“To read, write, and cast accounts”: Foucault, Governmentality, and Education in Upper Canada/Canada West

by

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ABSTRACT

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Contributing to the work of philosophers of education who have been examining issues of economy and emancipation, this dissertation employs a set of critical lenses drawn from Foucault’s investigation of governmentality to trace correspondences between economic liberalism and public schooling in Upper Canada/Canada West, the historical antecedent of present day Ontario. The analysis adheres to Foucault’s advice that philosophical critique involves a question asked of the present but answered in history. Thus through a Foucauldian genealogy it is argued that a series of transformations in the deployment of governmental power occurred in Upper Canada/Canada West that entailed the entry of an economic rationality into deliberations over the creation of a school system.

To support this argument evidence is presented that demonstrates how race, biopolitics, and the burgeoning science of political economy combined in the first half of the nineteenth century to form the conditions of possibility for governmental control of schooling. In particular, it is illustrated how these conditions favoured a pedagogy based in Locke’s epistemology, and were legitimized by the providential status accorded political economy. This pedagogy, which was promoted as mild and so conducive to student engagement, and the authority of political economy are revealed as integral to the methods of instruction and curriculum of the province’s common schools, and indicative
of the legacy of economic liberalism that persists, albeit transformed, in Ontario education to this day.

The result of this critical analysis is a redescription or, in Foucault’s terminology, a “countermemory” of Ontario educational history that challenges the presumed naturalism of the ideals characteristic of economic liberalism, such as autonomy, accountability, entrepreneurialism, and consumer choice. The dissertation contends that these ideals are active in local educational regimes long legitimized by economy, and dangerously aimed at fostering political consent by manipulating subjects into locations of restricted agency.

Providing insight into the historical role played by liberal governmentality and economy in the local context contributes to the study of Foucault and the philosophy of education, and also suggests a change in approach to questions regarding the corporatization or marketization of education. Instead of viewing economy as either a necessary component of schooling or a contemporary affront to educational ideals, it is proposed that it be re-evaluated according to its persistent, but contingent, historical correspondence with liberal government and its institutions.
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CHAPTER 1

SETTING THE STAGE

In all questions of political change, there are two dangers, of an opposite direction, to be considered. The first is the danger of doing too little; the second that of doing too much.¹

I. A Curious Political Detail

A wealth of literature takes up the nineteenth century obsession with developing systems of mass public instruction. Many commentators note how schooling was truly an international affair with educational reformers on both sides of the Atlantic exchanging advice and “borrowing from all what ever is good” in order to efficiently reach as many members of their populations as possible.² Among the mass of correspondence exchanged between reformers, one text is often singled out. The “Rapport sur l’état de l’instruction publique en Prusse”³ presented in 1831 by Victor Cousin⁴ to the French Minister of Public Instruction and Ecclesiastical Affairs describes in detail the Prussian educational administrative structure, curriculum, pedagogical practices and the organization of the Prussian Normal School. This text, and the system it portrays, was

⁴ Victor Cousin was one of the leading French philosophers of the time. His thought involved an eclectic perspective that combined elements of Scottish Realism and German Idealism. He was also a controversial figure. For his support of the royalists he had once been imprisoned in Berlin and later barred from teaching in French universities. Yet as the upheavals that followed the demise of Napoleon abated his teaching privileges were reinstated and his enthusiasm for mass public instruction made him appear the Minister’s obvious choice to provide assistance to the project of educational reform. Within a decade Cousin’s efforts would result in his leading the French Ministry of Public Instruction.
celebrated as a blueprint for at least two decades after its publication. We know that it was foundational to Horace Mann’s design of the Massachusetts system as well as Egerton Ryerson’s 1846 “Report on a System of Public Elementary Instruction for Upper Canada.” Indeed, as Ryerson notes in the preface to his “Report,” “the experience of Germany, (says M. Cousin,) particularly of Prussia, ought not to be lost upon us.” Although all of this is evident in the literature that addresses the widespread nineteenth century political resolve to make mass instruction a prime responsibility of the state, I have chosen for a different reason to draw attention to this vital text.

Before Cousin makes “the machinery of public instruction in Prussia intelligible…as a whole,” he briefly comments on the “double character” at the heart of the system that operates so “nothing escapes the eye and power of the minister, yet at the same time each” of its various branches “enjoys sufficient liberty of action.” This is a curious political detail. How is it that the governing authority of the educational minister, especially in Prussia where this influence would be warranted by an absolute monarch, is distributed forcefully yet permits flexibility at its extensions? It appears as if Cousin is describing a paradoxical situation wherein administrative power is at odds with itself, but no further explanation is provided. Cousin sees no difficulty as he observes that the system bears no “injudicious spirit of centralization or official despotism.” Instead of the openly coercive rule associated with a monarchical state such as Prussia, Cousin detects in its school system a spirit of zealous reciprocity between educational authorities and the

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5 I use “we” and “us” to refer to anyone whose field of study includes an interest in the questions taken up in this dissertation. I assume this means philosophers, sociologists, and historians of education, as well as those who have a coincident concern with matters of education and government.
public such that “all persons or classes who have an interest in the subject, find their appropriate place in this organization, and concur each in his own manner and degree, to the common end.” He attributes this to the “double character” of rule and its “vivifying and harmonizing” effect on “the whole” of Prussian education. Yet some two hundred years earlier the German political philosopher Samuel Pufendorf had used similar language to describe the “vivifying and sustaining” effect of “supreme sovereignty.” Can it be that with Cousin we see a shift in the relation between government and the governed? The government he describes seems no longer animated only by obedience to the natural power of sovereignty, as Pufendorf had suggested. The “sustaining” power of the sovereign has transformed into a “harmonizing” system of exchange, and presumes the participation of the governed in their own governance. How is it that this change has occurred? Indeed, since Cousin finds this innovation exemplified in the Prussian system of education, what is the role of education in this seemingly new mode of governance? Is public education the condition of this change? Or is it that new forms of government made public education possible? Cousin raises but does not consider the paradox at work in this political detail, and therefore, he leaves us with a riddle.

How might we go about untangling this riddle, which demands that we reconsider our intuitions about the historically problematic yet presumably necessary relationship between the state and education? What methods are at our disposal? To start, there is the standard view that holds the players in this relationship to be essential

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11 Samuel von Pufendorf was a seventeenth century German political philosopher known for applying his theories of natural law to separate politics from theology but in order to reinforce sovereign rule.
elements in the modern march of human progress. Accordingly, the early nineteenth century is heralded as a time of rising political involvement in humanistic educational reform intent on strengthening the state by nurturing the moral and intellectual capacities of citizens. Schooling is celebrated as fundamental to nation building, the way forward to obtaining the twinned goals of national prosperity and individual liberty. It is thus determined by the tones of this “epic register,” to borrow a phrase from Donzelot, that the merging of state and individual interests occurs in the revised field of mass pedagogy as a natural response to the new set of competitive pressures that accompanied the rise of industrial capitalism.¹³ I say revised since, after all, this does not truly mark the first instance of such a campaign, only the secular use of techniques employed by Martin Luther and Philipp Melanchthon and refined by history.¹⁴ Nevertheless, what I have deemed a paradox underlying Cousin’s “double character” would not under a progressive view of history be thought of as problematic. Thinking otherwise would be considered a misunderstanding of one of many politically indulgent innovations deployed at the time, whether administratively or in the day-to-day exchanges of the classroom, to ensure a nation’s prepared entry into the modern world. That some of these innovations aimed to serve education well in the nineteenth century was a function of an increasingly enlightened population’s acceptance of historical necessity.

If we are willing to subscribe to this view, then the story that begins with Cousin’s *Rapport* remains, more or less, one of undeniable progress. The advent of mass schooling and the growth of the democratic state are nothing less than complimentary instances of a glorious evolutionary process. However, such faith does not come close to providing an

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explanation for the difficulties that plague state sponsored education even after the supposed advances of the last two hundred years. It cannot account for the contemporary persistence of a variety of concerns that are perhaps less indicators of advancement than possible products of a union that began as one of convenience and remains fraught with contingency. Indeed, this dissonance is demonstrated by the historical logic of reform, which despite its idealism collapses back on itself in what amounts to a Sisyphean cycle of success and failure.

Yet drawing attention to this state of affairs does not break new ground. Dialecticians have for a long time similarly assessed the failure of reform as a consequence of a strategic alliance of bourgeois ideals, of which the administrative state, with its support of capital accumulation, acts as historical harbinger, and dependable means of exploiting the vulnerabilities of the masses. If this is progress then it can only be of the sort that benefits a select group, and so here we have our primary alternative to convention; that is, insofar as convention is taken to overlook the possibility that power is not simply a matter of the righteous achievement of necessary aims, but something exercised primarily for its own fulfilment. To assume that Cousin’s “double character” is a marker of political progress is to ignore that it entails a social cost, the gradual doctrinal enslavement of all but those whose nefarious intentions may not yet be apparent even to themselves. Educational reformers may speak the language of humanism, but their advocacy of a better way entails the expedient increase of social control. If schooling is the way forward to a better world, then it is an unjust one that reifies the ideals of the few while excluding many from reaping its benefits.
No doubt this perspective is compelling by virtue of its refusal to accept without qualification the convergence of interests presumed by progressive history despite the plain existence of ongoing social and economic disparities. It renders the individuals whose actions are guided by Cousin’s “double character” not, then, the beneficiaries of an advanced mode of administrative organization, but victims made complicit in their own subjugation as others withhold the means necessary to comprehend the true nature of the situation. Still, a question similar in form to the one that casts suspicion on progressive history arises here. How can we account for the long-standing complicity of a mass of individuals when the critical tools afforded by dialectics have been available for some time to those engaged in liberatory projects? Is this disparity a matter of either a shortcoming in the methods of dialecticians or a tribute to the aggregating power of the values thought to underlie the advancement of modernity? It seems that the former is a function of the latter, especially when it occurs that both progressive history and its dialectical adversary actually share an ultimate value, that is, freedom, which they invoke regularly to energise their particular viewpoints.

Perhaps the problem we are attempting to address lies in something other than the apparent differences that separate these two manners of historical inquiry. One maintains that we continue to celebrate the merging of the state and education as an expression of the necessity of socially reproducing an established ideal. Opposite is wariness over the historically constructed underpinnings of expressions of this ideal, and thus a questioning of the motives for adopting education as the servant of bourgeois ambition. Yet the irony is that regardless of which one we choose to employ it will most likely be in the name of a higher value conceived under the same liberatory mode of thought; a mode extending
itself in conceptualisations of the state and school that reverberate back into the epic register.

Therefore, whilst proponents of these two methods fight an ongoing battle over the reasons for the state’s appropriation of education and the way to assess the success of this enterprise, we might step out of the circle to wonder about the availability of a different mode of analysis. For what is overlooked in their confrontations is the possibility that the ideal that inspires their inquiries has played a technical rather than lofty role. The various programs developed and deployed in the wake of the merger of state and education may not be conceived only as the still unperfected yet necessary means of achieving freedom for the greatest possible number. In what amounts to an inversion of the perspective offered by the two more common historical methods, such programs can be characterised as indicators that freedom is already at work in their considered formation; not as the goal, but as the precondition of their exercise.

This is precisely the inversion made by Michel Foucault, who, instead of holding freedom as foundation and goal, a reductive stance that can now be seen to entail a frustrating circularity, posits freedom as something discernable in the historical record of human activity. Unlike the manichean evaluations of convention and dialectics, the alternative presented by Foucault drags freedom down from its lofty perch in order to assess its place as a practical feature of what people do. Its profound status exorcised by Foucault’s historicism, freedom becomes a question of interrogating the human record for the sake of recognizing how we are limited, for what we do involves paying attention to avenues open and foreclosed, and not what needs to be done to fulfil the hopeful possibility of limitlessness. The hope remains, but under the light of history it no longer
is allowed to blind us to the operations of programs deployed in its spirit and their contribution to how we are.

Among the many significant implications of this manoeuvre is an approach to the history of institutions that seeks to map their crucial role in the constitution of experience. The Foucauldian notion of freedom changes the stakes of critique from that of liberatory expectation to an ethico-political struggle over conduct. Invoking the French form of this term is key to understanding Foucault’s critical intent. The verb *conduire* is transitive and so refers ambiguously to driving or leading others as well as one’s own conduct or behaviour. Freedom is a matter of multiple negotiations between those entities whose activities have the effect of shaping conduct, and the individual subject’s agential capacity. Freedom, then, for Foucault is a problem of government, not only of others but also of one’s self. This is not to say that this problem is one of determined activity or an adversarial condition. The problem of freedom is about discerning modes of possible action. So if it is agreed that little justification is required to claim that the state and the school have always been in the business of fostering conduct, then the critical direction Foucault advocates may now seem evident. Other forms of history are content to attend to institutional success or failure, but Foucault’s analytic of power directs attention to how institutions have worked to enable and constrain human activities. The result is a perspective that strives to identify the ways in which individuals might act other than the

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ways induced by discursive conditions that are supported by institutions, even though this does not presume a release from the effects of their activities.

A question must still be raised: Is this critical direction truly evident? Or, is it simply apparent from a perspective that favours particular points of view? Admittedly, there is in Foucault’s thought expressions of a sort of privileged bohemianism that is reflective of nineteenth century attitudes to intellectual work and life. These expressions are troublesome in their exclusiveness, and may have the unfortunate effect of alienating scholars who could derive inspiration from his thought.

To assuage any concerns over the complex issues related to privilege, gender, race, and other important aspects of individual experience that are sometimes perceived to be inadequately dealt with by Foucault, I want to point out that what seem to be restrictions and shortcomings are the product of doing Foucauldian genealogy a certain way. It is a matter of whether one chooses to borrow a few tools from his thought, or attempt to adhere as much as possible to his philosophical orientation. For instance, insofar as the aim is to unmask the arbitrary hold of “political and social processes” that “have become habitual,” and therefore, appear to be a natural and necessary part of the “landscape” of experience, a nominalist and historicist attitude is required. Making war

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16 I agree with Stuart Elden, who thinks that the appropriation of Foucault “for a kind of historical sociology” without regard for his deeper “theoretical pronouncements” risks turning him into “far too much of an orthodox historian.” This is why I take care to consider Foucault’s philosophical pedigree in the next chapter, and at times throughout this dissertation. See Stuart Elden, “Reading Genealogy as Historical Ontology,” in Foucault and Heidegger: Critical Encounters, ed. Alan Milchman and Alan Rosenberg (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2003) 187.

17 Michel Foucault, “Truth, Power, Self; An Interview with Michel Foucault,” in Technologies of the Self, ed. Luther H. Martin, Huck Gutmann, and Patrick H. Hutton (Amherst, MA: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1988) 11. Like governmentality, nominalism is a difficult term to pin down. I will consider it in more detail later. For now, basically for the nominalist, irreducible categories are nothing more than rationally constructed abstract generalisations that cannot be verified beyond their status as conceptual extensions, as in names, of the physical world.
on universals, or, in particular, a “war on anthropologism,” entails shunning normative declarations, which history shows are often tools of oppression, while privileging one’s own experience. Foucault states,

The role of the intellectual is not to tell others what they must do. By what right would he do so? And remember all the prophecies, promises, injunctions and plans intellectuals have been able to formulate in the course of the last two centuries and of which we have seen the effects. The work of an intellectual is not to mould the political will of others; it is, through the analysis that he does in his own field, to re-examine evidence and assumptions, to shake up habitual ways of working and thinking, to dissipate conventional familiarities, to re-evaluate rules and institutions and starting from this re-problematization (where he occupies his specific profession as an intellectual) to participate in the formation of a political will (where he has his role as a citizen to play).

Elsewhere, along the same lines of thought, he writes,

But if one is interested in doing historical work that has political meaning, utility and effectiveness, then this is possible only if one has some kind of involvement with the struggles taking place in the area in question. I tried first to do a genealogy of psychiatry because I had had a certain amount of practical experience in psychiatric hospitals and was aware of the

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See Ian Hacking, *The Social Construction of What?* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999) 82. However, the one thing that is irreducible for Foucault is thought: “There is no experience which is not a way of thinking, and which cannot be analyzed from the point of view of the history of thought; this is what might be called the principle of irreducibility of thought.” The implications of this view are central to Foucault’s nominalist historicism, which uses power to trace relations of thought as discursive transformations that have material effects. Thus Deleuze’s summation of Foucault’s critical project, “Thought thinks its own history (the past), but in order to free itself from what it thinks (the present) and be able to ‘think otherwise’ (the future).” Deleuze identifies this perspective with an “arrow first fired by Heidegger and then again by Foucault,” that is, “What does thinking signify? What do we call thinking?” In this dissertation my use of events and the event of the thought of various scholars is an attempt to apply this notion. Furthermore, this entails that I am not doing a causal history of transformative ideals, and therefore, will not be engaging in normative speculation.


19 Thus the accusations of “cryptonormativism” leveled at Foucault by Nancy Fraser and Jürgen Habermas, which cannot be given proper attention in this dissertation.


combats, the lines of force, tensions and points of collision which existed there.\footnote{This is what Foucault means when he states, “it seems to me that the ‘we’ must not be previous to the question; it can only be the result – and the necessarily temporary result – of the question as it is posed in the new terms in which one formulates it.” Michel Foucault, “Questions on Geography,” in Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977, Colin Gordon, ed. Colin Gordon, trans. Leo Marshall, John Mepham, and Kate Soper (New York, NY: Pantheon Books, 1980) 64.} 

Privileging one’s own experience may seem arrogant, but it follows from the decision to refrain from speaking for others as if one has discovered a universal ideal.\footnote{Michel Foucault, “Polemics, Politics, and Problematizations: An Interview,” in The Foucault Reader, 385.} The same holds in reverse since the avoidance of normative declarations keeps Foucault’s nominalist critique from resolving in a performative contradiction,

I am not looking for an alternative; you can’t find a solution of a problem in the solution of another problem raised at another moment by other people. You see, what I want to do is not the history of solutions, and that’s the reason why I don’t accept the word alternative. I would like to do the genealogy of problems, of problématiques.\footnote{Michel Foucault, “On the Genealogy of Ethics: An Overview of a Work in Progress,” in The Foucault Reader, 343. See also “On the Genealogy of Ethics: An Overview of a Work in Progress,” in Dreyfus and Rabinow, Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics, 231-232.}

Moreover, to replace one error with another, as Nietzsche stresses, is nihilistic.\footnote{See Friedrich Nietzsche, “How the ‘Real World’ at last Became a Myth,” in Twilight of the Idols and The Anti-Christ, trans. R. J. Hollingdale (New York, NY: Penguin, 1990) 50-51.} It is also, as I will consider in Chapter 2, the critical error of logic Foucault detects in the Kant’s employment of the rational subject.

Genealogical analysis takes history as its object and sensitivity to power relations as its attitude. Here again the privileging of one’s own experience comes into play, and the selection of texts and events for analysis is not made innocently. The “slender wedge I intend to slip into the history of ideas” can result in alienating some readers.\footnote{Michel Foucault, The Archaeology of Knowledge and The Discourse on Language, trans. A. M. Sheridan Smith (New York, NY: Vintage, 2010) 231.} However, genealogy is intended, to cite David Owen, as “exemplary critique,” and as such carries
the invitation to consider the operations of power in one’s own location. The selection of texts and events for study in this dissertation did not occur as if, as Charles Taylor writes, “culture…spread outward from the formulations of epoch making philosophers.” Sources are treated not so much as the privileged sites of wisdom or ideology, but as discursively influential, and therefore, “as articulating something which is already in train” and “helping to define its future direction and form.” So, for instance, in Chapter 5 I will discuss how John Locke’s epistemology conditioned the emergence of a pedagogy that, in turn, proved complementary to liberal governance and the corresponding development of public schools in Upper Canada/Canada West. I am not arguing that Locke singularly caused these events, but that he “caught the spirit of some of the changes” of his time and “in turn deeply influenced the form they took;” that is, along with a multitude of others whose inclusion would burst the seams of my analysis. Nonetheless, while acknowledging the impossibility, or folly of a comprehensive view, the basic point, and perhaps the second most valuable aspect of Foucault’s thought, is that witnessing power used to unmask power is potentially a way of finding, Foucault once said, “freedom in knowing the game is yours to play.”

To this end, my text is offered as invitation, demonstration, and roadmap. I present interpretations of various events and ideas meant to incite re-engagement and re-evaluation of discourses that are so deeply rooted in our experience that only diligent attention can break their influence, however momentarily. For example, as I trace aspects

28 Charles Taylor, Sources of the Self, 306.
29 Charles Taylor, Sources of the Self, 308.
The most valuable aspect is, of course, doing this unmasking oneself.
of the early history of the Ontario public school system teachers may find value in reflecting anew on how programs of diversity and inclusion must continually battle against deeply sedimented ideas of race and nation. Those involved in making policy, who may wonder about or take for granted the increasing presence of economic discourse at all levels of education, might consider how this phenomenon also has deep historical roots, and has had unintended, even contradictory, consequences. The agency that economic discourse presumes to encourage may in fact have a restrictive effect since it induces individuals to adapt certain comportments, such as entrepreneurialism and the building and selling of abilities as capital on the employment market. Viewed from this perspective the ideal of autonomy that is so widely associated with the aims of schooling appears paradoxically as an economic resource. In other words, the positive concept of freedom trumpeted by education, to cite Michael Clifford, “is unwrapped like a cloak from a politicized body.” Most of all, because my analysis aims to strip away the veneer of familiarity that captivates us as we run through our daily routines, it is my intention that the following offers a number of moments wherein things taken for granted suddenly seem far less benign.

Fundamentally, Foucault inspired analysis involves inversions of the familiar. Therefore, to return to Foucault’s critique of institutions, it is important to notice that by overlaying the institutional and the agential he draws attention to how freedom plays a considerable role in government. According to Foucault, modern government, unlike its more centralised sovereign predecessor, is distinguished by how it carries forward the discursive elements of events such as the Reformation and French Revolution. In the wake of these and other eruptions of individual conscience rulers have come to recognise

the perils of relying upon overt displays of force to achieve state aims. Consideration must be given to the ever-present possibility that a population will resist, thereby causing the rulers to engage in what amounts to a self-defeating escalation of violence. Of course, this is not to suggest that the threat of violence disappears correlative to the decline of sovereign rule. Instead, it retreats as a new rationale of government that seeks to harness the agential capacities of citizens takes precedence. Government now calculates how to direct the conduct of citizens and then enact the results through strategies aimed at creating the conditions in which individuals might of their own volition adopt appropriate comportments. Appropriate, that is, insofar as their practice will suit the overall interests of the state. The novelty is it amounts to governing not for freedom but through freedom. Or, as Foucault offers, a reciprocal relation between government and individuals maintained on the basis of individual freedom and through government’s skill in managing this freedom.\footnote{Michel Foucault, \textit{The Birth of Biopolitics, Lectures at the College de France 1978-1979}, ed. Michel Senellart, trans. Graham Burchell (New York, NY: Palgrave, 2008) 63.}

Having considered the alternative view of the history of institutions suggested by Foucault, let us now recall the riddle of Cousin’s “double character”. It remains, given Foucault’s insights into modern governance, that it involves something other than what the unidirectional tendencies of the other two methods of history might be used to deduce. In identifying the role of freedom in modern governmental practices Foucault opens the possibility that what may be taken as either the enlightened merging of interests or enforced complicity is much more subtle and complex. Where there seems to be only a downward exercise of government there operates a calculated acknowledgment that the promotion of state aims necessarily includes the encouragement of citizens’ agential
capacities. This calculation, which Foucault deems the hallmark of modern liberalism, demands attention be paid to the level of public intrusion into the private sphere. As such it reflects a style of rule that operates to maintain reciprocity through a double movement, a constant intersecting of state and individual interests. The “double character” intuited by Cousin can be understood similarly as an effect of this sort of calculation, and therefore, an example of how the adoption of mass education as a state concern, even in early nineteenth century Prussia, was made possible by the emergence of liberal strategies of governing through freedom.

Thus what we have in Cousin’s “Rapport” is something in addition to a description of the minute details of the operations of inspectors, the remuneration of schoolmasters, acceptable methods of punishment, and other facets that are presumed to have been the primary reasons why so many educational reformers found it so captivating. Indeed, in the two seemingly insignificant passages where Cousin writes of this “double character” there is the reflection of a style of governance that animates the relationship between education and the state to this day. It is in the Foucauldian sense a liberal style that seeks to govern beyond the politics of centralised control or force by appealing to the capacities and interests, in fact, the freedom of the individual subjects that comprise a population. It is also government that problematizes its own limits in a self-conscious effort to respect freedom while harnessing it for specific purposes, such as those commonly associated with education. Significantly, it is a mode that has proven remarkably resilient in its ability to adjust and adapt to the contingencies of history. Therefore, understanding its mechanisms may reveal a great deal about how it has

33 I suggest they are seemingly insignificant since they have been overlooked.
contributed to the development of education as a state sponsored armature for the
direction of conduct, and thus the constitution of an educational self.

II. Navigating the Governmental History of Education in Ontario

This dissertation explores education and its historical role in the constitution of
subjects by seeking to understand the mechanisms of liberal governance. In particular, it
takes note of the correspondence between significant shifts in the application of
governmental power and the emergence of public schooling in the early to middle portion
of the nineteenth century. These shifts, which Foucault attributes to liberalism, and are
reflected in Cousin’s “double character”, did not take effect only in Prussia, France, and
other European nations where public education gained an obsessional hold. Across the
Atlantic in states such as Massachusetts, New York, and the Upper and Lower colonies of
of Canada, the same obsession held reformers in its grip, leading to the establishment of
public education systems that in time would become the envy of the Europeans.
Especially in the local context, in what was then known as Upper Canada/Canada West,34
a system of public instruction developed at a pace that enabled it to reach close to the
majority of the mostly rural population’s children within a decade of its inauguration.35 It
is this context, wherein the formative power of education was relied upon, as Ryerson
once wrote, “to impart to the public mind the greatest amount of useful knowledge”

34 Upper Canada became Canada West in 1841 after the Act of Union or British North America Act of
1840. Throughout this dissertation I will identify the historical changes in title as they match the time in
question. Therefore, for pre-1841 I will use Upper Canada, Upper Canada/Canada West for a duration
spanning pre- and post-1841, and Canada West for post-1840, but pre-1867 when the British North
America Act established Canada West as the province of Ontario.
35 Attendance figures for this period have long been the source of controversy. I think Michael Katz offers a
reliable standard. He notes that “mid-century school attendance remained far from universal” but exceeded
forty percent during “the years of heaviest school attendance,” which were ages “seven through thirteen.”
through an “indirect but powerful instrument of British Constitutional Government,” which provides the historical space for my analysis.\textsuperscript{36}

The set of lenses I will use to investigate this historical space are drawn from the genealogy of government offered by Foucault in his lectures at the Collège de France between 1975 and 1979.\textsuperscript{37} In these lectures Foucault uses an analytics of power to trace how, beginning in the sixteenth century, the recalcitrance of subjects and corresponding critique of sovereign power entailed a mode of government characterized by respect for the former, that is, subjects’ capacity for freedom, and concern for the latter, expressed in rule that is consciously self-limiting. Foucault refers to this mode of government with the term “governmentality,” a style of rule that is as much a rationality or way of thinking about government as it is a manner of ruling.\textsuperscript{38}

Like many of Foucault’s concepts governmentality is rather ambiguous, so I will offer a preliminary description. From a general perspective of Foucault’s work, governmentality designates a way of analyzing power relations on a wider scale than his earlier investigations of disciplinary practices, which he felt were too narrowly focused.\textsuperscript{39} Whereas discipline attends to power relations on a micro-physical scale, that is, in terms of the minute practices of specific institutions such as the prison\textsuperscript{40} or the school, governmentality takes a macro-physical view of the state’s organizing role in the distribution and effects of power in these locations and beyond. One significant result of

\begin{footnotes}
\item\textsuperscript{38} Foucault, \textit{Security, Territory, Population}, 108.
\item\textsuperscript{39} Foucault, “Truth, Power, Self: An Interview with Michel Foucault,” 19.
\item\textsuperscript{40} Michel Foucault, \textit{Discipline and Punish}, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York, NY: Vintage, 1979).
\end{footnotes}
this change in perspective is it enables Foucault to account for power as an overall strategy of governance at work in Western history. Another is it allows him to move beyond a concentration on power’s formative effects on individual subjects and view it in terms of the subject’s self-forming or ethical capacities. Foucault believes these operate reciprocally. Thus governmentality reveals the operations of power as they function in a “double movement” at the historical level of the governance of states, viewed nominalistically, and the subjective level of self-governance. Governmentality, then, suits the investigative concerns of this dissertation since it affords a broader historical approach that traces simultaneously education’s role as a totalizing mechanism of the governance and development of populations and as an individualizing tool of subjectification.

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42 I find this term is often employed confusingly as if it means the constitution of subjects through the unidirectional imposition of particular comportments. Nikolas Rose offers a definition that borrows from William Connelly and captures well Foucault’s use of the term, which credits the subject with a limited and agonistic freedom expressed in the capacity for self-formation. Rose helps clarify how the notion of subjectification, or, as it also called, subjectivization, and related concepts, such as freedom, are used in this dissertation,

Subjectification is simultaneously individualizing and collectivizing. That is to say that the kinds of relations to the self envisaged, the kinds of dispositions and habits inculcated, the very inscription of governmentality into the body and the affects of the governed depend upon an opposition: in identifying with one’s proper name as a subject one is simultaneously identifying oneself with a collectivized identity, and differentiating oneself from the kind of being one is not. As William Connolly has put it, “Identities are always collective and relational: to be white, female, homosexual, Canadian, Atheist and a taxpayer is to participate in a diverse set of collective identifications and to be situated in relation to a series of alter identifications. Hegemonic identities depend on existing definitions of difference to be.”


See also William Connelly, The Ethos of Pluralization (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1995) xvi.

At a meta-theoretical level, the idea of subjectification is Foucault’s way of turning Heidegger’s “question around” so that instead of cutting through the modern preoccupation with technology in order to re-connect with Being, Foucault inquires “which techniques and practices constitute the Western concept of the subject, giving it its characteristic split of truth and error, freedom and constraints.”

This is one manner in which Foucault deploys governmentality. Another appears prominently in his 1978 and 1979 lectures as Foucault explores historical interrelations between the government of states and the government of subjects. There he suggests that a novel way of thinking about rule emerged in the sixteenth century, one that acknowledges the recalcitrance of subjects and, therefore, problematizes sovereignty’s proclivity for excess. Foucault refers to this as a new “arts of government” or liberalism. Liberalism in the Foucauldian sense is not the same as the familiar institutional or ideological concept. Foucault takes up this historically contentious notion and recasts it according to two meanings. The first points to a mode of governing as “an ethos” that constantly gages its own performance according to information derived from a complex set of feedback loops that form in the discursive space between the activities of the state and the responses of the population. This makes liberalism an ever expanding but inherently cautious form of rule since knowledge culled from interaction with the population is used actively and self-correctively to direct and retract governmental practices. So, for instance, education becomes a state concern under liberal rule as it


But where danger is, grows
The saving power also


Foucault begins to speak of liberalism and “the game of liberalism” as a politics that is conditioned by freedom in the 1977-1978 lectures. See Foucault, Security, Territory, Population, 48-49. However, it is in the 1978-1979 lectures that this notion of liberalism is more fully discussed. See Foucault, The Birth of Biopolitics.


44 Foucault, Security, Territory, Population, 88.

proves an effective mediating apparatus between the state and subjects. In other words, it extends the state through an institutional form of the liberal ethos of governing insofar as it serves as a locus for the practical deployment and collection of official knowledge, such as that found in authorised schoolbooks and drawn from examination results.

Foucault finds this to be one innovation of liberalism as a governmental art, but it is not the most significant. Unlike classical liberalism that derives its modes of operation from the presumption of a single autonomous subject whose rights must be protected, Foucault’s concept recognises the subject’s freedom as intrinsic to government. So where the former functions with respect to boundaries imposed by a “prior commitment to natural liberty,” the latter “views the operation of individual liberty as necessary to the ends of government.”

This, according to Mitchell Dean, is “the real innovation of the study of liberalism as a rationality of government,” and it is the second meaning Foucault assigns to liberalism. That is, liberalism governs through freedom as it counts the subject in the Physiocratic manner as “partner” but extends the relationship so that the subject is “the correlate and instrument” of its operations. Therefore, if in the first sense of liberalism education is a mediating apparatus that serves in the organisation and distribution of knowledge, then in this second it is a prime location where its formative

47 Dean, *Governmentality*, 63.
48 The French Physiocrats were among the first economists. In the eighteenth century they espoused the idea of a natural economic order wherein the exercise of self-interest would provide prosperity as it spontaneously organized the social realm into a state of affairs best left untouched by the hand of government; thus *laissez faire*. Foucault describes how, among other political effects, *laissez faire* promotes the individual subject as the end or “vis-à-vis” of government. I explore this in depth in Chapter 5. See Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population*, 105, 79.
power is used to condition the freedom of subjects to extend what amounts to a game of rule.

What I mean by a ‘game’ is that the “double movement” of governance operates at both the institutional and subjective levels and reciprocally between the two in a constant contest over establishing areas of convergence among the interests of the state and of individuals. Education, then, is constructed to function as a prime area of convergence where the freedom of subjects is conditioned by official knowledges for the purpose of developing the comportments deemed appropriate for the facilitation of further programs of rule. However, it is crucial to recognise that under liberal governance this conditioning is not overtly coercive, but performed through the freedom of subjects in a surreptitious manner that facilitates complicity while maintaining the appearance of freedom. Education replaces the work once done by the sword with the subject’s own capacity for freedom. Clearly this amounts to a much different characterisation of education than the traditional liberal concept of it as a site for fostering autonomy.

I will explore these themes, and comment on Foucault’s expansion of them, throughout the following chapters. In the main, this dissertation will use the critical lenses afforded by governmentality to consider the historical deployment of freedom as a liberal strategy of governance that provides the conditions of possibly for the development of schools in Canada West. As Bruce Curtis asserts, insofar as schooling is contingent upon government, it is government. However, it is government of a certain kind that operates, as Ryerson himself recognized, to construct a domain “above politics” wherein the activities of government and the governed are merged on the basis on freedom but, as I will later consider, freedom as determined by the economic notion of

the mechanism of interests. Schooling assists in the formation of this domain wherein the interests of government and the governed are negotiated and served according to specific legitimating rationalities; for instance, such as those of the market.

By looking at the history of schooling in this manner, my aim is to construct an account that challenges the prevailing ideologically laden view of education as an unassailable shibboleth of liberty. In what follows, education is not taken at face value as a progressive enterprise geared toward cultivating the presumably innate qualities of human beings according to idealistic principles. I propose that ideals such as emancipation and autonomy should be, no less than the rational subject in which they are grounded, viewed sceptically as political “old saws” that mask the multifaceted subjectivizing operations of educational practices as they drive forward singular discourses of education’s positive authority; an authority that over time has become underwritten by the instrumental rationale of economy. The analysis offered in the following pages is expected to perform an ironic reversal of conceptualizations of government, education and freedom, a reversal that indicates how these notions are the contingent products of a long history of calculated attempts to manage our experience of the world and ourselves. I contend this is an experience that is increasingly conditioned by the rationality of the market, an early formulation of which was already present in the liberal conditions of public schooling.

It is important to keep in mind that governmentality, like genealogy, is not a methodology but a strategy of tracing power to expose the contingency of historical correspondences that are commonly taken as given. It is neither a unifying “halo” theory

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51 Curtis, Building the Educational State, 111.
nor a means of determining linear connections between objects.\(^{52}\) In practice it resists the sedimentation of ideas entailed by “functionalist coherence or formal systematisation” as it adheres to Foucault’s genealogical commitment to the nominalistic study of the contingent history of power relations.\(^{53}\) Governmentality studies are concerned with how ideas, values and practices arise historically in a “play of dependencies” and in the “polymorphous cluster of conditions” and not according the “privilege of the cause.”\(^{54}\) As such the ultimate purpose of governmentality is to use critically this contingency to undermine the presumed naturalness that grants institutions and practices authority. So making it serve in the creation of an explanatory narrative is not only counter-productive, it is contradictory. In other words, this dissertation is intended neither as a comprehensive account nor a social history of education in early nineteenth century Ontario. It is offered as an example of how one may read through this history in a manner that exposes power and authority, a sort of *éclairage en retour*;\(^{55}\) as they are deployed in education. The purpose is to demonstrate the arbitrary history of the effects of power and authority so that they may no longer be taken for granted.

Ian Hunter writes, “the extension of government and education form part of a series of parallel interventions into the life of the population which, while they intersected with the great political struggles in a variety of (sometimes surprising) ways, had their conditions of possibility elsewhere.”\(^{56}\) Despite reading through history, or looking “elsewhere” and so focusing on the seemingly extraneous conditions of history, at

\(^{52}\) Michel Foucault, “Two Lectures,” in *Power/Knowledge*. 87.

\(^{53}\) Foucault, “Two Lectures,” 87.


\(^{55}\) I owe this phrase, which means reading the present through the past, to Rudi Visker. See Rudi Visker, *Genealogy as Critique*, trans, Chris Turner (London, UK: Verso, 1995) 12.

various points throughout this dissertation I will direct attention to correspondences and
delineate ideas in sequences. My approximation of a linear narrative is a matter of
highlighting historical relations without allowing their polymorphous character to subvert
the need for textual clarity. Another way of looking at this is that my aim is to adhere as
much as possible to Foucault’s genealogical historicism without disregarding his deeper
theoretical work by pressing it into the service of social history. The point is to present a
plausible account, but one whose ironic purpose is to complicate; to show how what may
now be familiar arose out of opposition and scandal, and is therefore not as authoritative
or impenetrable that it appears.57

III. Two “intellectual therapies” for Rethinking the School58

My governmental genealogy of public schools is inspired by the work of Ian Hunter, especially his book Rethinking the School. Hunter draws from a Foucauldian perspective as he detects in public schooling a troublesome “circularity”59 that arises from adherence to the humanist subjective principles of “self-reflection” and “self-realization.”60 The former is a staple of what he refers to as the liberal progressive position, which envisions the subject as an inherently autonomous being that requires education to grow its rational capacities. He attributes the latter to some “Marxian” oriented theorists, who see the subject’s development as dependent on social and historical factors whose biased ideological content must be exposed before the scales fall

58 Ian Hunter, Rethinking the School (St. Leonards, AT: Allen and Unwin, 1994), 174.
59 Hunter, Rethinking the School, 25.
60 Hunter, Rethinking the School, 2.
from the individual’s eyes and true self-realisation can begin. Even though, Hunter writes, these two positions are quick to proclaim their differences, they are both predicated on a Kantian moral persona that is idealistic and, therefore, unattainable.

Hunter contends that in educational contexts, and in particular, education in Australia, this idealism has frustrating consequences. Both liberal progressives and their critical opponents begin and remain dependent upon a concept of the subject as essentially morally autonomous, but restrained by either inadequate institutional or socio-historical conditions. Education is held out as the prime means of redressing these inadequacies. Yet despite the good intentions of both schools of thought, the impossibility of fulfilling the subject’s capacity for self-reflection and self-realization through education is ignored as historical failures to do so are taken as increased demands to repair presumably inadequate external conditions. The circularity that Hunter detects is a matter of a constant return to the subject in order to highlight education’s provisional or ideological inadequacies, a return to ground that history demonstrates is a self-perpetuating series of aspiration, critique, and reform.

61 It must be noted that in the course of rendering his argument Hunter inadvertently raises questions regarding his view of Marxist critique. For instance, he comes perilously close to characterizing the subject of Marxist critical theory as an essentialist entity, and does not clarify the differences between Marx and Foucault’s respective concepts of subjectivity. Nevertheless, while a full pursuit of these differences is beyond the scope of this dissertation, what Hunter appears to have in mind is something Foucault notes when separating his project from those he finds to be of a Marxist persuasion; namely, a distinction between an idealist belief in liberation through struggle and the notion of freedom as an agonistic and “undefined work”. In other words, like Foucault, Hunter opposes moral idealism. Foucault discusses this distinction in two works:
In any case, my basic concern is Hunter’s seeming assumption of a more or less singular idea of Marxism. Yet having tabled my reservation, I intend to adhere as much as possible to Hunter’s language in order to fulfill my intention, which is to explicate his perspective for the sake of indicating his influence on this dissertation.
In order to illustrate how the circularity that arises from such “intellectual fundamentalism” hinders the emancipatory intentions of these reformers Hunter takes up two common examples of social justice issues that commonly arise in educational contexts. Sexism in schools is deemed to be a problematic consequence of an institutional and pedagogical failure to cultivate in students either rational moral reflection or the socio-historical awareness needed to overcome the factors that limit the “collective ‘class’” subject’s ability “to freely choose the form of its own social formation.” While these two positions appear to differ in their causal assessment, in the quest to correct the problem they both succumb to circular reasoning by suggesting that recourse be had through pedagogical measures that foster ideal subjective comportments. The problem, Hunter suggests, underlying the corrective programs offered by these presumably differing positions is a concept of the subject that operates as the arrogant “status ideal of a particular social group,” that is, “a mythopoetic projection of” reformers and radical intellectuals’ “ideal of a person.” Reform may appear to change the landscape, but educational reformers’ continuing reliance on an abstract ideal of self-formation, an ideal that has been in play for over two hundred years, ignores the possibility that it may be precisely this ideal that is the source of the problem. Hunter suspects the same difficulty persists where the concern is “racist school boards.” In this case the issue is perceived as one of a failure to obtain the equitable “social reproduction” of rationality among a democratically engaged citizenry. As with sexism, this

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62 Hunter, *Rethinking the School*, 177.
63 Hunter, *Rethinking the School*, 25.
64 Hunter, *Rethinking the School*, 171.
65 Hunter, *Rethinking the School*, 30.
evaluation is reliant on the development of a particular form of character whose historical singularity precludes the pluralism needed to counter racism.

In addition to a rejection of an idealized subjective capacity for self-formation this dissertation shares with Hunter a desire to cut across the circularity that plagues such views. For Hunter this means engaging the school not as the “failed realisation” of the kind of “‘deeper’ or ‘higher’ educational principle” that is derived from a moral ideal, but as “an improvised reality, assembled from the available moral and governmental ‘technologies’, as a means of coping with historical contingency.”67 This change in perspective is significant, as it demands embarking upon two Foucauldian “intellectual therapies” that Hunter believes are “required” to avoid continuing to police the borders delineated by the persistent presupposition of an ideal moral self.68 One of these is already indicated by Hunter’s assessment of the frustrating circularity that follows from attempts to define school-based education as the primary apparatus for the development of self-reflective and self-realizing subjects. Escaping the moral idealism that leads to this circularity means rejecting an idealised concept of the subject’s capacities in favour of a view that seeks to trace genealogically the subject’s historical construction by analysing a series of disciplinary technologies aimed at fostering the comportments of ideal moral selfhood. This entails the second “therapy,” which is based on an inversion of the Kantian notion that moral personality is a latent human characteristic whose emergence requires a specific regimen of pedagogical discipline. Instead of presupposing certain moral

67 Hunter, Rethinking the School, 3.
68 Hunter, Rethinking the School, 174.
Again, I want to be sure that my explication does not indicate that either Hunter or I presume an essential subject underlying Marxist critical theory. It is likely the case that Hunter equates liberal and Marxist-type critical views only on the basis of their adherence to an idealized moral outlook, and not a similar view of subjectivity. Still, it remains that this may be too narrow of view of Marxism, but this does not diminish those aspects of Hunter’s work that I have found inspirational.
capacities and then working to develop programs amenable to their obtainment, the very programs proffered by educators are historicised so that they reappear as the subject’s contingent conditions of possibility. Self-reflection and self-realisation, then, emerge not as the necessary aim of schooling, but as the contingently formed outcomes of a perceived need to inculcate these capacities. As Hunter states, “before” subjects “can acquire this capacity they must first be trained in a specific set of moral reflexes and habits.”

Hunter discerns two “overlapping” but “autonomous technologies of human existence: the pastoral guidance of Christian souls and the governmental training of national citizens” that he thinks have contributed much to the formation of the school “not as the necessary expression of all that we might become, but as one of the contingencies that make us what we are.”

The former is drawn from Michel Foucault’s description of a specific form of moral tutelage derived from the Greek political relation between the citizen and polis as well as Hebraic theological practice, and developed in the wake of the Reformation. Foucault, in his February 1978 lectures at the Collège de France, and again in two lectures he delivered at Stanford University in 1979, suggests that the Protestant concern with the earthly salvation of souls entailed adopting this pastoral form of managing the spiritual development of individuals in a kind of “shepherd-flock relationship.” Through this metaphor Foucault outlines how relations

69 Hunter, Rethinking the School, 52.
70 Hunter, Rethinking the School, 31.

Hunter cites this as his source, which at the time was available in S. McMurrin, ed., The Tanner Lectures on Human Values, Vol. II. (Salt Lake City, UT: University of Utah Press, 1981) 225-254.

Until 2007 this would have been the only of Foucault’s discussions of pastoral power available in English. In 2007 the 1977-1978 lectures at the Collège de France were translated and published as Security, Territory, Population. In that volume see 123f for Foucault’s description of pastoral power.
between rulers and the ruled emerged after the sixteenth century in a much more complex but intimate manner than under consensual sovereign governance. Just as the shepherd must tend a flock by caring for each sheep, the concern Foucault deems “omnes et singulatim,” this early modern mode of governmental relations is characterised as exercise of power over a population construed as a “multiplicity” of individuals rather than a uniform totality or the mere inhabitants of a territory. Governmental power exercised “on all and on each” penetrates to a more subjective level than sovereign or juridical techniques for the enforcement of order, which are limited by their totalizing tendencies. Whilst these techniques remain under pastoral guidance, what is new is the disciplined cultivation of ethical-spiritual practices of self-problematization to render each individual responsible for his or her own conduct. It is these forms of training that Foucault, and likewise Hunter, holds as the fundamental pedagogical components of the formation of self-governing subjects.

Having traced the emergence of the morally responsible subject as a contingent historical construction of pastoral discipline, Hunter proceeds to discern the manner in which pastoral techniques were conscripted in the development of the second technology of human existence that underlies modern state schooling. Taking into account the example of nineteenth century European debates regarding the state controlled education, he observes that a more comprehensive governmental concern with deploying “expert knowledge” to correct perceived “social problems” such as “poverty, criminality, morbidity, alcoholism and immorality” led to the establishment of distinct governmental

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72 Foucault, Security, Territory, Population, 128-129.
73 Foucault, Security, Territory, Population, 128.
bureaus.\textsuperscript{74} These bureaus were charged with the deployment of statistical evidence in “new political and intellectual technologies of government” that “allowed the life and labour of national populations to be known in a form that opened them to political calculation and administrative intervention.”\textsuperscript{75}

One such bureaucratic intervention was the school, and in Hunter’s view it provided for something other than the realisation of idealistic impulses toward “forming a democratic citizenry.”\textsuperscript{76} Through the emergence of bureaucratic interventions such as the school the “supramundane” aims of pastoral guidance were secularised into forms of “mundane” governmental practices.\textsuperscript{77} The spiritual moral concern with saving souls was translated into the “worldly” practical and “quite ‘material’” concern with forwarding the aims of government by training citizens to develop appropriate ethical comportments.

In sum, Hunter forwards his genealogy in order to challenge the idealization of the school by indicating three things. First, the school “belongs to a different department of historical-moral reality” that is more concerned with governability than moral perfectibility.\textsuperscript{78} Second, that the idea of perfectibility has been constructed through the governmental adoption of the “shepherd-flock game” of pastoral guidance and the behavioural model of the bureau, which were deployed in their technical forms in school to generate an interest in the “work of the self on the self” deemed necessary for government.\textsuperscript{79} Third, the notion of autonomy that serves as the guiding principle of schooling is constructed and not spontaneous since “the comportment of the freely

\textsuperscript{74} Hunter, \emph{Rethinking the School}, 46.  
\textsuperscript{75} Hunter, \emph{Rethinking the School}, 47.  
\textsuperscript{76} Hunter, \emph{Rethinking the School}, 47.  
\textsuperscript{77} Hunter, \emph{Rethinking the School}, 41.  
\textsuperscript{78} Hunter, \emph{Rethinking the School}, 141.  
\textsuperscript{79} Hunter, \emph{Rethinking the School}, 142.
chosen rational subject is not itself freely chosen. It is a remarkable artefact of ethical labour and civil government.”

Foucault writes,

one must analyze institutions from the standpoint of power relations, rather than vice versa, and that the fundamental point of anchorage of the relationships, even if they are embodied and crystallized in an institution, is to be found outside the institution.\footnote{Foucault, “Afterword: The Subject and Power,” 222.}

This passage is telling of how Foucault’s use of history should not be confused with the causally oriented style of most social history. Often with genealogy the object in question will be considered from the point of view of seemingly unrelated activities, rather than analyzing it with a direct focus on facts and issues. We will see a number of instances of this in what follows, as we do in the way Hunter’s genealogical challenge to the idealization of schooling shows how pastoralism and the bureau provided such anchor points or conditions of possibility for schooling to develop into a “purpose-built milieu” of “social training.”\footnote{Hunter, Rethinking the School, 173.}

Nonetheless, even though Hunter emphasizes the relation between education and the governability of subjects, he withdraws from consideration the possibility that a further set of anchor points is provided by the emergence of liberal governmentality,

Can we say, then, that this program emerged from a ‘liberal problematization of government’ of the sort envisaged by Foucault and his collaborators? In short, did it originate in a process in which liberal political philosophy and economic theory, by elaborating domains beyond the reach of government intervention – the rational individual, civil society, the economy – led to the development of ‘liberal’ technologies of government at a distance? In fact this does not seem to be borne out.\footnote{Hunter, Rethinking the School, 76.}

\footnote{Hunter, Rethinking the School, 143.}
\footnote{Foucault, “Afterword: The Subject and Power,” 222.}
\footnote{Hunter, Rethinking the School, 173.}
\footnote{Hunter, Rethinking the School, 76.}
However, with this observation Hunter provides an invitation. I contend that an exploration of the potential anchor points for power presented, and protected, by liberalism, especially as it emerged in conjunction with public schooling in colonial Canada, indicate that, besides the persistent idealization of the rational subject, a certain negotiation of interests was used to promote schooling in a manner that sedimented a market rationality. The school promoters of Canada West, who for the most part had received, Curtis writes, “a much more practical education” during the Rebellions of 1837, built their case according to an awareness of the limits of the public’s tolerance for government intrusion, and therefore, on a platform of rendering state and individual interests the same.\(^4\) We can see this in their appeals to economic interest made through threats of crime and pauperism. But these appeals are a subset of the wider curricular deployment of the burgeoning science of political economy, which proposed the exercise of self-interest in the name of the interest of all. A more clear-cut statement of individualizing and totalizing power, described by Foucault with the phrase \textit{omnes et singulatim}, has not been offered since, only more subtle variations.\(^5\) Neither of these was endemic to the domain of schooling until it was placed under the purview of government. Once this shift occurred it was possible to draw further from sources outside of schooling and apply concepts from realms, like science, that until the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were generally held disparate.

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\(^4\) Curtis, Buildling the Educational State, 36.

\(^5\) Foucault, “‘Omnes et Singulatim’: Toward a Critique of Political Reason.”
In Chapter 5 I will trace the educational effects of adaptations made from two sources in particular, the Lockean subject and political economy. There I will claim that an evolved view of Locke’s epistemology coincided with the advent of political economy to make it possible for education to serve a liberal governmental agenda, especially according to the modern market-oriented mechanism of interest. Yet in order to pursue this claim it is important to consider more popular approaches to public schooling and government, which view education in terms of control and moralization. For some, it may come as a surprise that this is precisely what differentiates them, and to a certain extent Hunter, from a perspective informed by governmentality. The difference lies in Foucault’s notion of freedom and the manner in which it changes the mechanics of governmental legitimacy or assent.

IV. Public Schooling and the Question of Popular Assent

Hunter’s analysis looks at schooling in Australia and the general context of the former Commonwealth. By Commonwealth relation his work is relevant to the Canadian context, but he does not make specific mention of it. However, a number of scholars have worked in the historical space that is the focus of this dissertation, most seeking to understand why the public school system developed with such rapidity in Upper Canada/Canada West, especially in the period following the Rebellion of 1837. It has proven a very productive terrain, and few have been able to navigate it without grappling with numerous paradoxes.

For instance, though it was Ryerson and his colleagues’ affirmed policy that public schooling be first and foremost available without cost, of uniform standards and
curriculum, and without barriers and inequalities, words and actions did not often match intent. Instruction for males and females was divided according to subjects deemed suitable to preparation for specific future occupations. Women were expected to marry and become servants to their husband and household, and therefore, in senior levels “polished their crochet skills and did worsted work and embroidery instead of mathematics.”\textsuperscript{86} Even as the school system developed and the teaching profession became amenable to having women among its ranks women were given no choice but to accept lower pay than men and were barred from participating in higher administration. In addition to the unequal treatment of women, racial and religious segregation were accepted and promoted. Separate aboriginal schools that were established before the public system remained so after, some later evolving into residential schools.\textsuperscript{87} In 1850 the school laws were amended so that a group of five or more black families could petition for a separate school. But, as Axelrod notes, this “enabled white parents and trustees to bar or oust black children from common schools anywhere an alternative facility existed or could be created.”\textsuperscript{88} Many Catholics actively excluded themselves from public schools, and won the right to their own system. This placed educational authorities in the ironic position of having to defend the existence of Catholic separate schools while enforcing the religious non-denominationalism that had been built into the public school system with the Common School Act of 1843.\textsuperscript{89} Furthermore, American influence on Upper Canadians was derided along with republican libertinism and expansionism. Yet

\textsuperscript{86} Susan Houston and Alison Prentice, \textit{Schooling and Scholars in Nineteenth Century Ontario} (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 1988) 251.
\textsuperscript{88} Paul Axelrod, \textit{The Promise of Schooling} (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 1997) 79.
\textsuperscript{89} Interestingly, the “conscience clause,” as it is known, was cribbed almost word for word from Prussian school legislation.
Ryerson regularly emulated and sought the advice of his counterpart in Massachusetts, Horace Mann, and other American educationists. All of these paradoxes are demonstrative of struggles to create and adopt new practices to a changing context.

Also prominent among a list of consistently perplexing questions confronted by scholars is why the project of government sponsored education thrived despite representing a wholly new level of state intrusion into the private lives of the colonial province’s citizenry. The weight of the paradox evoked by this question is increased by the fact that an impressive level of popular assent was achieved despite the absence of compulsory attendance. Historian Michael Katz writes,

> Education became compulsory only after attendance had become nearly universal. The initial popular reaction to public educational systems sometimes reflected apathy, resentment, or hostility but, given its radical intrusion into the lifecycle and the relations between parents and children, the ease with which public education entered social life stands out as truly remarkable.

How might we account for this phenomenon? For the most part, the response has been to argue in the epic register: a program of public schooling took hold effectively in Canada West as a function of bourgeois ideological hegemony, which aimed to homogenize society by surreptitiously imposing an ethic of self-restraint and hard work. So, for instance, Curtis concludes his analysis of schooling in Canada West, *Building the Educational State*, by stating, “The educational condition and the educational project remain central constituents of political rule in the bourgeois order.”

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91 Legislation regarding compulsory attendance passed into law in Ontario in 1871, and required parents under threat of a fine to send children between ages four and twelve to school for at least four months of the year.
Katz is reflecting on the general state of affairs, but the point holds in the case of Canada West.
Harvey Graff while investigating the role of literacy, “was useful for the efficient training of the masses to the social order and the reassertion of hegemony.”94 It was, he adds in another work, “training in being trained.”95 Alison Prentice sums things up: “Control was the thing.”96

Although I do not dispute that a hegemonic logic was and remains involved in public education, and likewise all governmental institutions, I propose that much more was at work in this interplay between the governmentalization of education and the agency of individual subjects. More, that is, than is indicated by conceptualizing hegemony as the unidirectional application of dominating power.

I argue that what we are dealing with in the early history of Ontario public schools is better characterized as the product of a series of polyvalent and contingent hegemonic logics. It is still a question of power and hegemony. The difference in perspective lies in the use of Foucault’s analytic of power. Accordingly, power is not presumed to be something that is the privileged resource of a single group or entity. It involves a multiplicity of actions that operate bilaterally and with the potential for reversibility. Power presumes freedom, not its foreclosure. The history of governmental institutions such as public schooling can be seen, therefore, as a response to freedom; one geared, as Foucault says, towards its “management and organization.”97 In this light, the task of managing freedom requires a variable strategy, and this supports thinking of hegemony in the plural. However, the larger point of interest in this dissertation is that the demands of this task, which Foucault finds “at the heart” of liberalism, provided a

97 Foucault, The Birth of Biopolitics, 63.
condition of possibility for public schools. In effect, schools served, and continue to serve, albeit under different conditions, as sites for the liberal management and organization, that is, government of freedom.

It is with this in mind that I view the paradoxes raised by the development of public schooling in Canada West not as riddles to be solved, but as reflections of a liberal rationale of government that, Foucault asserts, “is not satisfied with respecting this or that freedom, with guaranteeing this or that freedom,” as in its doctrinal form, but aims to proactively keep freedom in play. Paradoxes arise since the pursuit of this aim does not mean government is restricted to the duty of producing freedom in quantity. Foucault observes,

We should not think of freedom as a universal which is gradually realized over time, or which undergoes quantitative variations, greater or lesser drastic reductions, or more or less important periods of eclipse. It is not a universal which is particularized in time and geography. Freedom is not a white surface with more or less numerous black spaces here and there from time to time. Freedom is never anything other – but this is already a great deal – than an actual relation between governors and governed, a relation in which the measure of the ‘too little’ existing freedom is given by the ‘even more’ freedom demanded.

The activity of keeping freedom in play requires, on one hand, that government “consumes freedom” by relying on it to function “insofar as a number of freedoms exist: freedom of the market, freedom to buy and sell, the free exercise of property rights” etc. On the other, the possible limits to freedom entailed by its management mean that government “must produce it” and “it must organize it.” It must produce what subjects

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98 Foucault, The Birth of Biopolitics, 64.
99 Foucault, The Birth of Biopolitics, 63.
100 Foucault, The Birth of Biopolitics, 63.
101 Foucault, The Birth of Biopolitics, 63.
need to free, “to see to it” that they are “free to be free.”\textsuperscript{102} But, for example, active measures such as “free trade which involves protective measures intended to preserve the free movement of goods and services, demonstrate how “the production of freedom risks limiting and destroying it.”\textsuperscript{103} The same applies to schooling, and is precisely captured by Kant in his educational paradox: “How am I to develop the sense of freedom despite the restraint?”\textsuperscript{104} Schooling is always already a form of government, and like government its reliance on freedom carries an ambiguous operative principle, a sort of “double character” that makes liberal government “liberogenic”: a term Foucault uses to describe activities that are “intended to produce freedom” but “potentially risk producing exactly the opposite.”\textsuperscript{105}

Public schooling emerged in correspondence with the ambiguities raised by the establishment of liberal governance in Canada West. Thus it was imbued with the paradoxes entailed by the task of managing and organizing freedom. Recall how such an intrusive project raises the important question of popular assent. There is certainly enough evidence to suggest assent was a product of hegemony. For instance, even if we only briefly consider the activities of Ryerson, we find much to support this perspective. From the presentation of his 1846 “Report” on, Ryerson provided his critics with numerous opportunities to accuse him of acting like a “Prussian Dictator”.\textsuperscript{106} Indeed, it was in the 1846 “Report” that he introduced the concept of compelling parents to send

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{102} Foucault, \textit{The Birth of Biopolitics}, 63.
\item \textsuperscript{103} Foucault, \textit{The Birth of Biopolitics}, 64.
\item \textsuperscript{105} Foucault, \textit{The Birth of Biopolitics}, 69.
\end{itemize}

This moniker was a favourite of one of Ryerson’s most formidable critics, George Brown, who was founder and editor of the \textit{Globe} newspaper, as well as a founder of the Liberal Party of Canada and a father of Confederation.
their children to school by making references to Prussian law. Though he claimed “I do not advocate the incorporation of it into a Statute in this country,” this appears to be a bit of hedging considering he had just declared,

The principle is this...if the parent or guardian cannot provide [the child] with such an education, the state is bound to do so, - and if the parent will not do so, the State will protect the child against such a parents cupidity and inhumanity, and the State will protect the community at large against any parent, (if the term can be applied to such a character,) sending forth into it, an uneducated savage, an idle vagabond, or an unprincipled thief...The parent, or guardian...owes duties to his child, - owes duties to society. In neglecting to educate, he wrongs this child – dooms him to ignorance, if not to vice, - to a condition little above that which is occupied by horses and oxen; - he also wrongs society, by robbing it of an intelligent and useful member, and by inflicting upon it an ignorant, or vicious, barbarian.\(^\text{107}\)

Furthermore, the 1846 School Act that followed the “Report” contained provisions that wrested control from residents of school districts and placed it in the hands of an elite inspectorate, which was managed closely by Ryerson himself.\(^\text{108}\)

However, there is just as much evidence to suggest schooling had more to do with volunteerism than hegemony. To presume that Ryerson’s intent, or that of the spirit in which these documents were tabled, was hegemonic is to miss a significant side of the story. That Ryerson often demonstrated a paternalistic attitude and class bias is undeniable, but, as Alison Prentice notes, he had also long expressed his abhorrence of intrusive government.\(^\text{109}\) Writing as a young Methodist minister in 1826, he observed that people had a “natural aversion” to anything “clothed with compulsory power.”\(^\text{110}\) Twenty years on, as he assumed responsibility for public schooling, he maintained this

\(^{108}\) See Bruce Curtis, True Government by Choice Men (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 1992).
\(^{109}\) Prentice, The School Promoters, 175.
\(^{110}\) Egerton Ryerson, Letters from Ryerson to Strachan (Kingston, ON: 1828) 17, in The School Promoters, 175.

Italics in original.
perspective, and remarked that for the Canada West system, “the education of the people through themselves is the vital principle…Coercion is alien to the spirit of the system.”

If we look again at the 1846 “Report” we find him advocating a more accommodating relationship with the public. “[N]o Constitutional Government,” Ryerson writes, “can establish and render effective, a system of Public Instruction without the cooperation of the people of themselves.” Though Ryerson was an advocate of strong government, and often demonstrated in his administrative style a preference for centralized power, he was also prone to expressions of a liberal stripe; for instance, “It should be observed, that, according to the nature of things, government is merely the instrument to accomplish the end for which society exists; Society being the principal, Government the agent.”

It is reasonable to expect to find opposing ideas flowing together in an enterprise as complex as that undertaken by Ryerson and his colleagues. We could, as does Prentice, put these ambiguities down to the fact that the demands of the task, which, when coupled with the pace of the system’s development, made it almost impossible for Ryerson and other reformers to avoid appearing inconsistent. Moreover, this situation could only have been exacerbated by the prodigious amount of information communicated by

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On the other hand, Goldwin French argues that Ryerson’s reasoning was sometimes “tortuous,” but “his principal argument are clear and consistent.” I tend to see Ryerson striving for consistency by bringing all his resources to bear on a rapidly changing situation.
Ryerson in speeches, letters, and the monthly *Journal of Education for Upper Canada*. In a sense Ryerson was a victim of his strong belief that the public dissemination of information related to educational matters was essential to cultivating “an interest in the public mind in behalf of elementary education.” It was perhaps unavoidable that some members of the public would come to see the Superintendent’s Office as “a gigantic apparatus” determined “to curb and control public opinion” despite talk of providing information so the people could decide for themselves.

