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Educational Administration as a Disciplinary Practice: Appropriating Foucault's View of Power, Discourse, and Method

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This article discusses the relevance of Foucault's work to the field of educational administration. It argues for Foucault's concept of disciplinary practice as a powerful new generative metaphor for the field. A major implication of Foucault's view of power is that educational practices that may appear more democratic, participatory, or progressive may in fact constitute forms of disciplinary power and thus result in more effective technologies of control. The authors argue that regardless of which techniques of administration are used, the effects of disciplinary power cannot be escaped. No educational practices are inherently more empowering than others. They further discuss how disciplinary power operates through discourse practices, which, according to Foucault, link knowledge and power. Discourses shape administrative practices, and administrative practices produce discourses. Finally, the authors discuss how Foucault's methodology (genealogy) can be used to determine why some discourses have prevailed over others in the field of educational administration.

During the past several decades, scholars have attempted to frame educational administration as predominantly science (Hoy, 1996), craft (Blumberg, 1984), politics (Bacharach & Mundell, 1993), moral philosophy (Heslep, 1997; Hodgkinson, 1991), caring practice (Beck, 1994; Marshall, Patterson, Rogers, & Steele, 1996), dramaturgy (Starratt, 1993), symbolic interactive accomplishment (Greenfield, 1984; Gronn, 1983), problem solving (Robin-

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son, 1996), and ideological control (Anderson, 1991; Foster, 1980). These multiple frames have proven useful both as lenses through which to make sense of the complexity of organizational life and as conceptual challenges to research and practice. The development of these multiple frames has been enabled by theoretical debates in the social and human sciences among structural-functionalists, phenomenologists, symbolic interactionists, critical theorists, and feminists. In this article, we will explore the implications of a new postmodern[1] frame drawn from the work of Michel Foucault that we feel provides a new generative metaphor for the field. Foucault would have argued that fields such as educational administration are best viewed as predominantly a set of disciplinary practices. The rest of this article will draw out some implications for the field as we begin to view it through this new postmodern frame.

Disciplinary practice, as we will use the term in this article, refers to a set of discourses, norms, and routines that shape the ways in which a field of study such as educational administration and its related practices (i.e., site-based management, supervision, staff development, etc.) constitute themselves. This process of self-constitution entails the establishment of conventions, agreements, and rules that regulate and legitimize current ways of distinguishing among "best practices," desired outcomes, academic rigor, and valid knowledge claims. These discourses, ideas, and routines connect with historical, political, cultural, and economic contexts but are enacted within specific, local, and contingent institutional arrangements. For example, the constitution of the field of educational administration was framed amid competing discourses during the early 20th century, wherein social practice based on rationality, efficiency, and effectiveness prevailed over other competing discourses (Callahan, 1962). The way that the field of educational administration was constituted as a disciplinary practice has had specific implications for everyday school life.

An example of a disciplinary practice is the ways that academics construct journal articles, such as this one, based on a set of conventions and rules that have been historically constituted. For example, it is customary that scholars locate their topics within the field of study in which they write. For this reason, in the first paragraph of this article, we locate the concept of disciplinary practice within a set of previous competing discourses that have contributed to the constitution of the field itself. As we locate our own article within this discursive field, we become part of the taken-for-granted routines and conventions that form our field as a disciplinary practice at the same time that we challenge it. Thus, we as scholars are "disciplined" by these conventions and routines at the same time that we call into question many of the assumptions that maintain them in place. Therefore, disciplinary practices are

not totalizing in the sense that although they constitute practices, they can also be reconstituted through what Foucault calls acts of transgression. However, it is important to note that from a Foucauldian perspective, any alternative discourse runs the risk of emerging as a new "regime of truth"[2] with its own set of disciplinary practices and its own unique forms of oppression.

A few caveats are in order before beginning our analysis in more depth. First, we do not see framing educational administration as a disciplinary practice as an entirely new idea but, rather, as an extension of previous work in the field that has focused on hidden dimensions of social and organizational life. Many do argue that postmodern theory represents a fundamental break with modernist theories such as functionalism or critical theory;[3] however, we believe that many of Foucault's ideas, such as his notion of disciplinary power, draw heavily on views of power that currently inform the field.[4] On the other hand, because Foucault's work explicitly focused on an analysis of the administration of social institutions and because it challenges many taken-for-granted aspects of our field, we have found it useful and provocative. Second, we do not propose that any single frame should orient a field. Although we believe that researchers and practitioners have dominant frames through which they view social reality, we believe with Morgan (1997) that conceptual frames also have a heuristic value as metaphors. "When we recognize that competing theories are competing metaphors, we can approach them in a new way. We can learn to see and tap their strengths and be aware of their inevitable weaknesses" (p. 376). It would go against the spirit of postmodern theory to propose the notion of disciplinary practices as a new master narrative[5] or regime of truth for educational administration.

In spite of the relevance of Foucault's central concerns to the field, it is still fairly rare to find references to his work in the educational administration literature, much less applications of his work in everyday practice. In this article, we hope to provide some implications of his work for those unfamiliar with Foucault and postmodern theory generally while also engaging in an incipient debate that is developing in the field around postmodern approaches to educational administration (see Evers & Lakomski, 1996; Maxcy, 1994; Scheurich, 1994a, 1994b).

