Foucault and Education

James D. Marshall
University of Auckland

It is argued in this paper that Michel Foucault's work has much to offer education even though, in the main, educationalists have ignored his work to date. Section 1 is a general introduction to his work. In Section 2, his account of power/knowledge is outlined. Power/knowledge turns us into *governable* individuals who will lead useful, practical and docile lives tied to our real selves by knowledge of ourselves. This power/knowledge is exercised in what Foucault calls 'the disciplines'. How this happens is outlined in Section 3. Finally the educational implications for schools and our work as professional educators are outlined.

1 INTRODUCTION

Michel Foucault is an enigma, perhaps an iconoclast; an intellectual who appears to come from nowhere and to have no intellectual lineage. As he himself said:

> I think I have in fact been situated in most of the squares on the political checkerboard, one after another and sometimes simultaneously: as anarchist, leftist, ostentatious or disguised marxist, nihilist, explicit or secret anti-marxist, technocrat in the service of Gaullism, new liberal, etc. An American professor complained that a crypto-marxist like me was invited to the USA and I was denounced by the press in Eastern European-countries for being an accomplice of the dissidents. None of these descriptions is important by itself; taken together, on the other hand, they mean something. And I must admit that I rather like what they mean. (Foucault, 1984a, p.383f.)

Professionals and academics have become exasperated, because Foucault does not fit into traditional classifications, does not employ recognisable methodologies, and does not fit into schools of thought. Historians object that he plays fast and loose with data and with time (Megill, 1979), appealing to concepts like rupture and discontinuity which, they claim, fail to explain. Philosophers find his methodology to waver between the philosophical, the politically strategic and the moral; for example, in his major attacks on post-enlightenment thought (Fraser, 1985). Finally Marxists claim that he employs Marxist concepts and theories, without endorsing fully the Marxist program. (See Poster (1984) and Smart (1983, 1986) for discussions of the relationships between Foucault and Marxism.)

Along with many other French intellectuals, Foucault did not write just for an academic audience; for example, works such as *Discipline and Punish : The Birth of the Prison* (Foucault, 1979a) were read by both criminologists and prisoners

alike. However the library browsers or chance readers of Foucault might be excused for ignoring his works. Were they to pick up *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (Foucault, 1972) they would meet on the first page of the introduction such terms as 'sedimentary strata', 'linear succession', and 'disparate events', presented on a page already overflowing with learned terminology. In more lascivious frame of mind were they to pick up *I, Pierre Riviere, Having Slaughtered my Mother, my Sister and my Brother* (Foucault, 1975), they would meet on the similar page, the information that this is to be 'a study of practical aspects of the relations between psychiatry and criminal justice' and not a murder horror story or titillating initiation into the fantasies of the insane. In more serious fashion if they picked up *Discipline and Punish : The Birth of the Prison* (Foucault, 1979a), they would be regaled on the first page of text with the harrowing account of the sentence and execution in 1757 of the regicide Damiens. For those made of sterner stuff, who can read on, there will be, after more harrowing accounts of executions, a quick immersion into terms like 'punishment-body relationship', 'economy of suspended rights', 'physiological disconnectors' and 'modern rituals of execution' (p.11). Enough is enough, it might be said, and the books returned to the shelves.

A burgeoning number of academic books on Foucault has appeared. Educationalists, however, have had little to say. He is referred to by proponents of social reproduction theories and by those educationalists who are interested in and concerned by the school as an agent of social control (Sarup, 1982), but it is far from clear that the theoretical radicalness of his work has been grasped. Foucault does not just speak about power, domination and the ways in which man is reproduced as a *subject* (a key term) but, rather, he speaks about these issues in ways which preclude his ideas from being tacked on to resistance theory, or to the ways in which schools could really educate. His views undercut radically the ways in which such ideas and issues are formulated. His ideas cannot be used to supplement libertarian humanist ideals on education as a potentially liberating force: rather they cast very strong doubts upon the validity of such approaches to schooling.

