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**Manifesting the teacher.**

**A Foucauldian genealogy of practices and architectures functioning in the primary school classroom and the role they play in the formation of teacher subjectivity**

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Education

2019



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**By:**

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**Abstract**

This thesis is a history of the present which explores various facets of the primary school classroom and the effects these have on the subjectivity of the teacher. Inspired by the work of Michel Foucault (1926 - 1984), this thesis begins with a proposition that something is problematic and jarring about the ways in which the primary school classroom is portrayed. The Department for Education (2016) designate the educational process as an inherently good one, portraying education as the means to help individuals “to shape their own destiny” (p. 5). This thesis does not seek to add to or sit comfortably amongst such knowledge but rather seeks to destablise and challenge our strongly-held views regarding the inherent goodness of the educational process. To do this it explores the ways in which teacher identity is fashioned by a variety of disciplinary and pastoral practices rather than through individual agency and choice.

By exploring and critiquing other genealogies, I offer an overview of genealogy from a Foucauldian perspective before generating a specific genealogical framework that is used throughout this exploration. Key Foucauldian texts (1991a, 1991b) are consulted to provide a general overview of the methodological tools available to produce a consistent and theoretically rigorous framework. To further contextualise this genealogical project, and establish a history of the historical classroom and teacher, I offer a genealogy of the historical teacher by referring to the work of Hunter (1995), Jones (1990) and Allen (2014). By exploring the political, cultural and historical conditions for the emergence of the teacher, focusing on the key historical figure Kay-Shuttleworth, I demonstrate that the teacher does not sit comfortably within a discourse of rationality and evolution but appeared many times in different forms due to particular circumstances.

After fashioning a theoretical framework, I designate a genealogical conception of autoethnographic narrative to offer my own experiences for critique. I challenge the concept of experiential meaning and explore autobiography and autoethnography, reconceiving these methodologies as a means of disturbing and challenging the ability to speak truthfully. Autonarrative is, then, reconceptualised as a method to highlight the interplay of power within my own experiences and destabilise the assumption that one interpretation can be any more truthful than others. Using this conceptualisation, three experiential vignettes, which explore seemingly insignificant and innocuous practices, are offered and critiqued using key Foucauldian concepts of disciplinary and pastoral power.

Finally, I draw together the thesis by considering to what extent teacher subjectivity is fashioned by institutional practices and architectures and, more broadly, by cultural and political factors. In doing so, I indicate the extent to which teachers, just as extensively as children, are subject to power relations that circulate throughout the classroom. Lastly, I address the genealogical problematic: this research does not propose ‘better’ ways to educate but seeks to encourage interrogations of truthful knowledge wherever they appear as a way forward.

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**LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

CPD - Continuing Professional Development

DfE - Department for Education

OfSTED - Office for Standards in Education

SAT - Statutory Assessment Test

TDA - Training and Development Agency for Schools

UK - United Kingdom

USA - United States of America

**1. Introduction**

**1.1. First thoughts**

Wilson’s (2002) article ‘Is education a good thing?’ raises some important themes and questions with regards to education and what it purports to do. One of Wilson’s main points is that there is too little consideration of what ‘good’ comes from education. He states there are “very serious questions about the goodness (desirability, merit, worth) of education that have not been faced squarely, let alone answered...” and “if there are reasons why education is a good thing it is not immediately clear what those reasons are.” (p. 327) Furthermore, he suggests that “it has been assumed that education is a good thing, so that philosophers have spent most of their time in saying what kind of good thing it is or what form it ought to take…” (p. 327) Wilson’s article suggests that, in general, education is looked on as a positive force in our modern society and one of the main institutions utilised to broadcast this educational good is the school. Similarly, Bojesen (2018a) argues that “the values, ideals, means, and ends of education… are barely reflected upon, even by those (such as teachers, students, parents) who are most invested in them.” (p. 6) Chitty (2002) argues that “schooling is called upon to perform many essential functions in a sophisticated democratic society.” (p. 1) one of which can be to support this access to an education which brings a variety of benefits to the society at large. However, more central to this function than the institution of the school is that of the educational figure to be found within it: the teacher. The figure of the teacher remains a lasting and important figure in the field of education and society more broadly. Yet, I argue that the teacher also continues to be one of the most controversial and contested figures in the public and political narrative and the place teachers hold in our education system and society continues to be of great interest to both government, and population. In April of 2019, while preparing for upcoming SAT examinations, an article published by Richardson (2019) writing for the BBC was brought to my attention which reads that “Four out of 10 teachers plan to quit…” (no page). This may or may not be surprising to those within the field of education yet it highlights something important for this thesis. Reports of falling numbers of teachers hark to complex difficulties which teachers are facing in the 21st century and 2019 in particular.

Ways of speaking about the teacher vary considerably depending on the social and historical situation and the working life of the teacher continues to dominate contemporary discussions of education. Narratives regarding the work of teachers is commonplace within the social sphere. Whether, like Rogers (2018), they focus on the extensive holidays that teachers are felt to enjoy in order to keep going and maintain a healthy work-life balance or others such as those offered above by Richardson relating to poor conditions at work (2019), they all offer a glimpse of the teacher subject. These discourses are also digested alongside formalised discourses offered by official bodies such as the Department for Education (2016) which discuss the important role that teachers play in our modern society, making it a more productive, fairer and just place. As the document states:

No school and no education system can be better than its teachers and no single education reform is more important than fostering and supporting a high quality teaching profession. Pupils in schools across England already benefit from the hundreds of thousands of dedicated teachers who work hard every day to give their pupils the best possible start in life.” (p. 25)

Equally, the Department states that thanks to “the hard work of thousands of teachers, headteachers and governors, huge progress was made and schools today are better than ever before.” (p. 3) Both quotes place the teacher at the core of lofty and profound societal goals, constructing teachers as the means to achieving such goals and driving up achievements. Furthermore, the Department for Education (2015) advert ‘Get into teaching’ questions “if you want to know what else a good teacher makes, it’s probably more than you think.” (no page) whilst another YouTube series by the Department for Education (2019c) strengthens the concept that teachers have the capability to change lives for the better. Teachers and the spaces they work within are constantly under scrutiny both by government and the general public. As Chitty (2002) states:

At the classroom level, teachers are in the difficult positions of having to constantly rethink and reconfigure their role in the light of fresh demands being made upon them by parents, governors, local community leaders and national politicians. (p. 1)

In part, this thesis explores how teachers, classrooms and schools have changed over time as well as their relationships to one another. But it is also configured as a ‘genealogy’ (a term I explain below), designed to consider what the unspoken history of such changes might be, changes that are discussed not from the point of view of dominant voices and discourses but by using the subjugated knowledges, discourses and voices from those working in such institutions. Producing a plurality of readings is one of the goals of this genealogy as such readings do not appear within dominant narratives of education.

In this chapter, I intend to introduce some key ideas which will act as the basis for the exploration that is to take place. Firstly, I shall discuss the intention of this thesis and situate it in relation to its intended outcomes with regards to the University of Sheffield’s marking criteria. I do so as the theoretical framework which underpins this work has implications for the format and tone that this thesis will take. In attempting to be theoretically consistent and authentic, I hope to demonstrate that I have shown due consideration of the criteria and requirements whilst producing a thoughtful and provoking thesis. Secondly, I shall discuss why this thesis is relevant or, indeed, necessary at all. This will form the rationale and warrant for this research. Equally, so that I remain critical and reflexive throughout this process, I shall discuss my positionality and the role of this position in relation to the research offered. Finally, I shall offer a chapter-by-chapter summary of what is to be offered.

**1.2. Not an ordinary thesis**

Firstly, I wish to be clear that this thesis does not take the form of what might be expected of a doctoral thesis. Indeed, this thesis intends to in some degree subvert what is usually expected of a thesis in that, I suggest, most research seeks to establish some objective or subjective truth regarding a particular field or discipline. Indeed, the University of Sheffield regulations (2018) state that a doctoral thesis should be an “original work which forms an addition to knowledge” which “shows evidence of systematic study and of the ability to relate the results of such study to the general body of knowledge in the subject” and, finally, is “worthy of publication either in full or in an abridged form.” (p. 4) This thesis seeks to do something quite different within the word count afforded to it whilst satisfying the categories given above. In the space it affords, I offer an exploration to launch an argument against knowledges which are already accepted as truths within the social narratives that dominate our lives and systems of thinking. I do not wish to expose and reveal anything more truthful or precise about the subject position of the teacher and the role the classroom plays in this. Therefore, I do not attempt to answer specific research questions. It could be argued that this thesis works to undermine expectations in that I wish to challenge or destablise knowledge which already exists in the field. In this sense, I attempt to use this exploration to relate to the existing body of knowledge only to subject it to critique and scrutinise it. Through this, I hope to produce a different type of knowledge; a knowledge which challenges, fractures and, possibly, breaks existing ways of thinking about specific elements of the field of education. I shall imitate Foucault (1991b) by creating knowledge which is “made for cutting” rather than “for understanding…” (p. 88). That is, to consider different ways of thinking, speaking and doing education which challenges and disrupts historical practices and brings to light their humble historical beginnings. It is likely that this thesis will make the reader uncomfortable and I wouldn’t be upset if it did so. So often with doctoral work, and research in general, the ends justifies the means. Sadly, I cannot offer any possibilities or answers; instead this thesis seeks to offer problems and paradoxes whilst also offering possibilities for further exploration in a field of contextualized, historical problems.

**1.3. Why is this genealogy relevant or necessary?**

Ball (2017) begins his book *Foucault as educator,* asking (in a somewhat rhetorical manner) whether we need “another Foucault book.” (p. xi) Whilst this thesis is not a Foucault book, Ball raises an important question for this thesis: has enough Foucauldian scholarship not been engaged in already? Ball does not answer this question directly but moves forward to state that the book, for him, constitutes “an exercise in finding my own limits and limitations and going beyond them… to confront the impossibility of my role…” whilst at the same time considering “the possibility of being something else.” (p. xii) This thesis interrogates and critiques Foucauldian thinking, trying to understand how Foucauldian methodological tools can be put to work. Part of this consideration is how genealogical works reconcile issues such as necessity and relevance and how new methodological advances can address these concerns. As researchers continue to bend genealogy to their needs, the impact that such genealogies have potentially deteriorates as they begin to mix with other methodologies and theoretical traditions. This is of prime importance to this thesis as I myself wish to engage in this sort of theoretical fusion which enables me to investigate educational questions in a localised way. I share Allen’s (2018) “determination to localize and particularize problems…” (p. 54) and to do this I realise the necessity of fashioning a specific genealogical framework. As I argue in 3.4 *What does the genealogist do?*, the genealogist has much to gain from conceptualizing genealogy as a flexible and malleable method whilst remaining attentive to its theoretical implications. I argue that educational research too still has much to gain from genealogical tools if these tools are framed or conceptualised around certain problems facing the researcher. As Pignatelli (1995) states:

genealogy questions the fixity of propositions one too quickly relies upon to resolve problems we matter-of-factly presume to have. It is in the denaturalizing, defamiliarizing, and ultimately distancing effects of genealogy that those subjugated or repressed are able to redefine and resituate themselves at the margins of, and in opposition to, the confines of a restrictive problematic. (p. 391)

Thus, genealogy becomes a method for not only addressing specific historically-situated problems but for moving researchers and academic work into new thinking spaces which challenge both systems of thinking and specific presumptions. By situating problems within a genealogical framework, they become “demonstration sites for personal and scholarly re-evaluation…” within which the researcher can “investigate the contingency of one's thinking about various vital aspects of modem life…” so as “to scrape away the self-evidence and ahistorical veneer that settles around such matters.” (Pignatelli 1995, p. 385)

A note of scope and context is necessary: due to the limitations which must be acknowledged such as word count limit. This thesis does not provide a generalised or broad genealogy of teachers or schools as offered by researchers such as Jones (1990) or Hunter (1994). It is a specific genealogy which is limited to an exploration of the ways in which technologies of power have affected the development of the teacher subject in the various professional examples that I shall offer. I believe it is also important to note the context from which the theoretical materials have been brought. As I shall utilise genealogical tools taken from Foucault’s theoretical innovations, it is pertinent to acknowledge the French, late 20th century context from which these concepts originate. Whilst I believe Foucault wished for his materials to influence other genealogies, it should be noted that this genealogy is conducted in an English context.

**1.4. Methodological considerations**

A major contribution of this thesis is its unique methodological undertaking: blending together autonarratives with Foucauldian, genealogical theory. Because I wish to utilise my own experiences as primary school teacher, I shall explore how it will be possible to blend together genealogical theory with autonarrative methodology by considering the origins of autonarrative - autobiography - before leaving this aside to consider the possibilities of autoethnography. This will then be surveyed by merging autoethnography with genealogical theory. I shall discuss some of these key points as well as some introductory aspects of how this genealogy will be deployed.

Firstly, to consider the extent to which genealogy and narrative can be mixed, I have contemplated how autobiography could be utilised successfully. In doing so, I have considered autobiography as a historical genre of writing, as an object of academic critique and as a potential genealogical research methodology. As a genre, autobiography can and has been viewed as a narrative form which is able to articulate something true about the life and experiences of a person. Autobiography rests on self-reflection, collecting past thought to establish a coherent account of a singularly-developing self. Thus, the autobiographical genre is based strongly on an epistemological and ontological commitment to an objective reality and, as such, is incompatible with Foucauldian genealogical theory. As a subject of academic critique, autobiography became concerned with questioning humanistic concepts of a coherent and articulable self. As autobiographical narrative rested on the absolute meaning of language to express experience and truth, the absolute meaning of language came under critique so too did the ability of autobiography to express truth through experiential meaning. As such, autobiographical writing can embrace the multiplicity of the self which genealogy acknowledges. However, as autobiography fails to appreciate the extent to which external factors have on the experiences of the writer - as autoethnography does - autobiography lacks the necessary attributes to be convincingly blended with genealogy.

Secondly, I have considered the extent to which autoethnography is compatible with genealogical theory. I shall discuss autoethnography as a research methodology, how autoethnography can be refuted as a search for a deeper self before considering the extent to which autoethnography can be blended with post-structural concepts and reconceived as a genealogically compatible methodology. Tony Adams, Carolyn Ellis and Arthur Bochner (2011) define autoethnography as to “describe and systematically analyse (graphy) personal experience (auto) to understand cultural experience (ethno)” (p. 1). As such, it is a method for understanding experience in research moving towards an opening up of multifaceted possibilities. Ethnographers draw on a wide range of theoretical and methodological traditions yet they are alike in that they work to further understand cultural and social phenomena by investigating personal experience to produce meaningful critiques of issues and ideas. However, the methods used to achieve this and the product of the research can vary dramatically. An essential component of autoethnography is the use of individual experience contextualised within the community in which the research takes place. Whilst an autobiographer comments on a variety of significant personal or chronological events, an autoethnographer may choose to focus outside themselves, considering both significant events and features as well as minutiae and other intricate details to build a picture of the various facets of a culture. This appears genealogically fruitful as Foucault (1991a) also explores external factors such as architectures in *Discipline and punish* to conduct his critiques.

Another possibility of autoethnography is its ability to refute the humanistic tendency to purport for a deeper self. Jackson and Mazzei (2008) explain this as a tendency to create “coherence, comfort, and continuity through mediated truth” to produce “evocative, therapeutic stories through writing” that “lead to self-discovery and self-creation” (p. 300). However they argue that autoethnography of this kind attempts to produce a truthful story by placing the self and an “I” at the centre of the writing. Jackson and Mazzei state that autoethnography can be used to make meaning of experience through narrative rather than seeking to utilize it “to destabilize the traditional hierarchies between researcher and researched, and instead further reinscribes and recenters.” (p. 301)

Jackson and Mazzei (2008) suggest that we can reimagine the self within autoethnography which I believe is fruitful in developing a genealogical methodology. To do so they reconceptualise autoethnography by blending it with post-structural theory. To do this, experience and truth are challenged and “subjects, in their telling of experience, become fractured, multiply-positioned, and unreliable narrators” (p. 303). Therefore, to coherently fuse genealogical theory with autoethnography, I must “trouble it under erasure” thereby keeping “autoethnography in a rigorous play of games of truth, power, and knowledge.” (Jackson and Mazzei 2008, p. 314) As such, it is possible to create a deconstructive autoethnography that “illustrates an engagement with the *discursive* construction of experience, a critique of the *relations of power* in the production of meaning from experience…” (p. 304). This reconceptualise will be further explored in *4. Narratives* under these four points:

(1) by assimilating what Jackson and Mazzei (2008) call a “performative “I”” (p. 314) which acts in a limited capacity, able to recognize its own immediate deficiency whilst also functioning in a limited capacity and acting as a component in the state of becoming through selecting stories and tellings informed by relations of power. This performative I functions to “produce truths that [can be shown to] emerge from relations of power” (p. 314) rather than from experience or memory.

(2) a genealogical autoethnography will involve a critical revaluation of the self and what this label represents. In doing so, an active process of repositioning the I, which recounts experience, is necessary to critique and challenge experience and memory as a means to truth. By repositioning the I as the subject of experience, and understanding the self to be under constant construction, it becomes possible to use experience to show the contingency of the self as well as the fractured nature of experience. Equally, this constant becoming indicates the exigency of interpretation: as the self becomes something new, the interpretation of past or present experience is also reconstituted. As such, a repositioning of the I allows this genealogy to destabilize truth as self-evident and begin a process of questioning the historical beginnings of things.

(3) experiences will be used to show how relations of power function and are working to produce subjectivity. These demonstrations will be used to highlight the contingency of who we are and rethink the possibility of a single self. It may also be possible to highlight the specific conditions which bring about our shifting subject positions.

(4) by fusing autoethnography with genealogical theory, it will become necessary to explore the conflicting and paradoxical aspects of these tellings. The desire to produce tidy and comforting discourses surrounding the subjectivity of the teacher will be replaced to show the accidents and exigencies which make up the everyday experiences of teachers. Through exploring the complicated and messy aspects of these experiences, I hope to show that new ways of thinking and understanding schooling and teachers are possible.

**1.6. Summary of chapters.**

I shall now give a brief overview of each chapter.

Chapter two - ‘Genealogy’ - introduces the key theoretical concept of genealogy, which frames this thesis. I discuss research that utilises genealogical methodology, establishing a literature base regarding genealogy in general and specifically in relation to education. I offer a critical interpretation of the literature with a view to understanding where genealogy can be further pursued and utilised to offer a critical reading of education. To do this, I advance a discussion of Foucault’s conceptualisation of genealogy, which focuses on a variety of factors such as the role of discourse, and architectures and practices which play a role in the formation of subject positions. By exploring the concept of genealogy, as described by Foucault (1991a, 1991b), I demonstrate some key genealogical concepts or ideas that will be utilised in analysing aspects of this thesis. Furthermore, I discuss why I have chosen genealogy as a methodology before briefly discussing some limitations of the genealogical method.

Chapter three - ‘Teachers and classrooms’ - considers the possibility that ways of thinking and speaking about teachers and classrooms exist due to a dominant discourse which percolates through the social fabric and affects how the teacher is perceived both by the public and within the field of education. I discuss how this dominant discourse is effected by a range of factors and as such, the teacher is equally dependent on certain factors for its existence. By establishing that such a discourse exists, I utilise to work of key researchers to demonstrate that other ways of thinking or speaking about the teacher have also existed throughout history. Furthermore, by referring to the works of these researchers, I provide a genealogical overview of the various manifestations of the teacher subject from the mid to late 19th century. By doing this, I establish a historical account of the teacher, a subject position which is born from accident and conditionality rather than a logical and rational historical development through time. The teacher, then, can be understood not as a singularly evolving figure throughout history, but a multifarious and sometimes contradictory figure who appears due to a collection of social, political, economic, and historical conditions.

Chapter four - ‘Narratives’ - moves on to discuss the role of autonarrative within this thesis. To fashion a contextually-sensitive yet theoretically rigorous discussion of subject formation in the primary school, I undertake a discussion of narrative. I begin with a discussion of autobiography as the historical and theoretical basis for autoethnographic practice, constructing an argument for the use of narrative within a genealogical critique. Furthermore this chapter explores the role of autoethnography in poststructural research contemplating how a consideration of a genealogical ‘I’ could be fruitful in adding nuance and contextualisation to the challenging of certain knowledges within education. Finally, I attempt to fashion a genealogical concept of autoethnographic narrative which embraces both the theoretical implication of a genealogy alongside the possibility of narrative which explores experience.

Chapter five - ‘Vignettes’ - begins by exploring how vignettes fit consistently with the theoretical framework explored in the previous chapter and how they will be utilised in this analytical chapter. Each of these vignettes are forms of autoethnographic narrative which highlight experiences of practices, mechanisms and architectures that are to be found in the primary school. Three different vignettes will be offered that explore some aspect of my own experience as a teacher within the classroom. These experiences, which are offered as highly-contextualised examples of teacher subjectivity in the classroom, will be explored, analysed and critiqued using key themes and ideas. These analytical concepts will be taken from two principal texts: Foucault’s (1991a) *Discipline and Punish* and Hunter’s (1994) *Rethinking the school*. Using these key analytical concepts taken from Foucauldian genealogical theory, I suggest ways of thinking about the emergence of the teacher subject and how the architecture of the classroom aids this process.

Chapter six - ‘Last thoughts’ - brings together ideas, explorations, critiques and analyses that have featured in this thesis. It re-establishes the aim of this thesis, stating, clearly, the intentions behind the conception of the thesis before discussing what contribution to knowledge has been made throughout this genealogy. Through stating the contribution this research has made to the field of educational genealogy, I also discuss my own thoughts and conceptions towards this research and how they have changed throughout this process. Furthermore, I discuss the implications this research has for further genealogical and educational studies. By using contextually-rich research in the field of genealogy, I argue that further research can be enriched by conducting localised critiques of power. However, this chapter also discusses the limitations of the research and how these limitations have affected the outcomes of the research.

**2. Genealogies**

**2.1. Introduction**

[genealogy] is, in other words, a methodological device with the same effect as a precocious child at a dinner party: genealogy makes the older guests at the table of intellectual analysis feel decidedly uncomfortable by pointing out things about their origins and functions that they would rather remain hidden. (Kendall and Wickham 1999, p. 29)

This genealogy relies heavily on Foucauldian theory and utilizes the various techniques and tools Foucault offers to address a range of historically-situated problems. My goal is to situate my own problem within this Foucauldian philosophy to offer different and, hopefully, challenging ways of thinking about education. Specifically, I wish to open a critical space regarding the role and historical formation of the teacher subject within the primary school classroom. By using Foucault’s thinking, I seek to produce a consistent piece of writing which could sit alongside other genealogical works and add to the literature which will be explored shortly. Whilst Foucault’s own writings, in which he describes the methodology of genealogy, are few, the specific texts that describe genealogy are useful. In particular, this thesis refers to two key Foucauldian texts: *Discipline and punish: the birth of the prison* (Foucault, 1991a) and the short essay ‘Nietzsche, genealogy, history’ (Foucault, 1991b). Whilst these key texts are not exhaustive, and whilst Foucault has written about genealogy in other places, I have chosen these texts due to their educational relevance and their more direct concern with the matter of genealogy. As a result, this reading of genealogy is very specific and focuses on the use of genealogy within a contextually-informed piece of research and does not attempt an overview of genealogy as a whole. As Foucault (1991c) states:

What I say ought to be taken as 'propositions', 'game openings' where those who may be interested are invited to join in; they are not meant as dogmatic assertions that have to be taken or left en bloc. My books aren't treatises in philosophy or studies of history: at most, they are philosophical fragments put to work in a historical field of problems (p. 73-74).

**2.2. Genealogies**

The field of Foucauldian scholarship is dense and the research landscape contains a collection of writings that address genealogy as methodology, as theory and in practice. Regarding genealogy as methodology and theory, many authors and researchers outside education (See for instance, Sheridan 1980; Noujain 1987; McNay 1994; Pignatelli 1995; Kendall and Wickham 1999; Hatcher et al. 2000; Hook 2005; Garland 2014) have used Foucault’s writings to form an understanding of what Foucault’s key theoretical messages are in relation to genealogy. Understanding that Foucault’s theoretical compositions can often be difficult to grasp and even more complex to deploy in research, they may offer new and interesting ways of thinking about research. These works explore, summarise, contextualize and, in some cases, problematize Foucauldian thinking; they offer a window through which I have become accustomed to some of Foucault’s key theoretical developments to situate and understand genealogy. Whilst these works are useful in conceptualizing the theoretical components of what a genealogy may look like, they often do not offer any more than theoretical treaties. As literature, they offer a broad understanding which has influenced this research yet they do not move into the spheres of education which is essential for this thesis. I have used these materials to ground my understanding of genealogy but have focused my attention towards other works such as those that use the methods outlined by Foucault to enact their own critiques of knowledge and power relations, particularly in education. However, there exist in the literature many pieces of genealogical work that focus attention on education more generally. This literature (For instance Marshall, 1990; Pignatelli, 1995) moves from discussing genealogy as method to more specific examples of how we might understand education through the lens of a genealogical critique. Pignatelli (1995) highlights the “educative possibilities” that may be discovered through utilizing a Foucauldian genealogy to affect “research and school practice” (p.383). Marshall (1990) explores how systems of thought have framed “man as a moral agent, sexual being, learner, or whatever…” and the ever changing “masks” (p. 26) that subjects take on in the changing knowledges and discourses of any particular time. Marshall also paves the way for further research suggesting that a future genealogical project could be titled “‘Discipline and punish: the birth of the school’”, and would involve “a unique analysis of the use and refinement of power-knowledge in the modern school in the cause of governance” (p. 23). Despite this more focused attention on education, these papers only offer this thesis an example of genealogy in practice; they do not offer genealogical critiques themselves, only insights into what benefits may come from and how we might go about applying genealogy to education in general.

Instead one might turn to several works that do indeed offer genealogical critiques within the field of education. Jones (1990), Hunter (1994) and Ball (1990) all offer literature which not only engages with genealogy on a theoretical level, but moves beyond this to put genealogy to work in educational critique. Jones offers the reader a comparatively brief “genealogy of the urban schoolteacher”, constructing an alternative historical account of the school teacher as well as its “curious line of transformation” (p. 75). He argues that the teacher has a complicated and messy history which is a “passage of a failure…” (p. 75); this passage of failure will be discussed further in *3. Teachers and Classrooms*. Using Foucauldian methods, such as examining discourse and tracing pedagogies and practices established in the 19th century, Jones establishes an account of the historical development of the teacher. There is little theorising in this genealogy; Jones engages with his subject matter by outlining his intentions before exploring the different modes of existence the teacher took over 150 years since the beginning of the 19th century. Most importantly to this thesis is the way in which Jones directly references architectures as part of a myriad of technologies and practices to establish his critique. Similarly, Hunter (1994) traces the historical development of education across Europe in the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries in general and focuses primarily on England and Scotland. Furthermore, he offers a genealogy of education but focuses his attention not just on the teacher but on the school system. His critique explores discontinuities and improvisations thereby reconceptualising the school as a historical invention that was unplanned and used the available administrative and intellectual practices and pedagogies at hand to produce the institution we now know. Particularly relevant is Hunter’s discussion of systems of thought or changing epistemologies and how these were used, alongside other practices and technologies, to constitute the school and the teachers that occupied it as a hybrid creation. Hunter’s work is particularly useful as it demonstrates how a genealogy of power may be totalising in its effects without the writer ever intending to be totalising. That is, Hunter’s analysis may be perceived as leaving little room for other Foucauldian concepts such as ‘transgression’ or ‘resistance’. Ball’s (1990) work offers a genealogy not only of individuals but of practices. Ball’s chapter, ‘Management as moral technology’ highlights how practices, which flourish in our schools, are not ahistorical but have a point of emergence and play a role in developing and shaping subjectivities, identities and knowledges through surveillance. Again, Ball uses Foucauldian theory to demonstrate how knowledge and power are part of a formidable matrix, arguing that “management is a micro-physics of power” and that “management empowers the manager and objectifies and subjects the managed.” (p. 165) Of importance here is Ball’s discussion of performance management, appraisal and performativity which shall be discussed as part of this genealogy.

More recently, Allen (2014) and Ball (2017) have produced genealogies which have pushed forward the possibilities and expectations of genealogical work. Allen’s genealogy focuses on ‘Bodies’, ‘Populations’ and ‘Meritocracies’ seeking to “break down our various infatuations with the present…” (p. 246). This work uses various Foucauldian concepts such as power, subjectification, discipline and biopower to construct a critique of bodies and populations, examination and eugenics to encourage the reader to think about reimagining the self. It explores the ways in which examination has and continues to pervade our educational institutions and have had a profound effect on our systems of thought. Allen writes the text in an interesting manner: the text is presented in discrete sections, not unlike some of Nietzsche’s works, and transports the reader between flowing and disjointed sections, hinting at Foucault’s conception of history as discontinuous. Allen’s final comments are to encourage us to begin our own investigations of our present: this process will be “uncomfortable”, and an “excoriating experience” which will leave use feeling “ill at ease” with ourselves. (p. 250) Ball’s (2017) later text envisages Foucault as an educator and discusses how thinking about Foucault in this way can provide possibilities for rethinking education in a manner similar to how Foucault transformed our view of punishment, discipline and surveillance. Ball’s text puts genealogical theory to work - discussing genealogy as a methodology - and uses genealogical methods to explore how rationalistic education has constructed us epistemologically and made us subjects of that education. As I wrote in my review of the book, it offers “an exploration of the contingencies of the past that have formulated the emergence of the present individual who is constructed by the educational process” (Stothard 2018, p. 321) and in doing so demonstrates how we might move beyond this subjectification to reimagine what we might become. Unlike many of the other genealogies, Ball bridges the gap between genealogical work and empirical research and uses “the experiences and voices of a group of teachers” who have “found aspects of their experience of school ‘cracked’ and grating, discomforting and untenable” to find “ways of representing themselves and their practice differently.” (p. 44) Ball uses these experiences of teachers working in schools in the UK and the USA to show how practices of power act over them to explore how they begin to resist such practices in their own individual institutions. Whilst Ball uses small amounts of empirical data in his book, this makes up a marginal part of the work and seeks only to strengthen the points he is making rather than acting as the main source of his arguments.

**2.3. Summary of the literature**

A reading of the discussed literature has demonstrated several things which have relevance for this research. Foucauldian concepts are not new within the field of education and the research I have discussed deals explicitly with Foucault’s genealogical method. However, each piece of research does so differently. Over time, various types and forms of genealogy have been applied to a variety of educational concepts. Whereas much of the literature regarding Foucault deals with his concepts on a theoretical level, Allen, Ball and Jones have demonstrated what a genealogy of education might look like, deploying various genealogical tools to explore a range of educational problems. These works not only add nuance and detail to my theoretical understanding of genealogy, but provide a blueprint for this thesis. It appears that genealogies must go beyond theory if they are to have an impact and begin instigating and troubling the educational landscape more directly through historically-informed critiques. This is evident in works of Allen, Ball and Jones, whose troubling of the educational landscape encourages a rethinking of our educational future. Ball’s (2017) genealogy is crucial for this thesis as it attempts to do several things which are important for my understanding of a contextualised genealogy. Ball re-establishes the necessity of genealogies which continue to interrogate practices and technologies which continue to develop historically and yet remain unchallenged as time passes. More importantly, Ball’s work is crucial as he uses the experiences of individuals situated within institutions to explore the ways in which practices and technologies work on the subject positions of those individuals and how they react, develop and grow. The personal experiences of those working within institutional settings are situated closest to the practises, technologies and discourses from which their critiques emerge. These experiences emerge from those who are entangled within the “power/knowledge nexus…” (Pignatelli 1995, p. 386). I argue that critiques launched from within institutions can contribute to the genealogical discourse. These critiques, which use voices and experiences, do not offer truths in an abstract or generalisable sense but seek to highlight the games of truth and power which function within different aspects of our society and institutions through verbalisation. Moreover, I suggest that the literature is lacking in contextually-rich genealogies, which utilise not only Foucauldian theory, but invest in experiences and contextual examples to provide material to form a more nuanced critique, moving closer to those channels of power. Furthermore, I argue, as Allen (2014) does, that genealogies are critiques that must unsettle and destablise knowledge rather than attempting to produce more of it. I wish to produce an acerbic kind of knowledge, an unwanted knowledge, which causes suspicion and discomfort in the reader and a genealogy which is painful for the writer. To quote Ball (2017), this thesis moves forward to create “dispositions” of “scepticism, detachment, outrage, intolerance and tolerance…” (p. 79).

As my exploration of the literature has demonstrated, there is some variation in how genealogy has been interpreted and employed in academic research: whilst theoretically they attempt to adhere to Foucault’s principles the manner and style in which they utilise these principles varies enormously. Equally, each genealogy sets its sights on a different set of problems, whether they be theoretical - hoping to clarify and explore the theoretical implication of Foucault’s work - or practical - attempting to utilise these principles to conduct a genealogical critique. This genealogy hopes to continue the work done by these genealogists thereby facilitating a critical discourse of the school and the teacher that not only interrogates practices, architectures and discourses but does so by exploring experiences originating from situations which are enacted within the institutions themselves. Therefore, I shall now discuss the specific details of this genealogy to construct a clear theoretical overview of how this genealogy will take form, what I hope to achieve, how I intend to launch such a genealogy and why such a genealogy is relevant, necessary and needed. Pignatelli (1995) poses three questions that guide his work: (1) what does the genealogist do? (2) who is the genealogist?, and, finally, (3) why genealogy? I shall use these questions to guide the following discussion regarding what my own genealogy will look like. These three questions will guide my thinking as I explore and explain: (1) specifically, what will this particular genealogy attempt to do in the course of this thesis and (2) why genealogy? What is the rationale for conducting this genealogy and what limitations stand in its way?

**2.4. What does the genealogist do?**

Firstly, this genealogy is based within an historical approach, a desire to historicise the present and does not purport to be a historical work in a ‘traditional’ sense. Traditional histories of education have a tendency to present the passage of time as a rational progression, moving from event to event in a linear and logical way. The Department for Education (2016) states:

It is essential that schools in all areas can recruit, train, develop and retain excellent teachers. We have already given head teachers the powers they need to do this well, including significant reforms to the performance management framework in 2012. (p. 25)

Furthermore, they state:

We will replace Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) with a stronger, more challenging accreditation based on a teacher’s effectiveness in the classroom, as judged by great schools. This new accreditation will raise the quality and status of the teaching profession, better recognising advanced subject knowledge and pedagogy that is rooted in up-to-date evidence. (p. 32)

Discourses such as those provided by the DfE suggest that discourses such policy reforms, although are important and necessary changes, are part of an overall development or evolution in the state of education. That is, they were foreseen, planned for and will be acted upon. Such historical accounts trace what McNay (1994) calls the “logical flow of casual connected events…” in which each event is different yet moulded into an “overall pattern or meaning to history” (p.88). These histories do not appreciate the subtle conditions that bring about the emergence of such changes but instead, due to epistemologically-defined modes of thinking, try to explain historical events and moments within a grand narrative. These traditional histories are, as Downing (2008) argues, histories of “rational progress and dialectical thought” (p. 16) and do not embrace contingency. This genealogy counters such histories by seeking to insert discontinuity and possibility into the educational field through tracing the accidents that have occurred throughout the history of the school and the teacher. As McNay (1994) argues, when framed as a genealogy, “history is rather a process of struggle” (p. 90). Equally, unlike traditional historical accounts, this genealogy is not totalising but appreciates and acknowledges historical discourse as being necessarily perspectival. Foucault (1991c) argues that his works are not “said or written to be seen as laying any claims to totality” and nor did he try to “universalize” (p. 73) what he thought. As Foucault (1984) states:

The final trait of effective history is its affirmation of knowledge as perspective. Historians take unusual pains to erase the elements in their work which reveal their grounding in a particular time and place, their preferences in a controversy - the unavoidable obstacles of their passion. (p. 90)

This genealogy does not purport to say anything true in the sense that a traditional historian might understand that word but wishes to explore the curious and (as yet) still largely untroubled history of the school and teacher and encourage others to begin their own critique of education and its rituals of power. This genealogy embraces perspective to achieve its intended goal to destablise those accounts that would disregard the contingency of history. In reference to Foucault, this genealogy will also acknowledge its faults, limitations and biases along with other considerations as to why genealogy, like so many other methodologies, is imperfect. Thus, as Foucault (1991b) did, this genealogy will explore:

the accidents, the minute deviations – or conversely, the complete reversals – the errors, the false appraisals, and the faulty calculations that gave birth to those things that continue to exist hand have value for us; it is to discover that truth or being does not lie at the root of what we know and what we are. (p. 81)

In relation to the exploration of discourse, this history moves beyond Foucault’s archaeological method to genealogy; I do this so I may encounter not just discourse as part of this analysis but the wider effect that institutions, technologies and practices also have on my understanding of the historical development of the school and the teacher. Furthermore, this genealogy, as opposed to a dialectical history[[1]](#footnote-1), shifts from “celebrating great moments and situating the self-reflexive subject at the centre of the movement of history” (p. 88) to a nuanced and subtle exploration of the emergence of discourses, practices, technologies and institutions. This genealogy does not focus its critique on people, places and events as substantial elements in the writing of historical accounts but rather on individuals, institutions and emergences within the construct of power / knowledge relations.

This genealogy offers a critique of details which are often disregarded or remain unnoticed in histories of education. Foucault (1991a) argues that as genealogists we should develop a “meticulous observation of detail, and at the same time a political awareness of these small things…” so we can further understand how “a whole set of techniques, a whole corpus of methods and knowledge, descriptions, plans and data” was developed for the “control and use of men.” (p. 141) To further understand how these knowledges have been constructed, Garland (2014) states we should identify “a present-day practice that is both taken for granted and yet, in certain respects, problematic or somehow unintelligible” and then “trace the forces that gave birth to our present-day practices… to identify the historical conditions upon which they still depend” (p. 373). To do this, we must begin a process of challenging our ways of thinking, engaging in what Downing (2008) describes as “the close interrogation of given fields of knowledge” (p. 13). This genealogy, then, is an interrogation of systems of thinking within our current educational landscape that it seeks to challenge. Such epistemologies, or unacknowledged structures of thinking within any given society, must be identified as functioning as a field of possibility which allow certain knowledges, practices, technologies and architectures to emerge, proliferate and then disappear at any given moment. Furthermore, as Garland (2014) argues, this “critical history” focuses on using “historical materials to bring about a “revaluing of values” in the present day.” (p. 372), a phrase that clearly borrows from Nietzsche’s (2007) famous ‘revaluation of values’.

