The Fourth Face of Power

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Michel Foucault's writings have given the debate over power yet another twist. But how useful is this novel conception of power to the study of politics? We can better understand Foucault's meaning of "power" (referred to as the fourth face of power or power$_4$) by placing it alongside the debate over power which has occupied political scientists for 30 years. This juxtaposition reveals a conception of power that claims to be both descriptive and critical of the norms governing our self-understandings and political practices. The essay concludes by considering a political response to Foucault's striking notion of disciplinary power.

Productive of subjects, accompanied by resistance, twined with knowledge, and—in modernity—insidious, totalizing, individuating, and disciplinary. These are some of the strange and controversial features of the fourth face of power. Most frequently associated with the writings of Michel Foucault, this use of the word *power* has become prominent in the subdiscipline of political theory[1] and incorporated in a particular approach to politics that has been loosely termed genealogical. Central to this approach is the claim to discover "power operating in structures of thinking and behavior that previously seemed to be devoid of power relations" (White 1986, 421). For a discipline that not infrequently defines itself in terms of the study of

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[1]In the past nine years, *Political Theory* has published a number of articles elucidating, criticizing, and reformulating Foucault's approach to politics. See for example, Mark Philp, "Foucault on Power: A Problem in Radical Translation?" (1983), William Connolly, "Discipline, Politics and Ambiguity" (1983), Charles Taylor, "Foucault on Freedom and Truth" (1984), William Connolly, "Taylor, Foucault, and Otherness" (1985), Charles Taylor, "Connolly, Foucault, and Truth" (1985), Tom Keenan, "The 'Paradox' of Knowledge and Power: Reading Foucault on a Bias" (1987), Alexander E. Hooke, "The Order of Others: Is Foucault's Antihumanism Against Human Action?" (1987), Gad Horowitz, "The Foucaultian Impasse: No Sex, No Self, No Revolution" (1987), Jeffrey C. Isaac, "On the Subject of Political Theory" (1987), William S. Corlett, Jr., "Pocock, Foucault, Forces of Reassurance" (1989), Stephen Frederick Schneck, "Habits of the Head: Tocqueville's America and Jazz" (1989), Thomas McCarthy, "The Critique of Impure Reason: Foucault and the Frankfurt School," (1990), James Miller, "Carnivals of Atrocity: Foucault, Nietzsche, Cruelty" (1990), and Terry K. Aladjem, "The Philosopher's Prism: Foucault, Feminism, and Critique" (1991).

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power, such a claim has a certain appeal. But Foucault's conception of power is novel. Part of its novelty is that it relies upon a vocabulary differing dramatically from what is found in mainstream political science. This not only frustrates attempts to assess its significance, but also engenders charges of deliberate obfuscation, muddled thinking, and precious insularity. The goal of this paper is to make Foucault speak to the political science of power in a way that allows one to analyze and assess his conception for the study of politics.

Foucault uses *power* in different ways. At times his usage is quite ordinary.[2] Usually the word is paired with the idea of discipline, sometimes it is prefixed with "bio" as in biopower. To understand these striking terms we must first get at the novel and more general use of the word *power* that they presuppose (Foucault 1977, 215; 1980b, 108; 1984c, 380). The first part of this paper compares and contrasts Foucault's general understanding of power to uses more familiar to political scientists. The second part focuses upon the disciplinary character of the fourth face of power and its implications for politics.

The First Three Faces of Power

The debate over power ranges across political ideologies, methodologies, and disciplines. To juxtapose Foucault's conception of power to this debate, a sketch of a few salient positions will do. In "The Two Faces of Power" (1962) Bachrach and Baratz initiated and redefined much of the debate over power in political science. They argued that Robert Dahl's conceptualization of power reflected only one face of the power relationships in American politics. Dahl's conception of power was that "A has power over B to the extent that he can get B to do something that B would not otherwise do" (Dahl 1957, 202–203). In response, Bachrach and Baratz argued that power is not solely a matter of getting *B* to do something that she does not want to do, but can also be a matter of preventing *B* from doing what she wants to do.[3] To understand the exercise of power in a given political relationship more fully, investigators must also consider decisions that were not made. The political scientist must ask whether prevailing political values and procedures limit decision making and mobilize bias in favor of some groups as opposed to others.

Although the distinction between the first and the second faces of power

[2]For example see how Foucault uses the term *power* in his statement regarding the Vietnamese boat people (Keenan 1987, 21).

[3]Bachrach and Baratz continue by saying, "power is also exercised when A devotes his energies to creating or reinforcing social and political values and institutional practices that limit the scope of the political process to public consideration of only those issues which are comparatively innocuous to A" (1962, 948).

has generated extensive and heated controversy over the appropriate object of empirical research (Bachrach and Baratz 1962, 1963, 1975; Crenson 1971; Debnam 1975; Merelman 1968; Polsby 1963; Wolfinger 1971), the second face did not alter our conceptual map of power (Flathman 1980, 134). For both faces the idea of power characterized an overtly or covertly conflictual relation between agents coercively advancing well-understood, self-defined interests against the interests of other agents. Because the first two faces represent the self-determined interests and conflict of individuals they together constitute what can be called the liberal conception of power.

In *Power: A Radical View,* Steven Lukes (1974) argued that even Bachrach and Baratz's second face of power was inadequate. Power, Lukes argued, could be exercised in a way that is not captured by the first two faces. For example, *B* may willingly do something that *A* wants *B* to do. Under the first two faces of power this is not a power relationship if *B* is acting voluntarily. The willingness of *B* shows that there is not a conflict of interests. In response, Lukes contended that power *could* be exerted even if *B* consciously wants to do what *A* desires. Lukes claimed that if *B* acts contrary to her objective, real interests then power is being exercised. In other words, the first two faces are blind to a form of power in which the very desires and wants of *B* are manipulated (Lukes 1974, 23). The appeal to interests that are not selfdefined is Lukes's attempt to capture a form of intrusion that extends beyond the liberal conception of power. Using Lukes's terminology, this third face is called the radical conception of power.

These three competing ideas exhaust neither the positions adopted toward the concept of power nor the extent of the debate, but they provide enough of a relief to see the fourth face of power (which, for convenience, will be represented by power$_4$).[4] This relief will show that power$_4$ differs from the other conceptions of power in how it deals with subjects, where it is found, and how it is exercised, studied, and manifested. These differences raise questions whether power$_4$ is power at all and whether Foucault's approach is useful. The first half of the paper concludes by arguing that Foucault's unique use of the word *power* has its own drawbacks and attractions for the study of politics.

The Subject of Power$_4$

When moving from the first to the third face of power the focus of research widens from a concern with the action and inaction of agents to the formation of desires that violate objective interests. With the radical conception (the third face), the word *power* is employed to explain not only actions but

[4]For discussion of how Foucault's notion of power contrasts to the use of the term in critical theory see Philp (1983), White (1986), and Hoy (1986b). For a useful and wide-ranging discussion of theories of power see Clegg (1989).

beliefs. The fourth face of power takes this movement one step further and in so doing (as we shall see) compounds the problem of identifying when power$_4$ is present. But this movement also implies a rejection of the central feature shared by the other three faces. The first three faces agree at some level that *A* exercises power over *B* when *A* affects *B* in a manner contrary to *B*'s interests (Lukes 1974, 27): the *A*'s and *B*'s are taken as given. In contrast, the fourth face of power does not take as presupposed the subjects (the *A*'s and *B*'s) of the other three faces (Foucault 1977, 29; 1980a, 204; 1980b, 98). Power$_4$ postulates that subjectivity or individuality is not biologically given. Subjects are understood as social constructions, whose formation can be historically described. Foucault's use of the term *power* is part of his description of this formation.

The idea that power$_4$ has something to do with the construction of *A*'s and *B*'s raises the very large issue of exactly what Foucault means by subjects. Stephen White suggests that subjectivity is "an account of the human subject or agent, usually developed in terms of concepts such as rationality, intentionality, responsibility, mutuality, interest, etc." (White 1986, 419). This definition, however, blurs over a distinction that can be drawn between agency (or autarchy) and autonomy (Benn 1975–1976). Does the production of a subject refer to the effect that power$_4$ has upon the *quality* of our desires, intentions, and interests (autonomy), or does it refer to the generation of our *capacity* to have them (agency)? If the operation of power$_4$ calls into question the autonomous formation of our dispositions, desires, and intentions, then it forces us to ask whether our desires and projects are our own in some deep, critical sense. However, because autonomy presupposes certain capacities that already individualize us, it is more likely that Foucault is making the deeper claim that the forging of subjects refers to the enabling or disabling of agency, i.e., the ability to have desires, form goals, and act freely. As we shall see, if power$_4$ is linked to the formation of agency, its operation questions whether we have become something less than agents, or if we truly understand the costs of becoming agents.

