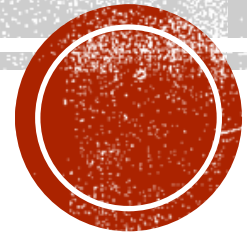# FOUCAULT: ARCHAEOLOGIES OF KNOWLEDGE

Week 6

CONFESSION

Church Confession

Personal Confessions

Reality TV Confessional Camera

 #Metoo

FOUCAULT: MAIN IDEAS

Wrote on eccentric subjects: Sex, Madness, Prisons, Clinics, Categorization

- Knowledge
  - Organization

- Power
  - Power is brought more broadly into being in play of relationships; classifications

- Discourse/Discursive Formations
  - Enables, constrains, constitutes (Language)
  - Normal/Abnormal – naming brings disciplinary mechanisms into play

- Gaze
  - Surveillance
  - Prison, Panopticon = order, body, discipline (professions); marking of subjects
  - Technologies

Michel Foucault: Discipline and Punish (1977)

- Culture = Discursive formation of power relations

- Torture; Prison, Power, Discourse, Discipline
  - Discipline creates "docile bodies", ideal for the new economics, politics and warfare of the modern industrial age - bodies that function in factories, ordered military regiments, and school classrooms
  - Modalities of Control/New Technologies of Power

- Communism; the incredible becomes credible and the credible becomes incredible

- Today?

- Truthiness; Post-Truth Moment

HOW AMERICA WENT HAYWIRE (DISCOURSE/ARCHAEOLOGY)

- All approximations of truth, science as much as any fable or religion, are mere stories devised to serve people's needs or interests. Reality itself is a purely social construction, a tableau of useful or wishful myths that members of a society or tribe have been persuaded to believe. The borders between fiction and nonfiction are permeable, maybe nonexistent. The delusions of the insane, superstitions, and magical thinking? Any of those may be as legitimate as the supposed truths contrived by Western reason and science. The takeaway: Believe whatever you want, because pretty much everything is equally true and false.

- These ideas percolated across multiple academic fields. In 1965, the French philosopher Michel Foucault published *Madness and Civilization* in America, echoing Laing's skepticism of the concept of mental illness; by the 1970s, he was arguing that rationality itself is a coercive "regime of truth"—oppression by other means. Foucault's suspicion of reason became deeply and widely embedded in American academi

- Today, each of us is freer than ever to custom-make reality, to believe whatever and pretend to be whoever we wish. Which makes all the lines between *actual* and *fictional* blur and disappear more easily. Truth in general becomes flexible, personal, subjective.

- Digital technology empowers real-seeming fictions of the ideological and

MICHEL FOUCA...

- Poststructuralist/Postmodernist;
- IDEAS:
  - Culture is a discursive formation
  - Structure/Agency
    - A relationship of power is a mode of action which does not act directly and immediately on others but instead it acts upon their actions on existing actions and on those which may arise in the present or in the future; Power requires that the person upon whom it is exercised be thoroughly recognized and maintained to the very end as a person who acts so that a whole field of responses, reactions, results and possible interventions may open up; resistance to power is always possible.
  - Extrapolations:
    - Education (Marshall)
      - Power as it operates systemically
        - Sex Education; What is "Normal"
        - Media: (Self) Surveillance

Movies and the Impact of Images

- Film as evolving technology

- Film within economic structures/cultural articulations

- Film as narrative/genre

- Film as ideological/political
  - Consensus narratives

Whiplash

FILM

- System; Narratives, Images,
  - European Film/American Film tropes
- Logics of film production = logics of self-production (Blurring of Film/Reality)
  - What structures our understanding of our self-representations?
- Film: As Discourse/Discursive Formation

- Film as Culture/Cultural Moment: #Metoo