There are, however, some major exceptions in educational literature. Henriques, Holloway, Urwin, Vern, & Walkerdine (1984) explore the ways in which psychology is involved in constructions of the individual and society. In the section devoted to the effects of psychological practices in the social regulation of practices and the construction of notions of the individual, Walkerdine (1984) adopts a Foucault type archaeological approach to argue that the developmental psychology of Piaget, in so far as it has been inserted into a child-centred pedagogy, has not had any hoped-for liberating effect but, rather, has become part of a set of scientifically legitimated practices whose object is the developing child. She argues that such practices are not liberating because they involve, in Foucault style, the observation, surveillance and normalisation of children, quite ignoring the point that the developing child has been an 'object' produced by those very same practices. Thus Walkerdine follows Foucault in that she has correctly seen

that the notion of the developing child is not liberating. Yet her project, challenging the reduction of problems to formulations in terms of 'the child's acquisition of' and 'the development of', is seen by her as a prerequisite to the reconstruction of a new liberating psychological subject. Foucault was not interested in the truth of such matters within the human sciences.

Jones and Williamson (1979) also adopt an archaeological approach to determine the discursive conditions which made possible the emergence of types of statement on mass popular education and pedagogic practices in the nineteenth century. As they freely admit, they concentrate upon 'writings of the nineteenth century' and the relations which occur between these writings. While they conclude that schooling cannot be reduced to notions of social control and socialisation but should be seen in terms of the extension of forms of modern power or the securing of governance, they adopt, perhaps, a narrow approach concentrating upon statements (an approach which Foucault was to abandon). He insisted that the site for analysis must be the present, whereas Jones and Williamson's present is in the nineteenth century.

Finally Hoskin (1979) looks at examinations, seeing them as normalisation procedures (in Foucault's sense of the term). Important as all of these critiques are in educational literature, they are based upon Foucault's (1970, 1972) notion of archaeology as opposed to genealogy and they seem overly restricted to statements. In conclusion, Foucault's later comments on the analysis of power relations would direct attention to much wider notions than the examination of statements.

Foucault has much to offer education and philosophers of education for, even if he is importantly wrong, as one of his major critics concedes, he 'is right enough to be disturbing' (Walzer, 1983). An answer to the question posed by an educationalist as to why read Foucault must start by recourse to the concept of power. But why power? (See Foucault, 1983a, p. 209.) Why is power so important in education? A partial answer to the question is provided by Burbules (1986), though not perhaps intentionally:

> In order to identify power relations in schools we have to begin with the questions Where are the conflicts of interest? ... In principle education need not involve power relations at all; the learning of one student does not necessarily entail the disadvantaging of another. In principle teachers can function as legitimate authorities ... In principle schools can educate ... minimise power relations and promote the basis for informed, consensual, and egalitarian relations. (p.109)

First there is the notion that power is imposed upon another by someone who owns it—in the quotation by the teacher upon the student. Second there is the suggestion that this power is repressive in some sense—it does not maximise and promote informed, consensual and egalitarian notions. Third there is the notion that this power acts upon students' beliefs. Finally there is the notion that perhaps some things we do to children are legitimate and others are not—those that do not act in the students' interests are clearly not. This notion of legitimacy connected to that of imposition by someone who owns it has the effect of turning enquiry

outwards and away from particular instances of power towards wider theories of legitimacy and state power. In traditional liberal political theory, this normally turns towards some version of contract theory, away from the politics of everyday life which is where Foucault focuses.

Burbules's liberal view of power masks the power relationships, the continual exercises of power, that are present in schools (and, indeed, in all social inter-actions) in *disciplining* people. To unpack these, we need a concept of power which is not repressive, whereby people are imposed upon or their interests infringed, because even when teachers do *educate* there is a requirement for subjection to a thought structure or discipline if one is to formulate true or acceptable propositions.

Finally it should be made clear that Foucault is not trying to displace or sup-plant or ridicule other approaches to problems in the politics of everyday life. He claims that he is just trying to present us with an aspect of reality, with one of its masks so to say. The French historian Paul Veyne (quoted in Goldstein, 1984) put this well when he said:

> [Foucault] produces strange pictures . . . these are very much pictures of the world we are familiar with: Foucault is no more an abstract painter than Cezanne. As in a Cezanne canvas the countryside around Aix is recognisable, only it has been pro-vided with a violent affectivity: it seems to issue from an earthquake [tremblement de terre].

The following sections will outline his account of power/knowledge, how this is exercised in what he calls the disciplines and how this affects the modern school. The outline is essentially expository but the reader is directed at the important points to critical literature—Hoy (1986) is a sound source.

2   POWER/KNOWLEDGE

How does this earthquake change our traditional views of power and knowledge? The different picture is produced by what Foucault calls genealogy which, bor-rowed from Nietzsche, is distorted for his own use (Foucault, 1977; Minson, 1985). Historians have been incensed by Nietzsche's and Foucault's assaults upon history. Nevertheless Foucault was not claiming, for example, to be writing the *history* of the prison, but to be using the prison and other disciplinary institutions to illustrate his theme of modern power—or power/knowledge as he calls it.

