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Practicing critique, attending to truth: The pedagogy of discriminatory speech

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Practicing critique, attending to truth: The pedagogy of discriminatory speech

Abstract

Teaching in university education programmes, can, at times, involve the uncomfortable situation of discriminatory speech. A situation that has often occurred in our own teaching, and in those of our colleagues, is the citation of homophobic and heterosexist comments. These are comments that are more likely to occur in foundation subjects such as philosophy and sociology of education. The occurrence of such situations has prompted debate regarding 'silencing words that wound'. This has prompted the question, 'should we keep students from stating such discriminatory speech?' Our article takes up this issue, and considers it from the perspective of the importance of critique. Working with Foucault's *What is Critique?* together with his discussion of subjectivation in the 1981–82 lectures at the Collège de France, we set out to make the case for the significance of the relationship between truth and critique. This leads us to a position where we ask the question, if we silence, what do we risk doing to critique?

Keywords

speech, truth, pedagogy, practicing, critique, discriminatory, attending

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Practising Critique, attending to truth: The pedagogy of discriminatory speech

There is no such thing as a neutral subject. We are all inevitably someone's adversary. (Foucault, 2003: 51)

[T]he person who is speaking, telling the truth, recounting the story, rediscovering memories and trying not to forget anything, well, that person is inevitably on one side or the other: he is involved in the battle, has adversaries, and is working toward a particular victory. Of course, he speaks the discourse of right, asserts a right and demands a right. (Foucault, 2003: 52)

There is something in critique which is akin to virtue. (Foucault, 1997b: 25)

Introduction

Truth is a vexing issue that faces many of us in the university classrooms in which we teach. It is an issue that is most poignant when we are presented with truths that are discriminatory, that are injurious to some members of the class, or to ourselves as teachers. To make a somewhat simplified depiction of our choices, do we silence these truths in an effort to counter a potentially injurious classroom exchange, or, do we engage with such truths in an effort to deploy critique? These decisions beg the question of how to strike a balance in relation to the ways in which we respond to and deal with the truths that are presented to us.

Yet as much as the subject is not neutral, and is our adversary; and as much as truths can be uttered with a 'right'; truth, it must be acknowledged, is an intimate in the constitution of the subject. Given that this relationship is so important, we take the position in this paper that there is much at stake in our responses to truth in our classrooms. For this issue, Foucault's work on the subject is generative; His writing offers explicit approaches on how the subject is constituted in terms of acts that subjugate the subject and processes

via which the subject engages in that constitution.¹ Working from Foucault, we assert that if we are to understand how the subject is constituted, we need to grasp the import of the subject's relationship to truth. Furthermore, as we will outline, a Foucauldian conceptualisation of agency is arguably premised on the subject's capacity to engage in the subjectivication of a true discourse. Drawing on Foucault's latter works, particularly *The Hermeneutics of the Subject, Lectures at the Collège de France 1981-82* (2005), we are plotting an argument that advocates a relationship between agency and the way in which critique is deployed in the subject's relationship to truth. In this paper we use this line of reasoning to tackle this problem with truth in our classrooms.

One approach for responding to these unwelcome truths has been eloquently discussed by two of our colleagues (Applebaum, 2003, Boler, 2004). Their work makes an important case for the prevention of certain truths being aired in the classroom, what Boler calls an "affirmative action pedagogy". This is one option available to teachers in classrooms who are faced with injurious or discriminatory truths. There is, however, another angle that needs to be considered in conjunction with this right of a power to silence certain truths. The burning issue pertains to what happens to critique in the pedagogue's management of truth. This leaves us with an interesting question: how do we teach critique, and at what expense? As such we can ask, 'how are we to take account of the relationship to truth, and with what effect?' We begin by describing an example of discriminatory speech that occurred in our own university teaching and move from this example to draw closely on Foucault to explore the relationship between truth and critique. We then move to a discussion that prompts us to consider how to practise critique and attend to truth.

