

Foucault Goes to School

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Abstract: The present paper seeks to examine the pervasive influence of the ideas of twentieth century French intellectual Michel Foucault. Foucault undertook an incisive analysis of several institutions such as the mental hospital and prisons and how they were sites of subjectification of the human mind and body. Retracing the course of history, he also chartered out for his readers how the methods of disciplining and punishing had changed over centuries from public spectacles of violence to disciplinary measures and surveillance. The present paper will seek to explore the playing out of these nuanced Foucauldian ideas in the fields of literature, media and education and utilise the Foucauldian lens to examine the apparently neutral institution of the society, the school.

Keywords: School, Education, Foucault, Power, Knowledge, Normalization, Subjectification, Objectification, Discipline and Panopticon.

INTRODUCTION

Twentieth century French intellectual Foucault's thoughts and ideas were quite revolutionary for his times. Foucault's charm lies in the subversive tone of his protest against accepting the Enlightenment myths such as reason, science, justice and freedom. Instead, Foucault's tendency is to undertake a nuanced examination of taken-for-granted notions and present them in a new light. Foucault has conducted a study of historical documents to show that definitions of madness, illness and criminality have varied and so have the measures to deal with them. The range of his work is so expansive that it is impossible to classify it within a particular disciplinary ambit. In this paper, an attempt has been made to undertake a discussion of Foucault's ideas that have a link with education, particularly school education. Hence, the title 'Foucault Goes To School'.

In this paper we'll begin by giving a brief biographical sketch of Foucault. Further, we'll discuss some of the main concepts given by Foucault. The major thrust of this paper will be an exposition on the unfolding and playing out of these concepts in the field of school education, their effect on students and teachers. The main focus will be on examining school as an institution geared towards the fashioning of the student subjectivities. The analysis will be interspersed with references to relevant works of literature and feature films to exhibit the pervasive influence and contemporary relevance of Foucauldian ideas.

FOUCAULT: A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Born to a surgeon father, in 1926, in the French city of Poitiers, Foucault entered school, the Lycée Henri-IV at the age of four. He changed his school several times and for the most part of his academic life in the school was successful. However, at Ecole Normale, the most exclusive college level school in France, Foucault attempted to commit suicide. Taken to a psychiatrist, Foucault confessed of his sexual interest in men. Homosexuality was then considered as an illness by the psychiatrists. According to Fillingham [1], this incident made Foucault think of psychiatrists as "mental police," deciding what should be done and what shouldn't be done in the society [1]. However, Foucault's interest in psychology was aroused and he studied the subject. From 1950-53, Foucault was a member of the Communist party. His personal life was a major influence on his work. For example, the fact that he was a homosexual would have influenced his work *The History of Sexuality*. Perusal of medical works pertaining from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries in a library in Sweden, along with his own trips to the hospital brought to fruition *Madness and Civilization* and *The Birth of the Clinic*. Foucault died of AIDS in the year 1984.

FOUCAULDIAN CONCEPTS

Subjectification and Objectification

According to Smart, Foucault is "constantly interested in the social processes through which rationality is constructed and applied to the human subject, in order to make it the object of possible forms

of knowledge [2]. Thus, Foucault is concerned with the modes by which human being becomes a subject which is an object for the disciplinary or human sciences. Copeland [3], in brief, discusses the three modes of objectification which transform human beings into subjects. The first mode of objectivizing the subject is the “dividing practices” (p. 381). The subject is divided from others, for example, the sick and the healthy, the mad and the sane, the achievers and the failures. This dividing serves to individualize the subject. The second mode originates in the human sciences. The knowledge of the human sciences such as psychiatry is used in the construction of the human subject. This knowledge also serves the dividing practices. The third mode of objectivising and according to Ranibow [4], the most original contribution of Foucault is subjectification. Subjectification is the process of self formation, whereby human beings are instrumental in turning themselves into subjects. While the first two modes may be termed “technologies of domination”, the third mode may be termed “technologies of the self” [5]. Subjectification is the process of coercive self disciplining. Subjected to hierarchical observation and surveillance measures, the subject takes upon himself to act “good”. Similar, is the effect of confessions in the religious and the medical world where confession is used for uncovering the truth about one’s sexuality and one’s self. Further in the paper an attempt will be made to unravel how a school student is constructed as a subject by the use of various disciplinary techniques and self regulation.

