THE POLITICS OF CHOICE IN EDUCATION: THEORIZING A POST-LIBERAL CHOOSING SUBJECT

by

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A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
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ABSTRACT

Over the last thirty years there has been increasing debate over the issue of the extension of choice in education. This issue has been taken up by constituents of a diverse range of discursive positions, but has recently been claimed by the neoliberal and neoconservative right, especially in the United States. Hence, the question of choice in education has been framed in relation to a critique of the welfare state based on a very particular notion of a generalized choosing subject: the rational, autonomous individual set in a free market of goods and services. Arguments against choice in education are most often launched as a critique of this construct, resulting in the theoretical negation of the choosing subject as such in favour of structural analyses. My dissertation attempts to disrupt this dialectic between the noumenal self and the constructed self on a theoretical level. I argue that a choosing subjectivity can theoretically be recouped from its structuralist critique without taking on the ontological and epistemological presuppositions of the discourses of modernity. An
Alternatively and strategically conceived model will draw from both modern and postmodern redescriptions of subjectivity, which present choice not as the ability to decide rationally among a finite "menu" of goods within a competitive market from the basis of an always already "given" rational subjectivity, but rather as the constitutive act of selfhood itself: choice then describes not the result of a rational subject's will, but the constitution of the self as distinct entity within particular contingent conditions. Choice and the chooser co-arise, giving the effect of a subject at once constituted and constituting.

I take this redescription and apply it to theories of radical post-liberal democracy, which include the reformulation, rather than rejection, of welfare state rationales and justifications, in terms of disrupting the ostensible opposition between the right (private choice) and the good (public institutions). Here I rely on the categories of culture and community, which describe the "sites" where people concretely live their lives, in contrast to the abstractions of the individual on the one hand, and society/state on the other.
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This dissertation was not produced alone, as lonely as the process of writing sometimes seems to be. I am grateful to my supervisor, Professor Dwight Boyd, who was a discerning reader of my various drafts. Dwight asked difficult questions in the most constructive and productive of ways, and always conveyed a real interest in the way I was trying to treat the issues at hand. I am most thankful that he left me the space to clear my own path, so to speak, allowing me to explore what I needed and wanted to explore.

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FOR MAXE AND JONAS

who dared to dedicate their lives
to a community endeavour
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Might the desire for some degree of collective self-legislation, the desire to participate in shaping the conditions and terms of life, remain a vital element - if also an evidently ambivalent and anxious one - of much agitation under the sign of progressive politics? Equally important, might the realization of substantive democracy continue to require a desire for political freedom, a longing to share in power rather than be protected from its excesses, to generate futures together rather than navigate or survive them? And have we, at the close of the twentieth century, lost our way in pursuing this desire? With what consequences?

Wendy Brown, 1995: 4

The case of the concept of *structure*...is certainly...ambiguous. Everything depends upon how one sets it to work. Like the concept of the sign - and therefore of semiology - it can simultaneously confirm and shake logocentric and ethnocentric assuredness. It is not a question of junking these concepts, nor do we have the means to do so. Doubtless it is more necessary, from within semiology, to transform concepts, to displace them, to turn them against their presuppositions, to reinscribe them in other chains, and little by little to modify the terrain of our work and thereby produce new configurations; I do not believe in decisive ruptures, in an unequivocal "epistemological break," as it is called today.


How does newness come into the world? How is it born?

Of what fusions, translations, conjoinings is it made?

How does it survive, extreme and dangerous as it is?

What compromises, what deals, what betrayals of its secret nature must it make to stave off the wrecking crew, the exterminating angel, the guillotine?

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION: THE THEORETICAL PROBLEM OF CHOICE

One has the impression that choices and decisions are of no importance and we could provide a thousand examples of this. But, the fact that this is the way things are does not mean that choice is simply an epiphenomenon or that it does not engage infinite responsibility. I believe that we should try to think "the way things are" together with infinite responsibility, impossible choices and madness. I do not think that we can choose between the two alternatives, and we cannot conclude that there is no choice from the fact that this is "the way things are." (Derrida, 1996: 87).

What...are the compulsions that drive a church, a state, a culture, an identity to close itself up by defining a range of differences as heretical, evil, irrational, perverse, or destructive, even when the bearers of difference pose no direct threat of conquest? (Connolly, 1991: 3).

My inspiration for examining the question of choice in education has been cumulative. It comes mostly from having myself been lucky enough to experience "alternative" education, which was a choice made by my parents on the basis of their very particular philosophy of life, and from the conflict I felt subsequently (and at the time, for that matter) about this alternative having been "private." I have wondered why it is so controversial, and controversial it is, to argue that alternatives such as the one I experienced at the Toronto Waldorf School, and the opportunity to choose amongst them, should become a public good, equally available to all. The status quo in
North America seems to be that the wealthy are free to follow their particular convictions about entrance into crucial life-changing institutions (education and healthcare, primarily) while the poor, or even lower middle-classes, are not. In the ongoing debate about egalitarian democracy, this does not seem to arise as a pressing issue. My inspiration also comes from my sense that growing up in an "enchanted" community within a "disenchanted" society is a promising and richly productive balance to strike over the dilemmas of modernity. My sense of social justice and fairness leads me to feel that this promise should be available to all who wish to choose it.

I actually decided to focus on this issue, however, after a particularly divisive and interesting graduate class at OISE/UT, in which another student and I became entangled in a rather strange argument about the possibility of choice in education. It was strange because we were both clearly "on the left" in terms of our overall politics, but were so fundamentally opposed to each other on this issue that we could hardly even set a common ground for our discussion. She, clearly committed to public education and an activist on its behalf (I saw her on the news some years later having made her way into the provincial parliament buildings with a number of other demonstrators in the fight against Bill 160 - and more power to her!), was vehemently against the idea of any kind of expansion of the public school system to include other kinds of pedagogical models, from which the public could choose. Her objection was based on a support for the welfare state as a series of equalizing institutions - education being that amongst them which could provide a standardized "common culture" for a generalized citizenry. In this vision establishing such a standard service is one feature of an egalitarian, democratic society, which once in place makes choice irrelevant. In conjunction with this, her objection was based on a deep doubt about the existential possibility of choice itself. She implied that because I even
mentioned the term choice, mine was a reactionary position. (I think if we had been talking about the politics of abortion her position might have been different). She doubted that "people in general" could really choose for themselves in this matter. That is, "people" were not choosers: the notion of the choosing subject, according to her, was produced in and through the mystification of the discourses of modernity - humanism, the enlightenment, liberalism, capitalism. "We" middle-class white people in the west see ourselves as choosing subjects because we are produced by these discourses which are still hegemonic, but these discourses lead to the social pathology of possessive individualism, lack of compassion, resentment against those who are seen to be weak, and an arrogance on the part of those who have "made it," they think, through their own will alone. I couldn't help but agree with her on these points. But "people in general" did not include her (or me by extension). It was clear by the way that she spoke about herself and about the practice of progressive politics (activism, participatory democracy, and so forth) that she could and had made a very conscious choice to support public education by sending her children to a public school, and she had made a choice to return to university, and she had chosen to speak out against the ideology of the choice discourse. She was a wilful person. I felt that we were entering dangerous terrain here: that an implicit distinction was being made between "kinds" of people in terms of their ability to choose. Since I made it clear that I was not suggesting that choice in education be implemented by privatizing education, but rather that choice in education should become a social and public good (that is, education must always be publicly funded), the implication was that even if choice became structurally possible, through incorporation of the alternatives available in the "private" sphere into a public system through their public funding, this was a dangerous policy because the qualitative capacity to choose (the
ability to *evaluate*, have an opinion, and decide, as opposed to the structural access to the conditions of choosing - money, geographical location, for example) was an impossibility for people who were not those "kinds" of choosing people. What "we" could do for "them," rather was redistribute wealth, free them from parochialism, and enlighten them through public education.

I felt that an alarming slippage in the register of our discussion was occurring. That is, her first-/second-person *understanding* of herself implicitly included the notion that she made choices - political choices, choices of conscience (supporting the welfare state and equality for all through supporting the public school as a centralized institution) - but that, in terms of third-person *explanation*, choice could not register at all. Her structural analysis of society was such that the agency of "people in general" became an ideological category. Because people are caught in inequitable structures they have no choices, and because they have no choices, they are unable to choose. In fact, her role as an agent of change, an activist, seemed to be on behalf precisely of all those who were, existentially, not agents. Thus, agitating for change in the public education system became a mission on behalf of a system which pulls people who have no opinions about such matters (because they are poor, immigrant, speak another language, exploited, alienated, and so forth, but also because at they are existentially not equipped to make choices) into the public sphere, creating the possibility of a common, egalitarian, democratic culture. Two subjectivities were clearly operative: the constituting, self-directed subject, for whom the world is laid out before her or his discerning gaze, and the constituted, determined subject, who is produced by "forces" which operate "behind his or her back," and whose will is entirely irrelevant to the state of social conditions.
I held to my position that a proliferation of accessible alternatives, and the option to choose amongst them within a transformed welfare state, must be a good thing for all people. My argument was grounded in a notion about the requirement of respect for diversity in the extension and deepening of democracy, based on the fact of constitutive differences and their, often unjust, social management. She held to her position that at the level of structure - economic, political, cultural, social - choice does not factor in at all, except as the false consciousness of liberals, and that diversity is simply a postmodern word for inequality. In her social democratic view, equality is a less ideologically loaded term than is freedom. So for her, the ushering into enlightenment of "the people," and hence also, ironically, into a kind of freedom, trumps the notion of choice.

I was puzzled and intrigued by this impasse, and felt that it would be worthwhile to untangle why two "leftist" positions could be so opposed to each other, and make clear to myself, at least, how these different registers of understanding and explanation work for the purpose of being able to make a stronger case for the extension of choice of education for all people without simply invoking the discourses of modernity and their immanent critique: opposing the deontological, noumenal individual to the structurally determined subject and vice-versa. How could one theorize a normative position based on the availability of alternatives as a social and political good, linked to an egalitarian democratic discourse, without re-engaging the conceits of liberalism to which my interlocutor was reacting (and I agreed with her there), but without simply resigning myself to a left politics which sanctions "...increase [in] the power of the state and its various regulatory discourses at the expense of political freedom" (Brown, 1995: 28) because we think that is the only way toward an egalitarian society? In other words, I thought
that there must be ways of theorizing choice which went beyond the rhetorics of liberalism and structuralism: either we are free individuals and become who we are through our will alone, or we are determined beings and therefore cannot choose and cannot be expected to choose life goods. At the level of explanation, the two argumentative "stances" both involve metaphysically dubious ontological and epistemological assertions, beginning with a simple positivity, The Agent/The Structure, as the originary moment of the social, and consider a practice such as choice either to be straightforward or an illusory effect of some other determinant.

I realized that in order to come up with a theory of choice which sounds plausible to me, and one which I could endorse, I needed to redescribe subjectivity in such a way that agency is salvaged, and the important structuralist critique of the liberal subject is tempered by a poststructuralist shaking of the concept of structure as determining in the last instance. This is what I set out to do in this thesis. I set out to show that choice can be used for the purpose of left critiques of education without re-entrenching a problematic liberal conception of the individual as consisting of a rationality and will which is prior to, and uncontaminated by, the social. With a redescribed notion of subjectivity, choice might no longer be conceived in various positions on the left as a reactionary and mystifying political tool, but as the agency of subjects who are radically constituted by their local cultures and communities and who are enabled by the constraint of this constitution to make relevant and meaningful things happen for themselves where they live and work.

While the attempt to argue this controversial issue persuasively is complex and convoluted, my normative intervention in the debate is quite simple: welfare services should include
choice as one of their goods, and more particularly, the public school system should expand to include all educational institutions which now, or might in the future, operate in the private sphere (for example, all schools which are now sanctioned by the state as privately operating institutions - with the same minimal modes of regulation by the state). Choice, then, should be invoked not as the activity of private interest, but as the activity of a public counter-politics. I want schooling to be free in a double sense: both economically and politically. The schools which are now "private," and which are self-run and operate as communities of invested people will be open to all students and parents, as a matter of choice, as now they are open only to those who can afford them. Such a choice will reflect and publicly support the diversity of subjectivities as they emerge in local cultures and communities in Canada and other liberal democratic nations.

This policy recommendation is not particularly strategic at this time, as it recommends a policy which could not be further from the policies of the current government in Ontario. In Ontario in 1998 we see the Conservative government putting in place policies which would further erode whatever integrity the public system now has, including the alternative programmes within the public system: they are centralizing power and at the same time cutting funding; they are "professionalizing" teachers while undermining their authority; they are standardizing the curriculum while at the same time opening it to entrepreneurial interests by contracting out. I am suggesting the reverse: decentralization with a strong commitment to adequate funding for alternatives within the public educational system. While there is some provision for alternatives in the public school system now (in Ontario), I am recommending that this provision be radically expanded to include already existing private and alternative schools as self-administering and
autonomous institutions, with their *already existing* conditions and standards of operation. Hence what I am saying would at this time certainly fall on deaf ears. It does, however, interject itself into an increasingly wide-spread debate, especially in the United States, about the "crisis" of public education and the prospect of privatization. While I am strongly against privatization, I don't think an adequate response by the left is to simply stand blindly behind the kind of public education system that has prevailed up till now. In fact, it is strategic at this time, then, to try to come up with some ideas toward a radically transformed public system. Partly, my thesis arises out of a strong desire to be a voice against the tendency by leftist positions to concede pro-active educational reform to various constituents on the right.

It is important to note, however, that this dissertation is not an analysis of public education policy in Canada and other western liberal democracies. It rather discusses the theoretical and philosophical principles which inform certain ways of thinking about and justifying what eventually becomes public policy decisions.
THE GIST OF THE ARGUMENT:

I don't think that we should consider the "modern state" as an entity which was developed above individuals, ignoring what they are and even their very existence, but on the contrary as a very sophisticated structure, in which individuals can be integrated, under one condition: that this individuality would be shaped in a new form, and submitted to a set of very specific patterns.

(Foucault, 1983: 214)

This thesis is most accurately described as coming out of the discipline of social and political theory. Social theory and political theory are disciplines which take as their object of study, and present as the content of their intellectual production, the ways and means for making claims about the workings of society and politics. The thesis does not attempt a rigorous sociological, historical, or institutional analysis of educational practices; it does not aim at geographical or national specificity. I realize that this thesis lacks a rigorous study of the structural implications of my policy recommendation. How would all this be financed, and how would it be regulated? These are questions to be addressed elsewhere. Rather, it discusses the discourses which inform the justification of universal compulsory education in western welfare states; it engages with the perennial efforts of thinkers to describe the world in such a way that certain normative injunctions follow, and it attempts such a description itself. Wherever the debate over choice in education arises in the west, evocations of terms such as democracy, equity, equality, freedom, identity, difference, unity and diversity, will occur. This evocation draws on traditions of thought and their critique, which I call the discourses of modernity. These discourses inform the terms of debates about education in the west. There are other, more straightforward, ways of arguing my point. Mine is an unabashedly meta-theoretical discussion, a series of conjectural
essays, but I have chosen to set it all up this way in order to answer and explore questions and issues which *really do* occupy my mind. Hence, I may seem to dwell on topics which could have been passed over much more quickly by others.

While I come from a social and political theory background and it informs the kinds of questions I ask, my chapters are not uniform with regards to their mode of exposition. I stretch myself over a number of disciplinary boundaries in order to meet my subject: it is a mixture of historical narrative, discourse analysis, philosophy of the subject, within a social and political theoretical agenda. Mine is, therefore, a risky endeavour: I push myself precariously out on a limb in many places, made more precarious by my attempt to make a normative intervention in the debate, rather than simply describe or analyze it. This is important to me even if it makes the tenor of my arguments seem naive in some places: I feel that it is important to "come clean" within critique in terms of the normativity driving it. If I don't clinch my arguments as tightly as I would like to, I hope that this thesis at least gestures at an interesting trajectory of inquiry, disrupts some self-evidences, and inspires new ways of thinking about education and welfare.

What I have hoped to accomplish with this project is to provide a theoretical basis, or at least a gesture toward formulating such a theoretical basis, from which a progressive choice discourse can be launched, given the structuralist and poststructuralist critique of the subject(s) of modernity. This theoretical basis is meant to show that our discourses over choice in education, once we have rejected old-style social democratic truisms, are not limited to neo-liberal terms.

I argue, then, that choice does not have to be conceived of as the ability to decide on the basis of a fixed constellation of needs and desires among a finite "menu" of goods within a competitive market (which provides no choice at all): it should instead be envisioned as the constitutive
process itself, as the collective making of "selves," as the creative arrangement of local possibilities. As Derrida writes:

...The decision, if there is such a thing, must neutralize if not render impossible in advance the who and the what. If one knows, and if it is a subject that knows who and what, then the decision is simply the application of a law. In other words, if there is a decision, it presupposes that the subject of the decision does not yet exist and neither does the object....That is to say that the subject does not exist prior to the decision but when I decide I invent the subject (Derrida, 1996: 84).

The assumption that there must be a doer behind the deed, a chooser behind the choice underlies western metaphysics. I want to suggest that there also must be a deed behind the doer, and a choice behind the chooser. "I" or "we" arise in and through choices and deeds. But, as Judith Butler states, a simple reversal of the terms does not disrupt the logic of such a metaphysical binary (1993). Rather, neither the deed nor doer, choice nor chooser, pre-exist each other: they co-arise, giving the effect of each other. This refiguring of a term like choice is important because it provides a new way for talking about certain social practices and political projects which undergird notions of cultural diversity and intentional community, which I suggest are the categories most essential to a radical post-liberal democracy.

Chapter Outlines:

In **Chapter Two**, I give a brief history of the rise of compulsory education and the welfare state in North America for the purpose of situating this theoretical discussion in a concrete terrain. Here I outline three different rationales for compulsory education which were given at the time, and show that education has, since it was taken over by the state in the west, served a unifying function: it has attempted to create a unified work-force, "a nation" of citizens, and the kind of universal subject which can enact both of these performativities.

**Chapter Three** briefly outlines the discourses of modernity as they became hegemonic in the west, and the kind of subjects they produced. These discourses informed the content of the argumentation which legitimized state controlled compulsory education and are still the discourses through which we argue the pro's and con's of welfare goods versus individual
freedom. The discourses of modernity constructed a very particular notion of the autonomous individual which still informs social and political practices and their justification in the west to this day.

Chapter Four reviews the critiques of these discourses and the subjectivity it produced, dividing them into structuralist and post-structuralist. The latter, I will suggest, offers a way in which the metaphysical dialectic which informs the discourses of modernity and its structuralist critique can be disrupted altogether. I use Judith Butler and, to a lesser extent, Jacques Derrida to map out a way of understanding subjectivity as at once constituted and constituting, as the very "moment" in which that which is determined and that which is free merges. I argue similarly, that the notion of the decision, of choosing, cannot be founded on the transparency, essentiality or rationality of the world "out there" or "in here" (of the object or the subject, in other words), which the discourses of modernity suggest, but is precisely possible because "out there" and "in here" is radically undecidable, radically unfixed. That is, only because of uncertainty and incomplete knowledge do we have to decide in the first place; otherwise all courses of action would be laid out in advance according to The Law, apprehended by total knowledge.

In Chapter Five, I discuss the politics of post-liberal democracy, in which "welfare" (the good) is no longer posed as in contradiction to rights (the just), and this because some notion of "freedom from" compulsory activity is incorporated into the public good itself. A radical post-liberal democracy is one in which the good remains in the public domain (in contrast to liberalism) but is always multiple. That is, alternative visions of the good exist and struggle side-by-side in the public sphere, arising out of various cultural practices and the communities which spring from them.

Chapter Six concludes by showing how a redescribed subjectivity, and a redescribed democracy, can help to make the case for choice in education. In my schematic, I suggest that cultures are non-identical to nation, but shaped by it; community is non-identical to cultures, but shaped by them; that identity is an ongoing process of identification within culture and community, not a timeless fixity, and that here choice can be harnessed as a term to describe the dialectic between the constituted and constituting subject; that the politics of difference must be alert to the fact that the process of identification can be violated (even if it has deconstructed the
notion of a fixed, essential, and therefore violable, identity). I look at the question of cultural diversity and make a normative claim that it can be fostered and protected by exploding the received notion that education must be a universal practice in the service of unifying the nation. I argue that education is a cultural activity, and should therefore be opened up to allow for cultural communities - of all kinds - certainly not limited to a traditionalist notion of ethnic community - within which the process of identification occurs, to run their own schools. I suggest that choice is a political practice, one which is always public and collective to the extent that we are always members of one or a number of communities which must be constructed and reconstructed.

Five Central Points Operate throughout the Chapters:

In what follows I introduce the reader to five central points or arguments, each of which inform all the chapters in various ways. I do this in order to offer an overview which will help to make sense of the content of the individual chapters.

1) About Education

Education is a practice which both constrains and enables. If there is to be continued support for the notion that children should be in school many hours each day (I'm not sure I do support this state of affairs, but this is an entirely different discussion), then the critique of compulsory state education cannot be launched from the basis that it constrains children, regulates them, makes them fit into some mold, has a certain vision of what they should become, of what they should know, of how they should "be" in general. Every educational practice will do this to one degree or another. Every educational practice has its own rationality, and produces its own vision of what this little creature, the child, is, how it should be treated, regulated, cared for, and so on.

I launch my critique of compulsory state education, then, on the basis that it has been built on the illiberal assumption that "the one best" educational system will meet the needs, desires, and
sensibilities of all parents and students, in whatever place, from whatever tradition, with whatever philosophy of life. While in some places in Canada alternatives are available, they are the exception to the norm: compulsory state education is tautologically and explicitly (at least at the time of its implementation) based on the assumption that there is a single public, and that public education is vital in constructing this single public. Hence it can be so closely linked, descriptively and prescriptively, by thinkers such as John Ralston Saul to the possibility of Canadian democracy itself (1998).

Education in its modernist form, as an adjunct to the process of enlightenment itself, has played a key part in the unification and pacification of difference in the west. It has become an institution of the state precisely at the time when nations were being built. This is no coincidence. It has become the "voice" of reason and progress, and a means by which direct rule by the state (the King and his subjects) was transformed into decentralized regulation by various state bureaucracies. Education is a prime site for "non-coercively" producing subjects in conformity to the requirements of this new nationhood. This is not to say that compulsory public education has uniformly and evenly produced bad effects, in my opinion. It too has been enabling in unpredictable ways. Yet, it has had devastating effects for those who were seen as extraneous and disruptive to the myth of the nation. Aboriginals throughout the world have suffered this reality, as have other "others," especially religious minorities whose faith disallowed them from recognizing the nation-state as sovereign: the Doukhobors in British Columbia and the Mennonites in Western Canada and Ontario are an example of this.

The thrust of my argument around choice in education is that dissenting educational methods and visions are vital in radicalizing democracy, which I understand as an agonistic process of respecting the play of identity and difference. They are then vital to the public culture of any nation which hopes to deepen its liberal and democratic traditions, and hence should be publicly supported. An important driving intuition, though less overtly expressed in this thesis, is that where this dissent takes the form of a re-enchantment of various aspects of life and meaning, especially for very young children, this provides an important counter-discourse to the dominant culture of hyper-scepticism, hyper-cognitivism, hyper-consumerism. This would mark a truly post-modern rupture.
Parents and students should be able to choose among these alternatives to a standardized curriculum within public schools. Clearly, the particular operation of this choice-making within families and communities is complex. I don't treat this important issue here: I assume, however, that "the state," teachers, parents, and students would each play a role in this operation - the state, in terms of the regulation of the self-regulation of alternative schools, teachers, in terms of providing alternative visions of education, parents and students together, in terms of working out the goals, purposes, and quality of experience they wish to pursue.

2) About Welfare

I address the question of the welfare state in this thesis, because it is centrally implicated in compulsory public education, and conditions the question of choice. In neo-liberal discourse today the evocation of choice as a social practice is almost always linked to a call for the dismantlement of welfarism as a violation of individual freedom. Choice then is used by that discourse to stand as the moral ground in opposition to welfare policies and programmes. This becomes a problem for a left politics which wishes to save the socializing aspect of welfarism. In order to counter neo-liberalism, it is forced to negate discourses of choice. I feel that this is a big mistake. In as much as the welfare state is in crisis, and is threatened by dismantlement altogether, a new re-invigorating and re-envisioning political discourse must cut through the stalemate between neo-liberals and social democrats. There is real urgency to this injunction. This political discourse must theorize equality as respect for difference rather than standardization of life goods and practices, and freedom as the ability to make something of local conditions out of the agonistically identified ideals living within those local spaces. My critique of welfarism is not that it limits individual freedom by preventing individuals from doing what they want to do, but that it is too much in the business of producing certain kinds of subjects within a single standard of subjecthood, actively foreclosing upon other kinds of subjectivity which empirically exist in any society.

The main, and often flagged, fear around the question of choice and the welfare state is that choice will lead to inequality. This sincere argument is sometimes based on a rather rose-tinted vision of the equality instantiated by public education over the last hundred years in the west. It
is true that some of the choice in education schemes which have been established in the U.S. and Britain have been shown to lead to an inequitable public system (Whitty, Power, and Halpin, 1998). Even though I do not do the work here, I believe that choice schemes within public education can work without this effect, and that attempting to think this through as a possibility from a "left" position would be very productive for public education. The problem arises within choice schemes when not enough power is given to communities to determine the shape of their own schools on their own terms, and hence parents and students become clients competing within a market of schools which have no ties to community life, and when choice plus parental supplementary money becomes the norm. I think these kinds of problems could be addressed structurally.

I do agree with Brown, however, that when the state is appealed to as the guarantor for a uniformly pacified society, there is a price to pay. She "...consider[s] how certain well-intentioned contemporary political projects and theoretical postures inadvertently redraw the very configurations and effects of power that they seek to vanquish" (1995: viv). State guaranteed equality, besides the fact that nowhere can we see the empirical evidence of this, is provided at the cost of having state institutions themselves codify and fix "injured subjects" in ways institutional rationalities require (Brown, 1995). The very appeals to "the state" to redress the very real injustices within civil society, risks bringing with it a whole new set of problems; that is, the harnessing of a notion of "protection" which itself can be a powerful technique of domination (Brown, 1995: 15). Brown writes, "what kind of attachments to unfreedom can be discerned in contemporary political formations ostensibly concerned with emancipation?" (1995: xii).

Many thinkers on the left acknowledge that the history of the welfare state is not an innocent one. It was not simply the product of a set of particularly idealistic and compassionate social reformers, but a very ambiguous and incrementally established accommodation between labour and the state which resulted in the pacification of social tension (see Struthers, 1994) as well as an exponential increase in regulation at all levels of society. Nevertheless, often the rhetoric of activists on the left in the face of the neo-liberal onslaught is one of mostly unqualified defense of the welfare state as social panacea. This is a particularly unstrategic position to take, as it
becomes more and more unbelievable, given the critiques of the welfare state coming from within the left itself, as well the ethos of crisis around the welfare state which cannot be ignored. These critiques especially address increasing bureaucratization, which is the means by which the state no longer rules outright, but proliferates sites of regulation. Brown states:

Foucault, and before him Weber and Marcuse, mapped in meticulous detail "the increasing organization of everything as the central issue of our time" and illuminated the evisceration of human depths and connection, as well as the violent structures of discipline and normalization achieved by this process (1995: 170).

It is also unstrategic because it thus leaves proactive politics vis-a-vis welfare to constituents on the right.

I don't assume that the state is a monolithic agent, or that it necessarily has "bad" effects. As Brown writes:

...What we call the state is at once an incoherent, multifaceted ensemble of power relations and a vehicle of massive domination. The contemporary U.S. state is both modern and postmodern, highly concrete and an elaborate fiction, powerful and intangible, rigid and protean, potent and without boundaries, decentered and centralizing, without agency, yet capable of tremendous economic, political, and ecological effects (Brown, 1995: 174).

The danger in a discourse like mine is to reify and vilify the state. It must be clear, then, that I support the continued, if transformed, role of the state in education, especially in the form of wealth redistribution. But my strongest point throughout this thesis is that if we are to have a welfare state which does not simply replace one form of domination by another, welfare must be transformed from a mode of regulation and pacification through state administered services, to a mode of enablement and support of non-state, non-profit community endeavours.
3) About Subjects

I have started with the premise that in whatever context, both academic and non academic, arguments for or against choice in education are based on implicit or explicit references to a descriptive category: the subject (are "we" choosers or not). From this asserted description, implications follow for normative claims about how society should be arranged: is it possible, useful, or beneficial to speak of choice with regard to public social goods? Hence, much political argumentation between various normative positions on the left and right has to do with competing descriptions of subjectivity. This is why my thesis focuses on questions of subjectivity as a political category with political implications (hence the title, *The Politics of Choice in Education*), and why I feel it is important to grapple with these questions in order to come to terms with the choice in education debate. It would be impossible, in my mind, to talk about the politics of choice in education without also talking about "the subject," even if only implicitly at the level of assumptions. I start here even though I fully recognize that no normative statement necessarily follows from a descriptive statement. Rather, I am implying that any descriptive statement already has a normative component to it: the very act of description is normatively loaded, so to speak. Remember that my initial interlocutor was suggesting to me that subjects are existentially not choosers. This was presented as a factual claim, and that therefore policies based on choice, whatever they are, and however they attempt to meet the problem of power imbalances, would be dangerous to subjects and to our democratic forms of society in the west.

I argue that the discourses of modernity, which I am categorizing as humanism, the Enlightenment, liberalism and capitalism construct certain notions of subjectivity, or
performativity in Butler's terms (1990, 1993). The discourses of modernity have become hegemonic in the west, defining the boundaries of proper subjectivity, which include autonomy, individualism, self-sufficiency, enterprise, self-interest, rationality, efficiency, self-governance. I present a schematic "popular history" of this new way of talking about "the person." This set of performativities was heralded as a liberation from traditional modes of existence within the confines of tight geographical, economic, and social boundaries. From this the language of liberalism emerges: freedom from the determinants of social and cultural place; freedom from persecution on the basis of social and cultural identity; respect for each other as rational persons; equality before the law; and so forth. The human subject is shaken loose from its rooting in place, time, geography, culture, and is held up to view as such; the public and political space is made free from narrow particularities which bind. This existential liberation is taken up discursively also by modern theories of democracy, which presuppose that democratic cultures have now to be based upon the individual units of essentially alike, rational, autonomous persons.

If this view of the subject is hegemonic, what could possibly be controversial about the notion of choice in education? What tradition of thought was my interlocutor drawing from to make her claims? Briefly said, this view of the subject is still hegemonic. I would risk stating that much of public discussion over political issues still assumes it. I would certainly say that educational discourses still assume it in one manner or another: the purposes of education are to create a) critical thinkers, b) competent workers, c) responsible citizens, d) well-developed/adjusted individuals. Yet, something has complicated the self-evidence of these subjects of modernity. There is a long tradition of their critique, which has evolved into forms of social analysis which
focus on structures and systems which stain this pristine notion of autonomy. It is a common formulation among some intellectuals and political thinkers that a particular problem is "systemic" - that events and conditions are caused by "something" which is more than simply a particular collection of wilful people.

Since theorists such as Hegel and Marx, the self-evidence of the liberal individual was disturbed (but certainly not overthrown). Nowhere in the world did this autonomous individual exist: it existed only as an effect of ideology. That is, certain economic, social, cultural, political and gender privileges gave the effect of the self-sufficient, independent individual. The self-willed and self-making man was a narrative which secured the property of the wealthy few, but "trickled down" to the labouring many in the form of the internalization of social conditions. If only one were to work a little harder, and if only one could be a better person! The reality of domination and exploitation could not be made visible until the ostensible universal inner freedom, and the responsibility it was supposed to breed, was shown up to be a feature of social arrangements. That is, until "one's lot in life" could be seen to be due to factors other than one's own moral rectitude or failing, individual perseverance or laziness - that is, to other things than individual choice - the exploitation of one person by another could be justified and there was no way, theoretically, to change the social organization which allowed for it. Until the ostensibly neutral public political space was put to question by the structural inequalities of the social, economic and ostensibly private space, the shape of people's lives for better or for worse could only be seen to be due to the strength of their own will. It was argued that the oppression and domination of the ages of industrialization and imperialism were legitimized directly by these discourses of modernity, then. Marx famously questioned the freedom of the social space and argued that the
conditions of material production and, linked in complex ways to it, cultural production determined the extent of freedom or unfreedom, rather than individual or even collective will.

Various critiques of a certain liberal choosing subject (imminent also to socialist analyses) then are also integral to western social and political theoretical tradition. Structuralist thought which arose within linguistics (Saussure), anthropology (Levi-Strauss), Marxism (Althusser), and elsewhere in the human and social sciences took the focus on the conditions of existence of subjects increasingly away from individual intentionality and will. From a discourse which constructed the subject as an autonomous will impacting on and shaping the world, to a discourse which constructed the subject as a site of structural determination, choice went, in terms of an explanatory principle and a possible social practice, from being the founding moment of the subject to being irrelevant to subjectivity.

The notion of "systemic forces" has entered into left critical discourses. It is because of these systemic forces - often seen as forces of inequity and oppression - that choice in education can be seen as a misguided concept. Structural conditions exist which make it essential that some kind of planned and centrally regulated and ensured equitable response to these forces can be universally implemented.

This is the place in which certain poststructuralist thinkers make an intervention in the dialectic of modern subjectivity, which we can schematically but nevertheless accurately describe as agent/structure. I focus on Judith Butler because she explicitly takes up this issue. She focuses her analysis on gender, but it pertains to all modes of human "being." She states: "...The 'coherence' and 'continuity' of 'the person' are not logical or analytic features of personhood, but, rather, socially instituted and maintained norms of intelligibility" (Butler, 1990: 17). Butler
suggests that subjectivity is both more and less free than the discourses of modernity suggest; that is, while the subject is always constituted within its contingent context, which can be structurally described, it is never determined by that contingency and that structuration. In her formulation, structure, that which would constitute us, is a temporal category: the stable structure is actually a repetition through time of particular practices in and through which we establish our identities. Butler writes:

...When the subject is said to be constituted, that means simply that the subject is a consequence of certain rule-governed discourses that govern the intelligible invocation of identity. The subject is not determined by the rules through which it is generated because signification is not a fouding act, but rather a regulated process of repetition that both conceals itself and enforces its rules, precisely through the production of substantializing effects. In a sense, all signification takes place within the orbit of the compulsion to repeat; "agency," then, is to be located within the possibility of a variation on that repetition (1990: 145).

Thus, Butler, in particular her notion of performativity as the "site" of agency, is useful for my purposes in trying to convince someone like my interlocutor from the OISE graduate class that the denial of agency in multiple contexts, even those which are seen by "us" to be desperate and totally disempowered, makes no empirical, normative or theoretical sense because this denial is tantamount to suggesting that "these people" have no practices at all, if practices are to be seen as both constraining and enabling. The insistence on structural determination simply consolidates at a theoretical level already existing disempowerment and inequity.

At the same time, such a rethinking of subjectivity avoids having to rely once again on a notion of the individual as a wilful entity because it exists prior to its attributes, place, tradition. It deconstructs the dialectic between freedom and boundedness, not to transcend them, but to question the efficacy of putting the problem in that way.
Liberty is a practice....The liberty of men [sic] is never assured by the institutions and laws that are intended to guarantee them. This is why almost all of these laws and institutions are quite capable of being turned around. Not because they are ambiguous, but simply because "liberty" is what must be exercised....I think it can never be inherent in the structure of things to guarantee the exercise of freedom. The guarantee of freedom is [the exercise of] freedom (Foucault in Rabinow, 1986: 245).

4) About Forms of Society

Society, as I am using the term, describes connections between people who are constituted by those very connections. It is not a "thing," but consists of sets of relations which can be rearranged. The normative basis of forms of society as a human condition has been debated for centuries.

In this thesis I propose forms of society which would foster choice and decision at the level of local collective practices. My political position, then, can be called a kind of libertarian socialism. As Laclau states, "...the formulation of a new politics of the left must begin with the deconstruction of the exclusive alternative between market and social regulation as its point of departure" (1990: xiii). It supports an emphatic presumption in favour of respect for diversity, and against all forms of standardization, universalization and compulsory unity of life practices. In this context I discuss notions of cultural difference, and posit a normative conception of intentional community. Communities, in the sense that I use the term, are the perfect sites in which post-liberal subjects become empowered through the process of identification, which is always marked within and without by difference. By community I always mean "micro-community," a social space in which people know each other personally (as singularities), as opposed to communitarian versions of total community, like the nation state. This "size limit" is part of my definition of community (hence the use of the word micro-community becomes
redundant, as it is always implied by the term community itself - there could be no such thing as a *macro*-community. It adds a precision to the term, which gets lost when any association of people ("the international community"?, "the Black community"?, "the business community"?) is called a community. "Intention" here connotes the *gesture*, the *orientation* toward a practice. By it I do not mean to suggest that communities can be "read" as a straightforward manifestation of the intentions of their members. To intend something is in no way to control its implementation (just as to intend something in a text one produces, in no way places limits on the way the text can be read, or even on what actually emerges).

I use this notion of intentional community to attempt to theorize concrete sites in which counter-discourses to "the one best system" can be manifested. I suggest that communities are especially important for marginalized and "different" groups of subjects, who have been traditionally "othered" within the nation state. Community is not a category which eclipses culture or identity, but is here conceptualized as a site where cultural practices and identities find their concrete expression, are actively used (like tools, in Wittgenstein's sense, which have been selected from those lying to hand). I suggest that community can offer a place in which agency becomes heightened, almost demanded of us, a place where identification and agency come together, and where choices are made necessary by the institutional indeterminateness of community. I suggest that communities focus and magnify cultural practices - this is the descriptive claim - and that this is a good thing because culture, out of which we emerge structurally as subjects, becomes transformed into that material on which we work, providing the site in which we are more than structurally determined subjects - this is the normative claim.
I engage with liberal democracy and its communitarian critique in order to plunder each of them for their useful terms: "respect for diversity," and "community." I then attempt to recontextualize the use of those terms: I reject liberalism at the level of the individual as positivity and irreducible entity, and communitarianism at the level of the total community. I place here my redescribed version of the subject as never stable, essential, or unified enough to fulfil the demands of an irreducible entity, or of a harmonious totality. Instead, this subject arises out of identificatory practices in a local setting - my strong normative version of this is the intentional community - which requires respect for diversity. Identities, in as much as they are micro-identities or micro-communities, require respect for diversity in order to thrive. I suggest then, that neither the liberal relegation of social goods into the private sphere (leaving a public sphere which is neutral vis-a-vis the good), nor the communitarian insistence on a common public good is the best way of envisioning the "living-together" of forms of society. Rather, goods which hold in particular localities, within particular communities, should be seen to be fully public and should be publicly supported. The common good could be seen as the respect for the public place these different conceptions of the good hold, the different kinds of subjects they assume, the different practices out of which those conceptions arise. Public governance would be a process of political negotiation (no theory of "ideal speech situation" is required here) for the purpose of sustaining these differences, where they thrive. This political negotiation is to be highly sensitive to the question of power.

My argument, then, presumes a notion of respect which it takes from the tradition of liberalism. I, however, subvert the notion by suggesting that respect cannot be "respect for persons," as the liberal version of "a person" is an empty signifier (or it is "filled" by a supposedly universal
capacity: rationality). Respect here, then, implies respect for practices (by definition shared) out of which persons arise.

I present a description of post-liberal radical democratic theories which honour the play of identity and difference in the way liberalism and communitarianism do not because they assume that on some fundamental level the unity of value and purpose - the unity of rational individuals, the unity forged by a common good - is the only way to form a viable social and political culture, either through a theory of the individual as essentially the same (juridical subjects, bearers of rights, economic units), or through a theory of total community as the instantiation of a singular, coherent tradition and vision of the good. Rather, as Laclau writes:

\[ \text{The principle of democratization is...compatible with a wide variety of concrete social arrangements that depend on circumstances, problems and traditions. It is in the multiplication of "public spaces" and their constituencies beyond those accepted by classical liberalism that the base for the construction of a radical democratic alternative lies. There is nothing utopian in the proposition of these alternatives, given the growing fragmentation of social sectors and the proliferation of new identities and antagonisms in the society in which we live (1990: xv).} \]

I argue that we can redescribe subjectivity in such a way that we salvage the notion of choice in order to envision a political culture in which the space for alternative ways of living and identifying becomes a self-evident aspect of democratization. Alternatives imply different options, and provisional adherence to one or more of them. I suggest then that any social formation which could address the play of identity and difference must allow for different forms of identification, which imply different practices, which include, finally, different forms of pedagogy. I state strongly in the final chapter that the "politics of difference" theories so prevalent now, make no sense if they ignore or devalue identificatory practices which arise precisely out of the structural failure to constitute identity. Much theoretical work has been done
to show that identificatory practices harbour the potential for viciousness, in which difference becomes abjected. Yet, in order for there to be differences in the first place, there have to be (multiple) sites of coherence, integrity, wholeness (empowerment within the flow of power). Failing to respect this simply leads us back to a triumphalist politics of unity in which respect again becomes a redundant concept, or to a politics of difference in which there is only pure dispersal, and hence nothingness. What has to be effected then is a political culture in which the unavoidable we/them of any identification does not turn into a friend/enemy relation. This is precisely what my normative intervention attempts to effect, as it proposes that the overt negation and undermining of various identities in the name of any essential unity (this is as true of a triumphalist nation, as it is of racist groups) creates multiple friend/enemy relations, where a politics based on the respect for the play of identity and difference proceeds with the knowledge that identification by means of a constitutive outside does not require, indeed cannot tolerate, the negation of that constitutive outside.

5) About Politics

This thesis is not entitled *The Politics of Choice in Education* for nothing. A particular notion of politics informs the entire project. Even though I am not doing an institutional analysis, or an empirical investigation into municipal, provincial, or federal positions with regard to choice in education, politics is central to my work. By politics I mean, with Mouffe, the way meaning comes to be agonistically constituted in any society (1993), and with this the way power is implicated in this constitution of meaning. Any site of politics, in other words, is one in which meanings are contested, and hence also the practices in which they are held. Politics can be
characterized as "the pragmatic formation of collective wills through contingent articulations whose success was entirely context-dependent" (Laclau: 1996: 62). I wish in this thesis, in whatever small and partial way, to shift the meaning of choice-making, so that it is possible to talk about choices without immediately invoking neo-liberal discourses. Hence, in saying that choices should become an important good in any welfare state, it would become readily conceivable that we are talking about the very processes of diverse identification itself, rather than about "interest fulfilment" of always already positive identities. This would be an instance of a new hegemony, and would be a political act through and through.
CHAPTER TWO

COMPULSORY EDUCATION, THE WELFARE STATE,
AND THE POLITICS OF UNITY

The Canadianizing (assimilation) of these (foreign) children will never be done by their home surroundings. They are far more closely bound to their own associations than the child of the rural settler, whose isolation upon a farm of 160 acres seems to have the paradoxical effect of throwing him into closer relations with his Canadian neighbour than occur between the foreigner of the city and his British neighbour three streets away. It is right here that the public school steps in, and is the only agency that can be called upon in the whole machinery of civilization to perform the duty of moulding the second generation of the foreign-born into Canadian citizens, capable and willing to build a homogeneous nation under the British flag. The church takes little or not part in this. Almost every nationality has priests and ministers of its own. There is no common ground upon which all classes can meet except the school ground (from the 1912 annual convention of the Ontario Education Association, quoted in Pennacchio, 1986: 39).

In this Chapter I present a brief sketch of the justificatory discourses which were circulating at the time when compulsory education was being instituted and legitimized in North America. I do this in order to show that compulsory state administered education was originally intended to be a unifying and regulating tool in aid of nation building and workforce regulation. Here we can see how education was pulled out of the so-called private
sphere of particular interests and values of family, community and religion, into the so-called public sphere of universal interests and values realized in the state in which children and adults were sorted according to a standard of rational conduct and utility. With this shifting of the domain or meaning of education, choice became an irrelevant criterion in the organization of education as particular and diverse interests and values were universalized by the state (or at least the attempt was made) into public interest. Democracy was figured as the identity of the governed and government, but in order for this identity to become possible "the people" as an enlightened citizenry had first to be forged. Public education, and later other welfare services, was an ideal instrument for this forging. Hence public education and the very possibility of democracy are still often linked in public debate (Postman, 1995; Saul, 1998).

I am not suggesting that the intent behind this process was malicious, nor that it was totally successful. It was rather for the most part full of reformist idealism and sincerity, and we can see today that the homogenization of Canadian and American society did not occur. This is true of welfare state policies in general. The consequences, however, were often sinister - this is the most obvious in the case of aboriginal tribes in North America, as they were also in places laudatory. However we want to judge that mode of governmentality, my purpose is to show how something as fundamental as the education of children could have become self-evidently the domain of the state.

The first section, "A Brief History," outlines a brief sketch of the ways in which compulsory education was justified in North America. It is broken into three parts: The Politics of Nation Building; Industrialization and Social Reform; Child Psychology and the
Social Sciences. The second section, "School Choice Debates," discusses how welfare policies incorporate the unifying and normalizing practices of the state.

A BRIEF HISTORY

As with any knowledge production, the writing of history is always a risky business as the demand of historical texts especially is coherence of description and explanation, a demand which tends to violate "social existence at loose ends with itself" (Gibson-Graham, 1996: ix). Presenting a coherent narrative for the purpose of making a point cannot avoid glossing over the incorrigible disarray of historical events. History writing always fails its subject to a greater or lesser degree. Or, stated more accurately, it is complicitous in constituting its subject as a singular subject with neat boundaries and clear origins. I therefore launch this story hesitantly, as I am no historian, but do so in order to convey the kind of language and reasoning which was quite uniformly used in industrializing nations in the west at the end of the nineteenth century to justify universal compulsory education. Of course, the impact of these justificatory discourses was different in different places. My project does not allow the space to do a comparative analysis of Canadian and American justificatory language around the institution of compulsory education. I fully intend to paint a general picture, even if it
means blurring the details in the process, because I think that the impulse behind universal compulsory education was a general impulse: educational reformers talked to each other across national boundaries. Ryerson, for instance, journeyed to other industrializing nations to research their burgeoning universal educational systems. They not only learned from the schools they saw in place there, they took from the justificatory language in use there (Wilson, 1970).

Universal compulsory free education is a new invention in the history of education in the west. From the very first time such a proposal was circulated to the present accounts for not even two hundred years out of thousands of years of various kinds of educational practices. Yet it is a practice which so radically and inevitably shapes the course of all our lives that it seems to have the presence of a force of nature. To imagine traversing the terrain from infancy to adulthood without ten, twelve, and often many more years of formal education is almost impossible for us. What would children do during those many years? What would we have done? How can we even conceive of childhood without compulsory institutional education occupying most of its duration? These questions lead us to contemplate the evolution of compulsory and public education in terms of the vast changes in social existence over the last two centuries, and it forces us to acknowledge that our common-sensical notions about the obvious necessity of formal, state regulated education tends to obscure the issues at hand. We can’t think past the self-evidence of packing children off to the neighbourhood public school each morning. We can’t imagine that there may be other ways of organizing
children and education. Public education has become an iconic image for any "advanced" industrial nation, a sign of its wealth and civility.¹

In Foucauldian terms, approaching the rise of compulsory, state regulated education as an "event," singular and peculiar to its time in and through the discourses of the time, rather than the formal culmination of some teleological progression, allows us to see it again clearly. Its requirement was politically constructed, not naturally given. Universal, free, public education was not inevitable: it was brought about in a complex play of historical, social, political, and economic exigencies and struggles which resulted in an hegemony of opinion. The rise of compulsory, state regulated education was contingent on a number of discourses circulating in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries - discourses constituting new forms of subjecthood: the citizen, the worker, and the child, to which education began to address itself. Compulsory institutionalized education began to seem crucial in relation to these subjectivities. Without

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¹ When the question of choice has been raised in the past, and with it questions about the state's role in education, it has been raised by marginal voices on both the right and the left. This is still true of Canada. As Dehli writes,

A recent Royal Commission on education in the province [of Ontario] (1994, released February 1995) delivered a five-volume report (entitled For the Love of Learning) which did not raise school choice as a serious issue. A review of reports on and debates about schooling in Ontario newspapers over the past three years turned up few substantive references to choice, while interviewers with parent activists, often seen as key promoters of choice in other jurisdictions, generated few direct references to choice as a distinct topic (Dehli with Januario 1994) (Dehli, 1996: 77).

Since the breakdown in the consensus over welfarism in the last thirty years, however, these voices, especially from the right in the US, the UK, Australia and New Zealand (Dehli, 1996) have become stronger and stronger. Very rarely, however, does this questioning call for the total removal of state funding from education. The notion that it is the responsibility of the state to ensure that all children should get an education still enjoys a full consensus, even though the means by which this should be accomplished is more and more contested.
them the institution of compulsory education would have been much more difficult to justify.

As Foucault writes:

I am trying to work in the direction of what one might call "eventualization." Even though the "event" has been for some while now a category little esteemed by historians, I wonder whether, understood in a certain sense, "eventualization" may not be a useful procedure of analysis. What do I mean by this term? First of all, a breach of self-evidence. It means making visible a singularity at places where there is a temptation to invoke a historical constant, an immediate anthropological trait, or an obviousness which imposes itself uniformly on all. To show that things "weren't as necessary as all that"; it wasn't as a matter of course that made people came to be regarded as mentally ill; it wasn't self-evident that the only thing to be done with a criminal was to lock him up; it wasn't self-evident that the causes of illness were to be sought through the individual examination of bodies; and so on. A breach of self-evidence, of those self-evidences on which our knowledges, acquiescences and practices rest: this is the first theoretic-political function of "eventualization" (Foucault, 1991: 76).

The histories that follow will serve to break the self-evidence of public schooling as it is structured today in North America.

In the Middle Ages, at the beginning of modern times, and for a long time after that in the lower classes, children were mixed with adults as soon as they were considered capable of doing without their mothers or nannies, not long after a tardy weaning (in other words, at about the age of seven). They immediately went straight into the great community of men [sic], sharing in the work and play of their companions, old and young alike (Aries, 1962: 411).

Prior to the nineteenth century, the education of immigrants to the North American continent, in as much as it was thought about at all, was a local and religious matter entirely, as was the case in the countries from which settlers had emigrated. "Education was a family matter but, as was the case in France and England, it was even more a concern of the Church" (Audet in Wilson, 1970: 70). After the Middle Ages in Europe, some religious orders began to be founded as teaching orders. The Jesuits and the Oratorians, for instance, were moralists rather than humanists, and directed their teaching to the young rather than to
adults and a general humanist life-long culture of learning.\footnote{Phillipe Aries argues that the revival of interest in education in the early modern period came as a result of advocacy for religious revival; society was becoming too irreverent: ...The humanists remained attached to the idea of a general culture spread over the whole of life and showed scant interest in an education confined to children. The[] reformers, the[] moralists, [however]...fought passionately against the anarchy (or what henceforth struck them as the anarchy) of medieval society where the Church, despite its repugnance, had long ago resigned itself to it and urged the faithful to seek salvation far from this pagan world, in some monastic retreat... (1962: 412).} "Henceforth it was recognized that the child was not ready for life, and that he had to be subjected to a special treatment, a sort of quarantine, before he was allowed to join the adults" (Aries, 1962: 412). This was the beginning of a major, but very gradual, shift in the way education was conceived. According to Aries, at the beginning of modernity, a positive moralization of society was taking place: "the moral aspect of religion was gradually triumphing in practice over the sacred or eschatological aspect. This was how these champions of a moral order were led to recognize the importance of education (Aries, 1962: 412). The churches were instrumental in slowly making education a moralizing activity and not only about learning a trade or learning how to read and write. Parents were taught "that they were spiritual guardians, that they were responsible before God for the souls, and indeed the bodies too, of their children....

This new concern about education would gradually install itself in the heart of society and transform it from top to bottom. The family ceased to be simply an institution for the transmission of a name and an estate - it assumed a moral and spiritual function, it moulded bodies and souls (Aries: 1962: 412).
This moral function would eventually shift again, from the family under the guidance of the Christian churches, to the state under the guidance of the Christian churches.¹

Education served what we would now anachronistically call "private" interests and purposes and had to be pursued "privately," if it was to be pursued at all, until even into the early decades of the nineteenth century. This is not to say that education was pursued by individuals alone but rather that it was pursued by communal, religious, and status-based

¹ Both in Canada and in the United States to a lesser degree, the so-called secular public education system has since the beginning been profoundly informed by the Christian churches. The missionary function of religious education would be transferred to the state. We can see clearly the traces of the church in state education today. The Catholic and Protestant Separate Schools, publicly funded denominational systems of education, derive their legal right to exist in Canada because of their early intervention into Canadian settlement life, such that language and religion were powerful political corollaries of one another. The delicate politicking around the protestant/catholic tension at the time of Confederation assured that religion as a moral imperative would still be institutionalized in the public school system of the late 1990s. As I write - that is in September of 1997 - Newfoundland’s provincial government is attempting to secularize a denominational school system which has been run wholly under the auspices of the Catholic and Protestant churches since the first educational projects in the mid-eighteenth century sponsored by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (Hamilton in Wilson: 1970: 130). Free education for the children "of the poor" was administered by religiously inspired philanthropic societies, even when, as with the New York Public School Society at the beginning of the nineteenth century, public money was allocated to help fund those endeavours (Prentice in Wilson, 1970: 49). Higher education was exclusive and the domain of individual denominations, funded by individuals or, in Canada, governmental grants. Alison Prentice writes:

...The early republican colleges and universities probably did what most of their supporters wanted them to do. They offered an education which bestowed upon its recipients distinctive knowledge in the area of religion, thus shoring up the denominational preferences of the founders; or, like the academies, an education which inculcated distinctive knowledge and habits in the area of morality and manners, thus shoring up the idea of social class in an age of increasingly violent social change (Prentice in Wilson, 1970: 50-51).

This was also true in Canada, where institutions of higher learning were distinctly sectarian. The royal charter which John Strachan brought back from England in 1827 to found a university in Upper Canada aroused controversy in the Assembly because it required faculty and governing Council to be members of the Church of England (Phillips, 1978: 25).
groups. There was as yet, in other words, no public sector as we know it today, and hence also no private sector. "In these crowded, collective existences there was no room for a private sector" (Aries, 1962: 411). The elite educated their children for leadership in state or church, or in order to pass down the practices of social class; the majority obtained very little or no education to speak of, and what was obtained was entirely dependent on local living conditions, wealth, and the degree of organization of the various denominations.

Because schooling depended upon the family, it was closely related to social class: in the main, advanced education was available only to those who could afford tuition fees and the cost of boarding their children away from home. Most children, if they received any formal education at all, never passed beyond the three Rs. Because schooling was voluntary, moreover, it was also characterized by variety. To meet their needs, parents used whatever means they had at their command: it might be a governess or a grammar school or a mercantile academy; it might be a private-venture teacher, a Sunday school, or a school established and maintained by neighbourhood cooperation. By modern standards at least, the kinds of institutions that existed were remarkable for their heterogeneity in origin, financing, and purpose (Lawr and Gidney, 1973: 16).

Childhood and education were only very slowly being constructed as corollaries of each other. The great traditions of humanist education in Europe were not geared at all to children or to the regulation of conduct. Children were occupied to a great extent with the activities of the adults around them; this constituted the substance of their education. "Families of a neighbourhood were usually a loosely organized tribe; social and economic roles were overlapping, unspecialized, familiar" (Tyack, 1974: 17). Education was a luxury on the side, even for the wealthy, not the organizing principle of the child's life, and in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries the school-house did not serve only an educational function: it was also the community centre in which any number of unrelated activities took place (Tyack, 1974). The economy of daily life was such that adult and child could be together in the
context of work and domestic activities throughout the day, especially during the early
settlement of North America. Indeed, sending a child to school represented a sacrifice rather
than an aide to family and communal subsistence. This was, of course, true for much longer
in rural environments (Tyack, 1974).

Thus the family as such was a different institution than it is now; its boundaries were not
those of our late nineteenth and twentieth century family. Families were public institutions in
any community in the sense that their practices were intimately interconnected with the
community. According to Phillipe Aries, the private family as we know it today was only
slowly consolidated in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, after a period of economic,
social and political transformation from the Middle Ages on, in which a sensibility toward the
education of the child could be cultivated. "Medieval civilization had forgotten the paideia of
the ancients and knew nothing as yet of modern education. That is the main point: it had no
idea of education" (Aries, 1962: 411). That is, education became a moral issue for the family,
and later for the state, only as the family became more and more of a private institution,
disconnected from traditional forms of work and community. It was then that the need for
the active socialization of children became paramount: if children were no longer actively
taking their place in the world of adults, they needed to be taught that place. This was most
explicit with the vocational education movement at the turn of the century:

While boys studied "industrial" subjects and principles of business, young women
studied home economics and stenography. By the third decade of the twentieth
century, young women and men in high schools pursued different courses of study
designed to prepare them for separate responsibilities in the social order (Finkelstein,
While schools proposed to be a means to forge an enlightened and civil public and an able and willing workforce, it did so by means of sorting and differentiating the population at large. "Progressive education reformers...tracked, sorted, and labelled, using the paraphernalia of schools to create boundaries between boys and girls, low and high achievers, blacks and whites, immigrants and natives, rich and poor and to broadcast the relative status and possibilities for one group or another" (Finkelstein, 1991: 487).

It was not, then, that private nuclear families looked after education of children before the state took over that mandate, but rather that families gradually but increasingly pared down to nuclear family size as a response to changing social and economic conditions, giving rise to the educable child - the child as clearly distinct from the adult, who got in the way of adult life, and was therefore newly seen as a being in need of a separate culture and space in which to be appropriately initiated into adult life. Horace Mann wrote in 1847: "at school...every child succeeds to acquire so much more than when he is simply in the property of the community...not in the form of gold and silver, but in the form of knowledge and training in good habits" (quoted in Finkelstein, 1991: 474). This child, one who must be taught his and her (separate) rightful place in the social order, finally became an important figure in the nineteenth century. So significant, in fact, that governments began to look at children as a separate constituency on whom it could impact considerably: the moral education of all children, with the help of the Christian churches, became a way to address social and political problems. "In fear of social disorganization, the architects of public education translated what they believed to have been disorderly, irregular, and unpredictable forms of socialization into visions of regularity..." (Finkelstein, 1991: 475).
Education becomes consciously directive and formative, initially in terms of spiritual well-being under the auspices of the family, church and community, and then as modernization continues, in terms of socio-psychological and political normalization and regulation under the auspices of the state. The development of the public school in modernity mimicked the trends in the social formation in general: there was a simultaneous process of homogenization and differentiation - children were placed together, sorted by age, gender, class and race, but emphatically removed from the adult world of work and home.

As early as 1647 Massachusetts passed legislation that required local communities of a certain size to establish grammar and common schools. But here still the rationale for such legislation was to support rather than to replace family and church education. "Church membership declined in the seventeenth century....and it is probably...accurate to see [early school laws] as a reflection of the attempt to promulgate correct religious views" (Vinovski, 1995: 7). Yet, it is not until around the very early 1800's that one can detect the beginnings of a shift in the governmental policy around education. Politicians were remarking on the moral need for schools for other reasons than religious, and began passing legislation regarding the allocation of public money, or the granting of endowments, for their establishment. "The Parish School Act of 1802" passed in New Brunswick "was the first act passed in New Brunswick for the establishment of common schools and although crude and imperfect it marked a change in the feeling of the people toward education" (Hamilton in Wilson, 1970: 109). It provided for 10 pounds per parish to set up and run schools. Similar legislation was passed at this time in the other provinces. Upper Canada passed an act "to Establish Public Schools in Each and Every District of This Province" (Phillips, 1978: 17).
But these were public schools in the British sense: though given grants by the government they were fee charging and offered a classical curriculum, thus attracting children of the upper classes. In the United States "it was only during and after the presidency of Andrew Jackson, which began in 1828, that the idea of a common education for all citizens began to capture the national imagination" (Prentice, 1970: 51). This historical moment, the transition of education from the "private" sphere of religion to the "public" sphere of the state - though we know that religion was never private, and that it survived intact in educational institutions after this transition - stretched throughout the nineteenth century, as compulsory free education was not firmly established until many decades later in the 1870's. Tyack argues that compulsory education moved from a "symbolic" phase in the mid-nineteenth century to a "bureaucratic" phase after 1890, at which time primary as well as secondary schooling was firmly established, and compulsion was no longer a dead-letter law but began to be thoroughly enforced by the state" (Tyack, 1976). The rhetoric around education as a social and public good now was translated into an institutional reality.

