

DOWNLOAD PDF THE IMPURITY OF PRACTICAL REASON : POWER AND AUTONOMY IN FOUCAULT

Chapter 1 : Project MUSE - Stirner and Foucault: Toward a Post-Kantian Freedom

Allen's theoretical framework illuminates both aspects of what she calls, following Foucault, the "politics of our selves." It analyzes power in all its depth and complexity, including the complicated phenomenon of subjection, without giving up on the ideal of autonomy.

It is a matter of pointing out on what kinds of assumptions, what kinds of familiar, unchallenged, unconsidered modes of thought, the practices that we accept rest. Criticism is a matter of flushing out that thought and trying to change it: Practising criticism is a matter of making facile gestures difficult. In this sense, critique aims to free us from the historically transitory constraints of contemporary consciousness as realised in and through discursive practices. Such constraints impose limitations which have become so intimately a part of the way that people experience their lives that they no longer experience these systems as limitations but embrace them as the very structure of normal and natural human behaviour. Within these limits, seen as both the limits of reason and the limits of nature, freedom is subordinated to reason, which is subordinated to nature, and it is against such a reduction of reason to nature that Foucault struggles. It is the freedom to think differently than what we already know. As James Miller *In The Order of Things* Foucault *We think in that area*". Further, as Miller *This tradition, says Foucault, entails "an analysis of the conditions under which certain relations of subject and object are formed or modified" and a demonstration of how such conditions "are constitutive of a possible knowledge"* cited in Miller, *Kant defines Enlightenment, says Foucault a: As Foucault puts it: The question which seems to me to appear for the first time in this text by Kant is the question of the present, of the contemporary moment. What is happening today? What is happening now? And what is this "now" which we all inhabit, and which defines the moment in which I am writing? Now it seems to me that the question Kant answers In this, it was " a cultural process of indubitably a very singular character, which came to self-awareness through the act of naming itself, situating itself in relation to its past and its future, and in prescribing the operation which it was required to effect within its own present"* Thus, as Foucault a: *Kant links the process of release from immaturity to man himself. He notes that "man himself is responsible for his immature status. It is in this sense, says Foucault a: As integral to the conditions for escape from immaturity, Kant seeks to distinguish the realm of obedience and reason. To resolve the issue as to how the public use of free reason can co-exist with obedience to the law, Kant proposes his famous contract with Frederick II. This, as Foucault puts it, "might be called the contract of rational despotism with free reason: It is precisely at this moment, however, that critique is necessary since, as Foucault a: The Critique is, in a sense, the handbook of reason that has grown up in the Enlightenment; and, conversely, the Enlightenment is the age of the Critique". It is in this sense, as Foucault maintains a: As he puts it: Discourse has to take account of its own present-ness, in order to find its own place, to pronounce its meaning, and to specify the mode of action which it is capable of exercising within this present. What is my present? What is the meaning of this present? Such is, it seems to me, the substance of this new interrogation on modernity. Fifteen years later Kant posed a similar question in response to the French Revolution of *In order to judge progress, reasoned Kant, rather than seek to follow the threads of a "teleological fabric which would make progress possible"* Further, says Foucault *It must be a sign that shows that it has already been thus the rememorative sign , a sign that shows that things are at present happening thus the demonstrative sign , a sign finally which shows that things will always be thus the prognostic sign. We will then be sure that the cause which makes progress possible has not been operative only at a particular moment, but that it guarantees a general tendency of the whole human race to advance in the direction of progress. What constitutes the sign of progress is, as Kant expresses it, that the Revolution is surrounded by "a wishful participation that borders closely on enthusiasm" cited in Foucault, Hence, for Kant, the enthusiasm for Revolution "is the sign of a moral disposition of humanity" Foucault, They are also the two questions "which have continued to haunt if not all modern philosophy since the nineteenth century, at least a great part of it". For Kant, says Foucault, the Enlightenment constitutes both a "singular event**

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inaugurating European modernity and as a permanent process manifesting itself in the history of reason" Foucault is less convinced than Kant that the Enlightenment is a long, slow, uphill pilgrimage based on the directing capacities of reason, and less convinced than Kant that the Revolution constitutes a sign of progress. Similarly, the Revolution is not an event marked by the passage of enthusiasm which serves as a sure sign of progress, but an event that is an ambiguous occurrence and always potentially dangerous: The Revolution that Kant took to be a sign of progress, although "born of rationalism. As he expressed it in a later essay, anthropological humanism takes various forms and can be seen evident in Christianity, Marxism, Existentialism, Phenomenology, even Nazism and Stalinism, says Foucault. From this we must not conclude that everything that has ever been linked with humanism is to be rejected, but that the humanistic thematic is in itself too supple, too diverse, too inconsistent to serve as an axis for reflection. And it is a fact that, at least since the seventeenth century, what is called humanism has always been obliged to lean on certain conceptions of man borrowed from religion, science, or politics. Humanism serves to color and to justify the conceptions of man to which it is, after all, obliged to take recourse. In its more specific usage, however, humanism constitutes a condition of possibility of the Enlightenment episteme. It focuses on the study of Man placing the subject at the centre of life. For Foucault, man cannot be seen as a foundation or origin or condition of possibility of discourse. Such a humanism introduces radical instabilities into the human sciences. Humanism, as Foucault understood it, exhausts itself in an endless back and forth from one side to the other of man and his doubles: Humanism, then, involves the claim that man, for Kant, exists at the centre of the universe as a finite being who can reason within limits which he cannot go beyond. Such a notion generates insoluble contradictions for the human sciences because it is based on incompatible conceptions of what man, his history, and mind are. Hence on the one hand our knowledge must be limited, as man knows himself as a finite being, as an objective of nature; on the other hand that finitude which establishes the limits of human understanding is claimed to be the condition that makes knowledge of this finitude possible. Hence the possibility of knowledge is established on limits to reason which deny it. Foucault opposes Kantian humanism in the same way he opposed the Cartesian conception of the atomized and disembodied Cogito at the centre of the universe. In this model, while the body is subject to the determinations of the laws of nature, mind is autonomous unto itself. In such a conception, knowledge is seen as grounded upon an incorrigible and indubitable foundation. Following Heidegger and Nietzsche, humanism, for Foucault, has a specific meaning which refers to the philosophical centrality or priority of the subject whose rational capacities, which are asocial and ahistorical, serve as a foundation anchoring objectivity and truth. It is in defense of this philosophical anti-humanism that Foucault presents his reading and adaptation of Kant. Yet in order to establish knowledge as secure Kant distinguished between the empirical and the transcendental, positing specific laws of cognition in order to ground objectivity against skeptical attack. Hence, for Foucault. Instead of exercising the power of free will and imagining "a city to be built", Kant in his Anthropology tried to vindicate a "normative understanding", not only by codifying the kind of savoir faire acquired in the course of everyday life, but also of accusing of "high treason" anyone who regarded such know-how as counterfeit and illusory. In this context, the role of the philosopher is to understand the historical nature of the a priori through a detailed examination of the social and historical practices customs, language, habits, discourses, institutions, disciplines from which a particular style of reasoning emerges and develops. It is in this sense, for Foucault, as Miller. This system is "immediate and imperative", no human being may escape it; it is transmitted in "the regulated element of language," organized "without the intervention of a force or authority," activated within each subject "purely and simply because he speaks". The objective is to switch from a conception of critique as being transcendently grounded, to a conception of critique which conceives it as practical and as historically specific. Criticism is no longer going to be practised in the search for formal structures with universal value, but rather as an historical investigation into the events that have led us to constitute ourselves and to recognise ourselves as subjects of what we are doing, thinking, saying. In this sense the criticism is not transcendental, and its goal is not that of making a metaphysics possible: Not "What can I know? How has the

