Review Essay

Should Feminists "Forget Foucault"?

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Up Against Foucault (1993), a collection of essays edited by Caroline Ramazanoglu, reevaluates Michel Foucault's theories on power and sexuality in regard to feminism from a sociological perspective. It is certainly a truism to state that although Foucault considered feminism as a revolutionary movement, he did not write with a feminist perspective in mind. Not only did he advocate the decriminalization of rape, but he also dedicated little space to women's specificity in his work. His *History of Sexuality* addresses women peripherally, dedicating only a few pages to the hysterization of women's bodies and to a brief reading of the Lapcourt incident (which, in Kape Soper's view, could very well serve as an example of sexual harrassment and sexual abuse).[1] Given that Foucault's theories of power and sexuality do not focus mainly on women or gender construction, one may wonder *a priori* whether it is legitimate to seek new directions for feminist studies in Foucault and, if so, why and to what extent feminists can gain from his work? Indeed, that Foucault is neither a feminist nor a gender theorist has little impact on the pertinence of his work for feminist studies. The problem, as Jean Grimshaw affirms, is "rather a question of what affinities there are between some of the questions that feminist theory addressed and those that Foucault addresses" (52).

Foucault's central interest in the functioning of power in modern societies imports findings significant to any marginalized group, informing gender and cultural studies with both a demystification of power and an analysis of the multiple forces at work in oppressor/oppressed relations.[2] Although Foucault's influence on cultural

studies goes beyond the scope of *Up Against Foucault*, several of the collection's articles appeal to the necessity for feminism to move beyond Western parameters. Thus, in the last decades, the feminist "new wave" (often seen as postmodern) has attempted to overthrow what is commonly referred to as "essentialism," that is, an emphasis on the binary opposition between "men" and "women," in favor of theories more encompassing of race, class, and sexual orientations. In this sense, most of the articles in the collection, albeit not without certain reservations, do attest to the relevance of Foucault's theories on sex and sexuality for feminism since they contribute to unveiling the artificiality of the gender dichotomy and shed light on the encoding of subjectivity and bodies within the power-knowledge system (although Adrienne Rich has raised these issues more radically—for women— in her analysis of compulsory heterosexuality).[3] The interest of Foucault's work for the feminist "new wave" relies on what is commonly seen as their shared break with the modernist (dualist) system of thought, a break which has enabled feminist studies to move beyond oppositional schemes of "masculinity" and "femininity" to explore (women's) identity in light of Jana Sawicki's "politics of difference" (Bailey 119).

Foucault's archaeological and genealogical methods thus provide important links in the problematizing of the gender dichotomy and mechanisms of power. Power is at the core of Foucault's entire corpus (whether it be analyzed in reference to psychiatry, medicine, disciplines, or the human sciences). Foucault's originality resides in his demonstration of how power in a modern context regulates the entire field of knowledge. Power in Foucault's sense is no longer located in the sovereignty of the nation-state but in a multiple, diffuse, and unsteady network of relations of force that work through an infinity of microstructures: schools, hospitals, prisons, law, sex, knowledges, discourses, etc. Being diffuse, yet nonetheless omnipresent ("it comes from everywhere" [*History* 93]), power affects every sphere of the social and political, including the microlevels of human relations and daily life, since it modulates the construction of our bodies and identities. However, precisely because power is mobile and unsteady, it is capable of producing resistances. In this respect, power is generative of creative forces, a hypothesis which in itself is not without interest for feminism. But neither is it without problems, since the effectiveness of women's resistance, or that of any other marginalized groups, seems highly debatable in the society of the 1990s. Maureen McNeil points, for

example, to the "considerable pessimism about feminism" in the 1990s, a pessimism due simultaneously to a backlash against feminism and women which is widely fed by mass media, the rise of the "not-so-new right," the dominance of conservative governments in most Western countries, and the economic recession (164). Similarly, Kate Soper speculates about the extent to which feminism or even gay culture has broken down misogynous and homophobic parameters of normalization and exclusion, and thus urges us to take into account the negative impact of recuperation phenomena and mass-media power.

