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ABSTRACT. Discourse analysis has come to represent something of a 'growth industry' in both research and critical psychology. Despite the apparent indebtedness of many such methods of discourse analysis to Foucault, there exists no strictly Foucauldian method of analysing discourse. Through a close reading of Foucault's 'The order of discourse' (1981), this paper re-characterizes the concept of discourse from a firmly Foucauldian perspective. Whilst not arguing against discourse analysis per se, the author indirectly takes issue with erroneous (mis)-applications of Foucault's conceptualization by clarifying his perspective on what discourse is, and on what 'discursive analysis' should entail. This critical presentation of the Foucauldian notion of the discursive will be contrasted with perhaps the two most prominent 'schools' of discourse analysis in psychology, namely those of Parker (1992) and Potter & Wetherell (1987). Key issues in this regard revolve around the themes of knowledge, materiality and history. By outlining the core components of what Foucault (1981) terms 'the order of discourse' and through the exposition of a four step 'method' of discursive critique, the author propounds an image of what a Foucauldian discursive analytic method may have looked like, should it have ever existed, before specifying exactly why one never did.

KEY WORDS: discourse, discourse analysis, knowledge, materiality, history, genealogy, the 'extra-discursive'.

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Introduction.

There can be little doubt that discourse analysis has come to represent something of a 'growth industry' in research psychology. Indeed, there has been, together with a proliferation of the various models of the process of discourse analysis (cf. Bannister, 1995; Fairclough, 1995; Parker, 1992; Potter & Wetherall, 1987) a veritable explosion of discursive analytic work. This almost unfettered expansion of discursive analytic work has lead, one might suppose, almost inevitably to a variety of mis-applications of the work of Michel Foucault, whose name is often attached, almost as matter of course, to varieties of discourse analysis.

Whilst this paper will not argue against discourse analysis per se, it will indirectly take issue with erroneous (mis)-applications of Foucault's concept of discourse by attempting to re-characterize a Foucauldian perspective on what discourse is, and on what a sound discursive analytic methodology should entail. These objectives will be achieved through a close reading of Foucault's inaugural lecture at the College de France: *The order of discourse*. Furthermore, this discussion will where appropriate, be illustrated (or contrasted) with reference to perhaps the two most prominent 'schools' of discourse analysis in psychology, namely those represented by the methods of Potter and Wetherall (1987) and Parker (1992).[i]

Furthermore, although this reading of Foucault will adopt

a 'criticalist' vantage – i.e. an approach which emphasizes the *political utility* and *critical capacity* of Foucault's notion of discourse *as a powerful means of enabling forms of critique and resistance* – this reading should not be assumed to be uncontested, or as necessarily excluding a 'descriptivist' reading of Foucault. A descriptivist position (cf. McHoul & Grace, 1997) would suggest that rather than as a critical methodologist whose work finds its greatest efficacy as a political instrument of resistance and contestation, Foucault might be better read as a 'diagnotician' of culture and society whose special forms of history enable him to incisively characterize a variety of historical phenomena.[ii]

Processes of formation and constraint.
In a succinct introduction, Young (1981) notes that the central focus in Foucault's paper is on the rules, systems and procedures which constitute, and are constituted by, our 'will to knowledge'. These rules, systems and procedures comprise a discrete realm of discursive practices – the order of discourse – a conceptual terrain in which knowledge is formed and produced. As Young specifies, what is analysed here is not simply that which was thought or said per se, "but all the discursive rules and categories that were a priori, assumed as a constituent part of discourse and therefore of knowledge" (1981, p. 48). In this way, the effects of discursive practices is to make it virtually impossible to think outside of them; to be outside of them is, by definition, to be mad, to be beyond comprehension and therefore reason (Young, 1981).[iii] Discursive rules are hence strongly linked to the exercise of power: discourse itself is both constituted by, and ensures the reproduction of, the social system, through forms of selection, exclusion and

domination (Young, 1981). As Foucault asserts near the beginning of the paper, "in every society the production of discourse is at once controlled, selected, organised and redistributed by a...number of procedures" (1981, p. 52). From the outset then Foucault is involved in a concerted attempt to restore materiality and power to what, in the Anglo-American tradition, has remained the largely linguistic concept of discourse; it is equally clear that he wants to centre the analysis of discourse within the field of political action. These concerns with not under-estimating the functioning of discourse lead also to his emphasis of the fact that discourse is both that which constrains *or enables*, writing, speaking, thinking. What he terms 'discursive practices' work both in inhibiting and productive ways, implying a play of prescriptions that designate both exclusions and choices (Foucault, 1981).

These processes, of formation and constraint, production and exclusion, are inseparable. More than this, they are both complimentary and constitutive of one another; discourse is formed and exists through their mutual constitution (Foucault, 1981). Foucault resolves first to deal with the most overtly exclusionary mechanisms effecting discourse.

External systems of exclusion.
The first exclusionary mechanisms Foucault (1981) deals with are the social procedures of prohibition which correspond roughly to taboos, rituals and privileges of the speaking subject. These forms of prohibition seem fairly straightforward and Foucault does not spend much time in elaborating them, noting merely that where the

(intersecting) grid of prohibition is tightest is in the regions of politics and sexuality (1981).[iv]

Joining the forbidden speech of politics and sexuality is another form of exclusion, not a straightforward prohibition this time, but more of a division and a rejection: the opposition between madness and reason. With the exception of a number of largely peripheral changes, Foucault (1981a) claims, this old division is still in operation. The speech of the mad is still 'a noise to discourse' that retains a capacity to truth. Foucault points here to that 'framework of knowledge', that 'whole network of institutions' and qualifications that allows the doctor or psychologist to be able to listen, with a learned and discerning ear, to those elements of truthfulness within the speech of the disturbed (1981a).

A third exclusion operating within the order of discourse is the opposition between true and false. Our sense of 'the true', our 'will to truth', is, Foucault claims, evoking the Nietzschean concepts, something "like a system of exclusion, a historical, modifiable, and institutionally constraining system" (1981a, p. 54). The example he uses to unseat an ahistorical sense of the truth is that of the Greek poets, for whom truth was that 'which inspired respect and terror, that to which one submitted because it ruled, that which was pronounced by men who spoke as of right and according to the required ritual' (1981a, p. 54). This was the discourse "which dispensed justice and gave everyone his share; the discourse which in prophesying the future not only announced what was going to happen but helped make it happen" (Foucault, 1981a, p. 54).

For a substantial historical period then this was the highest order of truth, but, as Foucault explains, a day came when truth "was displaced from the ritualised, efficacious and just act of enunciation, towards the utterance itself, its meaning, its form, its object, its relation to its reference" (1981a, p. 54). The question of truth hence no longer became the question of what the discourse was, or what it did, but deferred instead to the question of what that discourse *said.*[v] This has not however been the only shift in our 'will to truth'; there are ongoing mutations, continuing changes in the types of divisions that govern the terrain of legitimate knowledge. Indeed, as Foucault puts it, the 'will to truth' has its own history, which is a history that varies according to the range of objects to be known, the functions and positions of the knowing subject, and the material, technical, and instrumental investments of knowledge (Foucault, 1981a, p. 55).