Truth in the classroom

For several years Rasmussen taught an elective to fourth year pre-service teacher education students on the politics of difference in Education classrooms. Part of a Bachelor of Education at a large metropolitan university in southern Australia, the unit was designed to provoke students into questioning tropes related to multiculturalism and to make connections between differing conceptions of identity and teaching for

difference. Our discussion of truth and critique is contextualized in relation to a fairly mundane event that occurred in on an online discussion board associated with the unit.

Rasmussen's posts focused on ethics, morality and their relationship to truth and power, while one white middle class student who professed "a Christian worldview" posted verses from Gospel on the site that focused on sexual impurity, shameful lusts and natural and unnatural relations. While somewhat taken aback by the verses posted by the student Rasmussen carried on a conversation about how to think about making space for different worldviews in the classroom. Another white student in the class, who also identified as Christian, privately conveyed her concerns about the online posts and in response Rasmussen reminded students of the University's policies on equal opportunity and tolerance and respect for difference. Inadvertently, but maybe unsurprisingly, this exercise of power effectively shut down the online conversation (interestingly the discussion never entered into face-to-face dialogue). In retrospect, Rasmussen was more disturbed by the closing down of dialogue than she was about the emotions stirred by the posts. All students in the class ceased using the online discussion after this post, though feisty discussions of a more secular nature continued to occur within the classroom.

In the midst of these online posts Rasmussen emailed a colleague overseas hoping for some guidance about how to respond and was referred to an article by Barbara Applebaum on the silencing of words that wound in classroom contexts. Rasmussen was particularly interested in a provocative question posed by Applebaum "is it ever justified to use power to interrupt power" (2003: 151)ⁱⁱ. This article seemed apposite in analysing this event because one might say that Rasmussen used power to interrupt power.

This event prompts us to further consider Applebaum's (2003) advocacy of Boler's "affirmative action pedagogy"ⁱⁱⁱ, in relation to our interest in Foucauldian processes of subjectivization and the relationship to practises of critique. We will also consider the work of John Petrovic (2002), who is also cited by Applebaum in her defence of silencing words that wound. First it is necessary to briefly state the positions advocated by Boler, Applebaum and Petrovic. Boler argues "that we are not equally protected in practice by

the First Amendment, and that education needs to represent marginalized voices fairly by challenging dominant voices in the classroom”. As a consequence “affirmative action pedagogy seeks to ensure that we bear witness to marginalized voices in our classrooms, even at the minor cost of limiting dominant voices” (2004: 4). In concluding a complex defence of her provocative “historicized ethics” Boler suggests that educators adopt a pedagogy “which consciously privileges the insurrectionary and dissenting voices, sometimes at the minor cost of silencing those voices that have been permitted dominant status for the past centuries” (Boler, 2004: 13).

The weighing up of different injuries and contextualizing them in terms of specific social and political contexts is also Applebaum’s motivation in using power to interrupt power. Interrogating one of her student’s unashamed avowals that gays and lesbians are sinners, Applebaum suggests her student’s speech be read “as an instrument of subordination as much as it is an expression of her viewpoint. Not only does such speech harm gay, lesbian, or bisexual students who may be present in my class, but it also leaves a remnant on all the heterosexual students as well” (2003: 157). Applebaum goes on to argue “the liberal belief in freedom of expression and a market-place of ideas is compelling only if all viewpoints have an equal opportunity to have their voices matter” (159) echoing Boler’s insistence that “Until all voices are recognized equally, we must operate within a context of historicized ethics” (2004: 13).