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path of my knowing been determined? How have exclusions operated in delineating the realm of obligation for me? How have the parameters for my aspirations been defined? In order to explore "the nature scope and limits of human reason" we have to understand: The critique of reason as a non-foundationalist enterprise is concerned with structures and rules that transcend the individual consciousness. But what is supraindividual in this way is no longer understood as transcendental; it is sociocultural in origin. For Nietzsche our habitual modes of action and thought have an historical origin and bare the marks of conflicting individual wills to power of people, groups and classes in history. In *On the Genealogy of Morals* Nietzsche shows how our dominant moral codes emerged from the battle of classes and groups e. Romans and Jews in the past. Genealogy seeks to trace the lines of the battles that have gone into making the world as we know it in the present, natural. In this sense it contributes to problematizing our taken-for-granted beliefs and conceptions about the way the world is. A further sense in which Foucault is anti-humanist arises in the writings of the s, specifically *Discipline and Punish*, the *History of Sexuality*, and in his writings on power see Foucault, a. In these works, Foucault is concerned with the role of the human sciences in the emergence and maintenance of normalization through disciplinary bio-power. Bio-power, as David Hiley It functions via normalization to colonize every aspect of life. It is productive rather than merely repressive; it is capillary, decentralized and omnipresent, it operates through coercion, surveillance and discipline at the level of micro-practices rather than merely through ideological distortion; it is intentional and strategically deployed but nonsubjective, i. As a philosophical thesis anti-humanism questions the values of autonomy, subjectivity and self-determination. As well, one still tries to equalise power, to liberate. What Foucault is opposing essentially then, is the modernist conception of the subject, articulated in the philosophies of Descartes and Kant, and which took root in the period of the Enlightenment developing from a number of threads that can be traced from the 15th to the 18th centuries. As Tony Davies Humanism was a term which centred on the development of the individual by such writers as Burckhardt, Vasari, Machiavelli, and Marlowe. Lack of historical sense is the family failing of all philosophers; many without being aware of it, even take the most recent manifestations of man, such as has arisen under the impress of certain religions, even certain political events, as the fixed form from which one has to start out But everything has become: At a philosophical level, then, Foucault rejects the Kantian paradigm of critique as grounded in the idea of an autonomous, self-constituting, transcendental subject. According to Nancy Fraser

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Chapter 2 : Works by Amy Allen - PhilPapers

It analyzes power in all its depth and complexity, including the complicated phenomenon of subjection, without giving up on the ideal of autonomy. Drawing on original and critical readings of a diverse group of theorists, Allen shows how the self can be both constituted by power and capable of an autonomous self-constitution.

Select Secondary Sources 1. One rare, short, but not unimportant analysis occurs in *The Order of Things*. There, Foucault maintains that modern ethical thought attempts to derive moral obligations from human nature and yet modern thought also holds that human nature can never be, given the fact of human finitude, fully given to human knowledge. Consequently, modern thought is incapable of coherently formulating a set of moral obligations OT ; see also PPC This argument is, essentially, one piece of his larger attack on modern humanism and its conception of the human being as subject, a being that supplies for itself the foundations of knowledge, value, and freedom. *Discipline and Punish* and the first volume of *The History of Sexuality* further this line of criticism, insisting on the historical constitution of the subject by discursive practices and techniques of power see, for example, FL 67, PK , EW3 , DP It is surprising to many commentators, then, that by Foucault elaborated a framework for his work that grants self-constitution considerable importance. These focal points are studied along three axes: Foucault never did articulate a clear position on the conceptual fit between his critique of the modern subject and his account of ethics. Nevertheless, he does provide some clues as to the nature of his mature position. Late in his life he admits that his earlier work was too insistent on the formation of subjectivity by discursive practices and power-relations EW1 , Now, his focus is on the subject as both constituted and self-constituting, or the point at which discursive practices and power-relations dovetail with ethics. Of course, this does not decisively resolve the problem, but it does suggest a rereading of his earlier works more conducive to the notion of self-constitution. In fact, in later writings and interviews Foucault supports this interpretation when he explains that all the axes of analysis existed in a confused manner EW1 ; he even retrospectively interprets his work as fitting one or more of those axes EW1 By admitting that, first, all three axes of analysis existed in earlier works, and, second, that the goal of his work is to study the connection of knowledge and power with ethics, Foucault suggests that there is no ethical turn. However, it does appear to be the case that Foucault is suggesting that he is best read backwards rather than forwards. There, he designates ethics as one of the three primary areas of morality. In addition to ethics, morality consists of both a moral code and the concrete acts of moral agents. The latter refers to the actions of historically real persons insofar as those actions comply or fail to comply with, obey or resist, or respect or disrespect the values and rules prescribed to them by prescriptive agencies. In addition to a moral code and the real behaviors of individuals, Foucault claims that morality also consists of a third area, namely, ethics. He commonly and pithily defines it as a relation of the subject to itself, but a more technical definition of ethics is the conduct required of an individual so as to render its own actions consistent with a moral code and standards of moral approval. For Foucault, conduct is a category that is broader than moral agency and includes both non-moral actions and the exercising of non-agential capacities for example, attitudes, demeanor, and so forth. Ethical conduct, then, consists of the actions performed and capacities exercised intentionally by a subject for the purpose of engaging in morally approved conduct. Suppose, for example, that an individual adopts the prescription of sexual fidelity to her partner. In this case, ethics concerns not her morally satisfactory conduct that directly satisfies her duty of being faithful to her partner, but rather the conduct through which she enables or brings herself to behave in a way that is sexually faithful to her partner. Consistent with his distinction between moral conduct and ethical conduct, Foucault also distinguishes between moral obligations and ethical obligations. A moral obligation is an imperative of a moral code that either requires or forbids a specific kind of conduct, whereas an ethical obligation is a prescription for conduct that is a necessary condition for producing morally approved conduct. Foucault understands morally approved conduct to be a wide category, as it does not designate just those acts that comply with a moral code “ which