There is a growing body of work in education that appropriates Foucault's ideas. We are aware that to slot these into traditional subfields reinforces the disciplinary fragmentation that Foucault critiques; however, on the positive side, the fact that Foucault has been appropriated by scholars from various educational subfields helps to stretch current disciplinary boundaries. A few areas of education affected by Foucault's work include teacher development (Hargreaves, 1994; Jones, 1990; Labaree, 1992; Popkewitz & Brennan, 1994,

1997), classroom management (Heilker, 1994; Tavares, 1996), teaching methods (Biesta, 1995; Luke, 1992), educational equality (Ryan, 1991), and computer-mediated instruction (Spears & Lea, 1994). Studies that fall within the parameters of educational administration as the field is currently constituted are strategic planning (Rusch, 1992), policy analysis (Ball, 1994; Kenway, 1990; Knight, Smith, & Sachs, 1990; Miron, 1996; Roman, 1996; Scheurich, 1994a), school management (Ball, 1990), and leadership (Angus, 1996; Blount, 1994; Maxcy, 1991, 1994; McKinney & Garrison, 1994).

In this article, we will discuss several concepts central to Foucault's work that we consider particularly useful to scholars in educational administration, including disciplinary power, discursive practices, and genealogical analysis. We will argue that the Foucauldian concepts and approaches discussed in the article provide a powerful set of intellectual tools for the analysis of current educational reforms and educational administration as a field of study. Because the concept of power is central to Foucault's work and because postmodernists challenge current conceptions of power in the social sciences, we will begin with a discussion of power and its effects.

SHIFTING VIEWS OF POWER: FOUCAULT AND DISCIPLINARY POWER

> Foucauldians seek to look beyond the manifest and obvious exercise of power, to ask how resistance and expressions of dissent have been minimized or even eliminated. (Kearins, 1997, p. 7)

Nearly all of Foucault's work was concerned with the various ways that power operates through social institutions and the elements of social relations that control, govern, and normalize individual and collective behavior. His archaeological studies of modern institutions focused on mental institutions (Foucault, 1973), hospitals (Foucault, 1975), prisons (Foucault, 1979), and academic disciplines (Foucault, 1972). Barker and Cheney (1994) and Clegg (1989) argue that in a broad sense, Foucault's work on discipline extends Max Weber's claims about the increasing rationalization of society. Although using radically different historical methods of analysis, Foucault's archaeologies and genealogies also complement Callahan's (1962) claim that educational administration was colonized by efficiency experts from the fields of business and industrial psychology. The moment that school boards in the 19th century turned over some of their paperwork to a "principal teacher," the notion of school administration was born. Throughout the 20th century, the growth and dispersion of administrative discourses in education solidified

the categories of administrators and the administered, that is, those who are ultimately defined by the administrative gaze. It follows that control over discourses is a source of power, exemplified in the professional status of those who control it and in the loss of status to those (teachers, students, communities) who are defined by it.[6]

Foucault's writing on power extends previous debates on the nature of power, spawned largely by Dahl's (1961) pluralist conception of power, which was meant as a critique of current views of power that Dahl felt were too tied to power elites (Mills, 1956) and too lacking in empirical rigor. Dahl (1961) argued for operationalizing a definition of power so that one could observe and measure who exercised power and to what extent in a given situation. In this way, one can explain why certain decisions get made and who wields power in each case. In their discussion of the importance of non–decision making, Bachrach and Baratz (1963) challenged Dahl's empirical approach to the study of power by arguing that power is exercised not only through decisions made in formal decision-making arenas but also through keeping decisions out of those arenas. Following this view, researchers tended to study how issues were kept off the agenda or explained the nonoccurrence of something—why something was a nonevent (Anderson, 1990). Lukes (1974), arguing for a third dimension to power, claimed that in both cases, power was exercised to either promote one's interests or to keep others' interests from prevailing, but this assumed that social actors are always aware of what their interests are. Thus, according to Lukes, the failure to act may be a refusal to act, or it may be the actor's inability to see the need for action from the start. Lukes saw both Dahl (1961) and Bachrach and Baratz (1963) as mired in a behaviorism that viewed decisions and nondecisions as overt and observable instances of power. Following Gramsci, he argued that the exercise of power extended to the determination of our very interests and needs. According to Lukes (1974), A may exercise power over B by getting B to do what B does not want to do, but A also exercises power over B by influencing, shaping, or determining B's very wants. Lukes's break with previous behaviorist notions of power shifted attention to more unobtrusive and cognitive modes of control associated with the Marxist problematics of hegemony and false consciousness.

For Foucault, power is even more pervasive and unobtrusive than it is for Luke. Moving even beyond cognitive forms of control, including those that camouflage ideology as common sense, Foucault (1979) proposes a microphysics of power that disciplines the body, mind, and soul. Foucault's view of power is illustrated by Jeremy Bentham's 19th-century drawings of the panopticon, which consists of a tower surrounded by a circular structure

containing cells that are visible from the tower. The occupants of these cells never know if someone in the tower is observing them, but because they cannot see into the tower, they must assume that they are being watched.