To be sure, none of this is meant to offer justification for equivocation. Rather, it is to use the lenses afforded by Foucault’s concept of liberalism to argue that the paradoxes surrounding the development of public schools in Upper Canada/Canada West appear as constant calibrations in governmental actions that, though intended to foster freedom, are always already capable of hindering this goal. Elements of control are most certainly involved, but these are balanced, more or less, by measures that are respectful of the public’s sensitivity to intrusion. “Power writes Foucault, “is exercised only over free subjects, and only insofar as they are free.” Public schooling was raised as a question of the freedom of subjects, and then made freedom the answer.

This is made all the more interesting by the aforementioned fact that the idea of schooling had already taken hold of many members of the Upper Canadian population.

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117 Angus Dallas, *Statistics of the Common Schools: Bring a Digest of the Evidence Furnished by the Local Superintendents and the Chief Superintendent of Schools in their Reports for 1855, by a Protestant* (Toronto: 1857) iii, in Alison Prentice, “The Public Instructor: Ryerson and the Role of Public School Administrator,” in Egerton Ryerson and His Times, 150.

118 Foucault, “Afterword: The Subject and Power,” 221.
Katz and Graff attribute this to the sort of “spontaneous consent” of the masses described by Gramsci as a response to the privilege awarded to a dominant group’s ideas and way of life.\(^\text{119}\) Therefore, schooling, or, for Graff in particular, the prestige of literacy, developed through a set of complex relationships between social groups that gradually, and without a campaign of coercion, merged interests. Schooling was not necessarily imposed; it was developed institutionally on the momentum of a process that has been emerging since the birth of the values and mores of the bourgeoisie. Public schools and the celebration of literacy are exemplars of a process of gradual hegemony that can be traced, for example, to the advent of the Protestant work ethic. That members of the Upper Canadian population so readily sent their children to schools signifies that the process of hegemony was already in effect.

Though a compelling topic, detailing in full the differences and, indeed, similarities between Gramsci and Foucault is beyond the scope of this dissertation; and it has been given excellent treatment elsewhere.\(^\text{120}\) Nonetheless, at the very least it must be said that, though Gramsci and Foucault share a nominalist view of the subject as constituted through relations of power, according to Mark Olssen, Foucault “adds” a broader view of the operations of social and political influences, including a detailed account of micro-processes such as discipline as well as a move “away from the problematic of ideology.”\(^\text{121}\) Olssen observes, their similarities make it “possible to utilize the concepts of both thinkers in a combined perspective,” but with the advantage of


\(^{120}\) Graff quotes Gramsci on consent as, “the spontaneous loyalty that any dominant social group obtains from the masses by virtue of its social and intellectual prestige and its supposedly superior function in the world of production.”


\(^{120}\) Olssen, Michel Foucault: Materialism and Education, 95-117.

\(^{121}\) Olssen, Michel Foucault: Materialism and Education, 111.
Foucault’s replacement of ideology with discourse. This advantage is most evident in Foucault’s use of genealogy to trace the movement of power from below, that is, to follow how influence just as often ascends from common and disparate sources as it descends from a dominant order. As Lemke points out, it is an advantage that “goes well beyond the juridical conception of the state,” and therefore, also Gramsci’s idea of “compromise,” “consent,” and “contract” as the “origin of strategic articulation.”

Foucault takes these as “categories in need of explanation rather than given facts,” thereby exposing the possibility that public schooling was conditioned by experiences separate from general the order of things. I contend this is how we must see Upper Canadians’ assent to the intrusion of public schooling.

These issues remain complex, but by dealing with assent and other questions I have tried to offer a flavour of the ideas that are key to the descriptions and re-contextualizations that follow. I began by noting Cousin’s “double character” as a means of demonstrating how Foucault’s analytics of power changes the scale of interpretation so that the shifts in power relations indicative of liberal governmentality can be exposed in

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122 Olssen, *Michel Foucault: Materialism and Education*, 111.

Bakhtin’s definition of discourse as “language in its concrete living totality” helps clarify this point. It also accords with Foucault’s idea of the term. Bakhtin writes,

> The life of the word is contained in its transfer from one mouth to another, from one collective to another, from one generation to another generation. In this process the word does not forget its own path and cannot completely free itself from the power of these concrete contexts into which it has entered.

Like Foucault, Bakhtin does not mean to say that discourse conveys meaning statically. Even more so than ideology, which tends to adopt and adapt to ideas favourable to core principles, discourse is dynamic, and modified during its historical passage by other discourses of no apparent relation.


contexts where they may have previously been overlooked. I also referred to Cousin in order to link these shifts with the early nineteenth century obsession with public education and, because of his penchant for borrowing, the Ryersonian project of mass instruction in Upper Canada/Canada West. At the same time, I described the relation between government and freedom that is fundamental to Foucault’s concept of governmentality, and, in particular, liberalism. Attending to this relation, I illustrated how this dissertation differs from works of a similar orientation, and then reinforced this difference by applying the idea of the government of freedom to examples drawn from the educational context of Canada West. Along the way I explained the important and often misunderstood Foucauldian notion of power, which I will return to later on, as well as note the relevance of Gramsci to the interplay of government and the governed that Foucault captures with governmentality. Finally, without meaning to reach prematurely into the remainder of the text, I signalled briefly that the destination of this analysis is to reveal a historical correspondence between liberal governmentality, mass public instruction, and the economic government of subjects through the mechanism of interest. My purpose in exposing this correspondence is similar in spirit to Hunter’s objective of decentering the moral idealism of schooling so that what seems an infringement on this ideal is actually something that has occurred as a latent possibility in the discursive edifice upon which schooling has been constructed. In my view, this same phenomenon has occurred to the extent that that the blending of education and discourses of economy, whether deemed commercialism, consumerism, neoliberalism, economization, or busnification,\textsuperscript{125} is not a violation of the sacred territory charted by the likes of Rousseau.

\textsuperscript{125} This last term is taken from the work of James Marshall.
and Pestalozzi. In correspondence with the liberal government of interests, public schooling, and education in general, has never operated any differently.

V. The Labyrinth Ahead

The notion of government is fundamental to Foucault’s body of thought, but not because he is a conventional philosopher of politics. Foucault’s interest in government, like his studies of disciplinary power, can be attributed to his ongoing focus on the subject, which he once stated, “is the general theme of my research.”126 In taking a Foucauldian genealogical perspective to the history of public schooling in Upper Canada/Canada West, the subject is also the general theme of this dissertation. Therefore, in Chapter 2, I will consider Foucault’s notion of the subject, and do so primarily in relation to the philosopher who I contend is most significant in this regard, namely, Immanuel Kant. I will examine Foucault’s debt to Kant while drawing from two texts that frame Foucault’s intellectual career, *Introduction to Kant’s Anthropology* and “What Is Enlightenment?” 127 While analyzing these two works I will provide insight into Foucault’s nominalism, his concept of power, and adoption of Nietzschean genealogy, all of which have a central role in how I approach the early history of public schooling in Upper Canada/Canada West.

In using the lenses afforded by a Foucauldian genealogy of government to look at the Ontario, and thus Canadian, context I do not take for granted that a liberal sensibility

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is easily attributed to our history. Nor do I simply wish to assume that Foucault’s rather Eurocentric viewpoint is immediately suitable to North America. Furthermore, even in its ideological or doctrinal form liberalism is difficult to pin down. Its meaning and the question of its presence in Canada has occupied a number of historians and political theorists over the years, most notably, Louis Hartz\textsuperscript{128} and Gad Horowitz.\textsuperscript{129}

Yet the issue of Canadian liberalism has been given a novel mode of interpretation by historian Ian McKay.\textsuperscript{130} I find that McKay’s “Liberal Order Framework” offers solid suggestions regarding the question of Canadian liberalism, and that these can be used to enhance the local application of governmentality. Thus, in Chapter 3, I will examine McKay’s recommendations in order to bring liberal governmentality into the local context through a sort of hybrid ‘Liberal Order Governmentality Framework.’ However, I will begin the chapter by revisiting questions of control and assent, which have understandably preoccupied many scholars of Canadian liberalism and educational history. Not only will this give me the opportunity to consider their important work, it also will allow me to distinguish my analysis, especially with regard to ideas of freedom and agency.

In Chapter 4, I follow McKay’s advice that an examination of the theme of Canadian liberalism ought to attend to “seven arresting moments” in our history.\textsuperscript{131} One that he recommends is the cluster of events made up of the Rebellion of 1837, Lord

\begin{itemize}
\item\textsuperscript{128} Louis Hartz, \textit{The Liberal Tradition in America} (New York, NY: Harcourt Brace, 1955).
\item\textsuperscript{129} See also Louis Hartz, ed. \textit{The Founding of New Societies} (New York, NY: Harcourt Brace, 1964).
\end{itemize}
Durham’s *Report on the Affairs of British North America*[^132] and the Act of Union of 1841. Tellingly, these events coincided with a rapid increase in the attention paid by government to the issue of public schooling. Reading through these arresting moments I will describe how a series of significant shifts occurred in the deployment of governmental power in Upper Canada/Canada West. These shifts reflect the emergence of a liberal mentality and, in correspondence with other changes in government practice, provided the conditions of possibility for the development of a public school system. Beginning with the aftermath of the Rebellion of 1837, I will consider the colonial authorities’ restrained use of capital punishment as a response to popular recalcitrance. I then look at how Lord Durham’s *Report* used state racism as a means of dividing the population. On the basis of a double movement of inclusion and exclusion the *Report* signifies how the aims of the school system were biopolitically determined to induce subjective comportments that were expected to render the population, to use Foucault’s term, “governmentalizeable.”[^133]

In Chapter 5, I trace the conditions and effects of this biopolitical imperative in relation to two concepts. The first is the Lockean subject whose seemingly paradoxical cognitive susceptibility and capacity for self-formation makes it possible to educate *en masse* and without the use of the coercive tactics of sovereignty. The second is political economy, which emerged in the early nineteenth century as an authoritative science able to describe the natural laws of population management. Fundamental to these laws is the

[^133]: Foucault, *The Birth of Biopolitics*, 252.
free exercise of interest. I identify this notion as it appears in the works of Locke, Adam Smith and others, and show how it assisted in the establishment of a new manner of ordering the conduct of populations. In turn I examine interest’s pedagogical role, especially the manner in which it enabled pedagogy and curriculum to overlap, thereby producing a school system that was and remains a technical armature for economic government.

Charting the governmental parameters facilitated by schooling is an exercise that benefits from attending historically to the fundamental role of economy, especially as it has emerged coincident to biopolitics and liberalism. From a broad historical perspective issues such as neoliberalism, corporatization, and consumerism appear less as transgressions into the sacred territory of education than the genetic variants of discourses that have served as the conditions of possibility for education to become a governmental phenomenon. If the value of shifting from an idealist to a historical approach lies in exposing how the game of government has been played, then, in present educational contexts where a relation once dominated by education is increasingly tilted toward the economic, this insight affords an opportunity to resist the presumed necessity of implementing measures that further the disparity. That is, to resist not because policies such as those emphasizing economic accountability are bad, but in order to highlight any potential for over-determining practice to the detriment of individual agency. After all, and this applies especially to education under liberal governmentality where reform is ingrained, it helps to recognize, to paraphrase Foucault, the “irony” of any such “deployment” that has “us believe that our ‘liberation’ is in the balance.”

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concluding I note how philosophers of education, many taking a lead from Foucault, have been interrogating the economization of education from a governmental perspective. Yet I also point out that there remain openings to build on the economic aspects of governmentality, particularly in ways that include using economic proponents’ own language while confronting their seemingly unassailable assurance with knowledge of economy’s contingent history.
CHAPTER 2

FOUCAULT AND THE GOVERNMENT OF THE SELF

If I am posing...a problem within historical analysis, I'm not demanding that history answer it. I would like to find out what the effects the question produces within historical knowledge...it's a matter of the effect on historical knowledge of a nominalist critique itself arrived at by way of a historical analysis.\textsuperscript{135}

The aim of this chapter is to outline the philosophical basis of Foucault’s notion of critique, which is the grounding for the genealogy of government that serves as this dissertation’s approach to historical analysis.\textsuperscript{136} In order to do this I will explore some of the concepts that run like red threads throughout his body of thought, illuminating a consistent philosophical trajectory. The first of these is nominalism, which is expressed by Foucault’s rejection of an epistemic tendency Nietzsche derided as the “demand for certainty.”\textsuperscript{137} Nominalism is vital to Foucault’s insistence that critique involve,


\textsuperscript{136}The broad approach to governmentality taken by this chapter, and in general in this dissertation, is in agreement with Tina (A. C.) Besley’s assessment of Dean’s approach, that is, as she writes, “any definition of governmentality should incorporate all of Foucault’s intended ideas – not only government in terms of the state, but government in terms of ‘conduct of conduct.’” See Tina (A. C.) Besley, ”Governmentality of Youth: Beyond Cultural Studies,” in \textit{Governmentality Studies in Education}, 168.


This phrase in one manner of referring to the will to knowledge, that is, the overzealously expressed but insecure urge to unify the experience of the world even if it means taking refuge in metaphysics. Other expressions of this may be found in the writings of philosophers working out of the linguistic turn, such as Wittgenstein (“craving for generality”) and Lyotard (the construction of “metanarratives”). See Ludwig Wittgenstein, \textit{The Blue and Brown Books} (New York, NY: Harper and Row, 1960) 17.

For Foucault philosophy is historical ontology or work done in history as a means of understanding the forces that have established the limits of our experience, such as those involved in government.

To gain familiarity with Foucault’s body of thought is also to become aware of the extended family of scholars that inform his work. To be sure, once one learns where to look, as Ian Hacking remarks, it is as if “Foucault was gifted at imposing new organization on old material.” 139 This must be seen as a compliment in that Foucault’s erudition is a testament to his ability to discern in the work of others ways of renewing critique by rejecting the excesses of objectivism. Prominent among the list of thinkers whom Foucault engages in this spirit are Kant and Nietzsche. 140 Foucault derives from both his view of critique and the subject. Kant in particular is a constant presence in Foucault’s intellectual trajectory. As I will discuss below, this presence is apparent in two significant works that serve as bookends to Foucault’s career.

I view much of Foucault’s career as an ongoing attempt to wrestle with the set of questions that are put forward by Kant in Critique of Pure Reason. Kant’s original questions - “What can I know? What can I do? What may I hope for?” 141 - are taken up

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140 Heidegger is of course also extremely important to Foucault’s thought. Foucault admitted in his final interview, “Heidegger has always been for me the essential philosopher.” However, in the course of his own intellectual development, “Nietzsche prevailed over him.” And, as I will show, likewise Kant. See Michel Foucault, “The Return of Morality,” in Foucault Live, 328.
and recast by Foucault with a nominalist disdain for “the chimeras of origin.”142 They are historicised by Foucault to create a new series expressed in a different interrogative form: “How are we constituted as subjects of our own knowledge? How are we constituted as subjects who exercise or submit to power? How are we constituted as moral subjects of our own actions?”143

I am not claiming that all of Foucault’s work follows from this alteration. Nor am I suggesting that Foucault’s relation to Kant is simple and direct. I do, however, contend that this manner of approach affords a greater purchase on Foucault than an itemized explication of a select group of concepts. Understanding how Foucault’s nominalist reformulation of these questions informs his “historico-critical analyses,” which include his genealogy of government, is crucial.144 It is crucial because the trajectory of thought that leads Foucault to consider the post-sovereign “invention, of a new mechanism of power” that “has been a fundamental instrument in the constitution of” Western society and its institutions, that is, governmental power, is guided by this reformulation.145 The immediate clue to how this is so resides in the form of Foucault’s questions. Each question is concerned not with the subject’s inherent rational capacity for improvement, but its constitution through knowledge, power and ethics, which are identified by Foucault as the “three axes whose specificity and whose interconnections have to be analysed.”146

http://books.google.ca/books?id=mt1qSnq8PsoC&lpg=PR3&ots=tRnemKXI51&dq=Critique%20of%20Pure%20Rea
142 Michel Foucault, “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History,” in The Foucault Reader, 80.
145 Michel Foucault, “Two Lectures,” 104-105.
Nevertheless, in order to understand the close connections between Kant and Foucault, especially Foucault’s Kantian inspired notion of critique, it is helpful to have a close look at nominalism. After considering this concept, I will explore how Foucault develops his own strategy of analysis by jettisoning the idea of an essential subject while preserving a concern for freedom in a style of critique that he refers to as “a limit attitude.”

I. Foucault’s Nominalism

“Without claiming to,” writes historian Paul Veyne, “Foucault was taking part in one of the great debates in modern thinking: does truth, or does it not, correspond to its object; does it or does it not resemble what it states, as common sense supposes?” Veyne’s point is that even though Foucault may not claim to take a side in the centuries old debate surrounding correspondence, his admitted overall concern with truth, which he refers to as “the question of philosophy itself,” gives credence to situating him alongside those philosophers who reject the notion that knowledge is a mirror of reality. This is due to the fact, Veyne continues, that in his own manner Foucault adheres to the idea that objects and events, and, indeed, truth itself, “cannot be separated from the formal frameworks through which we come to know” them. Veyne does not

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148 Veyne, Foucault: His Thought, His Character, 5-6.
150 Primary among these, and noted by Veyne, are Nietzsche, James, Austin, Wittgenstein, Rorty, and Hacking. See Veyne, Foucault: His Thought, His Character, 6.
151 In his inaugural lecture at the Collège de France Foucault insists, “we should not imagine that the world presents us with a legible face, leaving us merely to decipher it”. See Foucault, The Archaeology of Knowledge, 229. See also Richard Rorty, Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1981).
152 Veyne, Foucault: His Thought, His Character, 6.
mean something akin to the cognitive frameworks or categories posited by Kant, but those comprised of discourses.

Foucault’s inherently anti-Platonic position has a number of effects, many of which he wrestled with throughout his work. His body of work may be also approached fruitfully, although not completely, as an attempt to follow after Nietzsche the consequences of opposing the Platonic epistemology and ontology that gives rise to the formal idea of correspondence. However, my purpose in this section is to refrain from becoming embroiled in the complexities of the question of truth and correspondence\textsuperscript{153} while attending primarily to a fundamental aspect of Foucault’s anti-Platonism, that is, nominalism.

Although there are a variety of forms of nominalism, in basic terms it holds that Platonic conceptions of truth and knowledge mistakenly rely on irreducible categories to guide the sorting of singularities. For the nominalist, irreducible categories are nothing more than rationally constructed abstract generalisations that cannot be verified beyond their status as conceptual extensions of the physical world. Their presumed status as essential or universal standard bearers for the truth of the world is disputed since there is nothing that confirms their material resemblance to actual states of affairs. At the extreme edge of nominalism they are taken to be not much more than names or words, and therefore, singularities masked as universals.\textsuperscript{154}

\textsuperscript{153} For a discussion about Foucault and correspondence see Carlos Prado, \textit{Starting with Foucault: An Introduction to Genealogy} (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2000) esp. chs. 6 and 7.

\textsuperscript{154} Hacking writes that “nominalism is a fancy way of saying name-ism,” meaning, for instance, that when we consider objects in the world, Hacking uses “Douglas Fir” as an example, there is nothing more to these objects (like an essence or some form of persistence in time and space) than that they have a certain name, such as “Douglas Fir”; it is, then, a singularity or singular instance of a Fir tree. See Ian Hacking, \textit{The Social Construction of What?} (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999) 82f.
The division between the defenders of the Platonic tradition and nominalists is a regularly visited sight of analytic contest. The issues involved in the debate pertain to the important question of how secure knowledge is possible. As such the argument has evolved into a variety of positions, and continues to collect adherents on all sides and from different disciplines. Through Veyne’s comment I have already noted that this is not a dispute in which Foucault engages explicitly or analytically. Foucault’s particular brand of nominalism, and this reflects his fundamental concern with truth, is more a matter of the political than the theoretical. He is not concerned with definitional arguments. What constitutes truth with a capital ‘T’ is less important to him than how truth functions to direct and limit experience. Foucault states, “the political question, to sum up, is not error, illusion, alienated consciousness, or ideology; it is truth itself.”

Significantly, he continues, “Hence the importance of Nietzsche.”

If not the idea of truth as surety against “error” and “illusion” then what does Foucault mean by “truth itself”? It is important to understand that Foucault approaches truth by distinguishing, according to Prado, “being true from the world.” Yet this distinction is not a denial of the world, nor is it a denial of the facts of the physical sciences. Instead, Foucault chooses to put the question of correspondence, particularly as it pertains to the expectation that the world can be understood through the discovery of its inherent facts, to one side, and concentrate on how what we have come to know as truth is produced and deployed in ways that have discernable effects on the practices and comportments in which subjects engage. Foucault’s overall concern is not with

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155 Michel Foucault, “Truth and Power,” 75.
156 Foucault, “Truth and Power,” 75.
157 Prado, Starting with Foucault, 152.
158 Prado, Starting with Foucault, 152-153.
questions of what truth is, but how the concept of truth plays an anthropological, that is, subjectivizing role to condition the ways we experience the world and ourselves.\footnote{159}

We can begin to see more clearly how Foucault approaches the question of truth in strictly political terms, and so too how this approach entails a particular investigative attitude. Foucault’s declaration of “the importance of Nietzsche” is telling. For Nietzsche, the Platonic quest for the truth is driven by a penchant for unifying interpretations of reality through metaphysical constructs, thus countering a fear of the disparities and chaos of the world. One result of succumbing to this fear is Kant’s reliance on the homogenizing tendency of reason, which presses presumably natural categories on things. In the realm of the modern physical sciences this enterprise appears progressive, but problems arise when the same homogenizing tendency is carried into the social sphere. Nietzsche, in noticing the dangers of this move, discovers what Stefan Ramaekers calls “the thorn” in his “philosophical side,”\footnote{160} What irks Nietzsche has to do with how systems of morality dictate that humans behave according to absolutized categories of right and wrong. A similar thorn afflicts Foucault no less than Nietzsche, albeit without Nietzsche’s psychological baggage. Even though Foucault likens his project to Nietzsche’s \textit{Genealogy of Morals},\footnote{161} his focus is not on the underlying consciousness of systems of morality, but the battles waged over anthropological truth that give rise to totalizing concepts such as madness, crime, sex and normality. Furthermore, he sees this

\footnote{159} Foucault uses the term anthropology to denote philosophical perspectives that posit truth as contingent on the judgment of an inherently rational subject. My discussion of Foucault and Kant below makes this apparent.


\footnote{161} In one interview Foucault remarks, “If I wanted to be pretentious, I would use ‘the genealogy of morals’ as the general title of what I am doing.” See Michel Foucault, “Prison Talk,” in \textit{Power/Knowledge}, 53.
as an evermore-urgent matter since post-Enlightenment scientific positivism accelerates the production of such concepts and, therefore, encourages a constant and dangerous encroachment on the possibility of acting and experiencing things differently than the comportments prescribed in the name of truth.

Later in this chapter, I will take up this idea of breaking free from what Foucault characterizes as the normalizing forces of Enlightenment rationality. For now, what is important is that Foucault’s rejection of Platonic conceptions of truth and rationality entails similar treatment of the essential subject. In particular, Foucault is keen to dismiss the version of subjectivity offered by Kant.

II. The Importance of Kant Part 1: Negatively

Around the time of Foucault’s death, Ian Hacking wrote a short piece in which he remarked that Foucault’s “longest and perhaps most important book, *The Order of Things*, arose from an attempt to write an introduction to a book Foucault had translated into French, Kant’s *Anthropologie.*” Regardless of whether or not one agrees with this assessment of *The Order of Things*, Foucault, as Hacking points out, “was a remarkably able Kantian,” and the influence of Kant is apparent right from the beginning of his very public career.

The translation Hacking refers to served as Foucault’s *thèse complémentaire* to the work that would become famous as *Madness and Civilization*. Foucault’s choice of Kant’s *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View* as the basis for his supplemental

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163 Hacking, “Self-Improvement,” 238.
thesis is, to say the least, curious.\textsuperscript{165} The status of this work at the time was questionable since on the surface it has the tone of an old evangelical offering advice on how to navigate the vicissitudes of life. For instance, Kant recommends that “A young, intelligent wife will have better luck in marriage with a healthy, but nevertheless, noticeably older man.”\textsuperscript{166} Clearly this differs from the rigorous style of expression commonly found in Kant’s books. “Though the temptation must have been great,” comments one of Foucault’s biographers, “Foucault does not have sport with Kant’s strange text.”\textsuperscript{167} Instead of pointing out its deficiencies, Foucault sets out to establish the \textit{Anthropology} as an essential part of Kant’s project. To make his case he argues that the text needs to be analysed in relation to the \textit{Critique}, which preceded it, and a later work, the \textit{Logic}.\textsuperscript{168}

Foucault’s standpoint is the \textit{Anthropology} marks an important but problematic transition between the three questions Kant uses to sum up his project in the \textit{Critique}, “What can I know? What ought I to do? What may I hope?”\textsuperscript{169} and the addition of a fourth, “What is man?” in the \textit{Logic}.\textsuperscript{170} According to Foucault, even though the fourth question is not yet posed plainly in the \textit{Anthropology}, it nevertheless “secretly animates the book.”\textsuperscript{171} In other words, it underlies Kant’s efforts to show how all three questions,


\textsuperscript{166} Kant, \textit{Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View}, 223.

\textsuperscript{167} See also Miller, \textit{The Passion of Michel Foucault}, 138.


\textsuperscript{169} Kant, \textit{Critique of Pure Reason}, 451.

\textsuperscript{170} Kant, \textit{Logic}, 30

\textsuperscript{171} Foucault, \textit{Introduction to Kant’s Anthropology}, 118.
which in the *Critique* are listed to summarize “the whole interest of reason,”172 lead to the fourth that Foucault believes serves “to gather them together in a single frame of reference.”173 This “frame of reference,” writes Foucault, is the subject, “the anthropological question par excellence.”174

Foucault is not just satisfied with reinstating the *Anthropology* as an important transitional work. Though he reveals that Kant’s folksy advice contains a tacit concern with the question of the subject, Foucault also wishes to illustrate how this concern turns on a considerable “paradox” in Kant’s thought, and in modern philosophy in general.175 In the *Critique*, Kant describes the subject as the transcendental *a priori* condition of all possible knowledge. Foucault finds that in the *Anthropology* Kant attempts to render this transcendental subject the object of empirical observation, and therefore, establish anthropology as a science of man that seeks to understand the “totality” of the subject’s “living in the world.”176 This amounts to a reversal “in the order of knowledge” laid out in the *Critique*, and so entails a paradox such that the subject is made at once the condition and object of knowledge. Foucault thinks this presents an untenable situation in which the subject “is the *reason* for what it is *part* of.”177

Yet the problem is not merely one confined to a point of theory. Kant’s influence on Western thought means that this anthropological move is “laden with consequences.”178 Foucault thinks the *Anthropology* instantiates “the play of an ‘illusion’

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173 Foucault, *Introduction to Kant’s Anthropology*, 74.
174 Foucault, *Introduction to Kant’s Anthropology*, 87.
175 Foucault, *Introduction to Kant’s Anthropology*, 123.
176 Foucault, *Introduction to Kant’s Anthropology*, 102.
177 Foucault, *Introduction to Kant’s Anthropology*, 114.
178 Foucault, *Introduction to Kant’s Anthropology*, 114.
proper to Western philosophy since Kant.”179 According to Foucault, this illusion is exemplified in the ongoing effort to reconcile the transcendental and the empirical in the subject. Such a reconciliation only leads to the circular interplay between the subject and its limits, or, as Foucault suggests, the illusion of being able to gather knowledge of a limited or finite subject from “a position of exteriority.”180

The upshot, and the main reason Foucault thinks Kant’s text ought to be considered central, is the futility of a reliance on an essentialized conception of subjectivity that has long forgotten that thought originates in the struggle with the question of the subject’s finitude or limits. Kant may have inaugurated his Copernican revolution by responding to the limit set by Hume’s radical skepticism, but along the way he seems to have forgotten a significant part of his original concern.181 Foucault’s solution is to re-engage the question of limits by first highlighting the problems entailed by Kant’s attempts to establish a properly empirical study of the transcendental subject,

One day, the whole history of post-Kantian and contemporary philosophy will have to be envisaged from the point of view of the perpetuation of this confusion – a revised history which would start out by denouncing it.182

Foucault concludes his *Introduction* by noting that “the model for such a critique was given to us more than fifty years ago” by Nietzsche who “at last” brought “that proliferation of the questioning of man to an end.”183 Nietzsche, who disdained any attempt to ground the subject metaphysically as an “aesthetic anthropomorphism”184 that

179 Foucault, *Introduction to Kant’s Anthropology*, 121.
180 Foucault, *Introduction to Kant’s Anthropology*, 118.
181 Robert Nigro, “From Kant’s *Anthropology* to the Critique of the Anthropological Question: Foucault’s Introduction in Context,” in *Introduction to Kant’s Anthropology*, 136.
182 Foucault, *Introduction to Kant’s Anthropology*, 106.
183 Foucault, *Introduction to Kant’s Anthropology*, 124.
renders “the ego, as substance,” thereby denying “the subject as multiplicity,” serves Foucault as another mentor and, as I will later consider, is as much an inspiration for him as Kant. Nonetheless, even as Foucault proceeds from the groundwork laid in his *Introduction* to the *Anthropology* to a fuller Nietzschean inspired analysis aimed at “denouncing” the Kantian subject, he later continues working through Kant while declaring, “the thought of finitude laid down by the Kantian critique as philosophy’s task – all that still forms the immediate space of our reflection. We think in that area.”

*The Order of Things* is where the line of thought charted by Foucault in the *Introduction* to Kant’s *Anthropology* achieves it fullest expression. In this work, Foucault proceeds by way of an ambitious historical survey of a variety of human efforts to determine “the pure experience of order and of its modes of being.” The work ranges in focus from an investigation of the deployment of language, statistics, economics, and a number of other manners of representing things as unified and calculable, but it culminates in an interrogation of what Foucault considers to be the pinnacle achievement of these modes of representation. The final sections of the book see Foucault revisiting the work done in his *thèse complémentaire* by describing how striving to unify disordered physical experience through rational representation culminates in a “bipolar” anthropological concept of the subject as infinite/transcendental and finite/empirical. This is the subject, or, as it emerged after Kant, “man,” conceived as “a strange empirico-transcendental doublet, since he is a being such that knowledge will be attained in him of

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188 Foucault, *The Order of Things*, xxi.
189 Foucault, *The Order of Things*, 359.
what renders all knowledge possible.” “We are,” writes Foucault, “bound to the back of a tiger” by this subject that is posited to “play two roles” at the interior and exterior of knowledge. This predicament arises since the work Kant presumes to offer as a progressive critique of the limits of perception becomes immersed in “an empirico-critical reduplication” such that,

All empirical knowledge, provided it concerns man, can serve as a possible philosophical field in which the foundation of knowledge, the definition of its limits, and, in the end, the truth of all truth must be discoverable. The anthropological configuration of modern philosophy consists in doubling over dogmatism, in dividing it into two different levels each lending support to and limiting the other: the pre-critical analysis of what man is in his essence becomes the analysis of everything that can, in general, be presented to man’s experience.

Where Kant proclaims his awakening from a “dogmatic slumber” and seeks to ground knowledge in the subject universally possessed of certain cognitive capacities, Foucault finds that there is now an “anthropological sleep” that can only be overcome if the Kantian subject is jettisoned. In fact, insofar as this subject has been identified as the source of the aporias of modern philosophy, it is already “being erased, like a face drawn at the edge of the sea.” What appears as the Kantian subject dissolves leaving neither a “void” nor “a lacuna that must be filled” but the discovery “of a space in which it is once more possible to think.”

However, the discovery of this space is not made without risk. Kant’s project, like those of his Enlightenment contemporaries, is fundamentally aimed at fulfilling the

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190 Foucault, The Order of Things, 318.
191 Foucault, The Order of Things, 345.
192 Foucault, The Order of Things, 341.
195 Foucault, The Order of Things, 387.
196 Foucault, The Order of Things, 342.
subject’s liberatory potential. Kant set out to establish an Ausgang or way out from what he perceived to be the barriers to freedom that were apparent in his times. For the most part, he viewed these barriers to be the consequence of the immature use of the universal human capacity to think rationally. “Immaturity” not only signifies the poor use of reason, it also makes it impossible for humans to live freely. A way out, that is, the achievement of a liberated maturity, is through the right use of reason, which in Kant’s view is reliant on the full and public expression of the model of cognition he lays out in the Critique. So if the key to liberty resides in the Kantian subject’s inherent rational capacity, then denying the subject means subverting any hope for liberation.

There arises here an immediate relevance to education: if denying the Kantian subject poses a risk to liberty, then it is also a threat to commonly conceived ideas about the purpose of education. Education, especially in the form of public schooling, is traditionally deployed as a means of cultivating the natural liberties of the subject through specific regimes of training. Depriving the subject of its natural capacities means education’s role in liberating subjects is moot. Either that or education becomes nothing more than an institutionalised form of heteronomy, that is, taking direction from of others. Yet even though Foucault’s focus on the Kantian subject is not directly concerned with education, he does offer a way through this problem.

Foucault is well aware that refusing the Kantian subject risks subverting the project of freedom that defined the Enlightenment, but he does not believe it leaves us bereft of hope. While he points out the perils of a strict adherence to the foundational aspects of Kantian philosophy, he still finds in Kant the possibility of a different way out.

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This way out is a matter of recapturing the critical basis of the Kantian project without carrying the weight of the concern with origins and unifying theory that Foucault believes causes Kant and others to become stuck in the folds of anthropological thinking. In order to explain how to work “in that area” opened by “the thought of finitude laid down by the Kantian critique as philosophy’s task” Foucault, almost twenty years after *The Order of Things*, turns again to one of Kant’s presumably “minor” works.¹⁹⁸

### III. The Importance of Kant Part II: Positively

“An Answer to the Question: What is Enlightenment?” was published in 1784 in a Berlin newspaper as a response to an editorial challenge. The practice of encouraging public debate in this way was popular at the time. Kant was one of two published respondents. Though Kant’s response incited much discussion in Germany at the time, the text remained relatively obscure in other regions; perhaps, that is, until Foucault made it the focus of a number of interviews, lectures and essays that he presented between 1978 and 1984.¹⁹⁹

Throughout each of his engagements with the text Foucault expresses his fascination with Kant’s attention to the conditions of his own time, and the possibility of using the human capacity to think freely to overcome the coercive tutelage of others. Foucault finds this same attention relevant today. He believes that after two hundred years Enlightenment appears again “as a political problem,” meaning a problem pertaining to freedom.²⁰⁰ Drawing from Kant’s text, Foucault, with important

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¹⁹⁸ Foucault, *The Order of Things*, 384.
modifications, turns his fascination into something loosely approaching a method, and in this way takes Kant’s concern with the present as his own.

Before describing how Foucault interprets “What is Enlightenment?” I will comment on the content of the text. In brief, Kant defines Enlightenment as “man’s emergence from his self-imposed immaturity.” As such it is the capacity to rise above any reliance on the “guidance from another” and exercise rationality courageously and freely. Kant does not believe that the conditions by which to overcome immaturity have been fulfilled in his own time. He thinks that this is because his contemporaries suffer under a “self-imposed...lack of resolve” that inhibits their ability to live maturely. In his view humans continue to invent “artifices to keep themselves in...barbarism” when what is needed is the political will to enable the free public exercise of reason. If this is obtained, and it can only be if humans have mustered the heroic impulse to make it so, then “free thinking” will entail the ability to “act freely.”

Foucault finds “two centuries later, the Enlightenment returns: but now not at all as a way for the West to take cognizance of its present possibilities and of the liberties to which it can accede, but as a way of interrogating it on its limits.” Foucault holds “negatively” that enlightenment has not fulfilled its promise but resulted in a state of affairs that must be critically considered in an ongoing interrogation of the limits imposed by its legacy. Not for the purposes of hailing an alternate idea of absolute freedom, since this involves making the same kind of dogmatic claims of the original, but as a

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matter of understanding how we have come to be in our situation. To approximate or achieve this understanding, Foucault advocates his “critical ontology of the present.”\textsuperscript{208} This is an attitude of critique “immanent in the movement of the Enlightenment” that questions the historical construction of the subject, indeed, its historical \textit{a priori}, in order to become aware of its present circumstances.\textsuperscript{209} The goal of this ‘method’ is to understand “the limits that are imposed on us and an experiment with the possibility of going beyond them.”\textsuperscript{210}

Foucault believes the genesis of the problems of modernity may be found in the Enlightenment and, specifically, in Kant’s ideas. Here Foucault discerns a division between two “two great critical traditions.”\textsuperscript{211} He suggests that these are represented on one side by the widely acknowledged Kantian attempt, expressed in the three questions of the Critique, to define “the conditions under which the use of reason is legitimate in order to determine what can be known, what must be done, and what may be hoped.”\textsuperscript{212} Foucault notes that this is precisely the description of Enlightenment thinking Kant has in mind as necessary if humanity is to reach maturity. It is also the tradition that has become most problematic. No doubt the original idea of discerning the ‘legitimate’ from the ‘illegitimate’ uses of reason was important to ensure autonomy without interference from “dogmatism, heteronomy” and “illusion.”\textsuperscript{213} But this same tradition has historically become a dogmatic enslavement to the use of rationality strictly in the service of the transcendental. It has evolved, as Foucault demonstrates in his \textit{Introduction} to Kant’s

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{208}Olssen, \textit{Michel Foucault: Materialism and Education}, 114.
\bibitem{209}Olssen, \textit{Michel Foucault: Materialism and Education}, 114.
\bibitem{210}Foucault, “What Is Enlightenment?” 50.
\bibitem{212}Foucault, “What Is Enlightenment?” 38.
\bibitem{213}Foucault, “What Is Enlightenment?” 38.
\end{thebibliography}
Anthropology and in The Order of Things, within the “paradox” of the “empirical-transcendental doublet” into a “privileged domain for analysis” such that its original opposition to the ‘illegitimate’ is now hegemonic. This hegemonic tendency is a matter of the coercive authority granted to such things as the essential subject, whose rational capacity and the correct exercise of that capacity are presumed to act as an absolute standard. The supreme expression of this Foucault refers to as the “‘blackmail’” of the Enlightenment, a kind of ‘if you are not for it you are against it’ proposition that renders anything outside of its “principles of rationality” subject to scrutiny according to “a simplistic and authoritarian alternative.” What Foucault has in mind here is the humble idea that things are never as simple as this blackmail would have us believe. To think otherwise is to continue to fall into the authoritarian trap of the “doctrinal elements” of the Enlightenment. Furthermore, Foucault remarks “we do not break free from this blackmail by introducing ‘dialectical’ nuances while seeking to determine what good and bad elements there may have been in the Enlightenment.” In any case, none of this is to say that the tradition founded in Kant’s “analytics of truth” should be rejected outright. On the contrary, we can honour and preserve the Kantian idea of critique once held essential for determining what is legitimate, but Foucault thinks we must now do so as a particular “philosophical ethos.”

The basis for this “ethos” is one of the “thread(s)” that Foucault wishes to use “to connect us with the Enlightenment” and so re-establish its critical power, but without

214 Foucault, The Order of Things, 303ff.
219 Foucault, “The Art of Telling the Truth,” 95.
being subjected to “‘blackmail’.”\textsuperscript{221} Thus his “positive” idea is we must re-activate the critical concern with limits that distinguished Kant’s philosophy, but to do so in a different way.\textsuperscript{222} This entails practicing critique with regard for the limits of the knowable while taking care to avoid indulging consciously or unconsciously in the authoritarian weight of the transcendental or universal. It is in honour of Kant that Foucault terms his ethos a “limit attitude,” but maintains,

Criticism indeed consists of analyzing and reflecting upon limits. But if the Kantian question was that of knowing what limits knowledge has to renounce transgressing, it seems to me that the critical question today has to be turned back into a positive one: in what is given to us as universal, necessary, obligatory, what place is occupied by whatever is singular, contingent, and the product of arbitrary constraints? The point, in brief, is to transform the critique conducted in the form of necessary limitation into a practical critique that takes the form of a possible transgression.\textsuperscript{223}

Foucault’s limit attitude does not concern itself with the re-establishment of reason or a modification of its exercise to accommodate a new ideal. The task is to recognise the contingent and historical nature of knowledge while exposing,

what kinds of assumptions, what kinds of familiar, unchallenged, unconsidered modes of thought, the practices we accept rest…Criticism is a matter of flushing out that thought and trying to change it: to show that things are not as self-evident as one believed, to see that what is accepted as self-evident will no longer be accepted as such.\textsuperscript{224}

The practice of criticism based on a limit attitude concerns itself with “the contemporary limits of the necessary.”\textsuperscript{225} Rather than seeking epistemic foundations to facilitate the freedom of the subject, for Foucault criticism resists foundations in the name of contingency and, therefore, directs attention to history and the ontological hegemonies

\textsuperscript{221} Foucault, “What Is Enlightenment?” 42.
\textsuperscript{222} Foucault, “What Is Enlightenment?” 45.
\textsuperscript{223} Foucault, “What Is Enlightenment?” 45.
\textsuperscript{224} Michel Foucault, “Practicing Criticism,” in Michel Foucault: Politics, Philosophy, Culture, 154-155.
\textsuperscript{225} Foucault, “What Is Enlightenment?” 43.
perpetrated in the deployment of numerous rationalities. The questions asked in such an investigation, then, are no longer the three posed by Kant that culminate in a fourth, thereby turning everything on the rationally autonomous subject, but about how the subject has been contingently and historically produced as a “prime effect” in the cultural evolution of knowledge and practices. They are, indeed, Foucault’s nominalist-historicist versions, “How are we constituted as subjects of our own knowledge? How are we constituted as subjects who exercise or submit to power? How are we constituted as moral subjects of our own actions?”

Significantly, it is in asking these questions that critique becomes a “philosophical interrogation - one that simultaneously problematizes man’s relation to the present, man’s historical mode of being, and the constitution of the self as an autonomous subject.” Foucault believes that this is the other “thread” that places his version of critique within a solid relation to the Enlightenment. This relation is defined in terms of the second “great critical tradition,” which is the initiation of an interrogation of the present

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226 Foucault, “Two Lectures,” 98.
Historians will be interested to know that these questions signify what Frédéric Gros calls “the triptych of his (Foucault’s) critical work,”

A study of modes of veridiction (rather than epistemology of Truth); an analysis of forms of governmentality (rather than a theory of Power); a description of techniques of subjectivization (rather than a deduction of the Subject – the stake consisting in taking a determinate cultural nucleus (confession, care of the self, etcetera) as the object to be studied, which acquires its volume precisely from the intersection of these three dimensions.

In chapters 4 and 5 my analysis of the early history of schooling in Upper Canada/Canada follows in a non-specific, that is, playful manner the contours of this triptych. As such my goal is not to suggest I am embarking on an account that attempts the approximation of a scientific perspective, that is, one seeking to establish an evidentiary foundation for public schooling. Rather, my focus is mapping in historical discourse the articulations of power, knowledges, and transformations of the subject corresponding to school.


According to Foucault, the “novelty” of Kant’s essay is how it stands as Kant’s “reflection…on the contemporary status of his own enterprise…a reflection on history and a particular analysis of the specific moment at which he is writing and because of which he is writing.”

In “What Is Enlightenment?” Kant self-consciously searches for a sign of progress in his own time while simultaneously judging the value of his own enterprise. It is on the basis of this concern with the present that critique draws its efficacy. Not because it can claim access to ahistorical forces that may effect change, but because the contingent nature of the present demands vigilance and so “places [critique] always in the position of beginning again.” Foucauldian critique harnesses the immanent forces of history and the Enlightenment, but locally, privately, experimentally, and always with caution.

Foucault cautions there must always be a prohibition against returning to the dogma of Enlightenment rationality. In his view, it is rightfully “our impatience for liberty” that demands we use reason to “work on our limits.” If we wish to continue to think of ourselves as the faithful heirs of the Enlightenment, then it is in this spirit that we may do so, but not without recognizing the dangers of attempting to escape the history of “our contemporary reality” with “global or radical” claims. Recent times have provided too many examples of how such claims lead to the manufacture of what Foucault refers to as the “worst political systems” that have “repeated throughout the twentieth century.” The point is to work with what we know, to recognise the social

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effects of the most “specific transformations” as they have operated in history and in current times.\(^\text{236}\) In order to escape the dogmatic pronouncements of traditional Enlightenment thinking, attention must be given to the immediate and tangible events that occur in our day-to-day lives. Any reliance or unconditional acceptance of the pronouncements of the past risks a return to the dogma of rationalism and idealism. However, we remain, like Kant, “at the crossroads of critical reflection and reflection on history,”\(^\text{237}\) except now we clearly recognise that “the relations between the growth of capabilities and the growth of autonomy are not as simple as the eighteenth century may have believed.”\(^\text{238}\)

Foucault offers his critical-historical ontology of the present because he wishes to draw our attention to the gradual intensification of these relations. In so doing he indicates his notion of freedom. As an “attitude” it is practical, and seeks no particular ends nor assumes the authority of any one position. It entails no grand moral judgments about any situation. Such a critical perspective would smack of the dogmatic attitude based on the universals that he prefers to historicize. The attitude he maintains is practical in that he reveals the modern intensification of power to have engineered a living landscape where everything is dangerous, and therefore, must be assessed and negotiated vigilantly,

My point is not that everything is bad, but that everything is dangerous, which is not exactly the same as bad. If everything is dangerous then we always have something to do. So my position leads not to apathy but to a

Olssen offers a nice summation, “Like Kant he [Foucault] sees no means of escaping conceptualism. Unlike Kant, he sees no way of salvaging objectivism, but accepts the implications of a radical historicism.”  
See Olssen, Michel Foucault: Materialism and Education, 72.
hyper- and pessimistic activism. I think that the ethico-political choice we have to make every day is to determine which is the main danger.239

Foucauldian freedom involves no expectation of fulfilment beyond its local exercise. Foucault presumes no goal of finally reaching the Enlightenment maturity of which Kant dreamed. “I do not know whether we will ever reach mature adulthood,”240 Foucault writes, and in stating this he suggests how freedom is a “patient labour” inspired by a historically demonstrated “impatience for liberty,”241 yet practiced open-endedly as an “undefined work”242 wherein one hopes to determine, however momentarily, how “the growth of capabilities can be disconnected from the intensification of power relations.”243

The liberatory project that underwrites the purpose of educating the Kantian subject appears through a Foucauldian lens as the construction of an illusory freedom to support institutionalised measures of coercion. Kant recognised how education could be a barrier to liberty, yet he did so in order to frame positively what he identified as the educational paradox captured in his question “How am I to develop the sense of freedom in spite of the restraint?”244 For Kant education is a problem of overcoming the limits imposed on human beings. His solution is consistent with his project as he councils instructing students in the right use of their faculties in order that they may “endure a restraint of…freedom, and at the same time” learn to “use…freedom aright.”245 From a Foucauldian perspective this is precisely the kind of heteronomous practice that defies the creative use of freedom by conditioning students in the socially acceptable exercise of

244 Kant, On Education, 27.
245 Kant, On Education, 27.
dutiful self-restraint. In rejecting such things as the idea of an ahistorical subject Foucault seeks to reveal the cost of this thinking while opening ways of acting otherwise. The Kantian educational paradox remains, but detached from an illusory ideal of autonomy education becomes more practically oriented. It becomes, as Foucault suggests, “a possibility always being offered.”246 That is, it becomes this if we learn to use our freedom critically and without adherence to absolutes.

In practice, Foucault’s critical attitude constitutes an inversion of Kant and moves on a series of lines of thought initiated by Nietzsche. It turns on a rejection of any attempt to extend critique into the realm of metaphysics in the service of a supreme value accorded to the essential subject. “Criticism,” writes Foucault “is not transcendental” in “that it will not seek to identify the universal structures of all knowledge or of all possible moral action, but will seek to treat the instances of discourse that articulate what we think, say, and do as so many historical events.”247 In other words, Foucault believes the search for origins and the correlative justification and deployment of knowledge must be interrogated practically and in terms of their formative historical effects in order to grasp “what we are” so we can discern possible ways of acting differently.248

However, as Carlos Prado points out, the inversion that underlies this attitude is not wholly original. Nietzsche had already overturned the Kantian preference for the universal over the particular in what Prado deems “a philosophical revolution as momentous as Kant’s ‘Copernican’ inversion of the subjective over the objective.”249

249 Prado, Starting with Foucault, 33.
his own reversal of the Kantian perspective, Foucault “emulates Nietzsche” even though he undertakes this manoeuvre with more specificity.\footnote{Prado, \textit{Starting with Foucault}, 33.} Still, though Foucault is known for his frequently nonchalant attitude toward his intellectual influences, Prado notes that this “intellectual debt”\footnote{Prado, \textit{Starting with Foucault}, 33.} is one he openly acknowledges in the essay “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History.”\footnote{Michel Foucault, “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History,” 76-100.} Of course, this essay is much more as it offers an explanation of Foucault’s manner of doing genealogy and so provides something Prado considers a “prolegomena” to “Foucault’s implementation” of genealogy in his historical analyses in \textit{Discipline and Punish} and \textit{The History of Sexuality}.\footnote{Prado, \textit{Starting with Foucault}, 33.} Paul Rabinow concurs somewhat when he remarks that the “importance” of this essay “in terms of understanding Foucault’s objectives, cannot be exaggerated.”\footnote{Paul Rabinow, “Editor’s Note,” in \textit{The Foucault Reader}, 76.}

I agree with Prado and Rabinow’s respective assessments, and in turn I would add that Foucault’s analyses of disciplinary practices and sexuality offer a kind of prolegomena to his investigation of modern government. Again, in saying this I do not mean to suggest that Foucault’s work in this area follows an easily discernable line. Nevertheless, insofar as Foucault seems to be constantly working on his three guiding questions by applying them in specific areas of interest that in turn draw his attention to other problems, I do mean to indicate the direction I intend to take in what follows. In this case, Foucault’s anti-foundationalism entails he look to history to see ‘how’ things have been constructed. This very same attitude toward history is fundamental to this dissertation. With this in mind, I now turn to “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History” to outline in detail Foucault’s genealogical approach to history.
IV. Nietzsche, Foucault and Effective History

Whilst the essay “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History” serves as an introduction to the projects Foucault embraced in the later years of his life it is by no means the beginning of Foucault’s interest in Nietzsche. Written in a period Foucault considered one of unfulfilled “repetitive” and “disconnected” “researches,” the essay is generally an attempt to fully reclaim an outlook expressed selectively in his previous works.²⁵⁵ It is also the product of the desire to fend off the criticisms that emerged in the wake of *The Order of Things* and *The Archaeology of Knowledge*. In these works Foucault could be accused of offering a method of discourse analysis that presumes an objective perspective²⁵⁶ even though he proclaims the death of the foundational subject in the former, and warns in the latter “the term *archaeology*…does not imply the search for a beginning.”²⁵⁷ Foucault himself admits in the “Introduction” to *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, “*The Order of Things*…may have given the impression that my analyses were being conducted in terms of cultural totality. It is mortifying that I was unable to avoid these dangers.”²⁵⁸ I believe the penchant for masks and anonymity that he developed during the period in which these works were published may be viewed as an effort to foil such criticisms.²⁵⁹ Nevertheless, the point is that even though “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History” may be perceived as Foucault’s formal turn toward Nietzsche he had already demonstrated an interest that could not be fulfilled while pursuing two works that come about as close to a systematic and totalizing analysis as anything else in his corpus. His interest is clear in his *Introduction* to Kant’s *Anthropology* and in *The Order*

²⁵⁵ Foucault, “Two Lectures,” 79.
²⁵⁸ Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, 16.
of Things. Nietzsche is invoked rather dramatically near the end of each of these texts in order to express how “the death of God” and “the death of man” comprise “a doubly murderous gesture”\textsuperscript{260} that signifies “the way of an imminent new form of thought.”\textsuperscript{261} With “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History” Foucault’s new way of looking at things, already Kantian in its critical attitude, becomes fully Nietzschean in design.

If Foucault defines his critical attitude as the use of thought to “work on our limits” in order to discern the possibility of acting differently, then the method of inquiry that suits this work must be historical.\textsuperscript{262} Through a different understanding of the past we may untangle ourselves from our historically sedimented perceptions of the present. As Foucault suggests in an interview, “since these things have been made, they can be unmade, so long as we know how it was that they were made.”\textsuperscript{263} Foucault, like Nietzsche, believes history holds the clues to how the things that condition our experience have emerged. However, this is not to say that Foucault is pursuing a constructivist program for revolutionary purposes. His concern is to show that only by exposing their contingent formation can we breach the historically accumulated authoritative status of the ideas and institutions that influence the way in which we see ourselves. Once exposed these ideas and institutions will appear less imposing and, therefore, may be more effectively challenged. So where Nietzsche refuses the Platonic foundationalism that hides the resentment and bad faith of modern morality, and does so by using genealogy to make his case, Foucault expands this project to subject anything that presents itself as necessary and natural to genealogical scrutiny.

\textsuperscript{260} Foucault, \textit{Introduction to Kant’s Anthropology}, 124.
\textsuperscript{261} Foucault, \textit{The Order of Things}, 342.
\textsuperscript{262} Foucault, “What Is Enlightenment?” 50.
\textsuperscript{263} Michel Foucault, “Critical Theory/Intellectual History,” in \textit{Michel Foucault: Politics, Philosophy, Culture}, 37.
A fruitful understanding of how genealogy is incorporated into Foucault’s thought may begin with Nietzsche’s second “Untimely” meditation “On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life.”\textsuperscript{264} In this piece Nietzsche lists “three species of history” that he believes ground the conventional practice of history, “a \textit{monumental}, an \textit{antiquarian} and a \textit{critical}”.\textsuperscript{265} Monumental history honours the past with “the belief in the solidarity and greatness of all ages”.\textsuperscript{266} It is the ‘great men’ and ‘great deeds’ perspective on past events. Antiquarian history “belongs...to him who preserves and reveres - to him who looks back to whence he has come, to where he came into being, with love and loyalty; with this piety he as it were gives thanks for his existence.”\textsuperscript{267} This means seeking out the basis for what is exceptional in the present by looking to the past, but doing this to ensure that the future will not loose itself from tradition. Critical history compensates for the inability of the first two to “engender...any firm resolve to attempt something new.”\textsuperscript{268} For Nietzsche the critical mode is a way of using the past in order “to confront our inherited and hereditary nature with our knowledge of it, and through a new, stern discipline combat our inborn heritage and implant in ourselves a new habit.”\textsuperscript{269}

Nietzsche lists these for the purpose of exposing their deficiencies. None, he finds, are capable of bringing about the creativity necessary for the enhancement of life. The problem is that all three, even critical history, venerate the past to the point of granting it the status of metaphysics, that is, as something that determines human destiny but can be analysed objectively. This makes history a dreamed rather than lived

\textsuperscript{265} Nietzsche, “On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life,” 67.
\textsuperscript{266} Nietzsche, “On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life,” 69.
\textsuperscript{267} Nietzsche, “On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life,” 72.
\textsuperscript{268} Nietzsche, “On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life,” 75.
\textsuperscript{269} Nietzsche, “On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life,” 76.
experience. As Nietzsche suggests in the third meditation, conventional history renders human beings “the toy” that “time…plays with.” What is needed to live a truthful and strong life, something Nietzsche refers to as “a new and improved physis,” and this can be accomplished by challenging conventional history’s presumption of “aeterna veritas” by approaching history in all its chaos and contingency. History becomes the promotion of health, the means to overcome the sickness that underlies and is symptomatic of the adherence to epistemic foundations.

Toward the end of “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History,” Foucault takes up Nietzsche’s criticism of these three conventional modes of history as a way of fleshing out his own concept of genealogy. What Foucault finds in Nietzsche’s analysis is the means to develop three approaches that are opposed to and “correspond” with “the demands of a suprahistorical history.” He lists three “modalities” that he terms the “parodic,” “dissociative,” and “sacrificial.” The parodic looks to replace the monumental by positing alternatives to the “perpetual presence” of the ahistorical. Instead of the essences and absolutes at work in stories of heavenly inspired human purpose, parodic history exposes grand narratives as a “charade” or “concerted carnival” of false constructions. The “masks” worn by the players in these narratives are, in the second modality, torn off as concepts, and identities are shown to be products of contingency. So whereas antiquarian history seeks out the “continuities” between the

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270 Friedrich Nietzsche, “Schopenhauer as Educator,” in Untimely Meditations, 155.
273 Foucault, “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History,” 93.
274 Foucault, “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History,” 93.
275 Foucault, “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History,” 94.
276 Foucault, “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History,” 94.
past and present, dissociative history reveals the work of “heterogeneous systems.”

The sacrificial modality is concerned with the role of the Kantian subject that is presumed by critical history to be at once in and above time. Foucault refers to it as “sacrificial” because it primarily involves “the sacrifice of the subject of knowledge.” Critical history views this subject as capable of using the past in a neutral and objective manner, and for the purpose of determining the truth of human existence. Sacrificial history explores how this subject, like other essences and absolutes, is nothing more than a product of the “rancorous will to knowledge.” It shows how the deployment of this will has entailed the creation of a series of “effective illusions by which humanity protects itself” from the vicissitudes of life. Rather than indulge the pretensions of objectivity inherent in critical history, sacrificial history “ceaselessly multiplies the risks, creates dangers in every area; it breaks down illusory defenses; it dissolves the unity of the subject” and illuminates how the quest for truth serves “something murderous, opposed to the happiness of mankind.”

Foucault’s alternatives to the three species of conventional history underlie his interpretation of Nietzsche’s concept of genealogy as “wirkliche” or “effective history”. Unlike the “suprahistorical perspective” of conventional history, effective history is history “without constants.” It takes the world as “a profusion of tangled events” rather than “the consoling play of recognitions.” So, for instance, events of the

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277 Foucault, “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History,” 95.
278 Foucault, “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History,” 95.
279 Foucault, “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History,” 95.
280 Foucault, “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History,” 95.
282 Foucault, “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History,” 95.
past are not seen as occurrences strung along a linear chain of causality, but instead as the products of multiple changes in relations between disparate elements. Knowledge is no longer defined narrowly as the proper use of universal reason. “The final trait of effective history,” states Foucault, “is its affirmation of knowledge as perspective.” Effective history looks at traditional history’s aim of forwarding objective inquiry as a form of “demagoguery” that conceals a disdain for life as an often “disgusting” and base experience played out “among crowded scenes.” Thus genealogy as effective history relies on Nietzschean perspectivism, that is, the idea that there is no view of events that can excuse the researcher’s own standpoint. The genealogist must always trouble his or her own relation to the areas targeted for interrogation.

Foucault shares Nietzsche’s perspectival conception of knowledge but, Prado notes, there is one significant point upon which they differ. Both see history through a set of genealogical lenses as “the endlessly repeated play of dominations” occurring among crowds of competing individuals. For Nietzsche this makes the idea of freedom something attainable only to a noble few capable of conquering their fear of living without the assurances found in absolutes. Nietzsche has no illusions about the willingness of the majority to recognise the cost of blind obedience, and so reserves his thought only for those individuals who have an untimely nature. Foucault, somewhat less dramatically, sees in the “play of dominations” not total subjugation, but a history that by virtue of its combative record “generates the idea of liberty.” What is important to keep in mind is that unlike common liberatory projects, which assume the extremes of either

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286 Foucault, “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History,” 90.
288 Prado, Starting with Foucault, 37.
289 Foucault, “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History,” 85.
290 Foucault, “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History,” 85.
absolute domination or liberation, the pervasive and relational character of Foucauldian power means that there is no escape or Nietzschean overcoming, only ways of acting differently discerned by critically considering how power accumulates and guides our choices. This is the reason why Foucault describes his limit attitude agonistically as endless “work on our limits…a patient labour giving form to our impatience for liberty.”

Genealogy is anti-history history in that it aspires to redescribe events in ways that make things unfamiliar and difficult where they once seemed meaningful and assured. To accomplish this effect, which Foucault refers to as “countermemory,” genealogy searches through history at the ground level in the vast archive of “entangled and confused parchments” and “documents that have been scratched over many times.” Foucault does not only mean the diaries, letters, official records, and other material found buried in the archive. Significantly, included in this material is the body, which Foucault states is “the inscribed surface of events (traced by language and dissolved by ideas), the locus of a dissociated self (adopting the illusion of a substantial unity), and a volume in perpetual disintegration.” With a focus on the body Foucault’s nominalism most obviously comes into play, as it represents the subject as primarily a material entity, one devoid of essence or metaphysical origin. Genealogy’s “task is to expose a body totally imprinted by history” as something that exhibits in its comportments the effects of what

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292 Foucault, “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History,” 92.
293 Foucault, “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History,” 76.
294 Foucault, “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History,” 83.
is ascribed to it, and what it ascribes to itself, as well as what is done to it, and what it
does to itself.295

Having adopted Nietzsche’s genealogical approach to history Foucault undertakes a series of investigations of how the embodied subject has been constituted as a product of the modern anthropologically driven pursuit of knowledge. His investigations are not intended as replacements for other traditionally oriented viewpoints. Genealogy may be a kind of anti-history, but it is not as such intent on the dismissal or destruction of conventional modes of research. Its effectiveness depends on an ability to offer a contrast to discourses and practices supported by convention. As Prado makes clear in his discussion of some of genealogy’s problems, “Foucault cannot offer competing theories” since this would amount to presenting his genealogical analyses as correct interpretations.296 If genealogy presumes “correctness” then it falls into the same difficulties that it attributes to traditional history.297 Genealogy is at best a “plausible” contrast that exposes the dangers involved in idealist history’s presumption of getting things right.

The criterion of plausibility is important. Genealogy cannot play fast and loose with the historical record and must, writes Prado, “look like what it is claimed to be, namely, a more productive construal of what ever is at issue.”298 Still, as Prado points out, an exact method of judging the success of genealogy’s use of history is complex, and so far discussions of this issue among philosophers have resulted in little more than an

295 Foucault, “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History,” 83.
296 Prado, Starting with Foucault, 47.
297 Prado, Starting with Foucault, 45.
298 Prado, Starting with Foucault, 45.
“impasse.”299 It remains that in the more than thirty years since Foucault began his genealogical investigations the controversies he has generated have only served to underscore one of his main contentions. Prado sums this up as “we can no longer do philosophy (or history) on the assumption that its standards are ahistorical and untouched by social and political influences, academic fashion, and vested interests.”300 I would add that in light of this, we can no longer live as if our most cherished ideals are supported without difficulty by the social and political institutions that have been developed with these in mind.