Foucault on violence and domination

While most of the essays in *Up Against Foucault* acknowledge the importance of Foucault's theories of power, identity, and difference, they agree that their application to feminism is nonetheless questionable. Violence exercised against women in our societies has raised suspicions about Foucault's ideas. Whereas Foucault establishes a certain distinction between violence and power, feminists see violence as a constituent element of power: "power is not neutral, diffuse and freely available but fiercely protected by those who hold it and their agents . . . threats and the actual use of force and violence remain essential to the exercise of power" (MacCannel and MacCannel 205).

Contrary to Max Weber, for whom domination is precisely what permits power to be exercised and for whom violence is the truth to power relations, Foucault does not reduce power to violence. However, as Gilles Deleuze has rightly noted, Foucault does not thereby exclude violence. Understood less as a constituent element of power, violence is rather "a concomitance or consequence of force" (70). Force, adds Deleuze, is never singular insofar as it always works "in relation with other forces . . . that is power." Thus, according to Deleuze, Foucault's distinction between violence and power relies on the nature of their object: whereas the object of violence is a form (bodies and beings, destroyed or re-shaped) and, in this sense, specific, the object of power is force (a multiple relation of forces) and is unspecified. The object of force lies in "an open list of variables expressing a relation between forces or power relations, constituting actions upon actions: to incite, to induce, to seduce, to make easy or difficult, to enlarge or limit, to make more or less probable, and so on" (70). It should also be noted that Deleuzian as

well as Foucauldian terminology unhesitantly falls back on metapors of violence to speak of power.[4] Power indeed includes violence but the latter is not the whole of the former. In this sense, Foucault is "closer to Nietzsche (and to Marx), for whom the relation between forces greatly exceeds violence and cannot be defined by the latter" (70). If Foucault did not expand the role of violence in his analysis of mechanisms of power, he nonetheless argued that violence manifests itself in relation to power in extreme situations:

> [the analysis of power] should be concerned with power at its extremities, in its ultimate destinations, with those points where it becomes capillary, that is, in its more regional and local forms and institutions. Its paramount concern, in fact, should be with the point where power surmounts the rules of right which organize and limit it and extends itself beyond them, invests itself in institutions, becomes embodied in techniques, and equips itself with instruments and eventually violent means of material intervention. ("Two Lectures" 96)

This comment by Foucault has provoked critiques which in fact do not concern only feminists since, according to Dean MacCannel and Juliet Flower MacCannel, it minimizes violence and even dismisses domination and repression: "it suggests an historical decline of physical violence and ongoing redistribution of power on the local and regional level at a time when neither is happening" (212). Yet Foucault did not exactly speak of a disappearance of physical or institutional violence. Concerned mainly with "material institutions" which have recourse to violence by means of "torture and imprisonment," he indeed posits the necessity "to locate power at the extreme points of its exercise, where it is always less legal in character" ("Two Lectures" 97). However, for Dean MacCannel and Juliet Flower MacCannel, Foucault's statement on violence does not "speak of and for [victims of assault], he does not speak from their perspective, nor does he incorporate their 'local' knowledge into understanding local practices of power" (205).

Citing striking examples of the relation between violence and power taken from actual sexual abuse and rape cases, Dean MacCannel and Juliet Flower MacCannel analyze the victims' responses. They observe that victims of rape, domestic violence, and sexual abuse are in most cases silenced (e.g. either they cannot speak about it or they blame themselves). This silencing results from re-

sponses overcoded by guilt, which itself is induced by constant cultural, social, and legal pressures to conform to (phallocentric) norms: "As symbol, the 'father figure' is a decent general model for balancing and modulating passions and drives, leading to the smooth functioning of modern democratic institutions at all levels" (218). The impact of both the private and the public on the victims' responses leads the authors to redefine violence. For them, violence is not limited solely to "direct violence," but rather is "capillary" (a Foucauldian notion), most notable when it manifests itself by means of "legal and/or bureaucratic violence" and "administrative violence."[5] These three modes of violence operate in a combined manner to legitimate violence and to corroborate the silence of victims, thereby revealing the existence of multipunctual interactions between power, violence, and sexual pleasure. Violence in this case appears as a far more complex phenomenon than in Foucault's sense, since its object is as unspecified as the object of force (power); consequently violence and power are of the same nature, that is, multifaceted.