Our will to truth, like other systems of exclusion, can be shown to be somehow contingent. This contingency can be shown up perhaps chiefly through the identification of institutional supports and the 'whole strata of practices' underlying the production of truth, such as pedagogy and library, publishing and university systems (Foucault, 1981a). These basic material conditions of possibility cannot be reduced, avoided, if we are to properly gain a fix on the formative and constraining systems governing discourse. These are institutions, social structures and practices which limit and constrict the free flow of discourse, which both reinforce and renew it, and as such they need take their rightful places within a thorough analysis of the power of discursive practices.

The 'will to truth' (the way in which knowledge is put to work, valorised, distributed) makes for a vital component in the workings of a successful discourse, and as such a nodal point of analysis. The strongest discourses are those which have attempted to ground themselves on the natural, the sincere, the scientific – in short, on the level of the various correlates of the 'true' and reasonable. This situation is aptly characterized by Said when he notes:

> "the will to exercise...control in society and history has also discovered a way to clothe, disguise, rarefy and wrap itself systematically in the language of truth, discipline, rationality, utilitarian value, and knowledge. And this language in its naturalness, authority, professionalism, assertiveness and antitheoretical directness is....discourse" (Said, 1983, p. 216).[vi]

The methodological imperative stemming from these formulations is an unrelenting skepticism towards all those rationales, explanations and statements that would validate themselves on the grounds of their proximity to a supposed truthfulness. The methodological injunction here is to replace these 'true' explanations with some other form of answer which is more conditional, which can demonstrate that what counts as 'the truth' is a product of discourse and power: a displacement of the will-to-truth by the will-to-power. This is a methodological tactic which will not only make overt certain conditions of possibility (certain contingencies underlying 'the truth'), but that will likewise prove a vital means of sensitizing the analyst to the pervasiveness of the power-knowledge complex.

What is being called for is not some naive debunking of the 'truthful' for its own sake. Indeed, to realize that truth is a function of discourse is to realize that the conditions of truth are *precisely* rather than *relatively* contingent on current forms of discourse. It is in this way ludicrous to read Foucault as suggesting that truth is 'relative', in the open sense of the term, where all possible truth-conditions are equal, depending merely on context or interpretative perspective. Foucault views truth-conditions as extremely stable and secure, as situated in a highly specific and idiosyncratic matrix of historical and socio-political circumstances, which give rise to, and are part of, the order of discourse. A skepticism of truth here defers not to a 'baseless' relativism, but instead to a carefully delineated set of conditions of possibility under which statements come to be meaningful and true.[vii]

Both Parker (1992) and Potter & Wetherell (1987) are rightly explicit about the fact that attaining truth is not the goal of discourse analysis. However, it appears they do not expend enough energy on showing how certain discourses operate as truthful, *on demonstrating the bases of power that under-pin, motivate and benefit from the truth-claims of the discourse in question.* Parker (1992) seems to shy away from destabilizing the notion of truth as entirely discursive-effect, and one suspects this is because Parker ultimately does want to take a strong political position, something which would be largely untenable in the absence of any grounding moral/political/ethical truism. Potter & Wetherall (1987) appear to supercede questions of how truth *is attained in discourse* with questions instead *of the active function and outcome of acts of discourse*; as a result they pay

little, if any attention, to the underlying forms of knowledge in which truth-claims are rooted.

Neither of these respective methods hence pays enough attention to what underwrites what counts as reasonable and qualified knowledge within a circumscribed socio-historical milieu; although they may provide schematic detail of what counts as important or dominant forms of knowledge (science, psychoanalysis, psychology, empiricism), they do not properly detail the underlying forms/conditions/criteria of reasonable knowledge on the basis of which truthful statements can be made. Careful examination of this sort would expand the generalizability of discursive analytic work (and enable a 'latitudinal linking' of texts) beyond the level of the targeted, analyzed text; something which neither Parker (1992) nor Potter & Wetherell's (1987) models can manage. These models also fail to properly replace the 'will to truth' with the 'will to power'; what counts as knowledge, and the various systems through which knowledge is qualified/disqualified (in particular the systems of exclusion operating upon discourse) are not traced back far enough to *the material conditions of possibility*, to the multiple institutional supports and various social structures and practices underlying the production of truth. As a result, discourse is not sufficiently grasped in its relation to power; the power of discourse is insufficiently engaged, and discourse analysis becomes more a project of reading the text than of engaging the discourse.

Parker's (1992) method does however, unlike Potter and Wetherell's(1987), contain auxiliary criteria specifying that institutions reinforced/attacked by the use of a

given discourse should be identified. It seems though that this awareness of institutional links and associated discursive practices is not properly integrated into his methodology in a way that it reasonably or efficaciously achievable within the frame of textual analysis. It would seem that these are goals better attained in a methodology (like genealogy) that does not prioritize textual forms of data at the cost of material forms, (as do both Parker's (1992) and Potter and Wetherell's (1987)), and in a methodology which favours a latitude of diverse data forms.

Internal systems of exclusion.
There are also a number of exclusions which work *internally* to discourse – the predominant amongst these are the discipline, the author and the commentary. Each of these allows the generation of new discourses virtually *ad infinitum* – although within certain limits of constraint. In terms of the commentary, Foucault (1981a) is speaking of the discourses based upon the major foundational narratives of a society, and the interchange between these primary (foundational religious, juridical or scientific texts) and secondary cultural texts (commentaries). It is due to the 'top-heaviness' of primary texts that they will remain permanent, yet ever capable of being brought up to date, revisited for hidden or multiple meanings (Foucault, 1981a).

Each form of commentary obeys the simple directive of recitation; each gives us the opportunity to say something other than the text itself, but on condition that it is the text itself which is uttered (Foucault, 1981a, p. 58). Foucault's suggestion here is that we over-play the importance of originality and freedom in everyday

discourse when in fact much of what is spoken is really the product of repetition, discursive 're-circulation'. By playing up the 'finitude of discourse', Foucault is making us aware of the presence of the limits within which we speak. As such, the questions of innovation, novelty, our presumed ability to utter whatever we will, refers not merely to what is said, but instead to the reappearance of what has been said before (Foucault, 1981a). As Said paraphrases Foucault: "Over and above every opportunity for saying something, there stands a regularizing collectivity...called a discourse" (1983, p. 186).[viii]

A complimentary principle of internal exclusion is that of the author. Foucault means the author in the sense of a principle or grouping of discourse, a focus of coherence, a unity and origin of meaning (1981a). Whereas commentary limits the hazards of discourse through the identity of repetition and sameness, the author limits this same chance element through the identity of individuality and 'I' (Foucault, 1981a). Although the principle of the author is obviously not to be found in each instance of discourse, it is a crucial grounding point of the veracity of certain statements. In the Middle Ages for example, a proposition was considered as drawing its scientific value only with reference to its author, and increasingly today, it is the author who is asked to carry the authentification of the hidden meanings traversing the texts carrying his/her name (Foucault, 1981a). Foucault extends these views later, in *What is an author?* (1977a), where he asserts the 'author-function' not as a creative, originating capacity, but rather as a complex and variable discursive function which points to the existence of certain groups of discourse (associated with the author in question) and affirms their status within a given society.

Asking "What matter who's speaking?" (1977a, p.138), he inverts the typical causal assumption of author-generates-discourse to ask how *discourse instead give(s) rise to subjects* (like authors) with privileged positions (and a series of related possible subject-positions). Instead of asking about what is revealed by authors in their texts, Foucault (1977a) suggests we ask instead about *what possible subject-positions are made possible within such texts.*

The discipline is the third internal principle of discursive limitation. A valid disciplinary statement is contingent upon a variety of conditions, Foucault (1981a) reminds us, upon the appropriate domain of objects, theories, methods, propositions, rules, definitions, techniques and instruments. In this sense, statements made from within a discipline need to fulfill certain conditions more complex than those of simple truth. At the same time however, disciplines consist of both errors and truths (Foucault, 1981a). Although each scholarly discipline entails a variety of 'complex and heavy requirements' that 'pushes back a whole teratology of knowledge', that discipline always risks the possibility that one may hear truthful statements 'in the spaces of a wild exteriority' (Foucault, 1981a, p. 61).