In most of English Canada the power to direct the development of education rested entirely in the hands of the provincial governments....Whatever the exact composition of the central authority in the different provinces...its powers were remarkable. It determined the character and content of nearly every aspect of schooling (Lawr and Gibney, 1973: 52).

A new move had been made in a very short time: the allocation of public money for the establishment of schools began to be legitimately linked to state control of education itself. Slowly the use of tax dollars to fund mass education, which had been pretty thoroughly and
fiercely thwarted in the century before and as recently as the 1840’s\(^4\) - became an accepted practice, and with it state regulation of the administration and curriculum of individual schools. In Upper Canada already by the 1840’s increased interest in centralizing education as an element of state-building was being agitated for by the Tory Party (Curtis, 1987: 53).

So how did it work that state funded education was legitimzed and put into practice in the second half of the nineteenth century, something which happened quite uniformly throughout the western industrializing nations? Governments in Britain, western Europe and North America passed a great many bills to do with educational policy. "New state school systems were established and older systems like those of Prussia and Holland were modernized and extended" (Lawr and Gibney, 1973: 51). And more importantly, how did it happen that state regulation of education followed from this? Various constituencies had their own reasons for supporting this eventuality, and today educational historians posit different explanatory principles:

British conservatives believed the education of the masses would lend support to the religious establishment and create a spirit of rational subordination. American whigs hoped schooling would counteract the excesses of universal male suffrage. Malthusians hoped it would teach sexual restraint and thereby keep the population and

\(^4\) J. Donald Wilson writes that the response to free schools was very mixed even up to 1849:

Opposition to free schools coalesced around several poles. Ideologically the concept was held to be an infringement of individual choice. The idea of taxing people with no children was considered tyrannous, socialistic, and according to the Standing Committee on Education in Toronto, "repugnant to British freedom and common sense." A Toronto Congregationalist minister, Rev. John Roaf, charged that free schools were "introducing communism in education to the undermining of property and society. A more strident British attitude was hear at a meeting in Barrie. When free schools were advocated, the speaker replied, "What do you need such schools for? There will always be enough well-educated Old Countrymen to transact all public business, and we can leave Canadians to clean up the bush (1970, 223).
the means of subsistence in balance. Political economists saw it as the best way to reconcile an emergent working class to the consequences of capitalism and technology. Owenites and other working-class publicists made it one of the great levers for creating a new society. For yet other men, education would end intemperance, eliminate crime, create social unity, spread the gospel, and encourage the arts and sciences. For Horace Man in Massachusetts, it was "the great balance-wheel of the social machinery," and for the Economist in England, it was "the steam-engine of the moral world" (Lawr and Gibney, 1973: 40).

The question of causality is a difficult one: what were the conditions which allowed for such a radical transformation in the way people thought about education? Clearly, there were many. But I am not so much interested in attempting to adequately account for why people whose voices were heard/recorded spoke the way they did about education at this time. I am interested, rather, in showing that the way they talked about it was uniformly about unifying and regulating a nation, a workforce, and a people, which set the tone for how we self-evidently think about education even today.

The logic of the argument was indisputable: if schooling was in the national interest, it was the responsibility of the state to encourage and guide it; if it was of universal benefit, it must be supported by all, open to all, and attended by all (Lawr and Gibney, 1973, 51).

The question is, why was education now in the national interest?

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5 While education was under provincial and state jurisdiction, the "national" nature of the debate over education can be seen in a changed discourse about the ends of education: education was no longer merely utilitarian, the mastering of certain skills, but formative of identities, one of which - and a domineering one - was the citizen of a nation, in this case a subject nation of Empire.
The Politics of Nation Building: Civilization and Enlightenment

The foundation of our political institutions, it is well known, rests in the will of the People, and the safety of the whole superstructure, its temple and altar, daily and hourly depend upon the discreet exercise of this will. How then is this will to be corrected, chastened, subdued? By education -that education, the first rudiments of which can be acquired only in common schools.

Report of U.S. House committee on Public Lands, 1826 in Wilson, 1970

What to do with all the immigrants? What to do with all the illiterate and poor voters? These were questions which occupied politicians and social reformers at the end of the nineteenth century and into the twentieth as suffrages expanded - questions which found their answers in a new focus on education as a political instrument. "How can we have a national spirit," asked educational reformers from the University of Nebraska at the turn of the century,

in a Commonwealth where there is an infusion of the language and blood of many nations unless there is a very strong effort made to socialize the different elements and weld them into a unified whole....It therefore becomes evident how important it is that the teacher be an American in sympathy, ideals, training, and loyalty (Tyack, 1974: 22).

The question of nationhood (in Canada this was formed around loyalty to the British Empire, in the United States around republicanism (Stamp, 1982)) was posed even earlier than that, and not necessarily in direct response to European immigration or industrial poverty and social upheaval. Already in the 1830's in Canada, and before that, in post-revolutionary
America, the question of the function of education for the purposes of statecraft was being discussed. Unlike later, this debate was not so much focussed around social and economic questions as around political ones. William Lyon Mackenzie wrote in the *Colonial Advocate* (2 June, 1831):

> What is chiefly wanted to consolidate and preserve British institutions and British principles in all her North American Colonies is Education. All reforms in government must begin by enlightening the people themselves (quoted in Lawr and Gidney, 1973: 41).

Later concern about the influx of eastern and southern Europeans, and their "foreign" ways, was at this time directed at American immigrants and their politically dangerous ideas. As Bruce Curtis argues:

> To many conservative elements, especially those in the Tory Party, the Rebellion of 1837 showed that "in the bosom of this community there exists a dangerous foe." The colony had been polluted by its proximity to the United States, "that arena for the discussion of extreme political fantasies," and by the presence of an unassimilated American population interested in democracy and republicanism (1987: 51).

Figures like Egerton Ryerson promoted compulsory schooling as a central feature of his vision of the Dominion: "...Ryerson looked on the school as a vehicle for inculcating loyalty and patriotism, fostering social cohesion and self-reliance, and insuring domestic tranquillity" (Wilson, 1970: 215).

The strongly centralized educational system which developed from the 1870s onward was increasingly viewed as serving a vital function for reasons other than strictly pedagogical. In

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6 Barbara Finkelstein writes of "America’s founding fathers and mothers, factory owners, republicans, an array of missionaries, philanthropists, and social leaders...as dreamers of an educated republic, t[ying] the political and educational fate of the nation closely together" (1991: 464).
Canada the mechanism of this new system was as follows, and with slight variation this was the case in most industrializing nations:

The machinery used in different places to systematize the schools varied in detail but the general pattern of state intervention was the same. Central boards or ministries of education were established to exercise some degree of control over curricula, textbooks, and the certification of teachers. Chief executive officers were appointed to administer the law, and inspectorates created to visit the schools and see that the law was enforced. Government grants to education were enlarged, and the traditional voluntary methods of local school financing were superseded by property taxation (Lawr and Gidney, 1973: 51).

Advocates of a uniform public school system entertained increasingly grander visions of its function in the body politic. No longer was it conceived merely as a means to impart very specific skills, that is, literacy and numeracy, but rather it entered the social imaginary as the tool for the fashioning of a people, a nation, even a way of life. As Tyack summarizes the sentiment at this time: "in a land where the people was king, it was essential to educate the sovereign" (quoted in Wilson, 1970: 215). Bruce Curtis argues that education enjoyed relative autonomy from the economy, and that education was not initially a project to manage class antagonism which arose out of industrial capitalism. Education was rather a political project to construct a certain kind of public in the provinces:

...I think that the attempt to treat educational development as an anticipation of capitalist development is essentially incorrect....[Rather], political reconstruction of a definite sort was implied in educational reform that, in itself, was an important mechanism for state-building (Curtis, 1987: 50-51).

Ryerson was the most influential nineteenth century educational reformer in Upper Canada. He was also a consummate politician. He was appointed Superintendent of Schools of Canada West in 1846 and set about reforming an educational system which he thought to be entirely ineffectual because of its ad hoc nature. He began to propose education as a uniform and
total experience. It should mould children in every aspect of their lives, not only mentally, and it should mould all children in the same way. The "humanization" and universalization of educational practices, which he advocated, was conceived as a move away from rote, mechanical learning toward the "...development of capacities for feeling and moral behaviour" (1987: 57). The cultivation of certain values and sensibilities would contribute even more to the public good than simple literacy and numeracy:

Students were to become self-disciplining individuals....[because] education would be intrinsically pleasing to the student and in consequence he or she would become the character sought by pedagogy. Education would produce in the population habits, dispositions and loyalties of a sort congenial to the state and to representative government (1987: 57).

The foundation of education for Ryerson was "our common Christianity," by which he meant a basic kind of non-sectarian Protestantism. Children could be cultivated into citizens by instilling in them the virtues of self-discipline, "toleration, meekness, charity and a respect for the rights of others," loyalty to the Imperial Crown, and the willing adherence to prevailing principles of the social formation (Curtis, 1987: 59).

Common Christianity involved, first of all, the creation of a form of social order in which subjects would willingly accept political forms, would respect political authority even if it appeared to be unjust, and would reject violent political activity (Curtis, 1987: 61).

As Bruce Curtis argues, this new attempt to reform education was a means by which to form a unified and "reasonable" public. The forging of a public meant the forging of a homogeneous substance out of diverse sectors of the nation. Schools would be the forge. Daniel Drake wrote in "The Americanization of Immigrants" in 1836 that the "schoolmaster is the only alchemist who can bring fine gold out of crude and discordant materials" (quoted in Finkelstein, 1991: 473). Schools, of all state agencies, mask the presence of the state most
successfully. "Political power is most effective where it vanishes" (Curtis, 1987: 61). For instance, education was seen to be a powerful tool in assimilating the native populations of North America precisely because it was a non-military tactic. The U.S. "Civilizing Act" of 1818 states:

In the present state of our country, one of two things seem to be necessary. Either that those sons of the forest should be moralized or exterminated. Humanity would rejoice at the former, but shrink from the latter. Put into the hands of their children, primer and the hoe, and they will naturally, in time, take hold of the plow and as their minds enlighten and expand, the Bible will be their Book and they will grow up in industry and morality (quoted in Finkelstein, 1991: 473-474).

The political nature of education is evident in the writings of Ryerson, and other educational reformers, precisely at the point where he claims to have raised education above politics once and for all. A "sphere above politics" (Curtis, 1987: 61-62) is what education should be, but by so being it should fulfil the following mandate: "Students were to become self-disciplining individuals who behaved not out of fear or because of coercion, but because their experience at school had created in them certain moral forms for which they had a positive affection" (Curtis, 1987: 59). These moral forms mirror precisely the convergence of protestant ethics with political universality: the pious churchman would become the virtuous citizen through the power of pedagogy.

Educational reform sought to create new forms of governance. It sought to obviate the necessity of governance by suppression of the individual will. Instead, it sought to shape...individual will so governance could proceed...(Curtis: 1987: 59).

Ryerson stated that an educated population is "the best security for a good government and constitutional liberty" (Wilson, 1970: 218).

The last half of the nineteenth century saw a whole new constituency of problem people: the urban labourer and the Eastern and Southern European immigrant. But the poor and the
"foreign," those potentially unruly segments of the social formation, could be uplifted through educational intervention: this intervention might just repair the gaping tears that were appearing in the social fabric. The discontent of the working classes and the marginalization of "foreign acting" foreigners could be managed by mixing all classes and "races" together in schools whose mission was now to instill an enthusiasm for the prevailing way of life, which was Anglo-Protestant. Tyack writes:

Americans intensified their attempts at political socialization in schools whenever they perceived a weakening of loyalties (as in World War I), or an infusion of strangers (as in peak times of immigration), or a spreading of subversive ideas (whether by Jesuits or Wobblies or Communists). Interest in compulsory attendance seems to correlate well with such periods of concern (Tyack, 1976: 367).

The political move here was to transform social and political "problems" into moral problems - that is, the creation of a citizenry was tied to a notion of individual performance, a performance which could be shaped and monitored in school. The moral problem - that is, the concern with how people conducted themselves in their day to day lives, especially in the city - now could be treated on the level of character. What kind of person can be productive and at the same time governable? Thus the source of political and social problems - a chaotic and sometimes brutal social space - was found to be weakness of moral substance, precisely that aspect of the human being which could be remediated through education. As was written by a judge in 1868 (I will quote at length):

While we may feel proud of the progress we have made in providing a Common School Education for our youth, and of the large sum which we annually devote to that purpose, we cannot but feel that there is a radical defect in that System which permits so many children of both sexes to wander as beggars and vagrants through our streets, despatched upon their daily errand of crime, to bring home to worthless Parents, to be dissipated in drunkenness, what they may lay their little pilfering hands upon, or what they may extract from the charity of the simple, by ready tales of orphanage, or of some imaginary calamity suddenly fallen on their Parents, instruction
in which fictions of misery is all that they receive at home, impressed upon their memories by cruel tortures and privation lest they, poor children, should forget their lessons.

To rescue this class from the evil influence of wicked Parents, is an object well worthy the ambition and utmost energy of the humane, and contributing, as every industrious citizen largely does, from the fruits of his industry, towards the Educational Fund, he would seem to have a right to demand that the Law which compels him to contribute towards the education of the children of others, should, at the same time, compel all to accept the benefits of education thus provided. The interests of the public and humanity alike justify such an interposition of the Law, which some see to shrink from, as, in their judgement, an unwarrantable interference with the parental authority.

In such cases as those to which we allude, the parental authority is the greatest evil to which these poor children are exposed; and the evil has grown to so great a magnitude as to make it a Christian duty in those who frame our laws to interpose for its removal (quoted in Lawr and Gidney, 1973: 65).

Industrialization and Social Reform

Capitalism had been around for several hundred years as a new economic practice mingling in complex ways with non-capitalist practices, but not until the technology was available to launch full scale industrialization were the daily lives of most people markedly disturbed. As the cottage industries were eclipsed by factory production, and as people were pulled from the land into the rapidly growing cities, the place, function, and thus the very discursive intelligibility of children was destabilized. This, at least, is a common narration of the story of how compulsory schooling became a possibility, one that still founds a powerful critique of public schooling: the state required an educated and willing workforce.

Industrialization co-arose along with a number of other social initiatives and experiments, or, put slightly differently, it functioned as a "performative" social representation. It was a
phenomenon whose very representation at that time was less descriptive than constitutive: industrialism's image of itself shaped an age. The self-reflexive audacity of the industrialists, risking everything to make huge profits, could also be seen in politicians and social reformers, for whom the potential of social planning and human welfare was limitless. Industrialism had its triumphs and its debacles. It produced human misery of a kind not seen before in history, grist for the reformers' mill: urban poverty on a massive scale was a different social phenomenon than rural subsistence; it was urgent and dramatic, bringing with it the threat of social unrest. It also at the same time produced extreme wealth, and more importantly, the means by which to spread some of that wealth around in the form of consumer products and cultural capital. Social reformers sought to find ways to minimize class conflict by socializing all classes of children together (Finkelstein, 1991: 472). In Ryerson's model, as with Horace Mann, John Dewey, and other social reformers, the schools were to be the site of this ostensible property redistribution: it would be that site within industrializing nations which would "transcend" class.

Common schooling meant placing "the poor man on the level with the rich man." It meant providing common intellectual property to members of all social classes and, in part, this conception arose out of attempts in Europe and the United States to compensate for the urban proletariat's lack of real property with a common intellectual property. In Upper Canada, this property was to be appropriated only in state institutions, and in the process of intellectual appropriation, members of all social classes would come to occupy a common position in relation to the state (Curtis, 1987: 59).

Industrialization and the mythology around it produced the effect of movement on all fronts and in all directions, generating at once optimism, expansiveness and an obsession with order and control. This is how an American educational historian writing in the 1920's puts it:
Territorial expansion and industrial development worked mighty changes in the life of the people. New and difficult social problems came with the growth of the cities and the rapid change from domestic to factory production. Easy means of transportation made it possible for men to move quickly from place to place as the demand for labor fluctuated, and the stabilizing influences of a relatively permanent home were greatly reduced. Some men were richer than men had ever been in the past, but by contrast poverty and hardship became more clearly defined. All this fired the imagination. The material means of human welfare were at hand as never before in the world’s history; and the resources for further development seemed limitless. Furthermore, the American experiment in democracy was succeeding, and succeeding on a vastly larger scale than had ever been anticipated (Finney, 1927: 113).

The legitimacy here for state regulation of education is premised on these two contingencies: the need for educated workers to fuel industrial expansion, and the need to control the social chaos that industrialism had generated. Education as a moral directive could both instill the discipline required for the changed work environment and the rectitude required to live in the big, potentially corrupting, industrial city. As Tyack writes: "...increasingly the school developed a curriculum, overt and implicit, that served as a bridge between the family and the organizational world beyond - that is, helped to create an urban discipline" (Tyack, 1974: 7).

Compulsory education was installed in part to keep children out of the labour force for a longer period of time, as the Victorian discourse of the child made the labouring child an anathema, but also for economic reasons. Children who worked in factories did not go to school, thus quickly grew up to be uneducated and thus inflexible adult workers. The commissioners write in Report of the Commissioners appointed to enquire into the Working of Mills and Factories of the Dominion (1882):

As to the attendance at school of children under fourteen years employed in factories, there is no attempt to attend school at all, from the fact that the regulations under which they work would not allow it. We have observed with regret a serious lack of education in very many of the adult factory hands. In some parts of the country a large proportion are to be found who can neither read nor write, and employers are seriously inconvenienced by this lack of education in those applying for work,
necessitating the importation of educated labour when our own people should be trained for these positions (Lawr and Gidney, 1973: 67).

In the first decades of the twentieth century millions of dollars were ear-marked for Vocational Training and in general "practical" education was gaining more support (Lawr and Gidney, 1973: 166).

The nineteenth century educational reformer became a powerful social and political figure. Men like Horace Mann, Egerton Ryerson, John Dewey, and George Herbert Mead began to write about the social and political productiveness of education. They each saw education as an effective response to every one of the problems and crises of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, an era which, if any generalization can be made about it, was marked by change and social upheaval. Thus socio-economic and political issues were translated into educational issues. This reconception required a revolution in teaching methods and curricula, away from the mental discipline tradition of classical education toward a more pragmatic and holistic approach. Schools were not only to pass on certain skills and traditions but to form a certain kind of future adult worker. Education increasingly bore an ethical dimension: ignorant versus educated described more than just the presence or absence of a certain kind of training. The 1864 Education Report for Upper Canada described a moral subject position in which ignorance was equated with an "unenterprising, grovelling, if not disorderly, population," while education guaranteed an "enterprising, intelligent, and industrious class of inhabitants" (quoted in Lawr and Gidney, 1973: 64). Education, social reformers imagined, could change the very subjectivity and consciousness of diverse groups of children. For the state to take control of education made prefect sense. Teaching the whole child was a much more effective way of determining her or his character as an adult citizen, than simply
teaching him or her to count, read and write. "Child centred" education made its first inroads into educational practice:

Influenced by theorists like Friedrich Froebel, Johann Herbart, and John Dewey, and by the educational psychology of William James, Canadian schoolmen were anxious to supplement the basic-skills and mental-discipline routines with subjects and methods more attuned to the new educational theories that emphasized the importance of the individual child's activity, growth, experience, and apperception....This new theory raised relevance to an educational virtue, and allowed educators to promote the new "practical" subjects and methods with enthusiasm and conviction (Lawr and Gidney, 1973: 158-159).

A direct link was beginning to be constructed between educational reform aimed at mitigating socio-economic and political problems and child psychology.

Child Psychology and the Social Sciences

All developmental models rely on some notion of "the child," as ideal-type, as universal category: precisely as an a priori positivity given before language and meaning. It is from this assertion of the nature of child, that is, from the naturalization of the child, that theories are built, that curricula are constructed, that schools are structured, that homes are created and evaluated; in short, on which quite an extensive social and political infrastructure is constructed and legitimized. This constitutes an hegemony - the naturalization and normalization of meanings by a certain kind of "expert" (Rudolph, 1992: 17).

Clearly the different explanatory paradigms briefly outlined above overlap each other, and separating them like this is simply to summarize the different history of compulsory education narratives as they have been told, and thereby avoid an elaborate methodological analysis which I cannot attempt here. A third narrative is organized around the scientific knowledge of the child as the source of legitimacy for universal compulsory education. Here the
"discovery" of the field by the professional educational "expert" justifies the state's co-optation of education from church and family for both political and economic reasons: science serves governmentality,\(^7\) forging the subject which can then be organized, regulated, and liberated. Nikolas Rose states:

During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the national territories of Europe and North America have become criss-crossed by programmes for the management and reconstruction of social life in order to produce security for property and wealth, profitability and efficiency of production, public virtue, tranquillity and even happiness. And subjectivity has become a vital resource in the managing of the affairs of the nation (1990: 5).

The new discipline of psychology, a hybrid of philosophy and biology, in which the mind becomes naturalized, emerges in the last half of the nineteenth century just at the height of industrialization, and as whole populations are shifting around the globe: at a time, in other words, of high anxiety.

Controlling and regulating those social elements considered potentially unruly presupposed the means to monitor them. Nikolas Rose (1985) discusses how "individual psychology" emerged to fulfil this role of classification and surveillance. The psychological individual was a highly specified and studied entity whose mental qualities and development were understood by virtue of comparison with the general population....The division of mad from the sane, the criminal from the lawful and educable from the ineducable, shifted from moral-political criteria to the equally judgemental, but scientific, evaluation of mental testing (Burman, 1994: 14).

Thus the language of child psychology enters educational theory: the child is no longer a receptacle for information or a body to be skilled but a being whose human development must be facilitated in order to meet a norm which has been naturalized. The child is now taken into

\(^7\) Science at this time serves governmentality because it facilitates the rationality of governing as a practice. It answers the crucial question: what kind of creature is it that we are governing, and how practically can populations be managed? (See Foucault in Burchell, Gordon, Miller, 1991)
the educational gaze in his or her totality. The 'child study movement' conspicuously reflects this trend: Child Study Societies were formed and the observation of children became a legitimate scientific endeavour:

The 'child study movement' is taken, not surprisingly, to have begun with Darwin. As part of his work he made a study of his own son: "A biographical sketch of an infant" (1840, 1887). The very terms of this study, of studying and observing human children in the same terms as other species, are crucially important, for in this act is the basis of the idea of "natural child development" (Walkerdine, 1984: 170).

The Manual Training movements at the turn of the century also show clearly how industrialization, and the changing social world which resulted from it, created a need to invent new ways of thinking about children. The advocates of Manual Training, an educational innovation which emphasized the pedagogical importance of working with the hands in a practical and precise manner, that is, through woodwork or metalwork, are quick, however, to downplay the productive side of that activity. Manual Training is not "merely" an apprenticeship programme to train workers, although Manual Training may residually result in more able future workers. On the contrary, as T.B. Kidner states in a paper presented to the Dominion Educational Association Proceedings (1901):

The distinction between the productive workshop and the Manual Training room is important, for to the casual observer the fact that wood and woodworking tools are being used would seem to indicate that some sort of trade work is being carried on, but the aims of the Manual Training room are entirely different. To the workman the objective is the article to be produced, and the methods are of secondary importance, while in the Manual Training room, the doing and not the thing when done is of prime importance to the teacher of Manual Training, who has in view, not the production of an article, but the development of a human being (Lawr and Gidney, 1973: 166) (my emphasis).

It is in the second half of the nineteenth century that reason becomes naturalized: that is, the mind becomes a biological function, which grows just as any organism does, and in as
much as biology (and its offshoot psychology) deals in the methods of science - the disinterested description of what is the case based on repeatable experimental techniques - it ostensibly side-steps the "speculative" nature of philosophy. The child is no longer a social or spiritual category - one which is subject to political controversy and discussion legitimately conducted by any interested member of the social formation - but rather a species category, at once universal and particular, a template against which every actual child can be measured. Through the observation of the child (and of the "savage"), so the nineteenth century psychologist thought, the very origins of human life could be revealed: ontogeny recapitulating phylogeny could actually be seen before the very eyes of the educator, and there revealed was a natural progression of human reason to the point where human reason could ground its own existence in the positivist statement "I know myself as a pure object."

This self-knowledge under the guidance of experts has become the big industry of the twentieth century.

Not just psychologists - clinical, occupational, educational - but also social workers, personnel managers, probation officers, counsellors and therapists of different schools and allegiances have based their claim to social authority upon their capacity to understand the psychological aspects of the person and to act upon them, or to advise others what to do. The multiplying powers of these "engineers of the human soul" seem to manifest something profoundly novel in the relations of authority to the self (Rose, 1990: 3).

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8 Valerie Walkerdine makes the argument that the child studies movement constituted one part of a larger discursive nexus which also incorporated eugenics and colonialism. The classification of different kinds of people in the model of biology into various categories of "human-ness" provided a sound justification for the rule of Europeans over non-Europeans. "The fitness of the race and the efficiency of the workforce combine to ensure Britain's domination of her empire" (1984: 173). Thus the concern about the degeneracy of the race became an educational issue: "feeble-mindedness as a category of science, of psychology, becomes inextricably linked to a threat to civilized existence" (1984: 169).
So, as educational reformers began to break the hegemony of classical education and make schools more "relevant" and "useful" in relation to the outside world, the language of child psychology slowly pervaded educational theory and practice and thereby saved public schools, in theory at least, from becoming merely an arm of industry through the auspices of the state. Instead, compulsory state-regulated schooling was framed as a means of addressing the innate "needs" of children, as a means of liberating them from pre-modern contexts, as a means of allowing them to become "fully human" by being fully civilized.

Educate, cure, reform, punish, - these are old imperatives no doubt. But the new vocabularies provided by the sciences of the psyche enable the aspirations of government to be articulated in terms of the knowledgeable management of the depths of the human soul (Rose, 1990: 7).

Child psychology and public schooling co-arose: the mass institutionalization of children, organized by age, allowed for controlled "measurement" and assessment of a huge cross-section of children, and at the same time the "new" knowledge that these experiments produced consolidated the public educational institution itself. New innovations could be justified by a much more edifying discourse than simple social utility, borrowing in equal measure from the new human sciences and the rhetoric of social reform. For progressive educators schools could become laboratories of social reform directed at the enlightenment of society by implementing pedagogical techniques developed through the scientific study of the child. This impulse was not cynical, however. Faith in the power of scientific observation to fully "know" the child was deeply held:

The belief in science and the concomitant struggle to find forms of legitimation and guarantee in science rather than religion forms a significant backdrop to the genesis not only of modern forms of rationality, but for the idea of rationality as natural and therefore to the search for a pedagogy which could produce the desired forms of individuality by means of natural development (Walkerdine, 1984: 164).
Of course, child psychology is a broad category which includes a variety of different schools of thought: not all child psychologists at the time were social reformers like John Dewey, whose whole project was engaged in using the body of knowledge gained by the scientific observation of children (his school was even called the Laboratory School) to guide education as a form of social conditioning. Dewey writes: "The school is an especially favourable place in which to study the availability of psychology for social practice" (Dewey, 1990: 114). Robert L. Church argues that the educational psychologists proper (that is, professional experimental psychologists) in the progressive era framed their object of investigation much more narrowly: "how to conceptualize and measure what occurred in the formal classroom learning of academic subjects" (Church, 1971: 392). Church offers a couple of reasons why this was the case: social scientists of all types were anxious to assert the "hardness" of their science by keeping it "pure" - applied psychologists inhabited a marginal position vis-a-vis experimental psychologists and had continually to reconfirm the positivist scientificity of their work by dealing narrowly with the scientific subject at hand - the individual child; the drive to professionalization of the social sciences in general, and psychology in particular, meant the need to construct an "expert" whose practice could be clearly distinguished from that of the amateur reformer/activist/politician (Church, 1971). But be that as it may, both the child psychologist as expert and the social reformer began now to use the language of child psychology to ground their respective educational/social reform discourses. Dewey writes: "The story of the achievement of science in physical control is evidence of the possibility of control in social affairs" (Dewey, 1968: 330). Whether positivist or pragmatic, educational psychologist and educational reformer used an expert
body of knowledge to "sell" the individual and social advantages of a free, universal public school system. Thus, a narrative has long been in circulation which is premised on the notion that scientists finally confirmed what was in the best interest of the (developing) child: a total school experience. Where professional child psychologists were conservative in their prescriptive claims, as Church states, "most educational psychologists publishing in the Journal tended to take educational purpose as given and to restrict their discussion to technique" (Church, 1971: 304), the progressive educators used the new scientific discourse to support their grand visions of social reform, and in the case of someone like Dewey, *democratic* social reform. Links were being made between new knowledges legitimized by their scientificity and social administration (Walkerdine, 1984). A clear understanding of the nature of the human being could organize an educational system designed to change society as a whole. "Dewey clearly advocated the "systematic utilization of scientific method as the pattern and ideal of intelligent exploration of the potentialities in experience" (Paringer, 1990: 56). It was such an elegant and simple idea: a properly worked out theory of the child, and a properly structured school environment, could initiate a thorough-going social transformation. "Politically and educationally, the nature of reform was to make the system work efficiently and effectively, and, if necessary (as Dewey argued in *Liberalism and Social Action*), increase the role of the state" (Paringer, 1990: 51). Dewey's was an emblematic vision of social consensus and harmony, in which transformation happens incrementally, as a series of adjustments in the social bearing of future adults, without political or social antagonism. This bears emphasizing: social reformers of the progressive era championed education as a means of change because it would be change without conflict - evolutionary, rather than
revolutionary. Change, in other words, in keeping with the corporate and harmonious society it would usher in:

Due to gains in experimental science, he believed that American democracy had transformed both the Platonic and Rousseauian formulations of self and society. Schools could begin to develop the imagination and sympathetic insight into "the social and scientific values" of the workplace which the evolving Western consciousness had produced....Dewey, can be seen...to be exalting the "Great Community" in phrases like "the formation of the proper social life," the "maintenance of proper social order," the "securing of the right social growth," and the teacher as "the prophet of the true God and the usherer in of the true kingdom of God." In Sanchez's view this meant putting "the schools in step with a modern, industrial democracy...[where] children would develop in a society 'which is worthy, lovely, and harmonious" (Paringer, 1990: 51).

To conclude: the newly emerging "science of the individual" (Venn, 1984) in the second half of the nineteenth century seems to correlate closely with newly emerging "organizational bureaucracies," the rationale of which was to create concentrated and standardized public institutions (Tyack, 1973: 373). Progressive Era, and later child-centred, educational theory built its discourse around the "natural freedom" of the child and of "the individual," but this was framed within institutions whose goals were at the same time the normalization and regulation of "the citizen." The paradox of progressive education, as Cohen and Mohl note (1979), lies in its double injunction: to restore the child to his or her natural state of freedom through self-directed and "creative" learning - thus meeting his or her "needs," as established by the scientific observation of the child; and to efficiently administer and shape generations of children to some socially legitimate end. The "social progressives" and the "administrative progressives," as Tyack calls them, were at ideological odds over a number of issues but, while both groups of progressives were highly critical of each other's tactics and goals, they often managed to cooperate. And the one institution that they could all
agree was of fundamental importance in reforming society, and that itself needed reforming, was formal education - the public schools (Cohen and Mohl, 1979: 174-175).

Nikolas Rose argues that the emergence of the social, and especially the psychological, sciences did not just represent the emergence of a new kind of knowledge, let alone a new "discovery," but rather that "knowledge" of the psyche allowed for the emergence of a new and far-reaching kind of governmentality (Rose, 1990). Knowledge is here, following Foucault, not just an epistemological product, but a production of a new kind of power. The kind of management of the self which flows from this knowledge is new in the sense of being explicitly produced and utilized by the political machinery, being the raison-d'etre of new "organizations' such as "offices, factories, airlines, colleges, hospitals, prisons, armies and schools" (Rose, 1990: 2), and most importantly for the point being made here, being the constructed material of a whole host of new experts, educators among them, who regulate "...the very interior of our existence and experience as subjects....in order [for us] to achieve happiness, wisdom, health, and fulfilment" (Rose, 1990: 10).

Why are the foregoing sketches important? Even while we understand them to be interpretative frameworks, each finds its explanatory power in a coherence of theoretical projection onto its material - as Kenneth Burke wrote: "a way of seeing is always a way of not seeing" (quoted in Tyack, 1973: 355), we can gather from these very different sets of
justifications that they arise out of the very deepest of dilemmas of the liberal welfare state: that is, each narrative reveals the essentially illiberal and antidemocratic rationale for the institution of compulsory education for the very purpose of the liberalization and democratization of society. The state intervenes in a fundamental way in the lives of its citizens in order to realize the "common good," which is their functioning as autonomous, civilized, hard-working citizens. Compulsory education becomes the means by which to create a universally rational citizenry, and a fit workforce. In short, it becomes a means by which to create a modern social formation.

By modern I mean a social formation in which the discourses of modernity are dominant and circulate as a normative injunction. These discourses arise out of humanism, the Enlightenment, liberalism and capitalism - I present a schematic sketch of these in Chapter Three - in which the subject/citizen is spoken of as a subject who has to actively be made what it always already is, through sets of regulations. This circulation makes the role and function of the state paradoxical. The state cannot be seen, in other words, as a sovereignty which forces its will upon the people. Rather it is a collection of instruments or apparatuses, education among them, which produces a specific kind of subject, one which governs itself according to particular standards of conduct. The state enters the lives of the people not as a power which subdues, but as regulatory mechanisms, as practices which organize life-goods to create the very universal subject of the state. Colin Gordon writes in The Foucault Effect (1991):

Modern governmental rationality, Foucault has said, is simultaneously about individualizing and totalizing: that is, about finding answers to the question of what it is for an individual, and for a society or population of individuals, to be governed or governable (36).
SCHOOL CHOICE DEBATES: DILEMMAS OF THE WELFARE STATE

Very crudely put, one can schematize the debate over choice in education as those with a presumption in favour of freedom (individual rights) against those with a presumption in favour of equality (public goods). This, of course, is an almost laughably simplistic statement, but it also crudely applies to debates over the welfare state in general. And this conjunction is an important one to highlight: for the debate over choice in education is at the same time a debate about the status of the welfare state itself, that is, a debate about the status of state intervention into the content and shape of the lives of its citizens. What kind of subject does the welfare state form through that intervention, and does this subject realize itself in the universal subject?

There are a number of different and conflicting interpretative models of the welfare state phenomenon. According to Struthers (1994)⁹, the accounts vary in adequacy and usefulness depending on their reductionism, and their analysis of power and agency within the welfare state construct. In fact in his history of welfare in Ontario (1994), he suggests that in order to explain the complexity of welfare, a number of different interpretative models must be used in conjunction with each other(17). A clear step forward in the interpretation of the uneven phenomenon of welfare in the west could be seen in the "...undercutting [of] an earlier idealist and Whiggish tradition of writing on welfare that viewed most programs as the product of enlightened and altruistic reformers" (Struthers, 1994: 6). This undercutting came from

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⁹ The following summary of interpretative models comes from this book.
different perspectives. "The logic of industrialism" school, associated with the work of Harold Wilensky, took the phenomenon of the welfare state in the west to be caused by the consequences of industrialism, which were to disrupt all manner of traditional mutual aid networks. As Struthers explains, industrialism "...created the economic vulnerabilities associated with wage dependency, and generated the societal surplus needed to finance welfare state programs of redistribution and social insurance as well as the bureaucratic structure necessary to administer them" (Struthers, 1994: 6). Hence there was a "functional fit" between capitalism and welfare, rather than a tension of an oppositional logic. The theory associated with Seymour Martin Lipset, Louis Hartz, and Gaston Rimlinger, focussed on political culture to explain the differences in welfare states in the west. They argued that the kind and extent of welfare state which emerged depended on the values and guiding national myths of various western nations, and that social policy is informed by ideas and beliefs not just by rational interests. The Scandinavian social democratic theorists suggest that the welfare state is an accomplishment of labour within civil society. Theorists such as Walter Korpi and Gosta Esping-Andersen suggest that it is the political struggle and activism of labour unions which pushed through social policies geared to workers and the poor. As Struthers describes this interpretation: "the level of any nation's or region's social policy development reflects the extent to which the working class, through trade union organization and political mobilization, can move the state to meet its needs rather than those of capital" (Struthers, 1994: 8). Marxist or neo-Marxist theories suggest, in stark contrast to the social democratic model, that welfare policies are, if not a direct instrument of capital, in the service of capital. To this end welfare policies shape the kinds of subjectivities which will be most
conducive to capitalist economies. They regulate labour and the conditions around labour in a manner beneficial for capitalist ventures. Piven and Cloward represent theorists who integrate into the social control theory an element of agency in which workers and the poor are shown to have some limited oppositional power in times of economic instability (Struthers, 1994: 10). At this time they organize to expand welfare services. State-centred theories suggest that the state has its own agency with regard to welfare policies. The players in policy making, government officials, civil servants, policy professionals (as Struthers summarizes them, "doctors, nutritionists, social workers, economists, and accountants" (1994: 13)), direct policy within an autonomous sphere: they are not just the passive conduit of social pressure. As Struthers summarizes: "government officials often lead social change, developing welfare measures through a process of political learning from the consequences of previous policy, through the regulatory knowledge and expertise they acquire within government agencies, and through their ongoing dialogue with like-minded policy professionals" (Struthers, 1994: 12). Gender based interpretative models suggest that welfare state polices are instituted and maintained in the service of entrenching gender roles within the workplace and at home. Thus welfare policies organize around rigid notions of female and male positions within the social formation, tending to construct women's welfare needs as charity and help rather than as entitlement. As Struthers writes:

...welfare policies in the early decades of the twentieth century were designed to shore up a family-wage model that viewed women and children principally as dependents of male wage-earners. In other words, welfare policies sought both to exclude women from the labour market and to uphold their essential role as mothers and caretakers of the nation's citizens (Struthers, 1994: 14).
Thus, those feminists who argue that the state is the vehicle for women's liberation from oppressive family, cultural and community spaces must consider that state agencies may very likely enforce similar codes of femininity. Brown states: "While Piven speaks of women as "partly liberated from the overweening power of men by the 'breakdown' of the family, what is 'liberated' from the private sphere may then be colonized and administered by one or more dimensions of masculinist state power" (1995: 195).

Struthers argues that all of these models have their weaknesses -none of them, in positing a causal factor or key social actor in the institution and logic of welfare, can meet the complexity of the welfare state, its contradictions, unintended consequences, and uneven institution in different regions and nations. But they each - with exception of the social democratic and "Whiggish" interpretations - point to the essential dilemma of welfare in which the much required ameliorization of harsh social and economic conditions has its costs in the social regulation of its clients - especially those struggling the most - to the extent that local rationalities and local definitions of well-being are destroyed. This has garnered increasing criticism from both left and right. Addressing this dilemma is clearly not accomplished, however, by simply privatizing the welfare state and letting the harsh social and political realities of capitalism simply take their toll. Most critics of the welfare state concede this point. Claus Offe writes:

First, contrary to the ideological consensus that flourished in some of the most advanced welfare states throughout the 1950s and 1960s, nowhere is the welfare state believed any longer to be the promising and permanently valid answer to the problems of the socio-political order of advanced capitalist economies. Critics in both camps [left and right] have become more vociferous and fundamental in their negative appraisal of welfare state arrangements. Second, neither of the two approaches to the welfare state could and would be prepared, in the best interest of its respective clientele, to abandoned the welfare state, as it performs essential and indispensable
functions both for the accumulation process as well as for the social economic well-being of the working class (1984, 157).

While critiques of the welfare state are increasingly to be heard, the dilemmatic nature of welfare itself ensures that no sudden radical changes will occur. The inability to conceive a straightforwardly "better" construct ensures that "fixing" welfare states will be an evolutionary rather than revolutionary process. "It appears that the welfare state, while being contested both from the Right and the Left, will not be easily replaced by a conservative or progressive alternative" (Offe, 1984: 157). Normative models, however, are crucially important. The direction in which the welfare state will evolve will depend increasingly on politicization, alliance-building, and agitation.

As my thesis advocates, there is a hope for a transformed "welfare society" which takes a different form than neo-laissez-faire solutions which romanticize the bourgeois stage of capitalism (free and harmonious markets), and neo-corporatist solutions which attempt to forge a tight and harmonious alliance between labour, capital and the state (harmonious collective governance). Offe writes, what is "not entirely inconceivable is...a type of alliance that combines working-class organizations [to which I would add a multitude of marginalized groups of people] and elements from the new middle class on the basis of a non-bureaucratic, decentralized, and egalitarian model of a self-reliant 'welfare society'. Proponents of this solution are to be found within the new social movements..."(Offe, 1984: 159).

I am using the term welfare state in its broadest sense in which goods - universal and means-tested - are redistributed by the state for various reasons to do with the peaceful, efficient, and productive running of a nation. Hence, education is one major plank in the welfare state
platform of western liberal/social democratic states. It serves to both regulate non-wage labour
activities and prepare people for a life of wage-labour (Offe, 1984: 94). "Privately-controlled
capitalist economies could not continue to function successfully (or even at all) without
extensive state provision of 'public goods' such as housing, health services and education"
(Offe, 1984: 27). It also serves to initiate heterogeneous groups of people into a singular
population which can be governed.

As with any policy or political formation, welfare states emerged incrementally and through
political struggle:

The ideological challenge to liberalism came not just from totalitarian doctrines such
as fascism and communism, but also from programmes of social amelioration through
state action which were increasingly adopted by parties of the Centre Right and Centre
Left. As suffrages were extended and mass democracies created, so the pressure for
increasing the scope and the scale of collectivist programmes of public provision in
the fields of welfare, economic development, and military defence was intensified.
The extension of democracy came to be seen as synonymous with the extension of the
spending and regulatory powers of the state (Gamble, 1996: 5-6).

The early Acts of Parliament regarding education, as with Acts to do with child labour,
pauperism, and old age pensions, paved the way for welfare statism in terms of changing
expectations. Welfare states did not fall ready-made from the sky: state welfarism, however
minimal, preceded the welfare state. As we have reviewed in the first half of this chapter
specifically in the case of education, the state gradually assumed the role of churches, family,
and other "private" institutions in distributing social welfare goods.

While previously, state financial assistance was occasionally provided for specific
institutions, to assist with capital cost or maintenance, Ontario moved towards a
regularized system of grants-in-aid with the Charity Aid Act of 1874. Institutions
supported included the first institutions for the deaf, the mentally retarded and the
blind, the former two opening in Ontario in 1870 and the latter in 1872... Provincial
governments in general began entering more widely into regulatory activities after
Confederation. The regulation of school attendance, public health, hours of work and
conditions in the work place (particularly for women and children) and the treatment of children, were all aspects of widening state involvement in social welfare by the end of the nineteenth century (Moscovitch and Albert, 1987: 17-18).

Thus, welfare initiatives were legislated into law well before "the welfare state" could be said to exist as an official political formation. This is not to say, however, that there was anything inevitable about this trajectory: it was a political achievement. Yet, only since post Second World War can there be said to be a coherence to these policy directions at which time Keynesian economics was implemented by many western democracies. The war was an important turning point in terms of the form and legitimacy of the relationship between the state and the economy:

In order to meet the requirements of war and production of war materials, the Canadian state was forced to take an ever-growing role in wartime economic and social life. Wage, price, rent and materials controls were introduced as were a range of crown corporations to run the war effort. With a wider array of state activity came broader public acceptance of state intervention (Moscovitch and Albert, 1987: 27).

But even in the decade before the war the notion that markets have to be managed began to sound like sense. "The Great Depression of the 1930's taught the Western industrial nations a crucial lesson: the crisis was not an irresistible natural catastrophe. It could have been avoided and, even after it began, its consequences could have been mitigated by appropriate measures" (Scharpf, 1991: 3). Keynes' intervention into classical economic theory helped considerably to justify the sea-change in public and expert opinion about the necessary beneficence of markets. Keynes wrote in his essay, "The End of Laissez-Faire," "it is not a correct deduction from the Principles of Economics that enlightened self-interest always operates in the public interest. Nor is it true that self-interest generally is enlightened" (Keynes, 1926, 39). Keynes proposed that in as much as the Great Depression showed the
free market to be anything but self-stabilizing or rational, governments could prevent booms and slumps in the economy by managing demand. That is, above and beyond specific welfare expenditures which would mitigate the harshness of the capitalist market for a segment of the population, the state could effectively manage the vicissitudes of the market itself.

Swedish Social Democrats, Hitler's minister of economics, and American New Dealers, independently and almost simultaneously, discovered that they could use government spending to stimulate aggregate demand and thereby achieve full employment and fully exploit the productive capacities of their countries. John Maynard Keynes subsequently created an economic theory to justify these successful experiments in deficit financing. His thought profoundly influenced postwar economic policy in all the Western industrial nations (Scharpf, 1991: 3).

In Canada the welfare state reached its peak in terms of social expenditures between 1965 and 1974 (Moscovitch and Albert, 1987: 39). At the end of this period Canada was a fully elaborated welfare state which, according to Moscovitch and Albert, served two functions: it increased economic and social security universally by augmenting the private wage with a social wage, and it socialized some of the costs of labour for employers. "Health and education programmes constitute the major part of social consumption expenditures, since they are intended for the general social reproduction of labour" (Moscovitch and Albert, 1987: 36).

Depending on which theorists one reads, the welfare state was not simply a response to economic conditions, it was also a political response, as we have seen in the particular case of education: there was a perception in the aftermath of the Second World War and the advent of the Cold War that it was necessary to introduce policies which would encourage social stability and thus discourage political extremism of both left and right (Waddan, 1997: 8).
The fully instituted welfare state was the function of an odd kind of political consensus which lasted a few decades after the war. There seemed to be cross-party acceptance of the legitimacy of an activist state which not only provided welfare goods to the population but directly managed the economy itself. As Waddan states, "there was, of course, always differences of opinion as to quite how significant the state's role should be," and these differences did fall along the right-left divide, "but critically there was a pro-activist consensus which was endorsed not only by the political parties and organizations of the centre left but also by those of the centre-right" (Waddan, 1997: 7). What differences there were tended to be framed in terms of procedure rather than ideological content: Waddan continues, "it appeared almost that conflict over the running of the social state was more managerial than ideological" (Waddan, 1997: 7).

Clearly, no such thing as the welfare state exists. Many varieties of state formation fall under that title.

That there existed something identifiable as a cross-national Keynesian welfare state consensus in the 1960s, does not entail the use of a simple convergence model which assumes that there were uniform economic and political factors which explain the emergence of subsequent development of all welfare states (Waddan, 1997: 9).

As Waddan emphasizes, using Esping-Andersen, there are different types of welfare state: he characterizes them as conservative, liberal, and social democratic welfare state regimes.

Conservative welfare states aim their interventionism at bolstering traditional political and social power structures. "[W]hile there is no strong ideological tradition inhibiting the state's role per se, there is a sense that...it should steer clear of encroaching on the...worthy institutions such as the church and the family unit" (Waddan, 1997: 10). Liberal welfare states are those which provide a minimal level of welfare goods, the distribution of which is
designed to "...make recipients aware of their low social status" (Waddan, 10). Social democratic welfare states use state power to try to redistribute wealth and social goods in order to eventually close the gap between rich and poor (Waddan, 10). Yet, in most western industrialized countries similar trends have developed regarding the role of the state in civil society, regardless of the type of welfare state in operation. I wouldn’t want to venture a causal explanation of this phenomenon: yet even if cross-national political or economic factors cannot be so easily reduced, some kind of international pattern has emerged. At this juncture, that is in 1998, it can be clearly mapped: a post-war consensus has dissolved and ideologically driven concerns are again on the horizon.

The resulting debate takes on a different tone depending on which type of welfare regime is "in crisis," a crisis whose status itself is often up for question. But nevertheless, the question now is not how the welfare state should operate, but whether or not it should be a) entirely rejected as a positive social value, or b) radically reconceived. Those analysts who defend it as it stands are losing credibility. It is true that only marginal constituents on both the right and left advocate either the total elimination of all state welfare, or the total socialization of private market mechanisms, yet "the debates" about welfare have changed in tone: "crises" over the welfare state are not so much tied to objective economic conditions (although economic conditions did change dramatically for the western industrialized nations in the 1970s), because these are interpreted in all manner of directly contradictory ways, but to legitimacy. From the 1970s onward, the right and left saw an opportunity to intervene again in the political debate around welfare statism: those who "had been effectively excluded from the centrist consensus" (Waddan, 1997: 27) now had an opportunity to raise ideological
concerns again. Hence questions raised about the welfare state tend today to be meta-
questions about the feasibility of welfare statism as a socio-economic and political formation
in general. Waddan writes:

...It was an almost bizarre feature of the 1970s’ political discourse how quickly
assumptions of consensus changed to assumptions of crisis. It was with "astonishing
speed" that the nature of the debate changed within the circles of "governing and

Federally in Canada, as of 1998, both education and healthcare are still spoken about as
"sacred trusts," however. And as Dehli writes: "in contrast with several other Anglo-
European societies, neo-liberal and progressive versions of school choice have not yet
'captured the discourse' (Bowe, Gewirtz, and Ball, 1994) of provincial and local educational
policy making in Ontario" (1996: 77). That is, regardless of what provincial governments and
the federal government actually do, they still need to be perceived to be for universal, free
education and healthcare. In Ontario choice is not yet, even in 1998, a term which organizes
the debates around the alleged crisis in public education. This can be seen clearly in the
kinds of statements the Minister of Education makes, the kinds of concerns the teachers have,
and the way the issues are reported by the media. The discourses seem to be organized
around notions such as involvement, accountability, excellence, global competition, and
efficiency.

...Universal programmes are more likely to enjoy popular support, and thus political
legitimacy, than means-tested ones....The popularity of universal programmes can
frustrate the right who find themselves compelled, at least rhetorically, to promise to
safeguard programmes which they instinctively want to cut (Stockman in Waddan,
Waddan puts forth the argument that this legitimacy is achieved by mobilizing a middle-class constituency which benefits from universal programmes but not from means-tested ones (Waddan, 1997: 19).

But this will probably not last: a major reconstruction of welfare is underway in Canada, as in other western liberal democracies, and even education and healthcare are being scrutinized, coming initially in the form of budget deficit concerns, that is, simply as a question of sound financial management. "In their populist ad-man versions...[the social policies of the new right] could be said to have a plain 'good housekeeping' ring about them" (Ferris in Bean, 1985: 46). Yet, clearly the language of the market has even infiltrated educational discourses in Canada. Dehli writes: "the new Minister of Education in the 'right-wing' Tory government [of Ontario]...consistently refers to schools as enterprises and to teachers, pupils and parents as producers and consumers" (Dehli, 1996: 77). The danger is that the crisis and critique of the welfare state will become increasingly organized around choice as a tool of the free-market, as in the United States, and not around the call for a "revitalized public sphere" (Dehli, 1996). My contention is, if the left fails to launch its own coherent critique of the welfare state in terms of the empowerment of communities through state funded non-profit, independent schools, the right may very well win the day with for-profit charter schools. This possibility is greater in the U.S. than in Canada, but the danger is real for Canada as well.

Wendy Brown writes:

...As the Right [in the U.S.] promulgated an increasingly narrow and predominantly economic formulation of freedom and claimed freedom's ground as its own, liberals and leftists lined up behind an equally narrow and predominantly economic formulation of equality. In this regard, leftists ceded important ground to liberal doctrine, which generally places equality and freedom on perpendicular axes in inverse
relation to each other, casting their relationship as something of political philosophy's Phillip's curve (Brown, 1995: 10).

As the history of welfare state policies show, political interventions do impact upon the form of the welfare state. For instance, I argue in this thesis that in order for the welfare state not to be jeopardized altogether the left has to decisively intervene by strategically working into the logic of welfare a reconceived notion of choice. The liberalizing and emancipatory element of welfare could be conceived in terms of a redistribution of the means by which to choose how to live, rather than in terms solely of redistribution of material goods, if the discursive conditions enabled such a conception.

As I have tried to show, public education has always served a function which is extraneous to the learning of skills, the gaining of general knowledge, and the orientation within a local community. Its function has been to unify, normalize, and equalize the disparate segments of the population for the purpose of creating a functioning liberal democracy. The legitimacy of this has been questioned by marginal voices on both the right and the left (the counter-cultural movement), but in the last decade or more the right has gained control over the discourse as the left has lost its focus and lost its moral voice in opposing the right. It is no longer clear from which position opposition to rightwing policies is to be launched without simply entrenching state forms of social planning.

The right in the west (and here I am talking about a general discursive position which informs rightwing rhetoric) began, after the breakdown of the welfare consensus, to frame their critique of this educational monopoly as another instance of the collectivist oppression of "the individual." This individual (that is, every individual in the abstract) would be far better served through a market driven distribution of educational goods, even if these goods were
still collectively subsidized. Within this discourse the market is often articulated, as though necessarily, to freedom as moral ground. Because it is a free market, it must be a universally good thing for all people. The left, pushed more and more into a reactionary position, frames its support of the status quo in public education as one of the last bastions of egalitarian and public values. The public school is the place where every child goes to meet her or his peers on a "level playing field," which is a place of harmonious convergence of every kind of subject position available in the social formation. Within this discourse, state regulated social goods are articulated, as though necessarily, to equality as moral ground. Because the state provides and regulates this service, it must be egalitarian and therefore good for all people, and any criticism is seen as highly dangerous.

Contemporary disorientation about freedom also appears consequent to the Right's programmatic attack on the welfare state since the mid-1970s. This attack incited liberal and left protectiveness toward the state and, for many, rendered critiques of the state tantamount to luxury goods in bad times (Brown, 1995: 10).

Yet even the right and the left are no longer easily determined as ideological positions: their political discourses often overlap and merge in confusing ways. For while it is clear that the centre-left still generally supports welfare policies, especially state managed public education - that is, it represents the ragged remains of the centrist consensus - various more critical left social movements concur with the right about the crisis of public education and the welfare state in general. While the analysis is certainly different, the trajectory is the same:

"...Although the triumph of the politicians with New Right tendencies was the most obvious manifestation of the changing political and ideological atmosphere, the 1970s also witnessed a resurgence of leftist critiques of the welfare state, or as some preferred to say, 'welfare capitalism'" (Waddan, 1997: 27). The clearly delineated and fixed boundaries, in terms of
ideological position, of the terms "freedom" and "equality" are beginning to break up, so that when they are reiterated within the political process, that is, ostensibly reintrenched as that which they had been before, they appear forced and rhetorical. What is generated is an exaggerated political language, in which the notion of freedom from the state (rights) and equality through the state (the good) become absolute counter-demands. Choice as a term is implicated in this general crisis of meaning, for choice has been articulated to both terms, freedom and equality: freedom as the negative condition of choice, and equality as its positive condition. That is, rightwing discourse suggests that choice is only possible when individuals are radically free (autonomous, self-sufficient) from state "interference" in life-decisions, and leftwing discourse suggests that choice only means something when it is made possible by the "equalizing" function of the state.

Thus, at a time when consenses of all sorts, and hegemonies of all sorts, are crumbling the ideological decibel count is going up. That is, as a certain political constellation is breaking up, including discursive hegemonies, the need to refix meanings and practices, to shore up particular "regimes of truth," in their ostensible singular form becomes paramount: hence the turn, on both the left and the right, to "fundamentals," "basics," "original values." As Laclau writes, part of the process of the hegemonic-discursive construction of the social is the articulation of signifiers (though, this can not be described as a transparent project) to each other as though they were necessarily linked.

...A signifier like "democracy" is essentially ambiguous by dint of its widespread political circulation: it acquires one possible meaning when articulated with "anti-fascism" and a completely different one when articulated with "anti-communism." To "hegemonize" a content would therefore amount to fixing its meaning around a nodal point. The field of the social could thus be regarded as a trench war in which different political projects strive to articulate a greater number of social signifiers.
around themselves. The open nature of the social would stem from the impossibility of managing a total fixity. The "necessity and "objectivity" of the social would depend on the establishment of a stable hegemony, with the periods of "organic crisis" characterized as those in which the basic hegemonic articulations weaken and an increasing number of social elements assume the character of floating signifiers (Laclau, 1990: 28).

To summarize: Education as a universal welfare service was intended to serve both freedom - liberation from "ignorant" and "backward" cultures and practices - and equality - liberation from social and class position and to hence produce a modern, enlightened and universal citizenry for a modern, enlightened nation. As the welfare consensus no longer held, the welfare state was itself critiqued from different political positions, also in terms of freedom and equality, as a series of regulatory practices which normalized and homogenized the population in pernicious ways. While this freedom critique came most forcefully from the left in the 60s and 70s, it now comes from the right. And because it comes from the right it is articulated to a particular discourse which assumes a very specific kind of subjectivity, and with it a very specific notion of choice.

Both neo-liberal and more progressive versions of choice would grant greater participation and power to parents. Both assume that the empowerment of parents would lead to better schooling. However, the terms of parental participation and the context and consequence of choice are conceived quite differently. While the market discourse of neo-liberalism constructs an image of the abstracted, individual parent who interacts freely in a consumer democracy to maximize his or her gains (Woods 1988, Brown 1990), progressive choice strategies speak in terms of a revitalized public sphere for the realization of democratic citizenship, greater equality and collective rights (Fine 1993, 1994) (my emphasis) (Dehli, 1996: 77).

Chapter Three attempts to construct a brief intellectual history of the emergence of the abstracted individual "who interacts freely in a consumer democracy to maximize his or her gains" as the sole choice-making subject; the kind of subject which public education, ironically, intends to produce.
CHAPTER THREE

EDUCATION AS ENLIGHTENMENT OF THE UNIVERSAL SUBJECT:
DISCOURSES OF MODERNITY AND THE PARADOX OF CHOICE

Time will come when the sun will shine only on free men who have no master but their reason (Condorcet quoted in Outram, 1995: 1).

The impulse which brought about the institution of compulsory, universal, and free public education was in some ways the crisis of social fragmentation which the various aspects of modernity in the west slowly brought on: shifting populations, changing modes of production, changing social, familial, sexual mores, changing modes of knowledge, changing technologies, changing geopolitical landscapes, changing myths of the good life, changing notions of the relationship between person, world and cosmos. This is not to say that change did not characterize so-called premodern societies, but rather that change itself became thematic. This is most evident in the discourses of the 19th century, and was especially present in the political cultures of the "new worlds" in which "newness" became thematic.

But change had to be managed; the philosophy of progressivism, which so informed the common school movement in North America, conceived of change in terms of progress and regress, as in other words, directional. Society could be "enreasoned." Dewey, for instance, was
inspired by Darwin's theory of evolution, not because this was a teleological theory of progress, which it was not, but because it eliminated all metaphysical "motors" of progress. Neither God nor Nature ensured social progress. Hence only man1 could direct change, could ensure progress. This vision of the capabilities of man had a long and complex history in the west, a history which I am calling modernity. In its most pure and essentialized form, modernity was a shift in the discursive constitution of the subject from a being connected and subject to the world to a being who knows and controls the world by virtue of his knowledge of it. As Dewey wrote:

Refusal to accept responsibility for looking ahead and for planning in matters national and international is based upon refusal to employ in social affairs, in the field of human relations, the methods of observation, interpretation, and test that are matters of course in dealing with physical things, and to which we owe the conquest of nature (Dewey, 1964: 27).

Dewey's writings capture the cadence of the discourses of modernity - especially its secularism - and it is not for nothing that he was a widely read educational thinker (as opposed to Steiner, for instance): the human being is now the centre of the world; man is a rational, knowledge-

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1 Throughout this chapter I will use the masculine pronoun where it is being used by authors to which I refer. I do this in order to emphasize that women were not included in modernity until very recently, and not without a struggle. When thinkers wrote "he" they meant he, not "s/he." This reflects the conflict which thinkers of modernity experienced over the universality of Reason, which they resolved quickly and elegantly. Reason could be shown to be universal by exposing the particular places where it did not operate - in women, children, foreigners of all sorts, the "dark races", etc. To change the pronouns to s/he would misconstrue the tone of the discourses, for which generality and universality is masculine, and hence male. This is not to say, of course, that women and "others" were not active participants in these discourses. Much research has been done to show that women were very much present, if controversially, in the places where these discourses circulated (Outram, 1995).
gathering being; scientific knowledge allows him to pragmatically transform and manage the world on a grand scale; human beings do not have to rely on the transcendent.\(^2\) He writes:

...The new logic introduces responsibility into the intellectual life. To idealize and rationalize the universe at large is after all a confession of inability to master the courses of things that specifically concern us. As long as mankind suffered from this impotency, it naturally shifted a burden of responsibility that it could not carry over the more competent shoulders of the transcendent cause. But if insight into specific conditions of value and into specific consequences of ideas is possible, philosophy must in time become a method of locating and interpreting the more serious of the conflicts that occur in life, and a method of projecting ways for dealing with them: a method of moral and political diagnosis and prognosis (Dewey, 1965: 17).