How can beheaded power exercise domination and generate resistance?

It is important to note here that most of the critiques in *Up Against Foucault* rely nevertheless on his very conception of power, either addressing the inadequacy of his conception of violence within his theory of power or the impossibility to locate power's source. Foucault's renouncement of sovereign power does pose certain problems for feminists who consider patriarchy to be the origin of women's subordination; they see Foucault's "decapitation" of the Prince as a "tyranny of the structurelessness" (57).[6] Toril Moi has argued that Foucault's complex interaction of power and sexuality leads to a "depolitization of feminism" (51) since it is no longer possible to say that women are oppressed under a patriarchal regime. But does Foucault's conception of power as multifaceted announce the death of patriarchy?

Here it is necessary to readdress Foucault's conception of power. Although Foucault sees power as omnipresent, he does not explain it in terms of coercion or repression but in terms of production: in the case of sexuality, power produces a space of truth and science (a *scientia sexualis*). It is a system of extremely mobile strategic relations which are not far removed from those involved in communication yet which are not entirely reducible to them:

The "distribution of power" and the "appropriation of knowl-
edge" never represent only instantaneous slices taken from pro-
cesses involving, for example, a cumulative reinforcement of
the strongest factor, or a reversal of relationship, or again, a
simultaneous increase of the two terms. Relations of power-
knowledge are not static forms of distribution, they are "matri-
ces of transformations." (*History* 99)

Power relations, far from being the effect of a sovereign instance
that exercises itself over others, that is, far from being subjective,
are displayed in a network of multiple blind and mute strategies:

the logic is perfectly clear, the aims decipherable, and yet it is
often the case that no one is there to have invented them, and
few who can be said to have formulated them: an implicit char-
acteristic of the great anonymous, almost unspoken strategies
which coordinate the loquacious tactics whose "inventors" or
decision makers are often without hypocrisy. (*History* 95)

In terms of sexual politics, Foucault does not view sexuality as a
repressive instance but as an effect of power, that is, a producer of
truth. *Up Against Foucault* is critical of this conception, since "truth"
for the authors is often perceived as an absolute whose production
elides the fact that oppression of women largely operates via sexual
repression. In this respect, the collection obscures the fact that sexual
politics for Foucault relies on micropowers (in the past, the church,
and, today clinics) that push subjects to confession and avowal in
order to establish new normative sexual policies in accord with the
revolving needs of History.[7] These norms in turn generate resis-
tances and counter-attacks in Foucault's view. Norms become the
object of resistances and "reverse discourses," yet they are the "odd
term in relations of power; they are inscribed in the latter as an
irreducible opposite . . . and are distributed in irregular fashion"
(*History* 96). Foucault's resistance hypothesis has evoked many
critiques outside feminism. Habermas has stressed the weakness of
Foucault's position on resistance since it excludes "cognitive privi-
lege on the basis of a philosophy of history" (281) in order to be
conceived as an effect of power. Counterpower by nature is thus
quickly absorbed into the power it opposes and is "transformed as
soon as it is victorious, into a complex that provokes a new
counterpower" (281).

If the question of resistance remains problematic for Habermas and feminists at both a practical and theoretical level, one may wonder whether it is due to Foucault's yielding to the idealism of the 1960s, which thought of desire as a subversive force capable of dismantling repressive institutions and of revolutionizing the entire society, or whether it is because he wrote at a time when the shadows of social revolutions were already vanishing or, even worse, dissolving into the order of simulation as Baudrillard insisted in his critique of Foucault.[8] By putting the emphasis on the micropolitics of desire, not only did Foucault derail the repressive hypothesis in History, but he put aside, as Habermas pointed out, the "repressive desublimation" factor that was, according to Marcuse and others, hidden behind the sexual revolution.[9] On the other hand, one may wonder whether critics have put too much emphasis on Foucault's renouncement of the repressive hypothesis and if this renouncement indeed excludes domination, and thus violence, from power, given that the production of discourse also works in conjunction with confessional practices.