In a similar vein to Boler and Applebaum, Petrovic argues the value of “Positive systematic inclusion”, a strategy which:

...requires the positive portrayal of GLB^{iv} persons in the curriculum and prohibits teachers, at least in the early school years, from expressing opinions against homosexuality...positive systematic inclusion is required by and promotes the liberal democratic tradition.” (2002: 145)

Arguably, Boler and Applebaum might be said to be proffering a more radical version of Petrovic’s argument, since as Petrovic suggests “positive systematic inclusion” may be inappropriate in a university teacher education program,

...this is a context in which....Prospective teachers must engage in explorations of their own autobiographies and the sources of their views about homosexuality. They must consider how they might be implicated in the angst of so many of their students and how to make democratic educational practices consistent with their own beliefs. But certainly, as I have argued, adding children to the equation requires a different solution. It requires positive systematic inclusion. (2002: 152)

Regardless of the age appropriateness of these strategies, it might be fair to claim that they are all generally concerned with the principle of curtailing speech in the interests of a more democratic education. It is this principle which we wish to further explore in relation to critique and the association that critique has with subjectivation. In so doing we ask, what are the effects of such principles on the relationship to truth?

Subjectivation

Before we consider the relationship between critique and truth, we first turn to a consideration of the term ‘subjectivation’, and as a consequence, the technologies of the self. This twofold examination is necessary because it is via the various technologies of the self that one engages in subjectivation. Here we are seeking to respond to the question, what kinds of relationship to truth are required for a technology of the self that engages subjectivation in practises of critique?

In his seminar in 1982 at the University of Vermont Foucault outlines four major types of technologies for considering constitution of the subject: “(1) technologies of production... (2) technologies of sign systems... (3) technologies of power... (4) technologies of the self” (Foucault, 1988: 18).^v Pointing out how these ‘four types of technologies’ function together, Foucault emphasised that it was the last two that “have most kept my attention”, and that “perhaps I’ve insisted too much on the technology of domination and power” (Foucault, 1988: 19). Toward the end of his life it was the last of these, the technologies of the self that secured his attention. As he explained, “I am more and more interested in the interaction between oneself and others and in the technologies

of individual domination, the history of how an individual acts upon himself, in the technology of the self” (Foucault, 1988: 19).

Yet the term subjectivation, as Alan Milchman and Alan Rosenberg (2007) point out, has received limited attention by commentators on Foucault’s work, and needs to be considered carefully against the term *assujettissement*. The latter they argue, pertains not only to the subject being subjected (as they state it is often translated), but also “relative [to] the *autonomy*, and possibility of resistance of the one who is *assujetti* [subjected]” (Milchman & Rosenberg, 2007: 55, emphasis in original). So what is this distinction? The clue lies, we suggest, in considering the subject’s involvement as more than resistance, in taking an angle that leads to a more careful scrutiny of the relationship one has to the self. As Foucault explains in an interview with Paul Rabinow and Hubert Dreyfus, “there are two meanings of the word *subject*: subject to someone else by a control and dependence, and tied to his own identity by a conscience or self-knowledge” (1983: 212). Foucault’s use of the new term ‘subjectivation’ (Milchman & Rosenberg, 2007) is precise insofar as it performs the crucial work of emphasising this relationship with the self.

Milchman and Rosenberg describe *assujettissement* as “pertain[ing] to how one is produced as a subject through the exercise of power/knowledge, including the modalities of resistance through which that exercise can be modified or attenuated” (2007: 55). Subjectivation, however, differs through the emphasis on the relationship with oneself and “to the multiple ways in which a self can be constructed on the basis of what one takes to be the truth. (Milchman & Rosenberg, 2007: 55). Thus in Foucault’s later work how one acts on oneself becomes increasingly emphasised, but this is not in terms of resistance to power. Rather, it is in terms of the relation one has to a ‘true discourse’. The term subjectivation is significant precisely because it captures this emphasis and places into relief the question of how one forms one’s relationship to truth. Technologies of the self, then, are crucial in the context of our argument. They are the very practises that are used by subjects in relation to the ‘true discourses’ which pervade the street, the classroom, the church, the family, the media.

