**Michel Foucault's Analytic of Power Relations:
A Defence**

By

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Abstract

Michel Foucault suggests that it is more useful and instructive to investigate power via an analytic rather a theory. The governmentality school presents a leading interpretation of Foucault's work without drawing upon the analytic of power, I suggest that a thorough consideration of the analytic of power will reveal an alternative Foucault that is very useful for sociology. Foucault's concept of 'analytic' is developed through a contrast with Louis Althusser's concept of 'Theory'. It thus shown that an analytic is significantly different than a theory. The analytic of power is reconstructed in light of this difference. Finally, it is shown that many critiques of Foucault have their origin through confusing an analytic for a theory.

Acknowledgements

A project of this size is not the labour of a single person, but rather necessarily involves many. Although my name appears on the title page, I cannot claim to have developed this thesis in isolation. As such, it is necessary that the contributions of many people (and pets!) be recognized. First, the contribution of my partner, Blythe Helman, has perhaps been greatest. Of equal importance has been my dedicated team of 'research assistants', our two cats, Calvin and Igge, and our dog, Mickey. Second, my peers and fellow students have provided a vibrant intellectual community in which to study. Thus, I wish to thank Todd Culbert, Danny Braun, Paul Datta, Mike Graydon, Gerald Morton, Serena Petrella, and Robyn Smith. Third, the faculty have provided tremendous moral and intellectual support, especially Bruce Curtis, Aaron Doyle, Alan Hunt, Rianne Mahon, Pat O'Malley, Trevor Purvis, and William Walters. Most influential among these has been my Watcher, Phillip Thurtle. Finally, I would like to thank all those who have participated in the Social Theory and Critical Discourses working group meetings, seminars, and mini-conferences over the past year and a half. Many of the ideas presented in this thesis developed through our discussions.

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Introduction

Foucault is an impressive theoretician who builds complex analytic structures with rare facility and acuity. His theorizing is typically not for its own sake but in response to the demands of a specific historical or critical project. Moreover, the theories devised are not intended as permanent structures, enduring in virtue of their universal truth. They are temporary scaffoldings, erected for a specific purpose, that Foucault is happy to abandon to whomever might find them useful, once he has finished his job (Gutting 1994: 16).

The point has already been made that Foucault sees the question of power as central to his later writings. Yet there is in Foucault's writings no theory of power, not even a sketch of such a theory. [...] Whatever remarks Foucault offers on the question of power are either negative remarks dispelling some of the usual perspectives on power relations or general protocols for the analysis of power relations. Some of these general protocols follow directly from the negative remarks, some recommend a particular perspective in preference to other perspectives on power and the rest consist of paradigmatic examples of how and how not to approach the question of power. They lack the coherence and formalization normally expected of theory; he himself offers them not as a theory of power but as a tool-kit for the analysis of power relations – what he terms an 'analytic of relations of power' (Cousins and Hussain 1984: 225).

In the first passage, Gutting argues strongly that Foucault is a highly competent theoretician: he develops theories with great ease and these theories are remarkably perceptive and useful. Gutting goes on to give the examples of a 'theory of language' and of a 'theory of power' that can be found in Foucault's work. In the second passage, Cousins and Hussain argue the opposite: there is no theory of power to be found in Foucault's work for the simple reason that Foucault never attempted to write one. Instead, there are a series of more or less coherent 'perspectives', 'general protocols', and 'paradigmatic examples' on the 'question of power' that amount to, at the best, an 'analytic of power relations'. How can these two views be reconciled? Is one more correct than the other? Does it even matter if Foucault is viewed as having a 'theory of power' or an 'analytic of relations of power'? Is the distinction merely academic fodder

for graduate student theses? After all, the same object is under description – power – and commentators draw upon the same passages to discuss this object.

Here I attempt to argue two things: first, it does matter whether one speaks of a ‘theory’ or an ‘analytic’ and second, a fairly coherent and comprehensive ‘analytic of power relations’ can be distilled from Foucault’s writings. It is important to recognize the distinction between a ‘theory of power’ and an ‘analytic of power’ not only because Foucault rejects the idea of a ‘theory of power’, but also because he claims to have an ‘analytic of power’.

This thesis is therefore structured in the following way: the first chapter inquires into the dominant interpretation of Foucault’s work in the English language – the so-called ‘governmentality school’. This first chapter overviews Foucault’s own writings on ‘governmentality’ (interestingly all of which are lectures), overviews the interpretation and contribution of the governmentality school itself, and then presents a critique of the governmentality school. The second chapter presents a theoretical exposition of the differences between a ‘theory’ and an ‘analytic’. The first part of the chapter is devoted to explicating Louis Althusser’s concept of ‘Theory’. Althusser, a contemporary and teacher of Foucault’s, developed his concept of ‘Theory’ around the same time that Foucault developed his concept of ‘analytic’. Althusser’s concept is explicated so as to demonstrate that the claims made by a theory are different in an important way from the claims made by an analytic. The remainder of this chapter develops the ‘analytic of power relations’ from Foucault’s diverse, divergent, and occasionally contradictory claims about power. The third chapter observes that almost all of Foucault’s harshest critics use the term *theory* while almost all of Foucault’s supporters use the term *analytic*.

This chapter attempts to show, in light of the previous chapter, that understanding power as either an analytic or as a theory has important consequences: those who identify Foucault as having a *theory* of power usually reject it as incoherent and dangerous, while those who identify an *analytic* of power in Foucault usually support it for opening up new avenues of social and political research. There is, however, one important exception: Mark Neocleous, although identifying a *theory* of power, nonetheless attempts to provide an ‘immanent critique’ of Foucault so as to use Foucault’s insights to develop a thoroughly Marxist theory of the state. Neocleous’ critique of Foucault is developed at length in order to reconcile his useful comments with Foucault’s analytic of power.

A Missing Link?

This project began at more or less the same time that Foucault’s lectures from 1975-6, ‘*Society Must be Defended*’, were published in English translation. Previously, two of the lectures from this series had been published as, reasonably enough, “Two Lectures”. In their form as “Two Lectures”, Foucault’s work on power seemed at the same time very exciting and very confusing. On the one hand, his emphasis on *war* and *struggle* in these two lectures appeared to me as extremely timely: at the time of the publication of ‘*Society Must be Defended*’, the United States had invaded Iraq for a second time, much of the world was debating the relationship among surveillance, freedom, security and terrorism, and a series of meetings of various global and regional organizations seeking the destruction of economic barriers to trade had been variously and violently challenged by anti-globalization activists. It was easy to see conflict, struggle and war everywhere – especially to the extent that these struggles were

intelligible as social and political activism of various sorts. But, on the other hand, was it not insane, if not even reductionist, to conceive of social, political and economic struggle as *war*?

I did not find the answer to the question of war and power in '*Society Must be Defended*', but I did find the 'missing link' that represented a shift in orientation between Foucault's earlier work on the history of ideas and his later work on power and ethics (Pasquino 1993; Marks 2000: 127-8; Murray 2004: 256). Delivered between the publication of *Discipline and Punish* and *History of Sexuality: An Introduction*, '*Society Must be Defended*' marked a fertile period that inaugurated the transition from war to agonism, from domination to governmentality, from discipline to biopower in Foucault's work and thought. These lectures, thus, filled in a gap between the 'microphysics of power' in *Discipline and Punish* and the 'agonism' of "The Subject and Power". The relationship between discipline and biopower became clearer. Although clearly of great importance, these lectures have been unfortunately overlooked between the time of their delivery and their recent publication. By closely looking at these lectures, it is possible to decipher what is meant by an 'analytic of power relations'.

'Society Must be Defended'

Although overlooked, the importance of these lectures is quickly being realized. Since Pasquino's (1993) article on these lectures – when they were still unknown – at least four excellent commentaries and interpretations of varying length and detail have been published. Although each interpretation indicates the importance of the others, they are all, nonetheless, significantly different. This difference in understanding should not

be attributed to a lack of clarity on the part of Foucault, but rather of the complexity and richness of these lectures. Each of these commentaries and interpretations has significantly influenced my understanding and reading of Foucault's 'analytic of power', but, like them, I wish to recognize their importance while setting my interpretation aside from theirs.

Ann Stoler (1995) reads the lectures for their contributions to the study of the history of racism. Of particular interest to her are those lectures that "directly address the discursive conditions for the emergence of state racism and its specific technologies" (Stoler 1995: 62). More specifically, she is interested in "what the lectures say about the discursive production of unsuitable participants in the body politic, and how the maintenance of such internal exclusions were codified as necessary and noble pursuits to ensure the well-being and very survival of the social body by a protective state" (*ibid*). She then applies Foucault's analysis of the racist discourses internal to European states to understand racist discourses in colonies.

In her reading of the lectures, she emphasizes how war functions as a grid of intelligibility of relations of power and gives form to the emergence of racist discourses during the process of European state formation. As states were increasingly becoming centralized and coming to dominate the means of waging war, a discourse of race and race war developed within each of the states that divided them internally. Stoler identifies this contribution of Foucault's as unique in the study of the history of racism: "It [racism] is internal to the biopolitical state, woven into the weft of the social body, threaded through its fabric" (1995: 69). This internal division is key to understanding

Foucault's later comments on 'race war' internal to the social body and his conception of the social in irreconcilably binary terms.

John Marks (2000: 129) reads the lectures as an auto-critique of genealogy: the key question of these lectures is how "real controversy and disagreement can only be produced when discourses are produced by the same or similar rules and focus upon the same or similar objects". Genealogy shows that discourses are formed historically and contain the memory of disagreement; these lectures apply this insight discovered by genealogy to the concept of genealogy itself. The lectures then become a genealogy of genealogy. The central element in this genealogy of genealogy is the concept of 'race war'. For Foucault, a race is not a biological entity, but rather a category that separates two unrelated elements. Race war is a "discourse which depends upon the notion that a 'binary structure' traverses society: there are always two classes, two races" (Marks 2000: 130). Race war emerges as a discourse that resists both the ritual worship of sovereignty and the ahistorical claims of social contract theories. But race war is not merely a representational structure of power; it also demonstrates that genealogy "itself is intimately linked with racism" (Marks 2000: 133).

Marks understands the lectures as an attempt on Foucault's part to make sense of the historical paradox that saw, on the one hand, the concentration of the institutions and mechanisms of violence into a central state and, on the other hand, the simultaneous birth of a discourse claimed a secret, hidden race war at the core of the social body (Marks 2000: 135). Foucault also attempts to demonstrate how the race war gets transcribed into racism: first, as a 'historico-biological' theory which justified European colonization on the model of European nationalisms and second as 'class struggle' which feeds a 'state

racism' that seeks to combat "its own tendency towards degeneration" (*ibid*). The second transcription reveals how "modern racism is not the product of a mentality or an ideology, but that it is linked to specific technology of power" (Marks 2000: 141). '*Society Must be Defended*' is thus not only a genealogy of genealogy, but also an important critique of contemporary biopolitics.

Stuart Elden (2002) reads the lectures as proposing a complex relation between the war of races, the constitution of the state, and the politics of calculation. Unlike Stoler, whose interpretation he draws upon, Elden's "emphasis is on the war of races that precedes modern racism, and, in particular, how the war can be seen as part of the constitution of the state" (2002: 130). Without explicitly stating it, one gets the impression that Elden feels these lectures radically change the common and received interpretations of Foucault – especially those that displace the role of the state, such as governmentality.¹ Additionally, Elden seeks to illuminate resonances between Foucault's earlier works, especially *The Order of Things*, and the lectures, essentially "what we have here [...] is a politicizing of the argument of *The Order of Things*" (2002: 138). Elden sees these lectures as remaining under the influence of Martin Heidegger, but in a less visible way.² Central to his interpretation is the relationship between race and biopower, a relationship that has gone mostly unnoticed in the secondary literature. Racism, like biopower, premises a "division or incision between those who must live and those who must die" (Elden 2002: 147). Modern racism takes on features similar to war: "to

¹ Interestingly, Elden studied with Mark Neocleous at Brunel University.

² See Elden (2001) *Mapping the Present: Heidegger, Foucault, and the Project of a Spatial History* for more on the relationship between Heidegger and Foucault.

survive, to live, one must be prepared to massacre one's enemies, a relation of war" (Elden 2002: 148). We thus see the meaning of 'society must be defended':

The death of the other does not just make me safer personally, but the death of the other, of the bad, inferior race or the degenerate or abnormal, makes life in general healthier and purer. [...] But what is important in the shift at the end of the nineteenth century is that war is no longer simply a way of securing one race by eliminating the other but of regenerating that race (*ibid*).

The emphasis upon race allows for 'constitution' (as in the 'binary constitution of society') to be brought out in its full importance. Constitution carries many meanings – legal, political, biological and medical – that need to be kept in mind. Drawing out the importance of constitution indicates the relationship of Foucault's seemingly unrelated studies: sexuality, punishment, war, race, the clinic, madness, and abnormality. Elden's important addition to this understanding is the relationship between biopolitics, population, and race through a matrix of calculation, "Calculation is, therefore, key to the *constitution* of the modern state" (Elden 2002: 151).

Stuart Murray (2004: 248) identifies in '*Society Must be Defended*' a "quest for a theory of power", but he finds the mobilization of historicism and myth, Foucault's attempt to demonstrate how 'truth can function as a weapon', more compelling. Particularly interesting to Murray is how certain writers can mobilize "a 'race' of people through an appeal to stories which are, strictly speaking, false" (2004: 250). He thus draws a connection between 'counter-history' and 'myth':

The effect of such discourse is significantly mythic; its very much visceral, a lifeblood; it animates bodies, courses through the veins of those who revolt; it is that which ties them to the past, their ancestors, gives them courage to revolt, to refuse to be governed in *that way*, to forge their own destiny (Murray 2004: 251).

Thus, "in these lectures, *myth* works as a singularizing, irrational, illogical animus that binds together local struggles, past wrongs, and future hopes" (*ibid*). Murray thus

proposes an interesting way to relate these lectures and Foucault's political journalism that followed a year or two later. It is interesting and worthwhile to compare, as does Murray, the concept of myth in '*Society Must be Defended*' with articles such as "Is It Useless to Revolt?" where Foucault attempts to understand a contemporary, revolutionary, and counter-historical discourse manifesting itself in the Iranian Revolution. Murray indicates a way to make sense of Foucault's journalism that has, at times, appeared baffling and irresponsible. This element of the mythic "holds a certain place of honor in Foucault's work" (Murray 2004: 253).

In addition to tying the concept of myth from '*Society Must be Defended*' to Foucault's political journalism, Murray wonders to what extent – citing Foucault's frequent comments about writing history as fiction – Foucault's own discourse could itself present a 'historico-political counter-history'. In other words, is there an 'ethics of myth' in Foucault's work? Indicating a new 'triangle' in Foucault's work, Murray brings revolt, myth, and critique together.

In effect, if there is an ethics of myth, it is in myth's potential to open up something new; it is as *mytho-poesis*, a creative force that allows for something to be created out of old forms, opening a world, perhaps without the utter destruction or foreclosure of the past and of other possible worlds (Murray 2004: 257)

Although Murray does not make the claim, one wonders if this is the 'normative' grounding of Foucault's work that has hitherto remained unnoticed by Habermas in his famous critique? Murray does not make this claim, but one hopes that Murray will continue this line of thought in the future through, perhaps, a comparative study of Georges Sorel and Michel Foucault's respective concepts of myth that he mentions in passing in a footnote (2004: 261n12). Reactivating a mythopoeic element in critical

theory is the key, according to Murray, to combating contemporary biopolitical discourses of the war on terror.

We thus have four interpretations of '*Society Must be Defended*' and each of them differ in important ways. Stoler identifies the contribution that Foucault makes to the study of the history of racism, Marks emphasizes the neglected role of race in Foucault's genealogy of genealogy, Elden points to the relationship among legal, political, biological and medical senses of the concept of constitution, and Murray claims to find a critical theory based in the power of myth. None of them emphasized the analytic of power: it is this dimension of '*Society Must de Defended*' that I wish to develop.

These very different understandings of '*Society Must be Defended*' point to its richness and untapped potential in understanding Foucault's larger body of work. I do not mean to suggest that these lectures comprise a secret key to unlocking the meaning of previously obscure and ambiguous passages, but I do suggest that these lectures provide missing context for his later works and point to the existence of a conceptual apparatus that never made it into his more official publications.

I

The Final Foucault?

Foucault's Triangle and the Failure of Governmentality

Michel Foucault's work has been used productively and usefully in a diverse array of disciplines drawing upon a diverse array of resources developed by Foucault. There is, however, a single dominant interpretation or use of Foucault: the so-called 'governmentality school' or the 'anglo-Foucaultian' interpretation. Among the most notable in this approach to Foucault are Nikolas Rose, Peter Miller, Thomas Osborne, Pat O'Malley and Colin Gordon. Critiques of governmentality have been both friendly (O'Malley *et al* 1997; Curtis 1995; Pearce and Tombs 1998) and hostile (Lemke 2002). There has not been, to the best of my knowledge, a thorough evaluation of the governmentality school that seeks to displace its position as the dominant interpretation of Foucault's contribution to power. This chapter seeks to provide a charitable account and critique of the governmentality school, for despite its theoretical shortcomings, it has nonetheless produced much valuable and important research. The aim therefore is to indicate that despite its successes, governmentality could benefit from a more thorough consideration of Foucault's 'analytic of power relations', to be developed in the following chapter. Governmentality has been successful at investigating power at the macro-level (i.e., 'government'), but has been far less successful at investigating power at the micro-level. An analytics of power at the local level would appropriately supplement governmentality.

Although the governmentality school is one of the most dominant approaches to Foucault's work, Foucault himself never published any books or essays on the topic. He did, however, give a number of lectures, at both the Collège de France and in the United States that explored the themes of governmentality. Among the more notable of these works are the lectures "Governmentality" (a lecture from the Collège de France from the 1978 lectures titled "Security, territory, population") and "*Omnes et Singulatim: Towards a Critique of 'Political Reason'*" (delivered at Stanford University on October 10 and 16, 1979). The remainder of Foucault's lectures on governmentality remain, as of yet, unpublished in English.

It is difficult to separate Foucault's limited and scattered writings on governmentality from their appropriation by the governmentality school because some, such as Colin Gordon, were present at the lectures where Foucault presented his concept of governmentality, thus giving them a degree of inside information that is not yet widely available. Nonetheless, such an exercise is worth the effort in that it separates the conceptual apparatus developed by Foucault from its application by others called the governmentality school. The first section presents an overview and interpretation of, on the one hand, Foucault's limited lectures on governmentality, and, on the other hand, the programmatic texts or introductions to governmentality by secondary writers. The second section explores Nikolas Rose's version of governmentality. The third section presents a number of critiques of governmentality and the governmentality school, both friendly and hostile. The final section asks the question, "Is governmentality the 'final Foucault'?"

