

Title: **Judging teachers: Foucault, governance and agency during education reforms**

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Addenda

A. References alluded to in note 9 but omitted to meet the word count:

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B. Other notes omitted to meet the word count:

Re: the antinomy over afterlives, see Kant, I. (1899/1900; originally 1776). *Dreams of Spirit-Seer, illustrated by Dreams of Metaphysics*. Trans. E. F. Goerwitz; Ed. Frank Sewall. London: Swan Sonnenschein; New York: MacMillan.

## **Judging teachers: Foucault, governance and agency during education reforms**

### **Cartographies of educational practice**

One challenge of being a teacher is navigating the many pathways charted by educational reformists. In the 1960s-70s liberal-analytic philosophers of education took important steps in delineating the conceptual terrain of ‘teaching’ and ‘learning,’ using rules of ordinary usage to guide us toward rational activities (believing evidentially) and away from indoctrinating and conditioning. Concerned during the “experimental sixties” that some techniques were merely parading as “innovative teaching,” Hirst asked a deceptively simple question: How, upon entering a classroom, does the external inspector *know* that teaching is in fact taking place? Concept-mapping was intended to give us clearer boundaries for sound ‘teaching’, supposedly preventing educators from doing “crazy and fuzzy things in its name” (Hirst, 1971).<sup>1</sup>

Today, linguistic analyses seem politically naive in attempting to demarcate pedagogical soundness in the absence of power relations and modes of governance. "Partitioning of sensibilities," is political, "fashioning what is to be known, done and hoped for," and "casting out what does not fit into normalized spaces" (Popkewitz, 2009, p.218). Contention still emerges among Foucaultians, however, whether discursively made-up things really exist, and whether removal of the constituent subject leaves room for agency within techniques of caring for the self (see Foucault, 1994h, p.118). Lingering confusion from the "culture wars" over postmodernism may be attributed to some authors leveraging Foucaultian positions "unsupported by those credentials" (Cooper, 1998; Peters and Besley, 2007, p.3,181). Instead of a polemical response I offer an exegetical tour. Returning to Hirst's question through Foucault's philosophy, I explore

intersections between epistemology, politics and ethics as they merge in a teacher's discursive and non-discursive practices, pointing to genealogical critique as a way to survey more fully the educational terrain. Not just analysing relations among concepts, Foucault 'assays' the subject's relations to knowledge, power and self-transformative practices (Foucault, 1990, p.9), each constituting the sense in which teaching-acts are, not *necessarily or sufficiently* but *contingently* speaking, 'normal' or 'abnormal', 'sound' or 'insane'. These "three axes" of Foucault's "historical ontology of the self" open to philosophical investigation several arenas of teacher-agency, not as humanists struggling free of oppression or neo-liberal individuals making independent choices, but as practitioners cast into working relations within rules originating in and outside educational institutions (Foucault, 1994a, p.318;1994b, pp.342-3). From this practice-based perspective (see Smeyers and Burbules, 2005) -- without ontologically privileging individuals or collectives (Schatzki, 1996) -- relatively 'sane' forms of education accord with shared, politically produced and governed *games of truth*.

### **Antinomies of education reform**

Of particular interest in this topography are initiatives one might call *antinomies* in the Kantian sense of cases where: (a) practitioners have limited foundations or reasons for holding antithetical positions, as no resolution to these quandaries appears at hand; and (b) through these intractable disputes subjects can be brought to a Kantian limit-attitude, a philosophical *ethos* of perceiving the historical finitude of pedagogical knowledge (Foucault, 1994a, p.315). Kant gives us the antinomy that lawful constraint of youth allows them later to become autonomous, free citizens (Kant, 1904, §§29-30; cf. Biesta, 2009, p.170); also the notion that physical hardship builds moral endurance (§46). Corporal punishment offers fertile ground: Wittgenstein

laments (c.1948), "the way people are educated nowadays tends to diminish their capacity for suffering" (C&V, p.71e) likely harkening back to dated practices in his own elementary teaching (c. late-1920s). His tribunal by school authorities occasions modern "interrogation" (*apologia*): whether striking pupils crossed trans-cultural boundaries, or, normalized Wittgenstein's otherwise aristo-eccentric behaviour within contemporary regimes of discipline (see Monk, 1990)? Judging "teacher cruelty," an "ethically thick concept," aptly demonstrates closure of the fact-value dichotomy (Putnam, 2002, pp.34-9, citing PI§127): making apparent how seeing/regarding punishments, or deeming suffering necessary to learning is value-laden and therefore historically-culturally contingent.<sup>2</sup> It is virtually impossible today, for instance, to feel Kant's confliction in weighing "the comingling of sexes" among grown adolescents over auto-affective "voluptuousness," concluding his *Pedagogy* with urgent warnings against "perversions of nature" *known* to result in harmful effects such as premature aging, reduction of vital powers and feebleness of mind (Kant, 1904,§111).