In violating the integrity of the principles of the author and the discipline, and in demonstrating how commentary is a limiting condition which re-circulates given understandings, Foucault is suggesting that we have dangerously over-estimated the creative and resourceful abilities of discourse. It will be impossible, he demands, to account for the positive and multiplicatory role of these broad principles "if we do not take into

consideration their restrictive and constraining function[s]" (Foucault 1981a, p. 61). Discourse analysis should hence busy itself not merely with the search for a plenitude of meaning, but rather with a search for the scarcity of meaning, with what *cannot* be said, with what is impossible or unreasonable within a certain discursive locations.

Parker's (1992) model of discourse analysis holds up relatively well in reference to Foucault's commentary on the limiting principles of author and discipline. Parker (1992) is emphatic that discourses are trans-individual, and that one should look beyond individual intentions when attempting to grasp meanings within a text; he likewise suggests 'that there need not be an author behind a text'. Indeed, much of the animating impetus of Parker's work (and this is shared, although perhaps to a lesser extent by Potter & Wetherall's (1987) *Discourse and social psychology),* lies precisely in the critical imperative to critique and question the conventions, norms, values and practices of established, mainstream Western psychology. In this sense *Discourse dynamics*, like a variety of his other texts (Parker, 1989, 1999; Parker, et al, 1995) certainly demonstrate an awareness of the inhabiting discursive powers of the discipline, and a willingness to disrupt and destabilize these boundaries for strategic purposes; although it is questionable the extent to which this awareness is effectively (and critically) implemented within his analytic methodology. Furthermore, both methods suggest (although perhaps mlore strongly Parker's (1992)), in line with Foucault, that texts play a role in generating, enabling and limiting empowered/disempowered subject-positions.

Philosophical themes of limitation and exclusion.

Having uncovered the predominant means of exclusion operating upon discourse Foucault is now concerned with identifying the correlating philosophical themes that reinforce these activities. His question, in essence, is how modern western society has been so successful in eliding the presence and actions of discourse. The themes he identifies collude: they all propose an ideal truth as a law of discourse, they all adopt an immanent rationality as the principle of their behaviour, and they all address themselves to an ethic of knowledge "which promises to give truth only to the desire for truth itself" (Foucault, 1981a, p. 65). These themes are all party to ensuring that 'discourse should occupy only the smallest possible space between thought and speech', to enforcing that speech should appear 'as simply thought made visible by means of words' (Foucault, 1981a, p. 65).

The first means of concealing the reality of discourse is found in the Heideggerian idea of the founding subject who directly 'animates the empty forms of language with his/her aims' (Foucault, 1981a, p. 65). This founding subject[ix] has at their disposal signs, marks, traces, letters, but does not need to pass "via the singular instance of discourse in order to manifest them" (1981a, p. 65). It is through the intuition of this subject that meaning is grasped, that horizons of meaning are founded, where sciences and deductive reasoning have their ultimate grounding (Foucault, 1981a).

A second theme, that of originating experience[x], turns on the supposition that at the very basis of experience there were prior significations, things already said, wandering around the world "arranging it around us and opening it up

from the outset to a sort of primitive recognition" (Foucault, 1981a, p. 65). In this idealist conception the world is occupied by "things...already murmuring meanings which our language has only to pick up" (Foucault, 1981a, p. 65). This language, moreover, has always already been "speaking to us of a being of which it is like the skeleton", and, we exist within "a primal complicity with the world" (1981a, p. 65).

Universal mediation is a third theme which indicates the presumption of an omnipresent logos elevating particularities to the status of concepts and allowing immediate consciousness to unfurl in the end the whole rationality of the world (Foucault, 1981a, p. 65-66). Through the reification of this logos discourse becomes little more than "the gleaming of a truth in the process of being born to its own gaze" and "things themselves, and events...imperceptibly turn themselves into discourse as they unfold the secrets of their own essence" (Foucault, 1981a, p. 66).

It is through these three dominant and pervasive philosophical themes, of the founding subject, originating experience and that discourse is reduced to little more than a play, of writing, in the case of the first, of reading in the second, and of exchange in the third (Foucault, 1981a). These admitted activities of discourse are the only the most superficial qualities (markers) of its actions; this writing, reading and exchange never puts anything at stake except signs; discourse is hence annulled in its reality and put at the disposal of the signifier (Foucault, 1981a). Here then is perhaps Foucault's strongest warning that the analysis of discourse should not defer simply to a reading of

textuality, to a study of powerful significations. What follows here is

> "a refusal of analyses couched in terms of the symbolic field or the domain of signifying structures, and a recourse to analyses in terms of the genealogy of relations of force, strategic developments, and tactics...The history which determines us has the form of a war rather than that of language: relations of power, not relations of meaning" (Foucault, 1980b, p. 114).

This commentary asserts a formidable problematic for much of discourse analysis (for both Parker (1992) and Potter & Wetherell (1987)), indeed, for many critical linguistic practices which, within the context of their analyses, focus on power as a function of the text alone. Foucault's claim here is that such forms of analysis attribute undue power to the internal properties/structure of language; against a pan-textualism which might claim that everything can ostensibly be analysed as a text, as a language, Foucault (1981a) points out that the power in language links to, and stems from, external, material and tactical forms of power. Power, in no uncertain terms, cannot be fixed, or apprehended in the meanings and significations of texts, but must be grasped and traced through the analysis of tactical and material relations of force.

If one is thus attempting to engage critically with discourse, as Foucault understands it, then those forms of analysis based on the 'turn to text', that define discourse as "a system of statements that construct... an object" (Parker, 1992, p. 5), as 'forms of spoken interaction... and written texts' (Potter & Wetherell, 1987) that consider discourse to refer to a set of

meanings, representations, images, stories and statements (Burr, 1995), will remain woefully limited in their attempts to apprehend discourse in the fullness of its capacity. These approaches come dangerously close to reducing discourse to narratives, to forms of representation, to language, or text alone. Potter & Wetherell (1987) are certainly guilty of this (although their later (1992) study includes more of a material focus on the effects of racist discourse), as to an extent is Parker (1992), although the latter, in a secondary capacity, does emphasize that discourse may also take material forms, and be 'embodied' in various kinds of practice. Even when authors such as Parker (1992), Burr (1993) and Potter & Wetherell (1992) signal that they are aware of the importance of material correlates of discourse, of discursive practices in the operation of discourse, they are unable to provide adequate means through which to involve the analysis of these material and extra-textual practised forms of powers within their methodology.

