

Pre-Draft Assignment 4.1: Mini-Lens Using Quotations as a Lens

In this exercise, you will work on how to use one text to read another -- that is, how to use concepts from one text as a lens through which another can be analyzed. This exercise will help show you how to use quotations from a text as an analytical tool.

Choose one of the Foucault quotations below and apply it to a section of one of the other texts we are reading for this section. (I suggest you use the text you are planning to write your paper on, but that is not required.) These texts include: Emily Martin's "Menstruation, Work, and Class," Jonathan Kozol's "The Savage Inequalities of Public Education in New York," Nancy Scheper-Hughes's and Daniel Hoffman's "Brazilian Apartheid: Street Kids and the Struggle for Urban Space," and Scheper-Hughes's "*Nervoso: Medicine, Sickness and Human Needs.*" You will probably need to quote this text as well.

Bear in mind that whatever reading you have chosen, you should be able to bring your lens quotation to bear on it. Also, your quotations should be properly framed and analyzed. One does not simply drop quotations into text; they need to be integrated. The quotations must be led up to in your text, presented properly and cited, and then analyzed.

You should write 2-3 paragraphs -- a one-page paper -- using your lens quotation. It need not be a finished essay, but should present a finished thought.

You may use further quotations both from Foucault and, of course, from the text which you choose to analyze.

You will be graded on the relevant application of your quotation (be sure you understand it -- I strongly suggest you look it up in the text and see it in context), your use of evidence from the text you analyze, and on the clarity of your argument. Please spell-check and proofread.

This assignment should be about **one double-spaced typed page** (but may run over a bit if you wish, or may also be a bit shorter).

Due 11/23

Here are the quotations you may use as the lens:

1. "...it was a question not of treating the body en masse, 'wholesale,' as if it were an indissociable unity, but of working it 'retail,' individually; of exercising upon it a subtle coercion, of obtaining holds upon it at the level of the mechanism itself -- movements, gestures, attitudes, rapidity: an infinitesimal power over the active body" (Foucault 136-137).
2. "Discipline 'makes' individuals; it is the specific technique of a power that regards individuals both as objects and as instruments of its exercise" (Foucault 170).
3. "The exercise of discipline presupposes a mechanism that coerces by means of observation" (Foucault 170).
4. "The examination combines the techniques of an observing hierarchy and those of a normalizing judgment. It is a normalizing gaze, a surveillance that makes it possible to qualify, to classify and to

punish" (Foucault 184).

5. "Hence, the major effect of the Panopticon: to induce in the inmate a state of conscious and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power. ...in short, that the inmates should be caught up in a power situation of which they themselves are the bearers" (Foucault 201).

6. "He who is subjected to a field of visibility, and who knows it, assumes responsibility for the constraints of power; he makes them play spontaneously upon himself; he inscribes in himself the power relation in which he simultaneously plays both roles; he becomes the principle of his own subjection" (Foucault 203).

7. "'Discipline' may be identified neither with an institution nor with an apparatus; it is a type of power, a modality for its exercise, comprising a whole set of instruments, techniques, procedures, levels of application, targets; it is a 'physics' or an 'anatomy' of power, a technology" (Foucault 215).

8. "We are neither in the amphitheatre, nor on the stage, but in the panoptic machine, invested by its effects of power, which we bring to ourselves since we are part of its mechanism" (Foucault 217).

9. "The seeing machine was once a sort of dark room into which individuals spied; it has become a transparent building in which the exercise of power may be supervised by society as a whole" (Foucault 207).

Here is an **example**, using the last quotation from Foucault and Burnett's *A Little Princess* as the text to be analyzed. (It is from a class I taught on "Discipline and Danger: The Cultural Politics of Childhood." Note that the lack of page numbers comes from using a scanned, online-source text without page numbers; none of your texts lack page numbers, therefore page numbers are required for your citations.)

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Quote #9

Text: *A Little Princess*, Burnett

Foucault's suggestion that discipline has been transferred as a duty to the populace is well-taken in *A Little Princess*. He suggests that this discipline "has become a transparent building in which the exercise of power may be supervised by society as a whole" (Foucault 207), and speaks of "the vigilance of intersecting gazes" (Foucault 217). Those intersecting gazes are the way people in society police each other, make sure that everyone conforms, and thus everyone is at once the watcher and the watched in a great intersecting web.

Sara is *watched*, not only by authority figures such as Miss Minchin, but by the other girls: "'To think that she was the girl with the diamond mines, Lavinia commented. 'She does look an object'" (Burnett 1994). Lavinia watches and comments on Sara's appearance, as do several of the other girls, including some who are friendlier to her such as Ermengarde, who "had never imagined Sara could look like this--so odd and poor and almost like a servant" (Burnett 1994). The emphasis on watching and seeing is very clear: the girls are watching Sara and her appearance is highly important.

However, Sara is also watching back. Her gaze penetrates in search of information (another Foucauldian concept) although she uses it not to discipline others, but to defend herself. Lavinia remarks upon this:

"...I never liked her much, but I can't bear that way she has now of looking at people without speaking--just as if she was finding them out."

"I am," said Sara, promptly, when she heard of this. "That's what I look at some people for. I like to know about them. I think them over afterward."

The truth was that she had saved herself annoyance several times by keeping her eye on Lavinia, who was quite ready to make mischief, and would have been rather pleased to have made it for the ex-show pupil. (Burnett 1994)

Sara's gaze is, in this instance, defensive. She watches out for herself, while other people watch her behavior and appearance in order to police it -- or to attempt to do so.