These values, which remain unchallenged or critiqued continue to circulate through accepted discourses within society. This genealogy opens a space in which we can begin to identify such unacknowledged values, bring them to the forefront of our attention and initiate the critical work of challenging and (potentially) changing them. This genealogy, however, is not an attack on the school in principle or what it purports to do. Neither is it a condemnation of the role of the teacher or the classroom or knowledges or pedagogies held by these individuals and structures; it is a critique of the conditions of emergence that have brought us to this present moment. This genealogy constructs a “history of the present” (Foucault 1991a, p. 31) of the teacher and the school.

To enact this process of critique we may begin to move beyond common systems of thinking and to “think about the ways in which current structures construct and constrain our possible modes of action and being.” (Ball 2017, p. 37) As Ball (2017) argues, genealogy has a “primary focus on practices rather than laws, on discourses rather than rhetorics, on techniques and procedures and architectures rather than social structures” (p. 47). Genealogy explores discourse as one of the primary ways in which our culture produces knowledge, meaning and understanding thereby developing an understanding of the emergence of the school and teacher subjectivity. As Hook (2005) argues, genealogy can easily “accommodate those dimensions of discourse (history, materiality, the conditions of possibility underwriting ‘knowledge’)” which are “less facilitated by more textually focused or less historically sensitive models…” (p. 3). This genealogy conceives of discourse in a particular way: “Genealogy is the primary domain of analysis in Foucault’s work,” which developed from “archaeology” however they are similar because “Foucault, through them, retells the history of disciplines, institutions and practices drawing on excluded and hidden texts or voices, therefore troubling the hegemony of established histories.” (Ball 2013, p. 35) Discourses, arguably, are to be found in all aspects of our lives but for Foucault they play a crucial role as the means by which knowledge and meaning can be produced, distributed and controlled in our society. Discourse is a force that produces, organises and limits the systems of knowledge and practices that are available in society within different historical periods. Most importantly to the genealogist, discourses are used to construct meaning and knowledge and are bound in relations of power which play out in a variety of ways. As Lazaroiu (2013) states in relation to Foucault’s work “discourses refer to different ways of structuring areas of knowledge and social practice…” and discourse analysis of a general sort can be understood as “a methodological tool to develop a theory of the relation between knowledge and forms of social control.” (p. 823) In my understanding, any given discourse regulates the production of statements, which have arisen from and within a set of contingent historical, political and cultural rules and factors. They define what can and what cannot be said and as such are imbued with power. As Foucault (2002) argues:

Each society has its regime of truth, its “general politics” of truth: that is, the types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true; the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true and false statements… (p. 131)

However, discourse is contingent and changes through history depending, as it does so, on a variety of factors. Foucault (1981) states that discourses must be “treated as discontinuous practices” which are subject to a matrix of factors and which “cross each other, are sometimes juxtaposed with one another, but can just as well exclude or be unaware of each other.” (p. 67) By focusing this genealogy on discourse, I endeavour to trace how certain statements or ways of thinking and being in educational settings have emerged and proliferated. These statements or knowledges are dependent upon the discourse that is present at any given historical moment. By investigating discourse, it is possible to trace the emergence of certain systems of thinking, certain epistemologies, and, as a result, certain knowledges. This genealogy recognises that “we are products of discourses and power relations…” (Danaher et. al. 2000, p. 118), because they impact on the ways in which we construct meaning about ourselves and our world.

Because knowledge is established as a product of discourse, and is bound within relations of power, the genealogist seeks to show that knowledge can be spoken of in the plural: there are different knowledges and ways of knowing that have emerged throughout history. As Ball (2017) states, by showing the contingency of knowledge it is possible to “show that there have been other ways of thinking and acting, and that modern discourses are not any truer than those in the past.” (p. 47) This also means that this genealogy has potential implications for shaping the current discourse around education, affecting the knowledge that may be produced in our current political and cultural circumstances. Finally, because discourse is constantly changing and knowledge, as a product of discourse, is also changing, we cannot say that there are any truths, only interpretations. Foucault (2013) argues that because “knowledge is an invention” this means: (1) “it is not inherent in human nature” and the “possibility of knowledge is not a formal law”; (2) “it is without model” and “no prototype of knowledge preceded human knowledge”; (3) knowledge “is not joined to the structure of the world” and objects are not existing to “be seen or known” meaning they have no hidden meaning or depth to be discovered and, finally, (4) knowledge “is the result of a complex operation” (p. 203-204).

Exploring discourse leads me to consider truth, or truth production which is another key concept in this genealogy. Foucault (2002) argues that “truth is a thing of this world” which manifests through “multiple forms of constraint” and “induces regular effects of power.” (p. 131) Furthermore, he argues that our society and culture “has its regime of truth, its “general politics” of truth - that is, the types of discourse it accepts and makes function as true.” (p. 131) He also suggests that these truths, and the discourses that support them, originate from specific “mechanisms” which “enable one to distinguish true and false statements”, and from specific individuals “who are charged with saying what counts as true. (p. 131) These statements, Foucault (1981) argues, “rest on an institutional support: [they are] both reinforced and renewed by whole strata of practices, such as pedagogy…” and is “renewed, no doubt more profoundly, by the way in which knowledge is put to work, valorised, distributed, and in a sense attributed, in a society.” (p. 55) Thus in relation to the question of truth, this genealogy seeks to explore how institutional practices play a part in the production of truth statements and how they statements are put to work through a variety of multifaceted channels.

Patton (1984) argues that Foucault described his texts as works of ‘fiction’ to carefully construct his ideas and concepts and not lay any claims to truth or objective knowledge. His works are “constructed with a view to producing specific and local “truth effects”” and the “analyses themselves, for example, those of the prison or of sexuality in terms of power relations, display this partial and limited character.” (p. 76) This genealogy must not “confuse itself with a search for the origins but will rather look at the accidents and details that accompanied every beginning, free from perfect truth.” (Foucault 1984, p. 80) This poses a unique issue for this thesis in which I wish to use my own experiences within the school to conduct this genealogy. As such, in *4. Narratives*, I shall craft a careful conceptualization for my use of narrative experiences explaining how they do not attempt to produce some essential truth or authentic experience but still function to say something about the ways in which institutions contain a range of practices and pedagogies for the production of truth statements. This exploration does not seek to uncover facts that may have been covered over by other insidious and politically-motivated knowledges which may seem to blight the teaching profession. My investigation is not carried out to achieve what Foucault (1984) calls a “universal reciprocity, where the rule of law finally replaces warfare” (p. 85) and where the true objectives and nature of education can be freed from oppression. Nor, as Foucault (1981) argues, does it seek to give voice to “a vast unlimited discourse, continuous and silent, which is quelled and repressed” (p. 67) but to become aware of “the will to truth, that prodigious machinery designed to exclude” (p. 56) that exists within us. This genealogy seeks what Hook (2005) describes as “a kind of historical density, a juxtaposition of varying perspectives on knowledge, of various circumstantialities underlying such knowledges” and a “collection of layers of historical sedimentation” to show that knowledges and truths “may be continually inscribed and overwritten.” (p. 14) Whilst this genealogy hopes to contribute to the field of genealogy and Foucauldian scholarship, I heed the warnings of Foucault not to allow this discourse to collate with others to provide a strengthening argument against any particular field of knowledge. Foucault asks (2004) “…don’t we run the risk of building, with our own hands, a unitary discourse?” (p. 11) Therefore, this thesis is a discrete work that focuses on a collection of specific and contextually-based problems. In exploring the various practices, technologies and architectures to be found in the school as well as the discourses that support them, this genealogy is not intended to create a clean and comforting picture but one which embraces the messy and inconsistent nature of these discursive formations. As mentioned, this thesis does not seek to establish coherence or unity in the history of education but to fracture it and open it up to a critique which may, at times, be uncomfortable.

Genealogies, which Foucault (1984) at one point calls ‘effective histories’, have profound implications for how we consider ourselves and the world in which we live. As Pignatelli (1995) states, “the core of genealogy is its concern with how we presently constitute, order, and know ourselves individually and collectively.” (p. 391) Because this genealogy attempts to critique educational principles and seeks to do so through historicising discourse and questioning the infallibility of truths, it must also consider the very nature of our systems of thought, bringing into question epistemologies on which our conceptions of education rest. Hunter (1994) claims:

We have become adept at identifying and labelling what we take to be irrational elements in the pedagogies of other cultures. We routinely stigmatise so-called ‘ritualised’ relations of cultural transmission - guru and disciple, yogi and neophyte - for not being based on the free choices of self-reflective subjects. We are less ready to recognise such elements in the system of schooling that our societies have been developing since the eighteenth century. (p. 86)

To begin this process of identifying and labelling the elements that Hunter describes, I frame this genealogy within the context of epistemologies. Danaher et al. (2000) describe this concept of systems of thought or epistemologies as “the grounds on which we base everything, so we more or less take them for granted”; they are an “organising principle…” which are “more or less unconscious…” and which “determines how we make sense of things, what we know, and what we say.” (p. 17) In attempting to understand how teacher subjectivity is formed, it is imperative to understand how systems of thought have perpetuated specific discourses and enabled institutional practices and mechanism to emerge and function. As Danaher et al. (2000) argue, “we are products of discourses and power relations…” (p. 118), and as such, in trying to explore the teacher subject we must explore discourse as a product of our current epistemologies. This consideration focuses on the fact that:

we are a number of different people… the kind of subject or person we are in different places and times depends on the rules, discourses and ideas in a culture which determine what can be said, thought and done, and on the social and historical context in which we live (Danaher et al. 2000, p. 124)

With respect to systems of thought, I am influenced by Foucault’s concern to “uproot its traditional foundations and relentlessly disrupt its pretended continuity” because an effective history “deprives the self of the reassuring stability of life and nature…” (Foucault 1984, p. 88) It is not, as Pignatelli (1995) argues about “getting the story "right"…” but about pursuing a desire to disturb “the ease with which we regulate ourselves through our complicity to a hegemonic, modem form of rationality…” (p. 388) It can be argued that epistemologies have changed throughout history and will do so again under certain circumstances. Using Foucauldian thinking, it becomes plausible to argue that throughout history there have been a number of epistemologies or systems of thought which have related to ways in which we conceive of our self, our world and our ability to function within it. A change in a system of thought, or “epistemic revolution” (p. 65) as McNay (1994) terms it, can signify a complete transformation in the discourses that circulate within a society, therefore closing down old systems of knowledge and opening up new possibilities and different subjectivities. I would briefly like to explore this further for the sake of my argument in this thesis.

Foucault (1989) describes such a revolution in *The Order of Things* which took place at the beginning of the 19th century and marked a transformation in “episteme of Western culture…” signifying “the beginning of the modern age.” (xxii) This shift was vital in reconstituting ‘man’. As Paden (1987) states,

By ‘man’, Foucault does not mean human kind, but rather a particular view of human cognitive processes which take them to be open to a kind of empirical investigation which can both provide a ground for knowledge and explain behaviour. This view, which Foucault refers to as ‘humanism’, is, he claims, of recent origin, a product of the particular ‘arrangement of knowledge’, which he refers to as ‘the modern episteme’. (p. 123)

This transformation “situated man as a knower, who was endowed with agency and freedom…” who “could access knowledge and truth regarding himself.” (Stothard 2018, p. 322) reinforcing the belief that we now commonly identify with that we are all have power over our lives, power over our experiences and can use learning and education as the means to fulfil our destinies. This belief, Hunter (1994), argues has led to a “formation of the individual as a self-reflective and self-regulating moral personality…” (p. 10) with the “capacity for unconditioned insight into the universal ends of morality…” or “the eternal and immutable dictates of reason.” (p. 7) Based on this system of thought, man was designated in the modern era as an (obviously gendered) individual who could use “educational practices… to develop this humanistic tendency to judge and modify oneself…” (Stothard 2018, p. 322). It is because of these epistemologies, and the discourses that emerged from them, that particular social practices and pedagogies have appeared. This undoubtedly affected the school which appeared in the social and cultural milieu of the 19th century. Thus, as Ball (2017) argues, “education and schooling…” could become the means “by which the individual is enabled to develop or unfold towards some absolute form of rational being.” (p. 30) It is on this system of thinking, or epistemology, that our conception of education is built and our institutions and teachers function. By investigating these specific systems of thinking as outlined above, this genealogy traces the functioning of educational discourse and the development of certain educational practices within a meta-narrative of rationality. This kind of critique, Pignatelli (1995) states, “affords the educator a space in which to problematize empirical and commonly held assertions…” because “an investigation into a specific rationality…” affords the genealogist “a means by which to gain access to technologies of power…” which are “the actual practices generated, legitimated, sustained, and even extended by the machinations of a specific rationality.” (p. 392)

To investigate the practices and technologies to be found in the school, I shall use the theoretical tools developed by Foucault and apply them to a range of locally-based problems. Indeed, many researchers have called for such an undertaking to emerge such as Pignatelli (1995) who argues:

The proper place to begin an analysis of power and a genelogical [sic] intervention is at a specific site where there is evidence that power is being resisted. The school is one such site. It provides educators with a field of opportunities for initiating and actively supporting critical research projects… (p. 394)

Given that my review of the literature has indicated a distinct lack of material which utilises genealogy in critiquing discourses and practices that are functioning within localised educational settings, I believe there is a distinct need for further consideration in this area. As Ball (2017) has argued, there is much to be gained from “revalidating excluded or marginalized voice[s], like those of teachers…” (p. 46) in writing critical histories, which I argue could add further nuance and insight into the play of power within our institutions. For the purposes of this thesis, this will entail a mixed-methodological approach in which I shall make an argument for combing genealogy and autoethnography to inform this genealogical critique. As I explore in *4. Narratives* this will not be unproblematic; it will become clear that genealogy and autoethnographic narratives do not necessarily sit comfortably together in theory. In that chapter, I explore and fortify this possibility, referring to the work of Ball and Tamboukou (2003) who consider the implications, both in theory and practice, of combing these two seemingly conflicting research methodologies. Moreover, I argue that in offering this genealogy, informed by a mixed methodological approach and conceived as a highly-contextualised piece of research, this analysis may offer possibilities for other researchers to do the same, using their own experiences to form histories of the present. Allen (2014) provides us with a tentative metaphor for contextualising genealogy in local settings stating:

Genealogy mirrors, indeed, the early stages of guerrilla war… In the early phase of guerrilla war, the revolutionary band is still small and depends entirely upon its terrain. The great weakness of the guerrilla force is its diminutive size. Its great strength lies in its flexibility. Whilst large armies operate according to a relatively inflexible protocol of engagement, the guerrilla band is free to adjust its tactics to the specific situations it encounters. Unconventional methods combined with constant reinvention can subvert the conventional and predictable strategies of a larger army. Detailed knowledge of the terrain is also essential so that the guerrilla may use this landscape to best advantage. Finally, the revolutionaries must be attentive to the needs of the local population, for without their support and recruitment the movement cannot grow. (p. 68)

Clearly Allen is not equating genealogy to revolutionary insurgency, but he is pointing here to the importance of retaining genealogy as a localised, and in part improvised, tactically informed mode of critique. In contextualising this research, I hope to achieve what Allen (2014) terms as an “appreciation of the local population…” and of the “needs and hopes that are silenced by the dominant regime of power.” (p. 68) Here, Allen warns that genealogy “must remain within the early stages of struggle…” and must not have “aspirations to statecraft…” (p. 68-69). This genealogy does not wish to use contextualised critiques in order to change practices or ways or working by organising them around a ‘better’ or enhanced version of education, nor to launch a type of academically-sanctioned critique on those professionals who inhabit such institutions. Instead I use these localised critiques to offer a more nuanced understanding of how discourses, practises and architectures function within institutions to make subject positions possible. And in writing this genealogy within the context in which I work, I am acutely aware of my own claim to power. As Patton (1984) warns “Intellectuals, as bearers of the speaking positions allowed within the social regime of truth, are themselves agents and beneficiaries of this system of power…” and even when “speaking on behalf of others - the insane, the imprisoned or the masses - the intellectual is perpetuating a system of power which prevents these others from speaking for themselves” (p. 72-73). Similarly, Pignatelli (1995) states that “Foucault's genealogist strives for anonymity, a facelessness in so far as it succeeds in averting the traditionally authoritative rote of the intellectual.” (p. 393) Whilst I shall discuss this problem further (*2.5. Why Genealogy?*) I believe it is important to allow this issue to surface within this discussion and to highlight the importance of resolving this matter which will have a crucial impact on this genealogy.

**Summary**

The present as a privileged vantage point from which the genealogist can assess the errors and triumphs of the past is forsaken. Clearly, Foucault is not attempting to write and to affirm a history of humankind's continuous progress. Rather genealogy addresses the particular circumstances of power in its modern form… (Pignatelli 1995, p. 387)

To summarise, this thesis presents an exploration and critique of genealogical methods, including how those methods have been used by other researchers to contextualise and interrogate a selection of historically situated problems. This allows me to interrogate how these methods can be used to submit my own experiences in the form of experiential vignettes to genealogical critique. Therefore, this genealogy of the school and teacher subject opposes other possible histories of their formation which might be an expression of rational progress towards an ideal architecture for the fulfilment of a fully-manifested educational principle. I shall present a messy and provisional genealogy which embraces contingency. To do this I have sought to establish that discourse, which is responsible for the production of knowledge and the practices that emerge from such knowledges, are dependent upon certain systems of thinking in our history. Because knowledges, which can be spoken of if the plural, are dependent upon specific epistemologies or structures of thinking throughout history, this means they are contingent and susceptible to circumstance and change. I argue it is then possible that there have been or could be other ways of thinking or conceiving of the concept of the teacher and the school and that nothing can be described as ‘true’ but only interpretation. Although this thesis refers to discourse it moves beyond discourse to consider how practices, mechanisms and architectures have contributed to systems of power, as seen in Foucault’s own genealogies. Furthermore, this thesis is a jarring and problematic undertaking; it initiates a search for and critique of principles and values which have gone unnoticed or, more commonly, have been disregarded within educational institutions. By exploring collections of knowledge, and the practices and architectures that have arisen from them, it becomes possible to trace the historical conditions within which our current circumstances arose. Historical developments such as these are discussed and conceptualised in terms of emergences and descents, as Foucault does; discourses, practices, technologies and architectures are part of this exploration and will not be viewed as common-sense or normal but treated with suspicion and intrigue. However, this critique is not totalising in its intent and I acknowledge that this work can only ever be perspectival in kind if it is to be truly genealogical. Therefore, I welcome other genealogical perspectives of the teacher and school which may accord, juxtapose or even conflict with this genealogy but which, inevitably, add to a growing discourse of discontinuity in education. In doing so I encourage an unsettling in my own experiences. Perhaps, as Foucault (2004) argues, this genealogy should result in “a sort of general feeling that the ground was crumbling beneath our feet, especially in places where it seemed most familiar, most solid, and closest [nearest] to us…” (p. 6)

**2.5. Why genealogy?**

I shall consider the ways in which this genealogy is useful (or not), whether it is necessary (or not) and what limitations may present an obstacle for the reception of this work. Firstly, I would like to address the work of Friedrich Nietzsche. In choosing genealogy as my method it is difficult to escape the figure of Nietzsche, who is called to mind by the very suggestion of genealogical critique. Allen (2018) suggests that both Nietzsche and Foucault can be understood as genealogists in that they “attempt to disturb the reader by interrogating the ambiguous and contradictory historical forces from which we have been constituted…” as well as suggesting “alternative, rival subjectivities and modes of self-formation” through establishing an “analytic, cognitive disturbance with rhetorical devices designed to further undermine the subjective attachments of their readers.” (p. 52) However, others have, according to Allen, “sought to distinguish between Nietzschean and Foucauldian genealogy…” stating that a “Nietzschean genealogy is more speculative, fanciful and freewheeling, whereas Foucauldian genealogy is patiently diligent, resolutely scholarly, analytically cool, and (one might hope) academically credible.” (p. 52)

As Allen argues, it is not a case of trying to establish two different genealogical methods but trying to view Foucault’s methods as emerging from the work of Nietzsche. As such, this work leans towards and follows Foucault’s genealogy as an “analysis of modern power as a positive and productive force.” (Pignatelli 1995, p. 386) Furthermore, because this investigation grew out of a sustained engagement with Foucault’s work, rather than that of Nietzsche’s, and is more strongly framed by the latter’s understanding of genealogy, along with the theoretical frameworks that Foucault developed alongside. Thus, an engagement with Nietzschean genealogy is beyond the scope of the current work.

**2.5.1. What limitations are there to this genealogy?**

I would like to discuss particular limitations of genealogy in reference to this thesis and the specific problems which it endeavours to address. It is, as Pignatelli (1995) states, the “genealogist's task… to contest and destabilize the positioning of knowledge about persons as disinterested, impartial, and beyond the exigencies and play of power” and yet genealogy is “not immune from the charge that it, too, is nested in a regime of power.” (p. 388) Acknowledging this is an important part of the work of genealogists as it recognizes the paradox that every genealogist is caught within. The genealogist occupies a difficult position as a producer of knowledge, as a potential expert voice or voice of power, as an agent of power in the institutions in which they work and as a person who is both for and against education in some way. By engaging in this genealogical research, which attempts to create a highly-contextualised critique, there is a danger of becoming a voice of expertise in which other voices or knowledges are subjugated. In doing so, this genealogy would not critique disciplinary power but only reinforce it. Pignatelli (1995) addresses this issue asking if genealogy can “be authored without being authoritative? Can it avoid speaking with a certainty and inevitability that manages to occlude other voices…” (p. 393). However, if the genealogist speaks and, in doing so, is able to problematize and critique him or herself as a proponent of power, recognising once again the myriad of historical and contingent circumstances that has made it possible to speak and that what is being spoken is only interpretation and lays no claim on truth, genealogy would enable the researcher to remove themselves from some claims to power.

Pignatelli (1995) argues that Foucault “recognizes this dilemma and works hard to diminish such effects…” by bringing “to his genealogical investigations a suspicion of all interpretation that purports to provide definitive understanding, even his own.” (p. 388) Thus in establishing this thesis as genealogical I will, as suggested, treat the critique that I establish regarding educational practices with suspicion.

It is a difficult position to be in and Allen (2018) identifies the genealogist as “a wretched figure…” who is “symptomatic of the ruin of education…” because they are “both of and against education.” (p. 58) Engaging in this process is to acknowledge “a troubling and perplexing condition…” in which the genealogist “participates in the very practices she/he attempts to criticize.” (Pignatelli 1995, p. 386) Understanding the implications of trying to fashion a critique which acknowledges its own fallibility, it seems essential then to situate the genealogist. Pignatelli (1995) argues:

Foucault positions himself off to the side. He becomes an archivist who resurrects the past in configurations that are intended to raise uncertainty, conjure doubt about the critical import of the master intellectual's stock and trade: truth and justice. Yet the discourse produced (the research) is meant to be useful to those engaged in extricating themselves from hegemonic contexts. Foucault's genealogist responds to dangerous, troubling situations and enables combatants. (p. 393)

This conceptualisation of the genealogist is useful in that it empowers me to engage in this research as it offers a way to conceive not only of the genealogist in theory but also in practice. The genealogist must, as Allen (2018) argues, work “within these normative frameworks, rendering them unstable and liable to collapse in their own terms.” (p. 54) Acknowledging that the work of genealogy is constantly eroding and undermining the same work it tries to do is to acknowledge the impossible position the genealogist works within. Any genealogical work in the field of education is damning both for education and genealogy itself; as Allen (2018) argues, it becomes “clear by now that a genealogy of education undermines the ground upon which it sits.” (p. 58)

Finally, genealogy is unique and problematic in another way. This genealogy does not try to change the present but acts as a means to describe it and destablise what we hold dear and truthful about our current circumstances. It brings with it outrage yet does not try to direct or dictate how things should change but challenge ways of thinking about it in this present moment. As Allen (2014) states “genealogy refuses to suggest or even hint at alternative forms of social life.” (p. 246) A great deal of academic work is undertaken with an intention to discover something and to set about a process in which it can be changed. As such, much academic work is invested in the present but is expected to forge a pathway into the future, to have some impact on a disciplinary field in theory or practice. This renders the present genealogy problematic as it has no desire or methodological tools by which to effect such change. Allen (2014) argues that genealogy “makes a deliberate choice; it refuses to speak of the future…” but instead concentrates its instruments “to destablise the present.” (p. 246) Because it seeks only to describe and critique and thereby reveal the contingency of current circumstances, it does not venture any further because the vast contingency of the present establishes that any prediction of the future of education or attempt to direct that future would be futile. Genealogies are “not intended as maps of the future. They are neither hopeful nor hopeless projections.” (Pignatelli 1995, p. 392) Genealogies are, in short, histories of the present.

**3. Teachers and classrooms: a dominant discourse**

This chapter presents a brief genealogy of the teacher and classroom during the middle of the 19th century in order to contextualise and establish the ground for the subsequent analysis of more recent educational experience. I have chosen this period of time for specific reasons. The limited word count means I am not able to give more than a brief overview, where to attempt to give an extensive history of the teacher and classroom would not be possible. Therefore, I have focused on what I believe is a crucial period in the development of the teacher and the classroom. Moreover, this period of time is accepted by some researchers (Hunter 1994, Jones 1990) as the period in which the historical teacher we might most readily recognise today appeared within the educational landscape. Thus, this signifies an important period in which to begin such a genealogical undertaking. This period is also well documented: a wealth of material is available to the researcher meaning it is possible to explore and critique various narratives that were born during this time. Thus, I should like to discuss several areas of interest in this chapter. Firstly, I shall discuss key political, cultural and social moments within the developing trajectory of the teacher, thinking carefully about how changing discourse within the political and public sphere provided certain conditions necessary for the disqualification of certain manifestations of the teacher and the emergence of others. Secondly, I shall explore the actual appearance of the teacher subject throughout this period, thinking about their manifestation as an educationalist and the pedagogy they purported to the urban mass. Thirdly, I shall briefly discuss how teacher training, as enacted by Kay-Shuttleworth, became a staple practice in the creation of teacher pedagogy and subjectivity. Finally, I wish to add another genealogical element to the discussion, thinking about how the use of disciplinary space was constructed and utilised to support the teacher in their work and how this architecture was also implicit in manifesting the teacher subject.

On the Chartered College of Teaching’s (2017) webpage ‘Our history’, Dame Alison Peacock, the Chief Executive of the college, is quoted as saying “Teaching transforms lives. Now the teaching profession has the opportunity to transform itself through a new Chartered College of Teaching.” This seemingly innocuous statement offers a critical point from which this thesis wishes to launch its critique. Similarly, on the Department for Education’s (2019a) ‘Get into Teaching’ website, it offers an insight into the work and life of a teacher; potential teachers are offered a “chance to inspire young people and use your skills to give something back – making sure every pupil gets the same access to a quality education and the opportunity to succeed.” Both these statements, made by two different bodies, are examples of ways of speaking or thinking about teaching, classrooms and schooling in our society and are symptomatic of dominant discourses in our systems of thinking. I argue that they are problematic for two reasons. Firstly, these discourses could be read as offering little more than a white-washed account of the ways in which teachers, classrooms and schools have appeared in our society. Furthermore, because of the strength of such discourses, it seems little space is left for the historicity of the teacher which, I shall argue, may be formed as the result of a variety of cultural, social and political circumstances. I suggest that these discourses are also born from a dialectical view of history, one that fails to account for the experiences and voices of peoples such as teachers and children.

The current conceptualisation of the teacher, both as a public figure and as a professional engaging in teaching and learning, remains controversial. Various governmental websites such as ‘Get into Teaching’ offer a specific idea of what the teacher is, the work they do and how they utilise the classroom as a space for learning and teaching. Of course, the dominant discourse which supports this interpretation is the work of Department for Education who attempt to offer a glimpse into the life of a teacher but who also attempt to meet recruitment targets. The various ways in which society interfaces with discourses surrounding the teacher and classroom (media, institutions, stakeholders) reveal the extent to which discourses proliferate and strengthen an interpretation and view of the teacher subject.

The above contemplation of the teacher, the work they do and the success and rewards that can be derived from it all signify a very specific way in which the teacher subjected is perceived by those outside of education, those who work within education and by the teacher and their colleagues. I believe it could be argued that the teacher, and the classroom space they utilise to aid them, was not slowly and continuously developed throughout history but emerged within the educational landscape again and again, reconfigured and reconceptualised based on the societal and political forces and influences that surrounded it. This current appearance, as I have described above, is once again possible due to the narrative surrounding the conception of the teacher as well as the societal needs and governmental drivers which are at play. We are less receptive to an understanding of the teacher as a developing and changing manifestation; perhaps it is possible to think that people who become teachers change but the essential work and status of the teacher remains the same throughout history. This genealogy suggests that we could view the teacher appearing from teacher training institutions as one of many appearances within a long and messy history of teacher subjects. It could be argued that the teacher we most readily recognise in the 21st century is an historical invention of the 19th century and which emerged from specific conditions that will be described. However, it is important to acknowledge even earlier manifestations of the teacher subject appeared in the field of education before this. These manifestations of the teacher, which we might not so readily recognise, played a crucial role in constituting the teacher which appeared in the mid 19th century and whose appearance (in some ways) resembles the teacher of the 21st century.

How did these previous forms of the teacher manifest the new teacher? As I shall come to discuss in greater detail, two new assemblages of education which appeared in the 18th and early 19th century were the monitorial and moral training schools. Monitorial schools, which had been developed by Andrew Bell[[2]](#footnote-2), were credited with being the first schools in which large numbers of pupils could be trained with the use of only one instructor and whose use of student-supervisors was crucial to the running of the school. This new manifestation of teaching and educating, which had been “refined over a period of years until the return of Andrew Bell to Britain in 1796.” (Allen 2013, p. 225) had such an impact on the educational landscape that it may well have influenced the genealogy of the teacher. Indeed, as Gillard (2018b) notes, the Church of England subsequently adopted Bell’s methods as the main style fo teaching as the momentum for mass education became stronger and monitorial schools came to be known as National Schools. This emergence of a teacher-master was unique as it demonstrated a formalised role of the teacher who oversaw the complete system working within one large classroom, possibly educating many hundreds of students. Similarly, Moral Training schools, established in Glasgow by David Stow, allowed for a new type of teacher to develop. Moral training schools, Allen (2013) suggests, focused on a “relationship between teacher and pupil…” in comparison to the “monitorial approach where shallowness was a virtue, where monitor-teachers were recruited for reasons of their near intellectual equivalence with one another.” (p. 237)

I suggest it is important to note that these two differing forms of teacher were not completely unconnected throughout the historical development of the teacher. As Allen (2013) states, whilst these two institutions used different methods for education and examining we should not overlook “the extent to which these institutions also borrowed from each other, establishing relationships between their respective approaches…” (p. 242). That is, they played an integral role in the development of education and teaching and directly impacted the manifestations of the teacher that were to emerge throughout the 19th century. Furthermore, as Gillard (2018b) notes, David Stow - the architect of the moral training school - had already begun opening teacher training colleges in Glasgow, highlighting the need for a formalised process of training teachers. This development of teacher training colleges would lay the foundations for the teacher-subject that we would most readily recognise today.

This assertion that the teacher has a historical dimension full of accident, possibility, emergence and descent is shared by other genealogists and social historians. Therefore, to conduct this introductory genealogy of teachers and classrooms I refer to the work of Allen (2013; 2014), Hunter (1994), Hurt (1971) and Jones (1990) who all offer, in some sense, genealogical histories of education and the role that teachers and classroom have played in the history of education. Each of these researchers offer a different narrative surrounding the concept of the teacher but do so with a view to critique the ways in which we think and talk about education. Furthermore, they explore the role that knowledge and power have played in the historical evolution of the teacher. Thus, by using the work of genealogists and, specifically, Allen (2013), I shall attempt to establish that the teacher appeared not from a continuous and rational historical lineage but “from a cluster of practices that were developed at a number of sites and were influenced by a range of political, social, historical, and psychological narratives.” (p. 218)

**3.1. The political and cultural climate surrounding the appearance of the teacher**

The 1830s were a time of profound change within the educational landscape: in terms of discourse, a strengthening belief in the potential good of education began to emerge in the public sphere. I begin in 1832 with Kay-Shuttleworth’s (2009) *The Moral and Physical Condition of the Working Class Employed in the Cotton Manufacture in Manchester* which concerned the working conditions of the urban poor. This publication marks an important moment in the growing discourse surrounding the care and education of children in Victorian Britain in which Kay-Shuttleworth[[3]](#footnote-3) highlighted a growing concern for the urban poor. At this time, there was no state education offered to the population; what schools did exist were run by churches and societies and they had full control over the administration and the education they offered. This lack of state education was identified, through specific statistical information provided by Kay-Shuttleworth, as a growing issue. Urgency around this matter was also augmented by the alarming increase in the population witnessed during the 19th century: in the second half of the 19th century the population almost doubled from 16.8 million in 1851 to 30.5 million in 1901 in England and Wales. As Gillard (2018b) recounts, in 1833 an independent MP named Roebuck[[4]](#footnote-4) recognised the growing issue and attempted to convince parliament that all children between six and twelve should go to school. Whilst this plan was rejected, the government did subsequently intervene by offering grants for new school building but which would be overseen by religious societies. Whilst this was a very small amount of money, this intervention signifies the historical emergence of a discourse surrounding the dangers of ignoring the moral education of the urban poor. Furthermore, Gillard (2018b) notes that the 1833 ‘Factories Act’ introduced severe restrictions and prohibitions against children working in factories. It argued that children should attend school six days a week for two hours a day. Throughout the 1830s a discourse emerged which was concerned with the “urban population, its indigence and immorality…” and which occasioned “a strategy for reforming the poor.” (Jones 1990, p. 59) This reform, Jones suggests, would be achieved through “an apparatus…” (p. 59) which emerged as the historical school and forged within the education the emergence of a mechanism which would remain part of the educational landscape until today.

This growing concern surrounding education and the urban poor resulted in the creation of a body which took specific interest in the education of children. In 1839, an Order in Council established the Committee of the Privy Council on Education, which was directly responsible for the education of the masses. This committee, on which Kay Shuttleworth held the position of secretary, was approved by Queen Victoria and established the beginnings of direct state involvement in the education of children. This Privy Council began enacting steps by which to train new teachers, creating an inspectorate, deciding on the salaries and pensions of teachers and launched a process that would subsequently bring schools entirely under the care of the state.

It was not until the 1850s, with the needs of the increasing population, that it became clear that the Church or England schools and British and Foreign School Society were unable to provide adequate places for children to be educated. This occasioned the need for further investigation into the state of education. It was not until the release of the Newcastle Report in 1861 by the Royal Commission on the State of Popular Education in England that the true extent of Education in England was fully comprehended. As Allen (2013) states:

This moment in the history of schooling, a moment that witnessed the birth of more systematic and widespread instruction, could be viewed as a triumph of inclusion. A chain of events was unfolding that would ultimately result in the guarantee that all children will have access to a formal education. (p. 221)

These political and societal circumstances were all part of the reimaging and reconceptualising of the teacher. What follows is an exploration of the emergences of the different manifestations that were given the label of teacher throughout the historical period described above.

**3.2. Teachers and their training**

As discussed in *2. Genealogies*, Jones (1990) describes the history of the 19th century teacher as the “passage of a failure…” (p. 75); his comment refers to the many unsuccessful manifestations the teacher subject progressed through before and during the period in which the state assumed responsibility for schooling. The teacher that appears today is a figure that has a definite historical point of emergence within a range of different institutions that existed in the 19th century. As argued above, the 1830s saw the emergence of a range of narratives, discourses, personages and institutions which constituted the birth of the historical teacher and would continue to develop into the teacher we recognise today. By the time Roebuck and Kay-Shuttleworth began taking an increasing interest in the possibility of education for all, some educational establishments already existed such as the dame school and the monitorial schools. These two particular institutions are crucial in this genealogy of the teacher as they provide opposite ends of the spectrum in terms of teachers which I shall now explore.

Dame schools, which were often “run by inferior people who were scratching together a living on the margins of society…”, were thought to be “irregular, nomadic, and quite possibly a breeding ground of immorality.” (Allen 2013, p. 220) These schools were often selected by those who were amongst the urban poor and the teachers were often viewed as individuals who were unable to find another livelihood to make a living. The teacher, therefore, was often untrained and unqualified and conducted their school from a room in their house. Conversely, Monitorial schools were used to train large numbers of children using a single teacher and a group of assistants. Allen (2013) states that “Bell was forced to design a system that he could superintend alone. A severe but effective economy of power would be required…” (p. 226) for Bell to maintain discipline through the entire school alone. And yet, as Allen states, “this is precisely what Bell declared as his achievement.” (p. 226) His ability to train a large group of students with only the help of student monitors suggested he had developed an institutional architecture which enabled huge numbers of children to be trained with only a single teacher. The lack of teaching staff was not a deliberate choice but one made of necessity; Bell commented that his use of student assistants, that is to say assistance recruited from the student body itself, was due to the relatively poor quality of “proper assistants…” (Allen 2014, p. 31) who Bell felt were not up to the task. Accordingly, he claimed: “One solitary master would conduct the schools…” and would employ scholars who were “dependable students, appropriately trained, [they] would monitor and supervise their peers.” (Allen 2014, p. 31) Such a system involved supervision which was “devolved within a tight scheme, across concerted systems of observation…” (p. 31). Whilst the “disciplinary technique would allow a single master to conduct the activity of a thousand scholars without revolt” the school still required “periodic maintenance” and “the oversight of an educational engineer, of a practitioner who was able to apply the newly established educational expertise.” (Allen 2013, p. 228)

Jones (1990) argues that a discourse of dissatisfaction began to flourish within government regarding the quality and effectiveness of education offered by dame, monitorial and other such schools. This problematisation included a “reevaluation of the teacher” (p. 59) who until the 1830s had little success in educating the urban poor. The dame school teacher was thought of as little more than a woman or man offering child care in their own home and the education provided was limited at best. Similarly, the monitorial school master was perceived by critics of the monitorial school as ineffective in transforming the nature of the immoral urban poor. It is for this reason, Jones (1990) states, that the “urban schoolteacher… was at best [viewed as] an unqualified drill master and at worse a purveyor of corrupt values.” (p. 59) As Allen (2013) argues, many of the educational institutions that functioned during the beginning to the middle of the 19th century were destined to be “short-lived and transitional institutions…” (p. 219) and yet a critical appraisal of their pedagogies and architectures may offer an insight into the reimaging of the teacher and classroom that was to take place within the educational discourse. It can also be argued that these institutions remained popular with members of the impoverished inner-city; as Allen (2013) identifies, the Newcastle Report of 1861 continued to launch a “critique of irregular institutions…” (p. 220) which remained part of the educational landscape for many years to the dismay of government. Their longevity suggests that those in the urban slums were happy with the educational provision offered by these ‘irregular institutions’ - such as dame schools - as it allowed the urban poor to pursue education on their own terms, educated by members of their class. This may help make sense of Kay-Shuttleworth’s later desire for trainee teachers to be taken from the lower ranks in order to secure social proximity between student and teacher.