Closer to Foucault's (1972) insistence that discourses are, at basis, *forms of practice*, is the analytic approach of Fairclough, who speaks of discourse in the terms of 'social action and interaction', and who is careful to emphasize *both text and context*, in the study of discourse, both that inside of, *and outside of*, the studied text as part of the discourse in question. Some of Potter and Wetherell's work (1987, 1992; Potter et al, 1990) also takes cognizance of the importance of the context of discourse (i.e. along the lines that one needs to understand the political and interpersonal contexts in which speaking is being informed if one is to properly gauge its power and its purposes). Whilst this relation of

discourses to contexts beyond the immediate level of the text is important, and whilst this emphasis on the performative focus on discourse *as action* would no doubt be well-placed for Foucault, even this attention to contexts and to textual *action* would not go far enough for him in terms of concretely tying discourse to physical and material arrangements of force. Ultimately, and this is echoed in Fairclough's (1993) critique, in which he claims Potter & Wetherell's (1987) focus on the variability of linguistic form (according to context and function) simply defers to *a restrictive focus on linguistic content* which marginalizes the breadth of discursive phenomena beyond the text.

The principle of reversal; event versus creation.
Foucault's first methodological priority is the principle of reversal. He means reversal here in the sense of a subversion or an over-turning (Young, 1981), as a means of refuting and inverting assumptions of origin. Those traditional sources of discourse which appear to play a positive role in the production of discourse must be refuted through the demonstration instead of how they act to cut up, limit and 'rarefy' discourse (Foucault, 1981a). These are the traditional 'sources' which typically derail our analytic attempts, and separate, in an artificial way, individual voice, the drive to truth and the realm of technical expertise from the political field more widely.

The methodological counter-term supplied by Foucault here as a way of enforcing the principle of reversal is the idea of *discourse as event* which he sets up in opposition to the idea of *discourse as creation* (1981a). In a later interview (1981b) he qualifies the methodological

prospects of the notion of eventualization as "[a] breach of self-evidence, of those self-evidences on which our knowledges, aquiescences and practices rest...." (P. 6). Continuing, he notes "eventualization means rediscovering the connections, encounters, supports, blockages, plays of forces, strategies and so on which...count...as being self-evident, universal and necessary" (p. 6). Using the principle of eventualization means, he suggests, effecting a multiplication or pluralization of causes such that the object of analysis (the event) is analysed according to those mutliple processes which constitute it (Foucault, 1981b). Analysis hence proceeds by progressive and necessarily incomplete saturation, from the consultation of ever more sources of origin and realization, ever more analytical 'salients', to an increasingly polymorphism of data sources (Foucault, 1981b).

In this way, thinking discourse as event enables us to look beneath the alibis of creation, and to isolate very different (and multiple) origins of discourse, which Foucault (1981a) suspects, will reveal functions of exclusion. These objectives of 'breaching self-evidence' and 'rediscovering connections, supports, blockages, plays of force' lead us to a determined identification of the material components acting upon and within discourse, to an analysis of the multiple analytical 'salients' underlying the successful production of discourse. It seems that Foucault's suspicion (1981a, 1981b) is that the more we follow a polymorphism of analysis, the more we will be able to tie discourse to the motives and operations of power-interests, the more analytically visible discourse will become, and, as a result, the more politically-(and ontologically-)robust our analyses will become. The principle of reversal hence may be seen as a

way of *politicizing the de-politicized,* self-warranting accounts of discourse, as way of making discourse visible, and visibly connected to multiple prospective origins anbd forms of realization.

Said (1983) similarly emphasizes the importance of re-relating discourse to a greater network of power-relations when he notes that Foucault's method of critically engaging discourse is to strip it of its "esoteric or hermetic elements and to do this by making [it] assume its affiliations with institutions, agencies, classes, academies, corporations, groups, ideologically defined parties and professions... [These critical engagements] ...forcibly redefine and reidentify the particular interests that all [discourses] serve" (p. 212). Re-emphasizing the importance of this form of 'reaffiliation' he notes that "[e]ach discourse... is to some degree a jargon...a language of control and a set of institutions within the culture over what it constitutes as its special domain" (Said, 1983, p. 219).

Here it should again be noted that Parker's (1992) method does make allowance for the identification of institutions; similarly, it makes mention of the fact that discourses reproduce power-relations. However, in both of the above cases, Parker (1992) fails to properly explain how the identification of institutions, like the identification of those who will/will not benefit from the mobilization of the discourse, may be properly accommodated within a methodology that treats discourse chiefly as a form of language. Again one feels that a broader definition of discourse, and a broader analytic scope than one limited basically to the analysis of *texts* will be necessary if this method is to comply with

Foucault's demands. Similarly, Parker (1992) is anxious about how one might imply the omnipresence of power by emphasizing the inextricability of power and discourse, and thereby lose sight of the prospects of resistance. This is clearly antithetical to Foucault's approach, which seeks precisely to emphasize how *enmeshed* power is within discourse. (Importantly here, an emphasis of the intimacy and interconnectedness of power and discourse need not, for Foucault, mitigate against the possibilities for resistance, particularly given that, in his conceptualization, resistance is a feature of every power relationship; there can be no relation of power *without* resistance (Foucault, 1982)).

Another pragmatic upshot of prioritizing discourse as event becomes clear: that one should approach discourse not so much as a language, or as textuality, but as an active 'occurring', as something that implements power and action, and that also *is* power and action. Rather than a mere vocabulary or language, a set of instruments that we animate, discourse *is* the thing that is done, "the violence", as he puts it, "which we do things" (1981a, p. 67). In a similar vein Said adds that the predominant goal of discourse is "to maintain itself and, more important, to manufacture its material continually" (1983, p. 216). Many of Foucault's later works take this material level of discourse as their prime focus. *Discipline and Punish* (1979a) is a case in point where Foucault maps, in rigorous detail, power's various and developing investments in the body. Here, each facet of discursive commentary is led and substantiated by the minutia of various corporeal rituals of bodily discipline, which, in their impact, would seem clearly irreducible to an exclusively textual focus.

It is worth commenting on one aspect of Potter and Wetherell's (1987) conceptualization of discourse here. Whilst they most certainly *do not* relate discourse to a wider realm of material forms of power (and have been criticized, as Burr (1995) notes, for looking at the internal workings of a piece of text at the cost of its wider political implications[xi]),they *do* importantly treat discourse as action, or, more specifically, as a "potent, action-orientated medium" (Potter & Wetherell, 1987, p. 28). The performative quality that they grant discourse in their conception resonates well with Foucault's conceptualization of discourse as 'a violence we do things', and is somewhat helpful in mitigating against the notion of discourse as individual creation. (Although their notion of interpretative repertoires, that is, the linguistic resources available to speakers in the construction of their accounts (Potter & Wetherell, 1987), regrettably restores what Fairclough (1993) considers to be a "one-sided individualistic emphasis upon the rhetorical strategies of speakers" (p. 25); an emphasis which in many ways recuperates exactly the sense of authorial and creative capacity that the notion of discourse as event had attempted to circumvent).

The principle of discontinuity; series versus unity.
Foucault's second methodological injunction is that of discontinuity. Perhaps the most straightforward aspect of this principle is the distrust it displays in cause-effect patterns of explanation. As Foucault (1970) had already suggested within the ambit of his historical work, linear causality and narratives of progress, continuity and evolution are not always the most profitable methodological tools of analysis. The reason for this distrust of continuity as an explanatory concept stems

from the suspicion that, as an historical form of explanation, it will remain limited, insulated within the context of its analytical activity. Butchart (1998) signals this trepidation in his comment that historical analyses emphasizing continuity run the risk of projecting backwards from the present the concepts that their analysis will ultimately 'reveal'.

