, as well as its entire existence, is proved to simply have been an act in order for the regime to detect people guilty of thoughtcrime and rebellion towards Big Brother, making O'Brien the antagonist of the novel. Ultimately, the rebelliousness of Winston and Julia is revealed to simply have played a part in a greater scheme of O'Brien and the regime, with the purpose of obtaining docile, loyal subjects of Big Brother who conform to the physical and psychological torture of society. Keeping this in mind, O'Brien can be said to not only support, but also represent the fundamental idea and logic within the ideology of society. More precisely, the Inner Party ultimately "[...] seeks power entirely for its own sake. [The regime is] not interested in the good of others; [they] are interested solely in power. Not wealth or luxury or long life or happiness: only power, pure power." (275). The ideologeme of the regime is that the Inner Party controls life at all levels. What this refers to, is that the regime believes that they ultimately create human nature, in the sense that power is power over human beings, power over their mind and body seeing as humans are "infinitely malleable" (277, 282). Arguably, it



can be deduced that the characters of the novel portray the oppositional and contradictory views and beliefs that exist within the society of Oceania in accordance with Jameson's theory of the social horizon. This undoubtedly leads to open conflicts throughout the novel between the regime and its followers and the opponents of the totalitarian regime.

Jameson's theory on the social horizon brings into attention the class structure of society, something that Orwell likewise illustrated in the novel through the social hierarchy. Orwell's social structure can be said to demonstrate Sigmund Freud's map of the mind and the struggles and disagreements that follow between the id, the ego, and the superego respectively (Storey 97). As mentioned in a previous section, the id refers to the unorganised, emotional, and primitive part of the mind whose main objective is to avoid "unpleasure" (Storr 61). Seeing as Winston so overtly rebels against the regime, he is, in a Freudian point of view, regarded by society as a character whose driving force is the id. Winston's repressed id forces him to act upon his thoughts and emotions without having thoroughly considered and filtered his actions through the ego and the superego. This comes into force when he makes up his mind to write "DOWN WITH BIG BROTHER" repeatedly in his diary at the beginning of the novel (Orwell 1984 20). Ultimately, Winston, as protagonist, would be expected to personify the ideals of the ego, namely the consciousness of the human mind which entails reason and common sense (Storr 61), seeing as he would conform to the ideology of the regime as an average labourer of the Outer Party. However, as his anxiety and fear of getting caught increase, Winston's id is prompted to proceed with his rebelliousness against Big Brother, which allows him to consider the notion that he is outsmarting the regime. The character of O'Brien, however, would generally, as the antagonist, have been represented with a mind where the driving force is that of the id. Alternatively, O'Brien is by the society considered a person who embodies the superego, commonly referred to as the conscience, seeing as he conforms to and protects the ideals and beliefs of the regime. This agrees with the regime's active attempts to create a strong superego within its citizens which is reflected in the upbringing and education of the children of society who are encouraged to repress their id. This is reflected in the attempt to impede children's desire to love and protect their respective families as well as abstaining from sex by rewarding children for their actions that agree with the ideology of society. The party's ideology is attested to by Winston as he considers the aim of the party: "There were even organisations such as the Junior Anti-Sex League which advocated complete celibacy for both sexes [...] The Party was trying to kill the sex instinct, or, if it could not be killed, then to distort it and dirty it" (Orwell 1984 69). The statement alludes to the fact that the regime represses the id of its citizens by correcting their sexual desire, aggression, and physical pain as a way to achieve control and power over the citizens of Oceania. Additionally, it can be argued that, when Winston is finally arrested by the Thought Police as the final trial on his voyage, the



regime puts Winston under surveillance in the hope that they acquire a knowledge or solution that will allow them to “cure” Winston of the struggles in his mind that are in opposition to the regime. The surveillance is conducted by means of telescreens, physical and psychological violence and torture performed predominantly by O’Brien. Ultimately, Winston is subjected to drastic mental treatments to comprehend how they can break Winston’s psyche and thereby strengthen his ego and superego according to the beliefs and ideals of the regime (258), something that arguably resembles Sigmund Freud’s way to diagnose his patients. Eventually, it is Winston’s own mind that betrays him by way of nightmares. Winston’s nightmare of rats provides O’Brien the key component to torture Winston psychologically and physically into becoming a docile citizen of Oceania:

Do you remember [...] the moment of panic that used to occur in your dreams? There was a wall of blackness in front of you, and a roaring sound in your ears. There was something terrible on the other side of the wall. You knew that you knew what it was, but you dared not drag it into the open. It was the rats that were on the other side of the wall. (Orwell 1984 297)

Winston’s nightmares ultimately become his downfall. His fear of rats is utilised as a way to hinder his rebellion and opposition towards the regime and force him to comply with the strong superego the regime attempts to create within their citizens (Orwell 1984 301). The moment Winston is considered to have surrendered to the regime or “cured” is the moment he decides to turn the punishment of the rats against the person he truly loves, Julia: “Do it to Julia! Do it to Julia! Not me! Julia! I don’t care what you do to her. Tear her face off, strip her to the bones, Not me! Julia! Not me!” (300). Winston here conforms to what Freud would consider the pleasure principle, in the sense that he disregards everything except the immediate fulfilment of his desire, namely, to escape from the punishment and torture he experiences (Storey 97). Winston then would be considered a person who internalises the surveillance and punishment and therefore embodies the societal beliefs and ideals rather than his individual urges.

The reader of *1984* experiences the totalitarian dystopian world of Oceania through the eyes of Winston Smith as he attempts to conform, understand, and rebel against the oppressive and powerful regime. Winston experiences both ups and downs as he embarks on his voyage filled with trials and challenges. These present antagonist features and opposing beliefs and ideals within the class structure of society play a prominent role in Fredric Jameson’s theory of the social horizon. The struggle and mindset in Winston and the society of Oceania can be said to portray Sigmund Freud’s notion of disagreements between the id, the ego, and the



superego of the mind. Perhaps, it is the struggles and rebelliousness of and within Winston that allow the reader to create a deeper connection to the protagonist seeing as the reader is able to imagine a future society that resembles that of Oceania, where surveillance takes control over humanity. This notion makes Winston's voyage so much more powerful, and his downfall even more tragic seeing as Winston's story carries weight for the future of today's readers.

SURVEILLANCE, PANOPTICISM, AND POWER

The development of surveillance technology throughout the years calls into question what the future may bring when it comes to monitoring, disciplining, punishment, and power. Will the continuous development of surveillance have an impact on the notion of free will, morale, and critical thinking? In 1984, Orwell imagined a dystopian surveillance-driven future where the government possessed total control over its citizens, and where the citizens spy, not only on one another, but also on themselves. The totalitarian regime of Oceania has, through its implemented surveillance, created a fear within the population that ensures that no sense of personal freedom or control exists within the lives of the citizens. One of the most common tactics used by governments and modern institutions to achieve a sense of control and oppression over people is fear, which assists in sustaining the comprehension of power and control of the authority. Tactics such as fear also play a prominent role in the traditional understanding of Jeremy Bentham's prison building, the Panopticon, and Michel Foucault's social theory Panopticism based on said building, as well as his philosophy mentioned in his work *Discipline and Punish*. The theories concern themselves with complex tactics for various approaches to obtain and control the behaviour and identity of the intended subjects.

The need for a totalitarian regime is perhaps best described through the character of Emmanuel Goldstein, the ultimate nemesis of Oceania as mentioned in previous section, who, in his book "THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF OLIGARCHY COLLECTIVISM", states that "[...] the only secure basis for oligarchy is collectivism. Wealth and privilege are most easily defended when they are possessed jointly." (Orwell 1984 214). Herewith Goldstein argues that society, through the evolutionary assessment of government control and surveillance, has become aware that for the ruling part of society to safeguard their position, they had to construct a society that would allow for the abolition of private property and individuality (214). The ruling part of society is here understood as the 'Inner Party' of Oceania, collectively owning and controlling everything of the lower social groups. Surveillance here is arguably "intrinsically bound up with power", which contributes to a notion of social control that is



managed and maintained by society's compliance with the current social order (Lyon 4, 26).

The constant and controlling surveillance conducted by the ruling party of Oceania has been rendered possible due to the invention of print and further developed by technical advances such as television and radio. With the development of surveillance measures, the notion of private life is accordingly eliminated, allowing the Inner Party to become the functioning ruling unit of the totalitarian regime. However, outwardly the face of the regime is that of 'Big Brother', a face that the 'Outer Party' and 'Proles' can identify and rally behind, or fear, as the manifestation of control and surveillance. This is further supported by the written and broadcasted propaganda of Big Brother's piercing gaze and black moustache with the words "BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING YOU" (Orwell 1984 4). Big Brother is employed by the regime as a tactic to impose the citizens of Oceania with a sense of constant surveillance, thereby implementing a permanent feeling of fear. The existence of Big Brother as leader and guardian of the totalitarian regime of Oceania was gradually introduced to the citizens. According to Winston, he first heard mention of Big Brother during the sixties, however, due to the effects of Oceania's control and rewriting of history, there is no way for the citizens to be sure. The gradual introduction of Big Brother's existence is supported by Winston's thought process: "[Big Brother's] exploits had been gradually pushed backwards in time until already they extended into the fabulous world of the 'forties and the 'thirties [...]" (38). The statement substantiates the fact that the regime controls and rewrites history as a way for them to adapt it so that it corroborates with their sense of reality. Moreover, this allows for the regime to maintain their social control and power over people through the depiction of Big Brother. This is evident when considering the summation of the general structure of Oceania. The Inner Party is described as the brain of the state, the Outer Party is described as the hands, and the 'Proles' below all are described as the "dumb masses" (217). Big Brother however is described accordingly:

At the apex of the pyramid comes Big Brother. Big Brother is infallible and all-powerful. Every success, every achievement, every victory, every scientific discovery, all knowledge, all wisdom, all happiness, all virtue, are held to issue directly from his leadership and inspiration. [...] Big Brother is the guise in which the Party chooses to exhibit itself to the world. (Orwell 1984 216)

Ultimately, Big Brother is utilised to, on the one hand assert power over the citizens of Oceania, and on the other, as a focus point for which the citizens can supply with "love, fear, and reverence" (Orwell 1984 217).

The citizens of Oceania arguably live in a virtual prison where Big Brother is utilised as



a way to impose an all-seeing eye in society. Therefore, Big Brother can be said to symbolise the watchtower of Bentham's Panopticon (Bentham 35). Consequently, the citizens of Oceania have to constantly be aware and in control of what they do and say because everything is monitored and recorded. This, as previously mentioned, is achieved through the presence of the required telescreens that fulfil the function of a two-way monitor by both disseminating announcements and propaganda by the government, as well as monitoring actions and behaviour of the citizens of Oceania, even in the privacy of their homes. Another aspect that supports the notion of Big Brother and the surveillance measures of Oceania as a Panopticon, is the fact that the citizens: "[have] no way of knowing whether [they are] being watched at any given moment" (Orwell 1984 4). This becomes evident one morning during the daily exercise where Winston is unfocused, the instructor calls attention to Winston's daydreaming: "Smith!" screamed the shrewish voice from the telescreen. '6079 Smith W! Yes, *you!* Bend lower, please! You can do better than that." (39). The quote emphasises the notion that the citizens are under constant surveillance irrelevant of what they are doing. On account of this, it becomes obvious that it is important for Winston and the other citizens to manage their behaviour, and furthermore that it is dangerous to let their thoughts wander, seeing as the telescreens pick up on all sound above the level of a whisper. As long as people are within the field of vision of a telescreen, they can be seen as well as heard (65). The smallest abnormal behaviour or expression of the face could give you away, "a nervous tic, an unconscious look of anxiety, a habit of muttering to yourself – anything that carried with it the suggestion of abnormality, of having something to hide." (65). Ultimately, an improper facial expression or thought process would be considered a punishable offence. Another way the ruling party maintains and upholds their power and control over the citizens is by the subjection to the Thought Police. The Thought Police, the police force, or spies of Oceania, assures that the people accused of thoughtcrimes as well as face-crimes are handled accordingly, more precisely, "abolished, annihilated: *vaporized* was the usual word" (21). Keeping this in mind, it can be deduced that the worst enemy of the citizens of Oceania are their own nervous system seeing as at any moment, a thought or tension within could translate itself into a visible expression or symptom that could be picked up on the telescreen or by the Thought Police (67). The power and control provided by the existence of the Thought Police is further elaborated by Winston, as he regards the role of the Thought Police in the regime's surveillance of its citizens. The Thought Police could, at any given moment, tune in to any arbitrary telescreen to watch over all individuals. In relation to this fact, Winston argues that "You had to live – did live, from habit that became instinct – in the assumption that every sound you made was overheard and, except in darkness, every movement scrutinised." (5). The statement mirrors Jeremy Bentham's notion in regard to the Panopticon that the illusion of constant surveillance



contributes towards an internalisation of the surveillance (Foucault *Discipline* 200) and further reflects Sigmund Freud's theory of internalisation of authority and surveillance by means of the superego (Storr 62: Storey 96). Additionally, this enters into David Lyon's notion that people have, throughout history, watched over and spied on each other to monitor and organise the progress and behaviour of the observed (Lyon 22). Another instance where the telescreens play a prominent role in observing and monitoring the behaviour of people, is in the prison cells of the Ministry of Love where Winston is imprisoned. The prison cells are equipped with four telescreens, one on each wall (Orwell 1984 237). This enables the Thought Police to constantly monitor the prisoners and consequently correct their behaviour as desired. This becomes evident when Winston attempts to retrieve a piece of bread from his pocket, as a voice from the telescreen yells out: "Smith! [...] 6079 Smith W! Hands out of pockets in the cells!" (238). The quote emphasises the notion that the telescreens hold different functions, namely, to observe and monitor its citizens while simultaneously allowing for the regime to communicate a message, propaganda, or orders. The telescreens in Orwell's imagined future therefore ultimately function as a way for society to manage and control, not only the social order, but more importantly, the compliance and loyalty for Big Brother by the citizens of Oceania.

Another way the compliance and loyalty remain with Big Brother and the totalitarian regime is by means of the organisation 'the Spies' as previously mentioned. The spies predominantly consist of the children of society who are recruited and "systematically turned into ungovernable little savages" (Orwell 1984 26). Consequently, the children learn to love, not only the regime and the propaganda that follows in suit with the worship of Big Brother, but also the ferocity and anger they can physically turn outwards against the enemy of the regime such as traitors, saboteurs, foreigners, and thought-criminals (26). Moreover, "[i]t was almost normal for people over thirty to be frightened of their own children." (27). The reality that parents are surveilled by their own children is exemplified when Winston encounters his neighbour, Parsons, after his own arrest at the Ministry of Love. When Winston asks which crime Parsons has committed, he admits that he is guilty of thoughtcrime having said "Down with Big Brother" in his sleep (245). When Winston asks as to who turned Parsons in to the Thought Police, Parsons answers that he was turned in by his seven-year old daughter (245). However, instead of being angry or afraid of his daughter, Parsons tells Winston that: "Pretty smart for a nipper of seven, eh? I don't bear her any grudge for it. In fact, I'm proud of her. It shows I brought her up in the right spirit, anyway." (245). Though Parsons tells Winston that he is proud of his daughter, the quote simultaneously accentuates the fact that children of Oceania constantly spy on their parents for the Thought Police, which reinforces the notion of constant surveillance. The reality that children are utilised as spies in the society of Oceania



enters into Fredric Jameson's theory of the first horizon, seeing as it reflects the historical fact of Nazi youth groups during the Second World War. Children were indoctrinated into the ideology of Hitler while simultaneously being utilised as spies in the hope that the children would influence and report on their families if they showed any opposition to the ideology presented by the Nazis (Blakemore "How the Hitler youth"). Ultimately, the existence of the Spies, of all ages, contributes to the reality that the citizens of Oceania live in a state of constant fear of being monitored and penalized, a fear that sufficiently keeps the Outer Party and the Proles in accordance with the regulations and laws of the regime. More precisely, it can be deduced that the possibility of constant surveillance conducted by the likely presence of the Spies can lead to the internalisation of surveillance. The internalisation of surveillance corresponds with Freud's notion of the superego which devotes itself to self-observation as a way to conform to the ideals and norms of society (Storr 63). The constant fear of being watched together with the internalisation of surveillance is adequate in ensuring that the consciousness of the citizens is kept in accordance with the regulations of the party which allows the regime to maintain their power over society.

Another way the state of Oceania asserts power and dominance over its citizens is in the form of punishment and torture as previously mentioned in the character analysis. Foucault in his work *Discipline and Punish* (1977) gave an account of the evolution of punishment which developed from being centred around torture with the intention of forcing pain, to a way of getting people to conform and reform from deviant behaviour and thoughts (Foucault *Discipline* 9, 15). In 1984, punishment was used in both senses of Foucault's definition. Punishment is both exercised through surveillance, monitoring, discipline, and classification as well as physical torture in the desire to achieve conforming individuals. The former aspect is exerted obviously throughout the whole of society by means of a uniform sense of punishment, while the latter is performed on specific individuals who rebel against society despite the main source of punishment. The Ministry of Love utilises physical torture as a way to penalise the prisoners guilty of thoughtcrime as a correctional method to achieve conformity from unwilling citizens. This becomes evident during Winston's arrest, where O'Brien declares the regime's intention of punishment:

We shall crush you down to the point from which there is no coming back. [...] Never again will you be capable of ordinary human feelings. Everything will be dead inside you. Never again will you be capable of love, or friendship, or joy of living, or laughter, or curiosity, or courage, or integrity. You will be hollow. We shall squeeze you empty, and then we shall fill you with ourselves. (Orwell 1984 268)



The statement alludes to the notion that Oceania seeks to, through an array of different forms of punishment, generate individuals who possess no capability of critical thinking other than that of the love for Big Brother and the regime. One form of punishment that Winston is exposed to is his nightmares of rats as mentioned in the previous section. Another punishment that Winston experiences during his arrest is that of electroshock which is utilised as a way to successfully reshape Winston's state of mind. The utilisation of electroshock is displayed as O'Brien attempts to force Winston into believing that the equation two plus two equals five (Orwell 1984 262). Every time Winston answers what would originally be deemed the "correct" answer, the number four, Winston is shocked due to the fact that the attempted brainwash has been unsuccessful, allowing the punishment to continue. Ultimately the punishment of the prisoners of the Ministry of Love assumes three stages, namely, learning, understanding, and acceptance (273). Winston and the other prisoners must learn to admit to anything the regime requires, which is illustrated in the equation, in order for the pain and torture to end. According to the regime, every shed of human dignity must be destroyed in order to prevent further rebellion and warn future citizens contemplating rebellion. As the punishment of Winston, and other prisoners, is finalised, the citizens are returned to their daily lives as reformed thoughtcriminals functioning as living warnings of the power and control held by the regime. According to O'Brien, the Party's intention with the punishment is: "To cure you! To make you sane! The Party is not interested in the overt act: the thought is all we care about. We do not merely destroy our enemies, we change them." (265). Arguably, torture is exercised as a technique to achieve citizens who reform from deviant behaviour and rather conform to the ideology of Oceania. The punishment Winston is exposed to, highlights the fragility of human resilience in the shadow of a totalitarian regime, and at last, Winston's rebellion is overpowered and converted into conformity for Big Brother: "He had won the victory over himself. He loved Big Brother" (311). This reflects the common trend of the dystopian genre where the victory goes to the totalitarian regime over the individual rebel (Booker 39). Arguably, the totalitarian regime triumphs in the light of their overpowering knowledge and control of the citizens of Oceania.

