

Foucault:
“Panopticism” & Foucault p. 1-79

Watch:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vVTKHI5ovyc>

Death Row Executions & Last Words:

http://www.tdcj.state.tx.us/death_row/dr_executed_offenders.html

“Panopticism”
from *Discipline and Punish*

Important Quotes & Terms:

“But the peculiarity of the **disciplines** is that they try to define in relation to the multiplicities a **tactics of power** that fulfils three criteria: firstly, to obtain the exercise of **power** at the lowest possible cost (economically, by the low expenditure it involves; politically, by its discretion, its low exteriorization, its relative invisibility, the little resistance it arouses); secondly, to bring the effects of this **social power** to their maximum intensity and to extend them as far as possible, without either failure or interval; thirdly, to link this '**economic growth of power**' with the output of the apparatuses (educational, military, industrial or medical) within which it is exercised; in short, to increase both the **docility** and the **utility** of all the elements of the system” (207).

Notes:

economic terms--marxist? internal organization of a “discipline”; not necessarily related to capital

consent without consenting--“sleight of hand”

gramsci- 3 steps: implementation of norms, conserving interest of power, ushering consensus

other translations: *docility*: obedience *Utility*: usefulness

Mills on power-- chapter 2: “Power is often conceptualized...”

who could enter the panopticon? Anyone

power is not given to one single person; it is a structure/**system**/chain

“individuals are the vehicles of power, not its points of application”

power is enacted on you, or you can resist it

we occupy subject positions; we cannot enact power

the concept of “performing resistance”

what is the power of “the self”?

foucault’s conception of power is contrary to marx’s notion of power. foucault never said

power is always negative.

there is no such thing as stable, individual selves.

“Neither the residual forms of **feudal power** nor the structures of the administrative monarchy, nor the **local mechanisms of supervision**, nor the unstable, tangled mass they all formed together could carry out this role: they were hindered from doing so by the irregular and inadequate extension of their **network**, by their often conflicting functioning, but above all by the **'costly'** nature of the power that was exercised in them. It was costly in several senses: because directly it cost a great deal to the Treasury; because the system of corrupt offices and farmed-out taxes weighed indirectly, but very heavily, on the population; because the resistance it encountered forced it into a cycle of **perpetual reinforcement**; because it proceeded essentially by levying...” (208)

Notes:

“The development of the disciplines marks the appearance of elementary techniques belonging to a quite different economy: **mechanisms of power** which, instead of proceeding by deduction, are integrated into the **productive efficiency** of the apparatuses from within, into the growth of this efficiency and into the use of what it produces” (208).

Notes:

“Is it surprising that the cellular prison, with its regular chronologies, forced labour, its authorities of surveillance and registration, its experts in normality, who continue and multiply the functions of the judge, should have become the modern instrument of penalty? Is it surprising that prisons resemble factories, schools, barracks, hospitals, which all resemble prisons?” (not in our excerpt, but still interesting...)

Notes:

panopticon as a “thing”
vs.
panopticism as an “ism”

a couple questions...

How does one become a disciplinary insider when they are stuck in a "double bind" for their normative category? Does this system in itself have privilege built in so that only those who

are born into "normative" categories (i.e. white, male, straight, christian, etc.) have the privilege of becoming disciplinary insiders?

Foucault 1-79

"Discourse, we must remember, is not the equivalent of language" (54-55)

Notes:

can a subject position have agency?
more than language

discourse is used differently in different foucault texts

Non-Discursive Practices (54-55)

Notes:

The reason that many people find the term discourse to be of use is that Foucault stresses that discourse is associated with relations of power. Many Marxist theorists have used the term ideology to indicate that certain statements and ideas are authorised by institutions and may have some influence in relation to individuals' ideas, but the notion of discourse is more complex than this notion of ideology in that, because of Foucault's ideas on power and resistance which I outlined in the previous chapter, a discourse is not simply the imposition of a set of ideas on individuals. In the History of Sexuality, Vol. I, Foucault states that:

discourses are not once and for all subservient to power or raised up against it, any more than silences are. We must make allowances for the complex and unstable process whereby discourse can be both an instrument and an effect of power, but also a hindrance, a stumbling block, a point of resistance and a starting point for an opposing strategy. Discourse transmits and produces power; it reinforces it, but also undermines it and exposes it, renders it fragile and makes it possible to thwart it. (Foucault 1978: 100– 101)

What I find interesting about this quotation is that, in Marxist theorising, ideology is always assumed to be negative and constraining, a set of false beliefs about something; whereas here Foucault is arguing that discourse is both the means of oppressing and the means of resistance (pp. 54-55).