Foucault on Governmentality

Foucault coined the awkward term 'governmentality' to refer to a new development in modernity: increasing centralization of political power and increasing degrees of knowledge about individuals. Thus, a political power that knows 'all and each' ('omnes et singulatim'), of populations and of individuals. Political modernity, in Foucault's view, is characterized by the dual tendency of totalization and individualization. 'Governmentality' is a 'mentality of government', "a way or system of thinking about the nature of the practice of government (who can govern; what governing is; what or who is governed), capable of making some form of that activity thinkable and practicable both to its practitioners and to those upon whom it is addressed" (Gordon 1991: 3). By focusing upon governmentality, rather than the traditional domains of political theory, Foucault believed that he could both avoid developing a monolithic theory of the state and approach questions of government in their historical specificity.

State theory attempts to deduce the modern activities of government from essential properties and propensities of the state, in particular its supposed propensity to grow and to swallow up or colonize everything outside itself. Foucault holds that the state has no such inherent propensities; more generally, the state has no essence. The nature of the institution of the state is, Foucault thinks, a function of changes in practices of government, rather than the converse (Gordon 1991: 4)

Additionally, the transition from the 'microphysics of power' developed in *Discipline and Punish* to governmentality was an attempt to address criticisms that he had no way of connecting small individual actions to larger social structures, for instance, individuals to economic classes. Governmentality became an attempt to articulate the mirroring of totalizing and individualizing moments of government as a rational and coherent whole.

The same style of analysis, he argued, that had been used to study techniques and practices addressed to individual human subjects within particular, local institutions could also be addressed to techniques and practices for governing

populations of subjects at the level of a political sovereignty over an entire society (*ibid*).

Governmentality, therefore, is this point of “contact between the technologies of domination of others and those of the self” (Foucault 1988a: 18). The project of the analysis of governmentality seeks to explain the “coexistence in political structures of large destructive mechanisms and institutions oriented toward the care of individual life” (Foucault 1988b: 147).¹ This coexistence of violence and life in the institution of the state, for instance, departments of war and departments of health, or alternatively the collection of taxes on tobacco as a major source of revenue and health projects to reduce the rate of smoking, is “one of the central antinomies of our political reason” (*ibid*).

Mitchell Dean provides an important clarification in the analysis of governmentality. He distinguishes between political rationality which is the “relatively systematic, explicit, discursive, problematisation and codification of the art or practice of government, as a way of rendering the objects of government in a language that makes them governable” from the techniques of government which “are all the means, mechanisms, and specific instruments which make possible all forms of administration, power, and rule” (Dean 1994: 187). This distinction is more useful than Gordon’s (1991: 3) apparent conflation of rationality, art, and technique of government: “A rationality of government will thus mean a way or system of thinking about the nature of the practice of government (who can govern, what governing is; what or who is governed), capable of making some form of that activity thinkable and practicable both to its practioners and to those upon whom it is practiced”. Dean’s distinction is useful as it resists an idealist

¹ The original text has the word “or” in the place of “of”, but that seems to be a typographical error. The word “or” makes little sense in this context and has therefore been changed to “of”.

tendency in much of the governmentality literature to collapse material practices into political rationalities (i.e., thoughts about practices) and therefore erase the distinction between thinking and doing. This idealist tendency is most pronounced in Rose's work. Elsewhere Dean and Hindess (1998: 7) make a similar point, "government is regarded as a complex activity that cannot be viewed as the expression or realisation of political or economic theories".

From Reason of State to Governmentality

Many sociologists have identified the major problem of sociology as the development of the state, modernity and capitalism (Giddens 1971, 1987; Sayer 1991). Thus, as someone making a contribution to social and political inquiry, it is paramount for Foucault to attempt to address this problem. For Foucault, the answer to this problem is to be found in the concept of governmentality.

Foucault suggests that three phases characterize modern political thought. From the Middle Ages until about the sixteenth century there were a series of works devoted to 'advice to the prince'. Around the sixteenth century until the end of the eighteenth century, the theme of 'advice to the prince' was replaced with works on the 'art of government'. The art of government could not be said to belong to the same tradition as advice to the prince, but at the same time it could not be said to belong to political science. The art of government appears as a transitional form between contemporary political science and early modern advice to the prince. In addition to these transitions at the level of political discourse, there were also transitions in the spatial organization of Europe: the system of feudal principalities was rapidly being replaced with a process of

state and nation formation. Meanwhile, there were a series of wars and struggles that were not overtly political, in the sense that they were driven by the prince and his dominance over his principality, but rather were concerned with religious dissent. Thus, there were the dual problems of state centralization on the one hand and a proliferation of religious possibilities on the other. Government, therefore, was rapidly changing both at the 'political' level of states and at the 'individual' level of religious choice. On the one hand the traditional unity of the state and church broke down during the Reformation; on the other hand a system of centralized, competing states began to emerge. This newly developing state system required different techniques of government than the traditional state/church mode of government, hence the increasing importance of government through statistical knowledge. There was a generalized problem of government, "how to be ruled, how strictly, by whom, to what end, by what methods, etc" (Foucault 1991: 88). A series of related discourses developed that concerned themselves with various domains of government: personal conduct (government of oneself), the Catholic and Protestant pastoral (government of souls and lives), pedagogy (government of children), and the prince (government of the state).

Commentators began to see these domains of government as intrinsically related.

Foucault cites a text by La Moth Le Vayer that argues

that there are three fundamental types of government, each of which relates to a particular science or discipline: the art of self-government, connected with morality; the art of properly governing a family, which belongs to economy; and finally the science of ruling the state, which concerns politics (Foucault 1991: 91).

A series is proposed that begins with the individual, extends to the family, and ends with the state. This series proposes an intimate link between self-government and state-government; ethical issues are closely linked with political issues. Thus, "in the art of

government the task is to establish a continuity, in both an upwards and a downwards direction” (*ibid*). A ruler must first learn to rule himself, which will in turn ensure the proper ordering of the individual ethical lives of the state. The series of government runs both upwards and downwards.

However, this series as presented remains connected to another, older, political discourse; namely that of Machiavelli’s *The Prince*. Published in 1513, *The Prince* would come to shape political discourse until the conclusion of the eighteenth century.

a single text [*The Prince*] which from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century never ceased to function as the object of explicit or implicit opposition and rejection, and relative to which the whole literature on government established its standpoint [...] It would be interesting to trace the relationship of this text to all those works that succeeded, criticized and rebuked it (Foucault 1991: 88)

Many vehemently disagreed with *The Prince* and therefore attempted to develop an art of government that preserved the government of the state while displacing Machiavelli.

Thus,

they attempted to articulate a kind of rationality that was intrinsic to the art of government without subordinating it to the problematic of the prince and of his relationship to the principality in which he is lord and master (Foucault 1991: 89).

Hindess (1998: 51) correctly argues that this was an attempt to displace the ‘political rationality of the prince’ by a distinct ‘political rationality of government’. This new attempt to construct a political rationality of government in the place of the political rationality of the prince required a parallel transformation in the conceptualization of sovereignty. *The Prince* presented a relationship of sovereignty between the prince and his principality, specifically its territory and the subjects who have the misfortune of living in it; the art of government, through the development of ‘police’, attempts to create a sovereignty over *things*. It is at this point when political economy – the introduction of

the principles of economy into politics – can be said to have come into existence (Foucault 1991: 92).

Territory as such is displaced as the object of government, being replaced with a concern for the ‘right disposition of things’:

One governs things. But what does this mean? I do not think it is a matter of opposing things to men, but rather of showing that what government has to do with is not territory but rather a sort of complex composed of men and things. The things with which in this sense government is to be concerned are in fact men, but men in their relations, their links, their imbrication with those other things which are wealth, resources, means of subsistence, the territory with its specific qualities, climate, irrigation, fertility, etc.’ men in their relation to that other kind of things, customs, habits, ways of acting and thinking, etc; lastly, men in their relation to that other kind of things, accidents and misfortunes such as famine, epidemics, death, etc (Foucault 1991: 93).

Government becomes distinguished from sovereignty and becomes the proper focus of politics. Politics no longer seeks to ensure sovereignty over a territory over time by a prince, but rather seeks to ensure the proper disposition of things. Politics and government begin to share a single identity. Politics and government come to concern the statistical management of populations rather than the dominance over subjects.

Finally, the government of subjects and the government of things is replaced by the government of population and the advent of the modern sciences of statistics and political science. Sovereignty over territory ceases to be the sole concern of government. Instead, population comes to be the final target of government:

the welfare of the population, the improvement of its condition, the increase of its wealth, longevity, health, etc.; and the means that the government uses to attain these ends are themselves all in some sense immanent to the population; it is the population itself on which government will act either directly through large-scale campaigns, or indirectly through techniques that will make possible, without the full awareness of the people, the stimulation of birth rates, the directing of the flow of population into certain regions or activities, etc. The population now represents more the end of government than the power of the sovereign: the population is the subject of needs, of aspirations, but it is also the object in the

hands of the government, aware *vis-à-vis* the government, of what it wants, but ignorant of what is being done to it (Foucault 1991: 100).

But how is this government of the population, this governmentality, conceptualized at the level of Foucault's discourse? To answer that question, I turn to what I have called 'Foucault's Triangle' in reference to that other famous triangle, the Bermuda Triangle, in which hapless explorers and adventurers have a tendency to get lost.

Foucault's Triangle

With the advent of governmentality, comes the necessity of tying the actions of a population to the actions of individuals and also back to the state, or sovereignty. A triad of governmentality-discipline-sovereignty emerges, or as I have called it 'Foucault's Triangle'. "The notion of a government of population renders all the more acute the problem of the foundation of sovereignty [...] and all the more acute equally the necessity for the development of discipline" (Foucault 1991: 102). As such,

we need to see things not in terms of the replacement of a society of sovereignty by a disciplinary society and the subsequent replacement of a disciplinary society by a society of government; in reality one has a triangle, sovereignty-discipline-government, which has as its primary target the population and as its essential mechanism the apparatuses of security (*ibid*).

The study of governmentality, then, is not limited to texts on the art of government or mere political rationality, but rather encompasses the vast triad of sovereignty-discipline-government emerges historically in the context of, on the hand, increasing state centralization and growth and, on the other hand, a spreading religious dissidence. The triangle – what Foucault means by governmentality – targets the population and has the apparatuses of security as its mechanism. Foucault does not define his term "apparatuses of security" in this lecture, but one assumes that 'security' should be taken broadly to

include the prevention of harm that is military, criminal, and health. Thus, an increasingly centralized state comes to protect its population through placing public health, criminal justice and the military at its core. Governmentality, therefore, is intimately tied to the development of the modern state.

Foucault ends his "Governmentality" lecture with a list of three things he means by the term (1991: 102-3). First, governmentality is concerned with "the ensemble of institutions, procedures, analyses and reflections, the calculations and tactics that allow the exercise of this very specific albeit complex form of power" that targets the population through the knowledge of political economy with the mechanisms of security. Second, the tendency in the West over a long period of time to the pre-eminence of government resulted "in the formation of a whole series of specific governmental apparatuses" and "in the development of a whole complex of *saviors*". And third, the process which saw the "state of justice in the Middle Ages" become the "administrative state during fifteenth and sixteenth centuries" which, in turn, increasingly became "governmentalized". Governmentality, as a method of analysis, involves situating projects of governance in their historical context of the growth of the state and its relationship to the development of knowledge. It is at once concerned with discipline and sovereignty as well as with government.

Foucault, finally, attempts to place his comments on governmentality in the context of social and political thought in the late nineteen-seventies. He seeks to separate his mode of inquiry from competing modes: on the one hand there is a vaguely Weberian and critical theory approach which criticizes the rationalization of society through the instrumental rationality of bureaucratic thinking and, on the other hand, are various

Marxist approaches to the state. Foucault wishes to acknowledge the importance of the state and its relationship to government while minimizing any misunderstandings as to his relationship to these other methods of inquiry. In a traditional Foucauldian move, Foucault wishes to invert the formula of the 'statification of society' with the 'governmentalization of the state'. Although the centrality of the state in theoretical discourse must be called into question, one must also recognize that the importance of this 'governmentalization of the state'. Indeed, present circumstances require that the state maintain its governmentalized form:

We live in the era of 'governmentality' first discovered in the eighteenth century. This governmentalization of the state is a singularly paradoxical phenomenon, since if in fact the problems of governmentality and the techniques of government have become the only political issue, the only real space for political struggle and contestation, this is because the governmentalization of the state is at the same time what has permitted the state to survive, and it is possible to suppose that if the state is what it is today, this is so precisely thanks to this governmentality, which is at once internal and external to the state, since it is the tactics of government which make possible the continual definition and redefinition of what is within the competence of the state and what is not, the public versus the private, and so on; thus the state can only be understood in its survival and its limits on the basis of the general tactics of governmentality (Foucault 1991: 103).

It is with this long passage on the importance relationship between governmentality, the state, and the contemporary political landscape that I will now turn to how the concept of governmentality has been taken up in the secondary literature – one that has almost assumed the position of an orthodox interpretation of Foucault.²

² One must not overstate the relationship between governmentality and the state. Foucault later (2000) spent a great deal of time investigating alternative forms of government that are in tension with 'state-governmentality'. He identifies one particular sort that he calls the 'pastoral modality of power', or 'self-governmentality', as 'individualizing power' in contrast to the 'centralized and centralization power' of the state. But, as with over-emphasizing the state, one should not over-emphasize the importance of the pastoral. Thus, he redirects his project into investigating how "this pastorship happened to combine with its opposite, the state" in, for instance, the welfare

The Governmentality School

Using the term “governmentality school” may be misleading, as those accused of membership in the school deny the existence of the school to which they ostensibly belong. Nonetheless, there is an identifiable group of people who publish studies of governmentality referencing each others work in particular journals, most notably *Economy & Society*. The school has an identifiable ‘dean’, Nikolas Rose, and a ceremonial ‘chancellor’, Colin Gordon, who had the privilege of studying with Foucault at the Collège de France while Foucault was developing the concept of governmentality. A number of disciples make regular appearances in the literature, for instance Thomas Osborne, Peter Miller, and Barbara Cruickshank, and there are a number of closely aligned scholars sympathetic to governmentality, but not necessarily adherents of it themselves such as Barry Hindess, Paul Rabinow and Hubert Dreyfus. A strong case can thus be made that there is a more or less unified approach to the concept of governmentality. Because the works of Nikolas Rose are the most frequently cited, the most prominent, and because he has co-authored the most articles with other members of ‘the school’, this section will deal almost exclusively with his works.

The closest there is to a programmatic statement of the governmentality school is to be found in Miller and Rose’s article “Governing Economic Life” (1990). As envisioned by Miller and Rose, Foucault’s concept of ‘government’ provides a ‘potentially fruitful’ way of analyzing “the shifting ambitions and concerns of all those social authorities that have sought to administer the lives of individuals and associations”

state (2000: 300). Thus, “right from the start, the state is both individualizing and totalitarian” (2000: 325).

(1990: 1). To them, governmentality concerns the 'diverse mechanisms' that link the 'actions and judgments' of individuals and organizations to political objectives. In their view, the most prominent means through which this is accomplished is indirectly through 'expertise'³ which they define as "the social authority ascribed to particular agents and forms of judgement on the basis of their claims to possess specialized truths and rare powers" (1990: 2). The key resource for governing in a modern, liberal democratic way is through inciting the "self-regulating capacities of subjects" through "the powers of expertise" (*ibid*). This form of governmental regulation takes on a discursive character: "to analyse the conceptualizations, explanations and calculations that inhabit the governmental field requires an attention to language" (Miller and Rose 1990: 4-5). The analysis of governmentality will privilege artifacts of intellectual production over concrete social and political action:

'Knowing' an object in such a way that it can be governed is more than a purely speculative activity: it requires the invention of procedures of notation, ways of collecting and presenting statistics, the transportation of these to centres where calculations and judgements can be made and so forth. It is through such procedures of inscription that the diverse domains of 'governmentality' are made up, that 'objects' such as the economy, the enterprise, the social field and the family are rendered in a particular conceptual form and made amenable to intervention and regulation (Miller and Rose 1990: 5).

Governmentality is therefore concerned with mentalities and rationalities of government: hence, govern-mentality.

But governmentality is not merely limited to rationalities and mentalities. Miller and Rose (1990: 8) identify the importance of 'technologies of government' which "seek to translate thought into the domain of reality".⁴ Technologies are "the actual

³ Their scare quotes.

⁴ The emphasis on the necessity of translating *thought* into *reality* betrays a certain idealism that is out of tune with Foucault. Comments such as this suggest a relationship

mechanisms through which authorities of various sorts have sought to shape, normalize and instrumentalize the conduct, thought, decisions and aspirations of others in order to achieve the objectives they consider desirable" (*ibid*). Governmentality, according to Miller and Rose, studies how thought transforms reality through the mediation of technology. Most prominent among these technologies is a diverse array of experts who incite individuals into various projects of government. Governmentality thus seeks to reveal the relationship between the political imaginary (govern-mentality) and its realization (the constitution of subjectivity through means of subjectivication not reducible to domination).

There occurs a significant break between Foucault's lectures on governmentality and its employment by his disciples in this initial programmatic statement by Miller and Rose. Whereas Foucault defined governmentality as the point of contact between technologies of domination and technologies of the self, Miller and Rose displace the emphasis on domination onto an unspecified array of experts who, although located in an amorphous space beyond the state, nonetheless are willing to engage in projects of governance that may have their origin in the state. The key role of the state in Foucault's account is significantly displaced by the role of experts and their intellectual production of various social, psychological and political programs of governance.

Problems remain at the conceptual level as to the exact relation among the state, government, and governmentality. A second article by Rose and Miller (1992) attempts to address these difficulties. The model presented in this article is somewhat more

of priority between 'thought' and 'reality' where 'thought' occupies the privileged position. Foucault's concept of 'power/knowledge' is significantly more complex and subtle than Miller and Rose suggest.

sophisticated: governmentality concerns the investigation of problematics of government.

These problematics of government consist of a “domain of cognition, calculation, experimentation and evaluation” which can be analyzed from two possible perspectives.

First, government can be analyzed in terms of its political rationality defined as

the changing discursive field within which the exercise of power is conceptualised, the moral justifications for particular ways of exercising power by diverse authorities, notions of the appropriate forms, objects and limits of politics, and conceptions of the proper distribution of such tasks among secular, spiritual, military and familial sectors (Rose and Miller 1992: 175).