Pertinent, genealogical limit-cases I table without further development include: whether late marks instil good habits and build character, or pollute measurements by mixing achievement data with behavioural attributes? Whether information-technology in classrooms (e.g., cell phones) enhances learning or results in time-off-task, unduly placing teachers at risk? Whether inspection, our focus, secures "quality assurance" or wastes resources through "rituals of verification" (Power, 1997)? The list is extensive: appropriate classroom uses of media; constituents of hard and/or professional work; testing to obtain accountability or learning; optimal utilization of time/space; desirability of streaming and segregation (see Graham, 2009); written curriculum planning required (e.g., stipulating expectations) and degree of alignment

with authorities; redressing achievement gaps; transferability of correlates of success; decorous behaviour, diet and classroom etiquette; gender- or brain-compatible classrooms; roles of feeling in teaching (see Boler, 1999); techniques effecting learning; need for vocational programs; adults' suitability to counsel youth (see Besley, 2009); lifelong-learning (see Ball, 2009) as a legitimate goal of education, etc.. Without begging the question by introducing strong forms of scepticism or linguistic idealism, the interest here is not whether these contemporary empirical and normative discourses in education are right or real in their respective truth-claims (facts or values) about learning. Rather, it is how teachers adopt various compartments with respect to these veridical discourses (see Rose, 1999, p.9), as historical events partitioning what can be said and done (Foucault, 1994a, p.315); and, in so doing constitute their professional selves and teaching practices in relation to games of truths, counting them as right-or-wrong or remaining strategically ambivalent. Not the correctness of such claims but how one might conduct oneself critically within arbitrarily firm rules for *is-or-ought*, thus opening unnecessarily limited ones to renegotiation. Historical-ontology raises the possibility of "thinking and acting differently" (Foucault, 1994a, pp.316-19; see Tully, 1999): not as an end-in-itself or to say "anything goes," but to work actively in the interest of learning, widening ranges of "reasonable experimentation" and expanding domains of "acceptable" eclecticism in education.

**The axis of knowledge(s):**

Surveying the subject's relation to pedagogical knowledge is not a question of verifying accuracy or warranting utility; nor of dismissing epistemological concerns, falling into the morass of postmodern relativism. Instead of the rightness of *forms of knowledge*, Foucault's problem (already in 1976) is rather "what rules of right are implemented by the relations of

power in the production of discourses of truth?" (Foucault, 1980a, p.93). The focus becomes "statutory sets of conditions" or rules "governing the appearance of statements" (Foucault, 1994d, p.309). Shifting attention from rightness to 'epistemic rules' (Foucault, 1990, p.12), political relations and subjectifying-effects "does not mean," however, "that truth is just a game" (Foucault, 1994e, p.297).<sup>3</sup> By "games of truth," he means "not the discovery of true things but the rules according to which what a subject can say about certain things depends on the question of true and false" (Foucault, 1994c, p.460).

Foucault's game-based concept of truth requires deep contextualization of rule-governed conduct, "reciprocally illuminated" by Wittgenstein's topographical investigations of language (grammar) within our *form of life* (see Tully, 2002; also Marshall, 1995; Sluga, 1996; Peters & Marshall, 1999; Hekman, 1999; Hacking, 2002; Zerilli, 2005; Olssen, 2006).<sup>4</sup> Without switching philosophical course, I heed Wittgenstein's advise: In traversing slopes one does well not "to stand for too long on one leg, so as not to get stiff", even walking backwards sometimes to revive oneself (C&V, p.27e). To find our way *After Postmodernism* (see Blake, et al, 1998), we need to return to the ambling, unfinished treks of Wittgenstein.