Foucault dismisses the classical analyses of power. On the one hand, he sees traditional philosophical discussions of power, concerned with discussions of contractual and legal limits of power as, first, asking the wrong type of questions and, second, asking archaic questions derived from the classical contract theorists —particular antagonists here would be Hobbes and Rousseau (Foucault, 1984b). On the other hand, in the general Marxist conception, power is conceived essen-tially in terms of the role it plays simultaneously in maintaining the relations of production and of class domination (which, of course, have been made possible by

the former). In both cases, Foucault claims, power is treated as a commodity which can be owned and exchanged so that ownership determines who has power. Rather, Foucault (1980b) argues, different types of questions need to be asked and a fundamentally different conceptualisation of power is needed to replace that of power as a commodity (p.899).

Foucault is not interested in who or what questions about power. Rather his question is: How is power exercised? Nor is he interested in questions of state power. However his concern is not with the dispersion of power to smaller groups of people or to individuals, so that there is no centralised bureaucratic power and a little power is held by everyone. Rather he is concerned with the extremities of the political system, at the micro-level, and with the exercise of power at these lowly levels. Indeed the state can only operate according to Foucault (1979a) 'on the basis of other, already existing power relations [i.e.] a whole series of power networks that invest the body, sexuality, the family, kinship, knowledge, technology and so forth' (p.122). But this poses considerable problems for Foucault.

Walzer (1983) criticises Foucault on micro/macro issues, claiming that, in desensitising readers to the importance of politics, Foucault ignores the fact that it is the state that establishes the general legal and social framework within which power at the micro-level in disciplinary institutions is exercised. Resistance at the micro-level to the exercise of power can be seen, Walzer argues, as an appeal for political and/or legal intervention by the state and, ultimately, it is only the state that has the power to control these disciplinary institutions or to shut down local resistance. It is a catastrophic weakness of Foucault's political theory, Walzer concludes, that power/knowledge is not situated in either the existent social and political setting, in which there is an account of the liberal state and the rule of law, or in an alternative one.

Poulantzas (1978), writing from within a Marxist framework, sees the state not only as playing an important role in the divisions and isolations of the masses but as doing this 'through a set of techniques of knowledge to which Foucault has given the name 'disciplines' (p.66). Moreover several of Foucault's analyses can only be understood if Marxism is taken as a starting point; in particular that the analysis of power must be rooted in the relations of production and the social division of labour. While Foucault denies this, claiming that power hovers over the social body like an immanent machine, Poulantzas claims that 'we should not attach great importance to this aspect of the analysis' (p.67).

In the views of Walzer and Poulantzas, writing from opposing political positions, there are fundamental problems with Foucault's account of power, especially in underestimating the state and the rule of law. In the earlier writings, power is treated as being repressive but, in his later writings, Foucault (1980b) drops this notion because 'repression is quite inadequate for capturing what is precisely the productive aspect of power . . . [and] this [repression] is a wholly negative, narrow skelatar conception of power' (p.119). Instead there are notions like governance (Foucault, 1979b), guiding possibilities of conduct, and ordering

possible outcomes. Nevertheless the notions of the political exercise of power, of domination and subjection, remain.

Power only exists for Foucault when it is brought into play to govern, when these stable mechanisms collapse or are threatened as a result of antagonisms, confrontation or struggle. Where there is an absence of struggle or resistance, stable mechanisms govern. At the micro-level, however, power is not owned by anyone nor, in its exercise, intentionally exercised by agents. It operates almost at an unconscious level even though it requires agents to bring it into existence. It is almost as if agents, for example professionals acting in their professional capacity, literally are unaware of exercising this power. For example, in questioning examination candidates, I am concerned only that they should exhibit what they know and understand about a subject: but if this is all that I think I am doing, Foucault tells us, then I am very mistaken. What I am doing is normalising these individuals; that is, producing calculable individuals capable of being governed. The examination and accompanying classificatory procedures objectify that person and constitute that person in certain ways, as being a person of a certain sort, tied to a subjective self and, thereby, subjected. This modern power underlies all of our professional activities according to Foucault and poses considerable dilemmas to us as professionals.