Second, problematics of government can be analyzed in terms of their governmental technologies defined as the “complex of mundane programmes, calculations, techniques, apparatuses, documents and procedures through which authorities seek to embody and give effect to governmental ambitions” (*ibid*). The first concerns ‘conceptualisations’, ‘notions’, and ‘concepts’ while the second concerns the way through which these ideas are ‘embodied’ so as to ensure the success of government. A detailed analysis of the various complex ways in which rationalities and technologies are connected can potentially reveal the ways in which “the aspirations of authorities in the advanced liberal democracies of the present” aim to govern the “lives of individuals, groups and organizations” (Rose and Miller 1992: 176). Rose and Miller understand themselves to be studying ‘political power beyond the state’ in an attempt to “avoid over-valuing the ‘problem of the State’” (1992: 174). In their view, this is a progressive development from sociology as it blatantly rejects “sociological realism” and its fetishization of “how the social *really* was” (Miller and Rose 1992: 177). Thus, in order to move ‘beyond the state’ it is necessary to study the sociology of expertise.

Experts and their expertise are part of a ‘double alliance’:

On the one hand, they would ally themselves with political authorities, focusing upon their problems and problematizing new issues, translating political concerns about economic productivity, innovation, industrial unrest, social stability, law and order, normality and pathology and so forth into the vocabulary of management, accounting, medicine, social science and psychology. On the other hand, they would seek to form alliances with individuals themselves, translating their daily worries and decisions over investment, child rearing, factory organization or diet into a language claiming the power of truth, and offering to teach them the techniques by which they might manage better, earn more, bring up healthier or happier children and much more besides (Miller and Rose 1992: 188).

Although “the claims of any particular expertise are always subject to contestation” it is not clear why if “experts hold out that hope that problems of regulation can remove themselves from the disputed terrain of politics” in order to be relocated “onto the tranquil yet seductive territory of truth” that they must align themselves with “political authorities” (*ibid*). Although the nature of experts and their expertise is discussed in detail, the nature of political authorities and their location in the field of contestation is never discussed. Based upon this silence as to the location of political authorities (how are they political? what is the source of their authority?), it seems as likely as not that “political authorities” refers to politicians and bureaucrats who manage the state apparatuses. If experts wish to remove themselves from politics in order to place themselves on the terrain of truth, why do they enter into a double alliance with, on the one hand, political authorities and, on the other hand, individuals? If experts are an example of ‘political power beyond the state’, why do Miller and Rose emphasize the need of experts to justify their expertise to ‘political authorities’? These questions are never addressed, thus making it doubtful as to the degree to which government and the state are actually at a distance in Miller and Rose’s conceptualization. If their claim is that there is now a different arrangement between policy making and social science that is characterized by social scientists (‘experts’) being located outside the state (meaning the

bureaucracy, presumably), then their claim is not controversial. But if they to say that expertise is an example of political power beyond the state, then they remain trapped by having not indicated where and when the state begins and how the expertise of a psychologist employed by the state differs in kind from a self-employed psychologist, one working for a corporation, and another working for a community group. Thus, what is the exact relationship between 'the state' and that which is 'beyond the state'? How should we interpret Foucault's comment about the 'governmentalization of the state' if Miller and Rose deny any explanatory power to the concept of the state?

The Critique of Governmentality

Despite the popularity of governmentality and its usefulness for studying diverse phenomena that have been hitherto overlooked, governmentality has its shortcomings. Most critics attack the lack of clarity in its conceptual framework, especially during the transition from Foucault to his disciplines. The governmentality school is seen as either unfaithful to Foucault's work or as revealing its incoherence. Additionally, many have signaled the apparent lack of a critical thrust to governmentality studies, despite their claim to present a 'history of the present' in order to problematize and question that which is given.

O'Malley *et al*, themselves practitioners of governmentality, emphasize both the strength and weakness of their approach. Governmentality has been successful at indicating the connection between political rationalities and technologies of rule. O'Malley *et al* (1997: 503) indicate that the "conceptual and analytical equipment" provided by governmentality allows for a "close critical engagement between theory and

political practice". In addition to opening up the door to the critique of politics, governmentality, through its thorough study of many rationalities of government and technologies of rule, enables the examination and theorization of interventions into the contemporary political landscape. However, "despite the clear potential for linking the governmentality approach to a critical politics, by and large it has not been realized" (*ibid*). They stress that their call to integrate a critical practice into governmentality should not be understood as a call to develop a particular political programme, be it one that finds its justification in Foucault's work or elsewhere.

Their core claim is that

even a politics that seeks to maximize the possibilities for contestation should, in co-operation with extra-academic organizations, think out the kinds of political and social conditions that would facilitate contestation and make room for diversity, help locate and define targets for intervention, and assist in the development and refinement of strategies for confronting or interrogating problematic regimes and technologies (O'Malley *et al* 1997: 504).

This suggestion, although widely echoed in the governmentality literature, has not yet been realized, although there have been occasional glimpses of it, for instance in some of the work of Barry Hindess (1987). Additionally, the critical potential of governmentality is only rarely seen (Rose 1987; Ewick 1993; Cruickshank 1994).⁵ Finally, O'Malley *et al* (1997: 509) suggest that the conceptual and theoretical abstraction of governmentality results in imposing "constraints on the relations between genealogy and critique". Governmentality's abstraction results in an emphasis on the mentalities and rationalities of government, thus forcing analysis to concern itself not with resistance and struggle (hence, a critical project), but rather with how the institutions, practices, and procedures

⁵ Rose's current work on genetics, developed in a post-governmentality framework he calls the 'history of possible futures' is a surprising example of what I understand O'Malley *et al* to be calling for. It is unfortunate that it took so long for O'Malley *et al*'s critique to be incorporated into governmentality.

of the rulers are enacted as government over the governed.⁶ Other critics who have entered the debate point out problems at the level of politics and conceptualization.

Bruce Curtis (1995; see Miller and Rose 1995 for their reply) presents a critique not of governmentality as such, having used governmentality in other works to great effect (2001, 2002), but rather of what he perceives as sloppy theorizing and misleading conclusions about Foucault. Curtis lists at least five grounds upon which Rose and Miller can be criticized: first, they present a simplified and ‘caricatured’ account of sociological theory – especially that with which they disagree, such as state formation and allied brands of historical sociology. Second, they present an inconsistent and misleading interpretation of Michel Foucault, purging him of his “inconsistent references to the state, state apparatuses, state action, social class, hegemony, domination and exploitation” (Curtis 1995a: 576). Third, although they present themselves as doing Foucauldian governmentality, they entirely neglect two key components of ‘Foucault’s Triangle’ of governmentality; specifically, discipline and sovereignty, along with their correlates of state structures and the constitution of subjectivities. Fourth, they ignore a key thematic occurring through many of Foucault’s works, his “concern with government as the inscription of large scale patterns of domination in individual comportment” (*ibid*). Finally, he takes issue with their interpretation of Bruno Latour’s work, which emphasized the possibility of the concentration and centralization of knowledge and the

⁶ One wonders if ‘positive practice’ might not be a better term, given that even traditional Frankfurt School-style critical theory does not overtly and expressly connect itself with “extra-academic organizations”. Positive practice might better imply the necessity of a post-socialist politics without prescribing an orthodox position. One could thus study, for instance, the ways in which the bodies of pregnant women (and, increasingly, woman who *may be* or *may become* pregnant) are governed and thus attempt to create/develop women-friendly and feminist public policy in conjunction with organizations such as Planned Parenthood.

relationship between the accumulation of knowledge and political action. Because my work concerns Foucault, I will leave aside Curtis' comments about Latour, just as Miller and Rose's comments about Latour were left aside when discussing them.

Although demonstrating a number of grounds upon which to attack Rose and Miller's brand of governmentality, Curtis attacks two points: their incoherent rejection of the state and their confusing use of the key concept 'government'. Curtis identifies three contradictory definitions of 'the state' in a single paper by Rose and Miller (1992). The first such definition of the state, according to Curtis' reading, is "a way of expressing the state of political forces in a given society at a given moment" (1995a: 578). Curtis has no quarrel with this particular definition, finding it useful in his own work on state formation. A second definition of the state "is an entity in a discursive field, 'an historically variable linguistic device for conceptualizing and articulating ways of ruling'" (Curtis 1995a: 578 quoting Miller and Rose 1992: 176-7). Finally, a third nominalist definition of the state is identified as "a complex and mobile resultant of the discourses and techniques of rule" (Miller and Rose 1992: 178). The first definition refers to a 'condition of forces' while the second definition refers to a 'linguistic device'. Thus, Rose and Miller present definitions of the state that at once place it in two separate ontological fields: 'empirical situations' and 'political concepts'. A definition presented in one ontological field is often used in the other, leading to conceptual incoherence. Therefore, depending upon how the 'the state' is mobilized, subsequent concepts will have entirely different meanings and inflections, especially as they relate to the equally confused concept of government.

As with 'the state', Curtis finds Rose and Miller to make use of confusing and contradictory definitions of 'government'. He isolates three such examples:

the historically constituted matrix within which are articulated all those dreams, schemes, strategies and manoeuvres of authorities that seek to shape the beliefs and conduct of others in desired directions by acting upon their will, their circumstances or their environment (Rose and Miller 1992: 175)

a domain of strategies, techniques and procedures through which different forces seek to render programmes operable, and by means of which a multitude of connections are established between the aspirations of authorities and the activities of individuals and groups (Rose and Miller 1992: 193)

And, third, they make use of the term government in its conventional meaning as 'the government' (Rose and Miller 1992: 185, 189). This final definition contradicts not only the previous two, but also Rose and Miller's attempt to move the analysis of political power 'beyond the state' – it relies upon the traditional understanding of the state that sees government agencies acting out the policies of a centralized state.

Meanwhile, the first two definitions – one broad and the other narrow – do not lead to conceptual clarity. The broad definition is the closest to Foucault's formulations of power as the 'conduct of conduct', but according to Curtis this formulation has the danger of extending the analysis of power to the analysis of human interaction (1995a: 580). The narrower definition is equally flawed in that it does not enable "political sociology to distinguish the finance ministry's attempts to have me pay my income tax, on pain of imprisonment, from my dentist's attempts to have me floss my teeth regularly, on pain of extraction" (*ibid*). Thus, whereas the broad definition diffuses relations of power into all human interactions, the narrow definition is not able to distinguish between political relations and non-political relations. In either case, as an attempt to refocus political sociology away from the state, the proposal by Rose and Miller appears to fail.

Miller and Rose find Curtis' critique to be 'unhelpful' (Rose 1999) and as an example where "polemic substitutes for argument in sociological discourse" (Miller and Rose 1995: 590). They continue what they perceive as a polemical tone in the debate by continually restating their case and refusing to acknowledge any inconsistencies because they do not seek to present 'commentary' on Foucault, but rather to "draw attention to the empirical scope of recent studies in government and governmentality" (Miller and Rose 1995: 591). Rather than 'stimulating debate and productive disagreement', they claim Curtis' comments to "merely re-cycle[s] familiar nostrums of 'marxist' sociology, now posing as solutions to the very analytical problems that they themselves generated" (Miller and Rose 1995: 590).

Miller and Rose understand themselves to be teaching sociologists "the central lesson of such studies: the constitutive role of an array of authorities, forms of knowledge, and the technologies of conduct that are fundamental to the activity of politics, but which lie 'beyond the state'" (1995: 590). Apparently the relationship between the state and what lies beyond it (whether it is understood as a state/civil society distinction or not) is to be taken for granted and understood as unproblematic. It is difficult to discuss 'political power beyond the state' if there is no coherent concept of 'the state' to allow the original distinction of *beyond the state* to be made. How does one know what is 'beyond on the state' if the state itself remains incoherently defined and relegated to an obsolete form of social and political inquiry? One would assume that a Foucauldian analysis would problematize the complex array of relationships among citizens, groups, classes, non-governmental organizations, professional experts, government departments and agencies, corporations and the like. Take a mental health

professional as an example: a psychologist requires a particular form of post-secondary education before she can put up a psychologist's shingle. The psychologist must first pass through a state-sanctioned education (universities are chartered by the state even if they are privately owned) that meets professional standards (for instance, an association or college of psychologists) that might be charged with enforcement on behalf of the state of something akin to a 'Mental Health Act'. She might work in private practice, for a public institution or a corporation while at the same being a private citizen. Additionally, as an expert on mental health, she wields influence over her patients who come encumbered with their own set of political relations – both with the state and beyond the state. One such form of influence wielded by the psychologist might be to prescribe remedies – for instance, drugs – that themselves exist in a complex relation among science, corporations, and the state. This form of expertise is closely related to the state, but there also other similar forms of expertise that exist primarily as media personalities such as the popular Dr. Phil, who does not even practice psychology as such, but rather chooses to appear as an expert based in the media. This wields additional influence over potential patients, patients, psychologists, and regulators. Even an analysis of 'expertise' that is located at some distance from the state is still, none the less, located at some proximity to the state. A fully coherent model of political power – be it state political power or political power beyond the state – requires a coherent delineation of that which falls beyond the state and that which is proper to the state itself. The above example is very broad and general, but none the less indicates the extreme complexity of relationships involved in governing mental health: relationships that transcend the simple distinction between 'the state' and 'beyond the state'.

Miller and Rose reject such an analysis because

the aim of this distinction was to direct attention to the heterogeneous intellectual and technical conditions for the historically specific assemblages that link aspirations of rulers with the conduct of the ruled through authorities as diverse as bureaucrats, lawyers, parents, accountants, managers, and teachers (1995: 594).

Although vague, their point is more or less correct: the aspirations of rulers (who they might be Miller and Rose do not explain) may be realized through means beyond the repressive state apparatus through such things as lawyers, accountants, teachers and bureaucrats. The point that power does not exist in a single form such as class or state power, as some less sophisticated versions of Marxism might have it, is correct, but to do the opposite move and deny all forms of power to these objects is incorrect. However, Miller and Rose neglect to mention that in many advanced liberal democracies (to borrow a term from Miller and Rose), these very professions only exist by virtue of the authority of the state!⁷ As such, Curtis is correct to take Miller and Rose to task for presenting naïve, incoherent, contradictory, and ill-conceived concepts of ‘the state’ and ‘government’ while claiming to present the future of the study of both the state and government.

As with Curtis, Pearce and Tombs take exception to a paper by Nikolas Rose and, this time, Mariana Valverde (1998). Also like Curtis, Pearce and Tombs find the contributions made by the governmentality literature to be profound; however, there

⁷ It is important to note that I use the term ‘professions’. By this I mean a type of occupation that is legally recognized by the state and granted certain powers. My argument does not involve the historical origins of the professions – on this I have no quarrel with Rose and Miller – but rather with the complex relationship between the state and expertise that takes the form of a profession. It is interesting that they only emphasize professional expertise and do not seem to address other forms of expertise that are less intellectual and more manual and technical, such as auto mechanics (which have a degree of professional organization) or computer technicians (who have no degree of professional organization). This might be another example of their idealist privileging of ideas and intellectual labour.

remains a great deal of conceptual difficulty in the theorization of the governmentality enterprise. Pearce and Tombs isolate two 'key problems' with governmentality:

First, their dismissal of (a sterile version of) Marxism, and thus any analysis of social relations within which class is integral; and, second, their appropriation of Foucault, an appropriation which is in danger of assuming the mantle of an orthodox interpretation of his work, and which in our view entails an unhelpful closure and so denial of much that his work offers to us as social scientists (1998: 568).

The first critical comment offered by Pearce and Tombs is similar to some of those made by Curtis: the governmentality school has failed to confront rival approaches to social inquiry, preferring to polemically reject 'sterile' opponents and 'caricatures'. The second comment is also similar to Curtis' claim that the governmentality school has not adequately addressed Foucault's triangle. Pearce and Tombs argue this point at length (1998: 570-2). The danger of governmentality becoming the orthodoxy is that it has failed to take into account Foucault's relationship with Marx in general, and Althusser in particular, while at the same time rejecting the possibility that there is such a relationship at all.⁸

Pearce and Tombs therefore call for a 'rigorous and productive assessment' of Foucault's work which, first, would require "a specification of his sets of concepts; these would be pushed to their limits through immanent critiques, and assessments made of their ontological and epistemological presuppositions" on the model of Pearce's *The Radical Durkheim*. Second, it would require "a disarticulation of the various signifying chains from the specific mode of narrativization found in Foucault's works, thereby

⁸ The charge of a dangerous orthodoxy on the part of Pearce and Tombs should not be overlooked. Two significant items missing from their bibliography is Curtis (1995) and Miller and Rose (1995). It is additionally worth noting that Miller and Rose's response to Curtis charged *Curtis* with enforcing an orthodoxy. Now this wild claim has come back to haunt Rose, and this time Valverde.

liberating them for articulation with other (similarly worked upon) theoretical discourses” (1998: 571). The following chapter aims to make a contribution to this critical project.

Like Pearce and Tombs, Lemke (2002) argues that Foucault is in a productive ‘genuine struggle’ with Marx and Marxist theory, especially with respect to the concept of governmentality. Lemke characterizes Foucault’s later works as having a dual interest: on the one hand is an “interest in political rationalities and the ‘genealogy of the state’” and on the other hand his interest in “ethical questions and the ‘genealogy of the subject’” (2002: 50). These two themes are often viewed as either opposed to or in tension with one another. Lemke views this opposition differently: the ‘missing link’ between the two is the concept of government. In Lemke’s reading, government analyzes the “connections between what he called technologies of the self and technologies of domination, the constitution of the subject and the formation of the state” (*ibid*). This link is missing because, as of yet, the lectures at the Collège de France where governmentality is developed (and from which the “Governmentality” lecture is an extract) remain unpublished. In Lemke’s understanding, governmentality comprises the relation between forms of knowledge, strategies of power, and the technologies of the self. His emphasis therefore greatly differs from the more mainstream governmentality school interpretation, which locates governmentality strictly in the rationalities, arts, and mentalities of government.⁹ Lemke’s reading transforms governmentality from an abstract idealism in the hands of Miller and Rose and transforms into a properly materialist method of social and political inquiry. Thus, while agreeing that governmentality is a concept of central importance in Foucault’s later work, he argues

⁹ And often conflating these three into a single concept.

that it has been read with the wrong inflection. Rather than being a rejection of or an alternative to Marxist theory, the concept of governmentality, for Foucault, operates in critical and productive tensions with Marxist theory; governmentality is a supplement to and not a replacement of Marxism.

As with O'Malley *et al*, Lemke sees an unrealized critical potential of governmentality:

By coupling forms of knowledge, strategies of power, and technologies of the self, it allows for a more comprehensive account of the current political and social transformations since it makes visible the depth and breadth of processes of domination and exploitation (2002: 54).

Governmentality is more able than rival forms of critical theory to account for and critique the contemporary political and economic order. Governmentality moves beyond traditional forms of critical theory that emphasize the ideological character of contemporary regimes of power; for instance contradictions between political practice and political ideology. Instead, governmentality recognizes that a key feature of projects of government is the inherent and permanent failure of government. The fact that government fails opens up a space for radical and critical opposition to the social and political order of things. The gap between practice and thought ceases to be viewed as a flaw, but as a condition of existence. Based upon this analysis, Lemke finds a deep resonance between contemporary forms of Marxist theory and governmentality. He gives diverse examples: the neo-Gramscian tradition which displaces the state/civil society distinction with the concept of hegemony (Jessop 1990), Althusserian approaches to the constitution of subjectivity through ideological interpellation (Montag 1995; Butler

1997), the biopolitical production of Empire (Hardt and Negri 2000), and post-modern materialisms (Milberg 1991; Gibson-Graham 1996; Callari and Ruccio 1996).¹⁰

The Final Foucault?