In the preceding sections, I have examined the development of Foucault’s thought as it transitions from opposing the Kantian anthropological approach to the subject, to preserving a concern with freedom by maintaining Kant’s notion of critique, and then to deploying this notion according to a Nietzschean design for the use of history. While covering these transitions I have, in each section, indicated how the refusal of the essential subject entails the need to consider how the subject has been the historical effect of the very rationalities that have been presumed to ground it and, in the name of liberty, work in its service. In rendering his genealogical investigations of what amounts to an ongoing history of the construction of the subject, Foucault paints a very different picture than that established by the heirs to the tradition of Enlightenment essentialism. Truth, reason, and power are not something whose proper exercise will lead to freedom, but constructs and relations that are both enabling and constraining.

Though evident in his earlier works this difference comes fully into view with Foucault’s analysis of government. Government, for Foucault, is not the singular

299 Prado, Starting with Foucault, 45.
300 Prado, Starting with Foucault, 50.
functioning of states or management operating at a level separate from the daily activities of individuals. Rather, it is a much broader range of practices that are geared towards exercising power in ways that affect the conduct of individuals. That a broad range is seen as necessary is a testament to how government has transformed the exercise of power directly into measures geared toward inducing conduct that is amenable to government.301 “To govern,” writes Foucault, “is to structure the possible field of action of others.”302 It is to create the conditions for agency, but in ways that try to affect its use so that the goals of government, most prominently order and prosperity, remain obtainable. In this way government, as noted in the previous chapter, has freedom as its “precondition”.303 To understand more fully how freedom can be a precondition of government it is helpful to have a closer look at a concept that is as important as nominalism to Foucault’s mode of analysis, namely, power.

V. Notes on Power

To say that power plays a complex role in Foucault’s thought is an understatement. One way it is integral to his perspective is that it allows him to be nominalistic and historicist at the same time. Using power, Foucault can remain consistent as he eschews any concept of origin while substituting discourse for ideology and multi-variant relations for linear causality. Therefore, power is key to enabling him to offer a layered analysis of events that challenges the authority of the dominant discourses and institutions of Western society by demonstrating their contingent historical

301 As Dean writes, this form of government “is characterized as facilitative and preventive rather than directive and distributive.” See Mitchell Dean, Governing Societies (Berkshire, UK: Open University Press, 2007) 84.
302 Foucault, “Afterword: The Subject and Power,” 221.
303 Foucault, “Afterword: The Subject and Power,” 221.
formation. “The point at issue,” he writes, “both in historical analysis and in political critique,” is that “we aren’t, nor do we have to put ourselves, under the sign of a unitary necessity.”

Despite the basic critical role power plays in Foucault’s thought, it is often misconstrued. Foucault appears to recognise this and in numerous interviews he tries to clarify his notion of power,

In studying the rationality of dominations, I try to establish interconnections which are not isomorphisms….when I speak of power relations, of the forms of rationality which can rule and regulate them, I am not referring to Power – with a capital P – dominating and imposing its rationality upon the totality of the social body. In fact, there are power relations. They are multiple and they have different forms…It is a field of analysis and not at all a reference to any unique instance…I in no way construct a theory of Power.

To be sure, in his insistence that he is not offering “a theory of Power” Foucault reasserts his nominalism. Like the subject, power has no essential nature; it is only apparent in its expression, which is always relational and a matter of assessing the effects of human activity. Power enables Foucault to conduct his genealogies without adherence to the idea of origins or a perspective dependent on tracing the links in a determined causal chain. Nonetheless, the polymorphic and contingent character of history revealed by power does not permit a style of analysis that Foucault refers to as a “lyrical right to ignorance or non-knowledge.” Genealogy may aim to subvert the authority of activities justified as legitimate or natural, but this requires increased vigilance, an attention to detail, and not a scattershot or disorganized manner approach to history.

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306 Regarding power, Foucault writes, “One needs to be nominalistic”.
See Foucault, The History of Sexuality, Volume One, 93.
307 Foucault, “Two Lectures,” 84.
The best way to describe Foucauldian power is to contrast it with more common conceptions. Foucault dismisses the functionalist view that power is something that may be held like a “commodity” and exercised as a means of attaining a specific objective.\textsuperscript{308} This view, which he finds underlies more conventional ideas of power, has it that “power is taken to be a right” or “conceived primarily in terms of the role it plays in the maintenance simultaneously of the relations of production and class domination.”\textsuperscript{309} The former is the sovereign/juridical conception that presumes power is held and exercised by divine authority or legal legitimacy. While the latter, still maintaining a “commodity” view of power, perceives power in terms of critically assessing the historical legitimacy of the sovereign/juridical order. In both cases, as Jana Sawicki points out, there are three notions about power in play: power can be acquired and held; its acquisition and exercise is predominantly attributable to a central authority, and in every case power entails a change in or domination of those less capable.\textsuperscript{310} Opposite this Sawicki characterises Foucauldian power as\textsuperscript{311} identifiable in the effects of human activity and, therefore, something exercised and not held; not strictly a matter of repression but also something that is productive, especially as it is evident in the material effects of human activity; and, unlike the sovereign/juridical idea, which understands power as radiating from a central

\textsuperscript{308} Foucault, “Two Lectures,” 88.
\textsuperscript{309} Foucault, “Two Lectures,” 88.
That Foucault sometimes attributes this notion of power to Marxist style critical theory is a reflection of the ideas that circulated during his lifetime. Since then a substantial amount of work has been done in the field of Marx related studies, and so this attribution now seems naïve.
See also Olssen, \textit{Michel Foucault: Materialism and Education}, 19.
\textsuperscript{311} Sawicki, \textit{Disciplining Foucault}, 21.
See also Olssen, \textit{Michel Foucault: Materialism and Education}, 19.
authority and aimed downwards with the intention of directing a course of events, power ascends, Foucault suggests, “from...infinitesimal mechanisms.”

Crucially, and Foucault is adamant regarding this point, power is relational and not a matter of blockages, foreclosures on action or one-sided dominations. Power has freedom as its precondition. With more insight into Foucault’s thought it is worth recalling that, unlike more common conceptions that equate freedom with autonomy or the unfettered exercise of individual will, Foucault advocates a non-idealist version. He presumes individuals cannot escape completely their susceptibility to outside influence and, therefore, must endlessly seek to find ways to think and act other than they are directed to do. This makes freedom eminently practical and political since it makes it a matter of vigilant thought and action, as opposed to an ideal state that has proven impossible to obtain.

Power in the Foucauldian sense is meant to indicate, as he states, “a complex strategical situation.” Such a situation is comprised of multiple relations that are neither unified nor entirely transparent. It is, for Foucault, not a matter of explaining power in terms of some kind of economic determinism or institutional force. He eschews the idea of power as the unidirectional cause of domination,

The exercise of power is not a naked fact, an institutional right, nor is it a structure which holds out or is smashed: it is elaborated, transformed, organized; it endows itself with processes which are more or less adjusted to the situation.

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312 Foucault, “Two Lectures,” 99.
314 Foucault, The History of Sexuality, Volume One, 93.
In terms of genealogical analytics of power, we must begin by thinking of power as fluid, as something that Dreyfus and Rabinow point out “is exercised, not simply held.” Power is “employed and exercised through a net-like organization,” that is “rooted in the system of social networks.” Within these networks power is exercised through institutions and individuals as relations of “actions upon on other actions” and in ways that are both prohibitive and productive. Power belongs neither to individuals nor to institutions, and so it is strictly impersonal. Institutional power is “embodied in techniques” such as the disciplinary practices of panoptic surveillance. According to Foucault, in these techniques the genealogist discovers “power in its external visage, at the point where it is in direct and immediate relationship with that which we can provisionally call its object.” This relationship is above all indicative of the productive effects of power, since it is here that power produces the subject as “one of its prime effects.”

Foucault’s descriptions of power as something strictly impersonal and yet productive appear inconsistent with his thoughts on power’s subject-determining role. How can power be instrumental in the manufacturing of subjects if it is only a matter of relations between actions and not specifically determining actions and subjects? The answer lies in what Prado asserts is Foucault’s “new way of saying something about how the vastly complex totality of human actions regulates behaviour without that totality

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316 Dreyfus and Rabinow, Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics, 192.
317 Foucault, “Two Lectures,” 98.
319 Foucault, “Afterword: The Subject and Power,” 220.
320 Foucault, “Two Lectures,” 96.
321 Foucault, “Two Lectures,” 97.
322 Foucault, “Two Lectures,” 98.
323 Prado, Starting with Foucault, 69.
The alternative is to think in the terminology of conspiracies that might be explained away in terms of coercion and domination. But to be nominalistic about power means adopting a different attitude to questions of coercion and domination. As Foucault argues,

Let us not, therefore, ask why certain people want to dominate, what they seek, what is their overall strategy. Let us ask, instead, how things work at the level of ongoing subjugation, at the level of those continuous and uninterrupted processes which subject our bodies, govern our gestures, dictate our behaviours, etc. In other words, rather than ask ourselves how the sovereign appears to us in his lofty isolation, we should try to discover how it is that subjects are gradually, progressively, really and materially, constituted through a multiplicity of organisms, forces, energies, materials, desires, thoughts etc.325

The idea, explains Prado, is “to understand how blind regulation of behaviour shapes subjectivity” without any of it being anyone’s or anything’s particular goal.326 What we may perceive as the covert coercion and domination of various practices is predominantly the products of a complex and impersonal web of activities.

Often when we attempt to single out these practices as instances of power itself we “mistake,” as Prado reminds us, “components for the whole.”327 For example, Foucault believes that when we focus on “the various social hegemonies” we are looking at the singular conditions of the overall dynamic lacework of force relations that is power.328 We usually consider these conditions to be models of power, but Foucault suggests they are instances of power’s “institutional crystallization” and not power itself.329 Power is a “multiplicity of force relations” that “constitute their own

324 Prado, Starting with Foucault, 70. Italics in original.
325 Foucault, “Two Lectures,” 97.
326 Prado, Starting with Foucault, 70.
327 Prado, Starting with Foucault, 70.
328 Foucault, The History of Sexuality, Volume One, 93.
329 Foucault, The History of Sexuality, Volume One, 93.
organization.”\textsuperscript{330} It is the “process,” the “support,” and the “strategies” of force relations, and so not deterministic because power does not operate according to any form of design.\textsuperscript{331} In hegemonic or coercive situations there is only domination and not power since individuals have no options for action; the design and directives of others bind every possibility since specific behaviour is dictated that excludes everything else. But as Foucault states, power requires “a field of possibilities in which several ways of behaving, several diverse reactions and diverse comportments may be realized.”\textsuperscript{332} Thus power expresses “an ‘agonism’…a relationship which is at the same time reciprocal incitation and struggle; less of a face-to-face confrontation which paralyses both sides than a permanent provocation.”\textsuperscript{333} Power as a permanent provocation informs Foucault’s notion of government and, as we can now see, reflects the influence of Kant and Nietzsche. Power assists in the critical analysis of objects set in the present, but constructed in the struggles of history. It renders the stakes of critical analysis a matter of attempting to get free of the cumulative effects of historical struggle, while acknowledging its permanence.

Having considered in detail the Foucauldian basis for the analysis presented in this dissertation, we may now turn attention to applying an analytics of power to liberal government and public schooling in the local context. In the main, attention will be paid to charting the limits imposed by power, as well as how power creates opportunities for action. Interestingly, in an introductory essay to a collection of Foucault’s work, Colin Gordon notes how Foucault formally duplicates the Kantian critical concern with limits

\textsuperscript{330} Foucault, \textit{The History of Sexuality, Volume One}, 92-93.
\textsuperscript{331} Foucault, \textit{The History of Sexuality, Volume One}, 92.
\textsuperscript{332} Foucault, “Afterword: The Subject and Power,” 221.
\textsuperscript{333} Foucault, “Afterword: The Subject and Power,” 224.
in the meaning of liberal government.\textsuperscript{334} As opposed to a doctrine of the political preservation of liberty, liberalism in the Foucauldian sense is about the limits imposed on government and subjects by freedom. These two entities face each other in a confrontation; government must not impinge on freedom, and freedom is not something that can be exercised without limits if order is to be preserved. To understand this it is crucial,

\begin{center}
in a Foucauldian sense…not to analyse liberalism as an apology or the cloaking ideology for ruling interests, nor on its own terms, but to examine, rather, the historical conditions within which the practices of freedom and guarantees of government have been possible.\textsuperscript{335}
\end{center}

The history of public schooling is a prime example of how such “practices” and “guarantees” have been deployed.

Therefore, in the local context of Ontario, I see this deployment as having been carried out in accordance with a unique series of events. Foucault’s analytics of power provides tools for charting this deployment, but offers no insight into where to begin an investigation in this distinctive historical territory.\textsuperscript{336} Vigilance entails that a deeper understanding of Ontario history is required, and for this it is helpful to turn attention to the works of others who have already charted the terrain.

\begin{itemize}
\item\textsuperscript{335} Mark Olssen, Mark, John Codd, and Anne-Marie O’Neill, eds. \textit{Education Policy: Globalization, Citizenship and Democracy} (London, UK: Sage, 2004).
\item\textsuperscript{336} Michel Foucault, \textit{The Archaeology of Knowledge}, 231.
\end{itemize}
CHAPTER 3

“Peace, good government, and prosperity”³³⁷

There are two human inventions which may be considered more difficult than any others – the art of government, and the art of education; and people still contend as to their very meaning.³³⁸

In this chapter, I bring the Foucauldian analysis of governmental power directly into the Ontario context in order to apply it soundly to the history of public education. I contend that it is necessary to perform a “preliminary mapping” of the ground in question before importing Foucault’s particularly Eurocentric body of work.³³⁹ That is to say, in taking a non-doctrinal approach to liberalism, one that does not presume the universal applicability of a rights based juridical order, I am sensitive to understanding how governmental practices are contingent upon context. To this end, I think my analysis benefits from following Ian McKay’s suggestion that Canadian history can be fruitfully investigated according to what he refers to as a “Liberal Order Framework.”³⁴⁰ My intention is to adhere to the concept of liberalism endorsed by Foucault’s analytics of governmental power, but supplement this with a set of suggestions that better facilitate its application in a unique historical context.

However, to consider this context is to readily see that the history of public schooling in Ontario has long been a contentious topic. Scholars have taken a variety of

³³⁷ Colonial Office, 42/390, “William Baldwin to the Duke of Wellington, January 3, 1829, 90-92, in Gerald M. Craig, Upper Canada: The Formative Years, 1784-1841 (Toronto, ON: McClelland and Stewart, 1963) 194. This is an original formulation of what we now recognize as the constitutional principle of legitimacy: “Peace, order, and good government” or POGG. I find it interesting in terms of the local history of liberalism how the phrase has changed.
³³⁸ Immanuel Kant, On Education, 12.
³³⁹ Hunter, Culture and Government, 21.
³⁴⁰ McKay, “The Liberal Order Framework.”
theoretical approaches, from the progressive to the critical, while investigating how a minor colonial region adopted modern pedagogical and administrative techniques to rapidly develop a school system capable of drawing the participation of the vast majority of the population. Yet no matter how the topic is framed, the achievement of public education in what was then Upper Canada/Canada West is without a doubt one of the most significant and lasting outcomes of the turbulent times that marked our province’s early history. It would be arbitrary and presumptuous to tackle this topic without making a survey of some of the most influential accounts.

I. Beyond “The Social Control Thesis”

It is no longer possible to grant the singularly progressive nature of the nineteenth century European and North American efforts to develop state sponsored systems of public education. This is a result of a wave of scholarship that began roughly around the late 1960’s and extended through the 1980’s. Scholars during this period sought to offer insight into the motives of those in charge of educational reform as well as alternative assessments of the outcomes of reformers’ ambitions. Drawing for the most part from a critical perspective, this body of work has seen to it that what was once held to be a significant component of the grand narrative of Western progress must now be appraised carefully and with respect to ideological factors. These studies point to the ways in which the interests of particular groups were imposed on others in the race to establish state education. In the main, the notion of state education as an exemplary instance of the judicious formation of collective capacities is challenged in order to illustrate how
injustice and exploitation has been a perennial accompaniment of even this most celebrated of Western institutions.

Since the 1970’s scholars working in the Canadian context have detected no shortage of opportunity to analyze the development of systems of state sponsored public education as a major facet of the reification of bourgeois ideology. Michael Katz, Susan Houston, Alison Prentice, and a number of others have come to represent a vanguard of sorts in this area. It is safe to say that their revisionist social histories have altered the landscape so that it now seems impractical to ignore questions of ideological hegemony in educational contexts.

Katz, for example, has gone to great lengths to indicate the ways in which mechanisms of capitalist hegemony operated in nineteenth century educational contexts, particularly under the cloak of social reform. He proposes that even though the activities of upper class reformers were meant to appear humane, the targeting of behaviours deemed morally deficient was in fact driven by the advance of the “ideology of democratic capitalism,” which demanded the creation of institutions to perform functions such as “train and discipline an urban and industrial workforce.” Thus the drive to inculcate new skills, something clearly touted by reformers as a benefit of public education, is for Katz less a matter of general welfare and more a determined result of capitalist expediency. He considers this to be so widespread that “any attempt to explain

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the successful imposition...of public education must be part of a larger inquiry into the hegemony of democratic capitalism.”[343]

In certain cases the form of analysis exemplified by Katz has been extended to an even more forceful interpretation of hegemony as overt coercion and control. Alison Prentice’s book *The School Promoters* follows this approach. Guided by the question of class, she embarks on an analysis of the development of the public school system of Upper Canada and concludes that it was the direct product of the activities of upper class reformers who had as “their fundamental aims” the “control of the uncivilized poor” and the “promotion of middle class respectability and achievement” to the extent that the “school could not help but reflect these social and political biases.”[344] Later social historians would come to label the work of Katz, Prentice and others holding to a similar orientation as representative of the “social control thesis,” which focuses on the development of public institutions as evidence of a concerted campaign to reproduce bourgeois ideals throughout society.[345]

According to Bruce Curtis, although the embrace of this thesis “opened enormous new fields of investigation for educational history,” it “has tended to mystify educational development” by portraying it unilaterally, and therefore, abstractly.[346] By treating “educational reform as an essentially repressive process aimed at the control of the ‘poor’ or the working class by an ‘elite’ or bourgeoisie,” other interpretations sensitive to the

346 Curtis, “Preconditions of the Canadian State,” 342.
agency of members of the affected populations are neglected.347 In particular, Curtis finds that what is overlooked is the possibility that the political actions of mid-nineteenth century ruling classes were not just reflective of abstract ideological means of neutralizing the lower orders, but involved the complex deployment of practical means of “reconstructing” the “political subjectivity” of citizens for the sake of nation building.348 To correct this oversight he contends that attention must be paid to how the state used education as a means of working with the capacities of subjects, and not simply against them.

Recognizable in Curtis’s critique is the influence of Foucault’s analysis of power and the subject. Bearing in mind the previous chapter’s discussion of this analysis, Foucault, while working against the notion of power as a repressive force held by certain privileged groups and individuals, describes power nominalistically as something present in the complex relations occurring in society at variable levels and between individuals and institutions. The very fact of the perseverance of human activity indicates that these relations are fluid, reciprocal, and therefore, not governed by repressive force. Rather than a gridlock of unbearable domination, Foucault takes a Nietzschean view of history as manifold strategic contests that give rise to the material effects that comprise our experience. Primary among these effects is the subject itself, which is constructed as an effect of power insofar as contestations over how the world is and how it ought to be, like the competition between reformers and their opponents, results in opening up avenues of being while foreclosing others. However, the Foucauldian subject is never strictly forced to choose one avenue over another. The strategic exercise of power is testament to the

347 Curtis, “Preconditions of the Canadian State,” 342.
348 Curtis, “Preconditions of the Canadian State,” 342.
subject’s capacity for freedom, and so to choose. The subject is not as malleable and determined as those who favour a repressive notion of power might assume. It is a being whose capacity for freedom enables participation in its own development. Still, as Foucault tactfully acknowledges, the ways in which this participation is negotiated remain an open question.

Also noted in the previous chapter, Foucault asserts that this open question is the question of modern government. Insofar as it must take into account the subject’s agential capacities, modern government is defined by its ability to create conditions that strive to enable self-formation in ways that coincide with its particular aims. The corollary of this activity is that the state can no longer be conceived as existing in an external relation to subjects vis-à-vis previous forms of sovereign or juridical government. “I don’t think,” writes Foucault,

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.349

This is precisely what Foucault has in mind when in the same text he remarks that government “must be allowed the very broad meaning which it had in the sixteenth century.”350 Modern government need not be defined only in accordance with the interests of a domineering ruler or states. It can be identified in terms of complex practices of rule that have evolved as they must consider the recalcitrance of the subject, a quality most saliently demonstrated during the Reformation, which Foucault describes as

349 Foucault, “Afterword: The Subject and Power,” 214.
350 Foucault, “Afterword: The Subject and Power,” 221.
the “great crisis of the Western experience of subjectivity.” The novelty of this form of governance is this subjective quality becomes in the modern era less an obstacle to rule than a strategic target and, as such, the source of the varied means by which the conduct of subjects can be directed.

In *Building the Educational State* Curtis draws from Foucault to distinguish his analyses of public education in Canada West from that of the advocates of the social control thesis. Whereas they argue that the state persists as a cold monster, enamoured with its own class-based interests, and therefore, set externally in a confrontational relation to the population, he suggests, like Foucault, that the relation between the state and the population needs to be taken as more complex yet also more intimate. Doing so opens the possibility of investigating how the state operates on multiple fronts and through multiform tactics to govern the conduct of subjects individually and collectively. In this light, Curtis views the development of state education in Upper Canada as emerging from a “multi-faceted process of political struggle” that plays out in civil society. He argues that in the early to mid-nineteenth century this process was aimed at nation building through the deployment of a series of administrative, pedagogical and social disciplinary practices, all of which, he observes, were “centrally concerned with political self-making, subjectification, and subordination; with anchoring the conditions of political governance in the selves of the governed; with the transformation of rule into a popular psychology.”

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351 Foucault, “Afterword: The Subject and Power,” 213. In other contexts Foucault refers to the Reformation as “the greatest revolt of conduct the Christian West has known,” and one of the primary historical “insurrections of conduct”. See Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population*, 196, 228.


Katz once commented that the “exposition of the mechanisms of hegemony could provide work enough for a generation of scholars.”\textsuperscript{354} It is now possible to recognize the prescience of this statement, especially regarding the study of the social history of Canadian education. Curtis may be included among the members of the generation anticipated by Katz, albeit with a significant caveat. Curtis’s use of Foucault’s analysis of power enables him to shed the binaries of the social control thesis and identify what he argues are the means by which the state and public education acted in concert to produce the conditions for the spread of bourgeois hegemony. Curtis’s insight involves a reversal of the social control theorists’ ideological \textit{a priori} whereby “once set in motion…public education produced its own developmental logic.”\textsuperscript{355} He does not presume that this ideology is an abstract structural force, but instead sees it as an outcome embedded in the practices associated with state educational interventions. Furthermore, this logic is contingent upon the recalcitrance of subjects so that “educational interventions generated local opposition which in turn generated new educational interventions and new forms of opposition.”\textsuperscript{356} The hegemonic power arising from the development of state sponsored public education in Canada West was neither singular nor predetermined, but varied and conditional. It was, and in Curtis’s view remains, in the Foucauldian sense a manner of structuring, but to be sure, not determining, the “possible field of action” of the members of the population such that self-government in line with bourgeois principles might be obtained.\textsuperscript{357}


\textsuperscript{355} Curtis, \textit{Building the Educational State}, 373.


\textsuperscript{356} Curtis, \textit{Building the Educational State}, 373.

\textsuperscript{357} Foucault, “Afterword: The Subject and Power,” 221.
In the line of thought that Curtis follows from rejecting the totalizing claims entailed by ideologically focused analyses to describing how the citizens of Canada West were given to forms of self-making and self-governing through, to use his term, “habituation,” we see the reflection of one of the manners in which Foucault deploys governmentality. This is the mode of governmentality that allows Foucault to extend his analysis of disciplinary power and investigate on a wider scale how power operates between institutions and subjects reciprocally and through various mechanisms. Curtis uses aspects of this broader analysis of power to offer a perspective on the development of systems of public education in nineteenth century Canada West that indicates the intimate manner in which education enabled the state to penetrate civil society and perform the task of nation building by pedagogically inducing particular subjective comportments among the population.

However, while this perspective moves beyond the narrow confines of ideological determinism, thereby showing how in educational contexts the activities of subjects were just as productive as those of the state, what is yet called for is an investigation that broadens the analysis further by taking into account another of Foucault’s uses of governmentality. I contend that without this extension there is the risk of constructing a circular and even contradictory description of the relation between subjects and governmental institutions, precisely the problem Foucault confronted with his later thought.

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II. “Soulcraft as well as statecraft”

It is important to keep in mind that when Foucault undertook his “genealogy of the modern state” his intention was to respond to critics who, following the publication of Discipline and Punish, accused him of rendering an analysis of power too restricted by its emphasis on local institutions and practices and, therefore, unable to explain wider structures of hegemony without recourse to the kind of totalizing notion of domination that he openly rejected. His appreciation of these difficulties, and the basis of his response, is expressed in the March 8, 1978 lecture at the Collège de France when he asserts,

What I would like to show you…is how the emergence of the state as a fundamental political issue can in fact be situated within a more general history of governmentality, or, if you like, in the field of practices of power. I am well aware that there are those who say that in talking about power all we do is develop an internal and circular ontology of power, but I say: Is it not precisely those who talk of the state, of its history, development, and claims, who elaborate on an entity through history and who develop the ontology of this thing that would be the state? What if the state were nothing more than a way of governing? What if the state were nothing more than a type of governmentality? What if all these relations of power that gradually take shape on the basis of multiple and very diverse processes which gradually coagulate and form an effect, what if these practices of government were precisely the basis on which the state was constituted? Then we would have to say that the state is not that kind of cold monster in history that has continually grown and developed as a sort of threatening organism above civil society. What we would have to show would be how, from the sixteenth century, a civil society, or rather, quite simply a governmentalized society organized something both fragile and obsessive that is called the state. But the state is only an episode in government, and it is not government that is an instrument of the state. Or at any rate, the state is an episode in governmentality.


Foucault’s interrogative response shows how he intends to turn the tables on his critics by pressing further his historical nominalism and analyzing power not only in terms of the constitution of subjects but the constitution of the state as well. His 1978 and 1979 lectures at the Collège de France exemplify this investigative approach.

Under genealogical scrutiny Foucault finds that the subject and the state have engaged in processes of co-development since the post-sixteenth century “return to Stoicism” brought about a revival of questions of personal conduct and state legitimacy.362 The recurrence of these questions, which Foucault identifies as happening “at the point of intersection of two movements, two processes,” the “dismantling of feudal structures” entailed by the creation of territorially defined states after the Treaty of Westphalia and the “religious dispersion and dissidence” of the Reformation, can be historically traced correlatively with the “general problematic of government.”363 The crux of this problematic is formed by the state’s inclusion of the recalcitrance of subjects into considerations of its overall security and welfare. After the upheavals of the sixteenth century, Foucault thinks there was an increased administrative concern with how the state’s newly defined territorial limits were matched by subjects’ limited tolerance for overt displays of state violence. As evidence he points to a “flourishing development of a significant series of treatises” that began in the sixteenth century and peaked toward the end of the eighteenth, all in various ways aimed at advising rulers on how to govern.364 Foucault refers to this as the historical point where the blatantly harsh practices of sovereign rule were gradually subsumed under a new “arts of government” intent on

querying the limits of governmental power.\textsuperscript{365} These “arts,” which by the nineteenth century are “imbued with the principle: ‘One always governs too much’,\textsuperscript{366} are discernable in the operations of all modern states as an ongoing “form of critical reflection on governmental practice.”\textsuperscript{367}

When describing how the modern state emerges as an entity constituted through its various practices Foucault makes a number of further observations regarding its character. Two of these are immediately relevant to this discussion. The first relates to a “methodological precaution” offered in an earlier lecture as Foucault, when discussing how to apply genealogy as an ascending analysis of power that affords a nominalist escape from sovereign and juridically based deductive approaches, suggests “we must eschew the model of Leviathan in the study of power.”\textsuperscript{368} During a later interview, he reinforces this advice with his now famous remark “we need to cut off the King’s head: in political theory that has still to be done.”\textsuperscript{369} Among the issues involved in these assertions is Foucault’s criticism of political theory that overvalues the state by assuming it to be either a callous sovereign or the essential locus of political struggle. In both cases, the question of the state is reduced to one of legitimacy and, therefore, presumed answerable in regards to benevolence and domination or proper function. Foucault finds that this paradoxical reductive overvaluation is mistaken because it adheres to a narrow view of power as something held and used expediently. True to his nominalist perspective, Foucault rejects any \textit{a priori} idea of state power in favour of a practical and polymorphous concept through which the state appears less as a “mythicized abstraction”

\textsuperscript{365} Foucault, \textit{Security, Territory, Population}, 88.
\textsuperscript{366} Foucault, \textit{The Birth of Biopolitics}, 319.
\textsuperscript{367} Foucault, \textit{The Birth of Biopolitics}, 321.
\textsuperscript{368} Foucault, \textit{Two Lectures}, 102.
\textsuperscript{369} Foucault, \textit{Truth and Power}, 121.
and more as a fluid and heterogeneous collection of contingent practices or tactics.\textsuperscript{370} As such the state “does not have this unity, individuality, and rigorous functionality,” but is simply a term given to an agglomeration of agents and their activities that disperse power throughout civil society in various ways that may be referred to as government.\textsuperscript{371} The state, Foucault proposes, is “governmentalized” so that processes and tactics previously thought to be the privileged exercise of its centralized power become mobile and far-reaching.\textsuperscript{372} This is why he advocates analyzing government not in terms of questioning the legitimacy of those in power, but by sifting through the contingent historical development and operations of the multiplicity of activities that comprise the modern governmental state.

A second observation Foucault makes regarding the character of the modern governmentalized state follows from the previous as government becomes, Foucault offers, a “‘way of doing things’ directed towards objectives and regulating itself by continuous reflection.”\textsuperscript{373} According to Foucault, this differentiates the modern state from previous incarnations whose primary aim was the fulfilment of the will of the sovereign or, in the case of early modern forms of rule such as “Raison d’état” and “Police,” the total calculated management of the lives of citizens.\textsuperscript{374} Whereas these forms presume, following the advice of the Physiocrats, the statistical capacity to obtain detailed knowledge of all aspects of daily life, the governmentalized state criticizes the hubristic nature of attempting to turn this presumption into multiple direct interventions into the lives of citizens. What arises out of this criticism is something that, Gordon observes,

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{370} Foucault, \textit{Security, Territory, Population}, 109.
  \item \textsuperscript{371} Foucault, \textit{Security, Territory, Population}, 109.
  \item \textsuperscript{372} Foucault, \textit{Security, Territory, Population}, 109.
  \item \textsuperscript{373} Foucault, \textit{The Birth of Biopolitics}, 318.
  \item \textsuperscript{374} Foucault, \textit{Security, Territory, Population}, 227f.
\end{itemize}
reflects a “transformation in the relationship between knowledge and government” whereby the ambition of a complete science of governing is challenged by a radical interrogation of the state’s ability “to know” and so “to act.”

Foucault describes the ensuing governmental history of this breach with sovereignty and raison d’état as occurring under a liberal rationale or mentality, and adds that it is fundamentally a form of governing as a “critical reflection on governmental practice.” In the expanded terms he uses to transform this common modern political concept, liberalism is neither a philosophy nor an ideology but a flexible and mobile manner of practicing rule that recognises the necessity of adopting governmental activities to spheres developed beyond the immediate influence of the state, which include economy and the social but, above all, the “rationality of the governed.”

To be sure, this attention to the capacities of subjects is important as the historically demonstrated recalcitrant subject acts as liberalism’s main focus and “regulating principle.”

Foucault’s attribution of these characteristics to modern governance enables him to escape from becoming embroiled in a circular ontology of power by first breaking the hold of the picture of the state as unified possessor of centralized power. From this nominalistic position he then describes how governmental practices formerly ascribed solely to the state have become distributed throughout various agencies and across multiple spheres. The former keeps him from the trap of portraying the state as an abstract self-perpetuating source of domination, while the latter opens a critical matrix, as Dean writes, for rethinking the “conditions of the political” in broader terms as the

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376 Foucault, The Birth of Biopolitics, 321.
377 Foucault, The Birth of Biopolitics, 312.
378 Foucault, The Birth of Biopolitics, 312.
governmentalization or gradual encroachment of governmental practices into multiple contexts, such as economy and the social, in practical ways that play a significant role in the constitution of our experience. If, as Foucault declares, “we live in an era of governmentality discovered in the eighteenth century,” then it is an era only determinately depicted as the “state’s takeover (étatisation) of society” and more productively analyzed by attending to the historical emergence of liberal “techniques” and “tactics of government” that have “allowed the state to survive” and flourish in different forms. Recognizing how this has been the case is crucial to Foucault’s critical purpose of determining the limits of experience. Especially insofar as his analysis of liberalism, as a “way of doings things” that is eminently concerned with the interpenetration of state and individual interests, serves this purpose by providing a set of critical lenses. These lenses can be used for discerning how the modern state’s survival has been underwritten by governmental calculations that are deployed in practices meant to induce an array of subjective comportments among a population.

None of this, however, should lead to the mistaken belief that what Foucault has in mind when speaking of governmentality is something akin to the idea of nation building advanced in recent years by some historical sociologists, a group that includes some of the scholars whose work has already been mentioned, such as Curtis. Foucault makes it clear that he diverges from this idea in his genealogy of modern government when he states that one “must do without a theory of the state, as one can and must forgo

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379 Dean, Governmentality, 60.
an indigestible meal.” Dean clarifies this divergence when he explains that for certain historical sociologists,

The nation-state was historically constructed through the subordination of various arenas of rule to a more or less central authority and the investment of the duty of the exercise of that authority to long-standing, if not permanent, institutions and personnel.

In other words, the primary culprit separating Foucault’s thoughts on government from that of historical sociologists is the Weberian concept of power as a function of the state monopoly on violence, a concept that inevitably informs a totalizing view of the state itself. So even when nation building is portrayed by historical sociologists as the outcome of the complex play of a variety of governmental functions, Dean finds that their adherence to Weber’s concept of state power results in integrating these functions so that the state persists as a “relatively unified actor.” The upshot of this adherence is a perspective that remains cynically mired in precisely the same questions of sovereignty and legitimacy that Foucault’s nominalist analysis of power seeks to escape.

Attempting to mitigate this perspective by adopting a Foucauldian analysis of power and the subject does not go far enough to move beyond these questions, since not concurrently attending to the history of liberal governmentality raises the risk of falling into a contradiction between: First, accounting for the recalcitrance of subjects, and second, the portrayal of the state as the fixed locus of hegemonic power. Though initially held out as a significant factor, the point is that in such cases the subject’s recalcitrance is

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381 See Foucault, *The Birth of Biopolitics*, 76-77.
382 Dean, *Governmentality*, 34.
384 Dean, *Governmentality*, 34.
eventually viewed as the increasingly diminished target of state hegemony. Foucault sees this as the endorsement of an impossible position. After all, the “crucial problem of power is not that of voluntary servitude (how could we seek to be slaves?)” Power is evident not as the paralytic end of a series of struggles, but in relations that have “a reciprocal appeal, a perpetual linking and a perpetual reversal.” It is present only where there is confrontation, insubordination and the possibility of “escape.” Without this possibility there would be no need to speak of power, since its further exercise would be moot.

III. A Nominalist View of the State

The discussion must now return to Curtis and reinforce the particular outlook of an investigation of the emergence of state sponsored public education that employs the broader governmental analysis of power presented by Foucault. Curtis’s ground breaking study, *Building the Educational State*, exposes the ways in which the early history of education in Canada involved the state’s deployment of various pedagogical ideas and techniques intended to incite citizen-subjects to exercise class-based forms of self-government believed appropriate to the aims and ambitions of the burgeoning Canadian nation. In particular, Curtis finds that public education played a doubly constitutive role in this history by delineating a realm within which pedagogical ideas and techniques could be applied for the sake of the intertwined goals of self-formation and state-formation. Overall he contends this was a new role, one demonstrated mainly by the array of changes that distinguished the centralized and uniform system of schools that

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385 Foucault, “Afterword: The Subject and Power,” 221.
developed out of the government acts of 1846 and 1850 from the somewhat disordered regionally administered schools of early nineteenth century Upper Canada.\textsuperscript{388}

Insofar as Curtis claims that this centralization and uniformity was the outcome of the state and education merging into a political “unity,” something he maintains is indicative of the hegemonic persistence of the “bourgeois order,” his analysis continues to look at the state and its institutions with regard to questions of its legitimacy and public consent.\textsuperscript{389} Therefore, although it may be that Curtis’s proclaimed “Marxism sensitive to cultural forms” leads him to attempt to root out deep hegemonic structures, this somewhat romantic goal inadvertantly results in his engaging a circular ontology of power that is inconsistent with the extreme nominalism underlying the Foucauldian “analysis of power and subjectivity” that he also claims as an influence.\textsuperscript{390}

I think this should not be considered a shortcoming, but may be accepted as a compelling invitation to investigate further the roles played by state and educational institutions in the constitution of experience. Curtis has already illustrated in part how this might be accomplished, but a further step is needed. To begin, any association of the state with a reductive view of power must be discarded. The immediate effect of this move is to grant the state the same contingent ontological status as the Foucauldian subject. The state and the subject may then be considered in terms of a mutually constitutive relation that is neither causally linear nor homogeneous. Notions of hegemony of the class-based or ideological form that Curtis detects are exposed as too simple to account for the dynamics of this relation. So although it cannot be claimed with certainty that the hegemonies of the nineteenth century bourgeois order have endured in such a direct

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item Curtis, \textit{Building the Educational State}, 15, 131, 159, 366f.
\item Curtis, \textit{Building the Educational State}, 317, 380.
\item Curtis, \textit{Building the Educational State}, 19.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
manner as to have taken a state enforced, invisible and totalizing hold over us, it is at least possible that what appears to be a despairing situation may involve a more diffuse and complex history.

Seeing things in this way entails adopting a different interrogative attitude, one demonstrated by Foucault’s questions regarding the state and governmentality. To paraphrase those questions, what if the history of state education in Canada West, and even the subsequent history of education in the same region, is an episode in governmentality? That is, what if instead of attempting to explain education as an inherently hegemonic precondition of Canadian state formation, a project that from the beginning includes the state as given or originary, the mode of inquiry turns to questioning how these two institutions, which have managed to insinuate themselves into our experience, have been historically constructed as a constellation of practices and in ways that nonetheless conveys formidable authority? Is this not, recalling dispersive and disruptive intent of Foucault’s notion of critique, a more politically productive and epistemically less contentious way of exposing the contingent history of these institutions and their possible effects on the present?

In a later essay Curtis himself recognizes the value of putting into practice the non-reductive critical attitude reflected by such questions. While commenting on the novel approach to Canadian history offered by Ian McKay, whose work will be considered below, he affirms the usefulness of the “Foucauldian preoccupation with liberal governmentality” for “engaging” history as “a particular kind of articulation of

391 Bruce Curtis, “After ‘Canada’: Liberalisms, Social Theory, and Historical Analysis,” in Liberalism and Hegemony: Debating the Canadian Liberal Revolution, 176-200.
techniques of government of others and of the government of the self.” In the main, Curtis points to the need to replace the essentialist binaries that narrow the purview of socio-political history, for instance, state/civil, with modalities of power. This means looking through Foucauldian lenses to see how “we inhabit state categories” insofar as “state intervention” is no longer indicative of an expression of dominating power, but is in effect a fluid and relational reconstruction of civil society and, accordingly, our experience. In this way, that is, by following Foucault’s nominalism, the “history of state formation” becomes the “conditional and conditioned history of theories, practices, technologies, and strategies, both in general and in the Canadian instance, in their particular articulations.”

Interestingly, early to mid-nineteenth century “debates over reading instruction” is one of the two examples of practices of the government of self and others that Curtis suggests might be analyzed productively in the educational context of Canada West. Seemingly mundane issues of this type are usually buried under instances of war, rebellion, contested legislation, and other activities that are more likely to be recognized by commentators. A closer inspection reveals that reading instruction carried forward a wide range of concerns related to the hedonistic use of pedagogical power to cultivate a morally discerning faculty of taste, that is, according to the prevalent models of white, masculine, Christian virtue. Reading instruction is a topic Curtis has dealt with

392 Curtis, “After ‘Canada’: Liberalisms, Social Theory, and Historical Analysis,” 186, 190.
393 Curtis, “After ‘Canada’: Liberalisms, Social Theory, and Historical Analysis,” 194.
394 Curtis, “After ‘Canada’: Liberalisms, Social Theory, and Historical Analysis,” 189-190.
previously.\textsuperscript{395} It is also a topic that will be taken up in this dissertation in Chapter 5. I will postpone a fuller discussion until then.

To return to present concerns, the more diffuse and open ended mode of analysis of the state indicated by Foucault’s notion of liberal governmentality entails facing up to certain hazards. One of these is acknowledged by Curtis when he suggests that analyzing liberal governmentality must not lead to either flattening the “field of investigation in principle, so that all attempts to govern are seen as equivalent,” or mistakenly adopting the notion that if government occurs through a variety of means then it precludes government from governing.\textsuperscript{396} What is needed, and fundamental to keeping in play the “conventional conception of liberalism as the rational government of self and others,” which Curtis correctly recognizes as something to which Foucault is “true,” is a sense of the “homology” of the history of liberal governance based on its being “axiomatically the government of freedom.”\textsuperscript{397} Maintaining this sense is the reminder that with governmentality Foucault attends primarily to the one size fits all rationality that persists in common conceptions of liberalism by performing another of his characteristic nominalist inversions on the notion of reason, and therefore freedom, so that something commonly held as an elemental proof is reinstated as a target and effect of multiple strategies. Or, as Foucault stresses, since analyzing power in governmentality is about tracing the effects of “actions upon other actions” freedom must be viewed constructively.


\textsuperscript{396} Curtis, “After ‘Canada’: Liberalisms, Social Theory, and Historical Analysis,” 193.

\textsuperscript{397} Curtis, “After ‘Canada’: Liberalisms, Social Theory, and Historical Analysis,” 193.
as performative and self-making; not, as in the Kantian sense, strictly a rational act of an abstract will.\footnote{398}{Foucault, “Afterword: The Subject and Power,” 220.}

Dean clarifies this concern by highlighting the contextualism of governmentality. According to Dean, the same reasoning that holds liberal governance to be a pluralisation of tactics and techniques aimed at shaping conduct prohibits it from being “approached...as a coherent set of ideas” or “as a definite institutional structure.”\footnote{399}{Dean, Governmentality, 61.} To take such a unifying or reductive approach would again run afoul of the genealogical nominalism of governmentality by treating liberalism developmentally, as if its basic conceptual nature has propelled a historical series of institutional advances. The Foucauldian idea of liberalism does not endorse any notion of its instigating a “succession of forms of state that compose the ‘normal’ stages of development of liberal polities.”\footnote{400}{Dean, Governmentality, 61.} There are no “stages” of liberalism supported by whatever mode of political philosophy happens to obtain prominence, as in “reason of state, classical liberalism, welfarism, neo-liberalism and so on.”\footnote{401}{Dean, Governmentality, 61.} Instead, the appearance of developmental stages ought to be understood as evidence of the inherently critical nature of liberal thought. Each supposed stage marks an substantial change brought about by liberalism’s “ethos of critique,” noted previously as the capacity for self-regulation that demands vigilance regarding the prudential governing of the conduct of the state and subjects. Since this vigilance arises out of a concern with freedom, it will not be expressed in the same ways in different contexts. Not only, Dean writes, does this show “that liberal government

\footnote{398}{Foucault, “Afterword: The Subject and Power,” 220.}
\footnote{399}{Dean, Governmentality, 61.}
\footnote{400}{Dean, Governmentality, 61.}
\footnote{401}{Dean, Governmentality, 61.}
contains within it a space for contestation,” it is also the reason why liberalism’s “key targets…can change according to the circumstances in which it is located”.

In this light, I have chosen to take care to avoid subverting the potential critical value of employing governmentality as an investigative method by presuming that whatever can be applied in one historical location can be carried over intact to another. Just as there is no set of precise connections between classical liberalism and neoliberalism, other than their engagement with the rationality of subjects, the governmental practices of nineteenth century Canada cannot be meticulously paralleled with those of another region in the same period. Not unless there is the presumption of a universalizeable liberal ideology. By now it should be clear that at the very least this presumption is antithetical to the nominalism that informs governmentality.

The distinction can be illuminated further with examples from Curtis’s writings. At the conclusion of Building the Educational State, he comments on the “international” character of state education in Canada West. The instances of borrowing and trading that occurred between the educational reformers of Canada West and their “counterparts in other countries” were common and openly acknowledged by the reformers themselves. Because of this, Curtis thinks that even though education in Canada West “had its peculiar features” these were overshadowed by the incorporation of characteristics from multiple locations. He writes,

The Canadian public schools embodied the pedagogical practices of Prussia and France, the inspectorial experience of Holland, France,
Prussia, Scotland, England, and Ireland, a curriculum derived from a righteously-glossed political economy applied to Ireland, and administrative devices developed in the United States.\textsuperscript{408}

Rather than see this widespread cooperation as an innocent trade in tried and tested methods, Curtis views it suspiciously as symptomatic of the purposeful homogenization of education performed by the privileged participants “in a vibrant international ruling class political culture.”\textsuperscript{409} He equates this with liberal ideology by describing state education as the enforcement of the sort of humanistic, and thus, universal notions of morality and character commonly associated with the reforms of the period. This is a somewhat different historical and political perspective than the one expressed in his more recent comments on McKay. There he concludes,

I argue that we would be much better off thinking in terms of histories of relations, practices, fields, figurations, games, tactics, and strategies in a much more abstract sense and letting the ‘Canadian’ in ‘Canadian history’ refer to a sense of the transient ways in which such things are territorialized at particular moments, de-territorialized at others. We study ‘Canadian history’ (or don’t study it) because of certain contingencies.\textsuperscript{410}

The totalizing reduction of historical events to outcomes of the hegemonic ideological ambitions of certain classes is now replaced in Curtis’s thought with an endorsement of history as a polymorphous play of power relations capable of being traced according to movements of territorialization, meaning the contingent dispersion of activities throughout particular physical domains. With this change comes a view of liberalism no longer tied narrowly to the humanistic and class based ideals of a select group, but one in line with the version portrayed by Foucault as an eminently practical rationality of

\textsuperscript{408} Curtis, \textit{Building the Educational State}, 379-380.
\textsuperscript{409} Curtis, \textit{Building the Educational State}, 379.
\textsuperscript{410} Curtis, “After ‘Canada’: Liberalisms, Social Theory, and Historical Analysis,” 194-195.
government. It is this practical expression of rule, developed out of an overarching concern with the problem of freedom, which gives liberal governmentality its specificity.

Thus far I have looked at some prominent examples of how the history of state education in English-speaking Canada has been addressed critically. My brief comparison of the work of a select group of commentators indicates two main ideas. First of all, that the aims of ideologically based modes of analysis are frustrated by their adherence to a reductive concept of state and institutional power. Second, I showed how in spite of modifying an analysis to overcome the limitations of ideological approaches by including Foucauldian elements, avoiding being caught in a circular ontology of power requires the full press of Foucault’s nominalism. This presupposes using Foucault’s analysis of power to interrogate the constitution of the state and its institutions in concert with a similar focus on the subject, leading to a way of looking at the history of politics that expands the investigative field of vision by thinking outside of the “theory of sovereignty,” that is, of both state and individual subject. In effect this approach is reflective of a typical Foucauldian reversal in that the conventional critical aim of devising a new politics of state legitimacy and individual liberty is traded for a concern with the historical emergence of politics as governmental practice.

In the context of these ideas, I extended the discussion of liberalism and described how Foucault uses the term to signify a regime of political practices that emerge in the modern era, as well as a mode of analysis. Because liberalism carries a great deal of historical and conceptual baggage, Foucault’s version benefits from being distinguished as much as possible from its more common sovereignty-based relative. One way of making this distinction is to caution against employing it structurally and progressively.

411 Foucault, Two Lectures, 103.
by stressing its specificity. As a tool of analysis, liberal governmentality’s specificity means its application in distinct locations cannot presume the same universality as that granted common versions of liberalism. Rather than a frame of reference fashioned according to foundational ideals, liberal politics viewed as governmentality is considered in terms of various practices reflective of particular concerns with the conduct of a population in a specific region. Then again, this does not mean that the influence of a multiplicity of discursive elements on these practices can be discounted. Looking at a particular event or period in terms of practice does not rule out taking into account the influence of modes of thought that developed in other regions. It also means seeking out among the similarities those disparities and modifications that warrant or impede practice.

With the above in mind, I contend that bringing liberal governmentality into the unique context of Canada West requires a kind of sensitivity to historical textures that is perhaps precluded or limited by other approaches. Even in its most common guise liberalism has many different facets. It would be heavy-handed to presume it amenable to unmodified transmission between disparate contexts. In saying this I have in mind the descendants of Louis Hartz and Gad Horowitz, for whom liberalism serves to define Canada as a colonial outpost of the European reformist experiment. However loosely affiliated the followers of Hartz and Horowitz are believed to be, as a rule, they retain an overriding curiosity for the spread of liberalism as an ideologically consistent doctrine. At the very least, this discounts the possibility of homology; in other words, that there are a

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413 Horowitz, “Conservatism, Liberalism, and Socialism in Canada: An Interpretation.”
“multitude of liberalisms” that “share a definitional resemblance, but not an essential identity.”

Although they have a rather Foucauldian tone, the words quoted in the last sentence are written by McKay when promoting an alternative manner of structuring analyses of Canadian history according to the advance of liberal forms of rule. Despite certain difficulties, some of which are pointed out by Curtis in an aforementioned essay, I find that McKay’s “Liberal Order Framework” offers a distinct invitation to seek alternatives to more prevalent treatments of liberalism in Canadian history, which often treat it as a reformist political movement whose importation underscores Canada’s status as either a colonial fragment or an extension of bourgeois hegemony.

IV. Cartography/Reconnaissance

With his “Liberal Order Framework”, McKay intends to re-energize Canadian historiography by offering a “third paradigm” beyond progressive or neo-Marxist methods. He thinks these have become entangled in a number of fruitless contests, all or most deriving from their procedural reliance upon binaries. As an alternative to the frustrations of dyadism he favours, not surprisingly in this case, treating Canada nominalistically, and thus as a non-essential historical expression of a variety of assemblages and divisions of political, social, cultural, and other narratives that have emerged under a liberal rubric. His “core argument” makes this clear:

The category ‘Canada’ should henceforth denote a historically specific project of rule, rather than either an essence we must defend or an empty

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As with Hunter, this is McKay’s view of Marxism and noted for the purposes of explicating his perspective.
homogeneous space we must possess. Canada-as-project can be analyzed through the study of the implantation and expansion over a heterogeneous terrain of a certain politico-economic logic – to wit, liberalism.416

The method that follows is described by McKay as a “strategy of reconnaissance”417 that takes a “problem-centred approach” to “probing the Canadian state’s logical and historical conditions of possibility”.418 By looking to expose the contingent formation of Canada as a political state, it is intended to be a method that has “abandoned synthesis as an unattainable goal” in order to “think Canada in a different way.”419

Of course, not everyone is willing to accept this without qualification. Curtis offers the response most appropriate to this discussion. He views McKay’s stance as “promising,” but limited.420 So Curtis brings “useful bits” of Foucault into play in order to argue that the liberal order framework displaces the essentialist or holistic view of Canada onto liberalism.421 McKay’s concept thereby extends an “oversimplified”422 critique that cannot account for the ways in which liberalism is multifaceted and rife with “thoroughly contradictory positions” and effecting “unintended consequences”.423 For example, Curtis cites Uday Mehta’s evaluation of liberalism’s paradoxically selective promotion of freedom and equality, which results in prejudice, exclusion, and inequality.424 Treating liberalism, or, for that matter, any body of thought as a “unitary ideology” risks overlooking such “dynamic and inherent complexities of historical

420 Curtis, “After ‘Canada’: Liberalisms, Social Theory, and Historical Analysis” 177.
422 Curtis, “After ‘Canada’: Liberalisms, Social Theory, and Historical Analysis,” 184.
423 Curtis, “After ‘Canada’: Liberalisms, Social Theory, and Historical Analysis,” 185.
development.” Hence Curtis recommends a “broad view of liberalism as a mode of government” that is sensitive to hegemony in a non-ideological manner by following an analysis of power that exposes the “inherent tensions between particular ways of casting universality and particularity”; in other words, Foucauldian liberal governmentality.

Along with his holistic treatment of liberal governance, Curtis finds that McKay preserves essentialist aspects of classical liberalism’s notion of the individual subject. This is evident in his appropriation of C. B. Macpherson’s ideas. Paraphrasing a passage from The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism, McKay writes that liberalism “begins when one accords prior ontological and epistemological status to ‘the individual’ – the human being who is the ‘proprietor of him- or herself’.” Just as McKay’s holistic concept of liberalism limits the investigative purview, Macpherson’s “historically specific” Lockean property-based view of the subject precludes attention to the variety of modes of subjectification that have evolved beside and against liberal practices of governance. “The possessive individual if seventeenth-century political theory,” writes Curtis, is not the possessive individual of nineteenth-, twentieth-, or twenty-first-century Canada.

I agree that MacKay’s invocation of Macpherson’s interpretation of Locke places a reductive view of the subject at the core of his liberal order framework, and so limits its critical potential. Nevertheless, this limitation is not insurmountable. The Lockean subject

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425 Curtis, “After ‘Canada’: Liberalisms, Social Theory, and Historical Analysis,” 186.
426 Curtis, “After ‘Canada’: Liberalisms, Social Theory, and Historical Analysis,” 178.
427 Curtis, “After ‘Canada’: Liberalisms, Social Theory, and Historical Analysis,” 186.
430 Curtis, “After ‘Canada’: Liberalisms, Social Theory, and Historical Analysis,” 188.
431 Curtis, “After ‘Canada’: Liberalisms, Social Theory, and Historical Analysis,” 188.
may be held as fundamental to doctrinal liberalism, especially as it is founded in the principle of private property, but I contend that Locke’s characterization of its impressionable and yet self-formative capacities has made it an important condition for mass public instruction. In brief, this is because the Lockean subject secures the notion of pedagogical practices that habituate without overly infringing on freedom. I will look at this more closely in Chapter 5.

Despite, and even because of these and similar criticisms, I maintain that McKay’s liberal order framework stands as compelling call to retrace the deep and complex furrows carved by regimes of governance into the landscape of Canadian history in the name of anthropological idealism. My reasons have less to do with the overall coherence of McKay’s proposal, after all, even he refers to it as “an early and inevitably flawed and partial reading,” and are more about taking it up as a site and period specific complement to my attempt to apply liberal governmentality to the Canadian context.432

Like Curtis, I find that McKay wishes to hold onto a holistic idea of liberalism that is not fully attuned to its contradictions and unintended consequences, and that his emphasis on the primacy of a Lockean notion of individual self-ownership is similarly problematic. From a Foucauldian perspective, it is troubling to read that the liberalism of the liberal order in Canada is “something more akin to a secular religion or a totalizing philosophy than to an easily manipulated set of political ideas,” and that at the “conceptual nucleus” of the liberal order is a concept of the individual “not to be confused with actual living beings” but held as the “abstract principle” of “true self-possession” that framed the aspirations of mid-Victorians.433 These notions irritate, even

though McKay seems to balance them by suggesting that the liberal order framework is a “way of doing history that locates the ‘problem of Canada’ within a history of power relations,” and, as such, imagines the country “simultaneously as an extensive projection of liberal rule” and “an intensive process of subjectification,” both properly Foucauldian intentions.

But this irritation dissipates if expectations are tempered by accepting the liberal order framework in a spirit similar to the critical attitude advocated by Foucault. McKay may cross nominalism with essentialism, and power relations with ideology, but overall I think his proposal takes on a different tone if it is accepted primarily as a “reconnaissance” of “an inescapably hybrid political project.” In other words, it is productive to approach it heuristically as a necessarily open-ended, and therefore, revisable mode of historical investigation that above all seeks to unearth “what was startling, revolutionary, and endangered about the nucleus of liberalism when it first assumed its pedagogical role in northern North America.”

While words such as “revolutionary” have a utopian connotation that is antithetical to Foucauldian critique, McKay employs the term to emphasize the possibility of viewing liberalism in Canada as a unique adaptation notwithstanding its importation from “the colonial metropole.” Liberalism may have begun life in the Canadian colonies as something “derivative” of the political landscape of Britain and parts of the European Continent, but it evolved differently in a region at once an outpost of the Crown

and a neighbour to the “hegemonic liberalism of the United States.” War and border incursions, the influence of American economic expansionism, and the spread of republicanism, were threats that had to be negotiated along with the difficulties arising from the exercise of sovereign power from almost half the world away. Add to this an internal division between the English and French, and the hybridity of Canadian liberalism is apparent.

McKay also draws attention to the illiberalism of Canadian liberalism by noting that the response to threats and confrontation was to make the object of liberal rule an abstract ideal of the subject. Recalling Mehta, liberalism made a particular set of capacities preconditions for inclusion into the political order. But this was not exclusive to Canada. Similar to Mehta’s work on India, Ann Marie Stoler has illustrated how in Dutch colonies the ideal of liberal subjectivity entailed political and social hegemony guided by definitions of a “citizenry fit to rule.” She notes how liberalism carries with it an inherent racism based on “a fictional foundation” that made it “exclusionary…by definition.” Egregious examples of this are found in the works of Locke and J. S. Mill, who deem savages those unable to obtain the rationality necessary to be governed according to liberty. Tellingly, just as liberal racism

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445 Locke writes of the natural improvement gained through knowledge pursued by rational subjects as opposed to the “wants and ignorance of the ancient savage Americans.” See John Locke, An Essay Concerning Human Understating (London, UK: William Tegg and Co., 1879) Bk. IV, Ch. xii, sec. 11, 549. Accessed April 20, 2012 http://books.google.ca/books?id=5P8QAAAAYAAJ&printsec=frontcover&dq=John+Locke&hl=en&sa=X&ei=rIG6T8fBIIn-6gHC_4X7Cg&ved=0CEgQ6AEwAg#v=onepage&q=savage&f=false.
446 Marianna Valverde notes the key passage in Mill’s On Liberty,
Infantilizes the presumably uncivilized, the exclusion of the non-rational includes children, who Stoler writes,

Are invariably othered in ways that compare them to lower-order beings, they are animal-like, lack civility, discipline, and sexual restraint; their instincts are base, they are too close to nature, they are, like racialized others, not fully human. 447

In espousing such ideas it is not surprising that, Stoler observes, “Liberal philosophers, colonial policy makers, and nationalist thinkers shared an overwhelming concern with the dispositions of very small children and the malleabilities of their minds.” 448 Thus we find that from Locke and Rousseau to James and John Stuart Mill the subject of education has been of particular fascination.

McKay detects the same racist and exclusionary mechanisms operating in colonial Canada under liberal rule as women, Aboriginals, and non-whites “were often conceptualized as doubtful prospects for liberal individualism.” 449 Similar prejudice and division were extended to a running confrontation between the British and French. In the nineteenth century the notion of Englishness served as a euphemism for all things rational, disciplined, and progressive, especially in terms of economy. French Canadians who did not display British qualities were considered to be representative of a slothful

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It is, perhaps, hardly necessary to say that this doctrine is meant to apply only to human beings in the maturity of their faculties. We are not speaking of children, or of young persons below the age at which the law may fix as that of manhood or womanhood. Those who are still in a state to require being taken care of by others, must be protected against their actions as against external injury. For the same reasons, we may leave out of consideration those backward states of society in which the race itself may be considered as in its nonage . . . a ruler full of the spirit of improvement is warranted in the use of any expedients that will attain an end, perhaps otherwise unattainable. Despotism is a legitimate mode of government in dealing with barbarians, provided the end be their improvement.


447 Stoler, Race and the Education of Desire, 151.
448 Stoler, Race and the Education of Desire, 152.
and superstitious lineage. Even Foucault identifies this attitude in the literature of the time. In a 1979 lecture\textsuperscript{450} he suspends his Eurocentric historical bias to comment on a passage in Adam Ferguson’s 1767 essay on civil society.\textsuperscript{451} With the Seven Years War recently ended, Ferguson attributes the French failure in North America to utopianism and bureaucracy that exemplified economically stultifying “political totalization”.\textsuperscript{452} The British, on the other hand, arrived in North America with an attitude of economic non-intervention of the sort fostered by liberal political economy. Reflecting on Ferguson, Foucault sees this as demonstrative of economic liberalism, which arises in its most identifiable shape out of the Scottish Enlightenment’s promotion of government by interest, that is, through the market.

All of these aspects of liberalism accumulate in the project of public schooling in Canada West. Schooling found its pedagogical purpose on a liberal concept of the subject derived from Locke, a teachable subject possessed of a developmental capacity for the rational exercise of freedom. At the same time, it would serve as a preventative measure against American threats by deploying curriculum that promoted Englishness and disregarded any difference from this ideal. Moreover, it would be the site for inculcating participation in the social and political order as a matter of interest; that of all and each spontaneously supported in the market.

These are the areas I will explore in Chapters 4 and 5. For now, it is helpful before looking at these important issues to understand how government in Upper Canada/Canada West had to evolve the ability to exercise power in the seemingly

\textsuperscript{450} Foucault, \textit{The Birth of Biopolitics}, 280-281.
\textsuperscript{452} Foucault, \textit{The Birth of Biopolitics}, 281.
paradoxical manner identified by Cousin’s “double character”.\footnote{Michele Dagenais also identifies this notion of the “double sense” of liberal governmental power as she describes the creation of municipalities in the Canadian colonies, and their function as sites of manageable local political participation. Notably, she sees this occurring as a “way to neutralize possible popular opposition and stifle lurking inclinations to rebellion”. See Michele Dagenais, “The Municipal Territory: A Product of the Liberal Order?” in Liberalism and Hegemony: Debating the Canadian Liberal Revolution, 208.} That is, the authorities in Upper Canada/Canada West needed to be confronted with the hazards of harshly imposing government so that calculative engagement with strategies that used power more economically might begin. The Rebellion of 1837 provided just such an opportunity.

In writing of William Lyon Mackenzie and his role in the Rebellion of 1837, William Kilbourn remarks that, though the decade beginning in 1830 determined the “destiny for the cause of liberalism throughout the world,” Upper Canada was a location where “the liberal infection was not catching”.\footnote{William Kilbourn, The Firebrand: William Lyon Mackenzie and the Rebellion in Upper Canada (Toronto, ON: Dundurn Press, 1956) 81-82.} While it is true that judged by more traditional ideological divisions Upper Canadians appeared rooted in the conservatism of allegiance to the Crown, by the end of the decade the operations of governmental power in the western colony would be forever changed. Thus opposite Kilbourn is historian Gerald Craig, who concludes his study Upper Canada: The Formative Years 1784-1841, “In the political realm moderate men were at last gaining at the expense of extremists, and would soon help to release and quicken the constructive energies of the population.”\footnote{Craig, Upper Canada: The Formative Years, 1784-1841, 275, in Ian McKay, “Canada as a Long Liberal Revolution, in Liberalism and Hegemony, 358.} McKay cites this passage and asserts that, “It was in the two decades following the 1840’s that the project of Canada took shape.”\footnote{McKay, “Canada as a Long Liberal Revolution,” 359.} To assess the evolution of this shape he recommends a particular periodization that concentrates on “seven arresting
moments” in Canadian history. In particular, he notes “the Rebellions of 1837, Lord Durham’s Report, and the Act of Union of 1841.” In the next chapter I take up Mackay’s advice, and consider two of these arresting moments as the backdrop for tracing liberal changes in governmental power that created the conditions of possibility for public schooling in Canada West.