The problem lies here in Foucault's definitions of violence and domination. We have already seen in examples of assault cases that violence is multipunctual. Moreover, it is distributed according to hard (molar) and soft (molecular) forces and in this way mirrors forces of power. If Foucault's notion of violence as having a specific object is inoperative in the understanding of everyday violence in a feminist context, his definition of domination indeed accounts for the multiple hidden strategies at work in institutional violence:

> in speaking of domination I do not have in mind that solid and global kind of domination that one person exercises over other, or one group over another that can be exercised within society. Not the domination of the King in his central position, therefore, but that of his subjects in their mutual relations: not the uniform edifice of sovereignty, but the multiple forms of subjugation that have a place and a function within the social organism. ("Two Lectures" 96)

Foucault did not exclude domination from power but aimed to replace sovereignty with multipunctual domination in order "to expose its latent nature and its brutality" ("Two Lectures" 95). Whether he succeeded or not, as we will address below, requires a reexamination of his conception of panopticism.

Habermas posits the ambiguity or, in his terms, a certain "conservatism" of Foucault's conception of power in its "filter[ing] out of the history of penal practices itself all aspects of legal regulation," which itself is in a doublebind: "in the welfare-state democracies of the West, the spread of legal regulation has the structure of a dilemma, because it is the legal means for securing freedom that themselves endanger the freedom of their presumptive beneficiaries" (290-91). For Habermas, Foucault's sexual politics also fall into the same trap since they paradoxically rely on an "early Romantic" notion of subjectivity, which overemphasizes the ability of subjects to express themselves. Similarly, Nancy Fraser points out that Foucault's conception of the resisting subject is symptomatic of an "unacknowledged acceptance of Enlightenment values of freedom" (55). In Habermas's view, Foucault disqualifies "the problematic structure of a long-term process of individuation and interiorization (accompanied by techniques of disclosure and strategies of surveillance) that simultaneously creates new zones of alienation and normalization" (291). From this Habermas concludes that Foucault fails to take into consideration not only the existence of various types of discourses and knowledge at work in power, but also the various technologies of subjugation around which a complex of power can exercise subordination in both the private and the public spheres. For Habermas, an understanding of power presupposes an understanding of the dominated subject, of the internal reasons for a possible manipulation of bodies. Habermas's objections are, in this respect, in accord with those of feminists.

In effect, *Up Against Foucault*, like many other critiques, draws attention to the fact that technologies of power involved in the exclusion of women and underprivileged people from discourse, far from inciting re-emergences of suppressed knowledges, indeed maintain silencing—as is the case of victims of direct or institutional violence. Maureen Cain takes Pierre Rivière and Herculine Barbin, whose voices were sounded only after their death and throughout a series of interpretations, as examples of the limited efficiency of pre-discursive realities. Feminists have also demonstrated how repressed knowledges discreetly remain just that in so-called liberating or liberated practices. Maureen McNeil recalls, for example, that Juliet Mitchell's work indeed shows how psychoanalysis, "far from liberating women," provides an "adequate account of how patriarchy 'worked' " (153) since its politics of self-regulation and self-control docilely recircuits women back into tradi-

tional power relations. "Hence, women have realized power in marriage, in the traditional nuclear family through cultivating forms of self-knowledge—ironically, sometimes even in the name of feminism" (167). While Sandra Bartky argues that the "facelessness" of power in the fashion and beauty industry (Grimshaw 53) illustrates Foucault's multipunctual theory of power, Susan Bordo, like Baudrillard, sees limits in Foucault's theory of power as it leaves aside the manipulative effects of hyperreality that are increasingly at work in popular and mass-media culture, and most notably, at a time when plastic surgery is "more affordable to the middle class," and when "liposuction is the most frequently requested operation with breast enlargement" (196). According to Susan Bordo, images of female power such as those of Cher and Madonna which exploit the rhetoric of choice and liberation demonstrate that the mystification to which these images proceed is not simply limited to normalization, since they are unavoidably "strongly racially, ethnically and heterosexually inflected" (196). It is most patent in Cher's face and body whose multiple surgical reconstructions (or rather deconstructions) have erased both the "defects" of age and ethnicity, and in Madonna whose transvestite or "lesbian" on-stage appearances reinforce at once heterosexuality and homophobia.[10] Jean Grimshaw has also called into question Foucault's views on self-discipline and self-monitoring practices, most specifically in his last essays, since these practices are no longer disciplinary but generative of autonomy. She notes that nowhere does Foucault address the issue of the male gaze, not in itself, but rather as "a whole apparatus of self-surveillance" (56) that dominates contemporary culture and establishes a regime of asceticism not only in fashion, beauty, fitness, and body-building, but, most dramatically, in anorexia.