The governmentality school has managed to position itself as the dominant interpretation of Foucault in the English language while managing both to deny that there is a governmentality school and that it presents an interpretation of Foucault. Due to its prominence, the governmentality approach to Foucault must be confronted seriously and considered, for it has produced much valuable research. However, a serious confrontation and consideration is not limited to a mere evaluation of the merits of the research presented; a serious encounter and confrontation requires that governmentality be confronted in its theoretical and conceptual entirety. While the empirical data produced by the governmentality school are immensely helpful, productive and useful, such as Cruickshank's (1994) work on self-esteem, its conceptual apparatus has unfortunately been neglected to the detriment of the entire approach.

While Foucault did not attempt to present a coherent conceptualization of governmentality in any of his published works, he did nonetheless develop it through a series of lectures in both France and the rest of the world. The lectures revealed him grappling with a new method of social and political analysis that is both conceptually rigorous and historically grounded, while presenting a spirited critique of the (then) contemporary political landscape – he thus confronted such topics as sexuality, security, subjectivity and state formation in these lectures. His disciples, a broad collective

¹⁰ Pearce and Tombs also cite a number of these as examples.

informally (and perhaps unfairly) called the governmentality school, led by Nikolas Rose, have put governmentality on the map. It was thus up to them to present a coherent and official account of governmentality were they to lay claim to the concept.

Initially the governmentality school did, indeed, attempt to systematize the method while denying that it was a method (Dean 1994; Dean and Hindess 1998; Gordon 1991; Miller and Rose 1995). The governmentality school argued that governmentality was concerned with the arts, rationalities and mentalities of government, which, according to Gordon (1991), amounted to the same thing in Foucault's discourse. The governmentality school thus attempted to argue that the future of political sociology lay in the study of 'government' (Miller and Rose 1995), which was to be understood as the 'conduct of conduct'. But, this 'conduct of conduct' was primarily understood as concerning 'political power beyond the state' and it therefore persistently argued for the minimal importance of 'the state'. Neglecting 'the state', however, led to a confused conceptualization of government.

This chapter introduced the concept of governmentality as Foucault presented it in the few published pieces on the topic. Foucault's concept of governmentality was taken up by the 'governmentality school' who understand governmentality as a post-Marxist method of social inquiry that seeks to discover political power beyond the state in the hands of experts. There are, however, many critics of governmentality (Curtis 1995; O'Malley *et al* 1997; Pearce and Tombs 1998; Lemke 2002) who point to conceptual inconsistencies and contradictions, confusing abstractions, and a lack of a critical project as major shortcomings of the governmentality school. But governmentality need not be entirely rejected on account of lack of systematic conceptualization and a lack of

participation in critical politics. A system of concepts and a critical theory is to be found in Foucault's own works dating from the same period in which he was developing governmentality. Thus, bracketing off Foucault's triangle – the connection between discipline, sovereignty, and governmentality – for the time being in favour of a detailed analysis of Foucault's analytic of power relations provides the necessary tools of relating empirical political practice at the microlevel with a critical political theory at the macrolevel. It is to the analytic of power that I now turn. An increased understanding of governmentality will enable a new, alternative Foucault to emerge as an alternative to the governmentality school.

II

On Theories and Analytics

Foucault *contra* Althusser

Michel Foucault left thousands of pages of published books, articles, papers, essays, interviews, and lectures behind him after his death. Because he actively resisted systematizing his own work, he never presented in a single piece a complete and coherent account of how he understood power, a concept that is often considered to be his primary subject. Readers are left in the unfortunate position of having to wade through all of these works in an effort to construct – or re-construct – a coherent account of power. The recently published lectures, *'Society Must be Defended'* (2003), in conjunction with his *History of Sexuality: An Introduction* (1978) and the two essays comprising 'The Subject and Power' present his most focused attempt to grapple with the subject. This chapter attempts to sort out the contradictions between these writings and to explain what Foucault meant by an 'analytic of power'.

The chapter progresses by means of a detour: Louis Althusser, a contemporary and former teacher of Foucault, spent a great deal of time developing a concept of 'Theory' that can be usefully contrasted with Foucault's concept of 'analytic'. I first outline Althusser's concept of Theory and then Foucault's critique of it. Foucault, however, was not content to end with a negative critique of the concept of Theory; instead he attempted to replace it with a positive contribution that he called an analytic. This forms the next part of the chapter. The final section attempts to reconstruct Foucault's analytic of power in great detail. I pursue this detailed reconstruction because

I am not aware of any similar attempt to interpret Foucault's 'analytic of power relations' line-by-line; this careful will reading shed light on the oft-misunderstood 'analytic'.

Louis Althusser's work is most often remembered for its contributions to (or, as some might have it, derailment of) an advanced Marxist social and political theory. From this perspective one remembers concepts such as 'interpellation', 'social formation', and that much debated term, 'determination in the last instance'. In addition to these overtly political concepts, Althusser also contributed to what might be called the philosophy of social science. This version of Althusser attempts to argue that Marxism is 'Theory'. Through this course of argumentation, Althusser develops a model explaining the relationship of science, theory, and philosophy. Althusser's contributions here might be less well remembered, but they were nonetheless integral to understanding his social and political theory.

Although nearly impossible to support textually, it is my contention that Foucault's explicit avoidance of the concept of Theory is aimed directly at Althusser. I argue we get a better understanding of Foucault's analytic of power if we contrast it to Althusser's concept of Theory. In light of this contrast, Foucault's analytic of power relations will be reconstructed and presented as a coherent position that calls into question the use of Foucault by the governmentality school. In the following chapter, the reconstructed analytic of power relations will be shown to alleviate – if not refute – the most common arguments made against Foucault's theory of power.

Althusser's essay, "Is it Simple to be a Marxist in Philosophy?" (1976), begins with an explanation of his detour through Montesquieu and Rousseau at the start of his philosophical career. Althusser explains that in order for him to understand Marx and

Marxism, it was necessary for him to understand the philosophies that have lost the “perpetual war” whose “battlefield” is “philosophy” (1976: 166). He writes, “no philosophy can exist within this theoretical relation of force except in so far as it marks itself off from its opponents and lays siege to that part of the positions which they have had to occupy in order to guarantee their power over the enemy whose impress they bear” (*ibid*). Althusser continues this thought,

if ... war is a generalized state, and leaves nowhere in the world for a shelter, and if it produces its own condition as its own result, which means that every war is essentially *preventive*, it is possible to understand that the war of philosophies, in which systems come into conflict, presupposes the preventive strike of positions against one another, and thus the necessary use by a philosophy of a detour *via* other philosophies in order to define and defend its own positions (*ibid*).

There are a number of striking elements in these passages. First, the language of war is almost word-for-word that which Foucault later mobilizes in his 1975-1976 lectures, ‘*Society Must be Defended*’. Second, Althusser’s ‘class struggle at the level of theory’ appears to be a dialectical version of Foucault’s genealogical analytic of relations of force. Third, it will become clear that Foucault (2003: 50) is waging a “secret war” against Althusser on the terrain occupied by Althusser himself – in effect using Althusser against Althusser. Finally, it appears to be more than a mere coincidence that Foucault, in his lectures from 1975-76, echoes the language of battle found in Althusser’s essay, which was published in late 1975. These should be kept in mind as the chapter unfolds.

Althusser: Theory, Science, and Practice

“On the Materialist Dialectic” (1969b) and *Reading Capital* (1970) present the core arguments of Althusser’s philosophy of (social) science. Here, Althusser extends Marx’s arguments about labour-power and material production as developed in *The*

German Ideology, *The Grundrisse*, and *Capital*, to his own comprehensive concept of theoretical practice, which concerns the production of knowledge. Althusser announces the goal of his theoretical enterprise in the “Introduction” to *For Marx*:

[...] Marxism should not be simply a political doctrine, a ‘method’ of analysis and action, but also, over and above the rest, the *theoretical domain of a fundamental investigation*, indispensable not only to the development of the science of society and of the various ‘human sciences’, but also to that of the natural sciences and philosophy (1969a: 26).

There is a unity between theoretical practice and other forms of practice – between production, political, and ideological practices. Practice carries a general meaning for Althusser: “by *practice* in general I shall mean any process of *transformation* of a determinate given raw material into a determinate *product*, a transformation effected by a determinate human labour, using determinate means (of ‘production’)” (1969b: 166). Althusser proposes a strong division between Theory and philosophy. Theory is understood as the combination of Marxist philosophy (dialectical materialism) and Marxist theory (historical materialism). Theory is distinguished from various forms of idealism (positivism, empiricism, etc), which are labeled ideological philosophy. Because Theory has its birth after ideological philosophy, it follows that there must be a mechanism allowing for the transformation of ideology into science. This “implies both the *production* of knowledge and the *critique* of an illusion in one movement” (*ibid*). This movement is encapsulated in the posing of the theoretical problem which involves the definition of the field of knowledge in which the problem is posed, identifying the exact location of its posing, and the definition and location of the concepts required to pose the theoretical problem (1969b: 164-5). The posing of the theoretical problem is understood as theoretical practice. Theoretical practice is more broad than the posing of the theoretical problem as it includes the examination of and the resolution of the

theoretical problem. Unlike Theory, “ideology is already unconscious of its ‘theoretical presuppositions’, that is, the active but unavowed problematic which fixes for it the meaning and movement of *its problems* and thereby of their solutions” (1969c: 69).

Because theoretical practice is at once both the production and the critique of knowledge, it follows that “the utilization of Theory is not a matter of *applying* its formulae (the formulae of the dialectic, of materialism) to a pre-existing content”, and the “external application of a concept is never equivalent to a *theoretical practice*” as “there is no *pure* theoretical practice” (1969b: 170). Instead, “a ‘pure’ science only exists on condition that it continually frees itself from the ideology which occupies it, or lies in wait for it” (*ibid.*). Because Theory is the only form of theoretical practice that transcends its origins in ideology,

only Theory [is] able to raise, if not pose, the essential question of these disciplines [the ‘human sciences’], to criticize ideology in all its guises, including the disguises of technical practice as sciences, is the Theory of theoretical practice (as distinct from ideological practice): the materialist dialectic or dialectical materialism, the conception of the Marxist dialectic in its *specificity* (1969b: 171-2).

Having established that Marxism, or dialectical and historical materialism, is the sole claimant to the category of the Theory of theoretical practice, it is incumbent upon Althusser to present a coherent model of the process and development of theoretical practice. This is a dual necessity: on the one hand it is necessary that criteria exist for the determination between theoretical and ideological practice and, on the other hand, if theoretical practice is to be conscious of its own theoretical presuppositions (unlike ideological practice) it is necessary that a continually dynamic process be delineated.

Like the production of material objects, theoretical practice sees the ‘raw materials’ (the concepts of the theory and its data) being acted upon by ‘means of

production' (the methods of the theory) in order to create a 'product' (new knowledge) (1969b: 173). Thus conceived, theoretical practice (transformation of representations, concepts and facts given to it by other practices) is classified as a 'social practice' ([1969b: 166] to be distinguished from production in general (transformation of 'nature' into a product), from political practice (transformation of existing social relations into a new set of social relations), and ideological practice (transformation of forms of consciousness). Theoretical practice itself is of two sorts: scientific theoretical practice (dialectical and historical materialism) and ideological theoretical practice (bourgeois human sciences dubbed the 'prehistory of science'). Thus, the dialectic internal to theoretical practice sees a 'qualitative transformation' whereby science detaches itself from the ideology of its past by revealing its past as ideological. The paradigmatic example of this qualitative transformation is Marx's immanent critique of political economy in *Capital*.

Theoretical practice develops through the internal dialectic between ideological and scientific theoretical practice, now called Generality I and Generality II respectively. With the transformation in terminology come more specific definitions of the concepts. Generality I now "constitutes the raw material that the science's theoretical practice will transform into specified 'concepts', that is, into that other 'concrete' generality which is a knowledge" (1969b: 183). Similarly, Generality II is now "constituted by the corpus of concepts whose more or less contradictory unity constitutes the 'theory' of the new science at the (historical) moment under consideration, the 'theory' that defines the field in which all the problems of the science must necessarily be posed" (1969b: 184-5). Science always works on pre-given concepts and not upon 'pure and absolute facts'

through the elaboration of its own facts via a critique of 'ideological facts'. This is how Theory moves from the realm of pre-scientific ideology to science; science has its origin in the critique of ideology. To elaborate a scientific fact, from this perspective, is at the same time to elaborate its own theory.

The work that Generality II performs on Generality I produces new knowledge called Generality III. It is the transformation of Generality I into Generality III through the work of Generality II that works, produces and advances. The new Generality III stands in the place of the previous Generality I allowing for a 'more correct' Generality II to repeat the process. Thus "theoretical practice produces *Generalities III* by the work of *Generality II* on *Generality I*" (1969b: 185). Althusser limits and further defines this process by claiming that there is not an identity of essence between Generality I and Generality III, but rather a real transformation in kind. Also the transformation from Generality I and Generality III is contained within the domain of theoretical practice, the transformation is limited to a transformation in *knowledge* and not a transformation of its *object*.

Foucault: Critique of Theory

Etymologically, 'analysis' has the meaning of "to decompose into elements". Theory, on the other hand, carries the etymological meaning of "seeing an object and contemplating it for what it is". The concepts, taking the literal meaning into consideration, propose two entirely different (but not unrelated) processes. Although the aim of both is to produce some form of knowledge about a process, relationship, or object, the direction of investigation is almost entirely opposite. Theories seek to

understand objects through inquiry into the essence of the object, whereas analytics seek to understand objects by breaking them down into their constituent parts.

A theory, based upon this tentative definition, proposes a relationship between the senses, thought, and an object. The goal of theory is to create an abstraction of an object in thought which codifies the essence of the actual object in reality. A theory thus attempts to overcome mediating or prejudicial influences in order to arrive at something akin to a correspondence theory of truth: the theory of gravity corresponds to the process through which less dense objects are attracted to more dense objects. Through inference, theories attempt to explain why particular phenomena are universalizable to all objects of the same sort. The theory of gravity does not seek to explain why *my* pencil falls to the floor of *my* office when *I* drop it, but seeks to explain why all pencils will always drop to the floor of any office when anyone drops them.

An analytic, in contrast, begins with an object and seeks to break that object down into its component parts in order to explain how that object works and what it is doing. An analytic avoids the metaphysical questions of why something exists and the ontological questions of what something is. Rather than focusing upon a universal answer to a universal question, an analytic situates a particular object in its varied contexts: historical, political, social, cultural, technological, and so on. These contexts are shown to not only influence the environment in which an object is located, but also contribute to its actual materiality. Thus, an analytic does not seek to answer the metaphysical and ontological questions, for instance, of power as such: 'What is power?', 'Who has power?', 'When is power used legitimately?', and the like. Instead, an analytic looks at what is involved in a relationship that is described as involving power. Where a

theory seeks universality, an analytic seeks singularity; where a theory seeks application, an analytic seeks explication; where a theory seeks to explain what something is, an analytic seeks to explain what this something is doing.

By the late 1970s, Foucault had elaborated a scattered, but detailed critique of the concept of theory. In an interview given in 1977, Foucault states, “The role of theory today seems to me to be just this: not to formulate the global systematic theory which holds everything in place, but to analyse the specificity of mechanisms of power, to locate the connections and extensions, to build little by little a strategic knowledge” (145). Foucault extends the earlier negative critique of theory as globalizing, all-encompassing, and authoritarian to include a positive critique of theory that suggests new ways of uniting theory and practice through conceiving theory as a ‘toolkit’ and emphasizing its analytic dimensions. The argument is made most forcibly in the first lecture from *Society Must be Defended* (2003) where he situates his project as a genealogy of subjugated knowledges that oppose themselves to the concept of science.

Reviewing the ten to twenty years prior to these lectures (given in 1976) Foucault refers to two tendencies characterizing this period. On the one hand is a tendency toward “the astonishing efficacy of discontinuous, particular, and local critiques” (2003: 6). These ‘local critiques’ (anti-psychiatry, penal reform, the women’s movement) “were not supported, are not supported, by any overall systematization” (2003: 5) thus calling into question the global and comprehensive theories that characterized, among other things, Marxism and psychoanalysis. Local critiques presented an “inhibiting effect” that was “specific to totalitarian”, or “all-encompassing and global theories” (2003: 6). Foucault recognizes that these theories provided “tools” that could be used at the “local level”, but

only at the expense of “suspending” the “theoretical unity” of their discourse. He elaborates in detail what he means by this suspension, “cut up, ripped up, torn to shreds, turned inside out, displaced, caricatured, dramatized, theatricalized, and so on” (*ibid*). Instead of progressively accumulating knowledge, “the totalizing approach always has the effect of putting the brakes on” (*ibid*). The result of this first tendency is “a sort of autonomous and noncentralized theoretical production” that “does not need a visa from some common regime to establish its validity” (*ibid*). Without actually speaking the words, it appears certain that Foucault is referring to the relation of Marxism, the PCF, and the Soviet Union. These comments are generally interpreted as a simple rejection and indictment, not of theory or theorizing, but rather of Marx and Marxism. Interpretations of this sort, however, miss the point. The point is not merely a simple rejection of Marxist or psychoanalytical theorizing, but of the enterprise of theory itself – of theoretical practice. His critique extends beyond the traditional opposition between theory and practice to include theory of any sort. The claim is therefore that a theory requires structures of institutional support premised upon a strict demarcation between orthodoxy and heresy. Theory as such performs the conservative and reactionary function of dividing between heretics and adherents: it silences and discounts opponents and opposition.

On the other hand, Foucault indicates the “returns of knowledge” that make the local critiques possible which he describes as the “insurrection of subjugated knowledges” (2003: 6-7). Subjugated knowledges have two meanings. First, “historical contents that have been buried or masked in functional coherences or formal systematizations” and, second, “knowledges that have been disqualified as nonconceptual

knowledges, as insufficiently elaborated knowledges” (2003: 7). On the one hand, Foucault claims the way knowledge is organized in modernity requires that there be an official knowledge; this official knowledge conceals the struggles that occurred during its own formation. Although a particular official policy from a particular government department will, on the surface, present a uniform face, this uniform face masks the struggles that went into and characterized the creation of the policy in the first place. Subjugated knowledge in this case includes suppressed or hidden voices. On the other hand, are knowledges that have no official or institutional existence. These knowledges include those shared by new immigrants to ethnic communities, the experiences of women, or the experiences of inmates. Because they have no official or institutional existence, these knowledges are dismissed for not taking on an official, scientific character. Whereas subjugated knowledges of the first sort are suppressed or hidden, subjugated knowledges of the second sort are ignored entirely. In either case, these knowledges carry a “historical knowledge of struggle” (2003: 8).