> All that is needed then is to place a supervisor in a central tower and to shut up in each cell a madman, a patient, a condemned man, a worker, or a school boy. . . . Hence the major effect of the Panopticon: to induce in the inmate a state of conscious and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power. So to arrange things that the surveillance is permanent in its effects, even if it is discontinuous in its action; that the perfection of power should tend to render its actual exercise unnecessary; that this architectural apparatus should be a machine for creating and sustaining a power relation independent of the person who exercises it; in short, that the inmates should be caught up in a power situation of which they are themselves the bearers. (pp. 200-201)

Foucault challenges the notion that power is something that is wielded and argues that it is embedded in social relations. In modern society, power is exercised through institutional relations that discipline our ways of thinking and acting through self-regulation. This new form of power moved, according to Bauman (1982),

> into the very centre of daily life. Its object . . . was now the subject himself [*sic*], his daily routine, his time, his bodily actions, his mode of life. The power reached now towards the body and the soul of its subjects. It wished to regulate, to legislate, to tell the right from the wrong, the norm from deviance, the ought from the is. It wanted to impose one ubiquitous pattern of normality and eliminate everything and everybody which the pattern could not fit. (p. 167)

This emergent power could be maintained only by a dense web of interlocking authorities in constant communication with subjects thus permitting a constant surveillance of the totality of their lives. These emerging disciplinary practices have resulted, according to Foucault, in the colonization through administration of all social spaces and practices.

HOW DISCIPLINARY POWER IS ACCOMPLISHED THROUGH DISCIPLINARY PRACTICES

Modern social institutions such as educational systems foster an array of disciplinary practices. Two ways that schools and universities discipline are through the study of discrete school subjects (disciplines) and by normalizing human subjects (students, faculty, administrators, and staff). Schools and

universities discipline the minds of students by providing one way of thinking about subject matter. The systematic study of an area of knowledge is a form of disciplining. For example, the breaking off of the field of educational administration from other educational fields such as social foundations and counseling was part of an attempt to create a science of administration based on technical rationality. As educational scholars focus on discrete fields of study such as educational administration, they engage in what Foucault calls dividing practices that fragment knowledge and promote a form of rationality that facilitates control.

A second way that schools and universities discipline is through the internalization of correct behavior or what Foucault called normalization. Norms, rules, and laws are internalized in ways that do not need external control or surveillance on the part of authorities. Normalization operates through both individual self-discipline and group control. These disciplinary practices allow teachers to leave the classroom assured that students will keep working on their tasks in the absence of the physical presence of authority. The disciplinary gaze is personal but also institutional, as students know they can get in trouble with the principal if they are caught in undisciplined behavior. Self-discipline is also achieved through discourse practices that provide validation for behavior. Terms such as *positive attitude*, *good student*, and *nice kid* are all normalizing discourses in schools that tell students what kinds of behaviors are rewarded. Later, students will be exposed to discourses of the good worker, the team player, and the community builder, which will provide the discursive incentive for subjects to accept authority and the norms and goals of social institutions.

The meaning Foucault gives to *disciplinary practice* is closely linked to the notion of disciplinary power discussed above. Although the idea that power is present in all social practices may not seem new, the implications of Foucault's view is that educational practices that may appear more democratic, participatory, or progressive may in fact be more effective forms of disciplinary power. For example, torture as a disciplinary practice has been superseded by disciplinary practices that engage in techniques of surveillance and observation as illustrated by the panopticon. The implication for educational administrators is that practices that appear more authoritarian may in fact exercise power in equally strong ways through techniques that appear less authoritarian. For example, Heilker (1994) points out that conscious efforts by teachers to transform and decentralize power in the classroom may, in fact, have an opposite effect. According to Foucault (1979), "Discipline proceeds from the distribution of individuals in space . . . and sometimes requires *enclosure*, the specification of a place heterogeneous to all others

and closed in upon itself" (p. 141). Heilker (1994) points out that one of the emblems of decentralizing power in the classroom is the conversion of rows of desks into a circle of desks. When a class is seated in a circle, students cannot escape the gaze of the professor. Not only does this arrangement make students easier to supervise, it turns students in upon themselves, creating reinforcing gazes among the students, resulting in what Foucault (1979) calls "multiple and intersecting observations" (p. 171). As Gore (1994) points out,

> There is nothing inherently liberating about this practice, even when located within a radical discourse, and nothing inherently oppressive about rows. On the one hand, the circle [absent the teacher] can require of students a greater self disciplining, taking responsibility for behaving "appropriately" without the "look" of the teacher. On the other hand, the partial privacy allowed by the traditional placement of desks, whereby one is under the surveillance or supervision primarily of the teacher, might be forfeited as students come more directly under the surveillance of their peers as well. (p. 116)

The same is true of many apparently progressive administrative reforms. Although Barker (1993) takes his examples from industry rather than professional organizations, most educators will recognize aspects of their own workplaces in the following descriptions of teaming. Barker argues that in postbureaucratic institutions, control is increasingly exercised by shifting "the locus of control from management to the workers themselves, who collaborate to develop the means of their own control" (p. 411). Barker calls this "concertive control" which, he claims, results in the negotiation of a new set of consensual core values among organizational members. Unlike bureaucratic control, which invests control in supervisors who enforce bureaucratic rules, concertive control through self-managing teams or councils hands over the creation and supervision of rules and norms to organizational members. Although this may seem like a positive development—and under certain conditions may be so—it also increases the intensity of control while it hides its sources. Barker describes an environment in which peer pressure, surveillance, and even humiliation become daily events. According to Barker,

> Concertive control is much more subtle than a supervisor telling a group of workers what to do. In a concertive system . . . the workers create a value-based system of control and then invest themselves in it through their strong identification with the system. (p. 434)

This strong identification makes the creation and enforcement of rules among the workers themselves appear a natural process, and they willingly submit to their own—often harsh—control system.

