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'Disciplining' Truth and Science: Michel Foucault and the Power of Social Science

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ABSTRACT

This article explores the works of French philosopher, Michel Foucault and examines its implications for understanding power and social relations. Despite this, there has been very little Foucauldian analysis of social science and its relationship to power (Powell 2012). Hence, the article discusses the relationship between Foucault's conceptual tools of 'power', the emergence of 'the modern subject', the individual and the important concept of 'body' as they apply to a methodological and epistemological understanding of social science in contemporary society.

Keywords: Power; Social Science; Michel Foucault; Methodologies

1. INTRODUCTION

Michel Foucault's research excavations covered a wide range of topics and have been influential across a variety of social science disciplines. Foucault was a 'masked philosopher' who deliberately sought to avoid being aligned with any particular school of philosophical or philosophical thought. Despite this preference, writers have identified affiliations, influences and the productivity of encounters with the work of other scholars and traditions: Nietzsche and Weber (Braidotti 1991; Owen 1997); Marx (Smart 1983); Kuhn (Dreyfus and Rabinow

1982); Gramsci (Kenway 1990) feminisms (Sawicki 1991; McNay 1994) and Habermas (Ashenden and Owen 1999). Commentators have also suggested new terminologies to capture the essence of his approach: 'interpretative analytics' (Dreyfus and Rabinow 1982, 'modes of information' (Poster 1984) 'governmentality studies' (Burchell, Gordon and Miller 1991; Dean 2007) and the analysis of 'dispositifs' (Deleuze 1992). In addition, his ideas have become influential in a variety of fields of investigation aside from generic social science studies: criminology (Garland 1985), management and organization (Knights and McCabe 2003), social science research (Kendall and Wickham 1999), philosophy (Armstrong 1992) and sociology and politics (Burchell, Gordon and Miller 1991).

Foucault's rejects any allusion to certainty in social science and political life and holds that there is no universal understanding beyond history – placing him at odds with currents in Marxism, as well as rationalist thought in general. That noted we can find imperatives which receive differing degree of emphasis throughout his work, one of which is "to discover the relations of specific scientific disciplines and particular social science practices" (Rabinow 1984, 4). He has engendered an awareness that disciplines, institutions and social science practices operate according to logics that are at variance with the humanist visions that are assumed to be social science are embedded (Powell and Biggs, 1999, 2000). In other words, the overt meanings given to activities do not correspond to their overall consequences. Whether these outcomes are intended or accidental was less important to Foucault than the analysis of power. As Barry Smart (1983, 77) points out, Foucauldian analysis asks of power: 'how is it exercised; by what means?' and second, 'what are the effects of the exercise of power?' Within those strategies and tactics, investigation would need to be centred on the mechanisms, the 'technologies' employed and to the consequences of change.

One example of this disjuncture between humanist vision and social science practices and its effects on the direction of modernity derives from Foucault's (1977) analysis of "utilitarianism". A pervasive theme of Foucault's work is the way in which the panopticon technique 'would make it possible for a single gaze to see everything perfectly' (1977, 173). Foucault describes how panopticism (based on the design of the utilitarian philosopher and social science reformer Jeremy Bentham) becomes a process whereby certain mechanisms permeate social science systems beyond actual, physical institutions. Techniques are thus 'broken down into flexible methods of control, which may be transferred and adapted ... (as)... centres of observation disseminated throughout society' (1977, 211-2).

The mechanisms used to extend the reach of centres of power through the social science body will vary depending on the grounds upon which they are required to operate. There are, in other words, periods in which particular sites and forms of conduct are subject to novel mechanisms and technologies in order to facilitate the transition from one state of affairs to another (Butler, 2000). These technologies may be overtly applied during periods of flux until moral relations have been accepted, whilst during the process of their application they both modify and are modified by the individuals or groupings charged with their implementation. Although Foucault does not impose any sense of causality on the development of such discourses, it is possible to discern the need for both an explicit moral reason and a method of operation, shaped to whatever new contexts are appropriate.

