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Title

**Samuel Fuller's Shock Corridor (1963): A Foucauldian Analysis
of Madness**

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Dedications

Every challenging work needs self efforts as well as guidance of elders especially those who were very close to our heart.

My humble effort I dedicate to my beloved

FATHER & MOTHER

Especially my second family

DADA & NANA

And to my besties: KAMAR

Whose affection, love, encouragement and prays of day and night make me able to get such success and honor,

Along with all hard working and respected

Teachers

Abstract

This dissertation will investigate Samuel Fuller's Shock Corridor (1963) from a Foucauldian perspective. The dialectic of power and knowledge forms the gist of his critical theory that tries to explain how different modern social institutions, like mental hospitals, aim at controlling individuals. Since some movies reflect the real state of societies to a large extent, Shock Corridor (1963) will be analysed from a Foucauldian stance to better understand how authorities exert power to produce docile bodies. Indeed, I have divided my work into two main chapters; the first one deals with the historical background of US during 1960s and the medicalized asylum, while the second chapter emphasizes on power relation and resistance in Shock Corridor in order to determine the extent to which Samuel Fuller's work meets Foucault ideas, this dissertation will follow Foucault's theory of power as explained in his book "Discipline and Punish: the Birth of the Prison (1991)". Foucault's concepts like Discipline, surveillance, panopticon and resistance are to be discussed in this dissertation to explain how the patients in Shock Corridor are treated badly and aimed to become docile and conformist and how resistance is created from the abuse of power. Throughout our investigation, we have found that Shock Corridor reflects Foucault's ideas of the omnipresence of power and highlighted the way resistance is created as a response to power.

Key words: *Shock Corridor, Samuel Fuller, Michel Foucault, power, discipline, surveillance, resistance.*

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I. General Introduction

Literature is often viewed as a collection of creative works that frequently reflect human experiences and emotions through language. Madness has been a recurrent theme in literature and cinema, providing a vast and diverse source of inspiration for authors and filmmakers from all eras and cultures. It is viewed as a mental illness that comes from different reasons resulting in a conflict of thoughts and emotions and hard situations. It is hard to give a specific and a single definition for madness because of the numerous theorizations that have been given by different cultures in different time periods. In Medieval Europe, for instance, madness was interpreted from a religious lens and often viewed as a possession by demons, but it was simultaneously considered as synonymous with wisdom.

Asylums are commonly defined as facilities designed to provide care and treatment for individuals with mental disorders. They are intended to offer a safe environment away from society's perceived chaos, where individuals receive therapeutic treatment, aiming at re-establishing their mental state back.

Within this safe environment, individuals are supposed to receive therapeutic treatments to restore their mental state to a more regulated and balanced condition. Our dissertation deals with the theme of madness in Samuel Fuller's *Shock Corridor* (1963). During the sixties, mental illness was frequently stigmatized, and many people, with mental health issues, were often marginalized and institutionalized in psychiatrist hospitals. The discourse of madness gained prominence as medical, legal, theological, as well as, political considerations have been implicated. For Carol Neely who is a prominent in the field of literature, gender studies, she pinpoints, madness began to be secularized, medicalized, psychologized, and gendered. (Neely: 2004, p24).

According to her, the study and inclusion of madness as a topic in several disciplines, including psychology and medicine, became increasingly important. By recognizing its significance across disciplines, psychologists study madness to understand the cognitive, emotional, and behavioural aspects of mental health disorders. This discipline focuses on diagnosing, treating, and researching mental illnesses to improve individuals' well-being. These disciplines often depict madness as a theme in literary works, films, and other cultural expressions to reflect and discuss societal attitudes, perceptions, and experiences related to mental disorder.

The aim of this dissertation is to study the themes of power, resistance, and punishment within Samuel Fuller's 1963 film "*Shock Corridor*", by examining how these elements interplay with socio-political perceptions of mental illness and the function of mental institutions. Fuller's film provides a critical lens through which one can gain a perception about the treatment of mental illness during the sixties, a time when mental health issues were heavily stigmatized, leading to the marginalization and institutionalization of those affected. By exploring the narrative and cinematic techniques employed in "*Shock Corridor*", this dissertation will delve into the ways in which the film reflects and critiques the power dynamics within the American psychiatric hospitals, the methods of resistance employed by patients, and the forms of punishment employed by institutional authorities. Furthermore, the film serves as a poignant commentary on the broader societal attitudes towards mental illness, mirroring the historical transition from viewing madness from a religious and moral lens to a more secular, medicalized, and psychologized understanding. Through this analysis, the dissertation seeks to highlight the inherent issues within mental institutions of the time, including the dehumanizing treatment of patients, the authoritarian control exerted by medical professionals, and the overall societal tendency to ostracize individuals with mental health disorders. In doing so, it will also illuminate the ongoing

relevance of these themes in contemporary discussions about mental health care and the treatment of those deemed "mad" by the American society of that time.

Review of literature

Shock Corridor is a movie that was made in the early sixties of the last century by a filmmaker who was constantly known to push Hollywood's standards forward. One of the ways in which he did this was by casting co and non-white actors in his films and the way he shot his scenes by employing unconventional filmmaking methods, for instance, Sarris claimed: "The sudden shifts to color in Johnny Barrett's dream sequences in *Shock Corridor* emphasize the surreal and nightmarish quality of his psychological breakdowns" (Sarris, 1963). This created a sharp visual contrast, and emphasized the film's exploration of mental illness and the blurring of reality and delusion. (White, 2017, p. 132).

The movie follows a man's ambition as it took him to an insane asylum and led to his losing grasp on reality. This gave this motion picture cult status and following. Many articles and reviews were therefore written in order to expand on these facts, as well as to elaborate on the method of Samuel Fuller in filmmaking.

One of these reviews was published to analyze the apparition of a "fat" person in *Shock Corridor*. It was entitled simply "*The Grotesque: Shock Corridor*". This title already gives us an idea about the themes that are discussed as the author of this article selects one character that he finds pertinent to his study of the Grotesque, he defines it as follows:

... An artistic concept, 'a hesitation between horror and comedy... often rooted heavily in the physical...the inside becomes the outside, and the outside becomes the inside.' He manifests the grotesque through a presence that speaks to the threat of potential disorder, through his defiance of easy categorization, and through his subversion of expectations set up by the other characters (Tucker, 2014)

Furthermore, the patients in the movie are all separated into "patient-caricatures" and "patients characters", while the former deals with a flat representation of patient with

mental illness as being exaggerated and bordering on the comic or terrifying. The latter is about a more nuanced and realistic depiction of an insane patient because their sickness is space between being represented only as a sick man and giving his character human qualities. This character was an obese man named Pagliacci, who lived out his psychosis in Opera. Regardless of this, Fuller's portrayal of him gave this movie a dimension that seemed to mock this character trope, and alienated him. The author of this review encompassed these ideas, he declares: "Pagliacci delivers the chaos and abnormality expected from a film set in an asylum. His body differentiates him from the other characters, making him more alienated from viewers." (The Grotesque: Shock Corridor, 2014).

Another interesting review was written by David Blakeslee, wherein he compared Samuel Fuller's movie *Shock Corridor* to Robert Bresson's *A Man Escaped* which was released in 1956. The motion picture in question was particularly interesting to intersect with Fuller's on the basis of their plotlines. Whereas the former deals with a man's plotting to escape from a high-security facility, the latter follows another man's plans to get himself locked up in an asylum. These films, however, had similarities, according to Blakeslee, because they "both pursued their artistic visions with little regard to compromise, and a strong intolerance for any interference from studio execs". Thus, he continues to draw the differences between the films, honing on Fuller's shooting style that gave *Shock Corridor*:

... Every appearance of being a haphazard production, a low-budget, below the belt exploitation film hastily brought to completion and aimed at luring in the masses through promises of lurid titillation and giddy outrage, just for the sake of making quick money (Blakeslee, 2013).

In addition, Blakeslee focalizes on the aims that each of the main characters of these films were pursuing, and explains that in *A Man Escaped*'s Fontaine, Leterrier sought his freedom when devising his scheme to escape prison, and in *Shock Corridor*'s, Johnny Barrett was an ambitious reporter after a big story, seeking a Pulitzer prize for selfish aims.

The film *Shock Corridor* came out in the midst of many civil and social upheavals that surged in the United States where it was set. It made many references to current and historical events, such as the Civil Rights Movement, and the Civil War of the previous century. The following article discusses their effects on the formation of the American psyche. Entitled “*Shock Corridor: still America’s emotional weather forecast*”. It considers Fuller’s movie as the incarnation of “the long-term gas lighting that is the American dream” (Collier, 2020). The characters of the film all represented different currents of American politics, exemplified by the case of the black man Trent, wherein he saw himself as a member of the Klu Klux Klan as a white supremacist that was infamously racist against Blacks, and his behavior was called “being in the ‘sunken place’” (Collier, 2020). Another character that the article refers to is Stuart who participated in the making of atomic missiles, and therefore found his split in the incident. The author of this article made viewers see that this film was really about “national trauma, about the things that we as a country refuse to acknowledge, confront or redress” but that eventually manifested in the citizenry of the country.

Through these reviews, one can see that they are made from various perspectives and are drawn from different points of view. They shed light on its construction as a sixties’ low-budget film that nonetheless illuminated the depths it captured with its diverse characters, and the presentation of the plotline in an insane asylum that allowed more freedom in tackling shocking or controversial themes.

Issue and working hypothesis

This research paper adopts a Foucauldian perspective to examine the theme of power relations and confinement within the mental institution in Samuel Fuller’s *Shock Corridor*. In order to achieve our objective, I aim to investigate to what extent Fuller’s

work questions and informs the reader's views on power dynamic, discipline, and resistance through the characters and the plot of *Shock Corridor* by maintaining total control over patients through group therapies, this is how characters are subjected to mechanisms of surveillance and normalization within the mental health facility. Thus, I believe that no work had so far been interested in the study of movie *Shock Corridor* in the light of the suggested theory of Michel Foucault.