It is clear that the kind of inquiry suggested by power$_4$ differs radically from what seems to flow from the other conceptions of power. Under the first face of power the central question is, "Who, if anyone, is exercising power?" Under the second face, "What issues have been mobilized off the agenda and by whom?" Under the radical conception, "Whose objective interests are being harmed?" Under the fourth face of power the critical issue is, "What kind of subject is being produced?"

Power$_4$ Power$_4$ Everywhere . . .

Power$_4$ not only produces subjects, it lies at the bottom of all our social practices: politics, medicine, religion, psychiatry, work. These practices are situated in a context in which power$_4$ is everywhere. There is no escaping it:

"power is co-extensive with the social body; there are no spaces of primal liberty between the meshes of its network" (Foucault 1980c, 142); "there are no 'margins' for those who break with the system to gambol in" (Foucault 1980c, 141).[5] Within the radical and liberal conceptions of power there is always the possibility for human relationships not to be mediated by power. This is not true of the omnipresent fourth face. Unlike the other conceptions, $power_4$ is not defined in opposition to freedom.[6] Liberation, if understood as an act that escapes $power_4$, assumes that we could jump outside our social skin to some unsituated arena where $power_4$ had no play.

Foucault's claim that subjects and social practices are the effects of a power that one cannot escape has been characterized as puzzling, even otiose (Taylor 1986, 92). However, this claim becomes more coherent if we assume that beneath our intentional, day-to-day political (or economic or personal or moral) actions and practices there are deeper values and norms serving as background conditions. These values and norms are not immutable structural features of human activity, for they can always be explicitly questioned and altered. Richard Flathman, for example, argues that the practice of political authority rests upon a constellation of shared values regarding the nature of obligation, the capacity of individuals to act freely, and other, deeper practices surrounding justification and reason giving. This constellation of shared values situates the practice of political authority in a given historical/social context. As shorthand, Flathman calls these shared beliefs the "authoritative." While these values can be consciously used, understood, and judged, Flathman argues that there is normally a "givenness" or "facticity" to them (Flathman 1980, 204). Consequently, they ground the construction, justification, and criticism of the practice of authority.

Flathman's sociological-historical account of political authority does not attempt to describe the emergence, maintenance, or disappearance of these

[5]At times Foucault seems to suggest otherwise. In the first volume of *The History of Sexuality*, Foucault asks, "Should it be said that one is always 'inside' power, there is no 'escaping' it . . . ? This would be to misunderstand the strictly relational character of power relationships" (95). In the "Two Lectures" Foucault talks about individuals circulating "between its [power's] threads" (98). Finally, in "Power and Strategies" Foucault writes, "But there is indeed always something in the social body, in classes, groups and individuals themselves which in some sense escapes relations of power, something which is by no means a more or less docile or reactive primal matter, but rather a centrifugal movement, an inverse energy, a discharge" (138). While this last quote is most at odds with the position set out above, it comes from an interview in which Foucault himself calls his statements "problematic" and "intentionally uncertain" (145).

[6]The relationship between freedom and Foucault's general conception of power is complex. Taylor argues that $power_4$ is altogether incompatible with freedom (Taylor 1986). Thiele, on the other hand, argues that freedom, for Foucault, "must be understood as resistance to the imposition of power, as the antimatter of power" (Thiele 1990, 907). On my reading, Foucault is not a theorist of freedom. Perhaps the most that can be said is that $power_4$ engenders the kinds of individuals for whom the freedom to do what one wants to do may or may not be seen as valuable.

background conditions. It is here that Foucault's power$_4$ can add a dynamic element to Flathman's analysis. The notion of power$_4$ may be useful in excavating the authoritative realm that forges who we are, what we believe, and how we should behave. This historical recovery of the struggles and conflicts that ultimately forge a norm is called "genealogy." A central component of the genealogical project is the claim that all of our political, economic, legal, and religious practices are planted in a social context governed by various rules and discourses forged by relations of power$_4$. Foucault writes,

> Between every point of a social body, between a man and a woman, between the members of a family, between a master and his pupil, between every one who knows and every one who does not, there exist relations of power which are not purely and simply a projection of the sovereign's great power over the individual, they are rather the concrete, changing soil in which the sovereign's power is grounded, the conditions which make it possible for it to function (Foucault 1980d, 187).

Bachrach and Baratz saw the first face of power taking the beliefs and values of political relationships as given, and used the second face of power to shift the attention of research toward how actors use those values to organize some issues into and other issues out of politics. The radical conception of power attempts to shift the program of research to the discovery and violation of objective interests. Power$_4$ suggests a different tack, focusing research not on the effects of biases on issues or on the violation of true interests, but rather on the sources and effects of the norms and values regardless of their bias or truth. The otiosity of Foucault's notion of power is a function of how well it describes the rise of these relationships and whether one accepts the radically historicized thrust of his argument.

Intentionality and Power$_4$

Not only is it everywhere, but power$_4$ is never "in anybody's hands," it is never "appropriated as a commodity or piece of wealth" (Foucault 1980b, 98). The idea that power$_4$ is not a possessed capacity (See, e.g., Isaac 1987) but a relational term accords, to a certain extent, with the liberal notion of power (Bachrach and Baratz 1963, 633). The liberal and Foucauldian conceptions would agree that while power is not a possessed capacity it can be exercised by individuals, groups, or states. However, the notion of exercise in power$_4$ can be taken only in a weak sense. Although what I say and do results in the formation of the subject "*B*"—and in this way I am exercising power—it may be more accurate to say that we are both the "vehicles" of power$_4$ (Foucault 1980b, 98). We are its vehicles because power$_4$ is conveyed through our practices and interactions. It is put into operation when we participate in discourse and norms and does not exist independently of those practices.

The weak sense of exercise accompanying the idea of power$_4$ raises the question of the role of intentionality. Under the liberal conception of power, agents must intentionally interact. *A* must convey his intentions to *B*, and *B* must understand and intentionally respond to *A* (if the exercise of power is successful *B* complies with *A*'s wishes, and if it is unsuccessful, *B* does not) (Crespigny 1968, 194; Flathman 1980, 129–30). Communication of intent may be direct or indirect, but power is successfully exercised if *B* makes a decision that *B* would not otherwise make. The notion of intentionality is deeply connected to the occurrence of conflict and the attribution of responsibility and blame. Without intentionality, claims of responsibility are diminished (Flathman 1980) and without a conflict of interests, *A* cannot be said to affect the actions of *B*.[7]

By contrast, radical theories of power first deny that power must be intentionally exercised. In fact, Lukes (1974) argues that intentions are not as important as whether *B*'s objective interests are being thwarted by the intentional *or* unintentional actions of *A*. Under the radical view of power, the owners of capital need not intentionally harm the real interests of the workers in order to exercise power over them. While there are still conflicts of interests they need not be overt, explicit, or understood by the parties. At the very least they entail the sacrifice and repression of *B*'s objective interests. While the notion of intentionality is not essential, the idea of repression does play a central role in the radical conception of power.

Unlike the radical conception of power, the fourth face eschews appeal to the notion of an objective interest. There are no essential interests, no enduring set of "true" desires and wants that are part of our natures. Without a notion of objective interests, there is no necessary connection between power$_4$ and repression. Furthermore, unlike the liberal understanding, the fourth face of power does not focus on the intentions of individual subjects. "[T]he analysis," Foucault writes, "should not concern itself with power at the level of conscious intention or decision; . . . it should not attempt to consider power from its internal point of view" (Foucault 1980b, 97). But Foucault is not consistent on this point. He also writes, "Power relations are both intentional and nonsubjective . . . they are imbued, through and through, with calculation: there is no power that is exercised without a series of aims and objectives. But this does not mean that it results from the choice or decision of an individual subject" (Foucault 1980e, 94–95). One consistent element here is Foucault's claim that subjects do not choose to exercise power$_4$. What is problematic is whether the remarkable claim of the second quote, that power could be both intentional and nonsubjective, revives the notion of intentionality (Hoy 1986b, 128; Taylor 1986, 86–90; Walzer 1986, 63).

[7]For a rejection of the idea that conflict is important see Debnam 1975, 896.