is, he thinks, a manifestly modern conception of moral approval. In this regard, the moral valorization of conduct might be, as it was with the ancients, weighted toward the satisfaction of ethical obligations, or, as it is in modernity, weighted toward the satisfaction of the moral obligations that comprise a moral code. These ethical obligations are, Foucault contends, deducible by analyzing the four primary themes of sexual austerity expressed throughout all of Western history: Although these themes are occasionally mentioned below, the focus of this section is on the four elements of ethical relations. In *The Use of Pleasure* Foucault maintains that the ethical substance of ancient Greek sexual ethics “an ethics that was exclusively for men of the right inherited social status” was the aphrodisia or the broad range of acts, gestures, and contacts associated with pleasures to promote the propagation of the species and considered the inferior pleasures given their commonality with all animals. The intensity of the aphrodisia induced the majority of men to behave immoderately with regard to it, and since the moral telos of ancient Greek ethics was a moderate state in which a man had succeeded in mastering his pleasures, the immoderate man was considered by ethicists to be shameful and dishonorable for allowing the inferior part of his soul to enslave his superior part. It was also considered shameful for a man to experiment or delight in pleasures derived from the passive and subordinate rather than active and dominant role in sexual relations, the latter assigned by nature to men and the former assigned to those incapable of mastering themselves of their own power, namely, women and children. By violating these limits out of a failure to master himself, the Greek man put himself in the position of compromising his health, household, social standing, and political ambitions. Foucault maintains in *The Care of the Self* that aphrodisia remains the ethical substance for Roman sexual ethics. But unlike the Greek ethicists before them, Roman ethicists conceived the aphrodisia as essentially and intrinsically dangerous rather than dangerous merely because of the fact that their intensity induces immoderate conduct. According to Foucault, Roman ethicists stipulated that although sexual acts are good by nature, since nature is perfect in its designs, those acts are nevertheless fraught with a dangerous and essential passivity that causes involuntary movements of the body and soul and expenditure of the life forces. Nature has, as it were, designed sex as good and beneficial but only on the condition that it conforms to its designs. Foucault therefore asserts that the perception of the dangerous physical and spiritual effects of unrestrained sexual activity led to a moral and medical discourse about sex different in kind than that of ancient Greek ethical discourse. It focused more on moderated use as a means of achieving physical and spiritual health rather than excellence.

Mode of Subjection Deontology The mode of subjection is the way in which the individual establishes its relation to the moral code, recognizes itself as bound to act according to it, and is entitled to view its acts as worthy of moral valorization. For example, consider the obligation to help someone in need. The use of pleasures refers to how a man managed or integrated pleasures into his life such that their use did not compromise but benefitted his health and social standing. Appropriate management submitted the use of pleasures to three strategies. The strategy of need demanded that desires for pleasures should arise from nature alone and be fulfilled neither extravagantly nor as a result of artifice. The strategy of status demanded that a man use his pleasures consistent with his inherited status, purposes, and responsibilities. But submitting oneself to this mode of subjection meant imposing ethical requirements on oneself that were not included in the moral code. In fact, submitting oneself to this rigorous sexual ethics was seen as a noble and fine choice precisely because it was not morally required. The mode of subjection for ancient Roman sexual ethics is also an aesthetics of existence, but Foucault is also clear that it is more austere than the Greek ethics that preceded it. What this means is that Roman ethical obligations became stricter despite a loose moral code regarding sex. The increased austerity of this ethics is due in part to the perception of an intrinsic passivity of sexual acts, and also because the means of responding to this passivity required greater attention to the rationality of nature which is not be understood according to the distinction between what is normal and abnormal. Roman ethicists conceived that the pleasures of sex were derived by involuntary and dangerous movements of the body and soul, and that seeking pleasure as the end of an act only furthered the possibility of corrupting both body and soul. Consequently, the criterion by which Roman ethicists evaluated sexual conduct was whether it was born