The first objective of this dissertation is to provide an account for the historical and cultural context of the 1960s in the United States. This era was marked by significant sociocultural changes. By examining this context, this research aims to provide a foundation for understanding how *Shock Corridor* reflects and responds to these societal shifts. The second objective of this work focuses on dissecting the power dynamics and discourse circulating within the mental institution in the movie. It aims to analyze how characters, including patients and staff, navigate the institutional space and interact with each other. It also will explore how docile bodies are produced. Furthermore, it investigates the strategies of resistance employed by characters as a response to the oppressive power structure.

Methodological Outline

I have divided my work into two chapters. In the first chapter I will try to give an overview of the historical and social political context of the USA during the time period of the 1960s. Furthermore, I have also tried to shed light on the important movements and events that marked this era in order to make the reader aware of the historical background of Samuel Fuller's *Shock corridor*. A brief look at the Civil Rights Movement and the counterculture will be provided.

Additionally second chapter deals with the analysis of the movie from a Foucauldian perspective. I will examine how power circulates inside the asylum, the production of docile

bodies, and the power of discourse. Meanwhile, as an important point I will investigate the theme of resistance inside the asylum and how it operates within the patients. Indeed I aim to study the strategies of resistance and discipline in Shock Corridor, by focusing on the power of media as a form of resistance against authorities, and societal norms, likewise to the resistance in personal relationships.

II. Methods and materials

This section of our research paper aims at exploring the methodological elements and materials that will be applied in our study of the themes of punishment, confinement and resistance. Because of his concepts on power, knowledge, and discipline, it seems that it is relevant to use Michel Foucault's work and theoretical perspectives on institutions such as asylums. These theories including power, knowledge and discipline can help us understand how these institutions function and how they affect the people who are confined within them.

1. Methods

Synopsis of Foucault's *Madness and Civilization* A History of

Insanity in the Age of Reason (1961)

In his groundbreaking work, "*Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason*," Foucault traces the evolution of madness from the Middle Ages to the modern era. He explores the different aspects of madness in European culture and how it develops in different fields. He argues that in earlier times, madness was often seen as a part of the natural world, and those deemed mad were often tolerated or even revered. However, Foucault contends that with the advent of the Enlightenment and the rise of reason as the dominant mode of thought, society's perception of madness shifted dramatically.

Furthermore, a significant development in the perception of madness happened within the modern era and the establishment of facilities such as asylums, which are entirely devoted to the incarceration of the insane under the supervision of medical professionals. Mad individuals became stigmatized, marginalized, and medicalized. Madness no longer seen as a reflection of the natural order but as a deviation from it (Foucault, 1988). He explores several key concepts that serve as the foundation of his analysis. These concepts revolve around the

shifting understanding of madness, the role of societal structures, and the interplay between power, knowledge, and discipline. Here are the main concepts in the book:

A. Definition of Concepts: Power, Knowledge, Discipline, Surveillance, and Resistance

A.1. Power

Foucault was interested in power and social change. He challenged traditional notions of power and knowledge and explored the way in which power operates in society. According to Foucault power is everywhere. It can be found in various forms and places in society. According to him, similar to all the other institutions, asylums work on a web of power relation, disciplinary and surveillance techniques to produce submissive individuals.

According to Foucault, power develops from every force relation in society, from every interaction, “power is everywhere”; as Foucault states:

The idea that power is wielded by people or groups by way of ‘episodic’ or ‘sovereign’ acts of domination or coercion, seeing it instead as dispersed and pervasive. ‘Power is everywhere’ and ‘comes from everywhere’ so in this sense is neither an agency nor a structure (Foucault 1998: 63). Instead it is a kind of ‘metapower’ or ‘regime of truth’ that pervades society, and which is in constant flux and negotiation. Foucault uses the term ‘power/knowledge’ to signify that power is constituted through accepted forms of knowledge, scientific understanding and ‘truth’ (Foucault, 1998, p63).

Instead, power is not limited to a specific individual or institutions, but rather is a frequent force which operates in society. It's not just about forceful domination, but also about shaping knowledge norms and even our understanding of ourselves.

A.2. Power & Knowledge

Foucault's concept revolves around the interdependence of power and knowledge. He contends that power doesn't just control through force but also through the creation and manipulation of knowledge. Institutions and systems of power generate specific types of knowledge that justify their authority and perpetuate their control. This process isn't one-way

as power shapes knowledge, knowledge, in turn, reinforces the legitimacy and effectiveness of that power. This dynamic relationship forms a cycle where power and knowledge mutually support each other, creating a complex system of control that operates through both overt coercion and the subtle shaping of what is known and accepted. Foucault's insights challenge conventional views of power, highlighting how it operates through the production and dissemination of knowledge to maintain its influence over society.

Michel Foucault's influential concept argued that power and knowledge are inseparable. He believed they are so intertwined that they cannot be truly understood in isolation. In other words, whenever we talk about knowledge, we are inevitably talking about power. For instance, this dialectic of power knowledge remains highly applicable to modern institutions such as schools and hospitals. By this we mean, that these institutions produce knowledge about their roles either education or healthcare, which is fundamentally linked to how they exert power over individuals who are students or patients.

C.3 Discipline

Michel Foucault's concept of discipline relates to a certain type of power that acts on individuals' bodies, shaping them to become obedient and useful. This power is exercised through surveillance, normalization and knowledge production. Institutions such as schools, hospitals and prisons frequently use disciplinary sanctions in order to conduct and force obedience. Foucault claims in his *Discipline and punish*:

The discipline became general formulas of domination. They were different from slavery because they were not based on a relation of appropriation of bodies; indeed, its elegance lay in the fact that it could dispense with this costly and violent relation by obtaining effects of utility as great. (Foucault, 1991, p137)

According to him discipline is not a way to slavery or owning bodies, but it serves as a mechanism of social control, shaping individuals to fit into a desired mold of a given society. It aims to produce docile and productive citizens who conform to societal norms by setting

expectations. He claims that the procedures which make possible the control of the body and assure “the constant subjection of its forces and imposed upon them a relation of docility-utility” can be called ‘Discipline’ (Foucault, 1977, p137).). As a result, Foucault argues that modern societies depend on disciplinary techniques to create docile bodies. However, these techniques include:

- a) **Hierarchical observation:** is about how power uses constant surveillance to control individuals, such as a pyramid. At the top a few people can see everything below them. This function is mostly used in schools, asylums, hospitals and prisons. The architectural structure of these institutions reduces the number of guardians, in order to facilitate surveillance of those within them. In fact, the structure of these institutions is presented by the notion of the panopticon.
- b) **Normalizing judgment:** refers to the ideas that society uses methods to evaluate and correct behavior through a double system. It’s not about outright punishment, but rather to shape individuals to conform.
- c) **Examination:** it’s a combination between hierarchical observation and normalizing judgment. By this, individuals are used to being assessed, classified and disciplined. These methods teach people to follow rules and perform their roles effectively, making them easier to manage.

C.4. Resistance

According to Foucault, resistance is an idea that signifies the multiple ways through which people or groups can fight against the authority structures and system control. He argued that power is not only repressive but also productive, meaning that it shapes and regulates individuals and societies through various mechanisms in this frame work, believing that resistance is not something that exists outside of power relations. In effect, he claims that

when power is exerted, there must be an opposing force that resists. As states in his book of *The History of Sexuality*": "Where there is power, there is resistance, and yet, or rather consequently, this resistance is never in a position of exteriority in relation to power."(Foucault, 1978, p95)

In fact, resistance is a recurring and basic part of power dynamic, it is not a reaction to power, but rather a basic component that shapes power itself, for example challenges to societal norms can lead to societal change.

C.5. Surveillance

Foucault's analysis of surveillance is based on the concept of disciplinary power, which he argues extends throughout society, not just in prisons. In *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault provides us with a depth insight into the birth of the prison, where he describes the Panopticon, a form of surveillance system. This peculiar prison building was created by Jeremy Bentham at the end of the eighteenth century. It is made up of tower in which the construction has cells shaped like a ring, circular structure can be individually observed by a guard .Indeed, this design of building made it necessary for prisoners to monitor themselves in order to conform individuals to the norm, ,even without being actively monitored.

The panopticon forces individuals to self-monitor their behavior, leading to self-discipline and normalization, for instance it emphasizes the ways in which surveillance and discipline are used to control individuals and maintain power in modern society The panopticon is a powerful symbol for understanding the relationship between power, knowledge, and social control.

To summarize, it is stated that power, discipline, resistance, and surveillance are the notions that Foucault employs in the majority of his works to depict the concept of power and

how it is exerted in institutions by the government. By analyzing at *Shock Corridor* through Foucault's concepts, we can see how Fuller criticizes the harsh power of institutions and how they control people, make them conform, and react to resistance. This allows us to understand the film not just as a story about mental illness, but as a broader look at how power and control work in society. Therefore, Fuller's overview of the mental institution serves as an important demonstration of how power is employed, rules are strictly enforced, and resistance is handled, emphasising Foucault's theories.

2. Materials

A. Life and Time of Samuel Fuller

Samuel Fuller was an influential American filmmaker known for his bold and often controversial films, like his career spanned several decades and included significant contributions to various genres, especially war films. Fuller was born on August 12, 1912, in Worcester, Massachusetts, and died on October 30, 1997 in Hollywood, California. He began his career in journalism, which deeply influenced his narrative style and thematic choices in filmmaking. Fuller left school at 13 to work as a copyboy for the New York Journal and later became a crime reporter, experiences that honed his storytelling skills and provided rich material for his films. In the 1960s Fuller's work included "Shock Corridor" (1963) and "The Naked Kiss" (1964), both of which continued his exploration of complex and often dark themes. After a period of relative inactivity, he returned with "The Big Red One" (1980), a semi-autobiographical World War II epic that, despite critical praise, did not achieve commercial success.