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' [Foucault, 1983a, p.220]. It is to be distinguished from a relationship of violence, which has the capacity to force or to bend or to break, even though violence may be necessary to bring a power relationship into play. Violence, and indeed consent, may be instruments of power but they are to be distingushed from power. Power is to be distinguished from violence also because the latter 'closes the door on all possibilities'; it merely breaks or destroys. Power, on the other hand, requires that the person upon whom it is exercised 'be thoroughly recognised and maintained to the very end as a person who acts . . . [so that] a whole field of responses, reactions, results and possible inventions may open up'; that is, resistance to power is always possible.

This opens up a series of important issues connected with the structure/agency debate—seen by some people as the most important debate in contemporary social theory. Foucault seems to be treading a wary path between a structure—the hidden power/knowledge structure brought into existence often by other quite mundane intentional actions—and agency, whereby people are not determined by such structures. Dreyfus and Rabinow (1983) see this as being a most important contribution to social theory but their claim is a little inflated. Foucault, for instance, did not see himself as advancing any sort of general theory and continually resisted suggestions that his works represented generalisable truths. In which case, how are we to make sense of his own analyses?

As this account of power differs markedly from the traditional liberal view, it should be helpful at this point to summarise these differences. First, on Fou-

cault's account, power is not owned by the sovereign, by the state or by teachers. It exists as a relationship only when brought into play by agents who often are unaware of the exercise of this sort of power/knowledge. To the extent that they do not own it, are unaware that they exercise it, and cannot be said to impose it intentionally, then individual people may not be held responsible for the spread of modern power (Foucault, 1984b). Second, Foucault does not see power as necessarily being repressive: on the contrary, power can be positive in its effects as it promotes pleasure, for example, and constitutes us as subjects in various ways. Third, power does not act upon beliefs, but upon actions and can always be resisted; also it acts upon bodies, changing abilities and capabilities, and producing docile and calculable bodies to lead useful lives. Fourth, Foucault is not concerned whether power is a legitimate or an illegitimate way of acting on people's actions. Finally this power is not top–down and directed necessarily by state apparatuses: it is capillary, working at the lowest micro-level in society. Hence power is to be understood not in terms of a social contract between sovereign and individual but in terms of the politics of everyday life.

3 DISCIPLINES

Foucault's use of the terms 'discipline' and 'disciplinary block' can be seen as another example of Veyne's landscapes emerging from earthquakes. In *Discipline and Punish* (Foucault, 1979a), for example, he is talking about such people as doctors, teachers, psychiatrists, psychoanalysts, warders and the military; about the practices which these people pursue; and about institutions in which these practices are pursued. We would normally use terms like 'professional' or 'profession' where Foucault uses discipline. This is part of Foucault's strategy, namely the defamiliarisation and reconstruction of our ordinary everyday life (Goldstein, 1984). In particular, the term 'discipline' captures aspects of power and knowledge which are normally masked. Also Foucault is drawing together those two senses of discipline where, in talking of a subject area and its conceptual structure, talk of discipline (that is, subjection and obedience) has tended to be downplayed and drained away into the concept of discipline associated with social control. It is therefore more than a pun on the two senses of discipline as Walzer (1983) says it sometimes appears.

In disciplines, the connectedness and mutual dependence of relations of power of communication and abilities or capacities can be seen. Disciplines are blocks—disciplinary blocks—in which the adjustment of people's abilities and resources, relationships of communication and power relationships form regulated systems. For example, in schools children learn to read and write in an ensemble of regulated communications (lessons, questions, answers, orders) in enclosed spaces, close supervision, reward and punishment, etc. Some disciplines may emphasise the power relationships; others those of communication; whereas others may concentrate on changing capacities and/or abilities. Prisons emphasise the first, apprenticeships those of communication, and ballet schools the changing of abil-

ities and capacities. Schools exercise all three, in their history in the western world, in varying degrees.

In order for power to be exercised in a disciplinary block, a number of conditions must be fulfilled. Essentially these are concerned with the organisation of space, time and capacities. First, individuals are allocated to spaces. The key idea here is that of the monastic cell—indeed Foucault traces the origins of the spatial block to monastic and earlier origins. The main idea here is that of self-contained units contained within larger units. The larger enclosure prevents distractions or invasions from the outside, whereas the smaller partitioned unit permits *any* individual to be placed under surveillance at *any* time. The ideal model for surveillance was given by Bentham's *Panopticon* (Foucault, 1979a, 1980b). Cells (desks, beds, etc.) are assigned according to a rank which has been established by grading, assessment or examination. As a result of classification people are assigned to their cells. The purpose of the cell and the organisation of space is to prevent imprecise distributions of people, uncontrolled disappearances, and diffuse and dangerous circulations. Spatial organisation aims at knowing, mastering and using.