The power of man to know the world, and hence separate himself from the vissicitudes of its unfolding, was most emphatically realized in the invention of the new sciences. Dewey states:

"Knowledge of the process and conditions of physical and social change through experimental science and genetic history had one result with a double name: increase of control, and increase of responsibility; increase of power to direct natural change, and increase of responsibility for its equitable direction towards the fuller good" (Dewey, 1965: 73). Not only were men now making change, which caused dislocation of social reality, but they were able to manage the consequences of the change that they initiated. The notion of social planning began to justify practices which were instituted from above by a paternal and knowledgable group of experts on behalf of the good of the public.

\(^2\) It must be born in mind that Dewey represents an interesting case of a thoroughly modern discourse which has within it already a postmodern critique: his scientism is problematic - the notion that we can fix social problems by applying to them the same techniques of knowledge acquisition as we do to physical objects in the world, which brings with it an over-optimistic reliance on expert driven social planning; but his pragmatism, which emphasizes the contingency and concrete-historical nature of any social configuration and its meanings, and a notion of the strategic and incremental (nonteleological) nature of any social progress, offers insights for postmodern thinkers.
As I tried briefly to show in the previous chapter, public education in North America was an attempt to bring order into what was seen as a ragged social formation. Educators and politicians thought that they could forge a public in their own likeness; independent and self-sufficient individuals had to be produced from the mass of ignorant and culturally mired immigrants through central planning and enforcement. Public education was explicitly a process of normalization. There was no embarrassment about this function, as there is today. Tyack states in the case of the US: "Republican liberty depended on a homogeneity of virtue and knowledge that only compulsion could create in the new generation. Almost without exception native-born and Protestant, NEA [National Education Association] leaders in the nineteenth century took naturally to the notion that real citizens were those who fit the pietist mold" (Tyack, 1976: 371-372). Tyack quotes an educator in 1891 saying: "people have come here who are not entitled to freedom in the same sense as those who established this government" (1976: 371). In other words, as Tyack, states "...compulsion created liberty" (emphasis added) (1976: 371). Public education attempted to uniformly create moderns of the rag-tag populations which dragged their sorry bones across the ocean.

This is the paradox of the discourse of public education everywhere in the west: people are "naturally" and "universally" rational, reasonable, responsible, and have great capacity for knowing the world; but this has to first be learned. And there are exceptions. It has to be pulled out of them from behind a great mass of beliefs, superstitions, and sentiments. Because education of the masses is required before they can count as reasonable, and especially as reasonable citizens, compulsion is legitimate. Thus the very choice discourses which the discourses of modernity imply are preempted in the will to modernization.
Thus an illiberal institution becomes the site for instilling the virtues of liberalism, a non-humanist education (humanist education proper is left to those private schools which still teach the classics, and so forth) is based on appeals to humanism, the Enlightenment injunction to think for yourselves requires an initial deference to authority, and a public institution serves the private market by training producers and consumers. It is a peculiar paradox of public education that it is legitimized as being both a neutral zone, in the liberal sense, at the centre of any given "neighbourhood" made up of diverse populations, which processes its students without "touching" them, and on the other hand, as a crucial substantive force in the nation which integrates an excessive diversity by producing rational and good citizens. This is, of course, a generalization. Practices may be much less coherent than this account: but this, at least, describes the justificatory discourse of education as a welfare state service. As Nancy Fraser and Linda Gordon state: "Following Williams and others, we assume that the terms that are used to describe social life are also active forces shaping it" (1994: 310). Whereas, as we saw, the nineteenth century educational reformers spoke in terms which we no longer accept about immigrants, workers, children, and later women - "others" - as those who "need" to be assimilated, enlightened, and shown their proper place in the social formation through education, these discourses were as invested in languages of progress and humanization as the critiques of those terms are today. As Luis Dupre states:

**Modernity is an event** that has transformed the relation between the cosmos, its transcendent source, and its human interpreter. To explain this as the outcome of historical precedents is to ignore its most significant quality - namely, its success in rendering all rival views of the real obsolete. Its innovative power made modernity, which began as a local Western phenomenon, a universal project capable of forcing its theoretical and practical principles on all but the most isolated civilizations. "Modern" has become the predicate of a unified world culture (Dupre, 1997: 249).
Education is a practice which straddles in an uneasy way the discourse of the public good, and the discourse of private rights, because the discourses of modernity wrestle with reconciling the universal and the particular, the state and the individual. Education sits right in the middle of this nexus. It is an institution which sits on the "boundary" between "private" and "public," as they have become constructed within modernity, creating both kinds of subjects, the citizen and the private individual. Education is meant to both provide the means by which we collectively forge a common culture, and by which we gain our individual autonomy - and these are meant to be corollaries of each other: our common culture is meant to be a culture of autonomous individuals. Public schooling in the west becomes an institution of the state which collectively "individualizes" citizens. As long as both the notions of a common culture and individual autonomy are viable, the mandate for a "one best system" might still seem legitimate. When both of these notions are contested, the mandate becomes harder to justify. Choice as a politicized activity, then, paradoxically, becomes a means of intervention in this modern institution. Choice becomes a political tool once the mythology of a common culture and autonomous individuality is deconstructed. The series of "posts" that I invoke here could also be called, in Zygmunt Bauman's words, the "coming of age" of modernity (1991: 272). I use "post" language "...as a way of finding a place from which to speak and a space from which to develop that critique of the places and spaces of exclusion inside modernity" (McRobbie in Perryman, 1994: 113). This is what Chapters Four, Five, and Six try to show and do. Postmodern "moves" which make any sense do not attempt to transcend modern discourses once and for all: this would simply further entrench them in the projects of modernity itself. Rather, they cut them down to size, contextualize them, shake them up, point out the skeletons in the closet.
In what follows in this chapter, I sketch a verbal picture of the discourses of modernity and show how they are paradoxically implicated in the normalizing efforts of public education. The great exhortation to unity under the sign of the universal rational subject is one that requires first and foremost the political authority of the state; in other words, much centralized regulation, sorting, and organizing.

...Population comes to appear above all else as the ultimate end of government. In contrast to sovereignty, government has as its purpose not the act of government itself, but the welfare of the population, the improvement of its condition, the increase of its wealth, longevity, health, etc.; and the means that the government uses to attain these ends are themselves all in some sense immanent to the population; it is the population itself on which government will act either directly through large-scale campaigns, or indirectly through techniques that will make possible, without the full awareness of the people, the stimulation of birth rates, the directing of the flow of population into certain regions or activities (Foucault in Burchell, Gordon and Miller, 1991: 100).

The justification for public state controlled education would not be possible without these discourses of modernity. This is not to suggest that they were coherent, or even that they informed, or inform, all life practices evenly and in the same way, but they certainly shaped the way public figures, social reformers, educators and politicians could now talk about education "for the masses."3 What I hope to achieve in what follows is to illustrate for myself and for the

3 These very discourses also carried from the beginning within them the possibility of critique against the arrogance and triumphalism of modernity itself, which manifested in some of its most excessive moments in the forced education of various populations (aboriginal, colonial, and others). Indeed, the postmodern move is to make explicit the incurable vertigo initiated, metaphorically speaking, when the critique of emancipation is made in the name of an emancipation which itself can be critiqued, and so on. The freeing from unfreedom is an endlessly circular project.
reader the ethos of modern discourses: their language, their impulse, their passion, their arrogance, and especially, their dangerous, if seductive, triumphalism.

THE DISCOURSES OF MODERNITY

The discourses of modernity, which I am for simplicity's sake dividing into Humanism, the Enlightenment, Liberalism and Capitalism, continue to set the terms for the theoretical debates over concrete political issues. I am trying less to make a case that these regimes of truth actually constituted a shift in the consciousness of Europeans, than to show that powerful new ways of talking about the human being changed, in uneven ways, the way it was possible and/or required to live and act in the world. These discourses indicated styles of governance of the self and of the state, rather than coherent doctrines. I am not trying to say that western cultures have undergone a uniform and even transition into modernity. Rather, I am suggesting that new ways of talking about the human being in relation to the world, these new discourses, radically impacted on the way life could be organized. We in the west are still within the nexus of these discourses and they still inform our modes of justification as well as our practices, as we saw in the last chapter. Thus, to this day, the norm of the free, autonomous, rational and self-sufficient subject can be linked to education as a discipline of the state.

Before I launch into my little expositions, I will explain what I mean by the word discourse. I use Laclau and Mouffe to do this. They write:

The fact that every object is constituted as an object of discourse has nothing to do with whether there is a world external to thought, or with the realism/idealism opposition. An earthquake or the falling of a brick is an event that certainly exists, in the sense that it
occurs here and now, independently of my will. But whether their specificity as objects is constructed in terms of "natural phenomena" or "expressions of the wrath of God," depends upon the structuring of a discursive field. What is denied is not that such objects exist externally to thought, but the rather different assertion that they could constitute themselves as objects outside any discursive condition of emergence (Laclau and Mouffe, 1987: 108).

To speak of a discourse then is to point to the way that different "worlds" emerge when elements of meaning are articulated to each other differently. It will certainly be uncontroversial that the brick fell, but the explanation and understanding of this event may vary dramatically. Many of these explanations and understandings do not fit the regime of truth and falsity, properly speaking. It may be true that the brick fell because it was improperly stacked, and this can surely be established, but in terms of giving meaning to this event - let's say the brick fell on me - a whole host of possibilities exist depending on how our world is put together, discursively speaking. The brick falling was a random accident - its meaning is that it had no meaning; I was at the wrong place at the wrong time; I was punished for a sin committed; I was careless and irresponsible - who walks under a stack of bricks?; I was emotionally destabilized and therefore a walking target; I had lived my life to the fullest and therefore had nothing left to accomplish (in the case of death); I was a tragic character from the beginning; I unknowingly sacrificed my life for that of my child who was walking beside me; and so forth. Creating a meaningful universe goes much beyond the establishment of the truth and falsity of statements about the world. This is what discourse analysis investigates, in the sense that I, using Laclau and Mouffe, use it. It is important to note that discourse is more than just language, in the sense of speech and writing. Sticking with bricks, Laclau states:

Let us suppose that I am building a wall with another bricklayer. At a certain moment I ask my workmate to pass me a brick and then I add it to the wall. The first act - asking
for the brick - is linguistic; the second - adding the brick to the wall - is extralinguistic. Do I exhaust the reality of both acts by drawing the distinction between them in terms of the linguistic/extralinguistic opposition? Evidently not, because, despite their differentiation in those terms, the two actions share something that allows them to be compared, namely the fact that they are both part of a total operation which is the building of the wall. So, then, how could we characterize this totality of which asking for a brick and positioning it are, both, partial moments? Obviously, if this totality includes both linguistic and non-linguistic elements, it cannot itself be either linguistic or extralinguistic; it has to be prior to this distinction. This totality which includes within itself the linguistic and the non-linguistic, is what we call discourse (Laclau, 1990: 100).

For Laclau there is no extra-discursive reality, in contrast to Foucault, as even "natural" objects are discursively articulated: their very "given-ness" as natural objects arise out of a discourse of naturalization. There is nothing for human beings which is not discursively "held" by us.

Discourse analysis is simply the name of a social analysis founded on a radically different mapping of the social than in terms of objects and subjects. It is a mapping, shall we say, which enables the theorist to operate as a critic and analyst even while he or she realizes that his or her project has no ultimate (transcendent) grounding, and that the very analysis is a production of meaning rather than an unveiling of meaning. This is accomplished by shifting the whole imagined terrain of social theory from the paradigm of consciousness (presence and knowledge gained by differentiation from the world "out there" - subject/object split) to the paradigm of language (as both speech and action) (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 105). Discourse analysis is therefore different from ideology critique, which is motivated in great part by identifying truth and falsity. As Foucault writes:

The notion of ideology appears to me to be difficult to make use of, for three reasons. The first is that, like it or not, it always stands in virtual opposition to something else which is supposed to count as truth. Now I believe that the problem does not consist in drawing the line between that in a discourse which falls under the category of scientificity or truth, and that which comes under some other category, but in seeing historically how
effects of truth are produced within discourses which in themselves are neither true nor false (quoted in Barrett, 1991: 123).

Discourse is structured meaning that is non-necessary; it is established by an articulatory practice (Wittgenstein's sense of "use"). As Laclau and Mouffe state: "we will call articulation any practice establishing a relation among elements such that their identity is modified as a result of the articulatory practice. The structured totality resulting from the articulatory practice, we will call discourse" (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 105). This re-formulation of Marxist ideology critique resembles the older, descriptive use of ideology as a set of guiding "ideas" belonging to any social group for which class may or may not be a defining characteristic, adding to it the non-necessary, constructed (by political practice), and precarious nature of the "unity" of those ideas as a "set." But it importantly salvages from the Marxist account the "embodied" nature of those ideas as the organizing practices of everyday life; it does away with idealism by translating the notion of idea - thoughts which waft about in the ether - into discourse - ways of talking about the world which radically organize the possibilities of acting in the world. Discourse "frames" the world for us to the extent that we perform it bodily (dress-style, physical carriage, modes of talking, rituals of interaction). Discourse is in this sense material.

We can see how the discourses on "woman" have changed (incrementally and unpredictably) in a number of ways as sets of articulated ideas by the concerted practice of feminists (often against each other). The category is not prior to its representation but rather emerges as a category through its representation. As Laclau and Mouffe state: "...Political practice constructs the interests it represents" (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 120). That is, part of the process of fighting for the interests of women is constructing a notion of Woman. This does not mean that women
as physical beings don't exist, but that their existence is always discursively organized in one way or another. What ways they are organized is established by politics - that is, by asserting certain ontological characteristics of woman which will require certain specific practices of them. This process is the site of struggle: it is here that the most decisive political battles are fought.

Discourses are what always already frame "the real" in a meaningful but non-necessary way, to the extent that "the real" as such falls out of the knowledge equation as a useless category of analysis. Discourse analysis addresses the frustrated query: there must be a way of talking about culture, language, politics, and subjectivity without either idealizing them or making them merely epiphenomenal effects of material conditions of existence. The "move" to language, the "ontological turn," further dissolves the assumptions of a long tradition of philosophy (and social theory): namely that the objects of our knowledge pre-exist our knowledge production, and that knowledge production is simply their retrieval into the human mind; that knowledge is the one-to-one ratio between apprehension and thing-in-itself. Once this model is destabilized, our investigation into "how things work" can never side-step their discursive nature, that is, how we "speak" about how things work. This "speaking" is a performativity which goes beyond words and the voice: it is language in all senses - the stringing together of a series of signs in a particular way.

Abstractly considered, language refers to an open system of signs by which intelligibility is insistently created and contested. As historically specific organizations of language, discourses present themselves in the plural, coexisting within temporal frames, and instituting unpredictable and inadvertent convergences from which specific modalities of discursive possibilities are engendered (Butler, 1990: 145).

Yet discourse analysis does not describe the social as an unproblematic terrain. All discourses are not open and equal, and the attempt to fix meaning is a hegemonic project which assumes
power relations. As Ball suggests, "Discourses are about what can be said, and thought, but also about who can speak, when, where and with what authority" (1993: 14). They are also about who cannot speak, when and where: a "who" which becomes the abjected "other." Discourse creates meaning within the indeterminacy of meaning that makes up the field of discursivity. Discourse, according to Laclau and Mouffe, is the continual attempt to fix meaning through hegemonic operations (1985: 105-114).

The impossibility of an ultimate fixity of meaning implies that there have to be partial fixations - otherwise, the very flow of differences would be impossible. Even in order to differ, to subvert meaning, there has to be a meaning....Any discourse is constituted as an attempt to dominate the field of discursivity, to arrest the flow of differences, to construct a centre (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 112).

Discourse analysis, in this sense then, attempts to understand how meaning is created and fixed "as real" in everyday discourses, how different "worlds" emerge by speaking about the world differently. As Laclau and Mouffe state, this process of fixing is done through the articulation of unstable meanings into a tight network: thus reason and freedom, two terms among hundreds, become articulated in a specific way within enlightenment discourse so as to seem necessary corollaries of one another. This seeming necessary articulation can be uncoupled, not in order to uncover the true relation between the terms, but in order to understand how hegemonic meanings are constructed in the contest over meaning, to see how "unnatural" this process is, and to open up the field to other possible articulations and meanings. Wittgenstein states: "There can be no "scientific investigation" into what a word really means, independently of the meaning given it by a normal speaker" (quoted in Hacker, 1975: 120). "Discourses are practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak...Discourses are not about objects; they do not identify objects, they constitute them..." (Ball, 1993: 14).
Humanism:

Humanism in the wide sense is associated with the belief in the dignity of man, and, more generally, with human or secular (as opposed to otherworldly) values. [Humanism in the narrow sense] refers to the men known in fifteenth-century Italy as humanistas, in other words the teachers of the studia humanitatis or humanity (as opposed to divinity), generally defined to include grammar, rhetoric, ethics, poetry, and history (Goodman and Mackay, 1990: 1-2).

"Humanism" is a word invented and circulated in early nineteenth century Germany to describe "the emphasis placed on the Greek and Latin classics in secondary education as opposed to a more practice-oriented scientific training" (Bernstein, 1983: 3) Later in the century it was used to describe the shift which occurred during the Italian Renaissance, also towards the literature and culture of antiquity. Thus, humanism, as a new way of organizing the world, emerges out of the life and practice of teaching and learning as it was redefined in fourteenth century in Italy. The humanists who emerged out of the Italian Renaissance were most often teachers in universities, schools, or private tutors, but also included thinkers and scholars not so engaged - lawyers, city officials, ambassadors (Kelley, 1991: 3) - and they performed the role of agitator, breaking with the orthodoxies of medieval learning - not, of course, without encountering resistance (Goodman and Mackay, 17). Humanists initiated this "break" by shifting the focus of learning to the study of humanity in the light of the recovery, interpretation and assimilation of "the language, literature, learning and values of ancient Greece and Rome" (Burke in Goodman and Mackay,
1990: 2), bringing to the fore again literature, politics, history, religion and philosophy (Holmes in Goodman and Mackay, 1990: 118), with a measure of scepticism toward traditional medieval thought and practice which had been entirely steeped in theology. "The object of the studia divinitas was to clarify the relation of man to God; the object if the studia humanitatis was to promote better communication among men" (Coates and White, 1966: 4). But there was something more here: an endeavour to grasp at the "essence" of humanity itself. Humanism, in all its guises, is an attempt to grasp the value of humanity. Aulus Gellius, a second-century scholar, was referred to by the humanists to describe their project. He wrote:

Those who have spoken Latin and have used the language correctly do not give to the word humanitas the meaning it is commonly thought to have, namely what the Greeks call philanthropia, signifying a kind of friendly spirit and good feeling toward all men without distinction. Rather they gave to humanitas the...force of the Greek paideia, that is, what we call "learning and instruction in good or liberal arts." Those who earnestly desire and seek after these are most highly humanized. For the pursuit of that knowledge and the training given by it have been given to man alone of all animals, and for that reason it is termed humanitas, or humanity (Kelley, 1991: 2-3).

As Anthony Grafton suggests, the figure of the magus is resurrected by the humanists and becomes a precursor of the figure of the scientist; "man" as the precise point of intersection between the earthly world and the divine world, whereby the "visible world which manifested like a great three-dimensional hieroglyph the beneficent intentions of its creator" (Grafton in Goodman and Mackay, 1990, 100) could be both read and understood by human beings and then acted upon, transformed, manipulated, created anew. As Dupre writes, "only when the early humanist notion of human creativity came to form a combustive mixture with the negative conclusions of nominalist theology did it cause the cultural explosion that we refer to as modernity." Dupre continues by suggesting that "its impact shattered the organic unity of the
Western view of the real" (Dupre, 1993: 3). Campenella's utopia, *City of the Sun*, which drew on humanists such as Vives and Rabelais, and Utopians such as More and Patrizi, is exemplary of a new conceit that "...practical knowledge could improve the social order and the human condition...[and] ideal societies would manipulate the physical as well as the social world" (Grafton in Goodman and Mackay, 1990: 109). Whereas the conception of the physical world as magical, or perhaps we can even say enchanted, still prevailed, and the magician was not the scientist produced by the Enlightenment, it is clear that humanism made a few crucial breaks with medieval thought which allowed the rise of a new conception of the human subject in relation with the world. "Whatever the difficulties and contradictions of the Renaissance vision of the cosmos, man's place in its centre seems a powerful and distinguished one" (Grafton in Goodman and Mackay, 1990: 111). Humanism itself emerged in the culture of a conflict of values: and the early humanists showed more continuity with medieval thought than discontinuity from it (Dupre, 1993: 2). Petrarch, for instance, was pulled in both the direction of the secular values of Cicero and Augustinian devotional Christianity; between, in other words, the flesh and the spirit (Kelley, 1991: 113). Here we see the forebear of Descartes, and the very first budding of what will become the notion of "the mind," and the mind as a specifically human capacity or facility in which "processes" occur which are elevated above, and unconditioned by, the particular context and state of human life. As Dupre writes:

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For example, Ficino, Pico's friend, "believed in a magical and semi-animate world, with rays of influence connecting stars to elements, planets to parts of the body;...he saw himself less as the master than the servant of the cosmic forces that constantly irradiated him, and sometimes felt that Saturn was persecuting him" (Grafton in Goodman and Mackay, 1990: 112).
Mental life separated from cosmic being: as meaning-giving "subject," the mind became the spiritual substratum of all reality. Only what it objectively constituted would count as real. Thus reality split into two separate spheres: that of the mind, which contained all intellectual determinations, and that of all other being, which received them (1993: 3).

Among the progenitors of this vision of "man" (not yet entirely a "discrete individual" in the liberal sense) as self-creator and creator of "his" own world is the ancient Greek, specifically Socratic, shift of attention from "the cosmos to the households of men" (Kelley, 1991: 112) "Moral philosophy," the fifth subject of the studia humanitatis, which "joined the ethics of Aristotle with that of Cicero and other Latin authors, including Stoics and Epicurians" (Kelley, 1991: 112), centred around questions of the human condition. The Renaissance philosophy of man included a preoccupation with the "dignity of man," the nature of the soul, the management of the household, the common good, the best form of government, the relationship between the private and public spheres, the purpose of human life (Kelley, 1991: 112). Clearly, however, Renaissance humanism did not simply absorb ancient thought in its pure form, if there can ever be said to be such a possibility: Renaissance humanism arose in a context which bore no resemblance to ancient Greece or Rome. Because of the context of an hegemonic monotheistic Christianity - with its controversial doctrine of original sin, redemption, and the problem of the freedom of the human will in relation to God's freedom and omnipotence - the new humanism emerged out of entirely different preoccupations, and was given its form by having to confront different kinds of orthodoxies. Renaissance humanism was a universalization of the knowledge of the human being, one wrested away from Christian initiates and spread by the proliferation of books. Thinkers and philosophers could again take as their object the human being in its profane guise, without disavowing God. As Petrarch states: "If wisdom is God, through whom all things
are made (as divine authority and truth declare), the true philosopher is a lover of God" (Bush, 1972: 55).

Humanism arises in reaction to, on the one hand, the otherworldliness of medieval teaching, and on the other, to its clericalism and utilitarianism; the medieval university produced functionaries for the church. Humanism grounds knowledge in the flow of history and culture, centred around various conceptions of the nature of the human being as a part of a divine cosmos. Human knowing, in other words, sets its sights on earthly things, the organizing principle of which was man himself. Donald Kelley writes: "Valla situated human knowledge within the horizon of everyday experience, action, memory, language, judgment, and communication" (Kelley, 1991: 38-39).

The theories of knowledge generated by the Enlightenment are not the same as those generated by humanism, though we can say that they are related. Whereas the enlightened knowing subject is separated by virtue of reason from the world around him, and hence can know the world around him, the humanist knowing subject secularizes knowledge by directing the knowing gaze toward earthly manifestations of God's creation: most importantly towards himself as a creature of the world - and this is true of all humanisms, early or late - who experiences earthly passions, as the classical scholars expressed so well. "For Cusanus, the human mind was a "divine seed" that, in order to bear fruit, "must be planted in the soil of the sensible world" (Kelley, 1991: 47)

As Rorty writes:

...In Aristotle's conception intellect is not a mirror inspected by an inner eye. It is both mirror and eye in one. The retinal image is itself the model for the "intellect which becomes all things," whereas in the Cartesian model, the intellect inspects entities modeled on retinal images (1980: 45).
Humanist learning, unlike Enlightenment knowledge, is not obsessed by the problem of the unmediated representation of the world - in which, as Foucault suggests, language becomes irrelevant in the quest for knowledge about the world (Foucault, 1990) - humanist learning is a process of self-understanding; through learning man humanizes himself - he evaluates and values himself - and by learning is meant an immersion into the poetry, literature, philosophy, and so forth, of men from another time, a rehumanization of humanity after a perceived "darkness," men whose experience of living saturates their texts with insight into the human condition in general. In short, the liberal arts humanize the student because they contain all the elements, in their particularly, of what it means to be human in general (Kelley, 1991: 118). That is, humanism generates its generalizations about being human through a protracted fascination with how men actually lived the passions of their particular day-to-day lives. "For a true humanism, such subjects as science, theology, and philosophy are less important for what they tell us about their specifically designated objects of study than for what they tell us about man and his creative capacities" (Coates and White, 1966: 5). Corliss Lamont, an historian who published a text on humanism at the end of the Second World War, gives a surprisingly (considering the decade in which he is writing) optimistic rendering of the powers of humanism to redeem all of humanity: "Humanism is a constructive philosophy that goes far beyond the negating of errors in thought to the whole-hearted affirmation of the joys, beauties and values of human living." He continues:

Indeed, Humanism already is the functioning philosophy of millions upon millions of human beings throughout the globe who are daily striving to build a better life upon this earth for themselves, their children and their fellowmen. To a mankind not yet altogether aware of its own good and goal, Humanism offers an inclusive program of philosophical and ethical truth that can play a leading role in the future of the race (quoted in Kelley 1991: 4).
It is evident that humanism re-emerged in both the register of 'faith' and that of 'science' in the centuries to come. Christian humanism as well as liberal, socialist, Marxist and scientific humanism are still active discourses today. Donald Kelly suggests that humanism is neither a completely temporally and geographically specific phenomenon nor a term which can describe everything which came after the Italian Renaissance:

...It seem[s] [in]adequate to limit the term, as Hans Baron's investigations suggest, to the immediate context of the Italian city-state - or to banish it altogether, as has been proposed by some historians who either fear anachronism or who do not see the value of historical generalizations (Kelley, 1991: 111).

Yet, something that can still be called humanism, despite its extreme variations, can be identified from the Italian Renaissance onward. What Foucault refers to as a thematic which takes the form of moral and social injunction does reappear in later cultural innovations and reactions. Kelley continues:

"Humanism," even in its expansionist phase, represents a legitimate historical judgment, for the one common feature of the original circle of humanities was the image of man (and perhaps, arguably, woman) as a creator - interpreting, shaping, in this sense "making" his world, and reshaping, in his own terms, God's creation. Such was the office of the orator, the historian, the poet, and the philosopher, and more generally the Renaissance "artist," who likewise, though dependent on the resources of the "encyclopedia," followed nature but ended up creating a second nature - a world of man's own making (Kelley, 1991: 111-112).

Petrarch reads from St. Augustine atop Mont Ventoux: "Man...admirès the mountains, the sea, and the stars but he fails to admire himself" (Bernstein, 1983:4). Humanism is well described by Levi along the line of Foucault's thematic as "the quest for human value," "a recall to order," "the conscience of every age." Every kind of humanism exhibits these injunctions, but differently. "The heart and center of the humanist approach is the recognition of a dualism between man and nature, coupled with an assertion that the rightful concern of man is his own humanity - his
world of value and quality" (Levi, 1969: 17). There are, for Foucault, clearly different orders of humanism: orders which bring to visibility different images of "man," but in all cases it is humanity's *humanness* - the quality of his essential being - that becomes *central*. Humanism is then, according, to Foucault, a theme which recurs throughout history, from time to time, since the Italian Renaissance and perhaps even before, but a theme with tremendous variations, so much so, that discontinuity marks its successive boundaries. Unlike the Enlightenment, which came later and which describes a specific "...set of events and complex historical processes, that is located at a certain point in the development of European societies" (Foucault in Gutting, 1994: 44), humanism describes a generalized orientation to the world in reaction to particular historical conditions, rather than a particular content or positivity. Humanism, according to Foucault, has always been tied to value judgments; that is, it has "served as a critical principle of differentiation" (Foucault in Gutting, 1994: 44).

In the seventeenth century, there was a humanism that presented itself as a critique of Christianity or of religion in general; there was a Christian humanism opposed to an ascetic and much more theocentric humanism. In the nineteenth century, there was a suspicious humanism, hostile and critical toward science, and another that, to the contrary, placed its hope in that same science. Marxism has been a humanism; so have existentialism and personalism; there was a time when people supported the humanistic values represented by National Socialism, and when the Stalinists themselves said they were humanists (Foucault in Gutting, 1994: 44).

Modern humanist varieties of existentialism, Marxism, socialism, as well as Christianity, liberalism and secularism in general confirm this statement: "humanism has at its foundation the ideal of the total human community" (Levi, 1969: 451). As Sartre writes of existentialist humanism:

Humanism, because we remind man that there is no law-maker other than himself, and that in his forlornness he will decide by himself; because we point out that man will
fulfill himself as man, not in turning toward himself, but in seeking outside of himself a goal which is just this liberation, just this particular fulfillment (Sartre, 1965: 61).

and George Novack on behalf (I use the word advisedly) of Marxist socialist humanism:

Over the past century the realistic humanism and revolutionary outlook of scientific socialism have uplifted increasing millions of people in all parts of the world and from the most varied stations in life. Its doctrines have convinced illiterate peasants, industrial workers, students, intellectuals, professionals and technicians, and organized men and women for action.

There is no mystery or magic about the source of the attraction and power of its idea. They correspond to the realities of our existence, explain the fundamental causes of our misfortunes and miseries, and tell us how to act in order to eliminate them and create a better home on earth for humanity. Can any philosophy of life be more meaningful - or more humanist - than that? (Novack, 1973: 150).

Romanticism is a humanism which arises as a critique of Enlightenment rationalism and the kind of humanism which arose out of it (as above). It posits the human being as an indivisible, organic, totality which is the ground of all valuation. Romanticism takes as primary to the human experience feelings and motivations, and the modes in which these are expressed, in contrast to the Enlightenment privileging of procedure, action, and critical distance. The Romantics of both England and Germany -Coleridge, Wordsworth, Blake, Keats, Byron, Herder, Lessing, Schiller, the Schlegels, Novalis, Goethe, even perhaps Hegel, are names which come to mind - launched their discourse in rebellion against the hyper-rationalism of the Enlightenment and also of neo-Classical norms in art and literature (Taylor, 1989: 368). But it signalled more than just a disavowal of Enlightenment ideas; Romanticism sought a deepening and extension of the limits imposed by rationalism and empiricism, and the rigidity of neo-classicism. Where the Kantian Enlightenment critique finds human dignity in freedom, in disengagement from nature and its heteronomous exigencies, Romanticism derives human dignity and meaning from nature as the great source of Life - the invisible in the visible (God, the unknowable); from the pathos of being
potentially connected yet always threatened with separation from that source. As Charles Taylor writes:

The philosophy of nature as a source, while it goes beyond the Deism of Shaftesbury and Hutcheson, obviously stands with them in their critique of Locke and the extrinsic theory. It stands with them in giving a central and positive place to sentiment in the moral life. It is through our feelings that we get to the deepest moral and, indeed, cosmic truths. "Das Herz ist der Schlussel der Welt und des Lebens," says Novalis ("The heart is the key to the world and life")....The requirement in this new philosophy that I be in tune with the impulse of nature could be seen just as another demand of love: now the nature which speaks through me is the good which must be cherished (Taylor, 1989: 372).

The Romantics consisted of a diverse collection of philosophers and writers/artists - who were not self-consciously organized under that name, but who, to a person, attempted to salvage the magic, passion, awe, wonder, mystery of living which was felt to be lost in the forced abstraction, mechanization and quantification of the Enlightenment: it became a discourse in which subjectivity emerges out of an inner, intuitive connection with nature as the Life force, as the primal, divine creative act. The imagination became the prime capacity of humanity's humanness - his "essence" as creator: the imagination brings objects into internal representation which are not actually there. For both the philosophers and the artists creative imagination - that power which takes isolated sensations, thoughts, feelings, and forges them into a meaningful whole - marked the decisive moment of being human. It marked his capacity to unite reason and the senses, and thereby create a vision of a holistic world; a world which holds a single, transcendental meaning which neither rationalism nor empiricism can reach. This synthetic function appears already in Kant, who writes in The Critique of Pure Reason that imagination is that medium by which perception turns into apprehension (Woodhouse, 1951: 137). The imagination is an "organ" which facilitates understanding: one which "sews together"
quantitative and qualitative data to usher in a coherent living knowledge of the world. "For Coleridge, imagination is 'the living power and prime agent of all human perception,' it is a creative power analogous to the divine, 'a repetition in the finite mind of the eternal act of creation in the infinite I AM'" (Kitson in Wu, 1998: 39).

Herder declared that everything that the Spirit of the world moves and nurtures has its meaning pressed into our hearts by Him. Less dramatically, it is only in self-knowledge that world-knowledge can be attained, for the external can act upon a man only through and within him; or since the essence of all existence is life, the essence of the knowledge of life is self-knowledge (Wilsher, 1968: 17).

Romanticism is, not surprisingly, a central discourse in modernist art, whose expressivism rests on the notion that human imaginative creativity - wrested from the depths of the self - alone can truly point to the truth of the world: that, in other words, which is always already "extra" to the world. Herder wrote: "The artist is become a creator God" (Taylor, 1989: 378). That is, the artist, as with God, "...is himself the continuing act of absolute imagination" (Wordsworth in Wu, 1998: 493).

For Foucault, "humanism" can only be really said to be a retrospective phenomenon: at the end of the nineteenth century we could look back and project "man" into the discourses of the past. Hence the term humanism is only coined in the nineteenth century. At this time man comes to be in the moment when he is seen both as an object which can be represented, and as the condition of possibility of representation itself - that is, He, as an object of objective knowledge, is born (and, according to Foucault, expires immediately) when the unthought becomes thought:

[The human sciences]...permit the dissociation which is characteristic of all contemporary knowledge about man, of consciousness and representation. They define the manner in which the empiricities can be given to representation but in a form that is
not present to the consciousness. But at the same time the human sciences...reappropriated the classical ideal of representation, thus attempting to produce what they believed man's liberation to be by making the unconscious conscious, by leading it toward representation, in short, by making the unthought an object of knowledge (Ferry and Renaut, 1990: 104).

The universalism which intends to emancipate man from pettiness and superstition, narrow-mindedness and parochialism is a feature of the new sciences which constitute a new kind of humanism: the unthought thought is always a universal condition. The sciences of man with time comes to be conflated with secular humanism: that view of man (and perhaps at this point, woman too) as objectifiable through the auspices of his own knowledge and can therefore do without any kind of occult or mystical belief in a divinity or force outside of himself. He is one object among others in the universe, while at the same time, through knowledge, is himself the condition of possibility of the universe itself: this becomes the new transcendentalism. "Normal science operates by setting up a total interpretation of some region of reality and then attempts to show that the anomalies that emerge can be fitted into the general account" (Dreyfus, 1992: 90). This scientific, secular humanism, at the same time similar to and different from its Renaissance ancestor, is still a powerful discourse today. The human being becomes such a "region of reality," the total interpretation of which becomes possible because the human being becomes naturalized and generalized in and through the assumptions of science itself: he is studied like any other species in the living world, and thereby becomes any other species in the living world, through a moment of forgetting that he is also the only species in the world enmeshed in this great tautology: producing himself in his own image.

Foucault uses the term "anthropological sleep" for the tranquil assurance with which the contemporary promoters of the human sciences take for granted, as a preordained object
for their progressive studies, what was initially only the project of constituting that object (Canguilhem in Gutting, 1994: 90).

This new man is radically and paradoxically divided against himself: both knowledge-producer and hence creator of the universe - and an inert object in that universe. This impossible split, as Foucault argues, means that the quest for the knowledge of man is eternal; it can never find its end. Foucault writes "it is an aporia because it attempts to turn conditions of knowledge into an object of knowledge, thus setting in motion a self-reflective mechanism that is eternal, since it is unrealizable" (quoted in May, 1993: 26). Psychology, sociology, the study of literature and myth all gaze at a man who remains perpetually opaque, perpetually perplexing - a man of depth, complexity, uncharted interiority, a man, in other words, who has an "inside" which is not visible to the "outside" - and hence, perpetually "under the microscope," both literally and metaphorically. There is always a concrete and material object of knowledge - the physical being - but there is always, obsessively, something else, because this physical being knows itself as such: it is conscious of itself as a being in the world; but this consciousness is nowhere to be found. Content is given to that which resides below the surface of visibility: the psyche, the soul, personality, consciousness, will.

Foucault's work is based on the assertion that particular local practices produce a prevailing discourse of the subject which provides the reference for moral and ethical injunction. If the new man is one who has his own discreet interiority of which he can become conscious, then he is also a man who can direct and shape that interiority. He becomes a man of responsibility, and a man of decision, a man of knowledge, and a man who can be rehabilitated, that is, brought face to face with his deed and own responsibility for it. Being conscious of my "I" as an example of a
universal humanity, I am responsible for maintaining the standard of conduct which is required by that universal humanity.

The Enlightenment:

Out of the ferment of this powerful movement of emancipation, the great ideas have proceeded on which rests the order of the secular world: human rights, separation of power, toleration, domination of nature and the political world through science and technology - but above all, the great thought of the solidarity of all humanity beyond the borders of cultures and religions. No one can deny that wherever these ideas succeed in being realized human beings achieve a level of maturity that they can give up again only at the price of a relapse into barbarism and inhumanity (Picht in Schmidt, 1996: 372).

As I noted above, for Foucault the Enlightenment is a somewhat different phenomenon than humanism, which usually takes the form of a moral commentary on the lack of "humanness" of "an age," the lack being characterized as an either a too rigid rationalization of the human world or a rationalization which can never cover the essence and depth of "being human": it is a different kind of historical discourse, even though the two do intersect. Rather than a theme, a value judgment, which takes form and dissolves and takes form again in various historical moments in response to a variety of social conditions, the Enlightenment describes a specific historical phenomenon which, while being described as a project, a process, arose at a particular time in reaction to a specific constellation of conditions, the results of which still reverberate to this day:
We must never forget that the Enlightenment is an event, or a set of events and complex historical processes, that is located at a certain point in the development of European societies. As such, it includes elements of social transformation, types of political institution, forms of knowledge, projects of rationalization of knowledge and practices, technological mutations that are very difficult to sum up in a word, even if many of these phenomena remain important today (Foucault in Gutting, 1994: 43).

The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries saw the emergence of an intellectual culture which made an intellectual project out of critique: faith was subjected to scrutiny. As Foucault says of Kant's reflection on the question of enlightenment: he stands at the "... crossroads of critical reflection and reflection on history. It is a reflection by Kant on the contemporary status of his own enterprise" (Foucault in Gutting, 1994: 38). This was a new move. The Enlightenment became self-conscious of itself at the time of its spread throughout Europe via the format of a debate, and the debate was about the status of enlightenment itself. This was most explicit in Germany. As Kant's student, Johann Heinrich Tiefrunk, asked: "We now live in a century of enlightenment. Should this be said to be an honor or a disgrace for our century?" (quoted in Schmidt, 1996: 11). Unlike humanism, a term which was coined many centuries after its alleged appearances, the Enlightenment named and consolidated itself as a decisive moment in history in and through ongoing and controversial discussions, which took place in new public spaces which allowed the dissemination of ideas: coffee-houses, public lectures, lending libraries, art exhibitions, books, journals, pamphlets (Outram, 1995). It was a self-conscious intellectual phenomenon. It is well known that the Berlinischer Monatsschrift published an article, in 1783, by Johann Friedrich Zollner in which he asks in a footnote, "what is enlightenment?" Within a year responses by Mendelssohn and Kant had been published in the journal. Many other
"leading intellectuals" participated in answering this question in various publications, with much conflict and dissension, to such an extent that by the end of the decade, the discussion had become so pervasive that when Christoph Martin Wieland, alone in his privy, glanced at the piece of wastepaper he had picked up to complete his task, he found himself staring at a list of six questions that began with "What is Enlightenment? (Schmidt, 1996: 2).

Most of these enlightenment tracts are not readily available to us today, but a few enlightenment thinkers have become clearly established as the heralds of a new era in western thought: Bacon, Newton, Locke, Smith, Kant, Voltaire, Hume, Lessing, Montesquieu, Diderots, Rousseau, Condorcet, to name a few. Scientists, doctors, university professors, men-of-letters, aristocratic judicial and administrative officials, theologians, free-lance writers (Manuel, 1965: 1), all participated in the debate about enlightenment, not all being unambiguously "for" it. On a political and ethical level, there was a sense around the debate of great riskiness: the power of the talk of liberation on a grand and profound scale had many people worried. On an epistemological level, empiricists and rationalists battled out their own versions of enlightenment.

In Germany a number of secret societies emerged at the end of the eighteenth century, among which was the Mittwochsgesellschaft, a secret society of "Friends of the Enlightenment." Such societies, James Schmidt argues, provided a forum for the unrestricted discussion of political ideas and reform programmes. Its ceremonies and rituals replaced those of orthodox religions which were increasingly unsatisfactory to the members, and constituted, "...in a society with a strictly defined social hierarchy,...a setting in which members of different religions, professional groups, and social classes could come into contact with one another..." (Schmidt, 1996: 3). These societies arose to manifest an enlightenment dream: the creation of forums in which all reasoning
men - free from the weight of their social, political, cultural and community-based identities - could, without the fear of persecution, collectively shed light into a dark world. Freedom was spoken about in terms of breaking out of parochialism into a vaster, unrestricted space: in 1780 an editor of the literary survey the *Histoire de la République des Lettres en France* wrote:

"...There exists a certain realm which holds sway only over the mind...that we honour with the name Republic, because it preserves a measure of independence, and because it is almost its essence to be free. It is the realm of talent and of thought (quoted in Outram, 1995: 21)."

A new privileging of reason over faith and sentiment became dominant in the philosophical and political writings of the time, the main thrust of which had to do with the overthrow of superstition and religious fanaticism, and a freeing of the intellectual and the practical operations in the world from a servitude to powers which ruled from beyond the limits of human control.

As Meili Steele states:

"Kant seeks to correct "pre-modern" philosophers who conflated scientific questions about efficient causes with religious, ethical, and aesthetic questions. In pre-modern views of reason, such as Plato's or Aristotle's, ethics and epistemology come together; our knowledge of the world is inseparable from our attunement to the telos of the species and the universe. For Kant, it is necessary to distinguish between the subject as object in nature and the subject as moral agent (Steele, 1997: 17)."

Kant's famous passage from his answer to the question "what is enlightenment?" is this:

"*Enlightenment is mankind's exit from its self-incurred immaturity. Immaturity* is the inability to make use of one's own understanding without the guidance of another" (quoted in Schmidt, 1996: 58). Both the rationalist and the empiricist schools of enlightenment thought, though their axioms differed, could stand behind this statement. Kant's writing, after all, attempted to come to terms with Hume's radical empiricism, in which the self is just a "bundle of sensations" (Kitson in Wu, 1998: 38). For Kant, then Enlightenment is a process of growing-up, of leaving, of exiting
a certain state in which subject and object are merged: I and the world are one, like in the womb, and neither reason nor will can come into play. He continues,

*Self-incurred* is this inability if its cause lies not in the lack of understanding but rather in the lack of the resolution and the courage to use it without the guidance of another. *Sapere aude!* Have the courage to use your own understanding! is thus the motto of enlightenment (quoted in Schmidt, 1996: 58).

Thus, Kant sees in the process of enlightenment not just an increase in knowledge of the world, through the liberation of reason from its servitude to Status and otherworldly powers, but a new and uncompromising will to know. He did not go so far as to say that what we now call the Enlightenment - that production of ideas and criticisms he was commenting on - signalled an enlightened age: "No," he states, "but we do live in an age of enlightenment" (quoted in Schmidt, 1996: 62). A will was called up which sought to take a grip on the state of the world, marked by fatalism and fear, and submit it to a process of scrutiny and transformation:

Our age is, in especial degree, the age of criticism, and to criticism everything must submit. Religion through its sanctity and law-giving through its majesty may seek to exempt themselves from it. But they then awaken just suspicion, and cannot claim the sincere respect which reason accords only to that which has been able to sustain the test of free and open examination (quoted in Schmidt, 1996: 16).

"Laziness and cowardice," not incapacity, prevent men from thinking for themselves. Thinking and willing are closely tied together for Kant. The will to know, the courage to know - which now becomes dependent on the willingness to question, examine, analyze as we see in the newly arising sciences - is crucial to the progress of mankind in general, and given the freedom in which to exercise this will and courage, as Kant states, "men [will] work their way by themselves bit by bit out of barbarity" (quoted in Schmidt, 1996: 62). That is, Enlightenment thought was connected from the beginning to the politics of reform.
"For [Kant], enlightenment demanded not a world in which everything stood naked to the light but rather a world in which it was possible to speak without fear" (Schmidt, 1996: 29).

Enlightened thinkers should endeavour to create a realm for free debate (that is, a process), as much as they should privilege the truths which would be made evident through this. He writes in "An Answer to the Question: What is Enlightenment?": "For this enlightenment...nothing more is required than freedom; and indeed the most harmless form of all the things that may be called freedom: namely, the freedom to make a public use of one's reason in all matters" (quoted in Schmidt, 1996: 59). By public use, Kant was indicating the use of reason in a realm beyond the mechanisms of civic life, a realm which is cosmopolitan and unbounded by particularistic duties and obligations. This public realm, from which a commentary on the institutions of daily life can be launched, is a scholarly realm, one which gains its knowledge through a distancing from the exigencies of the lived world which is regulated by the need to obey. The scholar is anyone who lifts himself out of the constraints of his daily duties and critically reflects upon them. For instance,

The citizen cannot refuse to pay the taxes imposed on him; even an impudent complaint against such levies, when they should be paid by him, is punished as an outrage....This same individual nevertheless does not act against the duty of a citizen if he, as a scholar, expresses his thoughts publicly on the inappropriateness or even the injustice of such taxes (Kant in Schmidt, 1996: 60).

Kant writes: "...all citizens, especially the clergy, would be left free, in their capacities as scholars - that is, through writings - to make remarks on the failings of the current institutions" (Kant in Schmidt, 1996: 61). Thus, schematically speaking, there existed for Kant two worlds: one which was public, detached, and free, and one which is private, bounded, and heteronomous.
The extent to which enlightenment could or should inflame the people en mass was of course up for debate: the dangerousness and potentiality of this possibility was made evident by the most radical phase of the French Revolution (1792-93), which sparked a critique of enlightenment which has been echoed for two hundred years (the Enlightenment always contained its own critique: that is critique was from the beginning used against it from within it). Supporters of the Enlightenment were faced with sorting out their views on revolutionary action by and for the "common" people which transgressed traditional subjugations. Jefferson was greatly influenced by the writings of the philosophes (Manuel, 1965: 2), and his writings show a direct link between the views of Enlightenment scholars and the politics of revolution. Although it is assumed that Enlightenment thinkers would automatically support liberal politics, this was by no means the case. The Berlin Enlightenment debate was much engaged with these questions: questions, really, of democratization: the dialectic between individual liberty and the common good; between anarchy and tyranny (Schmidt, 1996). The question of what kind of general subjectivity the Enlightenment should foster never garnered a single answer.

If liberalism is defined as a conception of politics that gives priority to "rights" over the "good" and holds that the chief end of the state is to secure individual liberty rather than to attain public happiness, then few of the leading figures in the Berlin Enlightenment could be classified as liberals (Schmidt, 1996: 12).

Kant distinguished between a paternal government and a patriotic government: "a 'paternal government', established on the principle of 'benevolence' toward its people, represented 'the greatest conceivable despotism'" (Schmidt, 1996: 12). Mendelssohn was closer to the norm: he was anti-liberal. He states that the enlightenment of man as man, and man as citizen, are two different processes which can often come into conflict with each other: "the enlightenment that is
concerned with man as man is universal, without distinction of status, the enlightenment of man as citizen changes according to status and vocation." Because of the latter case, he continues, "...enlightenment that is indispensable to man cannot be disseminated through all the estates of the realm without rising the destruction of the constitution. Here philosophy lays its hand on its mouth!" (Schmidt, 1996: 13). Liberty is a dangerous idea for the unenlightened. From the beginning the idea of liberty which the Enlightenment disseminated had its anxious shadow: liberty required moral responsibility and protection by the state. It required boundaries and regulation. It must find its proper place. "The misuse of enlightenment," says Mendelssohn, "weakens the moral sentiment and leads to hard-heartedness, egoism, irreligion, and anarchy" (Mendelssohn in Schmidt, 1996: 54).

If the essential destiny of man has unfortunately been brought into conflict with his inessential destiny, if certain useful and - for mankind - adorning truths may not be disseminated without destroying prevailing religious and moral tenets, the virtue-loving bearer of enlightenment will proceed with prudence and discretion and endure prejudice rather than drive away the truth that is so closely intertwined with it....The friend of Mankind must defer to these considerations, even in the most enlightened times (Mendelssohn in Schmidt, 1996: 55).

Enlightenment is more than a parade of famous thinkers, but a phenomenon produced in and through material and cultural conditions. Dorinda Outram rejects Ernst Cassirer's version of the Enlightenment as a homogeneous "value-system rooted in rationality" (Outram, 1995: 3) and asserts instead that it was "a series of problems and debates...where projects of intellectual expansion impacted upon and changed the nature of developments in society and government on a world-wide basis" (Outram, 1995: 3). It was no surprise that an obsession with freedom of
expression arose at a time when "dramatic shifts occurred in the production and accessibility of ideas and especially in the case of print media" (Outram, 1995: 29).

But there is more to it than that. Foucault (1996) makes an argument also around technologies: by which he means the modes of organizing the social, and most specifically, the art of governing "...in the very reality of a social practice by mechanisms of power that appeal to a truth" (Foucault, 1996: 386). The fifteenth and sixteenth century Europe saw the emergence of a new culture, a new attitude, according to him, "the attitude of critique," which did not simply appear out of thin air but arose out of what was "historically the great process of the governmentalization of society." That is, the technologies of governing changed, and with the question, "how to govern?" came the question "how not be governed like that" (Foucault, 1996: 385). As Foucault writes: "The art of governing, of course, remained for a long time tied to relatively limited practices, tied ultimately, even in medieval society, to monastic existence...

But I believe that from the fifteenth century and right before the Reformation, one can say that there was a veritable explosion of the art of governing men, an explosion understood in two senses. A displacement first in relation to its religious source - let us say, if you will, a laicization - an expansion into civil society of this theme of the art of governing men and the methods for doing it (1996: 384-385).

With increased governmentalization, that is governmental intervention in modes of conduct of, for example, children, the poor, armies, a house, cities, states, the body, and one's own mind, brought on also, states Foucault, "the reduction of this art of governing in its various domains" (1996: 384). With this increase of governmentality in more and more aspects of life comes its "counterpoint," as Foucault calls it: attempts to evade, displace, challenge (1996: 384). Given that governmentality - as opposed to rule by fiat from an identifiable source - in its many domains is a new aspect of life in Europe in and after the sixteenth century, critique becomes a
possibility. "And I would thus propose this general characterization as a rather preliminary definition of critique: the art of not being governed so much" (Foucault, 1996: 384).

This art of not being governed so much manifests itself against the most rigid of governmentalities: the church (not wanting to be governed manifested itself as a return to Scripture itself), the monarchical law (not wanting to be governed manifested in the assertion of natural law), what could be known (not wanting to be governed manifested here as suspicion of the truth of authorities based on status - not accepting truth because an authority tells you it is true: that is, science as unfettered knowing) (Foucault, 1996: 385). The dialectic between governmentalization and critique, according to Foucault, is "cardinal in the history of Western culture, whether it is a matter of the development of philological sciences, ...of reflection, of juridical analysis, of methodological reflection" (Foucault, 1996: 385). Critique, not wanting to be governed so much or in that way, arises in relation to "the majesty, the law, the authority of dogmatism." In other words, in relation to a truth which is now in the business of "subjugating individuals in the very reality of social practice" (Foucault, 1996: 386). The truth becomes powerful, as it becomes a technique for governing, and hence critique arises out of the politics of truth. Education, as enlightenment, is key to the possibility of critique. Education is also a kind of governance in the art of enlightenment. Enlightenment, critique, and education stand in close relation to each other, but also threaten to undermine each other.

The Enlightenment discourse on education is filled with great optimism. Reason's technique is impartiality, and through impartiality it accesses universality: "The impartial reasoner treats all situations according to the same rules, and the more rules can be reduced to the unity of one rule of principle, the more this impartiality and universality will be guaranteed" (I. M. Young, 1987:
61). The light this impartial reason casts, however, is not the spontaneous and fateful light of day of the ancient Greeks, but a willed light, a light which is directed, like a spotlight, into a world which has been dark for too long. In as much as the lighting up of the world is willed and directed, it is systematic rather than intuitive: it requires a process, a method, a calculus. In Kant's *The Critique of Judgement* he sets out these maxims of understanding:

- In itself nothing is more natural than to abstract from charm and emotion where one is looking for a judgement intended to serve as a universal rule. While the following maxims of common human understanding do not properly come in here as constituent parts of the Critique of Taste, they may still serve to elucidate its fundamental propositions. They are these: 1) to think for oneself; 2) to think from the standpoint of every one else; 3) always to think consistently. The first is the maxim of *unprejudiced thought*, the second that of *enlarged thought*, the third that of *consistent thought*. The first is the maxim of a *never-passive reason*. To be given to such passivity, consequently to heteronomy of reason, is called *prejudice*; and the greatest of all prejudices is that of fancying nature not to be subject to rules which the understanding by virtue of its own essential law lays at its basis, i.e. *superstition*. Emancipation from superstition is called enlightenment...(Kant, 1973: 152)

It is no surprise then that education is enlightenment's main instrument. Education in its modern sense is the process of getting to know the world for oneself in a systematic manner, a manner in which everyone else can also know it, through an elaboration of methodology and procedure, in the arts and sciences of daily life as well as philosophy. To this day, *critical thinking* is still extolled as the end of education. The Enlightened subject is one who uses his own rationality - one which is inherent and is therefore the freedom to exercise it is *rightfully* his - to assess the world, both philosophically and practically, regardless of authoritative injunctions and decrees - and especially regardless of the magical superstitions, fears, habits that have been instilled in him by tradition - the accumulated errors of ages which were characterized by the rule of power rather
than the rule of reason. The Enlightenment subject is the critical subject. This critical subjectivity requires autonomy:

For morality, Kant says, we need a completely separate point of view in which freedom and autonomy are possible, "for to be independent of determination by causes in the sensible world (and this is what reason must always attribute to itself) is to be free" (Steele, 1997: 18).

Most decisive is the newly posited notion that reason not only constitutes a light shed on a thus newly visible world, but grants a controlling interest in that world. The world and oneself can be shaped by the one who understands its operation through being outside this operation: the observer and the observed. A new connection between knowledge and utility is forged. The Enlightened subject separates itself out from the world, and thereby can control that part of itself which is the world. Lewis Hinchman writes:

Theories of autonomy present variations of a basic pattern. There is first a ruling, law-giving, controlling, or evaluating element (the nomos) situated within the individual (for, if it were outside, autonomy would not even get off the ground). The controlling or evaluating aspect of the self must relate itself to another internal element that, by definition, would vitiate personal autonomy if it were not directed, ruled, or evaluated critically. Finally, one or both of these internal elements must be seen as implicated in a larger transindividual context that may variously promote or thwart the project of being autonomous (1996: 490).

Certainly there was a wide-spread, if not entirely successful, attempt to reform the universities, subverting the educational dogmas of Renaissance humanism by adding new disciplines such as natural philosophy, geography, modern history (Im Hof, 1994: 207). As well, new institutions arose such as engineering colleges in France (1718), and mining colleges in Germany (1770) (Im Hof, 1994: 208). Art schools, which gave an education in the crafts and technology, business and commercial schools, as well as institutes for the training of civil servants, all appeared in this century. A few tentative attempts at integrated education for children appeared, also, though this
was far from the norm (Im Hof, 1994: 209). Pamphlets, brochures, journals, bulletins, calendars, were distributed to give practical "scientific" advice especially about agricultural and health issues.

In 1749 an attempt was made to refute the prejudice that was derived by many from the curse laid upon the soil following the Fall of Man and that suggested there was no point in seeking to improve farming methods. The relevant comment was that anyone who was so stupid that he could not distinguish between theology and the other sciences was in any case incorrigible. The publications of self-help and economic societies contain innumerable practical suggestions for making everyday labour less onerous and more effective. How may the new discoveries in the natural sciences be put to use in agriculture?....Which new fodder crops are suitable for which type of soil? How may blight in grain be combated? What can be done to ward off cattle diseases? The reader is instructed on the advantages of pig-breeding, a lexicon of fertilizers is intended to help him improve his soil; indeed, there is even discussion on how the poor may provide themselves cheaply with warm beds (Im Hof, 1994: 211).

A new impulse at improvement and reform of the practicalities of daily life in the light of knowledge gained by scientific and critical analysis rode on a sense of optimism about what the reasoning man could do to transform his environment: this was a universal possibility as reason was a universal capacity. In 1756 a moral weekly enjoined people to teach those less up-to-date, less in tune with the times: "Let us strive with all our might," it states, "to improve the lot of our brothers. Let us not be ashamed to act as teachers to the common man. For, had they but been educated as we have been, they would fain be what we are, and more" (quoted in Im Hof, 1994: 211). "Stoic self-sufficiency would soon slide over into a quite different attitude," says Hinchman, "one that actually encouraged a person to rearrange the elements of the natural world (and his or her inner life)...Self-mastery could yield to mastery of the world by means of scientific knowledge" (Hinchman in Schmidt, 1996: 491).
Liberalism:

i) What makes a man human is freedom from dependence on the wills of others.
ii) Freedom from dependence on others means freedom from any relations with others except those relations which the individual enters voluntarily with a view to his own interests.
iii) The individual is essentially the proprietor of his own person and capacities, for which he owes nothing to society. (Macpherson, 1962: 263).

The radicality of the emergence of liberal political philosophy in the eighteenth century lies in its decisive reversal of a binary which had held true since the political philosophy of antiquity; for now the Good was subordinated to the Right. In this "moment," which has its condition of possibility in Enlightenment thought, the modern individual is born: that being who exists prior to social and political formation. Government becomes the government of individuals - already defined in their nature - rather than the facilitator of the good, or strong, or sacred society which would set the conditions for the definition of every subject living within it, the society. Kant, one of the few unwavering liberals of the Enlightenment, was clear that for enlightenment to be a possibility the state must do *no more* than secure the liberty of its citizens. As we have seen, for him the "paternal government," whose benevolent concern for its citizens well-being, represented "the greatest conceivable despotism" (Kant, 1991: 74).

While the state could lay down any number of constraints to do with the logistics of day-to-day life, state assertion of the quality of that life - that is, its inner content - was simply a violation of
the freedom to think for oneself. Thus the liberalism of Kant and Locke stands in opposition to utilitarianism which grounds its political argument in a generic happiness: happiness is subjective and belongs to the realm of individual choice. It cannot reasonably be a principle of government, because practical reason cannot be universalized and government, as the government of all the people, must universalize. The universal law can only but be procedural, then, based on reason, which is law itself.

