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LECTURE THIRTEEN

On Discipline and punish

“Normalisation” is probably Foucault’s most influential concept. *Discipline and Punish* (Foucault, 1975) is the book where he constructed it. (The importance of the concept of normalisation for the book is emphasised in its very last words, page 360, where Foucault writes, “Here I interrupt my writing of this book which should serve as historical background for further studies of the power of normalization and the formation of knowledge in modern society”.) It is probably his most influential book. Stanley Cohen (Cohen, 1985) wrote “to write today about punishment and classification without Foucault, is like talking about the unconscious without Freud”.

In *Self-Transformations: Foucault, Ethics and Normalised Bodies*, Cressida Heyes bravely attempts to summarise what “normalisation” means for Foucault, in a few words. It is “a set of mechanisms for sorting, taxonomising, measuring, managing, and controlling populations, which both fosters conformity and generates modes of individuality” (Heyes, 2007: 16). I think we can taste the flavour, not only of Foucault, but of the Foucauldian diaspora – the worldwide outpouring of studies influenced by Foucault – by noticing three kinds of normalising that Heyes analyses. They are sexual reassignment surgery, weight loss dieting, and cosmetic surgery.

At one level, *Discipline and Punish* – the book from which the concept of normalising comes – is not about any of Heyes’s three examples. It is subtitled, “The birth of the prison”. It is about how western society, especially France, has dealt with criminals from the late 18th century until the present – that is to say, until 1975, the year when *Discipline and punish* was published. At another level, *Discipline and Punish* is about these three examples and more. One of its remarkable conclusions is that we now live in a jail-like society (this conclusion is expressed in the last chapter, “*Le carcéral*”: 342–360). Our world has become, in important ways, one big jail; therefore, if you want to understand our world in general, study prisons in particular. What Foucault sees when he sees prisons and prison-like institutions everywhere, is suggested in the final remark concluding Part Three of the book – the part where he most explicitly develops his twin concepts of “discipline” and “normalisation”. Foucault writes:

That the prison with its cells, with its schedules, with its obligatory labour, with its techniques of surveillance and record-keeping, with its masters of normality who transmit and expand the functions of the judge; has become the main instrument of the modern criminal justice system should come as no surprise. It should come

as no surprise either that the prison resembles the factory, the school, the military barracks, and the hospital; or that all these resemble prisons. (Foucault, 1975: 264)

Discipline and Punish has four parts:

- Part One: Torture. Pages 1–86 (the French name of Part One, *Supplice*, is sometimes kept in French when Foucault is translated into English because it has connotations not captured by “torture”).
- Part Two: Punishment. Pages 87–158
- Part Three: Discipline. Pages 159–266
- Part Four: Prison. Pages 267–360

Notice that Part Three, the part whose last lines I just quoted, is the longest.

Part One presents a startling contrast between two very different ways of dealing with criminals. The first is a spectacle: the torture and killing of a man who had tried to kill the king, conducted before a crowd of spectators in a public square in Paris in 1757. It is an extended ritual of atrocities, in which the body of the condemned man is subjected to maximum pain and utterly destroyed. The second is a timetable – it is a minutely detailed regime regulating the daily lives of the inmates of a Paris reformatory some 80 years later. Remember that it is just this time period – the end of the 18th century, the beginning of the 19th, the time of the French Revolution and its aftermath – that Foucault associates with the end of what he calls the “classical” period (the period from about the middle of the 16th century to a little after the middle of the 18th century). The end of the “*age classique*” is the beginning of “*notre modernité*”. What Foucault will trace in *Discipline and Punish*, is the transition between the first way of dealing with criminals he dramatically depicts in Part One, the public display of authorised violence, and the second. The second – introduced in Part One as a flash-forward giving the reader a glimpse of what is to come – is systematic discipline behind closed walls. *Discipline and Punish* is a story about power. It is about the evolutionary origins of power in what Foucault takes to be its productive modern form, the form of discipline. What modern productive discipline produces is normalisation.