The totalitarian regime of Oceania holds a suffocating effect over its citizens seeing as it exerts an influence over the language, a sphere no one can withdraw from, and which forms the consciousness as well as the opportunity of action. Considering this, it can be argued that language possesses and produces power. In Oceania, the invention of the language, Newspeak, can be said to suffocate any attempt of critical thinking seeing as the linguistic opportunities of independent phrasing disappear. This can be deduced from the simplicity and lack of complexity of Newspeak allowing no room to rethink words or their definition. Newspeak then can be said to limit, not only the language of the citizens of Oceania, but also



their personality and personal identity which prevents rebellion against the system. In this sense, Newspeak arguably was invented as a strategy to construct and maintain power, and according to Foucault, the production of power contains both truth and knowledge as created by man (Mills 105). Furthermore, Foucault states that knowledge and truth are not abstract entities, but rather products of the world which are produced by constraints, techniques, and selected authorities which induce the effects of power (Foucault *Power/Knowledge* 131). Moreover, “power produces; it produces reality; it produces domains of objects and rituals of truth. The individual and the knowledge that may be gained of him belong to this production” (Foucault *Power/Knowledge* 194). Newspeak in 1984 then, is utilised as a way to impose power over its citizens while simultaneously controlling the knowledge and truth passed on. This is further expressed in the regime’s control of history, where every source of information and knowledge is managed or rewritten to conform to the history of society that Oceania wishes to impart. The regime moreover prohibits all individuals from keeping any record of their past, such as documents, photographs, books, films, sound-tracks etc. (Orwell 1984 42), seeing as this makes it easier for the regime to control and rewrite history as they desire. The regime’s control over history is reflected in one of the slogans belonging to the Party: “Who controls the past controls the future: who controls the present controls the past” (260). The quote alludes to the realisation that the past of Oceania is brought up to date. What this means, is that every prediction or declaration ever made by the Party is deemed correct with documentary evidence, as history is continuously altered in newspapers, books, posters, films, photographs etc. (42). This is arguably done in correlation with the belief that whatever the Party holds to be true, is in fact the truth, due to the realisation that knowledge and truth produce power (261). The regime presumes that they are ruling their citizens for their own good on the ground that human beings are unfit to govern themselves allowing them to proceed with their exercise of power and control (275). Fundamentally, it can be derived that whoever possesses and controls knowledge, holds the power over others. This notion of power is consistent with the desire of the regime of Oceania, namely that by attempting to control the language, behaviour, thought, and history of its citizens through surveillance and punishment, the regime holds an all-important power which leaves no room for anything other than the love for the Party and Big Brother.

The character of Emmanuel Goldstein in his book accounts for four ways in which a ruling group can fall from power: “Either it is conquered from without, or it governs so inefficiently that the masses are stirred to revolt, or it allows a strong and discontented Middle group to come into being, or it loses its own self-confidence and willingness to govern.” (Orwell 1984 215). This is noteworthy when considering that the appendix, written from an unspecified point in the future, of the novel “The Principles of Newspeak” suggests that it is not the individual



rebels or the Brotherhood, but ultimately language itself that will become the downfall of Big Brother and the Inner Party. This is ascribed to the fact that Newspeak entirely fails to take by reason of the difficulties that existed in the translation between Oldspeak and Newspeak (324). An example provided in the appendix is that of the Declaration of Independence which brings attention to principled thinking and the integrity of language, and which would have been impossible to translate while simultaneously maintaining the sense of the original text (325). Keeping this in mind, the importance of availability to history and knowledge is reinforced, seeing as it contributes to the exercise of power and control (Foucault *Power/Knowledge* 99). More precisely, it can be argued that a central mechanism of power is that of documentation of knowledge which also plays a prominent role in the characteristics of the dystopian genre. Ultimately, this portrays the intimate relationship that exists between respectively power and knowledge seeing as it contributes to the edification of society which provides a cautionary warning of social, political, and historical trends and tendencies (Booker vii).

Conclusively, it can be deduced that the society of Oceania portrays a totalitarian regime where constant surveillance, punishment, and the control of knowledge eliminate any sense of personal freedom and individuality within its citizens. The regime arguably mirrors the theory of Panopticism where the ever-present and all-seeing entity of Big Brother contributes to the internalisation of surveillance which further allows the regime to obtain power of mind over mind within society. This ultimately sustains the comprehension of power, control, and authority of the regime of Oceania and allows for the opportunity to achieve docile bodies.

MODES OF PRODUCTION

The notion of modes of production enters into Fredric Jameson's theory of the third horizon which concerns itself with the historical aspect of a text. In order to uncover the political unconscious of a text, one must identify the ideologemes of a text to expose the social contradictions and oppositions that are in effect. The contradictions and oppositions are primarily found within the views of the character as well as the class structure of society. Having discovered and identified the ideologemes, dystopian characteristics, and ultimate contradictions of a text, it is rendered possible to determine the modes of production and thereby the underlying ideologies throughout the novel *1984*.

Through the ideologemes present in the state of Oceania, one mode of production that presents itself throughout the text is that of capitalism. According to Marxist theory, capitalism is understood as a social and economic organisation which focus lies on the relationship between the economic classes present. More precisely, "[a] capitalist society is structured



through the antagonism of two dominant classes: the bourgeoisie [...] and the proletariat.” (Edgar et al. 36). The bourgeoisie is considered the superior class who owns the production plus all the material and resources needed, the proletariat on the other hand, is considered the inferior class who works for the bourgeoisie seeing as they only hold ownership of their ability to work. This enters into the class structure presented in *1984* where society is divided into the Inner Party, the Outer Party, and the Proles. The Outer Party, the social class that Winston falls under, can be said to represent the proletarians seeing as people belonging to this social class work under the supervision of the Inner Party. Ultimately, the Outer Party is reduced to products of labour force for the Inner Party with the intention of enforcing the notion that all power and control reside with Big Brother and the regime. When people do not conform to the social class and the norms of society, they are conditioned into conformity through electric shock and physical torture seeing as the ideology and class structure of society are of higher importance than the value of human beings. The Inner and Outer Parties further illuminate the rich versus poor gap of the class structure in Oceania, especially when considering the description of the homes of Winston and O’Brien. Winston’s home is described as dingy, small, and run down (Orwell 1984 5, 22), whereas the grandness of O’Brien’s home is reflected in the attributes of servants, real wine and perhaps most importantly, the ability to turn off the telescreen and thereby the constant threat of surveillance (176, 178). The divide illustrates the lack of equality as well as the suffering of the lower classes of society who are stuck in a position that is impossible to escape from, while the superior class lives in luxury. Arguably, the dystopian characteristics of the totalitarian regime of Oceania intensify the class structure and corporate capitalism present both in the novel and during Orwell’s experience with Fascism and Nazism.

Another mode of production that is elucidated through capitalism is that of consumerism which refers to an increase in the consumption of goods and services that are desirable or fundamental for a person’s happiness. Due to the totalitarian regime of Oceania, which is enforced through surveillance and the Thought Police, as well as the social class structure, consumerism depends on false advertisement. An example of false advertisement is the many products labelled with the prefix “victory” which assists in creating a sense of patriotism and pride towards the war-efforts of Oceania: “Victory Mansion”, “VICTORY GIN”, “VICTORY CIGARETTES”, “Victory Coffee” (Orwell 1984 3, 7, 53). This alludes to the “false” notion that Oceania will eventually win the never-ending wars against Eastasia and Eurasia. Consumerism manifests itself in the paradox that the war in itself generates money seeing as it is marketed as a win with dead certainty, despite the regime constantly changing who they are at war and in alliance with respectively (36). Consequently, it can be argued that the citizens of Oceania are tricked into buying the goods and services due to the fact that they trust that they are



supporting the war effort. Moreover, the consumer society of Oceania is reinforced on the grounds that the only goods that the citizens are able and allowed to purchase are products sponsored by the regime despite the quality of these. Another instance of false advertisement is that of the rationing of chocolate where the regime tells the citizens that the ration has been increased to 20 grams, when in actuality it has been decreased from 30 grams: “It appeared that there had even been demonstrations to thank Big Brother for raising the chocolate ration to twenty grammes a week. And only yesterday, [Winston] reflected, it had been announced that the ration was to be *reduced* to twenty grammes a week.” (61). The quote emphasizes the notion that the regime utilises false advertisement as a way to strengthen the capitalism of Oceania, and further support their control and power over society. This is furthermore aided by the utilisation of technology which is evident through ever-present telescreens in the lives of the citizens.

However, worth noting, is that Orwell in his work *Why I Write* (1946) states that: “Every line of serious work that I have written since 1936 has been written, directly or indirectly, *against* totalitarianism and *for* democratic Socialism, as I understand it.” (Orwell *As I Write* 6). This enters into the argument that *1984* portrays capitalism in disguise of socialism seeing as the society of Oceania draws parallels to a capitalist society while simultaneously illustrating a socialistic conviction. Arguably, the novel can be said to illuminate a democratic socialism which is a mixture of regulated capitalism and a private/capital market of public services, which ultimately enters into the notion that no mode of production can ever exist in pure form. The socialistic aspect of *1984* is further underlined through the Inner Party or regime of Oceania, known as Ingsoc, or in Oldspeak: “English Socialism” (Orwell *1984* 38). Keeping this in mind, it can be deduced that the society of Oceania is strongly distorted by a false socialist ideology and further illustrates how a totally administered society can condition thought and behaviour through the control of language and class structure.

Ultimately, the passions and values of Orwell are placed in a new and seemingly relativised perspective by the horizon of human history in the modes of production, which arguably convey a symbolic cautionary message to the reader. Conclusively, George Orwell’s novel *1984* can be read as a cautionary warning of limited freedom and choices in the face of political realities of nightmares such as Fascism, Stalinism, and Nazism during the Second World War. The novel can be considered a critique and warning that democratic socialism can lead to a totalitarian regime with intrusive surveillance and punishment, and total control over society.



A Scanner Darkly

In 1977, American author Philip K. Dick published his dystopian science fiction novel *A Scanner Darkly* (henceforth ASD) which is deemed one of his most coherent political statements of the interrelationship of politics, drugs, and paranoia (Hickman 154). Produced in an era affected by heightened surveillance, ASD can be viewed as the product of the intertwining of cultural and political paranoia. Dick wrote the novel during a time of intense personal and national paranoia (Rhee 133), and by infusing autobiographical elements into the novel, he was able to reflect his own personal paranoia and removal from the values of the 1960s counterculture. Central to ASD are the effects of surveillance and drug addiction uttered by the powerful forces of government onto the non-autonomous subject.

SETTING

As a characteristic of dystopian fiction, ASD is set in 1994, subsequently seventeen years after the publication of the novel. Representing a hypothetical future is one of the main traits of Western dystopian fiction, which is why it is crucial to look at the futuristic elements presented within the novel.

The novel is set in a near-future in Anaheim in Orange County, California, in which the highly addictive and deadly, psychoactive drug Substance D, also known as “Death”, “D”, or “Slow Death” (Dick 19, 20) has found its way onto the black market, claiming numerous lives. Functioning as a cautionary tale about drug addiction, the mood of ASD is set from the opening lines, portraying two of the most important themes that come to influence the narrative from start to finish: the degrading stage of hallucination caused by brain damage and the persistent sense of anguish and suffering that addiction and drug abuse causes:

Once a guy stood in all day shaking bugs from his hair. The Doctor told him there were no bugs in his hair. After he had taken a shower for eight hours, standing under hot water hour after hour suffering the pain of the bugs, he got out and dried himself, and he still had bugs in his hair; in fact, he had bugs all over him. A month later he had bugs in his lungs. (Dick 1)

In the passage above, the character Jerry Fabin is introduced, who, as a result of his drug addiction, is committed to the Neural Aphasia Clinic (New-Path) for treatment. From the first page, the novel shows the consequences of drug abuse. The cautionary tone is carried out



throughout the novel and escalates in the “Author’s Note” in which Dick dedicates the novel to a list of close friends, all addicts who had either passed away or suffered severe permanent damage to their health as consequence of their addiction, himself included. Drug addiction serves therefore as a prominent theme throughout the novel.

Taking place in a somewhat near future, some futuristic elements will be considered, as they are major characteristics of dystopian fiction. In order to reveal the source of the drug Substance D, the government’s federal law enforcements have developed invasive high-tech surveillance systems. As part of these systems, a network of agencies undertakes extensive undercover operations sending officers and informants into the streets impersonating as drug addicts. The surveillance system present within the society of Anaheim resembles the Orwellian surveillance state as it includes a severe technological advancement in the form of tapped phones, and extensive surveillance cameras producing records into three-dimensional format. Finally, an organisation, WE TIP, specialises with cases of anonymous reporting on drug traffickers. The extension of the Substance D network has further resulted in the necessity of requiring undercover agents to go by aliases by wearing scramble suits when reporting to their superiors in the Orange County Drug Abuse Program, whose primary function is to protect the identity of the undercover police officers. The suit is described as a thin “shroudlike membrane” (16) that covers the entire body and projects a conspicuous blur of faces, which makes it impossible to identify the wearer’s voice and appearance, as it consists of “multifaced quartz lens hooked to a miniaturized computer whose memory banks [holds] up to a million and a half physiognomic fraction-representations of various people: men, women, children, with every variant encoded and then projected outward in all directions” (Dick 16). The representations of millions of faces are thus projected outwards onto the suits, resulting in the wearer’s face and voice becoming blurry and intertwined, “[leaving] in our minds no characteristics” (17). The scramble suit comes to play a prominent part in not only the intersubjectivity of the protagonist, but also in the collusion between government surveillance and Substance D.

The structural framework of the novel follows a linear narrative structure divided into seventeen chapters, in which the events are portrayed in chronological order, allowing the reader to experience the decline of the protagonist from start to finish without interruption. The vast majority of the novel is depicted in a linear chronological order; however, an exact time span is not revealed other than the novel takes place in June 1994. There is no indication of the span of time Fred/Arctor spends on surveilling himself and his household. The only indication the reader is provided is the fact that Arctor once had lived a different life: “there had been a time, once, when he had not lived like this” (Dick 48). The reader can thus only guess that from the beginning of the novel to Fred/Arctor’s personal decline several months



have passed.

Dick's setting of society resembles modern day America, though with some key differences, namely the complex and technological advanced state apparatus which includes constant public surveillance. The state surveillance is characterised as a dogmatic and aggressively punitive clinical apparatus that is intended to surveil drug addicts, which results in the embodiment and representation of many Foucauldian ideas on the state, madness, surveillance and how power operates throughout society. It is clear that two worlds are represented within society, from the perspective of the straights who inhabit mainstream society and from the counterculture's perspective of the dopers. According to Lejla Kucukalic, the two worlds in Dick's novel are not to be perceived as dualities, but instead as intertwining that emerge through the personal demise of Bob Arctor, illuminating that they in fact operate under the same rules (Kucukalic 120). The issue of government surveillance in ASD is explored by emphasising the paradox of society's darkened vision, "perceiving the world as reflected in a mirror" (Dick 169) because of the constant camera surveillance. One of the major events in the novel occurs when Arctor, in his role as the undercover police officer, Fred, is assigned to surveil his household, including himself. With the house wired for surveillance, the undercover agents are able, through records extracted from spying cameras, to observe their assigned targets. The spying cameras, small portable devices that acquire holographic images, also referred to as holo-scanners, enable tracking and storing information on the subjects being surveilled. The level of surveillance observation that the scanners provide, enables the authorities to search "above and beyond what their undercover people did when no one was looking" (55). By gaining complete access to the private home, the police are able to achieve a better understanding of society and its citizens.

Anaheim is marked by mass-consumption, verisimilitude, lack of compassion, and repetition, and society seems somewhat content with its empty lives. At the beginning of the novel, Arctor remarks on the state of the city, stating that:

[...] in Southern California it didn't make any difference anyhow where you went; there was always the same McDonaldburger place over and over, like a circular strip that turned past you as you pretended to go somewhere. And when finally, you got hungry and went to the McDonald's hamburger, it was the one they sold you last time and the time before that and so forth. (Dick 22)

Society in ASD is deeply influenced by repetitive mass-production and consumption. Even more so, the characters living in this environment seem to be ignorant and poorly educated. The two subcultures present in the novel evidently share the same basic rules of economy, despite



their different lifestyles: overproduction and mass-consumption. The rules and conditions of consumer ideology are present in both worlds. The world of the dopers is constituted by the massive drug industry, and the world of the straights is filled with endless trips to the strip malls and mass-produced, and at times, fake food. The verisimilitude present within Anaheim is especially expressed as substitution for various items. For example, the character Jim Barris, who also produces fake cocaine, is depicted eating a sandwich made out of “melted imitation cheese and fake ground beef on special organic bread” (27). Likewise, Arctor makes references to the “plastic dog shit[s]” (94) that are sold all around in Los Angeles, and later on, he finds himself speculating on which flowers he wants to buy Donna, the plastic ones or the real ones. This mass-manufacturing of replicas “support[s] fabrication”, by encouraging the citizens to purchase more and more, which further assists in questioning the authenticity of reality the characters find themselves within (Kucukalic 128). Conclusively ASD takes place in a world marked by endless exchange of commodities, with particular focus on drugs, a world not that different from that of its author.