Second, activities are planned for individuals according to a timetable (also of monastic origin). The principles here are those of prescribing the activities appropriate to the discipline and establishing set regular rhythms for these activities. These two principles are applied not only to the general activities but also to the particular activities of the body within the general activity—for example, within the military, marching is seen as an important activity which is planned to occupy certain periods within the week or day and, within such periods, times are allocated carefully for planned activities.

Third, activities are broken down into stages so that particular skills, abilities or capacities can be developed in a given time through constant exercise. For example, if a given time unit is an academic year, then certain activities will be designated as appropriate for that stage, depending upon the previous stage, the examination and classification, and the next planned stage(s). What activities are appropriate to any particular stage will depend essentially upon that discipline's 'true' discourse—that is, the knowledge of people, processes and activities which has been established through the exercise of power within that disciplinary block. Examinations, classifications, promotions and remedial treatments establish normal patterns of expectations. This knowledge developed through the exercise of power is used in the exercise of power to produce what Foucault calls 'normalised' individuals.

Finally, as cells may need to be moved within the larger cells, and as individuals need to work with maximum efficiency at activities, intricate systems of commands and instructions are required. Whistles, bells, and other more sophisticated devices signal the times for changes in cells and other moves within the timetable.

Foucault uses discipline to cover both senses of the term. We have become accustomed to talking of discipline in relation to a conjoint set of concepts like

authority, power and punishment. Indeed much of educational discourse is befuddled by confusions between discipline and punishment. But the other sense of the term, when we talk of *the* disciplines, has not received much scrutiny of the relationships to the first sense of the term. Initiation into the disciplines requires or demands submission and subjection, or obedience and discipline. Peters (1966) talks of submission to and caring about standards inherent within a subject; but usually, within mainstream philosophy of education, this element of subjection is ignored. Bertrand Russell (1971) saw this point clearly when he said that character formation, nearly complete by age six, needed only rigorous intellectual immersion in a discipline for further desirable development.

Foucault corrects for us this separation in thought of disciplines as cognitive structures and of discipline in the sense of submission or subjection. He uses discipline to identify a body of knowledge with a system of social control. A body of knowledge *is* a system of social control to the extent that discipline (knowledge) makes discipline (control) possible, and vice versa. But Foucault is talking about a particular kind of knowledge in his rethinking of the power–knowledge relation. It is that knowledge that has been generated post enlightenment by the human sciences (not merely the social sciences, as Foucault includes psychoanalysis, ethnography and certain kinds of literary analysis). Indeed his work can be seen as a long and protracted intellectual attack, and not merely a polemic against these human sciences (Foucault, 1984a).

Foucault talks of knowledge about man developed in such places as the hospital, the madhouse and the prison. His concern is with knowledge developed in these institutions (and others) where the knowledge is the outcome of certain practices associated with social control. As knowledge develops so also do the parallel practices of controlling the outcomes of behaviour. One aspect of discipline provides the data which make the other aspect possible and which, in turn, generate more data which not only improve the practice within the discipline but provide also a *legitimation*. Knowledge acquired through these exercises of power, because it is seen as knowledge, acquires legitimation status. In this sense, the exercise of power in the technologies of social control operating in these institutions becomes identical with knowledge according to Foucault—hence his concept of power/knowledge. It must be emphasised that Foucault is talking about a certain type of power and similarly a certain kind of knowledge—he sometimes refers to it as important discourse (Hacking, 1981). He is talking about discourses that have developed from disciplinary blocks, acquired official and institutionalised forms, and which carry with them the potential for domination and subjection. More importantly he believes that this potential has remained hidden or obscured to the general public view, masquerading as truth, and the truth about *ourselves* in particular. In *Discipline and Punish* (Foucault, 1979a) the school is placed firmly in the disciplines.

Foucault is not the first theoretician to raise questions about the role of the school as a mechanism for the production of people to lead useful, practical and docile lives—for example, the work of the reproduction theorists—but he is prob-

ably the first to locate the school in a total theoretical matrix of disciplines in which similar power relationships exist and are used to govern and control outcomes. He argues that, contrary to the normal liberal and humane stories, these institutions did not emerge for rational and humane reasons (see especially the emergence of the prison), but for negative reasons, either to neutralise dangers (the control of sexuality, for example) or to maximise efficiency (as in reform of the systems of punishment in France). As they developed through surveillance, the development of discourses and the parallel improvement of practices, so they became attached to the most useful and productive functions of society. For Foucault, they are not seen as having been produced by or as the outcome of the capitalist mode of production; rather they were assimilated by and improved upon by capitalism. What he says on the relationships between the various forms of political and economic domination is far from satisfactory (e.g. Foucault, 1983c).