Coupling these two forms of subjugated knowledges brings together “a meticulous rediscovery of struggles and the raw memory of fights”, which Foucault calls genealogy. A genealogy is “quite specifically” an “antiscience” that must fight “any discourse that is regarded as scientific” (2003: 9). A genealogy is “a way of playing, local, discontinuous, disqualified, or nonlegitimized knowledges off against the unitary theoretical instance that claims to be able to filter them, organize them into a hierarchy, organize them in the name of a true body of knowledge, in the name of the rights of a science that is in the hands of the few” (*ibid*). Foucault’s point here is aimed directly at the question of “whether or not Marxism is a science” (*ibid*). Rather than finding out the

extent to which Marxism is “analogous to a scientific practice in its day-to-day operations, in its rules of construction, in the concepts it uses”, one should inquire “about the aspiration to power that is inherent in the claim to being a science” ([1976]/2003: 10). Thus, Foucault shifts the terrain from “Is it a science?” to “Who are you trying to silence through your claim to scientificity?”. Consequently, when someone attempts to demonstrate that Marxism is a science, one must question why one is making this appeal and who one is trying to silence.

Althusser’s theoretical practice proposes a process through which ideology is transformed into science and then less correct science is transformed into more correct science. Although ideology may contain a grain of truth, because it is unscientific it cannot be characterized as truthful. The only form of theoretical practice that can produce truthful, correct science is Theory. Althusser is thus able to create a formal and tidy schematic of theoretical practice: Generality I (Theory) works on Generality II (ideas, concepts, representations, and ideology) to produce Generality III (new, correct knowledge). He therefore proposes a model of knowledge that is, on the one hand, progressive (from ideology to less correct science to more correct science) and distinguishes between true knowledge (science) and false knowledge (ideology). In comparison, Foucault’s analytic resists both the claim of progression and of scientificity. By rejecting both a truthful, scientific account of power and of a theory of power that is scientific, Foucault is able to avoid having his work codified through an institutional orthodoxy:

I think that you are completely free to do what you like with what I am saying. These are suggestions for research, ideas, schemata, outlines, instruments; do what you like with them. Ultimately, what you do with them both concerns and is none of my business. It is none of my business to the extent that it is not up to me

to lay down the law about the use you make of it. And it does concern me to the extent that, one way or another, what you do with it is connected, related to what I am doing (2003: 2).

His refusal to 'lay down the law' is a refusal to distinguish between correct and incorrect, scientific and unscientific, and truthful and ideological appropriations, applications and uses of his work. This division and antagonism between Althusser's Theory and Foucault's analytic is clear.

Towards an Analytic of Power Relations

Thus far I have established the difference between a theory and an analytic, but have not yet applied this distinction to the topic of this thesis, namely to an 'analytic of power relations'. This section attempts this goal: bringing analytic and power closer together. In one of his last works, "The Subject and Power", Foucault attempts to tie together his earlier works with what he expects to work on in the future. He maintains that his project is hostile to and should be considered "neither a theory nor a methodology" (1982: 208) because "since a theory assumes a prior objectification, it cannot be asserted as a basis for analytic work" (1982: 209). These claims echo earlier statements, such as "the aim of the inquiries that will follow is to move less toward a 'theory' of power than toward an 'analytics' of power" (1976: 70). Based upon these statements it is impossible for the analytic of power to present power as something that is applied, owned, held, or accumulated. Conceptually, power cannot pre-exist the analysis of the relationship under consideration.¹ Rather than investigating whether or not a particular relationship is one involving power of one party over another

¹ This raises a question that I do not yet know how to answer: if we take the claim of the analytic seriously, how can we know it was power we are analyzing? This calls for a resolution of an apparently problem between the relationship of a theory to an analytic.

(employer/employee, master/slave), the relationship itself must be analysed in order to discover how the relationship is constructed. It will become clear that power is the name given to describe the condition of existence of any relationship; power is the name given to the possibility of doing something.

Foucault most clearly elaborates his analytic of power in a series of lectures called “*Society Must be Defended*” (2003), in *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction* (1978), an interview called “Power and Strategies” (1980a), and an essay called “The Subject and Power” (1983). From these pieces, I will attempt to re-construct a coherent analytic of power.²

The *History of Sexuality: An Introduction* presents the longest, most detailed account of Foucault’s analytic of power that has yet been published in English. For this reason, I take this text to present the core of Foucault’s attempt to construct and elaborate his analytic of power. Much of the material found in *History of Sexuality* is also found in ‘*Society Must be Defended*’, albeit in much rougher form. The interview, ‘Power and Strategies’ given shortly after the conclusion of the lectures and the publication of *History of Sexuality*, clarifies some of the issues arising from these texts. And, finally, the two essays called, ‘The Subject and Power’, clarify and systematize the analytic of power.³ In these texts Foucault presents three separate components to his analytic of power: conditions of possibility of power (*SP* 217-22, 225-6), hypotheses on power (*SMB*

² To avoid confusion, my referencing practices will change at this point for greater ease of reading and clarity of writing. ‘*Society Must be Defended*’ will be referred to as “*SMD*”, *History of Sexuality: An Introduction* will be referred to as “*HSP*”, the interview “Power and Strategies” will be “*PS*” and the essay “The Subject and Power” will be “*SP*”.

³ I rely almost entirely on the second of these two essays called “How is Power Exercised?”.

15-6; *HSI* 93-7; *PS* 142), and levels of analysis (*SMB* 27-34, 45-51; *HSI* 92-3). I will cover each of these separately below.

Conditions of Possibility of Power

Power is not a function of coercion, consent or legitimacy. For although power only exists insofar as there is action, this is a special and specific form of action that does not “act directly and immediately upon others” (*SP* 220). Instead, this action acts upon the actions of others, be they currently existing actions or those that may arise in the present or in the future. Action that acts directly upon subjects and things is not action in this sense; it is violence. For action and power to exist, the receiver must be recognized as a subject capable of action who, when faced with power, has an entire field of possibilities with which to respond.⁴

Because both subjects in a power relationship must be capable of action and have this capability of action recognized, it follows that “power is exercised only over free subjects, and only insofar as they are free” (*SP* 222). This element of freedom is essential because without the possibility of reciprocal action upon action, a relationship of power is replaced with a relationship of domination. That is to say, the field of possibility is narrowed to a field of impossibility: the impossibility of action and therefore of freedom. With violence, the element of freedom becomes replaced by domination and determination. Thus, to say that power has freedom as its condition of possibility and

⁴ Foucault’s analytic is so radically different from other ways of conceiving power that I have trouble choosing the proper vocabulary: “the other” sounds awkward as does “receiver”. More generic terms such as “former” and “latter” become confusing and the difficulty of separating resistance proper from action makes terms like “the initiator” misleading. Although in my view mostly incorrect, I have opted to use the term “receiver”.

that possibility of action by the other must be recognized is to say that resistance is also a condition of possibility of power. Instead of “speaking of an essential freedom”, from the perspective of an analytic of power “it would be better to speak of an ‘agonism’” (*ibid*). That is, “of a relationship which is at the same time reciprocal incitation and struggle”, a “permanent provocation” (*ibid*).⁵

Three conditions that must be met before power can be said to exist: action, freedom, and resistance. It is important to recognize that each of these three elements is similar, but they are not reducible to one another. Action is action upon the action of others, but this action recognizes that the other is free to act within a field of possibilities, that is to say, this action can take the form of resistance. But this formula suggests something different than what has been described in the previous paragraph. This formula seems to suggest that for a relationship to be described as a power relationship, it is necessary that a possibility of resistance be present: actions taken by those whose actions are being acted upon create the relationship of power and not the actions of those who desire to act upon the actions of others.⁶ If there is an essential agreement between partners in a relationship, it seems to be the case that the relationship cannot be described as a power relation in Foucault’s sense as there is an identity between the reciprocal action on action.

⁵ It is worth noting that by “The Subject and Power”, Foucault has dropped the language of war and battle present in *Society Must be Defended* and *History of Sexuality: An Introduction*, replacing it with terms such as game and contest. The terminology remains difficult: whereas the language of war seems overstated, the language of gaming seems trivial.

⁶ Marks (2004: 174) suggests this confusing formulation points to the non-subjective character of relations of power: what Foucault should do is drop the confusing attempt to emphasize resistance and focus upon the emergent character of relations of power. This draws attention away from the nearly impossible analytical task of creating a typology of forms of action and refocuses attention to the fact of the relationship itself.

Hypotheses on Power

Foucault presents a number of similar lists of “hypotheses which will need exploring” (*PS* 142) or “a certain number of propositions” (*HSI* 94). Although his language is tentative (“hypotheses” or “propositions” rather than assertions) and hesitant (“need exploring”), this is consistent with the generally self-effacing comments he makes about his own work: for instance, that he has “come to a standstill” that is located somewhere between boredom and torture (*SMD* 2). But not only are these comments consistent with his own evaluation of his work, they are also consistent with his resistance to laying down a theory, orthodoxy, or official interpretation of his work. “These are suggestions for research, ideas, schemata, outlines, instruments; do what you like with them” (*SMD* 2). In spite of his dismissive tone, these hypotheses remain essentially unchanged between 1976 when he first suggested them and his last works nearly a decade later. It therefore seems acceptable to take these hypotheses as Foucault’s position on power. These lists can be remade roughly into seven hypotheses on power. The division between each hypothesis is more or less arbitrary and each relies upon the others.

1. *Power is omnipresent.* Because power has freedom, resistance and action as its basic conditions of existence, wherever all three elements exist there is power.⁷ Thus,

⁷ To the best of my knowledge, Foucault never elaborated on the *type* of condition these are. In standard philosophical language, is freedom/resistance/action a *necessary* or *sufficient* condition? It does not seem debatable that these are *necessary*, but are they *sufficient*? Foucault clearly holds that without all three of freedom/resistance/action that there can be no relation of power, but do these three constitute *sufficient* conditions for the existence of a relation of power? Perhaps questions such as these are best left to philosophers.

power cannot be said to exist in fixed positions: symbols, buildings, institutions, and the like. Instead, power occupies a temporal space between reciprocal actions, “it is produced from one moment to the next, at every point, or rather in every relation from one point to another. Power is everywhere [...] because it comes from everywhere” (*HS* 93). Power is produced in the relation between moments. Because power describes the relationship of a balance of force predicated upon freedom, resistance and action, power must be “co-extensive with the social body; there are no spaces of primal liberty between the meshes of its network” (*PS* 142). Liberty as such only exists insofar as there is power; if there is no power, there is no liberty. This formulation immediately calls into question and rejects emancipatory projects based upon finding primal sources of liberty – be it in sexuality (such as Marcuse) or in labour (such as Marx).⁸ But one is wrong to think this is a totalitarian understanding of power, “to say that one can never be ‘outside’ power does not mean that one is trapped and condemned to defeat no matter what” (*PS* 142). One must remember that power has resistance – the possibility of losing, of escape, and of challenge – as a condition of its very existence. Power is thus not cynical.

2. *Power is nominalistic*, it is “the name that one attributes to a complex strategical situation in a particular society” (*HSI* 93).⁹ Power is thus not an institution (ex, the state), or a structure (ex, the capitalist class), or an ‘endowed capacity’. That power must be understood nominalistically forces the recognition that “relations [of power] don’t take the sole form of prohibition and punishment, but are of multiple forms”

⁸ The relationship between freedom and liberty remains mostly unexplored in the secondary Foucauldian literature.

⁹ Bruce Curtis, in private correspondence, points out that this is the exact definition of the state given by Miller and Rose.

(*PS* 142).¹⁰ One must resist understanding power in terms of a possession or property, such as sovereignty, authority or capital, as consensual or coercive, such as a social contract or domination, as legitimate or illegitimate, or as juridical or punitive, such as law or violence. Power is better thought of as describing struggles, conflicts, confrontations, and wars. Power is therefore an unbalanced relationship of force: “Power is war, the continuation of war by other means” (*SMD* 15). Thus politics “sanctions and reproduces the disequilibrium of forces manifested in war” (*SMD* 16). Like war, power involves strategies for the management of unbalanced relations of force, but unlike war power does not have the goal of destroying the bodies of enemies for political reasons.¹¹ But this is not to say that power is violence – this claim has already been refused and eliminated because violence cannot form a condition of possibility of power – it is to say, however, that relations of power, like war, involve offensives, defensives, resistances, and strategies.

3. *Power is dispersed* throughout the entirety of the social body. If power is not a possession, property or law, it must be found elsewhere. Power thus exists wherever it is exercised in action. Because “power is exercised from innumerable points” it can take as many forms as there are possibilities “in the interplay of nonegalitarian and mobile relations” (*HSI* 94).¹² The emphasis on nonegalitarian and mobile is essential because power is the name given to the disequilibrium of forces. If all were equal and in agreement, there would be no action, no freedom, and no resistance and therefore the

¹⁰ But this is not to say that they can not take the form of prohibition and punishment.

¹¹ See Elain Scarry’s *The Body in Pain* for a convincing elaboration of this connection between the destruction of bodies for political reasons and war.

¹² This would include, however, property relations and ownership. Foucault displaces the explanatory ability of a commodity model of power while preserving some of its insights.

conditions for the possibility of power would not be present. Mobility refers to the claim that power is not concentrated in a fixed structure, such as the state or capitalist class, but the name of innumerable force relations that can arise anywhere in the social body.

4. *Power is productive and immanent.* Power relations “have a directly productive role wherever they come into play” (HSI 94). Because power relations are the “immediate effects of the divisions, inequalities and disequilibriums” which occur in other forms of relations, “relations of power are not in a position of exteriority with respect to other types of relationships [...] but are immanent in the latter” (*ibid*). Relations of power “are interwoven with other kinds of relations (production, kinship, family, sexuality) for which they play at once a conditioning and conditioned role” (PS 142). This particular hypothesis, in conjunction with the seventh hypothesis below, places a limit upon the first hypothesis; that power is everywhere. Power may be everywhere, but that does not entail that it is totalitarian, restrictive, and repressive. Rather, it suggests that some relationships are characterized by equilibrium, equality and identity, while others are characterized by disequilibrium, inequality, and division, and some others still are characterized by domination and total determination. Each of these is respectively relations, power relations, and violence. It is, however, not clear if such a thing as an equal balance of forces could exist in Foucault’s analytic of power. Such a thing is possible in a teleological and dialectical philosophy of history, such as Hegel’s, that proposes an end-state of universal reciprocity. It would be incorrect to compare Foucault’s analytic of power to Newton’s three laws of motion. The First Law is superficially applicable (‘an object at rest tends to stay at rest and an object in motion tends to stay in motion at a constant velocity unless either are acted upon by an

unbalanced force'), the Second Law is not applicable at all, and the Third Law ('for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction') does not make sense in Foucault's analytic of power. At the very least, mechanistic and teleological arguments about balanced forces must be rejected.

5. *Power comes from below.* Power is not superstructural, as it might be conceived in certain versions of Marxism, rather "power relations are rooted deep in the social nexus, not reconstituted 'above' society as a supplementary structure whose radical effacement one could perhaps dream of" (SP 222). Because power is relational, it is not possible to do away with power without also doing away with the social nexus. Power is not something that can be fought, but it is rather one of the conditions for there to be a fight in the first place. A political project that seeks to do away with power must necessarily fail.

6. *Power is intentional and nonsubjective.* Power is intentional because its strategies have objectives, but it is also nonsubjective because it cannot be said to have an origin in a particular individual or collective actor. Although "there is no power that is exercised without a series of aims and objectives", these aims and objectives are "great anonymous, almost unspoken strategies" that have neither been invented or formulated by anyone (HSI 95). That is not to say that power is cynical, deceitful and conceals itself, but rather that the "rationality of power is characterized by tactics that are often quite explicit at the restricted level where they are inscribed" (*ibid*). These restricted tactics become "connected to one another, attracting and propagating one another" with the result of forming "comprehensive systems" (HS 95). Strategies equally do not arise from

the choice or decision of an individual or collective, just as they do not arise from a headquarters, ruling class, or state apparatus.

7. *Power is coextensive with resistance.* The importance of this final hypothesis cannot be overstated. As such, the discussion of this often misunderstood proposition will be far longer and more detailed than the discussions of the previous hypotheses. This proposition is often cited and discussed. It reads as follows: “Where there is power, there is resistance, and yet, or rather consequently, this resistance is never in a position in a position of exteriority in relation to power” (HSI 95). Because power is exercised at a multiplicity of points, it follows that resistance is also exercised at a multiplicity of points. Just as power has no central mechanism controlling its exercise throughout the social body, there is also no central ‘locus of great refusal’. This dual relationship between a multiplicity of points of power and a multiplicity of points of resistance that mutually constitute one another is worth discussing at length.

Michael Ryan (1994) seeks to subvert Foucault’s analytic of power through what he calls “Foucault’s fallacy”. Ryan reads Foucault as making the claim that strategies of power produce resistance, but Ryan’s claim is the opposite: a strategy of power is a response to resistance. It is Ryan’s claim that Foucault “conceives of power as primary and productive activity when it should be seen as a response to the dangers posed by implicit resistance, dangers that must be permanently stabilized if the society is to survive” (1994: 159). Ryan proposes two corollaries (1994: 159-60) to this fallacy. The first claims that Foucault holds that power produces subjects, when in fact subjects produce power. Thus, someone subject to a disciplinary regime must exist as a subject prior to the imposition of the disciplinary regime. The second holds that Foucault is

mistaken to believe that positive realities are constructed by ‘power/discourse’ when in fact positive discourses are responses to ‘negativities’ whose “immunity to discursive capture underscores the indeterminacy and contingency of all such positive realities” (Ryan 1994: 160). Ryan is essentially correct, but he misses the key point made by Foucault in *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction* and in “The Subject and Power”: resistance does produce power because power itself is already resistance. For whatever reason, Ryan fails to cite either of these texts in his article, choosing instead to emphasize *Discipline and Punish* (which describes different regimes of punishment) and *The Use of Pleasure* (which describes the ethics of sex in ancient Greece). Neither of these texts addresses the analytic of power as such, but rather they address different practices and technologies of power – specifically punishment and sexuality.