Allied to the problem of the construction of the subject are Foucault’s major conceptions about “power”, “knowledge” and “the body”. The human body remains the target that is shaped by all political, economic and penal institutions. According to Ranibow [4], punitive mechanisms directed at the body provide additional “civil” labor in a slave economy, cheap labor in a prison factory at the time of development of mercantile economy. Thus, “...the body becomes a useful force only if it is both a productive body and a subjected body [4]. Next, is the concern as to how docile bodies are produced? Foucauldian concepts of power and knowledge are useful here. In brief, for Foucault, power and knowledge are inextricably linked. An example can be taken from Franz Kafka’s *The Trial*. Published in 1925, the book is an apt example of the inner workings of law in the modern world. According to Foucault in most European countries, in the eighteenth century, in event of a crime the legal procedures were carried out in utmost secrecy, with even the accused being unaware of the evidence against him. In Kafka’s work, a senior bank clerk, Josef K. is first arrested, asked to appear before the magistrate and then a year later executed on his birthday, without any trial or judgment being passed. Josef K. undergoes a great mental ordeal during the span of this one year but

unable to discover the nature of his crime. His lawyer also informs him that access to court documents and evidence is only the privilege of the prosecution lawyers. Here, we see an apt example of power-knowledge relations. The act of accusation comes from without. The apparent accused is kept in denial of accessing the knowledge about the crime, if it even was, and institutions of power participate by keeping it veiled.

The idea of construction of the human subject has also been dealt with in a number of films. These films deeply resonate Foucauldian ideas regarding the human body, power and knowledge. In the 1993 film *Demolition Man*, [18] a city of America called San Angeles has been shown to exist in a pacifist utopia under Dr. Cocteau. There is no crime but the paternalistic society forbids its citizens from enjoying unhealthy foods, sexual intercourse and even cursing. This futuristic society is one where people’s thoughts, emotions and even bodies are under strict control by subjectification and punishments such as fines for swearing and cryogenic freezing for bigger crimes. *The Matrix* [19] is another relevant example here. The trilogy is about the machines becoming more powerful than men to the extent that the machines are able to manipulate human vision of reality. Human beings sleep like fetuses and their bodies are harvested by the machines to run the Matrix. The human beings are neither aware nor interested in knowing that their reality is artificial. Thus, they have only one truth, one ultimate reality imposed on them that they adhere to. Moreover, the agents in the film are like the guards of Foucault’s *Discipline and Punish* who are instructed to ensure that the people infected with disease in the time of plague do not leave their homes. Likewise the agents in the film too are stationed to ensure that no human being leaves the Matrix. There are more such films on the subject of control of populations by the authorities such as *Nightmare City 2035* and *Minority Report*.

Foucault's exposition with regard to power is significant. Foucault power is exercised and not possessed. That is, there is no one dominant group that has complete control over power. Power moves and transforms in the social interactions. Power does not necessarily flow from top to bottom in a society. An example of the same is evident in Franz Kafka’s seminal work *The Trial*. Once the protagonist K. becomes an accused, he becomes dependent on lesser mortals such as the court painter or his lawyer’s maid who are all in a better position to tell him how to behave in the court of law. Another accused Block looks downtrodden and beyond his years having lost all his business and money on account of his trial. This also gives an insight into the future life of dependence and humiliation of an accused man.

Power and Knowledge: An interrelation

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The power-knowledge relationship can be understood in two senses. In the first sense, knowledge of the subject is essential to have power over him. This knowledge can be had from two sources namely, human sciences and secondly, official documents such as medical records, report cards and so on. From the first source, one can get to know the norms and standards of normality and divide the masses accordingly, for example, the I.Q. levels established the categories of intelligent, normal, idiots and imbecile and were widely used in French educational system to classify the students in the nineteenth century. Power is thus exercised to enforce normalization¹. From the second source, one can get to know the case history of individuals already divided and punitive or corrective measures can be planned for them. The more something is known, the more controllable it becomes. In the second sense, power-knowledge relationship can be understood in the context of the rise of human sciences in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. These disciplines developed as an outcome of power struggles. Scott [6] emphasizes that Foucault considered that knowledge is embedded in history and disciplines are historical products.