CHAPTER 4

“A PHENOMENAL REPUBLIC OF INTERESTS”

One must analyze institutions from the standpoint of power relations, rather than vice versa, and that the fundamental point of anchorage of the relationships, even if they are embodied and crystallized in an institution, is to be found outside the institution.459

In this chapter I will analyze two arresting moments in Ontario history in order to trace shifts in the deployment of power that reveal the conditions of possibility for the local emergence of liberal governmentality and its most prominent armature, public schooling. The first moment is the Rebellion of 1837, and, in particular, the trial and execution of Samuel Lount and Peter Matthews. As McKay writes, “It was only with the defeat of the radical democrats in 1837-8 and the imposition of a new form of rule under Lords Durham and Sydenham that the liberal revolution could move from utopian dream to emergent reality.”460 Though, as pointed out near the end of the previous chapter, my preference for a Foucauldian critical attitude means words such as revolution and utopia are to be held misleading or even hollow, the point remains that the Rebellion and its immediate aftermath proved a fertile ground for the growth of liberal tactics of government. This was not because of a lessening of governmental power, but a product of a novel calculative and economic form of governmental logic, precisely the one that Foucault associates with liberalism. As I will indicate, this logic is apparent in how the use of governmental power is curtailed after the Rebellion despite the Upper Canadian authorities’ ability to claim historical and legal justification for acting otherwise.

458 Foucault, The Birth of Biopolitics, 46.
459 Michel Foucault, “Afterword: The Subject and Power,” 222.
460 Ian McKay, “Canada as a Long Liberal Revolution, 358.
Reading through what amounts to a historical breach in the exercise of power, I trace how two specific technologies, namely, the power to punish and race, are brought into play in the Upper Canadian context in ways that signify the appearance of elements of liberal governmentality. These elements are as follows: first, a shift in the notion of security, second, a corresponding change in the orientation of rule from external or sovereign to internal or biopolitical, third, the exercise of biopower according to a calculative rationale that takes into account the limits of governmental power, and fourth, the exclusionary use of race to establish binary divisions among the population, and therefore, generate positivity around a new and insidiously extreme exercise of governmental power. The latter being a right that biopolitical government retains paradoxically as a necessary remnant of sovereign rule.

Before providing a brief explanation of the two reasons why race stands out in this analysis, certain aspects of Foucault’s notion of this often-controversial concept should be noted. For Foucault, race is not ethnic and does not refer to the scapegoating of others.\footnote{Stoler, \textit{Race and the Education of Desire}, 69.} Race points to historical divisions made among European populations ruled under a burgeoning biopolitical rubric. Most importantly, race is a political technology that enables biopolitics to work. It does this, and here is the first of the two reasons why it stands out, by distinguishing what must in the name of security be excluded from a population. Thus race simultaneously presumes a vision, however dubious, of what is to be included. To be sure, in terms of exclusions, race combines the sovereign language of war with the epidemiological biopolitics of population, thereby enabling government to act defensively against perceived enemies. In the case of inclusions, the exclusionary activities of government act as the conditions for the interventional deployment of
specific notions of what must be preserved and nurtured. In my use of Foucault’s notion of race neither these exclusions nor these inclusions will be treated anachronistically or judged, though it is granted in advance that the division and segregation of populations is objectionable. If anything, the Foucauldian idea of race used in the following enables a critical insight into Foucault’s analysis of governance, especially how privileged forms of subjectivity are historically sedimented in public institutions. The discussion will not take up the effects of these beyond discerning how certain mechanisms of power, which I contend included race, were deployed historically in the construction of our most prominent institutions. In Upper Canada, and later Canada West/Ontario, this proves important, since race acts as a prime instrument in the development of institutions geared toward pedagogically inducing behaviours associated with the troubling Imperial mythology of Englishness. Not just in terms of British origin, but of kinds of behaviours that were subsumed under the idea of being English, such as those expressed by John Stuart Mill’s remark, “the two influences which have chiefly shaped the British character since the days of the Stuarts: commercial money-getting business, and religious Puritanism.” 462 The practical aspects of how these behaviours were propagated, especially insofar as these aspects are legitimized by political economy, will be discussed in Chapter 5.

Having tabled these clarifications, race also stands out because it operates as a meta-theoretical bridge between Foucault’s investigation of the disciplines and his later work on government. Race enables Foucault to trace sovereign power as it shifts from the individualizing practices of the disciplines to the broader regulatory strategies of

biopolitical government. Recognizing this transition in Foucault’s thought is important since it further supports the contention made in Chapter 1 that a cluster of concepts run like red threads through his corpus, giving it a distinct philosophical trajectory. However, I do not intend to leave this as a point of theoretical interest. In this chapter the practical value of this contention is illustrated in the way it allows the analysis to make secure, but nevertheless non-linear, correspondences between the disciplinary power to punish, which is at issue in the Rebellion trials, and the development of governmentality, which finds a complement in public schooling.

To briefly return to Mill, he is, of course, another prime example of the liberal philosophers, such as Locke, Bentham, and James Mill, the latter John Stuart’s father and close collaborator of Bentham, who addressed the subject of education. In this context he held that the liberty integral to the liberal political project “is meant to apply only to human beings in the maturity of their faculties,” that is, those who have been educated to properly exercise their freedom. Furthermore, and without intending to become embroiled in the variety of issues that this passage immediately raises, in the year of the Rebellion trials, Mill observed that individual participation in the liberal institutions of representative government acted as a “great ‘normal school’.” Here we begin to see the correspondence between government and individual conduct that is fundamental to governmentality.

Significantly, Mill takes this phrase from Lord Durham’s Report on the Affairs of British North America. Durham, known to some in Westminster as “Radical Jack” for

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his staunch reform bias, had been dispatched to the Canadas with the hopes of discerning solutions to the problems that had given rise to rebellion in Upper and Lower Canada. His well-known assessment was that the insurrections had occurred because of a “struggle, not of principles, but of races.”

Durham believed that government had failed because of the unresolvable differences between French and English speaking Canadians. His solution was to begin the process of installing representative government by first making certain that it would operate as a reflection of and aid to the secure development of the provinces according to English character.

As I explore below, the use of race as a technology of exclusion is matched in Durham’s Report by the way in which it indicates what will be included and promoted for the security of the Canadian colonies, and, by implication, the Empire. This is why it has been selected as the second arresting moment. The arrival of this text marks the beginning of more overt transitions between the negative or exclusionary and the positive and productive biopolitical deployment of race. Insofar as race enables biopower to work, Durham’s Report reflects how race helps establish a strategy of inducing the character and comportments deemed necessary to secure the state and the population. In the middle third of the nineteenth century in what is now Ontario, public schooling becomes the cornerstone of this strategy. Common schools are prime sites where the government of others overlaps with the government of the self through the employment of what Foucault refers to as “liberogenic” methods “intended to produce freedom” but

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“which potentially risk producing exactly the opposite.”

In schools this was not accomplished by coercion, but by assent. The grounds for this assent will be fully explored in the next chapter, but first I will illustrate how they were reflected in another important aspect of the role played by race.

The racial difference between French and English character supposed by Durham is not, as William Westfall writes, a matter of “their inherent physical traits,” but of economy. Economy, and above all, the industrious habits that bring prosperity, informs the entire text of Durham’s report, acting as a legitimizing discourse. Under the guise of race Durham emphasized the necessity of prosperity to the security of the colonies. If power could placed in the hands of those best suited to pursue diligently economic expansion, then the order shattered by the Rebellion might be restored. For Westfall, Durham’s “developmental vision of Canada,” though problematically expressed in racial terms, presents an accurate “appraisal of the relationship between political power and self-interest.” As such its economic presumptions are more significant to Canada’s history than Durham’s specific recommendations. Later on I will illustrate the relevance of Westfall’s observations as Durham’s educational proposals are seen to be reliant on political economy.

The precedence given to political economy is not surprising once it is recognized that during the nineteenth century it had attained the unimpeachable status of a natural science. Foucault sees this as the fulfillment of a political movement predicted by Rousseau in his entry on political economy for the Encyclopédie, namely, the expansion

467 Foucault, The Birth of Biopolitics, 69.
469 Westfall, Two Worlds, 109.
470 Westfall, Two Worlds, 109.
of the model of governance associated with household management to the organization of the whole population.\textsuperscript{471} Government under political economy, means that the “good of all will be assured by the behaviour of each when the state allows private interest to operate, which, through the phenomena of accumulation and regulation, will serve all.”\textsuperscript{472} For now, however, before considering the mechanisms of economic private interest that foster assent, the link between behaviour and governance, which is forged in schools, must be discerned. It is out of this link that we will begin to see that for educational reformers in Upper Canada/Canada West, “In every good government, and in every good system, the interests of the whole society are obligatory upon each member of it.”\textsuperscript{473}

Schooling was the location where individual and state interests would be combined according to liberal strategies of power that limited excessive force while promoting individual agency. The Rebellion and trials were a testing ground for such strategies. In this way, governmental lessons learned after 1837 became integral to making education a public concern.

I. “The general feeling is in total opposition to the execution of these men.”\textsuperscript{474}

April 12, 1838, Messrs. Lount and Mathews, two of the bravest of the Canadian patriots, were executed this day…Petitions…signed by upwards 30,000 persons were presented, asking to spare their lives, but in vain…Capt. Matthews left a widow and fifteen fine children, and Colonel Lount a widow and seven children…The spectacle of LOUNT after the execution was the most shocking sight that can be imagined, He was covered over with his blood; the head being nearly severed from his body, owing to the depth of the fall. More horrible to relate, when he

\textsuperscript{472} Foucault, \textit{Security, Territory, Population}, 346.
\textsuperscript{473} Hodgins, \textit{Documentary History of Education in Ontario VI}, 76.
was cut down, two ruffians seized the end of the rope and dragged the mangled corpse along the ground to the jail yard…

The 1837 Rebellion in Upper Canada has been referred to as an “abject failure,” a “tragic debacle,” the “last act” in a “little tragicomedy,” and, when held up in unfair comparison to the bloody exploits of other political radicals of the period, an “affair” which “ended…in comic ignominy”. For some its legacy is simply a “story” that “does not lead anywhere.” Yet its turbulent aftermath was the capture and trial of more than one hundred persons for the capital offence of treason. Taken in context of the total population of the province this is an extraordinary figure, one that gives credence to legal historians F. Murray Greenwood and Barry Wright’s assertion that the Rebellion stands as “arguably the most serious state-security crisis in Canadian history.”

The difference between these characterizations is indicative of the many contradictions that surrounded and have come to epitomize the 1837 insurrection in Upper Canada. Some of these are apparent in the passage cited above regarding the execution of Lount and Matthews. Co-authored by the accredited leader of the rebels, William Lyon Mackenzie, and his supporter, Charles Durand, both of whom were sentenced to death and later pardoned, this rather sensational depiction exaggerates the number of petitions presented in behalf of Lount and Matthews. It even inflates the size

476 Read and Stagg, The Rebellion of 1837, xcvi.
478 Craig, Upper Canada: The Formative Years, 248.
of Matthews’ family for political purposes. Certainly there were numerous requests for clemency, but it is unlikely that they approached a number equivalent to greater than twice the population of Toronto at the time. Matthews’ own petition lists “eight children [,] the youngest only about six months old [,] besides two step children who depend upon your petitioner for support;” not fifteen. Furthermore, there is little to corroborate the description of the desecration of Lount’s body, and the authors’ propagandizing tone, most likely intended to foment public outrage over the executions, conflicts with the popularity of verses such as the following, published in the Cobourg Star,

Now that the rebellion’s o’er
   Let each true Briton sing
Long live the Queen in health and peace
   And may each rebel swing.

Nonetheless, despite the swiftness with which most rebels were either captured or driven into exile, the morbid and vengeful wish expressed in this verse would not be fulfilled. Despite the large number prosecuted, only Lount and Matthews were sentenced to the gallows. This does not mean that the remainder escaped punishment, as many were sentenced to transportation. Still, the compassion shown all but two of those indicted for a capital offense is unusual, and so an obvious question arises: Why did the colonial government show so much restraint?

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481 Susanna Moodie, Roughing It in the Bush, ed. Carl Ballstadt (Ottawa, ON: Carleton University Press, 1988) 537. This is only one source, but many others offer the same approximation.
484 With the passing of the Pardoning Act on March 6, 1838, the colonial government enacted legislation that, according to Greenwood and Wright, would have three main effects: 1) The prisoners were induced to confess in the hope of clemency, 2) The act granted the authorities a “constitutionally suspect” range of discretion over the prisoners fortunes, and 3) The act served as an “administrative expedient” in that only
Of all the contradictions associated with the Rebellion, I find the one conveyed by this question to be the most gripping. To see why one needs to only consider that in the years following the Napoleonic Wars the British authorities frequently demonstrated a reluctance to suffer the antagonisms of all but a few of the privileged class. Whether it was the Peterloo Massacre, the execution of Luddites, ongoing Imperial conquest, or the prodigious use of capital punishment that would continue to the extent that the criminal statutes became widely known as the “Bloody Code,” British authorities could claim a particularly gruesome record of using the sword and the gallows against socio-political unrest. The treatment of the majority of the Upper Canadian rebels clearly marks a breach in this record.

No doubt this breach could be explained as an exceptional but nonetheless self-evident expression of something akin to benevolence or mercy. This view could then be supported by pointing to the influence of the broader movement toward reform that occupied British politics in the 1830’s, and from this location absorbed into the later humanitarian and moral discourses that are so often identified with the Victorian age. It would have to be granted that the forces of British Imperialism continued throughout this age to use their power for retribution. The establishment of a gradual historical pattern of lenience, or, at least, an overall reduction in the frequency of Imperial brutality, might mitigate this concern. Accordingly, it could even be claimed that the handling of the Upper Canadian rebels marked the beginning of this pattern.

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There is evidence in the record that endorses this line of thought. For instance, a despatch issued shortly after the rebellion by the Colonial Secretary Lord Glenelg advises Lieutenant Governor Sir George Arthur to ensure the judicious and restrained application of the crown’s prerogative regarding capital sentences. Glenelg called for “great circumspection” such that “unless under circumstances of peculiar and pressing urgency…sound policy as well as humanity dictates an abstinence on that part of the Executive from having recourse to this extreme penalty.”⁴⁸⁶ The sparing of the majority of rebels, and especially the pardons granted in 1845, appears to be a testament to the appreciation of Glenelg’s well considered and historically appropriate advice, and therefore, an indication of the dawn of more compassionate rule.⁴⁸⁷

Admittedly, the above is an oversimplification, but I have offered it in order to contrast such an account with one arising from a genealogical analysis, and in turn support my reasons for focusing at first on the colonial government’s restrained use of punishment. The most basic element of this contrast is that Foucauldian genealogy calls for an inversion of what appears to be the self-evidence of such a breach. It need not be taken as self-evident that compassion alone was the regulating force for justice during the trial of the rebels. A simple question makes this clear: If the colonial government’s aim was to respond mercifully to the serious challenge posed by the rebels, then what of the fate of Lount and Matthews? Their case reveals how the quality of any mercy shown by the government of Upper Canada was strained.

⁴⁸⁷ All the rebels except Mackenzie benefited from the pardon. He would have to wait until 1849.
The exception within the exception that emerges from this inversion becomes even more interesting when it is noted that Lord Glenelg’s despatch was delivered almost three months before sentence was passed on Lount and Matthews. By the time of Lount and Matthews’s trial Arthur, having just arrived in Upper Canada, had received belatedly the advice meant for his predecessor, Sir Francis Bond Head, but he was nonetheless duty bound to carry out the Colonial Office’s orders. However, when the new Lieutenant Governor shared the contents of the despatch in a meeting with the Executive Council, an appointed body that served Upper Canada between the elected Assembly and the Office of the Lieutenant Governor, it was after the presiding justice John Beverley Robinson had come to his decision. At the same meeting Robinson made it clear that he was of the opinion that the spectacle of an execution would set an urgent and necessary political example. Two more meetings would be held before the Executive Council endorsed the view forwarded by Robinson. It was left to Arthur to deal with this delicate situation, which he did by choosing to keep news of the Chief Justice’s decision from the Colonial Office until after the sentence was fulfilled. When he did send his report he included in support of Robinson’s verdict a portrayal of Lount and Matthews as chief elements in a group of degenerate foreigners, and therefore, deserving of their fate.

Glenelg did not sanction the Lieutenant Governor. Some six weeks after Lount and Matthews were executed, he wrote to Arthur:

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488 Historian Jerry Bannister notes the date as January, 1838. Lount and Matthews were sentenced in April, 1838. See Jerry Bannister, “Canada as Counter-Revolution: The Loyalist Order Framework in Canadian History, 1750-1840,” in Liberalism and Hegemony: Debating the Canadian Liberal Revolution, 114, 139:105n.


490 Bannister, “Canada as Counter-Revolution,” 115.
Her Majesty’s Government regret extremely that a paramount necessity should have arisen for these examples of severity. They are, however, fully convinced that you did not consent to the execution of these individuals without having given the most ample consideration to all the circumstances of the case…With respect to the disposal of the other prisoners…Nothing would cause, Her Majesty’s Government, more sincere regret than an unnecessary recourse to the punishment of death, and I am persuaded that the same feeling will influence not only yourself, but the Executive Council. The examples which have been made in the case of the most guilty will be sufficient to warn others of the consequences to which they render themselves liable by such crimes…

For the time being, Robinson, the Executive Council, and the Lieutenant Governor agreed with Lord Glenelg, two exemplary executions in Upper Canada would be enough. Yet this would not put an end to the politics of the matter. Significantly, the presumed mercy shown to others would be the calculated supplement to a demonstration of the colonial authorities’ power.

The limited but nevertheless spectacular application of punishment in the case of the rebels, and Lount and Matthews in particular, calls to mind Foucault’s suggestion that a “new strategy” for the treatment of offenders emerged out of the eighteenth century and took hold in the nineteenth. According to Foucault, the acknowledged “reduction in penal severity in the last 200 years” is something else than a “quantitative phenomenon.” More than a replacement of the “atrocious” with the “humane,” what has occurred is a “change of objective.” Instead of having the singular purpose of expressing a “policy of terror: to make everyone aware of the unrestrained presence of the sovereign,” punishment maintains its aim of deterrence but, insofar as it is humane,

492 Foucault, Discipline and Punish, 81.
493 Foucault, Discipline and Punish, 16.
494 Foucault, Discipline and Punish, 57.
495 Foucault, Discipline and Punish, 16.
496 Foucault, Discipline and Punish, 49.
that is, performed solemnly and without vengeful cruelty, it is additionally accorded the objective of reinforcing the people’s loyalty. For Foucault this shift is not about punishing less, but about punishing better in order to “insert the power to punish more deeply into the social body”497 with the governmental expectation that what had been “great murders” could become instrumental to the “quiet game of the well behaved.”498

The notion of the humane plays a significant role in the dispersion of governmental power that is essential to this “game”. Foucault traces how after the age of revolutions sovereign power could no longer be employed resolutely as the power to take life, and therefore, punishment must be displayed as humanely as possible in order to be supported by the citizenry. Yet Foucault is clear that what seems a humanized or merciful exercise of this power is not necessarily what it appears. By the nineteenth century the power over life and death signified by punishment seemed to be expressed in a more limited manner, but this was in part a function of the “necessary regulation” posed, for instance, by public perception.499 The morbid curiosity of public witnesses to an execution could turn quickly into mass disturbance. Recognition of this resistant regulation or limit by sovereign power signifies that a new rationality has come into play regarding the physical treatment of criminals, and this rationality is, Foucault offers, not moral but “economic”.500 Under the pressure of this limit what had been swift and brutal vengeance is now a calculated staging of the offender’s fate designed for maximum political effect. Punishment in the modern era becomes well-crafted political theatre, and

497 Foucault, Discipline and Punish, 82.
498 Foucault, Discipline and Punish, 69.
499 Foucault, Discipline and Punish, 92.
500 Foucault, Discipline and Punish, 92.
for those supplying direction “humanity is the respectable name given to this economy and to its meticulous calculation.”*501

We can begin to recognize how a number of “meticulous” calculations are obscured by the “enigmatic leniency” that surrounds the execution in Upper Canada of two out of more than one hundred captured rebels.502 Foucault helps us identify the historical conditions of one set in the Colonial Office’s counsel of restraint. “What has to be arranged and calculated,” he writes, “are the return effects of punishment on the punishing authority and the power that it claims to exercise.”*503 With this double movement in mind we see how a broadly expedient manner of rule is reflected in Glenelg’s counsel to Arthur that “no further advantage could be gained by inflicting the extreme penalty of the law.”*504 Two would act as deterrent, would not test excessively the public’s tolerance, and therefore, the colonial government’s ruling status would be restored and, perhaps, even fortified.

II. Rule by Other Means

In rendering a capital sentence the Upper Canadian authorities could not rely only the power of exemplary display. Something else had to be taken into account, beginning, as Foucault’s genealogy of punishment shows, with the fact that no matter how violent or humane the punishment, deterrence is at best a temporary effect. In due course there will be further proof of the impossibility of eradicating illegality.505 Attempting to offset this eventuality by increasing the amount of punishment only raises the possibility of

502 Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 75.
504 “Despatch from Lord Glenelg to Sir George Arthur, 30, May 1838,” 400.
505 Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 83-89.
additional misconduct in the form of revolt. Out of this paradox comes the troubling realization that punishment and the juridical order responsible for its distribution proves necessary but not sufficient for the ordered administration of a citizenry. The penal exercise of the law will not be enough for the restoration and maintenance of order.

A prime example of the colonial government’s acknowledgement of the limits of deterrence, indeed, one that reveals the presence of liberal governmentality, may be found in Chief Justice Robinson’s sentencing address to Lount and Matthews. From the outset Robinson makes its plain that his decision “may be of some public service” if it “assist in turning others from the path which you have followed to your destruction.” This speaks to the necessity of punishment, and as such it is not an exceptional statement to make in such cases, but what follows this pronouncement is a rather telling rationale for passing the harshest of sentences. The Chief Justice explains to Lount and Matthews that their “conduct” has “very naturally given rise” to condemnation because they offended against a “country where every man who obeys the laws is secure in the protection of life, liberty, and property; under a form of government, which has been the admiration of the world for ages.” Still, for Robinson this is not the most forceful reason for demanding the harshest of penalties. What is most egregious is that they pursued their rebellious activities despite having lived as the prosperous beneficiaries of a system of government that enabled them to be their “own masters,” which meant having the privilege of working land of their own possession without unreasonable state

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506 This is one of the ways in which Foucault extends the Weberian analysis of governmental and legal power. Whereas Weber thought that the bureau contained functions that operate beyond the direct influence of government and the law, Foucault points to operations that have effects beyond the bureau. In looking beyond the bureau, Foucault directs attention to how government works through specialized agencies such as those of health, medicine, and education.
508 “Chief Justice’s Address to Samuel Lount and Peter Matthews,” 383.
interference. In other words, as citizens of the propertied class Lount and Matthews’s true crime was to renege on the contract they shared with the government of Upper Canada and the provinces’ law-abiding citizens.

We can linger for a while on Robinson’s invocation of this most fundamental liberal artefact, and be sure there is no confusion about how to interpret its appearance; for the modern relation between punishment and the contract corresponds to a fundamental shift in governmental rationality that Foucault finds integral to the emergence of liberalism. We have already seen how the colonial authorities did not act mercifully *per se*, but according to administrative calculations cloaked by the humane. It has also been suggested that the law did not solely provide a legitimating guide to penal action, and yet there remains in Robinson’s courtroom a reliance on the contract, which is held as the basis of the liberal juridical order. Nevertheless, I contend that Robinson’s use of the contract reflects not just a principled juridical liberalism, but also a governmental attitude that calculates the effects of actions, and does so more broadly than the disciplinary rationale of punishment. This is evident in the range of concerns that are constructed as primary points of reference for governmental practice. Recognizing how these concerns inform strategies of rule is fundamental to understanding Foucault’s notion of liberalism.

Before proceeding it helps to be reminded of how Foucauldian liberalism differs from classical or doctrinal liberalism. We can do this while remaining in the historical context of the trials. For instance, I agree with historian Jerry Bannister and others that Robinson’s appeal to the contract, especially in terms of the Lockean underpinnings of

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509 “Chief Justice’s Address to Samuel Lount and Peter Matthews,” 383.
“property and tacit consent,” attests to a nascent Canadian liberalism.\footnote{Bannister, “Canada as Counter-Revolution,” 117. Bannister acknowledges he is not the first to notice this similarity “between Robinson’s speech and Locke’s ideas,” but he argues rightly that the link is “deeper than the use of well-known phrases.” See also Patrick Brode, \textit{Sir John Beverley Robinson: Bone and Sinew of the Compact} (Toronto, ON: The Osgoode Society, 1984). See also Kenneth McNaught, “Political Trials and the Canadian Political Tradition,” in \textit{Courts and Trials: A Multidisciplinary Approach}, ed. M. Friedland (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 1975).} However, in adopting a Foucauldian perspective I see it other than as the doctrinal brand of liberalism expressed by a juridical application of Locke’s natural rights theory. If the contract signifies a liberal perspective at work in this case it is in light of a shift in the aims of governmental power, a shift that is also expressed by the restrained economy of punishment, and not just a matter of structural questions of political legitimacy and the adequacy of the law. Liberalism may have a long-standing affinity with the latter, but the appearance of the contract in this historical context reveals how new fields of reference that are in a sense beyond the law, but not strictly apart, have come into play to justify governmental activity.\footnote{Foucault, \textit{Security, Territory, Population}, 10.}

Foucault, as Colin Gordon explains, refuses the doctrinal account of liberalism as a political arrangement founded solely on a juridical relation between sovereign government and the governed. Instead of the legally formalized exchange of power between ruler and subjects meant to reinforce political and social order, Foucault sees liberalism as an attitude toward governing that, as Gordon writes, is concerned with the “adequate technical form of governmental action, rather than with the legitimation of political sovereignty.”\footnote{Gordon, “Governmental Rationality,” 19.} The contract is just one of many such technical forms used by government to govern effectively. What makes the contract suited to this purpose, claims Foucault, is not that it provides a quasi-sovereign juridical standard by which to govern,
but that it enables the legal justification of “general forms of intervention…and because
the participation of the governed in the elaboration of such law through parliament
constitutes the most effective system of governed economy.”⁵¹³ That is to say, the
contract legitimates governmental intervention according to a fair standard that is, most
importantly, based on openly negotiated public agreement, and together fairness and
participation provide for the effectual dispersion of governmental power across the social
strata.

The adequacy of the contract as a technical form of government does not stem
solely from a combination of fairness and participation. Even though it is through the
contract that these notions implicate citizens in government, the contract “needs to be
envisaged,” writes Gordon, “in terms of a further category.”⁵¹⁴ In Discipline and Punish
Foucault indicates how the contract both references and gains its meaning from this
category. He does this by offering the example of the “juridically paradoxical” status of
the criminal, someone that has agreed “with the laws of society” but is also a
transgressor.⁵¹⁵ The criminal does not just offend against government and the law, but
against his or her fellow citizens, who have upheld their agreement. “He (or she) has
broken the pact,” writes Foucault, “he (or she) is therefore the enemy of society as a
whole.”⁵¹⁶ The law in such cases enables the handling of the criminal to take a
generalized form, for instance, a standard of punishment, but its power lies in the
category of concerns or mode of reflection that from the commonweal beginning of

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⁵¹³ Michel Foucault, “History of Systems of Thought, 1979,” trans. James Bernauer, Philosophy and Social
⁵¹⁴ Gordon, “Governmental Rationality,” 19.
⁵¹⁵ Foucault, Discipline and Punish, 90.
⁵¹⁶ Foucault, Discipline and Punish, 90.
society gives it meaning.\textsuperscript{517} Foucault refers to this mode as security, and portrays it as the non-structural and extra-juridical plane of reference, or \textit{dispositif}, that enables the calculative rationale of humane punishment to be expanded so that by the nineteenth century the “right to punish has been shifted from the vengeance of the sovereign to the defence of society.”\textsuperscript{518}

Security has long played a defining role in matters government, but this shift shows that its role ought not be presumed obvious and consistent. Historical changes in sovereign power have had corresponding transformations in the notion of security. So, for instance, Hobbes posits security in terms of the prerogative of power granted to Leviathan by subjects in the name of providing protection otherwise unavailable in the state of nature. This means that security in the Hobbesian state is preserved by \textit{raison d’Etat}. It also means that the subjects of Leviathan willingly consent through the contract to unlimited government intervention in the name of \textit{raison d’Etat}. In his genealogy of the state Foucault finds that the limitless exercise of sovereign power as \textit{raison d’Etat} breaks down in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, particularly in the time of the

\footnotesize \textsuperscript{517} The use of the archaic term \textit{commonweal} instead of \textit{commonwealth} in this sentence should be noted. The former refers strictly to the general welfare of a population, while the latter, which becomes more prevalent after the English Civil War, refers to a common good delivered and upheld by law. The relevance of this distinction becomes clear below.

\textsuperscript{518} Foucault, \textit{Discipline and Punish}, 90.

See also Foucault, \textit{Security, Territory, Population}, 6-8.

The use of the term “\textit{dispositif}” in Foucault’s work has been interpreted or translated in a variety of ways. Ann Marie Stoler lists Hubert Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow’s preference for “deployment,” Gilles Deleuze’s use as “[social] apparatus,” and Alan Sheridan’s suggestion that it be thought of as “machinery.” I agree with her view that \textit{dispositif} may be used “interchangeably as “deployment,” “device,” and “apparatus,” but I want to be clear that I take the term to refer mainly to an emergent discursive formation that becomes instrumental to the operations of law, institutions, and governmental power. Security is the example used here, but Foucault also uses punishment, sexuality, and economy. Each of these comes to reflect knowledge and authorize its use. Thus a \textit{dispositif} is an important concept for genealogy because it allows an anchor point around which to trace the movement of power.


See also Gilles Deleuze, “What Is a Dispositif?” in Michel Foucault: Philosopher, 159-168.
Thirty Years War and subsequent Peace of Westphalia. He asserts that a combination of factors related to these events, such as the capacity of subjects to resist authority that was demonstrated by the Reformation, and the aforementioned Treaty of Westphalia’s provision for the creation of new states out of land once dominated by the Catholic Church, had the effect of gradually drawing rulers’ attention inward to population as a resource integral to state security. Security could no longer be counted predominantly as a Hobbesian question of the territorial interests and privileges of an absolute sovereign, but according to an evolving range of concerns arising from administering a population; including, most conspicuously, the calculated organization and deployment of multiple manners of facilitating and protecting life that Foucault refers to with the term biopolitics. The notion of security assisted in the evolution of governmental practice so that by the nineteenth century the defence of society, its protection and continued survival, was as much a matter of attending to the biological existence of the population as it was about issues of diplomacy and international rivalry.519

With this in mind we can return again to Chief Justice Robinson’s Toronto courtroom. The principle at work in this setting is neither humane nor juridical, but an evolved notion of security and corresponding emergence of a politics centred on life. I contend that this provided the legitimating rationale for the colonial authorities’ ambiguous exercise of penal/sovereign power in the wake of the Rebellion.

Foucault identifies a paradox in the biopolitical deployment of governmental power that attests to the plausibility of this contention. In the final chapter of the first volume of his History of Sexuality he explains how, correlative to the adjustment in the

519 “It seems to me,” says Foucault, “that one of the basic phenomena of the nineteenth century was what might be called power’s hold over life.”
Michel Foucault, Society Must Be Defended, 239.
political meaning of security from an external/territorial to a internal/population concern, there has been a change in “one of the characteristic privileges of sovereign power.”

For centuries this privilege was represented in the sovereign “right to decide life and death,” a divine right that in the modern era undergoes a “very profound transformation” into a practical “power that was still new in the nineteenth century.” The modern governmental orientation to life means that it is no longer feasible to rule according to the simple dichotomy formed around death through, as Foucault states it, the “ancient right to take life or let live.” Hence by the nineteenth century the power that once drew its meaning from death becomes “a power to foster life or disallow it to the point of death.” Foucault offers the death penalty as an example of how this new orientation entails a fundamental paradox that afflicts modern biopolitical government:

As soon as power gave itself the function of administering life, its reason for being and the logic of its exercise – and not the awakening of humanitarian feelings – made it more and more difficult to apply the death penalty. How could power exercise its highest prerogatives by putting people to death, when its main role was to ensure, sustain, and multiply life, to put this life in order? For such a power, execution was at the same time a limit, a scandal, and a contradiction.

This same paradox is reflected in the decision to execute only Lount and Matthews. Their case demanded that the colonial government critically take into account the extent and limits of its power. Authority would be diminished without a convincing expression of the capacity to respond to political transgression, but the degree of such an expression had to be carefully measured. The balance between these two extremes that

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526 See also Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended*, 247, 254.
was obtained in the decision to execute only two relied on a set of tactics engineered to
preserve the remnants of sovereign right while cultivating the role of guardian of life.
Rousseau, as Foucault notes in *Discipline and Punish*, had already identified the basic
reasoning for this tactic in his *Social Contract*:

> Every malefactor, by attacking social rights, becomes, by his crimes, a rebel and a traitor to his country; by violating its laws he ceases to be a member of it; he even makes war upon it. In such a case the preservation of the state is inconsistent with his own, and one or the other must perish; in putting the guilty to death we slay not so much the citizen as the enemy.\(^{526}\)

Rousseau proposes the necessity of demonizing the criminal to the point of expulsion in
order to protect the social body. Drawing on Rousseau, Foucault explains how this
invention of a monster becomes, in the name of security, a biological extension of the
juridical deployment of modern political power. Historically the criminal is already an
outlaw, but in order for biopolitical rule to justify the necessity of the power to punish
this status is exaggerated beyond offence to the law. The law, which under a biopolitical
regime serves as a normative emblem, stands at the threshold of an ascending rationale
as this exaggeration follows a familiar form: the law is in place for security, and security
is a matter of life.\(^{527}\) To break the law is to threaten security and so too life itself.
Therefore, it is not the law but life itself that responds to the malefactor by taking life.
Criminality is effectively rendered an epidemiological problem; the death penalty is less
the taking of a life than the immunization of society. Foucault writes:

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\(^{527}\) Under these circumstances “the law,” says Foucault, “operates more and more as a norm.” See Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Vol. One*, 144.
Hence capital punishment could not be maintained except by invoking less the enormity of the crime itself than the monstrosity of the criminal, his incorrigibility, and the safeguard of society. One had the right to kill those who represented a kind of biological danger to others.\textsuperscript{528}

Under a mandate to suppress further insurrection the execution of Lount and Matthews takes this same biopolitical form and is as much a prophylactic as a juridical measure.

\textbf{III. Biopolitics and Racism}

Establishing the criminal as a common threat to security is one mode of justification for the state’s right to apply deadly force, but it is not the most efficacious. A more forcible rationalization of this right is identified in Foucault’s analysis of a troubling product of modern historical shifts in sovereign power. In his 1975-1976 lectures at the Collège de France, given the title \textit{Society Must Be Defended} and delivered during the writing of the first volume of \textit{The History of Sexuality},\textsuperscript{529} Foucault straightforwardly poses the question that underlies the paradox of biopolitics as “Given that this power’s objective is essentially to make live, how can it let die? How can the power of death, the function of death, be exercised in a political system centred upon biopower?”\textsuperscript{530} In other words, how does the biopolitical state overcome the “scandal” and “contradiction” of taking a life? To answer this question Foucault considers how “in the first half of the nineteenth century” the “revolutionary discourse,” which at the end of the eighteenth century targeted the legacy of Roman style sovereignty by promoting plurality of belief, was effectively “inverted…to preserve the sovereignty of the State, a

\textsuperscript{528} Foucault, \textit{The History of Sexuality, Vol. One}, 138.
\textsuperscript{529} In a 1977 interview Foucault remarked that the last chapter of \textit{The History of Sexuality, Volume One}, which raises the theme of racism, is the “fundamental part of the book.” See “Le jeu de Michel Foucault,” in \textit{Omnican?} July 10, 1977, published in English as “The Confession of the Flesh” in Michel Foucault, \textit{Power/Knowledge}, 222.
\textsuperscript{530} See also Stoler, \textit{Race and the Education of Desire}, 20-21.
\textsuperscript{530} Foucault, \textit{Society Must Be Defended}, 254.
sovereignty whose lustre and vigour were no longer guaranteed by magico-juridical rituals.”

Under threat of revolutionary violence the state’s primary function, its relation to security, had to be redefined and reclaimed. Foucault finds that this occurred by adopting the language of war for a different purpose. Whereas the state had for centuries served as “an instrument” of territorial struggles justified in terms of ethnic rivalries, it becomes the “protector of the integrity, the superiority, and the purity of the race.”

In a movement corresponding in form and meaning to the shift of governmental concern from external/territorial to internal/population, the state’s relation to security is re-established as the role of government is connected with the biological destiny of the race. “Biologically monist” state racism “takes over” as a prime rationale of rule such that the “historical theme of war” is “replaced by the postevolutionist theme of the struggle for existence.”

In order for the state to sustain the power of its prerogative over life aspects of sovereign power are reinscribed in biopolitics, which impresses racism in the machinery of the state. Foucault identifies two significant effects of these adaptations that emerge in the nineteenth century. First, ruling power uses racism to embellish its capacity “to fragment, to create caesuras” within a population so that “certain races are described as

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531 Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended*, 81.
532 Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended*, 81.
533 Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended*, 80.

In typical fashion, Foucault takes as one of his starting points for this line of thought a reversal of Clausewitz’s famous dictum that war is a continuation of politics by other means. See: Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended*, 48.

Also, this notion of inverting what Foucault considers the revolutionary discourse of racial struggle so that sovereignty re-establishes its power has a logic similar to that used by Bannister to contend that loyalty provided the counter-revolutionary discourse in Upper Canada. However, in what follows I use Foucault’s ideas in a manner that may be taken to reframe loyalty in terms of biopolitics and race, and therefore, not revolution so much as emergence.


533 Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended*, 80.
good” and “others...as inferior.”\textsuperscript{534} Granted, power’s use of race to divide people into
groups delineated according to the language of supremacy is not new in the nineteenth
century. Foucault acknowledges that he is “certainly not saying that racism was invented
at this time.”\textsuperscript{535} He is saying that as the modern state became increasingly biopolitically-
oriented racism’s function changed. What had been the discourse of the enemy beyond
the city gates or the ethnic threat from another land now points primarily, but not
exclusively, toward internal matters. There remains a concern with “the idea that
foreigners have infiltrated this society,”\textsuperscript{536} but the main “polarity” is no longer
constructed along ethnic lines as “a clash between two distinct races.”\textsuperscript{537} Instead, says
Foucault, it “is the splitting of a single race into a superrace and a subrace,” and
therefore, the advent of a new discourse of normalizing power that within a single
population emphasizes the survival of the “one true race, the race that holds power and is
entitled to define the norm.”\textsuperscript{538}

Furthermore, since, as Foucault describes in \textit{Discipline and Punish}, normalizing
power is inherently segregating power, this historical change in the deployment of racism
is key to understanding the early nineteenth century elaboration of the “theme of the
deviants who are this society’s by-products.”\textsuperscript{539} As history shows, from that time on
populations are increasingly divided and subdivided into what are troubling but by now
all too familiar assemblages: normal/abnormal, law-abiding/criminal, responsible
citizen/pauper and, as I will consider in the following chapter, two further binaries that

\textsuperscript{534} Foucault, \textit{Society Must Be Defended}, 255.
\textsuperscript{535} Foucault, \textit{Society Must Be Defended}, 254.
\textsuperscript{536} Foucault, \textit{Society Must Be Defended}, 81.
\textsuperscript{537} Foucault, \textit{Society Must Be Defended}, 61.
\textsuperscript{538} Foucault, \textit{Society Must Be Defended}, 61.
\textsuperscript{539} Foucault, \textit{Society Must Be Defended}, 81.
include elements of many others: educated/ignorant and literate/illiterate. Though touted as morally necessary, behind the façade of righteous crusade these binaries lurk as the racist preconditions for what becomes the class struggle. Nevertheless, Foucault thinks that it is racism, and not class, that initially authorizes governmental power to generate the “binary structure” that “runs through society,” and it is in constant reference to this structure that the nineteenth century sees the development of “all those institutions within the social body which make the discourse of race struggle function as a principle of exclusion and segregation and, ultimately, as a way of normalizing society.”

The second effect of biopolitical state racism fits hand in glove with the first. Dividing the population into multiple binaries does not solve the paradox of biopolitical government, but by the nineteenth century the fragmenting function of racism enables the state to avoid becoming entangled in the ambiguity that arises out of the lethal exercise of sovereign right. State racism establishes a “positive relation” between governmental activities aimed at fostering life and the elimination, either actual or potential, of those placed on the undesirable margin of each binary. Foucault explains this as an effect of the biologization of the “warlike relationship of confrontation.” The sovereign maxim “In order to live you must destroy your enemies” becomes a matter of equating the eradication of the inferior with the protection of the population as species body so that “the death of the other, the death of the bad race, of the inferior race (or the degenerate, or the abnormal) is something that will make life in general healthier: healthier and purer.” Here, then, is the fullest meaning of the second effect of the

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540 Foucault, Society Must Be Defended, 51.
541 Foucault, Society Must Be Defended, 61.
542 Foucault, Society Must Be Defended, 255.
543 Foucault, Society Must Be Defended, 255.
emergence of state racism. Foucault states, “racism is the indispensable precondition that allows someone to be killed, that allows others to be killed. Once the State functions in the biopower mode, racism alone can justify the murderous function of the State.”

Still, it is important to notice that this “murderous function” does not refer only to the actual taking of life, but also to a rationale of classification and gradual marginalization of those persons considered an incorrigible threat. For this reason Foucault is quick to point out that “exercising…the old sovereign right to kill” in the racist state does “not mean simply murder as such, but also every form of indirect murder: the fact of exposing someone to death, increasing the risk of death for some people, or, quite simply, political death, expulsion, rejection, and so on.”

In light of Foucault’s analysis of the shifts in sovereign power that comprise the preconditions for the nineteenth century rise of biopolitical government we can see how the decision to execute Lount and Matthews was implicated in a burgeoning Upper Canadian form of state racism. The vilification of the two as individuals who had broken the social contract expresses the fragmenting effect of biopower warranted by the necessity of differentiating real and potential threats to the security of the socio-political order. However, as the Upper Canadian authorities’ apparent concern with public reaction to further executions shows, this level of differentiation could not alone legitimate the lethal exercise of power. This, Foucault holds, is the “point that racism intervenes.”

Racism’s biopolitical rationale, which is designed to mitigate the gulf

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544 Foucault, Society Must Be Defended, 256.  
545 Foucault, Society Must Be Defended, 256.  
546 Foucault, Society Must Be Defended, 256.  
547 Foucault, Society Must Be Defended, 254.
between taking and fostering life, is called into play such that the rebels must be portrayed as something akin to a pathologic menace that must be eradicated.

A line of thought that appears in Robinson’s address provides a further clue to how state racism informed the decision to execute two of the rebels. In a section of the address, one that initially seems more of an aside than a significant component of the Chief Justice’s reasoning, it is suggested to the convicted men that an option other than taking up arms had been available if the two had wished to reasonably express their dissatisfaction with the government:

> It was open to you, if you were discontented with the Government that protected you, to sell your possessions here, and transfer yourselves to any other country whose laws and institutions you liked better than your own. That you could have done, without injuring others, without violating your oaths of allegiance, and without loading your consciences with crime. \(^{548}\)

Implied by the idea of self-imposed exile to “any other country” is the recommendation that Lount and Matthews would have most likely found a more suitable home among what many Upper Canadian’s considered the profane libertine republicans to the south. \(^{549}\) Robinson had preceded the above advice by labelling the two as individuals who had decided, “a Republic, or any other form of government, was preferable to a Monarchy.” \(^{550}\) To be sure, the desire to establish an almost republican style of representative government had been one of the goals shared by the Upper Canadian rebels, but through the lenses afforded by Foucault’s notions of security, biopolitics, and

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\(^{548}\) “Chief Justice’s Address to Samuel Lount and Peter Matthews,” 383.

\(^{549}\) In her memoir *Life in the Clearings*, originally published in 1852, British born colonist Susanna Moodie reflected a view held by the majority of Upper Canadians: “Perfect, unadulterated republicanism is a beautiful but fallacious chimera which never has existed upon the earth, and which, if the Bible were true (and we have no doubts on the subject), we are told never will exist in heaven.” See Susanna Moodie, *Life in the Clearings*, ed. Robert L. MacDougall (Toronto, ON: MacMillan, 1959) 57.

racism, even the government’s handling of this aspect of the rebellion acquires a different meaning. What may be considered an ideological struggle may be broadly understood to involve the presence of a range of discourses that Foucault refers to as the “thematics of blood.”

IV. Governing the Species Body

Foucault uses the phrase “thematics of blood” to describe “the mythical concern with protecting the purity of the blood and ensuring the triumph of the race.” Today it is not difficult to recognize that strong discursive ties have formed historically between blood, race, and nation, and entailed a multitude of horrors. Already in the early nineteenth century these dangerous ties were rapidly developing. A prime example may be found in the xenophobic tones of Fichte’s Addresses to a German Nation. The English subscribed to their own version of Fichte’s program of race-based nationalism, and so by the 1830’s in its name they were well engaged in the bloody business of subjugating the inhabitants of almost one quarter of the earth’s landmass. But killing is not the only weapon wielded by biopower against incursion. In context of power’s conscription of racial discourse, which after the mid-nineteenth century will be used to legitimate all of the “colonizing genocide” that follows, political expulsion or transportation, as it was known at the time, is a more governmentally suitable

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punishment than death. Exile avoids the paradox of biopolitics, offering a seemingly humane solution, albeit as a cloak for state racism.

It may be asked, then, on what basis might the chief justice, even after determining Lount and Matthews’s fate, have assumed that the two men could have packed up their discontent, along with their considerable families, and simply move on? Additionally, by indicating that their most fitting destination would be the republic United States, which at the time remained an actively hostile threat, Robinson compounds the question. Why would Lount and Matthews return to a land that they had already actively renounced? Like many Upper Canadians, they had deep roots south of the border. Lount was born in Pennsylvania and moved to Upper Canada in 1815 at the age of twenty-one. Matthews, who had fought against the army of the United States during the War of 1812, was the immediate descendant of American loyalists. As Robinson acknowledged, and a solid level of popular support for their pardon demonstrated, both men had chosen and had, until the Rebellion at least, succeeded in forging decent lives for themselves and their families in Upper Canada.

The answer to the above questions is one that exposes a noteworthy aspect of the Chief Justice’s perspective, and thus, has less to do with Lount and Matthews’s missed opportunities as it signifies the prevalence among Upper Canada’s higher ranks of a rampantly chauvinistic, that is, racialized, dislike for anything not British. Before considering how this is so, it must be said that Canadian anti-Americanism and its contribution to the development of the northern colonies is too broad a topic to tackle

554 Foucault, Society Must Be Defended, 257.
comprehensively in this dissertation. Nevertheless, certain aspects are too important to ignore. Thus for the sake of offering a sufficient sense of how the early divisions between these neighbours contributed to the conditions of Upper Canada’s beginning and development, a few events must be noted.

First of all, the early social and political fabric of the Canadian colonies was influenced by an influx of American loyalists who were threatened by the anti-monarchist sentiment that intensified in the United States after the War of Independence. A considerable number flowed into Canada, making it necessary for the British government to take a series of momentous steps. A prime example is the Constitutional Act of 1791, which for the most part was designed to accommodate the increased presence of English-speaking people in the colony. In particular, the author of the Act, Lord William Grenville, considered the newcomers to be unlike their new French-speaking compatriots in that they were accustomed to “British privileges,” and therefore, deserving of “the blessing of the English constitution…the best in the world.” 557 The Act bestowed this blessing by instituting a governmental structure that reflected British constitutional monarchy “as close,” observes historian Gerald Craig, “as colonial conditions permitted.” 558 Nonetheless, as much as the Act was an exercise in the organization of state administration, it marked a trend toward building the Canadian colonies with a definite emphasis on the primacy of English culture and values.

It is interesting to note that taking into account “colonial conditions” in the design of the Act meant the inclusion of certain measures, such as a modest representational aspect to government, intended to correct the autocratic elements that contributed to

558 Craig, Upper Canada: The Formative Years, 15.
dissent in the American colonies. Another measure was the establishment of the Protestant clergy as the predominant theological and moral authority in Upper Canada. In particular, this was ensured through a system of land grants known as the Clergy Reserves, which, much to the consternation of other denominations, were placed under the control of the Church of England. Though these two portions of the Act were meant to positively address the future direction of the colony, they became, somewhat ironically, important factors in the political struggles that surrounded the Rebellion of 1837. However, this would not be their most important effect, for they would also contribute to the conditions for the institutionalization of Englishness in public schools.

Perhaps even more than the Constitutional Act, the War of 1812 conditioned the future of the colonies. Historians have long argued about the significance of this event, and doubtless this year’s bicentennial will see a renewed interest in the conflict. For this discussion, the war did not cause anti-American sentiment in the Canadas, but demonstrates another ascending moment of a discourse already in play before the arrival of the loyalists. The War of 1812 had all the requisite elements of prior and future conflicts, for instance, disputes over territory and trade fomented by the vocal presence of nationalist “hawks”. Not to be discounted from the conditions that stimulated military confrontation between the two nascent states is a shared discourse of the other’s inferiority, even barbarity. For the loyalist majority of English-speaking Upper Canadians, this discourse had accompanied them during their journey of exile, and would, unsurprisingly, not abate in the aftermath of armed hostilities.\footnote{On the southern side of the border, Americans also engaged in a similar amount of anti-British sentiment, which, as in Upper Canada, became fodder for a jingoistic curriculum. For instance, in her survey of nineteenth century American textbooks Ruth Miller Elson notes, “On the picture of an Englishman in one of the textbooks examined in this study, a young reader had drawn horns.” Elson}
From the perspective of Robinson and the Family Compact one of the most pressing challenges facing Upper Canada in the years following the War of 1812 was the internal threat posed by its American-born inhabitants. Despite a strict post-war policy aimed at curbing American immigration, American immigrants continued to comprise the majority of the population. Worry about the “alien question”, as it was known, was dealt with by affirming laws regarding an oath of allegiance and restrictions on the granting and ownership of land to those deemed non-naturalized citizens. In addition, a plan originally conceived by Governor General Gordon Drummond and Secretary of State for War and the Colonies, Lord Henry Bathurst, was put in place under the influence of the Family Compact to offset the dominance of American-born colonists in the south west and border areas of Upper Canada with immigrants from Scotland. Such initiatives evidence an ongoing concern with checking possible American threats to

follows this observation by characterizing the American attitude toward the English to be at best expedient, and at worst ambivalent. This, she writes, is primarily because most textbook authors “were of British ancestry” and many Americans, though they held their own social and political systems worthy of the highest esteem, understood the contradiction involved in being overly critical of the British foundations of these systems. However, the inhabitants of non-English speaking nations are often portrayed in nineteenth century American textbooks in the most damaging and dismissively racist terms, indicating that, despite their misgivings about the monarchy, when it came to the idea of race, the Americans emphatically prized their English heritage, and had no qualms about making other nations “useful foils” whose presumed behaviour “could be conveniently used to point up the virtues of the American.” As I will consider below, the convenient use of a shared heritage was also indulged by Canadians, and made their anti-Americanism seem inconsistent and, therefore, far less fervent than I wish to establish. I contend that this inconsistency, rather than lessening the import of anti-American discourse, exposes a deeper relation that depends on the affirmation of certain aspects of Englishness. This affirmation is integral to understanding the subjectivizing function of public schools.


Craig, Upper Canada: The Formative Years, 106ff. The Family Compact referred to a group of elites who exercised political power in Upper Canada. Compact members such as John Beverley Robinson and John Strachan advocated rigid class structure, loyalty to the Crown, and dominance of the Anglican Church. In Lower Canada the Family Compact had its counterpart in the Chateau Clique.

Colin Read, The Rising in Western Upper Canada, 1837-8 (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 1982).
the stability of Upper Canada and, by implication, upholding the monarchist politics and protestant values deemed necessary to national welfare.

As of the Rebellion of 1837 these initiatives had proven inadequate to stemming the republican contagion. The Rebellion constituted a nightmare scenario, an invasion from within, fomented and intended to spread hated American ideals through disorder and violence. Therefore, attempts to restore a sense of order involved extreme measures that pushed even the boundaries of British support. “An Act to Protect the Inhabitants of this Province against Lawless Aggressions from Subjects of Foreign Countries at Peace with Her Majesty,” authored by Robinson and passed on January 12, 1838, was perhaps the most egregious example. Notwithstanding its complex legal status, which was challenged by British authorities,\(^{563}\) among its provisions was the power to consider any action hostile to the government, whether committed by citizens of Upper Canada or American citizens crossing into colonial territory, as an act of treason, and therefore, punishable by death. In other words, activities commonly considered acts of war would be treated as if occurring domestically and so subject to the sanctions of civil and criminal law. Though Robinson justified his reasoning by pointing to the double deterrent of placing both Americans and Upper Canadians “upon the same footing in respect to trial and punishment,”\(^{564}\) for all intents and purposes, the rationale of the Act

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\(^{564}\) “The Chief Justice’s remarks upon certain Acts passed during the last session of the Legislature in Upper Canada, in consequence of the insurrection,” encl. 4, in Arthur to Lord Glenelg, Toronto, April 23, 1838, in *British Parliamentary Papers*, Affairs of Canada, Correspondence Relative to Upper Canada 1838-1839, at 19, in Bahre, “Trying the Rebels,” 44.
was demonstrative of the desire to contain the insurrection as if it was a viral infection spreading from American sympathizers to the Upper Canadian population.\textsuperscript{565}

This same rationale would soon be redirected toward a similarly proximate threat. With the movement toward an internally focused biopolitical mode of governance the libertine and disloyal ways of Americans were increasingly targeted as an extreme that needed to be repeatedly contrasted with the political and moral stability of people living under a constitutional monarchy. Another extreme would soon be identified, though according to a different sense of threat to the security of the province.

V. A “citizenry fit to rule”\textsuperscript{566}

The upheaval that followed the Rebellion included much call for official inquiry and the parallel production of a considerable number of official advisory documents. Among these was a report commissioned by Lieutenant Governor Arthur and delivered by Robert Baldwin Sullivan, a prominent lawyer and recent reform defector to the Tory side of the Legislative Assembly. Tasked with collecting information needed to confront a range of pressing concerns, which besides the Rebellion included the government’s desperate financial situation,\textsuperscript{567} Sullivan, who had a reputation for diligence, was expected to provide an account that was wide in scope and yet long on detail. However, as both Curtis and Craig point out, Sullivan’s “Report on the State of the Province” argued categorically that American influence was the root cause of Upper Canada’s most

\textsuperscript{565} It must be said that the similarities between the Upper Canadian response to American based aggression during and after the Rebellion and current American and Canadian reactions to perceived security threats are striking.
\textsuperscript{566} Stoler, Race and the Education of Desire, 130.
\textsuperscript{567} There had been a general economic collapse in 1837 that affected North America and Europe. Among the repercussions in the Canadas was the postponement of a variety of infrastructure projects, most notably, work on the St. Lawrence Seaway.
pressing problems.  Sullivan thought that the colonial government had allowed American settlers to encroach on British soil so that “in the bosom of this community there exists a treacherous foe.” If the threat posed by Americans was to be counterbalanced, he recommended the government stem the tide of immigration from the south while taking institutional steps to correct and prevent any further damage to the loyalty of Upper Canadian population.

Stemming the flow of immigrants from the United States would have been a tall order for the colonial governors who believed the vast tracts of undeveloped land in the province demanded an expansion of the settler population. However, immigration was not Sullivan’s primary concern. Though his analysis discussed restricting the flow of American newcomers he argued mainly that a war over “the popular mind” of the existing population ought to direct the bulk of immediate government action. As evidence for the ground where the key battle in this war ought to be waged, he blamed the spread of the “extreme political fantasies” of the democratic scourge on the prevalence of American teachers and textbooks in the schools throughout the western colony. In his opinion American teachers and textbooks operated as instruments of propaganda for “revolution and independence”. The crucial antidote to this troubling state of affairs, and one that Sullivan specified would best protect against a repeat of the events of 1837, was neither reinforcement of the border guard nor additional legal restrictions similar to the Lawless Aggression Act, but a government controlled and

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568 Curtis, Building the Educational State, 39.  See also Craig, Upper Canada: The Formative Years, 199.
570 Craig, Upper Canada: The Formative Years, 199.
571 “Mr. Sullivan’s Report,” in Curtis, Building the Educational State, 39.
572 “Mr. Sullivan’s Report,” in Curtis, Building the Educational State, 41.
universally accessible system of education. Such a system would, as Lieutenant Governor Arthur concurred, allay American influence while ensuring that the children of the province be schooled to remain loyal to “Her Majesty’s mild, gracious and merciful government.”

What is notable about these aspects of Sullivan’s report is how they reflect the manner in which two salient issues of the period, namely, the threat posed by the United States, and the perceived need for government involvement in education, were in the period after the Rebellion reconstituted by power and, therefore, in relation to each other. For this reason Sullivan’s report serves as a telling precursor to the second arresting moment through which we can trace the development of a system of public schooling.

The discourse that facilitates the shifts we see in Sullivan’s text is that of race, which operates, as Foucault explains, as a “mechanism that allows biopower to work.” As we saw in context of the Rebellion trials, Foucault’s notion of race is not “the ordinary racism that takes the traditional form of mutual contempt or hatred between races,” but a “technology of power,” and as such, an instrument that enhances governmental power’s capacity to act in ways that are both negative and positive, that constrain or enable, kill or let live, or, in the case of the battle over the public mind, exclude and include. When speaking of race Foucault is not referring to an “ideological operation that allows States, or a class, to displace that hostility that is directed toward [them], or which is tormenting the social body, onto a mythical

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574 Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended*, 258.

575 Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended*, 258.
adversary.”576 The biopolitics of race are not resolved only by the fabrication of an alien monster, but involve the deployment of power in a series of dividing practices. Hence, race serves biopolitical government doubly as it distinguishes between inferior and superior as a matter of “the elimination of the biological threat to and the improvement of the species or race.”577 With this in mind, we can see how the exclusionary function of race is reflected in Sullivan’s call for the eradication of the internal threat posed by Americans and, simultaneously, the identification of what must be preserved. This is important, for it is the biopolitical point at which these meet, that is, where threat is distinguished from what “will make life in general healthier,” that generates discursive breaches through which the issue of education emerges with increasing intensity after the late 1830’s.578

Similar to the shifts evident during the Rebellion trials, race represents a set of morphological changes in the deployment of power that occur as a function of biopolitical considerations of security. Whereas the shifts reflected in the application of sovereign privilege during the trials involved the establishment of a positive relation to the negative deployment of power, it is a reversal of this dynamic that occurs to create the conditions for the emergence of education as a question of governance. In this reversal race again plays a forceful role, but instead of giving literal countenance to the “political death” of enemies its scope is extended and so serves to draw lines between a broader range of conditions identified as either detrimental or beneficial to the population. Again, race determines the exclusions, barriers, dangers, but also, and insofar as these exclusions include their opposites, the inclusions, openings, and protections. The

576 Foucault, Society Must Be Defended, 258.
577 Foucault, Society Must Be Defended, 256.
578 Foucault, Society Must Be Defended, 255.
former are the province of prisons and asylums, but they are implicated in the latter as schools become their productive institutional counterpart. Schools are the location where the formative power of education is harnessed productively to develop subjective comportments deemed favourable to the security of the population.

The way in which Sullivan redescribes the province’s anxious relationship with the United States reveals how principles of exclusion are employed as governmental attention is increasingly redirected to accommodate a different set of objectives, namely the war against internal threats. For instance, it is likely that nineteenth century Upper Canadians would recognize their own predicament in Pierre Trudeau’s remark that living beside the United States “is in some ways like sleeping next to an elephant” because “one is affected by every twitch and grunt.” Still, the diplomatic realities of recent times are mild compared to those of two hundred years ago. The War of 1812 spread fear and stirred up the latent anti-American feelings held by many loyalists, and even after the end of hostilities the people of the province remained aware of the aggressive dynamism of their southern neighbours. Craig cites a statement made in 1836 by Justice of the Peace Thomas Carr,

the republican mania has crossed the lines – our ears are incessantly dinned with the institutions, progress, prosperity, and their superlative system of land-granting of these States…we must run a race with them, and keep pace also in the career of prosperity. 

Carr and other Upper Canadians had good reason to hold such a view. The budding idea of American exceptionalism that defined the United States in the 1830’s under the

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580 “Thomas Carr to J. Joseph, June 1, 1836,” Public Archives of Canada, Upper Canada Sundries, in Upper Canada: The Formative Years, 199.
Jackson administration entailed confident and dramatic expressions of the country’s new role on the world stage.\textsuperscript{581} Most notable was the popular sense among Americans that their country was on a divine mission to provide a higher, democratic, example to the rest of the world, even if this necessitated the use of military force.\textsuperscript{582} For Upper Canadians, American expansionist posturing bore the prospect of another northward incursion. The rhetoric of reformers such as Mackenzie, who advocated an end to the pseudo-oligarchy of the Family Compact and the adoption of republican style government, reinforced the possibility of another border conflict, but drew the colonial authorities’ attention to the more pressing danger of internal uprising. Both sides in the conflict, those in favour of maintaining the existent political structure and Mackenzie’s allies, for a time limited their weaponry to words, and waged war in the press over how best to govern the province. Rhetoric soon turned to action when the rebels took up arms in hopes of achieving their ambitions. They were supported through border raids carried out by American sympathizers. But by the time the Rebellion crisis begins to settle a significant shift of governmental priorities was already in process.

\textsuperscript{581} In his report Sullivan noted that Upper Canadian school children were presented with such expressions by the American textbooks,

\begin{quote}
The books they use are all American filled with inflated accounts of American independence and glorious wars with England. The exploits of General Jackson and the heroes of ‘76 fill the youthful mind to the exclusion of everything glorious or interesting in English history.
\end{quote}


\textsuperscript{582} This would be captured by John L. O’Sullivan’s phrase “Manifest Destiny”. Although coined in the 1840’s, O’Sullivan had already begun to popularize the sentiment behind this phrase in 1839 with his article, “The Great Nation of Futurity.”


http://digital.library.cornell.edu/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=usde;idno=usde0006-4
Hitherto the general threat posed by the United States was thought of primarily as externally based but, while there had been prior unease over the subversive infiltration of American ideals, the rebellious internal uprising entails a perceptual change. Sullivan’s report is revealing of this change as governmental focus is increasingly directed by an internally oriented concern with security, now thought of as contingent upon the state of the public mind. To be sure, this internal governmental orientation toward educating the public as a means of eradicating threats while inculcating appropriate character was not something that developed only after or as a direct consequence of the Rebellion. By the time of Sullivan’s report the development and governmental control of a system of public education had already been often discussed in terms of the correlation of order and security with the attitudes of the public, and therefore, with individual and collective conduct. Sullivan may be accused of repeating advice common on all sides of the social and political spectrum.