NARRATIVE FORM

The repetitiveness the characters experience within their daily lives has a deep effect on the narrative. As mentioned, Philip K. Dick’s novel can be classified as a dystopian novel through its exploration of social and political structures in an imaginary society. Throughout his authorship, Dick has in the majority of his work presented narratives with constructions of reality as their centre of attention. Believing that the internal human perception of existence at times differs from the external one, Dick has through his work attempted to illustrate that reality is in fact created on multiple levels, namely that of the “individual”, that deals with our perception of reality; the “virtual” in which reality is constructed by media and interactions through technology; and “institutional” in which reality is established by forces of power (Kucukalic 6). The theme of uncertainty of reality emerged due to Dick’s anxiety developed as a side-effect to his drug addiction which came to affect him (and his work for that matter) for the majority of his life. Dick’s background effectively came to influence his narrative tone as it inflicted philosophical, social, and cultural, scientific, and moral issues. His use of language carries remarks of such subjects, as it can be interpreted as a piece of reading that carries on Dick’s speculations concerning human culture and self-exploration that he narrows down into two questions: “what is human? And, what is real?” (qtd. In Kucukalic 2)

In ASD, Dick applies a major narrative effect which is the creation of tone set by the speech of the characters, through which he establishes the bigger questions or concerns of his



fictional universe. The characters live within a false reality created by the deception of police informants and the influence of drugs and therefore find themselves in a constant state of paranoia. Dick reflects this state through the sense of unsureness that continues throughout the novel. Having acquired a basic knowledge for the drug environment through his own personal experience, Dick is able to provide a certain credibility to his work, by successfully creating a realistic and convincing atmosphere within the drug environment. As seen in the following example, when Charles Freck considers going into rehab at New-Path rehabilitation centre, Jim Barris explains to Charles the side-effects of going cold turkey:

If you go in, Barris said, you'll experience symptoms [...]. You see, it functions this way: Substance D, in fact all addictive dope, but Substance D most of all, interacts with the catecholamines in such a fashion that involvement is locked in place at a subcellular level. Biological counter-adaptation has occurred, and in a sense forever. [...] They used to believe this occurred only with the alkaloid narcotics, such as heroin. (Dick 27)

Having acquired a basic knowledge for the mechanisms at play under the influence of drugs, Dick is able to provide credible information and knowledge of the state the characters find themselves in during the majority of the novel, and the impact drug abuse inflicts on the body.

In ASD, in alignment with G rard Genette's narrative discourse, it is Fred/Arctor who primarily functions as a homodiegetic narrator, a narrator who is present within the story he tells (Barry 226). As a narrative form, Dick has chosen to narrate the novel through the perspective of a third person by a limited omniscient narrator. The narrative form offers the reader insight into not only Fred/Arctor's thoughts and feelings, but also the perspective of Charles Freck, Donna Hawthorne, and the undercover agent Mike Westaway, and finally Bruce, Fred/Arctor's new and final persona, exposing their unspoken thoughts and feelings. Furthermore, the focalisation from which the narrative is told is what Genette refers to as internal focalisation, in which the focus is on "what the characters think and feel" (224), as seen in the following examples:

Arctor: I'll be glad, Bob Arctor thought, when we get in the holo-scanners and have them set up all over this house. He touched his gun, felt reassured, then wondered if he should make certain it was still full of shells. (Dick 53)

Fred: For some obscure reason Fred felt like shaking hands with them before he left, but he did not; he just left, saying nothing, a little down and a little bewildered, because, probably, of the way it had shot out of left field at him, so suddenly. (Dick



By narrating through several perspectives, Dick enables the story to be told from different points of view and thereby offers an interpretive insight to the cultural and historical instances of the narrative. As the novel mainly follows Fred/Arctor's point of view, the reader is mostly confined to how Fred/Arctor experiences his surroundings. Likewise, when Fred/Arctor becomes suspicious or questions his own reality, the reader is naturally taking his standpoint as well. Important to mention is the fact that Fred and Arctor at one point become the main representatives of the straights and the dopers, due to their mental deterioration and separation. One of the most crucial aspects of Dick's narrative, is that the perspectives of Fred/Arctor over time become increasingly independent of each other, underlying the split between the two personas as a result of the "*Cross-cuing*" (Dick 168) or split-damage between his two hemispheres in his brain caused by his addiction to Substance D, which he has obtained during his undercover. The reader, being fully aware that Fred and Arctor are in fact the same person, gets to experience Fred observing himself as Arctor, to the point where he at times forgets that he is in fact Arctor:

Fred wondered. [...] What the hell had Arctor been up to? Arctor must have burned [Barris] pretty bad, Fred thought, for this. [...] I'm the man in the scanners [...] And I was asking, What's Arctor been up to. (Dick 132)

In order to further illustrate Fred's alienation from Arctor as a result of his increasing cognitive deficit, Dick has as a linguistic technique throughout the novel injected a number of passages of German poems from Goethe's *Faust*, Heinrich Heine's *Die Heimkehr* and Beethoven's *Fidelio* respectively, all depicting some sort of split personality. Moreover, as Arctor's identity becomes increasingly disintegrated, the narrative too becomes more fragmented, as it from time to time is interrupted by scientific articles concerning the duality of the psyche. Dick's choice of these poems functions as allegories whose details and meaning(s) provide an apt context, mirroring the process of Fred/Arctor's mental decrease.

A final notion is that throughout the novel, Dick also applies narrative information, both through the perspective of the omniscient and through direct speech, to, not only provide the reader knowledge of the sciences of drugs, but also to aid the reader in his/her navigation through his fictional universe. In relation to the perspective of the omniscient narrator, it can be argued whether it is Dick himself in the role as a heterodiegetic narrator, a narrator who is not part of the tale that he narrates, in order to provide additional knowledge to his reader. The explanation for such narrative technique is that the amount of information provided in



chapter two in the explanation of the function of the scramblesuit would not function as well if embedded into the host's speech, as it would result in long passages of speech, whereas the narrative information constitutes a much more natural flow within the narrative, a technique Dick applies on multiple occasions throughout the novel.

A SCANNER DARKLY AS A SOCIALLY SYMBOLIC ACT

In accordance with Fredric Jameson's theory of analysis concerning the text being understood as a socially symbolic act, one must in alignment with the first horizon establish the historical events during which the text was written, as the text's symbolic act offers an imaginary solution to a real contradiction that has prompted its existence.

As a reaction to the increasing drug use during the 1960s, the Comprehensive Drug Abuse and Control Act of 1970 was instituted to systematise federal drug regulation, ultimately to control its user without addressing its social selectivity ("War on Drugs") In 1969, leading up to the declaration of War on Drugs in 1971, president Richard Nixon framed drugs, in a message to Congress, as a "growing menace to the general welfare of the United States" and saw it furthermore as a "serious national threat to the personal health and safety of millions of Americans" (qtd. in Barber). Following led to Nixon's official declaration in 1971, during which he declared drug abuse as the "public enemy number one" ("War on Drugs"). As part of the initiative, federal police funding was increased for drug control agencies, which proposed strict measures of action that included mandatory prison sentencing for engaging in drug crimes ("War on Drugs"). Following the increase of demand for marijuana in mainstream society, Nixon saw society as being fundamentally divided as a result of "straight society" transforming into a "drug society" (Farmbry 93).

There are a number of factors that point to Dick's novel being a socially symbolic act of the American enforcement strategies that harrowingly show how they occlude the social and economic laws of the problem they purport to remedy. Dick began writing ASD in 1971, and it was first published in 1977 and is referred to as a semi-autobiographical novel as it accounts for real events based on Dick's personal experience within the drug culture in America during the 1960s and 1970s, as he himself struggled with drug addiction throughout the majority of his life. In an interview in Germany in 1977 conducted by Uwe Anton and Werner Fuchs, Dick stated that "everything in A Scanner Darkly I actually saw" (Anton et al.), revealing that the majority of the time writing ASD, he wrote while being on amphetamines. In another interview in France, Dick asserted that his relationship with the United States was "very bad" (Breux et al.) due to the surveillance of law enforcement that arose with Nixon's administration



that ultimately caused the worsening of his mental state. Suffering from severe paranoia, Dick feared being arrested by the police for “obscure reasons” (Breux et al.). He further mentioned incidents that occurred during Nixon’s rule that affected his relationship with the American government, including a break-in in his house that he seemingly connected to the government, and another incident in which he claimed he was threatened by a police officer. Themes of oppression, killings and arrest unjustly enforced by the government apparatus came to affect not only ASD but multiple of Dick’s works such as *The Minority Report* (1956), *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* (1968), and *Flow My Tears, the Policeman Said* (1974). Apart from the police state and its surveillance apparatus enacted over its citizens, ASD has added a particular criticism directed towards corporate capitalism as well as including alternate realistic and mind alterations caused by addiction.

Arguably, Dick employs his personal experience through his protagonist Bob Arctor to convey a political statement, illustrating how the impact of law enforcement can create a discursive framework through which we distinguish between right and wrong. The representation of the two classes “straights” and “dopers” further emphasises how discourse functions as a disciplinary power that regulates and defines the individual body. The division between the dopers and straights is first and foremost enacted through policy of discourse through which systems of power are established and henceforth maintains the prohibition. Ultimately, it is Anaheim’s distinction between the two classes that portrays the class of the dopers as the ultimate threat to the welfare of mainstream society. It is such a distinction that inevitably causes the mental deterioration of Fred/Arctor, an undercover narc that imposes himself as an addict. It can be argued that Dick’s novel does not as much offer a solution to real life contradictions, as previously explained by Jameson. Rather, as Paul Youngquist asserts, Dick utilises ASD as an instance of “*déjà prévu* - remembering a future that will never arrive, because it is already here” (Youngquist 83), suggesting that the future is a loop that moves without a historical evolution. Elaborately, the future ASD warns against during the 1970s is already present at the time of its publication. It can therefore be argued that ASD is utilised as a warning or cautionary tale to elucidate the totalitarian enactment of discursive power (Booker 2). Notably, the execution of law serves as an important aspect in the coercive regulation of human behaviour, it is however the discursive exertion of power enacted throughout society of Anaheim that too serves as a regulation of how people think and differentiate between the mainstream society of the straights and the society of the dopers (Youngquist 83). To Dick, addiction is not perpetuated by corruption or need, but by social conditions “that include the violence of economic exchange, the demonization of a dangerous class, [and] the functionality of carceral justice” (83). In that sense, ASD can be argued to be the socially symbolic act of how the downward spiral of addiction is connected to the ascending spiral of surveillance.



CHARACTER ANALYSIS

With regard to the analysis of the novel's characters and their relationship towards the dystopian society, it is important to firstly introduce the main character of the novel as well as the centre of the universe for the rest of the characters. With regard to the second horizon suggested by Jameson, it is within this level that the term ideologeme becomes relevant as it represents the opposing voices present within the novel, often resonating in the characters, and ultimately it illustrates how class indifference ultimately can lead to open conflict. The ideologemes presented in ASD function to provide a dialectic between the proletariat class, represented as the dopers, and the bourgeoisie class, represented as the straights. In Philip K. Dick's novel ASD, the circumstantial reality of the totalitarian world of Anaheim is experienced through the perspective of the protagonist Robert Arctor, an undercover narcotic agent assigned to involve himself and infiltrate the underworld of drugs in order to locate its supply source.

Fred/Arctor is first introduced at the Anaheim Lions Club meeting as a representative of the police force, taking the stage to talk about the current drug war. In order to protect his identity, Arctor wears a scramble suit and answers to the pseudonym 'Fred' under which he reports the information he gathers to his superiors. As Arctor, he is a member of the household that he has been assigned to spy on, which he shares with two roommates, Ernie Luckman and Jim Barris, who are often found socialising with the addict Charles Freck and Arctor's girlfriend and drug dealer Donna Hawthorne, most often depicted taking Substance D and other drugs together.

When introduced to the crowd at the Anaheim Lions Club, the host announces the cause of Fred wearing the scramble suit:

There is a dire risk for these police officers because the forces of dope, as we know, have penetrated with amazing skill into the various law-enforcement apparatuses throughout our nation, or may well have, according to most informed experts. So for the protection of these dedicated men, this scramble suit is necessary. (Dick 17)

By depriving Fred of recognisable facial features and a legible identity, he is automatically deprived of intersubjectivity and "meaningful recognition by others [which] also situates him outside ethics" (Rhee 138). Even though Fred expresses that he does not mind wearing the scramble suit, he does have some reservations concerning his speech which "by and large, [had] been written by others and put before him to memorize" (Dick 18). As a common characteristic deduced from the dystopian genre, an alienation between Fred and the



government of Anaheim exists from the beginning. Neither the script nor the sentiment Fred conveys throughout the speech are his own. According to Jennifer Rhee, alienation is not an uncommon theme for Dick's fiction. In fact, Dick's inclusion of acts of alienation is almost always accompanied with consequence, which is evident when Fred repeats the scripted speech in public and therefore contributes to the estrangement of Fred from himself, which inevitably results in the progressive degrading of his two identities (Rhee 137). For a moment however, Fred breaks from the original script and starts to talk directly to the audience, emphasising the suffering of those addicted to drugs: "If you were a diabetic, he said, and you didn't have any money for a hit of insulin, would you steal to get the money? Or just die? Silence." (Dick 19). The quote contemplates an ideologeme present within Arctor's conflicting feelings towards the government of Anaheim in its repression of dopers. Indicated through his statement above, he takes an ethical stance towards the unfairness enacted against the dopers, as the condemnation directed at them offers no opportunity of escape from their current position within society; rather it merely maintains them at their current social position.

The representation of the environmental circumstances of the dopers and the straights lies mostly in favour of the dopers, as the representation of the straights is scarcely present throughout the novel. Besides the scene at the Anaheim Lions Club, the only straights portrayed in the novel are an elderly couple who share their building with an addict and her domestic boyfriend, and a locksmith and his sister who appear shortly during a passage concerning Arctor's issue with a fake check. During his speech Fred/Arctor describes the straights as "nitwits" and "[m]ental simps" (Dick 19), as they only seem to respond to the simplified and prepared speech, one that he has repeated "a million times, both in class and at previous lectures" (19). To Arctor, the commercial nature and lack of intellectuals in Southern California are what drive people into the exact same state of disbandment that his speech ironically attempts to warn against, namely, "Dumbness and Despair and Desertion" (19). Nevertheless, the social structure and ideologeme of mainstream society can be deemed to be represented in relation to its counterculture.

As for the dopers, they represent a subclass within the society and economy of Anaheim. Despite the fact that their life-style and identities comply with the counterculture of Anaheim, they partake as consumers just as much as the straights of mainstream society, placing them as part of the economic system of the society (Palmer 183). The dopers are allowed only to occupy themselves with menial jobs, but mostly their days consist of long and meaningless discussions. Reviewing the recordings from the holo-scanners, Fred often fast-forwards a couple of hours where he finds the dopers continuously rambling in repetition, conversing about the same topic begun a few hours before.

As a subgroup, the dopers are under constant suspicion and therefore denied access



to the shopping centres where the real wealth of consumer society is portrayed, as they are not able to present a valid credit card (Dick 6). Instead, they are left with cheap copies or used items, which are crucial for their position in society, as Palmer asserts: “it is by material circumstances that [the dopers] are defined” (Palmer 183). You are what you buy, or you are automatically under suspicion. The same goes for the legitimacy of the individual: “To survive in this police state, he thought, you gotta always be able to come up with a name, your name. That’s the first sign they look for that you’re wired, not being able to figure out who the hell you are.” (Dick 5); failing to show a legitimate name, one immediately falls into a class that poses danger to society (Youngquist 91). The concept of commodity and exchange manifests itself as a prominent ideologeme present within the society of the dopers, as well as the mainstream society, in which there are buyers, sellers, supply, demand, and competition at play. Dick promptly exerts throughout the novel that the doper “lives to score and scores to live” (87). The ideologeme of commodities and exchange, as well as the world of the dopers, is best expressed through the character and addict Charles Freck. Through his addiction, Freck frequently achieves a brief moment of satisfaction and joy through the commodity of drugs:

Happiness, he thought, is knowing you got some pills. [...] Look at what he had found by chance [...]. An unexpected new supply of Substance D. What more could he ask out of life? [...] Two weeks! His heart soared, and he smelled, for a moment, coming from the open windows of the car, the brief excitement of spring. (Dick 10)

Substance D sustains Freck, but only for a brief moment before he, as a consumer, needs to reproduce the satisfaction by purchasing more illegal substances, as for the doper there is no life without their fix. As an extension to the ideologeme of commodity and exchange is the ideologeme of consumerism and mass production. At the beginning of the novel, Freck imagines, as a result of having run out of Substance D, the Thrifty Drug Stores selling the drug in a variety of quantities: “they had a huge window display; bottles of slow death, cans of slow death, jars and bathtubs and vats and bowls of slow death, millions of caps and tabs and hits of slow death, slow death mixed with speed and junk and barbiturates and psychedelics, everything” (Dick 4).

His “fantasy” of the endless lines and varieties of Substance D is enhanced yet again when his friend Jim Barris convinces Freck that he is able to extract cocaine from Solarcaine sunburn spray by freezing it, producing multiple ounces of fake cocaine. Within the drug world, the selling and buying mechanism is at peak, and everything revolves around getting an instant fix. Despite the massive societal gap between the dopers and the straights created



by the governmental law enforcements of Anaheim, it is evident that Arctor is able to see through the gap and manages to outline that the main difference between the dopers and the straights, namely that straights gain immediate satisfaction through legal commodities and the dopers through illegal ones.

Not long after his break from the scripted speech, Fred is assigned by his superior officer, Hank, to primarily monitor his other identity persona Bob Arctor. Hank, also known as Mr. F, is one of the superiors at Orange County GHQ in Anaheim and more specifically he is Fred's superior to whom Fred reports. As a character, Hank represents the worldview of the state of Anaheim. Despite his limited appearance throughout the novel, Hank plays a significant role for its plot. Just like Fred, Hank is obligated to wear a scramble suit, and the reader can also assume that the name "Hank" is a pseudonym for his undercover. Not much is revealed about Hank, as the scramble suit hides his appearance and transforms his voice into a metallic monotonous and unidentifiable sound. During their meeting, Hank's view on the state of Anaheim is where the ideologemes of his position become evident. One ideologeme is the state's view on drug addicts and the drug environment, which is represented in Fred's pre-written speech:

What I fear [...] is that our children, your children and my children [...] little ones [...] But not too little to be addicted, calculatedly addicted, for profit, by those who would destroy this society.[...] We do not know yet [...] specifically who these men - or rather animals - are who prey on our young, as if in a wild jungle abroad [...] But finally we will. (Dick 18)

The state's view on its counterculture has established it as a dangerous space of drug abuse that harms the rest of the society. In response to Fred's fall out from his speech to express his sympathy towards drug addicts, Hank runs a list of victims of drug cases, stressing the inhumaneness of the drug environment, in order to make Fred understand the seriousness of the drug war in Anaheim and why the drug environment must be eliminated. The justice behind prohibiting drugs in Anaheim is invoked by old stereotypes towards the drug environment: "they" prey on the mainstream class, "they" lack restraint and "they" belong to a dangerous class, all which is used to justify its incarceration (Youngquist 91). The discussion of class ultimately leads to the final ideologeme expressed through Hank: to end the drug war, the number one solution being identifying and killing the pushers, and admitting the addicts into New-Path, thus ending at a sustainable society not threatened by the dangers of its counterculture. This is an essential dystopian feature, utilised through the push and pull mechanism between utopian and dystopian perspectives. Within ASD, the ultimate promise



of a utopia is the removal of the drug environment. However, the pursuit of this dream has unintentionally transformed the society into a fascist utopia with grave consequences for humanity. The extensive surveillance emitted throughout society has through the pursuit of a utopian society escalated into the creation of a totalitarian society, indicating that some marginalized groups must be sacrificed to reach this imagined society. Hank, being well aware that Fred during his undercover shares his house with fellow drug addicts, but not as to who Fred really is, informs Fred of a received anonymous tip that has identified Bob Arctor as a suspicious figure due to his frequent comings and goings from the house and his unexplained sources of income, which in fact originates from Fred/Arctor's work monitoring dopers (Palmer 192).