As Rouse (1994) has pointed out, an examination of the relationship between power and knowledge is central to interpreting and understanding social science phenomena via a Foucauldian framework. One of the consequences of power and knowledge is that rather than the focus on the explicit use of a particular technique of knowledge by someone in power to

cause a certain effect, attention is drawn to the reflexive relationship between both elements. This leads to a concern with: 'the epistemic context within which those bodies of knowledge become intelligible and authoritative. How statements were organised thematically, which of those statements counted as serious, who was empowered to speak seriously, and what questions and procedures were relevant to assess the credibility of those statements that were taken seriously. ...The types of objects in their domains were not already demarcated, but came into existence only contemporaneous with the discursive formations that made it possible to talk about them' (Rouse 1994: 93).

So, just as knowledge shapes what action is possible and what power is exercised, those actions also shape the creation of new knowledge and what is thereby given credence. Over time, legitimate *'domains'* are established which both define what is real and what can be done about it. Other possible interpretations are simultaneously discounted and delegitimised. The result is a view and mode of practice in which power and knowledge support each other. These domains not only sustain, for example, certain professional discourses, they mould what those professions might become. This analysis of power and knowledge emphasises their entwinement and the processes that occur as a particular domain takes shape. It also marks a distinction between what a method for both understanding and obtaining knowledge produces and the relationship between the shaping of that product and the distribution of power.

How did Foucault proceed to 'uncovering' discourses and practices? An answer to this question requires an analysis of archaeology and genealogy and we turn to this in the next section of the article. It is important to examine these concepts as contextual backdrops for understanding his approach to subjectivity in the subsequent section, before finally moving on to consider the legacy of his work.

2. TOOLS FOR THINKING

2. 1. Archaeology

It is through "historical investigation" that scholars can understand the present. However, when utilising historical inquiry, scholars should "use it, to deform it, to make it groan and protest" (Foucault 1980, 54). In *The Archaeology of Knowledge* Foucault (1972) discusses "archaeology" as the analysis of a statement as it occurs in the historical archive. Further, archaeology "describes discourses as practices specified in the element of the archive" (1972, 131), the archive being "the general system of the formation and transformation of statements" (1972, 130). Whilst an understanding of language would ask what rules have provided for a particular statement, the analysis of discourse asks a different question: "how is it that one particular statement appeared rather than another?" (1972, 27).

The use of an archaeological method explores the networks of what is *said* and what can be *seen* in a set of social science arrangements: in the conduct of an archaeology there is a visibility in "opening up" statements. For example, the work of Brooke-Ross (1986) illustrates how the rise of "residential care" in western social science produces statements about the "residents old age" while statements about "their ageing" produces forms of visibility which reinforce the power of residential care. Such visibility is consolidated by resource allocation; the cost of residential care stands at £8 billion per year (Powell, 2012) - hence the consolidation of statements pertaining to ageing reinforces institutions such as

residential care and the revenue they generate. In this context archaeology charts the relationship between statements and the visible and those 'institutions' which acquire authority and provide limits within which discursive objects may exist.

In this approach we can see that the attempt to understand the relations between statements and visibility focuses on those set of statements that make up institutions such as prisons – instructions to prison officers, statements about time-tabling of activities for inmates and the structure and space of the carceral institution itself. This leads to the production of: 'a whole micro - penality of time (lateness, absences, interruptions of tasks), of activity (inattention, negligence, lack of zeal), of behaviour (impoliteness, disobedience), of speech (idle chatter, insolence), of the body (incorrect attitudes, irregular gestures, lack of cleanliness), of sexuality (impurity, indecency)' (Foucault 1977, 178).

The crucial point is that this approach draws our attention to the dynamic inter-relationship between statements and institutions. Secondly, the attempt to describe "institutions" which acquire authority and provide limits within which discursive objects may act, focuses again on the institution which delimits the range of activities of discursive objects (Powell & Biggs, 2000) – it is at this point that an exploration of the architectural features of the institution would be used to understand spatial arrangements. In a similar context, Goffman (1968) wrote about how spatial arrangements of 'total institutions' operate to provide care and rehabilitation at an official level and capacity, underneath the surface. Such institutions curtail the rights of those within them: 'Many total institutions, most of the time, seem to function merely as storage dumps for inmates ... but they usually present themselves to the public as rational organizations designed consciously, through and through, as effective machines for producing a few officially avowed and officially approved ends' (Goffman 1968, 73).

