FOUCAULT STEALS POLITICAL SCIENCE

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■ **Abstract**   The subject matter of what has been traditionally considered central to political science, namely, power and government, has been stolen by Foucault while central trends in the discipline as a whole have departed markedly from serious engagement with those topics. Yet Foucault's discussions and analyses of power and government are so original, so striking in their import not only for the way we do political science, but for our lives, thought, and practices as scholars, that his work ought by now to have become a focal point for the resurrection of these topics and their restoration to centrality in the discipline.

INTRODUCTION

The title suggested for this article was "The Foucauldian Turn in Political Science." Regrettably, however, I do not think that such a turn has occurred in the discipline. On the contrary, the subject matter of what has been traditionally considered central to the discipline, namely, power and government, has been stolen by Foucault while central trends in the discipline as a whole have departed markedly from serious engagement with those topics. Yet Foucault's discussions and analyses of power and government are so original, so striking in their import not only for the way we do political science, but for our lives, thought, and practices as scholars, that his work ought by now to have become a focal point for the resurrection of these topics and their restoration to centrality in the discipline. Indeed, I would have preferred, mimicking Veyne (1997), to title this article "Foucault Revolutionizes Political Science," but that revolution is still far distant. It is my purpose here to demonstrate the importance of Foucault's insights into the nature of power and governance for a discipline that calls itself political science. I also provide several illustrations from recent political science writing that has been influenced by Foucault to indicate directions that a few scholars have taken in the hope that many will soon follow. In selecting the topics of power and governance, I have left out a considerable array of other themes that recur in Foucault's writings that are also of relevance to political science, including

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political practices, freedom (Dumm 1996), justice, ideology, political resistance, revolution, and gender studies (Butler 1999), all of which merit serious analysis and reflection within the discipline, but which cannot all be covered in the space provided here.

POWER AND KNOWLEDGE

The Power/Knowledge Relationship

Foucault's clearest statements on the relationship between power and knowledge are found in a collection of his essays, *Power/Knowledge* (Foucault 1980a). In those essays, Foucault undermined the entire basis for the traditional distinction between power and knowledge, embodied in the phrase of resistance to the unjust use of power: "speak truth to power." In Foucault's thought, the phrase reveals that those who speak it do not know the relations among power, truth, and knowledge. Indeed, the phrase is self-contradicting. There is neither knowledge nor truth that can be separated from power—not only the power in politics that political scientists have traditionally studied, but the power that reveals itself in systems of knowledge and practices in disciplines such as medicine (Foucault 1980c), psychiatry, criminology, and the institutions associated with them: the hospital, the asylum, and the prison. It reveals itself also in talk and practice in the domain of sexuality. Nor is the exercise of power confined to these institutions and practices; they are only the ones Foucault himself studied.

Power, in fact, exists alongside knowledge and the "regimes of truth" embedded in all knowledge systems, practices, and institutions in society, from the family to the school to the factory to the army to the agencies of the state. It is not only alongside knowledge but dependent on it. "Nothing," wrote Foucault, "can function as a mechanism of power if it is not deployed according to procedures, instruments, means, and objectives which can be validated in more or less coherent systems of knowledge" (1997a:52–53). But the obverse is also true, namely, that power cannot function without knowledge. Power produces knowledge (Foucault 1980b:59) in order to rule, regulate, control, and discipline. The power to confine persons to asylums, hospitals, and prisons, for example, made them accessible for study and observation, which produced modern psychiatric, medical, and criminological knowledge. This knowledge in turn was put to the service of the administrative state and became itself a part of "the machinery of power" (Foucault 1980c:176) by which, for example, in the case of medical knowledge, society as a whole was regulated through standards established for the maintenance of public health and healthy conditions of life, which in turn required mechanisms of observation and surveillance extending throughout the population.

This relationship between knowledge and power means that existing bodies of knowledge contain no vantage point for a critique of power relations.[1]   On the contrary, "we have an entirely interwoven network," (Foucault 1997a:66) in which knowledge cannot function without power nor power without knowledge. Every statement within a framework of knowledge "exerts a certain power and it creates, at the same time, a possibility," and every "exercise of power ... implies at least a *savoir-faire*" (Foucault 1997a:66–67). But it is not just a question of *savoir-faire*, which is an elementary form of practice. Foucault was most concerned with the disciplinary practices associated with systems of knowledge emerging from and applied within societal institutions. As Clegg has put it (1989:153), the "disciplinary practices" associated with all modern institutions are also "'discursive practices,' knowledge reproduced through practices made possible by the framing assumptions of that knowledge." In order to exercise another form of power, that of critique, one must first step outside the very frameworks of knowledge that produce the power relations themselves.[2]

Why are knowledge and power so intimately connected in modern societies? It is because all the disciplinary practices that pervade such societies, radiating out from institutions and the systems of knowledge that support them, have one central focus: knowledge of man. It is the focus on man that is central in all these institutions and in modern life in general. What is man? What are his inner motivations? What are his needs, wants, aspirations? What are the different types of man? Among those types, which are normal, which pathological? Which are to progress through the normal institutions of society, from birth to school to work to marriage to hospital to cemetery? Which are to deviate from the normal path for a temporary or permanent detour in a prison or asylum (or nowadays in a homeless shelter)?

This modern knowledge of man itself originates in institutions that focus on man, such as the hospital, the asylum, and the prison. In those institutions, the answers to the questions about man are "discovered" and techniques of power are devised to intervene in an attempt to normalize the patient, make him well, sane, or otherwise fit to return to society. These techniques of power derived from the knowledge base discovered in such institutions work on the inner being as well as the outer frame of the person (see e.g. Foucault 1979:23–26).

One of the earliest and most powerful of the techniques invented in the modern age that exemplifies the integral relationship between power and knowledge

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[1]"There is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations" (Foucault 1979:27). There is, therefore, no place from which intellectuals, for example, can "speak truth to power," since they "are themselves agents of [a] system of power" (Foucault 1977:207).

[2]Clegg has again stated the position well; there is, he notes, no "transcendent position which can be constituted outside of discursive practices" from which to analyze power. It is "the knowledge/power relation" itself that must become "the object of analysis" (1989:152).

is the examination (Foucault 1979:185–87). The medical examination defines the disease and at the same time provides the knowledge necessary to prescribe its treatment; the academic examination certifies that knowledge has been successfully transmitted from teacher to student, thus qualifying the latter to move to the next stage in his training or to embark on the career for which he has been trained and examined; the psychological examination certifies not only competence but normality. In all these cases, types of power are exercised, some more awesome than others. Most are not usually considered part of the field of study of power relations in political science. Certainly, you may say, a doctor must have the power to examine his patient, prescribe for his cure, and determine when he has recovered. What has this to do with politics? Perhaps nothing in the conventional sense, but the power exercised may be one of life or death in which the knowledge used may be faulty, the patient's means to determine its efficacy may be lacking, and the only means of redress may lie in another arena of power, the law courts. This power exercised through the examination technique is, however, in some ways even more awesome when it is exercised to define a person's place in society in relation to a scheme of knowledge that claims to know the difference between the normal and the pathological, the neurotic and the psychotic, the antisocial being and the civil being. Political science has recognized such techniques as aspects of the exercise of power only in totalitarian or other forms of rule in which they are used to confine political prisoners, failing to recognize that they operate, however more subtly, in our own and all other modern societies, and therefore deserve thorough scrutiny in any science of politics in which power is central.