Concertive power stands the notion of empowerment—so popular among educational administrators—on its head. The term *empowerment* is conventionally used in management literature and among school administrators to mean an increase in personal and/or professional autonomy within the context of formal organizations.[7] It is generally counterposed to traditional hierarchical, bureaucratic, and control-oriented approaches to management. However, once we view management teams, shared governance councils, parent-involvement models, and desks in a circle as disciplinary practices that represent the increasingly rationalized efforts to normalize and control individual and collective action, we must rethink current uses of the term *empowerment*. Empowerment becomes a disciplinary practice that embodies forms of unobtrusive or nonovert control in contemporary organizations in which control no longer appears to come from outside the organizational members' sphere of activity. According to Barker (1993), "the relative success of participatory approaches hinges not on reducing control but on achieving a system of control that is more effective than that of other systems" (p. 433).

Of course, control and discipline are not problems in themselves. Organizations cannot function unless members submit to some form of organizational discipline. The field of management is founded on this notion. However,

> Weber's (1978) great fear about the triumph of bureaucracy—besides its devaluation of the individual and the potential for the undue concentration of power at the top of an organizational pyramid—was that "substantive" rationality, the careful and collective examination of the ultimate goals of a society or of a part of it, would be overtaken and eventually supplanted by "formal" rationality, the often mindless calculation of tasks, procedures, and details. (Barker & Cheney, 1994, p. 26)

Therefore, as concertive control is recognized as a more effective system of control, it continues to replace bureaucratic control in contemporary organizations. As formal or instrumental rationality continues to hold sway over substantive rationality, external goals, such as neoliberal policies that disfavor workers, are promoted at the organizational level as empowerment. The same is true in education as discourses of empowerment are used at micro levels, whereas fiscal policies that sustain the savage inequalities documented by Kozol (1991) continue to be promoted at macro levels (see Anderson, in press, for a more in-depth discussion).

Thus, although conventional wisdom in educational administration tends to see current reforms that move from traditional bureaucratic and hierarchical forms of control to more participatory, site-based ones, Foucault suggests that there is nothing inherently more oppressive or liberating in these prac-

tices. Such shifts can in fact merely result in more effective disciplinary practices. In the following section, we will discuss the ways that discourse is central to Foucault's notion of disciplinary practice and its relevance to educational administration.

THE CENTRALITY OF DISCOURSE: ADMINISTRATION AS A DISCURSIVE PRACTICE

The challenge that Foucault represents to educational administrators should be clear by now. Regardless of which techniques of administration we use (i.e., site-based or bureaucratic management), we cannot escape the effects of disciplinary power. No educational practices are inherently more empowering than others. Like the panopticon, some so-called progressive administrative practices may increase the visibility and vulnerability of the administered (and often the administrator as well), thus disciplining them in ways that may have been unintended. However, the implications of Foucault's work are equally relevant for scholars since we are caught up in producing discourses that contribute to the constitution and promotion of particular administrative practices as well as to the constitution of educational administration as a field separate from teacher education, counseling, and educational foundations.[8]

Discourse is central to Foucault's work, but he uses the term broadly to include more than oral and textual linguistic practices (Fairclough, 1992). To Foucault, discursive practices are the link between knowledge and power. Disciplinary practices, such as those described in the previous sections, are viewed by Foucault as forms of knowledge. "Because they are knowledge constituted, not just in texts, but in definite institutional and organizational practices, they are 'discursive practices': knowledge reproduced through practices made possible by the framing assumptions of that knowledge" (Clegg, 1989, p. 54). Because discourses shape practices and practices produce discourses, some authors use the term *discourse-practice* to denote this circular dynamic (Cherryholmes, 1988).[9]

Discursive practices determine what counts as true or important in a particular place and time.[10] For example, administrative interns want to become good school administrators. Becoming a good school administrator currently means to acquire skills to maintain an orderly and disciplined school, motivate teachers, manage conflict, improve test scores, promote a vision, and engage effectively in public relations with the school community. Good school administrators seek to master "appropriate" discourse-practices of administration. The importance of these skills at any particular time and

place is the result of a battle over competing discourses, or what Foucault (1980) calls a "politics of truth," resulting in a regime of truth.

This battle of discourses is seldom carried out in the open and most often is not part of the consciousness of those who are constituted by it. According to Cherryholmes (1988), "Educators adapt as a matter of everyday professional life to contractual organizational demands, to demands of professional discourse, to expectations of professional peers, and to informal as well as formal job expectations" (p. 35). Administrative preparation programs seldom interrupt this socialization and help to reproduce discourse-practices through what is assessed (and not assessed) in assessment centers that screen applicants into and out of programs, through what is taught (and not taught) in courses, and through what is learned (and not learned) in internships with veteran administrators. Although this may sound similar to the traditional literature on professional socialization, a postmodern view of socialization rejects the notion that best practices are the result of a rational or scientific approach to a field of study or "discipline" such as educational administration. Postmodernists would view the field of educational administration as a modernist disciplinary practice—much like the panopticon described in a previous section—that contributes to the constitution of subjects (students and professors) as "docile bodies".[11] It is a regime of truth "produced by individuals caught up and proficient in discursive and nondiscursive practices of their time who participate in discourses without origins or authors and over which they have little control" (Cherryholmes, 1988, pp. 35-36).

Foucault's assertion that the human subject is at the mercy of dominant discourses has led some to view his work as pessimistic in that it does not appear to allow for human agency on the part of individuals. However, it is important to understand that the constitution of human subjects is an ongoing historical process in which human agency plays a part.

