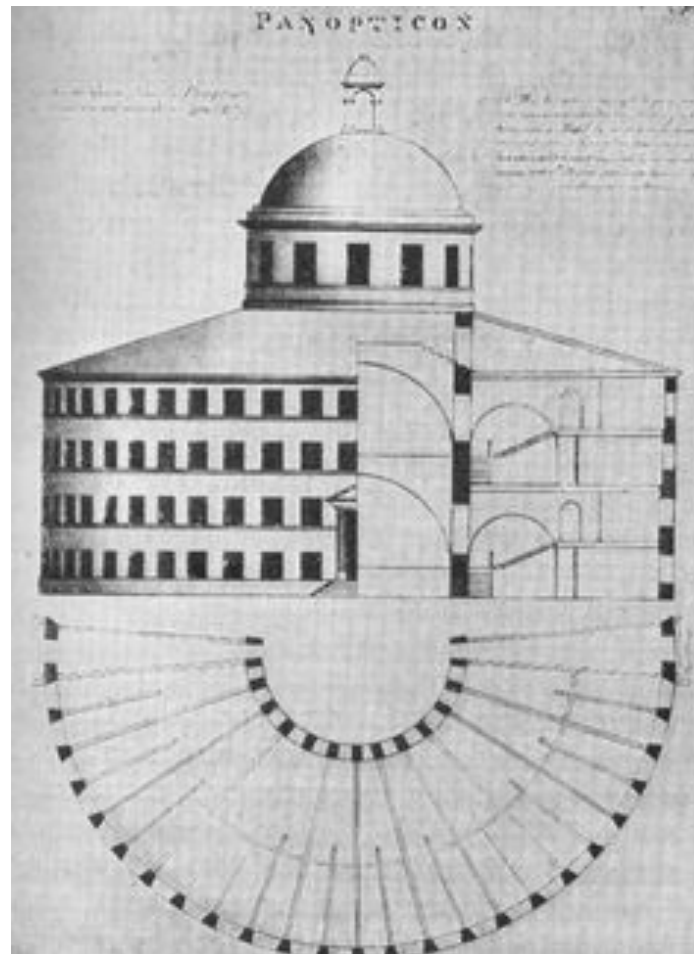


Technologies of the Self

BIG BROTHER
IS WATCHING YOU



Jeremy and Samuel Bentham, *design for Panopticon penitentiary, 1787:*
half-plan, half section and half elevation



Panopticon

The French philosopher Michel Foucault revitalised interest in the panopticon in his 1975 book *Discipline and Punish*. He describes the prisoner of a panopticon as being at the receiving end of asymmetrical surveillance:

‘He is seen, but he does not see; he is an object of information, never a subject in communication.’

(Foucault, M., 1995, *Discipline and Punish*, (2nd Edition), Vintage Books, p.200)

As a consequence, the inmate polices himself for fear of punishment.

The Truman Show

Peter Weir's film, *The Truman Show* (1998) depicts and assesses the impact of reality television on notions of privacy and identity, adapting Orwell's account of constant visual scrutiny by fusing it with the contemporary adulation of celebrity. In *The Truman Show*, surveillance has morphed into entertainment.



Ai Weiwei (marble)



The watchtower at the heart of the panopticon may be considered a precursor to the cameras fastened to our buildings – purposely visible machines with human eyes hidden from view.

**the Surveillance Camera Players
(completely distrustful of all government)**



The Digital Self

facebook®



You Tube



Foucault, *Technologies of the Self* (1984)

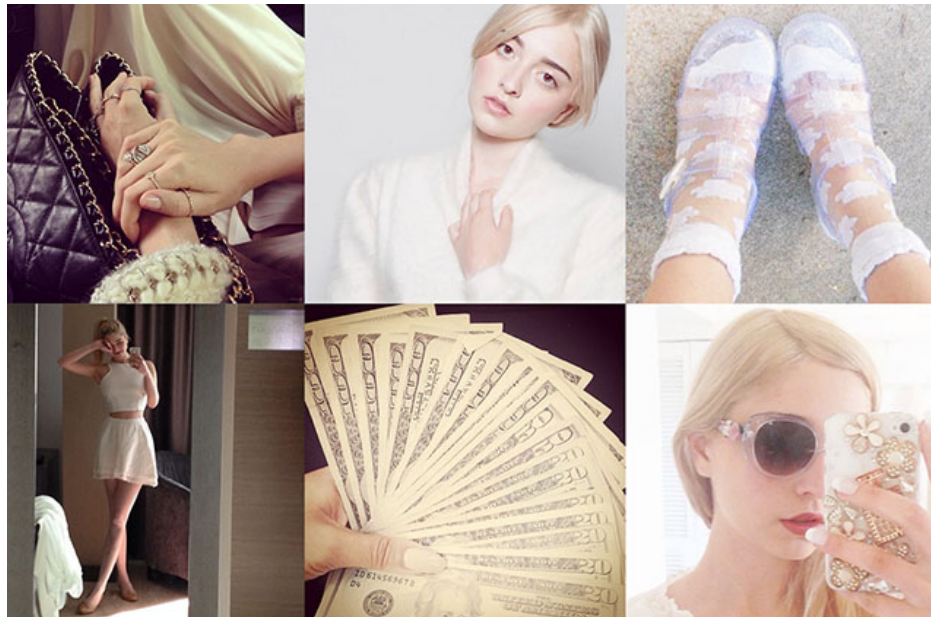
‘technologies of the self, which permit individuals to effect by their own means or with the help of others a certain number of operations on their own bodies and souls, thoughts, conduct, and way of being, so as to transform themselves in order to attain a certain state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection, or immortality.’



Foucault, *Technologies of the Self*

‘Each implies certain modes of training and modification of individuals, not only in the obvious sense of acquiring certain skills but in the sense of acquiring certain attitudes.’

Amalia Ulman, *Excellences and Perfections*





‘The measurable attention one receives through social media both consolidates and fractures the awareness of self. One hopes to be looked at because one knows that one will disappear in that gaze—one's objective realness will cease to be a problem, and identity will cease to be a burdensome responsibility.’ – Rob Horning

<http://rhizome.org/editorial/2014/dec/11/rob-horning-and-amalia-ulman/>

Perhaps the most culturally complex moments on social media occur when we become an audience for ourselves, when we can credibly consume our own selves as a product, as a spectacle.



Cindy Sherman, *Film Stills*, 1977-1980



Valie Export, *Identity Transfer 2*, 1968



Claude Cahun, *Self-Portrait*, 1928