A fundamental difference between Goffman and Foucault's interpretations of institutions would be, however, that whereas Goffman sees total institutions as an aberration, untypical of society as a whole, Foucault's critique assumes that the carceral element of institutional life encapsulates a core feature of social science life. In order to get a better understanding of what is punished and why, I wanted to ask the question: how does one punish?' (Foucault 1989, 276).

Foucault never felt totally comfortable with archaeological analysis and felt that discourses did not reveal the irregularities between on going within social science practices. As a result he developed his methodology during the course of his investigations.

2. 2. Genealogy

Foucault acquired the concept of "genealogy" from the writings of Nietzsche. Genealogy still maintains elements of archaeology including the analysis of statements in the "archive" (Foucault 1977, 1980 and 1982). With genealogy Foucault (1977) added a concern with the analysis of power/knowledge which manifests itself in the "history of the present". As Rose (1984) points out, genealogy concerns itself with disreputable origins and "unpalatable functions". This can, for example, be seen in relation to psycho-casework, care management and probation practice (Biggs and Powell 1999, 2001; May 1991; 1994). As Foucault found in his exploration of psychiatric power: 'Couldn't the interweaving effects of power and knowledge be grasped with greater certainty in the case of a science as 'dubious' as psychiatry?' (1980, 109).

Genealogy can be distinguished from archaeology in it approach to discourse. Whereas archaeology provides a snapshot, a 'slice' through the discursive nexus, genealogy focuses on the processual aspects of the web of discourse – its ongoing character (Foucault, 1980). Foucault did attempt to make the difference between them explicit: 'If we were to characterise it in two terms, then 'archaeology' would be the appropriate methodology of this analysis of local discursiveness, and 'genealogy' would be the tactics whereby, on the basis of the descriptions of these local discursivities, the subjected knowledge's which were thus released would be brought into play' (Foucault 1980, 85).

Foucault is claiming that archaeology is a systematic method of investigating official statements such as dispostifs (McNay, 1994). Genealogy is a way of putting archaeology to *practical* effect, a way of linking it to social science concerns: 'A genealogy of values, morality, asceticism, and knowledge will never confuse itself with a question for their 'origins', will never neglect as inaccessible the vicissitudes of history. On the contrary, it will cultivate the details and accidents that accompany every beginning; it will be scrupulously attentive to their petty malice; it will await their emergence, once unmasked, as the face of the other. Wherever it is made to go, it will not be reticent – in 'excavating the depths', in allowing time for these elements to escape from a labyrinth where not truth had ever detained them. The genealogist needs history to dispel the chimeras of the origin, somewhat in the manner of the pious philosopher who needs a doctor to exorcise the shadow of his soul' (Foucault 1984, 80).

3. THE MAKING OF THE MODERN SUBJECT

Foucault's use of genealogy cannot be divorced from an understanding of power, nor can the constitution of the subject. With this in mind our approach will be to consider his analytical ingenuity via an examination of different modes through which 'subjectivity' is constituted. Foucault (1982, 1983) grounded this as a pivotal mode of analysis that has been deployed in reflections on his own life (Miller, 1993). Subjectivity appears as both an experiential and discursive strategy that 'goes beyond theory' (Dreyfus and Rabinow 1983) and provides us with a way to problematise the explanatory value and relevance of his analyses.

We will discuss Foucault's approach to subjectivity in terms of classification, dividing and self-subjectification practices. These operate in ways to structure subjectivity under the auspices of the 'rise of modernity' where, commencing in the seventeenth century, the social science sciences, early capitalism and institutions began to co-ordinate new ways of objectifying 'populations' in western societies. In Foucault's analysis the realm of the 'social science' becomes the object of enquiry. Here, the term 'social science' means: 'The entire range of methods which make the members of a society relatively safe from the effects of economic fluctuation by providing a certain security' (Donzelot 1980 p. xxvi). Thus, in Discipline and Punish, the study: 'traces the historical emergence of the social science as a domain or field of inquiry and intervention, a space structured by a multiplicity of discourses emanating from the human sciences which, in their turn, are derived from, yet provide, a range of methods and techniques for regulating and ordering the social science domain' (Smart 1983).