> Just because subjectivity is culturally constructed and always in the process of construction, it does not follow that subjectivity is an illusion. To the contrary, at any given historical moment, there *is* a constituted subject; it is only over time, as the social relations within which subjectivity is embedded change, that the configuration of that subject is unstable. . . . What has changed fundamentally is the notion that the subject exists in any sense autonomously, outside that network of relations. (Baack & Prasch, 1997, p. 135)

This rejection of the human subject as stable, fixed, and unified means that the motives, values, and goals of each social actor within an organization must be viewed as a set of relational, subjective, and temporary ideas shaped by temporal and contextual forces over time. Within a micropolitical framework of organizational analysis, we can view politics as conflict among competing

discourses attempting to shape the identities of organizational members. This view of organizations extends current work that sees administration as a form of cognitive politics aimed at the management of meaning (Anderson, 1991; Angus, 1996; Corson, 1995, 1996; Gronn, 1983; Smircich & Morgan, 1982). It also extends the work of Greenfield (1973) who argued that organizations are social constructions that do not have goals independent of the goals of the individual members. However, Foucault would take Greenfield's argument further and assert that because individuals are not unified autonomous subjects, they do not have fixed goals but are themselves social constructions with goals that are shifting and contingent.

The notion that current practices of educational administration are the result of competing discourses requires a way to engage in a kind of backward mapping of how these discourses came about and how some discourses won out over others. Foucault developed a series of historical approaches to account for the taken-for-granted nature of current disciplinary practices. We will briefly explore these approaches in the following section.

INVESTIGATING WHY SOME DISCOURSES PREVAIL OVER OTHERS: FOUCAULT'S GENEALOGICAL APPROACH

Foucault provides two approaches for determining how discourse and power operate historically to produce taken-for-granted regimes of truth. Scheurich (1994a) has provided an extensive application of Foucault's earlier, more structurally oriented, archaeological analysis to issues of educational administration and policy. In this article, we will focus on Foucault's later approach which, following Hegel and Nietchze, he calls genealogy, which focuses on how discourse practices and power operate and which helps to explain why some discourses prevail over others. According to Foucault (1980), genealogy is "a form of history that can account for the constitution of knowledges, discourses, domains of objects, etc. without having to make reference to a subject" (p. 117). Although a genealogical approach is closely related to historical methods, traditional historians view Foucault's work as problematic because his way of doing history is not chronological, developmental, or evolutionary, and it is not always connected to the work of other historians. Genealogy does not propose a specific formula or set of steps to follow, but rather, a critical, questioning disposition is required. Ultimately, it is not humanist in the sense that it does not focus on individuals, mass movements, central characters, or the shaping of institutions or ideas by human beings. Rather, he invites us to view the production of disciplinary practices as strategic elements within relations of power.

> The longer I continue, the more it seems to me that the formation of discourse and the genealogy of knowledge need to be analyzed, not in terms of types of consciousness, modes of perception and forms of ideology, but in terms of tactics and strategies of power. (Foucault, 1980, p. 77)

Foucault is interested in how disciplines are constituted and how competing discourses prevail over others. He does not necessarily see this process as the result of a master plot managed from centers of power. On the contrary, the process is circular rather than linear because it occurs through everyday practices that are reproduced by adherence to norms that are themselves validated through a variety of discursive practices.

According to Donnelly (1986), a primary goal of genealogy is to make the past and present unfamiliar by using a narrative that interrupts grandiose storytelling by breaking with chronology, continuity, and coherence and that introduces accounts of events often neglected in conventional histories. Another goal is to problematize taken-for-granted concepts and categories. Thus, genealogy involves not only detailed, meticulous archival work but also a different type of question, a search for the different, for the unaccounted for, and for the strange or bizarre. It also requires a different type of narrative with the rhetorical device of questioning the taken-for-granted and writing about the present while moving back and forth from accounts of specific, local situations and practices of the past. For instance, *Discipline and Punish*, perhaps Foucault's (1979) most influential genealogy, was motivated at the time by several prison revolts, including the one at Attica, New York. It is a good example of how a concern with present events led to a genealogical study that focused not so much on prison systems, per se, but rather on the social practices of discipline and punishment.

In the same way, Foucault would be less interested in writing a history of education than genealogies of how schooling, pedagogies, counseling, management, or supervision were constituted historically. The focus would be on how control is exercised, how discourses are produced, and how regimes of truth are formed through discourse-practices. He would view schooling as an institution through which pedagogies, counseling practices, supervision, curricular practices, and management techniques serve a regime of truth and a process of normalization. By exploring these practices "in minute detail and reconstructing events so as to take account of subjugated and neglected knowledges" (Marshall, 1990, p. 23), Foucault invites us to consider that events could have been constructed differently.

All areas of educational administration lend themselves to genealogical analysis. Although there is not space here to provide a genealogy, we will suggest some areas in which the critical and questioning intellectual disposi-

tion of genealogical analysis has the potential to open up new perspectives on areas of inquiry in the field.

For example, the benevolent discourses of staff development and supervision have genealogical connections with less benevolent discourses such as those associated with school inspection. Inspection emerged in the 19th century along with the creation of common schools aimed at instilling democratic values, providing access to knowledge and equal opportunity, fostering a meritocratic system, preparing future workers, infusing respect for authority and the law, Americanizing immigrants and subjugated populations, and maintaining hierarchies historically associated with class, race, and gender (Spring, 1985, 1994). At that time, teachers were hired with little education or experience, and the rapidly growing teaching force increasingly consisted of women (Sedlak, 1989). As the system grew, inspectors—mostly male—were hired to ensure that prescribed content was taught, schools were kept clean and orderly, and teachers were on task. This hierarchization of gender roles created the patriarchal system we can still observe in schools today.[12] The position of inspector created a functional role in the educational hierarchy that inspected, evaluated, and provided accountability by creating a system of surveillance over teachers and ultimately over students (and their families). Although the perceived need for inspection is still as strong as ever, the techniques of inspection have changed over the years.