In the interview *On the genealogy of ethics: an overview of work in progress* Foucault provides a framework of “four aspects” for how to analyse the “relationship to oneself”. These four aspects provide a structure for analysing the relationship to the self, and significantly, how to situate this new term ‘subjectivation’.^{vi} The second is the mode of subjectivation (*mode d’assujettissement*), “the way in which people are invited or incited to recognise their moral obligations” (Foucault, 1997a: 264). Arianna Bove (2007) suggests that it is the second aspect, the mode of subjectivation that is where the “idea of the technologies of the self falls”. This would suggest that subjectivation is the key or active component of how to analyse the relationship to oneself. As Bove (2007, n.p.) points out, “Technologies of the self develop on the realm left open by the relation between the freedom of the object of a specific ethical discourse with the discourse itself”. From this observation we can suggest that the type of relationship the subject has to truth in processes of subjectivation is of key importance.

Related to this point, Foucault notes the distinction between the manner in which one examines one’s conscience in acts of confession as compared to those practises in the care of the self. In an unpublished dossier Foucault writes that in the care of the self, the task is to “gauge how far you have got in your appropriation of truth as principle of conduct...” and that the subject of the care of the self “must become the subject of truth...[but] it is not indispensable that he say the truth about himself” (Unpublished dossier of Foucault, cited in Gros, 2005: 528). As Gros points out, whilst the “examination of conscience” in Antiquity and Christianity differ, “each put[s] to work irreducible modes of subjectivation” (Gros, 2005: 528). Technologies of the self, then, occur in relation to truth, and these technologies vary in dependence on context. In this way, “what constitutes the subject in a determinate relation to himself are historically identifiable techniques of the self, which combine with historically datable techniques of domination” (Gros, 2005: 526). Since the subject is always involved in processes of subjectivation the solution isn’t simply to teach so as to ensure that subjectivation is occurring. Rather the issue is, in terms of subjectivation, what type of relationship to truth should students have? And, in the context of the pedagogical event discussed in the

previous section, this is relevant because we are arguing that students relationship to truth is of fundamental importance, and that we are concerned by the pedagogical impulse that seeks to reconstruct this relationship with a view to a upholding a particular understanding of inclusion.

The relationship to truth: Practises of critique

The practice of the self must enable one to rid oneself of all one's bad habits and all the false opinions one may get from the crowd or from bad teachers, as well as from parents and associates. To 'un-learn' (*de-discere*) is an important task of the culture of the self. (Foucault, 2005: 495)

In the above quote Foucault is referring to the care of the self and pedagogy and the importance placed on critical practise *because* of the deficiencies of pedagogy. We have begun this paper with a consideration of an event in which Rasmussen feels that she has been deficient in her own pedagogy because her intervention in an online discussion worked to shut down speech. So we take as a starting point the possibility of pedagogy having deficiencies, or the potential of such, what kinds of practises would we as pedagogues wish for our students to pursue in relation to these deficiencies? It is here that critique, to excuse the pun, is critical.

Critique involves how one establishes one's relationship to truth. Yet this is not a sufficient elaboration, for it could it be assumed that one is engaged in critique when one performs acts of confession as part of self-renunciation? Self-renunciation entails what Foucault describes as having an "essential moment", which is "the objectification of the self in a true discourse" (Foucault, 2005: 333). To do so is to submit oneself to the true discourse in a manner that is uncritical, at least in a Foucauldian rendering of the practise of critique. By contrast for Foucault this emphasis on the practise self is a 'philosophical ascesis' that "involves rejoining oneself as the end and object of a technology of life, an art of living. It involves coming together with oneself, the essential moment of which is not the objectification of the self in a true discourse, but the subjectivation of a true

discourse in a practice and exercise of oneself on oneself” (2005: 333). This philosophical ascesis does not emphasize self-renunciation, nor does it lay itself bare before a higher knowledge, or better knower of truth.