One of Fred/Arctor's primary functions as an undercover agent is to investigate the drug environment. The role of Substance D and its influence on the characters become a main motif of the novel and is quickly established to be the motive for all actions of the characters, whether it is the government's hunt for drug addicts or addicts' pursuit of the drug. Substance D's source material originates from the flower *Mors Ontologica*, which Mike Westaway, an undercover agent (and former addict, but still conscious) explains translates into: "Death of the spirit. The identity. The essential nature" (Dick 202). The deterioration of identity caused by Substance D is present within every addicted character but plays its role most prominently through Arctor. Throughout the novel, Arctor is in constant internal conflict with his identity: "who am I? Which of them is me?" (75). By appointing Arctor two identities, the reader is given an unique insight to all of the layers of the dystopian society - the mainstream society inhabited by the straights, the counterculture inhabited by the addicts and to some extent into the police and government.

As the story progresses, the boundaries between Fred and Arctor start to blur, making it difficult to determine which of the two he identifies as, even the narration refers to him as "Fred, Robert Arctor, whatever" (Dick 19). Consequently, due to the massive surveillance monitoring in Arctor's house, "the boundary between public and privacy has been removed" (Hemmat 22). The two technological surveillance devices, the holo-scanners, and the scramble suit, lead to a manipulation of reality. Arctor's task of surveilling the scanner recordings of himself eventually leads to his cognitive disabilities as he starts to question whether he is a narc or an addict, as in accordance with the construction of society, he cannot be in between. Due to the high risk of undercover agents falling into addiction and being admitted to New-Path, Fred has to undergo evaluation throughout his undercover job by two psychologists of the Orange County Sheriff's Department. During his first visit, the psychologist informs Fred of some of the side-effects caused by the intake of Substance D, referring to it as a form of 'toxicity': "It's a toxic brain psychosis affecting the percept system by splitting it" (Dick 87).



During the first meeting Fred already shows signs of affections in his brain due to his drug addiction, including his inability to identify the shapes of a series of pictures presented to him, for example when shown an outline of a dog, Fred identifies it as a sheep (88). Frustrated with his difficulties taking the test, Fred agrees to come back to finish it at another time.

In accordance with Jameson's theory of the social horizon, that urges to bring attention to the class structure of society, narrating through Arctor's point of view not only brings attention to the class injustice (albeit this is not the understanding of the government), but also to the struggles and contradictions that occur within the mind of the protagonist. This can be explained in relation to Sigmund Freud's model of the psyche. In alignment with Freud's assertion of the three parts of the mind, respectively the id, the ego, and the superego, Arctor and his contradictory reservation directed at the government can from a Freudian perspective be regarded as a character whose driving forces are navigated by his inner desires, i.e. the id. As mentioned, ASD contains bits of Goethe's play Faust which carries similar allegorical elements between the character of Faust and Arctor. In his essay *The Uncanny* Freud interprets on the two souls in Faust's breast, one that aspires upward and one that clings on to earth "as a doubling of the ego whereby what would soon go by the name superego keeps the ego under surveillance" (Rickels 60). In other words, it renders a man capable of self-observation. By adding bits from Faust, the reader is given the opportunity to experience the exchange between the two "souls" in Arctor's mind. While watching himself as Arctor, Fred questions if he (Arctor) is pretending not to know about the surveillance cameras, an act that stands in alignment with the idea of internalisation of surveillance presented by Jeremy Bentham's of the Panopticon: "Each day the experience of the scanners had grown [...] Like an actor before a movie camera, he decided, you act like the camera doesn't exist or else you blow it. It's all over" (Dick 146).

The doubling of Arctor's identity can be interpreted as a doubling of the ego whereby the superego emerges to keep the ego under surveillance. Fred/Arctor's ego, functioning as a mediator between the id and the external world through self-preservation, is throughout the novel compromised. In order not to raise suspicion about his true identity, Arctor simultaneously takes part in the consumption of drugs with the rest of the household, despite it being a violation of the law, especially in his position as an employee of the government. Progressively, living as Arctor, he starts to act in accordance with the pleasure principle rather than the reality principle. As stated in the theory section, the id acts in order to avoid pain and the same can be stated in relation to Arctor's situation. His behaviour must be enacted in accordance with his environment, and to refuse to partake in the drug consumption could cause suspicion or possibly conflict with his group of friends. His ego is therefore ultimately set aside in preference of the id, which is usually repressed by the other two instances of the



mind (superego and ego). The primary function of the superego, being the internalisation of authority, is constituted through self-observation as a way to determine the extent of which the ego conforms or fails in accordance with the ideal ego. As pointed out in the theory section, parallels exist between the superego and the Panopticon in an attempt to normalise and control the behaviour of the individual. Moreover, the superego, enacted through Fred, demands for socially accepted behaviour from the ego, embodied by Arctor, that conforms to the norms of Anaheim (which is the prohibition of drugs) rather than to individual urges, such as avoiding conflict. As Arctor fails to live up to the expectations set by the norms of Anaheim due to his addiction of Substance D and the effects hereof, he starts to develop anxieties and paranoid tendencies, and later on, he is subjected to punishment by the government due to his inability to conform to the norms.

By the time the second evaluation meeting occurs, Fred has completely succumbed to the effects of Substance D, as his brain now experiences a “[c]ompetition [...] between the left and right hemispheres [...] like two signals that interfere with each other by carrying conflicting information” (Dick 167). The boundaries between Arctor the addict and Fred the narc inescapably dissolve, making it impossible to determine whether if Arctor is an outlaw or a law enforcer. Inevitably, this mandatory self-surveillance combined with the mind-deteriorating Substance D cause Arctor and Fred to split, forgetting that they are in fact the same person: “I’m who?” [Fred] said, staring at Hank in the scramble suit facing him. ‘I’m Bob Arctor?’ He could not believe it. It made no sense to him. It did not fit anything he had done or thought, it was grotesque“ (181). Additionally to Arctor’s realisation, Hank reveals that he knew all along that Fred and Arctor are the same person, thus raising the question as to whether the assignment was a punitive response to Fred’s disobedience during his speech at the Lions Club, or if it was coincidental. With emphasis on Youngquist’s statement that “a law that administers illegalities incarcerates a dangerous class in advance”, Hank now charges Arctor guilty for willingly violating the drug laws, becoming an addict and not reporting it: “Nobody held a gun to your head and shot you up. Nobody dropped something in your soup. You knowingly and willingly took an addictive drug, brain-destructive and disorienting” (Dick 180). Having developed a severe addiction to Substance D Fred/Arctor has unintentionally abdicated his straight identity. As a consequence, Fred/Arctor morphs into the burn-out character Bruce and is sent to New-Path for rehabilitation. It can be argued that punishing strategies enacted by the law enforcements mirrors Foucault’s assertion concerning punishment utilised as a way of asserting power and dominance (Foucault *Discipline* 9, 15).

Although Hank is considered to be the main antagonist of the novel, seemingly being the one responsible for Arctor’s sufferings, the main antagonist of the novel is at the end revealed to be Arctor’s girlfriend and dealer, Donna Hawthorne. Typical for dystopian fiction, the



hidden antagonist's true identity turns out to be a prominent representative of the surveillance system, and Donna's true identity and her betrayal are never revealed to Arctor. Giving the impression of being a small drug dealer and passing as Arctor's somewhat-girlfriend, Donna is in fact an undercover agent just as Fred. More shockingly it is revealed that her assignment all along has been to infiltrate Arctor's household, to monitor and supply Arctor with enough drugs to cause a severe addiction to Substance D, well-aware that he is undercover like herself. Her main motive is to ultimately destroy him and send him to infiltrate New-Path to gather information for the government about the institution's funding sources. As Mike Westaway notes, "No one but Donald, the Executive Operator [at New-Path], knew where the funding for New-Path originated. Money was always there" (Dick 210). The great climax of the novel is that the people for whom Donna works believe that Substance D is produced by New-Path. However, unable to prove this theory, the police force would need to infiltrate someone into the clinic in order to retrieve evidence. Inevitably, this 'someone' (i.e. Bruce) would need to be truly brain damaged in order to be accepted as a patient and not raise any suspicion at New-Path, hence why Arctor was not aware that he had been selected by the federal agents.

Bruce, whose mind has been completely deteriorated by the toxicity of Substance D and the aftermath of his self-surveillance, is after a few months of rehabilitation entrusted to work at one of the farms at New-Path. In a cornfield, Bruce encounters a range of blue flowers planted everywhere, *Mors Ontologica*, which is used as the main ingredient in the production of Substance D. As it turns out, New-Path is as suspected producing Substance D. A legal institution whose main role is to rehabilitate drug addicts is actually distributing the cause of addiction, profiting from both producing and selling Substance D and from treating those who succumb to it. An institution such as New-Path is asserted to normalise behaviour while at the same time maintaining the criminality that justifies the surveillance directed towards dopers. As Youngquist asserts, "[t]he carceral economy that drug law administers distributes power over a range of practices, producing bodies subject to control" (Youngquist 105). Having Arctor completely succumbed to Substance D, his spirit, his identity, his essential nature, is reduced into what Dick calls a "reflex" machine", a human being "allowing [itself] to become means, or to be pounded down, manipulated" (qtd. in Kucukalic 11). Having been deprived of every last drop of self-consciousness, Bruce, formerly Fred formerly Arctor, is put to use by the law enforcements as the ideal technology of surveillance: "a human scanner without life of its own to comprise its operation" (Youngquist 101). Bound to New-Path and the police enforcement as a quiescent empty shell, Bruce embodies the essence of surveillance as both the rehabilitation centre and the police control his entire being. His function is now only to observe and report to his "friends" i.e. the police, concluding on the Foucauldian thought that "the carceral texture of society assures both the real capture of the body and its



perpetual observation; it is, by its very nature, the apparatus of punishment that conforms most completely to the new economy of power and the instrument for the formation of knowledge” (Foucault *Discipline*, 304). Fred/Arctor/Bruce’s role has been fulfilled, however as a serving paradox: Law enforcements breaking the law, rehabilitation institutions creating the drug they treat their patients for, profiting “both from selling the drug and from treating those damaged by it” (Hickman 154). The downfall of Fred/Arctor is caused at the end by the police enforcement, the drug organisations and even the rehab clinic.

SURVEILLANCE, PANOPTICISM, AND POWER

In ASD, the entire social existence of the characters is based on the concept of the Panopticon which Foucault uses to theorise the ways in which the behaviour of subjects in modern institutions is controlled without direct coercion.

The representation of an advanced state apparatus in ASD is maintained through up-close constant public surveillance presented at the beginning of the novel as a dogmatic and punitive clinical apparatus, which is directed towards drug addicts and pushers. It is within the context of Panopticism that the existence of the characters in Anaheim is situated, portraying the majority of the lives of the characters through countless surveillance scanners, tracking and storing information on its individuals within society. According to Foucault, the scheme of power is generalised throughout the social body, “running through society without interruption in space and or in time” (Foucault *Discipline* 209) inevitably leading to the formation of disciplinary practices within society. The strongest articulation of the Foucauldian conception of Panopticism within society, however, occurs through the more tedious and paranoiac-inflected conversations between the characters within Arctor’s household. Duly noted, the panoptic practices within ASD are far from preventing criminal behaviour, as the majority of the dopers all act in opposition to the regime in their drug addiction. Nevertheless, it is arguable that the effect of Panopticism has manifested itself within each individual through its disciplinary, subordinate, and delegitimizing practices, seeing that the dopers are denied access to every mainstream shopping mall and isolated to low menial jobs of productions. This is reinforced through Anaheim’s subjection to surveillance as a mechanism of power, the intention is to regulate and control the subclass of the dopers. Therefore, one can argue that the government of Anaheim operates under panoptic surveillance, seeing that the dopers are represented as prisoners under constant surveillance resulting in the characters’, at times, paranoiac behaviour. The dopers constitute a group that seemingly have either been discarded by society or decided to leave the society of the straights. Their deviant position in the context of state “Panopticism” forces them to be constantly on their guard; even those who are not



state agents can thus be considered ‘undercover’, adopting and absorbing traits which are both expected of them as psychotic ‘burn-outs’ and which they feel they must utilise to stay alert to the threat of the state. This is arguably a significant way in which they are denied the opportunity to escape their current social position. In alignment with Foucault’s establishment that within the penal system, prison transformed the punitive procedure into a penitentiary technique “from the penal institution to the entire social body” (Foucault *Discipline* 298), the dopers are the social enemy of the society in Anaheim transformed into deviants, who bring with them “the multiple danger of disorder, crime and madness” (Dick 299).

The characters’ paranoid tendencies most often emanate from seemingly unimportant matters or conversations, which develop into paranoid conspiracies of how external forces, typically involving the state, attempt to harm them. An example of this occurs when Arctor almost crashes his car due to a failing gas pedal. The character’s immediate rationalisation is that someone must have purposefully attempted to sabotage the car: “Someone deliberately did it,’ Luckman said loudly. He spun around in a circle of fury, lashing out with both fists. ‘MOTHERFUCKER! We almost bought it! They fucking almost got us!’” (Dick 62). Their rationalisations are often overly complex and intricate, however, ironically, their paranoid suspicions are not completely unjustified, as their house at the exact same moment is being bugged with holographic scanners by the law enforcements which Fred later will review. Their suspicion towards the surveillance state is therefore reasonably founded. The fact that they possess the knowledge that the state apparatus is capable of infiltrating anything and everyone, further adds to their stress and anxieties.

Power’s operation in the novel is practiced through the state’s panoptic ability to structure the characters’ paranoid tendencies. In *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault suggests that the Panopticon can be perceived as a laboratory of power in its ability to “penetrate into men’s behaviour” (Foucault *Discipline* 204). In other words, through Panopticism it is possible to train or correct the behaviour of individuals (203), and furthermore, it emphasises the production and maintenance of the docile bodies through different institutions which becomes evident in New-Paths rehabilitation of its patients. The development of panoptic surveillance has resulted in individuals being trained, observed, and normalised through different institutions within society (215), which is why Foucault considers the panopticon a perfect scheme for exercising power, as it acts directly towards individuals: it grants “power of mind over mind”, acting through “constant pressure [...] even before the offences, mistakes or crimes have been committed” (206). One could therefore argue that the state’s panoptic practices are a somewhat successful manifestation of power, as it manages, as a form of punishment, to construct the dopers as a dangerous sub-class. Even in its absence, the panoptical apparatus operates successfully in how the characters define their actions in



relation to its existence, always wondering if they are being watched.

The surveillance system of Anaheim is represented in how law functions to administrate illegalities and the multiplicities of the society. Normally speaking, law functions as a way of enforcement; if broken, law reinforces its sovereign relationship to its subjects by sending undercover agents such as Fred (Youngquist 91). However, throughout the novel a multiplicity of “subjects before the law” exist, illustrating how the law administers subjects such as undercover agents like Fred (91). According to Youngquist, the purpose of the law has shifted “from enacting justice to administering appearances” (91). This is implicated when Hank re-establishes his superiority towards Fred and further reminds Fred how he should go about his work as a narcotic agent: “What we think isn’t of any importance in your work. We evaluate; you report with your own limited conclusions. This is not a put-down of you, but we have information, lots of it, not available to you. The broad picture. The computerized picture” (Dick 83). Even though Fred is high in the ranks of society, Hank’s statement highly suggests that there are forces much more powerful than he may be aware of. The fact that “they” i.e. the government “evaluate” could indicate that the law also takes the liberty to administer illegalities and thereby take advantage of them. The effect of administering illegalities is visible in the surveillance of telephone conversations. At the beginning of the novel it is revealed that “every phone in the world [is] tapped” (24). This means that every recording of conversations is then obtained and listened to by a police officer, who is then able to identify callers that evoke any suspicion. However, even though all drug deals made over the phone technically are illegal, the authorities only register the ones that are deemed worthy of legal action, i.e. those not considered “routine illegal transactions” (18). A case of administering illegalities is evident when Fred/Arctor makes his usual buy-call to Donna, as he knows how to downplay their conversation and thereby not evoke any suspicion:

[...] all he or she had to do was keep it mild. The dialogue could still be recognizable as a dope deal. [...] [however] it wasn’t worth going through the hassle of voiceprints and track-down for routine illegal transactions. There were too many each day of the week, over too many phones. (Dick 24)

From the perspective of the enforcement, such illegal transactions are wrong, however from the perspective of the government the transactions become useful. Fred and Donna both operate as narcs posing as dopers, illustrating how administration of illegalities allows them to break the law in order to enforce it. Furthermore, by letting small-scale dealers continue their work, it not only enhances their productivity; it also keeps them addicted to drugs. The government is thereby able to maintain the image of dopers constituting a dangerous



class by keeping them at a level high enough to maintain their addiction, but not as high to the extent that they become a serious threat to mainstream society. Therefore, as a social practice, administering illegalities produces, as Youngquist puts it, “an economy of addiction” (Youngquist 98).

