

Discipline and Punish by Michel Foucault Essay

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Stability in terms of society can be defined as the state in which power is clear and defined, and the constituents abide to those in power. In modern day institutions, a certain amount of stability must exist or people would lack the motivation to get work done and would not respond to authority. To ensure motivation, employers will install cameras, or use other techniques to always keep an eye on their workers. If people are doing nothing wrong, there is no reason to have a problem with being watched. For this reason, it is not surprising that employers set their work station similar to a [Panopticon](#), an institutional building that is step up with someone in the middle watching everyone, but the workers don't know if they are being watched or not. Consequently, the workers will be on their best behavior knowing that they are being watched, and will maintain a high level of productivity. Workers perform at their best knowing that they're being watched because they do not want to lose their jobs more so than they want to impress their boss. As Foucault describes it, "He who is subjected to a field of visibility, and who knows it, assumes responsibility for the constraints of power." (Foucault, 290) As humans, it is natural for us to do what we want rather than what we need to do. If workers can get away with laziness, then they will. However, being watched at all times forces workers to always be on their best behavior, thus eliminating laziness in the workplace. However, despite its effectiveness, people criticize this use of surveillance, citing that it dehumanizes people by

invading their personal privacy. That being said, despite its criticisms, a Panopticon is an effective way of securing discipline in any institution, and the...

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... and stability. Despite this, it doesn't matter who is in control of the Panopticon, but at the same time, it does matter. It doesn't matter who is in control of the Panopticon, because it will work regardless. People will abide by the rules, and do whatever is considered "normal." However, it does matter who is in control because the person in control dictates how people are going to act, or decide what is "normal.". Because of this, a Panopticon can be used for destructive purposes if the power is in the wrong hands, as shown in the Nazi Germany example. Ultimately, it all depends on whether or not those in power have the best intentions for their people, their institution, and for society.

Works Cited

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