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of desire conformed to the wisdom of nature. These practices are not to be conflated with an asceticism that strives for the goal of freeing oneself from all desires for physical pleasures. To be sure, all ascetic practices are, Foucault thinks, organized around principles of self-restraint, self-discipline, and self-denial. Foucault maintains that the ethical work to be performed in ancient sexual ethics is that of self-mastery. For the ancient Greeks, mastering oneself is an agonistic battle with oneself, where victory is achieved through careful use of the pleasures according to need, timeliness, and social status. Greek ethicists understood that this battle required regular training in addition to the knowledge of the things to which one ought to be attracted. The sort of training a man undertook was aimed at self-mastery through practices of self-denial and abstention, which taught him to satisfy natural needs at the right time consistent with his social status. The moral end of such practices was not to cultivate the attitude that abstention is a moral ideal, but rather to train him to become temperate and self-controlled. As such, successful self-mastery was exhibited by the man who did not suppress his desires, but authoritatively controlled them in a way that contributed to his excellence and the beauty of his life. Foucault suggests that this ideal is exemplified in the literature about the love of boys, which heroized the man who could express and maintain friendly love for a boy while at the same time restraining his co-present erotic love. Foucault is clear in *The Care of the Self* that the ethical work in ancient Roman ethics is also self-mastery, and that the ethicists reconceived the nature of this kind of ethical work. Instead of an agonistic relationship in which a man struggles to subdue and enslave his desires for pleasures rather than be subdued and enslaved by them through their proper use, the work of self-mastery for Roman ethics was forcing the desires for pleasures into proper alignment with the designs of nature. What becomes essential for this ethics is grasping that all pleasures that are not internal to oneself originate in desires that might not be capable of satisfaction, and whenever one chooses to engage such desires one subjects oneself to physical and spiritual risk. The intensification of the austerity of sexual ethics this change in self-mastery produced is emphasized in marital ethics. Their joint spiritual well-being was considered integral to the harmony of the human community. **Telos Teleology** The telos of an ethics is the ideal mode or state of being toward which one strives or aspires in their ethical work. The man who controlled his use of pleasures made himself personally prosperous "physically excellent and socially estimable" in the same way that a household or nation prospers as the result of the careful and skilled governance of a manager or ruler, and a man was not expected to be successful in managing his household or exercising political authority and influence without first achieving victory over his pleasures. The man who failed to master his pleasures and yet found himself in a position of authority over others was a candidate for tyranny, while the man who mastered his pleasures was considered the best candidate to govern. Roman ethicists conceived the activity of self-mastery as aiming at a conversion of the self to itself, which they conceived as freedom in fullest form. Through the ethical work of self-mastery an individual conformed their desires to the rationality of nature, which resulted in a detachment from anything not given by nature as an appropriate object of desire. Roman ethicists did not understand the telos of self-mastery as the authority over pleasures that manifested itself in their strategic use, but rather it manifested itself as a disinterestedness and detachment from the pleasures such that one finds a non-physical, spiritual pleasure in belonging to the true self nature intends. Nature does not recommend the mere pursuit of pleasures; it recommends the pursuit of pleasures insofar as those acts are consistent with other ends that it wants met. Foucault certainly claims in both those volumes that the care of self is foundational to ancient ethics UP 73, ; CS , but curiously, and despite his titling of the third volume *The Care of the Self*, he does not provide significant discussion of the care of self in its generality. This history emphasizes the integral relation between the care of self and the concern for truth, notably on display in the practice of parrhesia frank-speech , as its central mode of expression. For the ancients, Foucault claims, the care of the self was the foundational principle of all moral rationality. Today, however, caring for oneself is without moral content. By explaining the ancient conception of the care of the self and its connection to the Delphic prescription to know oneself, famously observed by Socrates, Foucault wishes to diagnose the exclusion of the care of the self by modern thought and consider whether, given his diagnosis, the care of the self might remain viable in modern ethics.

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The exclusion of the care of the self is the result of a reconception of two ancient injunctions: These two injunctions were originally expressed by Socrates – the exemplar par excellence, Foucault thinks, of the person who cares for himself – with the care of the self serving as the justification for the prescription to know oneself. The prescription to know oneself was the means through which one cared for oneself, and Socrates cared for his own soul and the souls of others by using the practice of dialectic to force the examination of the truth of his own thought and conduct and that of his interlocutors. The salient point for Foucault is that Socrates did not practice philosophy merely as a means of arriving at true propositions. Instead, his program was to use philosophy as a tool for examining and testing the consistency of the rational discourse he and his interlocutors employed to justify their lives and conduct. Foucault sees this as a philosophical activity that is fundamentally oriented to the care of the self, for truth is pursued in philosophy for its own good and the sake of ethical development. Foucault therefore distinguishes between philosophy simpliciter and philosophy as a spiritual activity. But philosophy as a spiritual activity – or philosophy undertaken according to the injunction to care for oneself – is philosophy conceived as ethical work that must be performed in order for an individual to gain access to the truth. This is not to say, of course, that philosophy as a spiritual activity does not seek to acquire knowledge of things as they are. Rather, it is to say that such knowledge requires right conduct in addition to the justification of a true belief. Now, knowing oneself becomes merely a necessary epistemic, and not moral, condition for gaining access to the truth. Consequently, attending to oneself becomes judging the truth of a proposition, and self-knowledge is not a directive for spiritual and ethical development. In modernity philosophy is, for the most part compare HS 28, where Foucault adds some qualification, not the activity of ethical transformation that aims at the existence transformed by truth. The modern shift in the construal of self-knowledge as self-evidence required changes in moral rationality. But this is predicated upon a fundamental misconception of the care of the self. The care of the self is the ethical transformation of the self in light of the truth, which is to say the transformation of the self into a truthful existence. Parrhesia Frank-Speech In the final two years of his life, Foucault began to focus his attention on a particular ancient practice of caring for the self, namely, parrhesia alternatively, parresia or frank-speech. Parrhesia is the courageous act of telling the truth without either embellishment or concealment for the purpose of criticizing oneself or another. Foucault stipulates that there are five features of the parrhesiastic act. First, the speaker must express his own opinion directly; that is, he must express his opinion without or by minimizing rhetorical flourish and make it plain that it is his opinion.

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Chapter 3 : Foucault and critique: Kant, humanism and the human sciences

Introduction: the politics of our selves -- Foucault, subjectivity, and the enlightenment: a critical reappraisal -- The impurity of practical reason: power and autonomy in Foucault -- Dependency, subordination, and recognition: Butler on subjection -- Empowering the lifeworld? autonomy and.

