

Synopticon: Projection

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We are experiencing an entirely new form of a panopticon. The specialty of digital panopticons where people monitor each other is that we spontaneously contribute to its construction and maintenance by displaying and exposing ourselves through digital devices. Social media, which is perceived as a democratic space for freedom of expression, information sharing, and communication, is also a digital panopticon that induces control and voluntary mutual monitoring. For example, if you are photographed on someone else's smartphone and appear on his or her social media, Facebook's algorithm can theoretically analyze it through photos or videos of others you don't know. We are unintentionally entering the Big Brother world. This is the shadow hidden behind the positive usefulness that technological advances bring.

The fate of humankind has the task of co-existing with these technologies. Controlling under state agencies' pressure, which is a way of the past, cannot mitigate digital society's side effects. What is needed is to openly discuss these issues and disclose research results on side effects. To address privacy issues and information monopoly issues, we need to have a keen perspective on them. Besides, capital tries to make people's information into big data to predict and manipulate human behavior.

If the digital panopticon is building data prisons, how should we escape? Thorough self-information management of individuals is only a passive response and is practically impossible. However, we can notice that the disclosure of information has enabled people to monitor power simultaneously. For instance, a citizen may release a violent police crackdown video clip on the Internet to draw a public opinion. This counter-surveillance could narrow the monitoring network of digital panopticons.

This project is intended to express reverse surveillance against the digital panopticon that monitors us, thereby emphasizing the need for horizontal mutual observation, not vertical control relationships. The mask is a means to limit data exposure as much as possible and plays a role as a projection canvas. It is also a one-person demonstration for public surveillance cameras, a symbol of digital surveillance, which shows we are also monitoring power by projecting eyes on masks with a wearable personal projector.