To sort these matters out let us take as an example the emergence (production) of the practice of promise-keeping. *A* and his companions do not promise one day to establish and sustain a practice of promising (for how could they make a promise to do that?). Before the existence of such a practice, *A* may violently react when *B* does not do what he said he would do, cowing *B* into upholding his word in the future. Or, for some other reason, *B* may come to take a certain pride in keeping his word. That the practice of promising would become widely adopted and then sustained is probably an effect of many individual interactions forging responsible, rational subjects willing and capable of subscribing to the practice.[8] $Power_4$ is part of each of these interactions that marginally forge the character of individuals. As Foucault repeatedly notes, $power_4$ is productive: "[I]t traverses and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms knowledge, produces discourse" (Foucault 1980f, 119).

In this production of the responsible subject and the practice of promising, $power_4$ is conveyed only by acting upon specific intentions and goals. On this formulation, $power_4$ is a kind of unintended consequence of intentional action. It is possible, then, to interpret Foucault's claim that power is both "intentional and nonsubjective" to mean that there is an indirect connection between intentions and $power_4$. It is only in the pursuit of an aim such as getting someone to keep their word, or improving the efficiency of the workplace or raising the test scores of schoolchildren, that $power_4$ manifests itself.[9]

Identifying $Power_4$

Intentional action and conflicting interests, for the liberal conception of power, and objective interests and repression, for the radical conception, are signs that power is being exercised. In contrast, $power_4$ is always present, and for the most part is exercised without intentionality, objective interests, or a repressive character. There appears to be no one criterion that will reveal its operation (although, as we shall see later, Foucault's notion of resistance comes close to playing this role). The absence of a criterion is consistent with the strong antitheoretical current in Foucault's conception of power. Foucault rejects a universal or general set of necessary and sufficient conditions for describing human interaction. Foucault calls his approach less a "theory" of power than an "analytics" (Foucault 1980e, 82; 1980a, 199). This

[8] As Nietzsche writes, "To breed an animal with the right to make promises—is not this the paradoxical problem nature has set itself with regard to man?" (Nietzsche 1956, 189).

[9] Another possible interpretation is that Foucault is claiming that $power_4$ itself has the aim, objective, or goal of establishing the practice of promise keeping. This reading, however, has the problem of attributing an intentional state to a relational term. While $power_4$ relations may be imbued with calculation, it is only because humans have intentions and desires.

means that the exercise of the fourth face of power is revealed only in an examination of the myriad and infinitesimal mechanisms of our social practices and discourses (Foucault 1980b, 99). There is no comprehensive, all-encompassing "theory" of power$_4$: power must be seen at the extremities of what Foucault calls a "micro-physics." It is only through an intensive, nominalistic cataloguing of specific practices that this form of power reveals itself.[10] Power "comes from below" (Foucault 1980e, 94) and must be seen in the multiple and manifold goings on in society: at the factory, in the asylum, in the clinic, in the church, in the family, at school, in the courthouse, and in the army.

Foucault's nominalism is fairly thorough, but his own project is guided by certain generalizations regarding power, subjects, and practices. Power$_4$ forges subjects, not oak trees. Power$_4$ seems to be a universal feature, imbuing and creating social practices and forms of discourse. Moreover, it is always accompanied by "resistance" (Foucault 1980c, 142; 1980e, 95). What is meant by resistance? William Connolly argues that the idea of "resistance" entails the presumption that we are neither infinitely pliable nor naturally suited to be one kind of person rather than another. In forging a particular kind of subject, in imposing a particular form upon a human being, the exercise of power allegedly creates its own resistance. This resistance may be unreflective, the way cold clay responds to a potter's hands, or it may be a deliberate response to a felt imposition. Resistance implies that we are not predesigned to be rational, responsible, self-disciplined individuals (Connolly 1985, 371). It does not imply that we are predesigned to be something else. Complete success in any attempt to forge a particular kind of subjectivity is impossible.

Where resistance is greatest, the exercise of power$_4$ may be clearest. And so Foucault writes histories of the most visible forms of resistance: the mad, the sick, the criminal, and the abnormal. These histories reveal the constructed nature of subjectivity as well as the kind of subject we have become. Their histories give us a sense of our own "subjectification" and of the costs that must be incurred in becoming a "normal" subject.

This set of claims regarding resistance suggests certain features essential to power$_4$ that are tied to deeper claims regarding what we are as human beings: we are creatures that are not suited to be one kind of person rather than another. As Connolly notes, this creates an enduring dilemma for any form of social life: we must do violence to ourselves and others to become

[10]With regard to a theory of power, Foucault writes, "If one tries to erect a theory of power one will always be obliged to view it as emerging at a given place and time and hence to deduce it, to reconstruct its genesis. But if power is in reality an open, more-or-less coordinated (in the event, no doubt, ill-coordinated) cluster of relations, then the only problem is to provide oneself with a grid of analysis which makes possible an analytic of relations of power" (1980a, 199).

responsible, ethical subjects, but that violence cannot be justified by appealing to what we naturally are.[11]

Whether or not they are true, this ensemble of claims cannot be reconciled to Foucault's nominalist methodology. They imply precisely what his nominalism rejects: a universal or general set of conditions for describing human interaction. While it may be impossible for Foucault to avoid appealing to foundational claims and maintain his thoroughgoing nominalism, his foundationalism has a different twist to it. The essentialist or foundational claims to which he appeals are not given the status of absolute truth usually attributed to foundations. Their status seems to be provisional, their essential character is not meant to comprehensively exclude other foundations. As is characteristic of many genealogical writings, Foucault's claims are accompanied by a self-referential irony that questions their naturalness. The problematic status of Foucault's own work brings us to the problem of the relationship between power and knowledge.

Knowledge-Power/Power-Knowledge

What is the relationship between knowledge and power? At one level we can ask how we know that power is being exercised in a given situation. Much of the discussion above is at this level in that it considers the problem of identifying the fourth face of power. At another level we can ask whether there is a connection between what we know and power. Is it possible that our criteria for meaningfulness and knowledge are themselves the effects of power? Foucault's answer raises troubling questions about the grounding or source of knowledge in political science and what effect the accumulation of knowledge has on the exercise of power. Both of these concerns will be explored in this section.

Foucault writes that ". . . power and knowledge directly imply one another . . . there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations" (Foucault 1977, 27). In coming to grips with what this means it should first be pointed out that Foucault never intended the power-knowledge relationship as one that equates knowledge with power: they are different (Keenan 1987, 13–14). Second, Foucault's understanding of the relationship has two parts. One-half of the relationship is that there is no power relation without a field of knowledge. The second half is that there is no knowledge that does not presuppose power relations. I will argue that while the radical and liberal conceptions of power assert opposite halves of this relationship, only $power_4$ attempts to bring both

[11]Connolly calls this relationship between ethical responsibility and violence, the paradox of ethicality (Connolly 1991, 11–12). See also page 12 for Connolly's response to the assertion that Foucault offers a "flabby historical relativism."

halves together. Before considering the significance of this circular connection we must first investigate each half.

What does Foucault mean by saying that there is no power relation without a field of knowledge? Under the liberal conception of power this statement could mean that the operation of power requires a fairly wide set of acknowledgments on the part of both the *A*'s and *B*'s. The *A*'s can be said to have power only if the *B*'s have a conception of their own interests, understand how those interests conflict with *A*'s desires, and properly comprehend the discourse of threats that *A* is using. The possession of power by *A* requires the acceptance of and participation in a whole series of shared understandings by *B* regarding agency, interests, and the language of threats (Flathman 1980, 160). For the liberal conception, if *B* did not know the practice of power, then A's attempt to exercise power would simply pass by *B*. In contrast, the radical conception of power does not presuppose a field of knowledge at least for *B*. For Lukes, power apparently can be exercised without the oppressed knowing what is going on, although the oppressors must have had the power to act differently (Lukes 1974, 55).

Under power$_4$, in what sense could knowledge be prior to the formation of subjects? If we understand knowledge as a system of beliefs upheld by standards of truth or right, then the pursuit and conveyance of those truths could surely affect how we understand ourselves and others. Perhaps conceptions of truth and knowledge serve as a kind of template for the formation of subjects. Or, to put it another way, perhaps the forging of subjects requires some truth to live up to. Just as we must know something about the discourse of threats to exercise the liberal conception of power, so there must already be some truth about subjects in the exercise of the Foucauldian conception of power. Once we *know* that we are all rationally self-interested egoists, or that only an elect is saved, or that we are communally constituted selves, we will adjust our behavior and honor the accumulations of economic man, or condemn the impious citizen, or place under surveillance those who reject the identities offered by the community. What we take as known or as true serves to direct our intentions and goals thereby focusing power$_4$. If the truth of politics is as Hobbes suggests, then our norms will be directed toward molding the tamed, well-ordered selves necessary for sustaining the social contract (Oakeshott 1962, 289). If the truth of politics is Rousseau's general will, then our practices will produce a virtuous subject guided by the standards of nature (Connolly 1988, 62–65). But how does this interpretation fit with the further claim that knowledge presupposes power?