In societies that fancy themselves democratic, individuals are described politically as citizens, who may or may not play active, participant roles in political parties, interest groups, or government. However, in many activities, one's status as a citizen matters little and confers no political power. In many cases, the individual becomes not a citizen (more or less participant in the political process, with an armory of rights and protections), but a case—a social worker's case, a psychologist's case, a medical doctor's case, a lawyer's case.[3]

Although the individual remains an individual in the social worker's, psychologist's, doctor's, or lawyer's file, he loses a good deal of his freedom in the process. As a citizen, the individual operates within a framework that allows him, within restrictions, to adopt a multiplicity of attitudes, opinions, actions, and activities, and even to change them. As a case, however, he is pinpointed, defined, classified. His attitudes and opinions become not expressions of a political right or

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[3]I am opposing here the idealized conception of citizenship against one actuality, the individual as a case. However, for Foucault, the category of citizen is also problematic (Finkle, personal communication). It calls up the idea of the active, engaged, free individual of ancient Greece, whereas the modern liberal state creates the image of a free citizen-subject who is simultaneously the case-object of the disciplinary, normalizing practices of the "pastoral" state or what Polsky (see below) calls the "therapeutic" state (see Gordon 1991:8).

duty, but bases for making a judgment about him and whether the techniques of a body of knowledge or law need to be applied to him in order to train, correct, normalize, or exclude him from society (Foucault 1979:191) or, perhaps, whether they classify him as a victim denied his rights and, therefore, entitled to remedies. Those who exercise such techniques constitute an authority established not by democratic means but by induction. They occupy positions of power that are deemed legitimate because of their knowledge. They exercise that power through the examination by turning the individual from a citizen, who may belong to a broader group of like-minded citizens with potential influence in society, into an "effect and object of power" and of knowledge. The purpose of that power and knowledge is to establish "individual difference" (Foucault 1979:192) in order to treat, confine, or exclude individuals deviating from the normal.

These bodies of knowledge and the technologies of power associated with them arose at the very time that new conceptions of government were developing at the end of the age of absolutism. Indeed, the clinical sciences and practices of criminology, public health, medicine, and psychiatry flourished and entrenched themselves at the same time as did the democratizing movements that followed the French Revolution. Further, they became, in some respects, handmaidens to new systems of authority—first the centralizing absolutist state, then the democratizing state—that required detailed knowledge of their individual subjects/citizens to govern according to what were conceived as the new requirements of proper governance. These requirements included new systems of public health, means of keeping track of populations moving from the country to the city, means of detecting criminal elements in vast urban conglomerations, and so forth. All these new types of measures required bodies of knowledge to define the elements of the population, no longer demarcated into estates or classes, permanently settled in the countryside, but now seen as individuals on the move who had to be located, identified, and classified. They had to be located in order to be subject to surveillance; identified in order to be "known," so that authorities could anticipate their likely behavior (Clegg 1989:174, Foucault 1979:167); and classified as normal or abnormal according to the divisions of modern society, to determine whether they needed to be "trained or corrected" or "excluded" (Foucault 1979:191) and whether they belonged in the category of "ordinary criminals" or "monsters" (Foucault 1982:153,168).

The national census, among many other instruments of its type, became in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries a vast source of knowledge of populations divided into the categories that most interested the authorities. In this way, newly disaggregated populations were reaggregated into objectified categories that served state interests, forming a body of knowledge concerning the individual subjects/citizens who composed the vast, amorphous public. Such populations were then controlled by being made known and accessible to government in their particularities rather than being controlled through "ostentatious signs" (Foucault 1979:220) of sovereign power manifested in brilliant displays of majesty, as well as violent displays such as public executions.

In the establishment of new systems of state surveillance and control of the population, the disciplines—that is, the bodies of knowledge operating through universities, professional associations, and public institutions—became, in effect, handmaidens of the state. Much of their knowledge was garnered through observations made in state institutions such as hospitals, asylums, and prisons. It then became incorporated into judicial institutions through which assignments to such institutions of confinement were made. It also extended more broadly into many aspects of public life, including the school, the factory, the military forces, the professions, and sports, all of which became permeated by tests, interviews, interrogations, and consultations. Some of the latter were used to permit or deny entry, whereas others were designed to deal with the psychological stress of the discipline and rigors imposed on individuals in these institutions, but all became, in effect, methods of referring "individuals from one disciplinary authority to another" (Foucault 1979:226–27). All these methods served the broad purpose of defining the range of behavior, attention to study, work ethic, and obedience to authority—of laws and persons—to be accepted as normal.

Individuals whose tendencies threatened to move them off the normal curve required care, healing, treatment to restore them to the normal range. Those who fell beyond the normal curve faced confinement in asylum or prison. The reigning term for the treatment rendered in some of these institutions became "correction." Institutions for the treatment of juvenile delinquency, for example, were called correctional institutions or reformatories. Foucault considered the establishment of the first such institution in France in 1840 as the beginning of a new era "in the normalization of the power of normalization, in the arrangement of a power-knowledge over individuals" (1979:296).

Ultimately, as we see today in American political life, a vast array of instruments for determining the beliefs, attitudes, desires, and aspirations of the entire population were developed. The daily accounting these instruments provide is used by the politicians, the governing economic bodies such as the Federal Reserve Board, and other agencies of government. In this vortex of information, which includes not only matters of public policy but also matters of private morality, the whole population—ordinary citizens, elected officials, and candidates for public office—is run through a sieve that sorts out the decent from the indecent, the holy from the unholy, the pure from the impure, the rational from the irrational.[4]

What are the implications of all this for the study of politics? The most stunning observation in Foucault's masterwork, *Discipline and Punish*, is the statement—in a book whose main apparent object of study was the formation of prisons, mostly in France, from 1770 to 1840—that all these connections between power and knowledge had led to the creation of a "carceral texture of society," in which the examination is the principal means of sorting individuals, just as the inquisition had been in its day (Foucault 1979:304–5). At the end of his book, Foucault was clearly

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[4]One may doubt the relevance of the Federal Reserve Board in this list, but did not its chairman recently caution investors and the nation against their "irrational exuberance"?

talking about our present (and not only in France) when he referred to the contemporary state-society as a "carceral city." We live in no "city of God," no Jerusalem, no Athens, no democracy for that matter, but in a society composed of persons imprisoned in "walls, space, institution, rules, discourse" (Foucault 1979:307).

This modern society is something new in history, unprecedented. It flies in the face of what everyone in contemporary so-called democratic societies has been taught, namely, that the will of the people who formed a contract to establish a society based on participation of individuals, none of whom has any greater right to rule than any other, replaced the arbitrary rule of monarchs with rule of the people through elected representatives. We have been taught to believe that we live in democracies that more or less conform to this model. Political science has devoted itself overwhelmingly to discussions of how far our democracy does conform to such a model and how far it deviates from it. But the implications of what Foucault said in *Discipline and Punish* are quite radical and, for those who care to listen and understand, profoundly unsettling. One implication is that we have been unaware of the kind of society we live in, the ways in which our lives are organized, structured, and disciplined. We have been unaware of the confined, restricted, and ultimately inconsequential character of our participation in political life as citizens. Furthermore, the discipline of political science has virtually ignored these facts and has instead become implicated—indeed, has been implicated since its foundation—in fostering the governing myths of our political lives, our political selves.