For instance, newer, more horizontal forms of supervision and cooperative learning have genealogical origins in the Lancasterian pedagogy. Lancasterian practices consisted of pupils tutoring pupils. Those who mastered the text's content first became tutors of others, thus creating a cost-effective system in which a single teacher could manage and control larger numbers of pupils with the help of the pupils themselves. These practices date from the early 19th century; they have prevailed in the form of cooperative learning and professional development models in which teachers teach other teachers. Although these newer practices may on the surface appear to be more progressive than the former ones, genealogy insists on local analyses of why they appear at a particular time and place.

Teacher and administrator preparation is a disciplinary practice to the extent that it produces legitimate knowledge, proper ways of behaving, and ways of thinking that form the boundaries of what counts as good practice. The practices of super/vision (some see better than others) and professional development have traditionally been the focus of attempts to update educational professionals on new practices and provide support for implementing them. To mobilize this support apparatus, the professional must be viewed as in deficit and pathologized. Professional and organizational development experts, supervisors, and instructional leaders play a role similar to the

relationship of the physician to the sick patient, the psychiatrist to the mentally ill, and the justice system to the criminal. Meanwhile, new experts emerge and reemerge: the organizational developer, the researchers who diagnose and prescribe, and the educational psychologists who probe into teacher thinking and beliefs. Approaches to supervision based on clinical models (Goldhammer, 1969) use the language of schools as teaching hospitals with clinical faculty who do clinical supervision. An entire economy grows up around these needs as extra administrative personnel are hired to carry out these tasks and as fees are paid to consultants and experts who promise prescriptions for success.

More recent discourses calling for collaborative action research and teacher and administrator study groups can either open up authentic spaces or discipline school professionals through what Foucault calls pastoral power. Pastoral power, which Foucault based on the religious practice of the confessional, reaches inside people's minds, explores their souls, and makes them reveal their innermost secrets (Howley & Hartnett, 1992). According to Carlson (1997), normalizing techniques of power are becoming more individual and more totalizing through the use of pastoral power. In this regard, he discusses the move toward authentic assessment models, such as portfolios, in teacher and administrator education programs in which they are asked to document their daily activities and their fears, reactions, failures, and so forth.

> The portfolio in this case *may* become a confessional text to be read and evaluated by the student teacher's supervisor for signs of psychological imbalance, inappropriate attitudes, and lack of conformity to role expectations. In this form, journals and portfolios provide a more totalizing form of evaluation of the student teaching experience, which goes beyond classroom effectiveness to probe into personal motivations and psychological "adjustment." (Carlson, 1997, p. 36)

The same can be said of new moves toward collaborative action research, teacher study groups, peer evaluation, and so forth. The point here is not that one or the other disciplinary practice is better or worse but that neither is inherently good or bad.

THE CHALLENGE THAT FOUCAULT POSES FOR PROBLEMATIZING THE ADMINISTRATIVE SCIENCES

Foucault's method of analysis is intended to demonstrate that power is exercised in all social situations regardless of the forms it takes. However, his

work is not prescriptive because he believed that the tactics, strategies, and goals of struggle and resistance were contingent on local factors. Thus, by offering critiques of disciplinary practices and their normalizing effects, Foucault (1980) hopes to reveal and reactivate various forms of subjugated knowledge and local critique of "an autonomous, noncentralized kind . . . whose validity is not dependent on the approval of the established regimes of thought" (p. 81). In other words, his work is not intended to help administrators do what they do more effectively but, rather, to call into question their ways of thinking and acting, ways that are placed out of awareness through the exercise of power through normalization and other processes that Foucault described. According to Smart (1986),

> A central political objective of [his] work has therefore been to assist in the creation of conditions in which particular subject groups, for example patients or prisoners, can express themselves and act, rather than to provide a theory about "madness" or "delinquency" from which specialized social agents or functionaries ("social" workers) may derive guidance for their acts of intervention. (p. 167)

Foucault would have argued that, as a field constituted by power relations, administration is generally incapable of asking critical questions, not because to do so challenges dominant interests, as critical theorists would argue, but because it is trapped within a discourse of efficiency, productivity, and effectiveness that makes problematization or critical reflection difficult. The normalization of these discourses is so extensive that it is difficult to develop a persuasive argument that schools as organizations could be anything other than efficient, productive, and effective. Furthermore, as Barker (1993), Hargreaves (1994), and others have documented, moves toward collaboration and authenticity in organizations tend to be captured and distorted by administrative discourses, a point Ferguson (1984) made over a decade ago from a feminist perspective.

As Ball (1990) points out, educational administration creates a binary opposition between the manager and the managed. Rationality and neutrality reside in the manager and irrationality and bias in the managed.

> Oppositional activity within the organization is defined, in terms of the perspectives of the dominant groups, as inherently irrational. . . . The "problem" is taken to be "in" the person rather than the system, and collective interests, other than those of "the system," are in effect deconstructed. Collective opposition is systematically misrecognized. (p. 158)

Given this view of the neutral and rational administrators and the irrational subjects of administration, a disciplinary apparatus is set up using a counseling model of psychologizing and thus pathologizing those who behave in ways that the administration constructs as irrational. "The resister is cast as social deviant, and is normalized through coercive or therapeutic procedures" (p. 158).