The idea that power is prior to knowledge suggests that power is involved in the production of knowledge. This seems alien to the liberal notion of power. Just as liberalism sharply distinguishes coercion from persuasion, the first two faces of power would not see knowledge as the usual effect of power. Nevertheless, history probably shows any number of *A*'s who threatened to

bludgeon *B*'s in the hopes of establishing the supremacy of certain truth claims. And, in some cases, after enough threatening and bludgeoning, *B*'s may have actually come to believe, or at least publicly profess to believe, in the epistemological sanctity of such claims. If it is possible for threats to alter beliefs, perhaps the liberal conception of power can be prior to knowledge. But even this relationship is more contingent than Foucault's line of argument that knowledge "presupposes" power.

This half of the connection is more familiar to the radical conception of power, where, for example, what counts as truth in a capitalist mode of production is a function of the power held by the capitalist class. The power of the dominant class determines what is taken as true and false. It is able to generate a dominant ideology (Marx 1972). But even here, a certain truth remains untouched by power. If ideology is a mask for the dominant power holders, knowledge of reality requires unmasking that relationship. Ultimately for the radical conception, there must be a truth that escapes power, that allows one to see beyond the mask.

In contrast, Foucault's claim appears to be that no truth escapes power. What counts as knowledge is ultimately an effect of power. In making this claim, Foucault is rejecting the epistemological quest for a instrument that unfailingly guarantees truth and is unblemished by power. Foucault's power-knowledge relationship denies the pristine character of any such guarantee. But why would Foucault claim that beneath the surface of knowledge is power? One possibility is that it solves a larger conundrum facing all epistemological claims. The nature of this conundrum is that any instrument advanced to guarantee truth (be it reason, faith, or empiricism), can always be met by questioning what guarantees that guarantee. Drawing upon Hegel, William Connolly argues that epistemology ultimately reduces to one of two responses:

> [E]ach attempt to test the instrument or the medium for accuracy ends up either by introducing another one itself in need of redemption or reiterating the one which needed to be checked. It thus falls either into an infinite regress or a vicious circle (Connolly 1988, 91).

Resting knowledge upon power *appears* to be a way out of this conundrum without falling into either an infinite regress or a vicious circle. If knowledge cannot guarantee itself, perhaps power is below its surface. The appeal to power acknowledges the futility of this guarantee and describes the grounding of knowledge.

If, we must turn to power to account for knowledge, is knowledge a result of B's being coerced to do what they don't want to do or being prevented from doing what they want to do (i.e., the liberal conception)? Or is it a matter of the violation of B's objective interests (i.e., the radical conception)? The fourth face of power suggests an account in which knowledge is not

made to "stick" by overcoming the interests of recalcitrant B's who intentionally refuse to see the "truth," but rather by producing interests and engendering desires to forge B's into, for example, political scientists. In the case of academia this notion of power operates at the level of mundane decisions made by administrators, faculty members, book publishers, journal editors, and students, to hire this professor, teach that subject, advertise this book, publish that article, and take this course. The socialization implied by the fourth face of power suggests a mechanism that is subtler than what is found in either the liberal or the radical conceptions of power.

The implications of this critique of epistemology and Foucault's appeal to power are troubling. For example, as political scientists we may claim that knowledge is a matter of conjectures and refutations: formulating null hypotheses and then disproving them. While we cannot know what is true, at least we can know what is false. But how do we come to accept the theory of falsification? One possibility would be to attempt to prove the truth of falsification, perhaps by claiming that it is the only positive truth that can be established. If this means establishing some new foundation upon which to rest falsification we may be on the road to an infinite regress: we can always ask what guarantees this positive truth. If this means attempting to falsify the theory of falsification, we may be on the circular route: constructing, for example, a null hypothesis about null hypotheses (which would paradoxically require us to prove a positive truth). If the foundation to knowledge is perpetually slipping from under all science including political science, perhaps it is only through an exercise of power that we come to accept the "fact" that knowledge is advanced by disproving null hypotheses. Coming to accept the truth of falsification involves all those things that individuals do in defining a discipline.

But what at first appears to be a solution to an epistemological conundrum and perhaps a debunking of mainstream social science, turns out to be something different when both sides of the power-knowledge relationship are brought together. One may call it paradoxical (Keenan 1987), but if it is seen sequentially (knowledge resting upon power, power resting upon knowledge, etc.), the knowledge-power relation is itself circular. These terms are mutually supportive: power both produces and is produced by knowledge. Resting knowledge upon power is prey to the same critique levelled against mainstream social science. Where does this leave us?

Perhaps the power-knowledge relation is not meant to displace traditional approaches to knowledge but rather to create more breathing room in the discipline. On this reading, empirical political science is no better, but no worse off, as a source of knowledge than Foucault's arguments regarding the role of power$_4$. It isn't a matter of replacement but reduction of privilege. However, even this would have enormous consequences for the discipline. Could we maintain the prestige (not to mention the funding) of the natural

and social sciences if they were seen merely as complex sociological organizations (Kuhn 1970) or discourses based upon power (Foucault)? Without an unimpeachable claim to privilege, how would we decide which articles to publish? Which books to read? Which courses to teach? In itself, $power_4$ does not provide answers to these questions. Some may see this lack of a solution as irresponsible, as leading down the path to nihilism. Others may negotiate these questions by appealing to personal preferences or to what is more interesting, subtle, or sophisticated. Or these choices may be regulated by shared standards governing a particular literature. $Power_4$ by itself does not legislate an answer.

Is It Power and Is It Useful?

Is a conception of power that focuses upon the formation of subjects and knowledge, that eschews the necessity of intentionality, conflict, and harm, and that is inescapable, antitheoretical and productive of resistance, "power"? In referring to his own use of the word, Foucault writes, "the word power is apt to lead to a number of misunderstandings—misunderstandings with respect to its nature, its form, and its unity" (Foucault 1980e, 92). Indeed, $power_4$ has its own drawbacks and attractions for the study of politics. As the analysis up to this point makes clear, the central drawback is that Foucault's use of the word *power* departs significantly from ordinary usage. If we want to understand $power_4$'s contribution to the continuing debate over power and its value to the conduct of political inquiry, it is important to be aware of the departures that Foucault's use of power entail. With this caveat in mind, we can turn to the possible attractions that $power_4$ has for the study of politics. One contribution that follows from the discussions above, is that $power_4$ directs inquiry toward the formation and transformation of the norms, practices, and self-understandings which compose politics. The genealogical character of $power_4$ shifts the object of theoretical inquiry away from describing or clarifying current political practices and toward describing the mundane, violent, or fabulous beginnings and dynamic character of those practices. Not only does the idea of $power_4$ direct our attention to what sustains ordinary political practices, but it has also been used to study how governmental policies and actions forge and change the norms of other practices (e.g., the law, psychology, education, and sexuality). Foucault's notion of power has served as a tool for setting out the ways in which political actions and arrangements encourage some identities and marginalize others. For example, one effect that $power_4$ may have upon how we study politics is in the subdiscipline of political socialization. Instead of focusing upon the "process by which individuals learn about politics" (Kavanagh 1983), the idea of $power_4$ would direct attention to how governments learn about and forge individuals. Instead of directing the study of political socialization to the

formation of political ideas during childhood and adolescence (Conover and Searing 1987), Foucault would have us ask how does this kind of pursuit of the child in the adult assist the formation of a norm up to which people are expected to live? Power$_4$ not only directs our focus to the making of citizens, but to the making of individuals capable of taking on the responsibilities of citizenship. The fourth face of power suggests that this process is an ongoing one devoted to both child and adult using techniques that are both political and nonpolitical.

