

## Team Reading Notes: Summarizer

Name:	Date: 12/9/2015
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### Title of Essay: Panopticism by Michael Foucault

<b>Summarizer:</b> Your role is to prepare a brief summary of the day's reading. Use the questions to the right to help you decide what to include. If it helps you to organize the information, consider making a numbered list or an outline.	<b>Sample Questions:</b> What are the most important ideas or events in this reading? What makes them so important? What effect do they have on the reader? What might be a good essay topic for this reading?
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The main and most important idea of Panopticism is creating “positive” power over people in a building. The entire essay is over the Panopticon; a physical building created in the mind of Bentham, a philosopher from a different era. Foucault takes this idea and shows how this power can be used to create from punishment rather than to destroy.

The Panopticon is a building with guard tower in the middle of a yard with a circular building surrounding it with cells/rooms facing the guard tower. The guard tower will have lights shining onto the rooms so that the people in the rooms cannot tell whether or not they are being watched. This is where Foucault believes the source of power of the Panopticon comes from.

“Visibility is a trap” and “He [the person in the cell] is seen, but does not see; he is the object of information, never a subject in communication” are the two quotes that sum up Foucault’s reasoning for the power of Panopticism. Each person in the room does not know whether or not they are being watched, so they assume they are always being watched. Foucault believes this to be the perfect power because “its actual exercise [is] unnecessary” meaning the Panopticon makes power so overwhelming you won’t even need it. The idea of it alone makes it powerful enough to be effective at all times.