RESTRUCTURING OF SOCIAL AND POLITICAL THEORY IN EDUCATION: FOUCAULT AND A SOCIAL EPISTEMOLOGY OF SCHOOL PRACTICES

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Our concern in this essay is with how Michel Foucault's methodologies for the study of power are related to a more general reexamining and re-visioning of the "foundations" of critical traditions inherited from nineteenth century European forebears. Through his wide-ranging studies of knowledge, madness, prisons, sexuality, and governmentality, Foucault's historical philosophy interrogates the conditions under which modern societies operate. His concern with how the subject is constituted in power relations forms an important contribution to recent social theory, providing both methodological and substantive challenges to the social sciences. These have been taken up in various projects across multiple settings, with particular implications for interdisciplinary work. The politics of "identity," as witnessed in the theoretical and historical work within the feminist movement, is one such example, crossing nation-state barriers of European and Anglo-American intellectual work.

Our essay moves between the particular contribution of Foucault and the more general intellectual movements to which he has contributed. The attention given to Foucault in the English-speaking world is part of a larger sea-migration of critical traditions of social science since the World War II period. By sea-migration, we mean the post-World War II mixing of European continental social theories that integrate historical and philosophical discourses with the more pragmatic (and philosophical/analytic) traditions in the United States, Britain, and Australia.[1] The translation and incorporation of European Marxist social philosophy — such as that of the Frankfurt School of critical theory from Germany, the Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci, and more recently, French "postmodern" and French and Italian feminist theories — are important to the production of a "critical" space in the education arena.

Social theories since World War II have been important grounds on which educational debates, policies, and scholarship have focused. Our use of the term

1. We borrow the phrase "sea-migration" from the social-intellectual historian, H. Stuart Hughes, *The Sea Change: The Migration of Social Thought, 1930-1965* (New York: Harper and Row, 1975). Our intent, however, is not to suggest a single movement of ideas from continental Europe, but to recognize a certain globalization of ideas.

"critical" places the work of Foucault in a field concerned with issues of power and domination in schooling.[2] At one level, critical refers to a broad band of disciplined questioning of the ways in which power works through the discursive practices and performances of schooling. The various modes of critical inquiry seek to understand, for example, how the marginalization of people is constructed, the various forms in which power operates, and ways "of interrogating anew the evidence and the postulates, of shaking up habits, ways of acting and thinking, of dispelling commonplace beliefs, of taking a new measure of rules and institutions."[3] Further, there is a need for greater self-reflexivity about the implications of intellectual work as a political project. We see Foucault's work as both generative and illustrative of an intellectual tradition that provides certain breaks with the ordering principles of critical traditions dominating Western Left thinking since the turn of the century. Foucault's work, we believe, is important for entering into a conversation about a particular turn in critical thought during the past few decades.[4] Whereas previous critical scholarship has treated knowledge as part of the epiphenomena through which social, material practices are formed, Foucault's work is illustrative of a move within critical traditions to focus on knowledge as a material element in social life.

Our raising the issue of "sea-migrations" early in this essay provides a reading of Foucault as occurring within intellectual traditions that organize problems and methods of study. Translations of Foucault have provided entrance for English speakers to an intellectual tradition that has emerged forcefully in the past two decades to challenge the hegemony of Marxist theories about issues of power and the politics of social change. Until then, explicitly Marxist projects had been the main — even at times the only — means for considering power and politics within and across social settings at a time when individualist and functionalist theories held dominance. This challenge to Marxist theories, we argue, is not to displace them with another hegemony, but to recognize that there are certain changing conditions in the construction of power that are not adequately articulated, or even obscured, in Marxist theories. Our interest is with a view of power that is both different from and, at certain points, complementary to that of the structuralism of Marxist theories.

2. For general discussions of Michel Foucault's contributions, see Howard Dreyfus and Peter Rabinow, *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983); Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon, and Peter Miller, eds., *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991); and Gérard Noiriel, "Foucault and History: The Lessons of a Disillusion," *Journal of Modern History* 66, 547-68.

3. Michel Foucault, *Remarks on Marx: Conversations with Duccio Trombadori*, trans. R. James Goldstein and James Cascaito (New York: Semiotext(e), 1991).

4. One of the first books in education to explore this was Stephen Ball, ed., *Foucault and Education: Disciplines and Knowledge* (London: Routledge, 1990).

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The essay proceeds through a scaffolding of ideas whose resultant "logic" relates a number of cross-currents in social theory and history. We first discuss Foucault's "decentering of the subject" as part of a broader consideration of the intellectual and political project of intellectuals that we call a "social epistemology." Our interest is to consider knowledge as a social practice that generates action and participation. We explore two concepts of power: that of sovereignty/repression and that of the deployment/production of power, arguing along with Foucault, certain feminist theories, and a political sociology of knowledge that issues of power require making connections between self and self, self and other, and institutional discourses through the concept of "governmentality." In the final section, the politics of intellectual work are given attention.

We take Foucault's argument that the commitments of the Enlightenment are not bound to a particular doctrine or a particular body of knowledge, but they are "an attitude, an ethos, a philosophical life in which the critique of what we are is at one time the historical analysis of the limits that are imposed on us and an experiment with the possibility of going beyond them."[5]

CHANGING PATTERNS OF POWER AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF SOCIAL THEORY

If we look historically at critical traditions, we find that they have been evident in Europe since at least the work of Karl Marx in the nineteenth century, although they had a muted institutional development in the United States until the end of World War II.[6] It was not until the 1960s that critical traditions were given legitimacy in university disciplines as conditions of poverty, racism, and war helped to challenge the belief in the United States as a "melting pot" and the "exceptionalism" that justified its spreading democracy throughout the world.

What is of interest today, then, are the changing terrains of "critical" studies. If we think of critical educational research as a social room in which different groups of people compete to be noticed, we find that during the latter part of the 1980s "new kids" arrived to articulate and explore questions and ideas about the politics of knowledge untouched or undeveloped in other critical traditions; these ideas were later called "post-modernism" and "post-structuralism," as well as, in some cases, a re-visioned Marxism that emphasized what Stuart Hall called, "a Marxism without guarantees."[7] The new sea-migrations of social theory from France and Germany were positioned as central in these debates by their various proponents.

The significance of the questions being raised should not be construed as "merely" an intellectual struggle, but as one that embodies changes in the construction of power in modernity, of which intellectual work is an important part. Peter

5. Michel Foucault, "What is Enlightenment?" in *The Foucault Reader*, ed. Paul Rabinow (New York: Pantheon, 1984), 50.

6. Thomas S. Popkewitz, "Social Science and Social Movements in the U.S.A.: State Policies, the University, and Schooling," in *Education in the Late 20th Century, Essays Presented to Ulf P. Lundgren on the Occasion of his Fiftieth Birthday*, ed. Donald Broady (Stockholm: Stockholm Institute of Education Press), 45-79.

7. Stuart Hall, "The Problem of Ideology — Marxism without Guarantees," *Journal of Communication Inquiry*, 10 (1986): 28-43.

Wagner, for example, argues that since the nineteenth century there has been a reestablishment of control over social practices as older boundaries of social trust and security were eroded through processes of modernization. The modernization, however, was not only in the physical landscape in which one worked and lived as a social being. It also included the visioning/re-visioning of the person through forms of individualization that segmented the person into discrete attributes and behaviors that could be supervised and observed to ensure progress. The social sciences were part of the process of modernization that made objectivist knowledge intelligible as the classificatory criterion through which individuals would be disciplined and self-regulated.[8] The issue of power taken up by Foucault and certain "postmodern" writers, in Wagner's more general argument, departs significantly from social theories of the early nineteenth century.

We can pursue this argument about the politics of contemporary life through considering a version of the Nietzschean notion of the "the will to power" in which the subject is disciplined through the rules of knowledge. This consideration enables us to examine the changing political projects embodied in educational practices. Nikolas Rose, for example, has persuasively argued that neoliberal policies of market, choice, and privatization are themselves embedded in longer-term changes (he calls them "mutations" in "advanced liberal societies") in the ways of understanding, classifying, and acting on the subjects of government, and in new ways in which individuals are governed by others and by themselves.[9] This governance involves new social patterns which produce the self-reflective and self-governing principles of individuality. These patterns are not of the anthropological universe of functional sociology but the outcome of specific social practices through which subjectivities are constructed. Here we can find homologies at the epistemological level of Foucault's "regimes of truth" and Pierre Bourdieu's (and before him Emile Durkheim's and Max Weber's) habitus, that is, the patterns of relation which link the identity of individuals to the administrative patterns found in the larger society.[10]

The changing foci and strategies of power, which Wagner's, Rose's, and Foucault's empirical studies trace, require intellectual practices to explore issues of power that depart from these embodied in the epistemologies of previous critical traditions in the social sciences.[11] We can initially explore some distinctions and differences in educational research by comparing the assumptions of the philosophy of consciousness that has dominated liberal and critical social science with a "social epistemology" in which the work of Foucault can be located.