The exercise of power relations makes possible for a certain section of the society to decide what knowledge is and impose it on the majority. Thus, if enough number of people can be made to believe that something is true, it becomes the truth. The colonialists, for example, in the nineteenth century were in a position of power and all research in the colonies was geared towards proving this supremacy. Thus, the

¹ By normalisation, "Foucault means a system of finely gradated and measurable intervals in which individuals can be distributed around a norm- a norm which both organizes and is the result of this controlled distribution". Ranibow, 1991, p. 20)

Orient was considered to link the Occident with his prehistoric past. As such they succeeded in propagating that categories such as class and race were not socially construct, rather biological and natural [7]. Foucault is interested in the fact that knowledge doesn't have foundational status. Rather, what counts as knowledge is decided by the people who get together and impose their own worldview². These people are usually the powerful ones in the society, which is not to deny the presence of alternate discourses³. When we consider the school curriculum, we find that out of the many discourses available, only a few are included. Each discourse has the potential to be considered as knowledge. However, only one of all the possible discourses is counted as knowledge. This knowledge is a function of power relations.

Apple [8] reminds us that knowledge is never neutral. It is socially constructed and that the circulation of knowledge is part of the social distribution of power. According to him, the knowledge of the powerful is socially legitimized in schools and transmitted via media of textbooks. Textbooks signify constructions of reality. Apple [8] draws upon Williams's concept of "selective tradition" (p. 46) to point to the ways in which curriculum functions to privilege certain sets and orders of knowledge over others. With the disenfranchised groups demanding representation, a new trend has come up in textbook publishing. Little is deleted of the old and "limited and isolated elements of the history and culture of the powerful groups are included in the texts". Thus, for example, a small and often separate section is included on 'the contributions of women' and 'minority groups' but without any substantive elaboration of the view of the world as seen from their perspectives [8].

UNDERSTANDING SCHOOL THROUGH FOUCAULT'S CONCEPTS

School is considered as important institution of any society. Traditionally, schools are entrusted with the task of preparing the young of any society for adult roles. Schools are thus, considered to perform a service

² In the twenty first century too, we live in the age of Wikiliality i.e. "reality as defined by a consensus, particularly in a collaborative endeavor such as Wikipedia. It was defined on a satirical US TV show The Colbert Report as the concept that 'together we can create a reality that we all agree on', referring to Wikipedia, on which any user can add or alter information, and if enough users agree with them, that becomes "true"" Sandy, D. (2011, July 3) The Times of India

³ Discourses are about what can be said and thought and by whom, when, where and with what authority. (source unknown)

function for the society. Critical theorists warn against this simplistic understanding of schooling. Instead they focus on unmasking the very political nature of schooling. Foucault [9], argued in *Human Nature: Justice vs. Power* that:

...the real political task in the society such as ours is to criticize the working of institutions which can appear to be both neutral and independent; to criticize them in such a manner that the political violence which has always exercised itself obscurely through them will be unmasked, so that one can fight them [4].

Therefore, the focus of this paper is on analysing the apparent neutral status accorded to school and its functioning in the society. Foucault's *Discipline and Punishment* is the work that comprehensively informs examination of schooling practices in this paper. The focus of the paper will be on the disciplinary techniques and surveillance measures employed by the schools in order to enforce normalization and produce docile bodies that are productive in the society. Before examining the relationship of Foucault's ideas with education, it is important to make a reference to the birth of the prison as discussed in Foucault's *Discipline and Punish* as Foucault considers the school to be a carceral institution, modeled on the prison. For Foucault, the prison is a metaphor for or microcosm of our disciplinary society.

Discipline and Punish presents a structural analysis of power. According to Garland [10] Foucault undertakes an examination of the phenomena of the emergence of the prison in the nineteenth century to explore the theme of domination and investigate how individuals are constructed as subjects. The book opens with a contrast between two very different styles of punishment. The first example discusses the public display of authorized violence, a public spectacle of the execution of a regicide brought about by a number of tortures inflicted on the body of the convict in Paris in 1757. The second is the example of an institutional timetable of a reformatory in Paris some eighty years later. The focus is on organizing and controlling every single minute of the life of an inmate. Punishment, quite interestingly takes place in private and in silence. Foucault explores and problematizes this qualitative shift in punishment and asserts that the target of punishment was now the soul of the convict more than his body. However, the shift did not mean lesser punishment. Rather, it meant that power took on the mask of discipline and exercised a more pervasive and ubiquitous influence.