4 THE MODERN SCHOOL

It might be thought that in the modern school we have progressed considerably from the draconian institutions and processes that passed for education and which were described so vividly by Dickens—Dotheboys Hall and Salem House —and the schools described by Foucault. Foucault's point is not that the modern school is just like those schools, or that more humane approaches to education have not really been introduced into schools after all. Much of this he would concede. His point is that there are similarities and the method of genealogy is meant to establish this. Just as power was inscribed by the sovereign onto the body of Damiens, so too is power inscribed onto the bodies (Keat, 1986) of children. What has changed is the form of power and the technologies of power. The liberal educational account of power cannot capture this aspect.

Foucault's point is that these changes represent ever and more subtle refinements of technologies of power based upon knowledge which has itself been produced within or used by the discipline of education. This knowledge, constituted in practice, comes in turn to legitimate practice. As a result, children are constituted in certain ways. This is hardly a new or an original theme. It is to be found in the thought of Dewey (1916) for example. Rorty (1982) notes similarities between Dewey and Foucault on how the subject is constructed, but he sees the essential difference as being between Dewey and the good guys on the one hand, and Foucault and the bad guys on the other hand; optimism with Dewey and pessimism with Foucault. This is not quite right, for Dewey is writing within the liberal post-enlightenment framework (even if he plays havoc with parts of it), whereas Foucault seems to have mounted a total attack upon this framework, rejecting the notion of the autonomous individual subject in particular. Nor is he totally pessimistic. Power/knowledge does produce pleasure and resistance is possible—indeed, after 1968 it might be said to be all around. There are marked similarities between what Dewey says is involved in the imposition of meaning in

the indeterminate situation—the social constraints inherent in any application of concepts—and in Foucault, the ways in which discourses have been constituted through constraints (see, for example, Foucault, 1972).

What is new in Foucault is the identification of such social reproduction with a certain kind of political domination obtained through modern power. Here the notion of 'governance' is important. In the paper, Governmentality (Foucault, 1979b), he describes the emergence of this notion from the writings of Machiavelli to the contract theorists Hobbes and Rousseau and, finally, to its more modern form. Governance is concerned with obtaining obedience to laws and the right disposition of things for the convenience of all. Modern power has developed as a technique in the search for governance and it has little to do with economic, ethnic, racial or class domination. The development of certain views of humanity in the sciences has been an important key to the spread of modern power.

Given this framework of power/knowledge, shifts from a traditional approach to rules and discipline in schools should not be interpreted as any abandonment of the exercise of power over children—as, for example, John Wilson (1977) tends to interpret P.S. Wilson (1971)—but, rather, as a change in the technologies and programs of power. The abandonment of corporal punishment and other overt exercises of power do not entail decreasing exercises of power over the young but may only indicate a shift in technologies and programs of power. What is at issue between the two Wilsons, in Foucault's framework, is not a dispute about what discipline means and whether discipline in either's sense should be an educational aim, but which is the most effective technology of power to be employed with the young in the pursuit of governance.

Explicit examples of shifts towards regulated communication and away from overt power strategies can be seen in the emergence of explicit programs in moral, social and health (including sex) education. In these programs, governance is sought not by the structuring of the disciplinary block through power strategies but by, for example, turning morality itself into a set of skills, desirable attitudes and dispositions, in which individuals can be exercised, examined and normalised. Power is still exercised in the search for normalised and governable people. If it is more humane, it is more subtle; if it is less overt and involves less violence to bring power into play, it may be more dangerous because of its insidious silence.

People in these processes become an *object* for others classified in various categories and a *subject*, tied to what Foucault calls a deep inner self, with deep desires (the influence of Freud and psychoanalytic theory is most marked). In these processes they are also subjected. This arises from normalising processes and from the very concepts which we use to describe ourselves. These concepts are essentially social constructs with, he seems often to claim, disreputable genealogies. To talk about one's hopes, wishes, aspirations and inner desires is not to be liberated in any way but, through this series of interpretations, one's actions are controlled and directed by others. (The others remain a shadowy amorphous

and ultimately unknown entity in Foucault's writing.) To throw away sexual inhibitions à la California is not to be liberated.