8. See Peter Wagner, *The Sociology of Modernity* (New York: Routledge, 1994).

9. Nikolas Rose, *The Death of the Social? Re-figuring the Territory of Government, Economy, and Society*, in press.

10. Pierre Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1990).

11. Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Scoial Critique of the Judgment of Taste* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984). Also see James Donald, *Sentimental Education; Schooling, Popular Culture and the Regulation of Liberty* (London: Verso, 1992); Ian Hunter, *Rethinking the School; Subjectivity, Bureaucracy, Criticism* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994); Rose, *The Death of the Social?* Michael Shapiro, *Reading the Postmodern Polity: Political Theory as Textual Practice* (Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 1992); and Valerie Walkerdine, *School Girl Fictions* (London: Verso, 1990).

THE PHILOSOPHY OF CONSCIOUSNESS AND THE PRIVILEGING OF THE SUBJECT

The philosophy of consciousness refers to a legacy of nineteenth century social thought which underlies contemporary social and educational theory of two different ideological forms.[12] Both critical and liberal traditions in the social sciences were constructed within a particular doctrine related to nineteenth century views of the Enlightenment. It was believed that systematic knowledge was the motor by which "reason" could direct social action and guarantee future betterment in society. This reason was applied by specific sets of actors who are identified through the knowledge of social science.

The second is an assumption that disciplinary knowledge has a subject. The assumption of "actors" as the subjects of theory identifies the actors who are the source of change and who (in critical versions) repress, prevent, or need to be more adequately represented. For liberal and critical theorists, change was premised on identifying the subjects who gave direction to change, either by locating the origins of repressive elements that prevented progress or the groups that would bring about a redemptive world. In one tradition of theory, structural "actors" would be identified, and in another tradition individuals would be "helped" through organization and "community" strategies.

These two foundational assumptions of progress and actor/agent converge in the liberal and Marxist-Hegelian traditions.[13]

Liberal theory assumes progress to explain the organization of social scientific knowledge. Whereas in liberal thought progress is obtained through managing social change, it is obtained in critical Hegelian thought through identifying social contradictions. While liberalism tends to place greater emphasis on individuals and the phenomenology of the subject in social change, critical traditions focus on the objectively constituted and constituting subject. The strategies to overcome the repressive elements of society are embedded in the descriptions of contradictions that the researcher describes.

In contemporary school reforms, these foundational assumptions are deeply embedded as part of the doxa. Dominant and liberal educational reform discourses have tended to organize change as logical and sequential, although there has been some recognition of the pragmatic qualities of social life.[14] Although the specific focus may change, the agents of liberalist redemption are the state, educational researchers, and teachers who are "self" motivated professionals.

Critical traditions, particularly those related to Marxism, also maintain commitments to progress through philosophical assumptions about agents. With some

12. See, for example, Seyla Benhabib, *Critique, Norm, and Utopia; A Study of the Foundations of Critical Theory* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986).

13. Ibid.

14. See, for example, Michael Fullan and Suzanne Stiegelbauer, *The New Meaning of Educational Change*, 2d ed. (New York: Teachers College Press, 1991).

hesitations and some dissent, Marxian social redemption through schooling continues to be guided by a nineteenth century belief in progress. Marxian intellectual work should provide universal norms and directions for social change emerging from critical studies of schools. Redemptive progress is inscribed in assumptions about contradictions and dialectics; that is, it is assumed that critical interrogations of social conditions will produce a new synthesis from the identified contradictions. The norms and directions of progress typically appear as an outcome of research itself — what I refer to as "the obligatory last chapter" of critical research reports.[15]

The historical significance of the philosophy of consciousness is that it recast and reconstituted a particular doctrine of the Enlightenment. The philosophy of consciousness was a radical nineteenth century philosophical strategy that placed people directly into the knowledge about social change, challenging the reigning notions of theology and the chances of birth as the arbiters of progress. Further, this philosophy gave continuing attention to the groups (actors) who are included and excluded through social practices.

But while we recognize the importance of this nineteenth century doctrine, we also question whether the epistemological foundations of actors and progress are adequate for the politics of governing and power that circulate in contemporary societies. Two issues appear continuously in this essay.

One is that paradoxically, with different ideological positions, the opposing versions of change use similar images of the subject as an active and responsible agent within a development process of change. Young argues historically that the Marxist version of social change is but a revisioned negative form of the history that was imposed by Europeans in their nineteenth century imperialism.[16] Colonial systems and their dialectics embody rules of knowledge that presuppose a universal governing structure of self realization in all historical processes. Marxism's reversal of the idealism of G.W.F. Hegel, Young argues, "remains explicit with, and even extends the system to which it is opposed" because the same universalizing narrative of an unfolding rational system of the world continues to appear.[17] The construction of knowledge, Young argues, expropriates and incorporates the "Other" into a system that is totalizing and thus does not allow the "Other" legitimacy. To place this convergence into contemporary American educational reforms, the very systems of reasoning that are to produce equality, justice, and diversity may inscribe systems of representation that construct "otherness" through the concrete principles of pedagogical classification that normalize, differentiate, and compare.

The second point we want to make here is related to the a priori principle of progress. We will argue later that it is possible philosophically (and theoretically) to accept a view of progress and of human agency without the prior positing of the agent

15. Thomas S. Popkewitz, *A Political Sociology of Educational Reform: Power/Knowledge in Teaching, Teacher Education, and Research* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1991).

16. Robert J. Young, *White Mythologies: Writing, History and the West* (New York: Routledge, 1990).

17. Ibid., 3.

as a principle of disciplinary study. The significance of the foundational assumption in the philosophy of consciousness is not its analytic posture about progress and agents, but paradoxically its historical-political implications of making the intellectual through the tying of the past, present, and future, thus producing the intellectual as the authority over the subject. We say paradoxically because the critical tradition's off-repeated phrase, that the politics of knowledge is in "making" the world not in describing it, leaves its own presuppositions of progress and actors unquestioned and unscrutinized.[18]

A Social Epistemology, Decentering the Subject, and Knowledge/Power

Challenges to the premises about progress and agents in the philosophy of consciousness constitute the major foci in current debates about social and educational theory. In a wide band of intellectual work called "the linguistic turn," there has emerged a focus in research on the systems of "reasoning" through which the subject is constructed in modern life. Central to inquiry is the constitutive role of knowledge in the construction of social life. Our interest in the linguistic turn, however, is particular and twofold: to explore scholarship that focuses on the relation of power, knowledge, and change, and to historicize the problem of "knowledge," which we call a social epistemology.[19]

We use the phrase "social epistemology" rather than "linguistic turn" as a strategy in order to place the objects constituted by the knowledge of schooling into historically formed patterns and power relations. Epistemology provides a context in which to consider the rules and standards by which knowledge about the world and "self" is formed. Epistemology also provides the means to investigate distinctions and categories that organize perceptions, ways of responding to the world, and the conceptions of "self." Concurrently, social epistemology locates the objects constituted by the knowledge of schooling as historical practices through which power relations can be understood. Statements and words are not signs or signifiers that refer to and fix things, but social practices that generate action and participation.

The significance of a social epistemology is that it helps us recognize that when we "use" language, it may not be us speaking. It also recognizes that the speaker is not defining all the meaning, as has been assumed in subject-centered approaches to social sciences. Speech is ordered through principles of classification that are socially formed through a myriad of historical practices. When teachers talk about school as management, teaching as the production of learning, or children as being "at-risk," these terms are not "merely" the personal words of the teacher, but are produced in the context of historically constructed "ways of reasoning." The "reasoning" inscribed in systems of ideas order "seeing," talking, and acting. Learning as a discourse of teaching is an example. It is an invention derived from behavioral

18. This self-reflectivity, which Bourdieu calls an "epistemological vigilance," also applies in this study as well. Such self-reflectivity is always difficult as resistences operate within power relations and not outside of them. Pierre Bourdieu, Jean-Claude Chamboredon, and Jean-Claude Passeron, *The Craft of Sociology: Epistemological Preliminaries*, trans. Richard Nice (New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1991).