The important distinction here – and in this regard Foucault is explicitly reliant on Nietzsche's notion of "effective history" (cf. Foucault, 1977b) – is that between a 'history of the past' and 'a history of the present'. A 'history of the past' is essentially a work of the present, strongly anchored in the current socio-political realm, and produced as way of understanding what happened in a previous era. Because it is essentially a work of the present, it risks reproducing as much about the author's historical and political context as it does about the subject–matter under study (Butchart, 1998). Rather than anchoring itself in current socio–political understandings and alienating the past, a history of the present by contrast, prefers to interrogate the present, to examine *its* values, discourses and understandings with recourse to the past as a resource of destabilizing critical knowledge(Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1982).

In equivalent terms then, rather than grant a privileged status to the content of discourse (as Parker (1992) and Potter & Wetherell (1987) do), discourse analysis needs to decentre and destabilize such meanings, undermine their authority and uproot the coherence, unity or 'ahistory' upon which such 'truthful' meanings are reliant. The fixing of discontinuities makes for a nodal point of analysis precisely because "it disturbs what was

previously considered immobile...fragments what was thought unified...[and] shows the heterogeneity of what had been considered consistent" (Foucault, 1977c, p. 147). In this way the workings of discourse become that much more discernable, the effects of what had appeared as a 'transparent medium of communication' become fixable, just as some of our most fundamental concepts, like those of the psyche, sexuality and society become apparent as largely discursive entities. Hence one starts to see the absolute reliance, for Foucault, that any critical, or politically efficacious, project of discursive analysis will have upon effective forms of history; for him this is an important font of critical 'counter-knowledges' (cf. Foucault, 1980b) well-suited to destabilizing current hierarchies of knowledge, to resistance and struggle.[xii] Indeed, without this historical dimension we will be limited to 'scratching the surface of discourse'; our results will remain loaded with contemporary values, more a product of contemporary discourse than a critical analysis of it.[xiii]

Parker's (1992) method does suggest that 'discourse is historically located', in conjunction with the warning that discourse analysts should be wary of disconnecting themselves from history (p. 16). Whilst these stipulations are commendable (such a recourse to history is only made in the later work of Potter & Wetherell (1992)), it seems that this use of history can only possess a limited, peripheral and descriptive capacity if not centralized as a prime methodological component. Parker's (1992) appeal to history has an 'after the fact' feel, and as such, one supposes, it loses much of its destabilizing and critical potential. Ultimately, this reference to history lacks an explanation of how such contrary counter-knowledges may be

put to use in *contesting* current discursive knowledges.

The methodological opposition Foucault (1981a) brings to play as a way of enforcing the importance of the principle of discontinuity is that of *series versus unity*. Rather than assume a shared likeness then, or suppose that each component of the analysis will be of the same type, the discourse analyst must be prepared to search for similar functions across a variety of different forms (language, practices, material reality, institutions, subjectivity). Similarly, rather than following linear successions of development (vertical patterns of analyses), the discourse analyst must trace a laterality, mapping parallels of regularity (horizontal, 'sideways' patterns of analysis). Here the priority given to textual forms of discourse in Parker (1992) and Potter & Wetherell (1987) is again problematic; without the realization that textuality is only one 'realization-point' of discourse, without the breadth of analysis that would consider a variety of diverse forms, these forms of analysis will only be able to mount impoverished accounts of the greater powers and capacities of discourse.

Foucault's notion of the series is a vital methodological concept in alerting us to the fact that discourse works in discontinuous and often contradictory ways. If we are to successfully identify discourse, and to gauge it in the fullness of its various capacities, then we need a notion that can join together an ensemble of discourse's various components, despite their diversity. Said's(1978) assertion of the idea of 'flexible positional authority' is invaluable here. Flexible positional authority characterizes that feature of discourse which enables fragmentary,'un-unified' and immanently dissociable

discursive acts to work together in powerful conjunction. Hence Foucault's assertion that "discursive events must be treated along the lines of homogenous series which, however, are discontinuous in relation to each other" (1981a, p. 69).

Both Parker (1992) and Potter & Wetherell (1987) do attempt to accommodate a sense of the flexibility and discontinuity within the workings of discourse. (The notion of flexibility of use is integral to Potter & Wetherell's (1987) problematic notion of interpretative repertoire. Parker (1992) speaks of how a discourse[xiv] might refer to other discourses as way of extending itself, and reiterates the inter-textuality of discourse). However these attempts once again fail to pay enough attention to extra-textual forms of discourse. Given then that discourse is able to work in *discontinuous* ways, that discursive practices are able to cross and juxtapose one another with 'mutual unawareness' (Foucault, 1981a), then we cannot simply speak against discourse, or attempt to liberate a network of repressed discourse lying beneath it. To attempt to 'give voice' to a great unspoken risks simply reproducing the criticized discourse in another way. Indeed:

> "the fact that there are systems of rarefaction does not mean that beneath them...there reigns a vast unlimited discourse... which is...repressed by them, and which we have the task of raising up by restoring the power of speech to it" (Foucault, 1981a, p. 67).

It is not the case that there is a great 'unsaid' or great 'unthought' which runs throughout the world "and intertwines with all its forms and all its events" (p. 67). Foucault is pointing out that the model of repression will be inappropriate here in describing the functioning

of discourse – because, it is quite simply *not* the case that the attempt to utter those meanings excluded, marginalised or 'repressed' by discourse will bring us to truth. There is not a vast and unlimited, continuous and silent discourse 'quelled and repressed by various practices', and subsequently, it is markedly not our task to 'raise up the restored power of speech to it' (Foucault, 1981a, p. 67).

This is a difficult point in the sense that it frequently does seem to be Foucault's task to do just this, to give voice to those de-legitimized sources so thoroughly disqualified from predominant discourse (cf. Foucault, 1980b). Whilst this may no doubt be the case, it is worth bearing in mind that this kind of genealogical recovery of subjugated voices does not occur under the auspices of confronting a great untruthfulness with the force of an indisputable truth. It occurs rather under the auspices of tracing discursive formations of power and control, by assembling a strategically organized ensemble of historical knowledges which will be capable of opposition and of struggle against the coercion of presiding discourse (Foucault, 1980b). It is more of a question of increasing the *combative power* of potentially subversive forms of knowledge than of simply attempting to amplify their 'truth-value'; more a tactics of sabotage and disruption than a straightforward head-to-head measuring up of 'supposed truth' with a 'truer' counter-example.

The analyst of discourse is predominantly then concerned with exploiting the gaps or shortcomings of a given discourse, with systematically demonstrating its contradictions and discontinuities; these are the seams to be pulled, the joints and weaknesses to be relentlessly stressed. (Parker's (1992) method does make provision for

such an emphasis of the internal contradictions within discourse in that he suggests analysts that one "sets...ways of speaking against one another" (p. 14)). Exposing these points of vulnerability is infinitely preferable to the attempt to unravel the great 'unsaid' precisely because the latter risks simply reproducing discourse rather than arresting its activity.

The principle of specificity; regularity versus originality.

In speaking of specificity Foucault is worried about those over-generalizing forms of analysis which would resolve specific and particular discursive forms into 'a play of pre-existing significations' (1981a). The activity of a 'general reading' of discourse will not suffice, because such an activity makes the assumption that "the world turns towards us a legible face which we would have only to decipher" (Foucault, 1981a, p. 67). In strong opposition to such assumptions Foucault warns that "the world is not the accomplice of our knowledge; there is no prediscursive providence which disposes the world in our favour" (1981a, p. 67). It is not the case that there are inherent meanings in things, that varieties of discourse more or less closely approximate true or intrinsic meanings; by contrast, we come to know meanings and to distinguish truth-claims *precisely on the basis of discourse*. An important word of qualification stems from this point. To proclaim that 'there is no prediscursive providence' is not to subsume everything within the world into discourse. Indeed, to suggest that our knowledge of the world, our estimation of truth, and our speaking capacity (the scope of things that we can reasonably say) is governed by certain discursive formations is clearly different to saying that there is nothing beyond the text,

that everything that happens within the world is reducible to certain textual markers.