3. 1. Classification Practices

Foucault's (1980) main concern was to show that the 'truth' status of a knowledge derives from the field in which it, as a discourse, is employed and not from the interpretation of a subjects' thoughts or intentions. Discourses are powerful in that they operate as a set of rules informing thought and practice and the operation of these decides who or what is constituted as an object of knowledge. The relationship between the subject and truth should be viewed as an effect of knowledge itself. Quite simply, the subject is not the source of truth. As Foucault put it: 'what if understanding the relation of the subject to the truth, were just an effect of knowledge? What if understanding were a complex, multiple, non-individual formation, not `subjected to the subject', which produced effects of truth?' (Foucault in Elders 1974: 149).

Knowledge is not separate from the realm of `practice'. Knowledge is a practice that constitutes particular objects – non-philosophical elements – that are part of practice itself. Knowledge and the subject of knowledge are fused as part of the relationship between knowledge and power that is social sciencely constructed: 'The important thing here, I believe, is that truth isn't outside power, or lacking in power: contrary to a myth whose history and functions would repay further study, truth isn't the reward of free spirits, the child of protracted solitude, nor the privilege of those who have succeeded in liberating themselves. Truth is a thing of this world: it is produced only by virtue of multiple forms of constraint. And it induces regular effects of power. Each society has its regime of truth, its `general politics' of truth' (Foucault 1980: 131)

Foucault is deliberately questioning the individual subjects' will to construct as he sets about exploring the relationship between 'discourse' and 'subjectivity'. What emerges is a grounded understanding of power/knowledge construction and reconstruction as discourses transform people into types of subjects - as classifying practices. Through these techniques of knowing, human attributes are studied, defined, organised and codified in accordance with the meta-categories of what is 'normal'. Classifying practices and techniques of normalisation designate both the objects to be known and the subjects who have the authority to speak about them. Discourses thus encompass both the objective and subjective conditions of human relations (1973, 232) and these emerging forms of social science regulation, characterised by notions of discipline, surveillance and normalisation, are core to his philosophical studies (Foucault 1977).

The knowledge and practices are also referred to as 'epistemes' which are "the total set of relations that unite at a given period, the discursive practices that give rise to epistemological figures, sciences and formalised systems" (Foucault 1972: 191). Social science science disciplines, in different ways, order the status of those who can validate knowledge through inquiry. Foucault designates a discourse's function of dispersing subjects and objects as its 'enunciative modality' (Foucault 1972: 50). This modality encompasses roles and statuses and demarcated subject positions. Together they act to structure the space of regulation where the professionalisation of knowledge is instigated.

3. 2. Dividing Practices

Dividing practices are deployed in order to maintain social science order - to separate, categorise, normalise and institutionalise populations. In Madness and Civilization (1973a),

Birth of the Clinic (1975) and Discipline and Punish (1977), Foucault illustrates how 'unproductive' people were identified as political problems with the 'rise of modernity'.

The state divided these people into 'the mad', 'the poor' and 'the delinquent' and subsequently disciplined them in institutions: asylums, hospitals, prisons and schools (Foucault 1977). These exercises of disciplinary power were targeted at the subject and constituted techniques in these institutions. For instance, as we noted earlier, in Discipline and Punish Foucault argues that since the 18th century, prison authorities increasingly employed subtle regulatory methods of examination, training, time-tabling and surveillance of conduct on offenders in which we find a whole 'micro-penality'. Overall, dividing practices are seen as integral to the rationalism of the Enlightenment narratives of liberty, individuality and rights and as fusing with governmental forms of human calculation and audit.

3. 3. Self-Subjectification Practices

The previous modes of classification and dividing practices co-exist. Professions examine, calculate and classify the groups that governments and institutions regulate, discipline and divide. The third mode of self-subjectification is more intangible. These practices designate the ways in which a person turns themselves into social science subjects. Foucault claims that self-subjectification entails the deployment of technologies of the self: 'Techniques that permit individuals to affect, by their own means, a certain number of operations on their own bodies, their own souls, their own selves, modify themselves, and attain a certain state of perfection, happiness, purity, supernatural power' (Foucault, 1982: 10). In Foucault's work self-subjectification practices proliferate in the domain of sexuality because the occupying sciences of medicine, psychology and psychoanalysis obligate subjects to speak about their sexuality. In turn, these sciences characterise sexual identity as esoteric and dangerous (Foucault 1980). Thus, the association of sexual truth with self-subjectification gives 'experts' their power.