B. Short synopsis of Shock Corridor (1963)

In the early 1940s, Samuel Fuller began writing a screenplay under the title The

Lunatic. He soon abandoned the project, but returned to it years later, following the success of the play *Cuckoo's Nest*. *Shock Corridor* (1963) is an American film directed and written by Samuel Fuller. The film is a psychological drama that falls into the realm of both film noir and the exploration of cinema. It explores themes of sanity, identity, and the thin line between sanity and insanity.

The story of the movie revolves around a journalist named Johnny Barrett who feigns madness to get committed to a mental institution in order to solve a murder that occurred within the hospital's wall, hoping to win a Pulitzer Prize for his investigative reporting. Once inside the medical asylum, Barrett encounters a variety of disturbed and eccentric patients, each with their unique psychological issue.

As Barrett delves deeper into the asylum's environment, he undergoes an intense psychological transformation becoming more unstable himself. It ends by successfully gathering the information he needs to solve the murder case, however, the intense environment of the mental institution took a toll on his own mental state.

III. Results

This research paper studied the themes of power, punishment and resistance in Samuel Fuller's *Shock Corridor* (1963) from a Foucauldian viewpoint. In this work, we have highlighted the varieties of power relations that occurred in the asylum and how they are used as a strategy in the production of compliant subjects. In this study, we highlighted the various ways in which power is exerted in mental institutions, as well as how these approaches are used to make patients to follow rules and behave under control.

Through my study of Fuller's work using a Foucauldian perspective, I gained a deeper understanding of the movie and its themes. The film interprets various Foucauldian concepts, which are illustrated through different scenes. Since *Shock Corridor* explores the literature of madness and asylums, themes such as power, punishment, and resistance are given significant emphasis, alongside the concept of surveillance, which is embodied by the guardians and doctors.

During the exploration of the film we can deduce that the socio-political experience of the Americans during the sixties was a harsh experience for them, through this analysis, it can be understood that the film is a reflection of power and resistance. *Shock Corridor* has proved that the Foucauldian perspective is not only a theory but also a reality that faced people.

The exploration of the movie through the Foucauldian aspect, one can understand that resistance is a reflection and reaction to power. Resistance is caused by the oppressive discourse of the authorities, the role of media in this case is crucial, that situation has proved the theory of Foucault called "counterproductive nature of power."

IV. Discussion

Chapter One: the Social and Political Context in USA during the 1960s and the Medicalized Asylum

In this present chapter, we will try to offer a better understanding of the important sociopolitical context in the US during the 1960s. The events that are linked with the historical background where Samuel Fuller's Shock Corridor was released namely Civil rights movement and counterculture, are the concepts that will be explored in this chapter of our investigation. As we will also explore the birth and the medicalized asylum.

1. US during the 1960s

Artistic works are often influenced by and reflect the historical and political context of the time it was created. In the field of our research paper, it is important to have an idea of the historical and political events of the studied era in order to help the reader for a better understanding of our work and to be better informed about the relation between the movie that will be analyzed and its background.

The social, political and cultural environment of the United States experienced profound change throughout the 1960s. It was a decade characterized by a flurry of events, ideas, and movements that stretched the bounds of accepted wisdom and created enormous change. This time period, which is often referred to as the "sixties," witnessed a furious fight for Civil Rights Movement gained momentum, with the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. This movement, led by figures like Martin Luther King Jr., aimed to end racial segregation and discrimination. The decade also saw the rise of the counterculture movement, characterized by the hippie movement, the anti-war movement,

and the feminist movement. However, the decade ended with a failed Vietnam War and the assassination of John F. Kennedy in 1963.

Furthermore, the 1960s had a counterculture movement that stood out by rejecting traditional beliefs and focusing on freedom of thought and different lifestyles. It affected several areas of American culture, such as music, fashion, and art. On the other hand, another movement which sought to ask for equal rights and opportunities for women, this movement called Women's Liberation Movement. It was characterised by the publishing of seminal publications like Betty Friedan's "The Feminine Mystique" and the founding of organisations such as the National Organisation for Women.

Finally, the 1960s in the United States were a transformative period marked by significant cultural, social, and political changes. The decade's legacy continues to shape American society and politics today.

2. Civil Rights movement

The political side of "the sixties" has been marked by the impact of the Civil Rights movement, the Vietnam War, and other different political issues in the US. The African American referred to as "Black people", suffered from segregation on the bases of race, color and gender despite of other aspects, they were banned from interacting with the whites in public sites such as schools, hospitals, libraries. Therefore the African American started planning to gain their rights under what is called as the Civil Rights movement.

The Civil Rights movement was a nationwide movement for equal rights for African Americans aiming to racial segregation and exclusion that arose across the United States. It began in the late 1940s and ended in the late 1960s. Each movement has a leader and key figures. Martin Luther King was the most prominent leader in the twentieth-century civil

rights movement, leading it to success through protests and marches. While others campaigned for freedom via any means necessary, including violence, Martin Luther King used the power of speech and nonviolent forms of resistance, including as rallies, social organisation, and civil disobedience, to achieve almost impossible goals. He went on to spearhead similar efforts against poverty and international violence, always adhering to his ideals that all men and women, regardless of race or creed, are equal members of the human family.

Furthermore, Samuel Fuller's shed light on this struggle for racial equality. The film "Shock Corridor" reflects the struggles of the Civil Rights Movement through its exploration of power dynamics, oppression, and the impact of societal pressures on individuals. In fact, it portrays the mental institution as a microcosm of a society with unequal power structures. The guards and doctors represent the dominant white majority, while the patients represent oppressed minorities, reflecting the Civil Rights Movement's fight against racial segregation and discrimination. Adding to that, the protagonist is under pressure to comply within the institution, which reflects the societal pressures that Civil Rights stands to confront. Activists were supposed to integrate in with a discriminating society, the film's protagonist is expected to conform to the perceived norms of sanity within the institution

However, the film *Shock Corridor*, on which we stand our investigation, critiques racism by showing the struggles of African Americans in a mental institution, reflecting the broader civil rights struggle for social change, reflecting the broader societal fight for civil rights, as described in Rich Johnson's article:

"Set against a backdrop of simmering racial tension and released a year before the Civil Rights Act was passed into law, Fuller's film tells the story of journalist Johnny Barrett (Peter Breck) who has himself committed to a mental institution in order to solve a murder."(Rich, 2019)

This shows how the film addresses the themes of racial tension and social justice more directly connected to the Civil Rights Movement.

3. Counterculture

One cannot study the 1960s era without referring to counterculture. In sixties counterculture, a broad-ranging social movement in the United State, Canada, and western Europe, rejected conventional norms and traditional authorities its members variously advocated peace, love, social justice, and revolution. The 1960s counterculture movement, which extended into the early 1970s, was an alternative approach to life that manifested itself in a variety of activities, lifestyles, and artistic expressions, including recreational drug use, communal living, political protests, casual sex, folk and rock music. Speaking about counterculture is also to speak about the Hippie movement.

Several significant events that shaped the 1960s counterculture movement and affected society as a whole. Among the notable events like Anti-Vietnam War, Massive protests including the March on the Pentagon in 1967 and the Kent State shootings in 1970, reflected the movement's anti-war sentiments. In fact, this time period was closely linked to various movements, including the Civil Rights Movement, the anti-Vietnam War movement, the feminist movement and the sexual revolution. It was a time of experimentation, activism, and Cultural Revolution.

By exploring countercultural themes through its characters and storyline, "*Shock Corridor*" offers a critical view of the society of its time and the tensions between established norms and the dissenting ideals of the counterculture. It is depicted through themes of rebellion, questioning societal norms, and challenging oppressive forces. The characters in the film embody unconventional ideas and behaviours, pushing back against the expectations of

society at that time. Even though, the asylum setting can be seen as a metaphor for society itself, highlighting the alienating and oppressive aspects of the dominant culture. The characters in the film strive to break free from this oppressive system, seek their truth, and challenge the existing power structures.

4. Hippie movement

The Hippie movement was a subculture of the counterculture movement during the 1960s and 1970s that rejected the mores of mainstream American life. This movement emerged in the United States, particularly in the mid-1960s. The Hippies are better known for their clothing style, they are young people with long hair, colorful, clothes, drugs, listening to folk and rock music, singers and groups such as Bob Dylan and The Beatles.

The Hippie movement inspired many writers and producers to create their work. Tom Wolfe wrote *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test*" (1968) a novel that chronicles an adventure by traveling across America in a psychedelic bus; the novel gives a vivid account of the hippie movement, which embraced drugs and unconventional way of living.

Furthermore, The Summer of Love in 1967 in San Francisco's Haight-Ashbury district became a symbol of the hippie movement, where thousands of young people gathered to celebrate live, music, art and freedom. The movement also played a significant role in anti-war protests, particularly against the Vietnam War.