In contrast to suggestions that discursive practices can be largely reduced to textuality (as implicit in the approaches of Parker (1992) and Potter & Wetherell (1987)), Foucault's warning is that we must resolve to 'throw off the sovereignty of the signifier' and look further afield to identify a wider array of discursive effects (Foucault, 1981a, p. 66). Similarly, he demands that one does not reduce the analysis of discourse merely to the 'markings of a textuality', but that one fixes it also in the *physicality* of its effects, in the *materiality* of its practices (1981a, p. 66). As such, critical readings, like interpretative exercises, will be insufficient, they will allow one to deny the materiality of discourse, to elide much of its force, and will hence result in the crippling of the political impact of our analyses.

The opposition Foucault draws on here is that between *regularity and originality*. His point here is to impress upon us the fact that similar discursive acts can occur in a multitude of different ways, in various different forms which stretch from what has typically been considered 'discursive', that is, the textual, to the 'extra-discursive', the material level of discursive practices. Foucault's use of the term 'discursive practices' here is noteworthy; not only does it suggest a diverse plurality that nonetheless maintains a unified function, it also makes it difficult to separate the material and the textual, to grant either a separate (and mutually-exclusive) integrity beyond the other.

The collapse of this textual/material,'discursive'/'extra-discursive' division seems strategic on Foucault's part, his agenda, it seems, is precisely to complicate and problematize the division. Indeed, once we consider the discursive utterance (the diagnosis of someone as a 'pervert', say for example) as an action, as a practice or an event, then this utterance seems to start verging on the territory of materiality, and becomes more easily linked to the array of physical activities through which such a diagnosis may be made in the first place. On the other hand, more obviously material practices, like imprisonment by reason of sado-masochistic sexual behaviour, would clearly appear to be of a different ontological nature, able to support, extend, affirm discourse, without being exhausted it.

The collapse of such a division also brings serious problems with it – most obviously an over-emphasis of textuality. Two distinct errors are to be found here. The first resides in seeing nothing beyond the 'discursive', nothing beyond the text, seeing torture, for example, as a form of dialogue. The second resides in granting a kind of over-empowered status to language alone. A case in point here would be the deployment politically-correctness as a way of trying to change the world in isolation of certain fundamental material conditions. These errors signal a myopia of the text, an over-valuation of the linguistic and representational powers of language in isolation of the material arrangements of power in which they are enmeshed, and which they in turn extend.

The breadth of a focus on 'discursive practices' (so conspicuously absent in Parker (1992) and Potter & Wetherell (1987)) mitigates against exactly such a myopia.

Indeed, as problematic as it is to threaten the collapse of this distinction on an ontological level, there is nonetheless a critical methodological efficacy in a cautious, pre-cursory exploration of the blurring between the textual and material, the 'discursive' and the 'extra-discursive'. Indeed, as will become increasingly clear, this whole distinction, which to a large extent still retains its integrity, can be a dangerous one in the sense that it aids and abets the contemporary effacement and denial of the potency of discourse's material effects. Being able to cautiously blur these lines will keep the analyst from under-estimating *the discursive effects* of the material, and *the material effects* of the discursive.

It seems that by being able to work in two analytic domains, to substantiate critical textual assertions on the basis of materially-focussed analyses, and vice versa, that Foucault lends a unique epistemological strength to his work, a strength lacking in both Parker (1992) and Potter & Wetherell (1987). There can be little doubt that Foucault's priority is not that of 'reading', textuality or signification, but rather that of materiality, conditions of possibility, historical circumstance. Hence one might contend that Foucault's analysis of discourse occurs fundamentally *through the extra-discursive;* a fact which brings his approach to discourse into strong conflict those of Parker (1992) and Potter & Wetherell (1987).

The principle of exteriority; conditions of possibility versus signification.
Rather than moving from discourse towards its interior, toward the 'hidden nucleus' at the 'heart of signification', discourse analysis should move forward on the basis of discourse itself, on the basis of those elements which gives rise to it and fix

its limits: its external conditions of possibility (Foucault, 1981, p. 67). Foucault's methodological injunction here is that of exteriority. Critical readings, he claims, will prove inadequate: looking at what can be shown to be within the text, is insufficient, because alternative 'showings' will always be possible. This is the problem of textual relativism, where any reasonably supported textual interpretation will hold, within relative confines, as well as any other. Hence the results of our analyses will be of little significance beyond the scope of the analysed text.

This problem of textual relativism as mitigating against critical/political utility is one of which many practitioners of discourse analysis (Burman, 1990, 1991; Burr, 1995; Parker, 1992) are themselves aware. As Burr (1995) notes, the relativism of much discourse theory makes it difficult to justify adopting one 'reading' of a text rather than others. Because a discourse analysis cannot be taken to reveal a 'truth' lying within the text, it must acknowledge its own research findings as open to other, potentially equally valid findings; due to the absence of notions of truth and falsity as reasonable or secure points of reference in discourse analysis, all we have is "a variety of different discourses or perspectives, each apparently valid" (Burr, 1995, p. 60). Burman (1990) likewise points to this inability to ally oneself to any explicit political position from within such approaches, and comments that it thereby becomes difficult "to elaborate a position where it is possible to privilege or maintain a commitment to one reading rather than another" (1991, p. 331).

It is clear in this way that the analyst of discourse needs to appeal to certain stable reference points outside of the text (although not those of truth and falsity, for

obvious reasons). Indeed, if the critical efforts of the discourse analyst are to possess any real political weight then these analyses will need be substantiated with reference to a different epistemological order than that of textuality. The point here is that one needs reference one's analytical conclusions, wherever possible, to a double epistemology; to corroborate findings to extra-textual dimensions, like those of space (geo-politics), time (history), architecture, or material forms of practice (cf. Foucault, 1979).

There is a second reason why merely textual interventions will prove inadequate. If we produce texts as way of critiquing discourse, that is to say, if we attempt to generate a 'counter-discourse' as the basis of effective opposition, we may very possibly act to provide an oblique support or adjunct to the critiqued discourse. To focus too much on the textual level of discourse is to risk reducing analytic attentions (and discourse itself) to this textual level, and to hence leave our critical readings and writings open to the subsumption of other facets of the opposing discourse. What I have in mind specifically here is the distinction between discourse as effect and instrument, and as power itself. My concern is that in engaging discourse chiefly at the textual level one is predominantly dealing with discourse *as effect of power*, and is, in relative terms, neglecting to engage with discourse also *instrument of power.* Foucault makes a similar point when he clarifies that discourse should be viewed as neither exclusively effect nor instrument of power: "discourse is not simply that which translates struggles or systems of domination, but is the thing for which and by which there is struggle" (Foucault, 1981a, p. 52–53).