As self-regulation replaces less subtle forms of coercion, organizations appear more legitimate and the exercise of power is concealed along with its origins. Many educational administration scholars and practitioners will find this view too pessimistic; however, it does promise to help us better understand why many current participatory reforms are either failing or not enduring. In fact, Foucault is often critiqued as having created a closed system of oppression. Clegg (1989) argues, for example, that Foucault precludes any possibility of effective resistance.

Foucault (1979) sees the methods of surveillance and assessment of individuals, which were first developed in state institutions such as prisons, as effective tools developed for the orderly regimentation of others as docile bodies. This is so, he maintains, even when they provoke resistance. Resistance merely serves to demonstrate the necessity of that discipline which provokes it, according to Foucault. It becomes a target against which discipline may justify its necessity by virtue of its lack of omnipotence (p. 153).

In his later work, Foucault speaks of engaging in small acts of transgression against the normalizing tendency of disciplinary power and implies that these acts of transgression might have a cumulative effect. In a sense, for Foucault, resistance is the only heroic act that is left to individuals. He sees the transgression of the limits imposed by discourses and disciplinary practices as the highest achievement of human subjects. "Perhaps one day [transgression] will seem as decisive for our culture . . . as the experience of contradiction was at an earlier time for dialectical thought" (Foucault, cited in Schubert, 1995, p. 1003). Critical theorists might be more inclined to ask what comes after transgression, pointing out that transgression offers no assurance that what comes after will be more just or benevolent than what now exists. Foucault's response is that it is through such manifestations of resistance that

> subjectivity . . . introduces itself into history and gives it the breath of life. A delinquent puts his [*sic*] life into the balance against absurd punishments; a madman can no longer accept confinement and the forfeiture of his rights; a people refuses the regime which oppresses it. This does not make the rebel in

> the first case innocent, nor does it cure in the second, and it does not assure the third rebel of the promised tomorrow. One does not have to be in solidarity with them. One does not have to maintain that these confused voices sound better than the others and express the ultimate truth. For there to be a sense in listening to them and in searching for what they want to say, it is sufficient that they exist and that they have against them so much which is set up to silence them. . . . It is due to such voices that the time of men does not have the form of an evolution, but precisely that of a history. (cited in Smart, 1986, p. 171)

We could almost add many students, teachers, marginalized communities, and even administrators themselves to the above list of victims of absurd punishments, confinement, and forfeiture of rights. Although this process—not unlike the guard in the panopticon tower—is overseen by certified administrators, administrators are, in a Foucauldian sense, themselves disciplined by discourses of efficiency, effectiveness, and productivity. The point is not that school administrators as individuals are any better or worse than anyone else or that societies and organizations should not be administered but, rather, how we might construct systems able to engage in a level of reflexivity that allow us to hear courageous and sometimes inchoate voices of resistance rather than pathologize and marginalize them.[13] How might we monitor on an ongoing basis the ways we govern ourselves? Critical reflection and problematization that questions the taken-for-granted nature of dominant discourses does not promise solutions that are generalizable beyond the local nor that hold true throughout time. Such solutions would constitute new regimes of truth that must themselves be unmasked. Worthwhile school reforms can be the result of neither administrator-led reengineering nor reculturing but, rather, take place as local struggles by communities to create the schools they need.

Foucault's work suggests a new role for scholars in educational administration, one that is less prescriptive and more problem posing. He would have argued that this is the only way we can escape being enmeshed in the dynamics of power that constitute the field as a regime of truth.

> The role of an intellectual is not to tell others what they have to do. . . . The work of an intellectual is not to shape others' political will; it is, through the analyses that he [*sic*] carries out in his own field, to question over and over again what is postulated as self-evident, to disturb people's mental habits, the way they do and think things, to dissipate what is familiar and accepted, to reexamine rules and institutions and on the basis of this reproblematization (in which he carries out his specific task as an intellectual) to participate in the formation of a political will (in which he has his role as citizen to play). (Foucault, 1980, p. 265)

Foucault, the postmodernist, and Habermas, the critical theorist, might agree on something: Whatever the ultimate outcome, voices of resistance can only be heard within public spheres in which the risk of violence is reduced.[14] These public spaces, whether within schools or within society, must be created as spaces in which problematization, rather than normalization, can take place. Whether viewed as spaces in which a Habermasian reconstruction of rationality can preside or ones in which acts of transgression can occur, the struggle to open up these authentic, participatory, and polyvocal spaces in schools and society is a worthwhile one and represents spaces that progressive school administrators might seek to protect rather than control.[15] How this might be done will depend on the local circumstances of each school, community, and school district and the ability of the field of educational administration to stop promoting itself as a science, an art, or a craft and to begin to understand itself as a disciplinary practice.

NOTES

1. In this article, we use *postmodern theory* as a cover term for both the postmodern and poststructural aspects of Foucault's work. Although *postmodernism* and *poststructuralism* are sometimes used interchangeably, *postmodernism* is a somewhat broader term, associated with Jean Baudrillard and Jean-Francois Lyotard, which refers to a critique of the enlightenment project, the autonomous subject, representational thought, and the nostalgia for unity, totality, and foundational thought. Poststructuralism, often associated with the work of Jacques Derrida and Michel Foucault, critiques structural assumptions of Saussurian linguistics, examines the notion of difference in all its facets, and involves a radical questioning of otherness and of the subject-object relationship. Foucault himself objected to the use of either term to describe his work.