Therefore, the depiction of the hippie movement is quite different from the typical portrayal of hippies as peaceful and free spirited individuals. It explores the darker side of counterculture and societal pressures and anxieties of the time, including the growing women's liberation movement and the sexual revolution, which were significant aspects of

the counterculture movement that included the hippies. It was claimed in the journal article of Rich Johnson;

Fuller's microcosmic approach naturally leant itself to such a confined setting. The corridors themselves symbolise America's fenced-in mindset, with post-war paranoia at its most potent. Here, a person may snap at any moment, reflecting prevailing social tensions of the time as well as conservative anxieties over the growing women's liberation movement and sexual revolution. As Johnny enters a room of nymphomaniacs, their carnal, zombie-like behaviour calls to mind George A Romero as much as Masters and Johnson, as Johnny's screams, for once, hamper his internal monologue. (Rich, 2019)

Moreover, the movie that serves as a cinematic exploration of the main issues of American society in the 1960s. Aligning with Michel Foucault's concept of spaces that challenge, contest, and invert established societal norms, the movie can be interpreted through his terminology "heterotopic". Set in a mental institution within the confined space, the conflict between the patients who represent various forms of societal chaos and the staff symbolizes the fight for truth and individuality (Foucault, October, 1984) (Albrecht, 2010, pp14-26). The film creates a space that is simultaneously real and unreal, a place of both containment and rebellion. (O'meara, 2008, pp30-52). The movie reveals the theme of individuality, rebellion, and non-conformity within the institution and the patients.

One can figure out through the movie that Fuller illustrated those themes through the character of Cathy. She is Johnny Barrett's girlfriend, a young woman and also a professional stripper. She also played the role of his sister within the fake story that gave him access to the mental institution. Cathy is depicted as a rebellious and free-spirited individual who opposes society standards and embraces the countercultural principles associated with the hippie movement, being a stripper with non-traditional clothes. With reference to the movie one can understand that being a stripper does not conform to the values of society.

The Hippie movement had its influence on the culture with its ideas and social attitudes on music, television, fashion, literary works and art. They have supported religious

and cultural diversity in order to reach a larger audience. They were advocates for a more sympathetic, inclusive, and peaceful society at an era of extreme social upheaval.

5. The Psychiatric System in America During 1960s

During the 1960s, America's psychiatric system faced several challenges. One of the major theme during this time was the movement in mental healthcare called deinstitutionalization. This involved the shift away from large psychiatric hospitals towards community based mental health care. The aim was to provide more human and specific treatment for individuals with mental illnesses, rather than the often harsh and overcrowded conditions found in mental health institutions. This shift was influenced by concerns about the mistreatment and neglect of patients in these institutions, as well as advancements in psychiatric drugs and therapies that allowed for more outpatient care. However, the sixties marked a period of reevaluation and reform within the psychiatric system, aiming to improve the quality of care and support for individuals with mental health needs.

In relation to the context of Fuller's *Shock Corridor*, offers a scathing critique of the American psychiatric system during that period of time. The film portrays the psychiatric hospital as a place of control rather than care. In fact, the main corridor of the asylum, ironically called 'street' symbolizes the main street USA. the film's portrayal of the oppressive nature of the institution highlights the need for change, aligning with the contemporary movement towards deinstitutionalization.. He shows the need for this change and how media can help push for better treatment, reflecting the wider social movements and policies of the era.

A. The Medical Treatment

The 1960s saw the development of new psychiatric drugs and therapies, such as antipsychotic medications like Thorazine and they played an important part in the deinstitutionalization movement. These drugs allowed the control of psychotic episodes, which reduced the need for long-term hospitalisation. The development of new antipsychotic medications offered more effective treatment options than previously available. Although, there was a growing recognition of the inhuman conditions in many state mental institutions. These drugs allowed for better control of psychotic symptoms, reducing the need for long-term hospitalization. However, it's important to remember that deinstitutionalization had both positive and negative consequences.

B. Economic Considerations

The deinstitutionalization movement in the 1960s was influenced by various economic considerations. The primary factor was the rising costs of maintaining large psychiatric institutions. As these facilities grew in size, so did their expenses, such as staffing, maintenance, and operational costs. This economic crisis pushed political leaders to explore change, community-based medical options, which were frequently more economical.

Additionally, the emergence of new psychiatric medications during the 1960s, such as antipsychotics, played a role in the economic aspect of deinstitutionalization. These treatments allowed for the possibility of treating individuals with mental illnesses outside of traditional psychiatric hospitals, resulting to a shift towards outpatient care and local mental health centers. This shift was motivated not just by the need for more humane and effective therapies, but also by the possible cost savings associated with outpatient care as opposed to long-term institutionalisation.

The economic considerations surrounding the deinstitutionalization movement in the 1960s were critical in reshaping the psychiatric system by encouraging local treatment care, reducing reliance on expensive institutions, and emphasizing the importance of cost-effective and sustainable mental health services.

C. Human Rights Movement

The civil rights movement of the 1960s had profound implications for the rights of individuals with mental illness. Inspired by broader calls for equality and social justice, advocates within the mental health community pushed for reforms to protect patients' rights, established landmark precedents affirming patients' rights to appropriate treatment, human conditions, and protection from arbitrary confinement.

These efforts aimed to dismantle institutional abuses and promote the principle of the least restrictive environment. Advocates argued for informed consent in treatment decisions, the right to refuse treatment under certain circumstances, and safeguards against involuntary commitment except in cases of clear and imminent danger. These rights were pivotal in shifting the balance of power between patients and mental health professionals, promoting a more equitable and patient-centered approach to care.

D. The Birth of the Asylum

The birth of the asylum, as discussed by Michel Foucault, marks a significant event in psychiatry. Established in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, asylums aimed to normalize behavior according to aristocratic standards, which emphasized decorum, self-control, rationality, and productivity. These values were seen as essential for maintaining social order and stability. During "The Great Confinement" of the 1650s, those considered

insane, along with the destitute and sick, were segregated from society. Initially seen as a medical advancement, asylums were intended to treat mental illnesses.

Foucault argues that asylums evolved to isolate and silence madness, transforming from therapeutic spaces into tools of social control. Philippe Pinel's reforms turned asylums into places enforcing moral and social conformity rather than providing genuine treatment.

In the medicalized asylum, the doctor played a paternal role, acting as a moral authority rather than a healer. This created a family-like environment where patients were monitored and judged, reinforcing societal norms. Physical restraints were replaced by psychological chains, with patients coerced into accepting their diagnosis and conforming to the system.

Foucault highlights that asylums perpetuated control and moral judgment, suppressing the voices of the insane and enforcing a uniform code of morality under the guise of medical care. In order to prevent them from ever catching or recognizing a glimpse of their own truth in the face of another, they were not permitted to mix freely with other inmates away from the assessment and scrutiny of staff. Foucault emphasizes the role of observation in the asylum system. The knowledge that patients were being watched and judged restrained them, making them behave in a more normal manner. This combination of observation and judgment formed the basis of modern psychiatry.

In the following chapter, we looked at Michel Foucault's ideas about how power works in society, especially in institutions. Actually, we will see how these ideas are reflected in Samuel Fuller's film *Shock Corridor*. Fuller's movie shows these theories in action by illustrating how the institution controls and tries to change people's behavior. Instead of that, Using Foucault's ideas, we can see how power operates in the film's asylum and what it says about society and resistance.

V. Chapter Two: Power Relation and Resistance in Shock Corridor

In this second chapter we will analyze the *Shock Corridor* from a Foucauldian perspective. This chapter is divided into two sections, the first section deals with power inside the mental institution, and how they manifest with the relationship between patients and the medical staff in order to create docile bodies. We also explore how docile bodies are produced within the institution through different strategies.

1. Power Relations in Shock Corridor

Power relations are discussed in Fuller's *Shock Corridor*, which focuses around the dynamics of control and manipulation in the psychiatric setting. The film depicts how various individuals, such as doctors, patients, and staff, use their authority to gain influence over one another. The main character Johnny Barrette's effort to solve a murder case within the psychiatric hospital highlights the power struggles and hierarchies that occur in such situations. The film looks into the complexity of power dynamics, exposing how individuals can be either victims or perpetrators of power in a confined and stressful setting like a psychiatric hospital.

1.1 The Relationship between the Patients and the Staff

Shock Corridor deals with the relationship between the patients and the medical staff as one of the central themes. From the beginning of the movie, it is noticeable that there is an unjust relationship between the two sides. The medical personnel seeks to impose its power on the patients by depending on their knowledge of them in order to make them recognise their inferiority, insanity, and have control over them.

Fuller's objective from the movie seems to highlight the idea that considers the "Madman" should be confined in mental institutions and stay under the control of

psychiatrists, He also depicts how the personnel is positioned by authority to control the patients, as well as the terrible ways used to discipline and treat the patients. individuals with mental illness are seen as a threat and a danger for society since they have lost their reason, so in order to safeguard society they should be confined inside mental institutions and be under control of powerful medical staff. Power, as presented in the movie to the ability of individuals, groups, or institutions to control the behavior of others.

It is possible to suggest that madness is not an unchanging, inflexible phenomenon of itself. It is more closely related to social perceptions of individual actions. In other words, it is the prevailing discourse in a certain culture at a specific time period that organizes and determines what madness is. As a result, the protagonist Barrett is thought to be insane since he does not comply with and possess the same ambitions that the American government intended to communicate during the 1960s. Indeed, his inability to conform and adopt these societal expectations prompts others to doubt his sanity, because his thoughts and actions defy the established norms and values of the time.

As the story of the movie, develops, the first scenes depict that the attendants of the medical asylum show a complete form of power over the protagonist Barrett who feigns madness to have access to the mental institution. In fact, the attendants use power and control within the institution, deciding who is admitted, how they are treated, and even their perception of their sanity. The first scenes in the asylum show Barrett interacting with the attendants, establishing a complicated relationship of power, perception, and psychological manipulation. It sets an atmosphere for the film's exploration of deeper issues such as individual responsibility.



Shot 01 :(00:21:30) Attendant Ordering Barrett

a small shot that depicts the attendant Lloyd ordering Barrett. With an authoritarian tone, he orders him to put down what he took off from the desk and asks him to follow him to show him his

room. Fuller made it easy for the spectator to understand that the attendant held authority in controlling the patients, sitting in his office and directly starts giving orders to the patient with his dominant voice which increased his power. In another scene the other attendant Wilkes orders Barrett not to use some inappropriate words. It is clearly illustrated that the staff exercises a great form of power over the patients; their only aim is to make them under total control.