19. See Popkewitz, *Political Sociology of Educational Reform.*

psychology of the 1920s to provide a way for the teacher to administer the classroom. But the categories and distinctions of educational psychology were not only those of science. They were drawn from administrative concerns for centralizing and controlling teachers and children. As such, the application of discourses of learning helped to redefine the ways in which teachers "see" the child as a participant in classroom activities and judge the worth of the child's achievements.

Moreover, the knowledge of the world as "learning" is not only about interpretation. The psychological vision of the world is also a revision of the "self." The "reasoning" is inscribed in technologies about how the teacher supervises classroom practices and the ways in which teachers and children become self-governing actors in the spaces of schooling. The use of the word "learning," then, does not stand alone; it embodies a range of values, priorities, and dispositions about how one should "see" and "act" in the world.

The governing practices inscribed in pedagogy is a central theme in Lynn Fendler's genealogical study of the "educated subject."[20] Fendler argues "[t]o be educated has meant to become disciplined according to a regimen of remembering and forgetting, of assuming identities normalized through discursive practices, and of a history of unpredictable diversions."[21] She examines the shifting assumptions of "true" and "good" in the historical notion of the "educated subject," the practical technologies to educate, the systems of recognition and things "examined," and the ways people are "invited" to recognize themselves as "educated." She contrasts, for example, the Platonic "self" who was an aristocratic man of courage, musical talent and perfect body, the medieval "self" who received divine dispensation and mystical revelation, and the modern "self" who is constituted as abstract, scientifically reasoned, and socially identified.

The epistemological shifts in the organizations of the educated subject enable Fendler to consider the significance of current pedagogical reforms as practices of governing the "self." She argues, for example, that the modern "educated self" involves institutionally validated and credentialed individuality that is very different from what historically preceded it. The educated self is interwoven with the psychological instantiation of the social as the relation of moral, social, and institutional boundaries are dissolved in the construction of subjectivity. The child in school, for example, becomes the site to inscribe social and political rationalities as those of personal discipline, motivation, autonomy, and pleasure. The discursive construction of the self-reflective and self-consciousness "educated" self annuls the distinctions between the personal and the social.

The focus on the historical construction of "reason" and the "reasonable person" provides a strategy to make problematic what the philosophy of consciousness assumes. Certain postmodern writers, for example, suggest that specific strategies of

20. Lynn Fendler, "What is it Impossible to Think? A Genealogy of the Educated Subject," in *Foucault's Challenge : Discourse, Knowledge, and Power in Education*, ed. Thomas Popkewitz and Marie Brennan (New York: Teachers College Press, in press).

21. Ibid.

the nineteenth and twentieth century which define progress and the agent as an a priori philosophical assumption of theory need to be rethought.[22] The notions of progress inscribed in social theory, it is argued, may themselves be doctrines of "reason" that historically deploy power and therefore need to be interrogated. A subject-decentered approach identifies difference as that of studying Blackness instead of Black, femininity instead of women, homosexuality instead of homosexuals, and childhood instead of children. The production of knowledge, rather than being a separate issue from power, or emanating from existing structures, as traditions such as ideology critique would have it, must be understood as situated or contextualized.[23] That is, there is a need for specificity if one is to understand the nature of power made present through the production and marshaling of knowledge. There is a continual need to unpack the frameworks within which we are constituted rather than to assume that liberation can be achieved by overthrowing previous regimes. Again in comparison to ideological critique, postmodern theorists posit no substratum of truth to be revealed through critique; rather they examine the principles by which the frameworks and selves are themselves constituted.

Furthermore, related as well to Bourdieu's notion of spontaneity, an important epistemological principle is that actions cannot be predetermined from discourses. If knowledge is itself a material practice rather than something that affects material practices, then the actual practice of specific knowledge/power relations will differ according to their articulation with other practices. The intersections give rise to the capacity for spontaneous action, and not, as Bourdieu suggests, the reproduction of previous practices.[24] The ethical dimensions of Bourdieu's approach to knowledge/power relations suggest that the micro-practices of negotiation in a specific site do not invoke the specter of relativism but emphasize the importance of the engagement in practice as the site of developing shared ethics. There is thus not a single, universal standard truth but rather a contingent and politically strategic concern with how truths are produced.

Knowledge of the constituted subject, we argue here, is a central concern of social theory. Inquiry should seek to understand how the rules of reason that structure our practices for change and the classifications and distinctions among groups of people have been constructed. Jana Sawicki, drawing on Foucault in reviewing feminist research, argues that feminine forms of embodiment in dietary and fitness regimes, expert advice on how to walk, talk, dress, style hair, and wear make-up, are "technologies that subjugate by developing competencies" and aesthetic tastes.[25]

22. Judith Butler, Contingent Foundations: Feminism and the Question of "Postmodernism," in *Feminists Theorize the Political*, ed. Judith Butler and Joan Scott (New York: Routledge, 1992).

23. Donna Haraway, "Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective," *Feminist Studies* 14 (1988): 575-99.

24. Bourdieu, *Logic of Practice.*

25. Jana Sawicki, "Feminism and the Power of Foucauldian Discourse," in *After Foucault: Humanistic Knowledge, Postmodern Challenges*, ed. Jonathan Arac (New Brunswick, N.Y.: Rutgers University, 1988), 161-78.

Sawicki continues that power is deployed through the systems of ideas about the "self" which are intertwined with performances and "skills" through which an individuality is constructed as "natural" and desirable in order to be a woman.[26]

A number of empirical studies of the classroom have enabled us to consider reason and rationality as the effects of power. Valerie Walkerdine, for example, studied the cognitive development of children to understand how rationality and control are inscribed in schooling.[27] Empirically, she focused on what seemed noncontroversial — the teaching of mathematics. She explored how children's learning of mathematics, as an instance of control over a calculable universe, embodies norms that relate teaching to social and political rationalities. In a different study, Gore is concerned with how children are disciplined through the performances and discursive practices of the classroom. The discipline of children, Gore argues, is not only cognitive, but entails the production of wants, desires, and images of the body. She considers a number of institutional settings to consider how the normalizing practices of education vary across settings, as well as their common assumptions and practices about the "educated" child.[28]

In certain ways, this focus on knowledge is not "new" to the scholarship of education. Thomas Kuhn's studies of scientific change offer one example of such an approach, although we use Kuhn advisedly here because of his idealistic conception of change. Kuhn worked in what is called an epistemological tradition of history/social science that is tied to continental scholarship and brought into the study of power in the social sciences through the work of Foucault.[29] Epistemology in these traditions is not, as in United States philosophy, a metadiscourse to find the ultimate rules of truth, but an effort to understand the conditions in which knowledge is produced. Kuhn, the continental historians and philosophers of science, and Foucault all shifted the focus of inquiry from the intentions of people to the changing principles through which knowledge itself is structured. Scientific change is then located in the manner in which and the conditions in which concepts change.

We can also identify the focus on epistemology in the Marxist theorist, Louis Althusser, a teacher of Foucault. Althusser worked in the tradition of the history of science prominent in France, although Althusser's epistemological approach was criticized as not being Marxist.[30] The decentering of the subject is a strategy to understand how the subject is constituted within a field that relates knowledge and

26. These practices are not totalizing and without ambiguities and resistances, as Sawicki, "Feminism and the Power of Foucauldian Discourse," acknowledges.

27. Valerie Walkerdine, *The Mastery of Reason; Cognitive Development and the Production of Rationality* (New York: Routledge, 1988).

28. Jennifer Gore, "Disciplining Bodies: On the Continuity of Power Relations in Pedagogy," in Popkewitz and Brennan, *Foucault's Challenge.*

29. Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 2d. ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970). See, for example, Mary Tiles, *Bachelard: Science and Objectivity* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1984) and Melvin Richter, "Conceptual History (Begriffsgeschichete) and Political Theory," *Political Theory* 14 (1986): 1219-30.

30. Young, *White Mythologies.*

power. It is not to deny that actors are seeking to change their worlds but to give historical specificity to the systems of ideas that enclose and intern reason and the reasonable person.