The key to understanding this fundamental point, that resistance is the condition of possibility of power, is to be found, first, in Foucault’s discussion of ‘race’ in ‘*Society Must be Defended*’, and, second, in its more developed form as ‘agonism’ in “The Subject and Power”. A discussion of the transition from ‘race war’ to ‘agonism’ highlights the importance of resistance in the constitution of relations of power. In part because of the delayed publication of ‘*Society Must be Defended*’, the central role that race plays in Foucault’s thought has been mostly overlooked in the secondary literature. Few people, at least in the English speaking world, took advantage or have had the chance to take advantage of the tape recordings archived in France. Antonio Campillo’s “On War” (translated and published in 1994), Pasquale Pasquino’s “Political theory of war and peace” (translated and published in 1993), and Ann Laura Stoler’s *Race and the Education of Desire* (1995) present the only exceptions. The recent publication of the

entirety of the lectures in French and their translation into English has seen a number of substantial review articles published in English, including John Marks' "Foucault, Franks, Gauls" (2000), Stuart Elden's "The War of Races and the Constitution of the State" (2002), and Stuart Murray's "Myth as Critique?" (2004). Due to the relative obscurity of these lectures at the time of Ryan's article, he cannot be faulted for ignorance of them. Nonetheless, he raises a frequent objection to Foucault that needs to be addressed.

Among the new concepts introduced during the lectures that comprise '*Society Must be Defended*' are 'race war' and 'war as an analyzer of power'. These concepts are aimed directly at addressing the relation among power, resistance and struggle. They present the first attempt by Foucault to conceive the double binary structure of both power (two opposing forces) and society (two opposing races) which culminates in the analytic of power set out in "The Subject and Power". The attempt to think both society and power as a binary structure underpins the claim that action, freedom and resistance form the conditions of possibility of power that underlies his 'agonism'.

Rather than beginning with the subject and elements existing prior to the power relationship, Foucault suggests that we begin with the relationship itself; to see how the power relationship determines its elements. Investigating the power relationship itself reveals that even in cases of domination, there is not a single particular element determining the entirety of the relationship itself. Thus "showing how the various operators of domination support one another, relate to one another, at how they converge and reinforce one another in some cases, and negate or strive to annul one another in other cases" (*SMD* 45). Rather than tracing the relations back to their origins, it is

necessary to attempt to “identify the technical instruments that guarantee that they function” (SMD 46). In Foucault’s analysis it therefore becomes necessary to pose the following questions: “To what extent and how can the relationship of force be reduced to a relationship of war?” and “Can we and must we group together in the general mechanism, the general form, known as war, phenomena such as antagonism, rivalry, confrontation, and struggles between groups, individuals, classes?” (SMD 46). He suggests that the social body is divided by a rift of opposing relations of force he calls “race”. This structure of the social body is a reflection of constantly and consistently repeating relations of force he calls “power”. At the level of microanalysis, one could be confronted with a relationship of force between an employer and an employee and at the level of macroanalysis one could be confronted with a relationship of force between capitalists and proletarians. The small relationship between two individuals repeats itself in the large relationship between two classes. Foucault attempts to demonstrate in *‘Society Must be Defended’* this particular structure of power and race as it becomes manifest in a genealogical counter-historico-political discourse of “race war”.

At this point, Foucault concludes that yes, war can be an effective way of analyzing relations of power. Foucault’s answer to this question is worth quoting at length, as it provides the foundation of his argument about the binary structure of society:

War is the motor behind institutions and order. In the smallest of its cogs, peace is waging a secret war. To put it another way, we have to interpret the war that is going on beneath peace; peace itself is a coded war. We are therefore at war with one another; a battlefield runs through the whole of society, continuously and permanently, and it is this battlefield that puts us all on one side or the other. There is no such thing as a neutral subject. We are all inevitably someone’s adversary (SMD 50-1).

It is with this insight – albeit stated with rhetorical flair – that Foucault claims to have found another principle describing society that differs from the ‘great pyramidal

description' from the Middle Ages, the 'philosophico-political theories' gave of the social body, the estates in France, or the social organism by Hobbes. This "binary structure that runs through society" claims that "there are two groups, two categories of individuals, or two armies, and they are opposed to each other" (*SMD* 51). Perhaps recognizing that the terms race and war are somewhat loaded, Foucault shifts his language away from race and war to agonism and struggle. Nonetheless, the basic insight and claim, that the social body is fractured by a series of binaries that mutually and oppositionally constitute one another, remains.

I have already identified that for Foucault, power "designates relationships between partners" (*SP* 217). The meaning of power therefore turns on the meaning of partners. At no point does Foucault equate the meaning of partner with enemy; instead he carefully chooses the word adversary (*SP* 226). The choice of the word adversary has importance consequences. This word choice can be contrasted with an equally careful decision on the part of Carl Schmitt to base his concept of the political on the distinction between friend and enemy. It is instructive to compare Schmitt and Foucault on the use of these words.

For Schmitt, "the distinction of friend and enemy denotes the utmost degree of intensity of a union or separation, of an association or dissociation" (1996: 26). Schmitt continues, "the friend and enemy concepts are to be understood in their concrete and existential sense, not as metaphors or symbols" (1996: 27). The enemy is not 'a debating adversary' or an 'economic competitor', instead, "the enemy is not merely any competitor or just any partner of a conflict in general. He is almost not the private adversary whom one hates. An enemy exists only when, at least potentially, one fighting

collectivity of people confronts a similar collectivity” (1996: 28). For Schmitt, unlike the adversary concept,

To the enemy concept belongs the ever present possibility of combat. All peripherals must be left aside from this term, including military details and the development of weapons technology. War is armed combat between organized political entities; civil war is armed combat within an organized unit. A self-laceration endangers the survival of the latter. The essence of a weapon is that it is a means of physically killing human beings. Just as the term enemy, the word combat, too, is to be understood in its original existential sense. [...] The friend, enemy, and combat concepts receive their real meaning precisely because they refer to the real possibility of physical killing. War follows from enmity. War is the existential negation of the enemy (1996: 33).

Schmitt’s single-minded insistence on enemies and ‘war as the existential negation of the other’ contrasts strongly with Foucault’s nearly opposite claims about war and adversaries. As far back as *Society Must be Defended*, Foucault is adamant that he is talking about adversaries and not enemies: “The silence of an adversary – and this is a methodological principle or tactical principle that must always be kept in mind – could just as easily be a sign that he is not afraid of us at all” (*SMD* 12). He also shifts the meaning of war, “Are we really talking about war when we analyze the workings of power? [...] Is power quite simply a continuation of war by means other than weapons and battles?” (*SMD* 18). Later, Foucault writes “The relationship proper to power would not therefore be sought on the side of violence or of struggle, nor on that of voluntary linking [...] but rather in the area of the singular mode of action, *neither warlike nor juridical*, which is government” (*SP* 221, emphasis added). This discussion will be revisited in the next chapter in response to Neocleous’ (1996a) critique of Foucault, which suggests that Foucault’s position is dangerously close to Schmitt’s position and, by implication, because Schmitt was a fascist, that Foucault’s position is potentially (if not actually) fascist. For now, the important point remains that even when Foucault proposed

the model of war to understand the analysis of power, he was concerned with the implications of using the words war and race. These concerns become manifest in his attempt in “The Subject and Power” to reframe the analytic of power in terms of agonism rather than as race war.

The concept of ‘agonism’ is, according to translator of “The Subject and Power”, a neologism developed by Foucault that attempts to capture the meaning of “a physical contest in which opponents develop a strategy of reaction and of mutual taunting, as in a wrestling match” (*SP* 221n3). Although the associated meanings of ‘physical contest’ and combat remain in agonism, their importance has been replaced by reciprocal strategies of taunting and reaction. Foucault describes agonism as “a relationship which is at the same time reciprocal incitation and struggle; less of a face-to-face confrontation which paralyzes both sides than a permanent provocation” (*SP* 221). Purged is the language of violence and war, being replaced by a game metaphor that emphasizes that the relationship between strategies produces both conditions of power and of resistance. Because the strategies are at once reciprocal and permanent, it thus analytically impossible to separate power and resistance, except insofar as relations of power only exist when there is a disequilibrium of force relations that is challenged. This long discussion had the point of demonstrating the important relationship between resistance and power. Some commentators, such as Ryan, have suggested that Foucault has missed the essential point that resistance creates power. This discussion has shown, first, that Foucault did not miss this point at all and, second, that a thorough analysis of the problem reveals that it is nearly impossible to separate power and resistance, therefore a call to give one analytical primacy over the other is misplaced.

Levels of Analysis

Foucault proposes “an ascending analysis of power” that begins with “its infinitesimal mechanisms” and extends to “increasingly general mechanisms and forms of overall domination” (*SMD* 30). The first level concerns the multiplicity of force relations, the second level concerns a process of struggles, the third level examines how struggles create or destroy systems and chains, and the final level analyzes power at its strategic level (*HSI* 92-3; *SMD* 30). Many of the elements of these levels repeat or categorize the previous hypotheses on power, as such this section covers relatively familiar ground.

The first level of analysis is the ‘extremities’ of power where it becomes ‘capillary’ (*SMD* 27-8), where power constitutes itself “as the multiplicity of force relations immanent in the sphere in which they operate and constitute their own organization” (*HST* 92). This level of analysis occurs prior to the investment of intentionality and the constitution of subjectivity, thus rather than examining power as purposeful, tactical, or strategical, power must be approached “by looking at its external face” where it becomes manifest in “real and effective practices” (*SMD* 28). Power, then, is approached in the first instance as the relationship of force between entities at the point where this relationship is constituted. Thus, rather than presupposing that a relationship is racist or sexist, it is necessary to look at the relationship itself – what is happening, what occurs, what possibilities are opened up and excluded, who can do what and with what – prior to ascribing real systems and strategies of racism and sexism to the relationship itself.

If the first level of analysis reveals that there is a relationship of an imbalance of force, it follows, based upon the hypotheses, that there is also a relationship of freedom and struggle. Thus, first “we begin with the power relationship itself”, that is “with the actual and effective relationship of domination” to “see how that relationship itself determines the elements to which it is applied” (*SMD* 45). This second level of analysis seeks to explore how the relationship functions as a process which “through ceaseless struggles and confrontations, transforms, strengthens, or reverses” the multiplicity of force relations investigated at the first level.

The third level of analysis seeks to explore how power, operating at its extremities through ceaseless struggle, constitutes a system, chain or network or, on the contrary, creates a series of ruptures, disjunctions, and contradictions (*HSI* 92; *SMD* 29). If power creates networks of repeating relations of force and struggle, then power cannot be said to be possessed as a capacity or a commodity. This also means that individuals are not mere targets and objects of power, but rather that they are the relays through which power passes. Thus, repeating series of force relations either “converge and reinforce one another” or they “negate and strive to annul one another” (*SMD* 45).

The final level of analysis proposed by Foucault (one could, of course, imagine higher levels of analysis) connects the networks of power to mechanisms of formal knowledge, technologies and rationalities. Thus, “the delicate mechanisms of power cannot function unless knowledge, or rather knowledge apparatuses, are formed, organized, and put into circulation” (*SMD* 33-4). Contrary to arguments such as those put forward by such Marxists as Althusser (1984), these “apparatuses are not ideological trimmings or edifices” (*SMD* 33-4). An apparatus extends beyond the simply discursive

domains of knowledge to include the non-discursive domains of actions, objects, and things.

The concept of 'apparatus', or *dispositif* in French, remains relatively unexplored. For instance, Dreyfus and Rabinow's (1983) otherwise excellent text makes no mention of the concept at all. Deleuze (1992: 159) compares an apparatus to cartography: "Untangling these lines within a social apparatus is, in each case, like drawing up a map, doing cartography, surveying unknown landscapes, and this is what he [Foucault] calls 'working on the ground'". These 'lines' include, but are not limited to, the means through which 'seeing' and 'saying' is connected through force resulting in subjectification (Deleuze 1992: 160). Thus, an apparatus connects objects, subjects, knowledge and power. Foucault explicated the concept of apparatus most thoroughly in an interview titled "The Confession of the Flesh" (1980b: 194-8) where he identifies three elements of an apparatus: "the said as much as the unsaid", "the nature of the connection that can exist between these heterogeneous elements", and "a dominant strategic function". At this level of abstraction, Foucault believes that it becomes possible to explain how victories and defeats occur at the lower levels of analysis: "if one isn't content with descriptions, then one does have to pose the problems in terms of strategies, and ask, 'Why did that work? How did that hold?'" (1980b: 209). Approaching the question of how and why at this level of abstraction enables the explanation of why a 'certain relation of forces' was not only able to 'maintain itself', but also to 'accentuate, stabilise and broaden itself' (1980b: 206).

Conclusion

This chapter began with a discussion of Althusser's concept of "Theory" because it was developed at the same time as Foucault's concept of "analytic". Althusser and Foucault have indicated their close intellectual relationship and thus it is reasonable to believe that they are engaged in an intellectual dialogue with one another. The concept of "Theory" was shown to make different claims than the concept of an "analytic". A "Theory" proposes positive content of the object under discussion, and therefore proposes a pre-existing theoretical and conceptual apparatus. Meanwhile, an "analytic" presupposes no theoretical or conceptual object. Instead, an analytic of power suggests a number of hypotheses about power predicated on a number of conditions of existence. Through the process of beginning with the smallest elements – in this case a relation whereby two unequal forces come into contact – and then working up to a larger frame of reference, power can be analyzed in its specificity emphasizing its manifestation at the most minute level and thereby discovering how larger global strategies relate to local tactics.

Next I attempted to reconstruct the content of Foucault's analytic of power. I began with the premise that Foucault be taken seriously: he proposes that one should select an analytic of power over a theory of power and that this selection has important consequences at the chosen level of analysis. Despite his claims that power be investigated via an analytic, Foucault never presented a coherent single statement on his analytic of power. Instead, the analytic of power is discussed in varying detail throughout a number of publications, interviews, and lectures. I attempted to reconcile these various – and occasionally conflicting – statements with one another in an effort to

suggest that Foucault does indeed have an analytic of power, that the analytic of power is coherent, and that an analytic makes a different sets of claims than a theory. In the next chapter I seek to demonstrate that these effects are important: rather than demonstrating this through an empirical case study, I will demonstrate that Foucault's most prominent critics mistake the importance of Foucault's analytic of power and this has important consequences upon their critique.

III

The Critique of Power

To recapitulate the trajectory of the argument thus far: Michel Foucault's work has been identified as providing an important contribution to both social theory and to empirical sociology. A leading approach in sociology to Foucault takes his concept of governmentality as a beginning point. Thus, the first chapter explicated Foucault's concept of governmentality, how it has been taken up in the secondary literature by the 'governmentality school', and provided a critique of the governmentality school. It was shown that the governmentality school, despite laying claim to the dominant interpretation of Foucault in sociology, presents a rather theoretically weak and conceptually incoherent interpretation. The second chapter thus took it upon itself to provide a theoretically strong and conceptually coherent interpretation of Foucault identifying his 'analytic of power' as of the greatest use for sociology. A detailed discussion of the differences between theory and analytic demonstrated the importance of taking Foucault's analytic seriously. The rest of the chapter presented an account and interpretation of Foucault's analytic of power. This final chapter shifts terrain significantly: a number of commentators, especially liberal political philosophers and some Marxist sociologists, have identified Foucault's 'theory of power' as incoherent, nihilistic, morally suspect, and politically dangerous. In light of my attempt to re-direct the interpretation of Foucault to his analytic of power, I will revisit the arguments of these prominent and important critiques in an attempt to demonstrate that, properly understood, Foucault's analytic is not guilty as charged.

Two major sorts of critique have been aimed at Foucault: on the one hand he is accused of presenting a theory of power that is not capable of presenting a critique of existing relations of power and, on the other hand, Foucault is accused of presenting a theory of power that is dangerously close to the political theory of the Nazis. Thus, Foucault is either an odd sort of conservative, a 'Young Conservative', who cannot present a normatively grounded critique of the present, or as a dangerous radical whose politics are dubiously similar to Carl Schmitt's. The first critique belongs to political philosophy (Jürgen Habermas, Nancy Fraser, Michael Walzer) while the second critique belongs to Marxist sociology. Interestingly, Foucault's analytic of power is rejected by both poles in contemporary political philosophy, both communitarians and liberals find his work indigestible.

Infantile Leftist?

Michael Walzer, political theorist and moral philosopher, is among those who accuse Foucault of being a conservative – and dangerously so. In an article entitled "The Politics of Michel Foucault" (1986), Walzer sets out to demonstrate, despite Foucault's claims to the contrary, that Foucault possesses a consistent political theory, that it is an example of what Walzer was taught to call "infantile leftism" (1986: 51), and, worse, that this infantile political theory is dangerous.

Walzer's first step is to attempt a claim to a higher moral ground: he claims that Foucault's political writings on events ("May '68, the prison revolts of the early seventies, the Iranian revolution, and so on") constitute an "infantile leftism" which, Walzer was taught as a graduate student, meant an "endorsement... of the most radical

political argument in any political struggle” (*ibid*). But Walzer claims he is above taking swipes at Foucault’s political positions; he is interested in Foucault’s political theory. The second step, therefore, requires that Walzer demonstrate that Foucault holds a political theory in spite of Foucault’s claim to the contrary. He quotes Foucault denying a political theory and points to Foucault’s claim to “build little by little a strategic knowledge”. Although Foucault defines strategy elsewhere and discusses it in detail, Walzer glosses his own definition: “strategic knowledge implies to my mind a coherent view of reality and a sense of purpose” (*ibid*). He therefore concludes that ‘strategic knowledge’ is a code-word for ‘theory’. In addition to ignoring Foucault’s ‘infantile leftism’, Walzer will ignore Foucault’s failure to conform to the standards of American academic philosophy (“annoyingly presented”, “rhetorically inflated”) and “try to puzzle out what the author is saying” (1986: 52-3). This leads to the third step, Walzer’s evaluation of Foucault:

Foucault gives an importantly wrong account of local discipline; rhetorically inflated and drained of moral distinctions, it nevertheless captures something of the reality of contemporary society (1986: 53).

This leaves us with two questions: what is it that Foucault is “importantly wrong” about and why is his “wrongness important”? Walzer identifies Foucault’s political theory as an attempt to displace the theory of sovereignty by a pluralist theory of power. Because the change in theory ostensibly reflects a historical change in social organization, whereas previously subjects were the subjects of domination by a sovereign authority such as a king,

Now there is a new subjection, which creates and legitimizes new subjects – not the carriers of rights but of norms, the agents and also the products of moral, medical, sexual, psychological (rather than legal) regulation. Our interest shifts, because the action shifts, from a singular state to a pluralist society (1986: 54).

After identifying, correctly or not, Foucault as possessing a pluralist theory of power, Walzer makes reference to another group of pluralists who “denied the existence of a directing center, [thus] robbed radical politics of its object” who defended a “conservative” view that “power was radically dispersed in American society” (1986: 54). These pluralists were wrong, as Walzer (*ibid*) learnt “in a graduate seminar with Barrington Moore”,¹ because

yet, of course there was such a center, if not always visible or self-conscious or highly organized: law and policy had a shape, corresponded to a set of interests; and the interests imposed the shape, dominating if they did not absolutely control the making of law and policy .