Feminism and panopticism: toward a more comprehensive view of surveillance

Suspicious of Foucault's view of sexual liberation, which moreover does not escape androcentric bias, feminists have on the other hand established the pertinence of his theories on sex and power in relation to deconstructing the notion of feminine essence.[11] M.E. Bailey, Janet Ransom, Kate Soper, and Maureen McNeil see Foucault's reevaluation of identity, sex, and bodies as central to pointing out the limits of an essentialist feminist critique in a po-

litical context. M.E. Bailey recalls that since the 1960s feminists have questioned the "dualistic categories men and women as given, natural and eternal categories" (99). The oppositional men/women model sustains the notion of a feminine nature which is at once immutable, universal, and transhistorical, and therefore fictional from a Foucauldian perspective. Moreover, such an essentialist definition of the feminine takes into consideration neither the effect of cultural constructs of the feminine nor differences existing between women, whether they be social, racial, or sexual. Woman from an essentialist viewpoint is indeed an abstract entity which, ironically, is conceived within (Western) phalloheterocentric parameters since the differences between men and women are drawn mainly from the differences between the sexes.

Well before the *History of Sexuality*, Foucault had demonstrated in *Naissance de la clinique* that knowledges are not neutral but are the effect of power since they evolve with history so as to establish new and fictional models of truth and reality that end up becoming convenient modes of control whose efficiency rises gradually according to a lesser degree of visibility and a greater degree of diffuseness. This is the case of modern nosology, whose system of knowledge relies less on the "intellectual gaze" than on the aesthetization of the clinical gaze, thus placing both patient and researchers into a panoptical situation. In the case of women's identity, one could say that by making sexes, feminine identity, and bodies extra-social categories, essentialist feminists succumbed to a panoptical effect which ironically helped to maintain the status quo, that is, the patriarchal order. While M.E. Bailey does not critique essentialism in these terms, she approaches this when she stresses the dangers of "a static notion of patriarchal power as oppression and repression" (99) which undermines the existence of the equation made between women and their (hypersexualized) bodies and consequently participates in a depolitization of women's bodies, sexuality, and identity.

It should be noted here that M.E. Bailey focuses solely on the *History of Sexuality*, which nonetheless articulates the categories of sex and sexualities as effects of power. Foucault's conception of power-knowledge in the *History of Sexuality* is indeed compatible with feminist critiques of essentialism such as that of Sandra Bartky, for whom "the twentieth century's cultural investment of female bodies with sexuality and libido [has been made] through and around the ideal of the 'feminine' " (qtd. in Bailey 104), and of Judith

Butler, for whom genders are both performances and pure simulacra.[12] M.E. Bailey thus acknowledges the relevance of Foucault's theories which allow her, along with Sandra Bartky, to deconstruct essentialism into "an expression of power-knowledge" (104). In this logic, for M.E. Bailey, patriarchy can no longer be regarded as a single source of power over women. Hence, she claims that Foucault's work, because it pushes women to renounce patriarchy, "suggests that historically there may have been no universal and consequent oppression of women by men" (104). In the same line of thought, Toril Moi has also pointed to the challenge Foucault poses for feminism: "we can never answer the question of what resists power, nor give any fundamental critique of the notion of 'power' itself" (Grimshaw 51). Furthermore, Jean Grimshaw argues that work like Sheila Jeffrey's which positions heterosexuality as "the central site of male oppression of women (58) is incompatible with Foucault's theory of power.

Here, two interlinked questions inevitably come to mind. Why is so little attention granted in these cases to Foucault's conception of panopticism, which extends far beyond the Bentham apparatus (a panopticon) and the prison system and allows for a dissociation of seeing and being seen?[13] This affects the entire field of knowledge and thereby concerns feminism, especially in terms of a theory of the "male" gaze. Secondly, what in Foucault's analysis of power as a diffuse, "capillary," and unsteady agency provokes the conclusion that patriarchy or heterosexuality in themselves can no longer be considered operative sources of power and should thus be put in parentheses? Can Foucault's notion of panopticism and its consequences facilitate an understanding of power in modern societies?