Kay-Shuttleworth, as acting secretary of the newly established Privy Council, concerned himself with reimaging the figure of the teacher to begin tackling the issues of the urban poor. He began proliferating a new discourse surrounding monitorial, church and dame schools which, until that point, had been allowed to continue to be the main education provider. Jones (1990) states that this Privy Council, through the course of the 1840s, became unconvinced of the monitorial school’s ability to transform the urban slum as it “seemed neither very effective nor disciplined.” (p. 60) The newly-formed inspectorate along with the Privy Council began considering teacher instruction and generated a new discourse surrounding its current conceptualisation and ineffectiveness. The teacher was to be reconfigured from “mechanical instructor [into] a moral exemplar.” (p. 60) This shift highlights the emergence of the ‘moral teacher’ within the educational landscape. This shift was strengthened by the Privy Council’s and Inspectorate’s concern with training a morally or ‘good teacher’, as Jones describes it. As Allen (2013) points out, the council decided “A more systematic education for the depraved masses was required.” (p. 221) which qualified the need for a system of teacher training in which all teachers would be trained in the same pedagogical methods.

As the narrative surrounding monitorial and dame school teachers became increasingly critical, they were eventually disqualified as legitimate education providers and governmental support via grants began to diminish eventually to cease completely. This change within the educational landscape created the possibility for a new manifestation of the teacher to emerge. Thus, as Jones (1990) argues, the discourse throughout and after 1840 was focused mainly on the role the teacher played in the education of children. It was during the 1830s and 1840s, that different views and interests began emerging and were used against one another in an effort to claim dominance in the educational debate. Furthermore, it is in this situation that the power of expert knowledge, as provided by state-employed, social administrators like Kay-Shuttleworth, becomes obvious as it is promoted above other discourses that were circulating. Based on scientific and calculable information, Kay-Shuttleworth was able to qualify his views within a reasoned and logical explanation of how the teacher would address the issues of the urban poor. This new teacher would, based on the experience of previous incarnations, have to be differentiated and tackle key issues that had been previously identified. One such issue was the apparent lack of morality that Kay-Shuttleworth had witnessed in the urban slums of Manchester, as his report had shown in 1832. This new teacher would, most urgently, have to address the issue of so-called immorality in the urban poor through the range of pedagogical methods they would use. This new teacher, Hunter (1994) argues, would “have to incorporate the sympathetic demeanours of both the spiritual guide and the caring parent.” (p. 73) This differed radically from the previous manifestations of the teacher that had already appeared: neither the dame school teacher nor the monitorial superintendent had manifested as a moral personality in particular. Furthermore, as Hunter argues, “the new pastoral teacher was historically differentiated from both the untrained monitorial manager and the linguistically specialised grammar-school master.” (p. 73) through the range of training they received in teacher training institutions. A great deal of experimentation and innovation was needed for this new teacher subject to emerge. As Hunter (1994) argues, Kay-Shuttleworth decided that to “establish the sympathy required for pastoral surveillance, teachers would have to be drawn from the ranks of the lower classes.” (p. 83); a bold move for the council as they attempted to try new methods. Through the process of experimentation, Hunter (1994) argues that “the modern teacher, with its delicate balance of warmth and surveillance, love and discipline…” slowly manifested in the educational landscape and was the “achievement of a remarkable process of cultural adaptation and improvisation, through which government transformed and multiplied the persona of the pastoral guide.” (p. 82-83) Thinking genealogically, it is worth asking what the specific conditions were that allowed the modern teacher to manifest and emerge within the landscape of education.

**3.3. The training of pupil teachers**

Within this discourse of discontent surrounding the teacher, the lack of training and moral standing was identified as a key issue to be resolved. Again, as Hunter (1994) remarks, Kay-Shuttleworth decided that new trainee teachers should be taken from the lower ranks, since, in his view, they possessed a better chance of communicating and affecting change within the urban slum. However, this also meant that careful training was required for these new lowly recruits. This came in the form of intellectual and moral training. This state intervention through training, Hurt (1971) argues, signified “a major part in controlling the supply of and demand for teachers…” as it began to “regulate the supply of teachers in two main ways…”: by controlling “the provision made for their instruction…” and by controlling “the standards that it has been prepared to accept before granting teachers recognition.” (p. 226) Thus in the early 1840s, Jones (1990) argues that Kay-Shuttleworth had already begun outlining various methods and pedagogies which were to be used to train and produce an urban schoolmaster. By 1846, Hurt (1971) states, “the Department took an important step in extending its control over education by offering annual grants for the training of pupil-teachers and monitors.” (p. 78) Hunter (1994) states:

An apprenticeship system was established - the pupil-teacher scheme - which was in effect the first form of post-elementary education open to the lower classes. A network of training colleges gradually emerged, which was to give these same classes their historical entry-point to the previously tiny and elite zone of tertiary education. (p. 84)

Teacher Training Colleges played an essential role in the formation of the new ethical teacher. The first of many such institutions was Kay-Shuttleworth’s flag-ship pupil-teacher scheme at Battersea which was introduced in 1846. Indeed, we could argue that this specific institution played an essential part in the formalisation and emergence of the ethical modern schoolteacher. Teacher training took a vital role in achieving the goals required by the Privy council. As Jones (1990) states, “considerations of curriculum content occupied a secondary role.” (p. 60) It was assumed that this new ethical teacher would be able to transform the labouring classes due to its “irresistible ethical image…” (p. 60) rather than any particular intellectual capability or influence. To begin expanding this new formation of the teacher, teacher training colleges began to emerge in the educational landscape. Jones (1990) notes how training schools started emerging throughout the mid 19th century; schools such as the Normal School at Norwood and David Stow’s Glasgow Academy which began a process of training teachers in the image of ethical persons. This period also witnessed the emergence of a discourse in the form of commentaries which focused on the selection of student teachers, how the teacher should be instructed and trained and how they should behave within the classroom. Furthermore, within these commentaries we see a discourse begin to emerge concerning the use of architectures by which the teacher could be supported in projecting an ethical and moral image.

As noted by Jones (1990), as the path of this moral teacher was yet to unfold, an intense training was required. The training involved a five-year period during which the ability and character of the student-teacher could be sufficiently calculated and trained accordingly. This training paid particular attention to the “surveillance, correction, and confession of the aspirant teachers” (p. 61). Jones notes that from the 1840s, until the end of the century, educationalists (such as Kay-Shuttleworth) were unhappy about the “humbleness of the teachers’ backgrounds”. (p. 60-61) According to Kay-Shuttleworth they had to be both humble and isolated whilst adjusting to their advancement due to their “intellectual capabilities” (p. 61). As such the trainee teacher was inducted into a whole process of self-reflection and self-formation through which they adjusted their behaviour and thoughts based on what was required of them. Jones (1990) comments on teacher training manuals emphasising the “value of ‘modesty’ and the vital ‘qualifications’ of humility and gentleness” (p. 61). It is also clear that teacher training colleges did not attempt to hide the fact they were ethically training their student teachers as comments regarding these pedagogies appear throughout training manuals. The new colleges encouraged an “aroused and heightened self-awareness” (p. 61). The centre of the training college was the principal who acted as a moral exemplar and “constituted the student’s guide” who “rooted out the corrupting vice of degeneracy.” (p. 62) The vigilance of the principal extended even to the private lives of the student teachers. Jones (1990) argues that, for Kay-Shuttleworth, providing these conditions of “discipline, surveillance, and the application of technologies of the self” (p. 62) were of paramount importance. The formation of the student-teacher was heavily weighted towards the development of their ethical behaviour rather than their intellectual abilities: pedagogies of self-regulation played a vital part in the training and were, it is claimed, emphasised over intellectual training. This was because, Jones (1990) argues, it was believed the teacher might otherwise succumb to “the ‘vices’ of arrogance, vanity, and dissatisfaction” (p. 62). This new conceptualisation of the teacher, which was actively fashioned in the new training colleges, cements the emergence of this new ‘moral’ teacher within the history of education. Indeed, Kay-Shuttleworth believed that only through producing and distributing such teachers could a regeneration of the urban social environment take place. As Hunter (1994) notes:

Kay-Shuttleworth’s initial program at Battersea, with its monastic combination of horticulture and self-culture, its exhaustive timetable and unremitting surveillance, was short-lived, at least in its pure form. But what remained in the discipline of teacher training was the pastoral relation between trainee and the teacher-educator... (p. 84)

Hunter’s observation leaves one lasting quality of the teacher that it may be possible to trace forward into the current manifestation of the teacher subject. Whilst it is beyond the scope of this work to trace this historical linage nevertheless I shall investigate to see if any historical echoes of this 19th century moral schema in modern practices. It was “necessary to provide these ‘worker priests’ with the scholastic cultivation and moral authority necessary for them to become mentors to their own class.” (p. 83) Furthermore, it also remained important to raise the profile of the teaching profession, making it an attractive and lucrative profession to be chosen. Hunter states that “conditions of employment had to be established, together with pay scales…” so that the profession of teacher became an honourable profession by “raising its character”. (p. 84)

**3.4. The classroom as an aid**

The Privy Council’s reconceptualization of the teacher as a ‘good teacher’ or morally good teacher was of great importance. This new manifestation of the teacher was conceived through narrative and discourse both in the political and educational fields. Jones (1990) also argues that part of this teacher formation was the creation of an architecture that would support this new teacher in transmitting “ethical values to the children…” (p. 60). Similarly, Allen (2103) argues that educational institutions of the 19th century - such as the monitorial and moral schools - utilised functional and disciplinary spaces in which to achieve the desired outcome of educating the urban poor.

A radical change also took place in the kinds of spaces that were needed for this new conceptualisation of the teacher to be a success in their role as a moral exemplar. Such spaces, until the conception of ‘the gallery’ and ‘the playground’, were unable to support the new, intimate pedagogical practices of the teacher and were, instead, used as spaces to hold children rather than to work on them as moral subjects. Thus, as the teacher trainee scheme began to take form through the 1840s, a discourse emerged that necessitated the creation of a space which the teacher could utilise as part of the ethical training of the urban poor. Dame schools and monitorial schools used space in a completely different way. Dame schools were often run in the homes of teachers and thus were often cramped and were felt to have little impact on the educational training of the children. On the other hand, monitorial schools became synonymous with large halls which were filled with hundreds of scholars.

From the perspective of a present-minded educational subject, it is easy to recall the classroom of a primary school; for many of us it is a lasting memory from our childhood. Moreover, it seems plausible to imagine that classrooms of the past also existed in the same way and that the differences were only to be found in the lessons taught or how strict the teachers were that taught in them. However, this genealogy suggests that the classroom that we imagine has a historical point of emergence and was invented in the 19th century. As Jones (1990) states, the new “moral presence of the teacher” combined with a careful pedagogy “required a specific architecture to project the authority of the teacher.” (p. 63) Thus, the gallery was conceived within the minds of educationalists such as Samuel Wilderspin[[5]](#footnote-5) as a space in which, for the first time in the context of modern mass education, the teacher could make eye contact with all of the children they were to teach. This stands out as a remarkable development in the history of educational spaces as it begins a process in which surveillance of all people within a classroom was possible. This performed a role in strengthening the possibility of the ethical teacher being able to transmit a moral example to the children in their care. As Jones (1990) notes, it was the combination of “not only an exclusive space but also that space occupied by the authoritative voice and loving gaze of the teacher.” (p. 63) Alongside the object lesson, in which understanding of everyday life and objects was taught, the gallery played a central role in the formation of this new type of teacher. So, to further strengthen the effect of the new moral teacher, an architecture was required that “amplified and projected [that] moral presence.” (p. 63) Thus, with the new architecture of the ‘gallery’ and the moral teacher, a new era in education emerged. Using the gallery and the newly formed teacher, the 19th century saw the emergence of what Jones coins as “a machinery of moral synthesis” (p. 63) in which the characteristics of the teacher and the nature of the lessons they taught shifted. The teacher, Jones states, “occupies the place of a model and a focus.” (p. 63)

**4. Narrative**

[I]s it not foolish to imagine that one's life can be, or should be, transformed into a piece of writing and offered up to the general public for consumption? (Olney 1980a, p. 3)

As part of this genealogical investigation I shall utilise some methods which are not commonly deployed in a Foucauldian genealogy but within the collection of narrative methodologies. As such, this chapter deals with how a Foucauldian genealogy may be blended with narrative methodologies convincingly, considering they are situated with very different and, arguably, conflicting epistemological models. Just as Olney (1980a) cautions above, this chapter will deal not only with the problematic of whether personal experience should be offered generally but to what extent theoretical and practical issue surrounding mixed-methodologies can be harmonised. This concern is strengthened by the fact that a distinct lack of educational genealogies which employ narrative methodologies exist within the literature. As such, I shall explore the literature to find traces of possibility that can be exploited. Denzin (2000) offers some encouraging comments stating that “the study of narrative forces the social sciences to develop new theories, new methods and new ways of talking about self and society” (p. xi) as well as interesting new ways to investigate topics. Equally, Tamboukou (2010) states, “narratives are exceptionally useful topics for historical analysis, particularly in offering rich insights into how lives, images, and stories are intertwined in multifarious and complex ways…” (p.19-20). Therefore, I wish to investigate to what ends autoethnographic vignettes can be useful and theoretically aligned with this genealogy. I have explored narrative research literature (Berryman, 1999; Bochner and Ellis, 1999, 2000, 2004; Cook and Crang, 2007; Ellis, 2004; Gannon, 2006; Olney, 1980; Peckin, 2013; Sprinkler, 1980) which is pertinent to this discussion and shall comment on and critique this literature.

This chapter has several aims which seek to demonstrate why autoethnography is a useful and appropriate method for this exploration. Firstly, I address autobiographical narrative whose development can be traced to the emergence of autoethnographic techniques (Adam et al., 2011). Equally, I wish to explore the curious and problematic dimension of autobiographical narrative, considering its many conceptualisations before making an argument for autobiographic writing as a genealogical research methodology. Furthermore, I shall discuss why I have not utilised autobiographical writing itself in this genealogy. Secondly, I explore the field of autoethnography, considering its epistemological constraints and its various conceptualisations by key researchers in the field of education (Bochner, 2005; Bochner and Ellis, 2000; Ellis, 1999; Ellis, 2004) before critiquing them. Finally, after critiquing autoethnography as a method for producing ‘evocative’ narratives, I turn to the work of some poststructural researchers (Gannon, 2006; Jackson and Mazzei, 2008; Kaufmann, 2011) to fashion a Foucauldian theoretical argument for the use of autoethnographic methods in this genealogy. This will encounter a specific conceptualisation of the use of an ‘I’ which shall rethink experience. By creating a poststructural conceptualization of autoethnographic methods, I hope to blend these techniques with those described in the previous genealogies chapter. Furthermore, I shall explore Foucault’s (1980, 1994) comments regarding confession before developing a theoretical conceptualization that blends with my autoethnographic methodology. This will be done to offer a thesis which contains richly-contextualized explorations of the relations of power and knowledge that exist within the primary school classroom which provide the conditions necessary for the teacher-subject to manifest.

**4.1. Autobiography**

In his exploration of narrative, Freeman (2007) argues that “autobiography is itself a fundamental form of narrative inquiry…” (p. 120) and that narrative researchers should consider the historical roots of autobiography that many narrative methodologies descend from. He asks: “how can our consideration of autobiographical understanding inform a narrative inquiry?” (p. 137) This chapter aims to answer that question. I will focus on three areas of autobiography which necessarily develop from one another historically and discuss theoretical and practical considerations of the deployment of autobiographical narrative. This discussion will form the basis for this chapter before moving forward to consider the work of other researchers (Bochner and Ellis, 2000; Denzin and Lincoln, 2000; Ellis, 2004; Wall, 2006) who believe that elements of autobiography remain within the methods and methodologies used by autoethnographers.

Firstly, I shall consider the historical beginnings of autobiography and its emergence within Western society as a literary genre utilised for the expression of self. In doing so, I refer to William Spengemann’s (1980) book *The forms of autobiography: episodes in the history of a literary genre* and Charles Berryman’s (1999) essay ‘Critical mirrors: theories of autobiography’. These texts offer an overview of the historical development of autobiography as genre as well as the complex and contested position autobiographical writing now holds in the fields of research methodology, education and research more generally. Spengemann’s text is a history of autobiography as poetic, philosophical and historical device which can be used to understand autobiography’s relation to older forms of self-writing and newer fictitious forms of writing. He focuses on several issues such as the desire to liberate oneself from the past through writing a new sense of self. Secondly, he discusses the issues of plurality or many selves originating from a single individual. Spengemann’s book is useful as it begins to deal with issues of the modern autobiography as a descendant of philosophical and historical autobiography. As Spengemann (1980) states:

Efforts to expand the boundaries of autobiography have split critical opinion into two schools of thought… those critics who continue to insist that autobiography must employ biographical - which is t0 say historical rather than fictional - materials. On the other side, there are those who assert the right of autobiographers to present themselves in whatever form they may find appropriate and necessary. (p. xii)

Spengemann’s quote demonstrates a promising line of narrative theory; I shall argue that narrative research may be brought into alignment with genealogy because it is able to cross the epistemological boundaries of fiction and fact in a theoretically plausible way. Secondly, I move on to consider how autobiography developed and emerged within the field of academia as a discipline for critical evaluation and academic exploration. Again, I refer to the work of Berryman (1999), also referencing James Olney’s text (1972) *Metaphors of self: the meaning of autobiography*, to offer an overview of how this change took place. As part of this exploration, I consider how autobiography was influenced by the works of Derrida (1991) and themes of deconstruction and experimentation. Thirdly, I shall move on to consider the methodological implications of utilizing autobiographies, considering the work of Tamboukou (2008) who commits autobiographical methods to genealogical scrutiny. As a prominent Foucauldian scholar in the field of education, Tamboukou’s discussion encounters the “temporality and contingency…” (p. 116) of all knowledge and truth, and offers this thesis a lens through which to consider autobiography within the intersections of history, power and knowledge. Furthermore, considering Tamboukou’s admission that all knowledge - narrative or otherwise - “cannot be separated from the procedures of its production” (p. 104), I shall make reference to Foucault’s (1980) understanding of the practice of confession found within *The history of sexuality: volume one*, which Foucault identifies as a cornerstone of modern, Western truth production. I finish by furnishing an argument which suggests that, whilst autobiography is useful as a starting point for this thesis, it has its limits of use and I shall turn to other methodologies - namely autoethnography - to explore the role of experiential vignettes in constructing a genealogical critique.

**4.1.1. Autobiography as genre**

It is clear from the literature discussed above concerning the various conceptualisation of the narrative form that autobiography has a diverse and complex status. Many researchers (Abbs, 1974; Anderson, 2001; Berryman, 1999) discuss autobiography emerging principally as a genre of writing but trace its changing status through various theoretical traditions and its use in academic disciplines. These researchers typically claim that St Augustine’s *Confessions* (397 - 400 A.D.) stand out as one of the earliest examples of autobiographical writing with Anderson (2001) going so far as to argue that they are “often thought of as the origin of modern Western autobiography…” (p. 18). These texts, whilst coined as a confessional exercise, take the experiences of the individual as its content and begins the emergence of a type of writing which took the experience of the author as its main focus. Whilst this type of writing has been practised historically, it nonetheless came to prominence over 1000 years later in the 18th century when the term ‘autobiography’ sought to cover the varying types of writing that took the experiences of the author as its theme. Whilst the terms ‘memoirs’ and ‘life’ were still used into the 19th century to describe this mode of writing, it was commonly referred to as ‘autobiography’ to bring under one term the various types of writing that took the topic of the self as their object. This marks the emergence of the autobiographical genre in name though not in practice as, evidently, it has been practised much earlier. This was a genre which focused on the articulation of self-reflection through the medium of language and the written word. As a genre of writing that relates to writing about the self, researchers (Abbs 1974, Spengemann 1980, Eakin 1985,) argue that writing autobiographical narratives can be viewed as an exercise for producing a coherent and unified sense of selfhood, which can be used as the basis for speaking and writing truths. This extends to the latter part of the 20th century, when autobiography remained purely a literary genre. As this genealogy attempts to do the opposite by establishing a fractured and incoherent subject who speaks, I shall explore these suggestions as a different way of thinking about narrative.

Spengemann (1980) outlines the term autobiography: “the consonance of an individual life with an absolute, eternal law already in force…” (p. 60) because this initial performance of autobiography could be a search for a self which exists as a single, evolving entity throughout time. Moreover, Abbs (1974) claims that autobiography “is, thus, concerned with time…” (p. 7), because it is about regressing through time to find experiences and recounting them to create a linear development. Similarly, Eakin (1985) claims that autobiography took form as a kind of personal narrative with “anchored verifiable biographical fact” (p. 185); this is what separates it from other literary forms “which it may closely resemble” (p. 185). This original use of autobiography seems to have focused on a search for and reporting of a self which has existed and continues to exist throughout time: a unified and coherent self which can be known and brought to fruition through biographical fact. Again, Abbs (1974) states it is “an inward and creative discipline centred on the related acts of reflecting on and re-creating the personal past.” (p. 12-13) Thus, autobiography could be conceived of as what Abbs (1974) calls the “search backwards into time to discover the evolution of the true self.” (p. 7) Conceiving of autobiography in this sense is problematic in relation to this genealogy which critiques any suggestion of an agentic self which has existed throughout time. Indeed, the impetus of genealogies to consider selfhood as a contingent formation, which is dependent upon a range of discursive practices, would make it problematic to blend with autobiography as a literary genre relating the experiences of an untroubled self just as these researchers have described. Spengemann (1980) acknowledges that autobiography as a genre may attempt to create coherence and linearity and, as a result, objectiveness. Furthermore, what becomes evident in autobiographical writing as a genre is that experience acts as the constant and referential quality through which self can be constructed and supported; experiences create a single selfhood according to this reading of autobiography.

One example of this is Spengemann’s discussion of Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s autobiographical writing, his *Confessions­* (published in 1782), which mark an important stage in the development of how autobiographical writing relates to the self. The remarkable aspect of Rousseau’s confessions, and what separates them from previous autobiographical writing, was the attention paid to his everyday life and experiences. As Kelly (2001) writes:

his *Confessions* were to be set in opposition to those of St. Augustine, which had engendered a body of confessional literature in which people of all walks of life gave accounts of their sins and conversions. Rousseau's book, however, was something different. Far from being a glorification of heroic deeds, noble birth, or divine providence, it was the account of the life of a social misfit who had lived among the lowest as well as the highest elements of society and who confessed his misdeeds without attributing them to his sinfulness or presenting them as a preface to God's forgiveness. (p. 303)

Rousseau shows that the common factor for being able to justify a singularly evolving self is the referentiality of feelings throughout one’s life. Spengemann (1980) refers to Rousseau’s *Confessions* stating that:

his experience provides the only available evidence for this unitary soul, and thus constitutes his only route of access to it, he remains convinced that he is ultimately something more than a collection of experiences, the product of his own isolated actions and reactions. (p. 63)

Spengemann’s comments indicate that whilst there is an acknowledgement of the isolated nature of these experiences, Rousseau believes there is something more substantial to be found: a self that is already in a state of being. Like those examples discussed above, particular readings of autobiography consider it as a means to produce a coherent understanding of the life of a self as a whole. However, Spengemann argues that Rousseau begins to question the extent to which one can perform such a task. By reflecting on Rousseau’s autobiographical writing, Spengemann develops a counter argument suggesting that the production of truthful stories is problematic. In treating autobiography as a project of truth production, Rousseau developed a degree of scepticism concerning his ability to produce a ‘truthful’ story about his own experience. Rousseau’s own scepticism of his ability to produce a truthful account anticipates issues that would arise within the academic field which took autobiography as its object of critique.

**4.1.2. Academic critique of autobiography**

Rousseau’s thoughts regarding his ability to express objectively the ‘truth’ of his life already demonstrated a dilemma for the author. Whilst Rousseau was writing in the latter part of the 18th century, it was not until the 20th century that autobiography began emerging as an object of critique in various academic disciplines. Berryman (1999) argues that autobiography did not emerge within the academic field of critique as an object of interest during the start of the 20th century even though its popularity as a narrative genre may have continued to grow. It was only in the second half of the 20th century that autobiography made the transition from simply being a genre of writing to emerge as an area of academic critique in various disciplines. There were several key issues why this was the case. Firstly, questions concerning the nature of selfhood began to emerge within academic disciplines, particularly ideas concerning the humanistic belief in a single self that evolves over time. This became problematic for the genre of autobiography from the perspective of its academic critics which had, historically, been utilised to establish a self which could be articulated through written word through experience. Furthermore, and from a very different direction, because the 20th century favoured research grounded in objectivity, modelled after science, the reflexive nature of autobiographical narrative seemed irrelevant and was not seen as a viable option for academic research. Whilst autobiography may have been known within the academic field, the conditions for its emergence as either a qualified methodological device or as a field of critical study had not yet emerged. It could be argued that the popularity of autobiography as a genre had affected its reception amongst academics within different disciplines who identified its possibility as a methodology but were unable to justify its inclusion within academic work. Berryman argues that the autobiographical method was seen unfavourably by historians and some literary critics who leaned away from qualitative forms of evidence for their research. I shall explore one way in which the autobiographical genre, as a literary expression of experience, is problematic in more detail which has implications for this genealogy.

One way that the work of autobiography could begin to be critiqued is the questionability of objective meaning to be found in language. Since language acts as the medium through which autobiography is able to establish verifiable facts, once it becomes the locus of critique it positions autobiography as an area for academic critique. I shall explore this in a little more detail, though only briefly, in relation to the work of Jacques Derrida. As Berryman (1999) states, autobiography was limited as it was perceived by academics of literary criticism and history as being too subjective in nature to be used for any type of historical or literary reference. This was to change in the light of the rising interest in deconstruction in the 1970s and 1980s drawing from the work of Jacques Derrida. In his *‘*Letter to a Japanese Friend’*,* Derrida (1991) states “What deconstruction is not? everything of course! What is deconstruction? nothing of course!” (p. 3). He states, “deconstruction is neither an analysis nor a critique” and similarly “deconstruction is not a method and cannot be transformed into one” (p. 2). Derrida argues that the act of deconstruction is more complex than simply reducing a structure to the simplest element. Neither is deconstruction a critique in a Kantian sense as the instruments of critique are, once again, ripe themes for the work of deconstructionists. Biesta (2009), who is hardly a deconstructionist himself, has nonetheless commented on it, explaining that deconstruction is not simply reducible to the process of critical analysis and that doing so would be to degrade the complex work of Derrida; “his questioning of the traditional philosophical gesture in which the philosopher positions himself on some safe ground outside of the scene of analysis” (p.392) is one of the key issues facing a piece of work engaging with deconstructive themes. This placing of the self within the writing of deconstruction is a key issue for Derrida.

As Derrida (1991) notes, there is “a serious [sombre] problem of translation” when one discusses what is meant in one language compared with another “where the same word is already attached to very different connotations, inflections, and emotional or affective values” (p. 1). Absolute and objective meaning through language is not possible. Royle (2003) argues that Derrida’s deconstructive work has serious implications for autobiography as it problematizes the structures of objectivity by calling into question the unquestionability of truth mediated through discourse. Deconstruction might be conceptualized as the process of undermining givens; Derrida challenges the unproblematic nature of binaries and objectivity by attacking logocentricism as an underlying requirement of language. That language is characterised by “the impossibility of absolute plenitude of meaning or intention” (p. 68) discredits the ability for truths to pervade discourses and the idea that they are tied to the specific contexts in which they exist and function. Implicit here is the understanding that context, the spaces in which we find ourselves, gives rise to the types and kinds of language and therefore narratives that are able to surface and be written. Therefore, the kinds of self that emerge through narrative are dependent upon the setting that we find ourselves within. Moreover, I argue that the specific relations of power found within spaces allow or block certain discourses from proliferating which also has an effect of the types of selves being produced. Therefore, language and discourse is never objective or value free and is bound up in relations of power in every cultural and social situation in our lives. Therefore, logocentricism - the coherence of language - is unable to support the conception that language is able to objectively communicate meaning and interpretation.

Within this new thinking space, autobiography may be open to reinterpretation and blending to function differently depending on the research context. One new way of thinking about autobiography, truth statements and the self is to think of autobiography as the means to self-invention and dispersion. As Bruner (2004) states:

Modern literature (perhaps like modern science) becomes more epistemological, less ontological. The omniscient narrator (like the prerelativity “observer”) disappears, and with him so does hard-core reality. (p. 699)

Bruner’s comments highlight a shifting away from a self as a reflexive, self-knowing being who is able to subjectively understand the world. A new way of thinking about the self is possible: the humanistic notion of a stable and unified self is replaced by the possibility of contingent reality that is formed through the process of writing oneself. Olney (1980a) remarks that following this critical line of thought brings us to the conclusion that “the self, then, is a fiction and so is the life” and that “all that is left are characters on a page, and they too can be “deconstructed” to demonstrate the shadowiness of even their existence” (p. 22). Whilst this may be the case, we can temper Onley’s comments to show that the self is still a functioning force even though its inherent qualities can be disputed to show that truth and self-hood purported through autobiography is problematic. Eakin (1985) remarks that in contemplating the position of the “self and language in the order of being”, it becomes apparent that “the autobiographical act is deliberately presented as but the latest instance of an inveterate practice of self-invention” (p. 181-182) and that self-hood is fashioned. I believe in this discussion I have reached the outermost limits of the autobiographical genre and now wish to redirect this discussion towards a Foucauldian understanding which is consistent with the genealogical nature of this work. For this reason I now move on to consider a Foucauldian perspective on autobiography. To do this, I refer to the work of Maria Tamboukou (2008) who sets out a methodological understanding of autobiography as a genealogical research methodology.

**4.1.3. Autobiography as research methodology**

Whilst it would be useful to explore the different ways in which autobiographical narrative was slowly accepted and absorbed within qualified methodological practices in academia, word restrictions mean I shall only focus on one specific way autobiographical writing can be coined as a research methodology. Thus, based on Tamboukou’s (2008) research, looking at how narratives can be harmonised within Foucauldian theory, I would like to explore how autobiography can be used “to problematize practices and discourses…” (p. 104) rather than attempt to establish experiential truth and construct a unitary self.

I have attempted to establish that autobiographical narrative, if utilised as a genre of writing to support educational research would, as it has traditionally been understood, entertain certain epistemological and ontological presumptions. From an epistemological viewpoint, knowledge is traditionally understood to exist separate from the self to be experienced and recounted in its true, objective form. Namely, that the author of a narrative is separate from the world in which they experience, having little or no impact on how it is perceived and what is experienced is recorded as objective fact. Furthermore, and more importantly to this thesis, the conditions in which the experiencer finds themselves (historical, cultural or social) is of no relevance to the kinds of truths that can be found. Whilst traditionally conceived autobiographical narratives may tell different, conflicting stories regarding the experiences of individuals, they attempt to fashion a coherent and rational story, which ascertains that their reading of an event is guided by, and reaching towards, a true objective reading. Similarly, when autobiography emerged in the field of academic critique, it was typically considered inferior in comparison to other research methodologies. Again, this highlights a need to subscribe to more coherent, rational and logical ways of expressing experience and the world. Autobiography as a genealogical research method would do something quite different.

Any reading of autobiographical narrative underpinned by genealogical theory would elicit something very particular for its reader. Genealogies will always “raise a range of problems, questions and tactics…”, (p. 104) Tamboukou suggests, and will require the “researcher to become more sceptical about what s/he thinks s/he can ‘read’ in the narratives under investigation.” (p. 103- 104) Genealogies have no theoretical imperative to produce a coherent and unproblematic account of history and thus narratives can be “read in a way that deconstructs their coherence and reveals contradictions, gaps and broken narrative lines, fragmented and incomplete sketches of the self.” (p. 111) To do this, “the genealogical approach scrutinizes both personal and public narratives for the excavation of distortions and discursively constructed regimes of truth.” (p. 109) In doing so, the genealogist might well make use of narrative to problematize several autobiographical traits that have been explored above. As Tamboukou states:

It is significant that a genealogical approach to narratives should interrogate what has been accepted as the ‘truth’, any truth concerning the ways individuals understand and indeed narrate themselves as subjects of this world. (p. 110)

In this sense, autobiography would attempt to do something slightly different to that which it was utilised for in historical works such as St Augustine’s *Confessions*.

As a methodology, the first attribute of genealogy would be to interrogate the dominant position held by the author of such narratives. Tamboukou argues that “for Foucault, authorship is a problem…” (p. 108). Foucault “challenges the unity of the ‘I’ represented within the text…” (p. 108) by committing it to scrutiny and dissipation. As discussed in *Understanding Foucault,* Danaher et al. (2000) argue that “we are products of discourses and power relations…” (p. 118), and as such are constantly being refashioned over time depending on the different circumstances which are present. As such, for Foucault, there is no singular, consistent self, developing through time but a range of different subject positions emerging. For Tamboukou (2008) this acknowledgment means that autobiography does not constitute “a unitary core self, but rather a matrix of subject positions…” (p. 108). Therefore, Tamboukou argues that “a genealogical approach to narrative problematizes and indeed multiples the meaning of stories and decentres the author.” (p. 115) This admission is further developed with the understanding that such narratives may be “multiple and often contradictory…” (p. 116), demonstrating the lack of a unified, coherent expression of self. A genealogy utilising narrative would therefore expand its consideration to reflect not only what is being said, but also who is saying it and under what circumstances and in what time. This admission suggests that if different subject positions are emerging at different times, the narratives are also changing, dependent on the conditions present for a particular subject position. A teacher may, for example, offer a very different narrative surrounding their subjectification dependent on the circumstances they find themselves in. As a result, Tamboukou argues that autobiographies can “shatter certain stabilities and help us detach ourselves from our ‘truths’ and seek alternative ways of existence.” This may occur by “calling into question [the] self-evidences of the present by exposing the various ways that they were constructed in the past…” (p. 109). Experience and authorship “should be considered as discursive constructs, rather than indisputable points of reference.” (p. 115) In relation to this thesis, I argue that creating “a genealogical history…” around a subject position such as the teacher “does not claim to reconstruct their past ‘as it really was’…” but seeks to “reveal the temporality and contingency of contemporary ‘truths’ by tracing how they were constructed in certain historical periods.” (p. 116) Therefore, autobiographies, as “practices of self-representation… cannot be taken as indisputable documents of life, but rather as discursively constructed narratives…” (p. 115). Through genealogy we can “trace the formation of discourses around the persona…” of an individual to “identify different moments of its emergence, follow continuities and discontinuities of its development, trace recurrences or sudden eruptions.” (p. 113)

Famously, Foucault (1991a) argued that power is not a negative, dominating force but rather a productive one. Power produces and makes. As Tamboukou (2008) reiterates:

power should not be seen in its negative dimension - as a force imposing and sustaining dominations - but rather in its Foucauldian reconfiguration as producing truth, knowledge and ultimately the subject. (p. 104)

In this sense, autobiographical narratives can be an expression of such power effects and used to understand and trace the historical, cultural and institutional practices which allow such discourses to emerge. Equally, in relation to experience as truth, Tamboukou states “that truth cannot be separated from the procedures of its production…” therefore genealogy is “concerned with the processes, procedures and apparatuses, whereby truth and knowledge are produced as power effects.” (p. 104) Genealogy can therefore be employed in understanding how narratives “- both public and personal - become the medium through which connections are made and regimes of truth are established.” (p. 110) This occurs by:

stripping away as it were the veils that cover narrative practices, by simply showing how they have been mere discursive constructs of historical contingencies and in this vein how they can be interrogated and reversed. (p. 104)

Autobiographical narratives can be used as resources, used to acknowledge the specific conditions that gave rise to such discourses. Narratives can become “a rich archive for understanding how ‘realities’ - be they social or personal, past or present - are being constructed.” (p. 116) However, Foucault argued that power effects allow for the possibility of discourses to emerge whilst restricting other discourses in certain institutional settings. Tamboukou acknowledges that “power intervenes in creating conditions of possibility for specific narratives to emerge as dominant and for others to be marginalized.” (p. 104)

I suggest that whilst autobiographical narratives can be useful to explore the ways in which realities and subject positions are being constructed, as Tamboukou has shown, a wider understanding of constituent factors needs to be acknowledged. Speaking genealogically, these factors can encompass a wide range of institutions, practices and discourses. It may be that such factors appear insignificant in comparison to others. As Tamboukou acknowledges, “one of the key processes in genealogy is its focusing on insignificant details, what has been sidelined or kept silent” (p. 115). This focus might be employed to show how autobiography has emerged “from the grey spheres of history to give voice to experiences long unattended and discredited.” (p. 115) Thus, Tamboukou argues that “rather than focusing on the meaning of stories…” it may be interesting to explore “their connections and interaction in the production of truth and knowledge…” (p. 116) regarding the self. Finally, “the genealogical approach to narrative analysis stresses the limits imposed by the historical and social conditions within which narratives are produced. The genealogist is particularly attentive to what is left unsaid, the noisy silences…” (p. 111)

Thus, compared with other conceptualisations, autobiographical narrative considered through a Foucauldian lens will have very different implications for what can be said about selfhood, experience and truth. In some cases, autobiography is used to establish juxtapositions and reversals in relation to different historical objects of critique such as the teacher or school. The many ways of doing so have already been discussed at length both in *2. Genealogy* and here. I now wish to explore one way in which autobiography can be established as a writing practise in which power effects actively constitute and shape the self. It could be argued that confession is one such “narrative practices of self-formation.” (p. 110) that Tamboukou (2008) refers to when discussing autobiography so I wish to explore this in greater detail.