Another way through which power applies itself to everyday life is through the categorisation of the individual, appropriating the subjects’ in this case Arctor’s, own identity, attaches him to, and further “imposes a law of truth in him which he must recognise and which others have to recognise in him” (Foucault *The Subject* 781). In the assertion to the concept of subjectification, Foucault provides two meanings for the word ‘subject’ in his work *The Power and The Subject*, one in which the subject is tied to one’s own identity “by conscience or self-knowledge”, and the other ascribed being subject to another by dependence and control (781), both indicating a form of power that subjugates the individual. In ASD, it is the latter set of processes within subjectification that asserts itself through which Fred/Arctor, the subject, is constituted as an object for himself. Not long after his assignment, Fred quickly develops a discomfort as he is forced to surveil and “discriminate” between his role as a doper and his role as a straight (Palmer 192). In order to surveil himself, Fred/Arctor has to review hours of tapes recording him as Arctor (Kucukalic 118). His reaction when entering the house, aware that “the scanners, insidious and invisible” record everything he does has a negative effect on him, which marks a reference to the title of the novel “a scanner darkly” (Dick 184). He wonders if the surveillance cameras, i.e. the scanners see as “darkly” as he sees into himself, or if the scanners provide better clarity, as he himself can “see only murk”. In relation to this, Dick incorporates a passage from the Bible by St. Paul (through a glass darkly), which foregrounds that, even though it is their intended function, the scanners do not provide clarity - rather the opposite. It is as Arctor fears that “if the scanners see only darkly, the way I myself do, then we are cursed, cursed again and like we have been continually, and we’ll wind up dead this way, knowing very little and getting that little fragment wrong too” (185). It distorts his vision of himself to the extent that he is not capable of recognising himself. During his evaluation meeting with the psychologist, they explain to Arctor that the two hemispheres in his brain have separated from each other, contemplating that “It is as if one hemisphere of your brain is perceiving the world as reflected in a mirror” (169), which brings Arctor to the realisation that the scanners he uses to surveil himself are like a mirror “a darkened mirror [...] it is not through glass but as reflected back by glass. And that reflection that returns to you: it is you, it is your face, but it isn’t. [...] I have seen myself backwards” (169). The scanners distort the recordings and do not bring any knowledge or objectivity. Rather, it is arguable that the scanner distorts its recordings and ultimately is responsible for producing hallucinatory breakdowns (Kucukalic 123). In alignment with Foucault’s theory,



Fred's subjectification refers to the procedures by which he, as a subject, is manipulated to observe, interpret, and recognise himself within the game of truth, as it operates as a form of power that imposes a law of truth on individuals that they must recognise in them and thereby submits it to others that way (Foucault *The Subject* 212).

The entity causing the events is ultimately held by the rehabilitation institution New-Path, as it is both the source and treatment for addiction caused by Substance D. In ASD, the productivity of addiction is not identified with the institution of the prison, but with New-Path, the rehabilitation centre. As with surveillance within the prison, rehabilitation at New-Path incarcerates its patients, "but in a domestic setting" (Youngquist 103). As an institution, New-Path mirrors Foucault's notion that power and knowledge are inextricably related, as power is composed in relation to an accepted form of knowledge, which is the entity of scientific understanding and truths (qtd. Rabinow 72-73). Additionally, as Donna's superiors suspect, recovery of its patients may not be the aim of New-Path's rehabilitation program. Instead, the program is for turning the patients' addiction into a form more suitable for mainstream society, redirecting addicts' addiction for drugs towards legal items. If succeeding, New-Path manages to transform the addict into a legitimate consumer to partake in the model of exchange. If failing, the patient is reproduced as an addict and "a legitimate candidate for Surveillance" (Youngquist 99). Put more simply, New-Path as an institution deliberately reproduces the addict as a consumer, almost as a business and no matter the outcome, society profits from its addiction. As part of its rehabilitation program, the patients at New-Path undergo training to be able to hold a job once leaving the institution, namely because the ability to work equals solid citizenry (99). As a legal institution, New-Path cultivates and sustains the dooper's addiction through its production and exchange of illegal substances until it reaches a state of complete brain-damage and is then ready to return for yet another rehabilitation. Mike notes New-Path's administration of Bruce, formerly Fred/Arctor: "I wonder, he thought, if it was New-Path that did this to him. Sent a substance out to get him like this, to make him this way so they would ultimately receive him back" (Dick 210). Inevitably, rehabilitation cultivates addiction to the point that the dooper becomes the perfect worker - a slave, and for the government a human source of surveillance. As New-Path is the one who produces Substance D with the aim of maintaining addiction in a continuous loop, it can be argued that New-Path holds the power-knowledge regime of Anaheim. The truth established as knowledge is that Substance D causes severe addiction and brain damage, which therefore maintains the addict as the ultimate threat for mainstream society. Through its distribution and control of the drug, New-path not only controls the addicts, but also the rest of society through their knowledge of the source of Substance D.

In conclusion, the society of Anaheim portrays a totalitarian government that through



extensive surveillance systems and detainment of knowledge successfully sustains its power and control over the public and private life of its citizens as it not only contributes to the internalisation of surveillance which ultimately allows the government to transform its citizens into docile bodies, it also restricts and prohibits opposition to the state. The law enforcement further contributes to the crime it administers, by tolerating its existence among the smaller dealers and thereby utilising the information it gains from them. Additionally, Dick used his novel *ASD* to utilise various forms of perceptions of reality produced, recorded, and ultimately distorted through technological surveillance apparatuses. The technological advances the government applies in its extensive surveillance of its citizens is much in alignment with the theory of the Panopticon as a disciplinary concept that contributes in sustaining the constant fear and paranoia the dopers live in, because they never know whether they are being watched or not.

MODES OF PRODUCTION

The extensive analysis above, by discovering and identifying the ideologemes of the characters within *ASD*, and the dystopian features present within the novel, has assisted in identifying the modes of production present within the novel. Through the identification of ideologemes connected to the state of Anaheim and its citizens, both straights and dopers included, it is evident that the mode of production present within the novel is that of capitalism. As described by Marxist theory, capitalism is an economic system in which the economic system has a significant influence on the relationship between economic classes. The relations of production are structured in the working class, i.e. the proletariat, and the low-skilled owners who work for the bourgeois class, i.e. the capitalist class, who owns the means of production (Edgar & Sedgwick 36).

Assisted by the dystopian features of the continuous surveillance of the society of Anaheim, *ASD* can be perceived as an intensified critique of corporate capitalism and drug culture in the 1960s and 1970s America, one of the most visible dystopian elements being the totalitarian surveillance of society led by the police enforcements and the government. Additionally, the mode of production of capitalism is represented by a hedonic consumer society that is divided by mainstream society, or capitalist system, inhabited by the straights and its counterculture inhabited by the dopers. The straights are part of the official society in which capitalist relics are portrayed throughout the novel in the form of franchise-chains such as McDonalds, 7/11, and Coca-Cola. The perception of said chains however do not recall jubilation for the protagonist Arctor. On the contrary, he ridicules them, finding displeasure in



their diversity. Indicating some sort of hyperreality, which semiotician Umberto Eco similarly applies in his work *Travels in Hyperreality: Essays* (1995) to express his view on America as a “degenerate utopia - an ideology realized in the form of myth” (qtd. in Kucukalic 128), the public of Anaheim is meant to appreciate the fake, but as Donna expresses, the mere “construction of things” has resulted in the denigration of reality:

Life in Anaheim, California, was a commercial for itself, endlessly replayed [...] someday, it'll be mandatory that we all sell the McDonald's hamburger as well as buy it; we'll sell it back and forth to each other forever from our living rooms. That we won't even have to go outside. (Dick 22)

To Arctor, the denigration of Anaheim has resulted in a livelihood much resembling living within a chain of commerce and the culture of sameness. One major instance of the manifestation of capitalism in ASD occurs through the drug counterculture, in which the outcast, the dopers, live by the same rules as that of the straights. Despite being prohibited substances, drugs too are commodities and pose a significant role in the production and exchange system within the capitalist society. Keeping Karl Marx's characterisation of commodities in mind, namely that a commodity is “a thing that by its properties satisfies human wants of some sort of another” (qtd. In Youngquist 85), drugs can be perceived as a commodity because they provide satisfaction to its users. Within the drug subculture there are buyers, sellers, supply, demand, competition; Freck's addiction is a circular one in his terminal pursuit of Substance D, which in the doper circles is known as “death”, this therefore makes the life of a doper a “terminal pursuit of the substance that sustain it” (Youngquist 83). In his Author's Note, Dick compares the life of a doper to that of a straight, claiming that “[i]t is not different from your lifestyle. [...] It is [...] only a speeding up [...] of the ordinary human existence” (Dick 218). The appeal of addiction, Youngquist claims, is partly because of the quick arrival of dying, and partly because of the “lethal speed of addiction in the social space of a cash and carry economy” (Youngquist 84). Freck is a perfect example of a doper within ASD as he gains satisfaction and joy from his addiction, and the exclusion of dopers of the mainstream market is exemplified when Freck observes people entering shopping malls while not being able to enter himself “one of those giant shopping malls surrounded by a wall that you bounced off like a rubber ball— unless you had a credit card on you and passed in through the electronic hoop. Owning no credit card for any of the malls, he could depend only on verbal reports as to what the shops were like inside.” (6) This passage clearly shows how capitalism works in its subjectification of dopers, that is, one is identified and allowed into a place based on their purchasing power: the credit card becomes an identification card. Outcasts of the official market such as Charles Freck are



unable to find their identity within the system.

Arctor's sympathy towards the dopers' social position within society is arguably founded in the ideologeme of liberal humanism as it affirms his ethical stance in relation to the right to shape one's life in one's own terms, a liberty the dopers do not have. As previously stated, Arctor left his old life in the bourgeois suburbs "built of bourgeois dreams and purchases" (Youngquist 91) to pursue a life of excitement and danger. However, it can further be added, that his abandonment of his family can be read as an escape of the capitalistic economy. Until he became an undercover agent, Arctor lived through the image of commodities through his dependency on them and life lived through empty pleasures. During his speech at the Anaheim Lions Club, he attempts to explain that the differentiation between straights and dopers are not that different. The only difference lies within the fact that the straights enjoy commodities that happen to be legal in preference to those that are deemed illegal, however, the dependency both classes experience "return[...] to destroy the very satisfaction they are supposed to afford" (Youngquist 92). Of all the characters in *ASD*, Arctor serves as the one most humane. Palmer further asserts that Dick's values were strongly liberal and humanist, however the values linked to such ideologies in *ASD* are subjected to nothing but distortion. According to Jameson, Dick's response to good and evil in throughout history "can be attached to individuals" (qtd. Palmer 227). Arctor's liberal humanistic view "emerges as intuition of the potentially valuable [...]" (227), meaning that whenever life asserts a distinctness, it should be asserted as a valuable entity rather than threatening one.

Finally, a mode of production that has a significant effect on the culture of Anaheim is the exchange of commodities, which serves as a large part of capitalism and is closely connected to consumerism. Anaheim is especially capitalistic through its relation to consumption and consumer culture, as it is a vital part of society that the citizens consume to keep production in motion, whether if it is legal or illegal commodities, and as Youngquist states "what is true for controlled substances is true for legal commodities: addiction guarantees consumption" (Youngquist 100). If the addict is slave to rehabilitation, then the consumer is slave to exchange.

Conclusively, Dick's *ASD* can be read as a cautionary tale of endless production and sameness supported by the mechanisms of the government and the economic system, which ultimately is represented in the worlds of both the straight and the doper. Addiction is produced to sustain the capitalistic system through a carceral economy, in which both the addict and the consumer live to satisfy their needs "in an economy of substance dependency" (Youngquist 105). Ultimately, consumerism and totalitarian surveillance join together as they through self-destruction and rehabilitation secure unyielding social control over the docile body and attribution to the capitalist economy.



The Circle

The introductory line in the novel *The Circle*, by American author Dave Eggers (2013) goes as follows: “MY GOD, Mae thought. It’s heaven.” (Eggers 1). This allows the reader to, from the beginning, understand that the novel from then on will illustrate and portray anything but heaven. Followingly, the novel is by many regarded as a wakeup call in relation to the tyranny of transparency and the dehumanization of technology with the company of the Circle’s pressing elements of surveillance and all-powerful control. Something that arguably mirrors contemporary society’s increased use of social media and technological advancement. More precisely, *The Circle* as dystopian literature, elucidates and exaggerates problems posed by surveillance, control, and power over the individual’s desire as well as the opposition to totalitarian societies.

SETTING

With the increase in technological advancement, it is not hard to imagine a world where a person’s life problems can all be solved or go away simply by the click of a button. A world where everything and everyone are connected through the same network and kept under constant surveillance, which in essence would form a full and complete circle. This is the reality, or more precisely futuristic dream, that serves as the setting in Dave Eggers’ novel *The Circle*. A company, or society, characterised by a campus-like feeling that arguably resembles a mash-up of the headquarters and company culture of Google, Facebook, and Apple respectively with numerous buildings for various purposes. The company is ruled by the founding members that go by “the three wise men” (Eggers 19). The buildings are all named after different historical eras, for example, the character of Annie works at the Old West (3), whereas the protagonist Maebelline Holland (henceforth Mae) works in the Renaissance (4), something that allows the company to “make an enormous place less impersonal, less corporate” (4). The campus furthermore includes, amongst other things: eateries, auditoriums, workplaces, an outdoor amphitheatre, daycare for both children and dogs, dorm rooms, health clinics, rental facilities, as well as lawns and gardens, free of use for any members of the Circle. The campus for the Circle is set in a fictional city by the name of San Vincenzo (46) in the San Francisco Bay area, which undoubtedly alludes to the Circle resembling that of Silicon Valley, though it is never explicitly referred to by name. This is evident when considering the amenities provided by the Circle, and perhaps most pressingly state of the art technology by providing the latest phones



and tablets to its Circlers before they are even released to the public (42). The perks that follow employment at the Circle notably entail a sensation of indebtedness within the circlers, seeing as they strive to go above and beyond in their work to satisfy and accommodate the company. The prominent existence of technological advancement, therefore, constitutes a major theme for the novel which establishes a certain Orwellian tone for the novel. This is supported by the Circle's slogan: "ALL THAT HAPPENS MUST BE KNOWN" (67). Keeping this in mind, it can be argued that the tech utopia of the Circle's campus in itself resembles and constitutes a sovereign nation within society itself. Moreover, the sovereign nation of the Circle can be said to portray Jeremy Bentham's concept of the Panopticon which will be elaborated in following sections.

According to Mae, the world outside the walls of the Circle "seemed like some chaotic mess in the developing world. [...] all was noise and struggle, failure and filth" (Eggers 30). Therefore, Mae's biggest desire and intention with her work at the Circle, is to make the outside world as perfect, orderly, beautiful, and efficient as the world that exists within the Circle (30). This realisation enters into the notion that within the dystopian genre, that dreams or abused promises of a utopian future exist (Gottlieb 8) seeing as Mae regards the Circle and the work they perform as a utopian haven in the midst of the chaos of reality. Mae's comprehension that the Circle is this wonderful tech utopia, arguably sets the tone and mood for the novel which supports the function of dystopias as a cautionary warning of a possible totalitarian future. More precisely, the tone and mood of the novel brings into attention the possibility for companies such as the Circle coming to power in the not-too-distant-future. This is further emphasised by the realisation that the novel can be said to be set in the near-future, or even before the year 2020. This can be deduced from the fact that the novel was published in 2013 and was not set in a time before, seeing as the Circle is "less than six years old" when Mae lands her job at the company (Eggers 2). In the duration of those six years, it is stated that the Circle has out-competed and subsumed all rival companies such as Google, Facebook, Apple, etc. (23). However, it is expressed that Mae has used Facebook as late as 2010 (123), which ultimately means that the novel is arguably set in the year 2015/2016 at the earliest. The exact time span of the novel is troublesome to determine, however, the frequent mention of months passing, indicates that the storyline spans over months and not years (242, 274, 491).

In regard to the novel's short span of time, and the technological accomplishments the Circle achieves with Mae as their transparent front-figure, says a great deal about the amount of power the Circle possesses. Arguably, the novel illustrates the progressive forces of technological surveillance and shows no sign of slowing down its domination and power over the individuality and privacy of people in society.



NARRATIVE

The Circle commences its story with that of one woman's ambitious idealism towards the advanced and powerful internet and network company with the same name. However, soon the novel side-tracks and takes on a suspenseful and cautionary resonance, as it brings attention to complex problems concerning privacy, democracy, memory, history, as well as the limitations of human knowledge.

The novel throws light on the different kinds of communication and networking tools that exist within the world of social media, such as emails, comment threads, text messaging, instant messaging, and web forums as a few examples. This manifests itself in the contemporary and colloquial writing style utilised by Dave Eggers throughout the novel. This illustrates the simplicity of everyday language as utilised in the daily lives of digital media users across the world. This is evident when considering the correspondence between the employees at the Circle (Eggers 54, 90, 247) as well as the method the Three Wise Men supply the circlers with information which is often transmitted through video, for example Ty Godspodinov's speech:

Hey everyone. Sorry I can't be there with you all. I've been working on some very interesting new projects that are keeping me away from incredible social activities like the one you're enjoying. But I did want to congratulate you all on this phenomenal new development. I think it's a crucial new step for the Circle and will mean a great deal to our overall awesomeness. [...] Thank you all for your hard work on it, and let the party truly begin. (Eggers 211)

The language and discourse of the speech are easily accessible, light-hearted, and conversational, rather than highly professional and distant as one might suspect from a speech. This perfectly represents and illuminates the exemplary and preferred language employed throughout the company, as well as the novel in itself. The everyday simplicity of the language utilised brings attention to the development of the suppressive and totalitarian regime that follows the technological advancement introduced to the Circle. Furthermore, the language elucidates how easy it was for the Three Wise Men to introduce their ideas and concepts, as well as how easily accepted such notions were by the circlers. This is likewise manifested in the narrative perspective of the novel that follows the mind of Mae, and her view and thoughts of the world around her, which supports the fact that the novel utilises a third person limited-omniscient narrator. This allows for a direct insight and knowledge into the feelings and thoughts of Mae, reflecting Mae's positive perspective of the world in which she exists. This is especially made evident through the author's use of free indirect discourse, a narrative strategy where



the perspective of the narrator merges and reveals the consciousness of one of the characters in the novel, in this case Mae's. An example of free indirect discourse is during one of Mae's streams of consciousness where she reconsiders her choices:

And then Mae found herself sobbing. Her father was a mess. No, he wasn't a mess. He was managing it all with great dignity. [...] And there was nothing she could do for him. No, there was too much to do for him. She could quit her job. She could quit and help make the phone calls, fight the many fights to keep him well. This is what a good daughter would do. What a good child, an only child, would do. (Eggers 82)

The quote illustrates free indirect discourse in relation to how the narrator is not simply and objectively describing the thoughts and actions of Mae from a distance, but rather the narrator assumes and guesses at the feelings and thoughts of Mae, and further broadcasts it as though it is the narrator's own. Moreover, the utilisation of free indirect discourse contributes to the reader's understanding of Mae's perspective on the world, as well as background information about the company and its foundation. Ultimately, it allows for the reader to consider the naivety and alarming perspective of Mae's mind, and the opposing powers that exist in the form of Ty Gospodinov and Mercer Madeiros, characters Mae recognises as irrational, paranoid, and borderline insane (Eggers 260, 481). The opposing perspectives therefore assist in allowing the reader to contemplate and clearly regard the situation and problematics presented in the novel from both sides without creating a biased standpoint, and perhaps help in achieving a clearer overview than Mae herself does, granting the reader more information, knowledge, and understanding of the world within the Circle.