Oppositional forces and Foucault's panopticism

Gilles Deleuze has noted the various meanings that panopticism incurs in Foucault's work:

> When Foucault defines Panopticism, either he specifically sees it as an optical or luminous arrangement that characterizes prison, or he views it abstractly, as a machine that not only affects visible matter in general (a workshop, barracks, school or hospital as much as a prison) but also in general passes through every articulable function. So the abstract formula of Panopticism is no longer 'to see without being seen' but *to*

impose a particular conduct on a particular human multiplicity. We need only to insist that the multiplicity is reduced and confined to a tight space and that the imposition of a form of conduct is done by distributing in space, laying out, and serializing in time, composing in space-time, and so on. (33-34)

Deleuze defines the panopticon as an "abstract machine," which is both "blind and mute, even though it makes others see and speak" (34), an "abstract machine" that not only regulates the entire social field but all discursive and non-discursive (visible) formations as it rewrites and doubles history and produces artificial realities and models of truth. Panopticism is more a "diagram" or "a map of relation between forces" (36) than a structure: it transforms the old vertical structure of power into a transversal or rhizomatic network (map) of multiple relations of forces that are molecular and unsteady. Deleuze notes that Foucault's "diagram" that is panopticism is particularly apt to define power in modern societies. Indeed, he specifies that already Gabriel Tarde's microsociology, by focusing on the importance in modern societies of "small relations such as 'imitation' " in the "propagation" of belief, desire, and "invention," had shown how power relies on a panoptical mechanism (36). In this sense, although Foucault never discussed the role of communications, thus avoiding, as Baudrillard pointed out, an analysis of the impact of media power as well as the effects of simulations in the hyperreal stage of our societies, his panoptical machine does not necessarily preclude this element. Indeed, if Foucault had focused on communications, it is unsure whether they would have assumed the extreme form of a dead power or of spirals of simulated power as they do for Baudrillard.

Power as a panoptical mechanism in Foucault's sense may be a virtual and potential system of relations of forces which nonetheless become manifest at a macroscopic level (school, workshops, army, the State, etc.). Institutions thus ultimately give shape to the fluctuating matter and diffuse function of power. Deleuze adds that the realization process operates by divergences, dualisms, and differentiations; it is in this concrete realization of power that "appear the great dualities between classes," the "governing and the governed," the public and the private (38). It is also in the realization process that discursive and non-discursive (unspoken and visible) formations split. Without this split, knowledge would not be the cause of power and vice versa.

Foucault's pluralistic theory of power does not therefore exclude dualities; the oppressor/oppressed opposition remains actualized in modern societies. It does not, then, necessarily imply that feminists should disregard patriarchal power. Patriarchy, like any other institution, is beheaded and as such operates in a fluctuating and diffuse manner within the broader system of power-knowledge. Patriarchy, like all micropower, reexploits discursive and nondiscursive formations, causing them to bifurcate so as to fictionalize reality according to the needs of history. Susan Bordo's work on the construction of the woman's body in contemporary society as well as Dean MacCannel's and Juliet Flower MacCannel's on violence against women could be read in this sense, although as we have seen they point out the limits of Foucault's theories on resistance and repressed knowledges. Addressing the limits of reverse-discourse in the case of lesbians who claim their right to an identity, Judith Butler also illustrates the functioning of docile technologies of power within patriarchal power:

> oppression works not merely through acts of overt prohibition, but covertly, through the constitution of viable subjects and through the corollary constitution of a domain of unviable (un)subjects—*abjects*, we might call them—who are neither named nor prohibited within the economy of the law. Here oppression works through the production of a domain of unthinkability and unnameability, the claim of an identity by means of reverse discourses for lesbians. ("Imitation" 20)

As Christine Buci-Glucksmann demonstrates, the destabilization of the masculine during the age of mechanical reproduction did not erase misogyny but rather maintained it, albeit diverted by ambivalent discourses of androgyny or even bisexuality. She points to the fluctuating nature of patriarchy through the feminine figure, which has remained a projection of the masculine literary imaginary—whether she be presented under the mask of Salomé or Sappho, she is at once praised and despised.