For Wittgenstein and Foucault, the problem of pedagogical soundness only makes sense against complex background we inherit: world-pictures and games of evidence deposited within our linguistic and cultural practices. Background for judging teachers includes reforms emanating from District School Boards and the Ministry of Education. These initiatives arrive in packaged 'slabs' of professional development (e.g., binders, *powerpoints*, on-line modules and train-the-trainers sessions): programmatic slates comprised of 'fragments' taken from larger discursive

formations. Foucault's early archaeology was about digging through strata to find residue of forgotten *epistemes* -- fossilized rules of knowledge-production demarcating a period's conceptual scheme (1970, pp.x,xvi,422). Likewise, Wittgenstein talks of the bedrock-certainties upon which our spade is turned when digging for reasons beneath the level of our mastered practices (PI§217; OC§§65, 94-99).

Without excavating the strata supporting current educational truth-claims, imagine how teachers and supervisors stand in relation to an almost imponderable bank of pedagogic knowledge. From a Foucaultian perspective, rules determining the 'soundness' of pedagogic practice do not exist outside of discourses and the power relations that sustain them. Within the "politics of truth" we make certain discourses "function as true," and this "regime of truth" provides enabling mechanisms (rules) for distinguishing and sanctioning true-and-false statements or according status to those charged with saying what counts as true (paraphrasing Foucault, 1994h, p.131). Wittgenstein also illumines the *true-or-false* as *counting* certain for us (PI§237) in the gradually changing web of language-games we are taught to play. "Agreement in judgments" leads us to consider the ungrounded-ground that gives them foundation at particular junctures, forming a shifting riverbed or 'system of bedrock propositions' guiding the flow of life (PI§241-2;OC§98).<sup>5</sup> Educational rules exist in connection with such broad-based, historical *a priori* conditions of possibility and with other discursive 'positivities' made available through interrelated disciplines (Foucault, 1994d, p.327). By historical *a priori* he does not mean Kant's synthetic *a priori* concepts (e.g., time, space, motion): "it is not a condition of validity for judgements, but a condition of reality for statements" (Foucault, 2002, p.143). The difference is subtle, the latter being more a discursive "space of possibility" (Foucault, 1970, p.xxvi; Hacking,

2002, p.26). Language itself serves as the *a priori* ground of possibility in the transcendental argument-forms of Heidegger and Wittgenstein, and the in Heidegger-inspired historical-ontology of Foucault (Taylor, 1995; Foucault, 1996a). Foucault describes this idea as something “barbarous”: the *a priori* “of a history that is given, since it is things actually said,” jumbled together and overlapping in all their flaws, incoherence, replacements and successions (Foucault, 2002, p.143).<sup>6</sup>

An educator's ‘archive’ -- containing eroded and bowdlerized fragments of veridical discourses drawn from various fields of education, organizational management, sociology, measurement and psychology -- is a flawed collection of historical documents containing different ‘sets of rules for the possibility of statements’ (Foucault, 1994d, p.309). Without systematic coherence or a singular set, these archives form conglomerations of rules governing the production of the true-and-false: including taxonomies for sorting persons (e.g., gifted, learning-disabled) or teaching-styles (e.g., Blooms’) within the current ‘order of things’ (Foucault, 1970; Hacking, 2002, pp.99-114). These “dispersed and heterogeneous statements” (facts & values) sediment into a larger "disciplinary matrix" (cf. Kuhn, 1999), comprising education systems resembling conglomerate rock (*breccia*). *Brecciation* of education discourses (Freud, 1974) means that component pieces do not necessarily cohere in a narrative, linear sense but as loosely aggregated truth-claims and rhetoric about “effective teaching,” "character" and “accountability.” Although researchers deeply investigate each discourse, my interest is how compositions of fragments tenuously establish bedrock-rules for the true-and-false, practiced or played in their superficiality.

### **Agency as *Problematization***

Intellectuals within educational institutions can resist normalizing effects by opening these discursive formations and practices to *problematization* (Foucault, 1994h): revealing “how and why certain things (behaviour, phenomena, processes) became a *problem*” (Foucault, 2001, p.170); how at certain historical moments behaviours became characterized as ‘mad’ or ‘criminal’, whereas at others they are neglected, and how new subjects of investigation and disciplines emerge. For our purposes, how inspectors at particular times or places deem certain pedagogical practices to be normal, crazy or even abusive. But it is not as though we lack any ground for judging teaching; Foucault addressed “the double failing of pedagogy -- academic and amorous,” in Alcibiades's education, lecturing on Sophists' inadequate care of adolescents (Foucault, 2006, p.44).