At this juncture it is important to contrast sovereign power and disciplinary power as evidenced in

the two examples discussed above. Sovereign power is considered to be embodied in certain individuals such as the king, the prince and their agents. As its operations are highly visible and conducted through visible agents, sovereign power is susceptible to resistance, as evidenced in the increasing unruly crowds that attended these executions⁴. Disciplinary power, on the hand, acts invisibly but affects all the aspects of our life. On account of the invisibility of the disciplinary power, resistance to it is difficult but not impossible. Now, here comes the role of the school. According to Foucault, carceral institutions such as hospitals, army, and schools 'create' the individual subject. In fact, the Victorian novel, *David Copperfield* (first published in 1850) offers a brilliant contrast of sovereign and disciplinary power used in schools in order to fashion a gentleman who'll be a member of the Victorian bourgeoisie. Young David is subjected to physical violence in order to be disciplined by his stepfather at home at Blunderstone Rookery and by Mr. Creakle at Salem House. This is in direct contrast to the covert discipline at Aunt Betsey's hands. At Salem House the scrutinising eye of Tungay acts a disciplinary gaze but subjectification happens at Dr. Strong's in Canterbury where the disciplinary gaze is more discrete. The boys were spoken of well in the town and felt that they had a part to play in maintaining the dignity of that place. Here, discipline has become internalised and the boys end up enforcing self discipline. Similarly, another boy from the twentieth century English novel, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (first published in book format in 1916) finds it hard to swallow the insult as he felt he had been wronged for his glasses had been broken the previous day. His attempts to get justice by reporting the matter to the headmaster go in vain as the matter is brushed off. From a Foucauldian point of view one can say that as the child was in a weak position, in unequal power relations, there was no way he could have found redress.

The three basic tenets of Foucault's theory are central to the understanding the machination of power and discipline in the world of the school:

- Hierarchical Observation
- Normalizing Judgments
- Examinations (which combine both the former techniques)

Discipline works by dividing and classifying the multitude and appointing observers over them. Just as in the army, in schools, students are divided

⁴ An example of unruly crowds and subversive atmosphere of the execution can be had from William Hogarth's engravings of 1740's titled "Industry and idleness" [Refer: Plate 11: The idle 'Prentice executed at Tyburn]; engraving; 1747/09/30

according to different age levels in different classes and sections along with appointment of teachers overseen by co-ordinators. One can easily get a glimpse of it in the literary world also. For example, in the first instalment of the famous Harry Potter series, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, all the students are classified into different houses namely, Gryffindor, Hufflepuff, Ravenclaw and Slytherin with a sorting hat. The hat takes the students wishes into consideration while assigning the house. The hat gets confused while assigning Harry a house because he had a part of Voldemort, the Dark Lord, in him. Here, we get an example of knowledge of the subject being used to control the subject.

Disciplinary gaze and surveillance techniques work on account of visibility- not of the power, but of the subject. Here, it may be useful to discuss Bentham's Panoptican which Foucault considered an ideal example of the use of architectural innovations by disciplinary power for its own ends. Though never built, the Panoptican was to be the ideal surveillance system for a prison. It was to take the form of a circular building with the cells of the inmates arranged around the perimeter and the lighting so permitted that all the inmates were visible to the observer at the centre of the structure, without his being seen by the inmates. The inmates too can't see each other thus facilitating their individualisation. The inmates, thus, do not know whether they are being observed or not and their visibility makes them fall into the trap of self discipline. Consider the people who do not litter roads just because CCTV cameras are installed in the vicinity. Whether the instrument works, or not, is another matter altogether. Just like the prison inmates, the students too fall in the trap of self discipline. In the Doon school [11] and in the military school at Wardha [12] self discipline is highly valued. In fact, Benei commented as to how the students sat for their individual self study lessons in the evening and not one student could be found talking even in the absence of any teacher. Here, discipline has been internalised. Similarly, in the Doon school, students sit at their combination desk lockers called 'toyes', for self study. The desks arranged in rows one after the other is so designed so as to limit any kind of interaction amongst the students. Thus, even the furniture is so designed as to individualise the student and subject them to the disciplinary gaze.