Punishment, the topic that lends Part Two its title, is to be understood, according to Foucault, as a political tactic within the general field of the study of power relations. Power relations, in turn, are to be understood in the light of two other key foci of attention: knowledge and the body. With respect to knowledge, the genealogy of power assuming its modern forms as disciplines must be understood as inseparable from the genealogy of psychology, sociology, criminology and other human sciences. The more they know about people, the more people become controllable. Foucault’s hyphenated expression, power-knowledge, expresses the mutually reinforcing

and overlapping dependence of power on knowledge and knowledge on power. In deference to Foucault, I am saying “genealogy of sciences” where others would say “history of sciences” because Foucault insists that he is not a historian; he was (before his Nietzschean turn) an “archaeologist”; now (after his Nietzschean turn) he is a “genealogist”. With regard to the body, the genealogy (others would say the history) of modern discipline is ultimately about bodies. The human body is the ultimate material that is seized and shaped by all political, economic and penal institutions. All systems of domination fundamentally depend on the subjugation of bodies. Bodies must be rendered docile, obedient, useful.

Chronologically and conceptually, the focus of Part Two is mostly on the new-in-the-18th-century ideas of systematic legal thinkers, of whom Cesare Beccaria (1738–1794) was the most famous and most seminal. They advocated rational punishment. The old way was expensive, irrationally and unnecessarily violent, and ineffective. Modern commerce required a carefully graduated system of punishments-fitting-the-crime that would teach whole populations to respect property and persons, especially property. Besides, under the old system, sometimes the crowds, who were supposed to be cowed into obedience by torture-unto-death staged as a public spectacle, sympathised with the condemned criminal and became rebellious.

In part three, the heart of the book, power goes further conceptually while shifting backwards a bit chronologically. Throughout the 18th century (with some glimpses before and after), power establishes systematic discipline, not just in the treatment of criminals but generally in the army, in schools, in churches and convents, in hospitals, in orphanages, and in factories and other workplaces. It does this by confining people in limited spaces, where they can be more closely observed and more efficiently controlled (Foucault, 1975: 166–175). (In Foucault’s terms, power becomes cellular.) It does it by precisely scheduling people’s time, first in the monasteries with their around-the-clock routines of *ora et labora* and eventually in all institutions (Foucault, 1975: 175–183). It does it by prescribing precisely what they are to do (Foucault, 1975: 183–199). It does it by examinations, in schools in clinics and everywhere. Examinations turn individuals into cases and establish files that turn individuals into documentary records (Foucault, 1975: 217–227). In a sense – here we need to tread lightly because Foucault’s meaning is neither simple nor clear – discipline creates individuals, because individuals in the form they assume in disciplinary society did not exist at all before discipline. Put differently, discipline creates souls. The brutal torture of the body with which Part One opened becomes the infinitely more effective, infinitely more insidious and infinitely more pervasive discipline of a soul, and of a body via a soul. The soul becomes the prison of the body. Part Three concludes with a long discussion of Jeremy Bentham’s design for an ideal prison, the Panopticon. The

Panopticon principle (which can be applied in factories and elsewhere as well as in prisons) permits a warder in a central location to gaze simultaneously into the cells of all the prisoners. Knowledge becomes power and power becomes knowledge because everything the prisoner does at every moment of the day and night is subject to total scrutiny and therefore to total control.