2. According to Foucault (1980),

> Truth is to be understood as a system of ordered procedures for the production, regulation, distribution, circulation, and operation of statements. Truth is linked in a circular relation with systems of power which produce and sustain it, and to effects of power which it induces and which extend it. A regime of truth. (p. 133)

Foucault cautions that sets of concepts that are meant to critique current truth claims often themselves become new regimes of truth. Some might claim that postmodern theory has itself become a new regime of truth.

3. For example, many scholars, like ourselves, who would not call themselves postmodernists or poststructuralists, have appropriated Foucault's ideas. We prefer this more evolutionary notion of appropriation to one of a break or rupture between modernism and postmodernism. We believe that the enlightenment project's attempt to salvage a notion of rationality has not ended. We agree with Bernstein (1996) who argues that postmodernism subverts itself by creating the very binary oppositions (modernism vs. postmodernism) it claims to critique. We

also share Habermas's (1994) concern that poststructuralism's claim that all discourse is distorted by power calls into question the possibility of social critique itself. Furthermore, although postmodernism announces the end of master narratives (Lyotard, 1979/1984), it fails to acknowledge perhaps the grandest master narrative of all: the current triumphant and globalizing master narrative of free market capitalism. Many feminist scholars have also appropriated the work of Foucault, although they often have a similarly ambivalent relationship to his work (Ramazanoglu, 1993). Acknowledging that she took liberties with Foucault's work, Ferguson (1984), a feminist scholar, provided an early Foucauldian analysis of public administration that set the standard for the application of notions of discipline, discourse, and knowledge/power to the study of organizations and administration. In spite of these concerns, as critical theorists, we find Foucault's writing provocative and helpful in thinking about such educational issues as power relations, policy analysis, restructuring, testing and measurement, and numerous other issues.

4. See Gronn (1986) and Clegg (1989) for excellent reviews of theories of power.

5. *Master narrative* or *metanarrative* in postmodern writing refers to the dominant and totalizing ways by which events, ideas, and interpretations are organized to provide explanations and meaning. Positivism, Marxism, and capitalism are examples of master narratives.

6. We do not mean to imply here that principals and superintendents ultimately control discourses. As Callahan (1962) pointed out, school administrators tend to adopt discourses rather nonreflectively from other fields such as business. Educational administrators do, however, mediate the flow of discourses up and down the educational hierarchy. See Anderson (1990) for an in-depth discussion of the administrator's mediation role and Anderson (1991) for examples of how meaning is managed by administrators through the control of discourses.

7. The term *empowerment* can be traced to several sources, from radical literature on community organizing and liberation theology to more human relations approaches to organizational development. It can and does mean virtually anything.

8. Foucault refers to these subdivisions as dividing practices, which represent another type of disciplinary practice.

9. The notion of a discourse-practice is perhaps too complex to fully develop in this article. Briefly, practices help to form discourses in the sense that individuals and institutions create meaning out of experiences. When they articulate the meaning they have created, they are producing a discourse. However, these practices did not exist independent of the previous discourses and experiences that helped to form them. In turn, these new discourses serve to produce new practices, which in turn produce new discourses. Practices, however, often produce competing discourses and are often produced by competing discourses.

10. At a broader level, discourse practices, according to Foucault, operate through the creation of regimes of truth that determine the limits and boundaries of human thought. For example, in modern Western societies, we have come to value the scientific method as the only way to validate or challenge truth claims, and rationality as the superior way of thinking and making meaning. This regime of truth has several consequences. If rationality is a scientific way of organizing thoughts and ideas and if science leads to truth, then only those who are disciplined to be rationalistic can access truth. If certain people approach truth through emotions or intuition, they cannot make truth claims within the established regime of truth. Within this regime, rationality is an advanced, civilized way of seeking truth, and by contrast, the emotional, the intuitive, and the spiritual are primitive and backward. There is a need for discipline, and the existence of the nonrational is necessary as a foil for the rational. In this way, the scientific method becomes a regime of truth that controls what counts as truth claims, and challenges to it can come only through methods that exist within the dominant regime. This is what Foucault means by the power/knowledge connection. He does not argue that knowledge is power merely in the sense that those with access to knowledge have power but, rather, that power is exercised

through knowledge that becomes a regime of truth. Thus, schools and universities are disciplinary practices through which these regimes of truth operate.

11. See Part 3, chapter 1, of Foucault's (1979) *Discipline and Punish* for an in-depth discussion of the notion of docile bodies.

12. However, an intensification of this gender hierarchy occurred in the 1950s and 1960s as a male-dominated field of educational administration defined school principals less as principal teachers and more as school executives or managers.

13. Fine (1991) argues that rather than continue to resist, students often drop out of school as a way to maintain their mental health.

> The dropout was an adolescent who scored as psychologically healthy. Critical of social and economic injustice, this student was willing to challenge an unfair grade and unwilling to conform mindlessly. In contrast, the student who remained in school was relatively depressed. Self-blaming, this student was more teacher dependent, unwilling to challenge a misgrade, and endlessly willing to conform. (p. 4)

14. Pignatelli (1993) makes the point that "Foucault, with Nietzsche, is also concerned about the consequences of *not* risking oneself, one's truth, one's beliefs. . . . He also wants us to be aware of what is at stake if we choose to remain silent and inattentive" (p. 419).

15. Although there is not space here to discuss the many problems associated with the creation of democratic, participatory spaces in schools, see Herr (in press), Hargreaves (1994), and Zeichner (1991) for in-depth discussions of how spaces are co-opted and become contrived and how authentic spaces might be created and sustained.

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