The narrative strategy, moreover, is utilised as a way to criticise the political and totalitarian regime in Dave Egger's imagined world. This becomes evident in relation to Mae's naïve acceptance and susceptibility towards the company's intentioned visions of eliminating all kinds of crime carried out by means of technology in the form of cameras, microchips, and data. The unsettling aspect of Mae's choice of whether to rebel against the totalitarian regime of the Circle, or the willingness to blindly accept the technological development and advancement implemented at the Circle, is bound up with her two romantic counterparts. This contributes to the enforcement of the troubling tone of the novel. One of the romantic partners, Francis, represents the values and visions of the company (Eggers 393) while the other, Kalden/Ty, represents the opposition to the totalitarian regime (321). The notion that Mae's decision-making is connected to that of her romantic partners appears as an extremely old-fashioned way of settling the moral dilemma that exists within the female protagonist.



Moreover, this enters into the recurring feature of the dystopian literature according to Keith Booker, namely that female characters are often described as passive and silent figures that appear indifferent towards individual freedom and personal restrictions (Booker 39). This is demonstrated once again through Mae's blind acceptance as well as her lack of longing for power and freedom, which ultimately result in Mae appearing, not as a hero, but rather as a dull villain. This is evident when considering Mae's first day on her job at the Circle. After having all her data transferred to the Circle's system, she is expected to hand over her laptop for recycling, Mae hesitates: "Maybe tomorrow [...] I want to say goodbye" (Eggers 44). This leaves the reader with a faint hope that Mae is not voluntarily going to surrender her last shred of personal life to the totalitarianism of the Circle, however, this hope is quickly extinguished as Mae conforms to the rules and visions of the company.

Ultimately, the third-person limited narrative of the novel illuminates the opposing perspectives towards the Circle and its totalitarian regime present within the Circle. The narrative moreover grants the reader more information and an extensive understanding of Egger's imagined world. Furthermore, the combination of the novel's simplicity and Mae's blind acceptance of the technological advancement of surveillance, throws light on the realisation that the evil and danger of the future might personify characters such as Mae, rather than the hovering and all-consuming entity of that of Big Brother as is evident in the novel *1984*.

THE CIRCLE AS A SOCIALLY SYMBOLIC ACT

Proceeding the third industrial revolution, also known as the digital revolution, human society is now witnessing the rise of a new technological revolution that ultimately will alter the way "we live, work, and relate to one another" (Schwab 7). According to economist Klaus Schwab, founder of the World Economic Forum, it is safe to say that the world has entered a new "fourth industrial revolution" in which digital technologies (computer hardware, software, and networks) have evolved into something much more sophisticated and integrated in light of the transformation of societies and economies around the world (12). For a few decades, we have "been leaving digital bread crumbs everywhere" (Topol 174), starting with credit card charges, following Google and Internet searches, online retail purchases, Facebook likes, and social media visits, and not to mention the wireless mobile devices, that provide our precise location and much more about our persona. According to Eric Topol, these "breadcrumbs" have turned into "bread loaves", and proceeds to refer to the consummate informaticist Stephen Wolfram, who has demonstrated how much of our privacy we reveal when we register on social platforms, such as Facebook, for, even though our sharing is voluntary, we are highly



uninformed of its storage of our personal data (175). The storing of personal data is further discussed in relation to the amount of unprecedented closed circuit TV's (CCTV) set up to detect the individual's every move, and to capture "key biometric information such as facial recognition" (176), and thus being able to identify us. In 2013, the NameTag App, a software for Google Glass, was released to provide information from social media profiles, dating sites, and criminal registries, with the intention to make it accessible for smartphones in the future (Vincent, Koetsier). In light of this, Topol predicts that a faceprint database of Earth's seven billion residents at some point, will be in the works.

As author Dave Eggers himself states in an interview with the *Telegraph*, the rise of the internet and waves of contemporary culture for the past 20 years, inspired him to write what inevitably resulted in the Circle (Wood "Dave Eggers Interview"), a fictitious, innovative US-based technology system that combines internet search and social media capabilities. Resembling a hybrid of Facebook, Google, and Apple merged together, the Circle gathers the users' personal information such as emails, purchase history, and social networking into one single profile or identity for the individual.

Contemporary critics have expressed optimism concerning the benefits that technological advantages enlist, including the enhancement of "the well-being of all humans" and "the potential to assist human[s] in building more equitable and happier societies" (Marsen 86). One way to enhance human society is the ability to ensure safety for its citizens and prevent, or at least capture, criminals. On April 15th 2013 two bombs were monitored and detonated at the Boston Marathon, causing three deaths and 264 injuries ("Boston Marathon"). Thanks to the CCTV cameras positioned in the Boston townscape, and with the assistance of facial recognition software, the government was able to identify the theorists Dzhokhar and Tamerlan Tsarnaev after a few days. While such software and full scan surveillance are arguably valuable in such circumstances, concerns about surveillance cannot be ignored (Topol 176). Having occupied himself with promotion of literacy education and violation of human rights (Eggers 493), Eggers' novel centres around contemporary lives saturated by social media, through which privacy is now seen as hiding knowledge from your fellows, and in which secrecy is deemed as bad as lies. Eggers further stresses that the novel is not a reaction as much as a speculation as to which path modern technology might take, if the eradication of privacy is carried out. It is such a problem *The Circle* deals with, as its primary agenda is initially set on preventing crime, but soon it extends to beyond crime and instead everyone is surveilled, in order to create the perfect human race. After the bombings in Boston, privacy experts were surprised to conclude in public surveys that the majority of people would prefer to have omnipresent cameras cameras, well-knowing they themselves would be watchable any time during the day, as long as it it would ensure an increase in the degree of safety within



the public space (Wood “Dave Eggers Interview”). In *The Circle*, small cameras known as SeeChange cameras are created to livestream whatever a person wants the camera to film. Its initial function is to prevent criminal action, however, it is extended to be worn by politicians, wishing to be transparent, allowing the public to see what they want to see, and to ensure that there are no wrongdoings going on for the wearer’s part. At the end, the Circle sees SeeChange as a self-monitoring tool that should be made accessible, in hope that *everyone* will become moral beings, if we know we are being watched at any time.

In that sense, *The Circle* offers a glimpse into a potential future and the consequences that will inevitably follow the ill-effects that technology can produce, and the dangers of losing control of our mechanical creations. To quote the Economist “Rather than becoming paragons of democracy, they [clever cities] could turn into electronic panopticons in which everybody is constantly watched” (Tolop 175). The seemingly sole purpose of the Circle, which seems to be extrapolated from Google, is to make information accessible, shareable, and free, and to ensure the safety of the world’s citizens. However, as it often is with dystopian fiction, Eggers has created a universal operating system to portray what extreme loss of privacy can induce.

CHARACTER ANALYSIS

In Eggers’ novel, the idea of completing the Circle, i.e making all users transparent, is conveyed through the transformation of the protagonist Mae from an independent individual to a digitised version of herself, bound to the norms of social media. The three segments of the novel depict; firstly, Mae’s introduction and integration to the Circle; secondly, her progressive delineation from her former life after going transparent; and thirdly, her personal demise after completing the Circle.

The novel centres on Mae, a 24-year-old graduate from Carleton University, at her first day as an employee at the Circle in the Customer Experience department, thanks to her friend, Annie Allerton, a junior executive at the Circle and part of the “Gang of 40 members” (some of the crucial members of the company) (Eggers 14). Annie’s primary function at the Circle is to advertise and communicate the ideology of the Circle to other countries, which is, as one of the Wise Men, Eamon Bailey, formulates, to achieve “the perfectibility of human beings” (291). The Wise Men, founders of the Circle, consist of Tom Stenton, “an ostentatious capitalist” (Galow 123) who primarily is occupied with expanding the Circle to the rest of the world; Bailey, who is the face of the Circle and whose ultimate vision is to bring out the best version of people through surveillance technology; Finally there is Tyler Alexander Gospodinov, or “Ty”, the “visionary” (123) who developed the Unified Operating System TruYou, in order to



make the online experience more civilised.

During the first weeks at the Circle, Mae is experiencing difficulties adapting to the campus environment, as part of the job description is to uphold a certain amount of online activity, which on a deeper level demands from its employees to leave behind any sense of privacy in preference to be constantly watched, and henceforth judged as part of the ideologeme of the company. As the story progresses, Mae steadily integrates into the technological surfaces of the Circle. She is given a tablet with her name engraved that deposits her birth certificate, her fingerprints, and her entire data from her old laptop. Her entire persona is digitised thanks to this new technological device, thus marking the transformation of her subjective self, into a transparent object.

The turning point for Mae is during an incident when she borrows a kayak from her local rental station after closing hours. She is monitored by surveillance cameras near the shop, which subsequently alarm the nearby police of a “probable theft” and frame her as “a citizen who doesn’t want to be identified” (Eggers 272). Mae is identified by the owner as a regular customer and walks away without arrest but is nevertheless confronted about the incident the following day by Bailey at the Circle, and he explains through the extensive ideologeme that completing the Circle encloses the prevention of such crime cases:

[...] any information that eludes us, anything that is not accessible, prevents us from being perfect [...] if we all, as a society, decide that this is behavior that we’d rather not engage in, the fact that everyone knows, or has the power to know who is doing it, this would prevent the behavior from being engaged in. (Eggers 287, 288)

Shortly, after her encounter with the all-seeing system of the Circle, Mae adopts the surveillance ideologeme by going transparent and becoming the front figure of the Circle. Her primary function is to make her daily life accessible to millions of viewers on her social media through a small camera positioned on her chest, ultimately, to inspire and fulfill the Circle’s demands and to “perform your best self” (Eggers 328). The Circle’s agenda of turning human beings into technological objects is exemplified in Mae’s seemingly acceptance of the elimination of her subjective life. At one point she is given two health monitor bracelets and she ingest a microchip that will relay real-time biometrics to the Cloud, which enables the Circle to collect “perfect and complete data” (357) from all of its employees. This enhances the Foucauldian notion of governmentality, bio-power, whose primary function is the “disciplining [of the body], the optimization of its capabilities, the extortion of its forces, the parallel increase of its usefulness and its docility, its integration into systems of efficient and economic controls



(Foucault *The History* 139).

In relation to the paradigm of social media, professor and philosopher Dieter Thomä points out in *Transparency, Society and Subjectivity: Critical Perspectives* that numerous readings of social media have suggested that they bring people together by “[overcoming] the distances [...] between observers and their objects”, and instead “get rid of the observational model altogether and replace it by a communicative, cooperative realm” (Thomä 76). Thomä nevertheless juxtaposes that when users of social media act as observers, they are in fact at the same time being observed, as “[s]ocial media create a multiplication [...] of the observed” (76). The fact that an individual’s behaviour is measured on popularity when exposing itself through immaterial platforms, serves as a model for Freud’s notion of the superego (76). As Mae goes transparent, a subsequent change in her behaviour is expressed through an unconscious pursuit of approval:

She’d given up soda, energy drinks, processed foods. At Circle social events, she nursed one drink only, and tried each time to leave it unfinished. Anything immoderate would provoke a flurry of things of concern, so she stayed within the bounds of moderation. [...] She was liberated from bad behavior. She was liberated from doing things she didn’t want to be doing, eating and drinking things that did her no good. Since she’d gone transparent, she’d become more noble. (Eggers 329).

The change in Mae’s behaviour is a result of a sudden need for recognition from her viewers, who is regarded as the ultimate source of approval. Her transformation stands in contrast to the inmates’ state of mind within the panoptic model, namely that during the influence of surveillance, one acts to evade punishment. In order to evade punishment, or in Mae’s case judgement from her viewers, the observed prefers to live by the rules and expectations of the institution (Thomä 77). In accordance with Freud’s theory of the internalisation of the ego, the viewers (the observers) automatically become the superego of Mae’s ego (the observed). She becomes instantly aware of everything she does, enacting the panoptical notion of self-observation, or internalisation, and the fact that no one seems to be bothered by this phenomenon of an all-knowing society highlights Foucault’s notion that: “the most important effect of the carceral system, and of its extension well beyond legal imprisonment, is that it succeeds in making the power to punish natural and legitimate” (Foucault *Discipline* 301). The panoptic ideological setting which the Circle enforces onto the rest of the world “anticipates a world in which both self-relation and social relations surrender to the regime of visibility, observation, and transparency” (Thomä 77). As her followers observe her every move in the role as the superego, her ego strives to perfect her digital image to the point that her subjective



experience is eliminated in her pursuit for validation, and “a wave of despair” starts to emerge within her (Eggers 195). In order to distract herself from the “blackness spreading under her”, Mae continues to seek validation: “she felt the tear opening up in her again, larger and blacker than ever before. But then watchers from all over the world had reached out, sending their support, their smiles – she’d gotten millions, tens of millions” (465). Mae’s transparency inevitably becomes her downfall on multiple levels, which entails her estrangement from her family and friends, as it allows no sense of private conversations. Only after a few weeks at campus, Mae has adopted the Circle’s ethos to improve every aspect of the world, to inspire and to fulfil the Circle’s demands of performing voluntary transparency.

A more critical point of view offered by the dystopian novel is enacted through the characters Mercer, Mae’s ex-boyfriend, and Kalden/Ty, Mae’s secret love interest, both opposing the total deprivation of privacy and the loss of autonomous individual identities. Mercer is critical of Mae’s transparency and the digital universe she mediates through: “You comment on things, and that substitutes for doing them. You look at pictures of Nepal, push a smile button, and you think that’s the same as going there” (261). And it is Mercer’s critical viewpoint of the omnipresent spectacle of the Circle that becomes his downfall, as he succumbs to the pressure of the technological surveillance and power executed by the Circle (461).

The Circle’s agenda to turn human beings into technological objects is evident in Mae’s secret love-interest, Kalden, who in fact is Ty Gospodinov. In between their secret meetings beneath campus, Mae is unable to communicate with Kalden, which is a crucial element in the characterisation of the dystopian protagonist, as the reader starts to see Mae’s estrangement from reality. Mae experiences Kalden’s non-existence online as a violation of the otherwise unlimited sources of communication embedded within the Circle: “total non-communication in a place like the Circle was so difficult, it felt like violence” (Eggers 234). As Mae’s transparency steadily gains popularity, Kalden/Ty expresses his deep concerns about the direction his and the other Wise Men’s creation is taking, thus he transforms from creator of the Circle, to critic of the company:

I was trying to make the web more civil [...] more elegant. I got rid of anonymity. I combined a thousand disparate elements into one unified system. But I didn’t picture a world where the Circle membership was mandatory, where government and all life were channelled through one network. (Eggers 480)

Their relationship ends when Kalden/Ty wants Mae’s help to expose the company, calling it ‘a totalitarian nightmare’ (Eggers 481), and that Mae, with her status as transparent, is the only one who holds the power to stop closing the Circle due to the fact that she can reach an



incredible large amount of viewers worldwide. Mae, however, subsumed to the Circle, betrays Kalden/Ty and “with a duty that felt holy, she’d told the world about Kalden being Ty’ (490), enabling the completion of the Circle.

The novel ends with Mae watching over Annie, who in the meantime has collapsed into a catatonic psychosis due to the inhumane amount of work at the Circle, the tipping point being the revelation of her dark family ancestry made by the project PastPerfect, a program designed to map out personal ancestry and its history. Astonishingly, Mae shows great annoyance that she is unable to enter Annie’s thoughts, and in that moment, she decides that the next step to advance the technology of the Circle will be to enable reading people’s minds:

It was an affront, a deprivation, to herself and to the world. She would bring this up with Stenton and Bailey [...] They needed to talk about Annie, the thoughts she was thinking. Why shouldn’t they know them? The world deserved nothing less [...] (Eggers 491).

Mae becomes the pure embodiment of the Circle’s ideologeme, as she now herself expresses the ideologeme that any privacy is a criminal act. By depicting a society governed by the ideology of transparency, the characters in *The Circle* turn into technological entities that encourage observation of the rest of the world’s population, while at the same time preventing potential for discernment, insight, and the right to privacy.

SURVEILLANCE, PANOPTICISM, AND POWER

As a cautionary tale, focusing on the advancement and use of technology, cybersecurity, and privacy, *The Circle*, is often regarded as a contemporary continuation or reinterpretation of George Orwell’s *1984*. Both authors imagined a dystopian surveillance-driven futuristic society where the implementation of technology is utilised to obtain total control and domination over people. Moreover, the novels function as reminders of how quickly technology accelerates societies into the future, not always in the expected direction. The similarity in the novels emphasises how central these issues continue to be in popular culture and modern life, which enters into Michel Foucault’s notion that surveillance has entered a central feature of modernity while becoming the preeminent method of power (Storey 137). And where the novel *1984* employs the Thought Police and Telescreens, and *A Scanner Darkly* employs the holoscanner, *The Circle* employs that of SeeChange and Clarification as a way to achieve their respective concepts of the perfect utopian society.



The Circle as a company, is, in the novel, considered the world's biggest tech company resembling that of Silicon Valley, where the characters of the Three Wise Men introduce several programs in an attempt to keep the entire industrialised world under surveillance with the intention of controlling people. The company implements surveillance under the guise of creating a simpler and more efficient network authentication that can counteract many problems in the digital world. This was achieved by the introduction of TruYou that combines every aspect of a person's digital life into one account, allowing for just one network identity rather than having several different ones. The chaos and disruption of the web are made simple and elegant. (Eggers 21). Ultimately, this would entail that "[o]vernight, all comment boards became civil, all posters held accountable. The trolls, who had more or less overtaken the internet, were driven back into the darkness" (22). Essentially, it can be deduced that the Circle utilises technology and social media to establish, or rebuild, a safer, saner, and better world for future generations (446). However, from the outset it is evident that the operations and actions within the Circle exceed that of the typical tech company. More precisely, it can be deduced that the Circle intends to map the entire world through technology, eradicate crime, increase political awareness, and followingly end corruption in all aspects of the world. Even if this means the end of privacy and personal freedom as we know it, considering that the Circle is everywhere (54). Arguably, the Circle implements corporate surveillance as a tool for their own convenience and empowerment which would allow them to assume the role of judge, jury, and warden of society. This is supported by the fact that Eamon Bailey promotes the philosophy of surveillance as something natural and good, seeing as surveillance leads to enlightenment of people (8). Bailey ultimately seems powered by a sincere and honest belief in the morality of surveillance, as well as the goodness and pureness of people, yet only if they were to embrace and accept total transparency.