However, it has been suggested that the long-ignored Stirner may be seen as a precursor to contemporary poststructuralist thought. Broadly speaking, both thinkers see the classical Kantian idea of freedom as deeply problematic, as it involves essentialist and universal presuppositions which are themselves often oppressive. Rather, the concept of freedom must be rethought. It can no longer be seen in solely negative terms, as freedom from constraint, but must involve more positive notions of individual autonomy, particularly the freedom of the individual to construct new modes of subjectivity. Stirner, as we shall see, dispenses with the classical notion of freedom altogether and develops a theory of ownness [Eigenheit] to describe this radical individual autonomy. Indeed, Foucault questions the anthropological and universal rational foundations of the discourse of freedom, redefining it in terms of ethical practices. In this paradigm, the exercise of freedom is seen as an inherently rational property. According to Immanuel Kant, for instance, human freedom is presupposed by moral law that is rationally understood. He argues that empirical principles are not an appropriate basis for moral laws because they do not allow their true universality to be established. For Kant, then, there is only one categorical imperative, which provides a foundation for all rational human action: In other words, the morality of an action is determined by whether or not it should become a universal law, applicable to all situations. Kant outlines three features of all moral maxims. Firstly, they must have the form of universality. Secondly, they must have a rational end. Thirdly, the maxims that arise from the autonomous legislation of the individual should be in accordance with a certain teleology of ends. This last point has important consequences for the question of human freedom. Thus, for moral laws to be rationally grounded they cannot be based on any form of coercion or constraint. They must be freely adhered to as a rational act of the individual. This autonomy of the will, then, is for Kant the supreme principle of morality. Freedom is, therefore, the ability of the individual to legislate for him or herself, free from external forces. However, this freedom of self-legislation must be in accordance with universal moral categories. Hence, for Kant, the principle of autonomy is: However, for Kant there is no contradiction here because, although adherence to moral laws is a duty and an absolute imperative, it is still a duty that is freely chosen by the individual. Moral laws are rationally established, and because freedom can only be exercised by rational individuals, they will necessarily, yet freely, choose to obey these moral laws. Individual autonomy, for Kant, is the very basis of moral laws. But that the principle of autonomy [â€¦] is the sole principle of morals can be readily shown by mere analysis of concepts of morality; for by this analysis we find that its principle must be a categorical imperative, and that [the imperative] commands neither more nor less than this very autonomy. While the individual is free to act in accordance with the dictates of his own reason, he must nevertheless obey universal moral maxims. It is precisely because freedom must be exercised rationally that the individual finds him or herself dutifully obeying rationally founded universal moral laws. However, both Foucault and Stirner have called into question such universal rational and moral categories, which are central to Enlightenment thought. They contend that absolute categories of morality and rationality sanction various forms of domination and exclusion and deny individual difference. For Foucault, for instance, the centrality of reason in our society is based on the radical and violent exclusion of madness. People are still excluded, incarcerated, and oppressed because of this arbitrary division between reason and unreason, rationality and irrationality. Similarly, the prison system is based on a division between good and evil, innocence and guilt. What must be challenged, for Foucault, are not only the practices of domination that are found in the prison, but also the morality which justifies and rationalizes these practices. It is this moral absolutism that Stirner is also opposed to. They are ideas that have been abstracted from the world and continue to dominate the individual by comparing him or

her to an ideal norm that is impossible to attain. For Stirner, the individual is paramount, and anything which purports to apply to or speak for everyone universally is an effacement of individual uniqueness and difference. The individual is plagued by these abstract ideals, these apparitions that are not of his own creation and are imposed on him, confronting him with impossible moral and rational standards. Religion is alienating, according to Feuerbach, because it requires that man abdicate his essential qualities and powers by projecting them onto an abstract God beyond the grasp of humanity. For Feuerbach, the predicates of God were really only the predicates of man as a species being. God was an illusion, a fictitious projection of the essential qualities of man. In other words, God was a reification of human essence. Like Kant, who tried to transcend the dogmatism of metaphysics by reconstructing it on rational and scientific grounds, Feuerbach wanted to overcome religious alienation by re-establishing the universal rational and moral capacities of man as the fundamental ground for human experience. Through the Feuerbachian inversion man becomes like God, and just as man was debased under God, so the individual is debased beneath this perfect being, man. For Stirner, man is just as oppressive, if not more so, than God. Man becomes the substitute for the Christian illusion. Stirner radicalizes the theory of alienation by seeing this essence as itself alienating. According to Stirner, it is this notion of a universal human essence that provides the foundations for the absolutization of moral and rational ideas. In this way the subject is brought into conflict with itself. While Kant wanted to take morality out of the domain of religion, founding it instead on reason, Stirner maintains that morality is only the old religious dogmatism in a new, rational guise: What Stirner objects to is not morality itself, but the fact that it has become a sacred, unbreakable law, and he exposes the will to power, the cruelty and the domination behind moral ideas. Morality is based on the desecration, the breaking down of the individual will. The individual must conform to prevailing moral codes; otherwise, he becomes alienated from his essence. For Stirner, moral coercion is just as vicious as the coercion carried out by the state, only it is more insidious and subtle, since it does not require the use of physical force. A similar critique may be leveled at rationality. Rational truths are always held above individual perspectives, and Stirner argues that this is merely another way of dominating the individual. Its real basis, as with morality, is power. Moreover, they become the basis for practices of punishment and domination. For instance, in response to the Enlightenment idea that crime was a to be cured rather than a moral failing to be punished, Stirner argues that curative and punitive strategies were just two sides of the same old moral prejudice. Both strategies rely on a universal norm which must be adhered to: For Stirner, although moral maxims may be ostensibly freely followed, they still entail a hidden coercion and authoritarianism. There are several points to be made here. Secondly, both thinkers see rationality and morality as being implicated in power relations, rather than constituting a critical epistemological point outside power. Not only are these norms made possible by practices of power, through the exclusion and domination of the other, but they also, in turn, justify and perpetuate practices of power, such as those found in the prison and asylum. Thirdly, both thinkers see morality as having an ambiguous relation to freedom. In other words, by conforming to universally prevailing moral and rational norms, the individual abdicates his own power and allows himself to be dominated. Foucault also unmasks this hidden domination of the moral and rational norm that is found behind the calm visage of human freedom. The classical Enlightenment idea of freedom, Foucault argues, allowed only pseudo-sovereignty. In other words, Enlightenment humanism claims to free individuals from all sorts of institutional oppressions while, at the same time, entailing an intensification of oppression over the self and denial of the power to resist this subjection. This subordination at the heart of freedom may be seen in the Kantian categorical imperative: Classical freedom only liberates a certain form of subjectivity, while intensifying domination over the individual who is subordinated by these moral and rational criteria. As Foucault and Stirner show, this form of freedom is only made possible through the domination and exclusion of other modes of subjectivity that do not conform to this rational model. It is clear, then, that for both Stirner and Foucault, the classical Kantian idea of freedom is deeply problematic. The individual freely conforms to these rational norms, and in this way his subjectivity is constructed as a site of its own oppression. The silent tyranny of the self-imposed norm has