Although it is true that the vast bulk of work done in political socialization has focused upon childhood and adolescence (Sigel 1989, vii), there is a long tradition in political theory asserting a relationship between the political/social context and the production of different kinds of individuals.[12] Power$_4$ differs from this tradition in that power$_4$ is linked to the idea of resistance and a nominalistic methodology (however uneasily these two features can be combined). The idea of resistance suggests the empirical hypothesis that no regime can master its subjects. Depending upon the value of such mastery this may be either a counsel of despair or of celebration. The nominalistic methodology questions the desirability of a covering-law mode of explanation and focuses research upon the specific historical interactions and practices that forge the subject.

A further attraction of the idea of power$_4$ to the study of politics is that it may be useful for reminding social and political scientists that the pursuit and production of knowledge itself creates norms and standards of behavior that then open up new possibilities for the expansion of power. In this vein, students of power$_4$ may consider how the study of political behavior, rational choice theory, or genealogy has been or can be used to provide norms and standards for policymakers, political actors, and ways of disciplining the study of politics.

Finally, power$_4$ expands the study of power itself. At the very least, power$_4$ is involved in the forging of reasonable, responsible subjects willing and able to sustain the other conceptions of power. Power$_4$ does not displace the other faces of power, but provides a different level of analysis. For example, Foucault uses the liberal conception of power when talking about "the sovereign's great power over the individual" (Foucault 1980d, 187), without abandoning the idea of power$_4$. Power$_4$ is a tool for describing the identities and norms that sustain the liberal and radical conceptions of power. Foucault clearly believed that the kinds of descriptions provided by these alternative conceptions of power were inadequate (Foucault 1980d, 188). However, he felt they were inadequate not only because they ignore another level of

[12]See, for example, Book 8 of Plato's *Republic* (1968), Book 10 of Aristotle's *Ethics* (1976), J. J. Rousseau's *Social Contract* (1968), Alexis de Tocqueville's *Democracy in America* (1969), and Carol Pateman's *Participation and Democracy Theory* (1970).

analysis, but because they could not discern what Foucault calls the modern, disciplinary character of power$_4$. Foucault's description of disciplinary power will be considered in the next section.

While these are the kinds of attractions that power$_4$ presents to the study of politics, it is less clear whether a vision of political action follows from the general form of power$_4$. Unlike the liberal and radical conceptions of power, it is difficult to spin out political prescriptions from power$_4$. Compare power$_4$ to the liberal conception of power. Under the liberal conception, the notions of agency, interests, and threats provide a linkage between power, responsibility, and harm. These connections create at once a distrust of power and a desire to obtain it. Under the liberal understanding of agency and harm there is a fear of the accumulation of power and hence a desire to regulate and hold accountable those who exercise it. On the other hand, because liberals believe that it is good to have and act upon interests, there is a premium placed upon obtaining power to secure those interests into the future (Hobbes 1968). The complex negotiation between these desiderata compose much of what is understood as a liberal politics. From the liberal conception of power emerges the importance of identifying certain harms and benefits and hence a politics in which the problems of responsibility and control of power are central.

By loosening the connection to agents, Foucault clearly detaches the idea of power from the concerns over responsibility and harm that are so central to the liberal conception. Without taking the subject as given, questions of responsibility and harm cannot gain a foothold in power$_4$. And without agents to hold as responsible and be taken as identifiably harmed, the direct political implications of power$_4$ are clouded over. Unlike the other conceptions of power, power$_4$ does not yield prescriptions for how governmental institutions should be organized or how political actors should behave. While it shows us the deeply contingent nature of the norms and practices that compose political activity, it does not produce a vision of how to conduct politics.[13] From the general use of power$_4$, one cannot generate a program for political engagement. As we shall see, Foucault's idea of disciplinary power may hold greater promise in this regard.

[13]It may be that political prescriptions can only be drawn from the more general use of power$_4$ by converting it into one of the other conceptions. In other words, we must identify *B*'s and *A*'s who either explicitly exercise power and can be held accountable for their actions, or who are being coerced and must decide whether to resist. This, of course, would transform power$_4$ into a more conventional conception of power. To a certain extent, this movement can be seen in Foucault's own work. For example, in his essay "The Subject and Power," Foucault distinguishes between power and force, becomes concerned with the complex relationship between freedom and power, and emphasizes the free actions of *A*'s and *B*'s. All of these concerns reflect a shift to another conception of power. Mark Philp took this essay as a clearer formulation of Foucault's general use of the term "power." Philp's interpretation, however, covers over the radical disjuncture of this essay's use of the concept *vis à vis* Foucault's earlier work (Philp 1985).

The Critique of Modern Sociality

Foucault argues that a new form of power$_4$ emerged in the modern period: mild, subtle, minute, insidious, and disciplinary. This is perhaps the most familiar aspect of Foucault's writings. He characterizes this new form of power$_4$ as totalizing and individualizing (Foucault 1983, 213). It is totalizing in the sense that disciplinary power brings all aspects of life under its "gaze" and prods the thoughts, beliefs, actions, morals, and desires of individuals toward a norm of what is acceptable. Upon those who fall outside the range of acceptability, there is immense social pressure to conform, standardize, and normalize. The forms that this pressure takes have their origin in medicine, criminal punishment, education, industry, and the military. The tactics adopted to control diseases, observe prisoners, teach children, regulate workers, and regiment troops have been generalized, Foucault argues, to society as a whole.[14] Foucault describes a carceral society, in which we are rendered "docile" and "normal" through constant observation, measurement, threat of exclusion and self-discipline (Foucault 1977, 227). The mechanisms of discipline and surveillance first mold the soul and then "inscribe" upon the body conceptions of health, sexuality, and propriety.

Foucault also talks of "individualizing techniques," or "individualization." This facet of disciplinary power emerges as the idea of what is normal becomes clearer and more rigorously defined. As the notion of what a normal body, sexuality, attitude, or disposition becomes more evident, it also becomes easier to identify those who do not fit. One is individualized by falling outside the norm, by not living up to its standards. "The sign of a normalizing society is not . . . that everyone becomes the same, but that more and more people deviate in some way or other . . . opening themselves through these multiple deviations to disciplinary strategies of neutralization" (Connolly 1991, 150). The modern subject is individualized in the sense of becoming a case to be treated or a problem to be solved:

> In a system of discipline, the child is more individualized than the adult, the patient more than the healthy man, the madman and the delinquent more than the normal and the non-delinquent. In each case, it is towards the first of these pairs that all the individualizing mechanisms are turned in our civilization; and when one wishes to individualize the healthy normal and law-abiding adult, it is always by asking him how much of the child he has in him, what secret madness lies within him, what fundamental crime he has dreamt of committing (Foucault 1977, 193).

The engagement of these techniques, whether in the name of the pursuit of health, knowledge, truth, or reform results in the production of the modern, disciplined subject.

[14] "Is it surprising that prisons resemble factories, schools, barracks, hospitals, which all resemble prisons?" (Foucault 1977, 228).

The formation of the modern disciplinary subject, and the rise of the modern disciplines of knowledge (which are not unconnected) are, as we have seen, accompanied by resistance. Resistance is evidenced by the marginalization of individuals who do not fit the norm of the modern rational, responsible, well-ordered subject. These people are pushed to the margins and seen as something other than what is acceptable or normal ("otherness"). While on the one hand their lives and experiences need not be taken seriously, on the other they are taken all too seriously as they become the obvious target of disciplinary power. But this marginalization forges a kind of identity, which serves as a target for more control as well as a basis for more resistance. The transformation of the madman from a divinely inspired prophet to sinner to someone who is ill is paralleled by the marginalization of the lawbreaker from criminal to delinquent. With each step, power$_4$ acquires a more disciplinary character as it orders the subject along given lines of health or law-abidingness.

While the direct target may be prisoners, deviants, or the sick, the rest of us become indirect targets. What happens when deviation occurs (when one deviates from the norm) is a lesson for us, and we discipline our selves accordingly. Here, the model for the modern form of power$_4$ is the panopticon: Jeremy Bentham's ingenious prison design in which the jailor can, in a moment, see the status of the prisoners without the prisoners knowing when they are being observed. The perpetual possibility of surveillance forges a self-disciplined prisoner even when the jailor is not in the watchtower. In response to this surveillance, disorderly, irrational, irresponsible thoughts and desires are self-capped and self-controlled, yielding the disciplined self. We become our own jailors and perpetuate disciplinary practices through our own actions. It is unlike the other conceptions of power in which power is exercised by something outside the subject.

Resistance and Disciplinary Power

Assuming the disciplinary character of the fourth face of power, why should we find this disturbing? Throughout his work, Foucault never comes out and says, "Because of its disciplinary character we should do whatever we can to resist this form of power." This has led commentators to ask, "Why resist?" (Fraser 1981, 283). Before considering the problem of response, I will first consider why this form of power is disturbing.