Other Enlightenment thinkers were not so persuaded: for them, the power of the new "disinterested," "objective" knowledge of the world must be harnessed to right the miseries and stupidities of daily life once and for all. In other words, an enlightened government could force the hot-house flower of an enlightened citizenry via very specific institutions: schools, prisons, medicine. The new authority would be enlightenment rationality itself, as manifested in various civic institutions. Hence, while the possibility of liberalism was a certain culture of enlightenment thought, enlightenment discourses in politics were often illiberal. As we have seen in Chapter Two, this illiberalism would find its manifestation in governmental intervention into education in the nineteenth century west based on a mandate to "enreason" its subjects. Some liberals, such as Jacobi in Germany, rejected the entire enlightenment rhetoric precisely because it could easily legitimate coercion where it was not required. He wrote:

The great mass of our thinkers are least able to think [that government should only be protective], because they want to see the essentially true and the essentially good spread by power [Gewalt], and want to see every error suppressed by power. They would like to help promote an enlightenment - elsewhere than in the understanding, because that takes too long. They put out the lights, filled with childish impatience for it to be day. Oh hope-filled darkness, in which we hurriedly totter our way toward the goal of our wishes, toward the greatest good on earth; forward, on the path of violence and subjugation! (in Schmidt, 1996: 192).
In other words, enlightenment if it is possible at all, according to Jacobi, cannot be legislated. What can be legislated for is protection of property, and the stability of society. This is a prime notion in liberal political theory. For him, "civil society was "a mechanism of coercion" whose function should be simply "to secure for every member his inviolable property in his person, the free use of all his powers, and the full enjoyment of the fruits of their employment."

Enlightenment of the mind can take care of itself: reason is its own constraint. He continues,

attempts to justify a more extensive state intervention in the lives of its citizens - whether justified by appeals to "interests of state" or the "welfare of the whole" - led only to "the advancement of self-interest, money-grubbing, indolence; of a stupid admiration of wealth, of rank, and of power; a blind unsavory submissiveness; and an anxiety and fear which allows no zeal and tends toward the most servile obedience (Schmidt, 1996: 13).

Within liberal theory, then, goods and goals reside in the "narrow confines of the self" (Siegel, 1995: viii). The liberal individual stands in stark contrast to the reasoning man of antiquity, Aristotle's political animal: his identity is not contingent upon the good society of the polis within which he lives, except in as much as it protects him from that which would threaten his naturally autonomous, self-legislating, self-owning, discrete individuality. Thus the revolutions of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries would no longer be legitimized by theological arguments, instead "...an appeal was made to a secular natural order and to the political rights of individuals..."(Reiss, 1971: 4). The state and civil society only function to grant the individual the safety not guaranteed in the state of nature, not to determine the content of life as such. John Locke writes:

*The end of civil society* [is] to avoid, and remedy, those inconveniences of the state of nature....The only way whereby anyone divests himself of his natural liberty, and puts on *the bonds of civil society* is by agreeing with other men to join together and unite into a community, for their comfortable, safe, and peaceful living one amongst another, in

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secure enjoyment of their properties, and a greater security against any that are not of it....(1960, sec.90, 95).

Liberty of the individual is paramount. But as we will see below, this is only where liberals start, by the time they finish this liberty is not so straightforward.

Liberal theories arose to specifically address the social and political crises in seventeenth and eighteenth century Europe: that is, the dissolution of religious and political unity (with the struggles over the Reformation), the subsequent threat and reality of civil war, the rise of a commercial culture and expanding markets. In England "it was the impossibility of achieving any common religious orientation that made it necessary to establish politics on some other basis" (Siegel, 1995: xii). These crises threw up particular kinds of questions vis-a-vis government: how to provide for religious and political freedom while protecting property, both life and goods.

The first liberal tracts - their authors include Milton, Grotius, Locke, (James) Mill, Smith, Montesquieu, Kant - articulated an array of dispersed arguments which addressed the nature of proper government; that is, the proper spatial relationship between the citizen, the citizen's activities, and the state. As the concern about freedom from despotism grew, so did the question of legitimate constraint. The anxiety over both grew in inverse proportion to each other. The proper relationship between citizen and state was newly framed as a dialectic of rights and responsibilities - liberties and limits - a theorem of the separation of powers and spheres of life, of regulations, controls, and so on, in order to secure freedom.

The possibilities of liberal forms of freedom may historically depend upon the exercise of discipline. Freedom, in a liberal sense, should thus not be equated with anarchy, but with a kind of well-regulated and "responsibilized" liberty (Barry, Osborne and Rose, 1998: 8).
Liberalism builds in its own risk insurance: whereas liberty is paramount, the content of liberty is itself explicitly defined, not in terms of a good, but in terms of constraints of reason itself. Kant writes: "The free agent, as soon as we examine the question, we see to be distinguished, not by his lack of constraint, but by the peculiar nature of the constraint which governs him. He is constrained by reason, in its reception of the moral law" (quoted in Scruton, 1981: 149). Liberal theorists "calculatedly" elaborated the limits of the state in conjunction with the extent and limits of individual liberty. What kind of theory could be produced to persuade the political community that rule by power was not the most legitimate, or safe, grounds of government, without promoting a rule-less social formation? The assertion of "rights" - that which is inherent in every individual by virtue of his very nature and which therefore cannot by definition be taken away - which are in other words inalienable - changed the governmental landscape in the west forever. What inheres in every person is universal and prior to every particularity of belief: rationality. Where rationality does not manifest - in the poor, in women, in other races - this is because they have squandered nature's gift:

If men are by nature equally rational, in the sense of equally capable of looking after themselves, those who have fallen permanently behind in the pursuit of property can be assume to have only themselves to blame (Macpherson, 1962: 245).

This assertion of a new dimension of the human being, a dimension which is posited as essential and natural, and potentially guided by the law of reason "...sets limits to what government can know or do vis-a-vis a civil society that must none the less be governed..." (Burchell, in Barry, Osborne and Rose, 1996: 25). Unlike natural law theories of antiquity, natural law is posited against society and its conventions, but it is also that which legitimates society and its conventions. It is this "move" which was the condition of possibility of a modern
ethos of governmentality in the west; limited rule secured on a foundation of a naturalized law and the list of naturalized rights which came out of it, all of which were universalizable and inherently regulating.

In this respect an essential and original feature of liberalism as a principle of governmental reason is that it pegs the rationality of government, of the exercise of political power, to the freedom and interested rationality of the governed themselves. It does not identify governmental reason with the rationality of the sovereign who, in turn, identifies himself or herself with the state. Rather, it finds the principle for limiting and rationalizing the exercise of political power in the operations of the freedom and rationality of those who are to be governed (Burchell in Burchell, Gordon and Miller, 1991: 139).

The conceptual separation of the rights bearing individual from both the state and society, as radically prior to state and society, threw up an entity upon which a whole host of newly hybridized values were pinned - in his mature state he is independent, autonomous, self-sufficient, rational and reasonable; that is, self-governing. His very autonomy and rationality - his independence from others - is that which makes it possible for him to live together with others in harmony - this preempts the necessity of any state to establish a commonly agreed upon common good (with the exceptional violence and threat to property which that act would require). The liberal individual came to embody a positive content through its constitution out of a series of negative liberties - "freedom from." Though liberalism as a discourse is organized around theories of "private property, free markets, limited government, constitutionalism and the rule of law," (Barry, 1996: 5), that is, negative injunctions, its theoretical house is built on a positive foundation of "...individuals as the irreducible atoms of knowledge, conscience, and moral obligation" (Vincent, 1996: 140). John Locke wrote:

The State of Nature has a Law of Nature to govern it, which obliges everyone: And Reason, which is that Law, teaches all Mankind, who will but consult it, that being all
equal and independent, no one ought to harm another in his Life, Health, Liberty, or Possessions (Locke, 1960: 271).

That is, the liberal individual - as by nature, and hence by right, autonomous and self-mastering, because reasonable and capable - somewhat circularly guarantees the new liberal vision of political order, one in which each individual's rational self-mastery - his capacity to serve his self-interest (he becomes radically responsible and accountable for himself) - ensures civil harmony. Kant states: "When we think of ourselves as free, we transfer ourselves into the intelligible world as members and recognize the autonomy of the will" (Sandel, 1982: 9). In as much as all individuals are equally given this rightful (natural) free-reign to pursue their self-interest (and unlimited property) based on an equal inherent capacity to enter the universal intelligible world of reason, equality governs the normative order of a liberal state. In as much as each individual utilizes his natural right differently (it is entirely up to him), civil society is not a sign for the same. Liberal discourses incorporate within their theory of society a way of supporting vast social differences on a foundation of universal equality.

Liberalisms are political theories which, in one way or another, attempt to ground the claim that equality in freedom is both the "is" and "ought" of social, economic, and political reality. Freedom, as an a priori condition which requires the state for its guarantee (unlike Rousseau, most liberals theorized the state of nature as, if not essentially a "state of war" (Hobbes), tending at any moment to become so (Manent, 1995: 48)). These complex philosophical arguments, produced an emphatic, but devious, notion of the free (because self-governing) individual.

Freedom and The Law are two sides of the same coin. Kant states: the free and rational agent is conscious of his own existence as a thing-in-itself, [and] views his existence so far as it does not stand under temporal conditions, and....himself as determinable only by laws.
which he gives to himself through reasons. In this existence nothing is antecedent to the
determination of his will (quoted in Scruton, 1981: 152).

The classical liberal individual stands as a powerful figure contra certain kinds of arbitrary acts
by status-based authorities. The mythos of his origin ushers into the political landscape a
metaphysics of freedom and rationality which has persisted to this day. This heightened rhetoric
brings with it as a central concern questions of justice: that is, questions which have to do with
infringement against or regard for that which should not be taken away from the noumenal
individual, rather than with any particular vision of the good. Kant states: "Only when I am
governed by principles that do not presuppose any particular ends am I free to pursue my own
ends consistent with a similar freedom for all" (Sandel, 1982: 6).

[Manent] understand[s]...the idea of the state of nature as providing both an image of
human beings over whom no traditional claims to authority have any legitimate power,
yet also a basis for setting up an incontestable obligation to political obedience. Such a
notion, developed in order to combat the power of religious doctrine without undermining
social stability, cuts people off from every social attachment while delivering them over
to the agency - the state - that establishes social life in a form that excludes any partial or
specific social good (Siegel, 1995: x).

Capitalism:

As with the other discourses of modernity, capitalism became thematized as such only several
hundred years after certain new interjections regarding the state of the wealth of nations were
made. Marx is the first great systematizer of capitalism as a practice and a way of speaking
about the world, and it is no surprise that this great intellectual project comes in the form of a
critique. Capitalism was for him not just an economic system or operation, such as mercantilism
or laissez-fair, which operated in conjunction with various social, cultural and political forms, but a total social system in itself; one which was decisive for all other forms of life.

Capital was a term in Roman law used to distinguish interest and carrying charges from the principal of a loan (Pejovich, 1983: 1). But it is a very specific kind of circulation of capital which sets in motion an economic phenomenon called capitalism. There were always people who accumulated wealth and used this wealth to create more wealth: if the practice of charging interest on loans, charging rents or tributes, or using money in the exchange process, or even a spirit of acquisitiveness, is capitalism, then capitalism has been around since recorded history.

Yet we see in the political theories of Hobbes and Locke already elaborately constructed theories to secure and justify the shift from a simple market economy to a capitalist market economy which marks a decisive break. In a simple market economy, individuals trade their products, which they have freely undertaken to produce, in the hope that they can get a rate of return which will allow them to buy the products of other tradesmen; all people have land or some resource out of which to make a living; all people attempt to rationally maximize their utilities; all people gain to the extent to which they expend their own energies or goods; there is a contract law of some kind; all people maintain control of their own labour (Macpherson, 1962: 51-52). The rupture with the past which Marx calls the advent of capitalism, had to do, basically, with the way capital accumulation at a certain time was built upon (increasingly better organized) labour-power as itself a commodity (Dobb, 1963: 7). Capital growth became possible by reinvesting the surplus-value which wage-labour produced. That is, there were people now on the market who had no land or resources of their own and who gave up ownership of their own labour. Hobbes and Locke both produced a theoretical account of why it was justified that
society was increasingly divided into those who owned the products of their labour and those who no longer did: the theories both suggest, using slightly different arguments, that, although every person equally has sole right to his own person and the products which emerge from his labour, any person can alienate his labour - if not his person (he cannot sell himself, as such) - if it is in his best interest to do so - if he so freely chooses. Dobb writes:

...Capitalism was not simply a system of production for the market - a system of commodity-production as Marx termed it - but a system under which labour-power had "itself become a commodity" and was bought and sold on the market like any other object of exchange. Its historical prerequisite was the concentration of ownership of the means of production in the hands of a class, consisting of only a minor section of society, and the consequential emergence of a propertyless class for whom the sale of their labour-power was their only source of livelihood (Dobb, 1963: 7).

The historical increments in which a non-wage-labour economy shifted to a wage-labour economy in the west (and later, elsewhere) were slow and uneven: by the nineteenth century, however, the latter was well entrenched - if never total. In the three hundred years of this transition a discourse arose which produced a subject who made this new economic arrangement intelligible and proper. Not only were the practices of "making a living" changed, but an entirely different way of speaking about living in the world co-arose with these new practices. That is, it was imperative to the ongoing operation of the capitalist system of production and exchange that every person see himself as a fundamentally free subject; that whatever relation to the means of production he found himself in was due to his own decision, to a freely ventured contract. Liberalism as a theory of self-governance clearly aided in this task.

Adam Smith, who did not himself yet speak of capitalism, yet has come to be seen as its earliest advocate, argued in An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations that two things were necessary for the development of civilized and wealthy nations: the buying and
selling of labour, which presupposes a division of labour - whereby the value of labour can be stored in commodities and sold at a profit, and "natural liberty." "Natural liberty' presupposed a condition in which individual agents were free to pursue their own interests" (Tribe, 1995: 24)

Although it is not at all clear that Smith was arguing for a pure "night-watchman" state - he did advocate state intervention into those activities the profit of which "...could never repay the expense to any individual or small number of individuals, and which it, therefore, cannot be expected that any individual or small number of individual should erect or maintain" (quoted in Copley and Sutherland, 1995: 73), such as, interestingly enough, schools - he was proposing that the ground of self-interested existence was the use of productive labour to turn a profit, and that the state should facilitate this effort. Government, in fact, would take over those services - like schools - precisely because there was no profit in them for individual enterprisers. The merchant, through his self-interest which was motivated by desire for profit, was an efficient "improver."

Using this social energy, the state could foster social progress most efficiently. Never happy to let capital lie inactive, the merchant is continually looking for places in which to make his money work for him. This relentless private activity cannot but be beneficial to the whole social formation. Adam Smith writes:

A merchant is accustomed to employ his money chiefly in profitable projects, whereas a mere country gentleman is accustomed to employ it chiefly in expense. The one often sees his money go from him to return to him again with a profit; the other, when once he parts with it, very seldom expects to see any more of it. Those different habits naturally affect their temper and disposition in every sort of business. A merchant is commonly bold, a country gentleman a timid undertaker. The one is not afraid to layout at once a large capital upon the improvement of his land when he has a probable prospect of raising the value of it in proportion to the expense....The habits, besides, of order, economy, and attention, to which mercantile business naturally forms a merchant, render him much fitter to execute, with profit and success, any project of improvement (Smith, 1970: 507-508).
Smith gives a history of the emergence of the man of capital: the mover and shaker, who by his own calculation, frugality, and risk-taking, could make gold out of straw. It is a history of improvement in general, for Smith. This history is transmuted by Marxian analysis into historical materialism: the history of modes of production. In pre-commercial societies there was no incentive for either land-owner or tenant to improve the land and increase productivity: the land-owner received all the produce he needed to support his estate - surplus could not be stored or converted - whereas the tenant could not hope to see any change in his life by increasing his efforts. This leads to a stagnation: the society of men persists, but nothing changes, there is no forward motion, there is no expansive cycle. It is the with the formation of towns that things begin to change: "Smith makes it clear that the new townspeople were quite different from the land-owning citizens and slaves of earlier history. They had nothing but their autonomy and freedom to trade;....

Guaranteed the continued possession of whatever gains they might make by their own initiative, they at last had the motive to improve the productivity of their labour (Parker, 1995: 126).

The incentive to make a profit, together with the necessary self-restraint required not to simply convert capital into goods and services that are to be immediately consumed, shaped a kind of subjectivity who calculated the cost/gain ratio in every economic transaction, and abided by fair and deliberate rules of exchange. Smith's self-interested merchant requires other characteristics than self-interest in order for capital accumulation to be successful: he needed to be able to keep a promise, to regulate his transactions through time, to calculate his rate of return, to save when needed, to spend when needed; in short, to harness his innate practical rationality to plan his course of action through time with a view to expanding his capital. Only the particularity of this
practical rationality as it is exercised by each enterpriser in service of his self-interest aids in the rationality of society as whole. No individual reason could presume to apprehend such a complex overarching rationality. Every person will know what he needs to do: those with capital will invest it, those without will labour for wages. Adam Smith in *Wealth of Nations* presented this social fact as a sign of the rationality of all men. Capitalism, as an economic system, was supposed to be founded on a universal human capacity to transform the world through individual effort, which some cultivated and others did not, and this transformation served the civilizing process, because it was always based on productive labour: something was always made, sold, bought with more and more people drawn into, and benefitting from, the cycle. Productive labour participated in an endless cycle, creating opportunity exponentially, while unproductive labour dissipated energy and effort and created no opportunity for others in the future. This is schematized by Marx as a continuous transformation of capital-as-money into capital-as-commodities into capital-as-more-money (Marx, 1981). All societies, according to Smith, must have a place for unproductive labour - but only productive labour will make a nation wealthy and strong: will drive it into the future. The unproductive occupations are many, "some of the gravest and most important, and some of the most frivolous professions" (Smith, 1970: 431) - the sovereign, the officers of justice and war, public servants, churchmen, lawyers, men of letters of all kinds, physicians, players, buffoons, musicians, opera-singers, opera-dancers (Smith, 1970: 431). Smith writes:

The labour of some of the most respectable orders in the society is, like that of menial servants, unproductive of any value, and does not fix or realize itself in any permanent subject, or vendible commodity, which endures after that labour is past, and for which an equal quantity of labour could afterwards be procured (Smith, 1970: 430).
The ones who put productive labour to good use, however, by turning a profit which can be reinvested elsewhere, add "to the growth of public opulence" (Smith, 1970: 449) by ensuring the cycle of production and consumption which benefits all.

While it is Marx who lays out the analytic for the study of capitalism in a rigorous fashion - his explanation rests at the level of material conditions of possibility, which he assumes are determinant and a priori - it is Max Weber who thematizes the ethos of capitalist culture. He puts into ideal type the value assumptions which, for him, underlie capitalism in order for it to continue as such; that is, he utilizes a theory of the modern subject for the purposes of explanation: he paints a (controversial) portrait of the capitalist subject which, whether it is "true" or not, still is the way success in the system is spoken about today. He does this by taking how a certain class of capitalist spoke about themselves to be the spirit of capitalism itself; for what could motivate the drive to greater and greater accumulation in itself, which required a system which was set up to facilitate it - that is, a bureaucracy of some sort - if not something exterior to that practice?

5 As Eisenstadt states: "Weber's famous "Protestant Ethic" thesis, which attributed the rise of modern, as distinct from premodern, types of capitalism to the influence of Protestantism and especially of Calvinism, has provided, probably more than any other single specific thesis in the social sciences, a continuous focus of scientific controversy"(1968: 3). Clearly, capitalism as an economic logic thrives in non-Protestant parts of the world: this shows us that no "modern" practice is necessarily linked to the West's modern subjectivity. Nevertheless, the modern subject is constituted in and through the capitalist discourse in the West. Weber writes: "...We have no intention whatever of maintaining such a foolish and doctrinaire thesis as that the spirit of capitalism...could only have arisen as the result of certain effects of the Reformation, or even that capitalism as an economic system is a creation of the Reformation....On the contrary, we only wish to ascertain whether and to what extent religious forces have taken part in the qualitative and the quantitative expansion of that spirit over the world" (1968: 91).
While the Reformation clearly came after the incremental emergence of what we can call capitalist relations of production, Protestant, and specifically Calvinist, discourses came to subsume the capitalist practice into a stylization of life. It is within these discourses that the private and continuous making of wealth, rather than the heroism and glory-seeking of the Renaissance, becomes a possibility as a legitimate "calling". This is not to say that Calvin was an apologist for capitalist relations of production. No, his concern was solely for the salvation of the soul (Weber, 1958: 89). But as Tawney writes in the introduction to Weber’s *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*:

For Luther, as for most medieval theologians, [the calling] had normally meant the state of life in which the individual had been set by Heaven, and against which it was impious to rebel. To the Calvinist, Weber argues, the calling is not a condition in which the individual is born, but a strenuous and exacting enterprise to be chosen by himself, and to be pursued with a sense of religious responsibility (1958: 2).

Working hard at an activity one has chosen for oneself, including especially business - "once regarded as perilous to the soul" (Weber, 1958: 2) - became itself a spiritual end. The attributes required to work hard successfully - prudence, sobriety, thrift, diligence, patience - became themselves spiritual values - above faith, confession, fear of God - hence the successful workplace became a sign of spiritual and moral health. A pamphleteer wrote in 1671: "There is a kind of natural inaptness in the Popish religion to business, whereas, on the contrary, among the Reformed, the greater their zeal, the greater their inclination to trade and industry, as holding idleness unlawful" (Weber, 1958: 6). Idleness, laziness, become the greater sins; greed and covetousness the lesser sins, because it is hard work - and importantly, the organization of hard work - which is always the motivating force. Weber argues, while the Reformation emancipated
lay-people from the unquestioned traditional authority of the Catholic Church, this emancipation was not into permissiveness. Weber writes:

It meant the repudiation of a control which was very lax, at that time scarcely perceptible in practice, and hardly more than formal, in favour of a regulation of the whole of conduct which, penetrating to all departments of private and public life, was infinitely burdensome and earnestly enforced (Weber, 1958: 36).

The Protestant revolution entailed "...the substitution of a new form of control for the previous one:" (Weber, 1958: 36) taking over responsibility for and control of one's self vis-a-vis God and vis-a-vis society at large. The successful player in a capitalist system is not one who is simply out for a quick dollar, a good time, fame and glory. His activity in life has an ethical justification, an ethical rationale: his productivity is what keeps him in line - he must be honest, punctual, consistent, modest, shrewd, in order to gain the trust of his fellow business men and his workers and be truly successful at his business (Weber, 1958: 52). He must be a "good man" in order to be a good businessman. Doing well in business becomes a sign of being a good man: this holds for both the capitalist and the worker. Weber writes:

The universal reign of absolute unscrupulousness in the pursuit of selfish interest by the making of money has been a specific characteristic of precisely those countries whose bourgeois-capitalist development, measured according to Occidental standards, has remained backward (Weber, 1958: 57).

"Capitalism cannot make use of the labour of those who practise the doctrine of undisciplined *liberum arbitrium*, any more than it can make use of the business man who seems absolutely unscrupulous in his dealings with others..." (Weber, 1958: 57). Capitalism requires a rigorous self-mastery as it requires above all predictability in human behaviour: both capitalist and worker must be able to handle time "rationally," (to show up every day at the office at the same time; honour the closing date of a contract), to handle his own interests "rationally" (that is, if he can
make more money he will, rather than choosing to work less). Here rationality refers to a duty or an obligation to facilitate the process at hand in the most efficient manner, and the task at hand within a capitalist economy is productivity in general.

The ability of mental concentration, as well as the absolutely essential feeling of obligation to one's job, are here most often combined with a strict economy which calculates the possibility of high earnings, and a cool self-control and frugality which enormously increase performance (Weber, 1958: 63).

This Protestant ethos is everywhere present within capitalist cultures long after thoroughgoing secularization: Calvinists are few and far between, but the ethic of continually "making something of yourself" through hard work in a self-interested concern, as a calling, persists - because this "making of yourself" will, through some invisible mechanism, affect the good of all. When all are self-interestedly productive, wealth abounds for all, and all must, by definition, take on a conduct which facilitates the rational - in the sense of predictable and calculable - ordering of society. Albert Hirschman argues that, as well as the unintended consequence of a religious salvational doctrine, capitalism was also conceived of "by a current of opinion that arose right in the center of the "power structure" and the "establishment" of the time [seventeenth and eighteenth centuries]" (Hirschman, 1977: 129) as a means to put an end to constant civil strife: it would put interest before passion. The self-interested business man, the conscientious worker, does not make trouble:

Ever since the end of the Middle Ages, and particularly as a result of the increasing frequency of war and civil war in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the search was on for a behavioural equivalent for religious precept, for new rules of conduct and devices that would impose much needed discipline and constraints on both rulers and ruled, and the expansion of commerce and industry was thought to hold much promise in this regard. (Hirschman, 1977, 129).
Interestingly enough, as Hirschman notes, John Maynard Keynes uses a similar argument in his "low-key defense of capitalism" (Hirschman, 1977: 133):

Dangerous human proclivities can be canalized into comparatively harmless channels by the existence of opportunity for money-making and private wealth, which, if they cannot be satisfied in this way, may find their outlet in cruelty, the reckless pursuit of personal power and authority, and other forms of self-aggrandizement. It is better that a man should tyrannize over his bank balance than over his fellow-citizens; and whilst the former is sometimes denounced as being but a means to the latter, sometimes at least it is an alternative. (Keynes, 1936: 374).

THE POINT OF THESE SKETCHES:

...The metaphysical subject is a self-transparent subject that lays claim to the mastery of everything that exists, both for itself and the world. It is, then, a subject without an "unconscious," a closed subject in that any transcendence (ek-sistence) in it, any openness to Being as withdrawal (to the invisible, to mystery), has disappeared (Ferry and Renaut, 1990: 214).

These sketches are clearly not scholarly rigorous. I did not want to engage in a close philosophical reading, but rather sketch what is the common-sense narrative of western progress. Even though these discourses are not identical, and sometimes contradict each other, they weave together in such a way as to produce a normative picture of the heroic and triumphal modern subject. It is a narrative we westerners are all familiar with, which shapes us, even though it impacts on us in different ways depending on where we find ourselves located in it. It is one we use all the time, if in varying ways.

The basic narrative goes like this: somewhere after the "Dark" Ages humanity began to wake up into consciousness of himself [sic] as a rational and free being in the world. This consciousness allowed for a new ethical imperative: act in the world, transform the world.
Nothing must be left to chance or to fate. Decisions thus are within his purview: he must now weigh, measure, and count the evidence around him and eventually come to some conclusion, some decision, about them. In order to direct his own life, be purposive and productive, he must be sole owner of it, guiding, shaping, and choosing of his own free will. He must rise above himself. This requires a turning away from oneself: the renunciation of that which is particular and bounded, in favour of a reason which is the universal law - that transcendence which is in man himself, that which is founding, which is prior to particularity.

We can characterize the discourses of modernity as a revolt against arbitrariness in general, and the awful contingencies of life. Practices must bear some kind of logical relationship to reality "out there," the nature of which can be ascertained through techniques of quantification and calculation. "The veil of reverence was torn asunder, and behind it was nought but a mass of illogicalities and absurdities" (Hazard, 1963: 5). For the deists the only mystery which could not be known was God, and for the atheists there was, in principle, nothing which could not be known, or, that which escaped the domain of reason was not relevant to proper living anyway. This knowledge, compiled and arranged through rational analysis, could be put to good use by averting the innumerable human miseries of the time. A new security could be established on the basis of a new knowledge. "Reason is self-sufficing. Whoso possesses reason and uses it aright, never goes astray" (Hazard, 1963: 29). "Access to the self becomes access to the subject of knowledge, thus the submission of individuality to universal values that define truth and the scientific" (Ferry and Renaut, 1990: 115).

The hegemonic discourse is still one in which it is held that the shape of our life does result from our own wilful existential choices which arise in and through the capacity of an interiority
which is split from the world: which stands apart from it, alone, in a knowledgeable and informed manner. We know that this existential freedom requires rigorous regulation and surveillance: in fact, the more freedom, the more surveillance is required - surveillance by government, and ultimately of the self by the self. Hence it becomes logically possible to emancipate yourself, to transform yourself, to raise your consciousness, to be responsible for yourself, to find yourself, to know yourself, to shape yourself, to make something of yourself, to care for yourself, to love yourself, to control yourself, to observe yourself, to chastise yourself, to push yourself toward greatness or happiness or success; in short, to act upon yourself for some purpose. But this self-governance is marked as modern (as Foucault suggests in *History of Sexuality*, care of the self was also a practice of the Greeks) because it is not just an expression of the aesthetic particularity of a person, but the required practice of proper living. The truth of (this) humanity lies in a practice of calculating the utility for the future of this very practice of self acting upon self: greater effectiveness, control, happiness, productivity, empathy, knowledge. Foucault argues that there is no theory of this kind of subject before the onset of modernity (even while there were articulations of self-mastery and good living in Greco-Roman literature) in which a preexisting self - self-transcendent through its own rationality - is posited as that which can be found, managed, and ultimately liberated from its boundaries. "[The modern subject] experiences the world and itself through a series of separations and distances. The separation between 'subject' and 'object', between the 'inner world' of the individual and the 'external world', a gap which is experienced and understood as filled with reason (or loss) and which leads this subject towards particular forms of knowledge of the world" (Ogborn, 1995: 68).
The point of these sketches is to show that it is this triumphal notion of modern western subjectivity which provides the justification for the regulatory activity of schooling. We teach, so we say, to liberate from ignorance and superstition, to humanize, to control and manage the world. We in the west *teach to know*. When the mandate of public education is questioned or critiqued, in the name of freedom, it is this subjectivity which is recalled to our attention.

Education produces a rational, knowledgable citizenry: its subversion in the name of freedom would subvert freedom itself, as freedom is figured as the initiation into Reason as Law. The paradox of state-provided and regulated services is that they are provided in a specific way in the name of the liberation of modernity. In enlightening "the masses" by initiating them into the norm of proper living through the discipline of education, they are more and more separated (though never entirely successfully) from the local, particular, and differentiated contexts in which diverse forms of proper living exist and confront each other, and in which Reason as Law does not exist. When universal freedom through Reason as Law has been achieved, what would there to be left to choose from?
CHAPTER FOUR:

CHOICE AFTER STRUCTURALISM: A POST-STRUCTURAL TREATMENT
OF THE THEORETICAL PROBLEM OF CHOICE

The greatest part of mankind, Locke concludes, cannot be left to the guidance of the law of nature or law of reason; they are not capable of drawing rules of conduct from it. For "the day-labourers and tradesmen, the spinsters and dairy-maids,...hearing plain commands, is the sure and only course to bring them to obedience and practice. The greatest part cannot know, and therefore they must believe" (Macpherson, 1962: 225).

The ideal of impartial moral reason corresponds to the Enlightenment ideal of the public realm of politics as attaining the universality of a general will that leaves difference, particularity, and the body behind in the private realms of family and civil society (I. M. Young, 1990a: 97).

The discourses of modernity which I briefly described excite and inspire: they manifest an audacity, a stubbornness, a persistence, a conceit, a cheekiness, a grandeur, and a confidence on a scale not seen before. They preach the will to mastery, the will to uncompromising self-assertion, the will to liberation from tired old forms of life. This was manifest in social reform movements at the time of the emergence of compulsory education. The world is entirely malleable, and entirely accessible. Entire populations of people could be known, managed,
liberated, saved from themselves. Why is it, however, that the story is not so simple? Why is it that the free choice, which surely should be the organizing principle of the practical outcome of these discourses, should also be precisely and rigorously foreclosed by them? Why would it be that the very emancipation (from ignorance, "narrow" or traditional worldviews) supposedly achieved by universal, free education as a public good, which my interlocutor of Chapter One was so inspired by, would be reason enough to close down on options, alternatives, dissentions, as a public good (that is, equally available to all). I argue that it is because there is a deep suspicion from within modernity of its own discourse: firstly, this radical liberation through reason doesn't seem to describe how people actually operate in the world; secondly, it is a risky affair for those concerned with governing - freedom without a standard of conduct is a frightening thought - what if this new freedom allowed for modes of living which did not conform to the law of reason? The freedom effect had to be produced in the context of restructuring the conduct of life itself. Emancipating reason had to be instantiated by a new intensity of governmentalization. Foucault writes: "The history of the nineteenth century has laid itself open to the continuation of the kind of criticism - which Kant had placed somewhat in the background in relation to Aufklärung - with regard to something like Aufklärung itself." He continues,

The historical foothold that seemed to be offered to Kantian critique much more than to the courage of the Aufklärung consisted quite simply of these fundamental traits: first, a positivist science, that is, a science fundamentally having confidence in itself, even as it found itself carefully criticized with regard to each of its results; second, the development of a state or state system that, on the one hand, presented itself as the profound reason and rationality of history and that, on the other, chose as instruments procedures of rationalizing the economy and society; whence the third trait, the style of this scientific positivism in the development of states, a science of a state or statism...(1996: 388).
Governmentalization of the state is understood, by Foucault, as the seeping into the activities of
daily life of modes of rationality which structure that activity in specific ways, ways which are
meant to guarantee freedom and proper subjectivity itself. Hence the state must not be reified as
"a thing" which is out there in opposition to the people, but as a series of rationalities in which
state operations take up many different locations within society, regulating the details of the life
of the people. Hence, talking about governmental services is a better way of talking about what
we generally call the state. The state, then, is no longer rules directly, but rather manages the
shaping of the "conduct of conduct" of citizens, including their "freedom." Colin Gordon writes:
"a whole aspect of modern societies, Foucault was suggesting here, could be understood only by
reconstructing certain 'techniques of power', or of 'power/knowledge', designed to observe,
monitor, shape and control the behaviour of individuals situated within a range of social and
economic institutions such as the school, the factory and the prison...." He continues,

Foucault saw it as a characteristic (and troubling) property of the development of the
practice of government in Western societies to tend towards a form of political
sovereignty which would be a government of all and of each, and whose concerns would
be at once to "totalize" and to "individualize" (Burchell, Gordon and Miller, 1991: 3).

Hence the governmentalization of the state addresses both general populations and autonomous
individuals where they live concretely. I am suggesting that governmentality therefore
"individualizes" cultural and communal life. "What might be called a natural-social demand for
order, or for mechanisms to integrate individuals into appropriate schemes of behaviour and
activity is met by an expertise licensed by the state but formally independent of it: medicine,
psychiatry, psychology, criminology, pedagogy and so on" (Burchell, Gordon and Miller, 1991: 41).

Foucault's is an example of twentieth century critiques of the liberatory narrative of the discourses of modernity - which bind an absolute liberation to certain kinds of regulation - which do not simply ground the critique in the same liberatory narrative. Gordon writes:

...What Foucault finds most fascinating and disturbing in the history of Western governmental practice and its rationalities is the idea of a kind of power which takes freedom itself and the "soul of the citizen," the life and life-conduct of the ethically free subject, as in some sense the correlative object of its own suasive capacity (in Burchell, Gordon and Miller, 1991: 5).

Rather than asserting an *a priori* free individual which is injured by this kind of freedom and these kinds of regulations, Foucault suggests that the very regulatory practices which produce modern subjects also make available "counter-conducts." Hence arise the demands for the possibility of other regulating rationalities, for alternatives, for choices, for freedom to be "other." For instance, "as governmental practices have addressed themselves in an increasingly immediate way to "life," in the form of the individual detail of individual sexual conducts, individuals have begun to formulate the needs and imperatives of that same life as the basis for political counter-demands" (Gordon in Burchell, Gordon and Miller, 1991: 5).

Hence, against the contention of my interlocutor of Chapter One, there is a certain critical intervention possible which posits choice as a political tool with which to practice a "counter-politics," with which to make "counter-demands," without invoking the notion of absolute liberation. Exactly from the "site" of this kind of regulation springs the sense that "I" am not this, "we" are not this. It is precisely *this* possibility which modernity throws up and which could constitute its liberatory moment. Fighting for a place for counter-definitions of proper living is a
project of a radical democracy, which figures the public space as one riddled with different modes of proper living. Those balking at being governed in that way ought to be hailed as true (post)moderns, even if what they choose for themselves goes against the injunctions of modern subjectivity itself - especially, spiritually or religiously inspired modes of life.

In this chapter I elaborate on this line of thought using Butler's notion of performativity and to a lesser degree Derrida's notion of the decision. I intend to strengthen the notion that choice can be a counter-practice to absolute liberation and its regulatory techniques promulgated in the discourses of modernity. It serves to break up the homogenizing, unifying, and universalizing norms which posit a standard of proper living. Choice therefore cannot itself properly be said to be founded on any universalist notion of the rational, liberated subject, which my interlocutor of Chapter One suggests. The freedom of choice of which I speak can be described more accurately in these terms, as Foucault states, "rather than speaking of an essential freedom, it would be better to speak of an "agonism" - of a relationship which is at the same time reciprocal incitation and struggle..." (quoted in Burchell, Gordon and Miller, 1991, 5). Choice, in this sense, presupposes an agency which is contingent and particular. "Power is defined as 'actions on others' actions'" (Gordon in Burchell, Gordon and Miller, 1991: 5). Actions take place concretely in local contexts; actions do not occur in a universal space.

Thus, agency is possible precisely because there is no universal site of the subject. This is in contrast to structuralist critiques of modernity which describe a social totality without an agentic subject - which is the only place my interlocutor of Chapter One was able to go following her critique of the modern subject. This foreclosing on agency and choice constitutes one of the
darker moments of modernity, in which colossal abstractions take its place: History, Structure, Society.

I begin this chapter with a critique of structuralism and end with poststructural accounts of the choosing, agentic subject.

One of the vexing problems/questions of modernity has been the dialectic of the universal and the particular, the transcendent and the contingent, or as Derrida puts it the problem of the "invariable presence" - that is, a centre which is always both inside and outside its structure of intelligibility as first ground: "eidos, arche, telos, energeia, ousia (essence, existence, substance, subject) aletheia, transcendentality, consciousness, God, man, and so forth" (Derrida, 1987: 279-280) David Kolb states this in more prosaic language:

We often compare ourselves to others as if we moderns were members of a group with its own traditional ways, but when we think about the superiority of modern individualist ways, we tend to think that we are what one becomes when one sheds traditional ways. We are the modern people who can judge and accept or reject. We are not bound by tradition....Our modern individualism is a purer "human" identity that has something to do with being an "individual" before one is Italian or Swedish or Japanese. One is free to choose, free from the restraints of traditional fixed values (1986: 4).

There are many critiques of the solution to the universal/particular binary found in modernity. There are theories in which it is stated that the premises of modernity simply need to be expanded, as they stand, to ensure inclusivity in this universality: modernity, a good in itself, has let some of its constituents down, but reparation can be made. The excluded can also become moderns. Some kinds of ground-breaking feminist, race, and class analyses take on this strategy. Where women, "other races," workers were prohibited entry to the republic of reason, this can be
reversed. It can be shown that "the other" of modernity is actually its full citizen. This manifests as policy in efforts at education, "development," modernization, westernization in which modernity is extended and expanded in order to fulfil its destiny as an inevitable stage of universal human evolution.

But most prominent amongst these theories have been a range of greater or lesser devastating critiques of modernity in itself, and in particular, of the modern subject, whose agency, rationality, universality - whose pure positivity in general - has been debunked. The "masters of suspicion," from Hegel, Marx, Freud, his interpreters, and critical theorists onward, take the positivities, idealisms, universalisms of modernity and implode them: reason never reaches the universal, transcendent, or invariant maxim in the individual - nor is that attempt relevant to politics (as Kant thought it was), the wilful agent is in fact determined by forces other than his or her own willing, the universal is in fact the particular ("man" is never also "woman," "humanity" never includes everyone alive on this planet), consciousness is in fact constituted on every side by the unconscious, the generalized other is in fact always the concrete other, the self-creator is in fact never originary, public man is always already private man, and vice-versa. Luc Ferry and Alain Renaut state:

In contemporary neo-Marxism, from Althusser to Bourdieu, modern humanism was simply assimilated to bourgeois ideology. We are all familiar with the doctrine that states that valorizing man as such masks differences of class - a doctrine that one can find even in Marx himself, and one that he uses with great skill in The Jewish Question for a radical critique of the Declaration of the Rights of Man of 1789. We also know how the theme of a critique of instrumental reason...is found all through the Marxist tradition, even in the Frankfurt School...(Ferry and Renaut, 1990: xi-xiii).

For Lacan, then, "bad analytic practice," is related to a theoretical error: that of believing in "this mirage that it is the individual, the human subject - and why him among all possible
subjects? - who is truly autonomous and that somewhere in him...there is the little man who is in man who makes the machine work" (quoted in Ferry and Renaut, 1990: 205). As Seyla Benhabib states:

Universalistic moral theories in the Western tradition from Hobbes to Rawls are substitutionalist, in the sense that the universalism they defend is defined surreptitiously by identifying the experiences of a specific group of subjects as the paradigmatic case of the human as such. These subjects are invariably white, male adults who are propertied or at least professional (1987: 81).

Or, if these subjects are inclusive of those not white, male, adult, propertied, professional, imposcd upon them is the performativity of the white, male, adult, propertied, and/or professional individual. Seyla Benhabib and Drucilla Cornell write:

Feminists argue...that the system of priorities developed by liberal political thought is belied by the inequality and hierarchy at the root of the dichotomies it so cherishes. For example, the public conception of the self as the equal and abstract bearer of rights from which liberalism proceeds, is belied by the inequality, asymmetry and domination permeating the private identity of this self as a gendered subject (1987: 10).

We can add to this, the raced and classed subject, as well.

In other words, the project of modernity - of positing reason as that universal human capacity which distances and controls the contingencies of life - went wrong somewhere along the way. It did not keep its promise of enlightenment in which "those real potentialities in a concrete historical situation [were specified] which could further the processes of human emancipation and overcome domination and repression" (Bernstein in Bernstein, 1985: 7). Reason becomes instrumental rationality without substance, the universalization of value becomes rigid standardization and social, cultural and political imperialism, formalization and proceduralization which was meant to free value difference up becomes the "iron cage" of bureaucracy, freedom becomes emptiness on the one hand (freedom as that which is left over when particularity has
been stripped away), and, on the other, simply something you can buy. Critiques of capitalism and commodity fetishism show us that value has been reduced to exchange value. Richard Bernstein writes:

Weber's thesis was interwoven with Marx's analysis of alienation and with Lukacs's Hegelian-Marxist theory of reification. The "hidden" logic of this form of rationalization is a logic of increased domination and repression. The domination of nature turns into the domination of human beings over other human beings, and ultimately into the nightmare of self-domination....Weber never gives in to the temptation of believing that there is a historical necessity, but Horkheimer and Adorno, in their late writings, come remarkably close to maintaining such an historical inevitability. They argue that the seeds of the triumph of Zweckrationalitat are already contained in the origins of western rationality - in what they call "identity logic" (Bernstein in Bernstein, 1985: 6).

The critical theory of gender, sexuality, "race," and class shows that the exclusions which discourses of modernity force in their attempt at a total knowledge and emancipation from the particular (tradition, culture, the body), has not just been an intellectual mistake in the history of ideas, but has done empirically observable damage on an unprecedented scale to those human beings who had the misfortune to be "the remainder" of the modernist totality, as Adorno, Horkheimer argue so well. Ferry and Renaut affirm this:

Immediately after the war, in fact, it is no exaggeration to say the "civilized societies," that is the entire Western world, could legitimately be accused of having engendered, or at least of having been unable to stop, two of the greatest political catastrophes of this century: colonialist imperialism and Nazism (1990: xiii).

At the same time, at the level of theory, there was an increasing suspicion about the adequacy of the categories of individual will, consciousness, intention to explain social and historical phenomena. Structuralist critiques counterposed this dangerous, because abjecting, "presentness," "centredness" and "knowingness" - the will to will of the modern subject, the universal norm which the essence of the human generates, fixes and polices - with some kind of
structure of reality which shows the modern subject up as an effect, an ideology, an illusion.

Derrida writes: "One can say with total security that there is nothing fortuitous about the fact that the critique of ethnocentrism - the very condition of ethnology - should be systematically and historically contemporaneous with the destruction of the history of metaphysics. Both belong to one and the same era" (Derrida, 1978: 282).

*Structure* becomes the answer to the metaphysics of humanism, because structure has no centre, no will, no author. It shows us that individualist triumphalism is a delusion. The individual is never a positivity, but only the effect of a constitutive outside. As Ferry and Renaut summarize Heidegger in *Kantbuch*:

"The perpetual relations of the *cogito* to the unthought": As a finite subject I am immersed in the "non-me," thus in the unthought that conditions me and that I do not control. Logically, the three fundamental sciences develop from this, which correspond to the three fundamental regions of the unthought. *Biology* responds to the fact that I am always already alive, that is, caught in the chain of the living, which always precedes my consciousness, surrounds me, and surpasses me; *philology* takes on language that is also given to me and preexists me, without my being able to do anything other than discover that it is already at work; finally, *economics* corresponds to the field of work that I will be plunged into, which is already organized, already structured by history (Ferry and Renaut, 1990: 103).

That is, there is always already something which precedes and shapes my existence, and this something is posited in the form of structures which determine particular forms of subjectivity.

This way of refiguring the social scene, either as a neutral statement about the reality of the real, or as a bitter acknowledgment that unassailable heteronomous forces (the development of western rationality, for instance) which make individual autonomy an impossibility, takes explanation for the way things are entirely away from an analysis in which what people actually think and do can register in any way as decisive, unpredictable, interruptive, disturbing, or new -
as, in other words, itself transformative of the structures "out there." What people actually think or do is placed under a grid of explanation which always has the last word. That is, explanation arises out of a causal chain in which my particularity is always already a predictable effect of the always already existing structures within which I reside.

The eminent *Annaliste* historian Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie entitled part 4 of his *Territory of the Historian* "History Without People." The expression articulates a major feature of recent French historiography: its neglect of, if not outright disdain for, the concepts of agency, personal responsibility, and teleology so central to traditional historiography. If the New History is history without people, it is also history without heroes and villains. As another prominent French historian remarked, unlike the old history with its emphasis on narrating the drama of human choice, the new history "focuses primarily on what underlies those choices, on what determines them and makes them inevitable despite the appearance of freedom. It prefers to analyze deeper trends rather than superficial changes, to study collective behaviour rather than individual choices" (Flynn, 1997: 32)

The power of structural analyses lie in identifying lines of determination which intersect to give the effect of "me" - not as a radical singularity (for how could we ever make meaningful statements about that?) but as a "type." We can meaningfully locate ourselves and others through this technique. Class, race, gender, sexuality, nationality, kinship, power, discourse, myth - and the structure of structures, language, are all structures of intelligibility which produce a "big" explanatory punch. These extra-individual structuralist explanations of how the social works results in critiques and prescriptions which are very different from those produced by such positive categories as personality, character, temperament, disposition, reason, intention, will, which in discourses of modernity are the source of explanation of social "events." Questions about individual intention, motivation, initiative, responsibility, are eclipsed by questions about power, structural constraint and enablement, systems of signs. With structuralism the determination of Being as *presence*, as Derrida states, gives place to a metaphor of the social
which has no centre, and in which the subject as conscious reason, especially, is not the centre.

Derrida writes:

Henceforth, it was necessary to begin thinking that there was no centre, that the centre could not be thought in the form of a present-being, that the centre had no natural site, that it was not a fixed locus but a function, a sort of nonlocus in which an infinite number of sign-substitutions came into play (Derrida, 1978: 280).

Thus, the metaphysics of humanism is meant to have been subverted. Yet, at the same time, as Derrida notes with regard to Levi-Strauss and structuralism as a play of substitutions without a centre, the structure itself becomes centre, presence, metaphysical ground of all being.

If Levi-Strauss, better than any other, has brought to light the play of repetition and the repetition of play, one no less perceives in his work a sort of ethic of presence, an ethics of nostalgia for origins, an ethic of archaic and natural innocence, of a purity of presence and self-presence in speech.... Turned towards the lost or impossible presence of the absent origin, this structuralist thematic of broken immediacy is therefore the saddened, negative, nostalgic, guilty, Rousseauistic side of the thinking of play whose other side would be the Nietzschean affirmation. (Derrida, 1978: 292).

Thus, however incisive the structuralist critique of "bourgeois" enlightenment metaphysics, of that model which I described in the last chapter, structuralism brings in a new metaphysics of the system of relations which makes its analysis one dimensional and doctrinaire: it can no longer theorize in any interesting way the diversity of micro-personal existence, because this existence is always already a mere effect of macro-structures.
THE STRUCTURAL ALLEGORY

From Foucault's declaration of the "death of man" at the end of The Order of Things to Lacan's affirmation of the radically antihumanist nature of psychoanalysis since "Freud's discovery" that "the true centre of the human being is no longer in the same place assigned to it by whole humanist tradition," the same conviction is upheld: The autonomy of the subject is an illusion (Ferry and Renaut, 1990: xxiii).

Althusser attacked humanism as the imaginary social relations of the bourgeoisie. By humanism he means all the qualities and attributes assigned to the a priori positive (consciously willful) individual as posited by the combination of all the discourses of modernity - this matrix - we surveyed in Chapter Two. He rereads Marx in order to find him, finally, unquestionably, an antihumanist. He states:

In 1845 Marx broke radically with every theory that based history and politics on an essence of man. This unique rupture contained three indissociable elements:
1 The formation of a theory of history and politics based on radically new concepts: the concepts of social formation, productive forces, relations of production, superstructure, ideologies, determination in the last instance by the economy, specific determination of other levels, etc.
2 A radical critique of the theoretical pretensions of every philosophical humanism.
3 The definition of humanism as an ideology (1969: 227).

The young Marx and the mature Marx are counterposed by Althusser: the mature Marx is the Marx washed clean of the primacy of the subject as the source of meaning and ethical concern in theoretical analysis - as a being who can be alienated from himself or herself. After this "epistemological break," the subject of modernity becomes for Marx, according to Althusser, an ideological imaginary, which allows its real relations of existence ("the law of a liberal capitalist economy") to be grounded in an imaginary relation ("all men are free, including free labourers") (Althusser, 1969: 280). For Marx, according to Althusser, other units of analysis take over from "alienated man" and lived experience (le vecu). These other units are structural in nature. That is, Althusser understands the necessity of the practical function of humanism as an ideology, but in
terms of explaining society through the science of society, humanism is an error as it only describes the imaginary lived experience of class society, leaving the real structural relations of existence untouched. As Althusser writes: "In ideology the real relation is inevitably invested in the imaginary relation, a relation that expresses a will (conservative, conformist, reformist or revolutionary), a hope or a nostalgia, rather than describing reality" (1969: 233).

Althusser maintains that ideology and science can be categorically separated: science describes the relation between people and their condition of existence, ideology describes the way people live that relation, which they invest with imaginary content. "As far as Althusser is concerned, 'imaginary' might be reduced to 'lived': it is the domain of emotion, affect, will and experience" (Barrett, 1991: 102). "Thus," states Althusser, "rupture with every philosophical anthropology or humanism is no secondary detail; it is Marx's scientific discovery" (1969: 227). "All scientific discourse is by definition a subject-less discourse, there is no 'Subject of science' except in an ideology of science" (1971: 160).

Althusser interprets Marx to be the first critical theorist who does away with universalism and essentialism. Michele Barrett writes: "Althusser maintained that Marx was able to banish these unsatisfactory inferences drawn from so-called 'human nature' because he had formulated a complete systemic alternative to the previous paradigm" (1991: 86). On the level of explanation then, first-person accounts exist in the realm of the ideological imaginary, in which the relation to one's own conditions of existence are framed by narratives which do not reflect the real nature of those relations - these narratives in modernity suppose that the "I" is the root of events in the world. For Althusser, "ideology is not restricted to the conscious level, it operates as images, concepts and, above all, as structures that impose themselves on us" (Barrett, 1991: 153).
This subject of ideology decisively impacts on the world through the lived experience of these images and concepts, but Marxist science - theoretical knowledge - reveals that this lived experience does not describe the ontological reality of persons. Althusser describes persons as "bearers of complex 'structures in dominance'" (quoted in Benton, 1984: 210). The lived relationship between people and the world is different from the actual relationship. While Althusser eliminated the modern subject - as the universal and essential subject - from the analysis of social relations, except as the imaginary lived relation of a particular class to their conditions of existence, he never argued that ideology could itself be eliminated. Ideology is both an error, and necessary for living. But he does suggest that the social scientist can produce a non-ideological account of social relations which, in the last instance, come down to the relations of production, a structure which determines social relations (Barrett, 1991: 100).

It is safe to suggest that most structuralist theories depend implicitly for legitimacy on the scientificity of their model, which can isolate and identify invariant, synchronic systems of differences which constitute the objective and subjective world. As Peter Dews writes:

"Certainly there was a widespread feeling that the field of philosophical thought was undergoing a fragmentation, and that the totalizing ambitions of 'metaphysics'...now stood in the way of a scientific knowledge of human beings and their social practices" (1994: 105). Structuralism exhibits the epistemological confidence of a science. The structure of whatever kind - economic, mental - is posited as an objective system of relations which can be known - rather than as an interpretative framework. The "conception of the social whole as a complex structured unity capable of objective analysis into its parts..." (Glucksmann, 1974) is not disturbed by actual activities of people, which cannot but be a mere manifestation of structural reality, nor
complicated by the question of the agency of the theorist. The insight of structuralism as an allegory is to show the social as a totality made up of particularly interconnected elements underlying observed phenomena, to which individual persons always already find themselves subjected, and which can be identified by the science of symptomatic reading. Steven Smith states, "In his Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis, Freud observed that in the past few centuries the "naive self-love" of man has been progressively humbled by advances in science" (1984: 193). Levi-Strauss' critique of the universalized interiority posited by the discourse of the modern subject, is, as Peter Dews shows, one which gains its leverage from the positing of an objective layer of reality:

For Levi-Strauss "understanding" must consist in total participation - in which case the social scientist ceases to be an "interpreter" - or it cannot take place at all...However, there does exist a solution, which consists in considering human action as governed by an unconscious system of social rules comparable to the rules of grammar. To isolate this system of rules requires a deliberate break both with the immediate experience of the members of the society under investigation, and with the assumptions which the enquirer brings from his or her own culture. Thus, although Levi-Strauss rejects the possibility of a "general interiority," he does accept what could be termed a "general exteriority," which he equates with the domain of a structural social science (Dews, 1995: 108).

Levi-Strauss wrote: "in order to attain the real, one must first repudiate lived experience" (quoted in Dews, 1995: 117). It has become a structuralist truism that "Man is dead," just as it is a truism of modernity in general that "God is dead." The death of Man describes the demise of a self-radiating, self-originating positivity, and the resurrection of Man as the effect of a structured system of differences. No universal centre, which we can most clearly picture as consciousness, is available around which to theoretically organize everything there is. Althusser wrote of Freud:

Freud has discovered for us that the real subject, the individual in his unique essence, has not the form of an ego, centred on the "ego," on "consciousness" or on "existence" - ... - that the human subject is de-centred, constituted by a structure which has no "centre"
either, except in the imaginary misrecognition of the "ego," i.e., in the ideological formations in which it "recognises" itself (Barrett, 1991: 103).

Althusser uses the psychoanalytic theory of Lacan to develop his own theory of the decentred subject. He suggests that subjects are constituted through being interpellated - hailed - by "the Law" (Althusser gives the liberal example of being hailed by a police officer) into subjecthood. Interpellation suggests that it is through a constitutive outside, rather than the well-spring of being - a positive interiority - that we become what we are in any given empirical situation. This notion of interpellation has resonated powerfully in structuralist thinking, for it has allowed theorists to speak about identity without falling into the metaphysics of the discourses of modern subjectivity. People are "called" into language in particular ways, as it were. "The use of the term 'interpellation' is an allusion to the theological concept of call, of being called by God...To be hailed is to become a subject" (Ricoer, 1994: 64). We recognize ourselves (Althusser relies on Lacan's rendering of the "mirror stage") by being hailed, "hey, you there," into the symbolic. In turning and answering the call of the police officer - answering or not answering amounts to the same thing - we become subjects of the state. Barrett writes:

In the moment of acknowledging a shout of "hey, you there!" of turning round to respond to the call, of confirmation that "it really is he" who was hailed, the subject is both positioned in ideology and confirmed in his own recognition of himself (Barrett, 1991: 101).

What is it that hails us? It is what Althusser calls ideological state apparatuses ("institutions, practices, rituals, etc." (Butler, 1997: 123)). We are called into the ideological realm and become concrete subjects as required by the ideological structures of the state by being called on to respond to their practices: the citizen, the student, the faithful daughter or son, and so forth, are functions which we misrecognize as our own ego-driven capacities, as the results of our own
wishes and desires. This is, as Althusser writes, "the reality which is necessarily [miscognized] in the very forms of recognition" (quoted in Ricoeur, 1994: 65). Because there will always be ideology - that call which hails us as a unified being - it is inevitable for concrete individuals that they miscognize themselves (just as the child misrecognizes itself in the mirror as a self-sufficient being). Science alone disrupts ideology, because it alone sees through the process of being hailed. It can analyse that very process itself. Peter Dews writes: "The epistemological break not only reveals the pre-history of science as erroneous, it makes possible an explanatory account of that error: presicely a 'theory of ideology'" (Dews, 1994: 120).

Structural allegories are informed by Saussure's structural linguistics, in which "...the identity of a sign is given neither by the object to which it refers, nor by the intention of its user, but only by the system of differences and oppositions which constitute the language to which it belongs" (Benton: 1984: 10). The linguistic allegory provides a model for social analysis which shows us that meaning does not derive from a single source - meaning cannot be found in THE WORD - but rather from a structured systems of differences. Semiology asserts that the relationship between signified and signifier is arbitrary, and that speech is only possible in the context of language - which is a structured totality. As Ted Benton writes:

Any specific utterance may communicate a message only on condition that it satisfies the complex of rules for the combination of signs which constitutes the language in which the utterance occurs. Only set against the context of the set of other possible combinations allowed in this sign-system can this particular utterance communicate a message. The meaning of an utterance, then, cannot be the direct expression of the inner states of the subject. On the contrary, the subject may use language to convey a meaning only to the extent that he or she "submits," or becomes "subject"...to an externally established...sign-system (1984: 11-12).
Structural anthropology took semiology to be the allegory for social phenomena, in which various practices are pictured as languages. Semiology allows anthropology a mathematization of its subject, as constituent units can be identified, their interrelations isolated and studied, and the meaning of any utterance can be seen to be derived from the sequence in which units are placed. For structuralists the world is organized by the combination and articulation of basic given elements: "...the correct units of study are relationships between structural elements, not individuals, and...the structural elements are not necessarily observable" (Glucksman, 1974: 164). For Levi-Strauss, underlying structures reduced ultimately to natural structures are a universal feature of social organization, just as mathematical principles underlie every mathematical operation. Or,

to take the musical analogy, of which Levi-Strauss was so fond, empirical cases of, say, a particular type of marriage regulation or a particular myth are variations on a theme and the structure is the underlying theme although it may never be manifested in pure form. All the theoretically possible variants are rarely realized in practice, but a consideration of them permits the definition of their common underlying structure (Glucksman, 1974: 36-37).

In terms of explanation then, social rituals and myths do not manifest their "reality" explicitly - observation alone will give us no answers, although close observation is important for the gathering of raw data; rather, "second order theorization," or an analytic, is required to explain what is really occurring. As Levi-Strauss wrote: "...one comes to realize that these features belong to two entirely different levels, or rather to two stages of the same process" (Levi-Strauss, 1968: 280). Raw data alone says nothing; empiricists are wrong to assume that meaning resides on the surface of events, that empirical observation "adds" nothing to the data. Structuralism acknowledges that every genuine knowledge production does not stop at appearance, but tries to
get to the essence of the logic, the system, the practice. Hence, what is added to empirical observation is not simply a grid facilitating intelligibility - not simply, in other words, a model - but the discovery of a hidden law which manifests in empirical phenomena and which is not visible through observation. As Miriam Glucksman writes: "Levi-Strauss thus agrees with Marx that scientific analysis would be superfluous if the phenomenal appearance and the essence of things coincided" (1974: 39).

The discourses of modernity such as humanism, the Enlightenment, liberalism, and capitalism become prime candidates of symptomatic reading. The modern subject is an appearance thrown up by certain underlying structures which are legitimated by the imaginary lived relations of individuals. The sense of reflexive and critical self-hood which the discourses of modernity produce - the moment of interiority in which I contemplate myself - is always already a mystification, because the "I" is an experience which sits on the surface - it is an effect rather than a cause. Consciousness of self as self in freedom is a kind of ideological unconsciousness of the laws of subject constitution. Althusser writes: "Ideology has always-already interpellated individuals as subjects...individuals are always-already subjects" (Althusser, 1971: 164). While it is true for him that subjects are always already subjects through the operation of ideology, for Althusser this is not only a descriptive statement. The critique enters as soon as the science of Marxist theory is posited as that which escapes interpellation as a subject. That is, the third-person account by the scientist or analyst of first-person "beliefs" is always pure of and uncontaminated by first-person beliefs. Marxist science, or "theory," can show then that "...only through this constitution of the individual as a 'centre of initiatives, author of and responsible for
its actions' can the life of society as well as the reproduction of the relations of production be guaranteed and secured" (Smith, 1984: 135) (within modernity).