*Problematization* is not ideology critique, however, as though reform adopters suffer from false consciousness (Owen, 2003). These veridical discourses are of interest not because they are fallacious but because educators hold them, correctly or not, to be ‘instrumental and reliable forms of knowledge in our society’ (Gordon, 1994, p.xvii).<sup>7</sup> Never having studied cognitive science or developmental psychology, it would be arrogant of me to criticize the scientific validity of such contemporary educational discourses as “brain-based learning,” though critically important that others strategically situated open them to *problematization* (see Wong, 2009). Instead of corrections, genealogy shows how subjects are enthralled within bedrock-pictures or captivated by historical *a priori* conditions of possibility (Owen, 2003)<sup>8</sup>: how sensibilities emerge, open/close possibilities for thinking and doing. By example, *problematizers* may demonstrate how tardiness becomes an involuntary, biological (brain-based) attribute instead of a

blamable character flaw, provoking colleagues to critical reflection of their mental and disciplinary habits; or revealing supposed "paradigms shifts" as replays of Dewey's progressive movement (e.g., engagement through applied and authentic learning). The purpose in doing such a "critical history of the present" is not to offer better solutions than those mandated, playing the same role as modernist reformers in advocating singular positions within an antinomy.

The work of an intellectual is not to mold the political will of others; it is, through the analyses that he does in his own field, to re-examine evidence and assumptions, to shake up habitual ways of working and thinking, to dissipate conventional familiarities, to re-evaluate rules and institutions starting from this re-problematization.... (Foucault, 1996b, p.462)

Foucault illustrates the process in a radio interview (c.1965), answering with trepidation how philosophy and psychology entangle as general and specific forms of knowledge. This five hundred year-old antagonism is "given a new pertinence," he notes, "by all the questions that revolve around educational reform" (Foucault, 1994f, 249; re: Foucault's involvement in French reforms, see Marshall, 1996). Psychology's inclusion in education as a "positive science," with its methods for testing learning, occasioned archaeologically-tectonic reflections on limit-conditions we encounter in all sciences. The interviewer's question turns to how psychology, as an exact, rigorous science and technique, "carries out its own critique of its methods, concepts, and so on" (Foucault, 1994f, 258). Again, the focus on experimental psychology shifts onto the field of education and its search for rational foundations, for:

...when psychologists do studies on learning and they look at the data, determining the extent to which their informational analyses may enable them to formalize the results obtained, that is also a kind of reflexive and generalizing – and foundational – relationship that psychology establishes for itself. (Foucault, 1994f, p.258).

The 1960s emergence of this positive discipline, producing generalized findings, genealogically demonstrates how new pictures and metrics of 'learning' may arise along with developments in

other disciplines: information-theory and computer models of brain functions. The point is not that they replace false pictures (though that may be true) but open new ways of investigating teaching and learning.

He dramatically concludes the interview with a Nietzschean sense of parody in one's relationship to knowledge and truth (see Foucault, 1994a, p.315; 1994g, p.386). If asked as a philosopher to teach psychology Foucault would do so with a mask, in another voice -- dawning Anthony Perkins' schizophrenic character in Alfred Hitchcock's film *Psycho*. Witness Foucault as a 'crazy' educator, *problematizing* psychological discourse to create needed distance (un-timeliness) for students to exercise critical agency in their own process of self-formation (cf. Osborne, 2009). The masked Foucault (1996b) would initially be introducing students to various techniques used in psychology:

I would try to explain to them what psychoanalysis consists in. And then, the following hour, I would remove my mask, I would take up my own voice again, and we would do philosophy, even if this meant reencountering psychology, at that moment, as a kind of absolutely unavoidable and inevitable impasse that Western thought entered into in the nineteenth century. ...I would not criticize it as a science; I wouldn't say that it is not really a positive science; I wouldn't say it's something that ought to be more philosophical or less philosophical. (Foucault, 1994f, pp.258-9)<sup>9</sup>

### **The axes of power relations & arts of the self**

Readdressing Hirst's question, how inspectors recognize "crazy and fuzzy teaching," Foucault's critical limit-attitude calls for a "breach of self evidence"; he wants "to show that things 'weren't all as necessary as that'; it wasn't a matter of course that mad people came to be regarded as mentally ill" or that certain practices in education suddenly became 'normal' or 'insane' in the 1960s (Foucault, 2003, p.249). The sensibility in designating some teaching "mad" occurs not

only discursively within linguistic relations but politically within a mode of governance and its power relations. Foucault's 'problem is to see how people govern themselves and others by the production of truth -- not by true utterances but the establishment of domains in which the practice of true-and-false can be made ordered and pertinent' (paraphrasing 2003, p.252).