At times, Foucault describes the reach of disciplinary power as so extensive that one wonders how the question can even be raised. Insofar as these more extensive descriptions are taken seriously, we must ask how Foucault was able to exempt himself sufficiently to judge its effects (the fallacy of self-exemption). Or, is it the case that statements about disciplinary power are themselves just another insidious mechanism of discipline? Foucault may

avoid the fallacy of self-exemption by providing two answers to the problem of why disciplinary power is disturbing. One is that disciplinary power erodes a certain kind of openness that we, the heirs of the Enlightenment, have come to accept and value. Individual expression, creativity, autonomy, and an openness of inquiry are threatened by a form of power that totalizes and individuates. Disciplinary power closes down these kinds of possibilities that are part of our Enlightenment tradition. For Foucault one of the most important possibilities is our capability to critique what we have become through history (Foucault 1984a, 42). If we subscribe to and value this critical stance, we will judge the effects of disciplinary power as unfortunate.

We may also be able to critically assess our disciplinary practices by attempting to stand outside our traditions and practices. Foucault talks of being "at the frontiers" (Foucault 1984a, 45), of pushing past the boundaries of modern discourse. This part of the genealogical project does not attempt to deduce the limits or impossibilities of knowledge, but considers "the possibility of no longer being, doing, or thinking what we are, do, or think" (Foucault 1984a, 46). Connolly also explores the possibility of thinking outside that which enframes us (Connolly 1988, 5) and uses the work of Friedrich Nietzsche to "interrogate modernity from the perspective of imaginary points in the future" (Connolly 1988, 6). According to Connolly, "Nietzsche examines some of the most pervasive assumptions and self-understandings of the modern era as if they were the hallucinations of an alien tribe" (Connolly 1988, 168). If successful, this point of departure provides a (provisional) location from which to critique our practices. Presumably, from the outside looking in, our disciplinary practices really look like hallucinations of an alien tribe. The problematic source of our response to disciplinary power will be taken up again in the final section.

But even if we find disciplinary power disturbing, we must still ask why we should resist. While we may appeal to certain shared values, nothing suggests that Foucault believed in an obligation to resist. Especially in his later writings, Foucault appears disposed to leave this matter up to the individual. Moreover, the point of asking "Why resist?" is undercut by the claim that resistance always accompanies the exercise of $power_4$, and hence will occur whether or not we are obligated. Given that the self will not completely fit into whatever form it is pushed, there will always be some resistance, some friction. The question may not be a matter of obligation but an individual's decision to add to that friction.

Disciplinary Power and Politics

Foucault offers little systematic discussion of the relationship between politics as traditionally understood and disciplinary power. At one point, he even suggests that focusing upon the problems of obligation and sovereignty

hinder our understanding of the problems of domination and subjugation (Foucault 1980b, 96). Nevertheless, he does argue that political institutions and practices can redirect and influence the direction and intensity of disciplinary power.

One way the practice of politics increases the efficacy of disciplinary power is through approval: "we should not be deceived by all the Constitutions framed throughout the world since the French Revolution, the Codes written and revised, a whole continual and clamorous legislative activity: these were the forms that made an essentially normalizing power acceptable" (Foucault 1980e, 144). And: "the great continuity of the carceral system throughout the law and its sentences gives a sort of legal sanction to the disciplinary mechanism, to the decisions and judgments that they enforce" (Foucault 1977, 302). With the sanction of law, we see normalizing practices as normal and reasonable. In what Foucault calls the art of "governmentality" (Foucault 1979), law and politics reinforce and legitimate various techniques of disciplinary power. For example, the normalizing tactics of psychiatry are greatly expanded and magnified through criminal law. Foucault presents the law as becoming less concerned with what the defendant has done, and more concerned with establishing who the criminal is: his or her nature, background, what psychological mechanisms are at work, and why someone would do something like this (Foucault 1988). Judicial authority is fixed upon the offender and not the offense (Foucault 1988, 140). Its imprimatur sanctions and makes reasonable the close interrogation and definition of the offender.[15]

A second possible connection is much more direct: Disciplinary power is itself conveyed by the specific actions of the government. For example, Foucault claims that the object of the state's police power has changed from peace and justice (presumably less disciplinary objectives), to the physical well-being, health, and longevity of the population (Foucault 1980g, 170). With the augmentation of police powers, the techniques of a carceral society flow more easily into the population as a whole. Indeed, the population itself becomes an explicit object of regulation by the state. This form of "biopower" concentrates upon the importance of monitoring birth rates, death rates, sexual practices, and public health. All of these things allegedly come to define norms and standards that forge the modern, disciplined subject.

As others have noted (Fraser 1985, 175; Walzer 1986, 66), Foucault does not substantiate these sweeping claims. He fails to provide a precise cataloguing of the specific relationships between political practices and the constitution of the subject. While Foucault's work on punishment went some

[15]This does not mean that Foucault is advocating ignoring the offender. "A form of justice which would be applied only to what one does is probably purely utopian and not necessarily desirable" (Foucault 1988, 150).

distance in this direction (see also Dumm 1987), the story of how the vast purview of governmental functions is implicated in disciplinary power has not been told. This does not mean that it could not be told. The connection between disciplinary power and politics is suggestive (as well as reminiscent of critiques of modern politics offered by Alexis de Tocqueville, J. S. Mill, and Erving Goffman) largely because there are so many more officials whose job it is "to control, observe, confine, reform, discipline, treat, or correct other people" (Connolly 1991, 188).

Foucault's notion of disciplinary power raises critical questions for the study of politics (e.g., How is politics implicated in disciplinary mechanisms?). Does it also open alternative visions of political practice? What can be culled from Foucault's writings are merely fragments and possibilities, largely because he avoided the traditional problems of politics.[16] If there is a Foucauldian politics that can be spun from the idea of disciplinary power it is most easily contrasted to a view of politics commonly attributed to Thomas Hobbes. For Hobbes, the central problem of politics is how to provide order and (more importantly) authority in a world where a state of war of all against all is an ever-present possibility. In contrast, a Foucauldian politics seems to

[16]Some of these fragments include Foucault's celebration of administrative slack, a new form of right, rethinking sovereignty, and aesthetic individuality. Foucault praises the administrative slack in the judicial system of prerevolutionary France: "By their very plethora, these innumerable authorities cancelled each other out and were incapable of covering the social body in its entirety" (Foucault 1977, 79). Divided offices and rules created margins in which disciplinary power was rendered less efficacious. "The least favored strata of the population did not have, in principle, any privileges: but they benefitted, within the margins of what was imposed on them by law and custom, from a space of tolerance, gained by force or obstinacy; and this space was for them so indispensable a condition of existence that they were often ready to rise up to defend it" (Foucault 1977, 82). But Foucault also mentions the "possibility of a new form of right, one that must indeed be anti-disciplinarian" (Foucault 1980b, 108). At one point (perhaps in the eighteenth century), it appears that the notion of right could block the application of disciplinary techniques. The idea of an individual possessing a right to life or to one's body, health, or happiness could provide a point of resistance (Foucault 1980e, 145). This was true until the concept of right was captured by a norm or standard of rationality and normality. In order to deploy a right one needed to be a rational, responsible subject. Only a new form of right can serve as a point of resistance, but it requires a rethinking or even an abandonment of the idea of sovereignty. Although it is not clear, Foucault may be using the idea of sovereignty to refer to both the sovereign individual and a sovereign government. Just as a government expresses its sovereignty when it can order its internal affairs and foreign policy, so an individual is sovereign when he orders his internal life and external conduct. In both cases, ordering requires a high degree of rationality and responsibility. In either case Foucault declares that "sovereignty and disciplinary mechanisms are two absolutely integral constituents of the general mechanism of power in our society" (Foucault 1980b, 108). By claiming that the notion of right must be "liberated" from the principle of sovereignty, Foucault may be suggesting that we must not only abandon what he calls the biopolitics of modern government, but also rethink the idea of the sovereign individual. But this latter possibility sits uneasily with Foucault's desire to cultivate individuality to resist the normalizing tendencies of modern society. This theme, raised in his later writings, calls for style and Nietzschean self-creation to mitigate the effects of disciplinary power.

be one in which the central problem of modernity is how to provide enough space for difference in a world where the will to order and normalize is omnipresent. Hence a Foucauldian politics will celebrate such terms as resistance, unsettlement, and agonism as opposed to obligation, consolidation, or harmony. Perhaps the most fully developed understanding of political practice that draws upon Foucault's work is found in the writings of William Connolly. Although Connolly's arguments extend beyond Foucault's themes, he explores in some detail a democratic response to the normalizing forces of modern society. The final section considers some of the attributes and difficulties of Connolly's response.