If we do take to heart the implications of Foucault's comments on our "carceral city," what role can a political science play in its analysis? What mode of analysis can we adopt in the study of power relations, which used to be considered the very heart of the study of politics? Older definitions of power are of little use and older objects of study have been defined as either irrelevant or overstudied. That is, although Foucault used the term domination as an aspect of contemporary power relations, he told us there is no single center of power/domination, so we should not look for it in the state apparatus, which has already been overstudied. Do not look for it, Foucault advised, in acts of participation in politics designed to restore "power to the people" by reforming, controlling, and making accountable our elected officials and bureaucrats, for we and they are part of a broader network of power relations that operates almost independently of them. Do not believe that political science can demonstrate that power has been abused and that some movement of the people can restore power to them.

Yet, in the last sentences of *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault concluded:

> In this central and centralized humanity, the effect and instrument of complex power relations, bodies and forces subjected by multiple mechanisms of 'incarceration', objects for discourses that are in themselves elements for this strategy, we must hear the distant roar of battle.
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> At this point I end a book that must serve as a historical background to various studies of the power of normalization and the formation of knowledge in modern society. (Foucault 1979:307)

What a curious way to end a book: an apparent call for—or at least a welcoming of—an historic battle to come, followed by the terse academic statement that he, in effect, hopes that his work will lead to further studies of the sort he has just concluded! A call to action and a call to scholarship.

One of the most remarkable features of commentary on Foucault, even by some writers otherwise sympathetic to his ideas, is the accusation that he was a nihilist, that his thought provides no basis for resistance, though the latter word is pervasive in his texts. In fact, it is evident from the sentences cited above that, just as—indeed largely because—there is no possible separation between power and knowledge, studies that seek to step outside contemporary forms of discourse cannot be separated from resistance to contemporary patterns of domination and unequal relations of power. Study and practice, political study and political practice, are inseparable.

Objects of Study for a Political Science

But what then are political scientists to study? The objects for our study have also been delineated in those last sentences: power relations, bodies, forces, and ourselves as "objects of discourse." But how to do it? Where is the framework, the methodological guidelines? In fact, there is no framework, for that would be inconsistent with the very scholarly and political enterprise that Foucault set forth, to escape from existing frameworks and to keep moving in such a manner that one does not get entangled in a fixed set of concepts that would then congeal into another imprisoning discourse.

Foucault's works are, however, full of methodological guidelines, some of them listed in a series of points. I do not outline them here because they too are not meant to be procedures of the type that our graduate students are taught—how to design a research project, how to elaborate an hypothesis or set of hypotheses, whether to use survey research, ecological data, in-depth interviews, or case studies, how to present the data, and so forth. Foucault also elaborated a method he called archaeology, by which he meant the analysis of layers and traces of thought and practice that link or separate discourses from one another in different historical periods combined with the analysis of the linkages among all elements of thought and practice across disciplines, even across lines that separate elite knowledge and popular knowledge in any era. But that too is a rather broad and comprehensive method that does not provide specific guidelines to a political scientist setting out to do a piece of research that is new and outside existing frameworks. Foucault summarized the archaeological method as follows: read everything that has been written, said, or otherwise preserved on the topic of your research in the time period pertaining to your research. The injunction to read everything does not mean to read the existing theoretical literature, digest it, regurgitate it, use it to structure your research and then read what relates to it. No, unfortunately, it means read absolutely everything, ignore nothing that might reveal the lines that connect your object of study with every other thought or practice of its time. It means avoid isolation of your topic, which would lead merely to some normalizing statement about human

or institutional behavior as, for example, revealing the universality of self-interest or altruism or self-preservation. Instead, the aim is to identify the linkages among bodies of knowledge, institutions, and practices prevalent in society at a particular time that converge on your research topic and reveal its singularity.

At least, Foucault gave us in *Discipline and Punish* a set of objects for our studies, as noted above: power relations, bodies, forces, and ourselves as objects of discourse. However, these are all moving objects, not the fixed types to which we are accustomed in our social science disciplines, defined clearly, related to a model, a system, an order. Not power but power relations, not the body but bodies, not force but forces, and certainly not man but humanity. We cannot study such fixed objects as power or sexuality or force or man because such "grandiose objects do not exist" (Veyne 1997:176). Concepts such as the body, power, force do not exist independently of the discourses about them but are objects of inquiry constructed by and within particular discourses. Relationships occur, events happen, objects are constituted; these are the realities of existence, not some objectified concepts about reality.

Foucault made it clear that we ourselves are the most important objects in need of analysis. Before we can fully understand the complex relations between power and knowledge, we have to construct "the historical ontology of ourselves," how we have been "constituted as subjects of our own knowledge." We have to determine how we have become subjects of study, who both exercise and submit to power relations, and who also are "constituted as moral subjects of our own actions," beings possessed of knowledge that gives us power, subjects us to power, and makes us responsible in particular ways for what we do. This knowledge subjects us to discipline to ensure that we do not deviate from the normal curve, and subjects us to sanction, treatment, or punishment when we depart from it (Foucault 1997b:130).

With such vague guidelines—aside from the deeply threatening aspect of Foucault's thought—it is little wonder that political scientists have, with very few exceptions, not taken up the challenge. I refer later to some examples among the very few studies that have been undertaken that have been in one or another way inspired by Foucault's writings. But, first, I want to provide an example from Foucault's own work to illustrate some of the ways in which he himself moved, academically and strategically, to expose things previously hidden from view while challenging existing modes of thought. I want to show also how the scholarly and political functions merge in his work.

One of my favorite works in Foucault's corpus is *I, Pierre Rivière* ..., a text about a text. This book presents the dossier of a French parricide, who committed his atrocious acts of violence in 1835 and wrote a completely coherent account of the acts and his reasons for committing them. In addition to this text, Foucault's book includes all the commentary on it at that time (that time being a turning point in the history of the development of modern psychiatric thought and practice), including the statements of local people, newspaper reports, statements of local doctors, and statements from the leading Parisian psychiatrists of the day; and finally a set of

commentaries by contemporary social scientists and historians. Foucault himself, however, kept strangely silent. He made no comment on Rivière's text. Instead he drew attention to the documents that commented on the text, in which he said he discerned a map that led to the rediscovery of the interaction of discourses coexisting at the time. He saw these discourses "as weapons of attack and defense in the relations of power and knowledge." He saw in those documents "a key to the relations of power, domination, and conflict within which discourses emerge and function, and hence provide material for a potential analysis of discourse (even of scientific discourses) which may be both tactical and political" (Foucault 1982:xi–xii).

There are several things going on here. Foucault's book consists of a text with commentary on it at the time and commentary on it today. The time then was a point of transition from one age to another when a battle among discourses was taking place. The time now is also a point of transition, according to Foucault (he did not say so in this book, but see Foucault 1989b:30). We are, in his mind, in the postmodernist age wherein another battle of discourses is taking place.