The scene of inspection, ridden with anxiety and anticipation, reveals the educational world of supervisor and teacher, bringing to fore some of the background tacitly informing judgments. Professional development sessions expose educators to current initiatives (e.g., differentiated instruction and multiple intelligences), but, with little opportunity to investigate evidentiary bases or experiment, neither inspector or inspected really *knows* much about the discursive strata founding them. Rather, they have to *know how* to perform the rhetoric superficially to each other's satisfaction, signalling allegiance to authorized mandates and reacting [as though] intent to implement the reform instead of displaying depth of comprehension or open resistance. Less the rational activity Hirst envisioned, the exchange between teacher and inspector operates at the level of training and acculturation to recognize and expertly play slogans or phrases.<sup>10</sup> For instance, in interviews or on bulletin boards, curriculum and planning documents, teachers masquerade the Board or Ministry language-games of "character education," "brain-based learning," "result-based learning," and "authentic assessment-for-success." In other jurisdictions, substitute program labels to secure genuflection.

But this *Discipline and Punish*-like picture of subjectivization is flawed in that it grants too much normalizing, indoctrinating power to seemingly "monolithic discourses" in education (see Taylor, 1986). Instead of portraying teacher and inspector as hapless selves trapped in their

period's bedrock, in his final essay Foucault characterizes "the philosophical ethos appropriate to the critical ontology of ourselves as a historical-practical test of the limits we may go beyond, and thus as work carried out by ourselves on ourselves as free beings" (Foucault, 1994a, p.316). His later work on *governmentality* illustrates various modes by which people are made, and make themselves, subjects (see Gros, in Foucault, 2006, p.512), and the "psychagogic" as opposed to pedagogic "transmission of a truth whose function is not to endow aptitudes, but to modify that subject's mode of being" (in Gordon, 2009, p.xii) .

When administrators use supervision to enforce resisters' compliance, the regime of discipline stands in the way of the kind of self-conditioning, initially wilful and later internalized behaviour sought. Awareness of pretence and threat of force keep intentional dispositions from gradually becoming non-intentional habit (Prado, 2006, pp.166-7). Pastoral supervision only works if subjects come to perform self-surveillance, bringing themselves (second-naturally) into accord with rules through transformative practices and power relations. Panopticism summons and holds subjects in-check even when out of purview (Foucault, 1977), but if inmates know when inspectors are looking -- when the central tower is occupied and authoritative gaze upon them -- the apparatus fails to achieve more enduring and productive, as opposed to merely temporary and restrictive, forms of discipline.

Teacher appraisal, as a supervisory arm of pedagogic reform and professional development, actually functions poorly as an apparatus for inscribing 'normalcy', but the stress-inducing event can occasion self-critical modifications of practice. Teachers cast into reforms use cultivated sensibilities in adapting portions and ignoring others, judging these specific games of truth in

relation to both: (a) their prior *thrownness* and acculturation into shared (historical *a priori*) language; and (b) their initiation into and teaching of formal disciplines (e.g., math, science, history), containing various methods of testing assertions. Sensing problems, teachers may resist herding into new language-games, their hesitation acting as a conservative brake on change-initiatives. Instead of standardized solutions envisioned by reformers, interpretations multiply -- fragmenting the *omnes et singulatim*, 'for each and for all' into localized, improvised forms of governance (Foucault, 1994i; Hunter, 1994). Illustrating this process, Foucault redirects attention from individual reformers, clarifying rules, to myriad agents messily undergoing correctives within institutions as the locus of change.

The problem, you see, is one for the subject who acts – the subject of action through which the real is transformed. If prisons and punitive mechanisms are transformed, it won't be because a plan of reform has found its way into the heads of the social workers; it will be when those who have a stake in that reality, all those people, have come into collision with each other and with themselves, run into dead ends, problems, and impossibilities, been through conflicts and confrontations – when critique has been played out in the real, not when reformers have realized their ideas. (Foucault, 2003, p.236;cf. 1994a, p.316)<sup>11</sup>