**4.1.4. The limits of autobiography**

By considering various pieces of literature, I have attempted to gain an understanding of autobiography to contemplate to what extent it might be useful to pursuing this genealogy of the primary school teacher. In doing so, I have considered autobiography as a historical genre of writing, as an object of academic critique and as a potential genealogical research methodology. I shall now draw together some issues which have emerged and discuss what, I believe, are the limits of autobiography as a methodology with respect to this genealogy and why I shall ultimately turn away from a purely autobiographical methodology to consider other methods.

As a genre, autobiography can and has been viewed as a narrative form which is able to articulate the life and experiences of a person. The researchers I have considered (Abbs 1974, Spengemann 1980, Eakin 1985) have argued that as a genre, autobiography purports to present a way of saying something true about a person’s experience of the world they inhabit. Through self-reflection, the author is able to gather up knowledge of the past to establish an account of a coherent and linearly-developing single person. This genealogy does not subscribe to the self-evident, and unproblematic status of such accounts and any attempt to explore the emergence of the teacher must critique such an approach. As Spengemann (1980) discusses, autobiography aims to produce coherence and linearity, attempting to fashion an objective reality using experience. Thus, much of the exploration and critique of autobiography as a genre is concerned to point out that it is based upon an epistemological and ontological commitment to an objective reality. This strikingly conflicts with the Foucauldian theory underpinning this thesis. As autobiographical writing emerged as a subject of academic critique, it did so due to a rise in research which began to question the possibility of a coherent self, established on humanistic disciplines. Secondly, autobiography came under scrutiny due to its being rested on the function of language to translate absolute meaning and experiential truth. By taking one specific academic critique which was attempted to established that autobiographical fact becomes problematic when it purports to deliver objective truths about experience and reality through language. Furthermore, as Bruner (2004) states:

Modern literature (perhaps like modern science) becomes more epistemological, less ontological. The omniscient narrator (like the prerelativity “observer”) disappears, and with him so does hard-core reality. (p. 699)

Thus, autonarrative has increasingly come to the attention of critics who argue that trying to put across verifiable fact is problematic whilst acknowledging the shifting nature of language and multiplicity of selfhood that is manifested through the different meanings they can have. Finally, by considering Tamboukou’s (2008) arguments, as a genealogical research methodology (of which there are many different conceptualizations) autobiography can be understood and deployed in a very specific way based on theoretical constraints. Autobiography can be understood as playing the function of discourse within a matrix of power relations and effects. As such, it can be viewed in two ways: firstly, as a product and secondly as a producer. As a product, autobiographical narrative is produced not in isolation but emerges due to a range of historical, social and institutional factors making it historically contingent. Secondly, as producer I have attempted to demonstrate that autobiography is one available ‘technology’ of the self, which functions to actively manifest selfhood. What has become increasingly imperative to this discussion is the role of constitutional factors in the emergence of subject positions and thus I question the extent to which autobiography is able to fully acknowledge the various environmental factors that are necessary for investigating the teacher subject. Tamboukou’s (2008) arguments have led me to consider autoethnography due to its implicit inclusion of cultural and social factors as part of the research methodology and practices. Whilst I do not utilise autobiography in this genealogy, it is nonetheless important to acknowledge the lineage of autoethnography back to autobiography. By discussing autobiography in this way, I have demonstrated a critical interrogation of this method as a part of the research process. Therefore, I shall now move on to discuss how autoethnography will be utilised in this genealogical project, referring to key academics and researchers.

**4.2. Autoethnography**

Autoethnographic narrative, which Tony Adams, Carolyn Ellis and Arthur Bochner (2011) define in ‘Autoethnography: an overview’, seeks to “describe and systematically analyse (graphy) personal experience (auto) to understand cultural experience (ethno)” (p. 1). It is a research methodology which has developed from the field of ethnography and, as Ellis (2004) notes, may have originated in 1975 when used by anthropologist Karl Heider to describe a personal account of what others do. Similarly to autobiography, Gannon (2006) notes “autoethnography is far from new” and, quoting Foucault, she explains that “taking the self as something to write about, a theme or object (subject) of writing activity . . . is one of the most ancient Western traditions” (p. 478). As with autobiography, I wish to give a brief overview of the historical development of autoethnographic narrative moving forward to further examine the key literature and themes surrounding autoethnography to understand the applicability of this method to a genealogy. Principally I shall discuss three keys texts: Adams et al.’s (2011) ‘Autoethnography: an overview’, Jackson and Mazzei’s (2008) ‘Experience and “I” in autoethnography: a deconstruction’ and Susan Gannon’s (2006)‘The (im)possibilities of writing the self-writing: French poststructural theory and autoethnography’*.*

Adam et al.’s (2011) ‘Autoethnography: an overview’ gives a concise history of autoethnography, highlighting some of the many similarities it shares with autobiography as well as its distinctiveness. Autoethnography (as named) emerged in 1975 when Karl Heider used cultural accounts of Dani people - “a Papuan culture in the highlands of Irian Jaya” (Denshire 2013, p. 2) - growing sweet potatoes, to inform his doctoral work. Yet others (Denshire, 2013) believe autoethnographic works appeared earlier; *Facing Mount Kenya*, written in 1962 by the first president of independent Kenya, is recognised as the first published autoethnography yet it was “criticized for being too subjective and uncritical.” (p. 2) As I discussed earlier, the rise of postmodernism at the end of the 20th century had implications for research generally and specifically for the social sciences. This change meant the social sciences could now think differently about the existing binaries between facts and fictions and new forms of research could be engaged in. As Adam et al. (2011) state, “scholars across a wide spectrum of disciplines began to consider what social sciences would become if they were closer to literature than to physics” (p. 274). Therefore, the historical development of autoethnographies traces a general movement away from single genre forms of research towards an opening up of multifaceted possibilities.

**4.2.1. What is autoethnography?**

The emergence of autoethnography can be traced back to autobiographical narrative. The relevant literature (Behar, 1999; Bochner, 2001; Ellis, 2004; Peckin, 2013) outlines some key themes which highlight the large variation in ethnographic and autoethnographic works. Ethnographers consult a wide range of theoretical and methodological traditions yet they are alike in that they work to further understand cultural and social phenomena by investigating personal experience to produce meaningful critiques to issues and ideas. However, the methods used to achieve this and the product of the research can vary dramatically. One example is that of researcher Fetterman (2010) who argues that “the typical model for ethnographic research is based on a phenomenologically oriented paradigm. This paradigm embraces multiple perspectives because it accepts multiple realities” (p.5). A phenomenologically situated framework, which might be seated within an interpretivist paradigm, would draw on the understanding that we as social beings live amongst a myriad of meaning that we give rise to as participants in that social matrix. Walter (2013) explains that our meaning making is dependent on numerous factors that form part of our social interactions and shared understandings. Similarly, Behar (1999) argues that “the truth in genres are more blurred than ever. Research and eyewitnessing have become fundamental elements of twentieth-century poetry and fiction” and that “hybrid texts that baffle every attempt at easy categorization” (p. 476) should be accepted as a natural way of thinking about ethnography. As Ellis (2004) states, autoethnographies, which are “usually written in first-person voice”, come in a “variety of forms - short stories, poetry, fiction, novels, photographic essays, scripts, personal essays, journals, fragmented and layered writing and social science prose…” (p. 38) but their common factor is their wish to present great quantities of detail regarding their subject matter. It becomes clear that autoethnography cannot be ‘pinned down’: the literature shows there is no ubiquitous reading (methodological or theoretical) of autoethnography and, as Bochner (2001) argues, it “should be understood as a constructed, evolving, and contested idea…” (p. 142).

Adam et al. (2011) comment that autoethnography is a method that seeks to investigate personal experience to further understand our cultural nuances; the researcher writing autoethnographies will deliberately select past experiences and epiphanies which highlight specific and significant moments of interest. Whilst the autobiographer uses hindsight as a method to select past experiences, along with other materials such as diaries, photographs and journals, the autoethnographer uses both these materials and their own experiences at the present moment within the culture to inform their research. This makes the autoethnographic researcher an active contributor in the research process, who must act and live within the culture as a ‘participant-observer’. Whilst an autobiographer comments on a variety of significant personal or chronological events, an autoethnographer may choose to focus on both significant events as well as minutiae and other intricate details in an effort to build a picture of the various facets of a culture. As Adam et al. state the autoethnographer focuses their attention outside the self to study the “relational practices, common values and beliefs, and shared experiences for the purpose of helping insiders (cultural members) and outsiders (cultural strangers) better understand the culture” (p. 3). In the process of doing this research, the autoethnographer may decide to conduct interviews with community members, think about ways of speaking and communicating within the community, and consider how artefacts and objects are thought about and how space, place and time is used (Adam et al. 2011, p. 3-4). Finally, the researcher will use their own experiences of the culture to add to the picture. This constitutes a key element of the autoethnographic process in which the participant-observer becomes a community member (the time within the culture or community may vary) and, inevitably, impacts on the way the culture of community behaves and is viewed. They may also have a cultural identity (a teacher within a school community) which will also impact on the findings. These activities constitute some of the main practices of a researcher engaging in autoethnographic work.

Secondly, this process results in the production of a text; again, there are similarities between autobiography and ethnography. Adam et al. (2011) state that autobiography should show new perspectives on personal experience and bring the reader into the world of the author through showing them their thoughts, emotions and actions. Through this act, they ‘tell’ the reader what has happened. When autoethnographies are written, they contain “aesthetic and evocative thick descriptions of personal and interpersonal experience” by “discerning patterns of cultural experience” whereby the researcher not only makes “personal experience meaningful and cultural experience engaging” but also creates “accessible texts” that are able to reach “wider and more diverse mass audiences that traditional research usually disregards” (p. 5). In doing this it distinguishes itself from autobiography in that the intended outcome of autobiographical works are not always to allow the outsider a view into the reality of an insider; as seen in the works of Doctorow[[6]](#footnote-6), the outcome can be rather different, seeking to unfold the culture and experiences of another before an outsider.

**Refuting autoethnography as the search for a deeper self**

Two academics, who stand as key researchers in the field of autoethnography, are Arthur Bochner and Carolyn Ellis (Bochner, 2005; Bochner and Ellis, 2000; Ellis, 1999; Ellis, 2004) whose works are relevant as much of their academic output focuses on the ethnographic method and methodology to produce evocative and insightful narratives, grounded in experiential meaning. Because autoethnographic work varies hugely (as previously argued), I have chosen to discuss these key researchers and their work as they offer a glimpse of the type of autoethnography I will try to problematize and critique before establishing my argument for a poststructural autoethnography infused with (Foucauldian) genealogical theory. Whilst Bochner and Ellis do discuss topics such as schools and the experiences of those who inhabit these institutions, they do so from a different theoretical perspective. They adopt a humanist framework in which the self is established and used for the recollection of experiential meaning.

In *The ethnographic I*, Ellis (2004) discusses some of her theoretical and methodological concepts. Uninterested in a fixed or dogmatic commitment to methodology, yet respectful and aware of its place within research, she states she is more interested in the stories that produce meaningful research. She explains that ethnography is interchangeable with such terms as ‘qualitative methods’ and simply refers to a process of trying to understand the complexities of the social world in which we live. These terms, she explains, are simply used to describe the variety of methods and technologies available to the ethnographer in their work. She explains:

stories are the way humans make sense of their worlds. Stories are essential to human understanding and are not unique to autoethnography… Given their importance, I argue that stories should be both a subject and a method of social science research. (p. 32).

Indeed, Ellis explains that fieldwork includes anything that takes place in the process of collecting these ‘stories’. For her, the practice of ethnography involves “getting close” to those who are being studied and “attempting to see the world through the participants’ eyes” all to express “the experience in a way faithful to their everyday life” (2004, p. 25).Stories are a crucial aspect of Ellis and Bochner’s autoethnography because of the therapeutic, and potentially transformative, quality it offers the autoethnographer and participants. “I tend to write about experiences that knock me for a loop and challenge the construction of meaning I have put together for myself” Ellis explains; “I write when my world falls apart or the meaning I have constructed for myself is in danger of [falling apart]” (p. 33). Similarly, Bochner (2005) argues that this form of narrative research brings great benefits to the discipline of social research; academia could become “daring, honest, intimate, personal, emotional, moral, embodied, and evocative… This is what social science is missing!” (p.52) Ellis (2004) summarises autoethnography as functioning to “showcase concrete action, dialogue, emotion, embodiment, spirituality and self-consciousness” to reveal the “relational and institutional stories affected by history and social structure” which are “revealed through actions, feelings, thoughts and language” (p. 38).

Examining Ellis and Bochner’s work, I think it would be pertinent to state that whilst their work offers an outline of what an autoethnography could look like, it remains theoretically inconsistent with the aims I have outlined in this thesis in attempting to fashion a nuanced genealogy. As Ellis (2004) states “autoethnography refers to writing about the personal and its relationship to culture” yet it wishes to move inwards therefore “exposing a vulnerable self that is moved” (p. 37). In problematizing evocative autoethnographies, Jackson and Mazzei (2008) state that whilst Bochner and Ellis do recognise their work as being “particular, partial, and situated” they seek to extract experience that readers can identify with thereby creating “coherence, comfort, and continuity through mediated truth” in an effort to produce “evocative, therapeutic stories through writing” that “lead to self-discovery and self-creation” (p. 300). Using privileged experience – through stories and tellings – to link different facets of our cultural understanding (emotion, morality, history, etc.) they assume “a self who is able to recognize, know, and easily capture the “I” that has had shared experiences with those whom s/he studies” (p. 300) thereby using “I” unproblematically to make meaning of experience through narrative. Jackson and Mazzei argue that this “centering of the ethnographer’s experience” (p. 301) functions only to conceal potential research into why such stories should or would be told. Autoethnography purports to do good things in its desire to “expose” the “complex contingencies” of our everyday lives and experiences, primarily by shifting away from “conventional” ways of doing social science research towards “alternative forms of writing” (p. 301). Yet in doing so, Jackson and Mazzei argue, this writing “does little to destabilize the traditional hierarchies between researcher and researched, and instead further reinscribes and recenters” (p. 301) thus continuing to privilege the researcher’s voice and so blocks the work of destabilising ahistorical stories and knowledges that, as these authors argue, needs to be undertaken.

Another aspect of Jackson and Mazzei’s criticism of Ellis’ work is the fact that she purports to tell a truthful story with events that actually happened and, in turn, fabricating her own subjectivity which is never questioned. Ellis has arrived at a place where she tells her story but the place in which she has ended is “not one of her own creation, but one that has created her.” (p. 313) Essentially, they argue that “she positions herself within and against relations of power and discursive conditions that enable her obligations to truth-telling” (p.313) without discussing how these forces may have affected her narrative or the subjective position in which she finds herself.

4.2.2. **Postmodern autoethnographies**

I shall now discuss the possibilities of a poststructural autoethnography, using vignettes, in this genealogical investigation. To do so I refer to specific literature (Gannon, 2006; Jackson and Mazzei, 2008; Kaufmann, 2011) which offer a poststructural perspective on autoethnographic narrative which would fit more comfortably with Foucault’s genealogical framework.

**A performative I**

Alicia Jackson and Lisa Mazzei’s (2008) article - ‘Experience and “I” in autoethnography: a deconstruction’- offers some compelling contemplations around what autoethnography purports to do and how researchers can navigate the problematic ‘self’ which purports to speak in narrative. They state:

Our main critique of autoethnography rests on this notion of a coherent, explanatory subject who gathers up meaning and reflexively lays bare the process of knowledge-production, as if that process is self-evident, with no confrontation of the power plays in the non-innocent game of interpretation. (p. 303)

I believe their problematizing of experience, the ‘I’ and autoethnography has implications for this genealogy because whilst they “do not give up on a narrative ‘I’”, they begin to rethink its “current conceptualization” in an effort to generate autoethnographic work which does not present “a truthful story, but a story that confronts the truths…” as well as creating “tensions between a narrative “I” and a performative “I” to “keep autoethnography in a rigorous play of games of truth, power, and knowledge.” (p. 314) Jackson and Mazzei question to what extent we can “disrupt identity, discourage identification, and refuse understanding?” (p. 303) They ask what would happen if “subjects, in their telling of experience, become fractured, multiply-positioned, and unreliable narrators” (p. 303). Such an approach would undermine the veracity of what is being said and would lead to autoethnography accepting its fallibility or “epistemological failure.” (p. 303) in trying to say something true about ourselves. As a post-structural practice, I have argued that writing about the self is floored in its capacity to say anything truthful or establish any agentic singular self who is the origin of experiences. However, I believe it is also important to note that the wish to write or speak is not easily given up since it is difficult to step outside our current subjectivity and system of thinking.

**Experience and the I**

Poststructuralists – such as Mazzei and Jackson (2008) - often problematize research that seeks to create “coherence, comfort, and continuity through mediated truth” which will presumably “lead to self-discovery and self-creation” (p. 300). Instead they turn towards “poststructural theories of experience and voice to dislodge the centering, transparent effects of voice and experience in autoethnography…” (p. 302) to produce new readings of experience that dislodge and challenge privilege. Jackson and Mazzei argue that often “experience has a specific purpose…” in that it functions “to serve as the origin of knowledge”; as such it is considered as something that “has already happened, is already there, and becomes cumulative and homogenizing”. Moreover, it can be used as a basis “on which to build consciousness and knowledge” (p. 302) and, ultimately, a fully conscious and aware subject. Poststructuralists deny this “comfort of experience” and “transparent meaning making” (p. 302) because their theoretical baseline functions on the premise that there is “no pre-linguistic experience that is “out there” waiting to be reflected upon” (p. 302) and as such any reading of experience is fallible. Research may try to validate individual experience by investigating topics through the eyes of another yet this simply “sidesteps efforts to problematize meaning”, furthering the felt need for transparent, unified meaning rather than understanding the formation and power relations behind such meanings and knowledges. However, referring to the work of French poststructuralist Roland Barthes (1977a), Gannon (2006) states that even the “body is a discursive and multiple but very present space where we do not go looking for any “sacred originary” but for traces and unreliable fragments.” (p. 483)

Continuing this line of argument, she states “memory writing is not a veridical act that reproduces the original experience as it was lived but is necessarily always constituted from a particular time and place and discursive frame.” (p. 483) I therefore discuss the games of power and discourse in the telling of experience. Autoethnographies that study truth production about the self can be attempted if we can do away with the need to produce a coherent account and thus “the narrative “I” might be decentered enough to make space for autoethnographers to ask different questions of experience.” (p. 304) However, to completely disregard experience in producing narrative is also problematic so we must learn to trouble and use the language through which we would establish such meaning. I argue that by using experience in a way that contests “its signified traditions of presence, transparency, origins, and authority” (p. 304), it is possible to produce new fractured and inconsistent knowledges of the subject constitution in the primary school classroom. Jackson and Mazzei’s deconstructive autoethnography would be one that “illustrates an engagement with the *discursive* construction of experience, a critique of the *relations of power* in the production of meaning from experience…” (p. 304). So, experience must be reinvestigated constantly, “given new social contexts, competing discourses, and shifting relations of power” (p. 304), to move away from recentering and privileging. Because of this, Jackson and Mazzei suggest moving away from the problematic “narrative “I” and move toward a performative “I” who uses experience… as a concept “under erasure” to expose the indecidability of meaning, of self, of narrative” (p. 305). Therefore, in relation to this genealogy, I question who will be speaking and how will I go about doing that when I investigate my own vignette.

**Constituting a genealogical I**

I seek to understand how it is possible to discuss my own experiences (genealogically) throughout my vignettes by understanding the complex ways in which a poststructural telling of experience is fashioned without purporting to be truthful or consistent. Jackson and Mazzei suggest the use of a different type of I: a performative “I”’ which is a “becoming “I” that is constituted through “truth-telling, and uses experience as a provisional strategy” to put knowledge under erasure. This kind of approach works by “exhausting its interpretive possibilities to show how experience produces the construction of subjectivity through a repetitive doing (or undoing) bound to discourse, rather than an active doing by a subject (or a subject that precedes a doing, or a subject who merely performs knowledge)” (p. 305). Thus, the self becomes unstable and contradictory through experience as it “produces an “I” that is fluid and contradictory” and which is “bound to relations of power and therefore neither self-identical nor stable within those relations” (p. 305). The self can then become unknown, constantly changing and fractured. This performative “I”, then, which is constituted through the act of writing or speaking about the self, is also produced by narrative and yet it demonstrates its limited capability for self-expression. Moreover, using the performative “I” allows us to look at experience to interrogate the process of creating subject positions and in doing so shows the uncertainty of who or what we think we are or could become. As such the performative “I” has “endless, indefinite possibilities for transforming itself because it is never a fully expressed product…” (p. 305) and remains contingent on the cultural, social, institutional spaces and positions that we find ourselves within (the classroom, head teacher’s office, etc.).

**4.2.3. A genealogical autoethnography**

Ball and Tamboukou (2003) show how “ethnography seems to be ‘approaching’ genealogy” (p. 7) by infusing autoethnography with genealogical theory to escape the “iron cages of positivism” (p. 18) and create research that “may be deeply influenced by a genealogical sensibility” (p. 18). They suggest these methods may be used to “(1) create new problems, (2) open previously unthought areas of investigation and (3) pose challenging questions.” (p. 19). Yet this thesis has a more specific use for genealogical methods. Gannon (2006) states, we must accept that “the self writing a poststructural autoethnography both is and isn’t the author of the text, both is and isn’t subject and object of his or her experience” (p. 484) and therefore, as Jackson and Mazzei suggest, begin refusing “its current conceptualization” to “trouble it under erasure” thereby creating “tensions” keeping “autoethnography in a rigorous play of games of truth, power, and knowledge.” (p. 314) Ultimately, I ask how a genealogical autoethnography can help me to construct an understanding of the selves that are produced through practices and discourse and power relations in the primary school classroom. I believe it does this in four ways which have been identified in this analysis.

Firstly, in relation to truth-telling, I hope to use some of the previous contemplations to inform the telling of my own experience. To tackle the impasse of speaking truths, Jackson and Mazzei (2008) have advised researchers to critically interrogate the possibility of autoethnographers accessing their own ‘voice’ (in the form of a narrative “I”). I hope to “introduce a vigilant, a curious, a questioning knowing” that could produce a genealogy that results in a narrative that produces “uncertain, ungrounded, and thus fragile tellings” (p. 314) that may increase understanding of the formation of subjects within the primary school classroom. Foucault (1988) states that “relations of power, not relations of meaning” (p. 114) are the cause of creating truths for, as I have argued, meaning has no ground on which to support truth. In this genealogy, I shall endeavor to narrate to “produce truths that [can be shown to] emerge from relations of power” (p. 314) rather than truths that find their unproblematic origin in experiential meaning.

Secondly, this project will involve a cautious revaluation of the self. Jackson and Mazzei argue for a displacing of the “privileged position from which the researcher interrogates and writes the narrative “I”” rather than recentering the “I” under a different name or guise. Retaining the narrative “I” allows the researcher to interrogate, strain and, ultimately destabilize truths which destabilises the veracity of the narrating “I”. This ultimately aligns with John Caputo’s (2003) argument that “writing a history is as powerful a way to deconstruct something as one could desire, for a history shows that something that is trying to pass itself off as having dropped from heaven has been historically constituted” (p. 197). This offers the genealogist an opportunity to destabilize the truths purported in such histories as well as the discourses, practices and relations of power that have brought about such histories. An aspect of this argument would be a recognition that instead of thinking of the self that narrates as a subject that passes through time in a state of constant development and evolution, it would be “an “I” that is becoming” (Jackson and Mazzei 2008, p. 309) rather than fully formed and which is constantly lost and redefined throughout time as well as the people around us. Gannon (2006) argues the self is “perpetually under construction” (p. 480) due to complex ways in which the self is constituted. As such, this once again leads to a fracturing of the humanistic notion of selfhood, the narrative it tells as well as the experiences it purports to have had. However, Jackson and Mazzei warn that it is not “more stories or more perspectives” that are needed but “an assemblage of multiplicities that occur in the act of becoming” (Jackson and Mazzei 2008, p. 309) adding to inconsistency and paradox. We must embrace the *becoming* itself because that is all we can truly hold on to. As Caputo (2003) says “We don’t know who we are - that is who we are” (p. 197). It is not about adding multiple layers of stories or recognizing the multiplicity of these stories but using these stories to think carefully about how these stories came about. Hence one might ask: what caused such interpretations or stories to arise from experience? Thus “experience… is continually “made” in an engagement with the present” based on “how relations of power and discursive constraints produce certain interpretations” (Jackson and Mazzei 2008, p. 312).

Thirdly, this genealogy is focused on how relations of power in the primary school classroom have become entangled in the formation of my subject position as a teacher. Whilst Foucault (1988) argues that “relations of power are perhaps among the best hidden things in the social body” (p. 118), it is my goal in this work to highlight such workings of power through practices (supported by certain architectures of the school) and investigate the mechanisms which Jackson and Mazzei describe as “how power provides conditions for the production of subjectivity.” (p. 313) I argue that several subjective positions have emerged from this exploration; indeed, the writing of this work is also a process in which a new subjective position is being formed. As Gannon (2006) argues, “Writing is a technology for the production of particular subjects, particularly the self writing” (p. 478). In becoming aware of these hidden relations of power, Ball and Tamboukou (2003) state we become increasingly aware of the constitution of “*situated subjects* within *situated systems* of power and knowledge” which helps us to “maintain a sense of the relations of history, power and knowledge.” (p. 20) Equally, as researchers we become more acutely aware of the emergence and descent of different subject positions - both our own and others - and the specific conditions which bring these about.

Finally, I believe an essential component of this genealogical autoethnography will be the conflicting and paradoxical stories that will emerge. As Jackson and Mazzei argue, as autoethnographers we must be left wanting but in doing so we open ourselves up to possibilities of “different knowings” (p. 314) rather than seeking to produce tidy, clean presentations of our work that leave us untroubled and unfulfilled. The need “to tidy the ending and assure us, the readers…” (p. 311), Jackson and Mazzei state in relation to Ellis’ work, is a common wish for ethnographies which must be challenged. Whilst as researchers we may seek to create “authentic”, “unproblematic” and “transparent” stories, a genealogical autoethnography should remain skeptical of producing ‘real stories’ and continue the work of investigating truths whilst recognizing its importance in producing “complicated voices” and “new ways of understanding” rather than becoming “paralyzed by the impossibility of the limits of knowing” (p. 314).

**4.3. Confession**

I turn to Foucault to add a final and crucial layer to this discussion on narrative. Whilst I have already discussed confession as part of the genealogies chapter, I would now like to situate it within my conceptualisation of narrative. Foucault (1994) states:

My objective for more than twenty-five years has been to sketch out a history of the different ways in our culture that humans develop knowledge about themselves… The main point is not to accept this knowledge at face value but to analyze these so-called sciences as very specific "truth games" related to specific techniques that human beings use to understand themselves. (p. 224)

From a Foucauldian perspective, autonarrative would be one example of the micro-practices which are used in the formation of subject positions, to further develop knowledge about ourselves and for producing truth discourse. Furthermore, Foucault (1994) states:

From the eighteenth century to the present, the techniques of verbalization have been reinserted in a different context by the so-called human sciences in order to use them without renunciation of the self but to constitute, positively, a new self. (p. 248 – 249)

Foucault (1980) states that the practice of speaking and writing about oneself in modernity was linked with and increased in conjunction with *avowal* which “came to signify someone’s acknowledgement of his own actions and thoughts” (p. 58) which might be contrasted to caring for the self as found in the antiquity. Whereas previously one was referred to by ties to others in the family or community, a process of individualization was formulated in modernity by the need for discourses of truth about the self which man “was able or obliged to pronounce concerning himself.” (p. 58) For this reason “truthful confession [an ancient technique] was inscribed at the heart of the procedures of individualization by power” (p. 59). This brought with it a proliferation of individualization through the practice of confession. As acknowledged by Tamboukou (2008), narratives act as “*technologies of the self*, active practices of self-formation” through which the subject is turned “into a subject.” (p. 107) Whilst Foucault (1980) did not write at length about autobiography, he stated that confession is strongly related to “autobiographical narratives” as it is “one of the forms it has taken” (p. 63). Therefore, his thoughts on the practice of confession have implications for genealogically understanding and writing about this self. Foucault (1980) states:

[confession] plays a part in justice, medicine, education, family relationships, and love relations, in the most ordinary affairs of everyday life, and in the most solemn rites; one confesses one’s crimes, one’s sins, one’s thoughts and desires, one’s illnesses and troubles; one goes about telling, with the greatest precision whatever is most difficult to tell. (p. 59)

Drawing on Foucault’s work, the practice of confession can be understood as framing this discussion of narratives because, as Foucault (1980) states, “Western societies have established confession as one of the main rituals we rely on for the production of truth…” (p. 58). How does this tie within a narrative framework? Because Foucault (1980) states that “confession is a ritual of discourse in which the speaking subject is also the subject of the statement…” (p. 61), I believe we can situate autobiographical narrative as a confessional practice within a Foucauldian framework. He argues that *avowal*, which represents a person’s understanding of their own thoughts and actions, has situated the speaking subject in an uncomfortable position; the acknowledgement of all actions and thoughts must accumulate to a point where one must spill over such things as one relates to others or the page. As such, in the production of truth, which is also the production of a self, written and spoken discourse become a necessity. As such, Foucault argues a person is “authenticated by the discourse of truth he was able or obliged to pronounce concerning him[or indeed her]self.” (p. 58) Equally, Foucault argues that since subjects have become a confessing subject, confession, or avowal, has taken many different forms in literature throughout historical periods. Foucault states:

We have passed from a pleasure to be recounted and heard, centering on the heroic or marvellous narration of “trials” of bravery or sainthood, to a literature ordered according to the infinite task of extracting from the depths of oneself, in between the words, a truth which the very form of the confession holds out like a shimmering mirage. (p. 59)

Foucault’s comments mirror the discussion that has taken place so far throughout the development of autobiographical narratives, where the focus was placed on searching within oneself to recount the important moments of a life to be committed to paper for others to read. Essentially, one was able to select the memories one wished whereas modern confession seeks to encourage individuals to do the opposite. Thus:

the confession became one of the West’s most highly valued techniques for producing truth. We have since become a singularly confessing society. The confession has spread its effects far and wide. (p. 59)

Whilst autobiographical theory may present this type of writing as the product of a distinct, essentially unproblematic, and clearly defined self, Foucault would argue that narrative, as an act of confession, is a practice that demonstrates the contingency of the self as an individual. Subject positions are established by confession due to “a power that constrains us” in which ‘truth’ “lodged in our most secret nature, “demands” only to surface…” (p. 60). In this way, autobiographical narrative may act as a tool necessary for the expression of this deepest truth yet it reinforces this power and obligation to keep on confessing and telling. Moreover, this act of confessional writing is also an act in which the self is made up; by writing one’s autobiography, according to Foucault, subjectivity is produced.

As previously stated, this genealogy does not use narrative as a method to produce knowledge or truths that can be read as simple or unproblematic ways of retelling past events. Moreover, it does not provide the possibility for opening a space in which past memories can be extracted from within more easily. Both of these forms of narrative would provide a simplistic account of the self which is able to retell past events as truthful experiences. Furthermore, I do not assert that by drawing upon past experiences, it is possible to give life to inner or hidden truths in order to produce a more plausible and realistic account of past experience. That is, by using my privileged position as a teacher, and using this thesis as a means for bringing forth such memories, it will provide a more realistic or ‘truthful’ account of teacher subjectivity. This genealogy attempts to trouble these readings and instead attempts to provide a troubled and fragile telling of experience which arises from specific circumstances. Within the context of Foucauldian confession theory, this telling attempts to demonstrate how the conditions of revealing these experience, through autoethnographic vignettes, is problematic. In this process, the confessing subject emerges: a subject who is fashioned not just by their experiences of the primary school classroom but through the very act of telling their experiences to another rather than reflecting on them within themselves.

It is important to recognise that personal reflection has taken different forms in relation to the type of Foucauldian confession that I am discussing here. In relation to this genealogical project, confessional practices can be understood, as Foucault explains them as, as methods to produce certain truths regarding individuals. Indeed, as Fejes (2013) states:

As Foucault’s genealogy of confession illustrates, there have been other modes of governing and other ways through which we construe the relation of the self to the self. Among the Stoics, the focus was on turning life into an art – focusing on caring for the self and through this one would gain knowledge of the self. This is quite different from the ways confession shapes the relation of the self to the self in the present time, where the focus is on deciphering the self in order for the self to be improved. (p. 64-65)

These minute differences are important for this genealogy because, as I shall demonstrate in *6. Performance management*, *7. The display board* and particularly in *8. Moral training*, the vignettes that I offer arise from experiences in which I was encouraged to explore my own or others’ faults and address them. In relation to Foucault’s work, this is important because it is in the process of recounting these experiences to others - through the medium of this thesis -rather than myself that a confessing subject may also be fashioned. Whilst I shall go on to explore the Christian elements of confessional practices in greater detail in *8.1.6. Spiritual practices* in relation to certain teacher subjectivies*,* I shall only briefly mention these elements of truth production at this point.

As Fejes (2013) argues, Greco-Roman practices of self-reflection were focused on individuals and became a way of training the self to achieve personal development. The ‘care for the self’ was focused on the current life of the individual and was coined as a way for individuals to train and improve themselves. Whilst writing was an active part in this process, the individual did not focus on the negative aspects of their behaviour to draw out what the punish themselves for but what was to be improved. An emphasis on creating success in one’s daily activities was the prime focus rather than searching for bad ‘intentions’ or deeds which should be forgiven. The distinction between this form of confession and the Christian form is, as Fejes states, “…to excavate guilt…” (p. 55) and “…to search oneself and acknowledge one’s faults…” (p. 57). One such practise of Christian confession is that of ‘*exomologesis’* which Fejes describes as being similar to “the relationship between a physician and a patient, where the patient needs to show his/her wounds to acquire the status as wounded before healing can take place.” (p. 57) Through engaging in this practice a new subjectivity - a confessing subject - may also be fashioned. However, it is possible that these practices have not remained within the sphere of religion but have expanded into many different secular areas of society. “Reflection and reflective practice…” Fejes explains, “have become a conspicuous part of education and work life…” (p. 59) and it is possible that they have been incorporated into educational practices which are commonplace within classrooms.

Taking confessional practices forward, I hope to use the explorations above to demonstrate that my retelling of experience within the culture of the primary school classroom, are confessional in nature. By relating to my experiences in this way a new subjectivity is fashioned which adds greater contingency to the process of retelling experience for the benefit of this thesis. Conceiving my experiences - in the form of autoethnographic confessionals - means that they are narratives which arise due to the need to confess or speak of my experience. Equally, these tellings arise from and inform the methodological framework which has been set out in this chapter. Whilst this does not mean these tellings are in any way more truthful, nor have they arisen from a deeper or more secretive part of my previous experience, but are the product of a certain ontological condition which Foucault (1980) describes as “…one of the main rituals we rely on for the production of truth…” (p. 58). By wishing to explore my past experiences, these vignettes are confessional in nature because they arise from a wish to explore something that is problematic and jarring about my own experience and arise from situations in which I was obliged to explore my own subjectivity as a teacher and try to improve it in some way. As opposed to the Greco-Roman conception of reflective practices, these confessional vignettes are more closely aligned with memories which need to be drawn out and shared with others rather. My exploration of these vignettes is for the benefit of others as well as being reflective for my own sake.

**4.4. Summary**

The key thinkers I have engaged with all conceptualize autoethnography in different ways yet, as Gannon (2006) states, they all “displace the speaking self that is the subject, object, and the (im)possible production of autoethnography” (p. 491). I have attempted to understand what a poststructural conceptualization of autoethnography may look like in relation to this genealogical investigation. I believe this contemplation has offered me the tools by which I can begin examining my own experiences of the classroom. Jackson and Mazzei (2008) conclude that autoethnography should not be dismissed for more “so-called rigorous forms of qualitative inquiry” but should be reconceived by situating the speaking subject within questions of truth-telling, power and subjectivity, to produce “uncertain, ungrounded, and thus fragile tellings” (p. 314) which I shall endeavour to do. I believe such an autoethnography would be wholly consistent with this genealogical investigation as I attempt to understand how the primary school classroom functions in the production of subject positions. Equally, Gannon (2006) offers an indicative sense of what a poststructural autoethnography may look like which I endeavor to achieve in the next chapter of this genealogy. Therefore, I seek to write a narrative which:

might embrace multidimensionality, might aim to construct texts that are not easily ingested, that turn around and around so that we are encouraged (or forced or led) to a place of thinking differently and with more complexity about the world and our places within it. (p. 488)

Similarly, to Allen and Goddard (2017) this narrative aims to “disturb” and “encourage a questioning” of my own and others’ place within the primary school classroom; to make contemporaries and, indeed, myself “more uncomfortable, more uncertain about their place within the structures of education” (p. 1) as one outcome of engaging with these narratives.

**5. Vignettes**

Having made an argument for the use of genealogical autoethnography in the previous chapter, I shall now describe how these autoethnographies will take the form of vignettes in this section. Because I am utilizing autoethnographic vignettes, I begin with a description of my own conceptualization of vignettes and how they will be used, which is informed by my 2. *Genealogies* and 4. *Narratives* chapters. In developing my methodology, I shall refer to the work of key researchers (Erickson, 1986; Huby and Hughes, 2004; Humphreys, 2005; Pitard, 2016), who offer different perspectives on vignettes, drawing on a range of themes. However, one commonality between each researcher is their admission that vignettes can help us to construct a richer reading of experience and reality. It is this, along with other themes, that I wish to critique here. By doing this, I hope to demonstrate a broad understanding of how narrative vignettes have been used in research to define my own theoretical position clearly.