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become the prevailing mode of subjection. While for Kant, moral maxims and rational norms existed in a complementary relationship with freedom, for Stirner and Foucault the relationship is much more paradoxical and conflicting. It is rather that the form of freedom brought into being through these absolute categories implies other, more subtle forms of domination. For Kant, as we have seen, freedom is an absence from coercion. To ignore this, moreover, to perpetuate the comforting illusion that freedom promises a universal liberation from power, is to play right into the hands of domination. Indeed, as Olivia Custer shows, Foucault is as engaged as Kant in the problematic of freedom. For Foucault, the illusion of a state of freedom beyond the world of power must be dispelled. It is only through a rethinking of freedom in this way that it can be wrested from the metaphysical world and brought to the level of the individual. Rather than the abstract Kantian notion of freedom as a rational choice beyond constraints and limitations, freedom for Foucault exists in mutual and reciprocal relations with power. Moreover, rather than freedom being presupposed by absolute moral maxims, it is actually presupposed by power. Resistance is something that exceeds power and is at the same time integral to its dynamic. Power is based on a certain freedom of action, a certain choice of possibilities. Unlike classical schema in which power and freedom were diagrammatically opposed, Foucauldian thinking asserts the total dependency of the former on the latter. Where there is no freedom, where the field of action is absolutely restricted and determined, according to Foucault, there can be no power: Whereas, for Kant, freedom is abstracted from the constraints and limitations of power, for Foucault, freedom is the very basis of these limits and constraints. Freedom is not a metaphysical and transcendental concept. Rather, it is entirely of this world and exists in a complicated and entangled relationship with power. Indeed, there can be no possibility of a world free from power relations, as power and freedom cannot exist without one another. Moreover, Foucault is able to see freedom as being implicated in power relations because, for him, freedom is more than just the absence or negation of constraint. The liberation of an essential subjectivity is the basis of classical Enlightenment notions of freedom and is still central to our political imaginary. To suppose that freedom can be established eternally on the basis of this initial act of liberation is only to invite new forms of domination. It is in this sense that freedom may be seen as positive. This involves a reinvention of the self: It does not seek a metaphysical place beyond all limits, but rather works within the limits and constraints of the present. More importantly, however, it is also a work conducted upon the limits of ourselves and our own identities.

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The Impurity of Practical Reason: POWER AND AUTONOMY IN FOUCAULT. 3. The Impurity of Practical Reason: POWER AND AUTONOMY IN FOUCAULT (pp.).

A Reading the New Nietzsche. A Contemporary Critique of Historical Materialism. Ethics, Power and Corporeality. A Genealogy of Dependency: Tracing a Keyword of the U. A Reply to About the Beginnings of the Hermeneutics of the Self: Human Development Policies for an Aging Society. Age and sexual divisions: Age and the gender gap in the sense of personal control. Age, Race and Ethnicity: Age, Race and Ethnicity. Ageing and old age, reflections on the post-modern lifecourse. Ageing and Popular Culture. European Perspectives on Gerontology. Aging and Its Discontents, All work and no play: Body, Age and Identity. An Essay Concerning Human Understanding. An Introduction to Feminist Philosophy. An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology. An untiring zest for life: Are there body image differences between older men and women? Attractiveness through the Ages: An Essay on Self-knowledge. Autobiographical Memory and the Construction of a Narrative Self: Developmental and Cultural Perspectives. Autoethnography, personal narrative, reflexivity. Backs to the future? Basics of Qualitative Research. Theory Out of Bounds. Capitalism and Schizophrenia, trans. Body Art and Social Status: Body image across the life span in adult women: Body Image and health: Body image; focus group with boys and men. Body images among men and women of different ages. Feminists Consciousness and Feminism Research. Routledge and Kegan Paul. Care of the Self - The History of Sexuality, Young Women and the Individualization of Identity. Pruzinsky eds Body image: Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence. Continuity and Adaptation in Old Age. Cosmetic Surgery and the Cosmetics consumption and use among women: Critical perspectives on ageing: Daatland eds Ageing and diversity. A study of His Philosophy. An Intellectual Biography Oxford: Feminism, Power, and the Body. Protecting Yourself from the Hidden Dangers of Cosmetics. Emotions in Ancient and Medieval Philosophy Oxford: Ethics, Subjectivity And Truth: Essential Works Of Michel Foucault Evidence-Informed Policy and Practice: Challenges for Social Science. Family, work and quality of life: Fashion and the Unconscious. Fashion at the Edge: Jacques Lacan and the Ecole freudienne, Studies in the Phenomenology of Oppression. Feminism and psychoanalytic theory. Feminism, Marxism, Method and the Sate: Feminist interpretations of Michel Foucault. Feminist Methods In Social Research. Feminist Perspectives on Eating Disorders. Epistemology, Theory, Methodology and Method. Fetish, Fashion, Sex and Power. Focus Groups As Qualitative Research. Focus Groups in Social Research. Forms of technological embodiment: From Feminism to Postfeminism: Gender and Later Life: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity. Heresy in the female body: Hermeneutics, Human Sciences and Health: Linking Theory and Practice. Hormone replacement therapy in women with breast cancer. General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology Identity and the Life Cycle: Identity, Consciousness and Value. In a Different Voice. Partners, Opponents, or Strangers? Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis in Introduction to phenomenology, Cambridge: Psychology, Power and Personhood. John Locke and the Compass of Human Understanding. Les mots et les choses, Paris: Life as Literature Cambridge MA: On Female Body Experience: Epistemology and Ontology, Edited and revised by Dermot Morran. Look Me in the Eye: Older Women, Aging and Ageism. Making sense of mid-life: Making sense of Qualitative Data. Making the Body Beautiful. A Cultural History of Aesthetic Surgery.