Caught up in this *hurly burly* of reforms, teachers' agency is only possible where power relations permit freedom -- not where there is outright domination or totalizing subjection with a regime of truth (Foucault, cf.1994h, p.132 & 1994b, pp.340-41). Although "power is always present" (Foucault, 1994e, 291), pedagogical institutions abound in opportunities for power reversal: whether in teaching students or initiating teachers into reforms. The process is corrupt, he explains, if the one who knows more infantilises, overly constrains or dominates the learner in the process of transmission (Foucault, 1994e, pp.298-99). "I believe that this problem must be framed," he concludes, "in terms of rules of law, rational techniques of government and *ethos*, practices of the self and of freedom" (Foucault, 1994e, p.298). Under constraint, professionally

and legally obligated to carry out mandates, teachers within some governance structures freely enter into *problematization* of rules, contesting or improvising aspects of these games of truth as a mode of political action and self-stylization. In order to contest subjugation, however, teachers must enter into games of knowing, finding ground on which to "speak truth to power" (on *parrhessia*, truth-saying, see Foucault, 2001). "In the order of politics," he remarks, "one can criticize...consequences of the state of domination caused by an unjustified political situation, but one can only do so by playing a certain game of truth, by showing its consequences, by pointing out that there are other reasonable options, by teaching people what they don't know about their own situation, their working conditions, and their exploitation" (Foucault, 1994e, pp.295-6).

Through *governmentality* a new picture dawns of teacher and inspector: "Free individuals who establish a certain consensus, and who find themselves within a certain network of practices or power and constraining institutions" (Foucault, 1994b, p.297). Education illustrates the general concept of a constraining and enabling *nexus* or *block* of power relations, relationships of communication, and objective capacities (Foucault, 1994b, pp.338-9). Situated within this *brecciated* matrix of discourses and dividing practices, subjects of education reform may acquire capacities for strategic action (Foucault, 1994h) or gain critical purchase for *problematizing* and truth-saying. Within reversible conditions of communication-power-capacity, supervisor and teacher may even switch advisor and recipient roles, especially where experience or knowledge-differentials are manifest. They remain enmeshed, however, in the polemical contest for defining exemplary and substandard teaching. The central 'agonism' between "power relationships" on the one side, and "the recalcitrance of the will" or "the intransigence of freedom" on the other,

offers itself up as “a mutual incitement” or “permanent provocation” from which subjects cannot escape (Foucault, 1994b, p.342).

Witness the inspection-event as a site of such contest. Making explicit the evaluation criteria for sound teaching, while ostensibly normalizing and disciplining teachers, may have opposite tendencies to foster a climate of ‘dissimulation’ or flag otherwise hidden boundary problems. Teacher agency may take the form of playing ‘hidden scripts’ when out of purview, merely performing ‘public scripts’ when expected to do so by those in authority (Scott, 1990, pp.102-3). Instead of constituting teachers “sanely and clearly” in the form of curricular-mandates, the presence of inspectors elicits the appearance of desired responses (Hawthorn-effects), giving superintendents a false sense of efficacy, even "measurable improvements in performance." Resuming unsupervised practice, teachers usually default to previously established patterns. Reform is possible, but despite the rapid *flow of life* in schools change occurs at a glacial pace (Tyack and Cuban, 1995).

Recalcitrant teachers, whether openly defying reform or secretly carrying on old ways within the sanctity of classrooms, may mistakenly see deviance from rules as freedom. Ironically, in resisting change teachers may fall back into blind routines previously internalized as “their” (now supposedly genuine) “best practices,” making defiance to authority an instance of conformity – not ‘agency’ in a productive sense of techniques or arts of modifying and caring for the self, but retrenchment in herd mentalities and folk pedagogies exempted from critical reflection. Here too, intellectuals within schools may show colleagues how mere intransigence

dupes professionals into untroubled senses of autonomy and authenticity, opening taken-for-granted regimes of practice (the rules governing their *savoir faire*) to *problematization*.

## **Conclusion**

Entering the problem-space around judging teaching brought us to consider *normalization* to shared sensibilities, developed within conglomerate *blocks* of pedagogic knowledge and practice. In contrast to liberal-analytic maps of the 70s, I have given a political and perhaps unsettling view of the tenuous ground on which "progressive" reforms take place, describing education discourses as anti-nomous *games of truth* and inspection as rather futile attempts at teacher-subjectivization. Working through Wittgenstein and Foucault's notions of bedrock, finding historical *a priori* bases for agreement in judgement (PI§§240-42) opened to view the inspected and inspector's relations to embedded rules governing truths. What inspectors *see* upon entering classrooms is not teaching in relation to its conceptual domain, judged 'sound' or "crazy and fuzzy" by attending to linguistic boundaries or explicit criteria, but agreement or disagreement with complex discursive and non-discursive practices (language-games) set against deeply buried, historical-cultural and politically charged background.