Experience, as I have argued previously, is often viewed as a way to find truth or meaning. This is not the case in this genealogy. Attempting to be genealogical, I will explore my own experiences whilst also acknowledging their fallibility and lack of any true referential or experiential meaning. Therefore, I do not use my own experiences simply to produce knowledge that can be viewed as transparent and true, I offer these experiences to expose the functioning of power within my own life and experiences thereby weakening my sense of agency in order to expose my own subject position. This sharply differs from the work done by the researchers I shall discuss who seek to establish truth based on experiential meaning. Furthermore, by using first-hand experiences inside the classroom, I am offering contextually-rich exploration of mechanisms and practices of power within the institution itself where these technologies and practices are enacted. As I have argued in *4. Narratives*, this work seeks to understand how “relations of power…” (Jackson and Mazzei 2008, p. 314) are responsible for producing truth effects. In doing so, I hope to demonstrate that my own personal experiences within the school offer a distinct perspective from which to investigate the variations of power that are at work within the school setting. In contrast to Humphrey’s (2005) work, which seeks to offer the reader an opportunity to enter the world of the researcher so as to “vicariously experience the events…” (p. 854-855), I have argued that it is not possible to experience events in a similar way as they are contingent constructions, dependent upon a range of different factors. This thesis is an attempt to view situations and experiences in a different and (somewhat) unnatural way.

My use of vignettes will endeavor to remain consistent with genealogical methods by writing “…histories that focus on the interplay of knowledge and power…” (Ball 2017, p. 47) rather than experience for its own sake. Jackson and Mazzei’s (2008) concept of the ‘performative I’ or the ‘becoming I’ which uses truth-telling as a method to show the uncertainty of who we are or what we could become in the future also highlights the power effects at play in writing vignettes. Moreover, I hope to show that specific power relations have created the conditions for such experiences to emerge in the first place, again highlighting the lack of agency of myself as an individual and my continued subjectification in relations of power.

Finally, as I shall demonstrate, my own framing of vignettes will differ drastically from those discussed below based on their intended outcome. These vignettes do not seek to create “coherence, comfort and continuity…” (Jackson and Mazzei 2008, p. 300) but discomfort and disparity. Specifically in opposition to Humphrey (2005), this genealogy is not concerned with producing “…authenticity…” (p. 840) or “a plausible story…” (p. 851) for the reader. This thesis seeks to disrupt and, possibly, disturb the reader’s world so that plausibility is transformed into “…scepticism, detachment, outrage, intolerance and tolerance…’ (Ball 2017, p. 79). These attitudes will be developed throughout this genealogy, especially towards educational practices that arguably remain unchallenged.

The framing of vignettes offered by each of the researchers I shall discuss are intended to act as comparative examples as the themes in each of them are at odds with this genealogy. Firstly, each of the vignettes attempts to assert that based on memory and experience, a narrative text can establish that something actually happened in the way it is recounted by the author. Erickson (1986) argues that using vignettes is not something new. He states “As a literary form the vignette is very old…” and was used by “Greek rhetoricians… to persuade the audience that the orator’s general assertions were true in particular cases” by using “richly descriptive vignettes in their speeches” (p. 150). As a broad definition of the vignette, Erickson offers:

A vivid portrayal of the conduct of an event of everyday life, in which the sight and sounds of what was being said and done are described in the natural sequence of their occurrence in real time. The moment-to-moment style of description in a narrative vignette gives the reader a sense of *being there* in the scene. (p. 149-150)

Erickson argues the vignette can function as “rhetorical, analytical, and evidentiary” (p. 150); of these Erickson argues that its rhetorical nature is “an extremely important point” (p. 150) as it plays two main functions. Firstly, it is “didactic” as it should illuminate something in the reader’s mind, trying to convey meaning through everyday events. Thus the author must express abstract ideas in concrete and understandable ways so that the reader can access particular meaning. Erickson argues that a “richly descriptive narrative vignette” (p. 150) can do this. Humphreys (2005) also advocates using “autoethnographic vignettes as a means of enhancing the representational richness and reflexivity of qualitative research” (p. 840) to construct a particular image in the reader’s mind. He does so with the aim of producing a rich experiential dimension to researchers’ work. He states that by using vignettes, a researcher may offer “reflexive and poignant illustrations of “being there” (Geertz, 1988, p. 6)” and allows readers of the work to enter the world of the researcher to “vicariously experience the events…” (Humphreys 2005, p. 854-855). These interpretations are problematic for this thesis as poststructural theory would problematize the possibility of ever being able to guarantee that a reader can take any specific meaning from a text. As discussed previously, Derrida (1991) critiques the logocentricism of language stating that there is “a serious [sombre] problem of translation” because a word can have “very different connotations, inflections, and emotional or affective values” (p. 1) when interpreted by others.

Erickson (1986) states that the narrator must provide enough information to convince the reader they have given a realistic interpretation of the events as well as a convincing interpretation of what “the happenings meant from the point of view of the actors in the event.” (p. 150) By instantiation, the narrator convinces the reader that “such an event could and did happen that way.” (p. 150) The vignette typically emerges from “fieldnotes taken as the events happened and then written up shortly thereafter” and is a “more elaborated, literarily polished version of the account found in the fieldnotes.” (p.150) In practice, the vignette attempts to convince the reader that the author’s experience of the events that took place are credible due to “the sense of immediate presence…” (p. 150) and its reliance upon notes at the particular time. Equally, Humphreys (2005) states that using vignettes develops an awareness of “authenticity, authorial exposure, and reflexivity…” (p. 840) to help an author produce “a plausible story…” (p. 851) for the reader. I would argue that, from a genealogical perspective it is impossible to accurately describe or portray reality ‘as it is’. In doing so, there are serious ontological and epistemological consequences, namely that an objective reality exists to be experienced which has already been problematised earlier in this thesis. Equally, Foucauldian theory critiques ‘plausible’ stories, redefining them as dominant discourses and acknowledging that another story may emerge when certain conditions are provided.

Both Erickson (1986) and Humphreys (2005) ascertain that truth can be constructed on the basis of vignettes. Humphreys argues that by constructing a sense of ‘being there’ (established because of taking field notes and recalling memories), an author can construct truth to develop a deeper understanding about the self and produce deeper or more meaningful research. Thus, he offers the reader the opportunity to see more clearly the person and their experience thereby improving the quality and depth of the qualitative research being offered. Although Erickson admits that “even the most richly detailed vignette is a reduced account…” and that it “…does not represent the original *event itself*…” (p. 150) through analysis the author is able to establish “interpretive validity”. (p. 150) It is this “combination of richness and interpretative perspective…” (p. 150) which offers the reader instantiation on which a true and meaningful account can be established reading the objective reality of the author. Again, this genealogy problematizes such claims, arguing that truths are simply those statements that are accepted and qualified within particular discourses and that any suggestion of moving closer to a deeper sense of self harks to humanistic ideas already discussed in *2. Genealogies*.

Another theme which has emerged in the research featuring vignettes is the belief that experience can offer a deeper understanding of experience and life. As an example of how vignettes have been used within education, I will briefly discuss the work of Pitard (2016). Pitard uses vignettes to “explore in wholeness and without bashfulness the unique experience of teaching students…” (p. 15). By fashioning “a rich story of a first-time teacher of international students…” (p. 15), Pitard believes it is possible to “investigate the meaning of participants' experiences…” (p. 1) as well as “understand the nature and meaning of everyday experience.” (p. 1) She qualifies her use of vignettes stating that the:

use of vignettes to examine and analyse lived experiences can provide a window, through which the reader can gain an understanding of the insight which comes from placing a person with one cultural identity in a setting of different cultural norms. (p. 3)

Whilst Pitard’s work is somewhat relevant to this genealogy, as she specifically adapts the vignette method to the context of her research, it remains inconsistent with this genealogy as she attempts to use experience to look for a deeper sense of selfhood.

What becomes clear in each of these pieces of research is that the researcher utilises experience and memory to arrive at a deeper, more realistic or valid representation of what each of their participants is experiencing. Using experience, they argue that a particular view of reality is achievable. Of the research that I have discussed, I argue that Huby and Hughes’ (2004) work aligns closest to my own formulation of vignettes as they focus on vignette methodologies overall and in particular on the fashioning of vignettes as well as their interpretation and what this can mean for the usefulness of this methodology. They acknowledge that very rarely are vignettes used to simulate reality in its completeness; they are usually used to construct fragments of experience. They state:

Whilst vignettes are valuable in addressing particular research questions it is important to note that no research method can truly reflect the reality of people’s lives. Each application of a research method is only one way of understanding the complexity of the social world. (p. 47)

Their exploration of the limitations of narrative vignettes offers some important reflections for this genealogy. Whilst vignettes can “…transcend the wide-ranging subject disciplines within the social sciences and are invaluable in social research” there are some “…pertinent issues…” to consider. (p. 46) Similarly to Huby and Hughes, I have argued that this thesis does not seek to offer tidy and transparent perspectives of my own experiences; their criticality of “the extent to which vignettes actually tap into real life processes” (p. 46) therefore aligns with my own theorization of vignettes. However, they summate that it is the context in which the vignette is applied that will determine whether or not the use is appropriate or not. They state that “Vignettes provide one worthwhile route to exploring and exposing those elements of people’s lives that social work researchers seek to understand and learn more about.” (p. 47) I would argue that their mode of vignettes is not theoretically compatible to my own but does offer some interesting contemplations by which to continue this exploration.

**5.1. Introduction to vignettes**

I have been a primary school teacher for 7 years and have held a variety of different positions within the primary school. My teaching career has been spent teaching key stage two children (ages 7 - 11), with most of my time spent in year 6 (ages 10-11). This has meant I have spent most of my time at the upper end of the primary school which is a transitional year in which children move on to secondary school. My position as a year 6 teacher has meant that I have had to prepare many groups of children for SAT examinations, making me very familiar with role that examination plays in the lives of primary school children and staff. I have also held a range of different positions, ranging from class teacher to key stage leader and deputy head teacher. These positions have also had an impact on my understanding of teaching and the role of the classroom. I currently find myself once again working in a primary school, teaching a year 6 class mathematics. It is from these experiences that I draw the three vignettes which are to appear.

Ball (2017) states that Foucauldian genealogies always begin from the point where something is terribly wrong in the present, that “something is ‘intolerable’.” (p. 46) I would qualify this within my context as something that is terribly uncomfortable in the present: my experiences within the primary school classroom. In this section I shall offer three vignettes which will be used to investigate the ways in which teacher subjectivity, supported by architectural technologies of and within the classroom, are formulated. I quote Foucault (1982):

We must cease once and 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; it 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. (p. 194)

Through these vignettes, I shall try to demonstrate that something is produced through the proliferation of disciplinary and pastoral power. As Foucault states, it is a common assertion to think of power as something that represses. However, the opposite, I hope to argue is true. This discipline makes things, and does so in a very particular and specific way. I have chosen these three vignettes as they stand out as powerful examples of when I have been most troubled as a teacher. Furthermore, I have chosen them because outwardly they appear so insignificant to those outside of the institution that it is unlikely they would ever conceive that they would play any role is subjectifying the teacher-subject.

Firstly, I offer a vignette which explores my experiences of performance management. This vignette will focus on the role that performance management plays in forming my identity as a teacher and of those around me. I shall offer an official educational perspective regarding performance management and then offer a Foucauldian reading which focuses on themes such as examination, confession and subjectification. I also hope to establish that performance management is an essential mechanism in the constitution of expert knowledge which informs educational discourses within the school setting. In the second vignette, I shall extend my discussion of performance management to consider how these techniques of surveillance, individualization and normalization are supported by institutional architectures. In particular, I focus on a seemingly insignificant and apparently inherently good piece of school architecture: the display board. I shall offer a perspective on this common architectural feature of the school and demonstrate how it is crucial in supporting technologies and practices of examination within the classroom, proliferating disciplinary power in this setting. Thirdly, I shall go on to discuss a particular staff meeting and some CPD (continuing professional development) and discuss the role this plays in the process of normalizing teachers. I shall argue that CPD is an essential technique in the school institution for providing qualified discourses of knowledge and offering these discourses to individuals. I shall argue that this discourse is an essential component in a strategy of the Department for Education to persistently reconstitute the teacher as a moral individual.

**6. Performance management**

**The vignette**

*It comes to that time of year when we are asked to sign up for our yearly performance management in which we will be assessed based on the targets set for us at the beginning of the year. We are given the luxury of deciding when we would like our meeting to be which gives the illusion of choice, however I am aware that the meeting must take place. Once again, I feel the pressure and drain of having to prepare everything to prove that I am doing my job correctly. This is a huge strain on my time and adds to the pressure of an increasingly expanding workload. In preparing the material ready for the meeting I wade through lesson observations, pupil work and exercise book scrutinies, evidence of meeting each of the teaching standards and more. Whilst one part of me feels this to be a burden, I feel like I have to prove that I am doing a good job, that I am worth the pay grade I currently receive. I justify the process in my mind by considering the process as an essential part of my development and the financial rewards that come with it. My review takes place quietly, in a quiet room where no one else is present and is conducted by a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) but not the head teacher. We engage in pleasantries before the official meeting begins whilst I begin retrieving my documents and evidence to be inspected by the reviewer. They are impressed with the collection of evidence and note that this process will be ‘easy’. The document (performance appraisal document), which was previously agreed on by both parties and was taken away by both parties, is to be presented and discussed. We both have a copy but mine is jotted on and highlighted to suit the range of evidence that I have brought with me. The official copy is blank and shows the onus is on me to produce the evidence. I notice a range of information on the table in front of us; some documents are familiar whilst others remain alien. The documents include the ‘Teachers’ standards’, school policies, test scores, lesson observations, book scrutinies, environment observations, the school development plan and many more. I am not surprised to see the wealth of documentation and accept it as a natural part of the management process. I am to be judged against a whole range of statements and policies which act as a guide to how well I am performing in my role. We begin by reviewing the previous year’s targets and the documents before me are used to form a judgement about my performance. My reviewer takes the back seat and simply reads out the target before asking me to show what evidence I have to prove I have met this objective. They simply write down what evidence I have supplied which comes in the form of percentages, notes from observations, statistical information (pie charts to show ‘Age Related Expectation’ attainment). We stop from time to time to discuss various pieces of data and I am expected to discuss this information in detail. I discuss intervention and timetables to show how children have been given ample opportunities to meet different targets but have not managed to ‘get where they should be’. We discuss successes but mainly focus on where things could have gone better. I feel obliged to tell my reviewer what has happened this year and why this could be the case. Where things have gone well I am asked to explore why that is and the same applies to where things have gone not so well. As I continue to explain the minutiae of my results I begin to feel nervous. Many of my colleagues have already had their meetings and feel deflated. One teacher is told to “stop making excuses”. Soon we pass over this I and feel relieved that I have not been pushed further. I feel guilty, however, as not everyone has done as well as was expected. I am aware that feelings of guilt and shame are used to elicit results for the school and, above all, the life chances of children are used, as I understand it, to blackmail teachers into increasing their workload. As we finish the appraisal, my reviewer reminds me that they will pass on this information to the headteacher who will make the final decision as to whether I have met my targets or not. My reviewer is the first wave of my performance management process and is simply there to collect, analyse and scrutinise the information I have provided. The headteacher will then go on to make the final decision, which I shall not be present for. The meeting now looks to the future and new targets are to be discussed for the upcoming year. My reviewer immediately turns my attention to the school development plan which performs a key function in the management of the school. It highlights the areas of weakness in the school and acts as an indicator of what the teachers need to do better. I have no choice but to accept two targets from this development plan. Moreover, they are bound to key governmental documents, such as ‘Teachers’ Standards’ and ‘Teachers’ standards: how should they be used?’ and I feel drawn into a whole discourse of education that I do not necessarily agree with. The final part of the meeting focuses on picking my own target. This is an awkward moment in the meeting where I am left to think about what area I would like to improve in. My reviewer asks if I feel there is an area of my practice where I am weak or require some help. Feeling very uncomfortable at the concept of bringing my own faults or incompetence into the open to be discussed, I ask if there is something I could do to support the school in some way. We agree on improving a curriculum area in the school. The new appraisal document is typed up as I sit in silence as a witness of what has just happened. My reviewer informs me again that this document will be sent to the head teacher to be checked before it will be officially agreed and that they would come to see me to get this done. I am not to discuss this meeting with others.*

This vignette seeks to offer a personal and contextually-rich insight into one of the most common means of judging the work of teachers: performance management. Particularly, I hope to clearly demonstrate how this commonplace apparatus, which appears in arsenal of every school management team, has been discursively constituted as a vital and necessary tool by which to judge the work of teachers. Moreover, I believe it demonstrates that the teacher is bound within a whole range of techniques and practices, supported by a range of apparatus, which function to modify their way of being and proliferate the techniques of confession, normalization, individualization and docility. As Ball states (1990), “the profundity of the effects of management on the practice of teachers and other education professionals is rarely fully appreciated.” (p. 153) Arguably, this remains the case, three decades later. I attempt to bridge the gap between what has already been said about the work of teachers and move towards Ball’s vision of a full appreciation of this machinery.

I refer to two pieces of research (Morton, 2011; Page, 2015) which vary considerably from this genealogy and yet their slight differences of approach should be acknowledged. I have chosen them as they explore something very important to this genealogy but fail to extend their field of critique as far as this genealogy attempts to do. There remains a lack of research into performance management; as Page (2015) states, “while the issue of performance management is central to the work of teachers, there has been relatively little research on the subject…” (p. 1033). These pieces of literature, which at times contradict or antagonise one another, provide a generalised account of performance management for the means of constructing a different discourse of performance management that is, as Ball once argued, desperately needed.

In a paper titled ‘Performance management or managing performance? Supporting a vision to become outstanding’, published in *Management in Education*, Morton (2011) offers “an account of how performance management is operating in a rural primary school…” (p. 10). Morton aligns performance management with discourses promoted by stakeholders such as OfSted, stating that it enables a school to achieve their main purpose which is to “achieve an outstanding standard of education for its pupils, staff and community.” (p. 10) Morton conceptualises performance management as a tool to create “consistent vision” forging “a clear direction for the success of the school…” (p. 10). Framing performance management in this way means Morton is able to use it so that “governors rigorously challenge and evaluate the work of the school…” (p. 10). As the head teacher, Morton uses performance management to create clear objectives for staff by “management of our performance…” to achieve “the highest possible standards” by “developing a clear vision for the school in the future…” (p. 11). Furthermore, Morton argues this “constant review process and sharing of information provides a sound base for evaluating what has worked well, what needs to be improved…” (p. 11) and that this is facilitated by performance management. This critique is a demonstration of the success of performance management in delivering what is commonly constituted as the means through which attainment and performativity can be achieved. Antiquated methods have been abolished to make room for practices which enable schools to provide outstanding provision for its stakeholders. “Complacent performance management needs to be driven out…” (p. 13) Morton concludes; indeed this is the extent of his criticism of performance management as a process.

More closely aligned to critical aims of this genealogy is Page’s (2015) “study of performance management in 10 schools, five primary and five secondary” which explores the “panoptic metaphor…” by gaining a “snapshot of how headteachers are interpreting and implementing the reforms…” (p. 1031). Page does this through interviewing and thematic analysis and by touring some of the schools. This research aims to “gain a snapshot of the performance management practices within schools following the reforms that took place in September 2013…” and “explore how headteachers interpreted and implemented the reforms…” (p. 1035-1036)[[7]](#footnote-7). Page’s research “presents performance management as a matter of visibility and invisibility…”, thinking about the school as “panoptic” and as “glass organisations.” (p. 1032) Page critiques performance management by framing it through the lens of visibility, suggesting performance management operates a “normalised visibility” (p. 1032) in which evaluation material is gathered about the individual teacher and is normalised as a common practise due to policy reforms and special powers given to head teachers. Whilst Page’s research considers performance management as “bringing together the needs of the individual with the needs of the organisation…” (p. 1031), in both cases it considers teachers and leaders as individuals with agency. Performance continues to “define policy” and “increased powers to headteachers” has resulted in “unlimited observations”; teachers work within an “environment of normalised visibility” where continual observation is accepted as just how things are done. However, surveillance was not always found to be panoptic in the various schools Page references as it was “neither covert nor anonymised” but “open and transparent” and “distributed” throughout key players within the school. (p. 1046) Page likens his findings to a glass cage metaphor in which principal aspects of performance management are on view for all to see whilst other aspects are hidden. Finally, he summates, “the visibility of performance in schools is selective and controlled by headteachers” whilst also being subject to “the gaze” themselves. (p. 1046)

This research has identified some key gaps in the literature which this genealogy hopes to address. Firstly, whilst Morton (2011) expounds his own opinions in terms of the effect performance management has on the population of teachers in his school, he fails to explore the affect it has on his own practise (as a head teacher). It is significant that Morton does not submit performance management to critical scrutiny in terms of its effect as an instrument of power within the school. Equally, Morton’s research does not take on board the opinions or thoughts of teachers within the school; their voices remain silent within this research. Equally, whilst Page’s (2015) research does consider performance management through a Foucauldian lens, it remains limited in terms of its ability to understand the complex nature of localised power relations due to the author’s outsider position. Page is able to conduct his analysis through various documents and readings and yet a more nuanced and localised analysis of power relations in not possible. I now move on to explore the key themes which feature in Foucault’s (1991a) *Discipline and Punish.*

Foucault (1991a) offers three ways in which examination may be conceptualised:

1. “examination transforms the economy of visibility into the exercise of power.” (p. 187);
2. “examination also introduces individuality into the field of documentation.” (p. 189);
3. “examination, surrounded by all its documentary techniques, makes each individual a ‘case’.” (p. 191)

These forms of examination will be discussed in turn in relation to my vignettes. To clarify this exploration, I have transformed each type of examination into a key theme of Foucauldian analysis: (1) surveillance, (2) objectification and individualization and (3) normalization. *6.1. Theory* offers a summary of some of the key arguments in Foucault’s *Discipline and punish* regarding the emergence and nature of disciplinary power, whereas *6.2. Critique* will apply and develop the theoretical discussion contained in *6.1. Theory* in a theoretically informed discussion of the performance management vignette.

**6.1. Theory**

In *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault (1991a) states that “examination transforms the economy of visibility into the exercise of power.” (p. 187) He explores the transformation that took place in the mechanics of power, showing how the complex relationship between visibility and invisibility completely changed the relations of power that imbue our society with disciplinary practices and the ‘gaze’ (Foucault 1991a, p. 173). In doing so, he documents the diminishing of traditional power and the rise of disciplinary power which pervades our Western society. He states that “Traditionally, power was what was seen, what was shown and what was manifested…” whereas disciplinary power “is exercised through its invisibility; at the same time, it imposes on those whom it subjects a principle of compulsory visibility.” (p. 187) Using these concepts of disciplinary power, I hope to demonstrate that my experiences of performance management is imbued with disciplinary power in the form of surveillance. Firstly, I shall demonstrate that my performance management is essential in instilling a sense of being constantly watched; constantly being surveyed. It is this surveillance, I shall argue, that functions to objectify me and to make me a subject.

Foucault’s conceptualization of traditional power is one that conceives power as being enacted through visibility being given to those at the top, to the powerful. This power is typically believed to be repressive and exploitive with those at the top of the hierarchy, believed to hold all the power, oppressing those below. This visibility was often attached to those who appeared most powerful within Western societies such as monarchs and nobility, who held position at the top of the social order. It was achieved through an “excessive, yet regulated manifestation of power…” (p. 187), such as the ceremony, which Foucault describes as “a spectacular expression of potency, an ‘expenditure’, exaggerated and coded, in which power renewed its vigour. It was always more or less related to triumph.” (p. 187-188) Foucault uses the example of the public execution, such as the public execution of Damien in 1757, in which the condemned was used as a locus for the King’s power. Public spectacles, such as torture and executions, acted as reminders of the power that was held by the monarch and manifested through visibility. Danaher et al. (2000) refers to this level of visibility as “ascending individualism” (p. 58) in which the most powerful are increasingly individualised and visible within a society. Conversely, those with little or no social status were invisible and took their place within an undifferentiated mass. However, Foucault identifies a shift in this manifestation of power when such ceremonies or spectacles began to disappear. Foucault notes that “At the beginning of the nineteenth century, then, the great spectacle of physical punishment disappeared; the tortured body was avoided; the theatrical representation of pain was excluded from punishment.” (p. 14) In this transition, the reduction of spectacle signifies a slowing and reversing of ascending individualization and reduced the threat of uprising and rebellion against the state. This inversion signified a movement of visibility away from the monarch to the mass of undifferentiated people. As Foucault (1991a) states:

…visibility of the monarch is turned into the unavoidable visibility of the subjects. And it is this inversion of visibility in the functioning of the disciplines that was to assure the exercise of power even in its lowest manifestations. (p. 189)

This shift, Foucault argues, can be seen in 1666 when Louis XIV conducted a military review in which “paradoxically but significantly, the most brilliant figure of sovereign power is joined to the emergence of the rituals proper to disciplinary power.” (p. 189) This shift to descending individualism was represented by an inversion in the role of visibility in exercising power. Foucault calls this power ‘disciplinary’ and uses the term to describe the technologies and mechanisms at work with our society that function to modify our way of being. As Foucault states:

Disciplinary power… is exercised through its invisibility; at the same time it imposes on those whom it subjects a principle of compulsory visibility. In discipline, it is the subjects who have to be seen. (p. 187)

This inversion of visibility contrasts that of ascending individualism; the goal of disciplinary power is to separate the mass of people and make them visible. Foucault argues this is achieved in different ways but none more so than the modern examination. As Foucault (1991a) states:

Discipline, however, had its own type of ceremony. It was not the triumph but the review, the ‘parade’, an ostentatious form of the examination. In it the ‘subjects’ were presented as ‘objects’ to the observation of a power that was manifested only by its gaze. They did not receive directly the image of the sovereign power; they only felt its effects - in replica, as it were… (p. 188)

Thus, the physical presence of the sovereign was not needed to guarantee the functioning of this power, nor anyone else for that matter but the sense of being watched. It was the consciousness of visibility, guaranteed through various principles, that was key to the functioning of disciplinary power. Principles which ensured the visibility and individualization of the masses emerged in the military review and can be found in institutions and practices throughout the Western social body. These shall be discussed further now.

Foucault (1991a) argues, it is “the fact of being constantly seen, of being able always to be seen, that maintains the disciplined individual in his [or her] subjection.” (p. 187) We see this effect being realized through the architectural technology of Bentham’s Panopticon, which acted as “the perfect disciplinary apparatus”, in design at least, making it possible for “a single gaze to see everything constantly.” (p. 173) The Panopticon emerges as the architectural means for inverting the field of visibility necessary for disciplinary power to emerge and continue to function. In literal terms, the principles of the Panopticon may seem drastic and irrelevant to modern society, however this critique aims to show that they are nonetheless functioning with our modern institutions. The principles of the Panopticon may be contrasted with those of traditional disciplinary architectures. Foucault (1991a) states:

it reverses the principle of the dungeon; or rather of its three functions - to enclose, to deprive of light and to hide - it preserves only the first and eliminates the other two. Full lighting and the eye of a supervisor capture better than darkness, which ultimately protected. Visibility is a trap (p. 200)

But how is visibility achieved, maintained and used to allow disciplinary power to function? The Panopticon’s unique design ensures this field of visibility, making it “possible to see constantly and to recognize immediately” so that each prisoner was “alone, perfectly individualized and constantly visible.” (p. 200) It is, Foucault claims, a “machine for dissociating the see/being seen dyad…” in which “one is totally seen, without ever seeing” and “one sees everything without ever being seen.” (p. 202) Firstly, the undifferentiated mass, branded by Foucault as “The crowd, a compact mass, a locus of multiple exchanges, individualities merging together…” (p. 201), is problematized as the first issue in reversing the field of visibility. Therefore, the crowd is “abolished and replaced by a collection of separated individualities.” (p. 201) thus ensuring that no one remains hidden or can hide from the field of visibility which is to be established over them. The Panopticon, acting as intervention, ensures that:

Each individual, in his place, is securely confined to a cell from which he is seen from the front by the supervisor; but the side walls prevent him from coming into contact with his companions. He is seen, but he does not see; he is the object of information, never a subject in communication. (p. 200)

Secondly, the field of visibility or gaze is achieved through the Panopticon’s unique design; all inmates must believe they are being watched at all times and this is achieved through a fabricated yet powerful field of visibility they cannot escape. As Foucault states, “power should be visible and unverifiable.” Visible in that “the inmate will constantly have before his eyes the tall outline of the central tower from which he is spied upon” and unverifiable in that “the inmate must never know whether he is being looked at any one moment; but he must be sure that he may always be so.” (p. 201) This produces, Foucault (1991a) argues, “…a state of conscious and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power” (p. 201). Furthermore, the Panopticon ensures not only continuous relations of power through the field of visibility but it does so anonymously. It is, as Foucault states, an “…architectural apparatus… for creating and sustaining a power relation independent of the person who exercises it…” (p. 201) Therefore, the figure within the watchtower, if there is one at all, is irrelevant, or at least, the functioning of power does not depend upon that individual, or his or her whims. What is important is that the individuals think there is someone there watching or there is possibility of someone watching at all times. This belief that somebody is always watching the inmates is synonymous with the term Foucault uses: the ‘gaze’.

Thirdly, the Panopticon produces a secondary effect in that the inhabitants internalise the ‘gaze’ of the field of visibility which affects their behaviour. Foucault (1991a) argues:

He who is subjected to a field of visibility, and who knows it, assumes the responsibility for the constraints of power; he makes them play spontaneously upon himself; he inscribes in himself the power relation in which he simultaneously plays both roles; he becomes the principle of his own subjection. (p. 202-203)

Thus, the Panopticon produces a field of permanent visibility which is not only acknowledged by the individuals subjected to this field but internalized. The individuals change; they become different based on a situation in which they may or not be being subjected to or not. Through “…homogeneous effects of power… a real subjection is born mechanically from a fictitious relation” (Foucault 1991a, p. 202). Therefore, the Panopticon “acts directly on individuals; it gives ‘power of mind over mind’” and does so “without any physical instrument other than architecture and geometry” (Foucault 1991a, p. 206). Its principles make it easily translatable throughout institutions within the social body and does so while escaping the danger of appearing tyrannical. Foucault argues that the Panopticon “has become a transparent building in which the exercise of power may be supervised by society as a whole” because it is “subtly arranged so that an observer may observe, at a glance, so many different individuals, also enables everyone to come and observe any of the observers.” (p. 207)

Therefore, in reconsidering performance management as a practice in the disciplinary apparatus, I consider to what extent the principles that are displayed and underlie the Panopticon are present within the techniques and methods of performance management. In particular, I will investigate the extent to which performance management produces “a single gaze to see everything constantly” (Foucault 1991a, p. 173) thereby producing “a real subjection” that is “born mechanically from a fictitious relation” (Foucault 1991a, p. 202). I shall now unpack the vignette to identify these principles within performance management.

**6.2. Critique**

**6.2.1. Surveillance**

One could imagine performance management to be executed similarly to the ceremonies of the 17th century, with the “excessive, yet regulated manifestation of power…” (Foucault 1991a, p. 187) being realised through a grand meeting with the head teacher and reviewee teacher. The opposite is true in my own experience; the meeting is imbued with both modesty and privacy and yet is also totally saturated with visibility that it ensures the hold of disciplinary power over me. Firstly, the meeting is revealed through a ‘sign up’ board:

*‘We are given the luxury of deciding when we would like our meeting to be which gives the illusion of choice however I am aware that the meeting must take place.’*

I am given responsibility of deciding when the meeting can take place. It appears accessible and open and gives others the chance to see that teachers are given autonomy over their work. Performance management, to adapt Foucault’s description of disciplinary power, must be like the “transparent building in which the exercise of power may be supervised…” (p. 207) so that everyone can oversee the activities of the school as if that were sufficient protection against tyranny[[8]](#footnote-8). Therefore, this simple act, this gesture of freedom given to teachers simply reassures the observers and the observed that they have apparent choice. Furthermore, the location of the meeting, I argue, is significant; it takes place in a classroom where no one else is present and with the door closed. This is a private meeting:

*My review takes place quietly, in a quiet room where no one else is present and is conducted by a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) but not the head teacher.*

The presence and absence of individuals in this meeting is significant and highlights another Panoptic principle. I shall discuss the absence of the head teacher in further detail shortly. However, it is important to note that an SLT member, of which there are six, conducts my meeting. Foucault (1991a) states “power should be visible and unverifiable” (p. 201). Arguably, by sending a member of the SLT to conduct my appraisal ensures I am left unsure who it could be. Although it is usually the same person, there is always a chance it could change. The meeting ensures visibility as it functions like “the tall outline of the central tower” and yet, as Foucault (1991a) argues, it triumphs “independent of the person who exercises it…” (p. 201). Therefore, the member of staff conducting the meeting is, to some extent, irrelevant. The ‘gaze’ is strengthened within the school as members of the SLT are utilised as sentinels (knowingly or unknowingly). Furthermore, no other members of staff are present for this meeting. This is significant as it is the only official meeting throughout the year which takes place with only myself and another member of staff. In all other settings, targets, results and progress are always discussed alongside partner teachers and these are framed within a dialogue of responsibility across the year group. Teamwork is deemed essential and is positively constituted as a key success driver; not engaging with other teachers is frowned upon. This, however, is not the case for the annual performance review; this meeting is conducted totally alone without mention of the other teachers in my year group and key stage. This instils within me the sense that I am separate and individualised from other teachers. My performance management is focused on my successes and failures as a teacher and, ultimately, functions to individualize and normalize my behaviour within the body of the school. The stakes are high and the meeting could have huge implications: support and interventions may be offered for anything less than good performance reducing my confidence, professional autonomy such as it exists, and well-being, and pay increases may be rejected based on this meeting. All of this indicates a wish to reduce what Foucault calls “compact, swarming, howling masses…” (or the blob, as Michael Gove referred to the teaching profession) so that there is “there is no danger of a plot” (p. 200) and “no disorders…” (p. 201) in the enacting of this examination practice. Within the technology of performance management, as a teacher I am seen but I do not see the appraisal of others; I become the “object of information” but not “a subject in communication.” (Foucault 1991a, p. 200) Communication is neutralized as much as possible so that a “multiplicity that can be numbered and supervised…” (p. 201) so that, Foucault argues, it becomes “possible to draw up differences…” and “note the aptitudes of each worker…” (p. 203). Therefore, the meeting ensures that the crowd (or the teaching collective, such as it might exist as a professional, or even unionised group) is “abolished [or at least diminished and rendered powerless] and replaced by a collection of separated individualities.” (p. 201) I believe it does this for several reasons. Firstly, it stops teachers from hiding away, or avoiding the gaze of power, which may be possible if others are present and are able to take the lead in the meeting. Secondly, it ensures the teacher feels the sense of visibility that is cultivated in such moments. Finally, I am told *‘not to discuss the meeting with others.’* I believe this is setting the foundations for further individualization.

It has become normal for the head teacher not to conduct performance management meetings with class teachers unless there is a specific reason to do so. In the meeting, I am made aware that

…*this document will be sent to the head teacher to be checked before it will be officially agreed and that they would come to see me to get this done.*

Firstly, the absence of the most senior staff member chimes to the principle of descending individualism that Foucault (1991a) discusses:

…visibility of the monarch is turned into the unavoidable visibility of the subjects. And it is this inversion of visibility in the functioning of the disciplines that was to assure the exercise of power even in its lowest manifestations. (p. 189)

In this scenario, I extrapolate the monarch to contextualize it within the school setting in which I work, suggesting that the person who appears most powerful is the head teacher. The absence may be coincidental but it is nonetheless important in establishing another of descending individualisms principles in shifting the focus of visibility away from the top of the hierarchy to the bottom. Paradoxically, the head teacher is both present and absent; proximately they are absent but their impression is very much part of the meeting. Firstly, I argue that the absence of the head teacher allows the technology of descending individualism to function. It functions because the absence of the head teacher allows the field of visibility to disperse amongst the subjects; the economy of visibility, as Foucault discusses. The presence of the head teacher may lead to a reappearance of the ‘ceremony’ with its “spectacular expression of potency…” and focus on the “triumph” (p. 188) of the head teacher rather than the performance of the teacher. This subtle distinction is essential in establishing over teachers this field of visibility without losing this continuous play of visibility or the depths to which it could be extended throughout the life of the teacher. Conversely, the head teacher remains faintly present; they are only mentioned once during the meeting and yet this meeting acts as a representation; it serves, as Foucault states, as a reminder of ‘the gaze’. In reminding me that the meeting would be reported back to the head teacher, it demonstrated they are closely bound in the process even though they are not physically present. As Foucault (1991a) states, I “did not receive directly the image of the sovereign power; they only felt its effects - in replica…” (p. 188).

Secondly, in asking other members of staff to implement the meeting, another Panoptic mechanism is established which enables the economy of visibility to become disciplinary in its effects. Foucault (1991a) states that “Any individual, taken almost at random, can operate the machine: in the absence of the director, his family, his friends, his visitors, even his servants” and this mechanism is essential in establishing a continuous field of visibility amongst teachers as it “automatizes and individualizes power.” (p. 202) By using other teachers to conduct performance management on other teachers, I become aware that many people are drawn into this disciplinary apparatus and it is not one single person who is responsible for ‘the gaze’ that is held over me but many. Power, within the school, is individualized from the head teacher and distributed through the body of the SLT members which, once again, extends the field of visibility and these teachers are located at various places around the school. Teachers, themselves, become a resource of the mechanism of the Panoptic gaze due to performance management.

A reading of performance management from the viewpoint of the Department for Education (2012) is one which fails to appreciate what Ball (2017) calls “… the interplay of knowledge and power…” (p. 47) as well as the changing status of the individual as an object and subject of power rather than an agent of their own forces. Contrary to a “process designed to ensure that all teachers have the skills and support they need to carry out their role effectively” (Department for Education 2012, p. 6), I have attempted to demonstrate, through my experiences, that the review can be understood as a technology that instils in the teacher a knowledge which attaches to it a certain power. I have argued that it is responsible for instilling visibility throughout the whole population of the school and in doing so makes them an object of this visibility. Through a constant gaze, which is focused on themselves as well as others, the homogeneous effects of power can function. Therefore, performance management can be reconstituted as a mechanism for the proliferation of disciplinary surveillance power. I shall now explore how, I believe, as a teacher I am further individualized and objectified by the second type of examination.