Self-subjectification practices inter-relate with classification and dividing practices to construct modern subjects. For instance, subjects are created by human sciences that classify problems, identities and experiences; the systems of power that divide, stratify and institutionalise types of 'elderly' subjects and the technologies of the self that impose upon individuals the reflexive means to problematise themselves. What Foucault seems to be confronting us with is a disturbing vision that our ideas about the depth of human experience are simply social science veneers that exist in an interplay between power and knowledge. Shumway (1989) calls this a 'strategy of exteriority': a strategy that 'does not stem from a claim that the true being plain and visible, but from a rejection of the claim that the true is systematically disguised' (1989: 26). Foucault's analysis of subjectification practices highlight techniques used by administrative powers to problematise subjects and the games of truth employed by those who seek to know them through classification techniques..

3. 4. Subjectivity

3. 4. 1. Three Domains

Foucault juxtaposes his axis of classifying, dividing and self-subjectification practices with one that delineates three domains of subjectivity: the body, the population and the individual. These domains elaborate how modes of subjectivity traverse modern social science relations.

3. 4. 2. The Body

The 'body' is a subject of discursive and political inscription. In Discipline and Punish Foucault (1977) claims that penal practices produce the 'soul' of the offender by disciplining the body and corporealising prison spaces. In prisons, the body's most essentialist needs - food, space, exercise, sleep, privacy, light and heat - become the materials upon which schedules, curfews, time-tables and micro-punishments are enacted. The body discipline developed in prisons has parallels throughout the broader disciplinary society. Indeed, the success of modernity's domination over efficient bodies in industry, docile bodies in prisons, patient bodies in clinical research and regimented bodies in schools and residential centres attest to Foucault's thesis that the human body is a highly adaptable terminus for the circulation of power relations.

It would be a mistake to believe Foucault is alone in arguing that the rule of the body is fundamental to modern politico-economical and professional regimes of power. Critiques of the domination of the body were the mainstay of Frankfurt theorists such as Adorno and Horkheimer (1944) long before Foucault's work. As he noted of their work: 'As far as I'm concerned, I think that the Frankfurt School set problems that are still being worked on. Among others, the effects of power that are connected to a rationality that has been historically and geographically defined in the West, starting from the sixteenth century on. The West could never have attained the economic and social science effects that are unique to it without the exercise of that specific form of rationality' (Foucault 1991, 117). Foucault's contribution, however, is to locate the ways in which 'bio-power' and disciplinary techniques construe the body as an object of knowledge. For example, The History of Sexuality depicts the dominion with which 19th century experts constructed a hierarchy of sexualised bodies and fragmented the population into groups of 'normal', 'deviant' and 'perverted'.

While Foucault's definition of the body has inspired numerous debates, the task of refinement and problematization have largely been the province of feminist scholars. Foucault has been criticised for his lack of sensitivity and attention to gender inequality and women's history thereby requiring philosophical revision in order to overcome such limitations (Powell and Biggs, 2000). Feminists have stressed that the body is both a site of regulation, where gendered identities are maintained and a site of resistance, where they are undone and challenged. McNay (1993) agrees with Foucault that 'sexuality is produced in the body in such a manner as to facilitate the regulation of social science relations' (1993, 32). However, contra-Foucault, she notes that not all aspects of sexuality, corporeality and desire are products of power relations. Passionate social science relationships based on friendship do not necessarily facilitate intense forms of surveillance and regulation. 'Friends' can transform disciplinary spaces and engage in disrupting practices. Similarly, Butler (1990, 140-141) claims that ritualised body performances that bind women to fictional feminine identities can also become deconstructive performances that expose the arbitrariness of identities.

3. 4. 3. The Population

Foucault outlines how the modern state enhanced its power by intervening in the very life of the 'bio-politics of the population' (1980, 139). In this process power has two poles. First, a pole of transformation and second, the human body as an object of control and manipulation. The first revolves around the notion of 'scientific categorisation': for example, 'species' and 'population'.

It is these categories that become object of systematic and sustained political intervention. The other pole of is not 'human species' but the human body: not in its biological sense, but as an object of control and manipulation. Collectively, Foucault calls these procedures "technologies" which centre around the 'objectification' of the body. The overall aim is to forge: 'a docile body that may be subjected, used, transformed and improved' (1977, 198).

