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Technology and Power

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Seattle Pacific University Day of Common Learning
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Technology – liberator, oppressor, or instrument?

IS IT A GOOD IDEA?

DATA MINING

In Seattle and around the world, people are "mining" social networks, email and online databases for bits and bytes of personal information. Is giving up privacy the only way to find new ways to use data?

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0100100101010001001001 0
0001010011101001001000 1
1101010010100100101010 0
0010101110010101011001 0
0100010010010100100011 0
0011101001001000101101 0
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YES

The huge amount of information online today is like nothing before. Looking for patterns in the data can help fight disease, find human rights violations and customize online experiences. Sharing some personal information is the best way to participate in the greatest knowledge-sharing experiment in human history.

Why do you think personal privacy is less important than the greater good?

NO

Anyone with an email account knows that sharing too much information can lead to an inbox jammed with spam. But it's getting tougher to go online without giving up all kinds of personal information. History has shown us that we should be wary of "Big Brother," and data mining is the first step in that direction.

How can Seattle be part of the data economy while protecting privacy?

The New Atlantis (1627)

"to restore and exalt power and dominion"
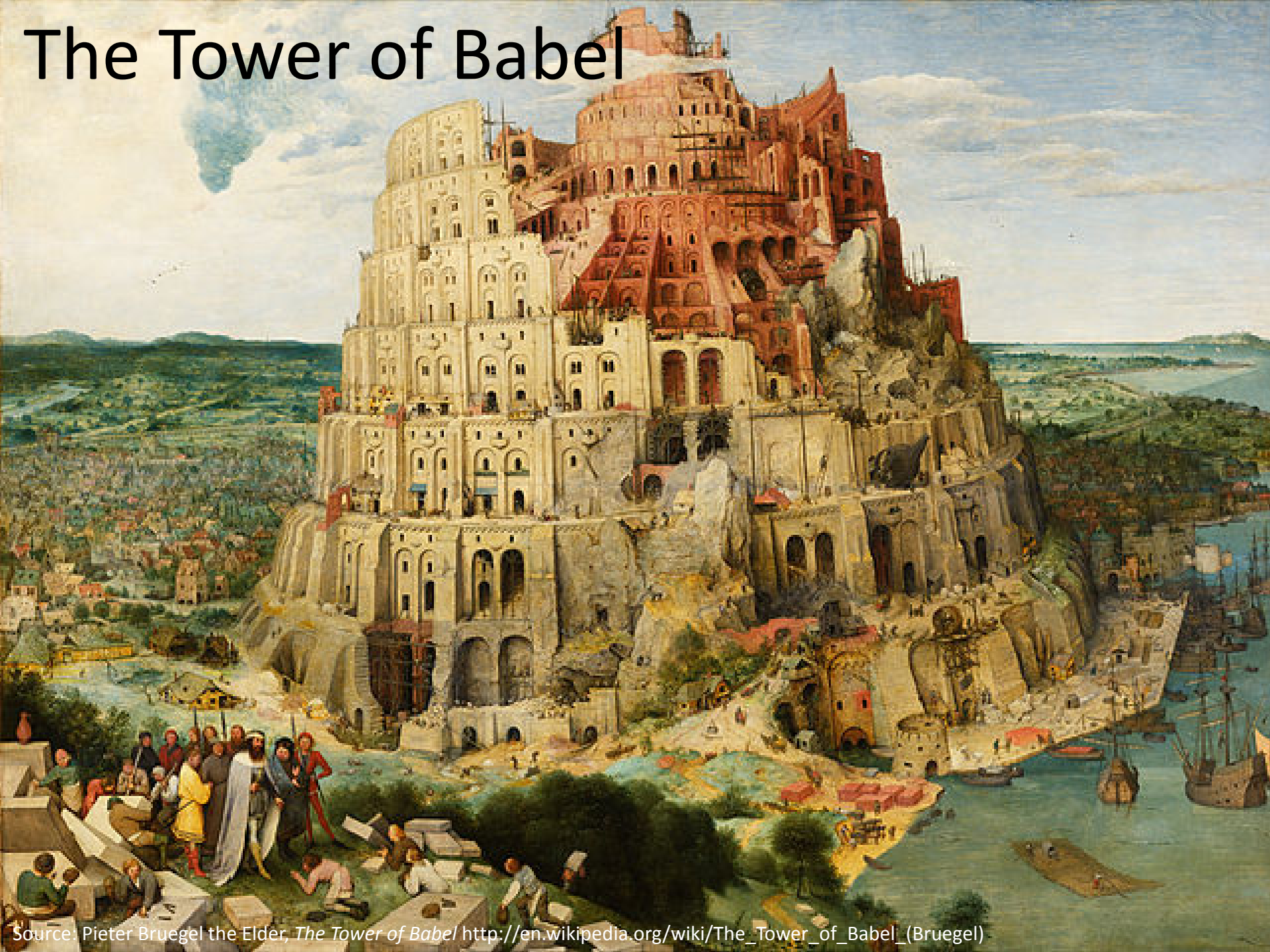
The New Jerusalem