**6.2.2. Individualization and objectification**

The teacher is further individualized and objectified by performance management as it is, I suggest, saturated by the second type of examination. Foucault (1991a) states “examination also introduces individuality into the field of documentation.” (p. 189) This second type of examination focuses on establishing individuals within a population by capturing them in documentation. Foucault (1991a) states:

The examination leaves behind it a whole meticulous archive constituted in terms of bodies and days. The examination that places individuals in a field of surveillance also situates them in a network of writing; it engages them in a whole mass of documents that capture and fix them. The procedures of examination were accompanied at the same time by a system of intense registration and of documentary accumulation. A ‘power of writing’ was constituted as an essential part in the mechanisms of discipline. (p. 189)

Performance management is, primarily, a documented event and is organized around the presentation and review of documents. Specifically, the performance appraisal document is used throughout the meeting and is taken away at the end of the meeting so that I have a hard copy. This document contains information about each individual teacher’s targets which have been informed by other key school documents such as the school development plan, OfSted inspections, lesson observations, the teachers’ standard, etc. As I stated above, ‘*The document which was agreed on by both parties, and which was taken away by both parties, is to be presented and discussed.’* When I arrive at the meeting this document is already loaded onto a computer screen and will be updated and rewritten as the meeting progresses. Thus, performance management, beyond its superficial functions, is used as part of a much greater collection of information which Foucault (1991a) calls “…a whole meticulous archive…” (p. 189) through which it is possible to capture individuals in the school population. As I have argued previously, the field of visibility was initially responsible for constituting individuality but the second type of examination that Foucault describes is responsible for fixing each person in concrete, physical terms. Because surveillance is too abstract to constitute a reliable network of power, it is supported by discourses and networks of documentation as they produce another layer of knowledge which aids in the functioning of disciplinary power. This, the second strand of Foucault’s examination theory, is the major component in the individualization and objectification of the teachers. The performance review always focuses on creating targets and responding to those targets, so it is necessarily a process of writing and documenting. Once again, it would be possible to review this process as a simple and effective way of designating and meeting the needs of teachers in their professional development. This discourse is a common-sense one but one that fails to appreciate the effect that documenting has on the individualization of people. Through documentation, performance management can capture snapshots of the individual and fix them within a collection of information.

It is possible to think that performance management is a strategy needed to simply check that each institution has the best possible people working for it. It is treated as a self-evident and valid discourse that is to some extent quite justifiably perpetuated by the Department for Education. However, from a Foucauldian perspective, performance management is one of the main technologies which functions to define the individual characteristics of the teacher, including how the teacher is expected to understand and relate to him/herself as a professional. In other words, we have become so thoroughly individualized that we cannot imagine a time or place where we could define ourselves differently. However, it may be pertinent here to explore the concept of individuality a little further. For a long time individuality meant something quite different to our current conceptualization. Foucault (1991a) states that “…ordinary individuality - the everyday individuality of everybody - remained below the threshold of description…” because being “…looked at, observed, described in detail, followed from day to day by an uninterrupted writing was a privilege.” (p. 191) Therefore the historical individual came to mean something quite different our own understanding. Foucault’s comments that the examination made possible “…the constitution of the individual as describable…” (p. 190) highlights the shifting nature of individuality. Now, as I have attempted to demonstrate, individuality is inscribed in networks of power.

So far I have attempted to argue that performance management has established each individual as a knowable object, it makes possible the ability to train and develop each individual person. Because each person becomes individualized within this play of power, knowledge is constituted as a branch of power in which knowledge of individuals makes it possible to create “a comparative system…” (p. 190) which was not possible before this reconstitution of the historical human subject. Thus in the performance management meeting, information about me and my colleagues is collected and used to form comparisons between ourselves. This can also take the form of comparing different periods of time such as a teacher’s performance one year with another. As I state above, ‘*I am asked questions and shown various pieces of data and am expected to discuss this information and knowledge with respect to the targets that were set for me at the beginning of the year.’* This review process is one of constantly creating comparisons between myself and other members of staff. More profoundly than this, the archive makes possible a whole new technology of power that was not possible before the accumulation of this information: the norm. Foucault (1991a) states that “…the accumulation of documents, their seriation, [and] the organization of comparative fields…” makes “it possible to classify, to form categories, to determine averages, to fix norms.” (p. 190) This normalization is a common theme of all of my performance managements. Teachers are pressured to agree to targets which are constituted based on the formation of norms. This could take the form of percentages of children reaching a certain level in a test (80% achieve age-related expectation), improving the grade of lesson observation (Requiring improvement to ‘Good’) or may be as modest as improving the profile of a subject within the school. However, all of these targets are established based on norms that have been constituted through the collection of knowledge derived, in part, from performance management. A more sinister side of this normalization process is when a teacher falls below the measurement of norms and is constituted as abnormal as I shall argue in the next form of examination.

Performance management is a crucial tool in increasing disciplinary power in the primary school because it nourishes the archive of documentation which functions within disciplinary institutions such as the school to demarcate the specific characteristics of teachers and how teachers are to relate to themselves. By increasing this power it is also performance management that individualizes the population and subjects them into a position from which it is extremely difficult to be released. It does this because performance management strengthens “two correlative possibilities…” (p. 190) which Foucault (1991a) describes as arising from this disciplinary power. Firstly, performance management continues to constitute “…the individual as a describable, analysable object…” (p. 190) to maintain his individuality and not to provide some general definition so that the individual may blend back into the population. Performance management seeks to individualize as much as possible so the subject knows, as much as possible how different they are from others and maintain their objectification. Secondly, performance management functions to make comparison between individuals. It is the collection of information and its documentation that makes possible, Foucault argues, “…the constitution of a comparative system that made possible the measurement of overall phenomena…” (p. 190). By annually inviting staff to performance management, senior leaders ceaselessly create rankings and comparisons between staff throughout the school body. This is done in a variety of ways such as sharing whole-school attainment data that highlights the classes and teachers that met their targets and subjecting those who are have fallen below the target to public scrutiny by other teachers. Moreover, this comparative system also functions to constitute a norm by which the teacher can judge themselves and begin to modify their way of behaving and relating to themselves. A whole body of knowledge surrounding the teacher is formulated through this archive of information. A fabricated subject position is constituted to the most minor details including how the teacher should perform, work, think, act, speak and even how they should feel.

**6.2.3. Normalization**

The third strand of this Foucauldian analysis is that “examination, surrounded by all its documentary techniques, makes each individual a ‘case’.” (p. 191) I have attempted to demonstrate that the individual subject which has been epistemologically constituted as a knowable individual and subject of power is also one that can be worked upon and improved. The teacher becomes knowable through the archive of information that is gathered around them and can be compared to others and institution norms due to this collection of information. The third type of examination, which is equally infused within performance management, constitutes the teacher as an object of the power of improvement by making them a case to be worked upon. Equally potent in this mechanism is the increasing performativity discourse which is present in academic institutions. Foucault (1991a) states:

The case is no longer, as in casuistry or jurisprudence, a set of circumstances defining an act and capable of modifying the application of a rule; it is the individual as he may be described, judged, measured, compared with others, in his very individuality; and it is also the individual who has to be trained or corrected, classified, normalized, excluded, etc. (p. 191)

Here Foucault is describing another transformation in which the teacher is not just someone who can be seen, known and compared but can also be worked upon and improved dependent on the institutional setting in which they find themselves.

Performance management is a mechanism for the training of teachers. I have established that the review is used to collect documentation and objectify the teacher within a network of writing. Performance management then goes further and uses this network of documentation to constitute the teacher as an individual to be trained. This is done in many ways. My performance management always begins by reviewing the previous years targets. These are discussed and reviewed and other pieces of data and documentation are used to decide if I have succeeded in meeting each of the targets. Following on from this I am given new targets or new ways in which I may work on myself and improve my practice. Targets are taken straight from the school’s action plan[[9]](#footnote-9): a plan which is used to drive forward the performance of the organization in some way. By doing this two important processes are established: firstly, the review establishes a technology of improvement in which the teacher is seen as an individual to be constantly trained. There must be no plateau as there is always work to be done on the teacher. Secondly, target setting constitutes the teacher as an individual who must be aware of their own faults and must work upon them. This can open a domain of conflict amongst teachers. As Ball (2003) states, for some teachers it is “… an opportunity to make a success of themselves, for others it portends inner conflicts, inauthenticity and resistance.” (p. 215)

By constituting myself as an individual within a network of writing, I become comparable, an object that can be examined and compared to others similar to it. Performance management functions here to not only situate teachers amongst one another but establish norms throughout the teaching population. These norms can take many forms: the quality of a teacher’s class books in which the children produce work, the output or productivity of the children, the grades that a class of children achieves or the pedagogical practices of teachers in a class. This list is not exhaustive. By establishing these norms, it makes possible a whole series of discourses which can be taken up by senior members of staff and proliferated as qualified discourses of the institution. It is inevitable, given how norms are based in part on averages, that throughout the population individuals fall below the threshold of norms which have been dictated by outside authorities such as the Department for Education or OfSted. Here performance management plays its most important function in offering interventions in the form of technologies of normalization.

The fact that performance management has such an essential role in constituting the individual as a case is one that has lasting implications for who the teacher is because performance management is an integral part of the functioning of the school and has been qualified by the Department for Education. Of particular importance is the role performance management plays in constituting the teacher as an individual who must work on themselves; the teacher is expected to strive to reach the institutional norm which has been created for them, and on their behalf, without their involvement. Knowing that these technologies function to problematize the teacher’s internal world makes them incredibly effective as they create what Ball (2003) terms the “…struggle over the teacher’s soul.” (p. 217) Because these “… struggles are often internalized and set the care of the self against duty to others” (p. 216) the teacher finds themselves into a difficult place as they are constantly being asked to question their identity and work against networks of power that constitute who they are. This is an uncomfortable place to be. Confirming the extent to which teachers struggle with the subjective experiences in which they are bound by relations of power (constituted by qualified discourses which offer norms of performativity by which to judge themselves) is not something that can easily be done. This process of grappling with a subject position, is, however, ever increasing. As Ball (2003) states we develop:

A sense of being constantly judged in different ways, by different means, according to different criteria, through different agents and agencies. There is a flow of changing demands, expectations and indicators that makes one continually accountable and constantly recorded. We become ontologically insecure: unsure whether we are doing enough, doing the right thing, doing as much as others, or as well as others, constantly looking to improve, to be better, to be excellent. And yet it is not always very clear what is expected. (p. 220)

**7. The Display Board**

**The vignette**

*During my first year of teaching I was pleasantly surprised by the attractive display boards that were scattered across the school. I had seen other displays at schools but these were particularly impressive. I had previously been responsible for producing a display during a placement at a school during my teacher training. However, when I was given my introduction pack at the beginning of term I was amused to find a school policy which addressed the subject of display boards around the school. Other teachers had warned me that there were very high expectations surrounding display boards and warned me that boards have been taken down ‘if they were not good enough’. I took my time to become familiar with the policy at the advice of other teachers.*

*The policy was extensive: it outlined various aspects regarding the display boards such as the type of paper to be used, how the paper was to be displayed, what type of work could be displayed and how the work should be displayed. Furthermore, the policy forbid many things. When backing the boards in paper, only complimentary colours could be used which should reflect the topic being covered. There was also text discussing the order and style in which the paper should be overlapped on the display board itself; this was to ensure there were no gaps or shadows on the displays when visitors were being shown around the school. As such, all gaps in the display paper should face away from doors so that visitors would not see gaps. Blue tack was forbidden from being used on the boards and only staples could be used. Furthermore, all staples had to be facing either horizontally or vertically and should be consistent throughout the display. The sizing of the lettering used for titles was also prescribed and had to be cut from colours complimentary to the backing paper. Borders around the edge of the display were also to be strictly measured: no fewer than 15mm and no greater than 25mm. The distance of the border from the edge of the display board was also to be carefully measured. The work selected for the board had to be the best as the board had to stand out as an example for all children in the class. The work had to be both academically very good (it met the standard which was expected for a child in that year group or above) but also presented beautifully (one example was that the handwriting had to be exceptional). Work selected to be displayed should be double backed in complimentary colours and display the child’s name in a selected font and size which was prescribed in the display board policy. Work must not have a date presented on it and should not be more than 3 months old. This prescription of work was very specific and was aimed to counteract a growing trend in schools: working walls[[10]](#footnote-10). Working walls were specifically banned: they were deemed as messy and of a poor standard most of the time.*

*Once up, display boards remained a focus throughout the school year and were often used to judge how well a teacher was working. Children’s work on the display boards was often checked and commented on if the quality was not good enough. Inadvertently, the display board became a method for judging the teacher; the quality of the work was inspected not only by the senior leadership team but by other teachers. Weekly staff meetings would be held in different teacher’s classrooms; it gave members of staff a chance to see the various displays up around the school. We would often be asked, at the beginnings of staff meetings, to comment on the display boards in a room. Often, we would be asked, as a staff, to list things that were very good and ways that the boards could be improved. From time to time, members of staff would be asked to change aspects of their displays or even take them down completely and start them all over again. One occasion particularly stands out in my mind: a member of staff had their display taken down by a teaching assistant which caused them great upset and disappointment as it had taken that member of staff a great deal of time to prepare but was not up to the standard of the policy. I was also asked on occasions to change certain aspects of my display boards. On one occasion, I had backed a board with paper ready for the work to be placed on it during the summer break. On returning to school in September, I was asked to re-back the boards because the paper had already begun to ‘droop’ and it would not look good enough for the children returning to school. Thus, the display board became a source of great stress and anxiety for many members of staff in the school which I worked. A great deal of time and effort was spent making and maintaining them.*

The vignette I have offered above is an example of my experience as a teacher from a very specific time I was employed in a school. Whilst the example I have given above may be seen as an extreme case, it nonetheless brings to light and exemplifies aspects of the disciplinary logic of the contemporary school. By offering this vignette of my experience, I hope to consider the role that architectures play in the formation of teacher subjectivity just as other researchers (Hunter 1994, Jones 1990) have done in relation to other educational topics such as the development of the school or the historical development of the teacher as a whole. In *Discipline and punish*, Foucault (1991a) argues that “discipline proceeds from the distribution of individuals in space.” (p. 141) and to achieve this “a whole set of techniques, a whole corpus of methods and knowledge, descriptions, plans and data” was coupled with a “meticulous observation of detail” (p. 141) in order to utilise space for disciplinary ends. It is these elements that Foucault has identified that I which to discuss here.

This discussion explores the concept of architectural apparatus as a key element for the conditions of disciplinary power. As Foucault (1991a) states:

although it is true that that its pyramidal organization gives it a ‘head’, it is the apparatus as a whole that produces ‘power’ and distributes individuals in this permanent and continuous field. (p. 177)

In considering this possibility that Foucault puts forward, I shall explore a piece of architectural space that appears in almost every classroom in every school. In my experience, within the school environment, a discourse surrounding the qualities and uses of the display board already exists and yet it fails to include the various ways in which display boards may contribute to the subjective roles individuals play within the school. Because genealogies wish to explore the minute details which are often removed from historical accounts, I have chosen to explore this architectural feature as it plays an indispensable yet, seemingly, inconsequential part in the functioning of the classroom and roles that individuals take within that space.

Just as Hunter (1994) and Jones (1990) argue, classrooms have a definite point of emergence within the educational landscape, and I hope to demonstrate that the display board can be explored in relation to disciplinary power as part of that landscape. In this way, I hope to explain how the display board can emerge within the educational landscape as a constituting factor in the manifestation of the teacher subjectivity. Moreover, I wish to demonstrate how the display board is essential in strengthening the effect that problematising practices have on the teacher subject which will be explored in the final vignette. Therefore, this genealogy considers display boards as an important aspect of the institutional discourse surrounding the teacher subject. I shall now explore material from Foucault’s (1991a) *Discipline and punish* which consider architectural space as a key element in establishing potentially docile subjects and disciplinary power.

**7.1. Theory**

Firstly, Foucault explains that we are fashioned by disciplinary power through the “distribution of individuals in space” and to achieve this disciplinary effect, it “employs several techniques.” (p. 141) These techniques will now be discussed in relation to the display board and teacher subjectivity.

**7.1.1. Enclosure**

Foucault (1991a) identifies open and unidentified spaces as functionally inadequate when it comes to creating docile subjects. He discusses how discipline required “*enclosure’*” or a space “heterogeneous to all others and closed in upon itself” (p. 141) which enables the techniques of discipline to take place. Such a space can, therefore, become an aspect of the teacher’s manifestation in relation to other practices such as performance management. He suggests that a disciplinary space is one that achieves the greatest possible output with the minimal number of interruptions, such as “thefts, interruptions of work, disturbances and ‘cabals’” (p. 142). Foucault’s remarks in *Discipline and Punish* as they relate to schooling are mainly focused on the way in which children’s docility was affected by such spaces and yet this exploration will focus on how teacher’s senses of self are affected by these architectures. By utilizing an enclosed space, Foucault argues that it is possible to “derive the maximum advantages and to neutralize the inconveniences…” (p. 142). This mechanism is, however, not totalizing. Foucault explains that enclosure on its own is not “sufficient in disciplinary machinery” nor is it “constant, nor indispensable…” because “this machinery works in space in a much more flexible and detailed way.” (p. 143) These spaces should be “homogenous and well-defined…” (p. 142) in which “the forces of production become more concentrated…” (p. 142).

**7.1.2. Partitioning**

Because enclosure simply isn’t enough to ensure complicity throughout the social body, Foucault argues that “discipline organizes an analytical space.” (p. 143) which must be separated in a particular way. Lack of partitioning allows masses and groups to mix together, making it difficult to analyse and train the conduct of individuals. Foucault argues that through partitioning, it is possible to “avoid distributions in groups; break up collective dispositions; analyse confused, massive or transient pluralities.” (p. 143) Partitioning, Foucault argues, is used to assign each individual a place and in turn each place has its individual, which is used to remove confusing and unregulated spaces. In doing so, this allocation allows for the surveillance of presences and absences, the locating of individuals and for the checking of communications. This enables a supervisor “at each moment to supervise the conduct of each individual, to assess it, to judge it, to calculate its qualities or merits” (p. 143) and makes the quickest identification of each individual possible.

**7.1.3. Functional space**

Disciplinary space is furthered by making it a useful and purposeful space. Foucault (1991a) states:

The rule of *functional sites*would gradually, in the disciplinary institutions, code a space that architecture generally left at the dis­posal of several different uses. Particular places were defined to correspond not only to the need to supervise, to break dangerous communications, but also to create a useful space. The process appeared clearly in the hospitals, especially in the military and naval hospitals (p. 143-144)

As Foucault states above, disciplinary power utilizes space in a very different way to the techniques and practices utilized in sovereign power as discussed in *6.1. Theory*. To enable the functioning of disciplinary power, spaces must be reduced from serving many different purposes to as few as possible; spaces must have distinct purposes and must not be left at the “disposal of several different uses” (p. 143). The example Foucault gives of Rochefort (p. 144), which existed as a military and civilian port with all manner of “crossroads for dangerous mixtures, a meeting-place for forbidden circulations”, demonstrates how a space which is not codified and analysed allows for a variety of undisclosed and unwanted activities to take place (p. 144). Foucault states that “out of discipline, a medically useful space was born.” (p. 144); I also argue that this can be said about the classroom. By designating a space for a single purpose, it allows the continuous functioning of certain discourses and practices to take place without interference.

By utilising a space for many purposes and functions, the necessary rules or guidelines attached to each function may overlap leading to messy or confusing results. Through coding a space for a specific purpose, rather than many, a very specific set of rules and boundaries can be maintained. By reducing the number of functions of a space, and “by dissipating the confusion…” (p. 144), which comes with this, spaces become useful in a disciplinary way. This can also be reduced to smallest elements of a disciplinary space. As I will explore in *7.2. Critique*, even the direction of the staples, if left unassigned and open to teacher discretion, can add to a lack of schematic planning and confusion. Therefore, the display board, as a disciplinary architecture, must become a useful space in a variety of different ways, even down to its smallest elements of execution. Whilst dominant discourses often highlight the display board as a functional site for displaying children’s work, this genealogy reimagines them as a space in the discourse surrounding teacher (and pupil) subjectivity. Thus, a Foucauldian understanding of power as a productive force encounters architectural features as determinants in the production of individuals. Display boards, I shall demonstrate, play a role in the subjectification of the teacher.

**7.1.4. Ranks**

Foucault (1991a) finally states that by “distributing individuals in a space in which one might isolate them and map them…” (p. 144) it becomes possible to judge and rank the work of children and, equally, teachers. It becomes possible “to observe the worker's presence and application, and the quality of his work; to compare workers with one another…” (p. 145). A teacher can occupy a position “in a series, and by the gap that separates [that position] from the others” (p. 145), a rank is produced: “a classification, the point at which a line and a column intersect, the interval in a series of intervals that one may traverse one after the other.” (p. 145-146) As such, the position that one takes in relation to others is “a technique for the transformation of arrangements” (p. 146) as it gives each individual an impermanent position that is hung in a constant network of relations to others. It is in this sense that “discipline is an art of rank” (p. 146) and became a natural aspect of the experience after it have been amalgamated into the architectural space of the school. Foucault states:

gradually - but especially after 1762 - the educational space unfolds; the class becomes homogenous, it is no longer made of individual elements arranged side by side under the master’s eye. In the eighteenth century, ‘rank’ begins to define the great form of distribution of individuals in the educational order: rows or ranks of pupils in the class, corridors, courtyards; rank attributed to each pupil at the end of each task and each examination; the rank he obtains from week to week, moth to month, year to year… (p. 146-147)

This technique of assigning rank allowed for the “supervision of each individual and the simultaneous work of all” (p. 147) but also transforms the classroom into a “learning machine”, which could be used for “supervising, hierarchizing, rewarding” (p. 147) which becomes clearer as Foucault explores how docile bodies are further trained. Foucault surmises that the distribution of bodies in a useful space creates the first necessary condition of disciplinary power, what “might be called a ‘cellular’ power” as it acts as the first “condition for the control” of different individuals (p. 149). For Foucault “in organizing ‘cells', 'places' and 'ranks', the disciplines create complex spaces that are at once architectural, functional and hierarchical” (p. 148) but are also “mixed spaces: real because they govern the disposition of buildings, rooms, furniture, but also ideal, because they are projected over this arrangement of characterizations, assessments, hierarchies.” (p. 148)

Ranking also has the added ability to punish and reward those within a disciplinary institution. As Foucault (1991a) states:

distribution according to ranks or grade has a double role: it marks the gaps, hierarchizes qualities, skills and aptitudes; but it also punishes and rewards. It is the penal functioning of setting in order and the ordinal character of judging. Discipline rewards simply by the play of awards, thus making it possible to attain higher ranks and places; it punishes by reversing this process. Rank in itself serves as a reward or punishment. (p. 181)

In this case, rewarding and punishing are enacted through a position within the arrangements of individuals in space and rank. I shall now discuss how this educational space - the display board - can be explored as a disciplinary space by applying these themes and ideas to my own experiences provided above in the vignette.

**7.2. Critique**

**7.2.1. Enclosure**

The first way I suggest that display boards can be understood as a disciplinary technique is that it creates an enclosure. It does so because it combines many spaces and functions into one specific area which is closed in upon itself. The display board provides many functions: it acts as a decorative feature to brighten a classroom and add interest for those who inhabit the space, creates a space for displaying work done by children, sets expectations for the children in terms of presentation and many others. In doing so, the display board has become a centralized space in the disciplinary architecture of the school which can perform many functions. Its dominion strengthened by the understanding that it can draw these elements into one architectural space which can be observed in one moment by any individual. By concentrating this information into one enclosed space, it also means one can quickly and easily obtain certain information without the need to look in other places or speak to other individuals. For example, to ascertain the standard of handwriting in a class, an individual would need to look in everyone’s book; work displayed on a board provides this information in one moment easily and effectively. As I have stated, ‘*working walls were specifically banned: they were deemed as messy and of a poor standard most of the time.’* I argue that working walls produce an opposite result: the information displayed is often disorganised which leads to confusion. This is to be avoided in disciplinary spaces as the working wall allows for individuals to remain undetected, or at least less available to direct and easy inspection.

Furthermore, and more importantly to this thesis, these boards function to render open to inspection not only the children in a classroom but the teacher. As an agent of disciplinary enclosure the display board reveals a myriad of information about the teacher. The display board is a closely guarded enclosure device and reveals specific information regarding the teacher. Firstly, it outlines to what extent the teacher has consulted the display policy. That is to say, regardless of any other effect, the display board demonstrates which teachers are willing and able to adhere to a closely guarded policy. The fact that many of the prescriptions are highly mundane and extremely exacting, if not absurdly so, seems almost like a further test, demanding a further demonstration of professional docility. As I have stated:

*The policy was extensive: it outlined various aspects regarding the display boards such as the type of paper to be used, how the paper was to be displayed, what type of work could be displayed and how the work should be displayed. Furthermore, the policy forbid many things.*

In examining a display board, an individual’s conduct and behaviour could be examined in relation to how well they had consulted and conformed to the policy document. Not only were senior members of staff able to elicit this kind of information, other teachers and support staff were able to make a judgement about the teacher by simply looking at the display boards in their classrooms. This judgement was only possible because the space functioned according to principles of disciplinary enclosure: only certain people had access to making or changing this space. This contrasts with working walls in which others are actively encouraged to add to the walls. This ad hoc way of creating a board creates specific disciplinary problems as it opens the enclosure to a range of individuals, making impossible to index the resulting display to any particular individual. In doing so, teachers fall below a certain level of visibility in this domain as they are no longer solely responsible for this particular space.

Entry into this enclosure was also very specific and detailed. The teacher acts as the gatekeeper to work being displayed and thus the responsibility rests solely on the teacher.

*The work had to be both academically very good (it met the standard which was expected for a child in that year group or above) but also presented beautifully (one example was that the handwriting had to be exceptional).*

By selecting work for the board, the teacher is also revealing something about themselves: their standards and expectations which remain hidden from others become explicitly known through the work they select to be displayed on the board. Therefore, the teacher can be judged based on a disciplinary space in which their own activity is the selection of what is placed within this space. The teacher must, therefore, question themselves and their own standards before admitting any work into this space. Thus, the teacher conceives a particular partitioning in this enclosed space and utilises this to make the best function in disciplinary way: to make it act on and change the behaviour of others. This selection or partitioning also functions to modify he behaviour of teachers: if a colleague’s work is not to the same high standard of another’s they may begin to examine themselves and their pedagogy and begin to modify it in some way. Thus display boards were not simply used to display the ‘best’ work, but to partition the best, and render the best functional within a larger logic of distribution within the classroom.

**7.2.2. Partitioning**

As Foucault states, enclosure is not enough to ensure the successful functioning of disciplinary power through architectural apparatus. To further understand how disciplinary space supports the manifestation of the teacher subject, Foucault discusses partitioning as an aspect of disciplinary space. Once enclosure has been correctly created, certain partitions must be established to enable the space to function correctly. This allows display boards to function as analytical spaces from which all ambiguity must be removed. This was achieved through the use of policy documents and a discourse which perforated throughout the school, transmitted by adults:

*The policy was extensive: it outlined various aspects regarding the display boards such as the type of paper to be used, how the paper was to be displayed, what type of work could be displayed and how the work should be displayed. Furthermore, the policy forbid many things.*

All ambiguity was removed from the space down the very smallest details such as how the paper was to be attached to the backing wall itself. These stringent methods meant that a high degree of uniformity was created across the school. It also provided the function of rooting out any imprecision that may exist within the teacher population. Help was offered to those who were unable to correctly put up the paper themselves by a more experienced member of staff. Precision was further inscribed through specific ways in which things were attached to the board. This was done to the smallest measurement to establish absolute precision:

*Furthermore, all staples had to be facing either horizontally or vertically and should be consistent throughout the display. The sizing of the lettering used for titles was also prescribed and had to be cut from colours complimentary to the backing paper. Borders around the edge of the display were also to be strictly measured: no fewer than 15mm and no greater than 25mm. The distance of the border from the edge of the display board was also to be carefully measured.*

Lack of uniformity in the presentation of the display board was highlighted as an issue which must be dealt with down to the smallest element of the boards. Leaving the boards open to interpretation from teacher-to-teacher could lead to a range of confusions as to how the boards should be presented. Thus, by making the space highly schematic - requiring each teacher to follow a very strict set of rules about its construction and upkeep - meant that confusion was eliminated to a certain extent. Whilst this may seem trivial, it was part of a whole set of practices which were designed to remove confusion or ambiguity from the school and classroom. Certainly, it inscribed within the display a sense of logic and method; procedures and practices such as these established the board as another aspect in the work of the teacher. Furthermore, by making the display board a highly-prescribed space, it made it possible to identify very easily those who have decorated such boards effectively and those who had not. Particularly important is the second group - those who has not - as this may have provided important information regarding their (perceived) abilities as a teacher and their commitment to school policies. To this extent, disciplinary power, enacted through the display boards, aimed to remove confusion from the classroom.

The partitioning of display boards also acted to increase the levels of visibility of the teacher even when not being observed directly by a member of the senior leadership team. As I have discussed in my previous vignette regarding performance management, Foucault (1991a) argues that disciplinary power lowers the threshold of visibility to the lowest level of individual and creates a permanent field of visibility which establishes a ‘gaze’ over them. The display board also provides this visibility function as it establishes knowledge of the individual teacher, and makes it possible to judge them against the policy. By using the display board, even if the teacher is not present in the classroom, it makes it possible “at each moment to supervise the conduct of each individual, to assess it, to judge it, to calculate its qualities or merits” (Foucault 1991a, p. 143). Because, as Foucault argues, disciplinary space is able to assign an individual to such a space, it becomes possible to pin them down and locate them even in their absence. This visibility was not only enacted through the senior leadership but by a complete matrix of individuals across the school. As I state:

*the quality of the work was inspected not only by the senior leadership team but by other teachers. Weekly staff meetings would be held in different teacher’s classrooms; it gave members of staff a chance to see the various displays up around the school.*

This inspecting of boards by other members of staff also increased the field of visibility that operated throughout the school.

Just as staff were asked to attend meetings in others’ classrooms and comment on their display boards, so I also took part in the same process:

*We would often be asked, at the beginnings of staff meetings, to comment on the display boards in a room. Often, we would be asked, as a staff, to list things that were very good and ways that the boards could be improved. From time to time, members of staff would be asked to change aspects of their displays or even take them down completely and start them all over again.*

This aspect of the partitioning was also effective in relation to my own experiences and practice. By adhering to this policy, I was regularly aware of the differences between myself and other teachers who’s boards were ‘better’ or ‘worse’ than my own. Some display boards in teacher’s classrooms stood out as exemplary and were commented on by senior members of staff. This performed an important function as it distributed and partitioned members of staff. Teacher’s whose boards were not of the same standard as those praised may begin a process of problematisation: it is possible that they begin to look inwards at themselves and their own practice and consider what they were doing incorrectly. This reflects an important step in the formation of the modern teacher subject and will be discussed in greater detail in my final vignette.

Finally, this process of inspecting the work of others also had another potential effect in that it further individualised and separated the teacher population. Foucault (1991a) states that partitioning prevents “dangerous coagulation” (p. 143); this also perceived in the teacher population as teachers were partitioned and compared to one another. Thus, rather than thinking of the display board a space which partitions display content in order to celebrate the success of children’s abilities, it can be used as one of the many individualising mechanism and technologies which exist within disciplinary institutions.

**7.2.3. Functional Space**

Foucault (1991a) states:

The rule of *functional sites*would gradually, in the disciplinary institutions, code a space that arch`itecture generally left at the dis­posal of several different uses. Particular places were defined to correspond not only to the need to supervise, to break dangerous communications, but also to create a useful space. The process appeared clearly in the hospitals, especially in the military and naval hospitals (p. 143-144)

Reconceiving educational spaces as disciplinary spaces involves looking at such spaces as functional sites which may have many different purposes. The vignette above hopes to demonstrate that the display board is one such space that could be reconceived as being disciplinary in function. Thus, whilst the display board can be understood as a space to display the work of children, I argue that it has a more subtle purpose: it functions to judge the work of teachers and make present their aptitudes and abilities. Display boards remain functional by making teachers visible, isolated and assigned to these spaces. In contrast to display boards, working walls function completely differently. Because the teacher is not isolated by the board, but works alongside others (teaching assistants, children, parents), they became part of a mass of individuals and thus cannot be singled out so effectively by this architectural space. This type of space, Foucault (1991a) argues, has the potential to break down relations of disciplinary power, leaving the space open to confusing messages and communications throughout the population of teachers and children. The display board can become a useful space in a variety of different ways. Whilst dominant discourses often highlight the display board as a functional site for displaying children’s work, this genealogy reimagines them as a space in the discourse surrounding teacher subjectivity.

I have argued in *7.1.3. Functional,* that disciplinary spaces must be refined to embody a single function. I suggest that the display board may perform many tasks whilst also upholding a single function which remains outside the dominant educational discourse. The board may be used to: display ‘good’ examples of children’s work, display timetables and schedules, display key information relating to a subject or topic and incentivise good behaviours. However, whilst the board can perform these tasks, because the teacher continues to be isolated and individualised as the sole overseer of the board, it can function to make the teacher visible. One could consider the example Foucault (1991a) uses regarding the penal colony of Mettray[[11]](#footnote-11). It is, perhaps, not accidental in institutions such as Mettray the words “‘God sees you’” (Foucault 1991a, p. 294) was written on spaces within children’s cells. Blatant messages such as this do not appear on the display boards in classrooms however I believe the extent to which the display board functions to isolate and judge the work of teacher demonstrates a certain level of visibility which is present. Yet, this must be moderated: Foucault (1991a) himself argue that disciplinary power, whilst aiming to be all-pervasive, could never be so. It may be the final and most simple purpose of the display board to exert this bold statement to the entire population of the classroom that, at all times, visibility is established.

**7.2.4. Rank**

Display boards also function in a disciplinary manner by utilising the technique of isolation to define individual elements and separate them from one another. As Foucault (1991a) states, “one might isolate them and map them…” (p. 144) and the display board functions to do this in many different ways. The first aspect of disciplinary space is the process of isolation. The display board is able to isolate individuals in space in several different ways. Firstly, each classroom has its own set of displays board which are isolated from other teachers and classrooms. Teachers are given ownership over their displays boards which are isolated from other teacher by physical space. Secondly, the display board isolates the capabilities of the teacher by display for others to see as the teachers has sole responsibility over how the board is decorated and what is it be placed on their board. As part of this, certain choices may be made visible for others to see: the choice of paper, how it is decorated, the quality of the work that is taking place in the class and even the quality of the work that is selected to feature on the board. Through isolation it becomes possible, through partitioning, “to observe the worker's presence and application, and the quality of his work; to compare workers with one another…” (p. 145). Without isolation, individuals are part of a larger network of group in which it is harder to ascertain the capabilities or work of a single unit. Without this isolation, the networks of power do not function so effectively and individuals can remain under the level of visibility that disciplinary power attempts to proliferate.

After isolating teachers, potentially rendering more visible to the school community, it then becomes possible to begin judging their work and ranking them. Isolation is the first step in being able to then make comparisons between different teachers. This could take the form of comparing the boards of different teachers in the school but equally could take the form of comparing different boards prepared by the same teacher. Essentially, this process of individualization is key in placing individuals within a system of ranking in which individuals inhabit a position “in a series, and by the gap that separates it from the others” (Foucault 1991a, p. 145). This process was implicit within the school setting I describe and was enacted by not only the most senior members of staff but throughout the population:

*Often, we would be asked, as a staff, to list things that were very good and ways that the boards could be improved. From time to time, members of staff would be asked to change aspects of their displays or even take them down completely and start them all over again.*

Teachers are initiated into a process of judging the work of others within generalised practise of ranking. In this process of looking and describing the boards of others, it was possible to establish gaps and differences that separated them from the boards of others. However, it is crucial to note, as Foucault does, that this position is not fixed or perspective in any way; disciplinary rank defines a momentary position and allows for the functioning of power within the institution. As such, the position that one takes in relation to others is “a technique for the transformation of arrangements” (p. 146) as it allocates an impermanent position that is hung in a constant network of relations to others. In this way, teachers were able to work on themselves, through technologies of behaviour, which may alter their position within this system of rankings. This system of fluid ranking was also expressed on the display board itself; no child has a definite position on the board and could be moved from it if their work slipped in standard.

Finally, Foucault (1991a) argues that ranking acts as a reward or punishment in a disciplinary institution. As I stated, there were obvious examples of members of staff being punished for not following the policy correctly:

*From time to time, members of staff would be asked to change aspects of their displays or even take them down completely and start them all over again. One occasion particularly stands out in my mind: a member of staff had their display taken down by a teaching assistant which caused them great upset and disappointment as it had taken that member of staff a great deal of time to prepare but was not up to the standard of the policy.*

However, this process of ranking was much more subtle and involved a larger network of power. The ranking of staff, through praise from the senior management and colleagues remarking positively about a teacher’s classroom, acted as a natural reward for following the policy and producing displays which conformed to the qualified discourse. It forged a discourse around individual teachers regarding their competency in their jobs or regarding their incompetency and the need for intervention for them to be brought up to the required standard of expectation. This is shown in the example above that I have shared; a teaching assistant was asked to help the teacher put up the display ‘correctly’ next time. The field of visibility present also meant that other members of staff became aware when staff fell below the expected level or raised above the level. This also added to teachers self-problematisation and the technologies of self they were engaged in which shall be explored further in the next vignette.

Finally, this process of ranking display boards and teachers formed part of a variety of techniques and practices that were utilized to efficiently and quickly spread a particular technology of disciplinary power through the teacher population of the school. In doing so, I argue that these practices and techniques were actively involved in establishing the teacher subject that was manifested in that particularly institutional setting. Above all, Foucault (199a) argues, these techniques allow for the “supervision of each individual and the simultaneous work of all” (p. 147) but also transforms the classroom into a “learning machine”, which could be used for “supervising, hierarchizing, rewarding” (p. 147). For Foucault “in organizing ‘cells', 'places' and 'ranks', the disciplines create complex spaces that are at once architectural, functional and hierarchical” (p. 148) but most importantly disciplinary.