This "discovery" of the mechanism at work behind the effect of "I" depends on an implicit notion of an authoritative reason which stands beyond the inevitability of ideology as a social function. Science then stands beyond the social. "Althusser's position on the intrinsically 'ideological' character of humanism is obviously bound up with his insistent claims that he is able to formulate a clear distinction between science and ideology" (Barrett, 1991: 87).

THE POSTSTRUCTURALIST REFIGURING OF SUBJECTIVITY:

If I understand deconstruction, deconstruction is not an exposure of error, certainly not other people's error. The critique in deconstruction, the most serious critique in deconstruction, is the critique of something that is extremely useful, something without which we cannot do anything. (Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak in Butler, 1993: 27).

...Mimesis always involves rupture and a differentiation from itself, repetition always invokes a disconcerting reinvention or mobility (Locoue-Labarthe and Nancy, 1997: xiv).

Structures do not take to the streets (May '68 slogan).

The relationship between structuralism and poststructuralism is far from straightforward. Some commentators take them to be theoretical problematics which are in a relationship of continuity to one another: hence what one can say about structuralism one can also say of poststructuralism. John Fekete writes in The Structural Allegory that
The post-structural formalization is thus programmatically committed to seeing all increases in the measure of satisfaction, all forms of human coherence and attempts to achieve plenitude, in a negative light (1984: xv).

Meili Steele writes:

What accompanies this particular ethical/political configuration in literary theory is the disappearance of agency, the absence of a theory of the constructing, as well as of the constructed, subject. In the poststructuralist paradigm, the "subject" becomes simply an effect of forces working behind the back of the agent....In a world composed only of impersonal forces rather than agents and values, hermeneutics and ethics disappear in favour of political accounts of these forces and their effects (Steele, 1997: 6-7).

Contrary to these contentions, poststructuralism, like postmodern theories in general, offers a decisive break from structuralism from within the structuralist problematic itself - and hence also from structuralism's dogmatic anti-humanism as the stripping down of ideology: this, indeed, is its very point, and is crucial to my attempt to salvage a notion of choice from the discourses of the autonomous subject on the one hand and the structuralist subject on the other.

To speak about structuralism and poststructuralism as a simple continuum, or as a simple break, makes no sense at all. In as much as poststructuralism is a feature of postmodernity, we can see that actually, the postmodern cultural critique errrs rather on the other side of Fekete's complaint. Increasingly cultural studies, and other disciplines as well, focus on the details of lived experience - describing and understanding the detailed self-descriptions of subjects, situated in their culture, in the mode of micro-narrative, rather than in the mode of a meta-scientific explanation. While this does not entail a new positivism - poststructural analysis problematizes the fact/value distinction, and the empiricist claim that observation could be free of a preceding analytic or problematic - the metaphor of social organization focuses on surfaces rather than invisible depths. In the revolt against theories of false consciousness, self-described experiences of plenitude are taken at face value - if not as "true," then not as "false" either - in contrast to
ideology critique. This is not to suggest that poststructuralism takes up again a naive theory of representation, but precisely the opposite: it suggests that representation is all there is, representation is the real, and no science - social or otherwise - can evade its mediation. Poststructuralism, then, rather than simply entrenching the subjected subject of structuralism, destabilizes the metaphysical idea of "impersonal force" as much as it destabilizes the metaphysical idea of "presence," leaving as the ground indeterminateness itself, and thereby helps us theorize the impossible possibility: singularity which is in excess of both structure (laws of society and history) and individual (laws of Man) and is produced through the undecidable in any contingent space, without which there would be no ethics or politics. As Derrida writes: "If one does not take rigorous account of undecidability, it will not only be the case that one cannot act, decide or assume responsibility, but one will not even be able to think the concepts of decision and responsibility (Derrida, 1996: 87). This is the refigured subject of choice which I will elaborate in what follows.

Poststructuralist theories of subjectivity theorize the subject as simultaneously subjected/subjectivating; that is, as both utterly emerging through the "constitutive outside" and radically impacting on that "constitutive outside." As Judith Butler writes.

How...is subjection to be thought and how can it become a site of alteration? A power exerted on a subject, subjection is nevertheless a power assumed by the subject, an assumption that constitutes the instrument of that subject's becoming (Butler, 1997: 8).

In contrast to Steele's assertion, over and over again, explicitly or implicitly, one sees in poststructuralism that the "death of Man" (the universal law) is not celebrated with regard to some newly posited metaphysics of the structure, but rather with regard to an excess, a
remainder, a trace which disrupts both the order of the Structure and the order of Man. It is precisely poststructural theories which try to schematize the process of self-constitution and the constitution of the self as flowing in two directions simultaneously: there is no "origin of action" in either the agent or the structure - these two terms are not in opposition to each other, nor are they in a relation of cause and effect, they are each other's condition of possibility - agent and structure necessarily co-arise. The constitutive subject and the constituted subject are the same subject: constraint is the same as enablement, and enablement presupposes constraint. But none of this is static. Poststructuralism leaves the synchronic stasis of structuralism for a theory of movement, flow, repetition through time, which creates instability in the system as it creates the effect of system itself, and therefore the possibility of derailment of the line of meaning onto some new line, going off in some new and unexpected direction. Butler writes:

...When the subject is said to be constituted, that means simply that the subject is a consequence of certain rule-governed discourses that govern the intelligible invocation of identity. The subject is not determined by the rules through which it is generated because signification is not a founding act, but rather a regulated process of repetition that both conceals itself and enforces its rules precisely through the production of substantializing effects. In a sense, all signification takes place within the orbit of the compulsion to repeat; "agency," then, is to be located within the possibility of a variation on that repetition (1990: 145).

Discourses regulate the intelligible invocation of an "I." Hence, a particular religious discourse, for example, produces a certain kind of "I" which is sustained by a constant invocation of that "I," both in language and in practice. There is, in other words, no single moment in which the "I" is established within a particular discourse, after which it simply "exists." Rather, the particular "shape" and "contour" of that "I" has to be constantly re-iterated, in order to ensure its "reality," and this re-iteration operates at the level of practice. "I" act as this particular "I," and in so acting
it becomes "real" and "solid." If I no longer so acted, continuously and consistently, this particular "I" would disappear.

Poststructuralism does not suppose it can counter structuralism with an even more positive discipline: hence it must take an entirely different strategy regarding the problem/issue/question of the subject. For, I will argue, the poststructural and postmodern accounts of subjectivity disavow the unassailability of the normalized subject and theorize difference as the ground upon which the hegemonic act of normalization takes place, whereas structuralism hoped it could theorize without the subject altogether, and rationalism theorized solely on the basis of a posited natural subject. What, then, is the theoretical relationship between the first-person experience of "empirical persons" and third-person explanation? The theoretical grasp of the difference between the absolute excess of singularity and its organization into that which is intelligible is important for a retheorization of choice as practice.

The radical critiques which posit structure in the place of the idealism of agency, as important interjections as they are, do not escape the triumphalistic discourses of modernity. They only manage to shift their presumptions. As Judith Butler writes:

There are defenders and critics of construction, who construe that position along structuralist lines. They often claim that there are structures that construct the subject, impersonal forces, such as Culture or Discourse or Power, where these terms occupy the grammatical site of the subject after the "human" has been dislodged from its place. In such a view, the grammatical and metaphysical place of the subject is retained even as the candidate that occupies that place appears to rotate (1993: 9).

Clearly, the sciences of structure - once having "discovered" it - attempt to pin down the unthought by thinking it, once and for all. Structure itself is the new metaphysical Subject: the unthought, thought. The "masters of suspicion" are themselves suspect, because at the end of the
day they simply reinstate in another guise that which they take such pains to dethrone. Geoff Bennington and Robert Young write:

...Structuralism involves a method of analysis in which individual elements are considered not in terms of any intrinsic identity but in terms of their relationship within the system in which they function. A system is regarded as constituted by the differences between the elements that operate within it: structuralism attempts to examine the structure of such systems from a more "impersonal" or "scientific" perspective than that of the perceiving or intending subject. Post-structuralism might be said to be suspicious of the apparent ease with which this "decentering" of the subject is carried out, and to submit that operation to more rigorous consequences of difference: the first casualty of this being the very possibility of the closed system on which structuralism is predicated (in Attridge, Bennington and Young, 1993: 1).

The critique of the discourses of the modern subject was pertinent - the interjection had to be made. The willing subject as the founding act of the world was both normatively a dangerous idea, and explained too little. But to have supposed to have fundamentally *overcome, or moved beyond* these discourses was a mistake, a mystification in its own right. It was a purification which contaminated itself: it attempted to erase the modern subject, but could only do so (being a critique) by using the presuppositions which ground the modern subject itself - the assertion of a trumping "principle of all principles" posited by a rational knower - the social scientist - just before the rational knower was made to disappear. As Marcus Doel writes:

> Whichever line is followed, the place of the subject is always made available to an-Other occupant. Hence the fact that every response to the negation of the subject is always accompanied by the speculative question: who comes after the subject? Even in death, the subject will subsist through hypertelia: "I am - dead" (Courtaine 1988: 103). The vampiric subject, what a horror! It is precisely in this sense that the decline of the subject in contemporary social theory remains haunted by a resurrection and return of the repressed (1995: 228-229).

Structuralist critiques use the categories of modernity against modernity - critique is after all a definitional practice of modernity - while imagining that it has found a privileged "outside" vis-a-
vis that discourse. For how can we legitimize the statement that the claim to autonomy and reason is a mystification, unless there is an unmystified field of the human that we can identify, and thereby enter the domain of philosophical anthropology all over again?

Foucault writes: "Those who are most responsible for contemporary humanism are obviously Hegel and Marx" (quoted in Ferry and Renaut, 1990: 98). But Freud and his interpreters and the Critical Theorists, even Heidegger, and certainly the structuralists, also effect a new kind of humanism in the sense that their critique is always of an error in describing human subjectivity (for example, as a "full presence"): if it is not the positivity of humanism, the Enlightenment, liberalism and capitalism - essence, reason, autonomy, will - then it is a non-positivity, marked by alterity, difference - the ground of being is simply shifted, put under erasure. Ferry and Renaut call this phenomenon the "higher bid." The critique of reason recoups reason in another light; the critique of agency finds it in another place; the critique of the particular as universal, establishes a true universal; consciousness is healed of the trauma of the unconscious - the unthought is thought; the concrete other finds its generalized partner again; the original is found simply in another register of theory; "man" and citizen are united again. This in itself, however, is not the problem. The problem lies here: what we are left with is a transcendental subject of some sort, but one without the theoretical possibility of unpredictability, eccentricity, mystery, will, transgression, chance, and above all, the radical, a-rational, moment of decision and choice.

We are left with the worst part of a bad thing.

Penetrated by relations of force, what used to be called the subject no longer, in fact, appears, in the process of this intrinsically reifying approach, to be anything but an object or a machine whose gears, it is claimed, are being dismantled and whose mechanisms are being uncovered (Ferry and Renaut, 1990: 208).
It is only when we get to poststructural renderings of the modern subject that this critique takes a new form. Poststructural problematizing of science and its ostensible privileged access to truth made poststructural critique a much more methodologically complex endeavour than the critical theory which came before it: all critical theories found a "last instance" which could legitimate, or ground, a claim to truth. Poststructural theories "demonstrat[e] the connection of science to power, [and find] the roots of truth in the soil of politics" (Poster, 1989: 54). Marx's definition of critique as "the self-clarification of the struggles and wishes of the age" (quoted in Fraser, 1987: 31) which recasts the Enlightenment notion of critique as rational thought invading the terrain of prejudice through the mechanism of reflective distanciation to find the truth under a distortion or domination, is recast again to exclude the notion of scientificity from self-clarification: traditional theory (ideology) and critical theory (science) are no longer so opposed. Critique here suggests simply the denaturalization of naturalizing discourses as and where they occur, the shaking of all self-evidences.

Horkheimer's statement that "[critical theory's] goal is man's emancipation from relationships that enslave him," (1972: 188) - critique since the time of Kant was meant to initiate this emancipation from domination - is problematized by poststructural theory, but not renounced by it. The problematization is phrased like this: What is it that people would be emancipated into? If that which people are to be emancipated into is a universal state of Proper Living, then suspicion abounds; if their emancipation is the freedom attained in a concrete setting from a concrete practice then the ominous overtones are eliminated. Thus, it is in poststructuralism that the terms "domination" and "emancipation" are put under quotation-marks precisely because there is no fixed referent, no self-evident ground (agent or structure) which could give them
universal meaning, which would algorithmically describe the path from the former to the latter. Yet, poststructural theories can recoup those terms by theorizing domination and emancipation precisely in terms of injunction to Proper Living. Those terms are rescued precisely to describe any attempt to force a reconciliation between beings in the world and The Proper: all modes of domination integrate or exclude beings in the world through the legitimation of an ostensibly universally valid template. Laclau puts it like this:

Let us return once more to the contingent and unstable relationship between fullness of the community and its singular and transient forms of incarnation. If the fullness of the community had found its true body, no democratic competition between forces attempting to incarnate that fullness would be possible. The rationality of the only one possible choice would make a joke of the very notion of choice. The perverse logic of the "love at first sight" would make any dialectics of love impossible (Laclau, 1996: 59).

Poststructuralism posits, then, what I will call the ontology of excess, or the ontology of singularity as excess, and precisely in this ontological moment of excess the decision and the choice come in to play, as that which comes before The Law, disrupting all teleologies. As Alan Bass writes in the "Translator's Notes" to Derrida's Writing and Difference,

This excess is often posed as an aporia, the Greek word for a seemingly insoluble logical difficulty: once a system has been "shaken" by following its totalizing logic to its final consequences, one finds an excess which cannot be construed within the rules of logic, for the excess can only be conceived as neither this nor that, or both at the same time - a departure from all rules of logic (1978: xvi-xvii.)

We will see that the destruction of The Proper as ground of all being creates a terrain of the undecidable which forces a decision, a choice, which is not just the following of a universal law of being. I will elaborate this line of exposition below. In the following chapter I attempt address why this high-theoretical discussion is worth our time at all, by showing how it can support a normative demand for a radical, post-liberal democracy - a "better" society.
In Heidegger's language, thinking of being as the openness of beings to Being, marks a departure from the closure in the last instance that defines both the modern subject and its structuralist refutation. Poststructuralism is a kind of humanism, too, then. *It opens up* the notion of the subject in order to counter the reification of humanist metaphysics, and therefore makes itself open also to the charge of humanism and metaphysics - because now the openness of being is posited in the last instance as the ground of all being. As Ferry and Renaut write: "This reminder that the human condition escapes the status of a thing, instead of generating any type of antihumanism, is the indispensable precondition of all humanism of whatever type" (Ferry and Renaut, 1990: 210) Structuralism's supposed escape from metaphysics is refuted by poststructuralism, which itself, as Derrida suggests, cannot hope itself ever to be innocent of metaphysics. Metaphysics can only be problematized, it cannot be erased altogether, because the very act of total erasure would be a metaphysical gesture.

The attempt to "move beyond" metaphysics, is a metaphysical attempt, for the site of the beyond is a metaphysical site, and the will to overcome and reasons for overcoming find their condition of possibility precisely in the subject of modernity which itself was to be overcome. This is the point, there is no *beyond*, only a reworking of the elements that are already *here*. That is, paradoxically, in order not to duplicate the metaphysical act, there can be no total moving beyond metaphysics.

Thus, while poststructuralisms of every type condemn the modern subject as closed onto itself, it is not ever thought to be gotten rid of in favour of a truer subjectivity, through the accomplishment of a more rigorous reflection, a more exacting critique or science - for this in itself would have implicated it in the very conceit of the closure of modernity which it targets.
The modern subject is "shaken" by being particularized, but it is not overcome. It is found to consist of a fixed set of normative injunctions in reference to The Proper which actually forecloses the possibility of the moment of decision or choice, rather than guaranteeing it. Once these normative injunctions become evident as emerging in a particular time and space, rather than as the Truth of Being, then the modern subject becomes a less dangerous site - rather a subjectivity whose characteristics can be deconstructed and reconstructed, used and abandoned, valued and discarded, depending on the practices at hand; that is, a subjectivity who is not itself erased in toto in the name of yet another Proper.

The discourses of modernity are never overcome: they are simply refigured, disarrayed, problematized. In the end, every poststructuralist thinker "returns," albeit with an entirely different consequence, into the modern and "plunders" what she or he finds there. The "post," as Lyotard writes, of the postmodern resides within the modern (Lyotard, 1984). In this problematization, structure and agency, the universal and the particular, first-person understanding and third-person explanation, become irreducible registers (rather than a dialectic which can be resolved into a synthesis), in constant slippage between each other, neither ever successfully reduced to the other, but which rather co-arise at the same time, without any priority. Judith Butler's notion of performativity attempts to describe this, as I will show below.

I use the word plunder advisedly as it implies both total iconoclasm, that is, a total breaking of the integrity of a system of signs, and a recognition of the value of the stolen goods. As Foucault writes, one must not be "for" or "against" the Enlightenment, for example, but "we must try to proceed with the analysis of ourselves as beings who are historically determined, to a certain extent, by the Enlightenment," and in this regard direct our inquiries "...toward what is not or is
no longer indispensable for the constitution of ourselves as autonomous subjects" (Foucault, 1985: 43).

The deconstructive branch of postmodern thought does not boot out "the human" and then retrieve it through the back door (which is what structuralism does implicitly through its ideology critique), but rather deconstructs and leaves it in pieces, as Derrida states, "by refusing to assign any 'proper' (attribute) to man [sic]" (quoted in Ferry and Renaut, 1990: xxiv). Deconstruction, thus, only ever succeeds in subverting metaphysics and the humanist subject by placing them in quotation marks: humanism is rejected because it forces an "inhumanity" on beings, because beings in the world exceed The Proper which humanism extols. The quotation marks register the groundlessness of every ground. Thus, the deconstruction of the subject is not meant to constitute a great nihilism, but in fact "restores" a notion of the "ethics" of the "personal particular" which was so thoroughly disavowed by the discourses of modernity and their structuralist critique.

Judith Butler: "Performativity" and "Materialization"

Judith Butler, in her various works, deals with the problem of the ostensible opposition between the sex (nature) and gender (culture) within feminist theory. She challenges the notion that there is ever a nature which resides underneath a cultural "sheath," and hence also problematizes identity politics which is based on the recovery or emancipation of a natural, liberated self. Against the stubborn notion that gender categories, "man" and "woman," were either the truth of
nature (linked necessarily to sex) or the falsity of culture (an ideology which hides the true nature of man and woman) - that gender practices as they stand today, in other words, are either biologically predetermined, or the false consciousness of a universal patriarchal system - Butler posits the notion of "performativity" as citationality. Butler quotes Derrida:

Could a performative utterance succeed if its formulation did not repeat a "coded" or iterable utterance, or in other words, if the formula I pronounce in order to open a meeting, launch a ship or a marriage were not identifiable as conforming with an iterable model, if it were not then identifiable in some way as a "citation"?...in such a typology, the category of intention will not disappear; it will have its place, but from that place it will no longer be able to govern the entire scene and system of utterance...(Butler, 1993: 13).

Performativity as a theory of gendering manages to destabilize entirely the bifurcations of the discourses of the modern subject: interior/exterior, nature/culture, true/false, before/after. This is because performativity, in a gesture which is entirely alien to structuralism, describes an enactment (an activity) through time and in space, or a repeated citation, which gives the effect of a static identity. As Butler writes:

...Acts, gestures, and desire produce the effect of an internal core of substance, but produce this on the surface of the body, through the play of signifying absences that suggest, but never reveal, the organizing principle of identity as a cause. Such acts, gestures, enactments, generally construed, are performative in the sense that essence or identity that they otherwise purport to express are fabrications manufactured and sustained through corporeal signs and other discursive means. That the gendered body is performative suggests that it has no ontological status apart from the various acts which constitute its reality (last emphasis mind) (Butler, 1990: 136).

This is not to suggest, however, that the performance of gender is an open and equal activity.

Performativity is riddled with normativity. While there will always be the performative - being in itself having been precluded by this theory - strict regulation of the kinds of performativities
allowed "on stage," so to speak, is clearly visible when a "simple" gender activity is subverted. My father, for instance, cannot stand in front of his class wearing a dress and have a normal class. Day in and day out he has to enact his gender by wearing the costume, enacting the gestures, which stand in for his phantasmagorical interior essence as a man (and as a teacher, father, husband, and so forth). If he does not accomplish this performance, his essence as a man becomes suspect. For Butler, it is particularly in and through drag that natural, necessary and static gender is exploded. Butler writes: "In imitating gender, drag implicitly reveals the imitative structure of gender itself - as well as its contingency" (Butler, 1990: 137). The effect of coherent "interiority" is actually that which is, and must be, clearly visible on the surface of the body as continual repetitive acts of signification. As Butler writes: "...the soul is a surface signification that contests and displaces the inner/outer distinction itself, a figure of interior psychic space inscribed on the body as a social signification that perpetually renounces itself as such" (Butler, 1990: 13). Interiority becomes in the modern discourses of subjectivity a "reality" which causes certain visible manifestations, but which is, itself, not visible, except by the privileged gaze of the scientist. In this way the interior is posited as that which can be conceptually withdrawn from contingent significations and become a universal core which is prior to contingent significations. Significatory acts which play on the surface of the body - clothing, body-language, speech patterns - can then be compared to this universal core and judged accordingly. "The displacement of a political and discursive origin of gender identity onto a psychological "core" precludes an analysis of the political constitution of the gendered subject and its fabricated notions about the ineffable interiority of its sex or of its true identity" (Butler, 1990: 136).
Butler's redescription of gender performativity presupposes a redescription of the subject in general. In fact, the subject, she argues, arises in and through practices of gendering. The compulsive need to immediately on birth identify an infant as "boy" or "girl" operates to call "it" into the realm of the human through language; "it" then becomes intelligible as a human being as such.¹ The universal category Human Being is first a gendered being. We don't know how to think of, or how to act around, a person who has no gender. Butler writes:

...Such...interpellations contribute to that field of discourse and power that orchestrates, delimits, and sustains that which qualifies as "the human." We see this most clearly in the examples of those abjected beings who do not appear properly gendered; it is their very humanness that comes into question (1993: 8).

The ambiguously gendered person does not fit into western languages except as an nonhuman object: "it." The positing of a humanity in general makes possible "a differential operation that produces the more and the less 'human,' the inhuman, the humanly unthinkable" (Butler, 1993: 8). Hence, though there is for everyone an injunction to live up to certain norms of human-ness, some groups of people are set up from the beginning to fail and are punished for it. Norms are implicated in power which is the action on other's action. Thus performativity of the norm is differentiated in terms of success and failure, coercion and consent. As we have seen in Chapter Three, the subject of modernity was a gendered and raced subject: that is, the new universal, rationality was ascribed to "maleness" and "whiteness" - it was embodied. As universal as the

¹ Butler focuses on gendering as the basic system of differences. In western languages at least, gender and subjetchood are installed in language at the same time: if one is not a "he" or a "she", one is an "it": a non-human object. Gender has been inextricably linked to humaness itself. Where other differences can be hidden by talking about "the person", "the subject", "the individual", and so on, unless one avoids using pronouns altogether which is very difficult to do, these categories are always gendered simply by speaking them.
injunctions of the modern subject were meant to be, explicitly excluded from them were women, non-whites, and children who failed to perform "humanity" in its true sense; they were seen to be incapable of those performances because they didn't embody the qualities of universality. In fact these categories became the constitutive outside of the subject of modernity altogether.

Feminist and anti-racist discourses have offered an array of different theoretical and political strategies for contesting this dominant discourse, which I will not summarize here. Key to all of them is the question of subjectivity as an ethical category: is there, or is there not, an "I" which exists before gendering, racing or classing (culture). This question has caused theoretical and political confusion and controversy, for, it is argued, in order for there to be a contestation of gender norms, which in the west have devalued "woman" - and hence also the women who lived under this sign - there must be an already formed counter-subjectivity which has the agency to resist these false prescriptions. If this is not the case, the possibility of changing the relations of gendering are slight, it is argued. Yet it is this very prediscursive "I" (prior to time, place, body), posited in the discourses of the modern subject, which causes problems for feminism in the first place. Feminism's main insight is precisely that the so-called universal subject of modernity - prior to all particularity - actually acts very much like the particular norms of the white European man.

Butler argues that this re-entrenching of the deontological subject of modernity for the sake of progressive politics is a mistake - just as the replacement of the human agency by the agency of a

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2 The canonical writers of the Enlightenment, humanism, and liberalism had a deeply conflicted relationship to "woman" as radical other (See Susan Bordo, "The Cartesian Masculinization of Thought," Signs Vol. 11, No. 3, Spring 1986, 439-456). Woman as body, in fact, became the constitutive outside of their discourse on reason.
universal system in structuralism is also a mistake. She argues in such a way that the either/or conundrum of these ontologically founded strategies fall away: either there is a prediscursive "I" which is oppressed by cultural norms and can also resist cultural norms, or the subject is determined by the structures which produce it as an effect and therefore agency cannot be theorized. As she writes:

The question of locating "agency" is usually associated with the viability of the "subject," where the "subject" is understood to have some stable existence prior to the cultural field that it negotiates. Or, if the subject is culturally constructed, it is nevertheless vested with an agency, usually figured as the capacity for reflexive mediation, that remains intact regardless of its cultural embeddedness. On such a model, "culture" and "discourse" mire the subject, but do not constitute that subject. This move to qualify and enmire the preexisting subject has appeared necessary to establish a point of agency that is not fully determined by that culture and discourse. And yet, this kind of reasoning falsely presumes (a) agency can only be established through recourse to a prediscursive "I," even if that "I" is found in the midst of a discursive convergence, and (b) that to be constituted by discourse is to be determined by discourse, where determination forecloses the possibility of agency (1990: 142-143).

In this quotation we see clearly the strategic aspect of these ontological assertions. It is within the contestatory politics of feminism, sexuality, anti-racism, anti-colonialism, that the stakes become clear in the game of positing an ontology of the subject. Butler sets out to argue that we can have a theory of the subject which rejects its dangerous essentialism (dangerous because the essence of the human is always exclusionary and abjecting) while retaining the possibility of the agency of the constituted subject, allowing for a theory of the constitutive acts of the subject itself. As she writes: "construction is not opposed to agency; it is the necessary scene of agency, the very terms in which agency is articulated and becomes culturally intelligible" (1990: 147).

Let us say, then, with Butler and poststructuralists in general, that there is no prediscursive being of subjectivity. Subjects are always constituted by discourse through performance
(repetitive enactment, practice). This is always already their "being." The regulatory principle is the radical limitation of performativities which will be intelligible in any social environment. Being "human" requires the enactment of specific performances: gender being the first required repetitive enactment through time. Yet at the same time we can see that things change. The kinds of gender performatives allowed have changed through time and do and have varied from culture to culture. What "will" has brought this about? As Butler suggests, this "will" can be called the incremental act of displacement in the ongoing repetition of significatory practices in time; "acts" which are effected by actual people in their day-to-day existence as a movement toward the realization of an integrated "I" or a "we" (in modernity, in any case - other cultures strive for other accomplishments) which is never completed, but is only ever a series of "adjustments" to the particular constraints and enablers of the discourse, or discourses, which is/are the condition of "my" or "our" emergence. I act in order to enact a self which is not yet, in order to be proper and/or in order to revolt against the proper in any given environment: in this sense I choose myself from a place of (infinite) incompleteness, and am choosing myself on a daily basis. Choice is the possibility of displacing, changing or "doing something to/with" norms which exist in local contexts. The impulse for this choice is affective not rational or knowledgeable, fragmented not integrated, contingent not universal, desired rather than calculated.

"Identity" politics suggests, on the other hand, that political activism to instantiate change has as its goal a reconciliation between "I" and what I enact - identity hopes that a coherent and integrated "I" become identical to that which it enacts - woman, blackness, lesbianness, and so forth (implying that "I" and my "characteristics" are two separate categories). My true "I,"
crying out to be realized, has revolted against socialization and found its true enactment. Butler suggests a different theory: there is never an "I" and its enactment. Rather "I" emerges out of repetitive enactment which is the condition of possibility of intelligibility of identity. As she states:

The foundationalist reasoning of identity politics tends to assume an identity must first be in place in order for political interests to be elaborated and, subsequently, political action to be taken. My argument is that there need not be a "doer behind the deed," but that the "doer" is variably constructed in and through the deed. This is not a return to an existential theory of the self as constituted through its acts, for the existential theory maintains a prediscursive structure for both the self and its acts. It is precisely the discursively variable construction of each in and through the other that has interested me here (1990: 142).

This means that agency, in a sense, comes before the sense of "I." "Things are done" by us through which we get a sense of ourselves as a coherent entity. Thus agency does not presuppose a coherent will which stands behind it, but rather gives the effect of a coherent will, after the fact. "I" emanate out of what I do, out of performances enacted - out of the languages (in the broadest sense of that word) which are the conditions of coherent activity. As Butler suggests, "being" appears static only in as much as it is in constant movement through repetition: "to qualify as a substantive entity is an arduous task, for such appearances are rule-generated identities, ones which rely on the consistent and repeated invocation of rules that condition and restrict culturally intelligible practices of identity" (1990: 144-145). As counter-intuitive as it seems, my coherent and timeless sense of interiority, of inner being, are the effect of the activities of signification engaged in over time in full "public" view:

...The question of agency is reformulated as a question of how signification and resignification work. In other words, what is signified as an identity is not signified at a given point in time after which it is simply there as an inert piece of entititative language (1990: 144).
The coherent and static sense of "I" comes only from a constant process of repetition of signifying practices. I have to "do," and keep "doing" in a certain way that is intelligible within a given cultural context, before I can have the feeling of "being." This "doing" is material, it as an actual productive practice, on which modes of social formation depend (there is nothing idealist about the theory of performativity). At the same time it is not "I" who "does" - but rather, "I" am "done." As Butler writes, "as with other ritual social dramas....gender ought not to be construed as a stable identity or locus of agency from which various acts follow' rather, gender is an identity tenuously constituted in time, instituted in an exterior space through a stylized repetition of acts" (Butler, 1990: 140). Hence rather than "I" (separate, distanced) working on myself (contingent, embedded), certain kinds of "activity" give rise to certain kinds of "I." Foucault describes this effect well in his analysis of the penal and asylum systems as regimes, and in his later history of sexuality (1978). Certain institutionalized practices produce certain kinds of subjects with certain kinds of souls, which are inscribed on the surface of their bodies. (Practices here coincide with Butler's notion of performativity and Laclau's notion of discourse.) This is a process of "normalization" which addresses an "individual" which it has first fabricated through regimes of activity. We can certainly see this in operation in schools, whereby certain activities are demanded in which children become who they are meant to be as children. Through the regulation of conduct and bodies - movement, posture, "small" practices of hand-writing, modulations of voice, turn-taking, and so on - certain kinds of subjects emerge, which can then be further regulated. Thus in schools, various activities produce "slow" children, "learning disabled," "smart" children, "efficient" children, "good" children. Schools not only teach subjects, they form subjectivities. Within the context of other kinds of activities other kinds of
categories of child would emerge which would then be "internalized." As Butler writes, for Foucault "regulatory power produces the subjects it controls, [and] power works as the regulatory and normative means by which subjects are formed" (1993: 22).

In the context of prisoners, Foucault writes, the strategy has not been to enforce a repression of their desires, but to compel their bodies to signify the prohibitive law as their very essence, style, and necessity. The law is not literally internalized, but incorporated (my emphasis) (1990: 134-135).

Both Butler and Foucault talk about the normalization and regulation of subjectivity as the inevitable process of social existence, and it happens differently in different social spaces, cultures, societies: it is many layered and complex, hegemonic and counter-hegemonic. As there is no individual before the social, subjects will always already be subjects through the subjection produced by social practices. There is thus no existentially free subject, in the sense of independent of local context. Butler states: "...gender is not a noun, but neither is it a set of free-floating attributes, for we have seen that the substantive effect of gender is performatively produced and compelled by the regulatory practices of gender coherence" (1990: 24). It is through these very norms that subjection takes place: that "I" become a subject of my own society.

As we saw in Chapter Three, subjectivation in modernity has involved increasingly an injunction to self-governance through the proliferation of discourses of freedom: I am free in as much as I strictly regulate myself, a regulatory practice which nevertheless come from outside me. Critical theorists of the Frankfurt school critiqued at length the instrumentality of modern subjectivity. The modern subject is one which arises out of its own mastering activities; mastery of itself and of the world (Horkheimer, 1974, Adorno, 1987). That which is errant or discordant
in it must be abjected. That is, a feature of governing is to "mark off" what it means to be human, and to do so by marking off that which does not count as human. In terms of gender, Butler writes, "the notion that there might be a 'truth' of sex, as Foucault ironically terms it, is produced precisely through the regulatory practices that generate coherent identities through the matrix of coherent gender norms" (1990: 17). This is, of course, true for all subjectivities, in all cultures, not just the modern subject. Every kind of subject performative available in any given culture, is constituted in and through the prevailing discourses of that culture.

Yet, while neither Butler nor Foucault deny that the self - where it emerges in those terms - is always constituted, both suggest3 that the self is not therefore absolutely determined by that constitution. Normative regulation always fails. Because the so-called "outside forces" which constitute the subject are not themselves fixed by nature or a transcendental law and are instead the regulated activity of concrete persons, concrete persons are in fact the specific "site" of regulatory activity. That is, there is no distance between "I" and the conditions of constraint and enablement made available through discourse (practice, performativity). "I" am always already constituted as a subject of one kind or another in discourse, and depending on the discursive context of my existence there may be only one, or a number of different intelligible "performances" I can perform. The recourse against this normativity cannot be a pure and originary self, prior to the social, because this self is a normative injunction, precisely that which "oppresses" (because it fixes - and once fixed, disavows) in the first place. Foucault writes,

3 This becomes clear in Foucault's later work on sexuality.
"because we have no 'true self, we have to create ourselves as works of art" (1983: 65) this creation always being enabled and constrained by the materials at hand.

Judith Butler tries to describe a "picture" of the arising of subjectivity as a moving circularity in which "I" and my "activities" - constantly condition each other - and so to speak, constantly incite each other; in fact, writing it this way is misleading: they so condition each other that they are the same thing - only language forces a distinction. Yet "my activities" are never simply my own. They have conditions of possibility and intelligibility (constraint/enablement) in the social and cultural context in which they emerge: crudely put, infants "become" the world into which they are born, which is a world with its own narrative of subjectivity. It is through this "becoming" that they emerge as particular kinds of selves. There is never, then, a space in which "I" could exist prior to those conditions of intelligibility. As she writes in *The Psychic Life of Power*:

No individual becomes a subject without first becoming subjected or undergoing "subjectivation." It makes little sense to treat "the individual" as an intelligible term if individuals are said to acquire their intelligibility by becoming subjects. Paradoxically, no intelligible reference to individuals or their becoming can take place without a prior reference to their status as subjects (1997: 11).

In *Bodies that Matter* (1993), Butler extends and deepens this analysis of performativity with the notion of "materialization." Materialization is a term which fine-tunes the meaning of performativity, clearing up some misunderstanding which had arisen from it. Butler talks in terms of gender, but what she says is relevant to all social performances of subjectivity. "...If I were to argue that genders are performative," she states,
that could mean that I thought that one woke in the morning, perused the closet or some more open space for the gender of choice, donned that gender for the day, and then restored the garment to its place at night. Such a wilful and instrumental subject, one who decides on its gender [and other subject positions], is clearly not its gender from the start and fails to realize that its existence is already decided by gender [as discourse]. Certainly, such a theory would restore a figure of a choosing subject - humanist - at the centre of a project whose emphasis on construction seems be to be quite opposed to such a notion. But if there is no subject who decides on its gender, and if, on the contrary, gender is part of what decides the subject, how might one formulate a project that preserves gender practices as sites of critical agency? (1993: x).

Butler's texts are intended to set up the theoretical possibility for agent-propelled political change, without using theories of voluntarist individual will. This is their ethical content, and this is why her work is important to this thesis. Even though "we" as "individuals," and the discursive conditions which constitute us, are in the end the same thing ("the seductions of grammar," in Butler's words, notwithstanding (1993: 6)), there is a temporal space which can account for the empirical fact of change, heterogeneity, and diversity which is evident through time, long before modernity made wilful change its self-conscious slogan. This space constitutes an excess, an aporia, a slippage, a trace, a supplement, which allows us as constituted subjects to yearn for alternatives, to want something different for ourselves, to impact on the very constitutive process itself. "Construction not only takes place \textit{in} time, but is itself a temporal process which operates through the reiteration of norms" (Butler, 1993: 10) Norms never just \textit{are}, they have to constantly be shown to just be, as though naturally occurring. They have to be "materialized." That is, that which seems simply to be matter - concrete bodies with material functions, and material parts which differentiate them in various ways, such as genitalia, skin colour, eye shape, hair texture - is always already in the grips of a significatory system which exists in and through time. "As a sedimented effect of a reiterative or ritual practice, sex acquires
its naturalized effect" (1993: 10) - the "...process of materialization that stabilizes over time to produce the effect of boundary, fixity, and surface we call matter" (1993: 9) That which we mark off as simply matter - beyond discussion, beyond controversy, simply *there*, as in sexed bodies - is "marked" discursively precisely by being "marked off."4 "But this sex posited as prior to construction [simply matter] will, by virtue of being posited, become the effect of that very positing, the construction of construction" (1993: 5). This is what Butler means by materialization. There is never just matter, only the process (in time, through repetition of acts and reiteration of utterances) of materialization in which matter is demarcated as beyond discourse, by way of discourse itself. Because "matter" is not a fixed positivity, but is always being materialized, Butler writes, that

...gaps and fissures are opened up as the constitutive instabilities in such constructions, as that which escapes or exceeds the norm, as that which cannot be wholly defined or fixed by the repetitive labor of that norm. This instability is the *deconstructing* possibility in the very process of repetition, the power that undoes the very effects by which "sex" is stabilized, the possibility to put the consolidation of the norms of "sex" into a potentially productive crisis (1993: 10).

If repetition is what gives the effect of stability, it is also, Butler argues, a process which is highly unstable: because it always must be re-performed and thereby re-entrenched, it always bears the risk of being done slightly differently. In the process of the repetition of significatory acts, displacement is the means by which repetition becomes change. The possibility of *doing*

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4 Butler argues extensively in her texts that this general "marking off" by which a domain of the world is placed beyond discussion, is fundamentally based on *exclusion and abjection*. There is that which is natural, human, etc., and that which is not. "The law" - order, intelligibility - actually creates that which it disavows. Every proper subjectivity is such only by virtue of what it is not - this constitutive outside, which is no more "real" or prediscursive than that which it constitutes, is both necessary for, and a threat to, this constitution.
something different, subverting the norm, does not require the coherent and integrated agent of modernity before it can take place: rather, every repetitive significatory act or utterance which has the effect of stabilizing "me" in one, or a variety of subject "positions," contains within it - not "before" or "beyond" it - a moment when things could go otherwise:

The "I" who would oppose its construction is always in some sense drawing from that construction to articulate its opposition; further, the "I" draws what it called its "agency" in part through being implicated in the very relations of power that it seeks to oppose. To be implicated in the relations of power, indeed, enabled by the relations of power that the "I" opposes is not, as a consequence, to be reducible to their existing forms (Butler, 1993: 122-123).

Citizen, worker, parent, student, and so on, are all normative performativities which can be subverted from within the act of repetition of its norms. "Such norms are continually haunted by their own inefficacy; hence, the anxiously repeated effort to install and augment their jurisdiction" (1993: 237). Because norms cannot ever be totally installed as natural, there is always an ongoing attempt to so install them. Here, Butler is referring to the hegemonic process, which Laclau and Mouffe elaborate in Hegemony and Socialist Strategy. Hegemony is the attempt to control, regulate, and fix the excesses of meaning within the social field. It is a continual activity, because excess is continually thrown up by the very activity of hegemonizing (confining meaning, demarcating, abjecting). Butler continues: "The resignification of norms is thus a function of their inefficacy, and so the question of subversion, of working the weakness in the norm, becomes a matter of inhabiting the practices of rearticulation" (1993: 237). It is from within the process of my own constitution, which I repeatedly enact in accordance with certain norms, that I find the space to do something else. It is only here - not through some transcendent position of autonomy - nor through "a single locus of Revolt," such as the psyche's unconscious,
or the imaginary (Butler, 1997: 97) (the pure negation of the full positivity of the Enlightenment subject) - that the possibility of something else can emerge. Every contingent situation has within it the potential for being something else. Or to put it negatively, no contingent situation is ever totally what or all that it is presented to be. Such a totality is impossible, conceptually and empirically.

By theorizing subjectivity as performativity which is normative, normalizing, "materializing," but which contains, imminent in its logic, the possibility of displacement and "dissent" due to the instability of repetition in time, the "individual" is deconstructed. The effect of "me" is always relational and temporal - it is always tenuous, and always in need of reiteration; our agency is possible precisely because of this instability, argues Butler. As she writes of Foucault: the proliferation of acts in time which performativity requires is impossible to regulate totally.

In this sense, the restrictions placed on the body not only require and produce the body they seek to restrict, but proliferate the domain of the bodily beyond the domain targeted by the original restriction....Criminal codes which seek to catalogue and institutionalize normalcy become the site for a contestation of the concept of the normal; sexologists who would classify and pathologize homosexuality inadvertently provide the conditions for a proliferation and mobilization of homosexual cultures (Butler, 1997: 59).

So it is the very site of contingency and normativity that offers the possibility of dissent and counter-politics - it is only possible to make "the next move" in the context of a concrete game where there has been a history of moves. For instance, "insofar as heterosexual gender norms produce inapproximable ideals, heterosexuality can be said to operate through the regulated production of hyperbolic versions of 'man' and 'woman'. These are for the most part compulsory performances, ones which none of us choose, but which each of us if forced to negotiate"
(Butler, 1993: 237). In having to negotiate contingent conditions, all manner of possibilities make themselves evident.

Practices which involve explicit ritual contain the insight that specific sequences of acts *brings forth* a specific kind of feeling of being, or more precisely, brings forth a specific kind of "me" in that moment, or hour, or day. The practice produces a kind of subjectivity. But the insight of ritual practitioners - from explicit rituals in religious ceremonies to the day-to-day rituals of living - is that the ritual must be *repeated* and augmented by other rituals in order to ensure the continuity of that specific kind of "me." This repetition to ensure continuity is what we call cultural and social hegemonic practice.

But, Butler suggests, the very act of rigorous universal fixing incites a respondent unfixing. Stability and the fullness of an autonomous self is not the condition of agency. The autonomous self is always already defined, completed, sufficient unto itself, and therefore "out of time"; hence, there is no need of "acting" (the agent by definition "acts," and acts can only happen in time) at all. Butler writes:

The temporal paradox of the subject is such that, of necessity, we must lose the perspective of a subject already formed in order to account for our own becoming. That "becoming" is no simple or continuous affair, but an uneasy practice of repetition and its risks, compelled yet incomplete, wavering on the horizon of social being (Butler, 1997: 30).

This "being a man" and this "being a woman" are internally unstable affairs. They are always beset by ambivalence precisely because there is a cost in every identification, the loss of some other set of identifications, the forcible approximation of a norm one never chooses, a norm that chooses us, but which we occupy, reverse, resignify to the extent that the norm fails to determine us completely (1993: 126-127).

Implicit in the notion of the *norm* is the notion of the alternative, the other, the different.

Alternatives are only produced in and through normativity itself, as that which stands opposed to
the norm and thereby gives it its shape. The process of hegemonization is to install a norm and make it seem self-evident, beyond controversy, given by nature. This very operation opens up the possibility of contestation - to saying "why like this, why not like that." The possibility of choice, then, is immanent to conditions one never chose, not transcendent of them. Butler writes:

Here the performative, the call by the law which seeks to produce a lawful subject, produces a set of consequences that exceed and confound what appears to be the disciplining intention motivating the law. Interpellation thus loses its status as a simple performative, an act of discourse with the power to create that to which it refers, and creates more than it ever meant to, signifying in excess of any intended referent (Butler, 1993: 122).

Butler writes, "the subject might yet be thought as deriving its agency from precisely the power it opposes, as awkward and embarrassing as such a formulation might be, especially for those who believe that complicity and ambivalence could be rooted out once and for all" (1997: 17). Thus the opposition to the abjecting discourses of modernity has its condition of possibility in those discourses themselves. If power is discourse, and power only manifests in and through the acts of subjects, who only emerge through the enacting of power, what does this say to the possibility of choice which was meant to be a possibility for the pre-existing "I" - romantic or rationalist - of modernity alone? Can choice and decision feature in a poststructuralist theory of subjectivity like this? As Butler writes, "the strategic question for Foucault is, then, how can we work the power relations by which we are worked, and in what direction?" (Butler, 1997: 100). How do we theorize this "acting in a different way?" I will argue that the notion of choice and decision can be inserted here. If choice figures in any given discursive context, it cannot be theorized as an autonomous, positive subject, because the empowerment which allows me to act is the very same power which constitutes "me" in the first place. There can be no "before" of the subject - in
this case figured as the individual - which would initiate the choice. Neither would choice be foreclosed by a power which acts only upon me to produce the effect of me. In order to try to argue explicitly for the theoretical assimilation of the term choice into the terms of this poststructural analysis of subjectivity, I will use Derrida's notion of the undecidable and the decision.

Jacques Derrida: the Decision within the Undecidable

...The decision presupposes identification, that is to say that the subject does not exist prior to the decision but when I decide I invent the subject. Every time I decide, if a decision is possible, I invent the who... (Derrida, 1996: 84).

So far in this chapter I have looked at the question of agency. Structuralism, as Derrida states, critiqued the modern subject by illustrating the metaphysics of its construct. "A subject who supposedly would be the absolute origin of his own discourse and supposedly would construct it 'out of nothing', 'out of whole cloth', would be the creator of the verb, the verb itself" (1978: 285). Butler's poststructuralist account of subjectivity is a clear departure from this structuralist
critique in that it attempts to describe the actual concrete activity of real persons as the site of power, normalization, resistance, and counter-production. That is, a subject does not originate her or his own discourse "out of nothing," yet neither is she or he simply produced by it. While Butler's account of subjectivity takes on something of the structuralist argument that normativity - those myths, rituals, injunction which regulate our activity - are anonymous because no particular person or group of persons willed them in that way, it eschews the implication that concrete subjects do not themselves impact in unpredictable ways upon the discourses which regulate them. As we have seen, the criticism of structuralism has to do with, as Gayatri Spivak states, questioning the "possibility of a general law" (1976: lvii) either of the human essence, or the structure of society. Poststructuralism denies this possibility (which is its performative contradiction - its general law is the impossibility of identifying a general law - a metaphysical gesture which undermines metaphysics itself). Butler's redescription of subjectivity helps us understand how the subject emerges by being thoroughly subjected, yet at the same time finds in that very process the possibility of a "further making."

Yet, what eludes us still is a new theory of choice. If there is a possibility that in every discursively regulated social context there is room to "do something else," what does choice or the decision have to do with that possibility? The premise of rational choice theories is that choice is a kind of calculation which can result in an answer which was given all along: it simply had to be mathematically deduced from all the variables. Given full, or adequate knowledge, of a situation and of our own interest, the right choice will present itself as though logically, like adding numbers. Choice in this sense is recognizing the Law in any circumstance. While it is clear - we know from our daily lives - that practical rationality informs our "moves," these are
conceived as constitutive moments of subjectivity, rather than as the logical consequence of the addition of a series of "givens."

While Butler deals explicitly with the problem of agency after structuralism, Derrida deals with choice and the decision after rationalism, which strengthens my account of why choice discourses do not require a rational, "modern" individual to ground them. Butler's argument around performativity is informed by Derrida's analysis of "iterability" as a temporal and spatial category of signification as difference and deferral. Difference, which he has so carefully theorized in order to show that "presence" (of the subject, for instance) is an effect of differing (in space) and deferring (in time), never comes to rest. "Presence" is a constant movement, "chasing" itself. "Such is the strange 'being' of the sign: half of it always 'not there' and the other half always 'not that' (Spivak, 1976: xvii). What Derrida adds to Butler's theory of performativity is a metaphysical account of the "ground" for a post-rational theory of choice. Butler suggests that any repetition is threatened by a displacement, hence negating the determinacy of structures of signification, but this in itself does not necessarily require a theory of choice: such displacement could simply be seen as accidental, as simply a failure to repeat exactly. Derrida's theory of the decision is more normatively conceived: that is, because the "ground" of the social is undecidability itself, the decision (ethics and politics) is required as an act of the instantiation of the social. Derrida talks about infinite responsibility in this context.

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5 Undecidability is simply a term, as far as I understand it, which describes the "lawlessness" of the ground of existence. Because the subject is not determined by a transcendental law of reason, and the social is not fixed by transcendental laws of sociality, and this "not a moment to be traversed and overcome" (Derrida, 1996: 86-87) once and for all, there is infinite responsibility. Precisely because there is no Law, there is ethics and politics (Derrida, 1996: 86).
I do not think that the themes of undecidability or infinite responsibility are romantic, as Rorty claimed. Of course, I can see how one might associate these motifs with a certain dramatic romantic pathos, but personally I would prefer this not to be the case. The necessity for thinking to traverse interminably the experience of undecidability can, I think, be quite coolly demonstrated in an analysis of the ethical or political decision. If we analysed the concepts of decision and responsibility in a cool manner, we should find that undecidability is irreducible within them. If one does not take rigorous account of undecidability, it will not only be the case that one cannot act, decide or assume responsibility, but one will not even be able to think the concepts of decision and responsibility (Derrida, 1996: 86).

This would not be a good thing, for Derrida. I require this strong ethical and political conception of choice for my notion of the intentional community in Chapter Six (intent having precisely to do with a recognition of the requirement of the decision within an undecidable terrain), even if I do not make the connection as closely as I would like at this time. Though one might deduce such a language from Butler, nowhere does she explicitly present it.

In an essay entitled "Remarks on Deconstruction and Pragmatism," Derrida writes:

I absolutely refuse a discourse that would assign me a single code, a single language game, a single context, a single situation; and I claim this right not simply out of caprice or because it is to my taste, but for ethical and political reasons (Derrida, 1996: 81).

Derrida suggests in no uncertain terms, not only that alternatives are available to every code, language game, context, situation, but that this should be the case. The political operation of deconstruction, which Derrida explicitly endorses (1996: 85), is precisely what Laclau calls "...a widening of the field of structural undecidability."

...The condition of possibility of something is also its condition of impossibility. As you see, we are already in the terrain of deconstruction. The later makes possible a crucial turn in Political Theory: (a) widening the field of structural undecidability; and (b) clearing thus the field for a theory of the decision as taken in an undecidable terrain (Laclau, 1996: 48).
Thus the politics of this position suggests that a widening of the structural undecidability of the social (freedom) brings with it increased choice-making and also increased responsibility. Derrida argues that once there is a coherent subject who knows itself and knows its object absolutely, the possibility of the alternative, the decision, of choice is ruled out altogether. As Derrida writes, "this is why I would say that the transcendental subject is that which renders the decision impossible" (1996: 84). Modern subjects are not in fact subjects who choose and who decide, precisely because these subjects already know who they are and what are their proper objects.

The question is here whether it is through the decision that one becomes a subject who decides something. At the risk of appearing provocative, I would say that once one poses the question in that form and one imagines that the who and the what of the subject can be determined in advance, then there is no decision. In other words, the decision, if there is such a thing, must neutralize if not render impossible in advance the who and the what. If one knows, and if it is a subject that knows who and what, then the decision is simply the application of a law (my emphasis) (Derrida, 1996: 84).

For Derrida, then, the notion of making a decision, of choosing a course of action, is crucial to radical democracy, and this not because democracy as conventionally conceived is premised on the rational and autonomous citizen who always already knows what the right and good consists of because it is given by the law of reason, but because the democratic terrain is the terrain of the undecidable - it is never algorithmically clear what should be the case - which requires constant ethical and political questioning and decision-making. Radical democracy is the politics of the decision, because it operates without a foundation of ultimate principles. "All that the deconstructive point of view tries to show, is that since convention, institutions and consensus are stabilizations (sometimes stabilizations of great duration, sometimes micro-stabilizations), this means that they are stabilizations of something essentially unstable and chaotic" (Derrida,
That is, at the level of foundations, the political space is open - nothing has been transcedentally decided there. With no Law to algorithmically guide us from on high, we are left to assert a decision into contingent and singular social situations: we have to make our own little laws, as it were.

...Derrida's claim... is that deconstruction is justice and justice is an "experience" of the undecidable; that is to say, according to my interpretation, to be just is to recognize one's infinite responsibility before the singular other as something over which one cannot ultimately decide, as something that exceeds my cognitive power. It is this "experience" of justice that propels one forward into politics, that is to say, from undecidability to the decision. ( Critchley, 1996: 35).

Because there is no metaphysical law by which our the ethical decisions can be formulated, we must do it for ourselves, courageously and cautiously, in the face of ultimate undecidability.

This is, of course, a theme which is modern through and through: pragmatism is one of its manifestations, as elaborated by Dewey and extended in Rorty. But here there is no resting place in science or liberalism.

For Derrida, then, the condition of possibility of the decision is the terrain of the undecidable which radical democracy as a means of governing recognizes. Precisely because undecidability marks every social situation, taking a decision is crucial. Thus far from choice and decision being based upon what can be known to the reasoning mind, upon a calculus made with all the figures accounted for, they are propelled out of a sense of the ambiguity and nuanced nature of every situation. As Laclau explains:

To deconstruct the structure is the same as to show its undecidability, the distance between the plurality of arrangements that are possible out of it and the actual arrangements that has finally prevailed. This we can call a decision in so far as: (a) it is not predetermined by the "original" terms of the structure; and (b) it requires its passage through the experience of undecidability. The moment of the decision, the moment of madness, is this jump from the experience of
undecidability to a creative act, a fiat which requires its passage through that experience. As we have said, this act cannot be explained in terms of any rational underlying mediation. This moment of decision as something left to itself and unable to provide its grounds through any system of rules transcending itself, is the moment of the subject (Laclau, 1996: 54).

Ernesto Laclau uses Derrida's discussion of the decision in "Force of Law: the 'Mystical Foundation of Authority,'" to elaborate the importance of a notion of the decision and choice for democratic theory. He writes: "...we can only be real choosers if the courses of action opened to ourselves are not algorithmically predetermined. Full rationality and possibility of choice are incompatible with each other" (1996: 52). The basis for our choices is not reason which always already "knows" the next "move" in any given circumstance, but the experience of the undecidable through which the deciding person must go. To make a choice is first and foremost not to know, to question, to wonder: in making a choice we first face the abyss of not knowing. Conceptually speaking, then, in choosing there first have to be two or more alternatives which could equally be possibilities for us. If we knew from the beginning which we will go for, then there would never have been a choice to make. The moment of choosing certainly involves practical rationality, desire, prudence, and so on, all of which are informed by the conditions in which we find ourselves - choice is not just a "groundless" opting - but it presupposes that before choosing there has to be a moment when the "move" one will make is not self-evident.

Laclau's point, using Derrida, is that a true decision comes out of the experience of the primary undecidability of social and political operations. Many ways of operating are possible, and no single way can be transcendentally grounded without an act of assertion. Hence, "...the very plurality of moves which are possible in that undecidable terrain requires a theory of the decision..." (Laclau: 1996: 49). Choice is required because neither human beings nor the
structures in which they come to be are ever rational in and of themselves. There is no law of being and law of structure. Deconstruction is precisely that mode of knowledge which, in contrast to structuralism, "widen[s] the field of structural undecidability," (Laclau, 1996: 48) and hence also the urgency of the decision and responsibility. Choice occurs in the moment in which the Law and the Rule fail, for while the Law and the Rule are in place there is no need of a choice or a decision. Laclau writes:

...In a first dimension a true decision is something other and more than an effect derived from a calculating rule. A true decision escapes always what any rule can hope to subsume under itself. But a second - and correlative - dimension is that, in that case, the decision has to be grounded in itself, in its own singularity. Now, that singularity cannot bring through the back door what it has excluded from the main entrance - i.e., the universality of the rule. It is simply left to its own singularity. It is because of that, as Kierkegaard put it, the moment of the decision is the moment of madness (1996: 53).

Laclau, with Derrida, links the experience of the undecidable out of which choice comes with the moment of institution of the subject itself. This reworks the notion of choice in the discourses of the modern subject in which its condition of possibility is full rationality and full autonomy. The structuralist critique of the modern subject, similarly, is reworked here because its very first claim - that the social can be analyzed as the manifestation of a structural law embedded in the materiality of social existence and uncovered by theory - is rejected. As Laclau writes, "the condition for the emergence of the subject (= the decision) is that it cannot be subsumed under any structural determinism" (Laclau, 1996: 55). No subject is fully determined by structure because structure itself is never eternally fixed by a transcendental law, nor is it ever totally static. That is, there is always more than one way of living within one's own context. Laclau states: "...the subject is the distance between the undecidability of the structure and the decision" (1996: 55). The decision is possible because of the ontological shakiness of the structures which
makes life meaningful. It is the failure of social structures to fully determine us in every aspect, which forces the decision.

The freedom thus won in relation to the structure is therefore a traumatic fact initially: I am condemned to be free, not because I have no structural identity as the existentialists assert, but because I have failed structural identity. This means that the subject is partially self-determined (1996: 55).

This argument cannot be made except through a notion of the excessiveness of "beings" who never simply "are," and of existence which never simply "is" - an ontology which is not one, presumes in favour of multiplicity and heterogeneity, but also assumes excessiveness in the process of becoming itself. While subjects are subjected, and we can account for how this happens, the total failure at subjecting in the same manner is always evident. This can be conveyed in the banal statement that although we are all rigorously regulated (in different ways at different times for different people), the consequences of this regulation are never the same. There is always an unpredictability which is made possible because of the singularity of human beings. Butler writes: "If the subject is neither fully determined by power nor fully determining of power (but significantly and partially both), the subject exceeds the logic of noncontradiction, is an excrescence of logic, as it were" (1997: 17). "I" become "a middle-class person" as soon as that grid of explanation is placed upon me. Yet "I" always exceed that explanation. Otherwise I would be indistinguishable from other middle-class people. As Butler states, the lists of explanatory adjectives which are meant to end up adding up to the effect of "me" is never complete and never satisfactory. My performativity of "a middle-class person" does not describe
me (I can also be differentiated in a number of different ways - white, female, and so on, but after all that has been accomplished I will still not have been fully described); there is always an excess which escapes formalization. It is precisely this moment which poststructuralism tries to allow into the theoretical moment, without annulling it by so theorizing it. To theorize under erasure is, in Derridian terms, to point to that which always exceeds description and explanation, to that which by definition remains silent: it can be pointed to, but never retrieved. Butler writes:

Theories of feminist identity that elaborate predicates of color, sexuality, ethnicity, class, and able-bodiedness invariably close with an embarrassed "etc." at the end of the list. Through this horizontal trajectory of adjectives, these positions strive to encompass as situated subject, but invariably fail to be complete. This failure, however, is instructive: what political impetus is to be derived from the exasperated "etc." that so often occurs at the end of such lines? This is a sign of exhaustion as well as of the illimitable process of signification itself. It is the supplement, the excess that necessarily accompanies any effort to posit identity once and for all (1990: 143).

The excess is that which cannot be pinned down theoretically, but which nevertheless registers as a present absence. It is here where poststructuralism slips in and out of the metaphysical mode. Excess is made present as an absence, but absented as a presence. As Butler states: "agency exceeds the power by which it is enabled" (1997: 15).