The subject does not give itself over, as it were *to* truth. Rather, it is characterised “as a certain way of constituting the subject of true knowledge as the subject of right action” (Foucault, 2005: 485). This marks an important difference for Foucault. Being a subject of right action differs from being a subject whose task is to renounce. For this ‘renouncing’ subject, “the essential function... is to determine and order the necessary renunciations leading up to the ultimate point of self-renunciation” (Foucault, 2005: 485). These two examples of subjectivation (on the one hand the renouncing subject, on the other the subject of right action) differ on the basis of how they form their relationships with truth. In renunciation, the subject objectifies himself in a true discourse, while to be a subject of right action, one is involved in subjectivation of true discourse. It is this very act of the subjectivation of a true discourse that we are calling a practise of critique. While we consider the value of being a subject of right action, our aim in this paper is not to critique the value of renunciation to a true discourse, as demonstrated by the student who posted gospel verses and while affirming the inerrancy of scripture.

We now consider how a subject be involved in the subjectivation of a true discourse, and moreover, how can such practise be conceived? The following suggestions can be cautiously offered. Firstly, there is need to consider the accent on practise (or we could say, the practise of critique), and secondly, there is the question of how and with what the subject enacts this critique. Starting with the second point, ideas for how to respond can, we suggest, be taken from the styles of analysis Foucault deployed throughout his work, for example his examination of truth and power. Whilst Foucault’s ‘turn’ to technologies of the self provoked questions about the ‘continuity’ in his work, there are compelling arguments for reading the inter-relationships between his differing studies (Allen, 2000, Flynn, 1985, Harrer, 2005). For example, Sebastian Harrer proposes a ‘conceptual continuity’ in Foucault’s work, suggesting that Foucault’s analysis of power in his earlier texts can be witnessed in the latter discussions of ascetic self practises.

The very ways in which Foucault analysed power, then, could be utilised to examine a true discourse, and thereby contribute to the practises of critique that subjectivate a true discourse. In relation to the pedagogical event used to introduce the piece, this might involve an invitation to students to think together about how they might respond to the practise of a student who is vocally committed to practises of self-renunciation. Foucault's work in destabilising truths, such as those concerned with psychiatry also offers an approach that could be drawn on by a subject in the subjectivation of a true discourse. For instance the ways in which Foucauldian criticism has been applied to critique truths such as children's 'behavior disorders' (Harwood, 2006) can also be applied to interrogate and subjectivate a true discourse when it is presented to us. Indeed, we argue, this work is invaluable for rethinking the categories presented to us as 'fact', and for accessing what Judith Butler describes as their "incoherence". As she writes, "the categories by which social life are ordered produce a certain incoherence or entire realms of unspeakability. And it is from this condition, the tear in the fabric of our epistemological web, that the practice of critique emerges..." (Butler, 2000: 5). But this tear in the epistemological fabric isn't always apparent, and we maintain, part of the beauty of Foucault's work is the way in which it casts light on these tears, and makes them accessible. Correspondingly then, it is not surprising to find Foucault making reference to the way in which critique is concerned with teasing out the familiar, "[a] critique does not consist in saying things aren't good the way they are. It consists in seeing on what types of assumptions, of familiar notions, of established, unexamined ways of thinking the accepted practices are based" (Foucault, 2000: 456).

Returning now to the point of how a subject can be involved in the subjectivation of a true discourse, we see practise as intimately tied to critique. In Foucault's reading, the subjectivation of a true discourse occurs as an exercise; it is an ongoing practise of working with truth and making it your own. Though we recognise that not all students will embrace our desire to work with truth in such a manner because the impulse to make truth their own may appear wholly anathema to the practise of self-renunciation. Yet we

are committed to the value of this practise and an elaboration of where its efforts might be directed are enumerated in the quote below,