In emphasizing that discourse is both the objective of power (its hoped-for effects), and its means (its instrumentation), Foucault is warning us that we are making a mistake in attempting to reduce the function of discourse to any one comfortable role within the operation of power. Indeed, one needs only briefly consider the complexity of the mutually-beneficial and interdependent relationship of the material and the discursive in the operation of power to be aware that discourse often appears as both *instrument* and *result* of power, as both its antecedent and its off-shoot.(Discourse facilitates and endorses the emergence of certain relations of material power, just as it justifies these effects after the fact. Similarly, material arrangements of power enable certain speaking rights and privileges, just as they lend material substantiation to what is spoken in discourse). In many ways the mutual reliance of this relationship cannot be under-estimated, and as such, the attempt to isolate either aspect of power from the other in the analysis of discourse risks severely undercutting the efficacy of one's analysis, and colluding in the ongoing production of power.[xv]

Remaining within the text, and maintaining a preoccupation with the contents of the text only, means that the analyst of discourse will not be able to properly engage with discourse as an *instrument of power* precisely because they will not have reference to a greater macro perspective where different and powerful material instances of power are intimately connected to its various textual elements. In lacking this macro overview of the matrices, interconnections and networks of power, the analyst of discourse opens themselves up to the possibility that their very critiques may become a part of the instruments of the discourse they are attempting to critique; the counter-

discourses constructed by way of opposition may themselves, in
 an oblique way, or at a different level, reproduce or 'speak'
exactly those forms of power that were initially being
critiqued in the first place. The lack of attention to
discourse as instrument, that is to say, analysis without
reference to the instrumentation of diverse forms of the
same discourse (for which Parker (1992) and Potter &
Wetherell (1987) have already above been criticized),
leaves itself open to the fact that the critique it
produces may be a part instrument of the very discourse
that it had attempted to dismantle. Foucault's notion of
the 'repressive hypothesis' (1980a) is useful here in
demonstrating that an over-riding concern with the content
and overt effects of discourse result in a lack of
awareness of the means in which *the criticism of discourse
itself may become the insidious instrument of power*.

The conceptual opposition that Foucault attaches to the
principle of exteriority is that between signification and
the conditions of possibility (1981a). Drawing analytical
attentions away from significations alone, Foucault's
imperative is thus to identify the various overlapping
forms of support which limit the discourse under study,
and in the absence of which certain discursive statements
could not have been made. Analytic attentions hence need
defer to a variety of circumstantial variables, stretching
across the material, institutional and historical
circumstances that make certain acts, statements and
subjects possible at certain specific locations. Rather
than just locating discourse within a web of discursive
effects then, one might also unearth certain of its
various potential instruments.

Having already favoured lateral as opposed to vertical lines of
analysis, Foucault now uses the notion of exteriority to eschew

depth in favour of breadth as the primary focus of analytic work. He notes:

> "Whereas the interpreter is obliged to go to the depth of things, like an excavator, the moment of...[genealogy] is like an overview, from higher and higher up, which allows the depth to be laid out in front of him in a more and more profound visibility; depth is re-situated as an absolutely superficial secret" (cited in Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1982, pp. 106–107).

To this he adds the observation that the deepest truth that the genealogist has to reveal "is the secret that [things] have no essence... or that their essence was fabricated in a piecemeal fashion from alien forms" (cited in Dreyfus & Rabinow, p. 107) to which he adds "If interpretation is an unending task, it is simply because there is nothing to interpret. There is nothing absolutely primary to interpret because, when all is said and done, underneath it all everything is already interpretation" (cited in Dreyfus & Rabinow, p. 107).

Perhaps the most important point of this position, for the present discussion, is that it plays up the extent to which certain forms of discourse analysis inevitably defer to a kind of interpretative activity, which, in a sense, recuperates the principle of the author within the interpretative researcher. (It should be noted here that Abrams and Hogg (1990) have criticized Parker's criteria for the identification of discourses, arguing that his stress on the way in which 'discourses are realised in texts' obscures the role of the analyst of discourse as interpreter. Similarly, Marks (1993) claims that despite attempts at reflexivity in discourse analysis procedure, typically the researcher's 'reading' carries the most weight (relative to that of research subjects), a fact that is also conceded by Parker and Burman (1993)). Lacking the breadth or latitude of a broad-based *genealogical* approach to critical investigation, discourse analysis unavoidably continues to follow 'a vertical line of investigation', to adopt 'a depth-approach' to the text. Hence,

as Potter claims of Parker (in Burr, 1995), one's own less than explicitly contextualized political position comes to assume the anchoring-position once provided by the provision of the notion of 'truth'. Basically, discourse analysis, in the models provided by Parker (1992) and Potter & Wetherell (1987) cannot rescue itself from claims that it functions as an interpretative activity, which reifies the text, recuperates the author-principle (in the figure of the interpreter), and restores a central anchoring point, not this time in the form of truth, but in the authoritative interpretation, which performs much of the same function. Given that there is no 'prediscursive providence', any activity which is interpretative in some means or form, will only again uncover discursive effects. To critically engage with discourse one does not need implicitly interpretative approaches, one needs, by contrast, to map discourse, to trace its outline and its relations of force across a variety of discursive forms and objects.

Conclusion: the shortcomings of discourse analysis.
At the outset of this paper it was noted that there exists no strictly Foucauldian method of discourse analysis. The reason for this by now appears to be quite apparent: the various methodological injunctions prioritized by Foucault can be better accommodated within the ambit of critical genealogical work than they can within any form of discursive analysis that (depending on its particular sub-variety) separates itself from the broader analysis of power, the consideration of history, materiality and the underlying conditions of possibility underwriting what counts as reasonable knowledge. Indeed, one of the broader conclusions that can be drawn from the proceeding examination is that Foucault's conception of discourse is situated far more closely to knowledge, materiality and power than it is to language[xvi]. It is the general conclusion of this paper that it is exactly the omission

of these three dimensions of analysis that so undermines the epistemological strength, the explanatory power and the political abilities of both Parker's (1992) and Potter & Wetherell's (1987) approaches.

It is with reference to these three pivotal conditions of discourse, and as way of tying together the underlying basis of many of the foregoing methodological/theoretical arguments, that four basic arguments may be articulated. Firstly, Foucault's conceptualization of discourse indispensably requires the role of historical contextualization; discourse analysis only finds its real usefulness within the agenda of a 'history of systems of thought' (Foucault, 1977). Moreover, to preclude the dimension of history from the critical analysis of discourse is to risk producing an analysis insulated within the sociol-political discursive context in which it was produced, that is, it is to risk reproducing precisely the kinds of discourses one had hoped to interrogate. In this connection, both Parker (1992) and Potter & Wetherell (1987) arguably involve historical forms of analysis (if at all) in only a peripheral and hence insufficient capacity.

Secondly, for Foucault, a study of discourse must necessarily entail a focus on discourse-as-knowledge, that is to say, on discourse as a matter of the social, historical and political conditions under which statements come to count as true or false (McHoul & Grace, 1997). Without reference to the underwriting conditions of knowledge and without reference to the frame of what constitutes reasonable knowledge, discursive analytic procedures such as Parker's (1992) and Potter & Wetherell's (1987) will only be able to make isolated

comments, with a generalizability and political relevance limited to the reference point of the analysed text.

Thirdly, without reference to materiality (as evidenced in the methods of Parker(1992) and Potter & Wetherell (1987)) discourse analysis remains largely condemned to 'the markings of a textuality', a play of semantics, a decontextualized set of hermeneutic interpretations that can all too easily be dismissed. More than this, by fixing on textual effects (and on discourse as *effect* at the cost of an awareness of discourse as also *the instrument* of power), discourse analysis aids and abets in the contemporary effacement and denial of its material effects and appears to risk a dangerous reductionism in thinking power.