Fuller portrays the power of the staff in several forms not only through their orders, but also the way they treat the patients, how they order, using words and gestures to assert control. For instance, scenes in which staff members speak to patients in a condescending tone, denigrating their opinions and feelings, exemplify how authoritative language is used to maintain dominance.



Shot02: (00:26:46) The Attendant Lloyd

Mocking and Changing Barrett's Place. The broader range shot that's being used which establish the sitting and the position of characters and the depiction of attendant's

authority, by a strong gaze, showing facial expressions of dominance, Lloyd hitting Barrett on his shoulder and called him Mr. Pulitzer as a mockery or as an emotional manipulation "Mr. Pulitzer come on to show you your table", he orders him to change the table at meal time.

Fuller shows to the audience that the oppressive side uses every possible means of oppression in order to make the oppressed feel inferior and dehumanized. This evident in the power dynamics between the staff and patients by using tactics such as isolation, manipulation and psychological coercion to maintain power over the patients. This interaction between Lloyd and Barrette serve as a powerful depiction of the humiliating effects of oppression.

From the very beginning of the story, one can see from Barrett's investigation of the murder that there is a kind of power inside the institution. As there is a murder inside that asylum there must be an oppressive side that led to the killing of Sloan. The movie presents a significant fight between two sides: the oppressed and the oppressive, the staff as the oppressive side and the patients as the oppressed one. As a result, it is noticeable that the film depicts a social issues, which means that one who is insane or suffer from mental disorders should be confined and kept in asylums under the supervision and control of doctors since they are considered a danger for society.

Shot03 (01:17:02): Barrett Having an Electric Shock. This shot depicts Barrett having an electric shock as a "treatment". It shows Barrett surrounded by the doctor and his staff. From this scene, one can



easily understand that exerting such treatment is considered as a form of power over the patients. . This form of treatment is typically administered by psychiatrists without the patient's consent, exerting a form of authority over those experiencing mental health challenges.

One of Fuller's goals in the movie seems to highlight for the audience how racism has its place within society. Trent, the second witness in Barrett's investigation, is an African

American man, a character who appears in few scenes but his interpretation has a significant meaning. In the context of segregation. Trent with his mental disorders contributed to his loathing of the Africans. He believes that America is for Americans due to the racial segregation he faced while he was attending a university designed for white people. Trent's hobby was to collect pillowcases, however, the attendants directly accuse him of stealing. Thus, we can understand why he is viewed in the asylum as a thief rather than practicing his hobby. Fuller portrayed how Lloyd is becoming angry with Trent after accusing him of stealing. The way he pulls him by the shoulder and screams at him exemplifies how black people are seen in society, as they are alienated and mistreated. In spite of this, many Americans believed that black people were inferior and did not deserve the same rights and opportunities as white people.

A. Power and Knowledge in Shock Corridor

In the movie, power and knowledge are demonstrated as two sides of the same process. In order to prevent the insane knowledge is clearly required, knowledge of the patient's life and the reason for their confinement is obviously essential which leads Foucault to say that knowledge can be considered as the scientific knowledge of the "mad" inside asylums. As we have already portrayed in the movie, the protagonist Barrett who feigns insanity, in order access into the mental institution to solve a murder, for the psychiatrists he is in the institution in order to rehabilitate him after studying and analyzing his issues and determining whether he is sane or not, as well as and having the authority to use judgment and impose punishment right away.

In the scene where Barrett is sent to the mental institution, it is portrayed that he had a conversation with Dr. Menkin who had already received all the information about Barrett's case as it is mentioned in this dialogue:

Dr.Menkin: your father living?
Barret: no
Dr.Menkin: did you like him
Barrett: of course
Dr.Menkin: any brothers
Barret: no
Dr.Menkin: any other sisters
Barrett: just Kathy that's enough
Dr.Menkin: mother living.

(Around 00:14:25) *Shock Corridor*

This dialogue from the movie shows how doctors and staff gather information to decide if Barrett, like the other patients, should be classified as mentally ill and kept in the asylum instead of living outside. In this sense Foucault in his *Madness and Civilization* argued that:

We leave it to the medical archeology to determine whether or not a man was sick, criminal, or insane who was admitted to the hospital for “derangement of morals,” or because he had “mistreated his wife” and tried several times to kill himself. (1973, pp65-66)

As mentioned before throughout the film, people are classified according to their mental health troubles and the degree and severity of their illness. One who watches will notice that psychiatric staff, including Dr. Menkin, Dr. Cristo, and the attendants, use their knowledge of patients to control them and keep them fully informed about their situation and difficulties.

Barrett, the film's principal actor, represents another example of power and knowledge. Actually, the power that Barrett reveals in his connection with the medical staff is drawn out of his knowledge of the asylum system and treatment. As we have indicated in the beginning, Barrett, while being admitted into the institution, was a conscious person who acted like he was mentally unstable. Unlike the other patients, he was faking madness with his friends dr.Frog and Swany, prepared and gave him all the information for what to expect inside the mental institution, and about the questions that he might be asked by the doctors. Instead, He was well-prepared to convincingly appear as someone who was mentally disturbed.

Once inside the institution, Barrett refuses to be under the control of the doctors and the administrative staff. That means Barrett's knowledge focuses on his consciousness, which provides him an advantage in resisting inside the asylum, gaining further insight and questioning what is going on beyond those walls. Questioning sessions with doctors are organised aiming to collect information about the patients' development so that they can have more control over them and produce docile bodies.

1.2. The Production of Docile Bodies in Shock Corridor

A. Discipline

Discipline is a concept that encompasses mechanisms and techniques used to regulate and control individuals' behavior, bodies, and minds. In *Shock Corridor* numerous examples can be stated to clarify how discipline is used by the psychiatric staff to control and neutralize the patients. Likely, the best example that can be provided in this sense is when the patients gather for group therapy or group activities.

In the early parts of the movie, we perceive that the asylum's doctors and staff employ strict discipline to maintain control, often resorting to physical abuse and other forms of punishment to enforce compliance among the patients. For example, the patients' daily routines are meticulously scheduled, encompassing meals, exercise periods, treatment sessions, and leisure activities. This structured routine provides the patients with a sense of predictability and order, which can be both comforting and confining. Means that the routine helps patients know what will happen each day. This regularity can provide a sense of security and stability, helping patients feel more at ease because they know what to expect.

However, Lloyd, portrayed as a member of the personal staff, disrupts this regimented environment by arbitrarily determining where patients sit during meals and controlling whom they can interact with. His actions suggest a departure from the institutional norms, possibly

hinting at a different approach to patient care or perhaps reflecting his own idiosyncratic methods of managing the asylum's residents.

Lloyd : Mr. Pulitzer.

Lloyd : Come on. I'll show you to your table.

Lloyd : This is your place from now on, Brisbane.

Johnny : Yes, sir.

Lloyd : Just behave yourself.

(Around 00:26:47) *Shock Corridor*

Indeed, discipline in *Shock Corridor* is multifaceted. One scene that has been permanently imprinted in our mind is when patients take part in a synchronized dance, showing an effort by the institution to place some sense of order on 'chaotic' minds. It is therapeutic as well as a way of controlling the situation. , Otherwise, the patients in this film grapple with their own mental challenges. This is reflected in the patients' behavior as well as the different forms of therapy adopted. Analysing the character Trent, who believes he is a Confederate general, serves as a poignant example illustrating the effects of institutionalization and strict discipline on individuals with extreme conditions. The asylum's rigid structure, characterized by scheduled activities and enforced rules, is designed to maintain order but can also stifle personal autonomy and exacerbate the suffering of patients like Trent.

Adding to that, all scenes showing group therapies, taking drugs and treatment reveal a strict and tight routine and regimen enforced on the patients. Through this, it is assumed that these behaviors will be managed and controlled. The best example that may demonstrate this state in *Shock Corridor* is when Boden is put into a padded cell as a kind of punishment or confinement. The design of this particular room stands as a harsh illustration of disciplinary actions aimed at suppressing violent or unruly behavior. It shows that the institution controls people through instillation of order and discipline. Discipline, according to Foucault, is not just about punishment but also about the mechanisms of power that regulate and produce docile bodies.

In the context of Michel Foucault's work *Discipline and Punish*, docile bodies refers to individuals who have been subjected to various forms of disciplinary techniques and practices. These techniques are employed by different institutions to regulate and control the behaviors, movements, and actions of individuals. Foucault highlights three strategies of disciplinary power in order to produce docile bodies, they are: hierarchical observation, normalizing judgment and examination.

A.1. Hierarchical Observation

In the context of Michel Foucault's work *Discipline and Punish*, docile bodies refer to individuals who have been subjected to various forms of disciplinary techniques and practices. These techniques are employed by different institutions to regulate and control the behaviors, movements, and actions of individuals. Foucault highlights three strategies of disciplinary power in order to produce docile bodies, they are: hierarchical observation, normalizing judgment and examination.

Foucault uses the term of hierarchical observation to refer to the various methods of observing and monitoring individuals. In *Shock Corridor*, observation is one of the main method by which the psychiatric staff can transform the patients into docile bodies. The medical staff observes the patient's movements, their interaction, and all the smallest details about them, since they already have all the information about them, they become more powerful over them. The patients are observed in a direct way, as we can see through the movie the two attendants Lloyd and Wilkes keep controlling the patients in their daily activities. They make regular rounds to check on them making sure they are in their designated areas.