One of the results of a government sponsored inquiry began in 1835 demonstrates this last statement. In that year the Assembly nominated a group of prominent citizens to explore the public development of institutions beneficial to the future of the colony. Of this group Charles Duncombe, a radical reform politician and future leader of the so-called Western Rising during the Rebellion, was dispatched on an institutional tour of the United States. Over the course of a year Duncombe’s investigative journeys took him to a number of schools and administrative offices as well as, in a juxtaposition of thought

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583 The sentiment in much of Upper Canada may have remained anti-American, but this did not preclude exchanges of knowledge and other forms of trade. Nevertheless, a trip such as Duncombe’s would not again be possible until the tensions caused by the Rebellion and border raids had dissipated. As for Duncombe, after his group’s defeat by the militia of the London District he would somewhat ignominiously take flight to the United States by crossing the border disguised as a woman. Though pardoned in 1843, he would remain in the U.S. until his death.
quite telling of the dynamic noted above and its role in nineteenth century social reform, prisons and asylums. In addition to tabling his findings on carceral institutions, Duncombe delivered to the government his Report on the Subject of Education in February 1836.\textsuperscript{584} Though Duncombe strove to demonstrate that the value of knowledge he collected was well in proportion to the length of his tour, his report is notable for taking a narrowly eschatological view of the urgent situation that he believed was facing the province. He wrote, “the great crisis is hastening on when it shall be decided whether disenthralled intellect and liberty shall voluntarily submit to the laws of virtue and of Heaven, or run wild into insubordination, anarchy and crime.”\textsuperscript{585} Duncombe is adamant, if Upper Canadians refuse to take advantage of education’s power to have a “decided influence in forming the character, and regulating the principles and conduct of future life,” then they will join the ranks of those who ignore the prophetic signs and are “in danger of eternal ruin”\textsuperscript{586}

Looking at the texts issued by Sullivan and Duncombe it is interesting to notice that not only do they share emphatic support for government involvement in education; they also argue their cases using what Marianna Valverde calls “rhetoric of national decline.”\textsuperscript{587} Such language is, in her view, expressive of the idea that the “Nation (as distinct from the state) is…seen as rather fragile and as subject to a quasi-physical process of decay that can only be halted if individuals, the cells of the body politic, take

\begin{footnotes}
\item[585] Duncombe, Dr., \textit{Charles Duncombe’s Report}, 52.
\item[586] Duncombe, Dr., \textit{Charles Duncombe’s Report}, 45, 49.
\end{footnotes}
control over their innermost essence or self.” Valverde’s analysis, which relies upon the Foucauldian notion of subjectification, draws attention to how behind the “rhetorical flourishes” of nineteenth century reformers there is a “belief in the nation’s need for specifically moral subjects”. Both reports rely on such rhetoric to characterize the province as besieged by subversive forces gnawing away at its social foundations and poised to spread virulently throughout the species body of the population. The two agree that the only remedy to this fearful state of affairs is education, which they see as the institutionalization of forms of training intended to improve the public mind by inculcating particular comportments in each citizen. Still, similarities in the linguistic conventions of the two documents should not conceal a key difference in meaning.

Duncombe and Sullivan may indulge in the “rhetoric of national decline” but, whereas the former represents its use as a complement to the evangelical discourse of moral peril, the latter exemplifies the overlaying onto moral discourse of biopolitical considerations of race. These take the form of the vilification of Americans and their sympathizers, who it is asserted have dangerously infiltrated the population. The addition is significant, and shows how an impetus to political action is emerging that is effective in a manner not demonstrated previously by appealing to either morality or the law. In the early nineteenth century this appears as a decisive re-orientation of power that makes public schooling possible in Upper Canada.

It is common currency, especially among the social control theorists discussed at the beginning of the previous chapter, to assert that public schooling arose in Upper Canada and operated hand-in-glove with repressive regimes of bourgeois moral reform.

Granted, from the outset it seems clear that the imposition of morality was the stated objective of schools. But the governmental mechanisms underlying this massive intervention into the private lives of Upper Canadians were far more complex. The gradual success of this governmental venture was a function of the inclusion of discursive factors such as those Foucault associates with biopolitics and race, which served as preconditions for the deployment of the commonly acknowledged dynamics such as class and morality.

The principled call to arms made by Upper Canadian reformers like Duncombe did not prove effective until talk of developing a school system included the biopolitical technology of race. Sullivan’s text is interesting precisely because it is predictive of this addition in the Upper Canadian context. Yet placing this text in front of Duncombe’s and potentially others like it is not intended to show that the discourse of moral reform was unproductive. Far from it, but from a Foucauldian perspective the productivity of this discourse was not a matter of the disbursement of bourgeois repression as social control. “[O]n the contrary,” writes Foucault, “what was involved” in moral reform “was…an intensification of the body, a problematization of health and its operational terms: it was a question of techniques for maximizing life.” Moral reform was already about biopolitics; it was infused with considerations of the life of the body expressed in the form of knowledges regarding how to live. During the nineteenth century race, with its militant biopolitical imperative of survival, “becomes the organizing grammar,” to use

590 It is worth noting that while Durham was in the Canadas, British Liberal politician Arthur Buller was busy drafting a plan for educational reform in Lower Canada. Buller, as Curtis notes, was of the opinion that separate French and English schooling fostered racial tensions and hampered a needed “anglification” of the province. As I will consider below, Lord Durham shared these ideas. See Curtis, Building the Educational State, 43.
591 Foucault, The History of Sexuality, Vol. One, 123.
Ann Stoler’s phrase, that enables these knowledges to be transformed into governmental regimes such as mass schooling.\textsuperscript{592}

Furthermore, according to Foucault, the imposition of such regimes has to be viewed as “an affirmation of self” rather than “an enslavement of others.”\textsuperscript{593} The undoubtedly hegemonic deployment of bourgeois morality constituted an extension of a “symbolics of blood,”\textsuperscript{594} which arises from the “transposition” of “the caste manners of the nobility” onto the familial concerns of the bourgeoisie.\textsuperscript{595} Thus, on the one hand, there is the “preoccupation with heredity” and, on the other, the bourgeois concern with “cultivation” of the body, which is evidenced from the late eighteenth century on in texts giving advice on subjects such as “hygiene” and other “methods for improving the human lineage.”\textsuperscript{596} These methods are, in effect, “an exaltation” that is “eventually extended to others” so that what emerges in the nineteenth century is a number of programs that have one thing in common; they are aimed at the expulsion of the heterogeneous elements of society that are seen as a threat to health of the body.\textsuperscript{597} Most of all, the elements of these programs are defined against a particular standard or norm that provides the basis for the homogenization of behaviour. In Upper Canada/Canada West this norm, which will be put into operation throughout the new system of education, is presumed to be white, male, Protestant, and, above all, English.

Linda Colley, in her book \textit{Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837}, describes “Englishness” as a unique identity forged around language and practices of self-

\textsuperscript{592} Stoler, \textit{Race and the Education of Desire}, 27. 
\textsuperscript{593} Foucault, \textit{The History of Sexuality, Vol. One}, 123. 
\textsuperscript{595} Foucault, \textit{The History of Sexuality, Vol. One}, 124. 
\textsuperscript{596} Foucault, \textit{The History of Sexuality, Vol. One}, 125. 
\textsuperscript{597} Foucault, \textit{The History of Sexuality, Vol. One}, 123.
development commonly associated with Protestant character and business acumen.\textsuperscript{598} Integral to the construction of Englishness, she argues, were the numerous wars with France that were characterized as pitting the realism and industry of Protestants against superstitious and indolent Catholics. Around these conflicts developed a profound national mythology fearful of all things non-British and expressive of national superiority believed contingent upon loyalty to the Crown, military services, and a faith in the business acumen and leadership of the aristocracy.

Colley’s definition provides a guideline for understanding the qualities held to comprise “Englishness,” as well as those considered opposed. Englishness was not restricted to Britons. Britain’s Imperial history is testament to the fact that this mythology was not reserved for the home front. The British Isles may have been the location where these attitudes were embedded, but, as Stoler argues, imperialist hegemony provided multiple testing grounds for the racialized elements of this myth of superiority; particularly those related to forms of personal conduct deemed necessary to racial, and therefore, national survival.\textsuperscript{599}

Sullivan’s report is predictive of the way in which governmental changes in the western province of colonial Canada would soon render its population a colonial testing ground for the biopolitical deployment of racialized modes of conduct; the latter becoming the domain of public education. These changes would be more fully expressed


The inculcation of Englishness in schools as a form of subjectification is akin to Pierre Bourdieu’s concept of \textit{habitus}, whereby subjects mnemonically develop identity according to a “system of lasting, transposable dispositions,” as well as Judith Butler’s notion that “identity is performatively constituted by the very ‘expressions’ that are said to be its results.”


in another set of observations regarding the state of the colonies after the Rebellion. No other text in Canadian history reflects the overlaying of biopolitical concerns with race and matters of personal conduct, and connects this ensemble with national security and the need for public education, as does Lord Durham’s *Report on the Affairs of British North America*.

VI. “Assimilation to English habits is already commencing”

Durham’s *Report* is widely considered a document fundamental to liberal reform in Canada. “As every student of Canadian history knows,” writes William Westfall, Durham proposed “changes in the structure and practice of imperial and colonial politics” in Canada that are presumed to be “the first important steps…leading to responsible government and national autonomy.” Durham is adamant that one of the necessary remedies to the circumstances that caused rebellion in Upper and Lower Canada is the institution of government able to accommodate offices of local representation. Restoring order after the uprising required placing a certain amount of power in colonial hands, and removing it from the hold of the Family Compact and *Chateau Clique*. The form of local representation recommended by Durham was not something akin to the republican style of government of the United States. Colonial offices were to remain ultimately dependent on instruction from the Crown. The aim was to give colonials more control over their affairs, but in a manner that strengthened loyalties to the Empire, thereby avoiding the mistakes made in the American colonies.

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According to Westfall, the almost canonical position granted Durham’s *Report* in the history of progressive reform has kept commentators from recognizing its “real intention.”\(^{602}\) Perhaps the most commonly cited passage of the text is Durham’s declaration: “I expected to find a contest between a government and a people: I found two nations warring in the bosom of a single state: I found a struggle, not of principles, but of races.”\(^{603}\) Westfall thinks it is also “the least read passage of the document.”\(^{604}\)

Though understandably taken as an example of Durham’s illiberalism, the passage ought to be considered “in materialistic and economic terms.”\(^{605}\) Durham’s use of race is about the characteristics necessary to adapt “to the new economic forces that were shaping the world” and not “inherent physical traits.”\(^{606}\) The thrust of the *Report* has less to do with establishing the roots of a liberal order, that is, egalitarian and conducive to freedom, than ensuring the placement of economic power “in the hands of those who would use it properly.”\(^{607}\) Of course, this meant the propertied English population, who it was dubiously presumed could be relied upon to apply their industriousness to achieve economic prosperity, thereby “solving the problem of social disorder and political instability.”\(^{608}\) Therefore, an economic interpretation of race reveals that the institution of responsible government in the Canadas is Durham’s goal only insofar as popular representation is equated with broader economic enfranchisement.

Westfall’s talk of discerning any “real intention” aside, I agree that an economized notion of race is fundamental to Durham’s text. However, my agreement is

\(^{602}\) Westfall, *Two Worlds*, 108.
\(^{604}\) Westfall, *Two Worlds*, 108.
\(^{605}\) Westfall, *Two Worlds*, 109.
\(^{608}\) Westfall, *Two Worlds*, 109.
qualified by a Foucauldian view of race as primarily a technology of biopower rather than class hegemony. Race is still seen to bifurcate the Canadian population, but in terms of distinguishing what must be given a “political death,” and what must be fostered for health and security. This, as Stoler observes, is what makes Foucault’s notion of race one that accounts for racism in “its most virulent form.”

Durham is clear that the divide “is one of races, and not classes,” and for him this is proven by the fact that in the Canadian colonies, “It is scarcely possible to conceive descendants of any of the great European nations more unlike each other in character and temperament.” Race in this case is about behaviour, character, and not only ethnicity. As Westfall rightly identifies, the behaviour being promoted is economic in nature. Thus, on one side, there are French-speaking Canadians of Lower Canada, who Durham characterizes as “unenterprising,” “not so civilized, so energetic, or so money-making,” and therefore, mired in “an old and stationary society, in a new and progressive world.” On the other, there are the English, described as having indisputably “superior political and practical intelligence” so that by “their own superior energy, skill and capital” they have ascended “in every branch of industry.” In Durham’s prejudicial opinion, the differences are so evident that the “French could not but feel the superiority

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For Stoler this is also what differentiates Foucault and Benedict Anderson on the important question of race and nationalism. Whereas Anderson sees race as a component of a homogenizing, that is, nationalistic ideology of aristocratic and bourgeois pseudo-aristocratic domination, Foucault traces racism’s operations revealing it as a predicate of class that under certain conditions, such as the perception of threat, readily permeates the consciousness of the population. In other words, racism is not the weapon of only a select group. For my purposes, this means race in colonial Canada was not a concern that emanated only from the upper classes, but was a consideration that appealed to everyone and could, therefore, be used to justify and obtain popular assent for various agendas, such as public schooling. In Chapter 5 I merge this positive use of threat with the government of interest.


of English enterprise; they could not shut their eyes to the success in everything undertaking in which they came into contact.”  

In fact, not only has the jealous animosity kept the colonies in a fractious state, it is precisely the source of the insurrections of 1837. “The error,” writes Durham, “to which the present contest must be attributed, is the vain endeavour to preserve a French Canadian culture in the midst of Anglo-American colonies and states.”

For Durham, if the conflict was to be dealt with for the security and prosperity of the colonies, and, by implication, the British Empire, a number of measures had to be put into place. The most important goal was to ensure the “anglification” of the colonies so that the character of the English, their industrious Englishness, would be affirmed as the main force dictating the region’s destiny. In order to begin accomplishing what was an inherently economic goal, a demographic shift had to be facilitated so that the cultural and political influence of the French majority in the lower province could be counterbalanced. This would be assisted in one respect by applying the immigration strategies of Durham’s travelling companion, Edward Gibbon Wakefield, to secure the future arrival of a large number of British expatriates. According to Wakefield’s theory of progressive immigration, an influx of skilled and hard working Britons would

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615 Curtis, Building the Educational State, 43.
616 Wakefield is best known as the originator of economically strategic emigration from the British Isles to the colonies, especially New Zealand. This doctrine had two main purposes. First, and in keeping with Malthusian principles, to relieve the surplus population that had accumulated in British cities and towns during the early nineteenth century. Second, to ensure that the colonies would be settled in a regulated and progressive manner, that is, concentrating people and skills in particular areas in order to better gain an economic foothold, thereby attracting further immigration by a “better sort of emigrant.” While travelling with Durham, who subscribed to Wakefield’s views, Wakefield looked to implement strategic emigration to the Canadas.
help prepare the colonies to compete and prosper in a world where changes in trade and tariff regulations were promoting the rapid expansion of the marketplace.

The other, and more immediate solution was the legislative union of the provinces, which would grant English-speakers majority representation in the affairs of both provinces. Union would not be a simple matter of amalgamating the regions under the old governmental structure. The Executive Council, previously comprised of appointees of the Lieutenant Governor, and so predictably in the hands of the Family Compact and Château Clique, would have to become an elected body, just as the reformers William Baldwin and his son Robert had demanded.

It is an understatement to say that the history of representative government in Canada is complex, and so, despite the importance of this topic, a detailed analysis is not intended here. Nevertheless, in terms of the advent of biopolitics it is interesting at this juncture to note a change in one aspect of the historical trajectory of this highly textured issue. Ten years prior to the Rebellion, Baldwin and his son took up a petition on behalf of the Reform Party. In it was expressed grievance over the ineptitude of the oligarchic leadership Upper Canada. The elder Baldwin followed this petition with a letter to the newly elected Prime Minister, the Duke of Wellington, stating that Westminster style constitutional government was absolutely necessary for the colonies to achieve the important goals of “peace, good government and prosperity.” Wellington refused to consider Baldwin’s request by pointing to the external threat posed by the Americans, stating that, “situated on a frontier,” the colony could not be held securely if a more

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equitable distribution of ruling power was allowed. After the Rebellion and under Durham’s recommendation representative government would arrive in the Canadas with the Act of Union of 1841. For present purposes it is interesting how this indicates another manner in which the notion of security changes during the 1830’s in Upper Canada from an external to internal orientation as the frontier of governmental concern shifts from border defense toward matters of population and prosperity.

Durham, in a manner typical of all radical reformers of the time, adds to his demographic and political advice some statements on the need for education. Again, his focus is mostly on Lower Canada. “It is impossible,” writes Durham, “to exaggerate the want of education among the habitants,” for “the British government has, since its possession of this Province, done, or even attempted, nothing for the promotion of general education.” “The entire neglect of education,” he continues, “has…more than any other cause, contributed to render this people ungovernable.”

Even though, as Curtis notes, “Durham did not present a plan for the strictly educational reconstruction of Upper Canada,” he commissioned Arthur Buller to develop one for Lower Canada. Buller shared Durham’s racial basis. Also like Durham he viewed the epicentre of racial antagonism to be in Lower Canada. Thus the bias of his mission is indicative of the presumed urgency. Buller rather quickly fulfilled his responsibility with a comprehensive set of proposals that focused exclusively on re-organizing education in Lower Canada. This, in Buller’s opinion, must first be achieved

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622 Curtis, Building the Educational State, 42.
from the top down, with the creation of a central office in charge of a structured administration. He also recommended proper teacher training and the creation of an inspectorate. Yet Buller did not suggest the school system be run dictatorially. Curtis points out, “Buller’s plan for regulating the system presumed organs of elected local government.”\textsuperscript{623} Local municipal trustees would oversee affairs in their regions and report to the central office. The central office had ultimate authority, but local officials could exercise discretion in certain matters.

The structure of authority proposed by Buller is similar to the exercise of power captured by Cousin as a “double character”. It is also, as Curtis writes, the partial fulfillment of the “English Radical vision of the well-governed Canadas.”\textsuperscript{624} The English Radicals, who counted Durham and John Stuart Mill among their ranks, viewed government as a participatory activity in which the individual comes to understand the importance of balanced rule, and more significantly, how this balance required restraint on the part of those governing and the governed. This is precisely what Durham meant by the “great normal school” of representative or municipally empowered government,\textsuperscript{625} which Curtis has demonstrated is one of the prime locations where government and schooling overlap.\textsuperscript{626}

When it came to education, Durham did not spare the English population his criticism. Though in most every way he thought English citizens of the colonies had shown the French to be socially backward, he found the English to be “hardly better off than the French for the means of education for their children, and indeed possess scarcely

\textsuperscript{623} Curtis, \textit{Building the Educational State}, 44.  
\textsuperscript{624} Curtis, \textit{Building the Educational State}, 45.  
\textsuperscript{626} See Bruce Curtis, \textit{True Government by Choice Men}. 
any, except in the cities.\footnote{Craig, ed. \textit{Lord Durham’s Report}, 71.} To be sure, in the cities of Upper Canada church based and private grammar schools had been established for years. But Upper Canada was comprised of a largely rural and agrarian population, and they had not been well served by previous government educational schemes. The situation would be remedied, but not in earnest until after the 1840 Act of Union.

Durham left the project of public education in the hands of Canadian officials, returning home to a promising political career unfulfilled by his early death. His recommendations did inspire Lieutenant Governor Arthur in 1839 to call for a Commission of Government Departments of which education was included.\footnote{Curtis, \textit{Building the Educational State}, 45.} The findings of the commission, though they did not result in immediate action, were no less despairing of the state of education in the colonies than Durham’s \textit{Report}.

It remains an unexplored legacy of the \textit{Report} how the changes in the application of governmental power it effected, especially its use of race to forward an economic agenda, contributed to make conditions in Upper Canada conducive to public schooling. In what follows I will pursue this legacy. I intend to begin revealing how, as the movement to develop a system of schools intensified after 1840, race and economy would be extended into and through public education. Together they informed the curriculum and pedagogical practices that shaped the experience of generations of the province’s children.
VII. Race as the “organizing grammar” of Public Schooling

Viewed from the perspective of genealogy, Durham’s Report is reflective of a number of shifts in the way power would subsequently be exercised by government in Upper Canada/Canada West. Primary among these is the institutionalization of modes of dispersing governmental power that enabled the population to participate in the governance of their own affairs. The effect of this is to condition a sense of ownership and responsibility. Government is no longer from a distance, but immediate and always current. It becomes embedded in the life world so that its former intrusions appear necessary and natural. Under such conditions the massive intrusion into family life that was public schooling was made possible. But this did not occur all at once or in terms of a narrowly constructed legitimating rationale. Multiple discursive factors, both negative and positive, contributed to fashioning an acceptable veneer that allowed public schooling to gradually blend into the social and political landscape of the province.

Insofar as the discourse of race is associated with potential threats it is one such source of legitimation. Earlier we saw how race was used biopolitically to justify sovereign violence. Race also provides the groundwork for a more sophisticated form of legitimacy. Under liberal rule this form is in part expressed by the logic of threat. Negatively, this logic appears in the formation of something Foucault identifies as “a culture of danger,” which vilifies and excludes in the manner evidenced in Durham’s Report.

Paradoxically, the intention of this culture is positive. The counterpart to the logic of threat is an appeal to security, which is a concern readily shared amongst a population.

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629 Stoler, Race and the Education of Desire, 27.
630 Foucault, The Birth of Biopolitics, 67.
Thus the culture of danger provides multiple rallying points for popular interest. Accordingly, under the culture of danger, government and the population share a heightened sense of vigilance and the energy to proactively deal with dangers such as ignorance, pauperism, and crime. In the name of interest governmental interventions that combat these dangers gather popular assent because they are not perceived as a sacrifice of freedom. Instead, interventions are justified as preventative or conducive to stimulating the exercise of freedom.\textsuperscript{631}

The prevention of threat proved a powerful justification for governmental intervention in Upper Canada/Canada West. Evidence of this power is to be found in the colonial authorities’ continuous expansion of the list of possible dangers in need of government attention. A list that already included the favourites of reformers, pauperism, ignorance, and crime, grew rapidly to include intemperance, illiteracy, poor hygiene and many other sources of danger to the population. All of these were targeted using a language that carries forward the language of race, which, as Foucault argues, is the language of quarantine and of war. Thus it comes as no surprise that such dangers were, as they continue to be, dealt with as campaigns and battles.

The language of war does not have to be used plainly for it to be in play. For instance, in Durham’s \textit{Report} there is no specific mention of war, but the presence of past confrontations arises regularly to summon a sense of danger and convey urgency. Durham does this is by expanding the racial threat. The French are not the only danger to

\textsuperscript{631} How this works according to Foucault’s view of liberalism will be considered in more detail next chapter.
English progress. Craig points out that the “shadow of the United States hovered over nearly every page of the Report,” as Durham, with great prescience, recognizes, the influence of the United States…is forever present. It extends itself as population augments and intercourse increases; it penetrates every portion of the continent into which the restless spirit of American speculation impels the settler or the trader; it is felt in all the transactions of commerce, from the important operations of the monetary system down to the minor details of ordinary traffic; it stamps, on all the habits and opinions of the surrounding countries, the common characteristics of the thoughts, feelings and customs of the American people.

The references to invasion in this passage are difficult to ignore, and invasion would continue to be a concern. Sullivan, as discussed above, had also made this a focal point of his educational recommendations. Neither Durham nor educational reformers offered little in the way of a departure from the same prejudice. Instead, they harnessed it strategically in order to achieve their aims.

The threat posed by racial differences had significant implications for schooling in Canada West. Most notably, anti-Americanism regularly fuelled debate over textbooks, and in particular was an issue called upon by Ryerson as justification for the employment of the Irish Reader series. As Ryerson would comment in 1847, “I believe it will be found, on inquiry, that in precisely those parts of Upper Canada where the United States books had been used most extensively, there the spirit of the

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632 Craig, Upper Canada: The Formative Years, 263-264.
634 Curtis argues that assessing curricular content simply as a reaction to a perceived American threat ignores the fact of “statification,” that is, the construction of knowledge in support of the state. This entails, he writes, subscribing narrowly to the “myth of curricular republicanism.” I do not challenge this view, but wish to use Foucault’s nominalist notion of the state to direct attention to how school knowledge developed in a double movement, negatively and constructively.

The insurrection in 1837 in 1838 was prevalent. The discourse of race was given a productive role in the development of public schools. Comparisons between the content of curriculum and dissent did more than foment anti-American sentiment and enable Ryerson to win his war over textbooks. A standardized curriculum made it possible to put into place other measures of regulation. Practices today considered a natural part of schooling, such as grading, standardized testing, and structured methods of teacher training had in their conditions of possibility dividing practices based on a culture of danger derived from the biopolitics of race.

The United States presents a special case whose effects on questions of education in Upper Canada/Canada West had been accumulating for decades. It is worth noting that the very first piece of education related legislation, the School Act of 1807, included, as the sole comment on teacher qualifications, the stipulation that each candidate be a British subject, and not of American origin. During the attempt to create the first comprehensive piece of educational legislation, the Common School Act of 1816, the question of the American presence in schools was, not surprisingly after the War of 1812, the subject of passionate debate. Even the Family Compact’s challenge to the 1821 election of American born Barnabas Bidwell to the Assembly involved education. As

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636 I will consider the impact of curricular standardization in Chapter 5.


Houston and Prentice also discuss how American immigrants to Upper Canada who arrived after 1783 were considered to have repudiated the authority of the Crown by not taking leave of the United States, as had the loyalists, immediately after the War of Independence, and therefore, were judged exempt from political participation in the Canadian colonies.
Craig notes, during the controversy then Lieutenant Governor Maitland expressed to the Executive Council the need for a university, something Strachan had already been promoting, that would provide “an education likely to impress...common feelings of attachment to the Crown, and of veneration for the Church of England.” These were qualities that few on the Tory side of the debate could imagine ascribing to men like Bidwell, who seemed little more than an opportunistic interloper and propagator of republicanism. Nevertheless, long before the Rebellion, anti-Americanism was an issue regularly raised in Upper Canadian discussions of education. With the acceleration after 1840 of discussions regarding complete government involvement in schooling the issue was raised more often and with greater intensity.

It is crucial to notice that when characterized in terms of the biopolitics of race, expressions of anti-French and anti-American sentiment were not just about exclusion. A primary effect of the discourse of racial superiority and inferiority proved to be the creation of mechanisms of inclusion, of which schooling ranks as a prime example. This is also evident in Durham’s Report, especially as he explains that his focus on racial differences pertained to the possibility of elevating French Canadians from their “hopeless inferiority” by giving “the Canadians our English character.” Though he may have included among the benefits of this proposal the removal of restrictions to “the higher professions” faced by educated French Canadians and the provision of more opportunity for “the humbler classes,” what he suggests is indeed the homogenization of Canadian society, the “raising up for the North American colonist some nationality of

638 Craig, Upper Canada: The Formative Years, 119.
639 Craig, Upper Canada: The Formative Years, 118f.
640 Craig, ed. Lord Durham’s Report, 149.
641 Craig, ed. Lord Durham’s Report, 149.
his own." But the qualities expected to be integral to this national character reveal as misleading the tone of forethought. Durham presumed Canada’s only future lay in its development as a dedicated outpost of British industry and enterprise.

In large part, achieving this future through education meant training students for inclusion by holding up the French and Americans as “definitions of difference to be,” and, as such, justification for the subjectifying deployment of Englishness in schools. Ryerson and his small army of inspectors and teachers appropriated the war-like language of race to make certain that the children of Upper Canada/Canada West learned well the advantages of Canada’s English heritage, especially the freedoms and protections guaranteed by a Constitutional Monarchy. The children were to discover that these freedoms and protections came with the responsibility of developing the rational and economically engaged demeanour associated with being English. As I will consider in the following chapter, these were precisely the qualities identified as natural by a novel science that was a subject given high status in the new curriculum: political economy. Political economy was more than a topic of study. Through political economy the “organizing grammar” of race was transformed into the organizing grammars of the mechanism of interest and the market. Schooling in Canada West served this transformation by fostering rationality conducive to the economic pursuit of interest. Tellingly, this is reflected even in the most apparent and basic features and goals of the system.

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642 Craig, ed. Lord Durham’s Report, 162.
VIII. “What Knowledge is Most Worth?”

Buller’s commission did not directly engage the problem of education in Upper Canada, but his plan predicted most of the aspects that would be incorporated into the project of public schooling during the 1840’s. Many of Buller’s suggestions found their way into Ryerson’s 1846 “Report on a System of Public Elementary Instruction for Upper Canada,” which some say is the most important text in Canadian education history.

Salient among these adaptations are Ryerson’s insistence on an administrative logic not unlike that indicated by Cousin’s “double character,” the building of a Normal School, the establishment of an inspectorate, and a detailed curricular proposal. Combining these topics with enhancements on the best of previous reports made the

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644 Herbert Spencer posed this question in an 1859 essay. The question is indicative of Spencer’s ideas of self-improvement and the value of competition, both of which had a great effect on the culture of the Victorian era and education.

645 Curtis, *Building the Educational State*, 42.

646 Ryerson was in on Durham’s educational recommendations throughout the process. Ryerson’s biographer C. B. Sissons notes that Durham “had consulted Ryerson” and even sent “the first copy” of his Report “to reach Toronto” to him. See Sissons, ed., *Egerton Ryerson, His Life and Letters*, Vol. II, 150n1

647 George Tompkins refers to it as “the single most important policy document in Canadian curriculum history.” See George Tomkins, *A Common Countenance: Stability and Change in the Canadian Curriculum* (Scarborough, ON: Prentice-Hall, 1986) 56.

I am not saying that with the 1846 Report Ryerson single-handedly made the system. As Gidney and Lawr state, “Ryerson did not make Ontario’s system of public instruction. He inherited an operating system” that was in process of developing on the basis of guidelines proposed in the 1843 Act. With the 1846 Report and Act, “His most significant achievement was the establishment of a more powerful and more effective central authority.”Nevertheless, where I differ from this view is that I see in Ryerson’s presumed consolidation of power in 1846 a liberal strategy of negotiating power to create public assent, but not strictly through class or ideological hegemony. I noted this idea in Chapter 1 when I pointed out his contradictory views on coercion. Ryerson was not trying to control the system so much as find ways to gradually work with public response, just like the colonial authorities calculations regarding the fate of the rebels. Gidney and Lawr sense this and in the same article from which the previous passage is taken write, “to put too much emphasis on the coercive power of the central authority is to misunderstand its administrative style…Ryerson used his power cautiously.” However, they do not continue to investigate the paradox. I am attempting to do so by looking at it in terms of liberalism’s operation in a double movement that simultaneously respects freedom and attempts to find ways to govern out of this respect.

1846 text comprehensive, and therefore, it proved foundational to future developments in the system. Yet I find the report compelling for how its recommendations for changes in the administrative structure of the school system reflects aspects of the liberal concept of rational government espoused by Locke and Mill, two philosophers who exemplify in their writings the doctrinal liberal notion that governmental legitimacy is dependent upon rationality.

Near the start of the “Report” Ryerson echoes their views by stating that if the people of Upper Canada “are to be governed as rational beings, the more rational they are made the better subjects they will be”.

The idea is straightforward: since rational beings understand that it is in their best interests to be secure and prosperous, the right use of reason necessarily entails the preservation of order, necessitating government but rendering it primarily an extended mechanism geared toward the same goal. Applied to education, this idea entails that, insofar as schooling cultivates right reason, it is instrumental to legitimacy and the safe progress of society. So goes the doctrinal story, which history demonstrates has reached an almost unassailable status. In Ryerson’s time, having been tested and not defeated during the American War of Independence and the French Revolution, this story found easy acceptance among Upper Canadian legislators.

When tracing the history of liberalism Foucault uses the same language when he characterizes it as involving “how to found the principle of rationalization of the art of government on the rational behaviour of those who are governed.” But through a Foucauldian lens the liberal deployment of reason appears other than progressive or innocent. Recalling the discussion from Chapter 2, Foucault does not presume rationality

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649 Foucault, The Birth of Biopolitics, 312.
is something exercised innocently or in a historical vacuum. Rejecting doctrinal liberalism’s essentialism makes it possible to see how practices of government are constitutive. In terms of schooling, the idea of making subjects more rational is not, as Ryerson most likely intended, about cultivating students’ inherent human capacities. Rather, it is about fostering behaviours deemed rational. By reading through some of the liberal aspects of Ryerson’s “Report” we can see how certain behaviours considered rational are deployed for specific ends that have broader implications than legitimacy and the preservation of order, though these remain important factors.

Ryerson proposed two primary features for the system of schools. Both are based on ideas borrowed from the liberal canon. First, public instruction in must be universal, and second, “nor is it less important...that it should be practical”. In terms of the former, making the system universal required it be free to all Upper Canadian children as well as non-denominational. To this end, Ryerson continued where previous reports had left off, noting the necessity of generating school revenues through a tax levied on property, and invoking a “conscience clause” that assured parents that their children would not be religiously indoctrinated against their wishes. In these we see the persistence of liberal principles regarding the nature of property and religious tolerance.

It is the second feature that most signifies the presence of a certain play of historical conditions; one that construes subjects as responsible individuals in a new way. Responsible, that is, not just because they are presumed inherently moral, but by virtue

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of becoming rational through the acquisition of authorized knowledge; authorized knowledge, in this case, meaning knowledge that enables subjects to flourish in daily life while contributing to the lives of others by engaging in productive activity. To modern eyes this might not seem particularly novel, but at the time it signified a number of changes. For instance, if nineteenth century public schooling represented anything it was the end of ornamental education, and the beginning of useful learning. Previously the privilege of the upper classes, in the minds of nineteenth century educational reformers learning for its own sake was an indulgence pursued by those possessed of too much leisure or a lack of motivation. Knowledge must be useful and applied to better one’s station and, on economic principle, that of others. The character building of ornamental education was transformed into a purposeful approach to learning. As Ryerson wrote while on a European tour of school systems intended to help him preparing the 1846 Report,

My leading idea has been...not only to impart to the public mind the greatest amount of useful knowledge...but to rendering the Educational system in its various ramifications and applications, the indirect but powerful instrument of British Constitutional Government.

652 The advancement of the idea of “useful knowledge” was especially energetic in England. There, organizations such as “Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge” gained great influence, and were responsible for the development of Mechanics Institutes. These operated similar to present day Schools of Continuing Studies, providing working adults with an early version of lifelong learning. Mechanics Institutes were quite popular in Canada West, and found in Ryerson an enthusiastic lecturer. Furthermore, the connection of usefulness to diligence and hard work, and, in turn, the connection of these with mutual interest and morality and Englishness, was prevalent. As Ryerson wrote in the Journal of Education for Upper Canada,

He who refuses labour...disobeys the laws of God, perverts nature, weakens his intellectual faculties, and by requiring his fellows to labour too much, that he may be supported in idleness, becomes an enemy to his race and is only unworthy of a place in the workshop of the Great Architect.


Even before the system was in place it was understood that schools were to make subjects useful so they would be governable.

Ten years before Ryerson’s 1846 “Report” Duncombe had devoted several pages to this issue in his Report on the Subject of Education. He declared, “whatever may have been the state of things heretofore, it is criminal to acquire knowledge merely for the sake of knowledge.— (sic) the man must be disciplined and furnished according to the duties that lie before him.”654 In Duncombe’s view, there was little value to be found in studying the classics. The children of Upper Canada had been born into a world generally seen to be rapidly progressing. For boys, knowledge of industry and commerce and, for girls, management of the household, instead of what would soon be known as the dead languages, Latin and Greek, were needed to secure the future; for,

if it be necessary that the antiquarian should still make his pilgrimage to the east, and dig after learned hieroglyphics in the ruins of the Acropolis, and in the subterranean depositories of the Herculaneum in Pompeii; or if it be necessary, as undoubtedly it is, that some should devote themselves to a critical investigation of the ancient languages,— (sic) so let it be; but from such a tedious pilgrimage, and such an endless study the great body of students should be excused, that they may devote themselves more immediately and more effectively to the great and pressing wants of the world.655

Early in his 1846 report Ryerson echoes this perspective, asserting,

Much knowledge may be imparted and acquired without any addition whatever to the capacity for the business of life. There are not wanting numerous examples of persons having excelled, even in the higher departments of knowledge, who are utterly incompetent to the most simple, as well as the most important, affairs of every day life. History presents us with even university systems of education, (so called,) entirely destitute of all practical character; and there are elementary school systems, which tend as much to prejudice and prevent, not to say corrupt, the popular mind, as to improve and elevate it. The very end of our being is practical; and every step and every branch of our moral, intellectual, and

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654 Duncombe, Dr., Charles Duncombe’s Report, 19.
655 Duncombe, Dr., Charles Duncombe’s Report, 25.
physical culture should harmonize with the design of our existence. The age in which we live is likewise eminently practical; and the conditions and interests, the pursuits and duties of our new country under our free government, are invested with an almost exclusively practical character. Scarcely an individual among us is exempt from the necessity of ‘living by the sweat of his face.’ Every man should, therefore, be educated to practice.^^656

No longer could one’s familiarity with the classics be granted as sufficient to being a responsible and fully participatory member of society. If schools were to be relevant, then children must be taught skills appropriate to the times. But the first steps would be most significant. Herbert Spencer had, more or less, summed up the nineteenth century notion of practical education with his question “What knowledge is of most worth?”^^657 For Ryerson and his colleagues an answer lay in “The great object of our common schools,” which was to “teach the whole population how to read, to write and to calculate – to make a good reader, writer, and calculator of every boy and girl in Upper Canada...Reading, Writing, and calculation are practical arts.”^^658

It seems necessary, if not benign, to argue that education must have a practical application. This is especially the case regarding basic literacy and numeracy, which then, as now, are presumed to be the keys to autonomy. However, when locating his liberal order framework in context of the present MacKay remarks, “for many working in political theory, ‘liberal’ values are self-evidently good; the organizing binary is ‘liberalism/illiberalism.”^^659 MacKay see this simple binary as a testament to the

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^^657 Interestingly, it was Spencer and not Darwin who first used the phrase “the survival of the fittest.”
successful assimilation of “liberal assumptions.” So deeply have the language and values associated with liberalism penetrated into the life world that MacKay argues,

It would be easy for a contemporary mind, inescapably shaped by the liberal order, to miss what was startling, revolutionary, and endangered about the nucleus of liberalism when it first assumed its pedagogical role in North America.

The liberality of the objectives assigned to common schools by Ryerson seems undeniably proper. Indeed, it is immediately recognizable in the current rhetoric that surrounds literacy, which reflects nineteenth century doctrinal liberal ideals. Harvey Graff, while commenting on his thirty years of studying the “literacy myth,” observes the persistence of a correlation between literacy and liberal concepts such as progress, prosperity, and freedom. He detects this in campaigns such as UNESCO’s UN Decade of Literacy 2003-2012: “Literacy as Freedom.” He even points to the local context, citing

*The Globe and Mail* from 2004:

If reading were cool, the sky would be the limit for Canadian 15 year olds, and eventually the Canadian economy…Canada should try to become the world’s most literate nation…Literacy is the greatest natural resource a country could have…Canada will never be a manufacturing power…a military power…But it can be a reading power…Canada needs to become obsessed with reading [like it is with ice hockey].

But Ryerson’s invocation of literacy as panacea is not as unproblematic as it may seem from a contemporary perspective. A closer look reveals a number of historical features that complicate its presumed self-evidence.

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663 *The Globe and Mail*, December 31, 2004, in Graff, *Literacy, Myths, Legacies, & Lessons*, 54, Fig. 4.1.
The first of these features is found in the sectarian roots of something that has become so highly valued in the secular order. Ryerson’s advocacy of literacy is a prime instance of the convergence of two dominant discourses: the religious and the economic. With regard to the former, his involvement in education shows strong ties to his Wesleyan Methodist faith, which began, like many Protestant sects, on the basis of a radical take on Lutheran principles. Luther had made Protestantism the religion of the book, and organized a massive campaign of literacy. Literacy and the spread of the Word through printed matter had central importance for Wesley. Literacy was basic to the Methodist brand of Protestantism, especially in terms of its support of philanthropy. Wesley even established his own order of freely distributed publications to advance his mission. Most volumes were intended to help people learn to read, but also included reissues of works by Shakespeare, Milton and Locke. Large portions of the texts produced by the Methodist press were books and pamphlets for use in schools. Children, Wesley ordered, must learn to “read, write and cast accounts.”

There was another side to literacy. As Plato considers in the Phaedrus, literacy could be dangerous. In Wesley’s time and into the nineteenth century not everyone shared the view that literacy should be made universal. Debates raged on about the merits of granting the working classes access to knowledge. It was common among British discussions of public schooling to associate mass literacy with various dangers. A line

664 See Strauss, Luther’s House of Learning.
from Thomas Peacock’s 1831 novel *Crochet Castle* captures this argument, “Robbery perhaps comes of poverty, but scientific principles of robbery come of education.” It is, perhaps, no less ironic to think that Luther’s quest to create a literate congregation began not just to steer people toward the Bible, but also to ensure they could be kept from immoral books and pamphlets.

At some point in the early nineteenth century a breach occurs and the issue of a dangerous literate public begins to dissipate. It then happens that literacy becomes an acceptable social and political goal. But it is not enough to say that it was simply recognized as practical. For literacy to obtain the status it continues to hold it had to be made practical according to something more powerful than the religious and political forces that had made its proliferation, and lack of, a concern. I contend that something was political economy.

Political economy, Foucault says, was precisely, “the intellectual instrument, the form of calculation and rationality that made possible the self-limitation of governmental reason.” Economy revealed that government is always already “too much” government. Respect for individual freedom corresponds to this principle in liberal governmentality. Moreover, with political economy we see the harnessing of the most inscrutable and irreducible aspects of population. The market is understood as a field where freedom can be most efficaciously exercised, secured by a natural assurance that increases in freedom support the maintenance of order. Adam Smith identifies the basic principle of this seemingly paradoxical notion as the “invisible hand,” a concept that

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668 A major discovery of the Reformation was that literacy is potentially dangerous, and therefore, must be controlled.


explains how the pursuit of self-interest benefits all. Nineteenth century educational reformers quickly identified literacy as an instrument for the proper cultivation and expression of self-interest. This, as I will consider in the following chapter, played an important role in the fostering of a something Michael Clanchy calls a “literate mentality,” meaning a positive engagement with “literate habits and assumptions.”

The connection between political economy as a science of prosperity and literacy as the goal of public schooling cannot be overemphasized. It is a connection that has been continuously fostered by political economists themselves. In *The Wealth of Nations* Adam Smith noted that it was incumbent on the government to educate the people since economy, and therefore, order and prosperity, demanded that as many people as possible be taught from an early age “to read, write, and account.” Some seventy years later, Karl Polanyi observes, “economic liberalism burst forth as a crusading passion and laissez faire a militant creed,” and concerns over a literate public’s potential for uprising were vastly outweighed by the utilitarian view that literacy, and thus schooling, were essential to prosperity.

A new mode of keeping order that operated beyond the law and with utility as the standard of legitimacy was expressed in the political economist’s repeated arguments for

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671 It is worth noting Smith’s original statement, that when one “intends only his own security” and, intends only his own gain, he is in this, as in many other cases, led by an invisible hand to promote an end which was no part of his intention. Nor is it the worse for the society that it as no part of it. By pursuing his own interests he frequently promotes that of the society more effectually than when he really intends to promote it.


the “intervention of the state as universal educator.” According to this mode a reading, writing, and calculating population was necessary to overall prosperity for it was assumed well prepared to appropriately pursue interest in ways that would be beneficial for both government and governed. It was in the midst of this historical context that Ryerson asked, “How is the uneducated and unskilled to succeed in these times of sharp and skilful competition and sleepless activity?” The answer was straightforward: “Everyman, unless he wishes to starve outright, must read, write, and cast accounts.”

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CHAPTER 5

“THE RIGHT DISPOSITION OF THINGS
ARRANGED SO AS TO LEAD TO A SUITABLE
END”678

In every country the art of forming man is so closely linked
to the form of government, that it may not be possible to
make any considerable change in public education without
making changes in the very constitution of the state.679

“There were consequences dependent upon Lord Durham’s mission to Canada,
calculated to make it the turning point of English politics for years to come.”680 So begins
John Stuart Mill’s prescient commentary entitled “Lord Durham’s Return.” As Mill saw
it, the stakes raised by the insurrection in the Canadian colonies went beyond the human
and material losses that might result from further conflict. These were secondary to the
risks posed to “the character…of England; her reputation in the eyes of all nations.”681
Hence responsibility for this reputation had been “delivered” to Durham’s “keeping” as
the world looked on,

to watch how England would act under this trial – whether like an irritated
despot, or a serious and thoughtful ruler, intent upon profiting by
experience, and gathering from her failures the most valuable kind of
knowledge, that of her own mistakes.682

Durham had drawn attention to those mistakes, and submitted his recommendations. For
Mill it remained whether the British government and its colonial officers would either

678 Guillaume de la Perrière, Le Miroir politique, ouvrer non moins utile que nécessaire a tous monarhes,
roy, princes, seigneurs, magistrats, et autres surintendants et gouverneurs de Républiques (Lyons, FR:
679 Helvetius, De L’espirit, Discours IV, Ch. xvii (1769) in Peter Gay, Enlightenment: The Science of
The “popular cause” to which Mill refers was that of the Liberal reformers whose ranks included “Radical
Jack” Lambton, otherwise known as Lord Durham.
wage “a war on liberty” or, inspired by “the popular cause in England,” follow Durham’s advice, and therefore, create the conditions for liberal governance in Canada. 683

By highlighting the distinction between “thoughtful” rule and despotism “Lord Durham’s Return” reminds us that by the nineteenth century, governmental power had assumed a new orientation, one concerned with “tactics” rather than submission.684 In the previous chapter, I considered how this new orientation is evidenced by the colonial authorities’ restrained or selective use of capital punishment after the 1837 Rebellion, and therefore, part of a deliberative strategy of “self-limitation” uncharacteristic of an imperial ruler faced with insurrection.685 I argued that this strategy, especially as it is qualified by Foucault’s concept of racism, is further expressive of the “calculated and reflected” or biopolitical use of power that is a fundamental condition of the advent of liberal governmentality.686

Though fundamental, as Foucault’s genealogies of government suggest, it is not the sole condition. In his 1977-1978 lectures at the Collège de France Foucault describes how the modern awareness of the authoritarian abuses of sovereignty does not entail the retreat of government. The flipside of self-limiting government is a series of intense deliberations over what constitutes suitable action.687 Out of these deliberations, which arise with respect to the biopolitical relation between the security of the state and the

685 Foucault, The Birth of Biopolitics, 13.
687 See also Dean, Governmentality, 133.
687 Foucault refers to these deliberations as “the agenda and the non-agenda” of government, adding, broadly speaking, the problem of the liberalism of the eighteenth century and the start of the nineteenth century was to distinguish between actions that must be taken and actions that must not be taken, between domains in which one can intervene and domains in which one cannot intervene.
See Foucault, The Birth of Biopolitics, 133, 12.
health of the population, a range of “surfaces” are identified upon which power “can get a hold.”  These “surfaces” are individual bodies and other objects of the “general regime of living beings.” With this discovery, something Foucault thinks began in the sixteenth century and accelerated around the last half of the eighteenth century, the population becomes governable not just as a sovereign “collection of subjects of right,” but as individuals comprising the human species, a body that in the eighteenth century became known as “the public.” At that historical juncture liberalism emerges as a rationality that moderates as it guides the biopolitical processes that operate through the public as species body, for example, such as in medical contexts where subjects are induced, rather than forced, to become attentive to their bodies and take responsibility for their own health; for their own good and the good of the state.

One way of looking at this, writes Foucault while paraphrasing the sixteenth century political theorist La Perrière, is government rules by “arranging (disposer) things in order to lead (conduire) them…to a ‘suitable end.’” According to this “curious definition,” along with the objects encompassed by a “territory,” such as land resources and the integrity of borders, the main “things” to be governed are the inhabitants. Enlightened government, then, is about organizing “a sort of complex of men and things…men in their relationships with things like customs, habits, ways of acting and thinking.” Thus Foucault finds in La Perrière’s observations an early rendering of rule

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691 Foucault is not claiming that the idea of “the public” was invented at this time. As he says, “the word is not new, but its usage is.”
concerned with the public as a “pertinent space” through which it can act to condition the
attitudes of individual subjects.\(^{695}\) This form of rule is liberalism, which governs through
the public by inducing a “right disposition” or modes of conduct favourable to particular
objectives.\(^{696}\)

I have tabled these features of Foucault’s description of the history of liberalism
because I contend that a modern concern with the “right disposition of things” made it
possible in post-Rebellion Canada West to raise and answer the question of mass
education in terms of government. We saw how elements of this concern were at work as
the punishment of the Upper Canadian rebels was calculated with respect to the public’s
reaction to state administered violence, as well as in the advice of reformers like
Duncombe and Sullivan, whose talk of the need to address the public mind is indicative
of the movement toward government no longer aimed at imposing, as in sovereign and
juridical forms of rule, but at disposing power.\(^{697}\)

In this chapter, I explore how in the aftermath of the Rebellion the issue of a
system of public schooling emerged at the forefront of this movement, representing not
the ideal outcome of doctrinal liberalization, but the practical manifestation of a liberal
rationality geared toward governing by shaping conduct. Integral to this exercise is the
cultivation of interest, the exercise of which is basic to freedom. Under liberal
governmentality freedom as personal interest is negotiated in terms of national interest in


Dean claims that biopolitics acts as a threshold over which “the art of government of the state would no
longer be simply concerned with the ‘right disposition of things’.” This, he says, is because governmental
reason focuses on more complex “social, economic, and biological processes.” I do not so much disagree as
wish to argue that a concern with the disposition of things is not excluded from governmental reason, but
remains a genetic component integral to the establishment of institutions and their practices.
See Dean, *Governmentality*, 114.
order to govern through a play of non-intervention and intervention. The former adheres to the liberal principle of frugal government, and the latter is a calculation of the utility of intervention and, more forcefully, the danger of not intervening.

Two main concepts conditioned the timely merger in Canada West of government and education under a liberal rationale. One is a paradoxical notion of the subject as susceptible to external techniques of habituation yet capable of self-formation. This is the radically objectified Lockean subject, whose developmental capacity for rational self-awareness has made it a source of legitimization, albeit with significant adaptations, for the policies and practices of generations of governors and educationists.

Tellingly, among this group is Egerton Ryerson, who wrote that as a young “teacher and student” he “took great delight in ‘Locke on the Human Understanding’.”\(^{698}\) This youthful enthusiasm would carry forward so that under Ryerson’s stewardship the school system of Canada West would display the authority of Locke in a variety of its defining features: pedagogy as habituation, an emphasis on literacy and numeracy and the inculcation of moral character, religious tolerance, and prohibitions on corporal punishment in the classroom, to name a few. These ideas were incorporated to support the formative goal that Ryerson set for the system, which he declared, was “to dispose the subjects of it for their appropriate duties and employments in life.”\(^{699}\)


Taken up again as a historical conduit through which we can gather a sense of the various knowledges that informed the development of schools in Canada West, Ryerson, who was at the centre of all educational activity in the province for thirty-three years, also provides a convenient link to the other concept: political economy.\(^{700}\) Locke supplied elements of only one part of the solution to the “dispositional problematic of government” faced by Ryerson.\(^{701}\) Just as pressing as the pedagogical question of effectively directing conduct was finding a means of legitimating public engagement in the new educational enterprise.

On one hand, Ryerson sought to resolve this issue by focusing his attention on the administrative design of the school system. In this regard he borrowed from his European and American counterparts,\(^{702}\) for whom he observed “the education of the people is more dependent upon the administration, than upon the provisions of the Laws relating to Public Instruction.”\(^{703}\) On the other, he applied the idea that the government’s obligation

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\(^{700}\) To be sure, I am not suggesting that Ryerson alone is responsible for this history, only that his activities reflect a set of discursive ideals that intersected as they evolved leading up to the nineteenth century obsession with public schooling. Nevertheless, though it is somewhat anachronistic, Houston offers that Ryerson had his finger on the pulse of the times, and thus “argued for a common school system in precisely the terms which would ensure its general acceptance.” See Susan Houston, “Politics, Schools, and Social Change in Upper Canada,” in ed. Katz and Mattingly, *Education and Social Change*, 41.

\(^{701}\) Dean, *Governmentality*, 113.

While looking at this problematic on the following page Dean writes, “From the end of the eighteenth century, the art of government of the state would no longer be simply concerned with the ‘right disposition of things’.” I take Dean to be saying that the art of government branched out, using the management of population as an opportunity to extend ability to exercise power into civil society. I don’t take him to mean that the problem of the “right disposition of things” no longer mattered. Indeed, from my perspective the dispositional groundwork laid by schools after the eighteenth century enabled the government to develop new techniques less apparently concerned with dispositional issues, but no less based on the history of this problem.

See Dean, *Governmentality*, 114.

\(^{702}\) It is noteworthy that Ryerson’s Methodist faith is apparent in his administrative style, which draws from Wesley’s preference for promoting a participatory community but under hierarchical leadership. See Himmelfarb, *The Roads to Modernity*, 128.


Here we see an indication of Foucault’s idea that with governmentality “the law recedes” as the juridical gives way to the practical, that is, “tactics”.

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to educate the public was not unlike that of parents to their children. The former solution tends to receive a great deal of attention from scholars who see in nineteenth century educational administration the manifestation of surreptitious techniques of habituation.\textsuperscript{704} Whilst I have already noted my agreement with the notion that the administrative project acted, as Mill remarked about “free municipal institutions,” like a “great ‘normal’ school” of government,\textsuperscript{705} I think that Ryerson’s view of government as a “collective parent” was just as significant to the development of public schools.\textsuperscript{706}

I say this not because I favour the idea that his notion of government represents oppressive bourgeois attitudes, and so can be used to explain public engagement in education in terms of paternalistic compulsion. Rather, when considered in terms of governmentality, Ryerson’s view of government, which is basically that it “exists for the prosperity of the public family,” signifies one of the portals through which political economy was inserted into the project of mass schooling in Canada West.\textsuperscript{707} As it was introduced into the educational context, political economy helped to stimulate popular

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\textsuperscript{704} Curtis, for instance, has shown how the system’s administrative structure provided an environment of subjectification as it “involved the social production of those directly engaged in it, and of those performing necessary functions for its management.”

\textsuperscript{705} Mill, “Lord Durham’s Return.”

\textsuperscript{706} It is worth citing the passage from which this phrase is taken, The State, therefore, so far from having nothing to do with the children, constitutes their collective parent, and is bound to protect them against any unnatural neglect or cruel treatment, on the part of the individual parent, and to secure them all that will qualify them to become useful citizens of the state.

engagement in the project of schooling by highlighting the correlation of state and individual interests.

Foucault’s description of the emergence of political economy as an economic rationale of government offers a means to understand the mechanisms and transformations through which this important correlation is made possible. However, the sorting required is complex since political economy is a concept that, in his 1977-1978 and 1978-1979 lectures, Foucault returns to over and again but without offering a stable definition. There are elements of traditional and critical views of political economy in his usage, yet he rarely brings these together in a single application. An explanation for this may be that in his analysis political economy, like security and population, plays the role of dispositif, and therefore, is approached as an evolving bundle of discourses and practices that are deployed historically, and in ways that have multiple effects. The result is that political economy is described according to fluid operations that influence multiple contexts.

With this in mind, two things are in order before we proceed. First, it helps to dispel any expectation that the term political economy will be used in ways that readily conform to either classical economics or critical theory. Second, as I will argue, political economy has discursive roots in the Lockean subject, and this subject is one of the prime effects of the deployment of political economy. So there is no granting precedence of one over the other, and this will be reflected in the structure of this chapter; meaning that I think it best to first understand Foucault’s account of how political economy emerges as a governmental rationale before considering its relation to the Lockean subject. I will later,
to use Foucault’s phrase, “pay a minimum homage to causality” by linking the two together as I consider their practical presence in the public schools of Canada West.\(^{708}\)

In the meantime, a little more attention must be given to Ryerson’s ideas to make this clear. By briefly probing his concept of government, and then relating it to some of the shifts in power that Foucault identifies in his account of governmentality, we can begin to understand how political economy contributed to public schooling in Canada West.

I. The “appropriate sequel to the domestic”\(^{709}\)

Colin Pearce writes that when it comes to issues of government scholars have commonly treated Ryerson as “a Christian, first, last, and all the time.”\(^{710}\) But, he argues, this results in too narrow a perspective as important secular sources of Ryerson’s political thought are ignored.\(^{711}\) Pearce advocates working from Peter Smith’s assertion of the “critical” importance of the Scottish Enlightenment in Canadian political history.\(^{712}\) Applying Smith’s suggestion to Ryerson’s political views exposes a debt to the work of Scottish theorists such as Henry Brougham, David Hume, and Adam Smith.


\(^{711}\) The same can be said of how many of Ryerson’s contemporaries are treated even though it has been noted, “All educated Englishmen on both sides of the Atlantic – indeed all educated Europeans – were familiar with [the Scottish philosophers’] writings.” See Ronald Hamowy, “Jefferson and the Scottish Enlightenment,” *William and Mary Quarterly*, 36 (1979) 505, in Pearce, “Egerton Ryerson’s Liberalism,” 774.

\(^{712}\) Curtis adds to this “Nineteenth century middle class educational theory is pervaded by conceptions drawn from the philosophy of mind/moral philosophy/ political economy of the Scottish Enlightenment.” However, he does not follow up on this observation. See Curtis, *Building the Educational State*, 134n21.
Their impact stands out in two ways. First, instead of something akin to the “possessive individualism” later derived from Locke by C. B. MacPherson, Ryerson “betrays signs of the ‘softening’ trends of post-Lockean thought” that follow from the Scots, who reject the concept of an adversarial state of nature in favour of a natural human fraternity based on a sense of sympathy between human beings. Second, Ryerson founds human fraternity in marriage and family, which he writes, “is the very law of man’s constitution.” The upshot is government is reduced to the management of the family. The family, Ryerson writes, is the natural blueprint for all “Civil institutions,” which he thought of as “the appropriate sequel to the domestic.”

Reflected in Ryerson’s domestically-rooted concept of government, and perhaps in all expressions of paternalistic rule, are remnants and modifications of an art of government that, Foucault says, takes as a model, “the proper way of managing individuals, goods, and wealth, like the management of a family.” According to Foucault, in the sixteenth century good government was increasingly likened to household management, and economy, a word that can be traced back to the Greek words oikos, house, and neimen, to manage, or nomos, rules, was introduced into modern political thought. But this event signifies more than the mere adoption of “a chimerical

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model” to a social reality whose complexities far exceed the confines of the family. With “the demographic expansion of the eighteenth century” and “the emergence of the problem of population” the question of economic government advanced beyond the limited model of the family to a concern with the biological processes that are “immanent to the field of population.” With this advancement public schooling was discovered to be increasingly more of a necessity than a possibility. To understand this development we must first consider Foucault’s description of how population and economy gave rise to a convergence in the activities of government and the governed. This is important since I contend that public schooling was developed in Upper Canada/Canada West because of and to reinforce such a convergence.

II. Political Economy and the Immanence of Liberal Government

According to Foucault, economy proves useful to dealing with population as an aggregate and as individuals because it enables government to extend its operations.

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The family remains the origin of the concept of government as the management of immanent processes, For it is in fact the government of the family that best corresponds to the art of government that was sought: a power immanent to society (the father being part of the family), a power over ‘things’ rather than territory, a power with multiple finalities all of which concern the well-being, happiness, and wealth of the family, a peaceful, vigilant power.


However, as Pavla Miller argues, this marks a historical point wherein the merging of family into population presents a challenge to patriarchy that will have important effects; for instance, the fight to reclaim the masculine power of patriarchy through imperialism and war. To a lesser extend this is also exhibited in the male domination of schooling.


Somewhat similarly, Dean suggests that the emergence of government as police “was a break within patriarchy” insofar as the rights of the head of a household evolved into a broader liberal mode of “fraternal patriarchy.”


Italics in original.
Specifically, economy’s employment of empirical observation and statistical methods helps government to identify “regularities,” such as rates of birth, death, accidents, and disease. As these immanent processes are made manifest by statistics they become the object of government, that is, statistics renders these processes, and by implication population, manageable. In this way the politicization of economic principles, which is political economy, “designate[s] a level of reality and a field of intervention for government.”

Political economy defines an epistemic space where it is “possible to think, reflect, and calculate the problem of government outside of the juridical framework of sovereignty,” and with regard to the unique natural processes “internal to the things” to be governed. In other words, through political economy government learns to operate immanently in relation to its object, which is population: “What is governing and being governed” are the same.

The economic objectification of the ends of government renders government immanent to its objects and thus entails completely new styles of governmental intervention. These styles, which are integral to the development of public schooling, emerge as the parallel advent of population and political economy directs governmental attention to the mechanism of interest. Once political economy renders population “the

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Thus one of the reasons why some of the first economists referred to themselves as the *physiocrats*, since they believed themselves engaged in the observation and analysis of natural physical phenomena.


724 Foucault writes, “not the naturalness of nature itself, as the nature of the world, but processes of a naturalness specific to relations between” people in society.


To be sure, none of this should be considered an argument in favour of teleology. Instead, it should be seen in light of Foucault’s statement,

For millennia, man remained what he was for Aristotle: a living animal with the additional capacity for political existence; modern man is an animal whose politics places his existence as a living being in question.


end and instrument of government rather than as the sovereign’s strength” governance
aims “to increase its wealth, its longevity, and its health.”

Sven Opitz comments that this
means neither the interruption of the natural processes of population nor managing by
“simply weighing costs against benefits.” Foucault finds that as “government revolves
around population, and consequently around the birth of political economy,”

Interest as the consciousness of each of the individuals making up the
population, and interest as the interest of the population, whatever the
individual interests and aspirations may be of those who comprise the
population, will be the ambiguous fundamental target and instrument of
the government of populations.

Elsewhere, Foucault states, “Governmental reason in its modern form…is a reason that
functions in terms of interests.” As such intervention cannot represent a single minded
governmental agenda. Government must work according to the utilitarian principle of the
mutual “interplay between individual and collective interests.”

Calculating the stakes
involved in any action generates practical political influence.