Agonistic Democracy and the Culture of Genealogy

Connolly argues that democratic politics offers a way to respond to disciplinary power because it can give expression to what he calls the paradox of difference. Connolly claims that one of the effects of disciplinary power is to close off the expression of this paradox which in turn enhances disciplinary power. A politics that provides enough space for the paradox of difference will also act as a counterpressure to disciplinary power.

What does Connolly mean by the paradox of difference? One formulation of the paradox is his statement that, "To possess a true identity is to be false to difference, while to be true to difference is to sacrifice the promise of true identity" (Connolly 1991, 67). The possession of a "true identity" for Connolly means having the belief that one's own identity is the true or right one. The idea of a "true identity" implies that there is a definite answer to the kind of person that human beings should be. The belief in a true identity implies that we are naturally suited to be one kind of person rather than another. The flip side of this belief is that those who refuse or resist that ideal are not living up to their natures. Accompanying the belief in a true identity is a temptation to remonstrate, reform, or restrain those who are different. In Connolly's terms, this failure to respect other ways of life is to be false to difference.

In contrast, being true to difference entails a belief that there is no natural or definite answer to the being of humans: No form of identity exhausts what we ultimately are and the identities we possess are deeply contingent. But the possession of even a contingent identity requires that we distinguish what we are from what we are not. It requires that we create and define difference. To be true to difference, then, is to acknowledge the deep contingency of identity and to be reluctant to construe what is different as a failure or as an evil or as something to be reformed. The tragic element of this stance is that it abandons the possibility of a true identity.

As for the paradoxical element in all of this, Connolly argues that "we cannot dispense with personal and collective identities, but the multiple drives

to stamp truth upon those identities function to convert difference into otherness and otherness into scapegoats created and maintained to secure the appearance of a true identity" (Connolly 1991, 67). Perhaps the paradox of difference is a kind of "you can't live with it, you can't live without it." Difference is necessary to constitute identity. But this dependent relationship is also accompanied by conflict. Insofar as identity is understood as "true," difference can also be seen as a threat to identity. Insofar as one wishes to be true to difference, the good of a true identity is placed forever out of reach. In either case, difference is both an essential part of and a threat to identity.[17]

In the relationship between identity and difference, modern disciplinary power is exercised in the "multiple drives to stamp truth" upon the norms and standards that define our identities. The idea of a "natural" identity (e.g., a responsible, rational, self-disciplined, self-interested agent) establishes a norm to live up to or to fall below. Pursuing that identity in ourselves and in others means the employment of social pressures and individualizing techniques of disciplinary power. For those who fail to live up to the standards of a true identity, their difference is their misfortune.

If difference is the prime target of disciplinary power, a disciplinary society is one that attempts to resolve the paradox of difference in favor of the truth of identity. In this case, the practical resolution of the paradox means that difference need not command our respect. Moreover it means ignoring the possibility that there may be terrible costs in constituting a set of differences as "intrinsically evil, irrational, abnormal, mad, sick, primitive, monstrous, dangerous." As disciplinary society seeks to reassure us of the truth of our identities (intrinsically good, rational, normal, coherent, healthy, civilized, and safe) it also undermines the basis for respecting difference. In other words, one will not see the failure to respect difference as a failure to respect alternative responses to (what Connolly calls) the mysteries of existence if there is only one appropriate response to those mysteries. One can be *false* to difference only if one believes that difference still commands respect. The creation of scapegoats cannot be seen as a cost if we think they truly bear evil.

What must sustain the paradox is a deeper epistemological skepticism: arguments establishing the truth of and arguments supporting the contingency of identity rest upon equally shaky grounds. Therefore, Connolly must claim that the kind of resolution that disciplinary society reaches for is ultimately unavailable. There is no guarantee that the notion of a true identity will not exact a horrible toll upon alternative responses to the mysteries of existence. Moreover, it must be just as unacceptable to resolve the paradox in favor of difference. One can never be sure that in the desire to be true

[17]Connolly calls the relation between identity and difference a "double relation of interdependence and strife" (Connolly 1991, 66).

to difference one has actually abandoned the best way for human beings to order their lives. On this formulation, the paradox of difference is closer to being a dilemma. Something of great significance can be lost whichever stance one takes.

The political problem, however, is how to respond to the normalizing pressures that push us to resolve the paradox in favor of the truth of identity. One of Connolly's responses is his idea of an agonal form of democracy.[18] The central purpose of this kind of democracy is to give political expression to both sides of the paradox. In an agonal form of democracy those who wish to be true to identity and those who wish to be true to difference oppose each other in a spirit of respect and forthrightness. It requires that neither side attempt to purge the other, and yet "robustly pursue" their respective agendas: one attempts to foster and enable what it sees as the truth of being, the other tries to create enough space to protect the "elemental rights to diversity" (Connolly 1991, 87). Connolly believes that the mechanism of a lively, competitive democratic politics can partially relieve normalizing pressures.

To sustain this politics requires not only an active minority contesting established identities, but a culture that is willing to respect the resulting differences. Agonistic democracy requires the cultivation of a virtue of agonistic respect. This means that not only those who wish to be true to difference, but those who wish to be true to identity must share an ethos of self-restraint when facing their opponents. The cultivation of agonistic respect is, at least in part, connected to Connolly's discussion of the culture of genealogy (Connolly 1991, 193). Connolly argues that this culture may provide the best conditions for an agonistic democracy. Genealogy clearly plays an important role in Connolly's theory for fostering agonistic respect and care for difference, although it is unclear whether genealogy is *necessary* to foster such respect. In any case, genealogy is able to play this role apparently because it can reveal the shaky epistemological grounding of all claims regarding identity and difference. The point of this revelation is not to drive us away from groundings and foundations, but to show us the contingency of all such claims and the difficulties that would attend any attempt to resolve the paradox of difference. The realization of contingency is meant to foster respect for those who are different and to further erode the pressure to normalize. It is Connolly's hope that an agonistic democracy and the culture of genealogy can provide a political response to Foucault's disciplinary society.

As a vision of politics that partly flows from Foucault's analysis of power, Connolly's theory raises a number of interesting questions and problems, some of which I will touch upon here. One has to do with the paradox of

[18]From a Foucauldian perspective, democracy is not an unambiguous achievement. Foucault writes, "democratisation of sovereignty was fundamentally determined by and grounded in mechanisms of disciplinary coercion" (Foucault 1980b, 105). Presumably, even an agonal form of democracy cannot be completely free from discipline.

difference itself. Although Connolly provides a number of formulations of the paradox, and alludes to a paradox of practice as opposed to one within philosophy (Connolly 1991, 66), the paradox itself remains elusive. Logically, identity does require difference. Practically, it is not clear if difference must be borne by some actual, flesh-and-blood individual or group. For example, in order to identify ourselves as something other than racists or genocidal murderers, we do not need to be surrounded by actual racists and murderers. Scapegoats, after all, were originally goats. If difference can be carried by a logical possibility, an object solely in the imagination, or by people in the distant past, it is not clear why it must threaten identity. More strongly, other than running the risk of confusing a logical possibility with an actuality, it is unclear why seeing a set of imaginative or logical differences as intrinsically evil—as other—would itself exact any costs upon actual human beings (putting aside the costs to goats). If it is possible to sustain identities in this way (as Connolly says, "These 'ifs' are big and contestable"), then being true to identity does not logically entail being *false* to difference.

A second set of questions concerns the relationship between the culture of genealogy and the maintenance of the paradox of difference. Putting aside, for the moment, the possible resolution of paradox in the imagination, is the culture of genealogy compatible with the desire to be true to identity? Doesn't the underlying virtue of agonistic respect actually purge positions seeking the truth of identity and, in effect, resolve the paradox in favor of difference? As Connolly acknowledges, his position is incompatible with those views of identity that must see others as evil in order to secure their own identity: "For identities that must define what deviates from them as intrinsically evil . . . in order to establish their own self-certainty are here defined as paradigm instances to counter and contest" (Connolly 1991, 15). Such paradigm instances would include racist and genocidal conceptions of identity.