In part of Section Two of Part Three Foucault writes about “normalisation” and “normalising” (Foucault, 1975: 209–216). He says that in every disciplinary institution there functions a system of punishment that he calls “infra-penal”. Discipline fills with light punishments, spaces that the law with its heavy punishments leaves empty (Foucault, 1975: 209). In school, at work, and in the army there are, for example, little sanctions that can be called light punishment for being late or for being impolite. But discipline is not just small-scale punishment. It has its own characteristic ways of making people conform (Foucault, 1975: 210). It is *corrective*. If a student or a soldier or a novice in a monastery fails an examination, a frequent consequence is not being promoted, having to study more and practise more, and taking the examination again later. “*Châtier, c’est exercer*”, writes Foucault (Foucault, 1975: 211), which can be interpreted as saying, freely translated, “The kind of punishment imposed in disciplinary institutions often consists of giving people exercises to do”. Carefully graded punishments are typically only one side of a disciplinary system, which is typically complemented by another side, consisting of equally carefully graded rewards. The carrots often outweigh the sticks. Foucault gives the example of an 18th century military school in France, where the cadets were periodically promoted and demoted according to their performance. Those in the higher ranks enjoyed more privileges. Those in the lower ranks suffered more shame (Foucault, 1975: 213–215). He concludes, “The perpetual punishing [he seems to mean mainly systematic small-scale punishing combined with systematic small-scale rewarding] that penetrates everywhere in disciplinary institutions and controls at all times, compares, differentiates, establishes hierarchies, homogenizes, and excludes. In one word, it *normalizes*” (Foucault, 1975: 215).

Before going into more detail about normalisation, let us step back for a moment and look at the big picture. What is Foucault doing? Why is he doing it?

I have been suggesting, sometimes with more subtlety and sometimes with less subtlety, that throughout his life, Foucault was loyal to his mother. He was loyal to her class interests as a member of a *rentier* class threatened by the herd, by democracy, and by socialism. Although it is true that, as Alasdair MacIntyre has written, “Foucault in each major transition changed direction” (MacIntyre, 1993: 57), it is also true that his motivation was consistent. He changed directions, but he did not change loyalties. His loyalty to his mother fused with loyalty to himself as a

highly eccentric sexual dissident; also threatened by the herd with its well-known proclivities for homophobia, xenophobia, and general phobia towards anybody creative and/or different; and also engaged in what I imagine to be a rather stand-offish relationship with the medical establishment, as represented by her husband and his father, who was both a practising physician and a professor at a medical school (these points were discussed in Chapter One and are derived mainly from Didier Eribon's biography of Foucault cited there). So my general answer to the general question, "What is Foucault doing?" would be that he is doing, in his own words, "critique", where critique is understood as "an instrument for those who fight, those who resist and refuse what is" (Foucault, 1981: 13). Friedrich Nietzsche's *Genealogie der Moral*, a seminal book for Foucault, is subtitled *eine Streitschrift*, that is, a fighting-writing. I am suggesting that, for Foucault, what needs to be criticised and fought is modernity's drift into ever more conformist and ever more technocratic mediocrity. My general answer to the general question, "Why is he doing it?", is that he is motivated by love for his mother and by love for himself.

Discipline and Punish fits into the large picture, thus, lightly sketched in three ways:

- As a polemic against the humanist ideals of the welfare state;
- As an apology for individualism; and
- As a displacement of the intellectual centre of gravity from Marx to Nietzsche; and at a more sophisticated level, striking a pre-emptive blow against any attempt to change the rules of the capitalist game. Rules-talk is out. Power-talk is in.

Let me comment briefly on the first two, and, at length, on the third:

Soon after *Discipline and Punish* came out in English, Clifford Geertz called it the "Whig history in reverse". While the Whig history that most of us were brought up on reads the story of the past few centuries as a story of the gradual progress and triumph of freedom, Foucault traces the Rise of Unfreedom and the inexorable regress of liberty (Geertz, 1978). Most of us think of the abolition of judicial torture and its replacement by what we now call "correctional institutions" as moral progress; it is a big step toward social democracy, as are public education and health care for all. Foucault tells a different story, and one which discredits and undermines what common sense usually regards as the slow and painful but steady implementation of human rights and human values. (Although Foucault does not repeat in *Discipline and Punish* his earlier attacks on humanism, he refers pejoratively on page 166 to "*l'homme* of modern humanism", confirming that he still counts himself as an anti-humanist.)