It is clear, therefore, that Foucault chose to analyze the discourses of the time of the murder and of the present, that is, 150 years later, not the text itself. Where is the "tactical and political" in it? Foucault revealed some years after the book was published that he wrote it as a deliberate challenge to "the shrinks," daring them to comment on it, daring them to apply their nosology to it. He claims that he won a victory because they all remained silent, "except for one fool, a psychoanalyst, who claimed that Rivière was an illustration of paranoia as defined by Lacan" (Foucault 1989d:132). The book, therefore, was put forth as a scholarly analysis of discourses on madness, but it is also a tactical, political statement directed against the criminologists, psychologists, and psychiatrists to demonstrate two things: that in 150 years, there had been no progress in the definition and nosology of mental illness, and, implicitly, that criminological and mental health professionals, who have so deeply penetrated our lives and our definitions of ourselves and who exercise powers and make use of powerful techniques in doing so, were fooling us and themselves. They have not been able to cross the boundary between reason and unreason that they themselves constructed. They have not been able to cope with the logic of the mad that contains understandings of reality that are inaccessible to our own reason because, if we stopped to think about them, they might cause our own ordered thinking about the world to crumble. The logic of the mad must, therefore, be defined as delusional, paranoid, and so forth.

What have madness and the violence of the mad got to do with politics? Nothing really. It is the way in which madness has been defined, that is to say, constituted through discourses, that is political. And what is political about those discourses is the establishment of difference, of divisions in society. The opposition between madness and reason is only one among many oppositions, for example, between peaceable citizens and delinquents/criminals, those who work and those who shirk, the moral and the immoral, majorities and minorities (especially ethnic minorities), those who have family values and those who do not. Is it not evident how far what we call politics in America today has been reduced to such empty oppositional

categories? In short, Foucault's studies, however far removed they seem from the stuff of politics as political scientists have conventionally defined it, on the contrary go to the very heart of politics, to the ways in which political divisions are created and perpetuated in societies and to the power relations that sustain such divisions over time.

GOVERNMENT AND GOVERNANCE

The second great subject of political science stolen by Foucault is government and governance. As with all other topics that he touched, he treated these matters in utterly novel ways, introducing at the same time two further terms to encompass the subject matter he discusses, namely, governmentalization and governmentality. In his self-appointed role as "historian of the present," he went back to the sixteenth century to find out how governance came to take the form of the "relations of power and techniques which allow these relations of power to be exercised," which he studied in his other works. How were the mentally ill, the sick, the criminal and delinquent governed? How did the techniques used to treat them and separate them from society lead to methods of directing and controlling the daily behavior of entire populations (Foucault 1997c:156–57)?

Foucault argued that in the sixteenth century a process was set in motion, and with it a question, both of which have persisted into the present. The process was governmentalization, that is, the extension into society of new and more comprehensive means, modes, and methods of governing not only society but the individuals who composed it. As this process of governmentalization spread and, along with it, a "great preoccupation about the way to govern and the search for the ways to govern," a question arose alongside it, namely, how not to be governed. That is, "how not to be governed *like that*, by that, in the name of those principles, with such and such an objective in mind and by means of such procedures, not like that, not for that, not by them" (Foucault 1997a:28, italics in original). Within this dichotomy between new ways of governing, on the one hand, and the question of how not to be governed, on the other hand, was laid the foundation for critique. In effect, to use the other polarity in Foucault's political thought, as this process of construction of new modes of exercising power unfolded, new modes of resistance unfolded as well. In the midst of this process also there occurred the great transformation in modern thought that is designated the Enlightenment. Through his definition of the political and of critique, Foucault identified with Kant, the herald of the Enlightenment. "What Kant was describing as the *Aufklärung* is very much what I was trying before to describe as critique, this critical attitude in the Western world starting with what was historically, I believe, the great process of society's governmentalization" (Foucault 1997a:34).

But then, in this new space between governmentalization and critique of it, something strange happened that involved the persistence of ideas about governance and of knowledge about it drawn from medieval Christian thought and

practices. The old idea that government meant "governing men," which in turn meant "to take them by the hand and lead them to their salvation through an operation, a technique of precise piloting, which implied a full range of knowledge concerning the individuals being guided, the truth towards which one was guiding" them (Foucault 1997a:70–71), was retained and transmuted. The essence of that process was retained, even if freed from the eschatological component, insofar as it involved a kind of earthly salvation to be achieved through a balance between necessary coercion and a process of constructing and modifying the self to conform not to religious law, belief, and practice but to the mandates of modern knowledge of what is good for man and for society (Foucault 1997d:181–82).

Methods derived from church practice of modulating conduct with "true knowledge" persisted while at the same time a vast expansion of the governmental occurred. Government, whose main function had been to collect taxes while the conduct of men and their acquisition of true knowledge was left to the church, now vastly expanded its functions in both the technical sense (dealing with sanitation, public health, control of large urban populations, public education, etc) and the pastoral sense of regulating individuals' daily behavior (Foucault 1997c:156) to conform to the needs of society. Regulating people's behavior required knowing them, teaching them, and disciplining them with the aid of new bodies of knowledge about the nature of man and his relation to his environment. To the governmental function of the modernizing state was added not only the pastoral function but an ancient "governmental function" previously confined to domestic relations, namely, training, education, and guidance (Foucault 1988:80).

It should be clear from Foucault's definition of the governmental and governmentality that he not only stole government from political science but also altered fundamentally the questions commonly directed to it and about it. Moreover, the questions about government derive from Foucault's radically different conception of power, power relations, and the technologies associated with power. The modern political science conception of power is primarily based on the notions of command and obedience and has been focused on the state's exercise of its powers of coercion in relation to individuals. The great theoretical and moral problem from this perspective concerns who governs, how much coercion is exercised in the process, and how to regulate this power and prevent its abuse of the rights of the people. In contemporary states defined as democratic, the leading question has concerned the distribution of power in state and society. It has been assumed for nearly two centuries that genuine rule by the people is an impossibility, that there is in all societies, democratic or otherwise, an uneven distribution of power. The question is how to describe it. For example, Dahl asks whether a single elite governs or whether there is a more pluralist distribution of power (Clegg 1989:53).[5]

Foucault's position is that this discourse of the state and of rights has ignored the more pervasive and insidious exercises of power not only by the state, but

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[5]Dahl's answer, of course, is that the distribution is pluralist.

within society and virtually all public institutions. Foucault's questions are quite different. They pertain to "the practice of government (who can govern; what governing is; what or who is governed)" (Gordon 1991:3). This focus on the practice of government disregards for the moment the issue of who in fact governs—an elite, a class, an ethnic group, or whatever—for the questions common to all modern societies, namely, the vast extension of technologies of power that act on the bodies of persons seen not as citizens but as "subjects as members of a *population*," (Gordon 1991:5, italics in original), that is, both as individuals and as populations of individual bodies (Gordon 1991:36) to be socialized, disciplined, and normalized. The discourse on rights notwithstanding, these new domains of power have extended willy-nilly into the most intimate details of the person's and the family's life, including its sexual life and its child-rearing practices.