Shot04 (00:25:35) The Attendant Lloyd Observing the Patient. This shot depicts a strong presence of the attendant Lloyd observing the patients at the dining room at meal time to make

sure they are quiet and in their right places. The cameraman filmed this scene in order to show to the audience how Lloyd stands and observes every patient and every area of the dining room.

As suggested in this shot, the attendants and the medical staff play a significant role in the observation and management of the patients within the mental institution. They serve as agents of control, supervision, and surveillance. Another way of observing the patients is during the therapy sessions.



Shot 05(00:59:01) Therapy Session. This shot demonstrates Barrett and dr.Cristo in a therapy session, where dr.Cristo interacts with Barrett. This therapy session aims to monitor the patient's behavior and take note of any notable behaviors or exchanges. From this

shot, one can understand that the doctors are taking control over the patients.

The attendants observe the patient at every moment in every area, as Lloyd observes Barrett from the grid of his office door when he exited his office all the way to his room accompanied by attendant Wilkes. Indeed, most of the doors have grids which aim to observe the moves and the behavior of patients, and interact if any fight starts between the patients.

Shot 06(00:22:13) Lloyd Observing

Barrett. A close-up depicting Lloyd face, it is a particular type of camera angle that focuses on the actor's face. Using close-ups, filmmakers grab audiences' attention. By paying attention



to the actor's facial characteristics, they can influence the mood or emotional depth of the audience. In this shot, Fuller uses the camera to focus on Lloyd's face to show his sinister or threatening expression towards Barrett, and the shot also depicts that Lloyd takes control of the patients.

A.2. Normalizing Judgments

According to Michel Foucault, normalizing judgments is a concept that revolves around the way in which societies and institutions establish and enforce norms of behavior, thought, and identity. It is a process that regulates and categorizes major social, cultural and institutional factors. In this sense Foucault writes;

...But discipline brought with specific way of punishing that was not only a small-scale model of the court. What is specific to the disciplinary penalty is non-observance, that which does not measure up to rule, that departs from it. The whole indefinite domain of the non-conforming is punishable; the soldier commits an offence whenever he does not reach the level required; to carry out his tasks. (Foucault, 1973)

The concept of normalizing judgment is deeply related to Foucault's broader views on power and knowledge. He argues that modern societies have created complex systems of surveillance, labels, and control with the intention of shaping and regulating individual and group behavior. These systems function through a variety of institutions that include prisons, hospitals, schools, and mental asylums. . In Starset's song Breach, people's behavior is regulated by a schedule.

In *Shock Corridor* Samuel Fuller portrays the concept of normalizing judgments through several elements and characters. The protagonist Johnny Barrett feigns madness to have access to the mental institution to solve the murder case. The man's act of madness revolved around something that was considered taboo at that time, incestuous feelings towards his sister, this went against the social norms of that era. As Cathy declared when she was interrogated by the officer;

Officer: What can I do for you, young lady?

Cathy: My brother won't let me alone. He –

Officer: How old is he?

Cathy: Thirty.

Officer: Are you married?

Cathy: No.

Officer: Does he live with you?

Cathy: No.

Officer: Has he ever tried to... attack you?

Cathy: He's tried.

(Around 00:12:25) *Shock Corridor*

However, Barrette's dissimulation of peculiar thoughts and behaviors were necessary to portray him as a societal outcast, which was the only way of getting access to the asylum. For instance, the other patients Barrett's pretended peculiar beliefs and behaviours were necessary to present him as a societal outsider, which was the only way of getting access to the asylum. The other patients were detained because they were unable to adapt to society's established norms and values. Society saw itself as perfect and in need of protection from those considered mentally ill.

In the film, the mental institution becomes the primary source for the exercise of normalizing judgments. The staff, particularly dr.Cristo and the two attendants Lloyd and Wilkes play an important role regarding what is considered 'normal' inside the institution. They apply diagnostic labels and therapies to regulate the patients' behavior based on their own preconceived notions of mental health. Several examples are depicted in the movie, for example, The attendant Wilkes tells Barrett that using some inappropriate words is not allowed inside the institution;

Wilkes: Well this one's yours Mr. Barrett
Johnny: Am I the only loony in this wall
Wilkes: No, Mr. Barrett, Your roommates are in the street
Oh! If you don't mind we never use words like buds,
Screwy, goofy, loony
(Around 00:22:48) Shock Corridor



Shot07 (01:08:48) Barrett and Trent's Punishment. This bird's eye shot conveyed from the top of an image looking down has the effect of establishing what's going on between the two characters Johnny Barrett and Trent

whom are being punished after they have caused anarchy in the corridor with all the patients. The staff isolated them in a room and tied their hand over their body with a uniform that is made for such kinds of foolishness as shown in this shot.

This norm about the language use is set in order to keep the institution and society respectful and harmonious. Another example which shows the medical staff establishing norms, is in the scene where Wilkes is giving the medications to the patients. One can understand that the staff, by administering the medications to the patients, aim to help them to maintain their mental states. This method demonstrates a form of medical intervention intended at connecting the patients' mental states with the institution's accepted norms. Adding another form of treatment by which they make the patient conforming to the mental institution is the therapy session. However, these therapies sessions are applied by the staff board over various patients including the protagonist Johnny Barrett, it aim at guiding their thoughts and emotions in the right direction of an understood state of mental health.

This form of punishment is made to control and manage the behavior of agitated and non-compliant patients. This method encourages the idea that some behaviours are unwanted

or disruptive and must be corrected, whereas also serving as a punitive tool by emphasising the belief that unacceptable conduct will not be tolerated.

These methods portray how the medical staff exercises normalizing judgments through various interventions and practices. They aim to control and regulate the patients' behavior, thoughts and emotions in conformity with the institution's recognized norms and standards.

A.3. Examination of Norms in Shock Corridor

The third strategy of disciplinary power that combines hierarchical observation and normalizing judgments according to Foucault is examination. According to him, examination is a disciplinary process that is used to create docile bodies. This last is a normalizing view that allows individuals to be qualified, classified, and punished. It is a type of surveillance that develops visibility over persons in order to assess and categorize them.

Shock Corridor depicts the concept of examination through several forms. Throughout the film the medical staff conducts diagnostic interviews with the patients, as it is illustrated in the beginning of the film where the medical staff conducts an interview with a patient named Johnny, where Dr. Christo's assertion, "I've had my eye on you every minute since I've been here," highlights the continuous surveillance aspect of examination. Barrett is under constant observation, which is a form of disciplinary power that ensures compliance and monitors behavior Dr. Christo begins by asking Barrett about his past and his current state, in order to gather information about him . As it is shown in the following dialogue:

Dr. Christo: "Oh you started as a copy boy I see."

Barrett: "Yeah when I was 14. and supported your sister uh-huh."

Dr. Christo: "Did you sleep well?"

Barrett: "La la la la la la"

Dr. Christo: "I want to help you John but I need your cooperation."

Barrett: "I understand."

Dr. Christo: "Why didn't you cooperate with my staff this morning?"

Barrett: "They want to hurt me."

Dr. Cristo: "Do I want to hurt you? I've had my eye on you every minute since I've been here. Do you know who I am?"

Barrett: "Of course. Who am I?"

Dr. Cristo: "Dr. Cristo, Clinical Director, head of the medical staff for seven years, married, two children, happy."

Barrett: "Now it's time to ask me about voices."

Dr. Cristo: "You hear voices?"

Barrett: "Yes, my head hurts. I gotta get out of here. Call my paper. They can't go to press without me. There is Kathy all right. That's why you're here John, to make sure."

(00:35:28)Shock Corridor

The dialogue between Dr. Cristo and Johnny Barrett exemplifies Foucault's concept of examination by demonstrating how the psychiatric institution uses detailed questioning, observation, and hierarchical control to assess, classify, and manage patients. This interaction highlights the disciplinary power dynamics at play, where the institution seeks to normalize and control behavior through systematic evaluation and continuous surveillance.

Another examination process illustrated in the film is group therapy session, in which the staff examines the patient's collectively to determine their different mental illnesses and also to observe how they interact with each other, by examining also their interaction with the staff especially doctors.

B. Surveillance

Samuel Fuller's 1963 film "Shock Corridor" explores the intricate web of surveillance within a mental institution, portraying how the panopticon-like environment influences both patients and staff. The concept of surveillance, central to Michel Foucault's discussions on power and discipline, is profoundly depicted through the institutional structure, the characters' interactions, and the overarching narrative of the film.

Firstly, the architectural design of the mental asylum in "Shock Corridor" embodies the principles of the panopticon. The wards are arranged radially around a central observation point, typically manned by doctors and staff. This layout enables constant monitoring of patients from a single vantage, fostering an environment where inmates are aware of being

watched at all times. This centralized surveillance not only maintains order but also imposes a form of psychological control, influencing behavior through the threat of observation and intervention.

Dr. Cristo, portrayed as an authoritative and detached figure, personifies the wielder of this surveillance power. His presence within the institution exerts control over both patients and staff, shaping their actions and interactions. His clinical demeanor and focus on experimental treatments like electric shock therapy illustrate how surveillance can be wielded as a tool of discipline and normalization, aligning with Foucault's argument that surveillance contributes to the normalization of behavior within institutions.

Throughout the film, attendants are depicted patrolling the halls, checking on patients, and enforcing routines. This constant vigilance perpetuates an atmosphere of discipline and order, where any deviation from prescribed norms is swiftly noticed and corrected. The institutional surveillance thus creates a pervasive sense of confinement and paranoia among the inmates, illustrating the psychological impact of being under constant observation.

Moreover, *Shock Corridor* criticizes the effectiveness and ethics of such surveillance practices. While surveillance is intended to maintain order and ensure safety, it often leads to unintended consequences. Patients become hyper-aware of their surveillance, potentially altering their behavior to conform superficially rather than addressing underlying issues. This superficial conformity can lead to repression and exacerbate mental health challenges rather than alleviate them, as highlighted in the film's portrayal of the inmates' struggles.