What Seneca is constantly indicating is a method of the subjectivation of a true discourse when he says, with regard to learning, the language of philosophers, reading, writing, and the notes you make, etcetera, that what is involved is *making the things you know your own* (*'facere suum'*), making the discourse you hear, the discourse you recognize as being true or what philosophical tradition has passed on to you as true, your own. Making the truth your own, becoming the subject of enunciation of true discourse: this, I think, is the very core of this philosophical ascesis. (Foucault, 2005: 333, our emphasis)

The emphasis on 'making the truth your own' accentuates the exercise one is required to do if one pursues this practise. Foucault went to great length to discuss the various exercises involved in practises concerned with truth^{vii}, and as Harrer points out, this concern with truth differs from the "modern concept of epistemology, which is that of scientific method" where "what is required for knowledge of the truth, is a set of methodological rules and a standard configuration of the epistemological subject..." (2005: 90). As Harrer explains, "at the time of Socrates, 'true knowledge' did not merely mean computational registration of given data, but appropriation of a truth through ascetic and spiritual practices... Habitualised practical truth is directly linked to action, in the sense that the subject has exercised this implication through meditation, training and ascesis" (2005: 90).

Thus far we have briefly discussed this idea of philosophical ascesis and 'making the truth one's own' in terms of how it was applied in Antiquity.^{viii} We wish now to proffer the suggestion that contemplation of these practises can contribute to an understanding of what we are trying to achieve when we are hoping to engage students in critique (and also, what we are seeking to avoid!). And part of what we are trying to avoid in providing this detailed discussion of practises of truth is a tendency we see among our peers to

silence dominant and/or homophobic voices in the name of “positive systematic inclusion” (Petrovic, 2002) or an “affirmative action pedagogy” (Boler, 2004)

Recalling the other aspects of Foucault’s work, it is difficult to miss the centrality that questioning and interrogation play in the relationship to truth. Elsewhere Foucault has stressed this centrality of interrogation. For example, in *What is Critique* he states, “I will say that critique is the movement by which the subject gives himself the right to question truth on its effects of power and question power on its discourses of truth...” (Foucault, 1997b: 32). There is then, we propose, a *vitality* to critique. Questioning and interrogation lie at the heart of this vitality. When considered in concert with Foucault’s discussion of the philosophical ascesis of Antiquity, the importance of truth to this *vitality* is brought to the fore. The vitality of critique can, as our example in the online discussion suggests, be quickly quashed by a desire to determine what discourses of truth are palatable in the classroom context.

Acts of questioning, and exposure to competing discourses of truth, are therefore paramount to the practise of critique. Critique is not a task of assimilating truth, nor is its sole purpose to ascertain epistemological veracity and then make oneself an object of truth. As Masschelein points out, “...telling the truth is for Foucault not an epistemological question of establishing truth, but an ethical one that has to do with the relationship with ourselves and with the world” (2006: 564). As such critique is concerned with the way one relates to truths, both in terms of subjectivation of truth, and in terms of how one tells it. This is why to ‘un-learn’ is, as Foucault points out, “an important task of the culture of the self”. Here we can see the reason why ‘insubordination’ is so significant, since “...critique will be the art of voluntary insubordination, that of reflected intractability” (Foucault, 1997b: 32). By prompting dissonance, insubordination might allow the opportunities for unlearning that can support critique. Bringing this point into a consideration of subjectivation, we can feel how imperative critique is to a technology of the self that can insubordinate truths that have the potential to subjugate. Isn’t this, after all, what we want when we are teaching

students to be critical, and what we hope they can utilise to respond to the subjugation of certain truths that ‘wound’?

Conclusion

Here, then, is the rub: critique is in need of truths it can insubordinate. When truths are silenced, we are, even in our most earnest of endeavours, disturbing the very ground upon which critique can exercise its practise. This point raises some challenges for a pedagogy that chooses to silence certain truths. Though we also recognise that students’ silent refusal to engage in conversation with their Christian colleague on the online discussion board may be interpreted as a form of critique; a quiet refusal to give this student more space in the classroom. This is also indicated by the fact that the conversations about truth, ethics and Christianity that took place online never made it into the physical space of the classroom. Alternatively, as one reviewer usefully suggests, this refusal to engage might also be interpreted as students practicing their own form of “affirmative action pedagogy” (Boler, 2004).