**8. Moral Training**

**The vignette**

*As staff, we are required to attend a weekly staff meeting which forms part of our weekly timetable. One particular staff meeting is designated to address behaviour, which is often a key priority for schools and is very much a priority for our school. Many members of staff have complained about the behaviour of both children and parents in the school and have discussed the impact it is having on teaching and learning inside the classroom. Because of this, we are told that too much learning time is being wasted and the school management have decided to address this in a staff meeting. As myself and many of my colleagues have spent a great deal of our time working with parents and trying to improve behaviour, this is a welcome encouragement that our concerns have been noted and were going to be addressed. Many members of staff respond positively to the meeting and are keen to see what can happen to help improve this situation. However, as the meeting begins, it becomes clear that a very different trajectory is about to unfold; the meeting becomes CPD for the teachers. Staff meetings are often designated for continuing professional development and yet we did not think this staff meeting would be for training. CPD is scheduled within staff meetings when a need or concern has been identified by the senior leadership, through observations, book scrutinies or general subject knowledge, and the leadership team wish to see an improvement within the staff population.*

*Finally, the meeting began and the teaching staff were informed that behaviour was indeed an issue around school and that it must be tackled by the school leadership. However, we were informed that the behaviour in school was poor due to staff. A lack of consistency across the school was designated as the first reason why children and parents were behaving so poorly in classrooms and on the school premises. The staff body needed to subscribe to a common method for promoting good behaviour and applying consequences. Furthermore, we were told that children’s poor behaviour was often the result of the staff reacting and dealing with poor behaviour choices ineffectively or inappropriately. The problem wasn’t the children’s behaviour, it was us: the staff. Once again it felt like we were being attacked and blamed for an issue within the school. This seemed to move beyond professional skills and start attacking our personalities and ourselves as people; those who were too involved or too emotional were being asked to change and consider their own behaviour when dealing with children. We were being asked to change as people to improve the situation.*

*The SLT continued explaining how we were going to improve the behaviour in school and that we would be trialling this new approach to behaviour. This would entail a new model in which we should think carefully about our own behaviour if we wanted the children’s behaviour to improve. The senior leadership created a plan which addressed the approach that teachers and adults should take in school to improve behaviour. Every item on the list addressed an aspect of the staff’s behaviour and conduct. We were given materials with catchphrases and scripts on so we knew what to say to the children in different circumstances. We were encouraged to use our display boards in our classrooms to display what good behaviour looked like and remind the children of our core values as a school. These boards were also used to recognise excellent behaviours and students who were exhibiting these behaviours were placed on these boards. We were encouraged to help and assist one another: if we become too involved we should ask a colleague to take over for a few minutes so that we could compose ourselves. We were encouraged to watch our own minds and check we weren’t letting our emotional brain take over our logical brain. Many members of staff left the meeting feeling deflated.*

This thesis continues to acknowledge and contest discourses which strengthen an untroubled and consistent history of the school and teacher subjectivity. As Hunter (1994) claims:

We have become adept at identifying and labelling what we take to be irrational elements in the pedagogies of other cultures. We routinely stigmatise so-called ‘ritualised’ relations of cultural transmission - guru and disciple, yogi and neophyte - for not being based on the free choices of self-reflective subjects. We are less ready to recognise such elements in the system of schooling that our societies have been developing since the eighteenth century. (p. 86)

Our epistemological assumptions are so deeply engrained within our thinking that they remain unchallenged even by institutional practitioners whom such practices originate from and adhere so closely to. Just as I have explored how performance management and school architectures have contributed to an understanding of teacher subjectivity formation, I shall attempt to demonstrate how Christian pedagogical practices continue to constitute the teacher of the 21st century as a moral exemplar who engages in practices of self-problematisation and self-examination. To do so, I once again return to an experiential vignette which, through my exploration and analysis, demonstrates a modern practice and pedagogy of pastoral power. By using Foucauldian concepts of ‘pastoral power’, Hunter’s (1994) genealogy of the school and Jones’ (1990) genealogy of the teacher, I shall establish that the teacher is a complex and increasingly problematic figure who does not fit comfortably into a rational history of educational progress. Also, and by using Hunter’s genealogy, I seek to show that the “new pedagogical personage…” (p. 73) which was the teacher of the 19th century was “an assemblage of two different ‘technologies of existence’: the governmental state and the Christian pastorate.” (p. 88) Finally I shall argue that this “hybrid ‘bureaucratic-pastoral’ character of modern educational programs…” (Hunter 1994, p. 87) continues to emerge today due to the resurgence of discourse. Through exploring my own contextualised experience, I shall argue that continuing professional development (CPD) can be interpreted as a mechanism through which qualified educational discourses and specific discourses of self-problematisation and self-examination can be introduced to the teacher population.

**8.1. Theory**

**8.1.1. A consistent and uncontested history**

The Department for Education (DfE) (2016) continue to argue that education is “the hallmark of a civilised society, the engine of social justice and economic growth” and “unlocks opportunity, helping children from all backgrounds to shape their own destiny” (p. 5). Furthermore, the DfE suggest that the “better educated our society, the fairer, more cohesive, productive and innovative it can be.” (p. 5) A discussion of primary education naturally draws to mind the figure of the teacher who is often portrayed in an unproblematic and consistent way in a rationalistic understanding of education. Indeed, since the 19th century, when the teacher formally emerged in the landscape of mass schooling, they have occupied a seemingly transparent and unchallenged position in the development of education. Furthermore, they are considered a substantial attribute in achieving educational goals such as freedom and justice and, if contemplated, it would seem the work of teachers has remained largely unchanged insofar as the teacher is viewed as a self-evident good, and as an a-historical construct. Indeed, it is as if the teacher-subject were a stable entity, with characteristics and behaviours that have remained largely unchanged. The DfE’s (2016) “vision for educational excellence everywhere” (p. 5) can be interpreted as a developing narrative regarding the teacher and we are told that “perceptions of teaching remain - rightly - very high” (p. 11). This document offers an unproblematic account of the teacher which continues to develop in relation to a historical linearity. Furthermore, these developments are all framed within the context of a meta-narrative: that the teacher is the person who is tasked with achieving the educational goals described above. However, these goals appear haughty at best and arguably near impossible considering the genealogies put forward by Foucault (1991a), Hunter (1994) and Jones (1990). The DfE (2016) state:

we will replace the current ‘Qualified Teacher Status’ (QTS) with a stronger, more challenging accreditation based on a teacher’s effectiveness in the classroom, as judged by great schools. This new accreditation will raise the quality and status of the teaching profession, better recognising advanced subject knowledge and pedagogy that is rooted in up-to-date evidence. (p. 13)

These comments from the government’s own white paper - ‘Educational excellence everywhere’ - highlights the inconsistencies and failures present in the current manifestation of the teacher. Thus, both qualified discourses, provided by the Department for Education, and genealogies, such as those by Hunter suggest that the teacher is a contested and contradictory figure which needs further investigation. However, such discourses should not be underestimated as their effects are manifested through the teaching population and educational landscape: teachers have become epistemologically conditioned into conceiving teaching as the process of educating towards such striking goals as social justice and freedom. All other aspects of their work, therefore, are subjugated to a lesser degree of importance and are perceived to take teachers away from their ‘real’ task. Indeed, the Department for Education (2016) itself states that “Too many of the country’s best teachers and school leaders felt constrained by unnecessary red tape, unable to do what they knew was right.” (p. 5) Considering its current conceptualisation and its historical conditions of emergence, which will be discussed in greater depth later, the teacher cannot be understood as an agent for the realisation of social justice and freedom through educative practices and pedagogies. Conceptualising the teacher as a contingent subject is a means for understanding the ‘how’ of the teacher rather than the ‘what’ of the teacher. This genealogy wishes to discredit such ‘truthful’ elaborations of the teacher, as put forward by the Department for Education, as mere interpretations of a highly-contradictory identity and begin a historically-sensitive and critical interpretation of teacher subjectivity considering its historical contingency and its epistemological and ontological conditions for existence.

**8.1.2. Contradictions and complexities**

Contrary to these dominant discourses, Jones (1990) describes this development of the schoolteacher as “the passage of a failure…” (p. 75) and Hunter (1994) argues that the inauguration of the modern schoolteacher was the result of “a period of intense political combat and bureaucratic activity” (p. 73). It was only due to that activity that the teacher was able to appear within the educational landscape. As Hunter argues, the modern school teacher, which might be taken to represent a “balance of warmth and surveillance, love and discipline, is thus the achievement of a remarkable process of cultural adaptation and improvisation, through which government transformed and multiplied the persona of the pastoral guide.” (p. 82-83) Similarly, Jones (1990) argues that “through a process of self-examination” the teacher “is transformed into a moral exemplar to project an ethical verity…” (p. 75). It is precisely because genealogies of the teacher exist, providing counter discourses, that this thesis wishes to continue their work in understanding how the teacher continues to be fashioned as a moral exemplar rather than as a self-reflexive and free agent.

I argue that this historical tradition of discourse and elaboration continues to function even for teachers in the 21st century. Whilst Hunter (1994) argues that “the distance between today’s radical pedagogy and the pioneering work of pastoral technicians like David Stow is negligible.” (p. 81) I believe this is only in relation to the interpretation of the teacher as a moral persona. The modern teacher, prone to the effects of discourse and functions within the play of discourse and power, is constructed and susceptible to the changing status of moralistic discourses throughout time. Whilst, the moral comportment of Stow’s teacher and modern teacher may be negligible, the differences in other aspects of their work such as pedagogy is very different. Political and cultural influences are generally ignored within general conceptions of educational progress but must be encountered as part of this genealogy. Such discourses are distributed from a range of institutions and settings such as the Department for Education. One such example is the Department for Education’s (2011) *Teachers’ standards: guidance for school leaders, school staff and governing bodies* which provides an obvious example of the moralism and self-problematisation at play in the work of modern teachers. The Training and Development Agency (TDA) for Schools (2007), whose *Professional standards for teachers* offer guidance on the work of teachers, discusses the ‘attributes’, ‘knowledge’ and ‘skills’ required of a teacher and were developed as part of Labour’s agenda on education. The TDA’s (2007) standards state that a teacher must “demonstrate the positive values, attitudes and behaviour they expect from children and young people.” (p. 7) but make no other direct comments regarding the behaviour or ethics of teachers. Conversely, the DfE’s (2011) document states:

A teacher is expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct. The following statements define the behaviour and attitudes which set the required standard for conduct throughout a teacher’s career. (p. 14)

In order to demonstrate this the teacher must “uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school…” (p. 14) as well as:

treating pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher’s professional position… Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach, and maintain high standards in their own attendance and punctuality. (p. 14)

These newer standards (DfE, 2011), delivered as part of the UK Conservative government’s new educational agenda, differ to those set out in the previous Labour government’s 2007 document. Most striking is the direct reference to the ethics and behaviour required of teachers both within the school and outside the school, extending the sphere of self-problematisation to many aspects of a teacher’s life. I argue that what is seen here is not governmental interference or political games but a re-centering of a specific discourse which circulated during the initial emergence of the school teacher. Discourse, as enacted through these standards, is how governments reimagine the work of teachers and enact it. The teacher is, I argue, once again constituted as a moral subject. As Hunter (1994) states, as modern educationalists we are “heirs to a whole series of inventions for taking an interest in ourselves as the subjects of our conduct.” (p. 53-54) But how was the teacher initially constituted as a moral comportment and what are these inventions that Hunter describes? To understand this, I return to Hunter’s (1994) genealogy of schooling and Jones’ (1990) genealogy of the urban school teacher for a theoretical understanding of how such a subject emerged in the educational landscape.

**8.1.3. A hybrid personage**

As I have argued, concepts of educational progress would situate the teacher within a coherent and rational development that is to unfold towards some universal goal such as personal liberty or social justice as the Department of Education (2016) state in their white paper. However, as I have established, the teacher inhabits a contingent position dependent on a variety of factors such as discourse. Hunter (1994) identifies the historical teacher as “a new pedagogical personage…” (p. 73), a “hybrid ‘bureaucratic-pastoral’ character…” (p. 87) and as “an assemblage of two different ‘technologies of existence’: the governmental state and the Christian pastorate.” (p. 88) Hunter states that this new ‘hybrid’ character became “historically differentiated from both the untrained monitorial manager and the linguistically specialised grammar-school master.” (p. 73) and it was due to “a period of intense political combat and bureaucratic activity” (p. 73) that such a person could appear within the educational landscape. Therefore, the teacher appeared because of a broad spectrum of socio-cultural and political needs which was epitomised by the desperate need to school the young of the urban poor. The teacher was neither born from capitalist needs nor from a democratic wish but as a necessary and contingent entity fashioned on the political and spiritual aggregates available to government at particular times in history. Whilst I shall argue that the hybrid teacher survived due to a *Modus Vivendi[[12]](#footnote-12)*, I shall pay particular interest to the teacher as an expression of Christian pastoralism.

**8.1.4. Teacher as bureaucrat**

Hunter (1994) argues that beginning in the 17th and 18th centuries, a political initiative - a *raison d’état -* emerged that made its prime objective of government the flourishing and survival of the state and subjugated religious principles to that end. This new pedagogical state was not an expression of rational historical development but, once again, a contingent reaction to the political and cultural circumstances of the time. In Hunter’s analysis, the effects of the so-called wars of religion, that had ravaged Europe throughout the 17th and the early 18th centuries, seeded a discourse of discontent towards religious principles and a desire to move towards ‘pacification’. As such, this new governmental rationality rejected morally-perfected persons as its goal, distanced itself from religious politics and conceived the bureaucratic citizen as the particular individual needed to help the state flourish and prosper. This ethical autonomy meant that citizenship of the state required a mental dissociation from religious principles in order to enable social peace and the flourishing of the state. Thus, Hunter argues, the citizen becomes the realisation of the bureaucratic state: a comportment which was ontologically separate from the self-reflexive and self-governing persona of religious institutions that we can see traces of in our modern humanistic traditions. Koselleck (1988), who’s work encompasses a consideration of Enlightenment intellectuals and the results of their work in the moral formation of individuals, states “For man as citizen… the prime cause of morality is no longer to be sought in God, but in the temporal power that puts an end to civil war…” (p. 37). Furthermore he states, however, that “for man as a human being it is his frame of mind, his individual conscience, that remains the ultimate criterion of morality.” (p. 37) Thus, as Hunter (1994) argues, the administrative state did not decay away into a state of immorality but responded to cultural and political circumstances to detach political administration from the conscience of the individual citizenry. The population, as a calculable feature of this enterprise, became the concern of governments and institutions. Thus populations become an area of intense governmental interest and allowed the rationale for schooling, as a means to produce a population of ‘citizens’, to strengthen. As part of the political *raison d’état* it was conceived that a trained citizenry is more beneficial to the state than an untrained one. Thus, education was identified as a political entity for state intervention.

Hunter (1994) argues that another feature of how this governmentality[[13]](#footnote-13) functioned was the “way in which it combines the exercise of power with the development of knowledge or expertise” (p. 43). It “became possible to think of the tasks and scope of government in a new way, that was because new ‘faculties’ of governmental reflection and calculation had been improvised.” (p. 43) Hunter explains that these possibilities were not dependent on the human subject nor was it another development in educational progress but a contingent development of what Hunter calls an “archipelago of calculative institutions[[14]](#footnote-14) - statistical societies, administrative bureaus, university departments” through which governments could produce a “particular kind of procedural expertise.” (p. 43) Education of the masses emerged as one field of interest of the emerging governmentality which required experts, such as teachers, in training the state’s population.

Hunter (1994) suggests: “This is a conception of government as an art and the state as an enterprise. The administrative state thus came to be conceived in terms of an optimal management of the various domains of government.” (p. 44) This development allowed for the representation of reality in terms of quantifiable and manipulable domains of governance so that governments could intervene in particular areas. It is here, as Hunter argues, that “the technology of statistics creates the capacity to relate to reality as a field for government” and it was through “the technology of social statistics, therefore, that the German cameralists were able to reconstruct the objectives of government as a series of problems requiring expert management.” (p. 44) Because certain information (mortality rates, productivity, literacy) supplied by staticians was not “available to human perception independent of the technology” and thus was not “an expression of the universal rational and moral capacities supposed to inhere within the reflective person…” (p. 44) it signifies the historicity and point of emergence of a type of government which concerned itself with these specific social problems. As part of this, specific individuals or experts were required for each domain of government.

Hunter argues that schooling and the teacher arose from one of these areas of expert knowledge and management. Hunter suggests that Kay-Shuttleworth’s (2009) investigation of Manchester’s social problems was one of the first major examples of this new intellectual technology which sought to understand the reality of Manchester’s slums through the framework of domains of government which needed intervention. This report arose due to a particular political situation and suggested education as the means of specific expertise to address a wealth of problems to be found in Manchester’s working classes. As Hunter (1994) states, referring to Kay-Shuttleworth:

His ‘perception’ of these social problems, and of state education as their corrective instrument, was formed through a series of statistical correlations linking the poverty, criminality, morbidity, alcoholism and immorality of Manchester’s working classes to their ‘ignorance’ or illiteracy. (p. 46)

The population was identified, Hunter states, as a body with “an array of conducts and capacities that had been rendered problematic through the application of statistically determined norms or standards of living.” (p. 46) Statistical information was gathered not to express reality as facts but to problematize certain aspects of it dependent on the political objectives of government. The information gathered by statistical bureaus was used to express a certain form of power: “political calculation and administrative intervention” or as Hunter states “problematisation and intervention.” (p. 47) Here schooling arose under particular circumstances not as a development in the evolution of the rational or self-reflexive person but, as Hunter argues, “as a new level of political reality and domain of government…” (p. 47). Equally, schools emerged as “an instrument for schooling whole populations in the capacities required for participation in more sophisticated forms of social, economic and political life.” (p. 47) Hunter concludes that:

state schooling emerged as the instrument and object of a technically formed, institutionally organised and circumstantially driven governmental expertise, whose social distribution was inescapably limited and will remain so. (p. 47)

Whilst common conceptions would suggest a rational development of the teacher began in the 18th and 19th century, the above exploration suggests an alternative history, where Hunter emphasises the contingency and sheer improvisation of such a person that would emerge as part of the development of the school. Hunter argues it was due to “a period of intense political combat and bureaucratic activity” (p. 73) that such a person could appear within the educational landscape. In relation to the teacher as a product of “bureaucratic statism…” (Hunter 1994, p. 66), the teacher is one example of a range of individuals that arose out of a political *raison d’état* which sought the flourishing of the state and achieved this end through expert management of different domains of government. The teacher, as an expression of the expert management of populations, can, therefore, can be conceived as an administrative citizen. This citizen, whose functions it was to use their expert knowledge in the form of pedagogy, attempted to address the population (in the form of teaching children) as a form of governmental intervention. Furthermore, Hunter’s (1994) analysis has shown us how the historical emergence of the teacher carries with it a complex comportment: a mixed ontology or “technology of existence[[15]](#footnote-15)” (p. 36). Coining the bureaucratic citizenry and self-reflexive human as a disintegration may be mistaken and by doing so have underestimated the contingent accomplishment of the state in separating two different ontologies of existence. Firstly, the teacher can be understood as a historical subject, one who encompasses the administrative persona of the statist citizen whose function was to achieve the aims of government through civic duty. This persona, whose spiritual reflexivity remained guarded against allowing such moralistic principles not to overcome those political principles which sought the security of the state as the highest achievement. Each persona, Hunter argues, had its own “intellectual faculties, moral horizons and ‘persons’” (p. 49). It was “the moral comportments of the citizen and the bureaucrat that emerge from governmental practices of the administrative state” which cannot be “reduced to that of the reflective subject which emerges from the practice of spiritual self-governance.” (p. 49) I shall now explore the teacher as defined by religious and spiritual practice of self-reflexivity and governance.

**8.1.5. Teacher as pastor**

The second comportment of the teacher hybrid shall now be discussed. Hunter (1994) states:

even though Kay-Shuttleworth correctly saw that educating the entire population was a task for the ‘central will and intelligence’ of the state, the instruments at his disposal for this task were not objects of rational analysis and free choice. (p. 86)

Whilst the administrative state had developed the intellectual rationale for intervening in the education of the working classes, and had, at its disposal, a whole range of administrative techniques which had emerged during this administrative development, it was still the case that these techniques were not born from spiritual practices of the human subject but had arisen from expert knowledges. Hunter states that the teacher underwent a radical development and became “historically differentiated from both the untrained monitorial manager and the linguistically specialised grammar-school master.” (p. 73) where the former had proved unsuccessful in training the working classes. Throughout the early 19th century, and before a reimagining of the teacher which occurred in the 1830s and 1840s, the teacher was, as Jones (1990) states, “at best an unqualified drill master and at worse a purveyor of corrupt values.” (p. 59) A discourse of reformation began to emerge which sought the apparatus of the school as the means to educate the working classes; for Jones it is “the [perceived] failure of the monitorial school as an engine of instruction for the labouring classes that occasions a reevaluation of the teacher.” (p. 59) The beginnings of what Hunter calls the “hybrid ‘bureaucratic-pastoral’ character…” (p. 87) appear at this point in the educational landscape. Indeed, in the 1830s and 1840s the recently formed Privy Council for Education began to take an interest in reconstituting the role of the teacher from “mechanical instructor to moral exemplar” in which “the teacher would transmit ethical values to the children for the labouring classes” thus transforming the teacher into an “irresistible ethical image…” (Jones 1990, p. 60). As Hunter (1994) argues, it was the Christian schools of the 17th and 18th centuries which already contained the practices and technologies required for individuals to comportment themselves as self-reflexive individuals and for transforming the teacher into an ethical image of moral comportment. What was significant here was the emergence of an individual which addressed educational issues of the state by utilising Christian practices and technologies to form a moral exemplar; it brought together a collection of Christian spiritual practices and administrative techniques which had, until this point, not been attempted.

Hunter (1994) states that “Christian pedagogy contributed to the development of mass school systems….” through the distribution of “organising routines, pedagogical practices, personal disciplines, and interpersonal relationships that came to form the core of the modern school.” (p. 56) Moreover, because the bureaucratic state, whose expert knowledges formed through statistical analysis, had no such techniques for moral formation, and had actively distanced itself from religious ideology, it was required to look at the Christian schools of the 17th and 18th centuries to borrow certain techniques and practices for self-examination and self-governance. In Foucault’s (1983) chapter ‘The subject and power’ he begins to discuss the correlation between Christian spiritual practices and pastoral power. Whilst, unlike Hunter, he is not referring directly to schools, it has significance for this argument. Foucault states that these religious practices “which over centuries - for more than a millennium - had been linked to a defined reli­gious institution, suddenly spread out into the whole social body; it found support in a multitude of institutions.” (p. 215) This genealogy seeks to establish that it was not only the historical teacher that was effected by these practices but the modern teacher of our current time is still contingently based upon these practices.

**8.1.6. Spiritual practices**

The reimagining of the pastoral teacher is one which encounters two specific technologies for producing ethical subjects. It is important to note that, once again, these principles did not emerge from a moral fundamentalism held by individuals but were technologies of existence taught through Christian practices. Hunter (1994) states:

The capacity for self-reflection that is formed in this milieu is not a generic general-purpose human ‘consciousness’, capable of serving as the ‘critical’ organ of all walks of life and departments of existence. It is a highly specialized (and highly prestigious) comportment of the person. It is a moral deportment formed through initiation into the disciplines of self-problematisation and self-regulation, and spread widely in our societies by Christian pastoral pedagogy and state schooling. (p. 82)

These techniques, that could be described as conscience-forming pedagogies, became an essential aspect in the training of teachers. Hunter encourages us to “pull apart the knowledge of moral principles” to further understand how Christian practices enable individuals to become “capable of acting on principle.” (p. 52) It is through these “specific spiritual practices and disciplines” that “individuals come to concern themselves with themselves and seek to compose themselves as the ‘subjects’ of their own conduct.” (p. 53) These practices, Foucault (1983) argues, are processes of self-problematisation and self-governance and belong to a power relation which is pastoral in its effects. He states:

Christianity brought into being a code of ethics… And as such postulates in principle that certain individuals can, by their religious quality, serve others not as princes, magistrates, prophets, fortune-tellers, benefactors, educationalists, and so on, but as pastors. However, this word designates a very special form of power. (p. 214)

Thus, when Kay-Shuttleworth and others reimagined the teacher not just as an administrative citizen but as a moral exemplar for the working class children that they taught, they instigated a discourse which inscribed pastoral power into the contingent construction of the teacher. This pastoral power, which has seemingly disappeared throughout the social body since the 18th century has simply transferred its effects and has “spread and multiplied outside the ecclesiastical institution.” (Foucault 1983, p. 215) The teacher, then, functions both as an effect and expounder of pastoral power whose job, Foucault argues, was “no longer a question of leading people to their salvation in the next world, but rather ensuring it in this world.” (p. 215)

**8.1.6.1. Self-problematisation**

To understand these techniques of problematisation that were so important in constituting the pastoral teacher of the 19th century, I turn to Foucault’s (1988) work on technologies of the self. Through investigating Greco-Roman and Christian practices of working on the self, we begin to uncover what made it possible for the individual to begin consciously problematizing the self. In doing so, the “history of the different ways in our culture that humans develop knowledge about themselves…” (p. 17-18) may emerge and, as Foucault argues, it becomes possible to understand the “very specific "truth games" related to specific techniques that human beings use to understand themselves.” (p. 18) Foucault (1988) states:

in the Christianity of the first centuries, there are two main forms of disclosing self, of showing the truth about oneself. The first is *exomologesis*, or a dramatic expression of the situation of the penitent as sinner which makes manifest his status as sinner. The second is what was called in the spiritual literature *exagoreusis*. This is an analytical and continual verbalization of thoughts carried on in the relation of complete obedience to someone else. This relation is modeled on the renunciation of one's own will and of one's own self. (p. 48)

This discussion entertains Foucault fourth type of technology mentioned in this seminar which is designed to:

permit individuals to effect by their own means or with the help of others a certain number of operations on their own bodies and souls, thoughts, conduct, and way of being, so as to transform themselves in order to attain a certain state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection, or immortality. (p. 18)

Whilst these technologies do not operate singularly, I shall focus on the fourth type and attempt to demonstrate how this spiritual practice relates to the emergence of the pastoral teacher. Foucault describes technologies of the self as developing from Greco-Roman philosophy during the 1st and 2nd centuries and from Christian spirituality during the 4th and 5th centuries. Whilst Greco-Roman practices feature in Foucault’s work on technologies of the self, I shall focus on Christian spiritual practices.

Technologies of the self begin with a movement inward to encounter the inner self, a self that is, moreover, constructed as part of that movement. Foucault states (1988):

There has been an inversion between the hierarchy of the two principles of antiquity, "Take care of yourself" and "Know thyself." In Greco-Roman culture knowledge of oneself appeared as the consequence of taking care of yourself. In the modern world, knowledge of oneself constitutes the fundamental principle. (p. 22)

First it is important to understand that, as Foucault argues, Christianity must be conceived as a particular religion, a “salvation religion…”, in which an individual must be moved from “one reality to another…” which took the form of “death to life, from time to eternity” (p. 40). It achieved this through a specific set of practices and technologies: Christianity “imposed a set of conditions and rules of behaviour for a certain transformation of the self.” (p. 40) Furthermore, Foucault argues that Christianity developed to become a “confessional religion” in which “very strict obligations of truth, dogma and canon…” (p. 40) are to be accepted in order to thoroughly know who one is. Moreover, it requires a further ‘truth obligation’ in that each individual:

has the duty to know who he is, that is, to try to know what is happening inside him, to acknowledge faults, to recognize temptations, to locate desires, and everyone is obliged to disclose these things either to God or to others in the community and hence to bear public or private witness against oneself. The truth obligations of faith and the self are linked together. This link permits a purification of the soul impossible without self-knowledge. (p. 40)

This “disclosure of the self” (p. 41), or *exomologēsis* as Foucault also coins it, constitutes one of the self-problematising practices which can be recognised in the process of forming the pastoral teacher. This public recognition of oneself as a sinner was a process of self-knowing and a way of presenting oneself as a sinner. Furthermore, Foucault argues that during the 4th century, we encounter a different practice for disclosure of the self - *exagoreusis* - which can be understood from the point of view of ‘obedience’ and ‘contemplation’. This principle rested on the Greco-Roman concept of a relationship with the master, who was able to “lead the disciple to a happy and autonomous life through good advice. The relationship would end when the disciple got access to that life.” (Foucault 1988, p. 44) This was very different in Christian spirituality and monasticism in which the monk’s obedience to the master was more far-reaching and permanent in its effects and didn’t just affect his ‘self-improvement’ but all aspects of his life without any conditions. The self becomes manifest through obedience. Furthermore, Foucault argues that “contemplation is considered the supreme good” and that the monk should “turn his thoughts continuously to that point which is God and to make sure that his heart is pure enough to see God.” (p. 45) This transformation of thought into self-examination becomes what Foucault describes as “the scrutiny of conscience…” which seeks to “eliminate movements of the spirit that divert one from God.” (p. 46) Foucault finds three forms of self-examination which are relevant here:

(1) self-examination with respect to thoughts in correspondence to reality;

(2) self-examination with respect to the way our thoughts relate to rules;

(3) the examination of self with respect to the relation between the hidden thought and an inner impurity (p. 46)

Foucault states that we see the start of the “Christian hermeneutics of the self with its deciphering of inner thoughts” and which “implies that there is something hidden in ourselves and that we are always in a self-illusion which hides the secret.” (p. 46) This deciphering of inner thoughts is achieved through the method of confession, through the continuous action of telling “all our thoughts to our director”, “to engage in the permanent verbalization of all our thoughts.” (p. 47) Finally, Foucault describes the role of confession in allowing the individual to decipher and purify his inner thoughts:

Why is confession able to assume this hermeneutical role? How can we be the hermeneuts of ourselves in speaking and transcribing all of our thoughts? Confession permits the master to know because of his greater experience and wisdom and therefore to give better advice. Even if the master, in his role as a discriminating power, doesn't say anything, the fact that the thought has been expressed will have an effect of discrimination. (p. 47)

There are many ways in which the pastoral teacher has absorbed such practices within the pedagogy of teaching practice. Believing that such practices, as identified by Foucault in the first millennium, are irrelevant to the modern teacher once again fails to recognise the historicy and contingent nature of the teacher subject who emerges in 21st century as a moral personality. As Foucault (1988) argues, this “practice continues from the beginning of Christianity to the seventeenth century…” (p. 48) and “from the eighteenth century to the present, the techniques of verbalization have been reinserted in a different context by the so-called human sciences…” in order “to constitute, positively, a new self.” (p. 49)

**8.1.6.2. Self-examination**

Once the individual had become problematised through particular spiritual practices, such as the confession, it was then possible for individuals to begin working on themselves based on a set of principles. Hunter (1994) describes this as:

the transmission of an ensemble of ethical techniques and practices through which individuals acquired the capacity to concern themselves with their own conduct and to shape it by ethical labour. Christian pedagogy was founded neither in ideological values nor in revealed truth. It was rather an induction into the arts of problematisation and forms of ethical labour through which individuals ‘became the kind of people’ capable of acting on the basis of moral values or revealed truth. It was, in short, a milieu for forming a particular comportment of the self and way of living. (p. 56)

Once the process of self-problematisation had been established, Jones (1990) argues that the teacher maintained, increased and supported this existence through “a quasi-monastic discipline.” (p. 61) This entailed many practices and technologies which were used to form the ethical substance through which the teacher emerged. The teacher “had to be instructed in techniques of monitoring the quality of his ethical self-formation” (p. 61) and develop “an ethic of service.” (p. 61) These substantive elements of the teacher subject, I argue, were written into its emergence in the teacher training school at Battersea opened by Kay-Shuttleworth in 1840 and constituted the first modern teacher training institution as we know it. The trainees were not just instructed in developing their intellect and pedagogical practice but, more importantly, were forced to develop an “aroused and heightened self-awareness….” so that “the virtue of morality and humility were consistently opposed to the corrosive vices of intellect and arrogance.” (Jones 1990, p. 61-62). Strict yet frugal diets, a care to dress appropriately and a wish for humility were some key principles established at the Battersea training school by which the trainees could examine their conduct. This ethical formulation was typified by the pastoral concern for those in the care of the teacher. As Foucault (1983) states, discussing pastoral power more generally, which is applicable to the comportment of the teacher, they must “also be prepared to sacrifice itself for the life and salvation of the flock.” (p. 214) “The care to establish this ethical regime through a combination of discipline, surveillance, and the application of technologies of the self….” (Jones 1990, p. 62) are written into the very history of the teacher and to deny or remove these would be self-comprising indeed.

**8.2. Critique**

**8.2.1. The staff meeting**

In comparison to the idea that the main function of the teacher is to promote teaching and learning, this vignette provides an interpretive example of how a situation commonly found in the running of a school can be viewed differently. Indeed, whilst I would argue that teaching and learning is one aspect of how teachers construct their sense of selfhood, this is not the only factor. Therefore, I will analyse my vignette with a view to demonstrate that teacher subjectivity is also fashioned through moralistic or spiritual practices which have existed for over a thousand years. By exploring these practices, I shall demonstrate that they make up the subjectivity of the teacher: how the teacher thinks and behaves in relation to these practices. Developments such as these are dependent on a myriad of socio-cultural and institutional factors which cannot be predicted or explained within a logical meta-narrative. As I state

*One particular staff meeting is designated to address behaviour, which is often a key priority for schools and is very much a priority for our school. Many members of staff have complained about the behaviour of both children and parents in the school and have discussed the impact it is having on teaching and learning inside the classroom. Because of this, we are told that too much learning time is being wasted and the school management have decided to address this in a staff meeting.*

These institutional needs could not have been predicted and the allocation of the staff meeting shows a sudden need for this issue to be addressed. Similarly, the reaction of staff and the implementation of a solution could not have been foreseen. Therefore, this vignette demonstrates that an adjusted deportment of the teacher emerged or at least was intended to emerge due to this event: this would entail a new way of thinking about and speaking of the teacher; a new way of thinking, speaking and acting as a teacher and how a teacher relates to and works on themselves. This vignette represents a potential shift in how teachers were expected to behave and comport themselves within the classroom.

I suggest that this particular staff meeting was significant for two reasons: firstly, it opened up a space in which a slightly different discourse of teacher behaviour was possible and it signified a shift in the construction of teacher subjectivity. Whilst it was striking from a genealogical perspective with regards to teacher subjectivity, it was no different from other staff meetings we had on a weekly basis. Staff meetings could be interpreted as ways of staff meeting together in a group and developing some aspect of their knowledge or skills which will benefit both themselves and those they teach.

*CPD is scheduled within staff meetings when a need or concern has been identified by the senior leadership, through observations, book scrutinies or general subject knowledge, and the leadership team wish to see an improvement within the staff population.*

Conversely, and more fitting to this discussion, is the possibility that staff meetings are a situation in which institutional discourses can be written, changed, proliferated and strengthened. To view the staff meeting in this way would be to acknowledge the relationship between discourse, power and knowledge and how each of these concepts are intimately bound not just within the senior leadership - as would be found in sovereign power - but throughout the teacher population. This conception of power and knowledge aligns with Foucauldian conceptions of power. Whilst the staff meeting was partly organised due to a wish from the teaching staff, I argue that this meeting offered the perfect opportunity for a re-evaluation of an institutional discourse surrounding the idea of behaviour. Furthermore, the meeting offered the unique opportunity during the week to insert newly qualified discourses into the entire teaching population, rather than by drip-feeding it to different groups throughout the school, whilst disqualifying others that have become redundant or antithetical to newer discourses. Thus, the meeting was used to alter a discourse and to refashion it to address the issue of behaviour that was affecting teaching and learning in school. This is the case with much professional development in schools. This situation also highlights the importance of acknowledging the concerns of staff and the exigency of needing to do something or be seen to be doing something to address issues within schools. Indeed, this also highlights the power relations that exist between the staff and the management. As I comment:

*Many members of staff have complained about the behaviour of both children and parents in the school and have discussed the impact it is having on teaching and learning inside the classroom. Because of this, we are told that too much learning time is being wasted and the school management have decided to address this in a staff meeting. As myself and many of my colleagues have spent a great deal of our time working with parents and trying to improve behaviour, this is a welcome encouragement that our concerns have been noted and were going to be addressed. Many members of staff respond positively to the meeting and are keen to see what can happen to help improve this situation.*

This situation demonstrates that discourses and knowledge also benefit those who, seemingly, cohabit a powerless position within an organisation. The senior leadership acknowledged the staff’s wish to meet regarding this important matter and a sense of urgency was created to allow this matter to be addressed. Turning to the reception of the new discourse, it soon became clear that many were unhappy with the way senior management were dealing with the issue. The meeting did not follow the direction of travel that many teaching staff had hoped for as it became ‘*clear that a very different trajectory is about to unfold; the meeting becomes CPD for the teachers.’* A different discourse was presented to deal with the issues the teachers had, one that supported a change and development in the teaching population rather than in the system as a whole. The senior leadership attempted to insert a new discourse within the teacher population which was used to address the issue first raised by the teachers. Whilst some members of the teaching staff were unhappy, a sense of duty and acceptance meant that many accepted this new development. Perhaps, teachers, despite themselves, were already ontologically predisposed to accept such discourses. As subjects, capable of acting on a principle (established through discourse, practices and technologies available to them in the school), they were forced by their own internal imperative to take responsibility for the behaviour of children and parents in the school. In this way, it may be possible to extrapolate Foucault’s analogy to include the teacher who must “be prepared to sacrifice itself for the life and salvation of the flock.” (Foucault 1983, p. 214) This, again, I believe shows the power existing between qualified and unqualified discourses circulating with the school. I argue that it demonstrates that particular individuals within the institution safeguard what can and what cannot be accepted as qualified discourse and only those who hold a certain position can set the tone of certain discourses. Furthermore, this discourse was accompanied by supporting materials which demonstrated how the teaching population should speak, think and act in relation to this new policy of behaviour management. As part of this new discourse we were offered:

*a new model in which we should think carefully about our own behaviour if we wanted the children’s behaviour to improve. The senior leadership created a plan which addressed the approach that teachers and adults should take in school to improve behaviour. Every item on the list addressed an aspect of the staff’s behaviour and conduct. We were given materials with catchphrases and scripts on so we knew what to say to the children in different circumstances.*

These materials were powerful as they addressed the ways in which staff should conduct themselves in relation to the children’s behaviour. They equally addressed the behaviour of the teachers. Furthermore, they formed an important part in the practices and mechanisms that would bring about the next aspect of this vignette. They were directly involved in a new problematising of the teacher subjectivity. I shall now demonstrate how this new discourse was used to construct a problematising of the teacher and forge a pathway for a new imagining of teacher subjectivity.