In calling *Discipline and Punish* an apology for individualism, I mean to say that it chimes in with Nietzsche's condemnation of herd morality, but I need to distinguish

two senses of the word “individual”. Foucault is emphatically not a eulogist of “the individual” created by modern disciplinary institutions. He is in favour of “the individual” as the body. It is in the end the human body that normalising seeks to render docile and obedient. It is, in the end, the human body that can be counted on to “to fight, to resist, to refuse what is”. In the words of David Garland in *Discipline and Punish*, “it is ‘the body’ that somehow represents the individual’s instinctive source of freedom” (Garland, 1986: 879). Interpreting “individualism” in this second sense, and reading *Discipline and Punish* as posing the alternatives starkly in terms of this binary polarity (normalising power/the body’s resistance to it), I read it as a text motivated by Foucault’s continuing loyalties.

What I mainly have in mind in reading *Discipline and Punish* as rejection of Marx and advocacy of Nietzsche, is not Marxism, as a cluster of schools of thought that dominated French universities until the mid-1970s – although that is important. What I mainly have in mind is Foucault’s rejection of the structural analysis of capitalism, whether it is done by Weberians, Durkheimians, Keynesians, *Annales* historians, or anyone else Marxist, non-Marxist or anti-Marxist. It would take a long time to recite here, today, all my reasons for believing that, to do a proper structural analysis of capitalism, we need to think mainly in terms of rules (also known as norms). It would take a long time to explain why I believe that if we think only or mainly of power, we will not understand where we (humanity) are, how we got here, or, most importantly, how to get out of the structural traps we are in.³ We will be handicapped in changing the rules of the modern world-system if we fall into the habit of disregarding rules as mere fictions.

Fortunately, today I can take a shortcut because Foucault himself seems to have thought about the same issues, and to have arrived at a conclusion that is the mirror image of mine. Foucault appears to agree with me that “rules vs. power” expresses a key, perhaps the key, methodological question, even while he disagrees with my answer to it. Because he emphatically disagrees with a rule-based approach, from my point of view, Foucault could not – even if he wanted to – do a structural analysis of capitalism or of any other institution.

³ See my (1995) *Letters from Québec*. San Francisco and London, International Scholars Press; (2000) *Understanding the global economy*. Delhi, Madhya Books, revised edition (2004) Santa Barbara, Peace Education Books; my and Joanna Swanger’s (2006) *Dilemmas of social democracies*. Lanham MD, Rowman and Littlefield; (2012) *Gandhi and the future of economics*. Lake Oswego OR, World Dignity University Press; my and Catherine Odora-Hoppers (2010) *Rethinking thinking: Modernity’s other and the transformation of the university*. Pretoria, University of South Africa; John Searle (1995), *The construction of social reality*. New York, Free Press; Rom Harre and Paul Secord (1972), *The explanation of social behaviour*. Oxford, Blackwell; Charles Taylor (1971), “Interpretation and the sciences of man” in *Review of Metaphysics*. Volume 25: 3–51; Alasdair MacIntyre and D.R. Bell (1967), “Symposium: The idea of a social science” in *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*. Volume 41: 95–132.

Just before beginning his long discussion of Bentham's Panopticon, Foucault writes:

One often says that the model of a society that would have individuals for its constitutive elements is borrowed from the abstract juridical forms of contract and exchange. Mercantile society would be represented as a contractual association of isolated juridical subjects. Maybe. The political theory of the 17th and 18th centuries often seems to obey this schema. But one should not forget that there existed during the same epoch a technique for effectively constituting individuals as the correlative elements of a power and a knowledge. The individual is, no doubt, the fictitious atom of an 'ideological' representation of society; but he is also a reality fabricated by that specific technology of power that one calls 'discipline' (Foucault, 1975: 227). [For comment on the phrase "isolated juridical subject", see Hoppers and Richards 2012: Chapter four.]

Let me react to this key passage commenting on one sentence at a time. The first sentence is: "One often says that the model of a society that would have individuals for its constitutive elements is borrowed from the abstract juridical forms of contract and exchange."