What remains excessive to theoretical explanation is the absolute singularity and irreducibility of all human beings, despite regulation and normalization. That is, besides enacting a number of different subjectivities, all of which bear a normative injunction and can be organized in larger normative categories of gender, class, ethnicity, and so on, each person bears a trace which has the effect of making them absolutely singular. This singularity is only something which manifests through the fact of the radical sociality of our existence; by singularity I am not trying to reinstate a notion of the positivity and isolation of the individual. My singularity asserts itself
in the face of my radical constitutedness. This singularity, which defies all theory, even theological accounts, because all theory is fundamentally *generalizing*, is always consigned to a silence. Hence, singularity - understood here as the opposite of "identity" or "individual," which are normalizing injunctions (being an individual and having an identity imply a specific way of being in the world - being singular does not) - is precisely that upon which nothing like the assertions of rights and claims to entitlement could be based, for it is a non-positivity, a non-universality, and an absent trace which cannot be instrumentalized. That human beings are always already distinguishable from one another can be explained only by the positing of a mystical trace - the soul, not in Foucault's sense, but in the sense of that which is always already other in every single person - or by elaborating an infinitely fine and complex "mesh" of "causal" variables - an unconceptualizable overdetermination. Singularity is an absent presence which always subverts our theoretical efforts and is never caught by them. For the purposes of theory building and policy production this insight is not very helpful - all it reveals is that our constant attempts to make general theoretical claims about subjectivity will always be unravelled by an uncontrollable singularity. Derrida writes of "the secret" as connected to a radical singularity: the secret is that which always already evades the glare of public knowledge:

The secret is irreducible to the public realm - although I do not call it private - and irreducible to publicity and politicization, but at the same time, this secret is that on the basis of which the public realm and the realm of the political can be and remain open (1996: 80).

The secret is that which allows the possibility of diversity and heterogeneity, that which is in excess of any order. As Derrida writes, "even if we take the example of the most triumphalistic totalitarianism, I believe the secret remains inaccessible and heterogeneous to the public realm."
(1996: 81). It especially evades the order of triumphalistic modern individualism which is a doctrine of full visibility and orderliness. That is, we can read the social as a terrain marked by socially constructed differences - women/men, black/white, homosexual/heterosexual, and so on - but beyond this constitutive differentiation by which we gain identities, there is an excess which is the difference of all difference.

We might call this excess a mystical trace, one which forever eludes our conceptualization, but one which we see around us every day in the uncanny differentness of each human being in her or his very constitutedness and regulation. As against both humanism and structuralism, no list of attributes and positionings will ever capture the radical heterogeneity and unpredictability of human beings in their local contexts. This excess is not heroic nor foundational, however, because it is never more than a glimmer that we catch out of the corner of our eye in our ongoing efforts to explain the social world. We know that we cannot act upon it, and that it explains nothing. Poststructuralism gives us an opening to point at that which cannot be pointed at, and hence offers us a glance at that which cannot be instrumentalized or normalized.

In this chapter I have argued that out of the very regulation of conduct, of the very relations of power, emerges the possibility of the alternative; and that choice is that interjection in a world which is metaphysically undecidable and structurally undetermined, but which is nevertheless filled by constitutive discourses. Choice, then, is the intentional displacement of constitutive, but not determinant, discourses in the face of ultimate undecidability. Thus, discounting choice as an important political tool is foolish precisely because nothing is already, or can be, decided once
will take up the connection between choice, democracy, and public welfare. In the following chapter I discuss the idea of democracy itself as an important political tool in favor of a utopian...
All that a deconstructive point of view tries to show, is that since convention, institutions and consensus are stabilizations (sometimes stabilization of great duration, sometimes micro-stabilizations), this means that they are stabilizations of something essentially unstable and chaotic. Thus, it becomes necessary to stabilize precisely because stability is not natural; it is because there is instability that stabilization becomes necessary; it is because there is chaos that there is a need for stability. Now, this chaos and instability, which is fundamental, founding and irreducible, is at once naturally the worst against which we struggle with laws, rules, conventions, politics and provisional hegemony, but at the same time it is a chance, a chance to change, to destabilize. If there were continual stability, there would be no need for politics, and it is to the extent that stability is not natural, essential or substantial, that politics exists and ethics is possible. Chaos is at once a risk and a chance, and it is here that the possible and the impossible cross each other (Derrida, 1996: 84).

Is there...a practice of democracy - or a strain of politics within democracy broadly defined - that responds to the problematic relation between identity and difference? I suspect there is....Let me call this political imaginary "agonistic democracy," a practice that affirms the indispensability of identity to life, disturbs the dogmatization of identity, and folds care for the protean diversity of human life into the strife and interdependence of identity\difference (Connolly, 1991: x).
In this chapter I will elaborate a notion of radical, post-liberal democracy, in which choice features, not as the activity of the rational, self-interested and self-serving subject, but as the activity of participants of a democratic culture in which there exists rich and diverse contents in the social space between the individual and the state. I will attempt to respond to the question "so what?" which arises after the kind of theoretical noodling that I engaged in in the last chapter. I will try to show that it matters how subjectivity is described for the assertion of a normative vision of a specific kind of political culture. This political culture is informed, for me, by the discourse of political liberalism (as opposed to economic liberalism) and by the discourse of participatory democracy: but both in their post-modern form. This means a liberalism free of its rationalism, and a participatory democracy without its universal subject. Thus the liberal conception of freedom becomes the freedom to move within particular contexts rather than be emancipated from them into the realm of a transcending reason, and to engage in democratic activity by impacting 'agonistically' upon the contexts in which ones lives, rather than attempting to embody a generic democratic citizen. The radicality of a radical post-liberal, post-Marxist democratic vision, as I see it, is that it attempts to theorize the play between identity and difference without subsuming the one social logic under the other.

The last chapter attempted to redescribe the subject as at once constituted and constituting; as emerging in and through the constant repetitious citation of significatory codes which produce the effect of stability and synchrony but which are essentially unstable and diachronic; as gaining the possibility of agency from the very contingency of life conditions, in Wittgenstein's sense of using the tools which lie at hand. It outlined a notion of choice which has as its
condition of possibility not Reason and the Law, but ultimate indeterminacy and undecidability. Thus it painted a picture of the social as rigorously regulated, yet always unstable, non-necessary, always open to change. It painted a picture of a social field marked by attempts at control and order which are plagued by unintended consequences and a multitude of responses.

Rational choice discourses which suggest that wherever we find ourselves as social actors is through our choice alone (marriage, employment, community, and so forth) cannot be supported, as they presuppose the generic person before its subjectification. Choice discourses which suggest, however, that choice is operative and justifiable within the conditions and contexts in which we find ourselves and which produce us as subjects because said conditions and contexts are never determinate or fixed, are crucial to the possibility of political practice. No subject position is ever totally fixed or normalized, even though some positions are more fixed and more normalized, more effective and more resourceful, than others. Thus, even the most awfully oppressive social conditions carry within them the tools for creating "something else;" every act of control risks unpredictable consequences. In Derridian terms, "even if we take the example of the most triumphalistic totalitarianism, I believe the secret remains inaccessible and heterogeneous to the public realm" (Derrida, 1996: 81). By public realm he means the realm of "the one best system," by secret he means the trace which can never be captured by it. This is not to suggest, however, that awful conditions of oppression are then less in need of dismantling, but that there is always an immanent activity through which this dismantling can occur.

It is my contention that this is what a radical democratic politics - as a praxis - actively recognizes, nourishes, and mourns when it is prohibited: it is a widening and deepening, in short a radicalization, of democracy which allows for "something different," or "not that" - in short, a
proliferation of alternatives in the face of The Same as its *modus operandi*. This is its *normative* injunction, based on a descriptive claim. The theory of a radical democracy impacts upon the way politics will be practiced. That is, it is a discursive intervention which literally changes the "arrangement" of political meanings.

The ethical intuition which feeds this injunction against The Same is based on conceiving the well-being of subjects in terms of their unrestrained *activity in life contexts which will take different forms in different contingent contexts*. Foreclosing on this process causes suffering, because it means violations of integrity; it causes dispersals of life practices which at its extreme leads to death. Where that place for activity has been destroyed, welfare should be directed at helping to rebuild it rather than replace it with dispersed, alienating and incoherent institutional services.

The normative substance of these assertions is based on respect for diverse practices. A reclaimed choice discourse rests entirely on a presumption in favour of respect for difference. If there were not something valuable about the way in which different practices evolve and proliferate empirically in the world, I would certainly theorize as a social planner whose only real problem is the implementation of uncontroversial social goods. What is it then that we seek to protect, nourish, salvage when speaking about respect for difference as such?

Respect is a problematic but powerful word. It is problematic because it carries with it such a particular philosophical burden: the liberal notion of respect for persons. Here respect is conferred as a recognition of all persons as persons - defined as rational and autonomous beings. Respect is based on recognizing in every person, universally, certain basic (natural) human characteristics, which within liberalism are rationality and autonomy. Downie and Telfer write:
To respect a person as an end is to value or cherish him [sic] for what he is - and that is a possessor of a rational will, where "rational will" refers to the abilities to be self-determining and rule-following with all that these imply....In so far as persons are thought of as rule-following we respect them by taking seriously the fact that the rules by which they guide their conduct constitute reasons which may apply both to them and to ourselves (1970: 36, 28-29).

As Taylor argues, the notion of respect for persons became useful precisely at the time when systems of status and honour were breaking down in Europe (1992). Hence, it became important to construct philosophies which elevated the generic person - unsituated, not "other-dependent" (status being given by birth, honour by "other-dependence") - to the level of universal subject. "What has come about with the modern age," says Taylor, "is not the need for recognition but the conditions in which the attempt to be recognized can fail" (1992: 35). Hence, the concepts of recognition and respect emerge within political language as identities are no longer theologically and inevitably grounded within a single, hierarchical, static system of differences (Taylor: 1992).

Positing "the person" as that entity due respect opened the possibility for liberal forms of social organization. Here respect for persons ostensibly operates as "difference blindness." Respect is demanded of us because persons are essentially and naturally the same. While this move may have been important in those contexts and in that time, today it becomes increasingly problematic. It carries with it a universality based on exclusion: the notion of "potential" becomes operative. That is, it is not required of us to respect all human life, but persons as persons - that is, autonomous and rule-following. There are then conceivably human beings who are not persons at all, or who are instead potential persons who could be taught those capacities which would make them full persons. "...While we do not regard it as a matter of moral indifference how we treat children, the senile, lunatics and animals, it is not clear that the attitude
of respect for persons is appropriate..." (Downie and Telfer, 1970: 34), and this because the word "person" implies "the possession of capacities (to be self-determining and rule-following)"
(Downie and Telfer, 1970: 35). To this list of non-persons, or potential persons in this frame, one can easily add "non-European," "non-white," "non-male," because the lack of respect in history for these groups of people was based quite reasonably and explicitly on the fact that, by this definition, they were not persons. Other moral sentiments may be called upon to approach them, such as affection, pity, agape (Downie and Telfer, 1970: 34), but not respect.

The presumption that people are (potentially) fundamentally the same with regard to basic capacities leads to disaster, because everywhere empirically people are different. The sameness is abstract: it is difficult to "look at." Respect comes from the latin specere, to look (Concise Oxford Dictionary). This difference can then easily be construed as deviance, problematic, something to be overcome, conquered, liberated - as a failure to achieve personhood (which we can make good through education, for instance), or which absolves us of the injunction to respect altogether.

This Kantian notion of respect "allows" us to separate person from practice: hence we are enjoined to respect a person, once we have decided that a human being is indeed a person, even while we may or may not respect his or her practices. In this frame it makes sense to foreclose on an offending identity or "being" (practice) - for example, homosexuality - while still claiming to respect the person who so offends. If recognition-respect, as opposed to evaluation-respect which is based on respect for certain acts and accomplishments, is based on respect for persons subtracted from their practices, then the notion of respect could not hold for the purposes of this thesis which argues that a person is only really manifested in and through practices. What is the
point of respecting a gay man or lesbian if we disregard his or her practices as gay man or
lesbian? The same goes for any identity. It makes no sense, and leads to liberal policies of
"difference blindness" which simply presumes a norm "beneath the surface" which all people fit.
This kind of respect is almost worse than outright condemnation. Recognition-respect then must
not be primarily of persons (which don't strictly speaking ever appear anywhere as such) but of
practices which give rise to different kinds of persons. In this way only does the notion of
respect begin to shed its liberalism, and begin to do some hard work. It is easy to respect a
generic person, by definition the same everywhere, but much harder to formalize a theory of
respect for different and often alien practices.

The concept of respect, then, undergoes a transformation with changed contexts and claims.
Respect for persons may have been the tradition out of which my political theory takes the notion
of respect (I could well learn from other languages of respect), but the notion of respect for
diversity is a radical transformation and critique of the notion of respect for persons. Maintained
is the sense that respect is required when status and honour are no longer a given order of society,
but gone is the notion that respect is based on recognition in the other of what one is oneself, that
is, on a universal sameness. Respect for diversity subverts respect for persons in that it extends
respect to that which is "not me." "I see that you are not me." What I "look at" are the practices
in which the other is engaged, which are different from mine. What I cannot "see" (though I can
assert them by fiat) are inherent (potential) inner capacities (such as autonomy or rule-following),
and hence these are the wrong categories for which to show respect. Thus, when we choose not
to respect a human being, if they no longer warrant our respect according to our judgement, we
do so because their specific practices have offended or wounded us, or have caused destruction or
pain to others, not because they have failed to achieve some elevated class of being human (personhood). If, as I have argued, the person is not a positivity with fixed capacities which we could describe once and for all, then respect is not for persons, but for practices of identification. Butler writes:

...Humanist conceptions of the subject tend to assume a substantive person who is the bearer of various essential and nonessential attributes. A humanist feminist position might understand gender as an attribute of a person who is characterized essentially as a pregendered substance or "core," called the person, denoting a universal capacity for reason, moral deliberation, or language. The universal conception of the person, however, is displaced as a point of departure for a social theory of gender by those historical and anthropological positions that understand gender as a relation among socially constituted subjects in specifiable contexts. This relational or contextual point of view suggests that what the person "is," and, indeed, what gender "is," is always relative to the constructed relations in which it is determined. As a shifting and contextual phenomenon, gender does not denote a substantive being, but a relative point of convergence among culturally and historically specific sets of relations (1990: 10).

It is, thus, this process which needs to be respected. With the deconstruction of the universality of reason, our thinking about respect as an ethical injunction also must change: respect, precisely, is required by the failure of that universality. To show respect in a post-rationalist sense is to see in the other not a reflection of ourselves (as rational beings, or any other "universal" attribute), but otherness as a manifestation of the infinite possibilities in the play of identity and difference. Respect is not a gesture toward the other that we can prove to be essential to human nature: it is rather an ethical "call," one which resonates within various traditions, liberalism being one of them.

The injunction to respect is a normative one. There is nothing to suggest that human beings are ontologically geared to respect each other and that therefore the language of respect brings us
closer to our "natural" dispositions. Talking about respect is to always invoke an "ought." There is no metaphysical referent which would tell us why it is better to respect than not to respect.

There are, however, historical reasons and normative languages. Respect for diversity is the radicalization of respect for persons arguments within the bounds of these reasons (the empirical fact of suffering and destruction) and normative languages (perennial attempts to come up with "better" ways of living together).

RADICALISM

Gareth Stedman Jones states:

The central tenet of radicalism - the attribution of evil and misery to a political source - clearly differentiated it from both a Malthusian-based popular political economy which placed the source of dissonance in nature itself, and from Owenite socialism which located evil in false ideas which dominated state and civil society alike (quoted in Bowles and Gintis, 1986: 8).

The term "radical" simply suggests that democratic politics enters all aspects of life "down to the roots" and is an alternative to socialist, Marxist, and liberal democratic theory in that it explicitly includes reference to social, cultural and spiritual issues as well as to economic ones, and this without making any of these descriptive categories determinant in the last instance. That is, radical democratic theory is alert to the cross-cutting relations between class, race, gender - or other modes of difference, however they are articulated in their time - in their social, political and cultural contexts. Radical democratic theory, then, attempts to offer a theory in which difference is lauded, but "othering" critiqued.
Pluralism, as Chantal Mouffe states, "is constitutive of modern democracy, and it precludes any dream of final reconciliation" (Mouffe, 1996: 25). In any radically democratic social space, politics is the ongoing source of contest and solution. As opposed to fascism or communism, and even some versions of socialism, a "final solution" in which the diverse associations in any given political space come together in a macro-consensus concerning the common good following a revolution of some kind is precluded. Radical democracy takes difference in the field of identity, and to some extent, managed antagonisms, to be a constant and beneficial state of affairs. Pluralism then can be linked with democracy as the form of governance which involves the direct and represented participation of the people in the politics of their own, diverse, lives, through the politicization of the associations, or communities, in which they live.

Radical democratic theory departs from the traditional American theories of pluralist democracy through a theorization of power. Pluralist liberals tend, as Chantal Mouffe states, to be "blind to relations of power." She continues:

They agree on the need to extend the sphere of rights to include groups hitherto excluded, but they see that process as a smooth one of progressive inclusion into a (supposedly) neutral conception of citizenship (1996: 24).

Difference is never open and equal, its legitimacy has to be fought for. This describes the history of twentieth century politics. The politics of pluralism is complex because the fact of plural associations of people is due in large part to insidious social hierarchies and relations of power in which difference becomes cause of abjection. Hence we have distinct identitarian categories like homosexual, black, Jew, which organize the social space into a vertical order and then are essentialized in that order. As Chandra Mohanty writes:
The central issue, then, is not one of merely acknowledging difference; rather, the more difficult question concerns the kind of difference that is acknowledged and engaged. Difference seen as benign variation (diversity), for instance rather than as conflict, struggle, or the threat of disruption, bypasses power as well as history to suggest a harmonious, empty pluralism (1994: 146).

The process of disorganizing and de-essentializing this order and reconstructing it horizontally as a fluid, if always somewhat agonistic, social structuring must include wresting back the means of self-definition (the always incomplete attempt at identification) from the hegemonic organizing discourses, amongst which are welfare services of the state, most notably public education. In Foucauldian terms,

As governmental practices have addressed themselves in an increasingly immediate way to "life," in the form of the individual detail of individual sexual conduct, [for instance], individuals have begun to formulate the needs and imperatives of that same life as the basis for political counter-demands. Biopolitics thus provides a prime instance of what Foucault calls here the "strategic reversibility" of power relations, or the ways in which the terms of governmental practice can be turned around into focuses of resistance: or, as he put it in his 1978 lectures, the way the history of government as the "conduct of conduct" is interwoven with the history of dissenting "counter-conducts" (Burchell, Gordon and Miller, 1991: 5).

As much as the New Left was blind to certain issues, it was organized around a notion of integral identities within a welfare state as a protest against the governance rationalities of institutions and bureaucracies. In this normative model, the state could be used to administer wealth redistribution, such as progressive taxation, but would not itself provide the welfare services paid for by those taxes. It would, rather, fund independent, not-for-profit servers. As Stanley Aronowitz writes:

The New Left rejected the common sense that conflated representative democracy with the very idea of democratic participation and proposed an alternative conception of democracy that entailed community control of key institutions such as the police, welfare, and education. While by no means contemptuous of the electoral process, or even of the necessity for some representative legislative institutions, it held these to be subordinate to
direct participation "in the institutions that affected the lives" of "ordinary people" (1996: 91).

While the myth of representative democracy and capitalist freedom rendered differentials in power invisible, the direct democracy called for by the radicalization of democracy focuses on the cause and effect of those differentials. In so doing, it critiques both bureaucratic capitalism and state socialism, and with this critique undermines the hegemony of state trained experts, managers, and professionals.

Radical democracy is achievable by creating institutions of popular control in which decisions are lodged with those directly affected by them, a realignment of economy and the polity entailing the reintegration of various aspects of life within smaller regional economies and social units (Aronowitz, 1996: 99).

The notion of difference has become prominent in theory-building and practical politics in the second half of the twentieth century (Critical Theory, Deconstruction, new social movements, anti-racism and multiculturalism). It is a bit tired these days, but one can really not do without it. Normatively speaking, the politics of difference attempts to replace an abjected otherness with a respected difference in the play between identity and difference. One version of difference simply refers to a vague idea that "individuals are different." Here diversity is envisioned as a social formation in which each social space is filled by individuals who have individual differences. This is the "we're all different in the same ways" version. Another formulation asserts that while differences are not just individual but group based, normatively speaking, a good social space would be one which housed one of every kind of different person available in the social formation. Thus there would be a list of differences, and each of these differences would be dispersed through the social space. A diverse social formation can thus be pictured as a city teaming with different colours and shapes of people going about essentially the same
business in essentially the same way. Thus differences become incidental, but interesting, "features" or "characteristics," or they become exotic and consumable (hooks, 1992). This is the fallacy of multiculturalist views of difference, in which difference is seen as that which is stuck onto subjects who do essentially the same kinds of things in essentially the same kinds of ways.

In contrast to these versions, I am using difference in a political sense. That is, the effect of difference is the political achievement of various identities, which constitute themselves as different in the very identifying process. This identifying process takes place at the level of performativity. It is the coherence of shared practices which give rise to beliefs and values. Our identities may be effects of "heterogeneous signifying practices" (Spivak, 1987: vix) but they are lived as coherences.

Difference which is absolutely singular, as I suggested in the last chapter, cannot be theorized. Theory cannot do without categories. There is nothing to say about singularity except that it invades every space of identity and difference. Difference is, however, deconstructive. Every identity bears its difference, which is also an identity which bears its difference. The description is one of infinite recession. I am suggesting that social spaces are not universal spaces which hold differences within them openly and equally, but that social spaces constitute the very differences which arise within social formations and they do so through a complex dialectic of identity and difference. Every identity is a precarious and unstable achievement which constructs a positivity, a regularity, a coherence, by repudiating other alternatives - identification implies a disavowal. There is no difference which is not also an identity. Every social space is constituted by practices which cohere, however tenuously. No social space, then, can be
conceived of as pure difference in dispersal. In other words, *difference must have its ground in identity, and identity must have its ground in difference.*

Identities are certainly riven by internal differences, but until this difference threatens the identity itself they can be held within it. Identity is fragile; unconsciously, it knows its own contingency, and that things aren't necessarily *this way.* In asserting itself it, therefore, has to continually assert it own limits. Hence, to give an example, a social space, lets say a lesbian club, can contain diversity to the extent that the identity of that club is not threatened. It can, then, host all manner of radically different kinds of lesbians (as they define themselves, and this certainly changes) - black, asian, white, aboriginal, working class, middle class, abled, disabled, vanilla, S/M, butch, femme, baby-dykes, old crones, and so forth (all of which are identities and differences in and of themselves) - but it cannot have an open invitation to straights (though, of course, a few here or there are always fun to have around!). If it does, the club is no longer a lesbian club. It becomes something else, constructs another identity; not necessarily a worse one. It might now be a "queer" club, where *type* of sexuality is no longer the point of identification, rather *kind* of sexuality, one which is based precisely on the breaking of sexual boundaries. This queer club cannot be seen to be more inclusive than the lesbian club, because while it can hold a certain kind of lesbian, gay man, or straight, it cannot hold my parents. They are not queer enough, nor would they want to be. If they started showing up with their friends, the club's identity would certainly change again.

Another example might be Waldorf schools. Waldorf schools can certainly accommodate a lot of difference in its teaching staff - all religious affiliations, ethnicities, sexuality, and so forth - but it cannot accommodate teachers who do not support the curriculum or the philosophy. If it
did, it would no longer be a Waldorf school, because these things, precisely, give its identity as a Waldorf school. Now, if the curriculum and the philosophy are seen to exclude certain kinds of differences the curriculum and philosophy can themselves be scrutinized and debated. This constitutes the politics of identity - which is always a kind of crisis of identity. Points of identification are contested from within and can be changed, but they cannot be done away with altogether bringing members of an identity into a zone of total nonidentity. Nonidentity does not bind people - they would just float away into other identifications. Identities, therefore, can bear a certain amount of dissent from within, they can easily dissolve, but they cannot be gotten rid of. Identities in other words are always radically open to change, and always vigilant about their limits. Identities never just are, they are made up of a set of performativities - the constant repetition of citational chains in the spaces in which identities are performed.

Our "individual" identities are constituted in, and consolidated or eroded by, the practices we engage in: these practices take place in social spaces of one kind or another. It certainly makes sense to say that an individual's identity is made up of "patched-together" identificatory practices and experiences, some of which might even be contradictory, but again "an" identity can hold only so much internal difference. Identificatory practices, by definition, require coherence to some degree. My identity as an individual is not the same as my singularity: identity is a social category of analysis, while singularity is not. In describing someone you know you can list all identifications, for example, straight, woman, middle-class, white, professional, but not have described the person at all in her singularity.

In terms of the big identifications of theory, such as gender, class, culture, which are supposed to signify a general identity, they too are riddled by difference. These identifications are broken
up by how they are inserted within other identities. Identities mark identities. Thus to speak of Woman, Worker, and White/Coloured, says very little at all. What it means for me to be a woman depends on other identifications I make.

There is always a limit to the internal differences an identification can bear before breaking. "The nation" or "the state" can also bear a series of differences, up to the limit of its own identity - which is always challenged, and so forth. Its identity can surely have broader limits or narrower limits. But the point I am trying to make here is that, for the nation to bear differences there has to be a ground upon which identities as differences can exist. That is, very simply, there has to be the open social space in which various practices can unfold and do their identitarian thing, as identities which bear difference but which also have limits, have integrity. This support for difference would be part of a state equity programme in which the focus is not any longer so much on supporting individuals, but on supporting those integral practices in which individuals emerge. Because identities are not all open and equal - the dialectic between identity and difference is an uneven one, and one which unleashes an infinite series of inclusions and exclusions - political practice and intervention has to then be at this level: the inclusion and exclusion of identities in a field of difference, and difference in a field of identity.

The politics of difference which supports a notion of pure dispersal is not very practical. Such a state cannot really be conceived except in psychosis or a good drug-induced adventure. Deleuze and Guattari's work gesture in this direction, in which fascism and the ego, indeed all proclivities to unity, are countered with "flows," and "circuits," with a multiplication of and disruption of selves (1989). It is an appealing vision of a kind of oceanic merging without any edges or boundaries - multiplicating couplings, endless connections - in which subjects dissolve through
infinitely merging with the world\textsuperscript{1}. But for practical purposes it is the very tension between the logics of difference and identity which is the grist for the mill of democratic activity, not the eradication of one by the other. As Mouffe writes: "I believe...that it is the existence of this tension between the logic of identity and the logic of difference that defines the essence of pluralist democracy and makes it a form of government particularly well-suited to the undecidable character of modern politics....The desire to resolve it could lead only to the elimination of the political and the destruction of democracy" (1993: 133).

Not all identities are the same, or are equally constituted out of a disavowal of otherness. Some are more absolute, closed and fearful than others. Thus, none of this is to say that judgements about identities cannot be made in the social space. This is precisely the role of politics: a constant negotiation about who counts as "the people" and about who gets to negotiate. If all of this were decided in advance by a transcendental Law then the work of democratic politics would already have been done. This is not to say, then, that all identities as differences must therefore suddenly be held by "the nation," but those which \textit{are} must be supported in such a way that their identity is integral. Part of the struggle then in the politics of difference is to broaden the identity of the nation with regard to the kind of differences it can bear, \textit{which means concretely, supporting the integrity of their various practices}, including schools where those are felt to be integral to the identity (this is not always the case). The politics of difference can certainly attempt to establish within the identity of the state limits beyond which it can no longer support

\textsuperscript{1} Although, Deleuze and Guattari might be very useful for future work which is required to flesh out my theory of community -work which would focus on a notion of de-individualized integrity.
difference: the most obvious are those identities which are organized around nothing else but the hatred of other people, in which we/they turns into friend/enemy. The extension of this logic, as is evident all over the planet today, leads to the end of politics and the beginning of persecution, warfare and genocide.

The play of identity and difference does not presuppose the impossibility of common ground beyond difference (I am not suggesting incommensurability, because difference is precisely a relational effect) - which would foreclose on the possibility of politics as much as absolute consensus would - it presupposes the impossibility of a thoroughgoing, comprehensive identity which erases all difference, and the impossibility of viable difference as simply the features of an identity. It poses the impossibility of ultimately stabilizing the dialectic between identity/difference. Difference of practice does not mean that there aren't common modes of practical reason and debate within a social space which has its own politically constructed and contested identity (talk shows, newspapers, parliament, town hall, city hall, posters, conferences, and so forth). Communities are the very sites, a place of integral practices and meanings, from which contest arises which can find its voice in public political forms, even to the extent of questioning those forms. Without such sites politics would have no "fuel."

We have seen in Chapter Two how just at the time of the consolidation of capitalist relations of production in the west and the increasing democratization of society, issues around social control became paramount. While the rhetoric of capitalism suggested that free markets make free individuals, in that markets are ostensibly neutral with regard to social, familial, and other "traditional" bonds which mire people, and the rhetorics of liberal democracy was that each
individual is free and equal, abstracted from their conditions of existence, clearly western governments were worried about the disintegration of social regulation that these rhetorics entailed. While the space between the abstract individual and the abstract state was emptied out - church, craft guild, community, family as economic unit, town-hall, local marketplace, slowly lost their centrality - the state "filled" that space with substitutes and presented them as Common Culture. As Bowles and Gintis write, "the result was the erection of compulsory schools, asylums, and prisons on an unprecedented scale during an era that prided itself on tearing down other walls in the interest of economic freedom" (Bowles and Gintis, 1986: 144). The freer the individual was meant to be, the more social regulation was implemented, not necessarily as an imposition by a coherent and monolithic state, but through a diffusion of rationalities which invaded social spaces: governance took on responsibility for how people conducted themselves in their lives in general - from mothering to worker conduct to hygiene to leisure and fitness. The state now had the intimate good of each and every citizen within its rationality. With the aide came lessons in deportment. As Wendy Brown states:

Traditionally it has been left liberals, following in the tradition of Mill and Thoreau, who viewed the state as a danger to freedom (conceived as popular sovereignty); conservative liberals such as Samuel Harrington and Henry Kissinger, following Hobbes and Hegel, tended to cast the state as a fount of freedom, protector against danger from without and domestic manager of our problematic particularity and atomistic energies. When freedom is equated with stability and order in this way, what is required is the containment rather than the enlargement of citizen powers, as the infamous 1973 Trilateral Commission Report decrying the "excess of democracy" made explicit. In this vein, Sheldon Wolin argues that the Right's 1980s rhetoric about "getting government off our backs" actually masked the steady expansion of state powers and retrenchment of citizen rights achieved through both foreign and domestic policy. Stuart Hall reads Thatcherism in a similar way, citing the resuscitation of empire manifest in the Falklands War combined with the (heavily racialized) emphasis on law and order as evidence of expanded state domination shrouded in a discourse of anti-statism (1995: 18).
As was indicated in Chapter Two, welfare is not essentially either a totalitarian tool in the hands of the state, or the great emancipator of the needy and equalizer of citizens: it follows an uneven cycle of liberalization and restriction, of enablement and constraint depending on political and social circumstances. The very restrictiveness of welfare policies has, historically, been the point around which groups have mobilized (Struthers 1994, Piven and Cloward 1974, 1982). The welfare state then should not be conceived as only oppressive; it has also enabled in certain cases. Various "arms" of the state are not only different aspects of the state, but are consist of different kinds of power. Social workers and the police operate with very different rationalities (Brown, 1995: 175). From a normative standpoint, it is then important to envision a welfare state which would maximize its enabling potential.

Radical, post-liberal democracy is the subversion of a democratic theory and politics (not to mention other kinds of totalitarian political formations) which would install The Good once and for all. It is also a subversion of liberal democracy which can be defined as being "...committed to both a competitive party political system and a competitive market economy, on to which was eventually grafted, after much struggle and bloodshed, a universal democratic franchise" (Critchley, 1996: 23). It therefore posits its own good as the pluralizing of goods in a public social space. Welfare provisions can either aid or hinder in this deepening of democracy, depending on how they are conceived and distributed. If choice were to become its central rationality, then it could support the radicalization of democracy, and perhaps even the undermining of capitalist excesses.

I see the process of redescription not as a project to "change the world" but to change the questions we ask, the way we talk about it, and the kinds of normative statements we can make.
As Mouffe writes: acknowledging "...the absence of foundation 'leaves everything as it is', as Wittgenstein would say, and obliges us to ask the same questions in a new way" (1993: 15). Thus, it is not the case that suddenly our entire vocabulary changes with regard to normative political statements, but rather that they should now resonate in new, quite different ways. Thus I can still use terms which come from liberal democratic theory such as "empowerment," "domination," "oppression," "self-governance," "freedom," and "equality," - those universalist modern terms - precisely because I have changed the grounding on which they are meant to rest: they now express simply the intuition of the alternative within contingent contexts which I am trying to argue for. Certain meanings imbedded within the terms of the democratic revolution themselves became obstacles to the deepening of democratic social imaginary. As the thrust of this thesis suggests, meanings of words in any discourse are unstable - they can be deconstructed, and reconstructed to signify differently: this is what Laclau and Mouffe mean by "articulation" (1985: 105). All radical democratic theorists attempt to subtract economic liberalism from political liberalism and rationalism from political liberalism. At the end of this, the terms of political liberalism mean something different. Mouffe writes:

The reformulation of the democratic project in terms of radical democracy requires giving up the abstract Enlightenment universalism of an undifferentiated human nature. Even though the emergence of the first theories of modern democracy and of the individual as a bearer of rights was made possible by these very concepts, they have today become a major obstacles to the future extension of the democratic revolution. The new rights that are being claimed today are the expression of differences whose importance is only now being asserted, and they are no longer rights that can be universalized (1993: 13).
Democratic theory of the social must provide a strong justification for the proliferation of the opportunities to choose as a non-commodified value in life, especially where people are in need and are struggling. As Bowles and Gintis state:

According to the principle of learning through choosing...individuals and groups in general participate not merely to meet preexisting ends, but also to constitute themselves, or to reaffirm themselves, as persons and groups with particular and desired attributes. It follows that preferences are as much formed as revealed in the exercise of choice. Individuals chose in order to become, and the nature of the opportunities given for the expression of choice affects the formation of wills (1986: 138).

In terms of the welfare state, a theory of choice that I wish to propose means something more than simply opting for "exit" over "voice," (that is, simply abandoning a common project and satisfying one's needs privately, instead of trying to change the institution in which one is implicated). This "voicing" means creating as an imaginary the possibility that a public social space can hold real (economically possible for all people) difference (different kinds of schools, different kinds of medical practices, different kinds of cultural expression, different kinds of families, and so forth) without these differences being constructed as divisive, dangerous, or pathological. It means imagining a culture in which the respect for difference is precisely that which becomes the social bond which all democratic social formations must have.

The idea that I think we need today in order to make decisions in political matters cannot be the idea of a totality, or of a unity, of a body. It can only be the idea of a multiplicity or a diversity....To state that one must draw a critique of political judgment means today to do a politics of opinions that at the same time is a politics of Ideas...in which justice is not placed under a rule of convergence but rather a rule of divergence. I believe that this is the theme that one finds constantly in the present day writing under the name "minority" (Jean-Francois Lyotard quoted in I. M. Young, 1990a: 156).

As we saw in Chapter Four, structuralism and poststructuralism are not the same discourse simply because both offer a critique of humanism. While the theme of the political unrest of '68,
organized around a refusal to acquiesce to being "integrated" into the prevailing system, may have informed a renewed "...primacy of the cult of private happiness and the very liberal pursuit of individual projects..." in the eighties (Ferry and Renault, 1990: xxiv), it also resulted in two clearly identifiable theoretical responses: the structuralist explanation of the "failure" of '68 in terms of the illusion of agency, and a thoroughgoing deconstruction of the dialectic of structure/agency altogether in the form of poststructuralist deconstruction, in which the theoretical place for emancipation and political activism was recouped. In what follows, I argue precisely the opposite case which Meili Steele makes when he comments on Ellison's theory of race politics:

Because he defends goods and traditions, and not just difference per se, he never insulates these traditions from assessment. He thus avoids the relativism and undecidability left by the politics of difference that works only through genealogical critique but with no site of judgement (1997: 198).

I argue that the relativity of social spaces and the undecidability of all ultimate principles is the condition of possibility of a radical democracy. It is the description of the social which makes sense of the empirical persistence of different forms of life. As Derrida makes clear, not until the radical undecidability and relativity of all value is acknowledged is there, logically and concretely, space and possibility for the decision, for responsibility, for the risk of judgement, for the activity of wilful intervention. If at the level of foundation all were always already decided, then politics would just be a one-time quest to uncover the right decision, after which the existential moment of decision, which is politics, would be redundant. The end of politics, and history, would truly have arrived. This erasure of politics can be seen in all utopian theories of social formation which hope for the withering away of politics, and the overcoming of all power,
in order to reach a state of total harmony in which nothing is any longer controversial, in need of debate, or requiring the act of judgement.

As we have seen in Chapter Four, decisions and choices can only be theorised as social phenomena: only in as much as we are regulated by the rules and injunctions of our social context - by discourses which produced "us" as intersubjective beings (discourse as language, by definition, operates through interchange between people which transcends the meaning-intentions of individuals) - which we describe at the level of foundation as radically undecidable, radically open, are we able to transgress through willed (incremental and unpredicting) activity those rules and regulations which are initially our condition of existence. That is, it is the very regulation which throws up the possibility, means, and form of transgressing them. This is not to say that our only option is resistance, but that our conditioned emerging is productive of the very tools which make positive interventions possible. A positive intervention into discussions and debates about welfare and social or liberal democracies is the notion of radical, post-liberal democracy. This notion does not just spring out of nowhere but is a transvaluation of the values of democracy and liberalism themselves.

Radical democratic theory is based on two premises, both held by the radically social nature of the discourses which are the condition of our meaningful existence: 1) the plurality of any social space as a system of differences - always limited by politics and hegemonic operations; 2) the ultimate unfixity of all identities - always limited by the process of attempted identification. In terms of speaking about choice, this means that at the level of foundation, nothing is fixed, but at the level of social existence the discourses which shape us always have the effect of "fixing" us. Thus social existence is a constant play between "pulling together" and "breaking apart." Mouffe

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writes: "tradition is the set of discourses and practices that form us as subjects. Thus we are able to think of politics as the pursuit of intimations, which in a Wittgensteinian perspective can be understood as the creation of new usages for the key terms of a given tradition, and of their use in new language games that make new forms of life possible" (1993: 17).

Hence choices entail bringing already formed beliefs and values to bear on context-dependent questions which have no metaphysically set answers. There are always criteria for choosing, even if these criteria are not metaphysically set:

...If the agent who must choose is someone who already has certain beliefs and values, then criteria for choice - with all the intrinsic ambiguities that a choice involves - can be formulated. Such an acceptance of the facticity of certain strata of our beliefs is nothing but the acceptance of our contingency and historicity. We could even go so far as to say that it is the acceptance of our "humanity" as an entity to be constructed; while in the case of rationalism, we have been given "humanity" and are merely left with the secondary task of realizing it historically (Laclau: 1990: 83).

Radical democratic theory asserts that subjects emerge in the context of social, political, cultural and spiritual associations, which differ from each other in fundamental ways, and where people are isolated they are in crisis. It is in and through these associations that people become what they are; a democracy can be described as being deepened when the chances for actively participating in these associations is enhanced. Hence radical democracy is not about the radical dispersal of individuals in the empty space of privacy, freedom and individualism, but a political theory which understands respect for difference, as it arises in the form of changing social and cultural associations, to be its core public value. Hence, liberalism's holding of the right over the good pertains here, but only in the sense that the political theory of radical democracy can advocate no single positive good, except the good of the respect for difference which is agonistically constituted. "The reformulation of the democratic project in terms of radical
democracy requires giving up the abstract Enlightenment universalism of an undifferentiated human nature....Radical democracy demands that we acknowledge difference - the particular, the multiple, the heterogeneous - in effect, everything that had been excluded by the concept of Man in the abstract" (Mouffe, 1993: 13).

This view of difference is not that of liberal pluralism in which group differences exist as positivities, simply laid side-by-side, openly and equally, within the social field. In such a view differences which are constructed through power, wealth and status are simply facts of nature. The "fact of difference" here justifies differential treatment, living conditions, respect, and so forth. Mouffe critiques Rawls by stating: "politics is not affected by the existence of pluralism, which Rawls understands only as the multiplicity of the conceptions of the good that people exercise in the private sphere, perfectly separated from the public sphere where consensus based on self-interest reigns. This is the perfect liberal utopia" (1993: 51). Because these differences are supposed to be private, a product of an originating free, rational choice, they fall outside the sphere of politics. Rather, as Mouffe suggests, the accomplishment of the extension and deepening of democracy has been to politicize and publicize differences precisely where they arise as private deviance, and where they are punished. If for radical democratic theorists differences are redescribed as plenitudes rather than deviances (the transsexual, the gay woman or man, the devout Buddhist or Christian for example), which add to the richness of forms of life, their sustained existence cannot be attributed to a fact of nature. It is a political accomplishment. Difference cannot be organized around, it cannot "call" for recognition, until it is politicized and constructed as coherent, that is, until an identity is established. One can certainly wish to be recognized as a singular personality within one's own community, but this could hardly be a
ground around which to organize public recognition. While differences simply proliferate (compulsory heterosexuality does not overcome the little girl from Sudbury, Ontario - she sees and feels that there are other ways and means), they proliferate within a context, and the context shapes their identity. Identities are always deeply marked by their constitutive outside. There is no isolated and pure identity which drops from heaven, however "different." But difference nevertheless continues to rear its obstinate head, however extreme is the assertion and institution of The Same.

Those promoting a politics of difference doubt that a society without group differences is either possible or desirable. Contrary to the assumption of modernizing theory, increased urbanization and the extension of equal formal rights to all groups has not led to a decline in particularist affiliations. If anything, the urban concentration and interactions among groups that modernizing social processes introduce tend to reinforce group solidarity and differentiation....People do not usually give up their social group identifications, even when they are oppressed (I. M. Young, 1990a: 163).

Foreclosing on different modes of life is always a violent affair, wherever it happens.

Radical democracy, then, should have as its political goal the ameliorization of inequity through actively nourishing differences as they arise, which means paying attention to the compulsive need to disavow difference which marks every social formation. That is, liberalism's answer to injustice was to attempt to erase social and political difference by putting in its place the theoretical possibility of an unencumbered individual. Liberalism argued that stripping each person of their cultural particularity would leave a universal core which was the same everywhere. It would remove entirely the problem of difference in the public sphere, and make politics a harmonious affair. It is this supposedly neutral core which the law was meant to address and justice was thereby meant to be served. In the meantime, that which "clothed" this core - specific traditions, rituals, and values - was at best ignored and at worst ridiculed,
persecuted and prosecuted. Social hierarchy arises out of a failed universality on the back of a repudiated and rejected difference; the "underclass" constitute those who are abjected from the norm - women, people of colour, "immigrants," dissenting religions; and those who fail to live up to proper living - workers, the indigent, "unemployables."

WHY POST-LIBERAL AND POST-MARXIST?

...We argue that an adequate political theory today must be post-liberal. It must be a transformation of liberal discourse which preserves its elevation of liberty but which nonetheless alters liberalism's differentia specifica, the dual partitions of actors into learners and choosers, and of social space into private and public. A democratic theory today must also be post-Marxian, retaining the acute attention to domination in the Marxian tradition, but encompassing a plurality of forms of domination and terrains of social conflict, and overcoming the Marxian (and Rousseauian) expressive theory of action (Bowles and Gintis, 1986: 184).

Why do theorists of radical democracy, such as Laclau and Mouffe and Bowles and Gintis, call themselves post-liberal and post-Marxist? This naming indicates that there is both a departure from, and an engagement with, liberalism and Marxism. Theories of radical post-liberal and post-Marxist democracy organize themselves around a critique of liberal democracy while still investing in the discourse of liberty the liberal tradition provided. They are post-Marxist in the sense that they take much from the tradition of Marxist critique of liberalism, while rejecting its essentialism (the universal subject of history), and its determinism ("the ultimate law of motion of history" as the contradiction between "the productive forces and the existing relations of production" (Laclau: 1990: 108)).
Marx launched the most comprehensive critique of liberalism already a hundred and fifty years ago in which he pointed out that liberalism conflates description and prescription. The free, autonomous, rational, self-sufficient and self-making individual of liberalism is both liberalism's description of the ostensible state of the human condition and its prescription: it becomes both is and ought, and in that move, any requirement for social revolution or even critique is nullified. Where people do not live out their autonomous destiny it is because they have failed to live up to their own nature. It is assumed that in every social transaction the parties involved, because they already have been described as a priori equal and free agents, will do what they do out of their free will. It assumes that because in principle in liberal theory anybody can borrow capital and buy labour-power, those who do so do so because they are motivated and want to, and those who don't are not motivated or don't want to. It asserts that "the free market economy" is by definition open to all, equally. It is blind to social power. It can do this because it has absolutely no mechanism by which to pick up and process non-economic forms of social interaction. Even if liberals can argue that everyone equally can raise capital (which is empirically not the case: capital is only lent on the basis of reputation, standing, wealth, collateral), they cannot "see," like Marxists, forms of systematic discrimination which are based on assumptions and values which exist outside the operation of markets - the simple and temporally limited exchange of goods and services. As Bowles and Gintis argue, "the market" operates to a considerable degree on the basis of extra-economic judgments; judgments about character, responsibility, trustworthiness, workworthiness, consistency, obedience, initiation, and reputation, and so forth.

Why does it matter who hires whom? It matters because the labour contract does not enforce itself, nor is it enforced primarily by the state; it is enforced by the employer, and
the costs of enforcement depend on the social organization of production, or more prosaically, on who hires whom (Bowles and Gintis, 1986: 75).

This is true also of lending and borrowing. The liberal illusion that the who does not figure in these transactions, because these transactions are purely formal and procedural, is nowhere corroborated. If liberal economic theory asserts that credit is equally available to all, practice shows that this is never the case. The lender will lend to whom he feels safest with, qualities which can be measured by a value judgment alone, and which are open to prejudicial assessment and familiarity - down to the details of clothing, bodily presentation, speech patterns, and so forth. The neutrality of market exchange is a fiction from the beginning. Market exchange is a social interaction. Those with little social power or status or acceptability are absolutely vulnerable to the hiring-firing mechanism of controlling them, let alone to lenders. It is therefore a major liability in liberalism that the issue of social, economic, and political power cannot be apprehended and treated. Or it is treated as entirely separate from economics. Hence, the choice discourse within liberalism becomes suspect. It is assumed that each individual can choose equally through the strength of their will alone, regardless of circumstance, and that, hence, the condition in which people find themselves has been chosen by them and is the responsibility of no other. Unemployment, for instance, must therefore be voluntary. Relationality, communality, power, subjugation, discrimination - everything which is political and public - is entirely lost in this interpretative framework. Hence, capitalism is meant to belong to the private sphere, and the politics of state alone to the public. As Bowles and Gintis write: "The fundamental commitments of liberal theory are reflected in two aspects of its discursive structure. First is its silence on the issues of exploitation and community....[Second],
Social space is divided into a private and a public realm. The public realm of social space is considered to be the state, whereas the private realm houses the family and the capitalist economy. In similar fashion, individuals are partitioned into two groups: rational agents whose intentions and choices are the subject of the explicit political and economic theory of liberalism, and those who for reasons of age, incapacity, or citizenship are excluded from this privileged category [they become "learners"] (Bowles and Gintis, 1986: 17).

In so compartmentalizing the social space, liberalism consigns the sphere of family and capitalist economy to the apolitical, to "freedom," meaning that whatever happens there is immune to political scrutiny, critique, and politically motivated change. Thus, liberalism cannot provide a fully functional theory of democracy, because the exclusions and silences upon which it is based directly threaten democratic participation.

Radical democracy also organizes itself around a critique of, and engagement with, Marxism. While liberalism was a response to the threat of the absolute state, socialism, most conspicuously in its Marxist form, was a response "to the concentration of wealth and economic power that resulted from the consolidation of European industrial capitalism" (Bowles and Gintis, 1986: 13). Radical democracy takes from Marxism the critique of capitalist relations of production as an harmonious and fair economy. The capitalist economy is an economy, rather, of consolidated and consolidating capital, which coerces and/or excludes those who do not own capital. The monopoly of capital, according to Marxist theory, makes the choice discourse of liberalism invalid - there is no choice but to sell one's labour power and see the surplus value go to the capitalist class, and hence the agency, the activities, the decisions, the cultural specificity, of non-capitalists as "free agents" is a sham - in the final analysis, workers and renters are subjected to the logic of capitalist relations of production and have no place to move. Thus, while Marxism and socialism have a strong theoretical grasp on relations of economic domination, they have a
weak theoretical language with which to describe other variables of social existence. Every relation of domination or exploitation is reduced to economic relations.

The Marxian tendency to treat distinct aspects of social life as theoretically indistinguishable is also manifested in its collapse of the terms domination, exploitation, and class to a single usage. The result is to force the most diverse forms of domination - imperialism, violence against women, state despotism, racism, religious intolerance, oppression of homosexuals, and more - either into obscurity or into the mold of class analysis (Bowles and Gintis, 1986: 19).

Consequently, Marxism's, and also socialism's, main concern is economic justice and not democratic culture. That is, socialism, especially Marxist socialism, cannot explain the mechanisms by which workers are meant to act in solidarity with each other. It is simply assumed that because all workers are exploited by capital they are fundamentally the same in the way they lead their lives - in their social, political, and cultural discourses. "This means that some of the most pressing issues of solidarity, division, and collective action - why a worker chooses to honour a picket line or to join a union - cannot be addressed. It is simply assumed that individual action is either an expression of class interest or of "false consciousness," and the problem of choice disappears" (Bowles and Gintis, 1986: 21).

Radical democrats such as Laclau, Mouffe, Bowles and Gintis, argue that, while Marxism informs their work, it loses its critical power through an obstinate economic determinism and reductionism. For an analysis of globalization Marxism, as with liberalism, does not have the theoretical means to deal adequately with the complexity of multi-layered relations of domination and exploitation, and the variety of ways in which difference is constructed, and instituted in society. In always linking any social phenomenon to the relations of production, the impact of the relations of domination and exploitation produced in colonialism and imperialism,
in the family, in "ideological apparatuses" - such as schools - on socio-political, cultural and spiritual matters cannot be thought through in a way that meets their complexity. They are always reduced to class. Discourses of gender, race, religion, sexuality, and culture which cut across class cannot be adequately theorized.

Debates among Marxian and liberal theorists concerning the roots of domination have tended to adopt an impoverished conception of power. The liberal concern with the despotic state is matched in its narrowness by the Marxian concern with class domination. Each ignores the undeniable insights of the other; both give scant theoretical attention to forms of power that cannot be reduced to either state despotism or class (Bowles and Gintis, 1986: 92).

Liberalism and Marxism, therefore, err in different directions in their interpretive frameworks in the ways that I have been trying to describe in the last chapters: in the former the individual as an always already pre-formed positivity with universal characteristics such as rationality and autonomy lives a strictly separated public and private life which is self-willed, and in the latter, persons appear into view only as carriers of class interest and the content of their lives is simply an example of capitalist exploitation. In both cases, power is unitary, as are relations of domination. The threat to individual autonomy in liberalism comes from the state, and the threat to working class in Marxism comes from the capitalist class (Bowles and Gintis, 1986: 22). In both cases, the identities which are formed around the struggle with relations of domination are homogeneous and one-dimensional. Laclau and Mouffe argue that the Marxist intervention which described the social antagonism as that between labour and capital rather than as that between the people and the ancien regime still maintained "the postulation of one foundational moment of rupture, and of a unique space in which the political is constituted" (Laclau and
Mouffe, 1985: 152). That is, there is only one real site of antagonism in any society, and that site for Marxism is class and for liberalism it is the individual versus the state.

Bowles and Gintis, as well as Laclau and Mouffe, construct their radical democratic theory around an objection to both the liberal and the Marxist theories of choice and agency.

In rejecting the premise of exogenous interest, we argue that an adequate conception of action must be based upon the notion that people produce themselves and others through their actions. According to this conception, action is neither instrumental toward the satisfaction of given wants nor expressive of objective interests, but it is an aspect of the very generation of wants and specification of objective interests. Individuals and groups, accordingly, act not merely to get but to become. The politics of becoming, we believe, provides a central corrective to both the normative and the explanatory dimension of traditional political theory (Bowles and Gintis, 1986: 12).

Laclau and Mouffe argue, similarly, that a theory of democracy has to involve the means by which both the heterogeneity between different identities or associations, as well as the heterogeneity within different identities or associations, can be theorized. The assumption of identities and interests which are pre-formed, simply given, and essentially stable subverts the democratic process, which is precisely the process of politicizing identities and interests. Mouffe writes: "How can we grasp the multiplicity of relations of subordination that can affect an individual if we envisage social agents as homogeneous and unified entities?" (1993: 12). If this were the case, democracy would be simply instrumental: it would simply be the process by which already constituted social entities are given rights; there would be no dimension of active becoming, of the tension between identity and difference, and hence very little politics. Both Marxism and liberalism operate under this assumption.

Democracy, as "rule by the people," is explicitly a theory and practice which must constantly ask who "the people" are, where they are, how they are constituted as such, who represents them
and how, what exclusions and inclusions operate around that notion. If democracy is the identity between "the people" and government, it is one that constantly keeps falling apart, being constructed, and falling apart again. Various identities within the field of difference push the limits of the identity of the state. The very content of democracy then becomes "how can we tell who the people are, and where do they reside?" In other words, how can a multiplicity of identities become constructed as the people? According to Mouffe, this is so because at a certain moment in history democracy became articulated with political liberalism (competitive parties and the parliamentary system). Hence the notion that democracy could ever be a harmonious identity between governed and government - in which, in other words, "the people" could be defined once and for all as a single identity untroubled by difference - is denied by liberalism's political intervention. Because the identity of the governed and the government cannot ever be fully established, the notion of "the people" keeps changing and breaking up, made up as it is of disparate identities.

Democracy, in its most basic definition, rests on the assumption that the legitimate seat of power - from which decisions are made which effect the shape and content of daily life of constituents - is existentially empty until it is filled through a procedure which is open to revocation. Chantal Mouffe writes, "as Claude Lefort has shown, this democratic revolution is at the origin of a new kind of institution of the social, in which power becomes an 'empty place'" (Mouffe, 199: 11). No person or group of persons can take that power by divine right. That right is conferred by 'the people', and 'the people' - or its representatives - fill that empty seat. Norberto Bobbio writes:
My premise is that the only way a meaningful discussion of democracy, as distinct from all forms of autocratic government, is possible is to consider it as characterized by a set of rules (primary or basic) which establish who is authorized to take collective decisions and which procedures are to be applied (Bobbio, 1987: 24).

A radical democracy is one in which the rules and the procedures are constantly and rigorously debated by people in the communities in which they find themselves, as well as the content of the laws which are passed within the constraints of those rules and procedures. That is, it is understood that even those basic rules and procedures are erected through a political process which is fraught with antagonism, exclusion, and self-interest. A radical democracy is one in which more and more constituencies are able to debate, contest, prescribe the rules of the game. Politics, as I have stated above, is an activity which is aimed at stabilizing or transforming the rules and procedures of the game itself. "The game" here means any kind of discourse which fixes its rules and procedures and manifests as certain kinds of performativities. As Bowles and Gintis write: "Political action, for example, may seek to alter not only the rules of the state, but the rules governing gender or race relationships" (Bowles and Gintis, 1986: 97). This can never be an isolated activity. I cannot choose to initiate this kind of change alone.

The ongoing democratic revolution over the last few hundred years in the west constitutes the means by which the differences as identities we value now have been able to even be thought of as plenitudes rather than threats. This democratic revolution amounts to a series of historical events which built on each other over the centuries - that process by which democratic demands of various different "the people" have been extended by the logic of equivalence. As Laclau and Mouffe state "...the logic of equivalence is a logic of the simplification of political space, while
the logic of difference is a logic of its expansion and increasing complexity" (1987: 130). Hence, certain equivalential links are made between various different identities; the language of rights which was formed in one domain was extended to others. Universal rights granted to propertied men who were constituted as "the people" soon began to be taken up by "others," that is, women, non-propertied men, ex-slaves, immigrants, aboriginals. "This break with the ancien regime, symbolized by the Declaration of the Rights of Man, would provide the discursive conditions which made it possible to propose the different forms of inequality as illegitimate and anti-natural, and thus make them equivalent as forms of oppression" (Laclau and Mouffe, 1987: 155). This "taking up" entailed a long political process whereby differences as identities were inserted into a notion of "the people." The emergence of this way of conceiving social relations has been arduous; it amounts to the persuasive vision of a fiction in which "the people" are said to be identified with the state. That is, first "the people" are taken to be already constituted through "a single will," and that the state is an extension of this will. Democracy's own logic of equivalence undermines this very useful fiction. While identities create a link of equivalence between themselves through political activity, they can never fully establish an overarching identity and erase the differences. Although men and women, blacks and whites, homosexuals and heterosexuals, are counted as equal, they can never be said to be the same. Democracy is a logic of unceasing proliferation of differences through the logic of equivalence, rather than the forging of "the people." If Catholics can have their own schools why can't we? If heterosexuals can marry why can't we?

This is the long process which stretches from the workers' struggles of the nineteenth century to the struggle of women, diverse racial and sexual minorities, and diverse marginal groups, and the new anti-institutional struggles in the present century....What
we are witnessing is a politicization far more radical than any we have known in the past, because it tends to dissolve the distinction between the public and the private, not in terms of the encroachment on the private by a unified public space, but in terms of a proliferation of radically new and different political spaces. We are confronted with the emergence of a *plurality of subjects*, whose forms of constitution and diversity it is only possible to think if we relinquish the category of 'subject' as a unified and unifying essence (Laclau and Mouffe, 1987: 181).

However much we know the Rights of Man to be a political invention at a certain time in history, rather than a discovery of the real nature of the human being, there is no denying that it began to make hegemonic a certain discourse which could be used in a variety of ways in a variety of social spaces to critique certain social relations of subordination and oppression. As Bowles and Gintis write:

> In February 1960, four black students refused to leave a Greensboro, North Carolina, lunch counter after being denied the cups of coffee they wished to purchase. At the time, there were assaulted and vilified as "outside agitators." In fact they were quite the reverse. The students' undoubtedly radical protest was a simple affirmation of quintessentially *liberal* rights. The spreading wave of sit-ins, though unsettling to the racial status quo, was not antiliberal: rather it proclaimed the priority of one aspect of liberalism, personal rights, over another, rights of property (1986: 27).

Thus, a liberal discourse of property rights which was used in many ways to disfranchise blacks could be subverted by invoking personal rights. This for Laclau and Mouffe is the counter-hegemonic task: to construct a chain of equivalences between various "the people" who are exploited, dominated, and unrepresented and create a political alliance in the midst of cultural, religious, and value differences.

The construction of "the people" is not always, however, a democratic project. At times, "the people" come to be constructed as the subjects of economic liberalism, tradition, or a Fascist
state. As Laclau and Mouffe write, "the people" can also be constructed as the bulkhead against democratization which has gone out of control. Democratization, here, connotes a dangerous egalitarianism, in which everybody has an equivalential voice, regardless of social and moral status. "An antagonism is thus constructed between two poles: the 'people', which includes all those who defend the traditional values and freedom of enterprise; and their adversaries: the state and all the subversives (feminists, blacks, young people and 'permissives' of every type.)"


It is precisely the polysemic character of every antagonism which makes its meaning dependent upon a hegemonic articulation to the extent that, as we have seen, the terrain of hegemonic practices is constituted out of the fundamental ambiguity of the social, the impossibility of establishing in a definitive manner the meaning of any struggle, whether considered in isolation or through its fixing in a relational system. As we have said, there are hegemonic practices because this radical unfixity makes it impossible to consider the political struggle as a game in which the identity of the opposing forces is constituted from the start (Laclau and Mouffe, 1987: 170).

The politics of gaining a respected presence in the public sphere by different groups in the west has relied on the liberal discourse of rights, the founding fiction of liberalism which posits into each individual, as though fallen from heaven, inalienable rights. Rights become that which cannot be taken away because they are always already there. Like the monetary system, the rights discourse is a collusion of belief. If we all believe in these rights then they will in fact become a founding principle in political negotiation. However, while rights are meant to apply to individuals because they are "in" people, they in fact are social and political goods obtained only by the concerted action of associations of people. Rights are not discovered, they are constructed and fought for, and rights do not really pertain to individuals as singularities; they pertain to individuals as identities. As Bowles and Gintis write:
Personal rights are simply a part of a discourse, a structure of communication and
political action which has been a ubiquitous medium of social solidarity and conflict in
Europe and North America since the rise of nation-states....A discourse is a set of tools.
People use these tools to forge the unities that provide the basis for their collective social
practices....The meaning of rights, in turn, is precisely their socially structured
deployment in social action (Bowles and Gintis, 1986: 152-153).

