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Introduction

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In the seminal book *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (1977) French philosopher Michel Foucault described how the psy- disciplines – his collective term for psychiatry, psychology, psycho-analysis and other psycho-therapies – became entangled in new forms of government. The 18th and 19th century liberal Europe was faced with the challenge to govern the population to ensure morality and order but in ways that also guaranteed the freedom of individuals and a free economy. Expertise, including the social sciences, psy- disciplines, economics, statistics etc., came to provide solutions for this challenge by producing scientific knowledges about persons, society and the economy (Foucault, 1988). The emerging psy- disciplines helped to make sense of individuals “as speaking, living, working individuals” and also provided avenues for these individuals to understand, form and regulate themselves according to these scientific discourses (Foucault, 1994: 281). In this way, expertise enabled a shift from coercive control into ‘the conduct of conduct’ and practices of self-formation. Psy-disciplines in this way are ‘technologies of the social’ (Fendler, 2001), rather than simply scientific areas amassed following simple rules and propositions internal to scientific discovery. As Michel Foucault indicated, and as has since been elaborated by Nikolas Rose (1998, 1999), among others, educational institutions and actors have been and continue to be central to the continuation of the psy- disciplines, their knowledges and practice, which often emerge and operate as natural, inevitable, ethical and liberating.

This book critically explores how the psy- disciplines manifest and operate in contemporary spaces and institutions of education. We trace and document the ways in which psy- disciplinary regimes of truth and technologies work in the government of teachers, students, parents, educational leaders, and others. What does it mean to know oneself and others as a subject of education vis-à-vis psy-disciplinary vocabularies, categories, boundaries, and affective registers? What does it mean to relate, to

teach, to learn, to lead, or to research on psy- disciplinary terms? What is it possible to be and become, and what forms of beings and becomings pose more difficult, within and under, what has come to be known as, ‘the psy- gaze’?

As the title indicates, the intention of the book is to ‘interrupt’ psy- disciplinary knowledges and practices in education. We are not so much ‘anti’ psy- as we are invested in exploring it as central to contemporary modes of truth-telling, meaning-making, organisation, practice, and subject formation. To interrupt is to bring to a momentary halt; it is to interject into a flow of sorts, to disturb the current or even interfere with it. On other terms, to interrupt can be to problematise and destabilise taken-for-granted-as-good knowledges and practices, and to destabilise is to enable a practice of freedom (Foucault, 1994) by which it becomes possible to think, to imagine, to feel, to become, otherwise.

Foucault’s analysis

For readers new to Foucault’s analysis of the work of the psy- disciplines it may be useful to briefly recap some of the major points. He argues (1977: 191) that for a long time ordinary people were not subject to much interest and scrutiny – only the powerful were. The king, the war hero, particular members of the clergy, and so on, were looked at, observed, and described in detail. It was a privilege for the privileged. However, as new forms of governance were introduced during the 18th and 19th centuries – forms that Rose (1998) argues are intrinsically linked with the exercise of political power in liberal democracies – new techniques of knowing, shaping, and controlling populations became both available and further developed. These disciplinary methods, as Foucault calls them, reversed the relation and “lowered the threshold of describable individuality and made this description a means of control and method of domination. It is no longer a monument for future memory, but a document for possible use” (1977:191). “This turning of real lives into writing is no longer a procedure of heroization; it functions as a procedure of objectification and subjection” (p. 192). The objects of the gaze began to include the child, the patient, the madman and the prisoner. Foucault writes,

The examination as the fixing at once ritual and ‘scientific’, of individual differences, as the pinning down of each individual in his own particularity [...] clearly indicates the appearance of a new modality of power.

All the sciences and forms of analysis and therapy employing the root ‘psycho’, according to Foucault, have their starting point in this “historical reversal of the procedures of individualization” (p. 193). The individual emerges out of the grey masses of ordinary people and delinquents and becomes an object of study and a potential for change. The individual, while a historical construct, became a reality fabricated and upheld in multiple ways, including by the ways the new sciences took an interest in its functioning. We began to measure and make comparisons, to make graphs and metrics for normal development, so that pathological development could be traced, and so on. The assumption was that by knowing human behaviour and its psyche in general and assessing the individual in relation to this, one could develop practices and therapies for transformation, improvement or correction.