Who is the "one" who often says this, or often says something of this sort? I think and I think Foucault thinks that it is the just about everybody I evoked earlier as Weberians, Durkheimians, Keynesians, *Annales* historians and anybody else who does structural analysis of capitalism. I think there is general agreement that Sir Henry Maine was onto something significant when he characterised the transition from traditional to modern society as a transition from a society based on status to a society based on contract (Maine, 1861). To understand modernity, you have to understand commerce. You have to understand buying and selling in markets. I would agree with Charles Taylor and others, that in addition to understanding commerce, one needs to understand much else. One must understand the sources of the self that made the modern identity (Taylor, 1989). Here, Foucault alludes to what "one often says". Presumably, it is a prelude to Foucault saying something new and different.

But I do not think "one" says exactly what Foucault says "one" says. Foucault wants to take credit for ground-level insight into everyday life as it is really lived while "one" traffics merely in "abstract juridical forms". I think it is the other way around. Property, contract, sales, commercial exchange, and so on, are the stuff of everyday life as it is lived on the ground.

In support of my view that the general consensus that Foucault is about to challenge sees the principles of contract and exchange as not just abstract law, but also as the common sense of everyday life, I can cite not just Marx (for example, his analysis of commodity fetishism, Marx, 1867: Chapter 1, Part IV), but also just about anybody

else, including distinguished anti-Marxists such as Friedrich von Hayek. Hayek freely acknowledges that the legal and moral principles that govern contractual relationships and property ownership and that constitute individuals as independent juridical subjects who buy and sell are neither universal nor natural. But he says that, during the last few centuries, the principles of contract and exchange have become firmly established in the morality and common sense of the people. They are the going morality, the morality that is, the morality that governs daily life. This is one of the main reasons for Hayek thinking that it is fatal arrogance on the part of intellectuals and governments to think they can improve on capitalism in ways that alter what the masses, in their hearts and minds, know is right (Von Hayek, 1989).

Foucault's second sentence in this passage is: "Mercantile society would be represented as a contractual association of isolated juridical subjects." Here, there is a shift. It is a shift *away* from using the juridical framework of exchange as a *model* for understanding capitalist society – which is near to, if not exactly at, what "one" commonly does. It is a shift *toward* attributing to others the implausible opinion that society is *constituted* by a social contract among pre-existing individuals.

The third sentence consists of just one word: "Maybe". I think Foucault is conceding, here, that it might, to some considerable extent, make sense to understand capitalism by understanding its rules. We will see in the next lecture that a year later, in 1976, he retracted this "maybe".

The fourth sentence alludes to some thinkers who really *did* say society began with a social contract. It reads: "The political theory of the 17th and 18th centuries often seems to obey this schema." Here, Foucault associates the plausible model of his first sentence with some implausible (for us today) notions of John Locke, Jean-Jacques Rousseau and others. His point may be that distantly similar ideas about contract law have been around for a long time and have had great influence.

In the fifth sentence, Foucault speaks for himself, stating his own views: "But one should not forget that there existed, during the same epoch, a technique for effectively constituting individuals as the correlative elements of a power and knowledge." Taking his words literally, he is not asking for much. It is as if he is willing to allow his opponents to define modern individuals as the civil law defines them, as juridical subjects capable of owning property and entering into contracts, as long as he is able to add his postscript to mainstream social science. The postscript addressed to social science by Michel Foucault would be: Especially since the 17th century, and even previously, techniques of discipline used in schools, monasteries, armies, workplaces, orphanages, and reformatories have been creating individuals by normalisation, filling in spaces left blank on the canvas painted by the law.

The sixth and last sentence reads: “The individual is, no doubt, the fictitious atom of an ‘ideological’ representation of society, but he is also a reality fabricated by that specific technology of power that one calls ‘discipline.’” Foucault allies himself, here, with many others who also find that talk of contracts and rules often disguises reality more than it reveals it. Most Marxists would say that, at a deep level, that of production relations, the class of owners of the means of production extracts surplus value from the proletarian class, while at a superficial level, that of ideology, exploitation is disguised by contracts signed by separate “atomic” individuals (see Marx, 1867: the last two paragraphs of Volume One, Chapter 4, part 3).