Thwarted attempts to supervise compliance with mandates brings into consideration teacher agency as the "self-stylizing and form-giving" aspect of Foucault's four-fold of subjectification: "The way in which the individual establishes his relation to the rule and recognizes himself as obligated to put it into practice" (Foucault, 1990, pp.26-28). Demonstrating reversible power relations, I have indicated how new rules might conflict with the professional's own sense of pedagogical rightness, standing in contrast to his/her own ethical project of self-transformation.

Primarily concerned with teacher comportment to arbitrary mandates handed down during education reforms, *problematization* was demonstrated as a form of critical agency: opening them to renegotiation and securing "civic freedoms within the rules" (Tully, 2002).

Inquiring into foundations of pedagogic knowledge and practice, I adopt the position of Foucault's unmasked psychology professor: unable to arbitrate whether new forms of pedagogic knowledge or practice *are* positively scientific, or determine whether educators *should* play particular games. Genealogy does not "vindicate a lyrical right to ignorance or non-knowledge" in averring positivistic questions of veracity or pragmatic ones of warranted assertability (Foucault, 1980, pp.83-4). Nor does uncertainty undermine political resistance to administrative censure or erasure of useful or unsanctioned, exploratory practices. Caring for themselves and their students, teachers conserve and invent practices that apparently work regardless of whether they align with current initiatives and appear "dated" or "mad" to inspectors. Diverting from 'pathways' mapped by education officers appears obstinate denial of authorized power/knowledge (*is/oughts*), but self-governance requires critical awareness instead of obedient rule-alignment. Teacher-agency is freedom to transgress artificially narrow limits, exploring educational pathways in that "permanent provocation" between the will and power (1994b, p.342), undertaking practices of ethical self-formation.

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## Endnotes

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<sup>1</sup> Green (1968), using Wittgenstein's family-resemblances case (PI§68-70), was content with fuzzier boundaries.

<sup>2</sup> See Wittgenstein, PIpp.194-5, re: continuous regarding/seeing-as & aspect-dawning.

<sup>3</sup> Foucault wasn't a relativist (Gordon, 1994, xvii; Olssen, 2006; Prado, 2006, 145-149). Emphasizing the 'politics of truth' in fields such as psychiatry does not make them "just concealed power relations," nor impugn, validate/invalidate them on that account (Foucault, 1994e, 296).

<sup>4</sup> See PI§§141-201 re: rule-following.

<sup>5</sup> "At the foundation of well-founded belief lies belief that is not founded" (OC§253). "The difficulty is to realize the groundlessness of our believing" (OC§166).

<sup>6</sup> Historical *a priori* are 'the given' (a first philosophy or basis), similar to *forms of life* but lacking the sense of natural history(cf. PIpp.224-6). See Garver, N. (1994). *This Complicated Form of Life. Essays on Wittgenstein*. Chicago and Lasalle, Ill.: Open Court.

<sup>7</sup> Historical-ontology is not linguistic-idealism (anti-realism).

...the 'problematization' of madness, crime, or sexuality, it is not a way of denying the reality of such phenomena. ...I have tried to show that it was precisely some real existent in the world which was the target of social regulation at a given moment. ...gathered together, characterized, analyzed, and treated as, for example, 'mental illness'? (Foucault, 2001, 171-2)

<sup>8</sup> Sometimes we become unnecessarily "entangled in our own rules," revealing the status of contradictions in civil life (PI§125). "A picture held us captive" (PI§115).

<sup>9</sup> Wittgenstein thought psychology masqueraded the scientific paradigm and metric of mechanics and physics (PIp.xiiv). Experimental methods fail to solve [grammatical] problems, for "problem and method pass each other by" (PIp.232; cf. PI§§109 & 308). See his remarks on philosophy of psychology, preliminary to PI, part II.

<sup>10</sup> Recognizing signs is customary, rule-governed behaviour, not interpretive (PI§198); something animal -- agreement in judgment within a *form of life* (PI§§241-2).

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Wittgenstein, RFM II.4.

The sickness of a time is cured by an alteration in the mode of life ...not through a medicine invented by an individual.

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