Foucault's concept of the panopticon extends beyond physical architecture to encompass the broader societal implications of surveillance and control. In "Shock Corridor," the institutional setting serves as a microcosm reflecting societal attitudes towards mental illness and institutionalization during the 1960s. The film challenges viewers to question the

balance between surveillance for safety and the infringement on individual autonomy and dignity.

In conclusion, *Shock Corridor* serves as a poignant exploration of surveillance within a mental institution, drawing parallels to Foucault's theory of the panopticon. Through its portrayal of institutional architecture, character dynamics, and narrative themes, the film underscores how surveillance shapes power dynamics, disciplines behavior, and influences the lived experiences of those within its grasp. It prompts viewers to critically examine the implications of surveillance not only in institutional settings but also in broader societal contexts, urging consideration of its impact on individual agency and mental well-being.

2. The Counterproductive Nature of Power

In *Shock Corridor*, a lot of scenes can be used to illustrate the productive nature of power and its counter effects. Indeed, since power in the mental institution aims to help the patients to recover from their mental illnesses, one can depict their insanity is not eliminated but rather increased. As a result the psychiatry not only fails in its objective, but it also causes the same problem for which it is intended to provide a treatment.

To start, the protagonist Johnny Barrett goes from sane to insane, since it is depicted in the movie that he simulates madness to have access to the asylum for an investigation about an unsolved murder. Barrett was not insane but he was forced to be. It shows that this psychiatry is portrayed as an environment where even the most reasonable persons can lose their sanity and become mad.

From the idea above, it is evident that power in the conditions of the asylum does not lead to the elimination of insanity but rather increases it. This tragic event that is represented in the movie has another message to transmit. Indeed, what distinguishes the film in its genre is the ability to critically discuss the social reality of Americans in a symbolic way. The

historical background where *Shock Corridor* was released in 1963, informs us about the main issues that he tries to discuss. The movie illustrates the major issues that the Americans faced at that time period. In fact, the film contains a strong anti-psychiatric message in several ways. What probably most verifies this idea is the symbolic use of the authoritarian oppressive staff as an image that represents the psychiatric system and its failure to restore the patient's sanity.

If one analyzes the tragic end of the *Shock corridor* evolving around the madness of Johnny Barrett, he has to understand how the medical staff's cruel characteristics drive him to be mad joining the other patients. In other words, power within this asylum produced resistance by the patients but it paradoxically results in the disorder of the state of mind of the patients.



Shot 8 (01:41:02) Barrett's loss of his sanity.

The last scenes of the movie represent the protagonist Johnny Barrett becoming a real madman who loses his reason. This scene is a close up depicting Johnny Barrett it aims to show to the audience that even though he was

faking madness during his confinement in the asylum, he ended up losing his sanity. Indeed, it clearly depicts that power in institutions does not lead to cure the mad but it aggravates their behavior using such methods of treatments which demonstrates the failure of the doctor and the staff.

3. Power and Discourse as a Form of Repression

As understood in the film, power functions in a variety of ways, such as discourse. The doctors and the staff of the mental institution, that held the authority which gives them the

capacity to control the patients, are seen as one of the best examples on how power operates through discourse inside the institution, such as the scene where Johnny interferes with the staff about the real illness of some patients, Johnny Barrett, posing as a patient, interacts with various asylum staff who manipulate the truth about patients' identities and conditions, that is considered as a manipulation of truth and power. Through the use of speech, the characters in the film, especially the patients in the mental institution, are subjected to different sorts of manipulation and control. The doctors and staff distort reality by portraying their activities as medical treatments and justifying their authoritarian methods through language and speeches. To achieve their goals, they employ manipulative and attractive language in order to convince the patients of their control over them. Throughout the journalist, who observes a group therapy session where patients are diagnosed and labeled by psychiatrists, that is a form of Social Control through Diagnosis.

According to Foucault, discourse identifies the individual who produces it since it represents his identity, class, and social standing. That is, the one who provides the discourse holds power over the other individuals, and the more powerful a person is, the more convincing his discourse becomes. The link between power and discourse is manifested by the powerful using speech to manipulate the powerless. In the film, every therapy is prescribed by Dr. Cristo, and patients are expected to submit without complaining.

Another depiction of power through discourse in the film, is when dr. Cristo interrogates Barrett's girlfriend Cathy where he accused her as not being cooperative in providing details about Barrett's suspected inappropriate behaviors. This interrogation-style discourse is a power action that puts Cathy on the defensive while also reinforcing Dr. Cristo's authority. Foucault claims in his book *The Order of Things*:

In every society, the production of discourse is at once controlled, selected, organized and redistributed by certain number of procedures whose role is to ward off its powers and dangers, to gain mastery over its chance events, to evade ponderous, formidable materiality. (Foucault, 1994. p52)

To conclude, this chapter thoroughly examines the complex mechanics of power relationships within mental institutions and their profound implications for the creation of docile bodies. It illuminates how medical professionals in asylums strategically apply principles of training to shape compliant behaviours among patients. Additionally, the chapter highlights the critical role of discourse as a tool through which power is exercised over inmates, influencing their identity and behaviour within institutional settings. Furthermore, it emphasizes the necessity of comprehending these power dynamics to effectively critique and challenge the oppressive practices that persist within the mental health care system. By unpacking these dynamics, researchers and advocates can better understand how institutional power structures contribute to the marginalization and control of vulnerable populations, paving the way for more informed and targeted efforts toward reform and justice in mental health care.

4. The Strategies of Resistance in Shock Corridor

In contrast to the Marxist perspective that sees power as a form of oppression, Foucault focuses on how those under power resist it. This implies that there must be a reason other than repression that makes people conform. Foucault proposes a theory where social bonds and power structures disintegrate, allowing him to depict power as both enforced and resisted. This approach emphasizes individuals as active participants rather than passive recipients of power. He argues:

Power must be analyzed as something which circulates, or as something which only functions in the form of chain....power is employed and exercised through a netlike organization...individuals are the vehicles of power, not its points of application (Foucault, 1980, p98)

Shock Corridor highlights the idea of resisting power and supports this Foucauldian concept. As we have already seen, there is power within the asylum so there should be men to resist. Unlike other films that avoided societal changes, this film directly approached racism,

sexual orientation, and war. It shows resistance as not only a fight against external oppression but also as a complex internal process influenced by the harsh conditions of their surroundings and minds. (Pam, 2007).

Resistance takes various forms in Fuller's movie highlighting the complex struggles of the characters inside a mental hospital itself. The film explores how encompassing the characters' psychological struggles, social critiques, and personal battles, numerous scenes can be used to support these forms of resistance in *Shock Corridor* as it will be demonstrated in what follows.

1. Psychological Resistance

A. Johnny Barrett's Resistance

The protagonist feigns insanity to gain access to the mental hospital in order to solve a murder case to win a Pulitzer price. Once inside, he encounters various patients who represent different forms of resistance to societal norms. His psychological struggle is to keep his sanity while seeming to be insane, but this resistance weakens as the film progresses. This claim is well exemplified by Barrett's defiance against the hospital system, along with various other moments showcasing resistance. This is clearly demonstrated in the following monologue of Johnny Barrett: "the next question has got to be about fetishist according to doc 'script ' oh I don't like this he 'stalling too much, if he doesn't come through with that question I'll fall right on my typographical face" . (00:16:14) *Shock Corridor*

After he was admitted into the institution, he says also:

"I made it! I'm in!

Ever since my voice changed, I wanted to be
in the company of the newspaper greats.

And this long corridor is the magic highway...
to the Pulitzer Prize.

Maybe I'm looking at the killer right now.

Three witnesses

Stuart, Trent, Boden''

(00:24:14) *Shock Corridor*

From the above monologue, one can understand Barrett's determination and resilience to resist the effects of the asylum. He is trying to convince Dr. Menkin of his sanity, asserting his real identity and purpose in the face of overwhelming evidence to the contrary. Dr. Menkin is sceptical challenges Johnny's statements, probing into his mental stability. Despite the difficulties and he expected dangers, he remains motivated to his purpose. In this sense Foucault states: "where there is power there is resistance" (Foucault, 1978, p95). Despite the fact that he is presented as a patient who refuses to accept the asylum's diagnosis of mental illness, he affirms his sanity and resists the influence of the institution. He tries to assert his true identity as a journalist with a mission, distinguishing his genuine self from the insanity around him.

B. Dr Menkin Resistance



Shot 09: (00:16:55) Johnny's Attack on Dr.Menkin. A long shot that represents Barrett when increasingly agitated and violent, screaming loudly over Dr.Menkin inside his room office, where he was interviewing him to

gain information about his case of mental illness. Dr.Menkin is powerless to protect himself and sits in terror. The close-ups on Barrett's face and Dr.Menkin's terrified appearance serves as reference in this sequence, which is shot in a claustrophobic and mental manner. It creates a sense of being stuck or having limited freedom. The lighting and camera positions intensify

the drama of the setting, in order to make the audience feel confined or stuck, like being in a small room or closed-in space and reflecting the doctor's inner struggles.

Indeed, this sequence where Johnny Barrett attacks Dr. Menkin is a powerful and intense moment in *Shock Corridor* which depicts the theme of resistance. Furthermore, it is a culmination of Barrett's resistance to the system and his determination to solve a murder case. Thus, he is ready to use violence in order to get the information he needs, even though it means to attack another patient. Barrett, who is pretending to be insane, is able to overpower Dr. Menkin who is in fact the insane.