Notes:

is discourse language? What is language?

language and discourse *produce* reality

Thus, rather than seeing a politics as being centred around individual great leaders who have utopian visions of the future, which entail the adoption of a set of beliefs by their followers, Foucault is more concerned to develop and describe a politics which takes account of the transformative possibilities within the present (p. 16).

What are these ‘transformative possibilities’? (Examples from book or other sources?)

However, Foucault should not be seen as completely negating the role of the individual in political change ; all that he is trying to stress is that humans are not ‘the universal operator of all transformations’ (Foucault 1991a: 70) (p. 17).

How does this compare to *agency* as it is theorized by Gramsci or Freire?

archaeological and genealogical methods of inquiry (pp. 24-25)

Notes:

Indeed, humanism (that is, the belief that each individual is in essence distinct from others, and that the individual is the key to ways of making sense of phenomena), is one of the main focuses of Foucault’s theoretical ire (p. 26).

Compare/ contrast with Freire, Gramsci

episteme (p. 27)

Notes:

episteme (ancient greek thought)-- knowledge that you had a good, justified reason to believe. through plato, permanent knowledge. Aristotle, syllogism.

episteme (in foucault)- the conditions that make knowledge possible in a given historical period.

knowledge/power binary

“Thus, it is not the sum of everything which can be known within a period but it is the complex set of relationships between the knowledges which are produced within a particular period and the rules by which new knowledge is generated” (pg 62)

"It is difficult, if not impossible, to think and express oneself outside these discursive constraints because, in doing so, one would be considered to be mad or incomprehensible by others" (57)

systems (shifting) vs. selves (stable)

freire: the oppressed have to liberate themselves.
liberation á la foucault-- is it possible?

types of knowledge:

episteme-- the conditions that make knowledge possible at that moment in history [In Foucault's special use of the term! Very different from earlier meanings!]

techne-- practical know-how; craft or art

doxa-- doctrine; received knowledge/untested. popular belief

gramsci's knowledge:

common--

folk--

relation to Marxist theory (especially pp. 28-29)

Notes:

Thus, both Foucault and feminist thinkers have found it necessary to rethink the conceptual frameworks which underpin much of what is characterised as common-sense within society (p. 29).

Relate to Gramsci

Perhaps it is this analysis of power which has most profoundly influenced political thinking , so that rather than simply thinking of power as an imposition of the will of one individual on another, or one group on another, we can see power as a set of relations and strategies dispersed throughout a society and enacted at every moment of interaction (p. 30).

Relate to Heather's post

Regime

notes:

"Each society has its own 'regime of truth', that is, the type of statements which can be made by authorised people and accepted by the society as a whole, and which are then

distinguished from false statements by a range of different practices” (74)

it is not “who” creates the power--it is “what”

perpetuating agreed-upon discursive practices

regime-- not just “ruler”; comes from “careful management”

(How) Is this different than hegemony?

gramsci--hierarchy, unlike foucault

Other interesting quotes:

“Discipline consists of a concern with control which is internalised by each individual: it consists of a concern with time-keeping, self-control over one’s posture and bodily functions, concentration, sublimation of immediate desires and emotions – all of these elements are the effects of disciplinary pressure and at the same time they are all actions which produce the individual as subjected to a set of procedures which come from outside of themselves but whose aim is the disciplining of the self by the self” (43)

TEST CASE:

Situation: Facebook--How would each of these theorists analyze it/what would they do with it?

Foucault	Friere	Gramsci
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ANALYZING systemic creation of the virtual self self-regulated based on the views of everybody else (i.e. “likes”) virtual surveillance advertisements based on your activity categorization of the self vs. the use of the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DOING individuals as a collective iberating/freeing get people organized create an uprising <i>How might facebook play a role in pedagogy/critical consciousness?</i> increase visibility and access follow new forms of knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> language as a unifying force--facebook is not like this. “internet language” unifies organic intellectual vs. traditional intellectual <ul style="list-style-type: none"> who do you “like”? maintain the status quo vs. challenging

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> site lots of choices, but still limited by "norms" DISCOURSE--facebook is all discursive how do we perceive reality? what is real vs. what is fabricated those who resist vs. those who join the way that we "package" ourselves for "observation" by others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> create their own community agency in creating that community/choosing the members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> who owns the means of production? facebook as a revenue generator "elite" origins of fb (being created at harvard)
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Why is Foucault important to RWS?

- the way that he frames discourse adds something new to the field of rhetoric.
- ex. achieving social change through discourse.
- Foucault is an *analytical tool*
- RWS people work toward social justice/advocacy
- as power circulates, subjects can maneuver within that circulation of power
- Western perspective of rhetoric--looking at "others" is fairly new
- writing as an important act in the system of panopticism
- creation of a discipline w recognition
 - analyze the desire to build rhetoric as a discipline