Why should educationalists read Foucault? All that has been established so far, it might be thought, is that Foucault has dressed up in a violent landscape the rather mundane truth that we influence our young in various ways. But there is a sense in which we cannot avoid that. My children cannot object to me that they were not free to be French, for example. What is it that Foucault is telling us about power/knowledge that is important to education?

Clearly Foucault provides us with no ready-made formulas. Nevertheless there is a program (Foucault, 1983a) that, combined with a genealogical approach which tends to show that the present and its discourse/practice are not as rational or as humane or as developed as might be thought, could throw genuine insight into what we are doing with children in the name of education. However this program needs yet to be undertaken.

Genealogy and the analysis of power relations will reveal, according to Foucault, the normalising functions of schools. In the medieval school, according to Aries (1962), there were no authority structures as we now understand them. Certainly the teacher was not in authority over the students and had little or no authority or power to discipline or punish. Punishments for disorderly or ribald behaviour were imposed by the students themselves and tended to be a fine of some kind. The critical question to be pursued could be to track out the changing patterns of punishment as the disciplinary block, which we call the school, emerged. What would be required here is a genealogical investigation of schools which threw up violent contrasts similar to Damien on the one hand and the quiet caring way on the other hand. In schools we have the example of the medieval school, the harsh repressive schools of Victorian times, and the modern notions of counselling and pastoral care. The latter, in particular with its confessional aspects, its reworkings and interpretations, provides excellent pedagogical examples of the constitution of the subject that Foucault discussed in relation to sexuality (Foucault, 1980a).

Finally Foucault's analysis of power/knowledge has disturbing implications for us as professionals:

1   In suspending the normative notions of legitimacy and illegitimacy, Foucault directs our attention with his concept of power to a host of shaping up processes—learning to speak, read and write, for example—which the liberal framework would not normally identify as exercises of power acting contrary to the interests of the child.

2   He directs our attention here because, in pursuing these educational objectives, we are bringing into play modern power which is directed towards governmentality and a form of political domination. Even in classical liberal theory, there is a fragile element here; for in the case of Hobbes, as Pasquino (1986) reminds us, there is a need for discipline to ensure obedience to the contract. In *De Cive*, I, 1, Hobbes says: 'Men can only become political subjects *ex disciplina*'; and in *Leviathan* there is considerable discussion of how this is to be achieved

through education (Marshall, 1980). Much of the power talk of liberal education ignores what Hobbes and Rousseau were very well aware of, namely the necessity of discipline for governance.

3 While modern power permeates all of modern society, according to Foucault it was developed and refined essentially in the disciplines and still has important homes and sources of legitimation in the disciplines and associated human sciences.

4 In the disciplines, there are found certain views of the individual as a moral agent, sexual being, learner, or whatever. In the normalising procedures of examination and confession, people are classified as objects and the truth about themselves revealed to themselves. In constituting the subject in these ways, modern power produces governable individuals; the rationally autonomous person is governable. While Foucault is demanding a new form of freedom in a new ethics, it is not one that he was ever to articulate fully (Foucault, 1983b).

6 As professionals, we must take note of Foucault's violent landscapes. He claims that he is not trying to ridicule, supplant or falsify other approaches to power but, rather, that he is trying to offer us another aspect, or another mask, that reality wears. In his view, we do not have to have a total world view to resist and oppose forms of political subjection and domination; we can do it at any time, as the various resistance groups in the western world are showing us. The problem is to recognise when modern power is being exercised and whether, when it is being exercised, resistance is the appropriate response. How are we to know when to resist? Without some explicit normative position, Foucault cannot help us (see, for example, criticisms by Taylor, Walzer and Rorty in Hoy, 1986).

Keywords

discipline	knowledge	punishment
governance	power	self-concept

NOTE

REFERENCES

BURBULES, NICHOLAS. (1986). A theory of power in education. *Educational Theory*, **36** (2), 95–115.

DEWEY, JOHN. (1916). *Democracy and Education*. New York: Macmillan.

DREYFUS, HUBERT, & RABINOW, PAUL. (1983). *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics* (2nd ed.). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

FOUCAULT, MICHEL. (1970). *The Order of Things*. New York: Random House.

FOUCAULT, MICHEL. (1972). *The Archaeology of Knowledge*. London: Tavistock.

FOUCAULT, MICHEL. (1975). *I, Pierre Riviere, Having Slaughtered my Mother, my Sister, my Brother* . . . New York: Random House.