If we look at Foucault and a feminist philosopher, Judith Butler, for example, we find that they raise questions about whether the subject who brings about change is, in fact, an effect of power.[31] Butler's argument is that the a priori philosophical placement of actors in the narratives of social science obscures more than it reveals. The strategies of naming actors in social practices is critiqued as hiding the power relations as rules of classification are applied. By contrast, the decentering of the subject enables us to problematize our relation to present modes of reasoning by examining how an autonomous "self" is historically constituted. The decentering of the subject, then, focuses on systems of ideas as historical practices through which the objects of the world are constructed and become systems of action.[32]

Foucault, in his later work, calls this historicization of the subject a genealogy. He argues that:

> One has to dispense with the constituent subject, to get rid of the subject itself...to arrive at an analysis which can account for the constitution of the subject within a historical framework....And this is what I would call genealogy...a form of history which can account for the constitution of knowledges, discourses, domains of objects, etc., without having to make reference to a subject which is either transcendental in relation to the field of events or runs its empty sameness throughout the course of history.[33]

Social epistemological theory is thus understood as situated within a broad multidisciplinary conversation about the project of social science and history. This intellectual project is, first, a strategy to focus on theory as an epistemological problem; that is, it provides a way of orienting and problematizing the social conditions in which contemporary social life is constructed. It treats theory, as does Bourdieu (who is educated within the same intellectual milieu as Foucault) as a "thinking tool" — "a modus operandi which practically guides and structures scientific practices."[34] Second, the decentering of the subject and the focus on the linguistic turn is not to reject all humanism but to resituate that humanism by historicizing the conceptions of actors and reason through which practice and

31. Butler, *Contingent Foundations* and Judith Butler, *Bodies that Matter: On the Discourse Limits of "Sex"* (New York: Routledge, 1993).

32. Michel Foucault, *The Care of the Self: The History of Sexuality*, vol. 3, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Vintage House, 1988); "Michel Foucault, The Political Technology of Individuals," in *Technologies of the Self*, ed. Luther H. Martin, Huck Gutman, and Patrick H. Huttan (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1988), 145-62; also Dreyfus and Rabinow, *Michel Foucault;* John Rajchman, *Michel Foucault: The Freedom of Philosophy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985). In feminist theory, see Sharon Nicholson, *Gender and History, The Limits of Social Theory in the Age of the Family* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986); Chris Weedon, *Feminist Practice and Poststructural Theory* (London: Basil Blackwell, 1987); Michele Barrett and Anne Phillips, *Destabilizing Theory: Contemporary Feminist Debates* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press); and Nancy Fraser, *Unruly Practices: Power, Discourse and Gender in Contemporary Social Theory* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989).

33. Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings by Michel Foucault, 1972-1977*, trans. and ed. Colin Gordon (New York: Pantheon, 1980), 117.

34. Pierre Bourdieu and Loïc Wacquant, *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1992), 161.

purpose are constructed. As Ian Hacking has argued, "Foucault said that the Concept of Man is a fraud, not that you and I are nothing."[35]

Overall, this notion of social epistemology can be considered as a theory that aims to problematize the trajectory of the historical forms of truth and knowledge that present themselves as having no origin or end. The effect of social epistemology is to disturb narratives of progress and reconciliation, and to find questions where others had located answers.[36]

The notion of "critical" has been used in this discussion in accordance with commonsense usage about social theory concerned with issues of power. However, our "sense" of "critical" is one that problematizes theory and focuses on knowledge itself as the problem of inquiry. This strategy reverses the interests of the philosophy of consciousness by making the problem of study that of the knowledge which inscribes agents. This social theory is also a theory of change that seeks to understand how the "objects" of the world are historically constructed and changed over time. Such a strategy, as will be argued later, is a political theory as well as a theory of knowledge, since the two are inseparable.

Regional Study Instead of Context: Individuality in Discursive Spaces

A concomitant interest with the "linguistic turn" is the focus on a radical re-conception of space in social theory. This re-conception shifts attention from notions of geographically bound contexts to notions of discursively bound "fields." The latter gives focus to how the subject is known in a terrain, not bound to geographical landscapes and physical points of reference but to discursively constructed practices.

The systems of ideas in schooling offer an example of this changing notion of space. These systems normalize the ways children are "seen," talked about, and acted upon. Further, categorizations of the child as an adolescent, a learner, a personality with or without "self-esteem," a sibling, a Hispanic, a psychological/clinical/medical "problem" of growth are all classifications that transcend the particular institution of schooling by applying more general categories. The conceptions of childhood "travel" across the institutions of health, schools, social welfare, and others.

We can think of the discursive fields of individuality as regions. There are multiple regions through which modern life is constructed. The histories that Foucault wrote about, for example, are histories of how the person is made into a subject through particular rules and standards in institutional patterns, but histories which are not reducible to those patterns. His studies of the prison and the criminal, the asylum and the insane, the clinical medical gaze, and bodily desires in the history of sexuality are examples of the constructions of discursive fields. Each field is an assemblage that spans multiple institutions. Individuality seems to transcend

35. Ian Hacking, "The Archeology of Foucault," in *Foucault: A Critical Reader*, ed. David Couzens Hoy (Cambridge, Mass.: Basil Blackwell, 1986), 39.

36. Mitchell Dean, *Critical and Effective Histories; Foucault's Methods and Historical Sociology* (New York: Routledge, 1984), 3-4.

particular events and the social moorings of place, such as the child as a learner who has no geographical location; instead, the person as learner is defined through abstract sets of categories about cognition, affect, and motivation.

We can think of educational studies, then, as a social mapping of the field and its inscribed boundaries. The field approach enables an understanding of how particular rules and standards of truth cross institutional patterns and are not reducible to those patterns. The notion of field embodies a notion of time that is different from chronological time and avoids a philosophy of consciousness that posits as a priori the conditions of subjectivity for considering social change.

Curriculum becomes, from this point of view, part of a discursive field through which the subjects of schooling are constructed as individuals to self-regulate, discipline, and reflect upon themselves as members of a community/society.[37] For example, if we focus on the systems of ideas that merge into the modern curriculum during the Progressive Era at the turn of the century, we find that the curriculum changes were a part of a visioning/re-visioning of social commitment, and of individual service and faith.[38] The ideas re-visioned a pastoral image of the person in relation to a modern, scientific notion of the "rational" citizen. The discourses of the child placed faith in the rational individual as the locus of change.

The focus on discursive fields through which individuality is constructed is explored in Ingóful Asgeir Jóhannesson's study of educational reform in Iceland. He argues that from the 1960s, Icelandic educational reform has been a key link in modernization of schools.[39] But that organization involved more than establishing organizational linkages and personnel hierarchies. The modernization entailed a reclassification of the knowledge through which schooling was apprehended. The concrete curriculum reforms in biology and social studies, for example, inscribed dispositions about historical progress, scientific reasoning, child development, and "democracy" that re-visioned the governing principles of previous curriculum knowledge.

DECENTERING PROGRESS: FROM EVOLUTION TO A HISTORY OF BREAKS

If dominant approaches to understanding power are interrupted, it then follows that conceptions of change must also be affected. If progress is no longer guaranteed

37 See, for example, Ulf P. Lundgren, *Between Education and Schooling: Outlines of a Diachronic Curriculum Theory* (Geelong, Australia: Deakin University Press, 1991); David Hamilton, *Towards a Theory of Schooling* (London: Falmer Press, 1989); Tomas Englund, "Rethinking Curriculum History-Towards a Theoretical Reorientation." Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association: Symposium on Curriculum History, Chicago, April 1991. We use the words "community" and "society" as distinctions that are of historical significance. The former involves time/space relations that were local; the latter involves more abstract conceptions of self as a citizen of a nation, as a worker, or as an ethnic group within some larger sets of relations. As these abstract notions of society are made part of one's definition of self, it changes the meaning and relationships in which communities are defined. For discussion of these concepts in relation to changing terrains of politics, see, Rose, in press.

38. Thomas Popkewitz, *The Formation of School Subjects: The Struggle for Creating an American Institution* (London: Falmer Press, 1987).

39. Ingólfur Asgeir Jóhannesson, "Principles of Legitimation in Educational Discourses in Iceland and the Production of Progress," *Journal of Educational Policy* 8 (1993): 339-51.

by the reasoned application of scientific principles, then another explanation for change must be identified. The notion of change as breaks or ruptures is found in the history of science that was developed in France. The distinctions between important periods of scientific ways of reasoning are not cumulative; rather they involve ruptures in belief and cognition that occur within particular historical conjunctures. For example, Gaston Bachelard's studies of physics from 1920 to 1930, argue that those ten years were, from a scientific point of view, as long an era as the previous five hundred years.[40] There was, in this period, a remaking of science's own history of itself as relativity theory and microphysics produced a reaction to previous concepts of science. Science became a series of "nons" — Non-Cartesian, Non-Euclidean, Non- Newtonian, Non-Baconian. In Kuhn's argument about revolutionary and normal sciences, as well, historical change did not involve the intent and purpose of actors, even though individuals and particular practices were part of the narrative about science.[41] Rather, "scientific revolutions" gave focus to sets of rules and standards about truth — what is to be studied, why, and how — different from normal science.