Up Against Foucault ultimately raises the question: should feminists (also) forget Foucault? The sociological orientation of the book addresses concrete political issues that extend beyond the scope of Foucault's archaeological and genealogical methods, especially concerning a certain inadequacy of Foucault's notion of resistance in the 1990s, at least in Western societies. Indeed, Fatima Mernissi

has shown that Islamic women, whose voices do not traverse Western media, are indeed the only people capable of challenging the fundamentalism of the Islamic state and street as well as the Western economical system. Whether resistance be operative or obsolete, in Baudrillard's terms, power nonetheless remains unsteady and mobile. If Foucault's theory presents a general understanding of the modern functioning of power and its lack of origin, without entirely solving the enigma of power, it is because an understanding of power concerns the entire field of human sciences, not just philosophy, sociology, or psychology. In this sense, women's oppression—without neglecting women's specificity—cannot be separated from that of other marginalized groups, nor can women be excluded from complicity in some forms of oppression, since hierarchies are still maintained not only between women, but across the lines of race, class, and Western/non-Western paradigms.

Paul Bové has noted that Foucault has often been misappropriated for various reasons. Yet, as Jon Simons recently indicated, Foucault's voice has often simply been reformulated unwittingly through the very voices of those who criticize him; such is the case of Habermas and indeed of some of the feminist critics in *Up Against Foucault*.

Notes

1. Kate Soper calls into question Foucault's reading of the Lapcourt incident (a little girl was "slavered over in a ditch" by a mentally disturbed man), which is based on a series of mediated discourses: the report of the little girl to her parents; the mayor's to the gendarmes; the indictment of the simple-minded man by the judge who later passed the case over to a doctor who himself turned it over to two other experts who finally published a report. Not only was the "truth" of the event quite possibly lost in this chain of discourse, but Foucault's omission of the functioning of these discourses in the Lapcourt case and his conclusion about "the pettiness of it all" reveal for Kate Soper the extent to which he is caught in the power-knowledge system he denounces: "The problem is to know how Foucault knows that 'nothing' was going on. Why should we accept the word for it of one who was not there, who never interviewed the child, who is arguably himself caught up in the discourse of 'inconsequential bucolic pleasures . . .' " (43).

2. See for example Joseph Bristow's *Sexual Sameness* and Jonathan Dollimore's *Sexual Dissidence* on the (mis)representation of gays and lesbi-

ans, and Michel Laronde's *Autour du roman beur* on the panoptical division of space in Paris and Parisian suburbs, which is designed to reinforce police and immigration control surveillance.

3. According to M.E. Bailey, Adrienne Rich has demonstrated that "human sexual norms are social/cultural constructs." She also adds that "this is not a particularly original or perceptive revelation" (110). In fact, Rich's notion of "compulsory heterosexuality" (which M.E. Bailey skips) encompasses the programming of women not only to adjust to, but to perpetuate heterosexual norms within the economic, political, and language system. Judith Butler has drawn her notion of the heterosexual matrix (an oppositional and hierarchical "discursive/espistemic model of gender intelligibility") from both Monique Wittig and Adrienne Rich.

4. Significantly, the violent metaphors in the French text often lose their impact in translation. For example, Foucault's *épinglage* [stapling] (*Histoire* 143) becomes "interpenetration" (*History* 108); a family "*traquant* [hunting down] en soi les moindres traces de sexualité, *s'arrachant à elle-même* les aveux les plus difficiles" (*Histoire* 146) is rather "engaged in searching out the slightest traces of sexuality in its midst, wrenching from itself the most difficult confessions" (*History* 111).

5. By legal and/or bureaucratic violence the authors mean "formal filing of false accusations, arbitrary firings and evictions, insertion without due process of 'black marks' into a person's record, blacklisting . . . for the sole purpose of destroying an individual's capacity to support themselves and their dependents. . . ." Administrative violence "is not an abuse of the rules," rather "it is a heartless . . . over-application of rules and regulations. . . ." It "ranges from petty authoritarianism to torture and 'administrative massacre' (Hannah Arendt) or genocide—all re-conceived as 'unfortunate' byproducts of enthusiastic organisational 'candoism.' Everyone is involved in the 'process' together so no one is responsible for it" (213).