C. Patient's resistance

In the movie, one can deduce that there are other patients that portray the Foucauldian concept of resistance through different ways. Race riot, one example which is a violent conflict between different racial groups. It often happens because of deep-seated racial tensions and can involve fighting. The credibility of this idea can be seen through the character's Trent. One of the violent scenes in the film that represent the racial fight at the hospital, where Johnny is caught in the middle of the chaos and tries to escape it. This scene portrays the resistance of the black who is fighting against the white patients and the staff. Barrett presented the black patient as the following monologue affirms: "witness number two Trent the only *nigro* student in the southern university hobby collecting pillowcases" (Monologue 1:00: 57) *Shock Corridor*



Shot 10: (00:40:28) **Trent as a White Supremacist.** A close up depicting of resistance by Trent as a character, a scene which takes place in the famous corridor where patients can interact

with each other. The discussion between Trent and Barrett demonstrates his rebellion in the system such a problem on social issues like racism that were common in the sixties. By this close up, attracts the attention of the audience and makes them establish a mood or develop emotional depth by focusing on the facial feature of the actor as a determined and strong patient in face of violence and oppression .In this shot, Trent believes that he is Klansman, he steals pillowcases to make hoods, and he chases other black patients in the hallways shouting, This portrayal highlights how deeply racism affects individuals and society, leading to violence and mental breakdowns. This shot also portrays that the black people consider themselves as white people in order to symbolize their inner turmoil and the explosive nature of racial conflicts in the society. This scene reflects the need of Fuller to expose the racial issues in society. Eventually, Trent confides in Johnny about the pressures that drove him to madness, but Barrett is obsessed only with Sloan's murder. This scene crucially underscores the themes of resistance and journalistic ethics, enhancing the plot's tension, stress, and intensity. It is fundamental for Barrett's character development, leading him to reject violence and advocate for peace.

2. The Power of Media as a Form of Resistance

In Samuel Fuller's *Shock Corridor*, Johnny Barrett's role, as an investigative journalist, is a profound act of resistance against institutional secrecy. By pretending to be insane, he gets inside the hospital to expose what really happens there. This shows how journalism can uncover secrets of powerful institutions. His undercover work allows him to see and report on the hospital's true conditions, breaking through the usual protections that keep such places hidden from public scrutiny. This reflects the role of media in Western democracies, where it is seen as the fourth branch of power. The following dialogue from

Johnny Barrett and Cathy expresses his ambition to achieve professional success by winning the Pulitzer Prize through his investigative journalism:

Johnny Barrett: “to solve a murder even if i don't crack this case honey my experiences alone will make a book a play or even a movie, sale every man wants to get to the top of his profession mine is winning the Pulitzer Prize if this story doesn't do it”

Cathy:” nothing ever will but their sickness is bound to rub off on you I said the same thing to you when you”

This reflects how Barrett views the media as a tool of resistance against institutional secrecy and as a means to bring important truths to light. His ambition to win the Pulitzer prize underscores his commitment to using media as a platform to challenge and expose hidden truths, despite the risks involved. indeed, the dialogue reflects the power of media as a form of resistance by highlighting its potential to uncover and publicize issues that institutions may try to conceal.

Another conversation that reflects the power of media and journalism in fighting to unhide the truth and uncover the domination of authorities in this institution is the dialogue between Johnny and Boden, where the journalist says:

Johnny: “why did you confess to the murder, Boden? You are innocent. Why protect the real killer.”

Boden: “it does not matter, Johnny. They will bury the truth. The institution and those in power will never let it out.” Johnny says: “Not if I can help it. I will make sure the world knows. The press can bring the truth to light.”

This interaction emphasizes the journalist’s conviction that journalism can defy suppression and reveal truths that authorities might want to conceal. It also portrays Cathy as a key character in Shock Corridor, who shares a special bond with Johnny Barrett. Cathy, Barrett's girlfriend and a professional dancer, files a complaint at the police station against

Barrett to help him gain access to the mental institution. Despite this, Cathy repeatedly warns Barrett that his actions could lead to his own mental breakdown.

The protagonist formed a special connection with other patients in the mental institution, different from how he interacted with the staff. He tried to build relationships based on respect and trust, especially with Stuart, Trent, and Boden, who were crucial witnesses to Sloan's murder. Despite their mental health challenges, Barrett worked with them to collect important information for his investigation.

Stuart was the first witness Johnny Barrett met. He grew up in the South where he learned prejudice and hatred. During the Korean War, he was captured and brainwashed to support communism. After being considered insane by his captors, he returned to the US in a prisoner exchange and was dishonorably discharged, seen as a traitor. In the hospital, Stuart imagines himself as Confederate General J.E.B. Stuart. His tendency to digress into his life story whenever Barrett asks about Sloan's murder disrupts their conversations and distracts Barrett from his investigation.

Trent is the second witness to Sloan's murder. He was among the first Black students to integrate into a segregated Southern university, an experience that deeply traumatized him. Now, he believes he is a member of the Ku Klux Klan and promotes white nationalist ideas among other patients. The film focuses heavily on Trent as a significant witness. He confides in Barrett about the events that led to his mental breakdown. Barrett spends a lot of time with Trent, listening to his stories and forming a personal connection with him. When caretakers accuse Trent of stealing pillowcases, Barrett intervenes to defend and protect him.

However, Barrett, his only interest is focused on questioning the patients and gathering information to win his Pulitzer Prize. He engages with them at different moments and places in the asylum, group therapy session, meal, and shared rooms together. He asks questions

discreetly and listens for any information that may be important to his investigation. The interactions Barrett has with his fellow inmates are crucial to his investigation. His ability to fit in, gather information, and build trust with the other patients helps him to piece together the puzzle surrounding the murder.

3. Power and Discourse as a Form of Resistance

In Fuller's movie, discourse and its role in resisting is complicated and portrayed through the characters and the setting of the mental institution. Indeed, Johnny's quest to solve Sloan's murder is a form of resistance against institutional silence, by interacting with other patients, each representing different facets of American societal issues such as racism, fear of communism, reveal how societal discourse can fragment individuals.

As it is previously analysed, each witness Barrett encounters within the institution embodies a form of resistance against their past traumas and the power structures that shaped their lives. However, the interactions between the patients, particularly their efforts to retain autonomy and sanity within the repressive atmosphere of the institution, show a collective resistance against the controlling mechanisms of the mental health system, whereby they form a sort of alliances and support each other, resisting the institution's isolating and dehumanizing effects.

Moreover, several sequences show the institution trying to keep quiet or manipulate Stuart, Trent, and Boden's declarations, clearly demonstrating the concept of suppressing resistant voices. These characters represent the repression of rebellion within the institutional power systems. One of the best scene is the following one which reflects this claims is:

Shot 11: (1:10:13) Trent's Outburst and Subsequent Isolation

This overhead shot illustrates Trent and Johnny isolated in special room, in order to get punished after their disturbance in corridor. Trent's behaviour can



be seen as a distorted form of resistance against the societal forces that oppressed him. By embodying the very ideology that harmed him, Instead of providing therapeutic intervention, the institution opts for suppression and control, silencing Trent's expression of trauma and resistance. Barrett is both worried and intrigued, realizing that Trent's actions stem from severe psychological trauma and the impact of racism. Eventually, he get isolated with Trent in the same room.

In *Shock Corridor*, we can find many scenes that highlight how the medical staff try to control patients by restraining, isolating, and ignoring their delusions and traumas. Stuart, Trent, and Boden's stories show how the mental health system silences those who don't fit the norm. Johnny Barrett's efforts to understand and share their stories act as resistance against this suppression, showing how asking questions can challenge and disrupt powerful systems.

To sum it all up, In Fuller's *Shock Corridor*, various forms of resistance by patients against the disciplinary power structures of the psychiatric institution manifests. The film highlights how the three witnesses who are named as Stuart, Trent, and Boden who each resist their painful pasts and social injustices through their delusions and bold actions, even though the institution tries to silence them with isolation and control Johnny Barrett, the main character, works to uncover their hidden traumas despite the institution's attempts to keep them quiet. Additionally, the film shows the power of the media to challenge these controls, as Barrett's efforts to expose the truth about the mental hospital serve as a form of resistance.

VI. General Conclusion

This present study has aimed to investigate Samuel Fuller's *Shock Corridor* from a Foucauldian perspective. By using *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in The Age of Reason* and *Discipline and Punishment* which is the theoretical basis of this foundation of this dissertation. The film of *Shock corridor* reflects Michel Foucault's thinking about power and resistance as they are illustrated in the movie through the storyline, theme and the characters.

Analyzing *Shock Corridor* from the Foucauldian perspective depicts how the patients are unable to improve their conditions. Our work has aimed to explore the ways of control over the patients who were considered as subjects. It also studied the techniques used by authority to control and dominate those subjects.

The major focus of this dissertation has been to study to what extent asylums are not innocent places that aim to keep the "unwanted" individual in confinement in order to safeguard society. We have tried to present the unequal power relation, which exist between patients and psychiatrists in the medical institutions. This can be understood through the exchanges of these two groups on the dialectic of power and knowledge. Indeed, the patients are fully managed since information about their lives, and issues, which gives the psychiatric staff more power to control the patients.

This research paper demonstrated how docile bodies are created among patients through the development of power relations inside asylums. In Fuller's *Shock Corridor*, we can see Michel Foucault's concepts in action: hierarchical observation, normalizing judgment and examination. Therefore, we have exposed how the medical staff uses these methods to shape the patients into conforming to expected behaviours.

Therefore, it is evident that patients are strictly controlled through the use of several techniques. These methods, which are used to manage individuals who are confined in these institutions, include strict discipline and supervision. As a result, asylum as shown in the movie, is no longer neutral institution for society, rather, it is a panopticon setting where everything is under control to enable the creation of submissive bodies. Additionally, the film also investigates power discourse and power as a form of resistance against authorities, through Barrett's journalistic investigation and persistence to unhide the truth inside the mental institution.

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