We can turn, as well, to the later work of Ludwig Wittgenstein who provided a way of understanding historical change as multiple rates developing across different institutions at different times that come together in what can be called a historical conjunction. Wittgenstein likened historical change to a thread made up of many fibers. The strength of the thread does not reside in the fact that some fibers run its entire length but in the fact that many fibers overlap.[42]

From this perspective, the set of relations that becomes schooling — in its forms of expression and performances — exists across different dimensions of time and space rather than through the development of a continuous history. Mass schooling, for example, was a nineteenth century invention which emerged from different movements within society that, at a certain level, worked autonomously. Overlapping with changes in classroom teaching were the creations of institutions for teacher education, the rise of the modern university, the formation of social sciences, and the emergence of a discipline of psychology. These multiple arenas of practice occurred at the conjuncture of the emergence of the modern U.S. welfare state that governed the new institution of mass schooling. At the same time, systems of ideas appeared about the "educativeness" of the child, about school administration, about psychologies of the individual, and about social and personal progress.

Interpretations of mass schooling need to account for the multiple intersections of knowledge constructed in these varied arenas that are present in the production of knowledge about education. It is in the conjuncture of these nineteenth century practices, for example, that currently favored words, such as "professionalism,"

40. Young, *White Mythologies*, 50.

41. Kuhn, *Structure of Scientific Revolutions*.

42. Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, 3d. ed., trans. G.E.M. Anscombe (New York: Macmillan, 1953).

"educational sciences," and "subject matter teaching" need to be placed, and their assumptions genealogically explored, that is, through changes in the rules of reason applied to the problem-solving of schooling.

The focus on change as breaks in discursive fields through which individuality is constructed can be explored in studies of educational reform. Bernadette Baker, for example, argues that schooling presupposed a concept of childhood, and explores historically the multiple and complex interweaving of discourses through which childhood is constructed as it produces systems of inclusions/exclusions.[43] Baker shows how the processes of differentiation of the category of childhood worked to privilege certain children by developing a game of "truth" around child study which tended to include white, especially male and middle class children, and thereby exclude African-American children from the dominant versions of the child to be cared for in the schooling system.

We can think of these studies as mapping the construction of the subject through a historical mode of analysis through genealogies. Genealogies as histories of the present work to build an argument about the construction of the truths, power relations, and kinds of knowledge central to establishing a particular discourse. This form of argumentation removes the linearity of much prevalent historical work, but more important it makes spaces for multiple interrelationships in the construction of a discourse, and hence more spaces for multiple openings for contestation and redefinition.

A different dimension of the "linguistic turn" is found in the work of Jürgen Habermas, a member of the Frankfurt School of Critical Theory.[44] Habermas's writing on cognitive interests in knowledge and his later theory of communicative action embody a theory of language in a social theory of change. Habermas's theory, however, is dualistic in his separation of lifeworlds and system, producing an ahistorical view of power as he focuses on a universal pragmatics of reason.[45]

If we place the work of the Frankfurt School in historical proximity to the French Marxist, Althusser, we realize that there are important points of continuity as well as breaks with the epistemological assumptions that we are discussing in relation to Foucault. The epistemological continuities are often ignored by critics who write about limitations of the "linguistic turn" in social theory and the "structural" needs of inquiry; these critics, especially in education, have not understood their "own"

43. Bernadette Baker, "Childhood-as-rescue in the Emergence and Spread of the U.S. Public School," in Popkewitz and Brennan, *Foucault's Challenge.*

44. Jürgen Habermas, *Knowledge and Human Interest*, trans. Jeremy Shapiro (Boston: Beacon Press, 1971); Jürgen Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action: Reason and the Rationalization of Society*, vol. 1, trans. Thomas McCarthy (Boston: Beacon Press, 1981); Jürgen Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action. Lifeworld and System: A Critique of Functionalist Reason*, vol. 2, trans. Thomas McCarthy (Boston: Beacon Press, 1987); and Richard Bernstein, ed., *Habermas and Modernity* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1985).

45. See, for example, Yves Sintomer, "Power and Civil Society: Foucault vs Habermas," *Philosophy and Social Criticism* 18 (1992): 357-79. One can also understand the Frankfurt School as a reaction to fascism, while French social thought was a more general critique but at the same time responsive to its colonial wars in the post-World War II period, and Young, *White Mythologies.*

history. At the same time, there are radical epistemological breaks in the discussion of change and power which is the focus of this chapter.

SOVEREIGNTY AND POWER

We can pursue further the implications of the linguistic turn for social theory by focusing more directly on the concept of power.[46] Foucault reverses the traditional belief that knowledge is power and looks for power in how people effect knowledge to intervene in social affairs. Foucault's concept of power gives attention to its productive dimensions, such as how power works through individual actions to vision and re-vision our "selves" as acting, thinking, and feeling persons. This occurs as we can consider the social and conceptual conditions through which we have come to reason about sexuality, criminality, medicine, and sanity/madness as the effects of power.[47]

To explore Foucault's notion of power, it is worth considering how the philosophy of consciousness is articulated in school studies of power. To be schematic here, the study of power within the philosophy of consciousness is to identify the origin of power; that is, the objective of the study is to identify the actors who control and in whose benefit existing arrangements work — asking in whose interest is the curriculum selected or achievement assessed. The centering of actors as the wielders of power introduces a view of power as sovereignty. For Foucault, this is best illustrated by the symbolic use of the power of the sovereign, the king with power of life and death over his subjects. Taking this notion of sovereign power into research is to give attention to what groups are favored in decisionmaking and how the decisions distribute values to produce a context of domination and subordination — the rulers and the ruled. Power in this landscape is "something" that people own, and that ownership can be redistributed among groups to challenge inequities, hence the use of the term "sovereignty."

The concept of power as sovereignty is found in much of the sociology of school knowledge. Sovereign power is used to explain the origins of domination and subjugation in society. For example, the sovereign notion of power is embodied in current educational literature that "sees" social interests inscribed in reform reports and government policies that argue for a "back to basics" curriculum. The consequence of the reforms, it is argued, is to re-produce gender, racial, and class distinctions in society.[48] Structural concepts of agency, resistance, and contestation have been used to posit ways in which the hegemony of the rulers is challenged and

46. Also see James Marshall, "Foucault and Educational Research," in Ball, *Foucault and Education*, 11-29, on the distinction of power.

47. Michel Foucault, *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason*, trans. Richard Howard (New York: Pantheon, 1965); Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (New York: Vintage Books, 1973); Michel Foucault, *The Birth of the Clinic: An Archeology at Medical Perception* , trans. A.M. Sheridan Smith (New York: Vintage, 1975); and Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage, 1979).

48. Dennis Carlson, *Teachers and Crisis: Urban School Reform and Teachers' Work Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1992).

change can be sought. Structural uniformity is assumed, for example, in inquiries to understand how gifted education, school tests, and teacher hiring practices privilege certain groups, or how students resist norms of control through their reading of "romance fictions," resisting teaching practices, and not accepting dominant values.[49] Here, power is attached to actors who have the legitimacy to make decisions and allocate values within communities — a description that continues to inscribe the commitments of the philosophy of consciousness. A central premise is that society includes groups, social interests, and "forces" that have been historically formed and whose practices dominate and repress other groups.

The sovereign notion of power is limited on a number of counts. It posits unified historical processes and structures; however, change entails "an amalgamation of institutional and discursive practices that function as a collective assembly of disparate parts on a single surface."[50] In a re-examination of the "conservative restoration" thesis, for example, the changes reported in economy, culture, and politics are found to begin well before the election of Ronald Reagan in the United States or Margaret Thatcher in the United Kingdom; the "restoration" entailed a reorganization of knowledge and practices that occurred in an uneven pattern, within multiple institutions, and over a period that is longer than the "Reagan-Bush" era.[51] What is reported as structural historical change in the "conservative restoration" is nonhistorical and nonrelational. Power is treated as immanent to the specific setting rather than questioned about how it is possible for it to exist in this form, or what conditions are necessary for its production.

Another limitation of the sovereign notion of power is its tendency to homogenize and essentialize categories of analysis. The historical contingencies and multiple boundaries in which race, class, and gender are constructed have no single origin or universal characteristics but are constructed in relational fields that are fluid and multi-dimensional. While one can posit a generalized condition of capitalism as a background to the organization of power, for example, this positing does not provide an adequate theoretical grounding for understanding how the capillaries of power work in modern societies. For example, there is no one "model" of capitalism; nor is its history one of unified development.