One of the great themes of both classical political philosophy and modern political science concerns legitimacy, the best government, the best form of government. Foucault, however, bypassed the question of legitimacy to ask how governing is actually done (Gordon 1991:7). What are the practices that are actually used in modern and contemporary states? For what purpose? It is not a question of whether democracy or constitutional government is better than autocracy, whether that government is best that governs least, whether a welfare state is better than a market-oriented state or a socialist state, but how all these governments actually govern in the spheres in which they undertake to govern. Further, Foucault argued that there are sets of practices that are common to all modern governments, however they are defined and classified, practices that are simultaneously individualizing and totalizing (Gordon 1991:8), capturing all in their net. Whatever distinguishes totalitarian regimes from representative regimes, it is not their governmental practices, which are the same, involving individualization, normalization, the disciplining of body and soul, confinement, and even execution. Of course, more people are brutalized, murdered, and confined in totalitarian regimes, but the methods are the same.

But it was not Foucault's purpose to compare states along some continuum of governance based on new criteria. His primary purpose, rather, was to show that all modern states have become—in an older sense of the term—police states. With or without the active involvement of state agencies, society as a whole and the individuals comprising it are subjected to intrusive, molding, disciplining, normalizing mechanisms accompanied by bodies of knowledge that create them, justify their use, and continue to perfect them, all for the good of the society. With the rise and consolidation of the modern liberal state, the central question of politics has become "not so much the justification of state action as the governability of the social" (Gordon 1991:34). It is now a question of governing large, amorphous populations, of maintaining order, of disciplining a population while dividing off the marginalized, dangerous, delinquent, and criminal elements. Although Foucault certainly opposed all forms of actual abuse of state power—all occasions in which the state acted like a police state in the direct, coercive sense of that term—his primary focus was on the consequences, or, in his terms, the effects of

the everyday policing powers of the state in the form of its public services and of the social services in public health, mental health, and control of crime, delinquency, sexuality, and so forth. He thought that the exclusive focus by revolutionary and ideological movements on state powers in modern liberal states diverted our gaze from the everyday practices of state and social service institutions and of our own docility in relation to those practices.[6] Furthermore, he distrusted every revolutionary utopian movement, whose end result, he thought, could only be the reinstatement of old, or the development of new, disciplinary practices.

Finally, on this matter of policing and governing, Foucault intended not only to draw attention to those institutions and public services that are central in the disciplining of populations in modern states, but to draw attention to the internalization of practices of governing, to the policing of the self according to existing conceptions of truth grounded in domains of knowledge about the self. Foucault was interested ultimately in seeing "how men govern (themselves and others) by the production of truth," that is, by the production of knowledge systems that establish what is defined as true and false. Although the focus of his major works was on "'practices' like those of the sequestration of the insane, or clinical medicine, or the organization of the empirical sciences, or legal punishment" (Foucault 1991:79), his further aim was to consider how such practices and a host of others become embedded in rules of behavior for everyday life. How to live without neurotic fears and anxieties, how to follow a diet for bodily health, how to achieve sexual satisfaction, all these goals for a good life lead to an array of individual practices that affect our relations with others and that draw us into games of normalization, in which we determine who among us are truly fit, healthy, and happy. These games are also, of course, power games in which persons derive advantage or get what they want from others by manipulating the codes to their advantage, using them to determine what is "due" to one person from another.

Again comes that question of governance. How does one escape or resist those forms of governance of oneself by oneself or attempts by others to govern one according to truths whose validity one distrusts? It is evident from much of Foucault's writing, though not always directly, that he mistrusted many of the contemporary movements that appeared to challenge existing modes of governance. Many such movements, in fact, that spring up from the marginal sectors of the population simply demand that they themselves be integrated into the normalizing frameworks of contemporary society. The demand is not to do what one wants so long as it does not infringe on the rights or abilities of others to do what they want; the demand is instead that one's own definition of truth be integrated into the existing frameworks. Everyone must have orgasms, gay marriages must be recognized, individuals previously classified as perverts must be accepted as normal, all of us must discover our identity in our roots, and we must reveal our innermost thoughts and secrets

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[6]"The fear (and hope) that the existing state will finally show its true colours as a police state blunts, he [Foucault] argued, our ability to perceive and refuse the unacceptable in what actually exists" (Gordon 1991:47).

so that we can see that we all are OK. [The fact that most of my examples of the striving for normality relate to sexuality reflects Foucault's view that all the moral problems of today "concern sex and politics exclusively" (Foucault 1989e:85).] In the process, the boundaries between the normal and the pathological are not eliminated; they are simply redrawn or moved outward a bit more.

I must come back now to the question of what relevance all this has to political science. When power and government were considered central to any conception of the appropriate subject matter for political science, it was commonly argued that power had to be defined precisely in order to avoid excessive broadening of the field to encompass family relations, sexual relations, doctor-patient relations, and so forth. But Foucault is telling us, in effect, that this avoidance was misplaced, that the study of power relations cannot be confined only to the power of governments and the power of citizens to influence their governors. Power is ubiquitous and universal, governance is personal as well as governmental, and all forms of power and governance are linked in contemporary societies.

The artificial demarcation of a sphere of political power attached to the questions of governance by governments has obscured from view most power relations in society. In fact, it has obscured from view the vast majority of life situations, including potentially life-threatening or life-constraining situations in which our ability to exercise self-determining power is sharply limited by the authority possessed by physicians, lawyers, psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, teachers, etc, who are not agents of state power in any conventional sense but are licensed by the state because of their certified possession of a body of knowledge in their discipline. Although it is neither Foucault's intention nor mine to argue that all or even most interventions by such persons in our life situations are malign, it is certainly Foucault's intention to suggest that they all operate according to standards of truth and falsity that require scrutiny. These standards limit our powers excessively by penetrating our bodies so that we internalize norms of conduct that imprison us and lead us in circles of power relations that deny us the power to define ourselves.

Foucault's mode of analysis does not imply that political scientists should be framing research projects that analyze power relations between doctors and patients, husbands and wives, teachers and students. His injunction to read everything, study everything pertaining to one's subject of research does not require such a micropower focus.[7] What it does require is exploration of the networks of power relations in society that link individuals to other individuals to institutions to government proper. A micropower focus means that the researcher does not

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[7]Foucault's writing does use the term micropower, in contrast to macropower studies that focus, for example, on the powers exercised by the state. A micropower focus, however, does not mean selecting the smallest possible site of personal interactions and examining it intensely, but rather extending one's gaze in all directions from that site. One examines the networks of power throughout society rather than those extending downward from some ultimate source or structure of power.

arbitrarily confine his research to a particular site of power relations but instead approaches any issue attuned to the linkages that may radiate out from or into a particular site of struggle.

Suppose one does want to pursue research of a more traditional kind that focuses on governance as a whole, that is, on the ways in which a society is governed or governs itself or, as Connolly puts it, on the "mode of governance" in a society that defines itself as democratic or is engaged in a process of "democratization" (Connolly 1995:154–55). Connolly, who has grappled with Foucault like Jacob with the angel for the past two decades, does indeed pursue that kind of research. Connolly has set his own idea of "essentially contested concepts" against Foucault's refusal to conceptualize in any conventional way and applied his notion to traditional concerns of political theory, such as the definition and meaning of power and freedom in democratic societies. Of particular relevance here is Connolly's discussion of power, which is treated in the next section.