6. "And if it is true that Machiavelli was among the few—and this no doubt was the scandal of his 'cynicism'—who conceived the power of the Prince in terms of force relationships, perhaps we need to go one step further, do without the persona of the Prince, and decipher power mechanisms on the basis of a strategy that is immanent in force relationships" (*History* 97).

7. Foucault includes Charcot in confessional practices but not Freud, who, in his opinion, was the first to posit the separation of sexuality (as a law principle, the Sovereign-Father) from a symbolics of blood. This separation was meant to counteract neuropsychiatry and the rise of racism in that period and consequently go against fascism (see *History* 148-50). This view of psychoanalysis, following the Anti-Oedipus, seems rather idealis-

tic and insufficient. Habermas is critical of psychoanalysis since its con-
fessional practices produce fictional realities: "psychoanalysis gives the
form of scientifically established therapy to these technologies of truth,
which do not open up the interior of individuals, but produce interiority
for the first time by means of an ever thicker web of relations to self"
(273). Maureen McNeil has also expressed similar concerns (see her "Danc-
ing with Foucault" 154-55).

8. For Baudrillard, if power is everywhere and sexuality is everything,
both power and sexuality have already disappeared (at least in the way
Foucault speaks of them): "Sex, like man, or like the category of the so-
cial, may only last for a while. And what if sex's reality effects . . . also
started to fade away radically, giving way to other simulacra and dragging
down with it the great referents of desire, the body, and the unconscious
. . ." (89).

9. Similarly, Alain Finkielkraut has argued that the so-called sexual revo-
lution of the 1960s was in fact the implantation of a new "monosexist"
order, in which the politics of "genitalism" (the penis as the sole sex or-
gan) and of the orgasm-at-all-cost erased bodies and passions and thus
engendered a deeper alienation of both women and men (see his *Le nouveau
désordre amoureux* 15-51).

10. Susan Bordo does not expand her analysis on Madonna here. Marjorie
Garber writes of Madonna: "Squeezing the crotch of her pants became for
her, on stage, the moment of the claim to empowered transvestism, to seem
rather than merely to have or to be—not (and this distinction is important)
just a claim to empowered womanhood" (127). Interestingly, this gesture
is an imitation of Michael Jackson, a hyperreal figure who, like Cher, has
erased his ethnic "defects." Marjorie Garber also notes that if "the playful
clowning" of lesbianism by Madonna may appeal to rock fans or some
gays and lesbians, it is also "offensive and threatening to people like Sena-
tor Jesse Helms" (160).

11. Jean Grimshaw is particularly critical of *The Use of Pleasure* not only
because Foucault returns to the Greeks, but because the "practices of self-
monitoring and self-surveillance are no longer seen as disciplinary prac-
tices which undermine all notions of the autonomy of the self; they are
rather constituting autonomy" and therefore are of no use in contempo-
rary culture where 'self-surveillance' is largely programmed by the me-
dia, fitness centers, therapeutic institutions, etc. Similar concerns are ad-
dressed by Caroline Ramazanoglu and Janet Holland in "Women's Sexu-
ality" (241).

12. "Gender is, thus, a construction that regularly conceals its genesis; the
tacit collective agreement to perform, produce, and sustain discrete and
polar genders as cultural fictions is obscured by the credibility of those

productions—and the punishments that attend not agreeing to believe in them; the construction 'compels' our belief in its necessity and natural-ness" (*Gender Trouble* 140).

13. The panoptical effect is never mentioned in relation to societal appa-ratuses of self-surveillance and self-discipline, whether it be in relation to the female body, anorexia, gender roles and compulsory heterosexuality (two issues that are missing in this collection of essays), or to victims who blame themselves when they are raped or abused "in the security" of their own home, or who are raped for having "made the mistake" of being in the wrong neighborhood or the wrong place at the wrong time (MacCannel and MacCannel 207-08).

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