Beginning with the inception of modernity, Western administrators rationalised their management of social science problems with technically efficient means of population control: statistics, police, health regulations and centralised welfare. Such means constituted governmentality: an assemblage of ruling practices, knowledge authorities and moral imperatives that converged on the population in order to extend the reach of the state. The controversial point is that governmentality is more complex than state power. Custodial institutions and health programmes configured individuals into sub-strata of the population. For example, pension policies explicate 'the elderly' as a particular group of people, while statistics elaborate their status as a demographic entity (an 'ageing population'). Thus, the disciplinary formation of subjects as a population makes possible the government of subjectification.

3. 4. 4. The Individual

If disciplinary gaze is a first step, then 'interiorization' of that gaze is the second. Foucault's social science contructivism, consisting of classification and dividing practices, technologies of the self and political grids of bodies and populations has fuelled his critics claims that he deprives human subjectivity of agency (Smart 1983). Minson claims that Foucault burdens the body with being true subject of history and 'the flickering counterpart to the dull individual of sociology' (1985, 93).

Foucault emphasises two important aspects of individual agency that counteract his critics. First, the victims of modernity's disciplinary matrix - the prisoners, patients, and children - can subvert the regulatory forms of knowledge and subjectivity imposed upon them. Second, while power/knowledge relations construct governable individual subjects, such subjects are not fixed to their conditions of ruling and do become agents of resistance to them (Foucault 1977, 1991). To investigate the 'how' of power then requires: 'taking the forms of resistance against different forms of power as a starting point…it consists of using this resistance as a chemical catalyst so as to bring to light power relations, locate their position, find out their point of application and the methods used. Rather than analyzing power relations from the point of view of its internal rationality, it consists of analyzing power relations through the antagonism of strategies' (1982: 211). Power is exercised on free subjects and guides, but does not necessarily determine, conduct.

In this formulation the individual is not the traditional subject caught in a war between domination and liberation. Rather, the individual is the personal space where both active and passive aspects of human agency and identity surface in the context of material practices. Identity may be imposed through the surveillance of a subject population. This surveillance produces both discipline (that is, conformity to the norm), and the disciplines (regulated fields of knowledge and expertise). Disciplinary surveillance involves first individualizing each member of the population to facilitate the collation of observations across the population.

From these observations, statistical norms are produced relating to a multitude of characteristics. These norms are then applied back to the subjected individuals who are

categorized, evaluated and acted upon according to their relation to the produced norm. Foucault's work focused on the 'history of the present' and 'power/knowledge' synthesis and how the subject was formed (Foucault, 1977 and 1978). Here Foucault's work is on the 'microphysics of power' and the interplay of power relations, dividing practices and tactics in particular contexts (Foucault, 1977): the 'doctor' and 'patient'; 'prison officer' and 'prisoner'; 'teacher' and 'student' and 'care manager' and 'older consumer'.

4. DISCUSSION

> 'It may be that the problem about the self does not have to do with discovering what it is, but maybe has to do with discovering that the self is nothing more than a correlate of technology built into our history' (Foucault 1993, 222).

Foucault's formulation presumes the notion that individual lives are never quite complete and finished – that in order to function social sciencely individuals must somehow work on themselves to *turn* themselves into subjects. The notion of 'technologies' offers the opportunity for a particular analysis of the sites and methods whereby certain effects on the subject are brought about.

Objectifying technologies of control are, for example, those invented in conformity with the facets of self-understanding provided by criminality, sexuality, medicine and psychiatry investigated by Foucault. These are deployed within concrete institutional settings whose architecture testifies to the 'truth' of the objects they contain. Thus, the possibilities of self-experience on the part of the subject are in itself affected by the presence of someone who has the authority to decide that they are 'truly' ill such as a 'doctor' of medicine (Powell and Biggs, 2000). 'Subjectifying' technologies of self-control are those through which individuals: 'effect by their own means or with the help of others a certain number of operations on their own bodies and souls, thoughts, conduct and way of being, so as to transform themselves in order to attain a certain state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection or immortality' (Foucault 1988, 18).