FOUCAULDIAN FORAYS

Political Theory

Connolly is certainly the leading Foucauldian scholar in American political theory. However, he did not start out that way. Rather than survey his entire corpus, which has become increasingly consistent with Foucault's thought, I focus here on the changes that have taken place in his discussion of power. Connolly's struggle with Foucault on the subject of power demonstrates the challenge that Foucault's analytics of power presents to received conceptualizations of the central subject matter of traditional political science.

In his pre-Foucault *discursus* on power, Connolly (1974) effectively deconstructed prevailing notions of power, authority, and legitimacy—the rage of the age—demonstrating through a multiplicity of examples that it was impossible to arrive at any fixed, precise definitions of any of these terms and to build a science of politics on top of them. Instead, he used his analysis to demonstrate that power—and its associated terms—was an essentially contested concept, one indispensable to political science and to any meaningful study of politics in America, but also one that, by its very contestability, implied that whoever used that concept, political scientist or political practitioner, was himself involved in politics. In the process, Connolly revealed his own value preferences, presented as a model for democratic behavior, in which the "capacity for choice or action" was primary. In this model, revised only marginally in later editions of *The Terms of Political Discourse* while maintaining the "basic thesis" (Connolly 1993:2139), he established a continuum of forms of power that, however difficult to pin down precisely, worked more or less directly on the individual's capacities. At the virtuous end lay persuasion, at the other end threat, as methods of exercising power over another person (Connolly 1993:213–14). Democratic practices would have to be judged by the extent to which they imposed or refrained from imposing "limits

or constraints on others" (Connolly 1993:216). Like Foucault, Connolly refuses to define power, but unlike Foucault, he presents a paradigm of power in which agents and recipients of power (in his terms) either have or lack access to resources that can limit or enhance the range of options over which the recipient can exercise autonomous choice (Connolly 1993:217). Outside the paradigm of power are those situations in which agents and recipients operate within structural and institutional constraints such that any action "will necessarily impose burdens on others" (Connolly 1993:218).

Connolly contrasts his conception of power with Foucault's, which he characterizes as "invested in institutions and divested from agents," who are artificially constituted subjects. Connolly uses the term power "for those contexts in which power can be said to be exercised." He uses the term structural determination for those situations "in which the constraints are so tight that there is no space for the exercise of power" (Connolly 1993:219). Despite his refusal to define power, Connolly's efforts to find a space for it and to differentiate it from other forms of exercising influence over others come quite close to a definition. He is especially keen, for example, to separate authority and persuasion from power (Connolly 1993:222–24). Connolly seems, in fact, to want to place power in an undemocratic rather than a democratic space; indeed, he characterizes most forms of power—"manipulation, coercion, deterrence, anticipatory surrender, force, and conditioning"—as immoral, whereas persuasion, which he insists is not a form of power, occupies the moral high ground in a democracy. Acceptance of authority also occupies a morally positive space, since he defines it as submission to "a command because one thinks it is the proper thing to do even if it is against one's interests" (Connolly 1993:109). Having presented a set of distinctions among various forms of power, authority, persuasion, and manipulation in which all the forms of power over other people are characterized as essentially immoral and undemocratic, Connolly reasserts the disarming position that his moralistic framework and definitions should be seen as essentially contestable, not dogmatic, fundamentalist, or otherwise immune from the democratic mode of argument and persuasion.

There is a considerable distance between Connolly's conceptualization of power (both in 1974 and later) and Foucault's. Foucault makes no distinction between good and bad, moral and immoral, or democratic and undemocratic exercises of power.[8] His focus is, as Connolly notes, "on the 'strategies' of power" (Connolly 1993:232–34), separated from concepts of agency and responsibility—although, contrary to almost everyone else who has written on this subject, I do not believe

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[8]On the contrary, all forms of power are "insidious" to Foucault, the more insidious the more "invisible," including those exercises of power that fit none of Connolly's categories but "subtly penetrate ... an entire societal network" (Foucault 1977:207–8), such as the discursive practices that operate almost unconsciously, without anyone imagining that he is exercising power. However, there are some passages in Foucault's work that evoke a world without power, or at least a world in which power and fear are separated (see Foucault 1989c:130 for the latter).

that Foucault eliminates agency and responsibility from his perspectives on power. Strategies of power exist independently of responsible agents, but they obviously may be used consciously or unconsciously. I believe that the ideas of agency and responsibility, like so many other themes in Foucault's writings, are "bracketed," but they are not disowned.[9] What is most important for Foucault is first to identify the strategies, techniques, mechanisms, and instruments of power, leaving aside the question of the extent to which they are used or misused with perfect, imperfect, or no conscious knowledge of their effects.

A second distinction between Foucault's ideas about power and Connolly's relates to the relationship between power and authority. From Foucault's point of view, there can be no separation between power and authority, since all power rests on a base of knowledge that provides the authority for its exercise and the right of certain persons to exercise it.

Third, Connolly's text—if not Connolly now—remains caught in the traditional conceptions of power, authority, and legitimacy derived from Weber and extending through to Dahl. His text continues to talk about power over others and power to get something done in the form of A influencing B to do x (Connolly 1993:243fn). This A over B business is inconsistent with Foucault's kinetic conception of power. For Foucault, A's actions affect B, who resists, thus affecting A, in successive iterations, and all of this takes place in a context determined by discourse and practice. The parameters in which power is exercised are not on a continuum from persuasion to force but on a playing field where strategies of both power and resistance to power are exercised in a multiplicity of ways, including all the elements that Connolly wishes to exclude on moral, democratic grounds.

Finally, Connolly's conception of power and its exercise leads him to a statement concerning the relationship between political order and power that seems inconsistent with Foucault. "No order," says Connolly, "could sustain itself without power, though that will not be the *principal* basis of order in a well-ordered polity" (Connolly 1993:243fn, italics in original). Why do we need to go into this question of political order? This is another trap of the conservative bent of political science that Connolly otherwise resists vehemently in his writings. Radical political thought ought—to put it squarely in moralistic terms—not to be constrained by the fear of disorder or the delusion that there lies ahead "a well-ordered polity" of which power is not the principal basis. There can be no such thing for Foucault. A well-ordered polity is almost an oxymoron. It is impossible to envision one without engaging in some form of utopian thinking, anathema to Foucault.

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[9]This is a debatable point. Both Polsky (1991) and I have identified specific persons, groups, and organizations, that is, various agents, responsible for actions, policies, and programs. I consider such identification necessary in empirical research. There is a diffuse societal responsibility for the predominant power practices in a society—on whichever end of Connolly's spectrum they lie—but there are also varying degrees of direct/indirect, conscious/unconscious involvement of agents in their perpetuation.

In the preface to his third edition of *The Terms of Political Discourse*, Connolly, now in his post-Nietzschean mode, challenges prevailing conceptions of moral order and calls for the destabilization of the "codes of moral order within which prevailing identities are set." It is evident that his later thinking also applies to the status of codes of political order and the need for their destabilization, but he allows himself an author's claim to consistency, stating that the conception of politics presented in the first edition of the book is "remarkably close" to that in the third edition (Connolly 1993:xii, xiii, xvii). Perhaps it is, but his work on power and authority, though it has succeeded in demonstrating the futility of the older distinctions that still prevail in the discipline, does not confront successfully the more difficult issues raised by the interplay of power and resistance that constitutes the core of Foucault's analysis of power relations.