Hierarchical observation is an important feature of the Panoptican. The observer at the centre of the Panoptican is also observed by another supervisor and thus cannot afford to be slack in performing his duties. Thus, people who occupy a central position in the panoptican are themselves enmeshed in it and involved in the ordering of their own behaviour [4]. Similarly, schools appoint observers in the form of class monitors, prefects and head prefects, thus, giving form

to the notion of hierarchical observation. To Mac Dougall [11] seeing such hierarchical exercise of power was like witnessing the British colonial practice of "indirect rule." However, things don't end here. Monitors and prefects are superseded by teachers, who in turn are in control of the Principal. Thus, discipline as a technique of domination works best by remaining diffuse and invisible.

Spatio-temporal constraints combine with hierarchical observation in the Panoptican to maximise the exercise of discipline. The architecture of school buildings is also geared towards maximising surveillance. The doors of the classroom open into the corridor facilitating the Principal to catch errant students and teachers while on rounds. The windows are placed at the back to minimise distraction for the students. In some schools, the teacher's table is placed on a raised platform so that s/he can keep an eye on the students' activities. Similarly, in colleges, lecture theatres are so designed that students' seats rise up in tiered pattern making them visible to the teacher in the centre. In some schools and colleges where the doors of the classroom are allowed to be closed, small windows are cut in the doors which can be used by the authorities to keep a tab on the goings on in the class. The offices of the Principal and the vice Principal are also centrally located to facilitate surveillance. Control through segregation of spaces is common in schools. Nursery wing, its park and swings are out of bounds for primary school children. The enclosure is ostensibly for the safety of the tiny tots but it is also to keep out and discipline the mature students. The reception of the school is another area out of bounds for the school children. All the students are expected to use the spaces as it has been marked for use by the authorities. Thus, the students need to seek permission for the use of rooms, halls and the school stage.

Spatio-temporal constraints have at their focus the body and the psyche of the individual subject. Winkelmann [13] as part of her study on Muslim girls' education, studied the Jamiatul Banaath madarssah, a residential institution spread over mere 50 sq. yards in Old Delhi. In this closed and exclusive space the girls are taught to practice 'adab'. In the Foucauldian sense, an attempt is made to inscribe discipline on the girls' bodies in the form of the purdah and the Shariat is offered to them as the only true source of knowledge. Although, the girls remain behind purdah, they can be heard on the other side of the thin curtain by the male manager of the school and thus surveillance is ensured. Also, the girls remain inside the school for the better part of the year. In the Doon school mentioned before, the students change their uniforms at least 6 times a day according to different activities. Mac Dougall [11], Looking at the morning assembly being performed with clockwork precision remarked that he had the

impression of school as being a theatre where a performance was going on.

Disciplinary power works on the body and the mind of the subject with the help of ritualised activities such as following the timetable such that “bodies are induced into particular social order and thus programmable for designated functions or tasks” [14]. Body is central for the Foucauldian subject. Discipline operates on individual movement and gestures too through constant and uninterrupted supervision. Thus, in schools one can find uniform monitors to check the length of socks and skirts, the plaiting of hair and enforce that neither mehendi should be applied on the hands of girls, nor should they be found wearing baubles. Similarly, the hairstyle of boys, the sitting and walking postures of students of both the sexes are carefully controlled. Thus, the body becomes the site for the exercise of disciplinary power.

School exercises a control over the students’ sexuality as well. Boys and girls are made to sit separately. They are provided with sex education, namely life skills education in India (geared more towards teaching about hygiene). The sex education programmes actually treat students in a “childlike” manner [15]. In fact according to Allen the ideal subject in schools is a non sexual student. The discourse of the sex education programmes is limiting and pre defined and offers no answers to the students’ queries. Sex is treated in an overly scientific manner and the discourse of desire is missing from sex education. Consider the opening scene of the film *Udaan* [16] where a group of adolescent students run away from hostel in the middle of the night to watch a porn film. This attempt of theirs of discovering their own sexuality is met with punishment in the form rustication from one of the premier institutes of the country. Similarly, in the *Jamiatul Banaath madarssah*, focus is on the female body and protecting it from harm by keeping it behind the purdah. Sometimes schools actively try to construct the students’ sexuality too, as opposed to just de sexualising the students. Both the Doon school and the military school at Wardha lay a lot of emphasis on physical activities. At the military school, the father son relationship is of prime importance while the rhetoric of becoming a soldier to guard the motherland is a constant refrain.