Thus, while research and researchers can be sensitive to issues of race, class, and gender, the rules and standards of reasoning by which subjects are "defined" are not essential categories of logic but need to be treated as historically constructed categories that embody and weave together social, technological, and institutional patterns. Power as sovereignty often creates a dichotomous world in which there are the oppressors and the oppressed, thus producing a dualism whose effect is to define

49. See, for example, Lois Weis and Michelle Fine, eds., *Beyond Silenced Voices: Class, Race, and Gender in United States Schools* (Albany: State University of New York, 1993).

50. Jonathan Crary, *Techniques of the Observer: On Vision and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1990), 6.

51. See Robert Kuttner, *The End of Laissez-faire: National Purpose and the Global Economy after the Cold War* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1991) and Robert Lekachman, *Greed is not Enough, Reaganomics* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1982). Also, see Popkewitz, *A Political Sociology of Educational Reform.*

particular social groups as monolithic entities. The story often unfolds as one group dominates while the other possesses social righteousness but not power. The dualism of oppressor/oppressed loses sight of the subtleties through which power operates in multiple arenas and social practices.[52] In sovereign power analyses, race, class, and gender are considered as parallel concepts, but the parallelism is never theoretically integrated.[53] The concepts stand as separate categories which do not account for the multiple agendas that exist within social factions and movements, or the multiplicity of relations that exist within and among groups at any one time.

POWER AS DEPLOYMENT AND PRODUCTIVE EFFECTS

Foucault suggests that there is an interpretation of power that is different from, but not necessarily incommensurate with, that of sovereignty. That view concerns the productive quality of power. This productive notion of power concerns its effects as it circulates through institutional practices and the discourses of daily life. Foucault argues that power is embedded in the governing systems of order, appropriation and exclusion by which subjectivities are constructed and social life formed. Here, Foucault revises the Nietzschean notion of a "will to know" to consider how available systems of ideas discipline individuals to act, think, and "see" themselves in the world.

The new deployments of power are enabled as the state and the social sciences develop new technologies. The Welfare State insurance for unemployment, and classification systems that define people by age, occupation, marital status, and health status serve to re-vision individuality through "civilizing processes" that produce boundaries and permissible paths for the new citizen. A central element of the politics of modernity, argued throughout this essay, is related to a version of the Nietzschean notion of the "the will to power" in which the subject is disciplined through the rules of knowledge per se; thus pointing to the need to focus on knowledge as part of the project to disrupt the power relations embodied in educational practices. The changing foci and strategies of power, which Foucault's empirical studies underscore, we believe, require different intellectual practices to explore issues of power than those embodied in previous epistemologies of critical traditions in the social science. Knowledge as the deployment of power has increased in important ways through the construction of expert systems of knowledge that discipline and normalize individuality. The strategy of locating individuals in discursive spaces is a way to understand and make problematic the classificatory criteria through which individuals are to be disciplined and self-regulated.

Strategically, the study of the effects of power enables us to focus on the ways that individuals construct boundaries and possibilities. The concern of Marx with the productive characteristics of labor is thus inverted into the productive character-

52. See Thomas S. Popkewitz, ed., *Changing Patterns of Power: Social Regulation and Teacher Education Reform* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993).

53. See, for example, James Ladwig, *Academic Distinctions: Theory and Methodology in the Sociology of School Knowledge* (New York: Routledge, 1966).

istics of knowledge itself.[54] In some ways, we can consider the work of Foucault as expanding and providing a historical specificity to the observations of the early Frankfurt School. The early theorists focused on the expanding rationalization and instrumental reasoning that underlies modernity. Foucault enables us to understand that such reasoning has multiple trajectories and to explore the various strategies through which individuality is constructed as both disciplining and productive of power. The productive elements of power move from the controlling actors to the systems of ideas that normalize and construct the rules through which intent and purpose in the world are organized. The effects of power are to be found in the production of desire and in dispositions and sensitivities of individuals.

It is the effects of power that postmodern and feminist literatures have focused on, with Foucault's work an important generative element of these explorations. For example, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak discusses the problem of translation as a political practice that entails multiple deployments of power.[55] Focusing on the translations of women's texts from the Third World into English, Spivak argues that the specific actor who writes these texts cannot be designated by her subject position of gender or class. She explores how the discursive practices normalize and produce identities through a pervasive orientalism that obliterates Third World specificity and denies cultural citizenship. For Spivak, the concern is not to find the origin of repressive mechanisms of class or gender; her concern is how "sense" is produced through the complex inscriptions of power relations.

We can explore the productive notion of power to re-conceptualize the problem of socialization in teaching and teacher education. Most research on teaching and teacher education assumes the "subject" of children and teacher as stable categories. Research questions are asked about how teachers and students learn about the social relations and, at points, resist those arrangements. The notion of socialization can also be used to ask about the discursive practices that construct what it means to be a teacher who administers children. For example, a study of socialization in teacher education focused on the discursive practices that provided the categories and distinctions through which teachers administered children.[56] In particular, the study was interested in understanding the particular images and visions in schooling that classified children of color and poverty. The study described how the discursive practices of classroom teaching and management, and conceptions of children's intelligence, behavior, and achievement, formed a scaffolding of ideas that normalized children of color in opposition to some general but unspoken norms about personal competence in schools. What was significant (and paradoxical) was that the

54. Thomas Dumm, *Democracy and Punishment: Disciplinary Origins of the United States* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1987).

55. Gayatri Chakrovorty Spivak, "The Politics of Translation," in *Destabilizing Theory: Contemporary Feminist Debates*, ed. Michele Barrett and Anne Phillips (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1992), 177-200.

56. Thomas S. Popkewitz, *The Spatial Politics of Urban and Rural Education: Discourses of Teaching as Systems of Exclusion* (New York: Teachers College Press, forthcoming).

teacher education practices were also shaped by the rules of "reasoning" in current school reforms that were supposed to make schools more accessible for those groups who have been historically excluded.

We can think about the two interpretations of the concept of power — as sovereignty or deployment — as maintaining general political commitments for social change, but having different assumptions in the loci of study and the politics of intervention. We can also recognize that neither interpretive stance is totalizing; rather, both are complementary. The former considers larger historical structures through which daily life is constructed; the latter focuses on the micro-politics in which subjectivities are constructed. In the latter we can attend more closely to how power circulates through and is productive in daily life, providing a strategy for disrupting that knowledge/power relation through making "reason" appear as socially constructed and as embodying power relations. This strategy makes visible the systems of ideas that construct the subject; by doing so, it also makes the systems resistible.

GOVERNMENTALITY IN EDUCATION

Foucault's concept of "governmentality" has received only scant attention from within the field of education as yet.[57] The notion of "governmentality" provides a way to consider the concept of power as deployment discussed earlier and to consider the conceptual scaffolding built through the discussions on decentering the subject and the problematics of power when considering issues of change. We first outline Foucault's own approach to governmentality and then move to discuss education as centrally implicated in the process of modernization within which projects such as the philosophy of consciousness have been constructed.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE EMPHASIS ON GOVERNMENTALITY

In current educational debates there has been much discussion about the problem of school governance, usually cast in terms of specific organizational features of the school or school system in relation to state intervention. Building on our discussion above, however, we suggest that it is more fruitful to discuss the issues of governance less in terms of pros and cons about specific policies but more in terms of the conditions by which practices — such as site-based management, "the reflective teacher," or "action research" — are constructed as plausible.

In his lecture on governmentality, Foucault argues that rather than by the "étatisation of society" modernity may actually be characterized by "the 'governmentalization' of the state."[58] The shift from the art of governance of the prince in relation to a principality — exemplified by Machiavelli's treatise — toward governance of a different kind is able to occur during the sixteenth century in large part, he argues, because of the specific development of the phenomenon of "population." Population as an entity can be cared for by government by moving the practices of the patriarch in caring for the family and managing its "economy" into a more

57. See, for example, Ball, *Foucault and Education.*

58. Foucault, "Governmentality," 103.

grand arena. Foucault suggests that "the family becomes the instrument rather than the model: a privileged instrument for the government of the population....Population comes to appear above all else to be the ultimate end of government."[59] Population, once it exists as a concept, can be measured, organized, statistically developed into categories, and dealt with in institutions, each with its own techniques of power-knowledge. It is the preeminent form of power-knowledge relations in the modern world. In developing the technologies appropriate to population, governmentality must then focus on the techniques of the self as well as the institutional technologies which perpetrate the art of government in ways that make it acceptable to the populace.