Comparative Politics

An early work in comparative politics in the postmodernist mode is *Colonising Egypt* (Mitchell 1988). It is a book that crosses conventional disciplinary boundaries and the categories generally used in political science to discuss politics, political development, and political modernization. Mitchell discusses the "birth of politics" and the modern state in Egypt in terms of new concepts of knowledge, new practices made manifest in new institutions and arrangements of space, and an entirely new way of looking at the world. Many of Mitchell's ideas and arguments challenge some of the fundamental assumptions on which the discipline of political science is based.

Colonising Egypt is a strikingly unconventional re-presentation of the interaction between colonizers and colonized in nineteenth-century Egypt. The principal intellectual debt is to Foucault, but the author draws also from Derrida and Heidegger. Said's *Orientalism* (Said 1978) is a considerable influence on Mitchell as well.

Mitchell shows how Egyptians adopted the disciplinary mechanisms and the instruments of surveillance that had evolved in Europe in the preceding two centuries, as so well described by Foucault. He analyzes the spread of these mechanisms and instruments and their relationships to new systems of knowledge as well in the military, in the schools, in the villages, in urban planning, and in new forms of writing about Egypt's past. Some of the descriptions resemble a tracing out in Egypt of the European paths laid out by Foucault. Mitchell has, however, gone beyond such descriptions to make original contrasts between the distinctive approaches of traditional Arab/Muslim writers to words, language, texts, and knowledge and European approaches to them. The most novel parts of the work, however, are the interrelated discussions of the "world-as-exhibition," of enframing, and of the modern world as a world divided in two. Both Europeans and the Egyptians absorbed into this new, divided world create oppositions between reality and appearance, body and mind, text and world, authority and power, state

and society, etc, and then seek the true relationships between the artificially separated entities. The false dichotomies lead us to perceive the world as an exhibition, never experiencing the reality but only the presentations and re-presentations of some imagined real world "out there." Hidden from perception are the disciplinary powers exercised by means of a reordering of space, enframing institutions and structures such as schools, factories, and barracks, as well as the land itself, and locating them on specific sites or grids in which individuals are "confined, isolated, combined together, and kept under surveillance" (Mitchell 1988:176).

This book provides a thoroughly innovative approach to the colonial experience. It avoids the developmentalist paradigm that focuses on modernization in colonial societies as a process of gradual adoption of western bureaucratic institutions, of value change from superstitious to rational, scientific ways of thinking and from religious to secular practices, and of the transformation of backward economies through the introduction of new means and modes of agricultural, industrial, political, and educational change. Instead, Mitchell (1988) focuses on the adoption, through the interaction between colonizer and colonized, of a division of the world into dichotomous categories that is characteristic of modernity, as Foucault has described it.

Two of my students have also adopted a Foucauldian perspective in their dissertations. Clea Finkle (*State, Power, and Police in Colonial North India*, unpublished thesis) focuses on processes of state formation in colonial northern India. She examines the spread of policing practices, in both the senses used by Foucault—that is, the establishment of a police constabulary as well as new practices of public health and sanitation. She too avoids the developmentalist paradigm and focuses instead on the ambiguities of relations of power and knowledge that developed between colonizer and colonized as the British sought to use the police as sources of both knowledge of local societies and control of the population. Far from seeing the establishment of a modern police force as an aspect of Indian bureaucratic development, Finkle examines the ways in which the British attempts to acquire both knowledge and control were constantly subverted and undermined by the local constabulary for their own purposes. In the process, she also exposes the unreality of the conventional distinction between state and society, the idea that modernization under colonial rule created a modern state above and separate from society. The Indian police, drawn from the local societies, never came to see themselves in such terms and were never integrated effectively into the neutral, hierarchical, bureaucratic police structure that the British imagined they were creating.

Kornmesser (*The Magical Rational Peasant*, unpublished thesis) takes off from a major debate in the literature on peasant politics in Asia, that between Popkin and Scott, (Scott 1976, Popkin 1980) concerning the economic "rationality" of the peasant. To what extent are peasants motivated in agricultural decision making by nonrational or extrarational considerations such as risk aversion (rather than profit maximization), moral relationships, and religious and ritual practices? Kornmesser transcends this debate and shows convincingly that such dichotomies do not hold up in the actual context of peasant productive decisions in which

economically rational practices and magical, ritual, and religious practices cannot be separated.

Kornmesser's analysis of the power relations in which the peasantry are enmeshed is also quite original. He demonstrates that the category "peasant" is itself a construction that implicates the cultivators in systems of knowledge, external control, and decision making in which they are turned into objects rather than acting subjects. Power over their own lives and decisions is transferred to external agencies, whose understanding of the actual bases of peasant decision making is distorted and whose plans for changing that perceived behavior usually go awry.

In effect, Kornmesser revives a dormant debate on the issue of peasant agriculture and places it in the broader, more significant setting of the relationship of Asian cultivators to the contemporary state and international development agencies. This shift is of both theoretical and practical importance, since it draws attention once again to peasants—still most of the world's population—not as objects of study who need to be reformed and brought into a modern world, but as victims of a world development process that continues to claim many of them. Kornmesser's form of analysis, therefore, could be taken as a model to be extended to groups other than the peasantry.

My own recent work (Brass 1996, 1997) shows how a subject that clearly falls within the conventional domain of political science, namely collective violence, can be illuminated by adopting perspectives and modes of analysis influenced by Foucault. I should stress first, however, that I did not set out to make use of Foucault's ideas, methods, and modes of analysis when I began this work. Rather, I had been reading Foucault for years and his ideas simply subverted me as I worked simultaneously on issues pertaining to public violence, particularly riots, including Hindu-Muslim riots.

My work ultimately was influenced by those ideas in the following ways. First, I altered a method that I had been using from the beginning of my PhD research, that is, in-depth personal interviewing of politicians, bureaucrats, police, and other public figures, as well as ordinary people (nonpublic figures). In preference to seeking the causes of public violence with reference to existing theories on the subject, and mining my interviews for factually accurate and coherent explanations, I treated the interviews themselves as texts to be analyzed. I found, in the process, something akin to what Foucault presented in *I, Pièrre Rivière* ..., a multiplicity of voices, all speaking coherently within distinct, though not entirely separate, frameworks, narratives, or discourses about the same subject. They did not necessarily give different factual accounts, though some did, but interpreted the same events quite differently. Second, I found that each type of interpretation or explanation of events of collective violence suggested a different configuration of power relations among individuals, castes, religious groups, political rivals, and so forth. Third, I found that some of these narratives were incompatible, but others fit snugly inside each other. In the latter case, I realized that it was not possible to settle on a single explanation of large public events of this type, but that the explanations revealed processes, motives, and conflicts that hid behind other explanations.