Foucault traces the changes to punishment and correction during the early modern period. From the earlier public spectacle of punishment, the tortured body in the town centre, which sought not only to punish the individual wrong-doer but also serve as a warning to the on-lookers, governments began to favour other forms of population controls. Other techniques of power came into play, which Foucault calls ‘discipline’. Discipline, among other things, concerns getting the population to behave in a certain way without the use of direct physical violence and, preferably on their own accord, because they have to come to believe these behaviours to be right, true and good. Discipline entails rituals and practices and it requires knowledge. Knowledge about which forms of discipline are effective and which are not, which, according to this discourse, entails knowing the human and developing vocabularies for describing and measuring this human. Importantly, Foucault questions whether the new forms of discipline were more ‘humane’. While the body as the major target of castigation disappeared, the punishment that “once rained down upon the body [was] replaced by a punishment that acts in the depth of the heart. The thoughts, the will, the inclination” (1977: 16). Punishment should strike the soul rather than the body. Under the new regime we were in the business of

‘governing the soul’ (Rose, 1999). This changed the way that physical punishment was regarded. Foucault writes, perhaps mockingly, of the new mind-set of judges, “do not imagine that the sentences that we judges pass are activated by a desire to punish; they are intended to correct, reclaim, ‘cure’” (p. 10). In other words, “a technique of improvement represses in the penalty, strict expiation of evil-doing, and relieves the magistrates the demeaning task of punishing” (ibid.).

The success of disciplinary power derives from the use of, what Foucault calls, ‘simple instruments’; “hierarchical observation, normalising judgement and their combination that is specific to it, the examination” (p. 170). In order to ascertain how discipline works, Foucault suggests to look at the ‘micro-physics’ of power; everyday routines and their material arrangements, such as timetables, seating arrangements, architectural orchestrations, etc., and everyday meaning-making practices that compel subjects to think, feel and behave in certain ways, in order to better themselves for example, and so on. The point of discipline is ‘subjectification’, the making of a particular kind of subject who acts and desires, on its own accord, in desirable ways. In relation to this, it is important to note that Foucault asserts (1977: 194) that we, when thinking of ‘subjection’ or ‘subjectification’, need to discontinue earlier traditions of regarding this as ‘negative’:

We must cease once of for all to describe the effects of power in negative terms: it ‘excludes’, it ‘represses’, it ‘censors’, it ‘abstracts’, it ‘masks’, it ‘conceals’. In fact, power produces reality; it produces domains of objects and rituals of truth. The individual and the knowledge that may be gained of him belong to this production.

In that way, power is always already ‘productive’, and the task for us is to ask, productive of what? What regimes of truth and what forms of being are enabled here, and which are marginalised or even precarious? In what ways do the psy- disciplines know its subjects and objects, and what are the multifarious implications of this? What kinds of lives, communities, and societies do they help create?

The consolidation of psychology into a discipline and its ‘social destiny’ was tied to “its capacity to produce the technical means of individualisation, a new way of construing, observing, and recording

human subjectivity and its vicissitudes” (Rose, 1999:136). Alongside the other psy- disciplines, psychology is a ‘technology’, “a way of making visible and intelligible certain features of persons, their conducts, and their relations with one another” (Rose, 1999:11). Since World War II psychologists have increasingly provided the vocabularies, with which the troubles of children have been described, the expertise for diagnosing and categorizing such children, the languages within which the tasks of mothers and fathers have been adumbrated, and the professionals to operate the technology of childhood (Rose, 1999: 133). While many ‘expertises of human conduct’ have proliferated over the past centuries, psy- expertise has been marked by a certain ‘generosity’. Rose (1998: 33-34) defines this generosity as one in which psy- has been happy, indeed eager, to ‘give itself away’, meaning that it lent “its vocabularies, explanations, and types of judgement to other professional groups and to implant them within its clients”. He suggests that psy- has had a “peculiar penetrative capacity in relation to practices for the conduct of conduct” (p. 34). We are all “called upon to play [our] part in the making up of persons and to inculcate in them a certain relation to themselves” (Rose, 1998: 35). One reason for this may well be that they have provided ‘practicable recipes for action’ in relation to the government of persons for various professionals in different locales (ibid.). An important point here is of course, that psy- discourse is not only at play in relation to the subjectification of the governed, but is also operative in the subjectification of expert professionals, such as teachers, as well as others, parents for example. Thus it may be that in this time and place a professional may come to feel not only that it ‘makes sense’ to take up psy- discourse, it may also be a route through which she can feel competent and justified in her actions and interactions.