Thus while this version of the democratic discourse makes use of the liberal language of
individual rights, democratic activity has always taken place in the context of collective action,
often highly antagonistic, and at times, bloody, against liberalism in its early form which wilfully
remained blind to the politics and power of the capitalist market. This liberalism - economic
liberalism - has been, thus, highly wary of democracy. Liberalism has not performed the social
function that it itself claims: its emancipatory rhetoric has benefited groups, not individuals, in
that it was groups of people who were barred from enfranchisement; its political discourse of
rights was double-speak for its economic discourse of rights (economic freedom means personal
freedom), except where these discourses were disarticulated by democratic insurgency -
capitalism, alone, has never fostered democracy. Hence, liberalism has generated a discourse of
individual freedom right in the midst of an economic system which both depends upon and
constrains individual freedom. Where a liberal discourse has been used against neoclassical
liberalism, which stubbornly "sees" an equality of agency everywhere in order to justify
inequality, it has done so through collective action, and using a democratic discourse about
equality of access to social goods and power which invokes, but goes way beyond, the liberal
discourse of individual rights. Bowles and Gintis write:

...The discourse of rights is fraught with internal tensions due to its genesis in social
conflict and the consequently contradictory forms it is obliged to assume in social life.
This contradictory character explains both its emancipatory potential and its seemingly
limitless capacity to legitimate social inequality and undemocratic economic arrangements (Bowles and Gintis, 1986: 175).

Early liberals in Europe knew clearly that radical democracy and capitalism (economic liberalism) were not compatible. As Bowles and Gintis write, "according to the Lockean accommodation, social harmony was to be ensured by limiting political participation to the propertied and their natural allies among the upper classes" (Bowles and Gintis: 1986: 42). They continue,

The...articulation between liberalism and democracy...was performed during the course of the nineteenth century. This "democratization" of liberalism, which was the result of multiple struggles, would eventually have a profound impact upon the form in which the very idea of liberty was conceived. From the traditional liberal definition of Locke - "liberty is to be free from restraint and violence from others" - we had passed with John Stuart Mill to the acceptance of "political" liberty and democratic participation as an important component of liberty. More recently, in social-democratic discourse, liberty has come to mean the "capacity" to make certain choices and to keep open a series of real alternatives. It is thus that poverty, lack of education, and great disparities in the conditions of life are today considered offenses against liberty. (1987: 172).

According to Bowles and Gintis, not until World War I was democracy fully wedded to a liberal discourse (Bowles and Gintis, 1986: 42). Contrary to popular belief, England's great democracy consisted of a voting constituency of only 2 percent of the population in 1832. In 1911 this had expanded to not more than 30 percent (Bowles and Gintis, 1986: 43). Even in the U.S.A, where land was abundant, propertyless, and therefore vote-less, workers "constituted roughly half of the labour force" (Bowles and Gintis, 1986: 49). This included slaves. Where Locke and Jefferson thought that the dangers of democracy could be curtailed by making the ownership of property the criterion of enfranchisement, Madison argued that "cross-cutting cleavages" endemic to nineteenth and twentieth century Europe and North American societies would guarantee that political power would always remain in the hands of the elite. The theory was that diverse
interests of diverse constituencies would cancel each other out (Bowles and Gintis, 1986: 54), rather than forge relations of equivalence. "The people," it was hoped, could never constitute themselves as such, let alone rule themselves. Liberalism was, then, never a political theory of democracy. It was an economic theory of the defense of property from a sovereign ruler, and also from a potentially unruly working and peasant class, which was argued on the basis of individual liberty and difference. Liberals, however, eventually \textit{reluctantly absorbed} the democratic discourse, rather than be swallowed by it. "There is no question, that once liberal democracy was forced upon a resistant liberalism and a reluctant capitalism it was touted by the exponents of both as their bountiful contribution to social emancipation" (Bowles and Gintis, 1986: 40). Similarly, neither Marxism nor socialism could be theories of radical democracy. Both of them, in contrast with liberalism, have a vision of the good which they seek to instate. If the process of instating this good includes democratic participation, this is fine. Indeed, Marx's model was the Paris Commune (Bowles and Gintis, 1986: 147). But the democratic participation is not itself the good. Both envision a society based on economic equality secured by socializing capital - the classless society in which objective and universal interests of the working class would be served. Here all diverse identities would merge into a single identity: "the will of the people" would be the will of the state without any mediation. Any identities which might arise outside of this realization in the state would be immediately quashed. The nature of "the people" would then always already have been established, and politics would be irrelevant. The constitutive and irreducible pluralism of radical democracy is denied from the beginning.
Radical democrats argue that traditional democracy has failed to deliver on its promises of equality and civic participation. They accuse liberal democracy in particular of being too willing to sacrifice the interests of diverse groups in the name of a broad consensus. Most importantly, radical democrats claim that democratic principles underlie critiques of capitalism and that the creation of an egalitarian society will entail extending these democratic principles into ever expanding areas of daily life: work, education, leisure, the home (Trend, 1996: 2-3).

The welfare state is premised on the notion that in the last few hundred years individuals have been caught up in a system (capitalism and its various pathologies) which both enhances the possibilities for improved living and which impoverishes their lives in innumerable ways which they can not resist individually. Because of their inability to resist the monolithic system, communities and individuals become disempowered by fragmentation, and hence, become unruly and dangerous to civil peace through collective organization. This is an important point: welfare is meant to redistribute wealth and opportunities and so lessen the tension between capital and labour, and thereby to manage social unrest without actually threatening to initiate a social revolution. Welfarism is a set of policies and practices which maintain, while transforming, the capitalist status quo. It is not surprising, then, that welfare policies construct solutions which are not geared to take into account the particular and diverse desires, goals, beliefs, of disempowered people. Welfare is, precisely, not for "the choosy." Education and healthcare may be universal, but they are also of a particular kind. This is not to say that welfare state policies, including public schools, have succeeded in forging particular kinds of
subjectivities, or that they succeeded in maintaining a uniformity of practice and purpose. They, too, are open to disturbance and resistance from within. All kinds of unintended effects occurred: for instance, the students who were in public schools in the 60s managed to use the rationality of the system to define their own anti-establishment politics. However, as much as resistance, even creative and productive resistance is always possible, a radical democratic culture cannot be one based solely on "fighting back." As the system stands, particular groups are faced with a disproportionate requirement to continually resist. For instance, the many empassioned public school teachers cannot sustain as their ongoing mandate both teaching their students and constant resistance to the directives from the Boards of Education.

The logic of the governmentality of the state is clearly visible in the impact of welfare policies on aboriginal communities. Here, the particular political, social, and cultural economy of various aboriginal tribes is disrupted by the administration of aid, which is provided as though it were neutral in value and content. The integrity, in other words, of the practices of the various native tribes was purposefully violated. Part of the aim of welfare provision for aboriginals was to "civilize" - the intention to liberate them from their particular identity. Residential schools constitute the most explicit form of this. While they inflicted much suffering, and the cost of this experiment is still felt to this day, aboriginals were not only passive victims. It is through political agitation that aboriginal communities have begun to assert the necessity to live in and by their own (changing) cultural traditions, which includes very different paradigms of "selfhood" and identity, by taking control of the funds made available and setting up and running their own welfare services. In order to accomplish this they have strategically taken up the language of identity and difference. In the Foucauldian sense of the term, aboriginals have empowered
themselves by mobilizing themselves against this very history. Many languages and cultural practices were lost, but identity was consolidated around this very loss.

This is true of other groups in North America in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Welfare policies were designed to form very specific kinds of differentiated subjectivities which could be easily managed. These policies were implemented as rationalities of conduct, in which actual daily practices were changed. Particular identities were then considerably threatened by the hegemonic norms in circulation, especially the identities of those considered foreign (Rousmaniere, Dehli, and de Coninck-Smith, 1997). A radical democratic theory suggests that choice, as the recognition of the unfixity of identities and the ultimate undecidability of social relations, actually works against the integrating and rationalizing force of both capitalism and welfare statism — it works against the injunction to enact only one kind of subjectivity. Choice also connotes that practice whereby various subjects negotiate the stabilities and instabilities of their own identities. Any given social site has its moments of choice, its moment where this could be that.

This is true of all normalizing discourses and technologies, the media among them. Where choice is politicized on behalf of beleaguered groups in the liberal democratic language of rights

\[\text{\textsuperscript{2}}\text{ In an interesting article in Saturday Night (October, 1998), Brad Evenson reports that many aboriginals are becoming increasingly frustrated with the pan-Indian culture which has emerged since the 1950s, supported by the Canadian and U.S. governments. This culture has become a mish-mash of native customs and rituals from different tribes and geographical locations, in which the sacred symbols and practices of particular tribes - like dream-catchers and smudging - are mass-produced and sold to tourists as generically "Indian." He writes: "Many natives believe governments have for decades promoted a kind of pan-Indian nation, with a common spiritual belief system, cultural hallmarks, and aspirations. After all, it is easier to deal with a homogeneous group than with a fractious collection of tribes with different politics goals" (19).}\]
and freedoms it can powerfully undermine the integrating and flattening invocation of The Same. It is operative in the dialectic of identity and difference. In this sense, choice cannot be a product of capitalist consumerism, as is often argued, which demands a very particular kind of subject, with the same values and needs. Even though capitalism constructs the producers and consumers required to keep "the system" running through an explicit and relentless discourse of choice and freedom, it is dangerously undermined by the possibility of really doing something entirely different: which would be not buying at all in the way multinational capitalism demands.

Thus politics and choice go hand in hand: politics is the ongoing, and often antagonistic, negotiation over the values which legitimate policy, and choices are the grist for its mill. It is only by virtue of the fact that nowhere is The Good algorithmically set down for us that we can choose and that we can engage in politics. The same tendencies which wish to shut down on politics also shut down on choice. Choice is not simply a given in any social space, but something that is won through political agitation by diverse identities in a field of difference - it can be won by groups as a basic aspect of social welfare. This winning would subvert finally the universal subject realized in the rational state which has historically been much more devastating in its rigidity and certainty than so called absolutist or pre-modern modes of identity. As Laclau and Mouffe write: "...Politics as a practice of creation, reproduction and transformation of social relations cannot be located at a determinate level of the social, as the problem of the political is the problem of the institution of the social, that is, of the definition and articulation of social relations in a field criss-crossed with antagonisms" (1987: 153). Thus choice might be the act - an actual practice of denying the self-evidentness of "the way things are" - in an increasingly shrinking and increasingly modernized globe, of eschewing the values of globalization and of
holding fast to "traditional," counter-hegemonic forms of life, which might include religious devoutness, or ecological conservation. These "traditional" forms of life most often are demarcated from modern theories of the subject through an understanding that a full and rich life can only be led in the context of associations - which we might still cautiously call micro-communities - which are smaller than the abstract, homogenizing, republican notion of the community of all citizens - the nation - but bigger than the self-sufficient individual of liberalism. As Gayatri Spivak states in response to a statement by David Trend:

DT:...You clearly don't want to go to landless agricultural workers in Bangladesh and tell them that the unity of the subject is a myth.
GCS: I wouldn't say that to anyone. I would say that the seeming unity of the acting subject - the agent - is produced within a vast field. And as for, say, the Bangladeshi subaltern, she already knows it in a way - because we are dealing here with what is contemptuously named "ethno-philosophies," where the sovereignty of the individual has always been questioned (Spivak, 1996: 218).

It also includes identities which are both post-modern and post-traditional: identities which form around certain practices which are hybrids of traditions, spiritualisms, cultures or are rooted in hyper-secular urban life in which the breaking of identities is the identity itself - the exhilarating play of identity and difference.

Choice, as a normative activity, does take something from liberalism in that it describes a procedure - dislocation and displacement in the citational chain - while leaving the content of choice well enough alone. Yet, as I wish to describe it, it departs from liberalism in that it recognizes the social rather than individual nature of all choices and the fact of power: choices are never made in an empty social space which is equally open to all. Choices are made in, and made possible by, specific contexts. They must be asserted by political means, through the
ongoing controversy and struggle over what counts as the good, and for whom, and who gets to say so. Mouffe writes:

As Pitken argues: "What characterizes political life is precisely the problem of continually creating unity, a public, in a context of diversity, rival claims and conflicting interests. In the absence of rival claims and conflicting interests, a topic never enters the political realm; no political decision needs to be made. But of the political collectivity, the "we," to act, those continuing claims and interests must be resolved in a way that continues to preserve the collectivity" (1993: 50).

This collectivity is radical democratic practice itself. A radical democratic theory, like any other political theory of society, offers a vision which is based on a set of norms. It does so in such a way that it lands somewhere between the civic republicanism of communitarians and the formal proceduralism of liberals. Between the fullness of the former and the emptiness of the latter, it posits politics as a democratic practice. Politics is the agonistic play of identity and difference, in which both identity and difference are seen to be vital to that ongoing practice, the one constantly tempering the other. Politics, in other words, requires differences. And differences require identities. Identities require integrity of practices. Integrity of practices require social space in which they can exist.

When "leftists" worry about the choice discourse, they worry about the way certain constituents on "the right" have taken it over:

Rather than identifying the poor as victims of discrimination and inequality, the disadvantaged are cast as the source of a decaying national infrastructure. Too sophisticated to directly name specific groups, this new rhetoric frames its objects by allusion and exclusion. Within this discourse, policy makers even appropriate the vocabulary of "empowerment" and "free choice" once thought to be the province of radical activists (Trend, 1996: 2).
Free choice, as articulated into a rightwing discourse and embedded in many education/schooling practices, means abandoning "the disadvantaged" again to the logic of the market place which is somehow meant to disperse wealth to those deserving of it. As Stanley Aronowitz argues, the mistake of the left has been to accept this cooptation of the choice discourse by the right, and in reaction to that cooptation, disavow the discourse altogether. He writes:

The early New Left harbored both anarchistic and Jeffersonian impulses. In the name of participatory democracy, the New Left excoriated welfare bureaucracies for encouraging dependency; demanded decentralization and democratization of government services through community control of the police and other institutions ostensibly serving poor people; and attacked the modern multiversity for massifying education and the public schools for miseducating children. In the wake of the left's abandonment of these ideas, conservatives have been pleased to appropriate them, just as the left's critique of liberal democracy became grist for fascism's ideological mill in the 1920s and 1930s (Aronowitz, 1996: 82).

Radical democracy should be a theory of the democratic process which attempts to disarticulate choice from the illusory "freedom" of capitalism, and reclaim it by articulating it to the democratic discourse of social welfare. Ultimately, welfare and empowerment would mean, in North America today, the ability to construct a life which meets the standards of one's (changing) values as they are shaped by the various (intersecting) discourses of one's various communities in the context of a common political culture shaped by respect for difference. This ability requires the redistribution of wealth. As Nancy Fraser writes: "Cultural differences can only be freely elaborated and democratically mediated on the basis of social equality" (1996: 207).

In as much as modernity brought about the fragmentation of "holistic" communities (the actual, unthreatened, holism of which can probably be safely doubted), and brought about the closer relationship of groups of people with each other, the requirement of a form of politics which could deal with the fact of difference becomes more pressing. Democracy theorized as the
construction of a single national identity, in which the democratic activity of a homogenized citizenry is limited to voting, producing and consuming cannot but be repressive and life-denying. Representative democracy allowed a virtual withdrawal from participation in community life. Historically, however, radical democratic agitation goes back a long way. As Bowles and Gintis write, "the seventeenth-century levellers and the eighteenth-century san culottes, the nineteenth-century chartists and agrarian populists, and the twentieth-century feminists and advocates of worker councils" (Bowles and Gintis, 1986: 8), to mention only a few, took democratic politics to mean the assertion of identities into the public sphere. That is, these movements recognized that politics is not simply about the manner in which power adjudicates competing claims for resources. It is also a contest over who we are to become, a contest in which identity, interest, and solidarity are as much the outcome as the starting point of political activity (Bowles and Gintis, 1986: 8).

To conclude: Classical liberal theory creates a hierarchy of value between what Bowles and Gintis call choosers and learners. Rational agents choose, others learn in order to potentially become choosers. Within liberal political theory, choosers, not learners, are the subjects of democracy. As John Stuart Mill writes:

It is, perhaps, hardly necessary to say that...we are not speaking of children or of young persons below the age which the law may fix as that of manhood or womanhood...[who]...must be protected against their own actions....For the same reason we may leave out of consideration those backward states of society in which the race itself may be considered as in its nonage....Despotism is a legitimate mode of government in dealing with barbarians, provided the end be their improvement (in Cohen, 1961: 198).
In liberal theory learners are those who may be able to become rational agents; that is, to think independently, to act independently, to separate self from encumbering culture and context. "The status of learner," write Bowles and Gintis, "has always applied in liberal discourse to children, prisoners, the "insane," and the "uncivilized." These constituencies are not fit for democratic participation because they have not yet "arrived" at a state of self and world mastery. For them the world is not transparent. They are mired in its opacity. Bowles and Gintis continue, "it has also applied variously to women, servants, workers, and specific races and cultures which by virtue of their biological constitution or social station, are deemed to be more or less permanently denied the status of rational agent" (Bowles and Gintis, 1986: 124). Thus, much discourse on choice includes this liberal notion that "others" have to be educated without their consent in order to become choosers. Hence people's inability to choose is seen to be due to lack of education in choosing, rather than to lack of material resources and social space. I, on the other hand, suggest that once the means and social right to choose is granted, different groups will find educational modes (state administered education might be one of them) which contribute to the integrity of their identity.

It makes perfect sense then that the age of liberalism was at the same time an age of anti-democratic compulsory institutions, as we have discussed in Chapter One. "This defect in the liberal model of action helps us understand how the golden age of free trade and the "democratic revolution" also saw the birth of compulsory education, conscription, colonialism, and other systems of institutional dependence and social control to an extent unparalleled in human history" (Bowles and Gintis, 1986: 125-126). And this because liberalism saw democratic activity as that which always already perfected rational actors did, and not as the process
whereby subjects negotiated their own identity. The choosing was to be done after the enforced
learning had been completed, and the enforced learning attempted to construct a common
identity. Foucault and some of his commentators, as we have seen in Chapter Two, remark on the
process of liberalization as one which actively teaches the art of being an abstract individual,
while at the same time erasing the artifice of that practice. This happens in specific institutions
such as schools, prisons, medical centres, welfare offices, and so forth.

Although favoured liberal institutions - market and ballot box - are praised as sensitively attuned to expressing the wills of consumers and citizens, this sensitivity fails to extend to a most central area of personal control; that is, the choices determining how individuals are to develop their preferences, their capacities for social participation, and their abilities to make informed decisions. Liberalism claims that the marketplace and the ballot box allow people to get what they want. But liberalism is silent on how people might get to be what they want to be, and how they might get to want what they want to want (Bowles and Gintis, 1986: 125).

That is, liberalism is silent about the earth from which human beings are meant to spring fully formed.

As Bowles and Gintis propose, theories of choice as they arose in the liberal tradition have failed totally to account for collective action and social existence. That is, these theories of choice which adumbrate the internal workings of an individual's mechanism for choosing, independently of external variables - as a rational act - has no way of describing how and why people associate, and through this association, make choices about how they wish to live collectively. No individual can possibly choose by himself or herself, because his or her choice must always have a vehicle - it must be realizable through possibilities which are available around h/her through institutions, infrastructures, other people.

Making society more democratic involves more than the progressive elimination of the familiar forms of domination: it means making people's political practices effective, and
more nearly equally effective, thus rendering the process of structural change subject to
democratic accountability. Structures change because people change them. Making good
the promise of the democratic accountability of social change demands an understanding
of why and how people change or fail to change the rules that govern their lives (Bowles
and Gintis, 1986: 120).

The main point that I have been making is that if choice is reconceived as the activity of
subjects who inhabit a number of identities which are tenuously fixed by repeated (and therefore
unstable) significatory performances, in a social space which is constantly being hegemonized by
particular discourses about the good precisely because the social space is essentially an open one
(the field of difference), then choice is no longer about asserting directives by individuals who
always already know who they are, and what the world is about. It is about opening up the
possibility of exploring "what could be" given specific conditions. The modern subject chooses
because he or she is rational, and the rationality of every circumstance makes explicit the
rationality of every choice. Choice here is instrumental rather than creative. As Bowles and
Gintis write, people actually "...act with others not only to get but to become" (1986: 150).

In the following and concluding chapter, I will elaborate what I mean by integral identities and
micro-communities in order to bring us back to the discussion in Chapters One and Two about
education and the politics of unity and diversity. I will show that choice within a radical
democracy means giving space for conservative and critical micro-communities to elaborate their
practices, and hence means disturbing the social uniformity to which the state unified through
reason aspires.
CHAPTER SIX

EDUCATION, THE WELFARE STATE, AND THE POLITICS OF DIVERSITY

The school is a state agency that sits between the private and the public, between the state and civil society, and to that extent, the regulatory powers of schools have been particularly significant in the dual process of subject formation and state formation (Rousmaniere, Dehli, and de Coninck-Smith, 1997: 274).

The liberal vision of people effectively controlling their lives is not a hollow promise doomed by human nature and modern technology. Liberalism's fault lies not in overstating the possibilities for human freedom, but in failing to identify the roots of domination - those which lie in economic dependency and patriarchal authority chief among them - and in elevating a radically individual conception of autonomy to the detriment of a conception community which might form the basis of democratic empowerment (Bowles and Gintis, 1986: 176).

In the last chapter I tried to sketch the relationship between radical post-liberal democracy, choice, and the play of identity and difference. I was suggesting that the task of state redistribution is to devolve as much choice to people as possible within a single constitutional state, which means increasingly freeing up the play of identity and difference where it exists locally. If the public education which exists now really disrupts the integrity of my world (for many communities it does not) and the world I am trying to create for my children, and if I am
not moneyed, then I should still be able to choose alternative educational forms in the public sphere.

In this chapter I argue that this opening up is especially important where education is concerned, because education is intrinsically about performative regulation, about creating and consolidating particular identities. I will use James Tully to elaborate a theory of culture, augmenting it with my sense of community, and finally discuss how choice in education fits into the new mapping. Clearly, the whole argument of my thesis has been launched for the benefit of dissenting minorities: those people whose identity is somehow violated, invalidated, or simply not recognized/nourished within the rationality of public education, and who are not wealthy enough to buy the right to their own integrity. I have not intended to suggest that all people will feel this way about public education. For many of them, the kinds of subjects constructed by public schools as they stand now augment their own cultural identities. I do think, however, if public education radically opens itself up to alternative modes of education this will shake up the system and make the educational experience less self-evident and more interesting for all students.

The institution and practice of education shows especially clearly the shakiness of the conceptual separation between public and private: education, especially at the elementary and secondary level where managing the student population takes up as much time as teaching, reaches right into the most intimate nooks and crannies of the student's being. Education is a cultural and "spiritual" activity through and through. It can never be said to be only a public practice or only a private practice. As we saw in Chapter Two, the structuring of a single
identity was explicitly the mandate of public schools (as is of course true of all schools, of the educational process as such): the so-called private sphere of different beliefs and values (over against the so-called public sphere of reason) was never left untouched. This is still the case with public schools even in the era of multicultural education. The anxiety about difference in "our" midst has not subsided, if it has taken on another language.

The problem with this is not that public schools regulate. They do and they always will, and in what direction will always be contestable. The problem is that they regulate in a standard way across the board (never, of course, with standard effects). Indeed, this is meant to be a strength of public education. Wherever you are, whoever you are, you receive the same lessons. This disassociation from place and identity is a feature of the enlightenment that public education offers. If parents want to actively intervene in the public education process, the changes they agitate for will effect all children uniformly. What a huge presumption that would be. Even if this uniformity of policy and implementation does not actually instantiate itself in actual schools, the rationality of public school systems is geared toward this. In order to instate a democratic hegemony which is radical in the ways I have been describing, the national identity has to be constructed around valuing "small integrities" over large integrations, and has to foster this through the redistribution of wealth.

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1 Any such structuring of course entails sorting according to the norm and hence a proliferation of hierarchically differential positions. No such structuring is ever entirely successful.

2 "Democratic hegemony obtains when the perspective of an identifiable constellation attains predominance in several areas of public debate [and] resisting factions remain effective in publicly articulating the terms of their opposition and compelling compromises on some fronts." (Connolly, 1991: 213). In other words, achieving a democratic hegemony means being
It could be argued that the process of "forging a nation" must necessarily be a violent and unfair moment in history - maybe it really was an incorrigibly ratty and impossible bunch which flowed across the Atlantic to a fragile young nation exploding into industrialism in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries - but this would not explain why to this day, even after one hundred years of state-building and public education, public education is still seen as "our" (those of "us" who think we know what Canada "is") saviour from the "irrational hordes." I am reminded of a lecture given by John Ralston Saul at OISE/UT in the fall of this year, 1998, entitled "Education in a Democratic Society," in which he explicitly talked about education as a necessary tool in making "those people" (by which he meant recent immigrants) "become" Canadians.\textsuperscript{3} The whole point of my thesis has been to try to write a social and political theory in which these kinds of integrationist moves, which are supported by the discourses of modernity as they have metamorphosed into the twentieth century, no longer need to be relied upon in order to forge a social good. While there is a huge gap between Saul and the Enlightenment thinkers, liberals, humanists, in all their different shapes and sizes, of centuries ago, echos from the well which fed them both still reverberate in the open air of decent politics: such a shocking statement below is unheard of today. Or is it?

If one takes a general Survey of the World, one shall find the Bulk of Mankind buried in a Stupidity so gross, that it does not wholly dispossess them of their Reason, yet it leaves them so little Use of it, that one cannot but wonder how the soul can be depressed into so low a Degree of Brutality. What does a Cannibal, Iroquo, Brasilian, Negro, Caffer, able to set the agenda and define the terms of the debate, in a context which contains much dissent and contestation. This must be the goal of radical democrats: not to impose their view on other political opinions, but to steer the terms of the debate.

\textsuperscript{3} A recording of that lecture was made by OISE/UT.
*Groenlander, or Laplander* think on during his whole life? The ordinary wants of the Body, and some dull ways of supplying them, Fishing and Hunting, Dancing, and Revenge on his Enemies, is the whole Compass of his Contemplations. (Pierre Nicole translated by Locke in Tully, 1995: 89).

In what follows, I will very briefly illustrate how one (left of centre) contemporary educational thinker talks about the integrating task of public education. It is against this position that I discuss the notion of community within culture as a place in which our practices gain purpose and integrity, move beyond resistance to integration, and become empowered. Community is the place in which the choice-no choice logic of performativity plays itself out (community is small enough that we can concretely identify with it, concretely intervene in it, concretely act in it, and foster non-instrumental modes of relating to others). The normative content of this term as I see it, indicates my wish to elaborate a politics which splits the difference, so to speak, between communitarianism (connectedness) and libertarianism (freedom), building on the normative impulse of both while critiquing their basic assumptions about subjectivity. Hence community connotes the possibility of wholeness, fullness and personal plenitude which come from identifying with others within a free public space which values difference and the liberty to experiment. Viable communities - whether traditional or hyper-post-modern (the "urban primitives") or those in between - counter the process of what Friedenberg calls the reification of clienteles (1975) whereby state services construct and fix the very kinds of subjects, dispersed evenly across the country, (we are all meant to be the same vis-a-vis the services we receive) they then in turn serve.
UNIFYING MYTHS

Neil Postman, in his book *The End of Education: Redefining the Value of School*, argues that the crisis in public education today in North America is caused by the loss of a unifying narrative. Education seems irrelevant, inconsequential, fragmentary, ineffectual, and so on, not because this or that teaching method does not work, but because there is nothing tying the educational project together as a whole across the nation.

...Call them what you will, we are unceasing in creating histories and futures for ourselves through the medium of narrative. Without a narrative, life has no meaning. Without meaning, learning has no purpose. Without a purpose, schools are houses of detention, not attention (Postman, 1995: 7).

Educational method, style, and purpose, change randomly according to the latest whims of government officials and the latest political exigencies, according to him. There is no overall vision. In the face of no "gods to serve," or bad gods to serve, as he phrases it, various groups assert their own particular narratives as an invigorating impulse for their own children. For example, African American and Canadian, Aboriginal, Jewish, Islamic, Christian communities - as well as all manner of "alternative" pedagogical initiatives, such as Waldorf, Montessori, performing arts schools, and so forth - claim that they can provide a richer, deeper, and more coherent, consistent, and relevant educational narrative for children than is provided in the standard public school. For, as Postman states, "to be nowhere means to live in a barren culture, one that offers no vision of the past or future, no clear voice of authority, no organizing principle" (1995: 13).

This response to public education's perceived malaise, however, is dangerous, according to Postman. The interjection of meaning by particular communities within and straddling various
cultures into their own form of education still amounts to being nowhere, for him. A community, with its integral values, beliefs, practices, should consist of no less than the nation itself. While the unifying myths of public education - the god of Economic Utility, the god of Consumership, the god of Technology, the god of Multiculturalism (Postman, 1995) - which have been tried in the last forty years have been unworthy, according to Postman, this does not mean that some more worthy unifying myth cannot be constructed. Postman argues that education can only be considered to be purposive and meaningful if it fosters unity on a national scale which transcends particularity and which gives an overriding sense of moral identity. In other words, education will not be worthwhile unless its purpose is the creation of an overriding, unified moral culture.

Schools are to provide the lost and lonely with a common attachment to America's history and future, to America's sacred symbols, to its promise of freedom. The schools are, in a word, the affirmative answer to the question, Can a coherent, stable, unified culture be created out of people of diverse traditions, languages, and religions? (Postman, 1995: 14).

He writes of the U.S. context, "the task of public schools, properly conceived, is to erase the hyphens or to make them less distinct. The idea of a public school is not to make blacks black, or Koreans Korean, or Italians Italian, but to make Americans" (Postman, 1995: 57). His vision is anti-liberal, republican communitarian: he argues that any nation which hopes not to be savaged by constant and dangerous civil strife must share a single identity. His understanding of what "America" could mean transcends whatever blacks in various communities take to be blackness, or whatever Koreans in various communities take to be Korean, and so forth. It is not that he wishes to exclude these groups which he has identified, but that they should forget about their difference already and show some enthusiasm for a bigger vision.
Postman acknowledges the need of all diverse peoples for a narrative, or a god, as he calls it, but there must be a god which all serve, one which overrides "local gods." (Postman, 14). The politics of diversity, he argues, is simply a move to "privatization." America is suffering because the public god, one which everyone believes in, is dead. The powerful local narratives, or myths, or discourses, which arise out of culture, are not acceptable because they are not all-encompassing. According to him, a grand unifying narrative is somehow less dangerous, more "rational" and benign, than particular narratives.

For Postman as a young boy the unifying narrative was "being American," "The American Creed" (Postman, 1995: 13), which he thought was generally a good thing, causing perhaps some problems for the hispanic and black communities, but other immigrants (that is, European, "Irish, Greek Italian, and German" (15)) could incorporate their "local" cultural myths into the grand myth (1995: 15). His suggestions for new grand narratives are the following: "The Spaceship Earth," "The Fallen Angel," "The American Experiment," "The Law of Diversity," and "The World Weavers/The World Makers" (Postman, 1995). Thus every child in America or Canada or even Mexico would sit at her or his desk at nine in the morning with eyes upturned to their teacher dreaming the same dream. For Postman this is the true calling of education.

...The idea of public education depends absolutely on the existence of shared narratives and the exclusion of narratives that lead to alienation and divisiveness. What makes public schools public is not so much that the schools have common goals but that the students have common gods. The reason for this is that public education does not serve a public. It creates a public. And in creating the right kind of public, the schools contribute toward strengthening the spiritual basis of the American Creed (Postman, 1995: 17-18).
While he argues explicitly against the instrumentalization of education, implicitly the purpose of a unifying narrative is to build national community, public spirit, and civic virtue again amongst what is seen as a divisive and disintegrating nation.

The argument is sometimes made that a "multicultural" curriculum is justified where an entire student population is African-American (or Mexican or Puerto Rican), as is often the case in our large cities. This might make sense if it were the task of the public schools to create a public of hyphenated Americans. But our students already come to school as hyphenated Americans....This path not only leads to the privatizing of schooling but to a privatizing of the mind, and it makes the creation of a public mind quite impossible. The theme of schooling would then be divisiveness, not sameness, and would inevitably engender hate (Postman, 1995: 57-58).

His thesis brings us back to the content of Chapter Two, in which we saw that the discourses around the institution of compulsory education played directly on the theme of unification using an enlightenment notion of a common culture based on Reason, or rather on the process of "enreasoning the other" - the foreigner, immigrant, aboriginal, and so forth, in order to create a suitable "public mind." Within modern western enlightenment discourses "enreasoning" has always been tied to a notion of education, and education has always been linked to national integration.

CULTURES AND COMMUNITIES IN PUBLIC SPACE

What sets worlds in motion is the interplay of differences, their attractions and repulsions. Life is plurality, death is uniformity. By suppressing differences and peculiarities, by eliminating different civilizations and cultures, progress weakens life and favors death. The ideal of a single civilization for everyone, implicit in the cult of progress of technique, impoverishes and mutilates us. Every view of the world that becomes extinct, every culture that disappears, diminishes a possibility. Octavio Paz (Tully, 1995: 186)
I argue, counter Neil Postman's vision, that in the late twentieth century west invocation of "the nation" can only be done in the form of a problematization. What this invocation brings to mind is the difficulty of adequately and justly describing who "the people" are. This is increasingly true of all western nations: they are riven by internal differences which become more and more prominent with the alleged globalization of the planet. If national identities are not to break apart over this, they will need to broaden considerably and develop new strategies for dealing with difference within and straddling their borders. National identification will need to surpass itself. Postman’s call for all Americans to again serve the same god is futile; it didn’t work before, and in fact may very well be the cause of the very crisis and divisiveness in the US which Postman bemoans now. "The empire of uniformity," as Tully (1995) puts it, is crumbling, and with it some of the myths of the nation state and its constitution.

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4 Here I disagree with certain post-modern and multicultural theorists who suggest that a new totalizing culture is presenting itself: one which could be called post-modern and which is truly global and uniform. This takes on the apocalyptic language of disruption, uncertainty, dispersion, dissolution, decentering within decentering, as the new standard reality, one which pervades the ethos of the planet as a whole as multinational capital zooms around it. This presumes that certain aspects of post-industrial society, capital flows, media-technology, impact on diverse parts of the planet in the same way with the same effects. Kroker characterizes it thus: "the end of the twentieth century as a time of cluster suicides, cultural dyslexia and forms of schizophrenia, as the postmodern mind runs down to random disorganization and burnout, where hermetic bodies and schizoid egos become panic sites at the fin-de-millennium" (in Fekete, 1987: 193). It is precisely this random but uniform disorganization through global regulation that my concern about the crucial and delicate play between identity and difference seeks to address.
Cultures:

In Strange Multiplicity: Constitutionalism in an Age of Diversity, James Tully asks the question, "can a modern constitution recognize and accommodate cultural diversity?" (1995: 1). His answer is yes, it can and it must if it is not to simply break apart through civil strife. But in order to accomplish this most post-modern task, it has to revise modern forms of constitutionalism in which by definition every nation is a single culture, and every culture is a nation, and nations must consist of geographically bounded states. According to him, liberalism, communitarianism and nationalism all prescribe to this form of constitutional thought:

The picture is of a culturally homogeneous and sovereign people establishing a constitution by a form of critical negotiation. The sovereign people are culturally homogeneous in one of...three ways: as a society of undifferentiated individuals, a community held together by the common good or a culturally defined nation (Tully, 1995: 41).

Tully suggests that modern constitutionalism as founding reason of a unified people, especially triumphal in revolutionary states like the United States, hides an ongoing and evolving practice of common law which for centuries dealt with the "customary diversity" in pre-modern, pre-nation state European societies (1995: 100). "Instead of grand theory, constitutional knowledge appears to be a humble and practical dialogue in which interlocutors from near and far exchange limited descriptions of actual cases, learning as they go along" (1995: 185). Against enforcing a big integration, common constitutionalism consists of an assemblage of incrementally derived rationalities for negotiating conflict and defining injustice in the name of small integrities. Rather than the Law, constitutions are seen to be a medium in which identity and difference is continually negotiated without either being forced into submission by the other. Tully's book consists of examples of how this can work.
People are already beginning to think of themselves as part of both larger and smaller identities than the nation state. Bryan Turner writes:

The nation-state is not necessarily the most suitable political framework for housing citizenship rights. In Europe, citizens increasingly appeal to supranational entities (the European Court or the European Parliament for example) to satisfy or achieve their (national) citizenship rights. Furthermore as a result of both nineteenth-century colonialism and twentieth-century globalization, the world refugee problem and aboriginal rights questions cannot be easily approached within the framework of (nation-state) citizenship concepts (Turner, 1994: 178).

James Tully thinks of these associations in terms of different cultures which are increasingly becoming politicized - that is, associations of people are calling out for public recognition as identities made up of shared practices, rituals, languages, aspirations, discursive frames of reference (Tully, 1995). The rights which these cultures claim are not individual rights but collective rights, and the difference they affirm is not individual difference but collective difference. Aboriginal claims fit this definition, as do the "cultures" and organizations of certain new social movements, which are both smaller and larger than the nation state: environmental groups, gays and lesbians, feminist organizations, human rights organizations. Connolly writes:

Central to the project of retheorizing democracy to fit the circumstances of late-modern life is the task of rethinking the contemporary relation between sovereignty and democracy. Perhaps today the state, as the legitimate center of sovereignty, citizen loyalty, and political dissent, must give more ground to other modes of political identification. Earlier chapters in this study have emphasized the ways in which the domestic politics of identity and difference exceeds state-sponsored activity while remaining within the confines of the territorial state. But this same logic operates on the external boundaries of the territorial state as well. Perhaps today the state must be thought and lived as one site of membership, allegiance, obligation, and political mobilization on a globe that presents other viable possibilities of identification, inside and outside state boundaries (1991: 215).

James Tully speaks of the tragedies of the wars in the Ukraine, the Baltic states, central Asia, Russia, the former Yugoslavia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Rwanda, Burundi, Zaire, Tanzania, Ireland,
and the struggles of aboriginals and ethnic, linguistic, religious, and sexual minorities in Canada, and other western nations, which arise out of the intense pressure created by the inability to think in terms other than one nation (a homogeneous cultural space - defined by ethnicity), one state (sovereignty over land). Tully writes:

Far from silencing demands for cultural recognition, these wars in the name of the unity of the nation have been met with unconquerable resistance, as the suppressed cultures snap back like so many bent yet unbreakable twigs, as Isaiah Berlin so aptly puts it (Tully, 1995: 10).

The persistence of the social democratic, or Marxist, or nationalist attempt at a unity which transcends cultural diversity is doomed to grief. Any identity, even as it marks a difference - woman, black, white, man, lesbian and gay, aboriginal, and so forth - is always unstable, as I suggested in Chapter Five. Difference itself is always deconstructive precisely because all identifiable differences themselves become unities which hide difference. If difference itself cannot erase its internal difference, unity certainly can't. Hence, policies of ethnic cleansing are so vicious and brutal - the drive for purity is always threatened from within, as well as from without.

It is the stubborn persistence of diverse cultures within the national space, the agonistic play of difference within any identity, which both dooms the drive for national purity, and incites it to further activity. "Culture" I use here, with Tully, to connote a broad set of identifying practices and myths which are manifested by actual, existing communities in a tangible way.

Communities take up the different cultures in any given public space in different ways. For instance, a generalization such as "the Chinese Canadian culture," or "the WASP establishment" is made concrete by identifying communities within them, communities which are different from
each other, and perhaps antagonistic to each other, but (in)formed by a common set of practices and myths. In these sites it is possible to see a cultural "family resemblance," but also clear divergences marked by generation, location, religion, education, language, class, assent, dissent, and so forth. Cultural identities can also consist of cultural hybrids which are the consequence of cultures being thrown together, as well as the differences internal to any culture. These differences break up gender as well: the category of gender plays itself out differently in different cultural sites. Feminists have long been struggling to come to terms with the fact that Woman does not exist, nor can she be said to have her own culture (women cannot agree on what that might be). Feminist critiques of male supremacy have had to deal with the increasing realization (due to the hard work of "other" women) that this supremacy takes different forms in different places, and that modes of resistance and overthrow will consequently vary. It is these incorrigible and unpredictable differences which continually undermine homogenizing regulatory practices - both within cultural formations, and by the state. Static and fixed difference can be managed as "other of the state" once it has been constructed: hence the ghettoization strategies of nation states - Jews in Europe, blacks in South Africa, the US south, aboriginals world-wide. The ghetto or assimilation become the options for state policies geared at nationalist integration. In other words, states manage all of this with difficulty all the time, and the more rigorously they, with their various rationalities, try to erase these kinds of differences the more violent they have to become.

Tully suggests that it is possible to radically (in the sense that I have been trying to convey) respect difference within an agonistic but peaceful constitutional state. The basis for his argument is that cultural identity, which both transcends nationality and finds its place within
nations, is the basic (self-deconstructing) unit of political analysis - departing from libertarian individualism and communitarian collectivism. An analysis with culture as its central signifier has its advantages and disadvantages. The danger of using the term culture lies in its connoted permanence. Conceiving of culture without a theory of change is worrisome, indeed. It can lead to essentialist theories of difference in which culture is a determinant of a generalized people based on place of origin, or "race," or gender. Racism, xenophobia, and misogyny come from a notion of culture as an unchanging mould which determines the "nature" of a "kind" of people in fixed and immovable ways. Difference, in this sense, has been constituted in history as a means to form a hierarchy of value.

Culture is only useful in so far as it is a term which describes the politics of the constitution of coherent, meaningful practices, a politics which manifests the play of identity and difference: cultural practices exhibit the cross-cutting differences of gender, generation, class. No culture is apolitical, eternally fixed, pure, or necessary. We can see that, empirically, cultures change constantly, riven by internal differences, and of course disturbed by outside intervention. Any culture at any time could be described thus. Yet, there is no space which is not culturally defined, that is, in other words, simply procedural - free of practical content - as liberals wish to persuade us. However much we might try to find such a space, culture slips in through the back door, albeit in an apologetic and demoralized fashion. Culture manifests as gestures in the world, literally and metaphorically speaking: the way we do things, and what they mean to us. This includes the narratives which we tell each other about our lives, the music we make, what we wear and when we wear it, what we eat, the work we can expect to do. But it is not simply a list of fun activities that we engage in from time to time: it is a set of interweaving discourses which
determines the kinds of performativities available to us and imposed upon us, which set the parameters of our practical rationality. As Michael Pickering writes,

Culture is...a collective assemblage of particular symbolic and ideological resources which are used and configured in the process of making sense of social life, and of developing a distinctive form of collective identity. Culture is both this process and its objectified results; it involves the making and remaking of meanings and values - and at times the creation of new cultural forms for doing so - within inherited and imposed structures. The starting point for so-called culturalism is social experience, and involves examining the interactive relations between such experience and its signifying practices. Experience may be seen as a site in which structures are reproduced, but there is no a priori guarantee of this outcome because experience is worked on, worked with, and at times worked against in order to transform it into something alternative, to bring about a qualitative shift in the conditions it provides and the possibilities it permits. Human agency is the crucial pivot in these negotiations, accommodations and transformations, and its material is cultural at every level (1997: 162-63).

So, cultures are the condition of possibility of our being in the world. It is where we live concretely. We recognize each other by means of cultural performativity. James Tully argues, however, that culture has been misused in politics and political philosophy. He writes:

"according to the concept of a culture (or nation) that developed with the formation of modern constitutionalism from the seventeenth to the twentieth century, a culture is separate, bounded and internally uniform" (Tully, 1995: 10). Counter to this conception, Tully suggests that cultures have always been and are ever more increasingly "overlapping, interactive and internally negotiated" social spaces: "In Europe and the People without History (1982), Eric Wolf showed that the interaction and interdependency of cultures is not a recent phenomenon; the cultures of the world have been shaped and formed by interaction for a millennium" (Tully, 1995: 11).

Cultures are often hybrids, and are not always based on tradition, or language, or geographical origin. As mobility in all levels of existence increases, we inhabit a number of cultures at once, often in conflict, and our cultures are increasingly chosen - that is, our cultures are created out of
what we make of that which has constituted us. As Laclau puts it in slightly different terms:

...Why prefer one future over another? Why choose between different types of society? There can be no reply if the question is asking for a kind of Cartesian certainty that pre-exists any belief. But if the agent who must choose is someone who already has certain beliefs and values, then criteria for choice...can be formulated. Such an acceptance of the facticity of certain strata of our beliefs is nothing but the acceptance of our contingency and historicity (Laclau, 1990: 83).

The advantage of the term culture is that it can describe the general ethos of different associations of people - made up of a complex, interconnected, often conflicted, set of practices - from environmentalists, to orthodox Jews, to lesbians, to Asian Canadians. Culture names soul quality, not simply function or structural location - a particular way of putting the world together, of feeling connected to the world in a meaningful way in communion with others: customs, criticisms, rituals, habits, memories, obsessions, music, art, food, division of the day, decor, and so forth. Culture, in this sense, is a nonreductionist description of human practice. It also names aspirations: the creation of communities based on certain values. Some cultural affiliations are chosen, some are circumstantial. Counter to conservative thinkers, cultural expression is not simply about conserving an old form, but also about transformation, or creating new and meaningful practices. Culture has always been that which was created in the act of collective self-constitution.

Tully suggests that the term culture is used politically by a number of different kinds of groups to solicit recognition in contexts in which the hegemony of high modernity reigns: recognition of nationhood or "distinct society" based on distinct culture (Quebec); recognition of ethnic minority cultures in the public sphere (schools, publicly supported TV, film and radio,
affirmative action, national histories, public rituals and events); recognition of women's distinct practices; recognition of aboriginal people's cultural integrity (Tully, 1995: 2-3). One could add all manner of new social movements, which are forming new kinds of cultural expression, new kinds of social rituals and meanings, often overlapping other cultural forms. This language of cultural diversity expresses a resistance to standardization of one form or another based on the dominance of a single cultural form. Cultures don't ever simply exist: they are asserted, beleaguered, flourishing, changing, stamped-out, held in high esteem. They always already exist, but also continually have to be "achieved." Tully writes,

[Cultures] are continuously contested, imagined and reimagined, transformed and negotiated, both by their members and through their interaction with others. The identity, and so the meaning, of any culture is thus aspectival rather than essential (Tully, 1995: 11).

Tully argues that it is precisely the pressure of both modern universalization and standardization and post-modern fragmentation and uncertainty - globalization and social disintegration - which gives rise to demands for cultural recognition. The demand of cultures to be seen, for a space to be created for coherent cultures to exist, is a demand for certain qualities of life to be given space. Against McWorld, cultural diversity policies foster a variety of non-standardized, non-commodified, life experience. James Tully uses the image of "the spirit of the Haida Gwaii," which is a sculpture by Bill Reid of a canoe holding a "strange multiplicity" of mythic characters, to illustrate his argument that diversity in any given social formation is not a dangerous pathology. This strange multiplicity only seems strange to us who have been schooled to think that order (constitution) necessitates uniformity. He writes:

...Why does the black canoe appear to us as a "strange multiplicity," rather than as a normal negotiation among members of a culturally diverse society over how they are
going to recognize and accommodate their differences and similarities over time as they paddle the ship of state? The answer is that the language of modern constitutionalism which has come to be authoritative was designed to exclude or assimilate cultural diversity and justify uniformity (Tully, 1995: 58).

Why do we think that diversity is so scary? Deeply ingrained in the political cultures of Canada and North America is the thematic "memory" of the immigrant's escape from Europe's religious wars. All manner of diverse beliefs could now exist in an environment of tolerance, as long as they did not exist in the public realm. In that space, a uniformity of purpose should reign which would embrace us all, with education as the means to make this a reality. "Even" women, blacks, and aboriginals would eventually be recognized as universal subjects beneath their disturbing embodiment. This abiding fear is compounded also by a fear of the superstitions and rages of absolutist thought which sanctioned all manner of cruelty, persecution and torture. The Spanish Inquisition comes to mind, and all types of religious fanaticism and persecution. Secular humanism was meant to be the answer. It was, literally, the choice of the reasonable.

We know from the history of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries that the infinite benefits of the secularization of certain life practices were often tarnished by the absolutist and conquering spirit in which they were compulsively disseminated. This became the new compulsion, the spirit of which was instantiated in freedom from particular identities, particular cultures.

The inability to think of diversity without thinking of disunity, dissolution, weakness, and death, as Tully puts it (1995: 196), is endemic to modern constitutionalism. Modern constitutionalism maintains that a nation can only arise through the identity of all its parts. Unity was the language of empire. Tully writes:

Lord Durham in Canada was no less concerned to insist that the unity created by cultural uniformity would empower the British empire to expand across the continent. In fact, it
is difficult to find a classic text of modern constitutionalism which does not contrast uniformity, unity and power to diversity, disunity and weakness (1995: 196).

Modern constitutionalism assumes that its rationality can account for all contingencies in advance, and that a coherent and consistent mode of governance can be created from scratch by general agreement of a people who are essentially the same. This is in contrast to ancient constitutions which evolve incrementally, through an assemblage of local customs, conflicts, precedents.

In fact, for there to be a peaceful nation-state at all modern constitutionalists argued and argue, a) people must come to a constitutional agreement pure, divested of social particularity; b) modern constitutions are decisive ruptures from pre-modern customs and practices; c) modern constitutions transform "motley" collection of legal and political jurisdictions into a uniform rationality; d) this uniformity is justified because it reflects social reality: modernity has created undifferentiated modern subjects; e) the modern constitution requires liberal political institutions to represent the sovereignty of the people; f) the modern constitution must give rise to the nation as an imaginary community giving it a corporate personality; g) the modern constitution is the condition of possibility of democratic politics - as its founding moment rather than its effect (Tully, 1995: 63-69). Modern constitutionalism has spread the word that at all costs for there to be order, peace and harmony there has to be basic and foundational uniformity. The value of Tully's text, and certainly I am no constitutional expert, is in its suggestion that all is not lost if cultural differences actually take up public space.

Rather than conceive of some essentially unifying feature, Tully suggests that certain agreed upon modes of practical rationality keep a state from simply dispersing: they provide the nation
its own integrity while looking with favour on the unruly and unholy cacophony within. The point of these modes is not to come to establish common first principles through reasoning together, but to establish a framework in which differences can exist. He calls these practical rationalities conventions: mutual recognition, continuity, and consent. "Constitutional 'conventions' in this common-law sense are norms that come into being and come to be accepted as authoritative in the course of constitutional practice, including criticism and contestation of that practice" (1995: 116). He argues that, because cultures are never hermetically sealed, because there is always a coming and going from cultural sites, a leaving and coming home again, or just a leaving, there is no problem of establishing common grounds for negotiation within any given political space. The common ground is precisely our basic enculteration and the movement in and around cultures which it entails (Tully, 1995: 133), as well as the conflicts which arise out of this. We all speak the language of cultures, of integrity: any discussion about difference very quickly becomes a discussion about practice - the ways and means for living a life. Incommensurability hardly exists in the same geographical space. We overhear each other’s conversations. Cultural integrity does not imply either total closure, or threat of dissolution. "The familiar dilemmas of relativism and universalism" (1995: 14) only arise when cultures are seen to confront each other with solid boundaries, or with the threat of conquest. Mutual recognition is a convention whereby the starting point of any negotiation is the recognition of the integrity of all parties: it is the recognition of the practical rationality of others, even if it is not one’s own, as a set of practices which is useful and does make sense of the world. From this basis much compromising and experimenting can occur. It is the opposite of the logic of
uniformity, in which for each life situation one practical rationality must present itself. As Feyerabend writes:

The "different mythological, intuitive, mystical or other-worldly frames of reference"...were not just dream castles; they delivered what they promised; they ensured material survival and spiritual fulfilment in the most adverse circumstances. The messengers of progress and civilization destroyed what they had not built and ridiculed what they did not understand (Feyerabend, 1987: 26).

Continuity is a convention which acknowledges that all parties "came from somewhere," they have customs and practices which do not begin with and will not end with the constitutional negotiation. "...The aim of negotiations over cultural recognition is not to reach agreement on universal principals and institutions but to bring negotiators to recognise their differences and similarities, so that they can reach agreement on a form of association that accommodates their differences in appropriate institutions and their similarities in shared institutions" (Tully, 1995: 131). This view discredits the catastrophic version of cultural integrity in which cultures are brittle forms of life which shatter on contact: it acknowledges that practical rationalities of any culture are geared to deal with the problems at hand, including communicating with others; they are flexible and tough. This first requires, however, respect from the other vis-a-vis the integrity of this practical rationality.

Consent implies a reciprocal acknowledgement, again, of the integrity of cultural forms of life. It implies that we grant the other the ability to know its own interests, desires, requirements, to say "yes" or "no" to specific propositions, demands, and invitations, and to strategically understand the operation of a multicultural space. It implies equally that space has to be made in order for the former process to occur. Consent then is the opposite of transcendence of culture into some implicit common rationality or higher principle, but rather the recognition that people
can say "yes" or "no" only on the basis of their cultural integrity. There is always the threat of the coercion of persuasion in the moment of negotiation, but if space is left open for all parties to "retreat into themselves," then this is minimized.

The point of this rehearsal of Tully has been to show that the play of identity and difference in any social space is not one of mutual exclusion: cultures are absolutist and open at different levels of their operation. Extra-cultural institutions such as constitutional states, but also smaller institutions like public school boards, can certainly negotiate with cultural minorities at the level of practical rationality. Deals can be made if integrity is allowed.

In the last fifteen years, the discourse of multicultural education has taken on a function of the unifying myth within public education in Canada. However much this may enliven and shake up education in the public schools, it does not meet the concerns I have raised here about cultural difference. Multiculturalism in education is a policy attempt at representing all particularities within a universal rubric. All multicultural curricula in North America, it is safe to say, treat students as "cosmopolitan spectators in the central tower" (Tully, 1995: 11), viewing their own cultures from a neutral space. It teaches about different cultures, rather than teaching in the manner of different cultures, hence treating culture, and cultural difference, as an artifact rather than as a practice. Hence, at the level of the quality of experience of the student, multicultural education makes no difference. It teaches a different content in the same form, which emphasizes cognition. Multicultural education as it is generally advocated, not that it is bad in and of itself, reifies culture: it treats it as an object of knowledge. This may well be a very worthwhile exercise, but it cannot properly be said to treat the issue of multiculturalism. Culture
then is conceived of in terms of "heritages," of preserving a knowledge of a harmonious and clearly bounded past, rather than in terms of nourishing diverse and contested practices in the present. Thus culture is depoliticized and depotentized; culture becomes "folklore" which "we moderns" are curious about but are mostly unaffected by, and it is represented as untouched by relations of subordination and oppression. Multiculturalism as a unifying mythology, then, is counterproductive to the hard politics of diversity. Anti-racist criticism is cognisant of this.

Multicultural and critical pedagogy as Giroux (1994, 1996, 1997) and McLaren (1989, 1993) write it, describe the politics of multiculturalism as arising out of critique. This too has its merit, but neither does it treat the issue of cultural difference. The normative intent of the multiculturalism of critical pedagogy is to usher in a new and better society. In it we would all be critical citizens in an ever more transparent society in which a unity of purpose would establish itself as oppression and subjugation is exposed. We are "...capable of becoming more self-reflexive if individuals are given the opportunity to acquire a critical praxis" (my emphasis) (Sleeter and MacLaren, 1995: 19). There is a strong element in this discourse of the modernist triumphalism which is so exciting and seductive. Sleeter and MacLaren state:

Since it is impossible to represent every cultural group in the curriculum, the task of critical pedagogy, in Ross's terms, is to construct identity allegorically in order that each group is able to see his or her cultural narrative in a broader and comparative relationship to others and within a larger narrative of social transformation (1995: 17).
Communities:

What is to be fought for is above all the right to secure communal, as distinct from individual, diversity; a diversity stemming from a communally chosen and communally serviced form of life (Bauman, 1991: 273).

While Tully's use of culture is important and I agree with the gist of his argument, I would want to deepen it and complicate it by positing the term community as the medium of our enactment. I do this because I think that in terms of discussing alternative education, invocation of culture alone won't suffice. Yes, we all arise in and through culture. It (in)forms our every activity. But it is too broad a term to describe actual identifying practices. It can become a very big bag indeed. As I suggested above, it gives us a sense, a feeling, an ethos, but it is not where we concretely live. What for example is German, Somalian, Canadian, English, Vietnamese, Mexican, Peruvian culture? Also, many cultural forms today are so hybridized and cross-referencing it is hard to determine where they begin and end: "mall culture," "urban culture," "TV culture," "sports culture," "club culture," "youth culture." Culture is an ethos, but actual communities are the site of its diverse manifestation. For the purpose of analysis, cultural categories always have to be broken down for the differences they contain. Hence, in what follows, I will discuss the notion of community as a place in which culture is actually practised, often differently within single culture, by actual people in relation to each other. While no means pure or stable, either, it is in this site, wherever it establishes itself, that the possibility for the effect of wholeness and plenitude can emerge. I present the term community (and I always mean micro-community) as a normative ideal: I think that where groups of people have been
marginalized and excluded from public acceptance, community is the site from which they can empower themselves and gain recognition and respect.

This effect can be generated equally through identifications which are harmful to its constitutive outside, or through co-existence with it. That there are "good" and "bad" communities, there is no doubt. But this is something which the political culture in which communities come into existence negotiate: within a radical democracy communities founded on an essential hatred of their constitutive outside - for example white supremacist groups - violate the point of democracy: the logic of equivalence and the respect for diversity. They in other words, threaten the conditions of possibility of their own free and legitimate existence when we/they turns into friend/enemy.

It should not be a shock to the reader that at the end of my entire narrative about the deconstruction of Enlightenment metaphysics of presence I flag a notion of wholeness and plenitude. It should be clear by now that I do not mean community in the sense of Rousseau: that is, the notion of nation as community unified by a general will. I am talking about particular communities as empirical entities and normative entities existing within the space between the individual and the state. It should also be clear that I will not engage the notion of community as a kind of institutional entrenchment of the metaphysics of presence. The face-to-face nature of community does in no way imply transparency or the elimination of power that many communitarian thinkers assume, as I. M. Young is right to point out (1990b: 315). There is always mediation, though we must acknowledge modes of mediations vary. Fullness is never achieved; it is a process, a striving.
Clearly, for me, then community is not a category which would presume to transcend politics, rather I conceive it as the site where politics is most visible; at this level the ability to engage in political activity is most accessible to non-elites; at this level the necessary (always failing, always unstable) process of identifying occurs. I clearly disagree strongly with thinkers such as M. Young that the politics of difference means a radical and constant destruction of identification, a simple and constant dispersal; this has been a consistent and far too literal (mis)reading of post-structural thinkers such as Derrida and is the basis for my critique of structuralism. Differance, in Derrida's sense, makes the effect of identity as effect possible; it does not annul identity once and for all, but simply always already defers it. As Ernesto Laclau states: a totally dispersed (non)identity is experienced as psychosis which one romanticizes at the expense of the pain of those so inflicted often because of traumatic, violent experiences in which the process of coherent identification has been violated. Laclau states: "a discourse in which meaning cannot possibly be fixed is nothing else but the discourse of the psychotic....The social is not only the infinite play of differences. It is also the attempt to limit that play, to domesticate infinitude, to embrace it within the finitude of an order" (1990: 91). This limitation of difference is an act of power. "Our thesis is that the constitution of a social identity is an act of power and that identity as such is power" (Laclau, 1990: 31) - and hence the process of identification is linked to empowerment and integrity. That is, identity is the ability to say "no" to certain practices, along with the ability to say "yes" to other practices, to make boundaries and to revise them. This constitutes a necessary protection and a necessary violence. The question of boundaries and their inherent ambiguity constitutes the crucial question of politics today, and the posing of a concept of community brings it into the forefront. As Connolly writes:
Boundaries form indispensable protections against violation and violence; but the divisions they sustain also carry cruelty and violence. Boundaries provide preconditions of identity, individual agency, and collective action; but they also close off possibilities of being that might otherwise flourish. Boundaries both foster and inhibit freedom; they both protect and violate life (1995: 163).

Because of this essential ambiguity Connolly states, "the most tempting thing is to suppress the question [of boundaries] itself" (1995: 163), or to attempt to transcend the ambiguity altogether. Community is the place in which the boundary itself is constantly visible, raw, negotiated - where the existential pathos of the dialectic between protection and cruelty becomes concrete. Community, in this sense, always exists within ambiguity in which wholeness and coherence carries within it the mark of a disavowal. The categorical critique of all disavowal leads to a kind of nihilism in which no constructed, differential positivity would be allowed: hence difference as well as identity would be imploded once and for all, and life as such would be extinguished.