The protagonist Mae shoots through the ranks once she begins to conform and match up to the expectations, "rules", and slogans of the company before she finally settles as transparent – this will be elaborated later on. Mae is enthralled by the company and its charismatic and impressive leaders. This contributes in persuading Mae to partake in the Circle's experiments and intentions to better the world through transparency: "As we all know here at the Circle, transparency leads to peace of mind" (Eggers 68). Ultimately, transparency makes it impossible to keep anything hidden or secret from the outside world. This is further supported by the perception of privacy as something selfish and dangerous, and according to Bailey: "SECRETS ARE LIES" (298). The statement exposes the fact that the company associates the notion of surveillance, not only with that of abuse, discipline, and totalitarianism, but also with the restriction of privacy. This becomes evident in relation to Mae's kayaking trips alone, where she is shamed and reprimanded for not sharing or updating her social media, and further



pressured into doing so in the future (301). As a result of the Circle forcing her into restricted privacy, Mae is demanded to be “on” at all times, which generates a desire for constant validation and support from other members of the Circle and her followers. Initially, Mae freely and voluntarily agrees to the surveillance executed at the Circle, however, Mae quickly becomes addicted to the constant confirmation from the people following along with her life, which results in the complete loss of her freedom and the ability to think for herself. This enters into Erika Gottlieb’s characteristic of the dystopian genre, namely that the protagonist often experiences an elimination or domination of privacy, feelings, thoughts, emotions, and family amongst other things (Gottlieb 11). By limiting the privacy of the people within the company, the Circle succeeds in asserting power and domination over its subjects without the use of brute force, as was once the common method (Foucault *Discipline* 9, 15). The novel can ultimately be said to illustrate how surveillance can assist in creating a homogenous and numb entity by violating the freedom, privacy, and personality of human beings, seeing as the individual’s private world has fallen under the control of the regime. This is further supported by the company’s mindset and slogans, namely that: “PRIVACY IS THEFT (Eggers 303), “All that happens must be known” (67), “SECRETS ARE LIES” (298), and “TO HEAL WE MUST KNOW. TO KNOW WE MUST SHARE” (150).

The surveillance in the Circle is conducted through, amongst other things, specialised orbs known as SeeChange cameras, devices utilised to livestream everyone and everything while being nestled on; Properties and people (Eggers 69); The social media network that exists within the Circle which intercepts all actions; And the silver bracelet that measures everything that happens within the human body (154). According to the Circle, the justification behind the ever-present surveillance is put up to the acknowledgement that people behave better when being constantly watched: “[...] when thousands, or even millions, are watching, you perform your best self” (328). Furthermore, constant surveillance arguably affects crime rates in a positive direction, medical diagnosis can be crowdsourced when vital signs of everyone are live-streamed to the world, and finally criminals and fugitives can more easily be located when the whole world is connected through technology and cameras. More precisely, the company can be said to believe that the utilisation of surveillance will make the world a better place. The Circle then arguably utilises surveillance as a power tool to create effective employees, but also to organise and discipline whole populations and societies. More precisely, the employees are considered social constructions which enters into Foucault’s notion that nations and states, in this instance the Circle, assume an all-powerful and all-seeing entity that controls and deprives the privacy and individuality of people (Barry 169).

As previously mentioned, Mae agrees to go fully transparent for the Circle by wearing one of the Circle’s small orb cameras around her neck during all waken hours, and by doing



so, it initially appears as though Mae voluntarily and self-determinedly agrees to surrender her rights to privacy, individuality, and freedom. This is supported by the character of Mercer, who expressly objects to the Circle and its ideology, as he confronts Mae about her blind acceptance of the technological developments: “No one’s forcing you to do this. You willingly tie yourself to these leashes” (Eggers 260). However, it can be argued that Mae’s actions and thoughts are progressively substituted with the ideology of the Circle. By going transparent, Mae assumes the role as role model for the millions of viewers who watch her live stream her life, with very few exceptions such as “during bathroom usage, or at least time spent on the toilet” (351). This emphasises the all-seeing and constantly present surveillance implemented in the environment existing within the Circle, seeing as transparency is used to enforce the constant surveillance and further allows for the company to enforce their sense of power and dominance over people. Moreover, it becomes evident that Mae internalises the surveillance that follows being transparent, considering the fact that she adjusts her behaviour, opinions, and actions in a hope to come across as perfect as possible on the grounds that she is conscious about her permanent visibility. Transparency ultimately corrects Mae’s behaviour as she is governed by her superego: “The first time the camera redirected her actions was when she went to the kitchen for something to eat. [...] Normally, she would have grabbed a chilled brownie, but seeing the image of her hand reaching for it, and seeing what everyone else would be seeing, she pulled back” (328). The quote illustrates the functioning power of transparency, in the sense that it automatically makes the camera-wearer conform to the rules, norms, and ideology of society. In the light of this, Mae has arguably lost any touch with reality outside of the Circle and has become a marionette doll for the company that leaves little, if any at all, relation to the outside world.

In relation to transparency then, it can be argued that the surveilled become the bearer of surveillance themselves, as was the intention with Jeremy Bentham’s idea of the Panopticon (Storey 136). Ultimately, it can be deduced that by implementing transparency in the Circle, the company stands forth as an embodiment of Bentham’s panopticon in the sense that all employees and supporters of the Circle are exposed to constant technological surveillance. More pressingly, it can be derived that transparency functions as an internalised panopticon that entails conforming docile bodies that act based on their fully developed superegos as it reinforces a constant notion of conformity and desire for acceptance within the individual (Foucault *Discipline* 201). However, it is worth arguing that by implementing transparency within the society of the Circle, the company aspires to abolish surveillance in itself, by achieving self-surveilling individuals. More precisely, it can be argued that the programs introduced by the Circle contribute to their desire of creating a fully transparent society, where external surveillance becomes superfluous. This is rendered possible due to the virtualness of



the Panopticon existing within the Circle which ensures a fully developed superego within its individuals. This ultimately reinforces the internalisation of the surveillance and power exerted by the company.

The effective mechanism of the internalisation of surveillance is further amplified by the tracking and modifying of behaviour and actions without the necessity of extreme disciplining and torture (Foucault *Discipline* 204). On the contrary, the Circle employs the use of shame and judgement from viewers to control and assert dominance over employees and users. This is reflected in the way shame promotes attempts to reform oneself and others to satisfy and live up to the ideology of the company, which is supported by the notion that Mae attempts to force her parents into conformity when they contradict and oppose to the technology and ideology as presented by the Circle (Eggers 365). This further emphasises the power the Circle holds over its employees and users, namely that they are manipulated into believing the goodness of the company to such a degree that they attempt to control people around them into conformity.

The all-seeing power and dominance of the company is perhaps best and most efficiently built up around the metaphor of the transparent, all-consuming, and blind shark in the aquarium located in the Circle: “It was a bizarre creature, ghostlike, vaguely menacing and never still, but no one who stood before it could look away. Mae was hypnotised by it [...]” (307). According to the quote, it is not difficult to realise that the shark is a clear metaphor for the Circle itself. This is further elaborated through Mae’s fascination with the shark and its consumptive power as it devours a lobster: “[...] the lobster was being processed, inside the shark, in front of her, with lighting speed and incredible clarity. Mae saw the lobster broken into dozens, then hundreds of pieces, in the shark’s mouth, then saw those pieces make their way through the shark’s gullet, its stomach, its intestines.” (318). The transparent glass-like appearance of the shark resembles that of the Circle’s surveillance and power over all its users. Moreover, the shark’s blindness functions as an ethical foreshadowing of the all-consuming social implications of the technological advancements that are executed at the Circle, a foresight the Circle does not concern itself with. This becomes evident when considering the cautionary warning presented within the character of Kalden/Ty: “We’re closing the circle around everyone – it’s a totalitarian nightmare” (481). The quote illustrates Kalden/Ty’s fear that by closing the Circle, which is the ultimate goal of the company, every chance to ever escape the Circle and its surveillance and technological advancement, will forever be impossible and “like setting up a guillotine in the public square” (482). The notion that a divisiveness exists between the characters and their concept of the state ideology reinforces the cautionary warning of the novel. This is further underlined in alignment with the final characteristic of the dystopian genre (Booker 39), namely that the novel concludes with the



victory of the totalitarian society over the individual as Kalden/Ty feared and warned about.

Ultimately, the novel functions as a cautionary warning that elucidates the accelerating advancement of technology and its impact on societies and their futures. More precisely, the Circle, as an all-powerful and all-seeing company, implements technological surveillance in an attempt to obtain control and domination over the privacy and individuality of people.

MODES OF PRODUCTION

The Circle sets off as a post-industrial tale whose main motif is to enhance democracy worldwide by making *everything* accessible to *everyone*. Through the analysis above, and its identification of the ideologemes represented through the high-tech company, the Circle, it is evident that the main mode of production is capitalism. What can be deduced from the analysis, is the fact that the ideologemes within *The Circle* are represented at a level above the characters, and more within the Circle itself as an institution.

In Egger's parallel universe, Mae Holland is fully assimilated into the Circle, who has "subsumed Facebook, Twitter, Google, and finally, Alacrity, Zoopa, Jefe, and Quan" (Eggers 23). Working at Customer Experience, Mae finds herself overwhelmed by the forever running "digital hamster wheel of customer satisfaction", through which she constantly must update on her social media and reply to the never-ending amounts of emails, texts, and tweets (Jarvis 276). As a result to the amount of work-load, Mae steadily works her way up in the corporate hierarchy which escalates in her growing popularity online to the point that she is asked to go transparent, making every part of her daily routine accessible to the rest of the world in its pursuit to completely eradicate privacy (Eggers 326). Regularly, the Circle arranges events for its employees during which the CEOs, most often Eamon Bailey, introduce new revolutionary products to the audience. These products are not mere commodities, ensuring "the perfectibility of the human being", but tools applied as "technological fixes for social problems and the harassment of human potential" (Jarvis 276). In order to ensure the continuous circulation of information, everyone needs to succumb to the Circle as an object. This is ensured by addressing the need for all action to become transparent, which is founded in the belief that equal access should be a human right. According to D. Berry and M. Dieter, accessibility for everyone is the representation of "a new mode of immaterial production" (Berry et al.).

Starting with the employees, the Circle encourages its workers to utilise their online activity to promote its products. For example, Mae is told that her Conversation Rate i.e. her participation in spurring purchases from her followers, is monitored by numbers extracted



from algorithm calculations that ensure competitiveness among the employees to guarantee its steady progressiveness: “the minimum expectation for high-functioning Circlers is a Conversion Rate of x250, and a weekly Retail Raw of \$45,000” (Eggers 251). By establishing a circuit between the corporation, its employees, and the consumers, the Circle’s corporate strategy entails a steady increase in the scale of the computerised surveillant assemblage (Zuboff 133). In order for the Circle to become the ultimate medium of accessibility and information, everybody needs to become part of its immaterial platform, ensuring equal access to all, making the human experience a basic human right: “

An image of Machu Picchu appeared onscreen.[...]“That’s a live image [...] this opens up the possibility of visual surrogates. Imagine I’m bedridden, or too frail to explore the mountain myself. I send someone up with a camera around her neck, and I can experience it all in real time. (Eggers 69, 70)

While the idea of making web searching and photo sharing free and accessible to everyone, it enables the Circle to utilise the personal data for its own gain by collecting it and selling it, which can be related to “surveillance capitalism”, a term coined by Harvard professor Shoshana Zuboff, which operates “through unprecedented asymmetries in knowledge and power that accrues to knowledge” (Zuboff 16). With Tom Stenton being the representant of pure capitalism in his characterization as an aggressive and ethically negligent corporate with a vision for totalitarian control, and Tyler as the representant of democratic socialism due to his envision for more civilized and equal activities online, surveillance capitalism seems to be best represented through the character Eamon Bailey in his support for eradicating privacy in preference to his intrusive technological surveillance devices.

Initially, the Circle starts a revolutionary platform for internet use introduced by the commercial success of TruYou, but due to its increasing popularity, the company begins to introduce and combine technological devices applicable for the workspace, then the home, and then cities around the world, and finally with the human body (transparency), slowly converting its users into surveillance assets. At the Circle, all employees are expected to complete CircleSurvey, i.e. complete combinations of digitally available personal information and thus becoming fully transparent (Jarvis 287). As a starting point, every employee at the Circle is given a health bracelet (or tracking device) that, other than monitoring the health of the wearer, ensures productivity from the employees (287).

The capitalist regime represented in the Circle illustrates how said regime has transformed from the industrial mass-production towards mass-customisation of technological devices. As the Circle’s ambition and success increases steadily, so too does the realm of surveillance



and security with the foundation of preventing crime, as more and more are enrolled to join the community of the Circle. This invasive collection of all possible data is, according to the ideologeme of the Circle, as expressed by Bailey, for the greater good of society: “SHARING IS CARING”. The next is then, to embed the Circle into the voting system, and thus dominating most of the economic, political, and social spectrum of the world.

Concerning the notion of transparency, the Circle claims it will only strengthen democracy: “There would never again be a politician without immediate and thorough accountability [...] There would only be clarity, only light” (Eggers 240, 241). But, in relation to the metaphor of the ominous all-consuming shark, anyone that objects to idea of the spreading of the totalitarian regime of the Circle, is repelled from society: “every time someone started shouting about the supposed monopoly of the Circle [...] soon enough it was revealed that that person was a criminal or deviant of the highest order. One was connected to a terror network in Iran. One was a buyer of child porn” (240). Through its extensive forces of power, the Circle is able to manipulate the public for the benefit of its own gain. In fact, it can be argued that the Circle is in fact dismantling democracy. In relation to Zuboff’s statement, that “it is important to understand that surveillance capitalists are impelled to pursue lawlessness by the logic of their own creation” (Zuboff 74), the Circle, through the production of surveillance capitalism, seems to know everything about everyone, whereas their operative sources are maintained inaccessible to the outside world.

In conclusion, the technologies in Egger’s novel developed by the Circle serve to strengthen its forces of power through profit and not least, surveillance. This process is carried out through the technological mediation enrolled onto humanity, through which the developing addiction of technological devices sustains the capitalist mode of production. What is disguised as means to enhance democracy and better the human existence, is in fact panoptic means to surveil and ensure the production of mass-customization technological products. Ultimately, Eggers’ cautionary tale illuminates how the panoptic dominance of social media affects the individual’s self-perception and further degrades the real human experience into a mere reflection.

Genre & Historicity

On the basis of the three analyses, it is relevant to compare and highlight the differences and similarities presented within the novels and further, how they can be regarded as a critique of the contemporary circumstances at the time of their publication. According to Keith



Booker: “the very motivation behind dystopian fiction is often an attempt to provide satirical, cautionary warnings that might help us to prevent the undesirable events depicted in the fictions.” (Booker vii). Ultimately, it can be argued that dystopian novels call attention to issues in contemporary history by creating the worst conceivable nightmarish depiction of society to warn and encourage future generations to take preventative actions to better the future of society. The three novels used in this project all employ surveillance as a starting point with the intention of creating a more secure and better society for its citizens. More precisely, it can be deduced that the governments of the novels work on the theory of utilitarianism which arose in an attempt to create the greatest amount of good for the greatest amount of people, or, to create cosmos from chaos. However, as is the case for all dystopian novels, this desire or mindset has been distorted for the benefit of providing the people in power with even more power.

The novel *1984* functions as a starting point for this project when appointing differences and similarities in terms of genre between the three dystopian novels that, temporarily, are far apart, and therefore are estimated to represent miscellaneous contemporary cultural and social problems. As Orwell’s work being sufficiently distinctive for its time period and presentation of a totalitarian society, Eggers’ work is deemed a suitable representative for its subtext in light of technological advancement and social media, as it raises the question of memory, history, privacy, and the limitations of human knowledge.

One of the most prominent similarities between *1984* and *The Circle* is that of slogans that are used to bring the population together in the fight against the enemies of the state ideology to ensure the continuation of their reign: “WAR IS PEACE, FREEDOM IS SLAVERY, IGNORANCE IS STRENGTH” (*1984*), and “SHARING IS CARING, PRIVACY IS THEFT, SECRETS ARE LIES” (*The Circle*). In *1984*, the slogans represent an omnipresent entity that encourages the public to conform and listen to Big Brother in the constant time of war, whereas Eggers employ slogans to claim that the problem lies with the public, and further transform the agenda of the government to make way for the revolutionary technology that will ensure the perfectibility of the human race. The slogans function as a deconstruction of the immediate logic by twisting what is true and what is false to assure that people conform to the respective ideologies.

A similarity that exists between the novels, *1984* and *A Scanner Darkly*, is the fact that the reader obtains a strong empathy for the protagonists. According to Booker, the protagonists in dystopian novels are often characterised as misfits or political mavericks, which contributes to the amplification of the reader’s sense of compassion and empathy with the characters (Booker 38). More precisely, the reader of *1984* and *A Scanner Darkly* quickly generates a relation to the protagonist and roots for them as they embark on their voyage and resistance towards the



government and their state-induced surveillance. This aspect especially asserts itself within the two novels, as both protagonists respectively find themselves in internal conflict with the ideologies of the state, and further struggle to reconcile with the social and political structures of society. This makes the downfall of the protagonists that much drearier and harder to accept as the reader experiences a sense of catharsis. However, in regard to *The Circle*, the reader never fully obtains a relation, or a sense of empathy and compassion towards the protagonist, seeing as Mae never expresses a downright resistance towards the government and its ideology, and therefore never expressly experiences a downfall. On the contrary, Mae quickly conforms and acts according to the rules and norms that exist within the Circle. This further entails that Mae never experiences a loss of identity, as is the case with the protagonists in *1984* and *A Scanner Darkly*, as she regards the state ideology and implemented surveillance as instrumental in her personal development.