The actual steps in the development of a riot, the persons, groups, and organizations involved, were hidden from view by certain types of explanations. Particularly obscuring were explanations that attributed riots to the spontaneous feelings of the people, especially to religious animosities. Fourth, I came gradually to the view that the very process of explanation constituted a form of blame displacement that contributed to the persistence of the violence "explained." Finally, on the specific question of Hindu-Muslim violence in India, I have concluded that there is in fact an overarching discourse of Hindu-Muslim relations in India that explains all incidents involving members of these two religious communities in terms of the eternal differences between them. That discourse is in itself really a subdiscourse of the modern nation-state, a discourse that contains a fundamental contradiction everywhere in the world, dividing every population that defines itself as a nation-state into majorities and minorities—those to whom the state rightfully belongs and those who are more or less tolerated, harassed, or discriminated against. Thus did I arrive from the ground up, as it were, from the smallest villages and towns in northern India to an understanding of how difference is created, sustained, and integrated into the very fabric of the modern nation-state in the contemporary world.

Public Administration

Two works on aspects of welfare policy in the United States that draw heavily on Foucault's ideas are by Polsky (1991) and Schram (1995). Although both deserve wide attention, I comment here only on Polsky's work.

The Rise of the Therapeutic State (Polsky 1991) is a model for the kind of political science research that responds to Foucault's call at the end of *Discipline and Punish* for further studies of the mechanisms, procedures, practices, and institutions of normalization in modern society. It also responds to Foucault's call for studies that constitute histories of the present, that is, for studies that ask, in effect, how we arrived at the current state of affairs with regard to instruments and institutional practices of normalization. Polsky traces the development and elaboration of such instruments, institutions, and practices with regard to a question of ongoing concern in American public policy, namely, the proper mode of providing relief to the poor, particularly to so-called marginal families, delinquents, and mothers with dependent children in families without fathers.

Polsky (1991) shows how, from the beginning of large-scale private philanthropic efforts in the 1870s, philanthropic societies introduced into the efforts to provide monetary relief to the poor and indigent a moral, normalizing concern. The aim was to bring the family up, through the care and instruction of caseworkers, to "meet the standards for normal family life" (Polsky 1991:80). This linking of normalizing care and treatment of the family through casework by philanthropic agencies was also picked up by the Progressive movement. Moreover, in the same period, the treatment and relief of the poor were linked for the first time with the judicial institutions in the establishment of juvenile courts to intervene in cases

where the children were considered delinquent. Very early, therefore, such intervention was attached to state sanctions in a system that offered both rewards and punishments—economic relief for those families whose members adhered to the advice and instruction of the caseworkers, withdrawal of relief to those families that did not, and judicial intervention as the ultimate sanction that extended to the power of removing children from the mother's care to the care of the state in foster homes.

As the policy practice of providing relief to marginal families became entrenched, further linkages developed to create the modern system of public intervention. Schools of social work were founded to provide the personnel for casework-based relief to the poor. Schools of public administration were founded that provided the managerial techniques for the caseworkers and government officials to organize relief and treatment for the poor. Social science, particularly the discipline of sociology, provided the broad analytic framework for societal change and evolution into which the model of the well-adjusted family could be fit. Developments in modern psychiatry, particularly in psychoanalysis, were integrated into the training of social workers, adding to the armory of caseworkers the (pseudo)scientific findings of these bodies of knowledge to implement programs for the treatment and adjustment of marginal families to acceptable standards. Indeed, the intrusion of psychological and psychiatric knowledge into the therapeutic movement added a further demand on the welfare state as well as a further intrusion by the state into the lives of the poor in the name of relief, namely, the addition of professional counseling as a new "basic entitlement" of the poor in addition to their "right to the minimum standard of living" (Polsky 1991:200).

However, from its earliest stages up to the present, the therapeutic movement has failed to provide any evidence that its methods of diagnosis and treatment have had any salutary results (Polsky 1991:112–13 and elsewhere). The evidence that does exist suggests, in fact, that they have not produced such results. In the meantime, however, according to Polsky, the whole ideology of the therapeutic movement has been colonized by antidemocratic sentiments that deny agency to the poor to speak for themselves, to organize themselves, and to demand public relief free of the intrusive interventions of caseworkers (Polsky 1991:120).

The advance of the therapeutic movement, though it has succeeded in entrenching itself and its values into the systems of welfare for the poor, has not been achieved without struggle. In fact, it has faced resistance throughout its history, ranging from opponents of public relief to local communities to the poor themselves. The grounds for such resistance have included ideological opposition from the Right, the desire of state and local governments to receive the funds from the national government to distribute without therapeutic casework intervention, and the desire of the poor for the right to relief without the intrusion of caseworkers into their modes of living. Polsky's critique is clearly one from the Left that deplores the therapeutic movement's pretensions and failures, its antidemocratic character, its focus on the social and psychological adjustment of the family to societal norms, and the consequent avoidance of the structural and economic conditions

that produce and reproduce poverty generation after generation in the country that prides itself in being the richest on earth. It is certainly not a call for the elimination of welfare, but rather for a reexamination of the conditions under which welfare is provided and the enormous waste of resources that is involved in such a system. It is not the welfare state that Polsky is criticizing, but the therapeutic state that is enfolded within it and that discredits the very goals of relief for the poor.

A study such as Polsky's clearly does not derive from the dominant methods and practices of contemporary political science. It crosses numerous conventional disciplinary boundaries: those between contemporary and historical analysis or between institutions and practices conventionally considered political (such as government agencies) and others considered nonpolitical (such as schools of social work and the techniques of psychoanalysis). It examines the role of the social and human sciences—particularly that branch of political science known as public administration—themselves in the failures of the therapeutic movement. It is based on the kind of comprehensive research that Foucault calls for in his injunction to read everything. Finally, while adhering to exemplary standards of empirical research that could be appropriated by persons and groups on the Right or Left for their own purposes, it stands on its own merits as a sharp, powerful critique of a major aspect of contemporary social policy.

CONCLUSION

The examples provided above are meant to illustrate how Foucault's ideas can provide new energy and direction to political science. For all its diversity, the discipline predominantly labors in traditional forms of hermeneutics in political theory and constitutional law; in state-centered studies of governance and inter-governmental relations; in analyses of the internal dynamics of political parties and their fates in the electoral process; in partisan discussions of contemporary policy issues such as affirmative action, race, and gender; in dissections of voter behavior; and so forth. I have argued and demonstrated that Foucault's work, and that of others who have headed in directions indicated by him or who have wrestled with or been subverted by his thought, can provide points of entry into new topics as well as new forms of theoretical, comparative, and policy analyses of subject matter that falls in the traditional domain of political science. But it would be a mistake to think that the discipline can profit much from the mere insertion of Foucauldian themes into political science or his resurrection in the form of a canonized theorist, whose works are to be dissected for their own sake or for the acquisition of his secret wisdom. Foucault was the most subversive philosopher–historian–political analyst of our present time. To read Foucault in depth and with understanding must be deeply disconcerting for those who have any doubts about the validity of their disciplinary enterprise, the methodologies they use and their rationalistic and mechanistic underpinnings, as well as their implication in existing power relations that are politically and academically conservative. A reading

of Foucault may make one doubt the worth of everything that has been done so far, including one's own work, and challenge one to consider what is truly worth doing.

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