Colin Gordon argues that the "focus of Foucault's interest in modern governmental rationalities consists precisely in the realization of what he called the "'daemonic' coupling of 'city game' and 'shepherd-game': the invention of a form of secular political pastorate which couples 'individualization' and 'totalization.'"[60]

GOVERNMENTALITY AND EDUCATION

While Foucault himself gave little direct attention to the institution of schooling and its microtechnologies of power-knowledge, much of his work has major implications for understanding the nature of education, work, and research, and he often refers in passing to such implications. In his lecture on governmentality in 1978, for example, Foucault suggests that the explosion of concerns central to his thesis included the "government of children and the great problematic of pedagogy which emerges and develops during the sixteenth century."[61]

His work on prisons has also been used as an important corollary to the institution of schooling. Foucault argued in *Discipline and Punish* that the invention of the "examination" allowed the "calculable person" to be developed and thus the particular form of the power-knowledge relations characteristic of the modern period.[62] Foucault argues that "The pastoral, the new diplomatic-military techniques and, lastly, police, these are the three elements that I believe made possible the production of this fundamental phenomenon in Western history, the governmentalization of the state."[63]

Keith Hoskin, however, working from Foucault's framework, suggests a need to move further than Foucault in understanding the significance of the examination. Hoskin suggests that "examination lies at the heart of the transformation."[64] For Hoskin, the new "calculable person" is the result of the invention of marking: the

59. Ibid., 100.

60. Colin Gordon, "Governmental Rationality: An Introduction," in *The Foucault Effect*, ed. Burchell, Gordon, and Miller, 30.

61. Foucault, "Governmentality," 87.

62. Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*.

63. Foucault, "Governmentality," 104.

64. Keith Hoskin, "Education and the Genesis of Disciplinarity: The Unexpected Reversal," in *Knowledges: Historical and Critical Studies in Disciplinarity*, ed. Ellen Messer-Davidoff, David R. Shumway, and David J. Sylvan (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1993), 277.

new panoptical gaze of surveillance-plus-judgment is the result of the new powers of writing-plus-examination. The transformation into the disciplinary world (never directly specified by Foucault) is a direct outcome of a new way of learning to learn, beginning at the top in these elite settings.

The new pedagogy, discussed in *The Order of Things* in relation to philology, biology, and political economy, gave rise to new ways of "constructing the self: respectively as critical-interpretive, as technical scientific, and as rational-economic."[65] By the early nineteenth century, Hoskin argues, the regulation through the introduction of practices of writing, grading, and examination was firmly entrenched. Thereafter students quickly came to take it for granted that "writing, grading, and examination were practices dating back to time immemorial."[66] The grammocentric world suggested by Hoskin, organized around the discipline of writing, and oriented to a new principle of producing power-knowledge has been central to the development of the modern world.

This may suggest some reasons why education, in both schooling and university sectors, has become so central in the development of new forms of governmentality, exemplifying new strategies, tactics, and techniques of power to furnish what had become the major form of power relations defining institutions and individuals in Western societies. The institutions of formal education, schools, and universities have become central to the "disciplining" in most, if not all, other fields.

Restructuring of education in the United States and Australia in the 1980s and now the 1990s, as in most Western countries, has been built on practices refined through earlier education reform packages such as the "teacher proof" curriculum materials of the 1960s and federally funded programs targeted toward the disadvantaged. The focus has very much been on government policy intervention, often justified through strongly mediated "public" dissatisfaction with educational institutions. As Bill Green argues, even a single subject area such as English can be a means of mobilizing particular discourses which alter the content, focus and relations of teaching.[67] Reforms in education do not occur in a vacuum, but are intricately connected to activity in other fields, particularly the media. Green's explorations of the reform of the subject "English" provides an exemplary case of state intervention in education with remarkable parallels across England, the United States, and Australia. Green is not only concerned with the way discourses around "English" are mobilized in the professional and public arenas; he also explores the role of key epistemic individuals in the construction of a discourse and its public reception.

The specific relations between the pastoral and political economy aspects of governmentality in schooling alter in different periods and sites. It is possible to see the feminist debates on teaching as "caring" and debates about equity for students

65. Foucault, *The Order of Things* and Hoskin, "Education and the Genesis of Disciplinarity," 280.

66. Hoskin, "Education and the Genesis of Disciplinarity," 281.

67. William Green, "Post-Curriculum Possibilities: English Teaching, Cultural Politics and the Postmodern Turn," *The Journal of Curriculum Studies*, in press.

from particular demographic backgrounds as exemplars of different emphases in these dimensions of schooling.[68] The "caring" is only possible because students are required to come to school. The counting of the populational characteristics of different marginalized groups is necessary in order for them to receive appropriate care. Both emphases are necessary for schooling to continue to exist as a means of organization of the population.

Both the pastoral and economic aspects of population work at the microlevel of the individual, in the body, by individualizing the particular dimensions of normality as well as across populations. Thus it is "normal" for young people to be gathered together in age-grouped cohorts, and organized around the transmission and production of certain kinds of knowledge, in schools. Students in these schools will, however, be differentiated according to different scales and categories, often through the medium of assessment, but also through the privileging of certain kinds of content and approaches to teaching and learning. Students will be cared for in a range of ways, and different kinds of statistics will be collected and collated in relation to their positioning and achievements. The move to further consolidate the calibration of "outcomes" in testing on standardized content, best represented in campaigns for a "national curriculum" across the Anglo world, can be seen as a further development of the links between individualization and populational overview.

INTELLECTUAL WORK AS POLITICAL: A RECONSIDERATION

Why make the linguistic turn rather than maintain the assumptions of the philosophy of consciousness? One could argue that focusing on the intent and purposes of social actors provides an important social as well as scientific commitment; it places people and their social worlds as central in producing social change. To remove people from history, it is argued, is to make the world seem deterministic and beyond the possibility of intervention. In fact, efforts to remove the actor have been viewed as reactionary within the dogma of the philosophy of consciousness.[69] Not to have a visible actor — groupings of people and individuals — in narratives of social affairs is asserted as anti-humanistic (and even anti-democratic). It is not uncommon to hear people react to stories about schools by asking, "Where are the people in the story?" The assumption is of a world in which salvation can be found through positing prior universal actors who will bring the good works, and in which potential is not prevented through the schemas of theorists who "decenter" the subject.[70]

Further, when there is no rhetoric of emancipation, it is often assumed that there is no consideration of power. This argument is a reading that ignores the terrain that

68. Nel Noddings, *Caring: A Feminine Approach to Ethics and Moral Education* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984).

69. One needs to read current literature theory, and feminist scholarship, as well as critiques of postmodernism in education to realize how political a question the privileging of the subject is. See, for example, bodily response to postmodernism which ironically argues for forms of analysis that Clarke rejects; John Clarke, *New Times and Old Enemies. Essays on Cultural Studies and America* (London: Harper Collins, 1991).

70. See, for example, Landon Beyer and Daniel Liston, "Discourse or Moral Action? A Critique of Postmodernism," *Educational Theory* 42, no. 4 (Fall 1992): 371-93.

is being struggled over. It is a reading that continually brings the ideas in the linguistic turn into an Hegelian set of assumptions about contradictions, resistance, and a humanism based upon a universalized notion of progress. The argument becomes solipsistic.[71]

But as important, the sociological consequence of the philosophy of consciousness has not always been empowering. The practical consequences of an unquestioned centering of a subject entail multiple issues of power that are hidden in the rhetorical constructions. Butler argues, drawing on feminist and postcolonial literature, that the centering of the subject is a particular invention of Western philosophy.[72] When the subject is taken uncritically as the locus of struggle for knowledge about enfranchisement and democracy, scholarship draws from the very models that have oppressed through the regulation and production of subjects.[73] Such a strategy, Butler argues, is both a consolidation and concealment of those power relations. Where the agency of individuals or groups is made to seem natural, there is a tendency to lose sight of how the agendas and categories which define oppositions are historically formed. The systems of relevancies are taken for granted.