Psychology in particular has been highly influential in educational practice and research (Nisbet, 2005), for example, in devising the ‘educable subject’ (Fendler, 2001), the ‘developing’ child (Burman, 1994; Walkerdine, 1994; Cannella, 1997), pedagogies (Henriques et. al. 1984; Meredyth & Tyler; 1993; Popkewitz, 1998; Popkewitz & Brennan, 1998; Hultqvist & Dahlberg, 2001), behaviour management (Millei *et al.*, 2010) and in identifying different forms of ‘conduct disorders’, such as Attention Deficit

Disorder, autism or learning difficulties (Billington, 1996 or in this book Allan & Harwood). Currently, psy- methods (self-observation and self-regulation) appear in new constellations with the administration of psychotropic drugs (such as perception, mood, or consciousness altering chemical substances), or combine with practices of neuroeducation or brain based learning utilize. Psy-disciplines merged with these knowledges form a part of the biopolitical regulation of individuals that is premised on the enhancement and positive improvement of human capacities (Foucault, 2007; Rose & Abi-Rached, 2013; Millei & Joronen, 2016). Moreover, in a kind of a circular fashion, institutions of formal education have a central role in the development of forms of governmentality and biopower, because they inform most other disciplinary fields with the knowledges, techniques and subjectivities they produce (Fendler, 2001).

While contemporary psy- disciplines are heterogeneous and at times incommensurable, we are interested in what Ingleby (1985) called the 'psy- complex' in educational arenas. Parker (1998:68) defines the 'psy-complex' as "the network of theories and practices concerned with psychological governance and self- reflection in Western culture". The mainstream agents of the psy- complex have that in common that they rarely, if ever, understand themselves as regulation. They rely on description and prescription, and are not prone to problematise themselves as form of 'conduct of conduct'. In other words, they operate within their own discursive regime, where we, following those who look at the psy- complex in terms of governmentality, wish to take a meta-perspective. Of course, taking a meta-perspective does not mean claiming to be outside of discourse, however, it is a position where we are willing to question the discourses, including the ubiquitous psy- discourses, governing our analysis (see for example chapters by Millei and Wilson-Wheeler in this volume).

The structure of this book

With the increasing rate of psychiatry based diagnoses of school aged children and concomitant medicalization, with the increased focus on individual learning styles and needs, with the call for more

'brain-based' pedagogies, with the continuing policy priorities around inclusive education, with mental health and resilience issues becoming a major concern in a wide range of educational contexts, and with neoliberal ideology's hyper-individualism, we are currently seeing a reinforcement of the relevance and significance of the psy- disciplines, and their knowledges and practices, in educational spaces in many countries across the globe. As Vansieleghem (2013) argues, we live in a time of 'psychologisation' and as Füredi (2004) demonstrates, we live in a 'therapy culture'. Folk-psychology (Olson and Bruner, 1996), everyday meaning- and sense-making, is saturated with terms borrowed from the 'psy- sciences' and many terms, for example notions of defence mechanisms, acting out, closure, denial, personality types or traits and so on, have become common sense ways of understanding psychological phenomena. Psy- disciplinary discourses delimit what can be thought, felt and said, and stipulate both implicitly and explicitly what needs to be done. As Foucault observed (Dreyfus and Rabinow, 1982: 187), people often know what they are doing and why they are doing what they are doing, but they usually do not know what that doing does. In other words, educators and other subjects involved in educational contexts are taking up psy- disciplinary discourses usually without realising and critically reflecting on the implications and effects of these discourses. This book provides scholars, educators and others with the tools to undertake this critical reflection.

The book at hand is the first of its kind. While psychological, psychiatric and psychoanalytic regimes of truth have been critiqued in various ways from the fields of psychology and sociology (e.g. Walkerdine, 1993; Burman, 1994; Rose, 1998, 1999; Rimke, 2000, Füredi, 2004; Hook, 2007; Brown and Stenner, 2009; Wright, 2011) the critique remains under-exposed and somewhat scattered within the education field itself. There are some notable contributions however, for example, in terms of monographs, Harwood and Allen (2014), Harwood (2006) and Billington (1996) describe the increased psychopathologisation of children in schools and Laws (2011) interrogates the role of psychiatric and mainstream psychological discourses in an 'end-of-the-line' special school. There are also books that speak to the topic of the proposed book, but do so more indirectly for example through deconstructing

the notion of ‘childhood’ (e.g. Cannella, 1997; Hultqvist and Dahlberg, 2001) or ‘classroom discipline’ (Millei et al., 2010), which are also imbued with psy- disciplinary knowledges. There are also a number of journal articles (e.g. Davies and Laws, 2000; McLeod, 2000; Graham, 2007, 2008; Harwood, 2010; Staunæs, 2011; MacLure et al., 2012; Petersen and Millei, 2015; Millei and Petersen, 2015), which demonstrate a common concern.