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Chapter 5 : Stirner and Foucault: Toward a Post-Kantian Freedom | Infoshop

"In her new book, Amy Allen argues that the capacity for autonomy is rooted in the very power relations that constitute the self." "Allen's theoretical framework illuminates both aspects of what she calls, following Foucault, the "politics of our selves.".

In lieu of an abstract, here is a brief excerpt of the content: Toward a Post-Kantian Freedom Saul Newman
Abstract The purpose of this paper is to explore and to develop a post-Kantian concept of freedom—that is, a notion of freedom that is not circumscribed by the categorical imperative or determined by pre-ordained rational and moral coordinates. Both thinkers, while not usually discussed together, share a similar critique of essentialist identities and universal rational and moral structures, and the relations of domination and exclusion that flow from them. Broadly speaking, both thinkers see the classical Kantian idea of freedom as redundant, as it is dependent upon fixed rational and moral postulates that restrict individual autonomy. They reconceptualize freedom in ways that increase the power the individual exercises over him or herself. Moreover, they recognize that, rather than freedom being an abstract, metaphysical ideal removed from the world of power, it is in fact situated in relations of power and must be understood in these terms. Stirner, as we shall see, dispenses with the classical notion of freedom altogether and develops a theory of ownness to describe this radical individual autonomy. Max Stirner and Michel Foucault are two thinkers not often examined together. However, it has been suggested that the long-ignored Stirner may be seen as a precursor to contemporary poststructuralist thought. Broadly speaking, both thinkers see the classical Kantian idea of freedom as deeply problematic, as it involves essentialist and universal presuppositions which are themselves often oppressive. Rather, the concept of freedom must be rethought. It can no longer be seen in solely negative terms, as freedom from constraint, but must involve more positive notions of individual autonomy, particularly the freedom of the individual to construct new modes of subjectivity. Stirner, as we shall see, dispenses with the classical notion of freedom altogether and develops a theory of ownness [Eigeneheit] to describe this radical individual autonomy. Indeed, Foucault questions the anthropological and universal rational foundations of the discourse of freedom, redefining it in terms of ethical practices. They take the understanding of freedom beyond the confines of the Kantian project—grounding it instead in concrete and contingent strategies of the self. Kant and Universal Freedom In order to understand how this radical reformulation of freedom can take place, we must first see how the concept of freedom is located in Enlightenment thought. In this paradigm, the exercise of freedom is seen as an inherently rational property. According to Immanuel Kant, for instance, human freedom is presupposed by moral law that is rationally understood. In the Critique of Practical Reason, Kant seeks to establish an absolute rational ground for moral thinking beyond empirical principles. He argues that empirical principles are not an appropriate basis for moral laws because they do not allow their true universality to be You are not currently authenticated. View freely available titles:

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Chapter 6 : The Politics of Our Selves : Amy Allen :

Introduction: the politics of our selves -- Foucault, subjectivity, and the enlightenment: a critical reappraisal -- The impurity of practical reason: power and autonomy in Foucault -- Dependency, subordination, and recognition: Butler on subjection -- Empowering the lifeworld? autonomy and power in Habermas -- Contextualizing critical.

Paul Patton critical horizons, Vol. I am very sympathetic to its general aims and I agree with many of the claims made in relation to our understanding of selfhood, power and politics. At the same time, I want to raise some questions about the characterization of Foucault and some of the assumptions about his analysis of power on which Allen relies in her response to his work. The overall aim of *The Politics of Our Selves* is to outline an account of human subjectivity that does justice to both the ways in which the self is constituted by power and the ways in which it is capable of self-constitution. Allen argues that Foucault never abandoned notions of subjectivity, agency, autonomy or critique, but rather sought to show the historical conditions of possibility for particular forms of subjectivity. Columbia University Press, , 2. New Press, , Ethics, Paul Rabinow ed. The New Press, , At stake is a conceptual issue of importance for feminist theory, critical theory and for social and political theory more generally, namely how to understand autonomy such that it is compatible with an appreciation of the depth and complexity of power relations. I agree not only with the aims of this project but also with many of the general theses defended in the course of the argument. She also argues that Foucault can and does make use of a concept of autonomy that is consistent with his earlier conception of subjectivity as constituted in and through relations of power. Given that impure practical reason still allows for autonomous action, and given that it does not commit Foucault either to the critique of reason tout court or to the inability to criticize existing limits to forms of subjectivity and social life, some of the criticism of Foucault at the end of this chapter is surprising. I am not sure that he does subscribe to such an impoverished conception, in part for the kinds of reasons Allen herself provides in pointing to remarks in late essays and interviews in which Foucault endorses ideals of reciprocity between friends or sexual partners. *Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*. As Allen notes, this implies that the exercise of power implies the freedom of both those over whom power is exercised and those exercising power. A further important element of this concept of power is that it says nothing about the reasons for which some individuals or groups might seek to govern the conduct of others. These might include aiming to hinder or to enhance the capacities of others, to limit or to expand the possible courses of action open to them. Acting upon the actions of others is something we do in all kinds of social interaction. It is not limited to the kinds of adverse impact on the action of others that theorists of power often presuppose. *Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, , " Take the relationship of democratic citizens to one another, as Rawls defines this by reference to an ideal of public reason: The aim is to convince them of the justice of a particular proposal so that it might be adopted as public policy. Such deliberation is communicative, reciprocal and premised on the mutual recognition of citizens in a democratic polity, but it is also the exercise of power by citizens over one another or indeed over themselves when they are uncertain about the right course of action and engage in internal deliberation. Why then does Allen suggest that Foucault fails to take sufficient account of non-strategic forms of social interaction? If this is correct then there is a broad sense in which all power relations are strategic, even when they are bound up with communicative and reciprocal relations of the kind expressed in my Rawls example above. The strategical model rather than the model based on law. The opening lecture of this course begins with the statement of an intellectual crisis. Foucault says that he has had enough and would like to bring to a close the series of fragments of research that he has pursued in preceding years: I would like to try to see the extent to which the binary schema of war and struggle, of the clash between forces, can really be identified as the basis of civil society, as both the principle and motor of the exercise of political power. Are we really talking about war when we analyse the workings of power? To what extent are they valid? Is power quite simply a continuation of war by means other than weapons and battles?