Besides, surveillance and hierarchical observation, the second way in which disciplinary power exerts itself is through Normalizing Judgments. The focus as we should remember is on the construction of an individual subject. Just as the medical profession defined normal health, the school with its disciplinary tools is supposed to create a normal child. We should also remember Foucault’s concern with normality and abnormality, which according to Foucault are false

categories. With the rise of the human sciences such as psychiatry, norms came to be established for the measurement of normality. Here, once again, we find an exercise of power of knowledge. People who are powerful decide what is truth, what is normal and based on this knowledge; some people are expelled from the category of normal as established by Enlightenment.

Normalisation is a corrective process targeted at producing conformity. Normalisation consists of five processes namely: comparison, differentiation, homogenization and exclusion. Thus, individuals’ performance is measured against the desired standard of conduct followed by the process of differentiating them from one other in terms of their ability to follow the rule. Then, in accordance with their performance measured in quantitative terms, the individuals are placed in a hierarchy. Certain homogenization also takes place such as the clubbing together of all failures and assigning them to remedial classes for all subjects without any consideration of specific weaknesses. Finally, normalization excludes. The mechanisms that serve to hierarchize the normal also serve to exclude the normal. Hierarchization of the normal is visible in the popular Bollywood film *3 Idiots* [17] where the topper protagonist (best amongst the normal) gets to sit next to the college dean for the annual group photo while his failed friends (read abnormal) get to sit at the extremity (and fear that they’ll be soon out of the photo altogether).

Normalising judgments and hierarchical observation come together in the necessary disciplinary device called Examinations. Examinations are the most conspicuous and ubiquitous presence in schools. Examinations are universally considered as a test of merit and according to Scott [6] examinations are also considered as an effective device of combating favouritism and preventing arbitrariness. Foucault is quoted by Scott [6] as stating that the examination “...is a normalising gaze, a surveillance that makes it possible to qualify, to classify, to punish. It establishes over individuals a visibility through which one differentiates them and judges them.” (p.61)

Examinations make the subjects all the more visible and susceptible to normalisation by bringing to fore their results. The results are subjected to statistical and psychometric apparatus for differentiating and placing individuals in a hierarchy. According to Foucault, examination works in three important ways:

□ Transforming ‘the economy of visibility’
Thus, as opposed to the visible exercise of sovereign power, disciplinary power is exercised invisibly. The examined person has no idea of who the examiner is but the rhetoric of neutrality all the

same binds the examined into measuring his or her worth in terms of the criteria as outlined in the examination rules. Thus, the examinee's construction as success or the failure is a function of the criteria of the examination.

□ Examination introduces 'individuality into the field of documentation'

Examinations with all the surveillance paraphernalia of sealed question papers, assigned roll numbers, admit cards, sitting arrangements and question papers with separate codes serve to individuate the students. Even in nursery classes officially mandated surveillance records include checklists, diaries of teachers' observations, profiles, and portfolios of students' work help to create a dossier on individual, thus making him or her a case [14]. In case of failure, each individual becomes a problem case in need of correction.

□ Examination makes 'each individual a "case"'

Thus, individual becomes an object for a branch of knowledge. Scott quotes Foucault stating

The case...is the individual as he {sic} may be described, judged, measured, compared with others, in his very individuality; and it is also the individual who has to be trained or corrected, classified, normalised, excluded etc [6].

For Foucault, examination becomes one major means of realising hierarchical normalisation. It allows individual to be placed on a scale of normality. No subject is able to fathom himself apart from this mechanism. Any deviance is considered as abnormal or unnatural. The results of examinations, moreover, contribute towards establishing the norms.

CONCLUSION

In this paper, major Foucauldian ideas have been examined such as power-knowledge interlinkages, normalizing judgments, spatialisation and the panopticon. The analysis draws upon films and fictional books to show the relevance of and pervasive influence of Foucauldian ideas in the modern world. We have also examined the relationship of Foucauldian ideas to education, particularly schooling. Schooling, as we have seen, is a major instrument contributing to the fashioning of the human subject for particular ends in the society. Students can be seen as rebelling against disciplinary power in subtle and not so subtle ways. However, the dominant discourse remains largely unaltered. Teachers are part of the system exercising disciplinary power but like the observer of Bentham's Panopticon are themselves subjected to this power in turn. Foucault's ideas and his works have aroused a great deal of interest and debate. His concepts and his

works are a treasure to be read, understood, critiqued and applied in the modern world. In fact "he desired his books 'to be a kind of tool-box others can rummage through to find a tool they can use however they wish in their own area... I don't write for an audience, I write for users, not readers.'"⁵

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