FOUCAULT, MICHEL. (1977). Nietzsche, genealogy, history. In D. Bouchard (Ed.), *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice* (pp.139–64). Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

FOUCAULT, MICHEL. (1979a). *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison.* New York: Vintage.

FOUCAULT, MICHEL. (1979b). Governmentality. *Ideology and Consciousness,* 7, 5–26.

FOUCAULT, MICHEL. (1980a). *The History of Sexuality* (Vol. 1). New York: Vintage.

FOUCAULT, MICHEL. (1980b). Two lectures: Truth and power and The eye of power. In Colin Gordon (Ed.), *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and other Writings.* Brighton: Harvester Press.

FOUCAULT, MICHEL. (1983a). Afterword: The subject and power. In Hubert L. Dreyfus & Paul Rabinow, *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics* (pp.208–26). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

FOUCAULT, MICHEL. (1983b). On the genealogy of ethics. In Hubert L. Dreyfus & Paul Rabinow, *Michel Foucault* (pp.229–52). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

FOUCAULT, MICHEL (1984a). Polemics, politics and problematization. In Paul Rabinow (Ed.), *Foucault Reader* (pp.381–93). New York: Pantheon.

FOUCAULT, MICHEL. (1984b). What is enlightenment? In Paul Rabinow, *Foucault Reader* (pp. 32–50). New York: Pantheon.

FRASER, NANCY. (1985). Michel Foucault: A young conservative. *Ethics,* **96**, 165–84.

GOLDSTEIN, JAN. (1984). Foucault among the sociologists: The disciplines and the history of the professions. *History and Theory,* **23**(2), 170–92.

HENRIQUES, JULIAN, HOLLOWAY, WENDY, URWIN, CATHY, VERN, COUSE, & WALKERDINE, VALERIE. (1984). *Changing the Subject: Psychology, Social Regulation & Subjectivity.* London: Methuen.

HOSKIN, KEITH. (1979). The examination, disciplinary power and rational schooling. *History of Education,* **8**(2), 135–46.

HOY, DAVID COUZINS. (1986), *Foucault: A Critical Reader.* Oxford: Blackwell.

JONES, KAREN, & WILLIAMSON, KEVIN. (1979). The birth of the schoolroom. *Ideology and Consciousness,* **5**(1), 5–6.

KEAT, RUSSELL. (1986). The human body in social theory: Reich, Foucault and the repressive hypothesis. *Radical Philosophy,* **42**, 24–32.

MARSHALL, JAMES D. (1980). Thomas Hobbes: Obligation and education in the Commonwealth. *Journal of Philosophy of Education,* **14**(2), 193–203.

MEGILL, ALAN. (1979). Foucault, structuralism, and the ends of history. *Journal of Modern History,* **51**, 451–503.

MINSON, JEFFREY. (1985). *Genealogies of Morals: Nietzsche, Foucault, Donzelot and the Eccentricity of Ethics.* Basingstoke: Macmillan.

PASQUINO, PASQUALE. (1986). Michel Foucault (1926–84): The will to knowledge. *Economy and Society,* **15**(1), 97–109.

PETERS, R. S. (1966). *Ethics and Education,* London: Allen & Unwin.

POSTER, MARK. (1984). *Foucault, Marxism, History.* Cambridge: Polity Press.

POULANTZAS, NICOS. (1978). *State, Power, Socialism.* London: Verso.

RORTY, RICHARD. (1982). *Consequences of Pragmatism.* Brighton: Harvester Press.

RUSSELL, BERTRAND. (1971). *On Education.* London: Allen & Unwin.

SARAP, MADAN. (1982). *Education, State and Crisis.* London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

SMART, BARRY. (1983). *Foucault, Marxism and Critique.* London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

SMART, BARRY. (1986). The politics of truth. In D.C. Hoy, *Foucault: A Critical Reader.* Oxford: Blackwell.

WALKERDINE, VALERIE. (1984). Developmental psychology and the child centred psychology: The insertion of Piaget into early education. In J. Henriques et al., *Changing the Subject.* London: Methuen.

WALZER, MICHAEL. (1983). The politics of Michel Foucault. *Dissent,* **30,** 481–90.

WILSON, JOHN. (1977). *Philosophy and Practical Education.* London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

WILSON, P.S. (1971). *Interest and Discipline in the Curriculum.* London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

AUTHOR

Professor James D. Marshall is Head of the Education Department, University of Auckland, Private Bag, Auckland, New Zealand.