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An Introduction, Robert Hurley trans. Picador, , 3. Sawicki eds A Companion to Foucault Oxford: Perhaps one reason that he continued to rely on the language of war in talking about power is that, at this point, he had not settled on any alternative. The " lectures do not provide one. After having raised questions about power at the outset, Foucault was still searching in the third lecture for a more precise specification of his conceptual question: He reformulated the question in terms of the search for a theory of the forms of domination, rather than a theory of sovereignty. He does not at this point question the assumption that relations of power culminate in systems of domination. Rather, he asks how does domination operate, by what techniques and by means of what effects of subjugation are relations of domination established and maintained? In particular, he asks whether the concept of war and war-like relations provide an appropriate framework for the analysis of relations of domination: To what extent can a relationship of domination boil down to or be reduced to the notion of a relationship of force? To what extent can the relationship of force be reduced to a relationship of war? Selected Interviews and Other Writings ", Sussex: The Harvester Press, , This passage also offers a carefully nuanced view of the usefulness of battle as the model for power relations by suggesting that the difference between war and politics was not a difference in kind but a difference of strategy whereby the force relations present in a given society could be played out either in the forms of war or politics. These do not involve direct confrontation between contending forces, but forms of action on populations, where these are considered as natural phenomena subject to various kinds of regular economic, demographic, epidemiological and other behaviour. Henceforth, it is in terms of government rather than war that Foucault understands the exercise of power. His lecture of 18 January shows what is at stake. He discusses proposals put forward in the middle of the eighteenth century to deal with the problem of grain shortage. Grain shortage was a threat to governments since it could lead populations to revolt. Previously, it had been dealt with by regulations intended to prevent food shortages from occurring: From the end of the seventeenth century politicians and their economic advisors became aware that the free circulation of grain was a better mechanism to ensure food security. Lectures de Michel Foucault: Palgrave Macmillan, , As components of a market mechanism, they do not involve the direct confrontation and struggle of contending forces, as suggested by the schema of war. Nor do they involve direct action upon the forces of individuals and groups in the manner of disciplinary techniques. Rather, they sought to ensure food security by establishing conditions under which market incentives would cause individuals to act in ways that address any problem of shortage. Foucault returns to the market mechanism for ensuring food security in the final lecture of the " course, in order to suggest that it pointed towards a new, liberal form of government. Rather than the regulative mechanisms favoured by the eighteenth century science of police, this involved the integration of freedom into the art of government. Liberal government as it emerged during the eighteenth century sought to adjust the exercise of state power to the realities of the market. It depended on the existence of the freedom to trade, the exercise of property rights, as well as freedoms of expression and freedom from monopolies. Such freedoms are not given but must be produced. Liberal government did not simply endorse freedom but established limitations, controls and various forms of coercion to ensure the kinds of freedom needed for the effective operation of markets. In the early twentieth century, forms of state intervention to maintain market economies developed to a point of crisis in liberal governmentality, whereby the forms of regulation themselves came to be seen as a threat to the very market freedom they were supposed to protect. Neoliberalism reinvented the aims as well as the techniques of liberal government and sought to extend the reliance on market mechanisms to areas of civil and social life previously exempt: The same methodological requirement was expressed in relation to the strategical model of power in the passage cited above from The History of Sexuality, Volume One: The strategical model, rather than the model based on law. And this, not out of a speculative choice or theoretical preference, but because in fact it is one of the essential traits of Western societies that the force relationships which for a long time had found expression in war, in every form of warfare, gradually became invested in the order of political power. Instead, it acts upon their actions: The parties to relations of power are now conceived as agents endowed with a degree of freedom. The exercise of power presupposes that those on

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whom it is exercised are subjects capable of action and that they are in fact free to act in a number of ways. The exercise of power can take a variety of forms including inducement or incitation to act in particular ways, but also constraint or prohibition on acting in other ways: Power is not something possessed that can be exchanged or transferred. It does not essentially involve either contracts or violence, which does not mean that the exercise of power cannot in particular cases involve the obtaining of consent or the threat of violence. Nor does it essentially involve struggle between contending forces. It is a way of directing or governing the actions of others: Government understood as the conduct of the conduct of others is precisely a way to leave behind the focus on struggle between opposing forces that had been central to his earlier concept of power: The constraints imposed on political interaction by the idea of public reason amount to government in this sense: It represents a break with the strategic conception that dominated his thinking several years before. However, this is not the only objection raised. Allen also raises a question about the sources of resistance to existing forms of power, and of the commitment to change: Power, translation modified. For this reason, the question how it is that subjects of power can take up empowering and transformative relations to themselves and their situation is a question that does not seem to have any general answer. It is the question that led Foucault to become fascinated by the resistance to the regime of the Shah in Iran, including the role of religion and what he called a political spirituality. Foucault is not unaware of the latter question. Is there a governmentality appropriate to socialism? However, it is worth dwelling for a moment on the question itself, since it implicitly raises a normative question about the kinds of governmental practice that would be appropriate to socialism. Socialism here can only refer to an ideal conception of society. How could this question be answered without reference to the normative principles that would characterize such a society? These might include the absence or at least the diminution of class divisions in relation to wealth, opportunity, or the value of civil and political liberties. Foucault does not propose answers to these normative questions but that is arguably because he is engaged in a different project with different aims: But difference is not in itself a defect and knowledge of the history of governmental reason has much to offer more forward-looking normative political theory. References Allen, Amy, *The Politics of Our Selves*: University of Chicago Press.

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critical horizons, Vol. 15 No. 1, March, , *Foucault and the Strategic Model of Power* Paul Patton School of Humanities and Languages, University of New South Wales, Australia Allen criticizes Foucault for having a "narrow and impoverished conception of social interaction, according to which all such interaction is strategic."

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appreciation of the insights of Foucault's analyses of power and subjection compels us to admit the impurity of autonomy and practical reason" and that, as a.

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It analyzes power in all its depth and complexity, including the complicated phenomenon of subjection, without giving up on the ideal of autonomy. Drawing on original and critical readings of a diverse group of theorists, including Michel Foucault, Jurgen Habermas, Judith Butler, and Seyla Benhabib, Allen shows how the self can be both.