Further, the decentering of the subject, we have argued, does not prevent the subject from acting and does not abandon the Enlightenment project. The strategy of decentering the subject is itself a product of the very self-reflectivity produced through an Enlightenment ethos. The decentering of the subject has its own sense of irony: there is an acceptance of the need to construct knowledge that can enable people to act intentionally. The subject is made into a dimension of the questionable and of "insistent contest and resignification," not as a foundation of research that is taken as the unquestionable.[74]

David Blacker, for example, argues against what he sees as an erroneous emergent consensus that Foucault's arguments, particularly those on humanism, are self-refuting and undermine his potential contribution to intellectual politics.[75] He suggests that Foucault's work does offer necessary and important dimensions to a research ethic for institutionally situated intellectuals. Rather than seeing Foucault's project as one of *refuting* humanism, Foucault, he suggests, it can be interpreted as offering an immanent critique of humanism, in the first place, and, second, as offering specific conceptual apparatus for developing a more political and effective specific intellectual. Blacker notes that the "essential problem for the intellectual is not to criticize the ideological contents supposedly linked to science, or to ensure that his own scientific practice is accompanied by correct ideology, but that of ascertaining the possibility of constituting a new politics of truth."[76]

71. See, for example, Frank Pignatelli, "What Can I Do? Foucault on Freedom and the Question of Teacher Agency," *Educational Theory* 43, no. 4 (Fall 1993): 411-32 where he moves from a problematized theory to dialectical theory of change without any notice of the shift in the grounds of argument.

72. Butler, *Contingent Foundations*.

73. Also see Young, *White Mythologies*, 50.

74. Butler, *Contingent Foundations*, 7.

75. David Blacker, "Intellectuals at Work and in Power: Toward a Foucauldian Research Ethic," in Popkewitz and Brennan, *Foucault's Challenge*.

76. Ibid.

"Governmentality" for Foucault was yet another way to explore the issue of the relations — and the constructions of those relations — between order and chaos, disruption and continuity, self and self. By continually exploring what it meant to remove the self-reflective subject from center stage, Foucault made different approaches to rationality and activity possible. Thus the process of subjectification — central to political projects of varying persuasions and commitments — becomes open to critical scrutiny in ways not previously understood. Constructing histories about how our subjectivities are formed (making the agendas and categories of the subject problematic) can provide a space for alternative acts and alternative intentions which are not articulated through the available commonsenses.

This insertion of the subject, therefore, occurs in a different location than that argued in the philosophy of consciousness; but it is no less an acceptance of the need of and the challenge for more viable and just possibilities. The humanism is reinserted into social analysis by questioning the givenness of the subject as historically constructed and thus reasserting an individuality that can challenge the rules of reason that subjugate.

The political project of many feminists inscribes this shift in intellectual work. An important strategy in constructing different social relations and social spaces for women is to challenge the hegemonies of "reason" that are inscribed in gendered identities. The "politics of identity" and the "politics of difference" in feminist scholarship are integral dimensions of the political project of feminism itself. It seeks to historicize gender constructions in order to dislocate the inscribed identities of women and thereby open up other possibilities.

The life and work of Foucault is another example of the insertion of the agency and the politics of the intellectual.[77] Foucault was in his lifetime a major figure in French intellectual life, playing the role of activist intellectual, a role which has no real counterpart in the English-speaking world, particularly the United States and Australia. Thus, although English speakers may read his work as not directly engaged with the major political debates of his — or the current — era, it is necessary to remind such readers of the significant and close connections that his work had at a meta-level with the issues of lived politics. In addition to his own political connection with the student uprisings in Tunis and France and their aftermath — for example in the development of a radical Faculty at Vincennes — and his work with prisoners, Foucault's focus in his own research lay in the problematics of disruption to order, the ways in which order itself was a fragile but forcible and tangible achievement. Such themes recur from *Madness and Civilization* through *The Order of Things*, *Discipline and Punish*, and *The History of Sexuality*.

Foucault's work, we think, entails a radical politics in intellectual work as it was related to social movements, but without the hortatory claims that privilege the position of the intellectual as an oracle. Foucault recognized that a particular contribution of intellectual work is that it can undermine the disciplinary and

77. See Dibier Eribon, *Michel Foucault*, trans. Betsy Wing (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991) and Miller, *Passion of Michel Foucault*.

regulatory effects of power. His intellectual production intersects with (but is also in a different social space from) his activist work in prisons, asylums, and so on. Foucault's practices, as well as those of Bourdieu, involve political commitments and engagement, but they recognize the pragmatic qualities of social conditions and of being a critical intellectual in social movements. They caution us not to reduce practices in one social space to the other, but to understand the historical complexities of their intersections.

At this point we can introduce the notion of resistance into our discussion of the relation of politics and intellectual projects. In the philosophy of consciousness, resistance was posed as outside of power. It privileged specific acts of will as if individuals were sovereign agents responding to universal categories and universal claims about emancipation. The discussion here has suggested that resistance is imbricated within power not outside of it.[78] The focus on sovereignty neglects a conception of resistance that relates to the disciplinary forms and technologies through which power operates.

But the politics that Foucault's work engenders, however, is not without controversy. To return briefly to the argument of the philosophy of consciousness: in that argument the actor makes history; and, it is believed, the absence of a visible agent introduces a determinist world that has no possibility of change. The argument of this essay problematizes that argument, focusing not on actors but on forms of reasoning and principles of ordering. Such a strategy is to destabilize the reigning forms of "reasoning." A seeming paradox is thus introduced as we re-vision the philosophical issues of agency and actors as a priori conditions of analysis and social action. In the social theory discussed here, the agent is present, but not as the actor locked in the narrative of inquiry; this social theory creates a space for undetermined agency by destabilizing the conditions that confine and intern consciousness and its principles of order. Making the forms of reasoning and rules for "telling the truth" contingent, historical, and susceptible to critique, is a practice to dislodge the ordering principles, thereby creating a greater range of possibility for the subject to act.

SOME CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

We have argued that the linguistic turn and a social epistemology embody political commitments to question injustice and domination, but the strategies of intellectual work are different from the Left scholarship of the 1970s and 1980s. In one sense, the strategies of engagement respond to the failures of the older strategies of the Left that certain intellectuals felt in the aftermath of the 1968 rebellions in the United States and Europe as well as in the anti-colonial struggles outside of Europe. At the same time, some have argued that the utopian energies that gave birth to modern politics have either been realized or exhausted, such as the successes and failures of the union movements and role of the media in modern societies.[79] Whether

78. Young, *White Mythologies.*

79. David M. Rasmussen, "Reflections on the 'End of History'; Politics, Identity, and Civil Society," *Philosophy and Social Criticism* 18, 234-50.

or not we argue with these assessments, it is important to recognize the changing terrain of political struggles exemplified in the politics of identity of postmodern feminist and postcolonial literatures. The disruption of how we "tell the truth" about ourselves and others is viewed as a practical strategy for constructing options as the rules through which power is deployed are themselves made visible.[80]

Making the rules for telling the truth visible and open to critique requires a careful use and problematization of the work of Foucault himself. While the epistemic figure of Foucault looms large on the intellectual landscape of the late twentieth century, what is important for research is not a slavish cult of Foucauldian implementation studies but a continual problematization of the categories, foci, and methodological considerations to which he has given emphasis. This is not to invite methodological pluralism or unbridled eclecticism. Rather, it is to emphasize the need for rigorous questioning of the will to truth embodied in educational work and educational research in particular. In an arena centrally concerned with training in truth production, such an invitation may be difficult to accept.

In moving to closure of a pragmatic kind, we turn to a historical argument about science. Stephen Toulmin, in examining the history of science, argues that we have been living under the specter of certainty since the late seventeenth century, even though the first work in science involved norms of skepticism.[81] He suggests that it is time that we give skepticism a try since certainty has not worked. To put this a different way, a rhetorical stance in the United States holds that if one does not make explicit, normative political commitments and emphasize the agentive subject in the knowledge of social science, no one will act and the people of the world will be incapacitated. This argument is an act of tremendous hubris as well as an odd historical argument. We can point to no instance of people being incapacitated to act because of intellectual knowledge; in fact people typically act in ways that intellectuals do not approve of. Neither have social movements been disbanded when the identification of actors was intellectually blurred. The dualism of a problematizing knowledge verses social reconstruction has no historical validity. People do continually act; they have no option but to act in their daily and collective lives. Perhaps, to return to Foucault and Toulmin, a problematizing theory may be one way to consider the politics of knowledge, the politics of intellectual work, and the politics of change at this historical moment.

80. It is an interesting side note to our discussion that Foucault's work has been influential in institutional reforms in multiple countries. This occurred without posturing an epistemology of progress in his scholarship. He rejected the privileging the intellectual through arguments about some universal notion of the intellectual bringing progress through the a prior positioning of the "subject."

81. Stephen Toulmin, *Cosmopolis, the Hidden Agenda of Modernity* (New York: The Free Press, 1990).

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