Foucault’s apparent refusal to accept the centrality of the state is proper grounds, for Walzer (1986: 55), to accuse Foucault of ‘having conservative implications’, ‘having anti-Leninist implications’, ‘sounding like a reformist politics’, ‘reformism’, ‘is not a good revolutionary’, ‘doesn’t believe in democratic revolution’, and ‘doesn’t believe in a vanguard revolution’.

Walzer’s charges appear to be as follows:

(1) Foucault lies when he says that he has no political theory; Foucault clearly has a political theory that Walzer calls “local discipline”;

¹ Walzer’s constant reference to his graduate education is more than a little disturbing. This paper, although a requirement for formally obtaining a graduate education, is surely not the be-all and end-all of my intellectual development. Why Walzer, who obtained his doctorate in 1961, makes constant reference to courses he took (as of the writing this particular essay) twenty-two years earlier is not clear. But maybe it is: if *Walzer* learnt these ‘facts’ while a *graduate student*, surely a *famous intellectual* should also be aware of these basic facts – especially if both claim to be of the left. Walzer is implicitly accusing Foucault of possessing an incomplete education – as though a ‘historian of systems of thought’ should be held liable for not discussing American Pluralists in *Discipline & Punish*! This may not meet Walzer’s definition of an “infantile leftism”, but surely it is an example of “immature argumentation”! Comments such as these blur the lines between Walzer’s stated attempt to interrogate Foucault’s political theory without petty bickering. It is little wonder that Foucault never saw fit to address Walzer’s arguments.

- (2) Foucault proposes a historical and theoretical transition from a 'society of sovereignty' to a 'society of discipline';
- (3) Because Foucault rejects the political theory of sovereignty this means that he rejects the importance – and possibly the existence – of the state;
- (4) The previous three charges culminate in proof that Foucault is a conservative and is therefore dangerous to political theorists on the left.

These charges are, at best, misleading and, at worst, dishonest obfuscation. First, the argument that Foucault has a political theory is incorrect and dishonest because Walzer decontextualizes a short comment in an interview, points to a distinction between theory and strategy, and then imputes his own definition of strategy as the definition of theory rather than drawing upon Foucault's own definitions of strategy. Second, Foucault (1991) denies proposing a historical transition from sovereignty to discipline where sovereignty ceases to exist and discipline becomes the sole content of politics. Instead, Foucault proposes a much more nuanced account: social and political reality is characterized by three poles, sovereignty-discipline-government, that manifest themselves in particular historical configurations. Some eras are characterized by the prevalence of sovereignty while others are characterized by the prevalence of discipline or government. None, however, exist solely as discipline, government, or sovereign. Third, as Foucauldian critics of governmentality have pointed out, the state is a central category in Foucault's analysis, both in its historical and contemporary dimensions. It is thus clear that rather than presenting a coherent and reasoned objection to Foucault's analytic of power (which Walzer mistakenly calls a theory), Walzer is content to engage

in petty polemic. There are, however, arguments of a similar sort that are worthy of more detailed consideration.

A Young Conservative?

Jürgen Habermas famously accused Foucault of being a ‘Young Conservative’. This charge has frequently been misunderstood, especially in North America, to mean that Foucault is, in some sense, a political conservative ideologically aligned with something akin to the Republican Party in the United States or something akin to the Reform Party in Canada. This interpretation, however, is misleading and incorrect as Nancy Fraser (1994) explains in detail.

According to Fraser (1994: 185-6), the phrase “Young Conservative” has a very precise meaning inside Germany that is not well-known outside Germany. The term refers to an interwar group of “conservative revolutionaries”, a group of ‘radical, antimodernist intellectuals whose numbers include Martin Heidegger, Ernst Junger, Carl Schmitt and Hans Freyer’. Many of these names are unfamiliar in the English language – Martin Heidegger is often identified as a semi-mystical philosopher who provided the groundwork for the much more well known ‘deconstruction’ of Jacques Derrida, and Carl Schmitt’s work did not come to any prominence in the English language until well after Foucault’s death. Hans Freyer and Ernst Junger remain largely unknown. In addition to the obscurity of this group, the actual ‘group character’ of the group is somewhat questionable. For instance, despite both Martin Heidegger and Carl Schmitt being prominent scholars and members of the Nazi Party, they never met and only exchanged a single letter – Carl Schmitt sent Martin Heidegger a copy of the second edition of his

Concept of the Political and Martin Heidegger replied thanking him for the book (Bendersky 1983). Thus, it is difficult to ascribe a group character to this obscure group. The charge, however, makes some sense. Many have identified Foucault as having Heideggerian tendencies (Dreyfus and Rabinow 1983; Elden 2001).

What then is the theoretical position of the “Young Conservatives”? What beliefs, rather than personal connections, bring them together as a group? Fraser identifies a ‘total critique of modernity’ and, therefore, the overcoming of modernity as their goal. Schmitt attempts this through developing a new form of politics, while Heidegger attempts to destroy the foundations of modern ontology and metaphysics, thus clearing the way for a post-modern future. However, critics of the “Young Conservatives” such as Habermas, view the ‘total critique of modernity’ as both theoretically paradoxical and politically suspect. Habermas makes this claim for two closely connected reasons. First, because the ‘total critique of modernity’ presupposes certain modern categories in the attempt to surpass modernity. Second, because the ‘total critique of modernity’ rejects a properly dialectical solution to the problem of modernity and instead calls for a rejection of modernity. According to Habermas, modernity does indeed constitute a problem, but the solution to the problem is to be found through normatively grounded critical theory and the historical completion of modernity. Habermas then brings Foucault into proximity with the “Young Conservatives” and finds a similarly theoretically paradoxical and politically suspect project.

Habermas (1994a, 1994b) devotes two lengthy and detailed papers to the subject of Foucault’s ‘critique of modernity’. Habermas understands Foucault as follows, “he is interested in the human sciences as media that in modernity strengthen and promote the

mysterious process of this socialization, that is, the investment with power of concrete, bodily mediated interactions” (1994a: 51). According to Habermas, Foucault has an “altogether unsociological concept of the social” (*ibid*) because it is not obvious what sort of theoretical framework allows for discourses to be connected to practices. Does Foucault employ a base/superstructure model? or a structure/event model? does one govern the other? or is there a form of circular causality? But these questions are not Habermas’s central worry about Foucault; instead his concern is whether a historical critique of the human sciences can succeed as a total critique of modernity:

will take up the question of whether Foucault succeeds in bringing off a radical critique of reason in the form of a historiography of the human sciences, which starts as archaeology and is expanded into genealogy, without getting caught in the aporias of this self-referential undertaking (1994a: 55).

Habermas further understands that “the entire weight of the problematic rests on the basic concept of power”, but Habermas understands Foucault as borrowing his concept of power wholesale from Nietzsche whose authority “is not enough to justify its systematic usage” (1994a: 57). There is thus a conflation of Nietzsche and Foucault, but this is the beginning of Habermas’ problems.

Up to this point, Habermas has claimed that Foucault is doubly unsociological, in his concept of power and in his concept of the social. But this raises a double problem: first, Foucault never claimed to be a sociologist, thus it is not clear why he should be held to the standards of sociological discourse. There is, however, a deeper problem. Habermas suggests that Foucault’s argument is to critique the concept of modernity from the perspectives of the human sciences. In his examples of the human sciences, Habermas lists sociology. If Habermas is correct and Foucault’s project is to provide a total critique of modernity so as to overcome or reject the concept of modernity, and if

Habermas has already argued that the total critique of modernity presented by the “Young Conservatives” is theoretically paradoxical because it presupposes certain modern categories while arguing against others, then Habermas should therefore recognize Foucault’s project as successful and without paradox because Foucault has managed to avoid presupposing modern categories such as a ‘sociological concept of the social’. This does not appear to be the case. Instead Habermas chastises Foucault for *not* presupposing particular modern categories, specially concepts of power and the social as defined by sociological discourse.

The second problem carries this thought further: Habermas argues that Foucault’s concept of power is unsociological and therefore unmodern because there is, according to Habermas, an equivalence between Nietzsche’s concept of power and Foucault’s concept of power. In order to make this demonstration, Habermas draws upon Foucault’s essay, “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History”. But, does Foucault actually present *his own* position in this essay? If he does present his own position, what is it? Whatever Foucault’s own position may be on ‘Nietzschean genealogy’ or ‘Foucauldian genealogy’, it is not clear that Habermas is correct on either account. A close reading of the essay suggests that Foucault, an acknowledged master of irony, is embracing certain critics’ identifications of him as a Nietzschean and then discussing his own concepts through Nietzsche’s voice. If one fails to read “Nietzsche, Genealogy History” carefully, then one will fail to see where Foucault agrees with Nietzsche, where Foucault disagrees with Nietzsche, and most importantly, how Foucault qualitatively transforms Nietzsche’s concept of genealogy. There thus remains an important difference between Foucault’s understanding of Nietzsche’s concept of power and Foucault’s own concept of power. There are at least

four points to be made here. First, “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History” does not present Foucault’s concept of power, but it does present an important point in the development of Foucault’s concept of genealogy. Second, Habermas goes to this essay for Foucault’s position on power and finds Foucault discussing Nietzsche’s concept of power. He then confuses Foucault’s commentary on Nietzsche’s concept of power with Foucault’s own position on power. There is thus a conflation of Nietzsche and Foucault into a single position on power and genealogy. What can be said about Nietzsche can now be said about Foucault. Third, Habermas misses the work that Foucault is actually doing: developing Nietzsche’s own concepts as far as they will go in thought without actually adopting it completely as his own. Finally, this misreading of the essay combined with the conflation of Nietzsche and Foucault says more about the narrow view of Habermas’ concept of critique rather than about Foucault’s concept of power.

Habermas’s confusion continues – and this is before he even gets to his serious charges against Foucault – when he first identifies Foucault’s project as presenting a “theory” of power (1994a: 57) and then writes “the only *thing* that lasts is power” (1994a: 61; emphasis mine). Habermas thus clearly misunderstands Foucault’s analytic of power. First, as demonstrated in the previous chapter, there are significant and important differences between the claims that a theory can make and the claims that an analytic can make. Many of Habermas’ confusions arise from mistaking the nature of Foucault’s concept of power; confusing an analytic for a theory.

Second, identifying the concept of power as pertaining to a theory allows Habermas to call power “a thing”. Power is not “a thing” but is an effect of an unequal relation of forces. Habermas thus falls into the liberal concept of power as possession,

contract, and commodity that Foucault clearly rejects. Power, unlike “a thing” cannot be accumulated, nor can it be possessed. Thus, Habermas confuses the nature of power: for Foucault, power is not a substance, it is the name given to the relationship between unequal forces. Habermas, however, by identifying the concept of power as belonging to a theory is enable to endow power with positive content – power is “a thing” for Habermas – and it therefore inhabits a different ontological dimension. These two errors – attributing a theory of power to Foucault and identifying power as a substance – occur throughout Habermas’ two essays, betraying a fundamental misunderstanding of Foucault.

While identifying power as a theory and as a thing on pages fifty-seven and sixty-one, Habermas changes terminology: “Foucault now raises ‘power’ to a basic transcendental-historicist concept of historiography as critique of reason” (1994a: 62) thus once again betraying his confusion: Habermas wants to read Foucault’s concept of power as both theory and thing, but Foucault does not use these words. In fact, Foucault clearly rejects these usages. Habermas is then forced to distance himself from the unfamiliar concept: it is totally alien. Habermas had previously been discussing *power*, but now Habermas begins to discuss ‘*power*’. He sets aside Foucault’s concept of ‘power’ as alien which further mystifies the concept of power. He continues his argument drawing a straight line from “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History” to ‘*Society Must be Defended*’:

In his later studies, Foucault will fill out this abstract concept of power in a more tangible way; he will comprehend power as the interaction of warring forces, as the decentered network of bodily, face-to-face confrontations, and ultimately as the productive penetration and subjectivizing subjugation of a bodily opponent (1994a: 63-4).

But once again, Habermas confuses an example for the actual position: Foucault uses war ('warring parties') as an example of unequal relations of force. Foucault only means that power is war ('face-to-face confrontations') insofar as various forces capture bodies and bring them into proximity. In order for there to be power, the bodies must possess forces of unequal 'strength': they must be unequal and only then is it proper to speak of power. But Habermas' account cited immediately above is overly simplified and therefore misses the 'force' of Foucault's argument.

In "Some Questions Concerning the Theory of Power", Habermas restates his position with more force and focus. In this paper, Foucault is transformed from a dangerously incoherent Nietzschean into a renegade structuralist. In this context, Habermas reframes his critique and Foucault is charged with three crimes: presentism, relativism, and cryptonormativism.

But first, Habermas restates his understanding of Foucault. Oddly, Foucault ceases to be a Nietzschean and is transformed into a renegade structuralist. Habermas, thus imposes structuralist constraints upon Foucault's work, "The structuralist requirement that each unity of discourse be understood strictly in terms of itself seems to be satisfied only if the rules constitutive of discourse assume control, as it were, of their institutional basis" (1994b: 80).² He then imposes an incredibly broad definition of discourse, "Discourse is what first links the technological, economic, social and political conditions to the functioning network of practices that then serve to reproduce it" (*ibid*).

² It is not clear how this labeling of Foucault as a structuralist is in tune with his claim (1984a: 55) to recognize that Foucault's work "starts as archeology and is expanded into genealogy". Habermas appears to be attempting to constrain Foucault's concept of genealogy in "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History" with the concept of discursive formation developed in the *Archeaology of Knowledge*. See Foucault (1983) for a discussion of his relationship to both structuralism and post-structuralism.

He continues, “However, these rules can make a discourse comprehensible only as regards its conditions of possibility; they do not suffice to explain the discourse practice in its actual functioning – for there are no rules that could govern their own application” (1994b: 81). Thus, “conditions” are connected to “practices” via mediating “discourses”. In this formula, the method of investigation therefore privileges the formation of the discursive glue over both general conditions and practices. But through injecting a ‘theory of power’ into a structuralist framework, Foucault becomes a renegade:

Foucault escapes this difficulty when he gives up the autonomy of the forms of knowledge in favor of their foundation within power technologies and *subordinates* the archaeology of knowledge to the genealogy that explains the emergence of knowledge from practices of power (*ibid*).

Reversing the order of priority constitutes the theory of power: practices become fundamental in explaining the emergence of discourses shaped by their technological manifestations. This move to genealogy (identified with the theory of power) clears the way of the autonomy of discourses from practices.

But according to Habermas, this renegade move is also Foucault’s downfall:

With his energetic reversal of the relationships of dependency among forms of knowledge and practices of power, Foucault opens up a problematic social theory in contrast to the rigorously structuralist theory of history of systems of knowledge, and a naturalistic problematic in contrast to the history of the understanding of Being (as a critique of metaphysics).

In order to make this reversal, Foucault must propose two postulates: first, there must be a will constitutive of truth (‘the will to truth’) that universally applicable across time and space and, second, ‘the will to truth’ must be conflated with ‘the will to power’ that is inherent to all discourses, regardless of their relationship to the truth. It is important to note that Habermas emphasizes the universality of ‘the will’ as opposed to ‘the truth’. Thus, the concept of power is derived from the concept of truth (Habermas 1994b: 82-3).

From this interpretation of Foucault, Habermas makes his three famous accusations (1994b: 87-9). First, Foucault is accused of presentism because genealogy reduces the meaning of discourses to their interpretation. Second, Foucault is accused of relativism because claims to the validity of discourses are reduced to their effects of power. Finally, Foucault is accused of cryptonormativity because he reduces the moral dimension of the 'ought' to the 'is'. This final accusation combines the previous two: if genealogy reduces discourse to an interpretation, and if all interpretations are equal, then Foucault has no *apparent* moral grounds upon which to critique the discourses he chooses to study. (Foucault's 'normativity' is 'cryptic' because Habermas cannot find an explicit moral philosophy in Foucault's work.) Habermas (1994b: 89) thus concludes,

His putative objectivity of knowledge is itself put into question (1) by the involuntary *presentism* of a historiography that remains hermeneutically stuck in its starting situation; (2) by the unavoidable *relativism* of an analysis related to the present that can understand itself only as a context-dependent practical exercise; (3) by the arbitrary *partianship* of a criticism that cannot account for its normative foundations.

In making this evaluation, Habermas relies on three curious texts: "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History", "Two Lectures" and "Power and Sex". The first text, as argued above presents Foucault's position on Nietzsche and not Foucault's position on either genealogy or power. The second text, although extremely important, is ripped out of its context of '*Society Must be Defended*'. The third text is an extremely obscure interview. It is strange, then, that Habermas' rejection of Foucault's position is based upon an essay on Nietzsche, two lectures, and an obscure interview when there are a series of published materials that deal with the subject at length. But, Habermas concludes, nonetheless that for Foucault "there is no 'right side'" to power and therefore dismisses Foucault's project as incoherent.

But is Habermas' project itself fully coherent? Nancy Fraser questions the correctness of Habermas' accusations against Foucault while remaining critical of both Foucault and Habermas. According to Fraser, Habermas conflates Foucault's critique of the human sciences, which emerged during the period generally called modernity, with a 'total critique of modernity'. Thus, in Habermas' reading the human sciences are constitutive of modernity. If Foucault rejects the human sciences, then he must also reject modernity. Fraser disagrees. She argues there are three ways to read the relationship between the human sciences and modernity and that if one is rejected, it does not necessarily follow that the others are rejected. She uses these three positions to determine whether Habermas' accusation that Foucault is a "Young Conservative", which she understands to be the essence of Habermas' argument, is correct or not.

The first possible position suggests that "to reject a foundationalistic or universalistic metaphilosophical interpretation of the humanist ideals of modernity is not necessarily to reject modernity altogether" (Fraser 1994: 188). If this is true, then Foucault cannot be accused of being a "Young Conservative" (Fraser 1994: 207). The second possible position suggests that "in addition to rejecting humanism on theoretical grounds, he also rejects it on strategic grounds". If this is true, then Habermas is correct to argue that Foucault is a "Young Conservative" (Fraser 1994: 207). Finally, if Foucault is "rejecting humanism not simply on conceptual and/or strategic grounds but, rather, on substantive normative grounds" then the charge of being a "Young Conservative" is ambiguous (Fraser 1994: 201, 207).

The final position, which Fraser holds to be true, cannot be resolved because the questions cannot be answered upon the grounds upon which they were raised without

also calling Habermas's own position into question; i.e., the foundations of its own normative claims. Thus, if Habermas is to be faulted for not raising the proper questions, Foucault is to be faulted for not answering them (Fraser 1994: 187). The debate must remain at an impasse because there are no means of adjudicating the superiority of one position, Foucault's rejectionism, over another position, Habermas' dialectical position (Fraser 1994: 208). If Habermas' critique is not convincing, then is there, perhaps, a more convincing critique?