As way of uniting the above three conditions of discourse in one over-riding methodological imperative, one could suggest that the analysis of discourse, according to a Foucauldian perspective, cannot remain simply *within* the text, but needs to move, in Said's (1983) formulation, both *in and out* of the text. If one is to guard that one's analytic efforts do not result in mere 'markings of textuality', with limited political relevance, restricted generalizability and stunted critical penetration, then it will be necessary to corroborate the findings of textual analyses with reference to certain extra-textual factors (history, materiality, conditions of possibility); to do exactly what Parker (1992) and Potter & Wetherell (1987) fail to do, to drive the analysis of the discursive *through the extra-discursive.*

Although this paper has attempted to provide an explication of Foucault's theory of, and approach to, discourse, and whilst it has attempted to communicate his understanding in as accessible and as straightforward a manner as possible, it has not meant

to imply that Foucault's position on discourse was unchanging, clear, simple and unproblematic. Indeed, whilst this paper will not under-cut its own hoped-for explanatory efficacy by introducing a variety of possible critiques at this late stage, it will forego that Foucault's thinking in relation to the concept and methodology of discourse was certainly complex, difficult, nuanced, and at times, flawed and contradictory. There is one however internal problem within the paper that does demand admission. This problem is quite simply that in critiquing specified forms of discourse analysis, this paper has frequently pointed towards a genealogical method as less flawed, yet has failed to fully describe or detail what such a genealogical approach would entail. In many ways then, this paper begs a companion piece, an elucidation of the genealogical method as it may improve upon certain methodological problems specified above, how it may more efficaciously enable the project of political criticism, and how it may usefully be put to use within the domain of psychology.

i.There is a fair amount of methodological (and theoretical) variation in the discourse analytic work stemming from these two 'schools'; as such the tensions that will be isolated here will be those between Foucault, on one hand, and the initial methodologies of Parker (1992) and Potter & Wetherell (1987), on the other.

ii. It is worthwhile maintaining the tension between these two readings. Whilst *The order of discourse* seems straightforwardly descriptive, the subsequent methodological approach that Foucault adopts (i.e. genealogy) and his later work stemming from it (the studies from *Discipline and punish* (1979) onwards) seem to be particularly difficult to divorce from a critical-political agenda. The distinction between Foucault as criticalist and descriptivist might well be seen as deferring to the distinction between his pre-genealogical and genealogical work (cf. Dreyfus and Rabinow's (1982) discussion of 'the methodological failure of archaeology'). This criticalist reading is bourne out not only by Foucault's own 'real-life' dedication to a variety of forms of activism(cf. Macey, 1994), it is also strengthened by the strong indebtedness of his later work to Nietzschean genealogy, which, arguably, cannot be fully separated from a substantive critical ethos. Furthermore, Foucault's own articulation of such a critical-political imperative within his later work is often explicit:

> "...the real political task in a society such as ours is to criticize the working of institutions which appear to be both neutral and independent; to criticise them in such a manner that the political violence which has... exercised itself obscurely through them will be unmasked, so that one can fight them" (Foucault, 1974, p. 171).

iii. Foucault's perspective on madness here, as stemming from his reading of Descartes in *Madness and Civilization* (1965), is by no means unproblematic, or uncontentious. Perhaps his most well-known detractor in this respect is Derrida, whose *Writing & Difference* (1978) takes strong exception to Foucault's conceptualization (here) of the relationship between madness and reason. The terms of this debate, as established in the critical interchange between Derrida and Foucault across *Madness and Civilization* (1965), *Writing and Difference* (1978), and *My body, this paper, this fire* (1979b) understandably have important ramifications for psychological conceptions of madness.

iv. Foucault's views here on 'the forbidden speech of politics and sexuality' stand in stark contrast to his later comments in *The History of Sexuality Volume 1* (1980a), where he clearly asserts that nothing has ever been more spoken than sexuality itself.

v. It is important to note here that Foucault at this point is clearly dependent on Heidegger's (1992) etymological analysis of the transition from the Greek notion of truth *(aletheia)* to the Latin notion *(veritas)*.

vi. Importantly, this argument's referencing of Said does not mean to imply that there are no theoretical divergences between Foucault and Said in terms of their respective conceptualizations of discourse. Said's comments here are used *selectively* to illustrate aspects of *Foucault's* position, and are not meant to adequately represent Said's own complex vantage on the subject of discourse, or to suggest that the two perspectives could be collapsed into one.

vii. By 'conditions of possibility' here Foucault (1981a) is referring to materialist conditions that are historically specific and contingent in themselves, rather than in any way 'transcendental'.

viii. Note that whilst Said (1983) suggests that such a 'regularizing collectivity' might be somehow overcome, Foucault (1981a) declines to endorse such a position, preferring, by contrast, to emphasize the 'unthinkability' of that which lies beyond such systems of regularization.

ix. Foucault's use of the idea of the founding subject here is much indebted to Heidegger (1992) on the Latin *subjectum* and its transition from the Greek *hypokeimenon*.

x. The notion of 'a sort of primitive recognition' is again indebted to Heidegger (1982), in particular his assault on representation and representationalism in the period of modernity (modernity that is, since Descartes) in which "man" becomes the first and only 'subjectum'.

xi. Although it is only fair to note that there is some indication of 'the wider realm of material forms of power' in their later (1992) text.

xii. The strategic importance of history here, as a destabilizing (yet realist) element through which contemporary discourse can be interrogated and critiqued, is, for Foucault, unquestionable. (The idea being here that an historical dimension of analysis will be precisely that kernel of resistance and refutation needed to guard against the recuperative powers of current discourse.

xiii. Another way or producing this argument is with reference to the distinction Armstrong (1990) draws between qualitative and quantitative research on one hand, and genealogy. Despite all the emphasized differences between the two former means of analysis, they share basic similarities: both elevate to

primacy their objects of study and ignore their own presence within the analytic field (Butchart, 1998). In so doing their results come to appear as *given*, as independent of the methods used to define them, whereas in fact they are inseparable from the contemporary universe of explanation and methodology which produced them. Against this problem of 'explanatory anachronicity' genealogy foregrounds the principles of descent and emergence, which fragment the unitary and ahistorical, firstly, and upset assumptions of origin and continuity, secondly (Butchart, 1998). In this way genealogy minimizes the risks of foreclosing the objects,'truths' and findings of its analysis (Armstrong, 1990).

xiv. 'A discourse' here refers to a specific discourse, such as, say, psychoanalytic discourse, or Christian discourse; the more general term 'discourse', as used in the paper, is simply a generic term of reference.

xv.This relationship between discursive and material relations of power appears to be much like the relationship between power and knowledge for Foucault (cf. 1979a). The power-knowledge complex points our attention to the endlessly circular relationship between relations of power and knowledge, relations which are mutually reinforcing and which substantiate and extend each other in highly complex ways. If we look beneath the surface of knowledge we will find power, and beneath power we find knowledge; both in fact are vital to the ongoing production and expansion of the other.

xvi.This is a distinction reinforced by McHoul and Grace's (1997) observation that Foucault moves the concept of discourse away from a linguistic system or grammar towards the understanding of a discipline, a discipline that is both in the scholarly sense (of science, medicine, psychiatry, sociology, etc.) and in the sense of the disciplinary institution (such as the prison, the school, the hospital, the confessional, etc.).
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