To demonstrate this Foucault offers the example of the difference between
sovereign penal systems, wherein “when the sovereign punished he intervened
himself,” and modern systems that operate according to extensive calculation of “the
injured parties interests…redress for damages, etcetera.” Whereas the sovereign had

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726 Foucault, Security, Territory, Population, 95.
Ulrich Bröckling, Susanne Krasmann and Thomas Lemke, Governmentality: Current Issues and Future
729 Foucault, Security, Territory, Population, 106.
730 Foucault, Security, Territory, Population, 105-106.
731 Foucault, The Birth of Biopolitics, 44.
732 Foucault, The Birth of Biopolitics, 44.
733 Foucault, The Birth of Biopolitics, 45.
734 Foucault, The Birth of Biopolitics, 46.
direct control over “subjects and other things subjected through these subjects,” there is in the modern context a “thin phenomenal theme of interests” that must be taken into account and are “the only thing on which governmental reason can have a hold.”

However, in order to more fully locate the mechanism of interests in context of liberal governmentality, it has to be asked how such a “hold” could be justifiably exerted considering that historically the economic complement to liberal rule are the physiocrats’ principle of laissez-faire and Adam Smith’s notion of the “invisible hand”? This question is important for understanding the role of economics in the emergence of public schooling under liberal governmentality, and so it merits consideration; for it helps account for the interrelated questions of popular assent and the development of new techniques of governmental intervention.

In simple terms, the physiocrats and Smith postulate that the unfettered pursuit of individual interest will converge as if by natural law in the general interest. The location of this convergence is the market, which is conceived as a spontaneous and self-organizing order of human relations. The governmental corollary of laissez faire is that there must be no official interference with the pursuit of interest since it is the engine of market order. In laissez faire and the invisible hand we see an extreme ideological manifestation of what Foucault refers to as the “frugality” of self-limiting liberalism. “Liberalism,” Foucault asserts, “is imbued with the principle: ‘One always governs too

735 Foucault, The Birth of Biopolitics, 46.
736 Though the physiocrats and Smith are commonly credited with propagating this idea, it is perhaps Dutch political economist Bernard Mandeville who, in his The Fable of the Bees, claims that the pursuit of interest in the form of wealth and luxury goods is to the benefits of all. Thrift, in other words, is a recipe for economic and social disaster. See Bernard de Mandeville, The Fable of the Bees, or, Private Vices, Public Benefits (London, UK: J. Tonson, 1724). Accessed April 26, 2011. http://books.google.ca/books/about/The_fable_of_the_Bees.html?id=vNQGAAAAcAAJ&redir_esc=y
737 Foucault, The Birth of Biopolitics, 29.
much’.\textsuperscript{738} It seems contradictory to suggest that under such principles government would attempt to get “a hold” on anything, and should, for its own sake, refrain altogether from interfering.

Foucault attends to this concern in his March 29 and April 5, 1978 lectures at the Collège de France with an analysis that revisits and widens the scope of the work he began in 	extit{Discipline and Punish}. He considers how economy, first expressed in terms of the household, and then as population, intensified the objectives of governmental power, but eventually proved to be the critique or limit of its exercise.\textsuperscript{739} This critique confirmed, it was no longer a matter of...following the old formula and conforming to, or approaching, or remaining true to the essence of a perfect government. Henceforth the art of government will not consist in restoring an essence or remaining faithful to it, but in manipulating, maintaining, distributing, and re-establishing relations of force within a space of competition that entails competitive growth. In other words, the art of government is deployed in a field of relations of forces. I think this is the great threshold of modernity of this art of government.\textsuperscript{740}

Under sovereign rule power is singular and symbolized solely in the person of the monarch. Foucault, in 	extit{Discipline and Punish}, details how “the great threshold” of modern government is defined by shifts in knowledge and power that occurred according to “a double-entry system” wherein power “had to correspond to the immediate wishes of the king, but it was also capable of responding to solicitation from below.”\textsuperscript{741} In effect this is the “double character” noticed by Cousin in the Prussian school system, also reflected in the colonial authorities’ handling of the rebels, and “borrowed” by Ryerson in his design of the Upper Canadian school system. It is a doubling of power according to limits or, as

\textsuperscript{738} Foucault, 	extit{The Birth of Biopolitics}, 319.
\textsuperscript{739} Foucault, 	extit{Security, Territory, Population}, 311f.
\textsuperscript{740} Foucault, 	extit{Security, Territory, Population}, 312.
\textsuperscript{741} Foucault, 	extit{Discipline and Punish}, 214.
Foucault offers, a “double delimitation” such that “the unlimited power of the sovereign and the ever-active illegality of the people” converge; “illegality” in this case also standing for recalcitrance. The doubling of power is also representative of the historical juncture where territorialization and population compel government to respond to the questions:

How is power to be strengthened in such a way that, far from impeding progress, far from weighing upon it with its rules and regulations, it actually facilitates progress? What intensificator of power will be able at the same time to be a multiplicator of production? How will power, by increasing forces, be able to increase those of society instead of confiscating them or impeding them?

Foucault finds that Bentham’s Panopticon offers an answer to these governmental questions by exemplifying how power can be exercised “in the subllest possible way” and without the “sudden, violent, discontinuous forms that are bound up with the exercise of sovereignty.” A key to the Panopticon’s effectiveness is its ability to make both government and population visible. The perfect “state apparatus” of panopticism, one that extends sovereign power beyond the castle walls yet is also intended to operate for the benefit of population, is police.

The “science of police” emerges in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as an instrument of state control over the resources of population. Police, Foucault writes

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742 Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 89.
744 Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 208.
745 Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 213.

Foucault states, “from the seventeenth to the end of the eighteenth century, the word ‘police’ had a completely different meaning from the one it has today.” By this Foucault means to point out that earlier forms were a comprehensive assemblage of techniques for the management of population, and not a corps whose sole aim is to uphold the juridical order.

while paraphrasing von Justi, is not simply a uniformed corps whose goal is to uphold the law but,

is the set of interventions and means to ensure that living, better than just living, coexisting will be effectively useful to the constitution and development of the state’s forces. So with police there is a circle that starts from the state as a power of rational and calculated intervention on individuals and comes back to the state as a growing set of forces, or forces to be developed, passing through the life of individuals, which will now be precious to the state simply as life.

As a state centred regulator of population, police is the perfect exponent of the paternalistic economy of the household. But its inherent paternalism gradually exposes its limitations. By attempting to regulate most facets of the life of the population, not only does police prove overly intrusive, but also its activities presume the possibility of gaining intense knowledge of its objects. This is what is made apparent by the arrival of economy, since for police to be an effective apparatus of government it “must bear over everything,” it “must be coextensive with the entire social body…by the minuteness of the details it is concerned with.” Total knowledge of its objects is fundamental to the operations of police. Therefore, in the March and April 1978 lectures Foucault takes up

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747 Johann Gottlob von Justi was an eighteenth century German political economist who, in part influenced by Pufendorf and other Cameralists (from the German kammer, meaning chamber or bureau), advocated limited governmental interventions into economic processes on behalf of the preservation of state interests. Hunter argues that such interventions required the bureaucratization of government as a means of managing multiple sectors. At the forefront of governmental bureaus von Justi placed police, who were to be generally responsible for “freedom, assured property, and flourishing industry.” See Hunter, *Rethinking the School*, 39, 43.


749 Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 213.

750 Police were one of the main governmental expressions of the “statistical enthusiasm” or “avalanche of numbers” that Ian Hacking says took place “in the two decades 1820-1840.” The collection of statistics was part of a biopolitically driven program of gathering as much knowledge of the population as possible. Police acted as *staatsbrille*, literally meaning “state spectacles.” While Hacking looks at other epistemic effects of this change, Foucault argues that the advent of political economy gave rise to an interest in statistics, but also revealed the impossibility of gaining the advantage of prediction over population; that is, other than the fact that individuals will always act according to their interests. This is why government begins to focus on interest, however inscrutable it may be, by finding ways of managing population at a distance. But in focusing on interest government can only act on other actions to open a field of possible
the question of how complete knowledge of population is possible, and looks again at police as a set of techniques that aim to establish a “stable yet controllable relationship between the state’s internal order and the development of its forces.” 751

Whereas in Discipline and Punish police are described as an example of a state apparatus that assists in the coercive and intrusive development of docility, in the lectures Foucault takes a broader view, and finds that the advent of economy puts the epistemic and practical limits of this assistance in question. Foucault uses the notions of price differentiation and supply and demand postulated by the économistes, and in particular, the physiocrats, to illustrate how the knowledge needed to control these fundamental market mechanisms is beyond the purview of police. 752 Moreover, it is discovered that interventions into the market based on the presumption of such knowledge prove to be counterproductive. In turn, the knowledgeable authority of police, which is supposed to enhance the ability to steer the processes of population for the mutual benefit of the state and its subjects, is exposed by the spontaneity of the market to be an economic, and therefore, governmental liability. This is the beginning of laissez faire, and it is also, in light of the epistemic limitations of police in regard to the realm of exchange and the creation of wealth, “a matter of ensuring the state only intervenes to regulate, or rather to

actions. This is precisely how Foucault sees the modern exercise of power. It also, more or less, is how Smith thinks of the market.


It is further noteworthy that the penchant for issuing paper that accompanies the “statistical enthusiasm” identified by Hacking was well demonstrated by the Canada West Department of Education. Houston and Prentice write that in one year the Department’s “voluminous official correspondence” totalled “a staggering 38,000 items,” which amounted to “more paper than was processed in the same period by the Colonial Office in its management of the affairs of the entire British Empire.”


The phrase staatsbrille I have taken from Duncan Ivison, who credits it to the Cameralist Wilhelm von Schroder.


751 Foucault, Security, Territory, Population, 313.

752 Foucault, Security, Territory, Population, 342-344.
allow the well-being, the interest of each to adjust itself in such a way that it can serve all.”

The economic critique of police confronts government with a paradox by introducing, Foucault says, “a formidable wedge into the unlimited presumption of the police state.” Still, even though economy seems to place government in a bind caught between action and inaction this does not mean it becomes muddled or ineffective. The economic critique of limits compels government to respond in a liberal fashion by adapting its operations to suit economy, thereby founding “a new art of government.” Something presumed to be a paradox under this new art is actually constitutive of modern governance. This is illustrated in some of the key techniques that are deployed in the wake of economic critique and “the birth of political economy.”

One way in which government responds is by making “the need to develop the disciplines even more acute.” The problematization of sovereignty expressed by the economic question of the frugality of government does not mean sovereignty is “eliminated,” but that population can no longer be managed “at the level of…overall results.” The disciplines make it possible to manage population “in depth, in all its fine points and details.” Thus sovereignty and discipline remain integral to this new art.  

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760 Foucault states in his January 24, 1979 lecture, “Economic freedom, liberalism…and disciplinary techniques are completely bound up with each other.” See Foucault, *The Birth of Biopolitics*, 67.  
Foucault’s idea is that it is not a question of succession, discipline over sovereignty, and governmentality over discipline. Rather, we should view it as a “triangle: sovereignty, discipline, and governmental management,” each mode directing power according to multiple factors based on their suitability to the situation at hand.
Discipline enables government to get a hold of the body for the purposes of maximizing its potential and that of the state. “For the old principle of ‘levying violence’…the disciplines” under “a quite different economy…substitute the principle of ‘mildness-production-profit’.”

This is not yet the more subtle way of governing through interests that accords with *laissez faire*. Nevertheless, in a key respect this new principle is apparent in the increased concern over the education of populations that developed during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. A number of commentators, including Foucault, have noted how schools of the period, insofar as they borrowed elements of their design from the model of the regimented military training camp, are prime examples of the use of panoptic discipline. By organizing classes hierarchically, following a strict schedule of lessons, placing students under the gaze of teachers and district supervisors, many early schools reflected the tactics Foucault discerns in institutions geared toward the exercise of disciplinary power. “Is it surprising,” he asks, “that prisons resemble factories, schools, barracks, hospitals, which all resemble prisons?”

Indeed, approaches to instruction carried forward the principles of production and efficiency shared by these institutions. One of the most popular educational techniques of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the Madras or Monitorial System advocated, though independently, by Andrew Bell and Joseph Lancaster, employed a mix of panopticism and production line processes to efficiently teach as many students as possible in a single classroom. In *Discipline and Punish* Foucault describes this system as

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Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 228.
“a machine for learning, in which each pupil, each level and each moment, if correctly combined, were permanently utilized in the general process of teaching.”

Briefly, the system employed students as monitors who were charged with assisting in the instruction of other students. These monitors, elected because of the maturity and familiarity with the lessons, would move through individually designated areas of the classroom repeating the master’s instructions and assisting students. Only a single master was required to issue lessons, take reports from monitors, and supervise the proceedings, making it possible to cheaply and efficiently teach vast numbers of students. Lancaster claimed that in an appropriately scaled classroom the system could meet the instructional needs of “a thousand children or more.”

At the time of its introduction in England, the Bell-Lancaster system was hailed by politicians as “perfection” and by poets as an invention just as important to the general improvement of humankind as the printing press. All manner of reform minded Britons believed the system could once and for all solve the economically related problems of pauperism and crime by cost-effectively teaching thousands of poor children. Perhaps the most fitting tribute to the system came from Bentham. Years before Bell and Lancaster made their mark, Bentham had demonstrated the training value of the principles of visibility and efficiency in his Panopticon prison design. But it was not until later that Bentham combined his Panopticon with the Bell-Lancaster method of instruction to create his own version of a monitorial school the *Chrestomathia*, which means

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763 Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 165.
765 Parliamentarian Samuel Whitbread thought it brought “the instruction of youth…to a state of great perfection” and made it a cornerstone of his plan for a public education system in England. The poet Wordsworth wrote, “Next to the art of Printing it is the noblest invention for the improvement of the human species.”
“conducive to useful knowledge.” The “Chrestomathic School” functioned so that “every human subject in the whole building is kept throughout within reach of the Headmaster’s eye,” and therefore, the common problem of idleness would be banished, in turn lessening the need for punishment: “The quantity of punishment and reward employed in the production of that effect sunk to its minimum; in a word, profit maximized, expense minimized.”

Considering its suitability to the widespread application of disciplinary technology in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, it has to be asked how the monitorial system fared in Upper Canada? After all, it proved immensely popular in the home country, and remained a standard for the teaching of the British poor for many years. It even had its supporters in Lower Canada, drawing the attention of Lancaster, who took up residence in Montreal and opened his own school in 1828.

With few exceptions, the most famous being the Upper Canada Central School in York, the Bell-Lancaster system failed to take hold in Upper Canada. Some have argued that this is attributable to the intra-denominational conflicts that influenced Upper

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769 Lancaster’s school in Montréal would suffer from a lack of support, and close soon after. For more on Lancaster and monitorial schools in Lower Canada see Bruce Curtis, “Joseph Lancaster in Montréal: Monitorial Schooling and Politics in a Colonial Context,” Revue d’histoire de l’éducation/Historical Studies in Education, Spring (2005) 1-27. In his most recent book, published while this dissertation was in its final stages, Curtis explores the influence of monitorial schooling in Lower Canada, which, he claims, was “unable to produce the deepened interiorities demanded in a liberal system of government, but it underpinned early liberal government.” As I argue below, monitorial schooling did not play a similar role in Upper Canada/Canada West. See Bruce Curtis, Ruling by Schooling Quebec (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 2012) 120-184.
Canadian politics in the years leading up to the Rebellion.\textsuperscript{770} I wish to add to this the notion that the monitorial system did not accord with the political landscape of post-Rebellion Upper Canada. By this I do not mean it was unsuccessful in an environment of competing doctrines. Nor am I arguing that Upper Canada’s pre-industrial agrarian economy was not yet prepared to match education with productive efficiency of the factory. Rather, the Bell-Lancaster system was out of step with transformations in relations of power between the government and the population of the province.

Consider the following instructions for monitors taken from Lancaster’s \textit{The British System of Education}:

\textbf{Out. Front. Look (to the right or left, by a motion made with the hand by the commanding monitor.) Take up slates. \textit{Show slates.} (Here the monitor inspects.) Left hand slates. Right hand slates. Single. (In a line.) \textit{Double.} Step forward. Step backward. Go. Show slates, to the master, or inspecting monitor.}

\textit{On returning to the class.}


\textit{On going home.}

Out. Unsling hats. Put on hats. Go.\textsuperscript{771}

Such rigid scheduling of activity was viewed by Upper Canadian educationists as mind numbing and, therefore, pedagogically unsound. Educational officials in the province were not against programming and uniformity in schools, but it had to be fashioned within limits and allow for student engagement. A proper and complete education


\textsuperscript{771} Joseph Lancaster, \textit{The British System of Education} (Georgetown, DC: Joseph Milligan and William Cooper, 1812) 84, in Richardson, \textit{Literature, Education, and Romanticism}, 94.
required more than the simple methods of rote learning offered by monitorial schools. Ryerson, in his 1846 “Report” stated outright that the monitorial method of teaching language is nothing more than “rote-learning and word mongery,” incapable of offering the student deeper learning. He added,

The great object of an efficient system of instruction should be, not the communication of so much Knowledge, but the development of the faculties. Much knowledge may be acquired without any increase of mental power; nay, with even an absolute diminution of it. Though it be admitted that “Knowledge is power,” it is not the Knowledge that professes to be imparted and acquired at a rail-road speed: a Knowledge which penetrates little below the surface, either of the mind, or of the nature of things, - the acquisition of which involves the exercise of no other faculty than that of the memory, and that, not upon the principles of philosophical association, but by the mere jingle of words; - a mere word Knowledge, learned by rote, which as no existence in the mind apart from the words in which it is acquired, and, which vanishes as they are forgotten.\footnote{Ryerson, “Report on a System of Public Elementary Instruction for Upper Canada, 1846,” 158-159. Ryerson’s mention of “the principles of philosophical association” is a reference to Locke. The importance of this will be made apparent below.}

Ryerson and his colleagues were not alone in this view. A number of educational reformers from various countries had already tabled similar criticisms.\footnote{For instance, Scottish educationist David Stow criticized the monitorial system for creating an artificial environment that excluded important socializing activities such as play. See Hunter, \textit{Rethinking the School}, 8-11.}

The supposed economic and pedagogical benefits espoused by supporters of the monitorial system were, in the minds of its critics, based on the very same characteristics that were its faults. Critics could discover ammunition for their views in the thought of Adam Smith, who observed in \textit{The Wealth of Nations} that the cost-effectiveness and efficiencies of the factory are subverted by the “torpor” of the mind caused by repetitive actions.\footnote{Smith, \textit{The Wealth of Nations}, Bk. V, Ch. I, 987.} Smith’s answer to this concern is the intellectually and physically engaging
“education of the common people” provided for by the government.\textsuperscript{775} From this standpoint, employing the monitorial system would at best be to simply remove subjects from one factory and place them in another.

In an epoch that, as Foucault writes, placed “mildness” in line with production and profit, monitorial instruction proved to be too dictatorial for reformers in Upper Canada/Canada West. Its pedagogy disregarded an increasingly popular idea, namely, that learning involves the pleasurable exercise of the student’s own will and judgment.\textsuperscript{776} Opposite the monitorial method it was thought that effective teaching must impart knowledge while stimulating the use of all faculties. As Locke had observed almost one hundred and fifty years earlier, “a slavish discipline makes a slavish temper.”\textsuperscript{777} Only the pedagogy of mildness, which Locke had spoken of as harnessing “the most powerful incentives of the mind,” could accomplish the full and proper cultivation of the student’s faculties.\textsuperscript{778}

I will discuss the importance of Locke to this pedagogy of mildness in a later section. For now, despite his ideas having been offered specifically for the instruction of a young upper class gentleman, it is indicative of the popularity of Locke’s \textit{Some Thoughts Concerning Education} that by 1800 the book was in its twenty-fifth edition.\textsuperscript{779} The significance of this is reinforced by the fact that book production remained quite costly until the early part of the nineteenth century. \textit{Some Thoughts} was widely read and

\textsuperscript{775} Smith, \textit{The Wealth of Nations}, Bk. V, Ch. I, 989.
\textsuperscript{776} Rousseau is known as the great advocate of this notion, influencing Pestalozzi and many others. However, as I will consider below, it is a notion that owes a great deal to Locke.
\textsuperscript{778} Locke, \textit{John Locke on Education}, §56:36.
was highly influential, and, as we will see below, this influence is apparent in the development of the Upper Canada/Canada West public school system.

I have taken the time to consider the Bell-Lancaster monitorial system because I think that its lack of success in Upper Canada/Canada West says more than its formal relation to the utilitarian spirit of the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries. No doubt it is demonstrative of the gradual spread of disciplinary industrial regimentation into the realm of education, but this occurs at a micro level with the use of drill, repetition, surveillance, and division into classes and levels of aptitude. From the broader perspective of governmentality discipline cannot account for other technical aspects of the application of new forms of rule in educational contexts. The modern equation of “mildness” with productivity and prosperity cannot be sustained by discipline alone. One reason is that discipline, as Foucault acknowledges while embarking on his analysis of government, tends to be too much a “technology of domination”.

Through the lenses afforded by governmentality domination is historically mitigated and transformed by multiple factors, the most constant being the subject’s capacity to exercise its interests freely. It is this capacity that economy aims to understand and employ.

Economy, by characterizing population as an “indefinite field of immanence” represented in multiple interactions and exchanges, highlights the emergence of a social order that is not forced, and so beyond the will of the state. Economy indicates that population operates spontaneously and according to “the mechanics of interests.”

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780 Foucault, “Truth, Power, Self; An Interview with Michel Foucault,” in Technologies of the Self, 19.
781 Foucault, The Birth of Biopolitics, 277.
782 Ryerson, Curtis points out, spoke of “a domain above politics,” a realm dependent upon the will of individuals, and where government directive could not have a direct affect. As we will see below, Ryerson’s most practical vision of this domain relied on the natural laws of political economy. See Curtis, Building the Educational State, 11.
783 Foucault, Security, Territory, Population, 352.
designated realm of the pursuit of interest is the market, which in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries is held as a source of civility and social cohesion. Not only does the pursuit of interest benefit the interests of all, it is also an activity said to “soften” and “polish” the “manners”.

Montesquieu, perhaps most famously, captures this idea in the principle of *doux commerce*: “it is almost a general rule that wherever the ways of man are gentle (*moeurs douces*) there is commerce; and wherever there is commerce, the ways of men are gentle.”

Of course, there is no guarantee that certain individuals will attempt to take advantage of others in the market. This is one of the great problems of economics. But it is noteworthy that Montesquieu’s remedy for greed is the correct “disposition of things” such that “power be stopped by power.”

The notion of countervailing power holds that over-indulgence in self-interest risks an exception to the civility of the market. Such exceptions jeopardize its distributive benefits, and are therefore, contrary to everyone’s interest.

Altogether, then, out of interest and the market there is prosperity, civility, and, most importantly, order, and, according to the natural principles of political economy, it is these desirable states that governmental interventions, and the avarice of individuals,

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786 Thus the so-called “Adam Smith Problem,” which will be discussed below.

787 For Hume it is also one of the great problems of politics in general,

   Political writers have established it as a maxim, that, in contriving any system of government, and fixing several checks and controls of the constitution, every man ought to be supposed a knave, and to have no other end, in all his actions, than private interest.


risk placing in jeopardy.\textsuperscript{789} This brings us back to government and the notion of \textit{laissez faire}, but now we are in a better position to understand how, under the paradox created by economy, government remains possible, effective, and even takes on \textit{laissez faire} as a crucial operational principle. In fact, to remain vital government develops a set of features around \textit{laissez faire} that are, Foucault says, “still the same today.”\textsuperscript{790}

With \textit{laissez faire} a novel approach to governance emerges that provides a condition of possibility for institutionally based interventions like public schooling. Instead of rule by direct means of control, the respect for interests fundamental to \textit{laissez faire} presents government with the task of ensuring the pursuit of interest is unimpeded. At the same time, government must also see to it that there is an environment conducive to the pursuit of interest. Government’s objective is double-sided, as the mechanism of interest requires strategies of prevention, which target subjects and modes of conduct that threaten the play of interests, and the active promotion of interest through strategies that incite, induce, seduce and make the pursuit of interest “easier or more difficult.”\textsuperscript{791} In this we find the answer to the earlier concern, for it is through this “paradox of (non)intervention,” as Opitz refers to it, that government gets a hold on interests.\textsuperscript{792} Yet this hold is not something that attaches power directly to its object. Rather, government

\textsuperscript{789} Interestingly, Foucault suggests that Kant, in his essay on “Perpetual Peace,” conceives of world peace not in terms of human agreement over juridical protections, but contingent upon the extension and solidification of market relationships of production and exchange, and, above all, the exercise of interest. See Foucault, \textit{The Birth of Biopolitics}, 57-58.

\textsuperscript{790} Indeed, Kant writes,

The mechanism of nature, in which self-seeking inclinations naturally counteract one another in their external relations, can be used by reason as a means to prepare the way for its own end, the rule of right, as well as to promote and secure the nation’s internal and external peace.


\textsuperscript{792} Opitz, “Government Unlimited,” 99.
applies power indirectly to attain particular ends, but with tacit reference to a cherished truth or value, such as freedom. Interests and freedom are bound together in order for government to attain its objectives.

III. “One will then no longer have to hear the obey; or rather, the obey will be founded on autonomy itself.”

The double-sided task of promoting and protecting the pursuit of interest “explains,” says Foucault, “the insertion of freedom within governmentality”. It does this not by proclaiming that subjects must ‘be free’, with the immediate contradiction that this imperative may contain.” Government attends to the management and organization of freedom, but does so in terms of the “paradox of (non) intervention,” which Opitz describes as,

intervention only in terms of non-intervention: governmental intervention is necessary because the processes in which it must not intervene are permanently threatened. At the same time, intervention only intends to make non-intervention possible and feasible. According to governmental reason, intervention always already refers back to non-intervention and vice versa.

To put this in context of the concepts discussed above, government must laissez faire out of respect for the freedom of subjects. Freedom is exemplified in the individual pursuit of interest, something that is satisfied in the main by participation in the market. To carry

Italics in the original.
794 Here we can see how the emphasis on liberty that defines doctrinal liberalism is preserved in governmentality as precondition and object of government. Freedom, says Foucault, has become indispensable to government itself. Henceforth, a condition of governing well is that freedom, or certain forms of freedom, are really respected. Failing to respect freedom is not only an abuse of rights with regard to the law, it is above all ignorance of how to govern properly. The integration of freedom, and the specific limits to this freedom within the field of governmental practice has now become an imperative.
Foucault, Security, Territory, Population, 353.
795 Foucault, The Birth of Biopolitics, 63.
this further, if freedom, and therefore, interest is in danger because the integrity of the market is threatened, then government must intervene to oppose this threat and restore the market’s equilibrium. The irony is that such an intervention is performed for the same reason that government must also *laissez faire*. But the irony is lessened somewhat by the idea that there is always, Opitz writes, “a kind of generative disquiet in the fabric of governmental power: it demands to be reproduced time and again without ever being dissolved. One governs always already too much, and has to continue governing in order not to govern too much.”797

With political economy acting as a “permanent correlative” of liberal rationality, government is exercised through a constant series of calculations aimed at establishing, preserving, and when needed, restoring the conditions for the free pursuit of interest.798 Liberalism is, Opitz asserts, a “constant process of calibration” around interest.799 In formal terms, there are two poles that delineate the space wherein these calibrations are performed. One is constructed on the basis of the distinct but complementary “problematics” of freedom.800 The most familiar of these is the juridical conception of

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797 Opitz, “Government Unlimited,” 99-100. With this in mind Peter Miller and Nikolas Rose observe, “government is a congenitally failing operation.” See Peter Miller and Nikolas Rose, *Governing the Present* (Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2008) 35. In a more direct manner, Colin Gordon sums up this kind of activity, “It is the paradox of liberalism in all its forms...that much action is necessary before one can *laissez faire*.” See Jacques Donzelot and Colin Gordon, “Governing Liberal Societies: The Foucault Effect in the English-Speaking World,” in *Governmentality Studies in Education*, 10. Indeed, the changes to fiscal policy initiated by Chairman of the U.S. Federal Reserve Alan Greenspan in the wake of 9/11 provide a perfect example of this mode of governance. With the stability of the American economy at stake, President Bush [in]famously encouraged the population to go shopping in order to ensure the flow of liquid capital. There are no juridical powers in place to enforce this advice, no matter how necessary to economic stability. However, though not directly related to shopping, Greenspan’s dramatic lowering of interest rates made borrowing more appealing, and therefore, stimulated, that is, induced the population to take advantage of readily available cash. An effect of this change in policy, of course, is the use of borrowed cash to make purchases.

798 Foucault, *The Birth of Biopolitics*, 16.
800 Foucault, *The Birth of Biopolitics*, 41.
freedom as a right guaranteed by contract; that is, protected insofar as the subject of right is willing to yield by contract aspects of his or her independence to the protection of the law. The other, which according to Foucault, “since the beginning of the nineteenth century...increasingly encompasses all the traditional problems of law,” is associated with “English radicalism” and its supporters Jeremy Bentham, James and John Stuart Mill, and Lord Durham.

Defining this radicalism “is the problem of utility,” conceived, Foucault says, in a wide-ranging manner as “more than the projection of a utilitarian ideology on the level of politics.” Utility, as it appears in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, is “something very different from a philosophy or an ideology” in that it emerges not as a theory but a constant test or critique of government and its institutions adopted to form a “technology of government.” As such it is informed by multiple considerations involved in any context of official concern. Nevertheless, these considerations are invariably directed towards a single criterion. This criterion, which gives a modern meaning to utility beyond the hedonistic calculus of Bentham, is freedom exercised independent of governmental

In this line of thought there is a productive style point that demands some attention because it reinforces what I have been doing with history in this dissertation. Foucault views these two problematics of freedom according to something he calls “strategic logic”. The aim of this logic differs from “dialogic logic” in that, instead of stressing “contradictory terms within a homogeneity that promises their resolution in a unity,” it establishes “possible connections between disparate terms which remain disparate.” In the case of freedom, these two kinds are connected through concepts such as the right to liberty, but in fact the divide between the juridical and the economic separates them. Indeed, it is when we attempt to reconcile this divide that we entertain the impossible task of creating an economic sovereign, which is the contradiction, and danger, that Foucault sees in neoliberalism. I will discuss this further since it informs the connection between this dissertation and the present.

See Foucault, The Birth of Biopolitics, 42, 283.
801 Foucault, The Birth of Biopolitics, 44.
802 Foucault, The Birth of Biopolitics, 41.
803 Foucault, The Birth of Biopolitics, 40.
804 Foucault, The Birth of Biopolitics, 41.
intervention. Independence, signified by the absence of the need to relinquish what is “both irreducible and non-transferable,” namely, the subject’s choices and interests, becomes the primary ground upon which decisions regarding rule are made.

Foucault extends the distinction between law and utility to illuminate how the latter informs governmental reason as it functions to manage interest on a level that is “inside” the juridical realm. It is customary in the liberal tradition to think that the concept of rights stands as both the source of legitimacy and the limit to governmental power. But whereas rights define an external limit, that is, external to government insofar as the holder of rights is the individual subject, utility works internally as a “criterion” not of “legitimacy” but with regard to “effectiveness.” In this we see one of the main effects of political economy. Identifying legitimacy with the natural realm of interests, which must be allowed to function spontaneously, means that “success” becomes an immediate standard for judging governmental activities. This is important because the achievement of success, especially market related prosperity, presents less of a limit to

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805 In rather basic terms, this is the positivity of freedom that Mill intends to preserve with his “harm principle”.
As Colin Gordon observes, in Foucault’s genealogy of liberalism, “The subject of interest perpetually outflanks the scope of the act of self-imposed limitation which constitutes the subject of law.”
807 Opitz, “Government Unlimited,” 100.
808 Opitz, “Government Unlimited,” 100.
For instance, Foucault says,
when the problem of the reform of the penal law is taken up at the end of the eighteenth century the question posed by the reformers really was a question of political economy, in the sense that it involved an economic analysis or at any rate an economic style of reflection on politics and the exercise of power. It was a matter of using economic calculation, or at any rate appealing to an economic logic and rationality to criticize the operation of penal justice.
809 Foucault, *The Birth of Biopolitics*, 16.
However, as Donzelot makes clear, “The substitution of the educative for the judicial can also be interpreted as an extension of the judicial, a refinement of its method, an endless ramification of its powers.”
governmental power than legitimacy. As Opitz notes, it enables government to rationalize the “un-limitation” of its power and intervene in ways not sanctioned by law.\footnote{Opitz, “Government Unlimited,” 101.}

However, the rationalization of intervention is not made only according to success as a positive notion, but even more forcefully in context of the potential for its opposite. Here we have another of Foucault’s key insights about liberalism, and it is perhaps the one that most directly applies to the rise of institutions such as the public school. Along with success gradually overriding legitimacy there emerges a range of negative supports for intervention. This, according to Foucault, corresponds to the establishment of “the political culture of danger in the nineteenth century.”\footnote{Foucault, The Birth of Biopolitics, 66.} In the previous chapter we saw the cultivation of a rudimentary form of this “culture” in post-Rebellion governmental calculations, especially with the invocation of race as a biopolitical threat. The same calculative rationale used to deal with the rebels and restore order would evolve along with liberal governmentality into various aspects of the culture of danger. In Upper Canada/Canada West and other regions where liberal governmentality was taking hold these aspects are recognizable in phenomena popularly associated with the Victorian age. For instance, Foucault points to “campaigns around disease and hygiene…what took place with regard to sexuality and the fear of degeneration of the individual, the family, the race, and the human species.”\footnote{Foucault, The Birth of Biopolitics, 66.} The rationale for such campaigns relied heavily on

\begin{footnotes}
\footnote{Opitz, “Government Unlimited,” 101.}
\footnote{Foucault, The Birth of Biopolitics, 22.}
\footnote{Foucault, The Birth of Biopolitics, 66.}
\footnote{Foucault, The Birth of Biopolitics, 66.}
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the notion that their common objective was progressive, and aimed at preserving the stability and order presumed necessary for the free exercise of interest. 813

Most notably, Mariana Valverde has explored this historical facet of liberalism while drawing attention to the illiberalism of John Stuart Mill’s equation of liberty with right reason. 814 For instance, Mill, in On Liberty, sought to ensure that in social and political contexts reason regulates self-interest; on the surface an honourable thought but, as Valverde argues, one that conceals the “despotism” underlying liberalism. 815 To show how this is the case she makes connections between nineteenth and twentieth century campaigns of moral hygiene and liberal doctrine, a combination that she reveals results in the creation of despotic regimes of habit formation. “Habit,” Valverde states, “is an extremely useful category of and for governance,” one of which liberalism takes full

813 I want to head off a comparison that arises by implication during the following discussion. I will argue that political economy made schooling palatable to the population of Upper Canada/Canada West and, significantly, did so with the support of popular religion. Public schools were positioned as a tool of government that reflected and developed aspirations already woven into a public mind by Protestant theology. I realize that this begins to sound like Weber’s survey of the role played by Calvinism and the notion of “one’s calling” in the “formation” of “capitalistic culture.” However, insofar as my aim is Foucauldian it is not directed toward tracing relations between Protestantism and economy as capitalism per se. In researching the textured correspondences between political economy and Protestantism I have in mind Foucault’s notion that while “the entry of life into history” that marks the emergence of population and biopower was “an indispensable element in the development of capitalism,” there were other forces at work that made this development possible. Of these, and of particular interest in this dissertation, is “the adjustment of the phenomena of population to economic processes” that entailed the creation of “methods of power capable of optimizing forces, aptitudes, and life in general without at the same time making them more difficult to govern.” As Foucault contends, these “methods” or “techniques of power” were deployed through “institutions of power” such as “schools,” which “operated in the sphere of economic processes, their development, and the forces working to sustain them.” Max Weber, The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, trans. Talcott Parsons (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 2003) 91.

Foucault, The History of Sexuality, Volume One, 141.


The focal passage in Mill is cited above, 121n435.

815 Her perspective, she writes, is informed by how “Foucault-inspired work on ethical governance” has shown that “despotism over oneself is part of the content of liberty.” See Valverde, “Despotism and Ethical Liberal Governance,” 365.
advantage.\(^{816}\) In so doing, liberalism segregates population into those who can bear the responsibilities of rational autonomy, and those who cannot, that is, the temperate and the intemperate. At the same time, habit capitalizes on a concept of the subject as a being, to cite Dean, which can be “divided against him or herself in so far as the condition of a mature and responsible use of freedom entails a domination of aspects of the self.”\(^{817}\)

Judging from the particular passage in Mill’s text upon which Valverde focuses, her point seems assured. The passage demonstrates how Mill draws from his equation of liberty and right reason to justify the exclusion of individuals who occupy “those backwards states of society in which the race itself may be considered as in its nonage.”\(^{818}\) In Mill’s view, and indeed that of other English radicals, a lack of sufficient rational capacity not only eliminates individuals from contributing to the management of political affairs, it renders them subject to a government’s “use of any expedients…provided the end be their improvement.”\(^{819}\) Of course, primary among such “expedients” is education, which Mill, albeit with certain caveats, believes should be made public and compulsory.\(^{820}\)

\(^{816}\) Valverde, “Despotism and Ethical Liberal Governance,” 362.
\(^{817}\) Dean, Governmentality, 156.
\(^{818}\) Mill, On Liberty, in Valverde, “Despotism and Ethical Liberal Governance,” 360. Mill mostly referred to non-white peoples, especially in India. He considered the Canadas a settler colony, and therefore, expected its peoples to “mature” to liberty eventually.
\(^{819}\) Mill, On Liberty, in Valverde, “Despotism and Ethical Liberal Governance,” 360. While looking at Valverde’s work, Dean argues that Mill’s advocacy of self-improvement does not arise out of a concern with “the possibility of the degeneration of the English race itself,” but instead comes from a “high point of optimism” regarding human potential. I think this downplays the role played by race in Mill’s thought, and perhaps liberal thought in general, as a tool of differentiation. The potential that excited Mill and other liberal theorists of the time was discursively anchored in values and behaviours explicitly associated with Englishness; an excitement held at the expense of others. See Dean, Governmentality, 158.
\(^{820}\) Historian E. G. West describes Mill’s position on public education as one that is “complicated and unsettled.” Though a full account is beyond the scope of this dissertation, it is worth noting why West finds this to be the case. Mill, according to West, found himself caught between advocating support of public education to promote liberty, and seemingly contradicting this view by stating,

A general state of education is a mere contrivance for moulding people to be exactly like one another: and as the mould in which it casts them is that which pleases the
While resisting the temptation to turn the discussion towards Mill, I want to point out the addition I am making to work such as Valverde’s, which draws upon Foucault’s concept of liberal government through freedom. My intention is to indicate how economic thinking broadened the field of governmental intervention, particularly with the targeting of interest. Liberalism presumes a free subject, and Valverde shows how processes of habit formation have exploited this subject’s capacity for moral self-reflection. I claim that interest is the main subjective hinge upon which the governmental practices of liberalism have been most reliant. From the nineteenth century onward modern reform has been morally oriented, but its increasing effectiveness cannot be attributed primarily to a hidden despotism. Just as significant is the appeal to interest, which has permitted government, even in its most conspicuous interventions, to appear, or at least claim, to be benevolently engaged in the promotion of freedom. So, for example, in the same way that Michael Clanchy argues that the success of the printing press relied on an already established reading public, it can be demonstrated that interest is the reason why widespread Upper Canadian participation in schooling predated compulsory attendance.⁸²¹ Even more suitable in this context is Martyn Lyons’s observation, “Progress in education…tended to follow, rather than precede, the growth of…

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predominant power in the government, whether this be a monarch, a priesthood, an aristocracy, or the majority of an existing generation; in proportion as it is efficient and successful, it establishes a despotism over the mind, leading by natural tendency to one over the body.

Clearly, Mill was concerned with the risk of conformity posed by mass instruction, an issue often brought to the fore by fellow utilitarian William Godwin. Nevertheless, Mill also thought the state should assist in the prevention of harm by supporting education. West thinks the contradiction, akin to that between positive and negative liberty, persists despite Mill’s attempts to surmount it. I suspect, with West’s due respect to Isaiah Berlin, that it is one worth pursuing in another work.


⁸²¹ Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record*, 1.
a reading public." The point is the population had registered an interest in education, and therefore, interest had already begun to trump morality and the law by the time public schooling became a major issue.

I think it is important to highlight this idea because the sort of positivity that has accumulated around economy carries greater potential to the mask dangers posed by interest’s role in the expansion of government. Tracing the part played by economic rationality in the development of public schooling affords a way of showing, to use one of Foucault more oft-quoted phrases, “things ‘weren’t as necessary as all that’.” What now seems benign has a long and contingent history, which contains the incubation of elements that in the current context are expanded far beyond their original objectives. Such an expansion has occurred to the extent that the liberal government of interest has morphed into the ever more comprehensively economized mode of governance referred to as neoliberalism. While acknowledging Foucault’s statement that “Neoliberalism is not Adam Smith,” I will consider this later on.

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823 Another way of looking at this tendency, which satirically pertains to education and government interventions in general, is offered by the poet Coleridge, “As in so many other cases, the inconveniences having arisen from a thing’s having become too general, are best removed by making it universal.” See Samuel Taylor Coleridge, The Statesman’s Manual, ed. R. J. White (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1972) 39-40, in Richardson, Literature, Education, and Romanticism, 120-121.

824 Thus Pierre Force writes, “Some of the puzzles of social theory can find the beginning of an explanation if one looks at the economic science at the moment of its coming into being.” See Pierre Force, Self-Interest before Adam Smith (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2007) 5.


826 Foucault, The Birth of Biopolitics, 131.
IV. “Interest Will Not Lie”

“Morality,” writes Donzelot of the history of liberal reform, “was systematically linked to the economic factor.” But this linkage was seldom equal. Morality may have been the prevalent rubric in the beginning, but it has long been surpassed by economy. The economic subject of interest has proven to be a far more governable subject, as interest, on a finer scale than the relation between utility and the law, has enabled liberal government to penetrate realms barred to morality.

Albert Hirschman’s discussion of interest offers support for this viewpoint. He describes how the gradual harnessing of the passions, traditionally thought by philosophers to be the source of vice, occurred not by human moral advancement but by taming, and indeed, subsuming them under interest. A conspicuous role in this historical shift was played by the Scottish Enlightenment philosophers, who narrowed the sixteenth century notion of interest from “the totality of human aspirations” to, in David Hume’s words, “the love of gain.” For Hume, it is human nature to desire material comforts and barriers to the harshness of the world; love of gain is self-love. Hume’s fellow Scot Adam Smith softened this somewhat by speaking of interest in social terms.

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826 Hirschman, The Passions and the Interests, 36.
828 Italics in original.
829 Hirschman, The Passions and the Interests.
830 The related and famous passage from Hume’s Treatise is, “‘Tis not contrary to reason to prefer the destruction of the whole world to the scratching of my finger.” Foucault paraphrases in his March 29, 1979 lecture while discussing “the subject himself” that “is called interest.”

If I am given the choice between cutting my little finger and the death of someone else, even if I am forced to cut my little finger, nothing can force me to think that cutting my little finger is preferable to the death of someone else.

as the “desire of bettering our condition.” Hirschman observes that a consequence of this eighteenth century “infatuation” with interest, clearly conveyed by French utilitarian Helvetius in the maxim, “as the physical word is ruled by the laws of movement so is the moral universe ruled by laws of interest,” is the discovery of “a realistic basis for a viable social order”. In the governance of this order “Interest,” advised a popular English maxim, “Will Not Lie.”

Interest presented modern government with “a number of specific assets” unavailable under “excessively demanding models of states.” For eighteenth century scholars of political economy the most conspicuous “of these assets was predictability.” Hirschman cites Sir James Stuart as a prime instance of one for whom interest offered a more compelling object of government than morality,

Were miracles wrought every day, the laws of nature would no longer be laws: and were everyone to act for the public and neglect himself; the statesman would be bewildered...were a people to become quite disinterested there would be no possibility of governing them.

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832 Hirschman, The Passions and the Interests, 43.
834 Hirschman, The Passions and the Interests, 48.
835 Hirschman, The Passions and the Interests, 36.
836 Hirschman attributes this phrase to Marchamont Nedham, a republican pamphleteer who borrowed from Machiavelli to express predominantly anti-monarchist views during the English Civil War. See Hirschman, The Passions and the Interests, 36.
837 Hirschman, The Passions and the Interests, 49.
838 Italics in original
The point is behind the “rhetoric of national decline,” a term of Valverde’s that I attributed in the previous chapter to the pronouncements of Duncombe and others, there must be an appeal to principle. In the nineteenth century and after the most common appeal is to the affirmation and protection of the free exercise of interest. Interest is consistently partnered with variations of the “rhetoric of national decline” forming a doublet expressive of the liberal paradox of (non) intervention. Similarly, Dean writes,

In the liberal mode of government that emerged in the first decades of the nineteenth century, poverty was constituted in a dual relation, to matters of economy, on the one hand, and to those of morality, on the other. It is evident that what distinguishes this mode of government from those which preceded it is not the tendency of its agents to preach certain values. Rather, it is the subjugation of the ethical to the economic.

Justifying interventions and other governmental activities for reasons of economy proved more acceptable than invoking morality.

In the history of public schooling in Upper Canada/Canada West, we can see this doublet at work in educational reformers’ frequent invocation of the dangers of crime, pauperism, and ignorance. Their proclamations are carried by a rationale that cuts both ways similar to the “dividing practices” Foucault identifies in his investigations of discipline and governmentality. I have already considered how race was deployed to justify the application of governmental power as a dividing practice, and thus a means of intervention. Race was invoked in Upper Canada to affirm ideas of behaviour associated with civility, the rule of law, and restraint; all presumed to be the characteristics of

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841 Foucault’s clearest statement of this idea is, I have studied the objectivizing of the subject in what I call “dividing practice.” The subject is either divided inside himself or divided from others. This process objectivizes him. Examples are the mad and the sane, the sick and the healthy, the criminals and “good boys.”

Dean also cites this passage. See Dean, *Governmentality*, 156.
At the same time anything not conforming to these characteristics was marked for exclusion. In this way race is also a prime facet of the development of the culture of danger. Historically, as Foucault says, it supports "the great apocalyptic threats of plague, death, and war." But in the nineteenth century utility facilitates the absorption of race in a new political vernacular; "The horseman of the Apocalypse disappear and in their place everyday dangers appear." By the 1830’s crime, ignorance, pauperism, and the like are held out obsessively in the West as scourges that all rationally responsible individuals have a duty to strike from the social landscape. Famously, these concerns are reflected in the British reform movement of the 1830’s, which had the utilitarians at its forefront. As historian David Wardle notes, their efforts were captured at the time in English playwright Douglas Jerrold’s quip “that in 1833 no one was thinking about the poor, and in 1838 no one was thinking about anything else."

Schooling for the poor as social corrective and the juxtaposition of education and matters of police are salient themes during this period, and have been given a great deal of attention by a variety of scholars. Much of this attention deals with the enforcement of a puritanical moral order, thought typical of the Victorian era. What I find interesting

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842 We can see how this presumption crossed into education with the career advancement of Ryerson. As editor of the Methodist Christian Guardian and aiming to invoke the privilege of race he began an editorial "I am a man, am a British subject and a professing Christian, and represent a British community." See Egerton Ryerson, Christian Guardian, July 11, 1838, in Albert Fiorino, "The Moral Foundation of Egerton Ryerson’s Idea of Education,” in Egerton Ryerson and His Times, 82.
843 Foucault, The Birth of Biopolitics, 66.
844 Foucault, The Birth of Biopolitics, 66.
See also Houston, “Politics, Schools, and Social Change in Upper Canada.” in Egerton Ryerson and His Times; Houston, “Social Reform and Education: The Issue of Compulsory Schooling in Toronto, 1851-71,” in Egerton Ryerson and His Times; Graff. The Literacy Myth; Curtis, Building the Educational State.
is how in the pronouncements of school promoters in Upper Canada/Canada West there is a gradual intensification of the relation between moral concerns and the economic.\textsuperscript{847} Duncombe, for example, begins one section of his 1836 report by citing statistics collected by prison officials in New York and Pennsylvania regarding the educational status of inmates. Within a page of these references his proposal transitions from a focus on the prevalence of uneducated individuals among the criminal ranks to economy:

I believe that frugality and economy in a money-making country such as ours, are virtues that ought to be taught the youth of the land, by examples of their preceptors as well as their precepts; besides moral instruction is badly taught by the profligate and intemperate; and I am much inclined to believe that “as is the master so is the child”.\textsuperscript{848}

This kind of transition, or, indeed, conflation of the moral and economic would not be so curious if it were not so common.\textsuperscript{849}

There are numerous similar incidents within the textual record of public schools in Upper Canada/Canada West. Another of the most conspicuous is found at the beginning of Ryerson’s 1846 “Report.” Immediately after announcing the goal of the system, Ryerson explains,

The establishment of a thorough system of primary and industrial education, commensurate with the population of the country, as contemplated by the Government, and as here proposed, is justified by considerations of economy as well as of patriotism and humanity.\textsuperscript{850}

\textsuperscript{847} This point cannot be overstated. In the range of the domain of conditions for the possibility of public schooling, the event of economic liberal government, which occurred in Upper Canada/Canada West, and as Dean shows, included “the event of pauperism,” represented the establishment of seemingly less restrictive, “positive measures of moral, educational, and medical police.” See Dean, \textit{The Constitution of Poverty}, 216. See Elie Halevy, \textit{The Growth of Philosophical Radicalism}, trans. Mary Morris (London, UK: Faber and Faber, 1972) 490.

\textsuperscript{848} Duncombe, \textit{Dr., Charles Duncombe’s Report}, 58-59.

\textsuperscript{849} Solotow and Stevens write that in matters of education moral and economic questions rarely “occurred in isolation from the other.” See Lee Solotow and Edwards Stevens, \textit{The Rise of Literacy and the Common School in the United States} (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1981) 72.

Reversing the order of Duncombe’s passage and using morality in support of economics, Ryerson then follows with a description of the ways in which education provides “the most effectual preventative of pauperism, and its natural companions, misery and crime.” To support this claim Ryerson cites “Her Majesty’s Inspector of Prisons in Scotland,” “evidence” presented “before the Poor Law Commissioners’ Queries” in England, and Alonzo Potter, American educationist, Episcopalian Bishop, and author of a book on political economy. Like most educational reformers Potter and the others held that “pauperism and crime prevail in proportion to the absence of education.” While discussing this Ryerson includes a variant of Adam Smith’s argument for public education as a safeguard against decreases in labour productivity that may be caused by the “torpor” of factory work. But, as Prentice writes, it was “statistical information” that Ryerson respected most, and so he was sure to also include the conclusion of a study of labourers made by his counterpart in Massachusetts, Horace Mann,

The result of the investigation is the most astonishing superiority in productive power on the part of the educated over the uneducated labourer. The hand is found to be another hand when guided by an intelligent mind. Processes are performed not only more rapidly, but better, when faculties have been cultivated in early life furnish their assistance. Individuals, who, without the aid of knowledge, would have been condemned to perpetual inferiority of condition and subjected to all the evils of want and poverty, raise to competence and independence by the uplifting power of education.

855 Prentice, “The Public Instructor: Ryerson and the Role of Public School Administrator,” 147.
Yet we do not have to attend only to official sources. Local documents evidence the same merging of the moral and the economic. An 1826 contract between an instructor and a group of Norfolk County residents engaging his or her services begins: “We the undersigned being deeply impressed with the necessity and utility of giving our children an education, by which they will be enabled to read the word of God and transact their business…”

In a time so enamoured with scientific verification, the “Facts, sir, nothing but the facts” of Charles Dickens’ head master “Thomas Gradgrind…man of realities,” the positive relation between morality and economy held even though there was little evidence to support it. Drawing deeply from a variety of public records collected in the regions of Hamilton, London, and Kingston during the mid-nineteenth century, Harvey Graff reveals, “literacy proved of remarkably limited value in the pursuit of higher status or greater rewards.” Factors other than education played a more significant role in an individual’s fortune. Nevertheless, school promoters insisted on stressing the economic perils of a lack of public education. In an 1848 edition of the *Journal of Education for Upper Canada* Ryerson declared,

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860 At the time Upper Canada resident Susan Moodie wrote, “Uneducated, ignorant people often rise by their industry to great wealth in the colony.” See Moodie, *Life in the Clearings*, 41.
861 According to Graff’s study of incarceration rates during the period 1867-1868, illiterates were not the most likely to offend, but they were punished more harshly and with more frequency than educated offenders. Yet even though illiterates in general “were isolated for severe prosecution,” it was the “Irish illiterates, especially Catholics” that “were certain to be convicted.” See Harvey Graff, “The Reality Behind the Rhetoric: The Social and Economic Meaning of Literacy in the Mid-Nineteenth Century,” in *Egerton Ryerson and His Times*, 205-206.
Does a man wish his sons to swell the dregs of society - to proscribe them from all situations of trust and duty in the locality of their abode - to make them near slaves in the land of freedom? Then let him leave them without education, and they're underfoot position in society will be decided upon.\textsuperscript{861}

The zealouslyness of educational reformers in this regard rarely abated, but it was not always respected. Dire warnings against crime and the “gangrene of pauperism” offered a popular target for satirists.\textsuperscript{862} The aforementioned Gradgrind is said by Dickens to have employed in his utilitarian school a curriculum of “little leaden books” that show how “the good grown-up baby invariably got to the Savings-bank, and how the bad grown up baby invariably got transported.”\textsuperscript{863} Towards the end of the novel a former student of Gradgrind, now working for a bank, announces,

I am sure you know that the whole social system is a question of self-interest. What you must always appeal to, is a person’s self-interest. It’s your only hold. We are so constituted. I was brought up in that catechism when I was very young.\textsuperscript{864}

Faced with the dilemma of having to support the validity of educating to promote self-interest and prevent immorality, educationists of the sort parodied by Dickens were prone, ironically, to beat around the bush. Graff points out how school promoters in general fell back on a dubious form of reasoning,

If education failed to decrease criminality, as they predicted, they retreated to explanations that stressed poor environment, immigration, poverty, heredity, the wrong sort of education, or nonattendance. If, however, ignorance, as discovered by the statistics of illiteracy, was the cause, educational provision would protect order, with training in literacy the essential aim. Some spokesmen attempted to use both arguments and to

\textsuperscript{861} Journal of Education for Upper Canada, 1 (September, 1848), 297, in Graff, The Literacy Myth, 156.
\textsuperscript{863} Dickens, Hard Times, 55.
\textsuperscript{864} Dickens, Hard Times, 287.
See also Gilmour, “The Gradgrind School,” 219.
have their claims accepted both ways, seemingly unaware of the potential for circularity or contradiction.\textsuperscript{865}

This logic, or lack of thereof, was seldom, if ever, questioned. In any case, it is most likely that any challenge would have been ignored since the call to improve society through education proved consistently compelling. To a large extent this was because of the emergence of a correspondence between Protestant morality and science that made it possible to think of human progress as compliance with divine will.

V. Secular Salvation

Whether the rhetoric of common school promoters in Upper Canada/Canada West seemed to favour the moral over the economic or vice versa, at bottom the two were considered inseparable. It was a match that had been decades in the making, and contingent upon a discursive convergence of the theological and the scientific. A number of complex ideas drawn from these areas contributed to this convergence. A cursory reading of one of the main lines of thought is helpful since this convergence enabled Ryerson and others to employ ambiguous logic but speak confidently and in universalistic terms about the moral aims of public schooling.

We can trace an important aspect of this convergence to William Paley’s philosophy. Paley, who along with Locke, was credited by Ryerson as an early influence, is known for employing the watchmaker analogy to support natural theology.\textsuperscript{866} Deeply

\textsuperscript{865} Graff, \textit{The Literacy Myth}, 246.
\textsuperscript{866} Ryerson, \textit{The Story of My Life}, 27.

Though, as noted earlier, Wesley can be considered Ryerson’s main inspiration, Fiorino writes that “as a young man, he had enthusiastically read \textit{The Principles of Moral and Political Philosophy} by William Paley and later, as principal of Victoria College, included this work as the standard text on the subject” and that he made “numerous references to Paley in his \textit{Christian Guardian} editorials and other published discourses.”

rooted in the Western philosophical tradition, the watchmaker analogy is essentially a teleological argument for God’s existence. It is a variation on Aristotle’s “unmoved mover,” a concept later taken up by Aquinas to describe the God of Christianity, which posits that actual things in the world are logically prior to whatever is potential. Given the fact of change, something purely actual must exist, that is, the fact of being is not an accident or the product of infinite regression, and this is the unmoved mover or God.

As is evident by its title, the watchmaker analogy takes nature to be an entity whose complexity may be compared to the delicate mechanisms of a watch. These mechanisms, Paley argues, cannot have occurred merely by accident, and therefore, indicate the existence of a designer, who must be God. Since this analogy is still invoked in contentious discussions about God’s existence, I do not wish to risk complicating things by pursuing it further. Basically, I mean to say that the upshot of Paley’s use of the watchmaker analogy, and the idea that gripped those involved in the development of common schooling in Upper Canada/Canada West, is in nature’s complexities there is a divinely designed order, which is made comprehensible by science, but only insofar as science is morally reliant on revelation. Science helps in the

While considering the influence of science in the Canadas, Pearce cites A. B. McKillop’s observation, “Baconian science, with Scottish ‘Common Sense’ philosophy and Paleyite natural theology, completed the triumvirate of intellectual orthodoxy that dominated many Anglo-Canadian minds for the first three quarters of the nineteenth century.” See A. B. McKillop, Contours of Canadian Thought (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 1987) 44, in Pearce, “Egerton Ryerson’s Liberalism,” 774, 14n.

868 The analogy appears on the first page of the book.
discovery of natural law, and in so doing brings one closer to God, but Scriptural revelation remains necessary to recognize that natural law is also divine law. If the ability to represent nature and the divine in terms of law is reflective of an inherent material/spiritual order, then to pursue order in human endeavours is to do the work of nature and, most importantly, God’s work. Indeed, and this harks back to Ryerson’s endorsement of the Scottish Enlightenment thinkers’ rejection of the Hobbesian brutish state of nature, the pursuit of order and improvement through the development of governmental institutions, such as public schools, accords with nature and God’s divine plan for humanity.

For Upper Canadian advocates of public schooling these ideas had a number of consequences. Perhaps most salient is the emergence of social utility as the main criterion for institutional legitimacy. The Protestant clergy, especially after loss of control over the Clergy Reserves, used social utility to justify its alliance with the state. Under a tacit pact

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871 Darren Marks writes, “The Scottish Enlightenment’s position of reason, guided and circumscribed by revelation, as directed toward moral improvement, held a powerful influence in Canadian Protestant circles.”


872 Another way of looking at this is offered by Marks, The ‘wounded reason’ of sinners meant that science, useful in itself as a technique, could not address the true needs of human society and must be confined to technical solutions. This is a form of Baconism. The activity of a providential God mimics the Paleyian belief in an ordered universe, so that Protestant evangelical society – voluntarist and democratic – is the best manner forward (and blessed) for a culture. Finally, it is only proper that God’s inerrant or inspired Word, the Bible, should be the guidebook, limiting but still in dialogue with reason and science, towards such a society and mission. A curious hybrid occurs in the evangelical mind, largely divorced from either European-American speculative attempts of synthesis (mainly idealism) and the extreme American fundamentalist hostility towards modernity. This hybrid holds the primacy of revelation and the need for a dialogue with secular society but values theology only to the extent that it serves assumptions already committed to. The end result, for both Canadian mainline Protestants and Canadian evangelicals, was a form of unsophisticated biblicalism and a historicist progressivism that conflated Canadian Protestant, mainly Anglo-Saxon, society with civilization and Christianity.


See also Michael Gavereau, The Evangelical Century (Montréal, QC and Kingston, ON: McGill Queen’s University Press, 2001).
the church made itself useful by loyally encouraging governmental aims, and in return receiving support, financial and otherwise. However, as Westfall asserts, for Anglicans, Methodists, and other Protestant denominations, “Social utility” proved “a cruel master.”

Paley’s views included a rationale for rendering establishments obsolete. If, for example, the church failed to meet the conditions of social utility by making itself inaccessible to the extent that it found itself in a minority position among its critics, then it must, Paley advised, “be altered or qualified.” Social utility held that institutions either contribute to the greater good or make room for those who can. One way to ensure the criterion of social utility could be met was by giving the school system universal appeal.

Ryerson sought to do this by emphasizing education’s ability to inculcate moral values, but on its own this approach was not without difficulty. An aim of public schools was to provide young Upper Canadians with moral instruction conveyed by lessons “interwoven throughout with sound Christian principles.” “Christian” in this case did not mean only the values of Protestantism. “Universality” was listed as the primary “feature” of the school system proposed by the 1846 Report. If schooling was to be truly public, then it must be non-denominational. It was thought that schooling could meet this prerequisite and retain a Christian bias since, as Ryerson argued, Christian values were common to all sects, and these could be discerned in “the general system of truth and morals taught in the Holy Scriptures.” Hence the Bible would remain for

873 Westfall, Two Worlds, 92.
874 William Paley, Principles of Moral and Political Philosophy (1785) Bk. VI, Ch. X, in Westfall, Two Worlds, 92.
decades one of the school system’s basic textbooks, and students taught moral lessons culled from its pages on a daily basis. But, as Ryerson stated, “although religion is essential to the welfare and even existence of civil government, the state is not the Divinely appointed instructor of the people.” Parents and students were free to choose. To accommodate those who might disagree even with the schools’ non-denominational teaching of Christian based morals, an exception was provided by a conscience clause, and included in the School Act of 1846,

\[And be it enacted, That in any Model, or Common School, established under this Act, no child shall be required to read, or study in, or from, any Religious Book, or to join any exercise of devotion, or religion, which shall be objected to by his, or her, parents, or guardian.\]

Despite the best intentions of Ryerson and his colleagues, this approach to public schooling exposed a number of deep divisions within Upper Canadian society. For some groups the supposed freedom to choose was limited by Protestant bias.

The overwhelmingly Protestant character of the province’s population only reinforced this inherently contradictory, indeed, prejudicial stance. Westfall figures that the four main Protestant denominations dominated to the extent that by 1881 they accounted for “close to 98 per cent of the population of Ontario.” See Westfall, *Two Worlds*, 11.

Nevertheless, as Ryerson’s biographer C. B. Sissons notes,

> He believed religion to be fundamental in education as in life. But he considered that the whole body of Christians—other religions were practically unknown in the province at that time—had a core of moral and doctrinal belief in common, sufficient to permit their children to work side by side in the schools.


But by no means the most important. As I will discuss below, Ryerson made certain to adopt a set of standardized textbooks, the *Irish Readers*, which, among lessons on a variety of subjects intended to also offer moral lessons, included instruction in political economy.


Compare to a similar clause from the Prussian legislation and noted by Cousin,

> No school shall be made abusively instrumental to any views of proselytism; and the children of a persuasion different from that of the school, shall not be obliged, against the will of their parents, or their own, to attend the religious instruction or exercise in it.