Panopticism

Plan of Jeremy Bentham's Panopticon penitentiary (1791) →
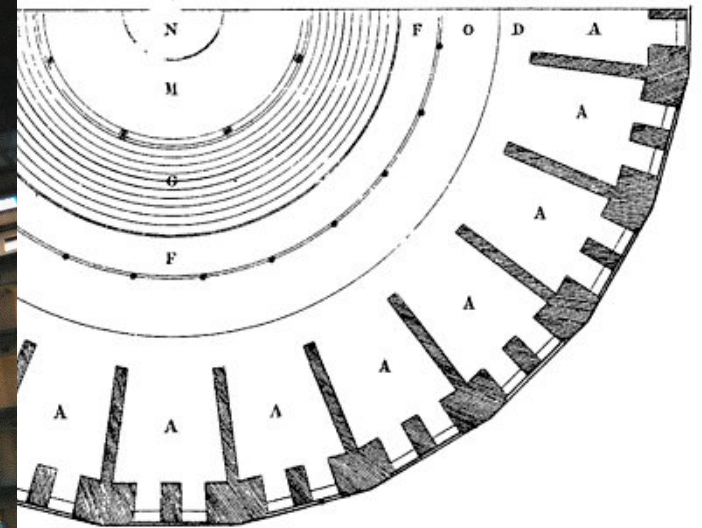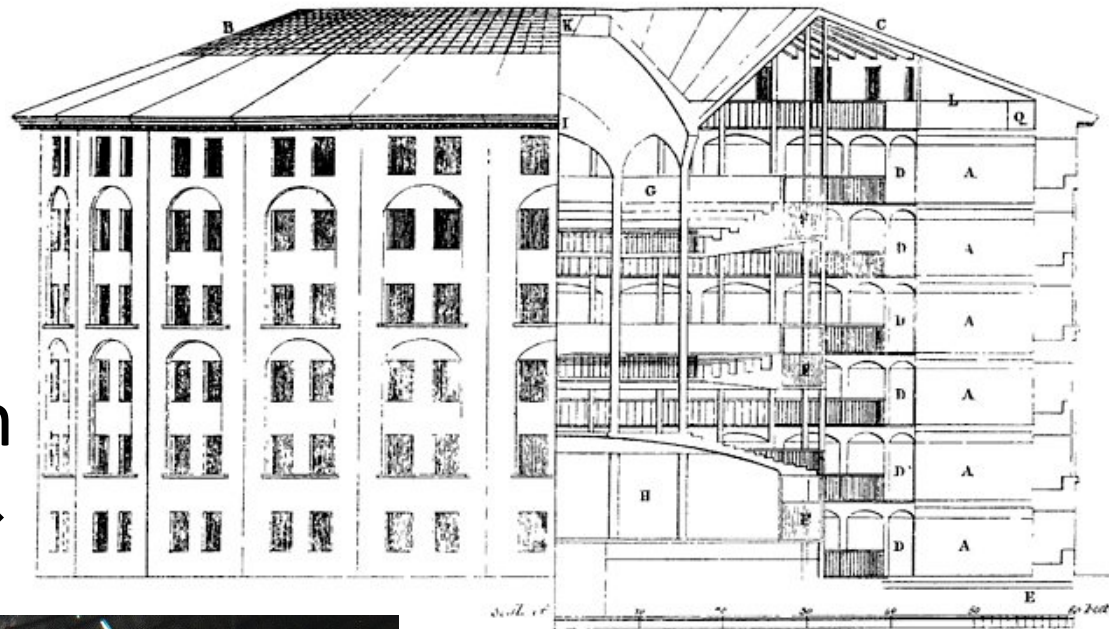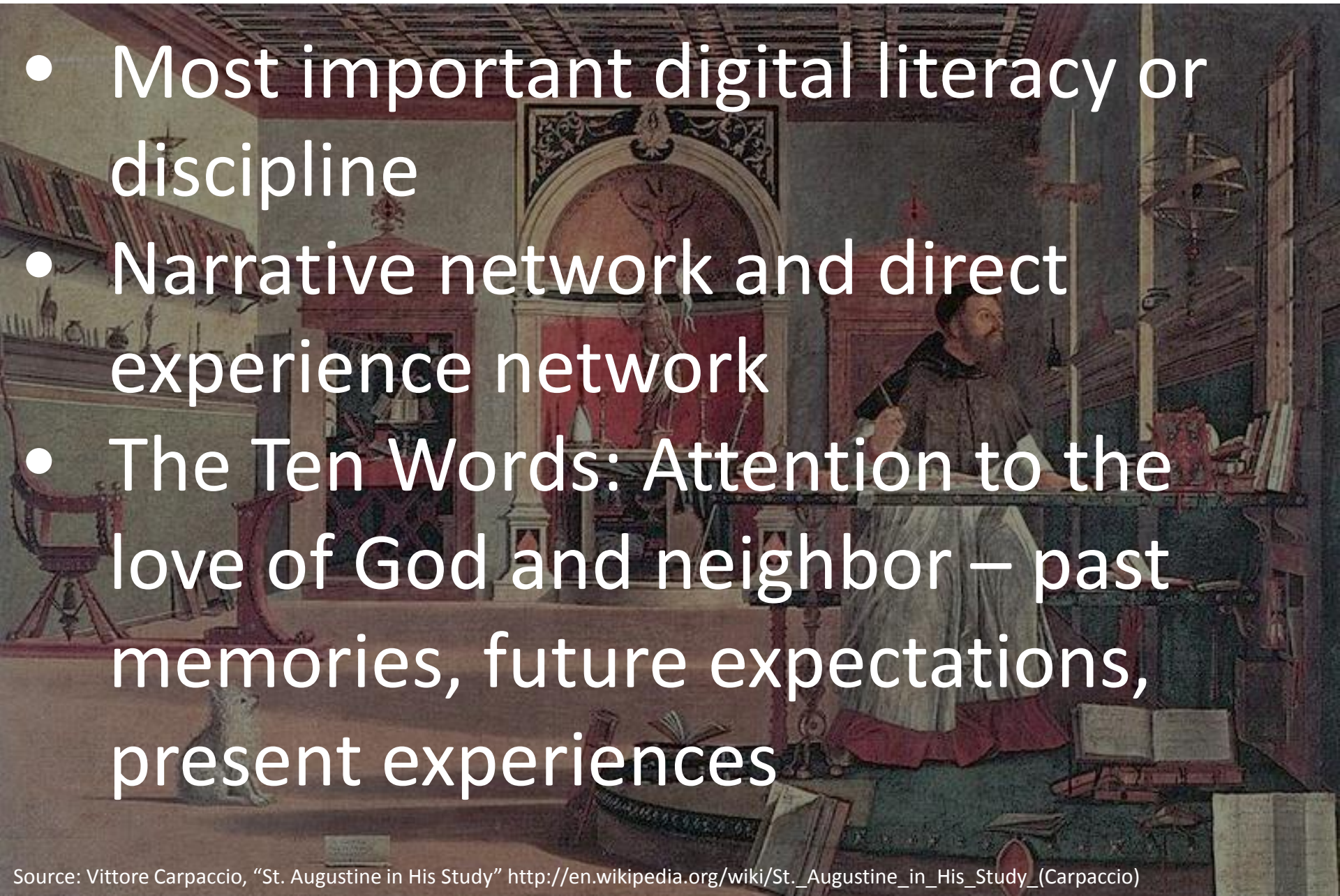
← Presidio Modelo prison, Cuba

The Tower of Babel

"… to signify the Heavenly City"

Attention

- Most important digital literacy or discipline
- Narrative network and direct experience network
- The Ten Words: Attention to the love of God and neighbor – past memories, future expectations, present experiences

Simone Weil, "Reflections on the Right Use of School Studies":

Attention consists of **suspending our thought**, leaving it detached, empty, and ready to be penetrated by the object; it means **holding in our minds, within reach of this thought, but on a lower level** and not in contact with it, the diverse knowledge we have acquired which we are forced to make use of.