However, in the context of this paper, our focus is on pedagogical events where there is a temptation to put practises of critique put into abeyance, and, simultaneously, the encouragement of the questioning of truth. As Foucault states, “as a matter of fact, I believe that the work of deep transformation can be done in the open and always turbulent atmosphere of continuous criticism” (Foucault, 2000: 457). We close with this cautionary note. We need to strike a balance between protecting ourselves and our students from discriminatory truths and fostering pedagogical practises that encourage the

practise of critique. Approaches such as Boler's (2004) "affirmative action pedagogy" and Applebaum's consequent call to silence words that wound need to be contemplated in tandem with recognition that contrary truths have more at stake than their obvious potential to confront and possibly injure. These contrary truths are, as we have argued, important to practises of critique. The politics of truth raises a spectre in our classrooms that we cannot afford to ignore; the conundrum then, is, in our classrooms what kind of relationship can be had with the politics of truth and how will such decisions impact the very possibility of critique. At issue, is not the polarization of the sounds of truth (do we or do we not silence truths), but rather, that at each turn we practise critique in such a manner that we can engage with its noise.

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ⁱ Foucault's work has been generative in educational research. Our theorisation in this paper draws from this rich literature, with key contributions including for example Ball, (1990), Marshall (1997), Mayo (2000) and Popkewitz & Brennan, (1998). Education literature that tackles questions of agency and subjectivation includes (Fischer, 2009; Peters & Besley, 2008; Youdell, 2006) as well as the recent paper tackling the issue of 'judging teachers' in *Educational Philosophy and Theory* (Stickney, 2011).

ⁱⁱ Rasmussen used this reading in subsequent offerings of her Unit.

ⁱⁱⁱ Boler's article was first published in 2000; our comments refer to the 2004 edition of this piece.

^{iv} Acronym GLB refers to gay, lesbian and bisexual.

^v Foucault provides this description for each of these technologies: "(1) technologies of production, which permit us to produce, transform or manipulate things; (2) technologies of sign systems, which permit us to use signs, meanings, symbols, or signification; (3) technologies of power, which determine the conduct of individuals and submit them to certain ends or dominations, an objectivising of the subject; (4) technologies of the self, which permit individuals to effect by their own means or with the help of others a certain number of operations on their own bodies and souls, thoughts, conduct, and way of being, so as to transform themselves in order to attain a certain state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection, or immortality" Foucault, M. (1988) Technologies of the self, in: L. Martin, H., H. Gutman & P.H. Hutton (Eds) *Technologies of the self: A seminar with Michel Foucault* (Amherst, USA, University of Massachusetts press)..

^{vi} The first of these aspects is "Which is the aspect or the part of myself or my behavior which is concerned with moral conduct?" (1997a: 263). Foucault terms this the "ethical substance". The second is the mode of subjectivation (*mode d'assujettissement*), "the way in which people are invited or incited to recognise their moral obligations" (Foucault,

1997a: 264). The third is “what are the means by which we can change ourselves in order to become ethical subjects” or as his interlocutors put it, “how we work on this ethical substance” (Rabinow and Dreyfus cited in Foucault, 1997a: 265). The fourth, “which is the kind of being to which we aspire when we behave in a moral way?” (Foucault, 1997a: 265).

^{vii} See Sharpe (2005) for detailed discussion on Foucault’s use of *askesis* and *logoi*. For detail see Foucault’s (2005) in depth discussions of these practises in the *Hermeneutics of the Subject, Lectures at the Collège de France 1981-82*.

^{viii} Foucault’s Course Summary of the 1991-82 Lectures draws on the *Alcibiades* to provide an outline of these practises.