The conservative sociologist, Vilfredo Pareto, says something similar: what goes on in people’s conscious minds has little or no significance for the scientific, causal explanation of social phenomena (Winch, 1958). And of course, for Nietzsche, the will-to-power loves to wear masks, and liberal democracy under the rule of law is one of its favourites (Vivian, 2007). Foucault has important allies when he reminds us that rule-talk is often ideological fiction.

But all of this leaves open the question whether the abstract juridical forms of contract and exchange, to some considerable extent, really do define the rules of the capitalist game as it really is played. “One” thinks they do. While Foucault, in this passage, admits that “one” may have a point, he seems determined to whittle away at it, claiming more and more for power while conceding less and less to rules.

Hopefully this digression to examine a single passage in some detail will now prove helpful as I take up the question of the relationship of power to normalisation in *Discipline and Punish*.

As David Garland points out in his exposition and critique of *Discipline and Punish*, for Foucault the proposition that it is power that generates normalisation is not a hypothesis. It is an assumption. Foucault approaches the study of disciplinary institutions on the *assumption* “that everything that occurs there is fundamentally oriented to the enhancement of control and the maximization of regulatory power” (Garland, 1986: 873). Foucault writes from a “power-perspective”. Foucault writes “a critique of morals in the name of power” (Garland, 1986: 877).

Garland finds Foucault’s power-perspective disconcerting. While most people who write histories of penal institutions consider several possible explanations of events. For Foucault there is in principle always only one (Garland, 1986: 876 and *passim*). That values other than control, such as compassion or improving health care or helping children learn their ABCs more effectively, might have played a role in the history of disciplinary institutions is ruled out not as an empirical finding after study but as

a point of departure before study begins (Garland, 1986). Foucault makes assertions that are supported by little or no evidence, but which are necessitated by the logic of his own assumptions. For example, Foucault takes what Garland regards as an unintended consequence of prisons, the formation of a criminal class that learns crime in prison and practises it upon release, to be an intended consequence of the broader political strategy of power (Garland, 1986: 875; Foucault, 1975: 299–342.). “Power” becomes an all-pervasive entity that is everywhere and nowhere: it is never exercised by anybody with a name and a face, but sometimes by abstractions such as “the dominant class” or “the state” or more often, by nobody at all. Often, Foucault avoids the question of who is exercising power by naming “power” itself or a surrogate, like “strategy”, as the agent exercising power, or by writing sentences without subjects in the passive voice. Having constructed a blueprint of what totalised discipline would look like, he goes on to write as if his blueprint and observed reality were identical (Garland, 1986: 877). All of this is due to what Garland calls Foucault’s “theoretical preconception” (Garland, 1986: 873). Nevertheless, Foucault became, and remains to this day, a charismatic celebrity, while the myriad authors who have called attention to how the “theoretical preconception” of his “power perspective” leads him into logical and factual errors, have remained obscure (see Garland for references to historical and other studies calling attention to Foucault’s misrepresentations of facts).

If you have been listening attentively to these lectures, you will see these matters in a somewhat different light. I have been saying, in agreement with Foucault himself, that the two great intellectual experiences of his life were reading Heidegger and reading Nietzsche. I have been saying that Heidegger insisted from the beginning of his career, even before he wrote *Sein und Zeit*, that there is such a thing as pre-theoretical knowledge (Lambert, 2002). Foucault never gave up the Heideggerian claim to be writing at a level somehow prior to and immune to criticism by ordinary scientific research. Whether writing archaeologies or genealogies, he always insisted that he was not a historian, not a social scientist, not a scientist of any kind, and therefore, implicitly, not to be judged by any ordinary criteria for evaluating research. I have been tracing where and when the idea of “power” first became central for Foucault; how it functioned to locate him “to the left of the left” at a place where he could both condemn the main working class ideologies as conservative and attract rebellious spirits to apparently more radical causes. Some listeners may remember that I did not claim to say anything on this point that had not already been said or implied by Jürgen Habermas. Nietzsche’s will-to-power saved Foucault from the twin embarrassments of either being guilty as charged in Jean-Paul Sartre’s criticism of *Les Mots et les Choses* of writing castles in the air of self-referential discourse referring only to other discourse, or else falling into a historical materialism incompatible with his deepest loyalties. Hence, in the light of what I have been suggesting in earlier