One of the obvious similarities that is evident in relation to the novels, *A Scanner Darkly* and *The Circle*, is that of addiction, more precisely the consumption of addictive commodities. In *A Scanner Darkly*, the notion of addiction manifests itself in the consumption of legal and illegal commodities, especially in the form of drugs. In *The Circle*, addiction is manifested in relation to the utilisation of social media and the constant demand for validation. More precisely, Eggers illustrates in his novel that nothing is valid before it has been approved or accepted with a 'like' from the masses. Arguably, addiction in *The Circle* is understood as an encouragement to the extent that social media has become mandatory and an essential part of society. In *A Scanner Darkly* on the other hand, addiction is discouraged on the grounds that it degrades and destroys society, at least the society of the straights. Addiction in the two novels can therefore be considered a human surveillance tool that controls the people affected.

Another similarity that plays a prominent role in the three novels is that of state-induced surveillance that assumes the role of an all-seeing and all-powerful entity. In both *1984* and *The Circle*, the protagonists are aware that they are being watched, whereas in *A Scanner Darkly*, it is only speculated. Regardless, the notion of surveillance ultimately, regardless of whether people know they are being watched or not, has an effect on the human psyche. This is expressed through the characters' actions and thought processes, where the protagonists in *1984* and *The Circle* are aware of the government surveillance and accordingly attempt to correct their behaviour and actions to fit into the norms and rules of society in the hope of passing unnoticed. This notion, however, is not applicable to the characters in *A Scanner Darkly*, who, on the contrary, live in a state of constant paranoia because they simply suspect the surveillance, but have no confirmation of its actual existence, and regardless continue to act out their addiction.

Ultimately, based on the three analyses of this project, it can be concluded that the three



literary works portray and elucidate the contemporary history at the time of their publication, and furthermore intend to warn about the tyranny of power and surveillance, and how these are made possible through technology, discourse, and addiction. The dystopian novels conclusively attempt to shed light on and communicate the current direction the political and societal state of power is taking in our contemporary and digitised world. Finally, the three novels function as cautionary warnings that direct attention to specific tendencies and problematics of contemporary society and a near-future that, in a worst-case scenario, could resemble that of the dystopian worlds if no preventative measures are taken to fight them.



Discussion

“There will come a time when it isn’t ‘They’re spying on me through my phone’ anymore. Eventually, it will be ‘My phone is spying on me’”

– Philip K. Dick

The notion of societies controlled by constant surveillance and monitoring raises several political and ethical questions concerning the privacy and control of the citizens affected. The three dystopian novels analysed in this project; *1984*, *A Scanner Darkly*, and *The Circle* all portray a somewhat near-futuristic surveillance society which illuminates the issue of government surveillance. Dystopian fiction, then, is written with the intention of creating stories showing people the existing problems of society that can otherwise be difficult to understand. As dystopian novels, the three literary works selected for this project, assume the role of cautionary warnings of future societies, and therefore, the novels and their highlighted themes play a dominant role when it comes to understanding the pros and cons of surveillance societies as we know them today.

The notion of surveillance is most often relegated to the realms of science fiction and dystopian novels as well as totalitarian and authoritarian states. This is something that becomes evident throughout all three literary works utilised in this project, seeing as they warn against the threat and harm of constant surveillance in digitised totalitarian societies. The novels then, as previously mentioned, function as warnings of possible outcomes and realities if surveillance is not limited, restricted, or controlled in some way or another. Ultimately, the increased technological advancements make the possibility of a near-futuristic surveillance society more pressing than ever. This is further corroborated by the notion that panoptic surveillance has become highly relevant in light of the COVID-19 pandemic that has challenged governments around the world in the management of citizens and the virus.

The virus has caused the deaths of more than 357,491 people (as of May 28, 2020) on a world-wide scale (Elflein). Important to mention is the fact that the pandemic is still on-going, and therefore the numbers mentioned in this project will continue to increase for months to come. Therefore, the numbers in this project reflect the situation at the time the project was written, and not when the project is read. Moreover, the project employs journalistic articles, rather than academic, from various news-sites to sustain the discussion with different, varying, and current conceptions of societal problems in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic.

A particular challenge regarding the pandemic has been the handling of misinformation



concerning the origin and spreading of the virus, which has been a politically dangerous issue given the arisal of conspiracy theories that attempt to grasp and explain the pandemic.

Conspiracy theories are formed as a result of situations and crises that are difficult to comprehend and appear unending. Moreover, it can be argued that conspiracy theories are often stories based on misinformation and a convoluted understanding of a given situation. Therefore, it does not come as a surprise that the uncertainty regarding the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in several conspiracy theories as an attempt to explain both its origin and its spreading. One such conspiracy theory spreading misleading information is that the implementation of the next-generation wireless technology, 5G, acts as a fuel for the coronavirus. More precisely, the conviction goes that 5G compromises the immune system due to the exposure of radio waves, which is then believed to cause the virus to infect a large number of people (Kaur). Another conspiracy theory suggests that the coronavirus is transmitted through the 5G network, but according to Adam Finn, professor of paediatrics at the University of Bristol, this would be impossible seeing as: “Viruses and electromagnetic waves that make mobile phones and internet connections work are different things. As different as chalk and cheese” (Schraer, et al.). Such conspiracies create a culture-political debate on how communities should approach misleading information, and further the need for governments to clamp down on such conspiracy theories. This happens by increasing the implementation of surveillance and control in societies. Considering the COVID-19 pandemic, our project has in recent months become increasingly topical in light of the circumstances affecting societies worldwide.

Governments around the world have, as previously mentioned, employed different surveillant tactics in an attempt to restrict and manage the virus. This has brought into question the handling of data privacy. Therefore, it is interesting to shift the gaze from general surveillance and instead look at how surveillance is enacted towards a specific purpose for example to prevent a worldwide disease.

By implementing social monitoring, governments around the world can track the coronavirus and further uphold the state-induced quarantine. A country that has increased their use of surveillance is China who resorted to expand their already existing surveillance by installing cameras that point directly to the front door of people’s homes or even within the homes (Frias). Following the lift of the coronavirus lockdown, China furthermore created a colour-coded health system that identifies the health status of people through a questionnaire with details such as health background and body temperature. The system, based on the information provided, generates a colour code, either green, yellow, or red. People with a yellow or red colour-code are not permitted to travel. Moreover, the red code further estimates that the person is likely infected with the disease, while the yellow indicates that a person has



been in contact with an infected person. The green code denotes that a person is symptom-free and, therefore, allowed to pass through the checkpoints that have been put into place in locations such as subway stations, hotels, restaurants, and apartment blocks (Ankel). In Russia, more specifically Moscow, the government has issued its 12 million citizens to remain indoors with only a few exceptions. Furthermore, the government of Moscow has provided its citizens with an app that tracks their movements outside their homes, as well as a QR-code containing personal data which must be presented to the police upon request (Maynes). Moreover, the Russian president, Vladimir Putin, has signed a law that introduced criminal penalties, such as fines and prison, if people are caught ignoring quarantine and, therefore, risk infecting others.

The increased surveillance and data collection have contributed to people expressing their concerns about the growing digital arsenal which the government commands over and likely will continue to command over when the coronavirus finally ends. According to UN Special Rapporteur Joseph Cannataci: “Dictatorships and authoritarian societies often start in the face of a threat [...] That is why it is important to be vigilant today and not give away all our freedoms.” (“World risks”). The quote arguably warns the world about blindly and openly accepting the digital surveillance that is introduced during the pandemic, which limits the freedom and privacy of the people involved. Instead, Cannataci argues that people and societies should ensure that the data collected is erased once the health crisis has passed, otherwise we risk “[sleepwalking] into a permanent expanded surveillance state [...]” (“World risks”). The fear of being overtaken by a surveillance society is further enforced by the implementation of 5G, as previously mentioned, seeing as it is often discussed that with 5G, governments are provided with an unparalleled surveillance power, in the sense that data retention could ultimately resolve in mobile phones becoming “virtual ankle monitor[s]” carried around in pockets and bags (Tonkin).

When discussing surveillance, what is one of the most pressing topics, is the fundamental right of privacy, more specifically the importance of freedom and privacy from observation, disturbance, and public attention, as well as the freedom of speech (York). And although laws exist that protect people from government surveillance, this cannot be challenged or ended unless it is discovered. More importantly, it can be discussed that surveillance is harmful due to the notion that it can affect the exercise of civil liberties seeing as “it can cause people not to experiment with new, controversial, or deviant ideas” (Richards). Furthermore, surveillance poses a harm in relation to the dynamic between the watcher and the watched which can lead to coercion, discrimination, as well as the threat of selective enforcement. Unquestionably, surveillance society limits the rights and control over one’s own body and personal lives, seeing as increased surveillance entails the government with more power, as it creates a suppressive



hierarchy amongst people in society. Therefore, it is important to develop certain surveillance laws and guidelines to protect people and avoid exposure from the substantial harms posed by surveillance.

Despite the diversity of opinions and conspiracy theories that have emerged due to the increase of surveillance during the pandemic of the COVID-19, it can be argued that surveillance is not solely utilised in a harmful and controlling way but also has some positive and helpful aspects. Despite balancing on eroding the privacy of individuals, enacting surveillance to control the spread of the disease has proved to be very effective in ensuring health for the citizens. Countries all over the world have in light of the pandemic turned to high technology apparatuses to track and monitor individuals with one common goal: to slow the pandemic. In relation to the “modes of governing by political responses to infectious diseases”, Swiss historian Philipp Sarasin explores Michel Foucault’s account of such governmental reactions (“What We Read”). In his work *Security, Territory, Population* (1978), Foucault accounts for specific reactions throughout history to leprosy, plague, and smallpox which ultimately serve as models for authoritarian, disciplinary, and liberal governmentality, which ultimately “may serve as guidance when approaching current government measures” (“What We Read”). According to Sarasin, Foucault uses these models of thought, in order to organise forms of power when living in the midst of a pandemic and from contemporary society’s point of view, being “subject to, or obser[ving] through the media, different modes of appearance of power and government” (Sarasin). Ultimately, Sarasin deems that the smallpox model is the one that best describes the form of government that European governments have primarily adopted in times of a pandemic (Sarasin). The smallpox model of power is based “on power’s abandonment of the dream to completely eradicate the pathogens” and instead coexists with the plague (Sarasin). This form of model follows the strategy of flattening the curve of the infected, meaning that society must reckon with the disease, and instead of eradicating it, it must be extended over time in such a way that it becomes more manageable for health systems around the world (Sarasin). Furthermore, Sarasin notes that the strategy of prohibiting gatherings of individuals “may [...] take on the character of a normation and disciplinarization of individuals” but rather, it is a “well-justified” and “understandable framework” the government sets for individual behavior (Sarasin). The obvious gains for increasing governmental surveillance is that it operates in favor of the welfare of populations around the world. In fact, Seerat Chabba has in her article *Coronavirus tracking apps: How are countries monitoring infections?* for the *Deutsche Welle* (Chabba) listed how countries have, as mentioned above, adopted tracking apps to trace and ultimately prevent the spreading of the disease. Such apps consist, amongst others, of; home-quarantine apps that track people in quarantine through the geolocation data from their smartphone to prove they are maintained



in their position; QR code apps used as an indicator of the individual's health, dictating whether the individual is safe to move about in public spaces; and finally apps applicable for tracking those who have come into contact with confirmed patients (Chabba). According to Jennifer Daskal from *The Conversation*, South Korea, one of the most surveilled countries in the world, has been praised for its management of the outbreak of the coronavirus (Daskal). Through its massive testing and technological advances, the country has emerged as a case study for controlling the number of cases nationwide (Normile). Daskal further claims that along with Taiwan and Singapore, who have excelled in containing the virus ("Total COVID-19"), South Korea has possibly provided the best model for stopping the outbreaks (Daskal). Additionally, South Korea's strategy is a result of the 2015 outbreak of MERS that resulted in a reorganisation of South Korea's disease control system with large-capacity healthcare systems, and the establishment of a large biotech industry able to mass-produce test kits, thus enabling the health system to carry out 15,000 tests per day (Daskal). Notably, because COVID-19 is a mild disease for most people, only a fraction of patients contacts health authorities for testing. As Daskal points out, if the patients cannot be found, testing capacity does not mean much, and this is where the surveillance technology plays its part prominently. Surveillance in this regard is not to be considered oppressive or controlling, but rather as a positive help to effectively combat the virus. The aim is namely to work out where known patients have been, and test anyone who might have come into contact with infected people, and the way through which South Korea exercise this, is by using three methods of tracking people; in alignment with China's quarantine of confirmed and potential patients along with its prohibition of local and international travel, the government of South Korea has relied on a surveillance system that combines mobile phone data, credit card information, and facial recognition software that ultimately creates a contact tracking system that runs through smartphone apps to help authorities analyse the movement of people who have tested positive for COVID-19 (Daskal). South Korea has one of the world's highest phone ownership rates, which therefore makes this method quite successful. The phones' location are recorded with complete accuracy because of their connection to multiple transceivers such as 4G and 5G that densely cover the whole country (Daskal). Additionally, "phone companies require all customers to provide their real name and national registry numbers", making it possible to track everyone by following the location of their phone (Daskal). Furthermore, by surveilling transactions through the users' credit cards, it is possible for the government to track the owners' movements. Worth mentioning, in 2014, South Korean cities were estimated to have over 8 million CCTV cameras (one camera per 6.3 people) (Daskal). In 2010, it was estimated that everyone was captured on average 83.1 times per day and every nine seconds travelling, and the numbers are expected to be higher today (Daskal). CCTV cameras therefore enable authorities through



a large overview of city activity to identify people who have been in contact with COVID-19. Ultimately, by combining mobile technology, credit card transactions, and CCTV recordings, authorities are first of all able to find out who an infected person has had close contact with after infection. Secondly, through geographic information systems, it is possible to compare a new patient's movements to earlier ones and thereby, the systems are able to reveal when and from whom the new patient was infected. Thirdly, if the government is unsuccessful in connecting newly infected with known earlier patients, it means that an unregistered patient exists, and he/she can be identified using the method outlined above. The results made by tracking surveillance are not only accessible to health authorities, but also made accessible for the public on government websites, which update the public about new local cases and show locations that citizens are ordered to avoid.

In accordance with Foucault's claim, the smallpox model makes it possible for governments to isolate the infected without having to impose a nationwide lockdown. To sum up, making the private information about people's movements accessible to everyone, rather than exclusively to the government, has proven to be an effective way for the authorities to gain public trust, which in turn, is important in preventing people from panicking.

All things considered in regards to the notion of surveillance, it is troublesome to provide a definitive answer of the merits and demerits of such a society, seeing as surveillance can be both beneficial and harmful depending on its role. Most importantly then, must be the way governments choose to utilise surveillance to observe, to register, and to control its citizens. Arguably, by limiting surveillance to the public space, as a way to combat crime or control diseases as seen with the coronavirus, one may achieve the most ethical and moral utilisation of surveillance, and thereby avoid a society dominated by such apparatus. By keeping the surveillance strictly to the public space, individuals can create their own identity without being manipulated or disciplined into one specific identity by the government. Ultimately, it is highly important to tread lightly when it comes to the utilisation of surveillance, regardless of its intention, seeing as it can result in horrific consequences if misused or taken advantage of.



Conclusion

Surveillance, power, and totalitarianism are some of the most prominent elements within the three selected dystopian novels *1984*, *A Scanner Darkly*, and *The Circle*. The societies present in the three novels are driven by the same forces and desires emanating from a utilitarian mindset, namely the greatest amount of good for the greatest number of people. However, at some point they have distorted their ideologies in an attempt to substantially gain and maintain more and more power over society and its inhabitants. This is secured by the obliteration of the right to independence and free thinking through a dominant and hegemonic ideology imposed by the totalitarian regimes that intend to create docile, conformed bodies through visible or invisible surveillance, discipline, and power, respectively.

By analysing the three novels using Fredric Jameson's theory on The Political Unconscious involving the three concentric frameworks: political history, society, and history, and Michel Foucault's theory on panoptic surveillance within the Power/Knowledge scheme, this project has been able to illustrate the novels as symbolic acts of the period at the time of their publication. As a short summation; *1984* is a symbolic act of the hardships of the post-war period of World War II and the following political conflicts that arose as a result; *A Scanner Darkly* is a symbolic act of the government-led War on Drugs during the 1970s; and finally *The Circle* as a symbolic act of the 2000s rise of social media as well as the innovative surveillance technology that is rendered possible.

In order to uncover the political unconscious of the three dystopian novels, this project has identified the underlying ideologemes of the social classes represented in the three works. This is achieved through the analysis of the correlation between the protagonist and the other characters' belief systems and perceptions of the world. The ideologemes of Oceania in *1984* consist of a belief system that worships Big Brother while compromising the individualism and free thinking within its citizens. In *A Scanner Darkly*, the occurring ideologemes serve as a dialectic element between the dopers and the straights and are, furthermore, represented in the consumer society that assists in dividing the two classes. Finally, the ideologemes of *The Circle* are represented in the enhancement of technological devices that prioritise community and sacrifice any notion of privacy and individuality. Through the occurring ideologemes, and the opposing views present within each novel, it is possible to decide the modes of productions present within the novels and further determine their underlying ideologies.

The three novels further illustrate how panoptic surveillance and totalitarian regimes both physically and internally control and regulate the behaviour and thought process of



people under authoritative powers. Surveillance within the societies of the novels has assumed the function of a disciplinary power rather than simply as a security measure. Ultimately, surveillance and power are utilised to create an ideal and sustainable society that allows for the regimes or people in power to enforce their ideology sustained by the truth and knowledge regimes present within the novels.

By looking at three different novels, from three different decades, it becomes evident that surveillance and power constantly manifest themselves and evolve throughout history. Themes and problematics that play a prominent role in *1984* are also recognisable in *The Circle*, which provide an insight into the relevance and importance of surveillance and power, and further how themes and problematics regarding surveillance and power are altered and adjusted to assert themselves into contemporary society. This calls into question, not only the ethics, but also the merits and demerits of surveillance, as well as the consequences that may follow if such power is misused. In the three novels, surveillance has become the ultimate method of power to restrict, limit, and control the actions and thoughts of the citizens. Therefore, the cautionary warning of the novels can be concluded to be a message of awareness and mindfulness of governing one's personal rights and privacy in an attempt to avoid a future mimicking the reality presented in the novels.

Conclusively, the notion of surveillance societies and totalitarianism presents itself in the dystopian three novels as measures for which the regimes assert their ideologies and power over their citizens. In doing so, the regimes aim at constructing a society that sustains and reinforces their power and allows for the obstruction of the individual's identity and further the creation and normalisation of self-disciplining docile bodies. As to conclude, when surveillance assumes the foundation of society, it is no longer solely utilised as a security measure, but rather becomes a disciplinary and controlling power. Therefore, it is important to tread lightly when regarding surveillance, for what is society without individualism, privacy, and freedom of thought.



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