The important issues that Foucault raises via a questioning of the centrality of the subject are associated to 'truthful' formulations of the task or the problem that certain domains of experience and activity pose for individuals themselves. The boundaries of self-experience change with every acquisition, on the part of individuals, of a possibility, or a right, or an obligation, to state a certain 'truth' about themselves. For example, bio-technology in popular social science can tell a 'truth' of selling a dream of unspoken desire of 'not growing old' to people. However, it is the self-experience of subjects that can refute, deny and accept the 'truth' claims of bio-technology. In the case of lifestyles in popular social science, the active adoption of particular consumer practices, such as uses of bio-technology contributes to a narrative that is compensatory in its construction of self (Biggs and Powell, 2001). Thus, the recourse to the notion of technologies of self is capable of accommodating the complexity of the 'subject'.

Although Foucault maintained the distinction between the technologies of power/domination and the technologies of self, these should not be regarded as acting in opposition to or in isolation to one another. Indeed, Foucault frequently spoke of the importance of considering the contingency of both in their interaction and interdependence,

by identifying specific examples: 'the point where the technologies of domination of individuals over one another have recourse to processes by which the individual acts upon himself and, conversely, the points where the technologies of the self are integrated into structures of coercion' (Foucault 1993, 203). The distinction should therefore be considered as a heuristic device and not the portrayal of two conflicting sets of interests. Overall, we should see Foucault's entire works as providing ways of understanding social science relations that require on our part active interpretation, not passive regurgitation.

To take one modern example of how we might think with, alongside (and against perhaps?) Foucault, take the question: how is modern bio-ethics rooted in a specific configuration of subjectivity? The body social sciencely represents the best hiding place, a hiding place of internal illnesses that remains inconspicuous until the advent of 'expert' intervention. In other words, what are the effects of this problematization given its conditions of possibility? Subjective relations to the self will be affected to the extent that social science life confronts individuals with the proposition that this subjective truth – the truth of their relation to themselves and to others – may be revealed by 'bodies', which are also object of manipulation, transformation, desire and hope. In this way we might anticipate through 'social science' (Powell, 2012) the relations between illnesses, new technologies, power, the body and desire. While confronting an illness this involves a deliberate practice of self-transformation and such tranformativity must pass through learning about the self from the truth told by personal narratives within popular social science. How is this social science and the body itself, however, interacting with and being changed by advances in bio-medical technology and the power of huge pharmaceutical companies?

Foucault is often seen as a structuralist, along with those such as Barthes, Althusser and Levi-Strauss. In reply to questions which sought to make such parallels, e was consistent: 'I am obliged to repeat it continually. I have never used any of the concept which can be considered characteristic of structuralism' (1989, 990). Perhaps the best way to view this is by examining his idea of historical 'events'. He refuses to see events as symptomatic of deeper social science structures and focuses upon what seems to be marginal as indicative of relations of power. Events thereby differ in their capacity to produce effects. The following quote helps us see how this can be applied to social science analysis: 'The problem is at once to distinguish among events, to differentiate the networks and levels to which they belong, and to reconstitute the lines along which they are connected and engender one another. From this follows a refusal of analyses couched in terms of the symbolic field or the domain of signifying structures, and a recourse to analyses in terms of the genealogy of relations of force, strategic development, and tactics. Here I believe one's point of reference should not be to the great model of language (langue) and signs, but to that of war and battle" (Foucault 1980, 114).

What about those questions concerned with whose social science, whose identity and how is this produced? These are the questions that pre-occupied Foucault. His refusal to see power as a property of say, a particular class, immediately leaves a question over his politics in terms of the idea of struggle? As he said: 'I label political everything that has to do with class struggle, and social science everything that derives from and is a consequence of the class struggle, expressed in human relationships and in institutions' (1989, 104).

This leaves us with a question: against whom do we struggle if they are not the owners of power? Who creates social sciences and how might alternative forms find public expression and does this change anything? These questions immediately bring forth issues

concerning the relationship between Foucault and Marxist theory. Class structure, race and gender are key determinants of the position of individuals in capitalist society. It is difficult for 'techniques of resistance' to be mobilised when particular groups are de-commodified and marginalized and lose their social science worth and voice (Biggs and Powell, 2001). At the same time Foucault sees subjectivity not as a fabricated part of a deeper reality waiting to be uncovered, but an aspect of the reality systematically formulated by resistances and discourses. He sidesteps the binary relationship set up by Marxist theory between true and false realities, ways of knowing and political consciousness (Foucault 1980) and seeks to loosen knowledge, ideas and subject positions from categories of social science totality: for example, social science formation, mode of production, economy and society.