The idea of a non-denominational but Christian oriented institution was inherently Protestant, and from the outset Catholics loudly opposed the notion that their theology could be adjoined in the classroom or otherwise with that of Protestants and/or made generically Christian. Their regular protests ensured that grants for separate schools became a highly controversial issue that would endure well into the next century. Separate schooling is a complex issue that deserves dedicated consideration; especially in terms of how government actions produce unintended effects.\(^{881}\) Notwithstanding the

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\(^{881}\) The issue of separate schools helped widen a deep divide between Catholics and Protestants and symbolized issues of class and race. Prentice points out that “as early as 1830” the Catholic Bishop of Toronto, Alexander Macdonnell, had complained “that the Catholics of Upper Canada ‘for want of education’ were made ‘hewers of wood and drawers of water’.” The situation would heat up further when a wave of Irish arrived in Toronto in 1847, and once again with the rise of Fenianism at the end of the American Civil War. Nonetheless, Ryerson, writes Prentice, “shared Macdonnell’s view of the situation” and held that Catholics, and the Irish Catholics in particular, if they were to advance their station in society, must partake of the educational opportunities offered by the public system. Realizing the extent to which this advice was taken by Catholics to be a hard line of opposition to their wishes, Ryerson came to see separate schools as a social and political “safety valve” against hostility toward the public system. Still, Prentice offers, “For all his efforts to defend separate schools against those who would abolish them outright, Ryerson was never completely comfortable with them.”


For the most part, by taking umbrage with what they saw as the systems competing universalistic pretentions, Catholics effectively excluded themselves from the public system. For instance, Curtis reports that Macdonnell’s successor, Bishop de Charbonnel, published a pastoral letter in 1852 “which threatened excommunication to all Catholics who attended or patronized” common schools.


The Protestant/Catholic Public School/ Separate School divide was but one, albeit prominent, source of controversy. Another surrounded black Upper Canadians, many of whom had been among the first to arrive in the province from the United States, as they faced exclusion from public education because of racism. Though their children attended lessons alongside white children, there were frequent incidents of bullying and pressure from bigoted white communities hoping to segregate schools. The School Act of 1850 sought, write Houston and Prentice, “to counterbalance the injustice it could not stop” by including a “provision for any group of five black families to request a separate ‘coloured’ school.” This proved a mixed blessing since whites in some communities used intimidation to force blacks to request their own school, and even when established many of these were underserviced. However, this by no means meant that black students did not manage to achieve high academic standing despite the barriers of racism. In 1852 Robert Sutherland became the first person of colour to graduate from a Canadian university, receiving an honours degree from Queen’s. In 1855 Sutherland qualified to practice law. Moreover, upon his passing in 1878, Sutherland bequeathed a donation of $12,000 to Queen’s, effectively saving the institution from difficult financial circumstances.


presumption of principled good intentions, the universal appeal that facilitated the creation of the Canada West public school system was not based on moral values but something that proved less contentious of public tolerance.

Political economy provided public school promoters the answer to thorny questions of legitimacy. Horace Mann, in his 1842 *Annual Report*, a text from which Ryerson drew inspiration, stated that of the “beneficent influences of education” economic self-interest “may, perhaps, be justly regarded as the lowest,” but “it represents an aspect of the subject susceptible of being made intelligible to all.” If calling forth the perils of idleness and pauperism were meant to get the public’s attention, there must be a positive, inviting, and simultaneously conveyed message that education is “the most prolific parent of material riches.” Even though, as Graff has shown, there is no solid evidence that links individual prosperity with education, most prominent members of society in Upper Canada/Canada West could lay claim to having gone to school or had a private tutor. Insofar as the upper ranks set an example for others, few could argue that

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See also Barrington Walker, ed. *The History of Immigration and Racism in Canada: Essential Readings* (Toronto, ON: Canadian Scholars’ Press, 2008).


Accessibility becomes as important as usefulness, and in this we see the excitement over education’s potential for preparing the young for civic participation. This idea, which in its most popular nineteenth century form is presented by Alexis de Tocqueville, gained prominence in the public education movement, and persists through the work of John Dewey and R. S. Peters. Tellingly, in the same volume where Tocqueville discusses civic education, he also observes, that self-interest “properly understood,”

> Is a doctrine not very lofty, but clear and sure. It does not seek to attain great objects; but it attains all those it aims for without too much effort…by itself it cannot make a man virtuous; but it forms a multitude of citizens who are regulated, temperate, moderate, farsighted, masters of themselves; and if it does not lead directly to virtue through the will, it brings them near to it insensibly through habits…I shall not fear to say that it seems to me of all philosophic theories the most appropriate to the needs of men in our time.

education, at the very least, did not present a Pascalian wager; no matter the case it was in one’s best interests to be educated. After all, as the editors of the Kingston Chronicle wrote in 1842, education was “the young man’s capital, the best assurance of further competency and happiness.”

Appeals to self-interest may have played a fundamental role, but advocates of public schooling were careful to avoid suggesting that they were condoning the rampant pursuit of self-interest. For instance, though Ryerson was a staunch follower of political economy, he once told a gathering of clergy,

I have often revolved in my mind…the theories of those political economists, who maintain that the essential well-being of man consists in health of body, sufficiency of food, and personal liberty, - and those who propose to remedy the existing bills of society and bring about the universal reign of millennial happiness, by altered forms of government, improved balances of power, other distributions of property, new constitutions and laws of latest invention, from the exhaustless manufactory of human ingenuity and speculation. I have also endeavoured to examine the dogmas of those professed philosophers, who, independent of any Divine Agency, and leaving Christianity altogether out of the question, are about to create all things new by the magic power of science and education. In both of these plausible and too widely-spread theories, there appears to me to be this radical defect, an irrational as well as anti-scriptural omission: Man, as a moral being, is entirely overlooked.

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884 An article in the Ryerson edited Journal of Education for Upper Canada offered at the time, Is not education in fact the power of the people to make all the resources of their country tributary to their interests and comforts? And is not this the most obvious and prominent distinguishing feature between an educated and an uneducated people – the power of the former, and the powerlessness of the latter, to develop the resources of nature and providence, and make them subservient to human interests and enjoyments? See “Duty of Public Men of All Classes in Reference to Common Schools,” Journal of Education for Upper Canada, II (1849) 72, in Prentice, The School Promoters, 134.

Social stigma and shaming the uneducated rapidly became part of the school system building process. Prentice cites an 1853 report from Oxford County superintendent of schools John Tidey, who wrote that there lived among his community people of “better education” whose example instilled in others “an admiration for mental attainment” but also “a feeling of degradation for the want of it, and a desire to see” this “remedied in their children.” See Public Archives of Ontario, Annual Report for 1858, Appendix A, 53, in Prentice, The School Promoters, 83.

885 Tomkins, A Common Countenance, 19.

Declarations such as this are often taken to be signs of the singular moral focus of the public school system in Canada West. Ryerson’s actions certainly support this view since, as Curtis notices, in his 1846 Report he “devoted thirty pages” to the moral orientation of the system, and “repeatedly stressed the ‘absolute necessity of making Christianity the basis and the cement of the structure of public education’.” But this focus, rather than excluding the economic, masks the fact that the moral increasingly relied on the economic. Although Ryerson may have been tailoring his remarks to his audience, something he was known to do, I think it is also likely he was acknowledging a concern for the limits of political economy and self-interest. Ryerson wished to make sure that political economy was given a solid moral complement. In other words, he was grappling with something commonly known to economists as “The Adam Smith Problem”.

Stated plainly, this refers to a contradiction thought to plague political economy and stem from presumed differences between The Wealth of Nations’ endorsement of self-interest, which appears to equal selfishness, and The Theory of Moral Sentiments’ positing of sympathy as the basis of moral relations. With regard to the former, most

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887 See Curtis, Building the Educational State, 109
See Ryerson, “Report on a System of Public Elementary Instruction for Upper Canada, 1846,” 146. Curtis notes the emphasis is original, but it does not appear in my copy.
888 Prentice writes of Ryerson, “What he said about education and schools changed, not only with the passage of time, but also according to the audience of the moment…The Toronto Globe may be forgiven, in fact, for complaining that a more inconsistent man than Dr. Ryerson never walked the face of earth.” See Prentice, The School Promoters, 182.
I think that if Ryerson may be accused of sometimes appearing mercurial in his opinions, it was a function of the experimental nature of government, which most certainly affected the development of the public system. Moreover, this does not mean that his works do not exhibit some revealing tendencies, such as the combination of the divine, nature, and the laws of economy discussed in this chapter.
889 A great deal of efforts has been spent over the years attempting to solve this problem, and the financial crisis of 2008 did little to stem the flow of related scholarship. Of the works that ought to be given consideration.
often singled out for criticism is Smith’s assertion, “it is not from the benevolence of the butcher, the brewer, or the baker, that we expect our dinner, but from their regard to their own interest.” Smith’s advocacy of interest over benevolence is presumed to open the possibility that the fulfillment of our most basic needs is vulnerable to the avaricious manipulation of others, something at odds with the picture of human relations he paints in his moral philosophy.

Smith did not admit to any contradiction in his thought. In fact, his writings on morals and economy were a direct response to problems he identified in Hobbesian rugged individualism and traditional notions of laissez faire. Smith sought to counter these with a concept of the market as a perfect system of liberty, in which collective participation spontaneously leads to mutual prosperity. What made his ideas different from that of his predecessors, such as those of Quesnay and the physiocrats, is he held the general pursuit of interest, that is, people’s innate drive to “better their condition”

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891 Eric Hobsbawn writes, “it is as much an error to abstract classical political economy from the historical sociology to which Smith devoted the third book of his *Wealth of Nations* as it is to separate it from his moral philosophy.” Eric Hobshawm, *On History* (London, UK: Abacus, 1998) 130.
Hirschman argues much the same thing.
893 As he writes in *The Wealth of Nations*, an individual “generally, indeed, neither intends to promote the public interest, nor knows how much he is promoting it...he intends only his own gain...” See Smith, *The Wealth of Nations*, Bk. IV, Ch. II, 572.
894 The physiocrats, as Hirschman points out, were more concerned with the political effects of exercise of the sovereign’s interests, and not, like Smith, with interest in the broadest possible sense.
895 Smith, *The Wealth of Nations*, Bk. II, Ch. III, 436,
as expressed in a natural “propensity to truck, barter, and exchange one thing for another,” to be the basis of peaceful, civil, human relations.\textsuperscript{896}

In Smith’s perspective, economic and moral modes of conduct are naturally linked provided there is free involvement in the market. Government must act frugally but ensure such involvement remains open. But this does not mean the market is without regulation. The free reign of interest, rather than having a pernicious moral effect, not only promotes prosperity, but also creates a check on behaviour. “This regulator,” Robert Heilbroner writes, “is competition.”\textsuperscript{897} Competition for market share compels individuals to contain their self-interest lest they risk alienating others and losing market share, and, by implication, social position. Competition spontaneously, and it is worth repeating, as if “by an invisible hand,” orders the market and social relations.\textsuperscript{898}

Smith had not, as Ryerson accused some political economists, “overlooked” the moral aspect of individuals. Like Ryerson he worried a great deal about what he referred to as “the disadvantages of the commercial spirit.”\textsuperscript{899} To see past the presumed moral inadequacies of the invisible hand it must be kept in mind, as Court reminds us, that Smith was also intent on subverting a mercantile economic system that he found corrupt

\textsuperscript{896} Smith, \textit{The Wealth of Nations}, Bk. I. Ch. I, 22.
\textsuperscript{Olssen \textit{et al}} note that this was not an idea unique to Smith. Montesquieu, Vico, and Mandeville “had developed a similar argument” while Alexander Pope, “some 40 years before Smith wrote,”
\textit{God and Nature link’d the gen’ral frame,}
\textit{And bade Self-love and Social be the same.}
\textsuperscript{897} Heilbroner, \textit{The Worldly Philosophers}, 53.
\textsuperscript{898} Smith, \textit{The Wealth of Nations}, Bk. IV, Ch. II, 572.
Writing of Smithian political economy and its effect in colonial Ireland, Boylan and Foley state,
The doctrine of the community of interests was held to ensure that ethics and economics were in harmony, that the pursuit of rational self-interest in the marketplace not only solved the economic problem, but, in effect, eliminated the moral one.
and inappropriate to modern industry. In its place he hoped for a more inclusive economy capable of spreading wealth as much as generating it. To this end, he understood that it was necessary to safeguard as much as possible against the “unrestrained egoism and unchecked selfishness” readily apparent in mercantilism. His studies of the sympathetic and self-preserving sides of human nature aimed at establishing a new socio-economic and political order “actuated by enlightened self-interest rather than avaricious individualism.”

Smithian theories of political economy most likely troubled Ryerson because of their secular tendencies, such as the attribution of order to spontaneous market mechanisms and placement of enlightened thought over evangelism. Yet Ryerson did not view political economy as wholly deficient in its depictions of human activity and progress. Ryerson held political economy in the highest regard, but, like other overtly religious supporters of political economy, he considered it, to use Boylan and Foley’s phrase, as “twice blessed”; that is, insofar as it emerged in the nineteenth century as an “intellectual discipline which combined the apparently universal and incontrovertible authority of physical law with the moral prestige of Christianity.” Political economy promised secular salvation, and public schools would make as much of this promise as possible.

900 Court, “Adam Smith and the Teaching of English Literature,” 328.
901 Court, “Adam Smith and the Teaching of English Literature,” 328.
902 Court, “Adam Smith and the Teaching of English Literature,” 328.
903 For instance, Dublin’s Archbishop Richard Whately, whose substantial influence on public schooling in Upper Canada/Canada West will be discussed below.
904 Boylan and Foley, Political Economy and Colonial Ireland, 69.
To the contemporary mind this combination must seem paradoxical, something akin to the tenuous reasoning used in service of intelligent design. But in the early nineteenth century, and considering Darwin’s works had yet to stir up science and effect the socio-political imagination, science and religion often engaged in a mutually supportive relationship. In Upper Canada/Canada West during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries revelation and scientific inquiry were not mutually exclusive. Westfall writes, “the method for ascertaining evidence of Christianity was the method of Baconian experimentation – natural theology was perfectly compatible with the world of Isaac Newton.” Science and religion were considered allies in the same pursuit, namely, discerning the God-created natural laws that ordered the universe, and therefore, human affairs. Order was crucial, “without it there could be no liberty or happiness,” and if there was one branch of science that emerged to satisfy the Baconian dictum that science serve the interests of humankind it was political economy.

This idea is evident in Ryerson’s writings, especially towards the end of his career when he compiled observations about political economy in a single book. For the most part, Ryerson’s *Elements of Political Economy* is a hybrid, combining concepts and language taken directly from inspirational sources. In the Preface Ryerson lists among others Smith’s *The Wealth of Nations*, John Stuart Mill’s *Principles of Political

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905 Throughout the eighteenth century a somewhat more rationally or scientifically, and therefore, less evangelical version of the idea of a divine creator was propagated under the concept of Deism. Its followers, which included Voltaire, Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, and Thomas Paine, thought that God created the world according to natural laws and these laws enable it to function without divine intervention. The scientific orientation of Deism is based on the notion that we can know the universe only through observation and experimentation, and not revelation.  
906 Westfall, *Two Worlds*, 35.  
907 Westfall, *Two Worlds*, 34.  
Economy, 909 and John Ramsey McCulloch’s Principles of Political Economy 910 as integral to his study. 911 McCulloch, who Ryerson thinks presents the “most comprehensive and complete” definition of political economy, is chosen to provide the book’s final passage: “It is by the spontaneous and unconstrained but well-protected efforts of individuals to improve their condition and to rise in the world, that nations become rich and powerful.” 912 It is not surprising that this echoes Smith’s fundamental idea. 913 However, even though Ryerson agrees with his inspirational sources that interest shows “what is true of individuals is also true of a nation,” his perspective on why this is important differs in a fundamental way. 914 Ryerson adds Paleyian natural theology to hold that what some perceive as the spontaneous order produced by market participation is actually a reflection of divine law. The invisible hand is a divine hand. The Scriptural certainty of God’s involvement in the human pursuit of order and prosperity is apparent to the extent that it grants political economy the legitimacy of a science. Ryerson inquires, “Why is political economy called a science?” and answers, “because it teaches that systematic arrangement of the laws which God has established for the accumulation of the blessings of this life.” 915

The effect of this merger of Christian theology, natural science, and economy was to make instruction of the principles of prosperity and order a proposition of the sort long

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911 Ryerson, Elements of Political Economy, 11.
913 McCulloch was Smith’s fellow countryman, and oversaw the publication of an edition of The Wealth of Nations.
914 Ryerson, Elements of Political Economy, 167.
915 Ryerson, Elements of Political Economy, 10.
See also Prentice, The School Promoters, 172,
associated with the teaching of scripture. Striking similarities between the aspirations and attitudes of the Ryersonian period of Canadian educational history and those of a previous series of events demonstrate this fact. During the Reformation Luther and his lieutenant Melanchthon, writes Gerald Strauss,

> embarked on a conscious and, for its time, remarkably systematic endeavour to develop in the young new and better impulses, to implant inclinations in consonance with the reformers’ religious and civic ideals, to fashion dispositions in which Christian ideas of right thought and action would take root, and to shape personalities capable of turning the young into new men – into the human elements of a Christian society that would live by evangelical principles.\(^{916}\)

In this endeavour schooling was viewed as “the best of pious works.”\(^{917}\) It was relied upon to produce a morally sound population while ensuring that the young were, as Melanchthon had insisted, “inoculated against the host of dangerous ideas swarming.”\(^{918}\)

Three hundred years later, political economy returns to education its devoutly virtuous character, but in a modified form.\(^{919}\) Whereas Biblical literacy was the priority of the Reformation, by the nineteenth century it is supplemented, if not surpassed, by economic literacy. “The Bible,” observes J. M. Goldstrom, “is still there, but its importance is

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Note the use of the term “inoculate,” precisely the kind of language that, as noted in the previous chapter, returns to the fore whenever education is held out, as it commonly is, as a remedy to perceived threats. It also captures the language of war that Foucault finds underlying race and biopolitics. A number of examples of this are found in Upper Canada/Canada West pertaining to Irish immigration during the famine, or Black ’47 as it came to be known. As Prentice notes, even Ryerson declared in a lecture that the “disease and death” brought by Irish immigrants was the forerunner of “a worse pestilence of social insubordination and disorder.” Only education could counter the consequences of this human tide. See Egerton Ryerson, “The Importance of Education to a Manufacturing and a Free People,” *Journal of Education for Upper Canada*, 1 (1848) in Prentice, *The School Promoters*, 56.

919 In no way do I mean to minimize the longstanding relation between religion and education. My aim is to highlight how economy modified the perception of education without lessening the status accorded it by religion. Economy added another layer of purpose that was used to enhance education’s role in the salvation of individuals and nations. For a concise account of education and religion see Mitford Mathews, *Teaching to Read* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1966).
Political economy provided a new means of linking education with the rejuvenation and progress of the population, thereby allowing reformers to infuse schooling with a more modern, but nevertheless devotional appeal. Political economy, as Brian Simon offers, was raised “almost to the status of a religion.”

By the time Ryerson and Upper Canadian educationists had brought political economy into the discussion of public schooling it had already been regularly forwarded by its most well regarded theorists with an element of reverence usually reserved of Christian moral principles. Thomas Malthus gives us a prime example of this significant discursive shift. Malthus, whose *Easy on the Principle of Population* calls into question the optimism attached to the spontaneous order generated by an invisible hand, contends, “political economy is perhaps the only science of which it might be

922 Foucault says of Smith’s invisible hand that it is part of a “well thought-out economic optimism” and also, the remains of a theological conception of the natural order. Through the notion of the invisible hand, Smith would be someone who more or less implicitly fixed the empty, but nonetheless occupied place of a providential god who would occupy the economic process a bit like Malebranche’s God occupies the entire world down to the least gesture of every individual through the relay of an intelligible extension of which He is the absolute master.

A consequence of this presumption of providence is that it lingers and transforms so that economy creates a new governmental order, one which entails many of the problems currently associated with the entry of business-style economy into education. Foucault refers to this in governmental terms, by saying even though “there is no sovereign in economics,” we are still experiencing under regimes like neoliberalism “the problem of the impossibility of the existence of an economic sovereign.” We expect much of economy without realizing the dangers posed by something that is essentially a “return and revival” of the will to knowledge, that is, the positing of an unknown but ultimate source of order. It is this sort of thought that nominalist critique is meant to cut across.

923 Basically, Malthus argued that there were limits to human prosperity, most of which derived from unchecked increases in population that could overwhelm the resources of the land. Nature and human activity, then, were at odds in a way not described by Smith and his more favourable acolytes, that is, people’s welfare could not be placed at the mercy of “the cold and speculative consideration of general
said that the ignorance of it is not merely a deprivation of the good, but produces great evil.”

Malthus’s moral perspective and strong commitment to public schooling are apparent. The moral restraint Malthus thinks necessary to the future of humanity can only be acquired and maintained if along with “the elementary parts of geometry and mechanics” schools include in their curricula “the simplest principles of political economy.”

Malthus expresses only mild concern that political economy’s complexity renders it too esoteric for the popular mind. Rather, because its principles pertain particularly to the interests of those most vulnerable to the mercurial nature of markets, he wonders,

I cannot help thinking that the common principles by which markets are regulated might be made sufficiently clear to be of considerable use…It is certainly a subject that, as it interests the lower classes of people nearly, would like[ly] attract their attention.

Ryerson, though not someone who could be characterized as Malthusian, exhibits a similar pedagogical attitude to this issue. He reasons in his 1846 “Report” that, though the discipline has “exhausted the most profound intellects,” its “simple elements” could be made accessible to general study, and therefore, “may be taught, with ease and advantage, in every School.” Ryerson continued throughout his career to consider political economy’s relation to public education as pedagogically crucial. The consistent level of consideration he gave to this idea is evident towards the end of Elements of

consequences.” For Malthus the only solution is an intensification of moral responsibility, especially through the inculcation of moral restraint.


Political Economy, where he cites “various grounds” why “the education of the people has the most important connection with political economy,” including the economic necessity of learning the “duties” and “rights” of “intelligent, Christian” citizenship.\textsuperscript{928} The latter is essential since “a man who can neither read nor write cannot do this,” and “is often a weakness and a danger to civil government, and therefore, to the security of life and property.”\textsuperscript{929}

Ryerson and Malthus provide but two instances of how political economy was thought germane to considerations of education in a manner previously reserved for spiritual salvation. The Lutheran educational project, writes Strauss, had linked salvation to the “grand design of spiritual renewal of state, society, and individual.”\textsuperscript{930} Strauss continues that this “endowed early Lutheranism with its strongest source of appeal.”\textsuperscript{931} Political economists, armed with what they saw as God given scientific principles of nature, followed similar lines of reasoning. James Mill in particular, who shared the idea that anyone granted the opportunity could understand the facts of political economy, something that is analogous to Luther’s inspiration for translating the Bible into the vernacular,\textsuperscript{932} envisioned the redeeming effects of education in terms of its power to

\textsuperscript{928} Ryerson, Elements of Political Economy, 150-152. In two short sections Ryerson invokes the Crown, the end of mercantilism, law, government, moral duty, literacy, productivity, national security, and citizenship, placing each in service of this relation.\textsuperscript{929} Ryerson, Elements of Political Economy, 150.\textsuperscript{930} Strauss, Luther’s House of Learning, 8.\textsuperscript{931} Strauss, Luther’s House of Learning, 8.\textsuperscript{932} See also Steven Ozment, The Reformation in the Cities (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1975) 61-67.\textsuperscript{933} Brian Simon quotes Mill, I should have little fear of the propagation among the common people of any doctrines hostile to property, because I have seldom met with a laboring man (and I have tried the experiment upon many of them) whom I could not make to see that the existence of property was not only good for the laboring men, but infinitely more important to the labourers as a class, than to any other. James Mill, “Letter to Brougham,” September 3, 1832, in Simon, Studies in the History of Education, 1780-1870, 144.
improve the economic and moral station of all human beings and nations. When contemplating the range of educational possibilities his optimism and excitement was often evangelical: “Whatever is made of any class of men, we may then be sure is possible to be made of the whole human race. What a field for exertion! What a prize to be won!”

Concealed by Mill’s excitement are significant hurdles.Notwithstanding Mill’s optimism, oft-repeated in Upper Canada/Canada West by Ryerson, the vital issue faced by promoters of public schooling was similar to that confronted by the educationists of the Reformation. Striving to win the “prize” meant engaging an epistemic problem, although with certain variations, that has a substantial pedigree. Plutarch’s parable of the two dogs of Lycurgus, one trained and well behaved, the other left to the vicissitudes of its nature, and therefore, prone to impetuous and disobedient behaviour, encapsulates the

James Kay, later Sir James Kay-Shuttleworth, who Simon labels “the leading civil servant concerned with education in the mid-nineteenth century,” at least in England, wrote in 1832,

The great principles of that science which is generally known by the name of ‘Political Economy,’ ought certainly not to be sealed to the understanding of those who are chiefly affected by the operation of those principles – those, namely, who obtain a living by their labour. Matters affecting the interests of every human being, and involving a variety of facts having relation to the condition of mankind in every age and country, are not necessarily, as has been supposed, dry and difficult to understand, and consequently only to be approached by systematic students.


http://archive.org/stream/moralphysicalcon00kaysuoft#page/n3/mode/2up

See also Simon, Studies in the History of Education, 1780-1870, 166n2.

In passing, it is interesting to note that a proclamation often attributed to Kay-Shuttleworth was actually made in 1828 by British Whig Lord Henry Brougham,

There have been periods when the country heard with dismay that ‘the soldier was abroad’…(But) There is another person abroad, a less important person in the eyes of some, an insignificant person, whose labours have tended to produce this state of things. The schoolmaster is abroad! And I trust more to him, armed with his primer, than I do the soldier in full military array, for upholding and extending the liberties of this country.


http://research.wslib.wsu.edu/xmlui/handle/2376/2888

battle between nature and nurture at the core of the problem.\textsuperscript{934} Aristotle, centuries before Plutarch, expressed much the same, “It makes no small difference, then, whether men form habits of one kind or another in their very youth; it makes a very great difference, or rather it makes all the difference.”\textsuperscript{935} The later Stoic philosophers incorporated this idea into their concept of the ethical practice of \textit{askesis}, and encouraged life-long training of the self. Centuries later during the Reformation nature versus nurture returns as “few words turn up with greater frequency” in educational treatises “than habituation.”\textsuperscript{936} To a certain extent the same can be said of nineteenth century school promoters’ language. Political economy raised the question of mass education, and brought with it a renewed interest in how to pedagogically direct behaviour through habit formation.

Political economists had in their theoretical pursuits recognized how the principles of the discipline stood in tension with the behaviour of the majority of the population. Debates over the Poor Laws in England during the 1830’s revolved around the need to educate the poor and working classes to help them take responsibility for their situation by developing, to combine two key phrases, the right disposition in order to better their condition.\textsuperscript{937} Essentially, the goal was to help individuals to differentiate between, to cite Smith, “the delusions of enthusiasm and superstition,” and proper exercise of their interests,

A man without the proper use of the intellectual faculties…is…more contemptible than even a coward, and seems to be mutilated and deformed in a still more essential part of the character of human nature…An

\textsuperscript{934} Strauss, \textit{Luther’s House of Learning}, 57.
\textsuperscript{936} Strauss, \textit{Luther’s House of Learning}, 64.
instructed and intelligent people...are always more decent and orderly than an ignorant and stupid one. They feel themselves, each individually more respectable, and more likely to obtain the respect of their lawful superiors, and they are therefore more disposed to respect those superiors. They are more disposed to examine, and more capable of seeing through, interested complaints of faction and sedition, and they are, upon that account, less apt to be misled into any wanton or unnecessary opposition to the measures of government. In free countries where the safety of the government depends very much upon the favourable judgment which the people may form of its conduct, it must surely be of the highest importance that they should not be disposed to judge rashly or capriciously concerning it.\footnote{James Mill had similarly referred to the “primary habits” of the mind, meaning conducive to rational and moral behaviour, which education could bestow on the population.}{James Mill, “Education,” \textit{Encyclopedia Britannica} (1818) in Milgate and Stimson, \textit{After Adam Smith}, 146.\footnote{Ryerson, “Report on a System of Public Elementary Instruction for Upper Canada, 1846,” 195.\footnote{Jeremy Bentham, “Outline of a Work Entitled Pauper Management Improved,” in \textit{The Works of Jeremy Bentham}, Vol. VIII. ed. John Bowring (Edinburgh, UK: William Tait, 1838-1843) Accessed January 30, 2011.\textit{http://oll.libertyfund.org/index.php?option=com_staticext&staticfile=show.php&title=2208&search=%22Pauper+Management+Improved%22&chapter=207451&layout=html#a_3375558.} See also Simon, \textit{Studies in the History of Education, 1780-1870}, 139, 142-143.}


Ryerson, though properly considered more of an advocate of political economy than a theorist, pronounced at the end of the first part of his 1846 “Report,”

the education required for the people…will give them objects and pursuits and habits of conduct favourable to their own happiness, and to that the community, of which they will form a part...[and] will teach them the identity of the individual and the general interest.\footnote{Ryerson, though properly considered more of an advocate of political economy than a theorist, pronounced at the end of the first part of his 1846 “Report,”


The pressing question that arose from these assertions was how to effectively go about bestowing such habits on the population by using, to cite Bentham’s phrase, “the direct and constant exercise” of the “plastic power,” of education.\footnote{The pressing question that arose from these assertions was how to effectively go about bestowing such habits on the population by using, to cite Bentham’s phrase, “the direct and constant exercise” of the “plastic power,” of education.}{Jeremy Bentham, “Outline of a Work Entitled Pauper Management Improved,” in \textit{The Works of Jeremy Bentham}, Vol. VIII. ed. John Bowring (Edinburgh, UK: William Tait, 1838-1843) Accessed January 30, 2011.\textit{http://oll.libertyfund.org/index.php?option=com_staticext&staticfile=show.php&title=2208&search=%22Pauper+Management+Improved%22&chapter=207451&layout=html#a_3375558.} See also Simon, \textit{Studies in the History of Education, 1780-1870}, 139, 142-143.}

Historian J. F. C. Harrison has written of these issues,

To an age which was firmly in the grip of economic teachings so attractive to the rising middle-classes such as those of Adam Smith, Ricardo, and

\footnote{To an age which was firmly in the grip of economic teachings so attractive to the rising middle-classes such as those of Adam Smith, Ricardo, and}{To an age which was firmly in the grip of economic teachings so attractive to the rising middle-classes such as those of Adam Smith, Ricardo, and}
Malthus, it seemed mere obtuseness to refuse to acknowledge the practical force of these theories when once they had been logically explained. Their very ‘naturalness’ removed them from the realm of argument and doubt; they were truths to be explained and accepted, not hypotheses to be debated. The problem was one of communication, of how to disseminate most effectively these truths among the working classes.\textsuperscript{942}

Basically, no matter political economy’s status, it could not of its own cause a Platonic exodus from the cave into the light of rational self-interest. Public schools must be the solution to the problem of communication. Even though, as Ryerson proclaimed, “Education…should be indiscriminately and universally diffused among the people; it is the equal right and interest of all classes; and is sanctioned by the authority and example of God Himself;” nineteenth century school promoters did not have the authority to intervene in the lives of the population by using the forceful combination of evangelism and sovereignty available to the educators of the Reformation.\textsuperscript{943} No matter how obvious the benefit of even the most rudimentary economic wisdom, it could not be demanded of the population that they partake of it.\textsuperscript{944} Ongoing debates over compulsory attendance, for instance, testify to the calculative, and indeed liberal approach developed to negotiate this issue. It was noted near the beginning of this dissertation how the issue of compulsory attendance, especially the length of time needed before it was deemed an acceptable legislative option, belies the idea that the school system was a mechanism of overt control. The fact that it took until 1871 to institute it in Ontario, and even longer in


\textsuperscript{944} Similarly, Donzelot wonders,

\begin{quote}
But if schooling was the solution to this sum of problems that threatened the political order, how was it to be imposed? By decreeing school for everyone?…Should a single system of compulsory education be decreed, then? No, such a proposal seriously clashed with liberal logic.
\end{quote}

See Donzelot, \textit{The Policing of Families}, 76.
Britain,\footnote{1874.} is telling of an ongoing negotiation with the population; a negotiation that was, nevertheless, able to capitalize on a play of interests. The majority of the population had already recognized that schooling for their children was in their best interests. It was incumbent on government to discern the means of coordinating and directing these interests, albeit, since liberal government is conscious of its excesses, in tandem with popular reaction.

According to J. M. Goldstrom, the majority of educators in Britain, especially those “anxious to demonstrate to the lower orders that God’s ‘invisible hand’ was at work,” agreed that “persuasion, as opposed to repression, was less expensive a policy than policemen and prisons.”\footnote{J. M. Goldstrom, “Popular Political Economy for the British Working Class Reader in the Nineteenth Century,” in \textit{Expository Science: Forms and Functions of Popularisation}, ed. Terry Shinn and Richard Whitley (Boston, MA: D. Reidel, 1985) 260.} Things were no different in Canada West. When reflecting on governance, and most likely keeping in mind the post-Rebellion changes affecting Upper Canada/Canada West, Ryerson acknowledged that the time had come in which “rulers began to learn that they must, henceforth, govern through the understanding and affections of their subjects, rather than by the sword and bayonet.”\footnote{Egerton Ryerson, “A Lecture on the Social Advancement of Canada,” \textit{Journal of Education for Upper Canada}, 2, (December, 1849) 177, in Pearce, “Egerton Ryerson’s Liberalism,” 781.} “Free schools” might, as the American statesman Daniel Webster declared, be “a wise and liberal system of police, by which property and life, and the peace of society are secured,” but it was understood that the methods for achieving such security must be cautiously restrained.\footnote{Daniel Webster, “Speech on the Constitution of Massachusetts,” in Egerton Ryerson, “Address to the Inhabitants of Upper Canada on the System of Free Schools,” \textit{Journal of Education for Upper Canada}, Vol. II. No. I (1849) 1, in \textit{Documentary History of Education in Upper Canada}, Vol. 9, 1849, ed. J. George Hodgins (Toronto, ON: Warwick Brothers, 1899) 75.}
I contend that this entailed that the feasibility of common schooling relied on a pedagogy of mildness conducive to forming young minds without resorting to coercion. The failure of the Bell-Lancaster model in Upper Canada/Canada West, and its limited success elsewhere, illustrates how a bias toward more persuasive and less severe means of instruction influenced the overall design of public schools. What was happening in government effected education and the same in reverse. If the shifts in governmental power that occurred after the Rebellion were demonstrative of a more limited and liberal use of power, public schools, which were intended “to wet down the smoldering embers of discontent,” would follow suit.\(^{949}\)

Liberalism and pedagogy are interlaced, and the mode of connection between the two that made public schooling a question and an answer to issues of government in the early nineteenth century had been emerging for centuries. There is no more heuristic approach to understanding this than sorting through the constellation of ideas that surrounds the works of Locke.\(^{950}\)

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\(^{949}\) Altick, *The English Common Reader*, 140.

\(^{950}\) I credit this choice to the work of James Tully and Charles Taylor, which by implication helped me recognize the ramifications of a minor mention that Foucault makes of Locke toward the end of his March 28, 1979 lecture at the Collège de France. See Foucault, *The Birth of Biopolitics*, 271.

Justification for choosing Locke also comes from Hacking’s assertion, Locke’s *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* is as nonhistorical a work as one could imagine, yet its project is amenable to historicization…It is a perfect example of what Rorty takes to be the core project of modern philosophy (that is, Western philosophy from Descartes to almost now): epistemological foundations. This is why, he adds, “I sometimes think of [philosophical] projects as Locke plus history.” See Hacking, *Historical Ontology*, 63.
VI. “It is very seldom seen that anyone discovers mines of gold or silver in Parnassus”¹⁵⁵¹

To understand Locke’s contribution to the pedagogical rationality that supported public schools in Upper Canada/Canada West we can look again to Foucault’s lectures at the College de France. In particular, we can begin with comments he makes during the February 1, 1977 lecture on the abundance of treatises on “the general problem of ‘government’” or conduct that appeared in the wake of the Reformation.⁹⁵² I contend that Locke’s writings played a crucial role in the development of the new mentalities of government that Foucault describes as representative of a slow secularization of “the problem of the government of souls and conduct.”⁹⁵³ My argument is based on the way in which Locke’s investigation of assent involves a novel reconciliation of concepts previously held disparate, and therefore, introduces a notion of the subject that is self-forming yet susceptible. This subject paves the way for techniques of governing through interest, which proves instrumental to the pedagogical perspective that undergirds public education.⁹⁵⁴

Foucault analyzes this slow secularization through the question, “How to conduct oneself?” especially as he sees it raised in Descartes’ philosophy as “Regulae ad
directionem ingenii, meditations.” What is interesting for Foucault is that this “reappearance” of Hellenistic or neo-Stoic philosophy in the form of a secular fascination with the “theme of conduction” exhibits both a private and a public aspect. On the one hand, the focus on discerning rules and practices for conducting oneself is extended into a double relation; the relation of self to self is made social. On the other, there is a political “problematization of conduct” that centres sovereign attention on the correct or most effective ways to direct others for the sake of the good of the state. According to Foucault, the shadow of “religious conduction” continues to hang over these aspects as they intersect, producing, the problem of the education of children. The pedagogical problem of how to conduct children – how to conduct them so that they are useful to the city, so that they will be able to ensure their salvation, and so that they will be able to conduct themselves – was probably surcharged and over-determined by this explosion of the problem of conduct in the sixteenth century. The education of children was the fundamental utopia, crystal, and prism through which problems of conduction were perceived. The suggestion that the education of children became a problem in the sixteenth century is reminiscent of the work of Philippe Ariès. Ariès offers that “the revival, at the beginning of modern times, of an interest in education” marked a “great event” and changed society “from top to bottom.” Behind this event was the early modern invention of childhood as a social category, which coincided with the moralist battle against the perceived anarchy of mediaeval society. Ariès claims that beginning in the

958 Foucault, Security, Territory, Population, 231.
959 Philippe Ariès, Centuries of Childhood, trans. Robert Baldick (New York, NY: Vintage, 1962) 412. Recently Ariès’s ideas have been placed under scrutiny as some scholars have found his view of childhood in the Middle Ages to be implausible.
sixteenth century questions of education were driven by a “positive moralization,” by which he means the enforcement of a particular moral outlook.\textsuperscript{960} Foucault may temporally identify the modern emergence of education with events of the sixteenth century, but his perspective is not as narrowly focused as Ariès’s. From a Foucauldian perspective, historical confrontations with the problem of conduct do not entail a unique dominant program of training or the institution of a common code of conduct, but are known by the multiple strategies they produce. In other words, the problem of conduct has resulted not in a single “positive moralization” but a proliferation of moralizations.

Binding technical elements of this proliferation together at various points is a correspondence between strategies of government and education. Liberal government and modern pedagogy intertwine from the sixteenth century forward. Both emerge out of questions regarding the “conduct of conducts,” and, Foucault offers, as such develop according to the “equivocal nature of the term ‘conduct’.\textsuperscript{961} Conduct represents “the specificity of power relations” as it refers to government in two fundamental senses.\textsuperscript{962} It means to lead or direct others, as in the purposeful management of behaviour, as well as a way of conducting oneself, “of behaving within a more or less open field of possibilities.\textsuperscript{963} The liberal rationality of government that emerges in the sixteenth century is an art that enables these two activities to occur simultaneously, and the pedagogy appropriate to it, as Kant expressed with his educational paradox, is one that honours this double movement between the government of subjects and the government

\textsuperscript{960} Ariès, \textit{Centuries of Childhood}, 412.
\textsuperscript{961} Foucault, “The Subject and Power,” 341.
This ambiguity of conduct, especially in its French form \textit{conduire}, was noted at the outset of this dissertation. It is an important point, and therefore, worth mentioning again.
\textsuperscript{962} Foucault, “The Subject and Power,” 341.
\textsuperscript{963} Foucault, “The Subject and Power,” 341.
of the self. But before Kant it was Locke who remarked tellingly in an essay on education, “Politics contains two parts very different the one from the other, the one containing the origin of societies and the rise and extent of political power, the other, the art of governing men in society.”\footnote{John Locke, “Some Thoughts Concerning Reading and Study for a Gentleman,” in ed. James Axtell, \textit{Introduction to the Educational Writings of John Locke} (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1968) 400, in Nathan Tarcov, \textit{Locke’s Education for Liberty} (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1984) 5.} Consideration of one leads to the other and \textit{vice versa}, and this is apparent in Locke’s corpus.

Tracing the problem of conduct to Locke and then to modern pedagogy requires a brief return to Descartes’s role in the secularization of conduct. Adding to the discussion a line of thought pursued by Charles Taylor, it is Descartes’s inauguration of a certain view of the subject that has had the most lasting impact in government and education, but primarily insofar as this view is taken up and radicalized by Locke.\footnote{I am aware of the irony, given Taylor’s criticism of Foucault. For instance, in the volume I will look to below, he makes the rather common claim that all “neo-Nietzschean” arguments suffer from relativism. He does, however, add that he is not saying such arguments are without merit. In particular, he refers to their value for exposing forms of domination. Nevertheless, as I noted previously, I have found Taylor’s ideas helpful, and my use of them imposes no risk of being drawn into his differences with Foucault. See Taylor, \textit{Sources of the Self}, 99-100. But it should also be noted that I consider Taylor’s perspective ultimately no more secure since he supports attempts to critique or escape the hegemony of one essentialism by replacing it with another, in this case the divine, which is precisely the move that neo-Nietzscheans like Foucault criticize. Still, Taylor’s account of Locke offers an interesting complement to my discussion of the history of the self-forming yet susceptible subject.} The product of Locke’s radicalization Taylor deems a “disengaged subject,” one who constructs him or her self and the world in conformance with unassailable rational standards.\footnote{Taylor, \textit{Sources of the Self}, 159.} In presenting us with the \textit{cogito} Descartes posited truth as contingent upon correctly structured thought, thereby inverting the Platonic conception of rationality. As Taylor offers, this marks a “move from substance to procedure.”\footnote{Taylor, \textit{Sources of the Self}, 156.} In other words, Descartes performs an epistemic inversion from a Platonic externally oriented view of “the order of
things” to an internal attention to thinking. The upshot of this change is a subject understood as the ontological centre of gravity. Above all, the capacity to disengage from the material world means that, unless at the mercy of “a malicious demon,” this subject is further capable of suspending for examination its own experience of itself. But if Descartes is a solipsist it is only of the methodological kind. Rationally securing the subject’s capacity for suspending judgment are God given innate ideas. These enable reason to discern and follow proper procedure while distinguishing true from false. Like Descartes, Locke posits a self that is disengaged, but the similarity ends as Locke takes the “radical” step of rejecting altogether the notion of innate ideas.

For Locke the mind is reliant on its potential, latent at birth, to employ reason and assemble an understanding of the world. Humans are born tabula rasa and, therefore, developmentally dependent on processing environmental stimuli for their ideas. Therefore, educating is not a matter of negatively permitting natural rationality to develop, but of actively cultivating latent rational capacities through engagement with appropriate environmental conditions.

The main movement undertaken by Locke to reach this idea is an inversion of Descartes. Indeed, it is a double inversion because in describing the subject as tabula rasa he replaces the Cartesian concept of essential rationality, which rejected Plato’s view, with an account of rationality as something acquired. This double inversion sets up Locke’s emphasis on the role of custom and habit. Out of a concept of the subject that is,
in James Tully’s words, “a malleable blank tablet,” Locke considers how reason emerges from its initial status as a latent quality.972 A key part of his argument founds later theories of utility as he identifies the pleasures and pains experienced by the subject while interacting with the world. The development of rational habits is reliant on these interactions. Most are social, and so habits form insofar as the subject has opportunities to receive approbation. Seeking pleasure and avoiding pain in the company of others is not merely a matter of gaining individual status, but relates to Locke’s vital notion of relish.

Tully summarizes relish as “the acquired mental habit in virtue of which specific ways of thinking and acting are pleasant to the agent.”973 Relish is a state of mind that enables the subject to appraise hedonistic experiences and make decisions regarding the reinforcement of certain habits and the cessation of others. In terms of the former, Locke uses “custom” to describe how habits are reinforced through repetition until they become ingrained. Here another of the pedagogical implications of Locke’s ideas should be apparent, and this is the importance of an instructor’s appeals to the child’s “Esteem and disgrace,” which “are, of all others, the most powerful incentives of the mind, when once it is brought to relish them.”974 Consistent with this idea is Locke’s counsel against

973 Tully, “Governing Conduct,” 53.
974 Locke, Some Thoughts Concerning Education, §56:36.

This helps explain the epigraph to Some Thoughts,

_Doctina vires promovet insitas,
rectique cultas pectora roborant:
utcunque defecere mores,
dedecorant bene nata culpae._

Taken by Locke from Horace, in translation this reads,

Teaching improves implanted strength, and right cultivation strengthens the heart; whenever morals fail, the faults dishonor the wellborn.
corporal punishment, which when compared to relish has only a negative effect on the formation of habit.975

Locke takes care to not leave the subject vulnerable to the whims of others and its own hedonistic proclivities. He sees relish as formative, but also “capable of reform.”976 If there is pleasure to be had in good conduct, then this will guide behaviour towards improvement since the capacity to disengage noted earlier allows the subject to step back and assess his or her relish. The individual subject’s response to praise and blame carries an opportunity for character reform, but only by virtue of the subject’s ability to objectively examine and evaluate the situation and, crucially, choose how to act as befitting best interest.977 The Lockean subject is susceptible to influence, but as a disengaged self it is also possessed of consciousness such that, as Locke writes, it “is a self to itself,” and therefore, participant in its own development.978

Locke’s concept of the subject is not, of course, without difficulties. His notion of relish as a quality unique to each individual, for instance, attracts accusations of relativism.979 Yet it is Locke’s solution to this issue that gives his thought an added appeal, especially to religiously oriented educational reformers such as Ryerson.

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975 Locke, Some Thoughts Concerning Education, §50:34.
976 Tully, “Governing Conduct,” 53.
977 Taylor writes, “Radical objectivity is only intelligible and accessible through radical subjectivity.” This, he notices, is precisely the “paradox” that is “much commented on by Heidegger,” and, I would add, in the manner important to Foucault and discussed in terms of the Kantian subject in Chapter 2. See Taylor, Sources of the Self, 176.
979 Tully, Governing Conduct, 52.
It is “wrong,” Taylor argues, to read Locke as a religious sceptic, since even though “he was certainly not fully orthodox theologically…his faith was not peripheral to his position.”\textsuperscript{980} Locke overcomes relativism by reconciling reason and revelation; the law of nature is both rational and divine.\textsuperscript{981} God’s law is taken as the ultimate arbiter of considerations based on relish. God gives subjective assessments a universal standard that removes the risk of relativism, including any concern presented by hedonism since divine law trumps these by dictating the “superlative rewards and punishments” of heaven and hell.\textsuperscript{982}

Locke’s Puritanism holds that the highest forms of knowledge suit the purposes of humanity as dictated by God’s law. The quality of knowledge, as well as the practices or conduct that follows from knowledge, is judged instrumentally by adherence to divine law, which dictates that things are useful. Locke, writes Taylor, inherits more from Bacon than a “revolutionary” scientific perspective, for his thought indicates how “contemplation” was replaced by “productive efficacy.”\textsuperscript{983} Thus begins the critique of decorative education, and the rise of the idea of learning for a higher yet practical purpose. When combined with the Puritan concept of a calling, this idea takes on precisely the sort of character discernable in the pronouncements of nineteenth century

\textsuperscript{980} Taylor, \textit{Sources of the Self}, 235.  
\textsuperscript{981} Taylor, \textit{Sources of the Self}, 235.  
The roots of the Payleian view are evident.  
\textsuperscript{982} Taylor, \textit{Sources of the Self}, 235.  
Tully sums this up by stating that Locke brings together “voluntarism and hedonism.” The importance of this cannot be underestimated since “out of two powerful traditions” Locke constructs a subject capable of improvement but essentially independent. Again, this is basically the liberal subject.  
See Tully, \textit{Governing Conduct}, 33.  
\textsuperscript{983} Taylor, \textit{Sources of the Self}, 231.
reformers, usually in their frequent diatribes against the evils of idleness and pauperism.\(^{984}\)

At this point it is helpful to recall that Locke’s overall project arises out of a concern with assent. His rejection of innate ideas is inspired by the same critical considerations as his attention to government. In both cases Locke wishes to ensure that independence prevails over deception and the arbitrary exercise of power. Even God and creation are placed under Locke’s scrutiny. According to Taylor, in this Locke’s Puritanism once more comes into play. Puritanism holds that creation proves the primacy of self-preservation. Locke acknowledges this by putting reason in its service:

For the desire, strong desire of preserving his life and being having been planted in him, as a principle of action by God himself, reason, which was the voice of God in him, could not but teach and assure him, that pursuing his natural inclination he had to preserve his being, he followed the will of his maker.\(^{985}\)

Self-preservation, like reason, is a God-given predisposition. Any action inspired by self-preservation is both rational and follows divine law. From a theological perspective, Locke’s accomplishment, writes Taylor, is “a reasonable Christianity,” which is less obscured by “mystery” and so “without tears.”\(^{986}\) Agonizing over the actions of an inscrutable divinity ends, for life’s purpose is discernable through reason and revelation. From the secular realm of thought, Locke paves the way for the free pursuit of interest since in reconciling reason and revelation he does the same for “self-service and

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\(^{984}\) A calling is the unique labour that God assigns to each individual. Weber popularized this notion by relating it to the “methodical character” of the “worldly asceticism” that Puritanism, specifically Calvinism, brings to capitalism.


\(^{986}\) Taylor, *Sources of the Self*, 245.

Taylor adds, “God’s providence becomes more and more scrutable, however much the engineering detail may escape us.”
beneficence.” By bringing these together he sets up a line of thought that can be traced to the Smithian principle that it is to the self-interest of “the butcher, the brewer, or the baker,” and not their “benevolence,” that our own interests are served. In fact, this commonly noted passage from the Wealth of Nations has a precursor in Locke’s consideration of land and labour in his second of the Two Treatises of Government: “it is not barely the plough-man’s pains, the reaper’s and thresher’s toil, and the bake’s sweat, is to be counted into the bread we eat.” The difference is Smith and the political economists draw out of Locke’s reconciliation of natural and the divine and individualism and collectivism a new standard for the arbitration of assent to any idea or action: the market. By the nineteenth century this standard begins to displace notions of the divine or nature, having significant consequences for how education develops in modern times.

During his March 28, 1979 lecture Foucault discusses how the science of political economy corresponds to the emergence of the subject of interest and entails the creation of a mechanism of government that is outside of the juridical realm. Foucault says of the advent of this subject that it is representative “of the most important theoretical mutations, one of most important theoretical transformations in Western thought since the Middle Ages.” The “mutation” to which he refers is a subject identified by its capacity to choose. It is a view of the subject that I have discussed above as emerging through population and economy, and whose historical development corresponds to a mode of governing without recourse to the imposition of sovereign or juridical measures. Instead

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987 Taylor, Sources of the Self, 239.
989 Locke, Two Treatises of Government, Bk. II, §43:85.
990 Foucault, The Birth of Biopolitics, 271.
of being held to account by force or contract, this subject is governed according to its interests, and so by strategies and techniques aimed at bringing rationality to its selective capacities. It is, Foucault acknowledges, a subject introduced “roughly, with Locke.”

Foucault does not pursue the Lockean connection, but, with assistance from Taylor, Tully, and others, I have shown how Locke’s version of the disengaged subject involves justification for the exercise of self-interest as divine, natural, and collectively beneficial. In this we see some of the most important discursive roots of political economy, and the emergence of liberal governmentality and education, which are products of the problem of conduct as it appeared in the sixteenth century. But the event of political economy, liberalism, and education do not solve the problem of conduct. Rather, they intensify it since the Lockean subject’s capacity for disengagement and the justification for the exercise of interest pose new problems that require attention, and must be addressed from outside the juridical apparatus. This is where the issue of public schooling gains its currency. The exercise of freedom cannot be legislated so schooling develops to in order to harness the subject’s ability to disengage by conditioning the pursuit of interest. Fortunately for nineteenth century school promoters, Locke recognized this eventuality in just the way that Smith would later worry about

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992 Not everyone agrees that Locke is a supporter of self-interest. Tully, for instance, thinks that interest is overshadowed by habit in Locke’s considerations of the direction of conduct. He bases his claim on statements made by Locke in *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* and in the *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*. I do not dispute this claim, but offer that interest’s role in Locke’s thought, and especially its connection to economy and education, deserve another look. This is why I have shown how Taylor’s work provides warrant for tracing interest back to Locke. But even without considering the influence of Puritanism, we can also look to Hirschman who suggests that Locke’s use of the contract to counter the arbitrary exercise of power represents not an overt “appeal to interest,” but “clearly an affinity” with the notion of a commonwealth. Given that Locke’s interpretation of the commonwealth is intended to avoid the dangers of the Hobbesian view, and therefore, better promote self-preservation, which is interest in its most basic form, I think this gives credibility to my analysis. See Tully, *Governing Conduct*, 55.
See also Hirschman, *The Passions and the Interests*, 53.
unrestrained egoism, and thus supplied the means of dealing with the dilemma. In so doing Locke laid the groundwork for the pedagogy of mildness that made it possible for Ryerson to declare, “It is our duty to augment the intellectual power of society to the utmost; but it is equally our duty to give that power a right direction.”

Before moving on, it must be acknowledged that “Locke’s theory was not,” as Taylor writes, “the only possible justification” for the practices of governance readily associated with schools, prisons, and other disciplinary institutions. It is only reasonable, and mindful of the traps of causal history, to presume such practices were already being extended over the landscape of experience before Locke. I agree with this view, and emphasize that I am not saying, any more than Taylor, that Locke is the single foundation of the pedagogy appropriate to public schooling. His ideas are part of a constellation of discourses that inform the pedagogy that becomes instrumental in public schools. Within this constellation I argue that his body of work is most conspicuous for its readily discernable links to questions of science, religion, and the government of conduct.

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994 Taylor, Sources of the Self, 173.
995 Taylor cites as evidence works that inspired and were involved in the “great mechanization of the scientific world picture of the seventeenth century,” which was, in part, a “nominalist revolt against Aristotelian realism,” especially teleological morality. William of Ockham is a prime example. Others, such as Leibnitz, forwarded a mechanistic view of the universe, but unlike Locke, attempted to re-define the subject under a different form of teleology. Where Locke stands out is his positining of a radically objective view of things that includes a subject capable of the “double movement of suspension and examination,” thereby engaging in its own formation as a moral agent of itself. What makes this revolutionary is that it supports science, accounts for learning without the mystery of innate ideas, and celebrates individual agency or freedom of conscience. In other words, a rudimentary version of the subject adhered to today. See Taylor, Sources of the Self, 161-173.
Citing Herschel Baker, Tully adds, “Locke not only crowns the anti-authoritarian protest with which Bacon had opened the century, but also brings to a full cadence that incisive attack with which William of Ockham had initiated the revolt against scholasticism.” See Tully, Governing Conduct, 38-39.
VII. A “right disposition.”

The connection between the development of common schools in Canada West and Locke is not one that can be established by direct reference alone. It takes an understanding of the theological landscape to reveal his influence. For a theorist who worked with the stated intention of “removing some of the rubbish that lies in the way of knowledge,” which included at the top of his list forms of intellectual and spiritual mediation, and who occupies a “talismatic position in the liberal canon,” it may seem strange that religious leaders embraced Locke. Yet the Methodist Wesley, writes Goldwin French, had declared, “Locke alone [is] acceptable,” having discerned “a deep fear of God and reverence for his word” in the Essay. The link to Wesley is important since his devotee Ryerson “imbued from Wesley’s writings” the basis for his Christian oriented views on education. He would not have been alone in his appreciation, most likely finding fellow acolytes among his Methodist brethren and other Christian educationists.

Locke’s popularity is evident as his ideas came into fashion in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. As noted above, during the years preceding the reform movement of the 1830’s, and before Ryerson’s tenure as Assistant Superintendent of

996 Locke, Some Thoughts Concerning Education, §177:135.
997 Locke, An Essay Concerning Human Understanding, 6. Locke makes this plain in a prior passage, “tis not worth while to be concerned, what he says or thinks, who says or thinks only as he is directed by another,” and declares his focus on the problem of assent. See Locke, An Essay Concerning Human Understanding, 3.
998 Hacking refers to this succinctly as “taking a look” or the “Lockean imperative” of assessing “the origin and transformation “ of our conceptualizations. See Hacking, Historical Ontology, 71.
Education for Upper Canada,\textsuperscript{1001} Locke’s books and essays were reissued on a wide scale. Along with new editions of \textit{Some Thoughts} and the \textit{Essay} was a version of Locke’s report on poor relief, which no doubt held great interest to those involved in debates over the English Poor Law amendments.\textsuperscript{1002} I mention this because the preface to the 1790 edition of the report on poor relief encapsulates the spirit in which Locke was taken up at the time:

the object of republishing [Locke’s report] is to explain, and, if possible, procure strength and permanency for a system of parochial oeconomy, congenial to the sentiments of Mr. Locke, who appears from the whole tenor of his reasoning in that memorial, to be convinced that rewards and punishments, and the mixing habits of industry with principles of religious duties, were the best and surest means of effecting that reformation in the manners of the people, which in those days was judged essential to the strength and safety of the nation; and which in our time, form the great increase of profligacy and dissoluteness of the lower order of people, is become a more pressing object of national concern.\textsuperscript{1003}

A number of the prominent issues of the period are present in this passage, such as the notion of “mixing habits of industry with principles of religious duties” to fight pauperism and crime, and secure order. These are concerns found without exception in the policy reports of nineteenth century public school promoters.

By the same token, I do not assume that Locke’s ideas and related practices were handed down to nineteenth century school promoters without qualification. Locke remained a prominent figure because his ideas proved useful, adaptable, and transformable. Through interpretation and challenge his works gained increased authority

\textsuperscript{1001} His tenure commenced in 1844, and the title was changed to Chief Superintendent of Education in 1846.

\textsuperscript{1002} Duncan Ivison states, “Entire swathes of it [were] quoted in the 1817 Parliamentary Select Committee report, which formed the basis of the 1834 poor law reforms.” See Ivison, “Liberal Conduct,” 39.

as they were passed from one hand to another. We find that a varied mix of philosophers, scientists, politicians, and theologians participated in building this discursive momentum. Other than Wesley, it is unlikely that the editions of Locke that reached Ryerson’s desk had not been strained through discursive filters constructed by other interpreters. Locke’s Baconianism and use of natural law and creation to reconcile reason and revelation made his work conducive to various scientific pursuits. One such pursuit promoted Locke’s view of the mind in a manner that infused his pedagogical ideas with the force of scientific legitimacy. This made his work difficult to ignore, even for the most religiously orthodox educationists.

It was the early psychology of David Hartley that gave Locke’s concepts a modern scientific gloss. Hartley’s Observations on Man, written more than a decade before Rousseau’s publication of Emile, adopts Locke’s epistemology to fashion a perspective on teaching and learning that, historian Brian Simon writes, is the “key to a grasp of the educational optimism” of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Simply put, with reference to Locke’s developmental view of reason Hartley made practical the idea that whole segments of the population could be behaviourally habituated to socially progressive behaviour. Moreover, since the mind developed in accordance with its own internal mechanisms, individuals remained responsible for diligent participation in


The popularity of Hartley’s Observations of Man had other effects. Besides Locke’s concept of the mind, Hartley drew from Newton, especially the idea of molecular vibrations, which Hartley used to describe the relation between the senses and ideas within the mind. Hartley’s work was so widely read, George Rousseau remarks, “many readers of the 1750’s learned their ‘Newtonianism’ from Hartley’s Observations rather than from a book written by Newton himself.” See George Rousseau, Enlightenment Borders (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 1991) 285.
training regimens and the later use of acquired skills. Hartley was able to add science to Locke without sacrificing the latter’s emphasis on moral responsibility. In this way the pedagogical practices based on the associationist psychology that Hartley derived from Locke maintained a fundamental element: choice.

Rousseau may be credited most often with drawing modern attention to the pedagogical importance of a child’s environment, but it is arguably the case that Hartley be granted similar status. At the very least it can be recognized how Hartlian associationist psychology created forceful scientific warrant for rejecting innatism and Rousseau’s negative pedagogy in favour of a deterministic style of education that retained a strong moral element. For historian Richard Olson such moral considerations are evident in Hartley’s proposal for widespread environmental conditioning. Hartley thought he had found the tools to improve the general sense of “higher-order ideas, such as sympathy,” which were essential to the creation of a moral community based on “refined’ self-interest”.

For many eighteenth and nineteenth century reformers Hartley’s associationist psychology’s novel combination of science and morality proved irresistible. Olson writes that it was viewed as “the prerequisite for moral knowledge,” a “moral medicine” that

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1007 Even Rousseau, whose disdain for the corruption and conformity instigated by modern institutions factored heavily in the negative education he outlined in Emile, once wrote in support of public schooling, “It is education that must give the souls of the people a national form, and so shape their opinions and their tastes that they become patriots as well by inclinations and passion as by necessity.” Rousseau is here addressing public education as established by the social contract, but it is arguable that this does not lessen the paradoxical nature of this comment. See Jean Jacques Rousseau, “Considerations on the Government of Poland,” in The Minor Educational Writings of Jean Jacques Rousseau, trans. William Boyd (New York, NY: Teachers College Press, 1910) 97, in Richardson, Literature, Education, and Romanticism, 86.

could propel humans toward enlightenment. On this basis, Hartley gained a number of disciples, and elements of his thought can be found in the writings of Joseph Priestley, Adrien Helvetius, Mary Wollstonecraft, Jeremy Bentham, and James Mill. Priestley, in particular, was among the first to use associationism as a scientific foundation for pedagogy. He wrote of the new science, “the most important application of Dr. Hartley’s doctrine… is to the conduct of human life, and especially the business of education.”

Wollstonecraft incorporated Hartlian principles in her argument against the deprivation of access to circumstances and experiences necessary for women to rise from subjugation and achieve true participatory citizenship. Bentham relied on associationism when designing his Chrestomathia. But none expressed enthusiasm for education’s formative prospects like the French utilitarian Helvetius, who proclaimed that with the new associationist psychology, “There is nothing impossible to education: it makes the bear dance.”

With few exceptions Upper Canadian school promoters were not in the business of writing scholarly tracts on educational theory. When it came to supporting reasons

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1009 Olson, Science Deified, 251.
1010 Richardson, Literature, Education, and Romanticism, 12.
6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=A%20treatise%20on%20man%3A%20his%20intellectual%20faculties%20and%20education&f=false
1014 This is not to say that Upper Canada/Canada West did not produce a number of books containing advice for teachers. A long history of such works begins in 1795 with Richard Cockrell’s “Thoughts on the Education of Youth.” According to Prentice and Houston, this was “the first tract on the theory and practice of education to be published in English in British North America.” See Houston and Prentice, Schooling and Scholars in Nineteenth Century Ontario, 17. Interestingly, in another work Houston and Prentice report that in 1799 Cockrell wrote his Essay on the Necessity of Education, wherein he offered a most Lockean observation,
for showing a preference for one practice over another the tendency among educational reformers was to cite the experience of contemporaries in similar policy making situations. Ryerson’s 1846 “Report” includes references to Victor Cousin, Calvin Stowe, Horace Mann, David Stow, and a host of others involved at the time in developing public school systems. There are mentions of authors who wrote while distanced from the obligations of public policy, but the majority of citations are from peers in other regions. This is even the case with articles in the Ryerson edited *Journal of Education for Upper Canada*. Beginning in 1848, this periodical was intended to keep common school supporters informed of all aspects of the system and its progress. Its mandate meant that it dealt with everyday issues in a clear and practical manner understandable to its broad base of readers.