A Fascist?

Receiving perhaps the least attention in the secondary literature, but perhaps presenting the most interesting and detailed critique, is Mark Neocleous' (1996a, 1996b) suggestion that Foucault's (once again!) *theory* of power presents a dangerous inversion of Carl Schmitt's *Concept of the Political* (1996). At the core of Neocleous' claim is that, whereas Schmitt makes everything the potential object of political action and therefore dissolves the social into the political, Foucault makes the opposite move of dissolving the political into social. In either case, the result is nearly the same: the social and political become co-extensive which, in Neocleous' formulation, is a recipe for fascism, both historical and theoretical. Neocleous' argument is interesting and compelling because it openly questions Foucault's ability to present a critique of fascism as he begins in the final chapter of *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction* and in his preface to Deleuze and Guattari's *Anti-Oedipus*. While not accusing Foucault of being fascist, he places Foucault in dangerous proximity to Carl Schmitt, a legal and political

theorist who joined the Nazi Party and has been described as “the theorist for the Reich” (Bendersky 1983).

On the surface one might interpret Neocleous’ comments as insulting, inflammatory and overstated – after all, no one wants to be called a fascist! But this interpretation would be misleading, as Neocleous’ critical comments do not attempt to displace Foucault, but to place him in an intellectual context and therefore explain his concepts. Neocleous (1996b: 57) identifies Foucault’s work, which he understands as contributing to the study of political administration, as providing three contributions: order is maintained and structure through relations of power, administration is at the heart of this order, the relationship of subjectivity to this order. He thus identifies Foucault as making an important contribution to state theory and the history of state formation. Specifically, he identifies Foucault as making important contributions to the problems of order and ordering within the modern state. This comprises Foucault’s ‘positive contribution’: the uncovering and theorizing how various aspects of social life such as health, sexuality, criminality, welfare, and so on, became subjects of administration that order a capitalist society. Thus, Neocleous presents a minoritarian interpretation of Foucault: in addition to making a contribution to state theory, Foucault is also making a contribution to the critical theory of capitalism.

However, although making some sort of positive contribution to the understanding of administration, which is part of state theory, and a critique of capitalism, which is part of a progressivist politics, Neocleous also identifies these two contributions as possessing important negative effects. Although Foucault emphasizes administration, he does not propose any necessary connection between administration

and the state. Neocleous understands this as a “rejection of the state concept and, alongside this the conceptual distinction between state and civil society” (1996b: 58).³ This implies two further problems: Foucault’s analysis comes solely to rely upon the explanatory ability of the concepts of power and of the social. Additionally, Foucault seems to avoid theorizing the relationship between law and administration. Thus,

in Foucault’s work there is a process whereby concepts fundamental to our understanding of politics – law and state – undergo a dual series of dissolutions: state is dissolved into power and thence into the ‘social body’; law is dissolved into norm and thence into administration (*ibid*).

Therefore, Foucault is only able to theorize individual objects because he does not see the role of the state in the constitution of subjects, he fails to address collective subjects, and he fails to see how subjects constitute power as much as power constitutes subjects.⁴

In Neocleous’ view, the misunderstanding of the importance of the state/civil society distinction directly contributes to the debates surrounding Foucault’s relationship to the concept of the state. Without a clear distinction between state and civil society, Foucault’s frequent comments on the state take on an ambiguous character. However, it is noted that when Foucault does talk about the state, he is relatively consistent on one point: Foucault, as understood by Neocleous (1996b: 60), believes that the state is

³ On the surface, this claim is similar to the one made by Nikolas Rose about ‘political power beyond the state’, but it is my view that Neocleous presents a more faithful and subtle interpretation of Foucault than Rose.

⁴ This is an interesting claim by Neocleous; Fraser (1981: 280) sees it differently: “This is probably the single most important feature of Foucault’s thought. He provides the empirical and conceptual basis for treating such phenomena as sexuality, the family, schools, psychiatry, medicine, social science, and the like as *political* phenomena. This sanctions the treatment of problems in these areas as *political* problems. It therefore widens the arena within which persons may collectively confront, understand, and seek to change the character of their lives.” Fraser thus indicates a political contribution on the part of Foucault that takes into account collective agency. She does not, however, tie this to the state. Fraser’s concept of the political is much broader than Neocleous’ – this raises the question, yet again, of the relationship between the state and the political.

superstructural to other relations of power. Thus, the relationship between power and the state is parallel to Marx's 'guiding thread' in the 1857 Preface in which he presents the base/superstructure metaphor of social formations. But, overall, Foucault is viewed as 'downplaying' the role of the state:

conceptualizing the state as 'governmentalized' in fact *consolidates* Foucault's downplaying of the state, for his argument rests on the supposition that the state lacks any unity and function other than to be a tactic of governmentality (Neocleous 1996b: 71).⁵

Having determined that Foucault is unable to theorize the relationship between state and civil society and that his comments that seem most in favour of supporting a strong role for the state actually perform the opposite function, Neocleous moves into his main contention: the concept of power operates so as to dissolve the concept of the political into the concept of the social. At this point it is necessary momentarily to turn away from Foucault and examine Carl Schmitt who performed the opposite operation: he dissolved the concept of the social into the concept of the political.

Foucault and Schmitt are compared as being confronted with the inverse problem: Schmitt's comprehensive concept of the political leaves no room for a concept of the social, while Foucault's concept of the social leaves no room for a concept of the political (Neocleous 1996a: 48). This accounts for Foucault's inability to understand fascism and for why Schmitt became an active supporter of the Nazis. A second significant point of commonality is that neither of them are able to incorporate, and therefore reject, the

⁵ It is for this reason that Neocleous (1996b: 70) accuses Walzer of missing the point: "Whether his denial of a center makes him a *pluralist* is less relevant than the fact that his treatment of his state as just one locus of power among many others loses the very meaning of the state; a state that is merely a locus of power like any locus of power is no state at all".

state/civil society distinction. Finally, both of them imagine their respective concepts of the political and of social as defined by an idea of 'perpetual war'.

According to Schmitt (1996), the state/civil society distinction no longer holds any meaning. Instead the 'total state' must intervene into the former domain of civil society, not to destroy 'democracy', but to save it from 'liberalism'. This requires a renewed centrality of the sovereign – 'he who decides on the exception'. Sovereignty rests on the decision on the exception, while the political rests on the distinction between friends and enemies. Politics, therefore, becomes the sovereign act of separating friend from enemy and then commanding friends potentially to die in order to destroy enemies.

The total state is needed to combat liberalism and its core institution of parliament. Because liberalism is premised upon the belief that differences can be resolved through rational debate in parliament and because discussion can, in principle, continue indefinitely, liberalism is confronted with the possibility of being able to decide on the content of friends and enemies. Thus, liberalism is potentially unable to provide political grounding for sovereignty. Parliament, as the core institution of liberalism, both neutralizes and depoliticizes antagonism: enemies cease to exist, being replaced by debating partners. The concept of the political undergoes a neutralization and depoliticization, thus presenting the potential for the permanent suspension of the decision. According to Schmitt, this results in a liberal and nihilistic desire for the destruction and end of politics altogether. Liberalism is unwilling and incapable of being a political entity for it is not decisive. Unfortunately for liberalism, its enemies are decisive and willing to destroy liberal states; liberal states cannot therefore be expected to survive.

It is thus easy to see how Schmitt's concept of the political can quickly become fascist political theory. The demand that the total state dominate civil society in order to exercise sovereignty to fill the concept of the political with content becomes the fascist exercise of identifying enemies internal and external to the state. Internal enemies must be purged to preserve the unity and purity of the state while external enemies must be destroyed to preserve the life of the state. The concept of the social is completely replaced with a concept of the political determined by the interests of the state.

In contrast, Foucault performs the inverse operation: the importance of the state is entirely discounted thereby requiring a concept that can replace the theoretical vacuum. The concept of power fills the void left by the state and "runs the risk of losing the specificity of [the] political" (Neocleous 1996a: 54). Thus, "as politics is dissolved into the social, 'power' becomes inflated, so saturating the social body that power and the social become coterminous" (Neocleous 1996a: 55). At this point we can return to the previous argument and revisit the relationship between administration and power.

With Foucault, the concept of the political is dissolved into the concept of the social, which is saturated by the concept of power. The social replaces the state and power replace the political as the primary explanatory concepts. Neocleous is partially correct: with Foucault, the social and power have explanatory primacy over the political and the state. However, this is not to say that there are no concepts of the political and the state in Foucault's conceptual apparatus. Even taking governmentality into account and accepting Neocleous' previous point about government having primacy over the state, this does not mean that there are not passages of significant importance in Foucault that deal with the state. The final chapter of *History of Sexuality: Introduction* is one

such where the relationship between biopolitics and the state is developed. Additionally, there appears also to be a concept of the political operative in Foucault's work. If we accept that Schmitt presents a concept of the political, albeit dangerous and flawed, we are nonetheless forced to recognize that the act of *division* becomes determinate of the political. The process of dividing, in Schmitt's example between enemies and friends, is the core of the political. That particular division may not constitute the political, but the act of dividing itself may constitute the political. We can therefore broaden Schmitt's concept of the political from the division between friends and enemies to act of division itself. Foucault, for instance, makes the concept of dividing practices integral to his historical project. Thus we see, for instance, in the series of lectures *Abnormal* a detailed examination of dividing practices and how they are imbricated in law, administration and the state.

But this is not the sole problem with Neocleous' analysis. He claims that the concept of the social and the concept of power become so broad and abstract that they come to take on the same content. However, at no point does he appear to provide a definition, as he understands it, of either concept. It seems possible that Neocleous misses the radical nature of Foucault's analytic of power: the social is characterized by relations of force that are inherently uneven, thus in a particular relation one element is dominant while the other is dominated. It is the presence of the dominated, through the act of *resisting* the state of balance of relations of force that a relation of power is created. This inherent resistance constitutes the social as a domain of government and administration thus opening the way for political action – i.e., action upon the action constituted by the relationship in the place. The political, through the division between

unequal relations of force, exists in Foucault's conceptual apparatus so long as there is resistance preventing the *stasis* of the system.⁶

This interpretation of Foucault thus presents difficulties for Neocleous' claim (1996b: 80) that

One of the problems here is that on Foucault's own account of power there is nothing outside that escapes networks of power, certainly not bodies or the plebs, both of which appear to be letting in through the back door a subject erected from outside.

This claim becomes dubious when Foucault's concept of power is understood in its full relation to both the social and the political, in addition to the state. The claim is dubious because the importance of Foucault's concept of power is not that there is no outside, but that power is an inherently political concept. There thus appears to be no grounds upon which to deny the existence of a collective subject despite a clever argument attempting to reconcile the "Docile Bodies" chapter of *Discipline and Punish* with the account of power as incitation in *History of Sexuality: An Introduction*.

It thus appears, in the final analysis, that Neocleous' real problem with Foucault is not so much his conceptual apparatus, but rather his ambiguous stance *vis a vis* Marxism and a normative, emancipatory liberation politics. His criticism of a lack of a collective subject theorized *a priori* and thus in contradiction to an analytic of power suggests to Neocleous that there can not be any grounds upon which a collective subject can resist. This could be the result of his instrumentalist account of the state in which the state is essentially captured by a dominant class for the purpose of dominating others to perpetuate capitalist production. On the contrary, an infinite number of grounds exist for

⁶ Although it is dubious to make arguments from archaic words, both 'stasis' and 'state' have their origin in the same Greek word meaning "standing", "stationary", and "stoppage". One could develop a theory of the state tied to a fixing of relations of force in Foucault's work similar to that performed by Deleuze and Guattari (1987).

exercising political action on the part of a collective subject; in my view, what is lacking in Foucault is a particular reason why a particular collective subject should resist a particular relation of power. Presumably, in parallel to the analytic of power, reasons for resistance constitute themselves imminently in the relation of force itself. Neocleous (1996b: 83) is thus left wrongly to conclude that “the social as conceptualized by Foucault and his followers is so well policed and so effectively administered that the idea of it producing its own gravediggers is impossible”. This is curious claim for Neocleous to end his argument: after all, Foucault and his followers routinely argue that government (and policing) is a perpetually failing act.

Conclusions

Three prominent critiques of Foucault were presented. The first, inexplicably influential, argued that Foucault’s politics are immature, juvenile “infantile leftism”. Rather than putting forth a coherent theory of politics, Foucault is accused of taking the most radical position possible in any political debate. Arguments such as these are unhelpful and contribute little to an understanding of social and political struggles. Thus, two more critiques were presented in great detail. The first of these finds its origins in Habermas who attacks Foucault primarily for a purported relativism and an inability to make normative judgments. The second presents a Marxist critique of Foucault which attempts, rather than to destroy Foucault’s position as with Habermas and Walzer, to enter into productive dialogue in order to develop a comprehensive analytic, theory, and political agenda. Although occasionally falling into unhelpful digressions about the lack of a collective subject, Neocleous nonetheless draws attention to the odd relationship

Foucault has with Carl Schmitt. However, a careful analysis of Neocleous' and Foucault's work allows for workable and useful concepts of the social, political, power, and state to be extracted. In the end, it was shown that there is not necessarily an essential theoretical difference between Neocleous and Foucault, but rather a matter of emphasis. This chapter has shown that once Foucault's analytic of power is properly understood, the most frequent critiques are revealed as misguided. Critics misunderstand Foucault as making a contribution to the theory of power when, in fact, he is rejecting the project of a theory of power in favor of developing an analysis of power based upon force relations. This, of course, does not imply that the analytic of power formulated by Foucault is beyond reproach and the final word on the subject of power. It does show, however, that the most prominent critiques of Foucault – most notably that of Habermas – fails in the task that it has set for itself.

Conclusion

This thesis sought to demonstrate that importance of taking seriously Michel Foucault's claim to having an analytic of power relations rather than a theory of power. There were three main sections to this thesis.

The first situated my work in the context of the dominant approach to Foucault's work, the governmentality school. I showed that although the governmentality school has produced a number of excellent empirical studies, its conceptual apparatus is inconsistent with Foucault's own use of governmentality and is theoretically incoherent.

The second constructed a theoretically coherent interpretation of Foucault's analytic of power. The suggestion by Foucault that he has developed an analytic of power rather than a theory of power was taken seriously. By contrasting Foucault's concept of analytic with Louis Althusser's concept of Theory, it was shown that an analytic differs significantly from a theory. Whereas a theories seek to inquire into the essence of object, an analytic seeks to understand objects by breaking them down into their constituent parts. Having established the meaning of 'analytic', I then set out to establish the meaning of 'power'. According to Foucault's analytic, power is the name given to an imbalance of force relations. Power has three necessary elements: freedom, resistance, and action. In the absence of any of these three elements, one cannot be said to be investigating power – one has moved, for instance, into the territory of violence.

Finally, the third section addressed major critiques of Foucault, notably those of Michael Walzer, Jurgen Habermas, and Mark Neocleous. All three began with the elementary misunderstanding as to the meaning of the analytic of power. When their critiques were moved onto the terrain of the analytic of power rather than on the terrain of

a non-existent theory of power, their critiques were shown to be misplaced at best and incorrect at worst. Neocleous' critique was the most compelling as it attempted to bring Foucault in closer proximity to Marxism, as did some of the critiques of governmentality in the first chapter.

To close this project, I would like to return to a claim I made in the third chapter: the critiques of especially Walzer and Habermas were misguided because they confused an analytic of power with a theory of power. But because those two critiques are incorrect, does not mean to say that Foucault has presented the final word on power – be it an analytic or a theory. If we assume that Foucault's analytic of power is correct, where does this take us? I would like to close this thesis with some questions for future research.

(1) The governmentality school approaches Foucault via an analytic of government. It thus begins with global strategies and work downwards. The language of power, force, and relations is almost entirely absent for their studies. Is the governmentality approach faithful to Foucault and does this matter? How is governmentality changed when it is brought into proximity with the analytic of power? Foucault never provided a conceptual apparatus for the analytic of government comparable to the analytic of power. Can such a conceptual apparatus be constructed? Or, alternatively, if an analytic of power and an analytic of government (as developed by the governmentality school) employ the concept "conduct of conduct", is there any important difference between an analytic of power and analytic of government?

(2) Foucault employs the language of war, forces, battle, and domination in his development of the analytic of power. To what extent can the analytic of power be

separated from the language of war? Is the language of war integral to the analytic of power? Is it madness to equate power with war, or is it an excessive rhetorical flair?

(3) How should the concepts of force and bodies be interpreted? Do forces have an actual existence, or are they metaphorical? How does a force capture a body? What relation does the language of force have to Deleuze's similar language? It has been said that Deleuze read Foucault's *History of Sexuality: An Introduction* as a personal attack, which suggests that Deleuze saw a certain affinity between Foucault's use of force and his own use of force, at least up until that book was published. Is the language of force useful? Are forces metaphysical or ontological? And how does this concept of force relate to the scientific concept of force?

(4) Foucault's concept of 'race' and 'race war' have been relatively overlooked. Can a coherent theory of the social be found in his suggestion that the division into warring races constitutes the social body? How do forces constitute individual racial bodies and how do these individual bodies connect to the body of the race? Should the 'binary structure of society' be understood literally: in other words, are there only two races in each society, or are there a large number of binary oppositions that relate to one another in a complex way? Is this a useful way to analyze the relationship between racism and sexism in contemporary societies? Are the concepts of 'race', 'race war' and 'the binary constitution of society' historically appropriate concepts?

(5) How far can my suggestion that Neocleous and Foucault can be combined without committing the sin of eclecticism? In other words, is it possible to bring together Marxist state theory and Foucauldian social theory? Are their ontological and epistemological presuppositions compatible? Just as I like to mustard as a condiment,

chocolate as a snack, and pasta as a meal does not mean that putting them all into the same pot will make a really tasty dish. Similarly, I might like Foucault's epistemology and Marx's ontology, but putting them in the same pot and mixing might produce something distasteful – something eclectic. Is it possible to develop in detail a complex conceptual apparatus connecting the political, the social, the state, and power as the dominant points of reference while maintaining the analytic of power? Or must one position give way to the other?

(6) Is it possible or desirable, as Neocleous, Habermas and others have suggested, to develop a normative sociology? If it is both desirable and possible to develop this normative sociology, can it be done in a broadly Foucaultian framework?

(7) What would a Foucaultian theory of power look like? Is one possible?

An attempt to answer some of these questions would go a long way towards sorting the wheat from the chaff in terms of Foucault's theoretical contribution. Answering these questions would reveal the depth of Foucault's theoretical and historical project – extending it beyond the familiar terms of 'discipline', 'discourse', 'genealogy', 'archaeology', and 'power'. These questions are especially important to consider as Foucault's Collège de France lectures are being published in French and quickly translated into other languages. The publication of these lectures presents an ideal occasion to reconsider and question Foucault.

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