Social science is rearticulated in Foucault's thought to historical and societal features ignored in those models of social science reality that 'read off' social science according to deeper structures . Foucault looks to areas such as medicine, sexuality, welfare, selfhood and the law, and to marginalised social science groups, local politics and the micro-levels of social science. In these studies he found social science, discursive and historical substrata in which relations of domination were apparent that were not simply reducible to modes of economic exploitation. The idea of 'governing' then captures the ways in which the 'possible field of action of others' (Foucault 1982a: 221) are structured. Yet in inheriting this approach authors have produced panoptic visions in which resistance is subsumed within impersonal forces. This results from over-looking two main aspects in Foucault's work. First, in terms of his own question, what are the 'limits of appropriation' of discourse'? Without this in place, all does appear quiet on the battleground. Second, and relatedly, the agonism that exists between power and freedom (May 1999). This suggests that where there is power, there is also resistance; power thus presupposes a free subject. If there is no choice in actions, there is no power. A slave, therefore, is not in a power relationship, but one of physical constraint (Foucault 1982).

Foucault notes three types of struggle: those against domination; those against exploitation and those against subjection and submission. The latter, whilst rising in importance in the contemporary era, do not do so to the exclusion of domination and exploitation as many of his followers have appeared to suggest. To understand why particular actors enjoy more power than others, as opposed to seeing power as a 'machine in which everyone is caught' (Foucault 1980: 156), an account of resistance is needed. Because Foucault views freedom as part of the exercise of power, he does not provide for such an account. Yet, in answer to a question concerning 'power as evil', he spoke of the need to resist domination in everyday life: 'The problem is rather to know how you are to avoid these practices - where power cannot play and where it is not evil in itself' (Foucault 1991b: 18).

What makes Foucault's overall philosophical work inspiring, is how he animates and locates problems of knowledge as 'pieces' of the larger contest between modernity and its subjects. By downplaying the individual subject, Foucault shows how 'bodies' and 'populations' are sites were 'human beings are made subjects' by 'power/knowledge' practices (Smart, 1983, 44). To look for a possible form of trangression in order to change social science relation, we must examine within contemporary arrangements the possibility for it to be 'otherwise'. We thus find, in Foucault's later work, an insistence upon the reversibility of discourses through 'resistance'. Subjects of power are also 'agents' who can strategically mobilise disjunctures in discourses and in so doing, open up the world of possibility in a world that seeks order through discipline and surveillance.

5. CONCLUSIONS

In his essay on Kant's 'What is Enlightenment (*Was ist Aufklärung?)*? Foucault writes of his work as being an 'historical ontology of ourselves' through a critique of what we do, say and think. He is clear throughout the essay concerning what this form of critique is not: neither a theory, doctrine, or body of knowledge that accumulates over time. Instead, it is an attitude, 'an ethos, a philosophical life in which the critique of what we are is at one and the same time the historical analysis of the limits that are imposed on us and an experiment with the possibility of going beyond them' (Foucault 1984: 50). What is the motivation for this work? 'How can the growth of capabilities be disconnected from the intensification of power relations?' (1984: 48).

There is no 'gesture of rejection' in this ethos. It moves beyond the 'Outside-inside alternative' in the name of a critique that 'consists of analyzing and reflecting upon limits' (Foucault 1984: 45). The purpose being 'to transform the critique conducted in the form of necessary limitation into a practical critique that takes the form of a possible transgression' (1984: 45). Overall, it is genealogical in form: 'it will not deduce from the form of what we are what it is impossible for us to do and to know; but it will separate out, from the contingency that has made us what we are, the possibility of no longer being, doing, or thinking what we are, do, or think' (1984: 46). The ideal lies in the possibility of setting oneself free. To examine the internal modes of the ordering of truth, but not in the name of a truth that lies beyond it, is seen to open up possibilities for its transgression.

Despite criticisms that his work lacked a normative dimension (Fraser 1989), the orientation for Foucault's approach is clear. The issue translates into one of how one-sided states of domination can be avoided in order to promote a two-sided relation of dialogue. The journey for these investigations being from how we are constituted as objects of knowledge, to how we are constituted as subjects of power/knowledge. What we can take from Foucault is the insight that critical approaches to social science analysis cannot practice on the presupposition that there is an essence to humanity.

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