lectures, when writing *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault had no intention of writing the sort of history of disciplinary institutions that any garden-variety historian might write. He wanted to write a *Streitschrift*, a fighting document, fighting against humanism, and for a Nietzschean power perspective.

I conclude that what Garland calls Foucault's "critique of morals in the name of power", and what I have been calling the "rules vs. power" methodological issue, is indeed the central issue. If Foucault is right to see will-to-power operative everywhere, and causing everything, if that is, in some sense or other, the valid or preferable or only legitimate or most realistic or best way to understand this world we live in, then he can be forgiven for fudging facts. It was for a good cause. Foucault apparently agreed that such was the central issue, for it is the issue he addressed in his next book, the first volume of his projected *History of Sexuality*, published in 1976 and one year later. In the first volume of his *History of Sexuality*, he takes back the "maybe" discussed above, where he conceded – temporarily as it turned out – that there might be something to be said in favour of "one" taking the abstract juridical forms of commodity exchange as a model for understanding our capitalist society.

I will examine, in the next lecture, the central issue in Foucault's most famous book, *Discipline and Punish*, and the central issue for normalisation, his most famous concept, namely the issue of power. I will examine it by looking at another book that came out a year later and was devoted to that issue. After that, and in the light of that, I will come back again to *Discipline and Punish* to consider its concluding Part Four, the part about prisons.

A COMMENT ON LECTURE THIRTEEN

Evelin Lindner

Garland and other critics *seem* to be correct when they point out that Foucault disregarded many facts that did not fit his theoretical perspective. Nevertheless, Foucault's account of normalisation rings true for many people. It rings true for me. It has been a revelation for many of us to put on Foucault's glasses and to see the world through them.

I sympathise with Cressida Heyes's employment of Foucault's discourse about how power normalises bodies in studying sexual reassignment surgery, weight loss dieting, and cosmetic surgery. I think we all know what it feels like to be under pressure to conform to what a woman is supposed to be, or to conform to what a man is supposed to be, or to be thin, or to be beautiful. From Foucault, we get new ways to articulate what many have long felt.

Perhaps Foucault saw some things so clearly that they crowded out other things from his field of vision. What he did focus on and see clearly seems, to me, to be especially prevalent in what you, dear Howard, have explained so well, namely the social democracies that have turned out to be rather disappointing. Especially in Europe, the working classes fought long and hard to reach goals like free education for all and comprehensive health care for all. One might add humanitarian reform of the penal system to the list. But when they got what they had been fighting for, the outcomes turned out to be not so wonderful. Mass education, universal access to medical treatment, and trying to rehabilitate lawbreakers in correctional institutions all seemed to be afflicted by a curse. They seemed to fall inexorably under the sway of the pseudo-sciences and bureaucratic, petty tyrannies that Foucault brilliantly exposes. Yet, when the private sector was called on to be the saviour with its superior "efficiency", tyranny mostly only changed form and justification.

We are challenged to apply what we know about psychology to humanise and to personalise what has become an inhuman and impersonal world. But I have to qualify my words. Psychology itself is too often captured by pseudo-science and even by bureaucracy. Psychology too often becomes part of the problem. And Foucault himself did not want to be known as a humanist. Surely those of us who do want to be known as humanists can draw inspiration from his work to use in our work? Only, perhaps we should be careful not to presume to identify his name with the spirit of our own projects.