The absence of an obvious theoretical orientation is understandable since school promoters performed their duties under an imperative to achieve results. Attention to practices tried and tested by others is to be expected. Yet in the midst of the wealth of useful advice offered in periodicals, official reports, and pamphlets, the theories of Locke and Hartley maintain a presence, and inform the most important classroom practices of the school system. We can see this most tellingly in Ryerson’s statements regarding the most basic goal of the system, namely, the instruction of how “to read, write, and to

However ignorant we are of the materials of which the common mind is composed, the truth is clear, that in its infant and tender state impressions are made with the greatest ease; and those impressions which are then made are generally of a very durable nature. See, Richard Cockrell, *Essay on the Necessity of Education*, in *Documentary History of Education in Upper Canada*, Vol. I, ed. J. George Hodgins (Toronto, ON: Warwick Brothers, 1899) 34-35, in Alison Prentice and Susan Houston, *Family, School, and Society* (Toronto. ON: Oxford University Press, 1975) 9. Nevertheless, I am not certain if most or not all of these could be considered highly theoretical. Ryerson makes brief mention of Pestalozzi, Erasmus, Plato, and Montaigne, De Fellenberg. See Ryerson, “Report on a System of Public Elementary Instruction for Upper Canada, 1846,” 76, 160, 161, 162.
calculate.”

To achieve results in these areas Ryerson proposes that it is necessary to diligently watch “over the impressions and associations which the mind receives in early life, to secure it against the influence of prevailing errors, and, as far as possible, engage its prepossessions on the side of truth.”

Ryerson intends not the awakening of innate ideas, but the Lockean goal of using “training” so that, he states, it “unfolds the faculties.” Crucial to this process are instructional techniques and materials of study that teach the student “to use with pleasure” his or her “reflective faculties,” for,

He who can think, and loves to think, will become, if he has a few good books, a wise man. He who knows not how to think, or hates the toil of doing it, will remain imbecile, though his mind be crowded with the contents of a library…If the mind of child, when learning, remains nearly passive, merely receiving knowledge as a vessel receives water which is poured into it, little good can be expected to accrue.

The appeal to pleasure, referred to by Locke in his notions of esteem, grace, and relish, is noted throughout Ryerson’s “Report,” and became a staple aim of the Canada West system. The idea of appealing to pleasure most often is mentioned in discussions of reading instruction and corporal punishment. The latter, obviously, is to be avoided since it results in resentment and, to use Locke’s term, a “slavish” disposition. Regarding the former, Ryerson advocated the use of then novel techniques of reading instruction instead of the traditional drudgery of rote memory learning. Based on theories

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1019 Italic in original.
1020 John Locke, John Locke on Education, §50:34.
1021 As a point of comparison, Rousseau, who held that “Reading is the plague of childhood,” was referring to the natural experiences of his negative education, which excludes the early use of books. “No book other than the world, no instruction other than the facts. The child who reads does not think, he only reads; he is not informing himself, he learns words.”
credited to Jean Joseph Jacotot, the normal words method promoted by Ryerson was a break with approaches to reading instruction that had been in use since the Greeks. These older methods, the “Abecedarian” or letters to words, taught reading by introducing students to the names of letters, and then their sounds by working on vowel-consonant, consonant-vowel combinations and syllables. Whole words would not be introduced until each student had mastered the alphabet according to these steps. The normal words technique involved a reversal of the letters to words method. Proclaiming, “Everything is in everything,” Jacotot encouraged introducing familiar objects to students, then breaking down their names into letters.

The normal words method relieved teachers and students from the “unnatural process” of older styles of reading instruction, especially by avoiding situations where,

The young prisoner is confined to his seat several hours in a day; he must be silent; he sees nothing to excite his curiosity; he hears and is required to do nothing to awaken mental activity; the only variation in the dull monotony of the school hours, is to be called up three or four times a day to repeat the names of twenty-six letters, of the use, or application, of every one of which he is entirely ignorant.

See Rousseau, Emile, 116, 168.

Mitford Mathews writes that Jacotot may be credited with this style, but he owed much to eighteenth century Prussian minister of education Friedrich Gedike, who observed in nature the hand of God working from the simple to complex, leading him to think that learning involved a reversal that uncovered creation. From this Jacotot derived the notion of teaching from the whole to the particular, or from words to letters. See Mathews, Teaching to Read, 37-38.


Mathews notes that this phrase comes from nineteenth century Prussian educationist Carl Kehr. See Mathews, Teaching to Read, 47.


Mathews, Teaching to Read, 30.

See also Curtis, Building the Educational State, 279f.

Pestalozzi expressed this with his dictum “Things not words.”

In order to free the “young prisoner” teachers were advised to direct students through their most powerful senses:

Our senses are so many inlets of knowledge; the more of them used in conveying instructions to the mind the better; the more of them addressed, the deeper and more permanent the impression produced. Of all the senses, that of seeing is the best organ of communication with the mind, especially in childhood. It has been said that ‘the eye remembers. It is more attentive than the ear. Its objects are not confused. It takes in a single and perfect image of what is placed before it, and transfers a picture to the mind. Hence, all illustrations in our teaching, which can possibility be addressed to this organ, should be so applied.”

This point is illustrated by Ryerson’s substantial use of citations from Horace Mann’s observations of Prussian classrooms. Among the many pedagogical activities noted by Mann was the teacher’s use of pictures, drawings, and common objects, which “never fail to command attention, and thus a habit of mind is induced of inestimable value.” The proper training and performance of the teacher was imperative, especially in the arts of managing a classroom by maintaining a dignified tone yet generating a sense of play, thereby negating the need for punishment. “Occasional jets of laughter,” Mann remarked, are “more favourable to a receptive mind than jets of tears.” Teachers “mingled with their pupils…animating, encouraging, sympathizing, breathing life into less active natures, assuring the timid, distributing encouragement and endearment to all.” While observing this apparent educational utopia Mann reports, “I never saw one child undergoing punishment, or arraigned for misconduct.”

Curtis takes up this same issue and invokes Foucault to describe the use of active participation in the classroom along with an appeal to the students’ sense of pleasure as

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part of a pedagogy geared toward “self-government” through “social subordination.”

He sees in the techniques lauded by Mann and Ryerson a “humanized” exercise of power that eschews “pain and fear” in favour of engaging students through pleasure. “Humanization,” he writes, “was a process of subjectification,” aimed to induce student interest so that “education would penetrate to the core of the student’s self, and would organize the fundamental forms of social experience.” In this way, students would be habituated to the moral order, which for Curtis means the creation of “social subjects who enjoyed and actively embraced their subordination, who experienced subordination in equality and liberty.” As an example he gives Ryerson’s promotion of music instruction, which he sees as a portable means of turning time spent with friends and family outside of the school into a subjectifying experience. Together music could be shared outside of schools, and, as Ryerson recognized, the singing of “moral songs” serve to “refine and elevate a whole community.”

Pedagogical tactics similar to those observed by Mann in Prussia were adopted for schools in Canada West. In general these tactics aimed at forming a range of desirable moral comportments, such as industry, frugality, self-restraint, religious devotion, loyalty to the Crown, and a host of others commonly deemed bourgeois, but which I have related to the biopolitical development of Englishness. Placing these in context of biopolitical

1033 Curtis, Building the Educational State, 102.
1034 Curtis, Building the Educational State, 104.
1035 Curtis, Building the Educational State, 105-106.
1036 Curtis, Building the Educational State, 106.
1037 Curtis, Building the Educational State, 104.
1038 Curtis, Building the Educational State, 106.
1039 Curtis, Building the Educational State, 106.

Italics in original.
history lessens any thought of the rigid mode of building assent indicated by Curtis. His class-based perspective comes perilously close to conveying the rather non-Foucauldian idea that students in Canada West were educated through juridical repression and the strict habituation to bourgeois behaviour. I contend that the mechanisms of power involved were subtler, and more adaptable to student and parent feedback. In the main, this is because educators followed a Lockean pedagogy that fashioned a more active mode of assent by appealing to the disengaged subject’s agency. The goal of educators was not to compel the direction of student behaviour through a limited range of options and punitive tactics, but the pleasurable cultivation of an awareness of possible comportments framed by criteria related to usefulness and economic participation. In order to accomplish the Ryersonian goal of giving “a right direction” to the “intellectual power” of the population, educator’s employed pedagogical tactics aimed at inducing the exercise of power according to interest.1042

While it is the case that Foucault thinks that “power induces pleasure,”1043 I think our historical perspective benefits from an analysis that is more cognizant of how Foucault’s notion of power relations accounts for the positive effects of pleasure. In the lectures at the Collège de France and later interviews, Foucault suggests that the governmental exercise of power occurs at a distance as actions upon other actions in a

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1042 In this we see a formal precursor of the sort of governmental action that becomes prevalent in our time. Nineteenth century public education constituted a microcosm and facilitator of a broader range of governmental tactics, setting up what Miller and Rose refer to, using a phrase taken from Bruno Latour, as “action at a distance.” For Miller and Rose, it is through liberal government’s “action at a distance that subjects’ “self-regulating capacities...[are] aligned with economic objectives through...indirect mechanisms.”

See Miller and Rose, Governing the Present, 26, 50, 60.

series that is not determinate since government’s precondition is freedom. To say that a subject is fully complicit in his or her subordination ignores the dual importance of freedom and agency, and describes the sort of situation Foucault deems simple “voluntary servitude,” which he considers a problem different than the one posed by power. It is with this in mind that I argue that the emergence of public schooling as a form of government presents a different concern than the insidious imposition of complicit subordination. The problem faced by school promoters was constant: how to construct assent to a range of comportments or conducts, what Locke also called a “right disposition,” while honouring the subject’s freedom?

No single response to this problem could be sufficient. A modified Lockean epistemology grounded the pedagogy of public schools, but a more substantial governmental instrument for dealing with the problem of freedom came from making pedagogy inseparable from curricular content.

VIII. “To read is to wander through an imposed system.”

An appreciation and aptitude for the proper use of language is a cornerstone of Locke’s advice to educators. “To write and speak correctly,” he asserts, “gives a grace and gains favourable attention to what one has to say.” Locke admits he is counselling

See also Foucault, The Birth of Biopolitics, 62-65.
1045 Foucault, “Afterword: The Subject and Power,” 221.
1046 Locke, Some Thoughts Concerning Education, §177:135.
1047 This is the Kantian problem of autonomy, which is the problem confronted by Locke, and the governmental problem that attracts Foucault’s attention. It is also basic to education, and the key to its relation to liberal governmentality.
1048 Houston and Prentice, Schooling and Scholars in Nineteenth Century Ontario, 239.
1050 Locke, Some Thoughts Concerning Education, §189:143.
those engaged in the instruction of the British aristocracy, announcing in *Some Thoughts Concerning Education*, “The principal aim of my discourse is how a young gentleman is to be brought up from his infancy.”\(^{1051}\) In the achievement of this aim, proper diction and skill with a pen are not only signs of intelligence, but necessary to *noblesse oblige*. Yet Locke’s class and gender bias, though problematic in their own right, should not obscure the revolutionary nature of his views. In the previous section I considered how Locke’s epistemology supported novel approaches to the instructional use of habit formation. I will now look at an important mode of habit formation, one that proved extremely productive in the development of public schools in Canada West: literacy.\(^{1052}\)

Reading and writing skills have always been the first order of schooling, but for those privileged enough to be educated outside of the family the persistence of scholasticism in the seventeenth century meant that instruction in these skills involved the classical languages. In English speaking countries more than a century would pass before the vernacular was accepted as part of core instruction. The first formal signs of this development appeared in Scotland between 1748 and 1751 when Adam Smith created and delivered a program of literary instruction at the University of Edinburgh, thereby becoming “the first professor of English.”\(^{1053}\) Leaving Edinburgh in 1751, Smith carried his program to the University of Glasgow. According to David Hamilton, Smith’s new employers, having suspended the logic syllabus to secure his services, permitted him to teach a controversial combination of political economy and English literature, and

\(^{1051}\) Locke, *Some Thoughts Concerning Education*, §6:12.

\(^{1052}\) As a wealth of publications show, this is a slippery and controversial concept. My approach aims at capturing how the acquisition of reading and writing skills involves the exploitation of the Lockean notion of consciousness. After Locke words gain a new power to affect subjectivity, and therefore, become more integral to governance than ever before.

\(^{1053}\) Court, “Adam Smith and the Teaching of English Literature,” 326.
assuaged his detractors by arguing he “would revive the flagging fortunes of the university by attracting students from ‘industry and commerce’” who were “a relatively new and untapped constituency.”1054 The expectations of the administrators of the University of Glasgow were fulfilled, but this is tangential to a more significant event.

Smith’s instructional use of English literary selections combined the intellectual pursuits that define his work, such as the parallel development of moral character and critical thought. Outwardly, writes Court, he used selections for exemplary purposes “to inform the populace, to enlighten them” through “lessons of character” found in “English literary models.”1055 Inwardly, he aimed to encourage “the critical faculty of mind, the judgment of the impartial spectator within, the signer-signified.”1056 Court notes that Smith’s use of English to achieve these interrelated objectives was the first in “pedagogical trend” that has dictated the use of literature in classrooms for “two and a half centuries.”1057

On one hand, Smith’s use of exemplary literary models more or less adhered to the pedagogical views that dominated until the seventeenth century. Prior to the late eighteenth century, reading instruction followed a Platonic or Aristotelian model of knowledge acquisition. This model presumed an idealist ontology of immutable forms, and therefore, emphasized mimesis, which in the classroom meant repetition, copying, drill, and the memorization of select passages of poetry and prose.1058 As a consequence, the teaching of reading and writing proved to be drudgery for instructors and students. In

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1055 Court, “Adam Smith and the Teaching of English Literature,” 332.
1056 Court, “Adam Smith and the Teaching of English Literature,” 332.
1057 Court, “Adam Smith and the Teaching of English Literature,” 333.
fact, it was considered so tedious that the Greeks made it the responsibility of slaves, as well as making it the brunt of humour as, in reply to inquiries regarding the fate of anyone not yet returned from the military disaster in Syracuse, Athenians answered “He is either dead or become a schoolmaster.”

After hundreds of years, Luther’s educational programs did little to diverge from this model and rapidly expanded reading instruction using the catechistic method, which Jean François Gilmont describes as “an activity in which orality predominates” and “memorization precedes explication.”

Though it helped adapt teaching to a larger scale than ever before, after all, it had been tested and tried from the pulpit for centuries, the catechistic method had a serious shortcoming. The best example of its limitations is found in early modern Sweden. Though the use of catechistic reading instruction enabled Sweden to claim a “near universal rate of literacy” by the end of the seventeenth century, it is doubtful that this success included proper comprehension of the Biblical texts that comprised the curriculum.

On the other hand, Smith’s expectation that literary models would have an inward effect separates him from tradition, and links him to Locke and the revolution at the heart of modern pedagogy. For it is Locke, writes James Donald, who presents “the view that what gives language its coherence is not a cosmic hierarchy, but the relation between its

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Mathews also cites a similar use of this phrase from the seventeenth century, “He is either dead or teaching the ABC’s.”


1060 Jean François Gilmont, “Protestant Reformations and Reading,” in *A History of Reading in the West*, 314.


internal structure and the logic of the human mind.” After Locke reading is no longer thought of as the repetitively developed conformity to ideals represented by a text. Printed words reveal themselves to have subject penetrating powers. The process of learning to read, and reading itself, Robert Morgan states, renders the subject “the privileged locus” of “moral introspection.” “Introspection” refers to that ability to disengage and suspend judgment for examination, which Locke sees as fundamental to the development of rationality and character.

In *Discipline and Punish* Foucault observes how notions of introspection and habituation have been integral to the modern distribution disciplinary practices, which he writes,

provided, in effect, by means of the theory of interests, representations and signs, by the series and geneses that it reconstituted, a sort of general recipe for the exercise of power over men: the ‘mind’ as a surface inscription for power, with semiology as its tool; the submission of bodies through the control of ideas; the analysis of representations as a principle in a politics of bodies that was much more effective than the ritual anatomy of torture and execution.

The new power to captivate the mechanisms of the mind through the physical and mental training of the kind involved in learning to read and write did not only intrigue educators like Smith. Those who made a career of directing conduct to specific objectives had also identified the value of this new power. Foucault notes the prescient recommendations of the eighteenth century French general Servan:

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1063 Reinhard Wittman, “Was There a Reading Revolution at the End of the eighteenth Century?” in *A History of Reading in the West*, 288.


When you have...formed a chain of ideas in the heads of your citizens, you will then be able to pride yourselves on guiding them and being their masters. A stupid despot may constrain his slaves with iron chains; but a true politician binds them even more strongly by the chain of their own ideas; it is at the stable point of reason that he secures the end of the chain; this link is all the stronger in that we do not know of what it is made and we believe it to be our own work; despair and time eat away at the bonds of iron and steel, but they are powerless against the habitual union of ideas, they can only tighten it still more; and on the soft fibres of the brain is founded the unshakeable base of the soundest of Empires.  

With Lockean epistemology serving as a prime condition, learning to read became a disciplinary practice fundamental to the government of subjects. The schools of Canada West aimed to take full advantage of this new power.

A novel conception of the formative connection between mind and text followed Locke’s epistemology and expanded the range of language education’s potential effects. Besides functioning to cultivate moral character, or, to use Hunter’s phrase, act as a “seminar of conscience,” the pedagogic space of language learning was re-calibrated with reference to the most salient points in the web of socio-cultural relations. The disengaged subject enabled a deeper mode of comprehension, stretching the boundaries of learning such that, as Morgan offers, reading instruction functioned as “training in how to say ‘I’, and the establishment of the social horizons in which that utterance takes place.” This marked the beginning of the long slide into obscurity of the classical languages, and the inception of the widespread use of instructional models relevant to the times. Thus, as the value of school knowledge was quantified increasingly according to the commonalities of the greater linguistic community, students were no longer confined

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to extrapolating from classical texts, but were exposed to lessons designed to reflect their current and future experience.

The effects of this shift in the conception of language went well beyond pedagogy, and endowed schools with the task of cultural homogenization. In his inquiry into nationalism Benedict Anderson sees the modern promotion of language as crucial to the formation of the “deep, horizontal, comradeship” that binds individuals together under a shared cultural mythology.\textsuperscript{1069} The ascension of the role of language becomes particularly evident in the nineteenth century. Though at the time English had just “become an ‘English’ language,”\textsuperscript{1070} Anderson thinks that recognition of the word’s ability to reach “into the lair of the skull”\textsuperscript{1071} inspired a great “philological-lexicographic revolution.”\textsuperscript{1072} Some of the most recognizable products of this revolution have since been collected under rubrics such as Russification and Anglification. As the seat of reading and writing instruction, and the study of literature, schools played an immense role in the ascension of language to political weapon.\textsuperscript{1073}

Anderson’s perspective highlights the hegemony of modern language, but in saying this it is worth recalling how he differs from Foucault. As noted above, the difference is most apparent in their respective conceptions of race. Anderson ties cultural homogenization and racism to aristocratic and bourgeois domination, thereby placing class ahead of race. Foucault, on the other hand, sees race as a predicate of class,
something that emerges in response to a perceived biological threat and, as such, effects whole populations. Race is not the domain of a dominant class any more than the nationalism; its connection to self-preservation means it is readily dispersed throughout a population. The point is that Foucault’s biological conception of race paints a more disturbing picture than Anderson’s ideological account because it reveals how dangers are contained by positivity.

Another heuristic lens with which to view the modern shift in language is offered by Gayatri Spivak, who suggests, “the means of production of explanations is, of course, a very important part of the ideology of cultural explanations that cannot be distinguished, in fact, from the explanations themselves.” In Canada West these “explanations” took the form, Morgan argues, of “a very particular ‘image repertoire’, one which promoted the expansion of a global English Empire.” Classrooms were conspicuously decorated with the iconography of colonialism, flags, portraits of Queen Victoria, and maps indicating English dominance throughout the world. But these decorations were visual reminders of the more powerful language of biological race that permeated the materials used for reading instruction. Morgan cites as examples tracts written by the Reverend James George and Ryerson’s close assistant John George Hodgins. In 1867 George wrote The Mission of Great Britain to the World, Or some of the Lessons which she is now Teaching. Assuming a view of the relation of language to

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culture similar to that espoused earlier in the century by German scholars such as Johann Fichte, Johann Herder, and Friedrich Schiller, that is, language as *Volksstimm* or voice of the people, George proclaimed,

a highly civilized race, will ever have, a highly accomplished language. The English language strikingly illustrates this. It is very generally held, that a certain mixture of blood, drawn from the noblest branches of the human family, produces the finest race of men.\(^{1077}\)

Hodgins’s work, *Selections for Public Recitations in Schools*, which, Morgan tells us, was sanctioned for use in schools by the Department of Education at its publication in 1857, aimed at helping teach “Young Canadians…to love and venerate that great fatherland, whose annals are so rich in heroic incident and noble achievement.”\(^{1078}\)

Reverence for home country and Empire corresponded to the double movement of the biopolitics of race discussed in the last chapter, wherein identity relies on exclusion as much as inclusion. Reading instruction played a central role in biopolitics; operating on both sides of this movement. If, as John Farthing argues, freedom in colonial Canada wore a crown, it was an embellishment purchased at others’ expense.\(^{1079}\) This expense was demanded through the exclusion of others, the vilification and making invisible, and is an effect of the regulation of knowledge. Homi Bhabha describes this process, writing of the “exercise of colonialist power” as “the production of differentiations, individuations, identity effects, through which discriminatory practices can map out subject populations that are tarred with the visible and transparent mark of power.”\(^{1080}\)


this discursive context, practices of English reading instruction simultaneously carry a power to distinguish, which,

effects a regulation of spaces and places that is authoritatively assigned; it puts the addressee into the proper frame or condition for some action or result. Such a mode of governance addresses itself to a form of conduct that is achieved through a reality effect that equivocates between the sense of disposal, as the bestowal of a frame of reference, and disposition, as mental inclination, a frame of mind.\textsuperscript{1081}

Therefore, Morgan offers, the “persistent feature” of reading and writing instruction” in the schools of Upper Canada/Canada West/Ontario was a “blurring of the line between” disposal and disposition, “English and Englishness.”\textsuperscript{1082}

Being English in Upper Canada/Canada West meant more than a birthright, it required the acquisition and maintenance of appropriate dispositions. Race, like economic government, was a problem of disposition and, as Locke had advised, integral to solving this problem was the correct use of language. Durham in his Report argued for the use of language as a means of stamping English character on all of Canada. When it came to language even the Americans were in his opinion superior to the French Canadians,

\begin{quote}
The language, the laws, the character of the North American Continent are English; and every race but the English (I apply this to all who speak the English language) appears there in a condition of inferiority. It is to elevate them from that inferiority that I desire to give to the Canadians our English character…At the best…the French Canadian is cast still further into the shade, by a language and habits foreign to those of Imperial government.\textsuperscript{1083}
\end{quote}

Ryerson concurred with Durham on the link between language and superior conduct, and in his 1842 inaugural address to Victoria College stated,

\textsuperscript{1081} Bhabha, “Signs Taken for Wonders,” 151.
\textsuperscript{1082} See also Morgan, “The ‘Englishness’ of English Teaching,” 207.
\textsuperscript{1083} Morgan, “The ‘Englishness’ of English Teaching,” 207.
\textsuperscript{1083} Craig, ed. Lord Durham’s Report, 149.
He who can speak well, both in public and in private, on all subjects in which he may be concerned, possesses a power more enviable and formidable that that of the sword; he possesses an empire over mind, the more admirable as it is entirely voluntary, - the more elevated as it is the force of reason in man’s immortal nature, - the more formidable as it controls the springs of human action. Knowledge itself cannot properly be said to be power, without the appropriate power to communicate it.1084

Coupled with his commitment to the universal availability of education, he once wrote that education “should be as common as water, and as free as air,”1085 such thoughts led Ryerson to declare that no one “should be a murderer of the QUEEN’S English.”1086 The issue was not simply one of grammar and pronunciation. Durham’s comments on the inferiority of the French race had by Ryerson’s time been folded into a more overt consideration of economy. Without proper language skills, Ryerson offered, anyone who expected to improve his or her place in society would confront an “impassable gulf” separating them from prosperity.1087

Just as Clanchy notes that literacy “could not be imposed by royal decree,” working to bridge the economic and social gulf demanded overcoming the drudgery of medieval modes of instruction.1088 Acknowledgement of the harm done to student progress by the use of threat and punishment meant new ways of engagement were crucial to the success of public schools. Some educationists in Upper Canada/Canada West found reason for optimism in the English literary canon. George Paxton Young, for

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1088 Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record*, 12.
instance, to whom Morgan refers as “the architect of English Studies in Ontario,” argued in a series of reports ordered by the Department of Education that the aesthetic superiority of English literature made the use of vernacular texts essential to a curriculum aimed at building character. As an example he cited his experience using Shakespeare’s *Merchant of Venice* to give a lesson to a class of adolescent female students:

Here was a lesson in practical Christian Ethics, given incidentally, in no dry dogmatic fashion, but in connection with words of such singular sweetness that they can scarcely be read intelligently without entering into the soul and becoming part of its convictions for ever.

The general idea was that if an art and skill “more formidable than the sword” were to be inculcated to the youth of Canada West, then the public school system would have to rely on something just as formidable; something that would render the subject willing to accede to “the authority of print.”

For this public school promoters could again look to Locke’s notion of appealing to students’ inclinations. A former source of classroom drudgery was adapted to suit the goal of making learning to read and write pleasing to students. This was accomplished by replacing the varied and, in most cases, out-dated textbooks used in common schools with a standardized set of graded readers. These new textbooks not only solved a multitude of administrative issues, they ensured that the engaging instructional practices observed by Mann and Ryerson in Prussia had a suitable complement.

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1089 This is another sense in which the colonies acted as a testing ground for biopolitics and liberalism. Morgan notes, “English as a school subject began in the colonies, in Africa, India, Scotland, and Ontario long before it was initiated within secondary schooling at ‘home’.” See Morgan, “The ‘Englishness’ of English Teaching,” 205.


IX. Curricular Standardization of Interest

If one feature defined the public schools of Canada West it was the use of a standard set of textbooks. Control over school knowledge had been a constant concern. Often discussions regarding textbooks and curriculum revolved around concern over American influence. From the Common School Act of 1816 until the Act of 1846, the most commonly recommended solution to foreign threat was the system wide implementation of a single set of approved textbooks. Ryerson’s predecessor, the Reverend Robert Murray, had placed the issue at the forefront of debates leading to the Act of 1843. Ryerson took up the subject in his 1846 “Report” and, instead of making the usual claims about combatting the influence of cheap and readily available American books, he cited school reports from Connecticut and New York. According to these reports, the cultural influence of foreign books was less an issue than the “Evils” of variety. It was on these grounds that Ryerson argued most conspicuously that the Department of Education, and, in particular, the Chief Superintendent, be granted the power to select and standardize the books used throughout the burgeoning public system.

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1093 Houston and Prentice, *Schooling and Scholars in Nineteenth Century Ontario*, 239.
Furthermore, Ryerson later wrote in his book on the Loyalist experience in Upper Canada, From facts, which have come to my knowledge, I believe it will be found, on inquiry, that in precisely those parts of Upper Canada where United States Schools Books had been used most extensively, there the spirit of the insurrections in 1837 and 1838, was most prevalent.
Ryerson’s insistence on governmental control of textbooks may have contributed to accusations of “Prussian despotism” that followed his 1846 “Report,” but the improvements to the system that they facilitated were undeniable. Houston and Prentice note that the single action of instituting standardized books enabled “all the following” to be accomplished:

- compensate for inadequately trained teachers;
- classify pupils according to ability and prior knowledge;
- meet the challenge of endemic pupil-teacher mobility;
- minimize sectarian animosity;
- provide affordable and universally available reading material to families and local communities before the advent of a viable book trade.

Nevertheless, the successful introduction of this innovation was reliant on more than the withholding of grant money to schools refusing to employ the sanctioned texts. As had been increasingly the case in governmental affairs, enticement took precedence over obvious measures of deterrence.

Locke argues that the best manner in which to convey knowledge is by appealing to “esteem and grace,” thereby affecting relish and setting off cognitive processes of examination. Of course, the demeanour of an instructor was paramount in this matter, but alone this would soon be frustrated unless supported by the right sort of text, preferably one “dulce et utile” according to the Horatian edict. In the five books that comprised the Irish Readers series Ryerson claimed he had discovered a pedagogical tool

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1097 Houston and Prentice, Schooling and Scholars in Nineteenth Century Ontario, 237-238. Italics in original.

1098 Locke, John Locke on Education, §56:36.

that would be well appreciated by students and teachers alike. The following passage indicates the extent of his fascination,

Beginning with the forms and various sounds of the letters, and one syllable dialogues and little narratives so congenial to the taste of the infant mind, they proceed through the simple elements of the essential branches of useful knowledge, until in the fourth and fifth books, the most important subjects...are treated in a manner both attractive and scientific, and adapted to the intercourse and pursuits of life – the whole being interspersed with miscellaneous and poetic selections calculated to please the imagination, to gratify and improve the taste, and to elevate and strengthen the moral feelings.1100

Among the many qualities that set the Readers apart, that is, aside from providing practical solutions to the issues noted by Houston and Prentice, was their generous use of illustrations as well as literary motifs drawn from fairy tales and children’s stories in a way that seamlessly combined the imaginative with the didactic.1101 Alone this combination was not innovative. Schoolbooks had for years used pictures and stories, but for Ryerson it was the proverbial icing on the cake that made the Irish Readers the obvious choice for the classrooms of Canada West.

The Irish textbooks helped children learn to read and develop their young minds by engaging them with a series of lessons purposefully designed to be familiar and pleasing. By offering students a pleasurable experience, relatively speaking, the books presented a sanctioned curriculum mildly and in developmental increments. Students’ inclinations were developed lockstep with their rational abilities. A few years after making the Readers the standard textbooks of the public schools of Canada West,

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1101 I have borrowed this distinction from Alan Richardson. See Richardson, *Literature, Education, and Romanticism*, 112f.
Ryerson wrote, “Text-books are the tools which the Teacher uses in developing and moulding the resources and powers of intellect and heart.”

“Readers,” offers Stephen Heathhorn, “were often the first books that most working-class children read, and so they formed the basis of all their future reading: these books not only provided literacy, but also a lexicon for the development of personal and collective identity.” Insofar as readers were instrumental in identity formation, adds Heathhorn, it was to initiate children “into the ethos of mid-century liberal culture.” I agree that the Irish Readers played a substantial role in advancing liberalism. But words such as “moulding” and “initiate” give the impression that textbooks were part of a campaign of indoctrination. As I have illustrated throughout this dissertation, liberal governmentality emerges as a critique of such excess. In any case, whether the Readers were emblematic of an imposed system of identity is a question without resolution. The situation is far from clear-cut. On one hand, as officially authorized textbooks it seems they were foisted upon all involved in common schooling in Canada West. But Curtis has detailed a variety of cases related to curriculum where neither the legal authority of school officials nor the presumed universality of school knowledge was enough to diminish resistance among parents and students. Nevertheless, the success of the Irish Readers in Canada West and throughout British ruled territories is undeniable. According to Viola Parvin, by 1866 only 150 of over 4000 common schools in Canada West failed

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1104 Heathhorn, For Home, Country, and Race, 10.
1105 Curtis, Building the Educational State, 140-173.
to report that they were using the *Irish Readers.*

After the series was replaced in 1868 with a version that contained Canadian content, letters were received by the Department of Education requesting copies of the books or inquiring where they could be purchased. The books also made an impact in England where by 1859 “nearly one million of the Irish books were being used” in schools. The idea that the texts were imposed is belied by their long-standing acceptance.

Rather than choose between these two sides, I contend it is heuristically fruitful to view the effects of the Irish textbooks in terms of both, but with consideration given to an important distinction suggested by Foucault when discussing the government of interest; namely, between the juridical and the economic exercise of power, and therefore, between governmental logic that attends respectively to “the subject of right and the subject of interest.”

Officially sanctioning the books gives the appearance of a governmental imposition as it represents the application of a juridical style of government. But the textbooks were not simply enforced by law. Like school attendance, their use was in many ways voluntary as they were introduced gradually and by favour. Furthermore, as Curtis illustrates, many did not appreciate the books presumed strengths

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1107 These revisions resulted in the 1868 publication of the *Ontario Readers,* also known as the *Red Readers,* which, with the exception of the addition of references to Canadian history and landmarks, retained most of the *Irish Readers*’ basic lessons. This is significant since the volume left most intact was the fourth, which contained the bulk of the lessons on political economy. I will look at this below. See Bruce Curtis, “Curricular Change and the Red Readers: History and Theory, in *Re-Interpreting Curriculum Research: Images and Arguments,* ed. Geoffrey Millburn, Ivor Goodson, and Robert Clarke (London, ON: The Falmer Press, 1989) 41-63.
1110 Foucault, *The Birth of Biopolitics,* 274.
and were vocal in their opposition, leaving Ryerson with the constant task of justifying the Readers’ suitability.1111

Bearing this resistance in mind, the widespread adoption of the Irish textbooks indicates that something other than the power of law contributed to their appeal. Factors such as the books’ low cost and availability played a part. Granted these were important, but I contend the success of the texts, in addition to their application of a Lockean based pedagogical style, was owing to the discovery of new ways to govern made possible by political economy. The implementation of the Irish Readers occurs at a historical crossroad between the juridical and the economic that is emblematic not of governmental heavy-handedness or its complete abatement, though on the surface either may seem to be the case, but a liberal critique of the limits of sovereignty that entails a compensatory appeal to interest.

The appeal to interest that assisted the measured introduction of the Irish books was also key to their prodigious formative effect on students and teachers. The building of engagement on an individual scale mirrored the processes by which the books became popular, processes that were facilitated by political economy. Thus the efficacy of the science in this regard was carried into the content of the textbooks themselves.

1111 Among the cases cited by Curtis are those of District Superintendent for Niagara, Dexter D’Everardo, and sometime Superintendent of Schools for Preston, Otto Koltz. The former advised Ryerson against hurrying the implementation of the Irish textbooks, stressing the predominance of cheap American books already in use in his district. The latter was a force for the revision of the texts, pointing out the lack of Canadian content. Regardless of these and other objections, Curtis notes that the books were introduced gradually and more as an option than a legal obligation.

The financial powers of the Council of Public Instruction were not directed against schools using offending books, although occasional threats to do so were made. The generalization of the Irish texts was promoted rather through attempts to make them cheap and easily available, on the one hand, and on the other hand by propaganda efforts, and by measures designed to implicate them in routine administrative activity.

X. “Bildung of the market”

“Anyone,” writes historian Donald Akenson, “who knows the history of the British Isles reasonably well cannot help but have a sensation of déjà vu when surveying nineteenth century Ontario’s educational history.” This observation is largely supported by the impact the adoption of the Irish Readers had on the common school system of Canada West. At a sensitive stage in its development the textbooks gave the system administrative and curricular consistency, and therefore, a management base for projects such as the Normal school, which opened in 1847.

By giving the burgeoning system much needed consistency the Readers fulfilled their initial purpose. However, as in the colony for which they were originally designed, it was consistency in service of a broader political goal. In colonial Ireland the goal was to mitigate the sectarian rivalry that intensified after Catholic emancipation in 1829. The Readers were expected to help make the Irish National School system a counterbalance to Catholic insurrection. There were two ways in which the five books that comprised the Readers series were to contribute, one obvious and the other less so. First, as Patrick Walsh notes, stability and order determined by Protestant interests was to be achieved

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1112 Dean, Governmentality, 187.
1113 Donald Akenson, Being Had: Historians, Evidence and the Irish in North America (Port Credit, ON: P. D. Meany, 1985) 174.

“Ryerson,” adds Akenson, “was importing, not just the school books, but the entire Irish national system of education into Upper Canada.”
See Akenson, Being Had: Historians, Evidence and the Irish in North America, 148.
1114 The Irish National School system was founded in 1831 on a plan outlined by the Colonial Secretary Lord Stanley in what became known as “the Stanley Letter.” During his 1844 tour of the United States and Europe, Ryerson met with Lord Stanley, who was of great assistance to him.
As a matter of interest, Lord Stanley was Edward Smith-Stanley who later served three short terms as Prime Minister of the UK, and was the father of Frederick Stanley. Like his father Frederick served as Colonial Secretary and in 1892, as Governor General of Canada, gave Canada the Stanley Cup, hockey’s most coveted prize.
through the Readers’ rejection of Catholic “confessional education.” Second, the books in the series covered a rather comprehensive number of subjects, but among these were significant lessons pertaining to political economy. The first did not prove effective. Squabbles between Catholic and Protestant officials continued. As a result, Walsh writes, “the dismal reality was that the schools soon established themselves largely on confessional lines.” But, according to Goldstrom, “no voice in this wearisome controversy was raised against” the lessons on political economy. “Everything else might be suspect but the ‘laws’ of political economy were self-evident to all.” Hence, where a non-denominational approach failed to breed a community among the religious factions of Ireland, the “Gospel of Mammon” prevailed.

Faith in political economy’s power to drive the progress of humanity was embedded in the Readers from their conception. Most of the responsibility for this can be attributed to a leading editorial contributor. A former professor of political economy at Oxford, Richard Whately was appointed Archbishop of Dublin in 1831, and soon after joined the Irish Commissioners of National Education. Despite his high position in the Church of Ireland, Whately was of the opinion,

It was a mistake to suppose that religion or morals alone would be sufficient to save a people from revolution. No; they would not be sufficient, if a proper idea of Political Economy was not cultivated by that people. A man, even of the purest mind and most exalted feelings, without a knowledge of Political Economy, could not be secured from being made instrumental in forwarding most destructive and disastrous revolutions.

1116 Walsh, “Education and the ‘Universalist’ Idiom of Empire,” 647.
1119 Boylan and Foley, Political Economy and Colonial Ireland, 120.
Thus archbishop Whately’s practical career in public school curriculum began with a proposal for a book on political economy.\textsuperscript{1122} At a July 1833 meeting of The Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge (SPCK), Whately outlined his plans to write \textit{Introductory Lessons on Political Economy} for children.\textsuperscript{1123} It was agreed the lessons would be serialized in the Society’s \textit{Saturday Magazine},\textsuperscript{1124} and this collection was crafted into pamphlet form as \textit{Easy Lessons on Money Matters for the Use of Young People}.\textsuperscript{1125} \textit{Easy Lessons} is comprised of eighty-three pages divided into ten sections, and covered topics ranging from “Money,” and “Exchange,” to “Capital,” and “Taxes.”\textsuperscript{1126} Whately’s main aim was to make the complex issues of the science accessible to a young audience. In the Preface he states that the lessons “were designed, and, on trial, found adapted, to the instruction of young persons from about eight years of age and upwards.”\textsuperscript{1127} The concept proved timely. Goldstrom points out that the pamphlet outsold “all it competitors in Britain,” and was “translated into several languages.”\textsuperscript{1128} For Whately this validated his “missionary zeal” for political economy, but his public career

\begin{footnotes}
\item[1124] \textit{Saturday Magazine} was published by the S.P.C.K. in response to the establishment in 1832 by Jeremy Bentham and other “radicals” of The Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, which had it own \textit{Penny Magazine}. See Goldstrom, “Popular Political Economy for the British Working Class,” 264.
\end{footnotes}
and the reputation of *Easy Lessons* were just beginning.\textsuperscript{1129}

Large portions of Whatley’s pamphlet made it into the *Irish Readers Series*.\textsuperscript{1130} His lessons are interspersed among the books, especially the second, third, and fourth, the latter having a full section on political economy. Almost all the lessons are written “in the guise of a fable, fairy tale, or poem.”\textsuperscript{1131} The simplification of the material made it familiar and pleasurable to students. But Whately was not the only one whose work found its way into the *Readers*. His parables on “Political Economy and the Useful Arts,” as Section IV of the fourth book\textsuperscript{1132} is titled,\textsuperscript{1133} are joined by passages from the work of Jane Marcet\textsuperscript{1134} and Adam Smith, though their ideas are used sparingly compared to Whately’s.

Smith’s ideas find their way into the textbooks fairly early as a section from *The Wealth of Nations* provides an introduction to the theory of the division of labour. Section I, Lesson IX of the second book of the *Readers* paraphrases Smith’s example of the advantage of dividing up the tasks involved in the “very trifling manufacture” of a

\textsuperscript{1129} Goldstrom, “Popular Political Economy for the British Working Class,” 265.
\textsuperscript{1130} Goldstrom, “Popular Political Economy for the British Working Class,” 265.

Ten sections of Whatley’s *Easy Lessons* can be found in the *Readers*, four in the third book, and six in the fourth. See Boylan and Foley, *Political Economy and Colonial Ireland*, 77.
\textsuperscript{1131} Curtis writes that the fourth book “is arguably the most important” as its lessons “were aimed at thirteen-year-olds and hence were commonly the last books read at school for many students. They were the first books in which authors assumed that students had mastered the technical skills of reading and could thus be addressed as a rational audience.” The equation of a high level of reading skills and rationality as prerequisites for understanding political economy is significant in terms of Foucault’s notion of the rationality of government being tied to the rationality of subjects. See Curtis, “Curricular Change and the Red Readers,” 47.
\textsuperscript{1132} Commissioners of National Education of Ireland, *Fourth Book of Lessons for Use in Schools* (Edinburgh, UK: Fraser and Co, 1842) 219-260.
\textsuperscript{1133} Jane Marcet was perhaps the earliest writer of political economy for children. See Jane Marcet, *Conversations in Political Economy* (London, UK: Longan, 1824).
pin. Smith writes,

One man draws out the wire, another straightens it, a third cuts it, a fourth points it, a fifth grinds it at the top for receiving the head; to make the head requires two or three distinct operations; to put it on, is a peculiar business, to whiten the pins is another; it is even a trade by itself to put them into the paper; and the important business of making a pin is, in this manner, divided into about eighteen distinct operations.\textsuperscript{1135}

This rather mundane text is interpreted for a young audience in the \textit{Readers},

What a small thing a pin is; and yet it takes ten men, if not more, to make it. One man draws the wire; the next makes it straight; the third cuts it; the fourth points it; the fifth grinds it for the head; the next puts it on; the eighth makes the pins white; and the ninth and tenth stick them in rows. What a heap of pins they will make in a day! More, I am sure, than you or I could count.\textsuperscript{1136}

However, it is Whately’s \textit{Easy Lessons} that prevails, and the message that an individual “only seeking to enrich himself” is following “the best and surest way he could take for enriching his country” is a mainstay of the sections on political economy.\textsuperscript{1137} For instance, on the basis of this principle students are told that to presume income inequality is unjust is a “mistake…long ago exposed in the fable of the stomach and the limbs.”\textsuperscript{1138}

‘Once on a time,’ says the fable, ‘all of the other members of the body began to murmur against the stomach, for employing the labours of all the rest, and consuming all that they had helped to provide, without doing anything in return. So they all agreed to strike work, and refused to wait upon this idle stomach any longer. The feet refused to carry it about; the hands resolved to put no food into the mouth for it; the nose refused to smell for it, and the eyes to look out in to its service; and the ears declared they would not even listen to the dinner bell; and so of all the rest. But after the stomach had been left empty for some time, all the members began to suffer. The legs and arms grew feeble; the eyes became dim, and all the body languid and exhausted.’

\textsuperscript{1135} Smith, \textit{The Wealth of Nations}, Bk. I, Ch. I, 11.
\textsuperscript{1136} Commissioners of National Education of Ireland, \textit{Second Book of Lessons for Use in Schools} (Edinburgh, UK: Fraser and Co, 1842) 12.
\textsuperscript{1137} Commissioners of National Education of Ireland, \textit{Fourth Book of Lessons for Use in Schools} (Edinburgh, UK: Fraser and Co, 1842) 232.
\textsuperscript{1138} Commissioners of National Education of Ireland, \textit{Fourth Book of Lessons for Use in Schools}, 229.
‘Oh foolish members,’ said the stomach, ‘you now perceive that what you used to supply me, was in reality supplied to yourselves. I did not consume for myself the food that was put into me, but digested it, and prepared it for being changed into blood, which was sent through various channels as a supply for each of you. If you are occupied in feeding me, it is by me in turn, that the blood-vessels which nourish you are fed.’

“You see then,” the lesson continues, “that a rich man, even though he may care for no one but himself, can hardly avoid benefiting his neighbours.”

In the principle of a market-based community of interests Whately thought he had found the perfect mechanism for promoting an interdependent human community without the sectarian barriers of religion. Few disagreed, and the amazing international popularity of the Irish Readers enabled him to spread the word, quite possibly making him the nineteenth century’s “most widely published of economists.”

The Irish example also proved that political economy succeeded where other secularly oriented approaches to common school curriculum failed. The Irish commissioners found that the Readers’ Smithian perspective on the imbalances of social and political life offered the most effective solution to sectarian rivalry. Practices of faith were no competition for material prosperity. There were a few critics outside the circle of the National Commissioners who echoed Ryerson’s previously noted concern that “man, as a moral being, is overlooked.” Boylan and Foley point to objections raised regarding the presumed “hard-heartedness” of political economy’s scientific laws. Whately ably

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1139 Commissioners of National Education of Ireland, Fourth Book of Lessons for Use in Schools, 229.
1140 Commissioners of National Education of Ireland, Fourth Book of Lessons for Use in Schools, 229-230. See also Richard Whately, Easy Lessons on Money Matters for the Use of Young People (Dublin, IE: B Graisberry, 1835) 49-50.
1142 Montifort Longfield, Four Lectures on Poor Laws (Dublin, IE: Longman and Company, 1834) 2, in Boylan and Foley, Political Economy and Colonial Ireland, 142.
deflected such objections, and maintained that placing political economy at the forefront the curriculum of public schools ensured that principles demonstrative of a natural and irrefutable order defined by mutual self-interest and sanctioned by God would be learned by all.

The *Irish Readers* were a highly efficacious governmental instrument in what amounted to the spreading of an inherently British and Protestant standpoint. There can be no doubt, Goldstrom writes, “the ideas shaping the books are English.”

John Stuart Mill’s remark, noted previously, that there have been “the two influences which have chiefly shaped the British character since the days of the Stuarts: commercial money-getting business, and religious Puritanism” is worth revisiting at this point. Now we see that even in the school curriculum it is the former that has absorbed the moral concerns of the latter, thereby superseding it as the prime body of reference for governmental action. In the local context, religion, or, at least, the teaching of Christian morals stood out as the topic of concern at the start of the development of common schools in Upper Canada/Canada West. But I contend that the events of the late 1830’s conditioned the landscape so that political economy ruptured alliances between church and state, and, in correspondence with transformations in the deployment of governmental power, revealed ways of governing that eschewed direct intervention and confrontation; not just in immediate practice, but by inculcating comports expected to lessen governmental reliance on harsh measures. Schooling aimed to ensure that government was made immanent to the subject so that the interests of each and all might be served together. As

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I would add that from an English perspective, England meant Britain.
1144 It was no accident that as a matter of politics and economy control of the Clergy Reserves Upper Canada/Canada West was taken from the Anglican Church in this period.
Ryerson declared in his 1846 “Report”: “In every good government, and in every good system, the interests of the whole society are obligatory upon each member of it.”^1145 The Irish Readers made an undeniable contribution to the building of this obligation in Canada West.

I am not, however, arguing that the Irish Readers were a singular historical catalyst. It is has to be acknowledged that mediating factors such as the activities of instructors and other officials, as well as an unknowable number of contextual peculiarities experienced by individual citizens of the province played their part. Other means of inducing forms of self-governance were used that emphasized different notions of economy. Female students, for example, were educated to different standards than their male counterparts.^1146 Under a regime of firm patriarchal bias their lessons took on a domestically based view of economy. Furthermore, it is near impossible to determine whether or not the students whose studies continued to the third and fourth books actually understood what they were reading, or to account for similar questions of social history.^1147

I have chosen to focus upon these issues differently, genealogically approaching political economy and the Irish textbooks as a discursive instrument of dissemination, a textual portal through which student subjects gradually allowed themselves to give in to

^1145 Ryerson, “Evils of the School Rate Bill, (or fees) System,” in Documentary History of Education in Ontario, Vol. 6, ed. J. George Hodgins, 76.

^1146 For instance, the trustees of the Toronto Board reported in 1859 that where the boys received instruction in “book–keeping and practical mensuration,” and “mathematics or talk…as far as Equations, in the first two, or perhaps, three books of Euclid,” girls received instruction in “the higher branches of needlework, such as crochet, worsted work, and embroidery,” and these took “the place of mathematics.” See Report on the Past History and Present Condition of the Common or Public Schools of the City of Toronto, 1859, 62, in ed. Lawr and Gidney, Educating Canadians: A Documentary History of Public Education, 110.

^1147 Goldstrom raises this question and answers in the negative. I have asked the question differently, since my concern has more to do with the entry of economy into educational, and therefore, ontological history. See Goldstrom, “Richard Whately and Political Economy in School Books,” 144.
the power of the printed word and, under pedagogical expectations that grew out of biopolitics and Lockean epistemology, learned how to rationalize and exercise choice against the supportive backdrop of liberal governmentality.

XI. “An implicit pedagogy of civility”

In this dissertation I have traced how the event of public schooling in Upper Canada/Canada West is expressive of changes in the application of governmental power, which, when channelled through an evolved notion of the Lockean subject and discourses of political economy, presented colonial Canadians with the problem of rendering subjects capable of identifying government with their own interest.

Insofar as it is the case, as Foucault claims, that the latter constitutes the paradoxical operational principle of liberal governmentality, the aims of schooling in Upper Canada/Canada West corresponded to the individualizing and totalizing task of making government immanent to the subject; though in a manner that did not overstep the limits set by the critique of sovereign rule. Thus, in support of these aims a pedagogy derived from Locke opened the possibility that subjects could be trained mildly, that is, with attention to the capacity to choose. Through the cultivation of this capacity schooling was able to induce subjects to adopt certain comportments while presuming to respect their autonomy. Yet training alone, as Foucault realized during the time between his considerations of discipline and governmentality, could not close the gap between each and all. This occurred with the scientization of economy, which equated atomistic behaviour with mutual benefit. Indeed, the novel science of political economy proclaimed this connection a complement to the providential order, substituting an invisible hand for

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the divine, thereby solving a problem introduced by sectarian rivalry. In this manner political economy displaced religion and joined the ensemble of liberal modes of directing conduct as an “indispensable hypodermis,” the “underside” of the “visible face” of governmental activity that provided the evaluative standard for practices of rule.  

By showing how public schooling, as a model of liberal governmentality, adheres to discursive components of this standard, my study indicates the extent to which economy has been imbricated in our system since its conception. In revealing the depth of economy’s influence my intention has been to make the question of its current presence in our educational institutions something altogether different than a recent intrusion. At the same time, my goal has been to strip away the pretentions of thinking that an intensification of economic practice is necessary to education’s viability. Neither of these points of view holds any more promise for the present than when they were expressed in kind almost two hundred years ago during contests over public schooling in Upper Canada/Canada West. Their expression continues to have the unintended consequence of manipulating subjects into locations of restricted agency, precisely the circumstance they presume to resolve.

Foucault suggests the link between subjectivity and government that lies at the heart of liberalism is based on “a ‘way of doing things’ directed towards objectives” and self-regulating “by continuous reflection.”  

Public schooling in Canada West was integral to the intensification of this link because it’s systematization established a practical nexus wherein political economy, along with other disciplines, could be deployed to mitigate the possibility of insubordination. Schools performed the seemingly

1149 Foucault, The Birth of Biopolitics, 16.
1150 Foucault, The Birth of Biopolitics, 318.
impossible task of simultaneously cultivating individual self-interest and a spirit of community. Through a curriculum that highlighted instruction in the economic exercise of interest students were habituated to a social and political milieu based on the congruence of individual and popular choice. To borrow a phrase from David Hogan, the common schools of Canada West “employed a secular, market-based grammar of motives to motivate children.” 1151

Once set in motion the processes of ordering and disposing people and things that are fundamental to liberal government are self-perpetuating. In the calibration and recalibration of these processes education persists as problem and answer and as such a constant point of consideration with regard to the limits of the private and the public spheres. Continuous reflection on the activities generated in these biologically distinguished and economically invigorated domains reflects liberalism’s experimental mode of operation. For Foucault, the “main characteristic” of this “political rationality” is a “constant correlation between an increasing individualization and the reinforcement of…totality.” 1152 Citizen-subjects must be appropriately initiated into liberalism’s experimental order, not as an “imperative of freedom” but “as the management and organization of the conditions in which one can be free.” 1153 The result is that governance becomes technical support, to cite Giovanna Procacci, “for an immense enterprise of permanent educability.” 1154

Houston and Prentice note that this effect was not lost on Ryerson, who “had once pointed out, good education created new wants; and one of those wants was more and

1152 Michael Foucault, “The Political Technology of Individuals,” 161-162.
1153 Foucault, The Birth of Biopolitics, 63-64.
better education.” They view this as a sign that from its inception public schooling in Canada West was “the original state consumer product.” The success of the system must be credited to Ryerson and his colleagues’ talent for manipulating their message into “propaganda” that no one “could resist.” This is true, but only if one is willing to imagine the individual subject as an unwitting dupe in a market game.

Thinking of the educational subject as one who must be rescued, as one who can only be unbound by those who have managed to break free so that they see things better than others, is to police familiar borders. The perspective offered by Foucault and governmentality rejects outright the need to rescue or resolve experience as it reveals how supposed intrusions into prized institutions were manifest “as a latent possibility” in their early development.

In this light, I claim that the public school system of Canada West was largely made possible by discourses of political economy and the corresponding government of interest, and therefore, imbued from the start with vestiges of the commodification, consumerism, and the like that are presumed to be a recent affront to education’s ideal status. Public schooling, and education in general, can only be superficially interpreted as “consumer product” or the vulnerable object of the nefarious intentions of corporations.

1155 Houston and Prentice, Schooling and Scholars in Nineteenth Century Ontario, 339.
1156 Houston and Prentice, Schooling and Scholars in Nineteenth Century Ontario, 338.
1157 Houston and Prentice, Schooling and Scholars in Nineteenth Century Ontario, 339.
1158 It is, of course, to presume that leaving Plato’s cave causes the scales to fall from one’s eyes.
1159 Olssen et al Education Policy, 108n23. This is an important point. It is possible to agree with Foucault’s statement, “Neo-liberalism is not Adam Smith,” but still attend to economic government by recognizing, as he says, “neo-liberals had to subject classical liberalism to a number of transformations.” Thus it can still be viewed as “an absolutely important mutation with regard to traditional liberal projects” that, because of liberalism’s self-limiting or “frugal” rationale, operates in terms of a “basic apparatus of which is in fact still the same today.” So while I am not saying that political economy and present day neo-liberalism are one and the same, I am claiming this economic apparatus is introduced into government in the eighteenth century by political economy, which makes government less about sovereign will and more about calculation of interests in a manner that remains “a permanent correlative” of government to this day. See Foucault, The Birth of Biopolitics, 131, 117, 28, 18, 16.
A broader historical analysis, such as the one I have undertaken in this dissertation, shows it to be the historical effect of attempts to promote an equilibrium of power through governmental practices that follow “the internal rule of maximum economy,” which, as Foucault’s studies of government indicate, is always already about freedom.\textsuperscript{1160} Therefore, investigations of education that take an attitude of economic critique are more plausible than ever, especially if the first question posed is one regarding the extent that “our impatience for liberty” has contributed to the present.\textsuperscript{1161}

\textsuperscript{1160} Foucault, \textit{The Birth of Biopolitics}, 318.
\textsuperscript{1161} Foucault, “What Is Enlightenment?” 50.
AFTERWORD

The past does not repeat itself in the present, but the present is played out, and innovates, utilizing the legacy of the past.\textsuperscript{1162}

Near the outset of this dissertation I discussed the risk of lapsing into performative contradiction that comes from using Foucauldian genealogy to resolve an investigation by giving advice and instruction to others.\textsuperscript{1163} This risk is always greatest at the end of a journey through a set of questions, especially when the urge to unify experience leads to the assumption that one has obtained through criticism a privileged platform for proclaiming what is wrong and what must be done to shape and re-shape practice. Yet this privilege presumes future contingencies may be avoided or overcome, and, more problematically, that the way to do this is to expect that individual practice can be predictably determined in spite of identifiable sources of interference. If there is one thing that Foucauldian critique proposes, it is that awareness of limits be kept in play, meaning the impossibility of sustaining without danger any notions of determining the experience of others.

Experience will change regardless, and the stakes are to mitigate the dangers involved. I have embarked on this journey through governmentality and the history of Ontario education with this in mind. But I have also remained conscious of the limitations of this outlook. In my reliance on a Foucauldian investigative attitude I have not taken for granted that Foucault’s body of thought is without serious difficulties. Not surprisingly, his seemingly non-committal position has been a source of irritation for a


\textsuperscript{1163} See above 10-11.
number of theorists who find that Foucault “disconcerts”\textsuperscript{1164} or leaves us with a despairing sense of our modern culture and its future.\textsuperscript{1165} In particular, it is argued that Foucault’s inattention to the requirement of forwarding a basis for the normative assertions that his sometimes bleak characterizations demand is at least “cryptonormative” and at most politically irresponsible.\textsuperscript{1166} Furthermore, his use of history seems tantamount to playing fast and loose with evidence, thereby confusing the search for any positivity that may be derived from the past.\textsuperscript{1167}

These are all serious issues, and, as such, deserve separate attention. However, I do not mean to be completely evasive. The point is that the demand for a unified theory or normative foundation is precisely what must be resisted so that an account of the history of the effects of similar demands may be presented. The inversions made as a function of genealogy are intended to illuminate the benefits of this resistance, which are apparent in how outwardly impenetrable and unproblematic targets of analysis are made

\textsuperscript{1166} I noted this above on p. 10, 19n regarding the criticisms of Nancy Fraser and Jürgen Habermas. See Fraser, \textit{Unruly Practices} and Habermas, \textit{The Philosophical Discourse on Modernity}.
\textsuperscript{1167} Foucault’s use of history cannot satisfy historians’ expectation of an adherence to the criterion of empirical evidence. In this respect the only manner of addressing historians’ concerns is to repeat Foucault’s commitment to the importance of difference and the corresponding role played by his perspectival concept of the truth, which enables the imagination of other worlds that is necessary to self-formation.
Also, some historians argue that Foucault’s “antihumanism” precludes the important option of writing history with “reference to the entrepreneurial activities” of individuals for whom personal ambition played a significant role in their contributions to the advancement of knowledge. Other than pointing out the problems associated with attempting to override what Thomas Flynn terms Foucault’s “war on anthropologism,” I suggest that, while the desire for reputation and esteemed contribution can be acknowledged in a Foucauldian analysis, as, for example, I have more or less done with regards to Lord Durham and Ryerson, it is mistaken to isolate the activities of certain individuals as if their efforts were unaffected by the actions of others. None of us acts in a vacuum, and this is indeed the basic political point made by Foucault through his analytics of power.
For Flynn’s comment see above 10, 18n.
to appear vulnerable to challenge. The necessity of economic measures and/or the ideological basis of education are two examples. My treatment of these may be counted as evasive if it is understood that one of the points of this dissertation is, as Colin Gordon says of Foucault’s work on liberalism,

refusal of the double blackmail, by the policy experts for whom a critique is invalidated if not accompanied by a prescription for reform, and by those who use the converse charge of recuperation, for whom every unprejudiced discussion of what is possible or desirable comes down to a capitulation of critique before the status quo.

Insofar as liberalism can be characterized as government that already critically limits its own activities to accommodate the “indocility of the governed” it should not follow that this alone is enough to satisfy the demands of individual liberty. Foucault’s positive reading of Kant’s concern for limits calls for an “inventive sequel” to the “autocritique” of liberal governmentality that inquires “how to govern in order to be governed less, how to govern in order to be governed or to govern oneself in the way one wishes?”

Therefore, the remedy I propose is the furtherance of this “inventive sequel” in the historical pursuit of an awareness of economy’s contribution to education. It has been said that the two most important works of pedagogy from the past century are not to be

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1168 Thus Foucault’s comment on how the seemingly irresponsible is actually an act of political engagement: “I am not making a problem out of a personal question, I make of a personal question an absence of a problem.”


found on the syllabus of any educational studies course. The works in question are Friedrich Hayek’s *The Constitution of Liberty* and Robert Nozick’s *Anarchy, State, and Utopia*. If my genealogy is plausible, then perhaps it is time to turn attention to these and similar texts, which grew out of the urge of reform, but have proven to be support for measures of economically justified constraint.

Although these texts have not as yet been allotted a central place in educational studies, I am excited to say that my proposal is not entirely unique. For instance, in two recent collections of essays on governmentality the significance of economics for education is highlighted. The editor’s introduction of *Governmentality Studies in Education* finds Michael Peters commenting on the current “building of an ‘enterprise culture’” and the ramifications of the generalization of entrepreneurial behaviour for education. Education is reduced by this culture to capital accumulation, and there appears no end in sight. In addition, Peters notes how reports of the demise of the neo-liberalism behind this culture have been belied by the actions taken by governments in the wake of recent economic crises. All signs point to the fact that, rather than the end of neo-liberalism; it is highly likely we are seeing the beginning of a new era of economic intensification. More specific to the discipline of economics, Ute Tellmann, in the volume *Governmentality: Current Issues and Future Challenges*, suggests that

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governmentality studies extend work left incomplete by Foucault by taking up the question of “economics as culture.” Tellmann writes,

If governmentality studies continue to neglect the question of the economic, the field deprives itself of the possibility of detecting the multiple sites at which it is fashioned. Instead, the opposite effect ensues: the regime of visibility and intelligibility which classical and neo-liberal economic political discourse organizes is strengthened, because the field continues to ignore the disreputable and historical character of the economic.

The motive for my concern is reflected in Peters and Tellmann’s respective observations. The danger presented by economy is its ability to appear natural to our present life-world. Who would argue against prosperity? But this is the reason why some of the “multiple sites” alluded by Tellmann are those given most attention in this dissertation. By tracing economy’s presence in schooling my aim has been to counter its unquestioned positivity. Education, like so much else in our world, is increasingly about “the economy, stupid,” albeit for a host of reasons other than those James Carville had in mind when he coined this phrase.

Liberal government, economy, and education are cultural cornerstones of our present experience, and their endurance is a testament to the role played by an ideal they carry in common: freedom. It thus remains crucial to attend further to the discursive history of this ideal and its intimate relation to education. As Foucault reminds us, “one has to have an inverted image of power in order to believe that all these voices which have spoken so long in our civilization…are speaking to us of freedom.”

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1180 Carville was Bill Clinton’s head strategist during his 1992 presidential campaign.
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