The culture of genealogy also excludes identities whose truth requires some kind of collective transformation. For example, communitarian theories that posit an ultimate, harmonious communal ordering for all selves to live up to would not pass this test. Under communitarianism, "the paradox of difference becomes resolved into a project of assimilation in which those who fall outside the range of communal identifications are drawn into the folds of a higher, more rational, and more inclusive community" (Connolly 1991, 90). Connolly acknowledges that the idea of agonistic respect, "already compromises the highest hopes of community" (Connolly 1991, 91). One cannot simultaneously subscribe to the culture of genealogy and be fully committed to a communal ideal.

But the incompatibility with communitarianism is perhaps better framed as an incompatibility with any position whose self-certainty resolves the paradox. This means that the culture of genealogy and its ontological pluralism

would sit uneasily with views of identity whose reassurance demands the conquest or conversion of others. The pursuit of the truth of identity in Connolly's agonistic culture is not ruled out as long as the pursuers subscribe to the unresolvable nature of the paradox. If there is a true identity that lurks in Connolly's position, it is one in which racists, genocidal murderers, zealous communitarians, conquistadors, rabid evangelists, and overconfident ontologists constitute a set of differences that define it.

This response, however, generates a third set of problems that revolve around whether the culture of genealogy can itself be extricated from the paradox of difference. On the one hand, these differences are necessary to define the participant's identities in the culture of genealogy. On the other hand, these differences threaten the kind of identity necessary to sustain agonistic respect and agonal democracy. To preserve agonal democracy, it may not only be necessary to resist, but perhaps convert or conquer these differences. The problem is not whether the desire to define others as evil becomes the new evil, but whether the participants to the culture of genealogy must also sustain the racists, the conquistadors, and the rabid evangelists in order to maintain their own agonistic identity. This brings us back to the question of whether there must be actual bearers of difference to sustain an identity.

At the political level, one can question whether the epistemological skepticism that underlines agonistic respect could support a "robust," engaging, lively, competitive democracy. For example, those who wish to be true to difference could never be more than partially committed to their position. Would the idea that their position is, at bottom, no better than the alternative deflate their political enthusiasm? Connolly seeks to place another candidate on the field to respond to disciplinary power, but in the rough and tumble of politics, how competitive or robust would that candidate be? One answer is that it would be as competitive as its opponent in a culture where everyone was self-restrained by the sense of tragedy and contingency. But this further questions whether an agonistic politics would really be necessary in a culture of genealogy. Would those who leaned toward the truth of identity still press to have that identity carved in the social body? Is it possible that a culture of genealogy would itself deflate and dampen an agonistic politics? If this is possible would normalizing pressures be reinforced or dispersed by a tempered, as opposed to an agonistic form of democracy?

A final point concerning Connolly's response to disciplinary power reintroduces the problematic source of any response to a carceral society. In Connolly's case, this refers to the source of agonistic respect and a culture of genealogy. At one level, agonistic respect would be reinforced and expanded by an established practice of agonistic democracy. Connolly is aware of, but postpones consideration of a further paradox implied by this relationship:

Agonistic respect is sustained by a democratic way of life and a democratic way of life presupposes agonistic respect.[19] At another level, however, this paradox is apparently circumvented by the presumption that a culture of genealogy can be cultivated through argument. The very act of being a scholar who is working from the genealogical perspective seems to express the hope that people can be convinced of the unresolvable nature of the paradox of difference. But how is it possible for an intellectual culture of genealogy to emerge through historical scholarship and argumentation if we live in a carceral society? What is the relationship between disciplinary power, argumentation, and our ability as agents to identify and respond to those disciplines?

Foucault believed that while the dream of disciplinary power is totalitarian, the reality is always checkered by resistance. The notion of resistance suggests that the individual can never be completely normalized: "there is indeed always something in the social body, in classes, groups and individuals themselves which in some sense escapes relations of power, something which is by no means a more or less docile or reactive primal matter, but rather a centrifugal movement, an inverse energy, a discharge" (Foucault 1980c, 138). Connolly also seems to appeal to something that eludes power's reach. "This fugitive difference between my identity and that in me which slips through its conceptual net is to be prized; it forms a pool from which creativity can flow and attentiveness to the claims of other identities might be drawn" (Connolly 1991, 120). The problem here is that neither Foucault's nor Connolly's position seems to account for the intentional and, in many ways, reasoned response to disciplinary power that their works provide and presuppose. The metaphor of "discharge" inadequately describes what it means to be convinced of a position. Perhaps the conscious, intentional receptivity to the genealogical case depends upon a notion of agency that exceeds $power_4$. Is it possible that the intellectual culture of genealogy must invest in a conception of agency that stands outside of power to account for certain kinds of success that it may have?

[19]This is my understanding of Connolly's formulation of what he calls Rousseau's paradox: "democratic virtue presupposes a democratic way of life, while that way of life in turn presupposes the virtues it should precede" (Connolly 1991, 193). This paradox points to the problem of how one would begin to implement this view of politics. Even though Connolly says that only a committed minority is needed, it is clear that the rest of the culture must come to respect difference. How does this come about? Perhaps Connolly's conception of agonistic democracy is based upon a recovery and reformulation of the idea of civic virtue. Instead of defining civic virtue as a willingness to subsume one's self-interest for the common good, this new form of civic virtue would entail a willingness not to resolve the paradox of difference. It is less clear what mechanism would engender this willingness, although one could conceive of a political practice that drew upon political participation, education, and artistic expression as ways to foster civic virtue.

While agency does not stand beyond or between the meshes of power$_4$'s network, this is not the same as saying that agency cannot elude the grasp of disciplinary power (a form of power$_4$). This argument takes us back to the first and perhaps most important claim of power$_4$, namely that power$_4$ forges subjects. If we associate being a subject with agency, then becoming a subject entails acquiring the capacity to have desires, form interests, pursue goals, act in a minimally rational manner, and insofar as one does what one wants, to be free. If we are not predesigned to be agents (as Foucault and Connolly would argue), then this set of abilities is imposed upon us through training and cultivation. Now, even on this interpretation it must be true that to some extent, the matter (whatever we are) is able to accept the form (in this case agency). At the very least, we are predesigned not to completely reject this form called agency. But the contingency of this imposition implies not only that other forms could also be imposed upon us but that whatever form is imposed cannot exhaust our being and will generate its own resistance. While power$_4$ may forge agents ("agentification") we are never agents through and through. There is always a remainder, an internal form of difference that "slips through" our identities as rational, responsible subjects.

What, then is the relationship between agency and disciplinary power? Foucault's genealogies do not support the claim that agency (i.e., the capacity to have interests, pursue goals, etc.) emerged only with the modern disciplines. Rather, his histories seem to show that disciplinary power changed the process of "agentification" in two ways. First, we have acquired different and perhaps more efficient mechanisms for forging agents. Instead of bashing bodies we have instituted different kinds of self-disciplinary, educational, and confessional techniques to produce subjects. Second, what has accompanied this change in techniques is the dream of mastery. It is a dream that we can extend the imposition of agency so that there is no remainder: self-mastery can exhaust our being. The pursuit of a true identity in a disciplinary society is a pursuit that not only is false to difference but is an unending quest to master difference through conversion or conquest.

On this interpretation, as agents we can understand what agentification means, we can comprehend the costs of the dream of mastery, and finally, we can (perhaps) let difference be. None of this is meant to exclude Foucault's idea of an "inverse energy" or of Connolly's "fugitive difference," as sources to be evoked when establishing a genealogical culture. Nevertheless, these terms do not describe the formation of an intellectual culture, nor do they account for what must be presupposed within the audience when making an argument. The possibility for a culture of genealogy has an investment in agency, but it is a conception of agency that does not stand outside the relations of power$_4$. It is, however, a notion of agency that can get some distance from disciplinary power and act, for good reasons, with agonistic respect.

Conclusion

If we are convinced of the disciplinary character of power$_4$, then the problem of how to respond looms large. William Connolly's notion of agonistic democracy and the culture of genealogy provides the most well-developed theoretical response to the normalization of modern society. However, even if we are not convinced by Foucault's more sweeping claims regarding disciplinary power and whatever visions of political practice that flow from it, the general idea of the fourth face of power remains important for political inquiry. From this conception of power comes an analysis of truth and knowledge that has troubling implications for the epistemological basis of empirical social science. From this notion of power also comes a description of the formation of norms and practices that raises difficult questions for those who simply take norms and practices as given in the construction of political theory. Finally, from this understanding of power comes a focus upon how our self-understandings are produced, which engenders resistance to and expansion of the traditional subject of the discipline of political science.

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