It is only those theorists who think it is possible to do away with all power (and hence, of course, empowerment) who would have us think that liberation from community into a freer space is possible, one in which the agonistic play of identity and difference is transcended once and for all, and the ambiguity of the boundary can be erased. Laclau writes:

Underlying that response is the assumption that a free society is one from which power has been totally eliminated. But as we saw, if power is the prerequisite of any identity, the radical disappearance of power would amount to the disintegration of the social fabric (1990: 33).

As Foucault theorizes, power - identification - is not only restrictive, it is also productive. I am thus trying to produce a political theory which would, given the play of identity and difference which cannot be transcended, value the agonistic process of identification in its local context,
over large integrations which attempt the inverse of I. M. Young's politics of difference: the disavowal of all difference. Community then, in the sense that I am trying to theorize it, does not take up one position in the individual/collective binary: it tries precisely to deconstruct that binary by showing that difference is integral to any identification process. In other words, the identification process which takes place in community never resolves itself into the holism of an individual or the holism of a total community, but undermines both logics.

Community as I use it here is not seen as a replacement for other forms of society between people which would entail the dismantling of urban existence, and so forth. I am suggesting, however, that community grants other forms of society - that of strangers working within institutions, or strangers in the city - their pleasure and empowered aspect. In other words, the city of strangers, the anonymous pick-up bar, the hierarchical work-place, the school of three thousand students, is much more liberating, thrilling, and safe for those who also have a community which is looking out for them, than it is for an isolated individual. It should be obvious that the fifteen year old street kid who has moved to the city to escape ill-treatment by family, school, or small community is at high risk until she or he finds herself or himself a new community which is supportive of her or his desires and needs. I. M. Young romantizices the city from the point of view of its middle-class inhabitants when she writes: "Even many of the most staunch proponents of decentralized community love to show visiting friends around the Boston or San Franisco or New York in which they live, climbing up towers to see the glitter of lights and sampling the fare at the best ethnic restaurants" (1990b: 317). If you have friends who travel in to the city from afar, if you feel entitled to use the city as though it is your own (I will show you my city), if you go out to eat frequently enough to know where all the best ethnic, no
less, restaurants are, then you are clearly already well-connected on many different levels. There is never only one city, thus: the city in which I may find an exhilarating array of "literature, art, and film" (I. M. Young, 1990b), in which I find a liberating sense of privacy and anonymity, is also the city in which young prostitutes are murdered, and people live lonely, disconnected and desperate lives. There is a very great danger in glorifying the city without also at once acknowledging that it is a positive place for "us" precisely because within it "we" - the privileged - participate in diverse, engaging, and empowering communities which make up its texture. Or more strongly put, we the privileged enjoy the anonymous city because it reflects our own identity and because we have the means to negotiate it safely. More on this below.

In terms of choice in education, the demand for choice in public education does not come from cultural groups as such. It comes from people within communities which exist within or straddle cultural forms, who see specific alternatives as necessary for the maintenance of their communal and personal integrity, of their identifying practices (See the Appendix). For instance, one could certainly not say that "the Jewish culture" is one whose claim for recognition uniformly includes

5 Clearly children within these cultural forms have their own agency, and assert their own desires, within the prevailing constraints, often undermining those of their parents. In traditional communities within modern societies this is always a potential site for (productive, I think) struggle, for the dislocation of certain truths, and the displacement of certain boundaries. Unfortunately, space and time do not allow me to pursue the important and difficult question of parent-child relations with regard to school and identity. Such a pursuit would entail discussing the status of the authority of parent over child, and the topical question of children's rights against their parents. What are the consequences and implications, for instance, of extending the liberal language of rights into the family setting? This is a very complex issue, the elaboration of which is clearly very important to my topic, although I cannot engage it at this time. It is empirically evident that no party in this matter - state, parent, student - essentially holds the position from which the "best interests" of the student could be established. I would say that in further explorations of this issue, arguments could be constructed around the appropriate role of each in the choice-making operation.
public funded Jewish parochial schools. Many are not in the least interested in them. But it is certainly true that Jewish culture supports certain communities which do seek that kind of recognition. The Waldorf school communities are made up of people from various ethnic cultural backgrounds who are drawn together by a philosophy of life and pedagogical model. Jewish schools and Waldorf school are informed by culture in very different ways, but they both arise out of communities of people who actively got together in order to provide a space which will support the integrity of their practices. These identities are dense and localized.

As I am describing it, community by definition has a size limit: a community is a network of people each of whom knows, at least by sight, everyone else within that community - any bigger "community" is simply an imagined entity - like nation, ethnicity, gender, class, and so forth - which has its place, but which is not the site for concrete activity. Without this limit, the specific intention of the term community gets lost: there would be no conceptual difference between the local church congregation or the local music community, for instance, and The World Community.

Community is the quintessential place for the agency of the post-modern and post-structural subject, although many other "experiences" of self are also, simultaneously, possible and desirable, including that of the vertiginous and ecstatic "panic culture," "panic sex," "panic communication" in a hyper-extended and hyper-externalized postmodern world without boundaries (I am using Kroker's language here (1987)). Even institutional change is effected by rallying some, however provisional, communal energy. In prosaic terms, it is in our own backyards that we must and can (it is right there) dig in the dirt, even if this digging is to ensure that in the future the emanations from it will not kill the flowers next door. Where people are
without their own metaphorical (and literal, for that matter) backyards they can do no digging. Then agency is certainly compromised, and the notion of choice becomes a bad joke.

Community is a term which scares many good liberal, because it implies the loss on a personal level of the boundary of the individual, so recently liberated, who becomes mired in a web of sticky, complicated, draining relationships, and hence can no longer act, change, and be himself or herself. In terms of politics, it invokes a whole communitarian literature from Rousseau and Hegel to contemporaries like Sandel and MacIntyre - in which individual will is subsumed under the collective will and traditionalism is framed in deep despair about the potentialities of "our time," which is seen to be without any redeeming features, and which is to be remedied by nostalgic or idealistic dreams of total and static identity. It seems retrograde and backward looking, to confound the possibility of change through choice, self-assertion, and overthrow of authority.

It also scares many good feminists, as it implies "old" ways of life haunted by the spectre of multiple oppressions, especially gender oppression. Communitarian writers have been notoriously blind to the hierarchy, meanness, cruelty, narrow-mindedness, lurking in all communities: the "bad" side of community life seems to get lost in this oceanic panacea. Added to this, the linking of women and community as the site of caring, nurturance, sensitivity, harmony, and love is a dangerous feminism because it reintrenches a patriarchal notion of femininity. Community itself becomes gendered as feminine (affective and personal), while institutions are masculine (rational and impartial). The contest over this within feminism has been prolonged and heated. As Marilyn Friedman writes:
...Communitarian philosophy as a whole is a perilous ally for feminist theory. Communitarians invoke a model of community which is focused particularly on families, neighbourhoods, and nations. These sorts of communities have harbored social roles and structures which have been highly oppressive for women, as recent feminist critiques have shown. But communitarians seem oblivious to those criticisms and manifest a troubling complacency about the moral authority claimed or presupposed by these communities in regard to their members. By building on uncritical references to those sorts of communities, communitarian philosophy can lead in directions with feminists should not wish to follow (1989: 277).

Communitarian theories also launch a critique of the dislocated subject of modernity, but the places where they unproblematically situate the situated self are the same places from which many feminists (but certainly not all) work to extract themselves, especially nuclear family, tribe, nation. "...The specific communities of family, neighbourhood, and nation so commonly invoked by communitarians are troubling paradigms of social relationship and communal life" (Friedman, 1989: 279). It takes our situatedness itself to be the place of community which is vaguely defined as constituting family, city, tribe, nation, neighbourhood (Friedman, 1989: 278-279). Thus any association of people, in fact, can be described as a community. This generality does not allow us to hone in on the concrete site in which people are connected to the social world: this concrete site is "me" connected to a finite series of actually living human beings who make up communities of value, interest, or custom. It is here that my performativities are "seen" and here is where they can be transformed.

6 As Friedman argues, nothing changes by simply making a metaphysical argument that people are constituted by their social relationships: the effect of the autonomous, independent and a priori liberal individual still persists where its condition of possibility is satisfied, and this does not lay ground for the argument that living relationally is therefore better (1989: 280). What I have been trying to argue is slightly different, however. I have been arguing against the position that states that once the autonomous individual as a universal subject position has fallen at the level of description then we can no longer theorize choice. I have been suggesting that precisely because that subject position is no longer credible is there the possibility of theorizing choice.
Friedman writes: "...communitarian theory fails to acknowledge that many communities make illegitimate moral claims on their members, linked to hierarchies of domination and subordination" (1989: 279). I am in no way suggesting that community is free from the multiple logics of oppression; rather it is the site of its enactment and also potentially the site of its transformation. I am using the term community as something bigger than the isolated individual and smaller than "culture in general." It is this so-called "private" sphere that liberalism was always able to factor out of its equation - leaving a theory inhabited by free individuals and the state. It is at the level of community as a category of analysis that the dynamics of domination and subordination can be read most precisely: that is, it is at this level that it becomes specific and concrete, and not simply an abstraction which is hard to make use of: that is, "women are oppressed," or "racism exists in our society."

I. M. Young launches a similar attack on communitarian thought in her article "The Ideal of Community and the Politics of Difference" (1990b). I find her argument confused, however: she describes "a vision of the good society," which is to replace the ideal of community, in which the stranger in the city samples with pleasure in her or his leisure time the diversity of experiences the city has to offer without being called upon to identify with those diverse forms (1990b: 317). This constitutes the unoppressive city. "The model of society composed of small communities is not desirable, at least in the eyes of many. If we take seriously the way many people live their lives today, it appears that people enjoy cities, that is, places where strangers are thrown together" (1990b: 316). This certainly happens and can be a great source of pleasure. What she fails to see is that her description includes the description of communities as that which makes up the substance of the diversity she so admires. When she states this:
the city consists in a great diversity of people and groups, with a multitude of subcultures and differentiated activities and functions, whose lives and movements mingle and overlap in public spaces. People belong to distinct groups or cultures and interact in neighborhoods and work places. They venture out from these locales, however, to public places of entertainment, consumption, and politics. They witness one another's cultures and functions in such public interaction, without adopting them as their own. The appreciation of ethnic foods or professional musicians, for example, consists in the recognition that these transcend the familiar everyday world of my life (1990: 319)

she is failing to acknowledge that all this diversity is not simply difference in dispersal. The diversity of people, groups, subcultures, activities, functions, and so forth, are themselves instances of an identification: the ethnic restaurant and the professional musician are made possible through cultural and often communal identification. Classical musicians in orchestras and ensembles, as well as the various genres of popular music-making, are organized along communal lines. This is a perfect example: the making of particular kinds of music requires a common vision and purpose - that is, an identification of sorts - which may also be professionalized. Thus her posing of the city versus communities makes very little sense in terms of the normativity of her argument: the healthy, vibrant city is precisely composed of small communities sitting within, and often disturbing, a larger institutional infrastructure. Hence she can erroneously state that for "'independent' women or socialists or gay men and lesbians, the city has often offered a welcome anonymity and some measure of freedom" (1990: 317). No, these "deviant" subjects come to the city precisely to find of forge their own community or communities which will better suit their identificatory processes, communities in which they no longer have to experience themselves as deviates. This experience does in no way have to be described as "authentic" versus "inauthentic." Many community-builders are very aware, especially in the gay scene, how truly "inauthentic" their discourse is: it is consciously and
playfully constructed. They are also aware of how fragile it is, and to what degree it depends on constant political activity. The city then is the place of community, not its antithesis, and is therefore, as she states not necessarily a place of alienation and despair, which some communitarian thinkers imagine.

In stating that city life, "the good society," is made up of "the being-together of strangers" (1990: 318), she is falling into the trap of having to assert a kind of individualism to support her critique of the ideal of community: a city made up entirely of strangers is a city of atomized individuals. Surely she can't mean this, given her own critique of individualism and her valuation of the diversity of cultures, groups, activities, which are made possible only through collective identifications. Here lies her confusion, which is instructive for us regarding the topic of community. She participates in the very opposition of individualism/community which she thinks communitarian thinkers must necessarily utilize. Her notion of difference comes down to a liberal notion of individual differences: subjects as the site of difference. If we have followed Butler's argument, it becomes clear that there is no such thing as an individual identity, except in as much as we are pointing to an untheorizable and mystical absolute singularity, just as there is no such thing as an individual subject: subjects are produced by definition within a collective context. They have discursive conditions of possibility. To be subjected means necessarily to be in relation to something outside of one's own skin. Therefore it makes no sense to oppose community with the notion of difference between discrete subjects, as she does. She states: "as I understand it, difference means the irreducible particularity of entities" (1990: 304). Hence she can suppose that communities repress and cover over individual differences, which is simply a liberal critique of community. The notion that difference means the irreducible particularity of
entities is wrong, because an irreducible particularity is itself exempt from difference. Hers then
would not be a politics of difference, but a politics of presence. Within liberalism the irreducible
particularity is the individual itself, as though simply given. As I have been trying to show, post-
structural theories of subjectivity precisely disturb this version of difference and identity. Hence
difference cannot find its resting place, its grounding, in irreducible particularity which is itself a
presence: difference has no resting place, no place beyond which it does not go. The
identificatory process is only possible because absolute identity always fails within the field of
difference: there is no ground on which either identity or difference asserts its supremacy. If
there were full presence there would be no need to identify; if there were absolute difference
there would be nothingness. This means in ordinary language, that culture and community are
processes of identification which are never finished and never stable - they are founded on a
fundamental lack: hence their continuity and vibrancy as practices which can never rest in their
own full presence. As Laclau writes: "if there is a need for identification, it is because there is no
identity in the first place" (1996: 56). The need for identification is generated precisely by what
Laclau calls the trauma of the failure of absolute given structural identity (1996: 55).
Even despite her explication of the metaphysics of presence in which she argues that
community is simply the flip side of individual, she posits the site of difference as the subject
itself: subjects are different from other subjects, therefore identification within a community
must necessarily be a violation of difference. Difference sits within and between subjects, she
states (1990: 307). "Gould's conception of community works on and through a totalizing desire
to reconcile the differences of subjects" (1990: 308). Thus she sees the process of identification
with others as potentially oppressive, because it violates the particularity of the individual subject
and its internal differences, that is, it violates something particular to particular subjects. But what is the content of the differences of subjects? How do subjects become different from one another if this difference is not simply a presence emanating from the a priori individual? Precisely their various identifications within cultures and communities, constitute their difference. That is, their identification is the source of their difference. You are different from me not because you are simply a different person (this begs the question), but because you participate in different practices (which implies identification).

This version of a politics of difference does away with the play between identity and difference, because it has somehow decided that identity is bad altogether, that identity and difference are not in play with each other: it becomes the reification of difference in and of itself. This is simply the flip side of identitarian thinking which hopes to have done with difference once and for all. It seeks, with the most idealist of communitarians, to do away with the politics of inclusion and exclusion which the play (politics) of identity and difference is about. Without a notion of identity, difference becomes meaningless: absolute difference can be pictured as an apocalyptic post-nuclear landscape in which every living organism has been disintegrated into nothingness and power (integration, integrity), and hence also politics has been done away with once and for all. Any poststructuralist thinker will agree that the play of identity and difference is infinite, and also infinitely necessary for life: it cannot be transcended in dialectical fashion to secure a synthesis, nor can one term of the binary, difference for instance, simply eclipse the other.

Post-structuralism has often been misunderstood as that mode of analysis which seeks to transcend the binaries of western enlightenment thought: rather it simply seeks to show how they are inextricably linked to each other, most often in a hierarchical relation, and can deconstruct the
supposed solidity of each other. Derrida writes: "we could thus take up all the coupled
oppositions on which philosophy is constructed, and from which our language lives, not in order
to see opposition vanish but to see the emergence of a necessity such that one of the terms
appears as the diferrance of the other, the other "differed" within the systematic ordering" (1976:
xxix). I. M. Young's privileging of difference over identity is no different from communitarian
privileging of identity over difference: it hopes to halt the play by positing a center, irreducible
particularity itself. Derrida writes:

If totalization no longer has any meaning, it is not because the infiniteness of a field
cannot be covered by a finite glance or a finite discourse, but because the nature of the
field - that is, language and a finite language - excludes totalization. This field is in effect
that of play, that is to say, a field of infinite substitutions only because it is finite, that is
to say, because instead of being an inexhaustible field, as in the classical hypothesis,
instead of being too large, there is something missing from it: a center which arrests and
grounds the play of substitutions (1979: 289).

Thus, I. M. Young's positing of the differential subject itself ushers in the back door a
metaphysics of presence which she has just pushed out the front door:

All these formulations seek to understand community as a unification of particular
persons through the sharing of subjectivities: persons will cease to be opaque, other, not
understood, and instead become fused, mutually sympathetic, understanding one another
as they understand themselves (1990b: 309).

In contrasting "particular persons" to community I. M. Young exhibits her liberalism.

Anyone who lives in a community knows that community life is not one of fusion: rather,
agonies of community living forces the personalization of political activity and shows the
differences within any identity. Power is raw and visible at this level of localization. The whole
trajectory of my text seeks to destabilize the notion that subjectivities are particular - that is,
individual. Subjectivities always emerge within discourses which are shared, collective, in any
Community, as against culture, is posited as a normative form of that collective emergence: communities explicitly take hold of the process of identification - hence community cannot be opposed to "different subjects." Difference arises as the detritus of the process of identification. When I. M. Young states that "a desire for community in feminist groups...helps reproduce their homogeneity" (1990b: 301) she fails to see that it is this desire precisely which brings out in sharp relief the differences between feminists. The history of feminism is one in which identifications have constantly been aspired to, and have constantly been deconstructed, making its politics so effective.

The notion that every individual is absolutely opaque to every other individual is simply the inverse of communitarian assertions that there can be absolute transparency. In as much as I arise within certain discursive conditions, I will better understand those who similarly arise than those whose world is differently described. The move to immediate inclusion, understanding, assimilation of the other into this discourse is, I agree with I. M. Young, not necessarily a progressive political act. At the same time, however, she is critical of communities precisely for their potential exclusion of the stranger (1990b: 302).

If I. M. Young actually stands behind this statement: "a politics of difference lays down institutional and ideological means for recognizing and affirming differently identifying groups in two basic senses: giving political representation to group interests and celebrating the distinctive cultures and characteristics of different groups" (1990b: 319), then she would not disagree with my notion of micro-communities, which is that it is the site of empowerment of "differently identifying groups." She would then have to rethink the notion of "differences between subjects" and phrase it as "differences between differently identifying groups." She
would then begin to make a lot more sense, and extricate herself from the individual/community binary which she accuses communitarians to make unwitting use of. Then the questions which she asks could also be my questions, as they in no way support her critique of the community:

Many questions arise in proposing a politics of difference. What defines a groups that deserves recognition and celebration? How does one provide representation to group interests that avoids the mere pluralism of liberal interest group? What are institutional forms by which the mediations of the city and the representations of its groups in decision making can be made democratic? (1990b: 320).

I agree with her that "radical politics...must develop discourses and institutions for bringing differently identified groups together without suppressing or subsuming differences" (1990b: 320). What is required in the first place, however, is that strong communities of identification are allowed to flourish, establish and assert themselves as different within the public culture. Without different communities what is the point of her normative statement?

I would venture to say that the value of community decreases in direct proportion to the identification any given person has with the hegemonic culture: hence it is easy for someone like John Ralston Saul to speak with warmth about the common public national culture, and with fear about so-called dissenting particularisms. This common culture already is his community; he negotiates it with ease; his identity is reflected and confirmed within it. Also, someone like I. M. Young who speaks of the city as though it is a fabulous playground can do so only because she is secure within it; she comes from a place of safety in which even its dangerous and degenerate spaces afford a thrill of excitement. Hence, she should not brush over her own statement so quickly: "in a racist, sexist, homophobic society that has despised and devalued certain groups, it is necessary and desirable for members of those groups to adhere with one another and celebrate a common culture, heritage, and experience" (1990: 312). It goes without saying, given the play
of identity and difference, that these kinds of celebrations will always be fraught with internal disruptions, and are always outrageous fabrications. This does not in the least deny the fact that they also constitute the site of solidarity and support for precisely those for whom the city, the state, the common culture shows no respect. Postmodern theory precisely can support the validation of this kind of inauthentic, inessential, fictitious community as a means of gaining power. If we do away with the notion that identification can be either true or false, then it can hardly be argued that identificatory strategies are false practices, nor that the aspiration to an always illusive wholeness and fullness is essentially bad. I. M. Young writes:

I do not doubt the desirability of small groups in which individuals have personal acquaintance with one another and interact in a plurality of contexts. Just as the intimacy of living with a few others in the same household has unique dimensions that are humanly valuable, so existing with others in communities of mutual friendship has specific characteristics of warmth and sharing that are humanly valuable. Furthermore, there is no question that capitalist patriarchal society discourages and destroys such communities of mutual friendship, just as it squeezes and fragments families. In our vision of the good society, we surely wish to include institution arrangements that would nurture the specific experience of mutual friendship, which only relatively small groups interacting in a plurality of contexts can produce. Recognizing the specific value of such face-to-face relations, however, is quite a different matter from proposing them as the organizing principle of a whole society (1990b: 316).

I agree that communities cannot be the only organizing principle of society, but I do not agree with her that it therefore holds that they not be an organizing principle at all, which she implies throughout her article. Must there be only one organizing principle? Her mistake is that she assumes that there is such a thing as "a whole society" in the first place - that is, a positive identity beyond individual cultures and communities which is self-evident. She implies here, in liberal manner, that communities are private, and "the whole society" is public - made up of the big institutions which she seems to assume are simply givens of our western societies: large scale
industry and urban centers, which bring with them specific "living space [increasingly this consists of suburban sprawl rather than gentrified cities], work places [factories and huge corporations], places of trade and commerce [shopping malls]" (1990b: 316). She states that "the vision of small, face-to-face, decentralized units that this ideal [of community] promotes...is an unrealistic vision for transformative politics in mass urban society" (1990b: 300). I'm not sure what she might mean when she states that transformative politics must start with the just mentioned facts of modern life: does that mean simply accepting them, or attempting to subvert them, for example, by decentralization, small-scale industry and local markets initiated by particular communities, which she suggests are efforts which are both "wildly utopian and undesirable" (1990b: 316)? What kind of politics does she imagine to be transformative if such strategies are to be ruled out? Here we see again a triumphantist notion of progressive politics as mass and total enlightenment of a generalized and falsely identifying public initiated by whom she does not say: probably elites and intellectuals within institutional parameters. If "the whole society" is the site of transformative politics, I for one cannot even conceive what that means conceptually, let alone picture it practically. Where is it? How do people belong to it? How do they organize their dissent if not by drawing inspiration from like-minded within communities?

My vision of community is clearly normative and rather passionate: a notion of community is essential to the possibility of action, change, and self, because it is here that the identificatory process becomes self-conscious and directed; in a sense it is here that the fabricating aspect of identifaction becomes most explicit. Communities have to be constantly re-enacted and reconstructed, and the normative aspect of an endorsement of the proliferation of micro-
communities is that there is no single or essential or authentic object of identification, even while identification is always required. Thus, I am not suggesting here that community does away with mediation and representation, but rather that we acknowledge that interests which need to be represented are collectively constructed. "One person, one vote," is a liberal mantra which goes a long way to effectively depoliticize politics. It is within communal settings that modes of human relationship can be changed - a political act par excellence: it is here that I can concretely transform the relationships which my theoretical understanding of the world no longer bears, or build supports for my sense of integrity in conjunction with others; it is from this site that I can launch my critique of legislation and institutions.

I would hesitate to go so far as Friedman, however, in this critical task, however. She states:

> To evaluate the moral identities conferred by communities on their members, we need a theory of communities, of their interrelationships of the structures of power, dominance, and oppression within and among them. Only such a theory would allow us to assess the legitimacy of the claims made by communities upon their members by way of their traditions, practices, and conventions of "debts, inheritances...expectations, and obligations" (1989: 282).

I agree that it is important to theorize the notion of community, and to emphasize that community does not guarantee well-being, but I would be very cautious about producing yet another reductionist and categorical mode of analysis in which "we" assess "them" for their own good. I would certainly say that communities can and do generate their own critiques: all the big new social movements have arisen thus. Where they have fallen is in taking the insights culled from local experience and applying them universally to others. A whole array of feminists have brought this to the attention of middle-class, white women, who presumed to assess the situation for all women.
My sense is that community is "where it's at": both in terms of analysis, and in terms of where we ought to concentrate our lived experience. It is the site of the play between identity and difference. The analysis of communities tests our favourite interpretative models - gender, "race," class, public, private, "society," culture, nation (I hereby theorize my own highly generalized narrative out of business). And very basically, community-building (and renovation) is a good thing; it tests institutional and social structures, and subverts standardizing regulation. My redescriptions of subjectivity supports this statement: in fact, it focuses the generalities produced by the theoretical redescriptions of subjectivity by both Butler and Derrida. Butler talks about gender performativity in very general terms: she simply makes the case that gender is performative. It would now be up to theorists to take a look at how the general western feminine and masculine performativity is actually played out differently in various communities within and straddling cultures in the west. Equally, Derrida speaks in such abstract terms that it is difficult to ground his analysis in social and political reality: what does it mean concretely that "when I decide I invent the subject?" (Derrida, 1996: 84). It means that when I make a move within a community of people which I know personally, I immediately "become someone" to them. I differentiate myself as an acting being. It is at the level of community that my concrete daily acts reverberate back to me as "me."

Community is both new and old, pre-modern, modern, and post-modern. It is the web of people around me, however this is arranged. It sets a ground, provides the conditions in which the notion of individual can become intelligible in certain cultural contexts, and is non-necessary in shape, content, and membership. It is the point of leverage, the point of reference from which a will, a person, can be said to spring. Community is a space in which performativity can become
consciously enacted, in which identifying practices are actually played out. For instance, I am gay only in as much as I am in a community of gay people - actual people who I meet face to face - with specific practices, mores, vocabularies. Alone I cannot be said to be gay - for alone I cannot have a practice (and by alone I do not mean a spatial or social relationship - I mean without the discourse). Practices are concretely shared by people who interact with each other: practices are collective. What does it mean to be without community? It means that one is alone in the world even in one's very theoretical categories: I may be a woman, a student, white, and so on, but this does not imply that I am connected with other human beings. It simply shows that I can fit into a number of very general categories. It is only in the context of interrelationships that people become singular personalities for us whose actions can then be generalized and categorized.

Community, as opposed to culture, implies some sense of active participation among its members. We are thrown into culture or cultures, we participate in communities. Hence it is here that we are held to account. Community is the place in which people actively and manifestly are seen to be "personalities in the singular," become players, take pleasure, and have grievances in the medium of specific performativities. This is the material on which our structural analyses works, on which our generalization work to render explanations.

Community is not just a category to again individualize politics, to "privatize" analysis: "whatever happens out there is caused by the will of individuals in their own homes." Rather, meta-analysis - gender, "race," class, culture - concretizes itself here. Community is a concrete site in which generalizations are particularized, and the actual logic of dominations, oppressions, enablements and plenitudes can be seen to work themselves out.
The dialogical process of critical awareness which theorists talk about as a template for representational politics - national politics - actually has its place in a community setting - in which goods are defined and contested, and the imagined nation, the imagined people, take shape through discussion and practice. It is in communities that regulatory discourses find their uneven manifestation: if I had been writing not about the form of a discourse in Chapters Two and Three, but about concrete communities, the narrative would not have been nearly as smooth. It is here that the fact of difference raises its head on a daily basis. It is precisely in the nitty-gritty of communal life where institutional procedures and bureaucratic rules do not serve as a buffer, that people come into struggle with each other over goals and purposes even within a single identity formation. Laclau writes: "We see here a second paradox of community: it has to be essentially unachievable to become pragmatically possible" (Laclau, 1996: 120). The activity of community-building is never finished.

As Chantal Mouffe writes: "Contrary to what some communitarians propose, a modern democratic political community cannot be organized around a single substantive idea of the common good" (Mouffe, 1993: 62). The notion of community that I am asserting circumvents the classical argument between liberals and communitarians: liberals claim that the sense of common purpose and identity in any community endangers individual liberty, and communitarians claim that liberal conceptions of citizenship and democratic participation reduce them to a mere, empty, legal status. Active participation in small communities allows for investment in common purposes and goals on a micro scale, providing the content for political participation in a public space, within an overall radical, post-liberal democratic state whose normative goal is the accommodation of these micro political spaces. As Mouffe writes: "our
choice is not only one between an aggregate of individuals without common public concern and a premodern community organized around a single substantive idea of the common good" (Mouffe, 1993: 65).

So one can see that for me community is at the same time a critical site of analysis, and the normative site of activity. It is the site where "thrownness" gives way to "choosing," to identifying. A communal web of some kind enmeshes most people wherever they are, these webs usually layer each other, and are more and less dense. Within this web the filigree of culture, identity, and difference, and the agonistic nature of human social life shows itself. Through this constitutive web we most directly experience ourselves as enacting ourselves. People also exist within institutions. Within institutions, including welfare institutions, we experience ourselves as surfaces of inscription: institutions write their messages on us.

Clearly, schematizing how communities relate to each within the public space, how the process of identifying operates within them and from without of them, how culture impacts upon them differently and is transformed by them, how the regulatory interventions of the state makes incursions into communities via the individuation of welfare services, is an enormous task. I certainly cannot see my way through it now. It would require another thesis entitled "The Politics of Community." But I still maintain that without a descriptive and normative account of community - the "is" and the "ought" of it - no social and political theory will catch the complexity and multiplicity of the public space. In this regard choice, conceived as action upon contingent conditions of being, which could subvert the social controlling, and capitalist driven, nature of welfare and reinstate a real and productive tension between capital and citizenship,
becomes operative. Choice implies alternatives - alternatives would mean sites in which other relations than depersonalized and commodified ones might exist. It is the case that various subjectivities struggle to come into "being" within culturally differentiated communities - through literally being face-to-face with others in affectively defined social spaces; that is, in spaces where people are connected through such "rationalities" as friendship, like-mindedness, familial relationships, identity affiliation, cultural tradition. It is the case that various subjectivities struggle to come into "being" within culturally differentiated communities - through literally being face-to-face with others in affectively defined social spaces; that is, in spaces where people are connected through such "rationalities" as friendship, like-mindedness, familial relationships, identity affiliation, cultural tradition.7 It ought to be the case that those communities and cultures be returned the means by which people can act on their conditions of existence - including their health and education - supported by this kind of solidarity. As Offe writes, "this model would imply that the functions of the welfare state could be taken over by libertarian, egalitarian and largely self-reliant communities working within a highly decentralized and debureaucratized setting" (1984: 158).

Marilyn Friedman counters the communitarian notions of community, as the traditional sites of attachment into which we are thrown, which constitute us completely, and which provide the material for all imagined associations - including nation, "the people" - with community as

7 This is not to suggest that these forms of interconnectedness are necessarily harmonious or egalitarian, but rather to suggest that it is in and through these connections that struggles and contestations, as well as nurturance and inspiration, have their concrete possibility. Where people are not "connected" in this way they cannot "act" - there is nothing to act upon. All political and cultural movements begin with a dialectic of personal struggle and connection. Where liberation is felt to be liberation from oppressive personal, traditional, religious, or cultural confines, it is liberation into another kind of community, or liberation out of isolation of the nuclear family or an institution into another kind of community. It is never conceived of as liberation into emptiness. We can see this in feminist and lesbian/gay politics. Liberation can also be conceived as liberation from norms and controls which prevent one from inhabiting the personal, traditional, or cultural confines which give life its meaning and integrity. This can be seen in the politics of minority cultural groups, such as aboriginal peoples. The two modes of liberation can converge.
voluntary associations (1989: 288); that is, communities which are not determined by blood ties or geographical location, but are chosen from within the "scene" into which we were initially thrown. She wants to be able to theorize a way of evaluating the qualitative differences between communities within a feminist framework, "to retain the communitarian insights about the contribution of community and social relationship to self-identity, yet open up for critical reflection the moral particulars imparted by those communities, and identify the sorts of communities which will provided nonoppressive and enriched lives for women" (1989: 286).

And her way of doing this is to introduce choice as the differential category. It is the voluntary nature of communities, as I use the term, which make them sites for powerful political interventions, as well as the site for enriched personal lives.

In opposition to the romanticism of communitarians who talk about the family-neighbourhood-school-church nexus as our "home," she suggests that the city, urban life, is an ideal place for communities of choice. Far from necessarily promoting "alienation, isolation, and psychic breakdown" which puritans and conservatives warned about (1989: 287) it provides the freedom from the givenness of the accident of birth in a certain place, time, family, culture, to make something of this accident.

In keeping with my analysis of cultural diversity, my definition of what could constitute a "good" community is much less programmatic than Friedman's. I don't think these communities can only be found among friendship groups within an urban setting: I don't think they necessarily have to be free from ties of place and blood, which are not necessarily oppressive. But I do think that they represent that place in which our subjectivity, constituted by nonvoluntary
"thrownness" into place, family, culture, sets about constituting itself as something more than this. They are the political site in which choice manifests itself most clearly as potential.

I will make a somewhat theological move and say that community only exists when there is choice. That is, by definition communities cannot be compulsory. If they were, they would no longer be communities. This constitutes, of course, an easy tautology - a lot of theoretical problems would be solved by theoretical moves like this. But I think it is useful, nevertheless, in order to conceptually separate various sites within the public sphere. It narrows down quite considerably what kinds of social relationships can count as communities. Community becomes a truly normative category for me, then, within the context of a radical democracy. Community is a good thing because it cannot be forced on us without undermining its own logic (tangible and mutually voluntary connection). Yet, so-called traditional forms of community can still survive the passage through democracy and modernity, which is so important to me. It is especially within an open democratic culture that the validity of so-called traditional communities - even when they seem to outsiders to be authoritarian or oppressive - is revealed through the voluntariness of their association. People exist within traditional associations - that is, organized around religion and pre-modern cultural forms - without necessarily wanting to leave or feeling oppressed and unfree. They feel well there. This is community. If leaving is made impossible it is not a community. I am framing this conjecture in this somewhat awkward fashion in order to show that communities do not have to be the same in form and content in order to count as communities. That is, however unacceptable they seem to outsiders, assessment belongs to their members (within the limits of the rule of law, of course). This holds because I am trying to theorize the notion of community within a radically democratic space, that is, one which is
marked by the play of identity and difference (there is no Common Good, nor merely a dispersal of undifferentiated individuals). Alternatives proliferate in such a space, making community (voluntary connection) possible. Because no community is ever entirely isolated - especially given the multitude of institutions in modern societies - and because there is not just one big Community, members of communities always also "know something else."

This makes sense, because I have problematized the notion of choice itself throughout this thesis. Choice is not a tool in the quest to instantiate "who we really are," in Friedman's terms, but it is the room for movement within a social space which is non-necessary. It is a formative activity. Rather than simply positing it as that which we do \textit{separately from, and over against}, our situatedness, our miredness - as a radical and disruptive liberation - I have suggested that choice is that activity which plays with the structural realities of the "thrownness" of our existence. Community is the site of that play. I agree with Friedman when she says, "Perhaps it is more illuminating to say that communities of choice foster not so much the constitution of subjects but their reconstitution" (Friedman, 1989: 289).

Why should communities be supported in the public realm? It is clear that there are many social and political spaces in which we exist which are not communities, alongside our community attachments. Community, as I said, is not just everything else but institutions. There are forms of association which are loose associations: a sports club, a political activist group, colleagues at work, university departments, neighbourhoods, acquaintances, friends; there are families. They fill the space between state and individual alongside communities. It is also clear that people can also exist without communities or loose associations. They then become literally
"institutionalized." Most lives contain mixtures of relationships and communities, some given/found/discovered and some chosen/created" (Friedman, 1989: 290). Communities in the way I am using the term (that is, not just as a generic term for any human relationship), have a strong normative content to them: communities pull people together on the basis of strongly felt commonality of purpose, belief, practice and curiosity. Communities are projects, which arise from our collective activity out of the place in which we were "thrown." Thus, there are feminist communities, Jewish communities, Waldorf communities, lesbian communities, green communities, arts communities, activist communities, ethnic communities, farm communities, worker communities, and so forth, which are organized by a particular ethic, a particular mode of being in the world informed by particular discourses; their convictions spread outward and shake institutions and cultural practices, the diverse ensemblage of different types of social space within a democratic state. They are often organized around resistance to the excesses of modernity itself. In them people enact their identities in safety and with pleasure, while acting within the rationality of some transcending vision. Of course, communities are cross-cut by institutional and media-incursions; they are informed by the public culture of their place and time, including the many "isms" which are out there. Communities are not harmonious, but they are integral.8

8 There are communities which are organized around hateful convictions. These communities are discredited by the political means available in a strong democratic culture, and they are limited by the logic of community itself - they cannot institute themselves as "nation" or "people" (although they may invoke those names), because such an institution would imply a universality and generality which community cannot hold.
My strong sense is that there have to be alternative modes of human relationship and support than nuclear family (Mommy-Daddy-Me), loose associations, and institutions of state and capitalism in a democratic society. This is so, because our complex democratic tradition in the west strives for both liberty and the good - both dispersal and integration. Especially at a time when the welfare state is being criticized from both the left and the right, and at a time when the self-evident "rightness" of the nuclear family is in question, communities provide the site in which non-instrumental, rich life activities can occur, in which people support each other with support from the state. As I quoted Friedman above stating: "much evidence suggests that urban settings do not, as commonly stereotyped, promote only alienation, isolation, and psychic breakdown" (1989: 286). They do not do only this, I suggest, because community life is available within urban centres. I would put it more strongly: "alienation, isolation, psychic breakdown," can be the debilitating condition of urban, cosmopolitan, and modern life, most especially for those marginalized within it, unless communities "hold" people in such a way that uncertain times and impersonal institutions can be experienced as liberating. The state would benefit immensely from significantly subsidizing these communities wherever they organized their own services.
If I critique the attempt to install a unifying myth which is universally applicable, this is not because I think education could be neutral with respect to culture. I agree with Postman that every educational endeavour, however neutral it attempts to be, is culturally informed by a grand narrative which gives it reason and purpose for educating. Education has always had a missionary aspect. Education was after all, as we have seen, not very long ago the exclusive domain of the religious institutions of all faiths. Where there is a social or religious purpose waiting to be fulfilled education is that practice which is seen to be the means to that end.

Education is a practice which constrains and enables in order to produce specific kinds of subjects in specific ways. It is so effective precisely because its purpose is to systematically shape or alter performativity. This is true of all educational practices. State administered education is problematic not because it regulates and "socializes" - how could it not? - but because state rationalities themselves become the guiding forces of education. The "reasons" for educating are elaborated in terms of the parameters required by state institutions in order to govern: these parameters are restrictive with regard to what kind of subjectivities and practices are enabled to exist.

It is important to note that this critique of public education is not aimed at the women and men who operate within it. I am not commenting on whether the teaching is good enough or not, whether standards are being met or not, whether our education system is competitive or not.
That is, unlike many conservative critics of public education, I do not aim my criticism at an alleged decline in student performance, or institutional efficiency. Rather, my criticism of public education as a system is its mandate to deliver a uniform kind of educational experience to all students, with the aim of constructing a narrow range of normative subjectivities. I am not suggesting, here either, however, that practitioners within the system have no agency themselves: certainly a variety of educational practices occur as teachers redirect, subvert, and implement in unintended ways the directives which come to them from "on high." As Ball writes, "Action may be constrained differently (even tightly) but it is not determined by policy. Solutions to the problems posed by policy texts will be localized and should be expected to display ad hocery and messiness" (Ball, 1993: 12).

Yet still, the governmentality of public schools is something not easily "fought against." It is precisely a logic which is not only about rulings which come from government through ministries of education, but a logic which is immanent to the prevailing institutional discourse itself. Ball writes:

We may only be able to conceive of the possibilities of response in and through the language, concepts and vocabulary which the discourse makes available to us. Thus, Offe may be right in stressing that struggle, dispute, conflict and adjustment take place over a pre-established terrain. The essence of this is that there are real struggles over the interpretation and enactment of policies. But these are set within a moving discursive frame which articulates and constrains the possibilities and probabilities of interpretation and enactment. We read and respond to policies in discursive circumstances that we cannot, or perhaps do not, think about (1993: 14-15).

At some point, faith in the ability of teachers and administrators to creatively subvert individual policy directives as they come "down the line" must give way to questions about the general dominant discourses in which this subversion can take place (Ball, 1993: 14). That is, while the
notion of "resistance" is productive, it is also over-rated as political practice. At some point, a radical political theory must be able to conceive of the means by which the prevailing discourses themselves can be called into question, to the extent that dissenters are not compelled to speak within the constraints of a certain language about education. This requires that alternative discursive interventions, and even the institutionalization of alternative discourses, must take place. In Chapter Five, I was trying to suggest that a radical post-liberal democracy would welcome and foster such a proliferation of discursive "terrains."

Educational systems represent, we can almost say literally, "different worlds," depending on the prevailing discourse of education, which of course concretely manifests as student educational activity. Public schools then should not only be critiqued by labelling them better or worse by reference to criteria immanent within the rationality of the system itself. I am suggesting that progressive political intervention into the prevailing public educational system also requires the destabilization of the prevailing "world" arising out of the governmentality of public education itself, to the extent that the self-evident discourse about education is thrown into question and other educational discourses begin to circulate freely. This subversion cannot be launched on the basis of "truer" educational discourses - this would be very difficult to establish - but on the basis that there are other educational discourses which can be shown to be equally valid and promising for those who cherish them. We must question then, whether a public realm, in order to be public, demands only one "regime of truth" with regard to education. If it so demands,

9 Clearly, the argument of my thesis leaves me open to charges of relativism: do I really mean to say that any and all educational practices are equally good? Do I mean to say that there should be no legislated standards? No. I don't wish to suggest that any social formation, whether a nation state or a community, can exist without standards, nor that I think all educational practices
democracy in the west will continually face its shadow side: the suffering of those whose integrity has been violated by the compulsive requirement to erase difference. As Tully writes:

To prepare people for the superior life of a modern constitutional nation it is necessary and beneficial to break down their ancient cultural ways and instil modern ones through repetitive drills and exercises in schools, factories, prisons and armies (Tully, 1995: 89).

The language of the English in the nineteenth century regarding Canadian (French Canadian) pretensions to their own republic is a telling example of the way cultural imperialism was justified by modernity itself. Durham wrote of the French in terms of saving them from their own backwardness. He saw them as oppressed by their own ancien regime: a "central, ill-organized, unimproving and repressive despotism" over a "race of men habituated to the incessant labour of a rude and unskilled agriculture" which "remained the same uninstructed, inactive, unprogressive people" (Tully, 1995: 159). The French "clung to ancient prejudices, ancient customs and ancient laws, not from any strong sense of their beneficial effects, but with

are equally good. There are always standards: but what kind of standards, generated by whom, according to what criteria, in what context, and enforced by whom?

The charge of relativism which implies that, because I think respect for diversity is important, I think there are no reasons why anyone would decide in one direction rather than the other misses the mark here. My whole thesis is based on the idea that we emerge from within various discursive sites with specific, if contingent and unstable, values and convictions. All I am suggesting, then, is that these criteria of evaluation will be different depending on these discursive sites, and that there is no algorithmic or pre-political way of deciding between them. A sensitivity to this changes the whole tone of political negotiation. As Rorty writes:

"Relativism" is the view that every belief on a certain topic, or perhaps about any topic, is as good as every other. No one holds this view....The philosophers who get called "relativists" are those who say that the grounds for choosing between such opinions are less algorithmic than had been thought....So the real issue is not between people who think one view as good as another and people who do not. It is between those who think our culture, or purpose, or intuitions cannot be supported except conversationally, and people who still hope for other sorts of support (1982: 166-67).
the unreasoning tenacity of an uneducated and unprogressive people" (Tully, 1995: 159). In contrast, the English represented progress.

...The English have "developed the resources of the country," "constructed or improved its means of communication," and "created its internal and foreign commerce." As a consequence, the "large mass of the labouring population are French in the employ of English capitalists" (Tully, 1995: 160).

The discourses of modernity made it possible to suggest that the relinquishing of "unprogressive" habits of thought and practice, entrenched in particularistic cultures through education would result in self-evidently universal values and purposes. Stubborn attachment to "ancient ways," Durham implied, leads to a justified class society in which diversity is organized as a social, political, and moral hierarchy, because these "ancient ways" are, by definition according to the reformers and progressives, inferior to "modern ways."

Education is a cultural practice. It imbues the child with cultural knowledge: how to walk down the hall, sit in a chair, eat, talk, move, think, create, feel. Thus in every society in which one culture has dominated another, it has harnessed education to do so. The tragedy of residential schools in Canada is the starkest example of cultural domination of difference through education in North America. The rationale for this was that aboriginal peoples could not "be part of" the Canadian dominion without sharing "American" or "Dominion" culture. This sharing entailed being stripped clean of all aboriginal cultural performativities, including language, through education.

The discourse within public education as an institution, in the 1990s in Ontario, and increasingly in other western countries, is organized around effective management and efficient use of resources in order to obtain higher standards of "outcomes." Many school reform
movements which speak about school choice also\(^{10}\) structure their objectives around this discourse. The devolution and decentralization of bureaucracy arguments are then justified by reference to questions of efficiency, rationalization, and professionalization, responsiveness to "clients," in which the market appears as that social principle which will, "on its own," alleviate the problems of education. The impetus is to make "public services act more like the private sector" (Whitty, Power, and Halpin, 1998: 3).

Given this articulation of meanings, calls for reform of education in terms of choice can generally be called "rightwing." It echoes themes elaborated by Milton Friedman (1962) and Friedrich Hayek (1965) in the middle of this century, in which the ability of "the state" to know the social and economic field sufficiently enough to regulate it was put into doubt. Rationality was seen to reside rather in the free, self-interested activity of individuals in the private sphere of production and consumption.

The marketing of education takes the form of "quasi-markets" in the late twentieth century, however, as nowhere is there doubt that state agencies must play some role, usually in the form of financing, but also in the form of regulation of self-regulation (even Friedman argued this (1980)), in the provision of education.

...The distinguishing characteristics of a quasi-market for a public service are "the separation of purchaser from provider and an element of user choice between providers." In other words, provision of a service is separated from its finance, so that different providers, including sometimes private and voluntary sector bodies, can compete to deliver the service. Levacic adds that a quasi-market frequently remains highly regulated, with the government controlling "such matters as entry by new providers, investment, the

\(^{10}\) It is important to note that in these cases, the discourse used by reformers within public schools - making them more accountable and responsive - and those wishing to break up the public school structure as it stands now through a choice scheme, are the same.
quality of service...price, which is often zero to the user." The lack of a conventional cash nexus and the strength of government intervention distinguish quasi-markets from the idealized view of a "free" market... (Whitty, Power, and Halpin, 1998: 3).

Thus, schools within quasi-market choice schemes operate as though they were in a market place even though "the customers" do not pay, and the market is highly regulated. Such a system would emphasize the "good" effects of competition for quality of education, efficient use of public money, responsibility placed back into the hands of parents, and so on. All of these "outcomes" of choice reflect neo-liberal and neo-conservative values - the consolidation of the "private" sphere in the form of the nuclear family, managerial styles of business, re-entrenchment of hierarchical social management, as modes of regulation of the social, and once again install a narrow range of possible subjectivities into the public domain.

But it does not follow that questions of decentralization and de-bureaucratization necessarily exists within these kinds of managerial and entrepreneurial discourses. That is, a critique of a centralized state bureaucracy does not logically entail as its replacement the kind of professional managerialism of the corporate world which neo-liberals promote. Critiques of bureaucracy coming out of new social movements from the 1960s onwards harnessed an entirely different set of meanings. They were based precisely on a critique of the values which the neo-conservatives and neo-liberals wish to restore through their choice reforms. Such a critique suggests that bureaucratic centralization tends to differentiate its charges and its professionals along vertical lines, by making each in its different function conform to a standard procedure and performativity. "...Bureaucracy develops a detailed division of labour. It defines positions in a hierarchy of authority, where each position is bound by rules, and movement between positions is governed by a formal meritocratic system" (I. M. Young, 1990a: 77). Bureaucratization also
fosters professionalization which conceives of a practice as a discipline bound by impersonal rules, legitimized by the "science" of the expert, whose object is a generic "person," rather than as a vocation driven by passion, intuition, personal revelation, and commitment to a particular community of people (I. M. Young, 1990a: 77). Bureaucracy is untouchable in as much as it is a "system" without agents: its logic is such that there is no point of interjection. No "one" is responsible or accountable for the system as a whole. Bureaucracy is the institutional manifestation of the discourses of modernity par excellence, in that it is a hyper-rationalization of the public sphere which pushes the personal into the private sphere. The emergence of these styles of rule in modernity were motivated, of course, by a rejection of the dominations and arbitrariness of traditional forms of rule based on personal status alone. Yet bureaucratic rule, despite its liberatory moment, imposes performative on its clients, inhibiting, and even actively prohibiting, the possibility of alternative modes of "being."

Hence, when we critique these kinds of choice in education discourses which include managerial and entrepreneurial solutions to state bureaucracy, we have to be careful not then to simply re-validate centralization and bureaucratic modes of educational provision. As I have been suggesting throughout the thesis, it is my strongly held conviction that if "choice discourse" is not circulated by leftist activists and intellectuals, we will indeed be stuck between a rock and a hard place. Both state bureaucracies and the new managerialism are incompatible with, and threatened by community activity, which is not organized according to the rationality of
professionals or experts, with the status and deference, rules and procedures they bring with them.\footnote{This is not to suggest that there is no place in post-modern societies for bureaucracy. Bureaucracy is an extremely useful kind of rationality. It does certain things very well. I am simply suggesting that education is not one of those practices in which this rationality is productive.}

Whitty, Power, and Halpin suggest, "we need to ask how we can use the positive aspects of choice and autonomy to facilitate the development of new forms of community empowerment" (1998: 133-134). Hirst argues, according to Whitty, Power, and Halpin, that through the notion of associational democracy, that state collectivism and free-market individualism are both subverted when "as many of the activities of society as possible are organized by voluntary and democratically run 'associations'" (1998: 136). Giddens suggests that "generative politics," which "seeks to allow individuals and groups to make things happen, rather than have things happen to them," (in Whitty, Paul, and Hapin, 1998: 136) is vitally important for empowerment in a world of increasing globalization of decision-making. Whitty, Power, and Halpin write:

Arguing against moves to atomize education decision-making further, we also highlight the impossibility and undesirability of returning to the largely discredited statist policies of the post-war era. In acknowledging the need to move beyond traditional notions of welfarism and citizenship, we consider how far the "new times," which so many commentators have identified, might provide the conditions in which more inclusive democratic structures might be developed "from bellow" (1998: 14).
Debates over choice in education often centre around questions of equity. As Whitty, Power, and Halpin describe the debates:

Advocates of quasi-market policies argue that they will lead to increased diversity of provision, more efficient management, enhanced professionalism and more effective schools. Some proponents, such as Moe (1994) in the United States and Pollard (1995) in the United Kingdom, have argued that such reforms will bring particular benefits for families from disadvantaged communities, who have been ill-served by more conventional bureaucratic arrangements. However, critics suggest that even if these reforms do enhance efficiency, responsiveness, choice and diversity (and even that they regard as questionable), they will increase inequality between schools (1998: 4).

It is suggested by many critics of the choice in education debate that the equality issues which are supposed by them to be a feature of welfare services\(^{12}\) will be lost when welfare is restructured. Or, it is suggested that those now disadvantaged by public schooling systems will not fare any better through choice schemes. An investigation like Whitty, Power, and Halpin's (1998) shows that choice schemes in the U.K, U.S., New Zealand, Australia, and Sweden have led to educational inequality. Market models of schooling in which parents and students are consumers who battle it out with other consumers in order to "purchase" the most prized educational commodities lead those already disadvantaged by the system of schooling now to further disadvantage. They do not have the means - the time, money, "cultural capital," - to compete effectively. They write, "especially where there are a limited number of schools of

\(^{12}\) Many, especially Marxist and feminist, welfare state analysts would disagree that this was ever a central mandate of welfare states (Piven and Cloward, 1971, Abramovitz, 1988, Gordon, 1990); hence it is not a surprise that equality has not been one of the outcomes of public education.

The rhetoric of schooling has always suggested that schools break down social class lines. By the 1940s sociologists began to argue that rather than breaking down social class lines schools actually were strengthening them by schooling people into their social positions (Spring, 1972, 151).
choice with a strong market appeal, advantaged parents and advantaged schools tend to search each other out in a progressive segmentation of the market (Ranson, 1993)” (Whitty, Power, and Halpin, 1998: 119).

The model in which parents and students get to choose between a finite market of already established schools will clearly lead to equity problems, especially when the criteria by which "better" and "worse" schooling is still maintained by a single and prevailing discourse on education. But this market model of choice is clearly not what I intend to gesture at in elaborating a theory of choice in this thesis. The market model is counter-productive to and undesirable for my argument, because the market is never a place in which diversity of products proliferates. The logic of marketing is to homogenize and expand its market-base, so that as many diverse potential buyers will want the same product. Markets narrow and regulate the range of items to be "chosen." Especially in the age of multinationals and super-corporations, fewer and fewer, not more and more, choices are available - as we are all enjoined to buy the same kinds of products (even if we get to choose the brands) - and those choices are tightly managed by the perpetual image spin-machine of advertising. Zygmunt Bauman writes:

The coveted freedom of the consumer is, after all, the right to choose "of one's own will" life-purposes and life-methodology that the supra-individual market mechanics has already defined and determined for the consumer. Consumer freedom means orientation of life towards market-approved commodities and thereby precludes one crucial freedom: freedom from the market, freedom that means anything else but the choice between standard commercial products. Above all, consumer freedom successfully deflects aspirations of human liberty from communal affairs...(1991: 262).

The thought that education as a process and experience would become part of this injunction to buy, and to buy in a certain way, is depressing indeed.
I am arguing rather that choice is the means by which local conditions and discourses can be displaced, altered, transformed, or re-confirmed through working within a community of similarly willing people. Here education is no longer a commodity "out there" which can be "bought" for your child, but a practice which emerges from the demands, needs, values and imaginary of communities of people. This would provide the basis from which self-evident discourses about education could be challenged (especially along class, ethnicity, gender and sexuality lines, but also along philosophical and religious lines) and new discourses institutionalized. Choice would not then be compelled by the fact that schools are now organized into a market - probably of quite similar kinds of schools as they each try to capture the market by claims to "higher quality" - with the fear of "loosing out" which this produces. Rather it would be organized just in the way in which it is now organized (though, not for long) within public schools in Ontario - only there would be more of it. In fact, I think that further research for this paper in terms of the pragmatics of schools choice in the way that I intend it would need to begin with a study of the historical rise of alternatives within the public school system in Ontario, the discourses which structured it, the communities which took part, and the implications it had for the system of public education at large. That is, schools would need to be organized and founded from a community base, with a vision and purpose which arose from within that community. "Self-regulation" and "autonomy" would be terms taken out of a managerial discourse, and begin to resonate in radical democratic terms. They would be translated into terms which described the required practices of sustaining the play of identity and difference, that is, a play which does not deconstruct state disciplinary practices in the name of the sovereignty of the modern individual. As Chantal Mouffe writes:
What we need is a hegemony of democratic values, and this requires a multiplication of democratic practices, institutionalizing them into ever more diverse social relations, so that a multiplicity of subject positions can be formed through a democratic matrix (1993, 18).

An educational system organized through choice which could structure itself horizontally in terms of diversity of educational methods and experiences, rather than vertically in terms of a single standard of "quality," and which was substantially organized and run by community members, might actually empower those who have not thrived in the public system as it stands now. This would require political will. "Alternatives" would then not be a marginal aspect of the educational system, but its organizing principle. This would not require a total revolution in the educational system, but an incremental, though motivated, deconstruction of the system as it stands now.

Schools, have not in the past, and cannot, "make up for" a society structured by hierarchies of "race," class, gender and sexuality. We cannot look to public schools to alleviate the social inequities when these themselves are left unaddressed outside of school. The "just send them to public school" solution to issues of cultural diversity and class is ineffectual and possibly also "in bad faith." These social injustices have to be dealt with in the social spaces in which they arise. This, of course, entails the kind of detailed and complex analysis which this thesis has not pretended to accomplish. Yet, it can be generally stated that equality can no longer be thought of as The Same: it would more productively be conceived as that social arrangement in which different practices come to be seen as equivalent within the public space, and hence afford respect and freedom to exist. Macpherson formulates a paradox of democratic politics:
EPILOGUE

This dissertation does not pretend in any way to have come to grips with the complex practical problems involved in extending public education to include a whole array of alternatives which are now "private." It does not deal with the kinds of problems and objections to this "move" that practitioners within alternative schools have (that is, their fear of loss of integrity through acceptance of public funding), as well as the many complex structural and institutional questions within the public system that this recommendation demands. I could now write a whole other thesis - a second volume - dealing with this alone, one which would be in quite a different register and draw on quite different disciplinary conventions and literatures. The thesis was motivated, rather, by the experience that in talking about educational issues one is always very quickly drawn into metaphysical questions about the status of subject and society. It attempted a discussion at this level, driven by the intuition that one did not have to resort to a modernist notion of subjectivity in order to support a politics in which choice could feature. That is, one did not have to accept that in order for people to choose the shape and content of their own lives, they have to first pass through the initiation of becoming moderns - enlightened, liberal, enreasoned, autonomous, self-sufficient, secular.

I argued that if one conceives of subjectivity in terms of performativity, then one can move beyond the structuralist versus individualist debate - are we determined by the Structure or by History or are we existentially or naturally free? - and redescribe subjectivity as at the same time constituted/constituting. Hence, choice is the activity of subjects who are produced by the
discourses which make up their culture but who are also essentially unfixed in their identities.

The failure of any social structure to determine us fully, not some existential state of freedom, is what gives us space for the making of choices. We are not condemned to be free, as in Sartre; rather, the usual determinants cited as our unfreedom are the very conditions of possibility of freedom. Choices and decisions are demanded of us in as much as we recognize that nothing, locally and hence globally, is inevitable.

Democratic theory, for centuries, have explicitly assumed this; other social formations have shown it. Nothing is guaranteed in terms of what "we," "here," call progressive and reactionary choices. This is the fact of politics, which is a long, arduous, conflictual conversation about why we think certain things are good and other things are bad. Efforts to put an end to the political, in favour of some guarantee of a final good, has never but ended in disaster. In seeing the possibility of making choices, justification of and responsibility for the choices we make is required with regard to the people around us.

Social formations should create the space for people to find and live their own forms of enactment, not because they are rational agents and the normative content of this enactment of subjectivity has always already been decided or can be finally discovered, but because they are contingent agents in a political space of ultimate undecidability. In as much as no social or political space is ever homogeneous, and no identity is ever complete or fixed, people need to find ways to "become themselves" within the field of difference. Education as a social institution, which is about the production and regulation of being, must be especially sensitive to this delicate but powerful process.
Finally, I would say this to my interlocutor of Chapter One after writing this dissertation:

We have to move away from the liberal and socialist/ Marxist conceptions of equality as a term for the same: we are equal because we bear the same universal characteristics which can be realized in uniform practices. Notions of equality have to include a theory of the play between identity and difference. To be truly equitable is to organize the social formation in such a way that integral differences have the support to flourish where they exist. As Tully writes, "the critical freedom to question in thought and challenge in practice one's inherited cultural ways, on one hand, and the aspiration to belong to a culture and place, and so be at home in the world, on the other" (1995: 202) keep the play of identity and difference open. We need an understanding of education which includes a sensitivity to the overall ethos of a school culture which offers a quality of experience for students which goes beyond lessons taught: this quality of experience is dependent on many things which go beyond questions of teacher professionalization, sophistication of equipment, "progressive" curriculum, standardization of opportunity, accountability, outcomes measurement, and so on. A sensitivity to quality of experience requires the kind of knowledge of local conditions, flexibility and creativity, commitment, and personal engagement which can flourish most strongly at the level of community. Welfare policies would do well to foster this kind of energy which is the opposite of bureaucratic, and which alone can touch the singularity of students where they live, as they struggle with questions of "becoming" within the play of identity and difference.


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