This book seeks to show how various contemporary educational contexts are entangled in the psy- disciplines. The point is not to argue that psy- disciplinary knowledges and practices are prevalent but, rather, *how* they operate and what their effects may be. While the book conceptually is couched in Foucault’s terms, and his interest in psy- as governmentality, it is not a ‘governmentality book’ as such, as the authors in each of their chapters use an array of different theoretical apparatuses and may not speak directly to the question of government.

In terms of the final selection of chapters we would not claim this book to be neither complete nor comprehensive. Many other sites of education (which is an inexhaustible notion), many other aspects of how psy- works in contemporary education and many other perspectives than the ones offered here are certainly possible. Yet we believe that the chapters present an interesting range of critical perspectives and in collecting analyses from different educational sectors and sites they also come to show the ways in which psy- follows us across the educational lifespan. To evoke this sense of lifespan – and we realise there are other educational sites across this lifespan than what is represented here – we have ordered the chapters, as far as possible, accordingly.

We begin with Watson’s chapter, which looks into three Australian early childhood classrooms and shows us the ways in which mainstream ‘inclusive education’ discourses, which have a strong psy- disciplinary heritage, help to produce silence around difference, in effect creating and sustaining taboo around the discursively constituted ‘Other’. Also related to the early years, Millei and Alasuutari consider how attachment theory, which they argue is part of the psy- complex, is configured in early childhood policy and practice prescriptions in two contexts: Finland and Australia. They show the ways

in which attachment discourse produces various understandings of ‘the child’, ‘the caregiver’ and their relations, and discuss the implications these have for notions of professionalism and for what is included in professionals’ work.

Following this we enter the Australian primary school where Petersen explores how children are continuously positioned as ‘learners’ and how this construct relies on psy- disciplinary knowledges and techniques. Staunæs and Juelskjær’s chapter is also set in the primary school but this time in Norway. They illustrate the entanglements of post-psychologies and educational leadership practices following the implementation of a so-called ‘milieu therapist’. A ‘milieu-therapist’ is an agent produced by ‘post-psychological’ discourses around the relational and distributed self. They also illustrate the ways in which features of modern psychology re-enter the scene via the new ‘affective economy’. Next, we enter the secondary school sector, where Saari and Harni analyse the ways in which positive psychology and its notion of happiness are translated into a model of ‘positive education’ at the Australian Geelong Grammar School. Then Bansel and Keltie consider the knowledge queer young people labour over to produce the truth of an authentic self situated both in digital social media and schools. Following this, Laws discusses how psy- discourses around ‘the mad’, ‘the bad’ and ‘the sad’ in an end-of the-line special secondary school play out and how the use of irony and humour helped her, as a teacher and principal, to unsettle the dominant psy- based discourses of engaging with these youths.

Subsequently we move into the tertiary sector, where McMahon and Harwood analyse preservice teachers’ understandings of challenging behaviour, and the confusions and conundrums that arise from the apparent conflictual understandings between psychological, biological and ecological discourses. Then Saltmarsh provides a critique of the psy- discourses of university mental health awareness campaigns, and shows the way they ignore or over-simplify the systemic and social conditions that help produce mental health problems for students and university workers

The book concludes with two chapters that are not set in any particular sector as such. In the first one of these, Allan and Harwood discuss the risk factors for psy- diagnosis of school children in the

UK, US, Australia and Brazil, and argue that race, class and gender heighten the risk of psy-diagnosis while at the same time the very process of psy-diagnosis deflects attention from racialised discrimination or poverty in the lives of children and young people. Next, Wilson-Wheeler illustrates how educational researchers, even as they are aware of the hold of psy- knowledge, unwittingly can come to reproduce the 'psy- gaze' in the analysis of data and the representation of educational subjects.

We hope the reader will find the collection of chapters stimulating for reflecting on how the psy-complex plays out in contemporary spaces of education. Our intention is not in this book to devise 'better psychology' for education. Rather, it is to provide a resource for understanding and critiquing the operation and effects of the psy- disciplines in our everyday within educational institutions.

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