Introduction

• Explore ideas relating to the Panopticon
• Apply these to reality television
• Highlight ideas about the surveillance society
• The media as judge – Superpanopticon
• Learning Outcome 2
  ◦ Critically apply theoretical considerations to generic popular texts
• Assignment choice
  • A textual analysis of television programme in relation to surveillance and panopticon
  • Analysis of television itself in relation to surveillance (which can include online television, recording with Web 3.0 etc.)
Big Brother and Reality TV

- Big Brother surveillance
  - *The Truman Show* (1998)
  - 15 minutes of fame
- Why viewers watch
  - Voyeuristic pleasures
  - Suffering of others — reassures us
  - Schadenfreude (pleasure at the misfortune of others)
THE PANOPTICON

• Bentham - 18th century

• Inmates housed where every movement is observed by watchtower

• Foucault – disciplinary power exercised by individuals

• **Clip of Foucault and disciplinary society and the birth of prisons**

• Self-policing
REALITY TELEVISION

• Some types of reality TV
  • Crime, intimacy, lifestyle
  • Media as judge
• Phelan – panopticon applied to television
  • TV producer as guard, television viewer (us) as prisoner
• Big Brother and panopticon (see editing of reality television)
• New technologies – superpanopticon (Mark Poster)
The gaze and self regulation

- Surveillance society *(see Britain is surveillance society)*
  - Gets individuals to monitor their own behaviour
  - Surveillance ingrained in contemporary life
- Self regulation at the heart of Enlightenment
- Kant
  - Morally acceptable
- Foucault
  - Other means of monitoring e.g. records, census etc.
SUPERPANOPTICON

• Information compiled into profiles
• It is possible to have a record of everything
• Information accessible
  • We participate willingly
• Total surveillance
  • Mass surveillance society
• But agency is possible (e.g. Jack Dee, Celeb Big Brother)
Surveillance Studies

- Foucault – panopticon is about the design of institutions
- Deluze – networks of expanding surveillance systems, mechanics, policies, techniques
- Bentham – tower is at the centre of surveillance
- Foucault – prisoners at the centre of panopticon
- Deluze – act of watching/being watched is in flux
  - Set of relationships which are fluid/flux
Media

- Media gaze – being watched
- Reality television as panoptic subject
  - part of networked identity including through technology
- Images used for conditioning our behaviour
- Control imposed on watchers and watched
Key ideas

- Media in relation to self surveillance – similar to the Panopticon
- Reality television providing us with norms to monitor our behaviour
- Not just media – part of surveillance society (Superpanopticon)
- Where the images are part of control in relation to surveillance
- We judge and are judged
- The image has overtaken the structure (or architecture as Bentham first wrote about)
References