**8.2.2. Problematising the teacher**

Firstly, it is important to re-emphasise Hunter’s (1994) argument that there is no predetermined quality within human consciousness with which to problematize certain aspects of our thinking or behaviour: these things we must be taught. As stated, the staff meeting was essential in re-establishing a particular problematisation within the teaching population by providing a discourse of behaviour which staff were to judge themselves against. To understand this, we must recall Foucault (1988) discussion of ‘*exomologesis’* which can be understood as a wish to move inwards and a need to become more familiar with what is happening on the inside. Accordingly, it was a sense of looking within, with checking thoughts and behaviour, that was essential for instilling a moral dilemma within the teaching population. Referencing Foucault (1988), this new discourse of behaviour demands that the teacher has a need to:

know who [s]he is, that is, to try to know what is happening inside him[or her], to acknowledge faults, to recognize temptations, to locate desires, and everyone is obliged to disclose these things… (p. 40)

Returning to the vignette, because the teaching population had been presented with and were encouraged to accept a new discourse, a process of internalising and acting on this discourse begins. Moreover, with this discourse a whole set of practices and mechanisms emerged through which the teacher could continue to intensify their adaption of such a discourse. Teachers needed to ‘*subscribe to a common method for promoting good behaviour’* and try to develop ‘*consistency across the school’.* The use of scripts, concepts and role models allowed the teacher to fashion an exemplary model and judge themselves against this through a process of ‘*exomologesis’* by looking inwards to see if they were living up to such a model. The teacher population now had a new discourse, a new set of practices by which to judge themselves, their conduct and alter the way they behave. Using Hunter’s (1994) argument, this act of problematising produces teachers who are “capable of acting on principle.” (p. 52) and “come to concern themselves with themselves and seek to compose themselves as the ‘subjects’ of their own conduct.” (p. 53) Furthermore, it becomes apparent that the role and designation of the teacher is implicitly altered by taking on such a discourse and subsequent problematisation. Essentially, those teachers referred to in the vignette (including myself) were ‘*being asked to change and consider their own behaviour when dealing with children. We were being asked to change as people to improve the situation.’* It can be argued, therefore, that such changes simply add to or modify a set of duties or responsibilities that are encompassed within the teacher’s role but the teacher as a person remains the same. Conversely, exploring this situation from a genealogical perspective, I argue that these modifications impact on the individual (as he or she is contructed) in a substantial way, modifying their own behaviour and thoughts in relation to this institutionally sanctioned process of self-problematisation. Freedom for individual action, for teachers to adhere to their own versions of professionalism, appears lacking in this situation. Instead, a new subjectivity, emerging through accident and discourse, is fashioned not through individual agency but through a combination of power relations: discourse, practices, mechanisms and architectures. I shall now discuss these in more detail.

The manifestation of disciplinary power in this instance is supported through the architecture of the classroom which must be included in this critique of teacher subjectivity. Hunter (1994) states:

we find the classroom as a space of ethical formation in which the students are placed under the continuous ethical supervision and problematisation of a teacher who embodies both moral authority and pastoral care. (p. 57)

Whilst Hunter’s comments refer to the effect of the classroom on the behaviour and subjectification of the children, I shall argue that the opposite is also true. The classroom becomes an architectural feature in the problematisation of the teacher subject, and that it, along with the presence of the children, provides the physical conditions for certain problematising practices and mechanisms to function. It could be argued that the classroom becomes the demonstration site for this new form of ethical behaviour expected of the teacher: the place where the teacher grapples with and takes on this new subject position through a process of transformation and fragmentation. A plethora of features are required for this transformation to take place: for many it will be an uncomfortable process in which they must reject and work out aspects of their behaviour and identity whilst taking on new features which are not necessarily welcome. Within the classroom, the teachers are expected to play out their new subject position: their new way of speaking, acting and, more significantly, thinking. The process requires support which comes in an array of architectural elements such as the displays and notice boards which are apparent in every classroom. As discussed in the previous chapter, the display board serves a multi-layered purpose: serving not only to display work but to act as a reminder of the pervasion of surveillance throughout the school. Indeed, the display boards inform the children what is expected of their behaviour and gives reminders of the school’s core values as well as examples of children who are demonstrating good behaviours. The teacher must actively take on the role of promoting such practices within the classroom and in doing so establish themselves as agents of these practices and discourses. They function through and with the support of the teacher. Furthermore, wall spaces and notice boards are also used to display scripts, key messages and the plan for what teachers must do over the trial period. They are there to aid in the moralization of the teacher. The teacher continues to problematize their thoughts in relation to the new discourse that is being inserted into the institutional space, supported by these various materials.

The effect of these power relations can only be understood when one considers the extent to which these discursive practices and mechanisms modify the thinking and behaviour of the teacher. More specifically the teacher adopts a new routine or set of actions - interacting with the children in a different way so as to promote a new relationship with them. Furthermore, the teacher becomes aware of their speech. The institutional discourse offers scripts to aid the teacher when speaking to the children in different scenarios. In this process, the individuality of the teacher’s speech is disqualified as something undefined or unclear in the process of improving behaviour and must be replaced by a more uniform way of speaking. This impersonal style of speaking (a white-wash of sorts) addresses the key issue of consistency around the school. Arguably it is a key feature of schools, and other institutions, as bureaucratic entities. With all members of staff reading from the same script, the school seeks to achieve consistency where difficult behaviours are met. However, this emphasis on consistency arguably nullifies or restricts the teacher’s professional judgement regarding what to say in certain circumstances, erasing certain aspects of their personality, or constructed sense of self, from the classroom (where the teacher is, of course, a hybrid figure, and is not simply, nor in all respects just a teacher, but is also a friend spouse, partner, daughter, son, father, mother and, more abstractly, a citizen.) Indeed, the classroom itself becomes a dual space: a space in which certain things can be said to the children and certain things cannot. Again, guidelines suggest that praise should be celebrated within the classroom whereas sanctions and consequences should be enacted privately and without others around.

Finally, the teacher’s thoughts are reconstituted, or such is the apparent aim, in order to satisfy the needs of this new discourse. One might speculate on the subsequent process of alignment: most importantly, the teacher may become more attuned to their thoughts as they begin a process of self-watching in which they check their thoughts correlate to those prescribed in the policy change. Over time, it could be argued that as the teacher continues to check their thoughts they become more familiar with a particular way of thinking until it becomes commonplace. Where there is dissonance between the teacher’s thoughts and the policy, a process of correction may take place where the teacher attempts to align themselves more closely with the qualified discourse of behaviour. A questioning of their own actions may become apparent and they become unsure of themselves in particular situations which may lead to a lack of confidence. The senior leadership encouraged the teaching staff to assess their success at the end of each day, reflecting on what had gone well and what had not by keeping a journal or diary. This reflective thinking was evident throughout the teaching population as many a conversation took place regarding this policy change and many discussions took place regarding the success of these changes. This technology of self-fashioning, supported by the practices described, might also have other effects: the teacher could become confused or deflated regarding their role or position within the school as their individual personalities are replaced with scripts and thinking schemas which fashion a very particular type of teacher. It is also possible that an increased level of suspicion is developed towards the senior leadership team as the new discourse offers another potential way to judge the work of teachers. This marks an area of potential resistance. Because the strategy was shared so transparently with the teachings staff, it left the policy open to potential critique and contestation. Whilst this may be the case, my later understanding of events was that whilst there was an initial critique of the policy, which was expressed openly in subsequent staff meetings, it did little to change the policy which was being distributed.

In these ways, the changing behaviour of the teaching staff may demonstrate the power that institutional discourses have, from changing day-to-day routines and actions, the manner in which people speak and what they say, to the very thoughts regarding their role within education, how they interact with their students to how they come to imagine and view and define themselves. I believe this exploration demonstrates that power acts as a productive agent and, contrary to conceptions of sovereign power as a straightforwardly oppressive force (a force that says ‘no’, that denies and limits), is active in the process of creating and making subjects. In this context, power is not a force in which the teacher is simply diminished into a lesser space but functions so that they may grow and evolve into something else. No, this development is a re-emergence: a conflicted, messy and complicated process in which fractures and complication are included in the development of this new subjectivity. Messy as the policy may not have been enacted uniformly throughout the teacher population. Some teachers applied different aspects of the policy to their pedagogy and practice and at different times throughout the trial period. Equally, as teachers may have attempted to reconcile the policy with their own sense of agency, their need to be ‘themselves’, this may have complicated and fractured the intended way in which the policy was to be applied. Thus, the new policy created the conditions for many different teachers to emerge, many teachers who were adhering to the policy in different ways. This may have also been an unintended outcome for the SLT.

Slightly extending my vignettes, after a period of time the teaching staff were invited back to discuss how the trial period has gone. Whilst there have undoubtedly been informal discussions taking place throughout this time period, this is the first time a formal expression of ‘*exagoreusis*’ takes place in which the teaching population are invited to come forth and discuss the discourse openly. Foucault (1980) states:

finally, a ritual in which the expression alone, independently of its external consequences, produces intrinsic modifications in the person who articulates it: it exonerates, redeems, and purifies him; it unburdens him of his wrongs, liberates him, and promises him salvation. (p. 62)

The second, or follow-up meeting constituted another mechanism in which the discourse is officially acknowledged by the teaching population as they are required to discuss how the trial has gone. Members of staff were invited to speak one after another to discuss how they feel it has gone. Through this process, they confessed where they have not followed the policy and other cases where they have followed the qualified discourse carefully, using the designated practices and architectures to support them. Some staff discuss the importance of having the scripts and classroom displays which support the new discourse. Others are less enthusiastic: concerns or worries are accepted but quickly dealt with as disqualified comments in contrast with the success of the trial.

**9. Last thoughts**

This thesis was undertaken to explore and understand the subjective position of the primary school teacher and the possible influence of the classroom, as a site of practice and as an architectural space, has on this shifting subjectivity. My aim was to further challenge commonly-held views regarding the primary school classroom as a site of inherent goodness and popular concepts of the teacher which exist more broadly in society. Furthermore, I intended to encourage a new attitude of suspicion towards these commonly-held views of the classroom and teacher and, indeed, all knowledge which purports to be ‘true’, or be ‘right’ about education, including my own genealogy. As the literature discussed in *2. Genealogy* helped demonstrate, very few genealogies of education have been written from within the institution in which they target their critique and fewer still are written by those enclosed in that specific network of power. Therefore, I have recounted specific educational experiences which have been selected due to their educational relevance and innocuous yet genealogically significant nature. Using these experiences as a basis, I have explored them using key Foucauldian concepts, specifically drawn from his work on disciplinary and pastoral power, to provide a different interpretation and history. I shall now explore some key aspects of my exploration which I believe have implications for how we conceptualise education, and how we engage in a practical and theoretical critique of its operations.

**9.1. Reflections**

It became apparent throughout this exploration that teacher subjectivity, that is, the ways in which teachers act, speak, and even think, is dependent on a variety of contributory factors. Contrary to my own expectations, the exploration of the practices and architectures noted above revealed that there are key differences between the ways in which these factors are perceived and represented within social discourses and their interpretation when examined through a Foucauldian lens. I shall now draw together key arguments that emerged throughout the vignettes above in *6. Performance management*, *7. The display board* and *8. Moral training*. As I do so, I shall try to infuse these thoughts with “dispositions” of “scepticism, detachment, outrage, intolerance and tolerance…” (Ball 2017, p. 79). In other words, these arguments are best engaged as provocations, rather than disembodied attempts at truth construction.

**9.1.1. Performance management**

One feature to emerge in this thesis was that the teacher is enmeshed in networks of visibility which have various effects both on themselves, other teachers and individuals within the school. Using Foucauldian theory to view performance management as the means through which visibility could be established, highlights the lack of criticality falls short. Indeed, I argue that this practice, which is often regarded as an unnecessary annoyance, constitutes a major element in the work of the teacher. This discovery resonated with others such as Ball (1990) who state that capability and performance measures are part of the essential work of the teacher. However, the extent to which the whole social group, the teaching body, was involved in this field of visibility appeared to me to be something new, which has not been much remarked upon in the literature. As I stated in *6. Performance management*, it became clear that *‘many people are drawn into this disciplinary apparatus and it is not one single person who is responsible for the ‘gaze’…’*; the entire teaching population was actually involved. It could be said that teachers are actively encouraged to work within and support this collegiate effect of visibility in order to improve the outcomes of students and, in some respects, the teachers’ performance. In doing so, the burden of visibility is removed from one or several individuals and is distributed to many throughout the population. This ensures not only the effective and pervading presence of visibility as described but also introduces compliance throughout the teaching body as it is discursively constituted as a positive technology, a necessary technology of the school.

Similarly to Page’s (2015) research, I have identified performance management as a mechanism of visibility within the classroom and school as a whole. Whilst my reading of performance management also aligns with Page’s view that it is becoming increasingly normalised to be watched constantly, I do not believe that it has become ‘accepted’ by staff members. Similarly, Page argues that “the visibility of performance in schools is selective and controlled by headteachers” (p. 1046) whereas my reading of visibility suggests the headteacher plays a marginal, or at least indirect, role in proliferating this field of visibility. Rather, it is teachers themselves who are becoming increasingly involved in supporting the network of visibility, knowingly or not.

A somewhat surprising discovery was the extent to which the teaching population, with or without their knowledge, were broken down from a group into individuals and the extent to which this individuality was actively encouraged. Performance management breaks the teaching population down into individuals through documentation. Whilst I have eluded to the common discourse surrounding performance management as the means to check staff competency and identify development needs throughout the school, a different discourse emerged. By *‘capturing them in documentation’*, staff were represented in terms of statistical information, where this provided information to create comparisons between other members of staff and myself. Equally, it becomes possible to compare individuals across time. By sharing data between members of staff, with groups of staff and in staff meetings, individuals are introduced to the differences between them. This can take the form of key stage to key stage, year group to year group and even direct teacher to teacher comparisons. From a Foucauldian perspective, performance management is one of the main technologies which functions to define the individual characteristics of the teacher, in terms of their abilities and personal attributes.

One of the most controversial ideas to arise from this exploration was the way in which norms could emerge due to teacher individuality. My exploration highlighted the extent to which performance management is involved in constituting teachers not as people but as ‘cases’ which are to be established, identified and worked upon to meet a recognized norm. As stated above, examination through documentation creates a comparative system through which norms are defined and used to judge the work of teaches. In *6. Performance management*, under the subtitle *normalization*, I described two processes which contribute to this effect: firstly, the review establishes a technology of improvement in which the teacher is an individual to be constantly trained. Secondly, target setting constitutes the teacher as an individual who must be aware of their own faults and must work upon them. Through constituting norms, a teacher can be constituted as ‘abnormal’ when they fall below the specified level of conduct, a process that identifies them for intervention.

In comparison to my own reading, Morton’s (2011) more typical reading of performance management contains some contentious points whilst offering glossy superlatives. Whilst Morton expounds the benefits of an all-encompassing review process, there is a lack of acknowledgement of the effect this has on students and teachers. Performance management is portrayed as a natural and essential mechanism in the primary school. This is, arguably, an impression that schools might like to convey to their own staff, and is one that this thesis seeks to vigorously contest.

**9.1.2. The display board**

Another major aspect of this genealogy was considering the role that architectures play in the formation of teacher subjectivity. By doing so, I have explored the possibility that space can function is such a way that it induces and supports disciplinary power. The display board is an unremarkable feature of the primary school classroom and yet it signifies a range of mechanisms which act upon individuals within the classroom and functions to modify and support particular attitudes to the work of the school, which include the work and identity of the individual teacher, and display-board maintainer.

My research has identified the display board, as explored in my personal experience, as a meaningful and highly functionalised space that is codified for a particular purpose. Whilst the common view of this board is that its primary focus is to display the work of children for the purpose of celebration or emulation, I have argued that is equally important in judging the work of teachers. The display board does this in several ways:

(1) it measures the extent to which teaching staff has referred to and complied with school policy in relation to display boards. The teacher’s dedication and attitude was further inspected based on how carefully they had consulted this important policy.

(2) it could also be utilised to judge the expectations and standards of the teacher, something that was often hidden. By selecting work that was to be displayed on the board, and by exploring how the work was prepared in terms of its presentation and care, a teacher’s process of ranking and selecting work was elicited and made public for other teachers and managers to inspect.

(3) as teachers were actively encouraged to view other teacher’s boards, and because staff meetings were held in classrooms, individuals could be judged, ranked, praised (shamed) and penalised by other teachers. As such, teachers could ascend and descend a discrete ranking system which was played out over the year; the teacher’s position was not concrete but could change.

The extent to which the display board supported the field of visibility which was discussed in *9.1.1. Performance management,* and which plays a role in the formation of teacher subjectivity. The display board was useful in expanding the field of visibility as it provided information regarding the teacher whether they were present or not. As discussed in *6. Performance management*, the Panopticon, due to its architectural design features, caused inmates to involuntarily internalise a sense of being always watched. Through reconsidering the display board as an architectural feature which can support this all-encompassing visibility, one might understand it according to the operations of the panoptic mechanisms that Bentham described in the late 18th century.

Whilst I shall discuss how the teacher is problematized and made available to inspection (including self-inspection) in more depth in *9.1.3. Moral training*, the role the display board played in this mechanism of pastoral power was also significant. Whilst the display board is often viewed as the means for children to judge themselves against others, it is also utilised by teachers to compare themselves to one another, and to school norms. By doing so, teachers can enact a practise of moving inwards to check their own thoughts and expectations in relation to the work they are doing. This can sometimes be done by others on a teacher’s behalf when the teachers’ work falls below a certain level of expectation. Furthermore, it also added to a discourse of competency: conversations between staff members would elicit levels of competency surrounding other teachers which would also play out in their opinions of how others might view themselves in turn.

**9.1.3. Moral training**

Contrary to my initial expectations, my exploration of the moralising practices that I have discussed were most significant in my understanding of the formation of teacher subjectivity. In exploring these moralising practices, the role of institutional discourse and conscious-forming practices were strongly identified and highlighted the extent to which teacher subjectivity is constantly changing. The exploration emphasised a commonly occurring event: an unplanned and yet unavoidable socio-cultural occurrence which needed a specific and qualified discourse to resolve it. This socio-cultural occurrence, which arose due to a variety of factors, could not be easily solved as no qualified discourse or method had previously been established to solve it (CPD, intervention, communication to parents). Therefore, a new method was required. This new method took the form of a behaviour policy change which could be easily formulated and introduced into the teacher population. Furthermore, as the contingency and emergency of this event was established, it highlighted that an equally contingent method was needed to solve it. What is striking here is the lack of planning or neat evolution that took place in this development in the school narrative, which is often written into such events in traditional historical accounts. Moreover, this new discourse, which was to be qualified through the teacher population, was to emerge from the headteacher demonstrating that hierarchical position may act as an indication of what qualifies or disqualifies a discourse.

Another aspect of this exploration was the strategies used to solve such problems, which were developed based on limited resources available to those fashioning the new discourse. Whilst the new policy initiated by the school SLT was not the response wanted from the teaching staff, it marks an important recognition that the solution to problems are often solved based on limited resources and conditions available to them. Equally important was the way in which this new discourse was introduced into the teaching population. The staff meeting, which each teacher is expected to attend, was used to introduce and clarify this new policy to individuals. This policy, which primarily addressed the behaviour of staff members rather than the children, was established and delivered by the SLT. It offered a 30-day trial during which time the teachers were expected to try out new types of behaviour - such as greeting children at the door – and new ways of speaking and thinking in certain situations. Certain materials were given to staff to help them embed these practices into their performance.

This gave the leadership the opportunity to deliver this new discourse alongside relevant materials that the teachers would need to embrace and utilise it. Essentially, new discourses, such as the one introduced in this situation, may address any aspect of school life but this focused intently on the behaviour of the teaching staff. It was potentially successful because it was also strengthened and supported by other qualified discourses such as the DfE’s (2011) ‘Teachers’ standards: guidance for school leaders, school staff and governing bodies.’, which offer governmental support for discourses of this type.

Most importantly, this exploration found that by establishing a new discourse of behaviour in the school, teachers were initiated into a practice of problematising themselves. This problematisation was established through spiritual (or moral) practices: ‘*exomologesis*’ and ‘*exagoreusis*’ which I have explored above in *8. Moral training*. These terms, whilst only briefly introduced, have not been applied in relation to an analysis of the school teacher. They are, however, important conceptual terms developed by Hunter (1994) (and has been taken up since by writers such as Allen, Goddard, Bojesen and Peim). Indeed, as an area of further study, these terms may prove fruitful in a genealogy of teaching and schooling.

Teachers were actively encouraged to begin a process of looking inwards to check that their thoughts and actions coincided with those that have been spelt out in the new policy. This new way of thinking about their own behaviour was further supported by a range of materials (displays, scripts, prompts, reading materials) and situations (weekly key stage meetings, weekly staff meetings, conversations with members of the SLT) that arguably work together in constituting the teacher as a self-governing subject. Furthermore, the use of a trial period and follow up meetings meant that teachers could explore their own ability to adapt to this new policy; staff were inspired to recount where they had succeeded and where there was room for improvement.

**9.2. Implications**

I have offered a summary of the main arguments of the three vignettes that I have critiqued, discussing what I feel are the major genealogical points to be taken from these discussions. I shall now briefly consider the main implications of this analysis.

**9.2.1. The teacher subject as a product of visibility**

The above exploration has demonstrated that the teacher subject may be constituted through a range of practices and architectures which make them increasingly visible. Contrary to the view that children are the most visible subjects in the school, the analysis developed above indicates that the teacher subject is increasingly exposed to situations and practices which are used to increase not only their visibility but their knowledge of their own visibility. The teacher increasingly feels ‘exposed’ within the operations of the school. This has been achieved through a range of mechanisms such as performance management which highlights the visibility of individual teachers not only in the meeting they attend but the classroom where they are observed. Because of this, the teacher has become an increasingly visible individual, one who must perform in a particular way at all times due to the inescapable effects of that visibility. As such, the work of the teacher can be extended to show that they are more regularly taking on the position of performers: the network of visibility surrounding them continues to strengthen their ontological condition, potentially making them feel pressured to ‘perform’ for their colleagues and superiors.

Equally important to this was the investigation of the means by which teachers are encouraged to become part of the network of visibility that surrounds them. Teachers are recruited as willing agents in their own subjection. They, themselves, become satellites in the matrix of power that not only exists but functions to modify their behaviour through the pervasive field of visibility that surrounds and acts upon them. This is achieved through various practices such as encouraging teachers to observe ‘good practice’ or by asking members of staff to comment on and judge display boards in another teacher’s classroom. The above vignettes provide a snapshot of some of the means by which architectures and teachers are combined to ensure the field of visibility expands over the classroom. As such, the ‘gaze’ of senior members of staff is not always necessary in order to ensure that the regime of visibility functions throughout the school. Just as any person can provide the function of the watchman in the Panopticon, any member of the teaching team can extend the ‘gaze’ of power. As such, teacher subjects are fashioned as observers: as they continue to function within institutions which normalise visibility and exercise scrutiny. They take on this skill and function, developing acute awareness of the actions of others and the quality of the work they are doing.

**9.2.2. The teacher subject as an individual**

Whilst my exploration has come to show that teachers are working in conditions of visibility, I argue that they are also becoming individualised. Contrary to the belief that teachers must work in teams and use their team working skills to perform their roles effectively, my exploration has found that teachers are also subject to technologies of individualization designed to bring teachers into alignment with institutional norms and affect change. This can often take the form of a binary situation in which teachers must gauge when it is appropriate to work as part a team (staff meetings) and when they must be individualised and focus solely on their own behaviour and abilities (performance management). This may also function simultaneously. Thus, teacher subjectivity is contingent on the circumstances they find themselves within: teachers may speak, act or think completely differently dependent on whether the institutional situation requires them to identify as a single unit within a team or whether they must separate themselves as an individual. This, in some cases, may make the working life of the teacher increasingly stressful as they fail to adapt to nuance of individual situations, miss-reading which discourse is qualified at any particular time and which is not.

Another implication of my exploration is the relationship to a norm that teachers are expected to internalize. As teachers become progressively visible, and as increasing amounts of information is collected about them and their colleagues, normative standards are developed which influence the constitution of the teacher both professionally and personally. Because such an emphasis is placed on collecting information, it is possible that teachers are identified as a source or data rather than as a multi-faceted subject to be nurtured as a professional. Normative discourses become increasingly prevalent in the world of teaching and as teachers internalize such discourses they learn to judge their success and effectiveness in relation only to a set of predetermined norms. As I have stated above in relation to Ball (2003), teachers maybe become unstable with regards to their work, constantly concerned as to whether they are doing a good job and undermining their professional constitution. This may influence the teacher on a personal level: norms have a profound effect on the teacher’s self-esteem and confidence in doing their job. Thus, part of the subjective nature of the teacher is the amount of instability that is now placed at the centre of the teachers work. It could be argued that teachers are increasingly rendered as precarious individuals, not simply in relation to the increasing use of performance-related pay, but also in terms of the most mundane, apparently insignificant operations of the school. In relation to the stringent rules regarding the display board, which cannot surely be justified on educational grounds, and can hardly be justified on aesthetic grounds, could be setting up teachers to fail, making their professional conduct precarious not only in relation to everything that is beyond their control (i.e. all the complex factors that lie behind student performance, which they are also judged by), but also in relation to the most mundane, insignificant aspects of their job, such as how the stapler was held, its precise angle, when putting up a display.

**9.2.3. The teacher subject as moral persona**

Harking back to the one of the first conceptions of the modern classroom teacher by Kay-Shuttleworth in 1846, my investigation has suggested that teacher’s personal morality and behaviour makes up a key part of their subjectivity and constitutes an essential part of the teacher’s work. Whilst this thesis has focused only on two of the conscience-forming pedagogies Foucault describes, I suggest that these play an essential role in the formation of the teacher subject. Firstly, ‘*exomologesis*’, or the process of problematising one’s own thinking, was something that emerged strongly in the findings in relation to new discourses that were introduced. Thus, insofar as schools can be interpreted as discursive sites in which qualified discourses emerge and disqualified discourses are removed, one of the main functions of the teacher is to take these new discourses on-board. In the third vignette that I explored, this newly formed discourse - the notion of teacher responsibility for parent and student behaviour - was a substantial one, which modified not only the way that teachers were to teach but also how they were to think, speak and act in the roles they occupy. This signified a minor yet significant change in the role of the teacher and reinforces Hunter’s (1994) argument that the teacher continues to act as a moral exemplar, perhaps even more obviously than I previously assumed. This inscribed the process of problematisation into the teacher subject, who must now begin to work on their own thoughts in relation to the new discourse adopted.

In relation to this new deportment of the teacher, another practice (‘*exagoreusis*’) was adopted in which teachers were encouraged to share their inner most thoughts and feelings regarding this policy with others. A trial period offered the teacher a chance to begin this process of problematisation in relation to the new policy and begin working on their actions, their speech and their thoughts. Through introducing supporting materials to aid teachers, there may have been an intention to change the very thoughts and speech of the teachers to come into line with the new discourse. Following this trial, teachers were then actively encouraged to reinforce this new policy by discussing their ability to adhere to it. This took place in an open forum with senior members of staff where individual teachers could express their inner thoughts and failings in relation to abiding by the policy.

**9.2.4. The teacher subject as a discursive construction**

I suggest that much of my exploration has shown that whilst teachers continue to have a degree of choice regarding how they enact the requirements of their profession, there are many aspects of their professional identity that are absorbed without challenge rather internalized through choice. For example, my investigation has shown that teachers are encouraged to change their behaviour, speech, actions and thoughts depending on the circumstances in which they find themselves. This could be a meeting with colleagues or a senior leader, teaching a class of children, speaking to a board of governors or a parent. In each case, the teacher discriminates the situation and utilizes a different discourse which, in some respects, brings about the comportment of a different teacher, a slightly different person within each contingent scenario. Therefore, I suggest that these different positions that the teacher takes on are not additional aspects of the work of the teacher but are constituent elements which actively make up who the teacher is. As I have shown above, these comportments arose due to specific political, social and cultural situations to which discourses and pedagogies were developed to meet a specific socio-cultural need. It is possible to reimagine the primary school classroom specifically and the school more broadly as discursive sites. Institutions, as sites of discourse, are actively involved in making up subject positions and people. The primary school classroom appears particularly effective as a tool in manifesting and supporting particular subject positions; this is because it emerged in the history of educational progress as an architectural feature for bringing about the moral comportment of the child. This, referring to the vignettes above, can be extended to include the manifestation of teacher subjectivity too.

As can be seen in *9.1.3. Moral training*, it was not particularly difficult nor time consuming to introduce an emerging discourse into the teaching population. Rather, it could be argued that this slight change signifies the disqualification of the previous behaviour policy and the emergence of the new policy which addressed the issues of behaviour within the school. Thus, I suggest that the teacher, situated in the primary school classroom, can be reconceived as a discursive comportment: a subject arising in many manifestations and in a state of constant change and contingency. Moreover, the teacher is a fractured and contentious subject: a character that fights between personal needs, professional duties and the disciplinary and pastoral power effects that play upon and around them at all times.

Finally, I suggest that this genealogy has many implications regarding the subjectivity of the teacher, how the teacher may be viewed within the educational landscape and society more broadly and education as a topic for genealogical research. Furthermore, I believe this genealogy has some implication for my own and others’ practice as teachers working in educational settings. This genealogy, and the analysis it has produced, is meaningful for my own practice as it allows me to consider the ways in which teacher subjectivity may be fashioned and how I can affect my own subjective position. By understanding the different conditions which bring about subjectivity, it allows teachers to play a part in actively fashioning their own subjectivity. It also hints at ways of possibly resisting aspects of the teachers work which cause disillusionment and allow teachers to focus their attention on aspect of the teaching role which are meaningful to them.

**9.3. Contributions**

I believe this genealogy has contributed to the field of education and educational discourse in several ways which I shall now discuss. Firstly, this genealogy sits alongside others which have been written (Ball 1990, 2017; Jones 1990; Foucault 1991a; Hunter 1994; Allen 2014) and adds to a growing number of texts which explore and challenge commonplace assumptions and unquestioned goods in education. In doing so, this genealogy has attempted to challenge or develop a suspicion of truth and replace this with contingency and accident. It also adds to the collection of Foucauldian-inspired research projects as I have utilized key Foucauldian texts such as *Discipline and Punish* and key theoretical ideas that are contained within them in new and different ways (Noujain 1987; Marshall 1990; Pignatelli 1995; Tamboukou 2003, 2008; Hook 2005; Garland 2014; Page 2015).

The originality of this thesis is established based on its highly-contextualized approach. That is, I have offered a genealogy as a teacher currently working within a primary school classroom. Much of the genealogies discussed and critically analyzed in this work (Jones 1990, Hunter 1994, Allen 2013) are conducted and written from an external viewpoint. As such, these works offered critical analyses that were informed by external interpretations. I argue that this thesis offers a new direction for genealogical work: investigations by teacher-researchers who might integrate genealogical theory into their professional life thereby giving them a new way to reflect, critically, as professionals working within institutions.

This thesis contributes to established work in the genealogy of schooling, by extending arguments by Ball (2017) and Ball and Tamboukou (2003), to the effect that genealogy can be combined with other ‘methods’ to provide richer, embedded insights into the operations of power in contemporary institutions such as the school. Such an argument must, of course, explore the methodological and critical tensions this kind of work will inevitably create, in order to navigate this process of methodological innovation. It is important to do justice to genealogy, in other words, at the same time as it is adapted to new ends. Benefitting from the approach that was subsequently developed, I have sought to offer a localised and nuanced analysis, which offers examples which have not yet been explored to offer a critical mapping of power relations within the primary school and classroom. Whilst there are genealogies that have investigated both the role of the teacher and classroom (Jones 1990, Ball 1990, Hunter 1994), with some even quoting the experience of teachers themselves to inform their explorations (Ball 2017), this genealogy sought to contribute to the field by providing a genealogy which was conceived, explored and written from within the very institution it critiqued. Furthermore, by utilising a new methodological tool (genealogical autonarrative), I have been able to explore not only the mechanisms, practices and institutions of power within the institution but also consider the extent to which I myself am a product of those practices and have been constituted and arisen from the very institution I critique.

Secondly, this thesis contributes to growing collection of literature (Ball 1990, 2003, 2017; Hunter 1994; Jones 1990; Allen 2014; Bojesen 2018a, 2018b) that challenges common views regarding education, schooling and what it purports to do. Traditional and qualified interpretations of teaching and education (as reflected most starkly in government reports: DfE 2010, 2011, 2016, 2019a, 2019b) offer a one-sided reading of what the work of the teacher is and how the classroom can assist the teacher in achieving this goal. This work challenges and troubles that reading, by offering educators and researchers readings that contradict qualified narratives and asks them to rethink and explore these institutions in ways that they begin to challenge their own systems of thinking. Thus, I believe this genealogy contributes by asking educators and teachers to rethink the very nature of themselves, their practices and the places in which they work.

A third major contribution of this thesis is its resolve to challenge dominant discourses surrounding education, schooling and, in particular, the teacher in relation to a specific focus: the contemporary primary school teacher. To achieve this aim, I have developed an argument to reevaluate the teacher subject as a contingent entity and one that can be understood as a product of accident rather than historical evolution. As key genealogists (Allen 2013, 2014; Ball 1990, 1993, 2003, 2017; Hunter 1994; Jones 1990) have already challenged the concept of the teacher as a fixed and agentic individual, my thesis strengthens this argument by offering an interpretation of the teacher from a localized perspective using my own experiences. By doing so, I contribute to a discourse which suggests that the teacher is a discursive construction: someone who is manifested through the various pedagogies they practice, mechanisms they are subject to and the architectures in which they work.

Discriminating the teacher as a contingent entity also contributes to narratives that entertain the possibility that the teacher, as an individual, cannot be a singular entity but can means many different things to different people. Indeed, my reading of teacher subjectivity could contribute to a deeply pessimistic understanding of the teacher, one which explores the fractured and uncertain nature of the teacher subject. However, this could also add to a discourse of change and transformation, one which embraces change also embraces possibility and hope. Equally, the teacher can be reconfigured as a constantly changing comportment: teacher subjectivities will continue to adjust as they work with a range of discourses and practices from which disciplinary and pastoral power arises and functions. Furthermore, I suggest that teachers, and the roles they perform, differ drastically based on the location in which they work and the specific local, political and social situation which are present in that location. Thus, I remind myself of Jones (1990) when he states that the history of the teacher is the “passage of a failure…” (p. 75): I would amend that statement to the passage of definite uncertainty.

A fourth contribution of my exploration is to begin rethinking and reconsidering the primary school classroom. Genealogists such as Allen (2013, 2104), Hunter (1994) and Jones (1990) have explored the classroom as a site of functioning power; I believe this critique goes further to explore the nuanced ways in which classrooms play a function in supporting and constructing subjective positions which must operate within that context. I have sought to demonstrate that the classroom is more than just a space for learning but should be understood as a site of discourse and narrative, which has implications on the individuals who inhabit this space. As such, I encourage educators to consider the ways in which classrooms can effectively change the behaviours and subjectivities of individuals through the practices, pedagogies that are practiced in them and the architectures which support these practices. This thesis is underpinned by the idea that in sensitising teachers to the operations of power, often mundane, that form them and those about them as subjects, the teaching profession may be assisted in contesting how it is constrained to act and think in certain ways, and in working towards new formulations of what it means to be a teacher.’

**9.4. Limitations**

Previously in *2.5.1. What limitations are there to this genealogy?,* I discussed a vital limitation which is faced by every genealogist when conducting a critique: that the genealogist themselves is caught in the process of producing knowledge. I have sought “to contest and destabilize the positioning of knowledge about persons as disinterested, impartial, and beyond the exigencies and play of power” (Pignatelli 1995, p. 388) throughout this thesis, and yet I must acknowledge the fact that this thesis can also be represented as a discourse seeking to assert truths due to its highly-contextualised, perspectival approach. As a genealogist, then, I find myself in a difficult and paradoxical position. This thesis seeks to challenge and destabilise knowledge but also, through the process of research itself, produces a new knowledge, a knowledge which might be viewed as an expert and professionally informed (or constrained) knowledge due to my status of being a teacher. I have endeavoured to overcome this limitation by acknowledging my problematic position throughout this thesis.

In section *4.2.3. A genealogical autoethnography*, I demonstrated how autonarrative can be refashioned to overcome this genealogical problematic. As previously stated, I have utilized a conception of narrative that is aware of its own conditions of power and recognise how my position as both a teacher within an institution and my position as a researcher affords me access to certain ways of thinking or speaking about teacher subjectivity and classrooms. In this sense, I disturb and trouble my own discourse as a necessary genealogical prerequisite. As such, this genealogy is written with the awareness that I am “perpetually under construction” (Gannon 2006, p. 480) as both a researcher and teacher and to try to hold on to any stable conception of self or experience, as recounted in the vignettes above, would be antithetical. Furthermore, it is necessary to admit that the above explorations are mere interpretations that have emerged due to “relations of power and discursive constraints” (Jackson and Mazzei 2008, p. 312) which may change over time giving rise to a different but equally valid interpretation. It is exciting to think different interpretations of these experiences could be “continually “made” in an engagement with the present…” at any given time. Thus, these interpretations are nothing more than “uncertain, ungrounded, and thus fragile tellings” (Jackson and Mazzei 2008, p. 314).

Again in *2.5.1. What limitations are there to this genealogy?*, I stated that this genealogy would not suggest ways forward in terms how to better educate. It may be disappointing to some to have reached this point to find there are no suggestions in terms of how we can improve the situation in terms of teacher subjectivity. As Allen (2014) states genealogy “makes a deliberate choice; it refuses to speak of the future…” refusing to “suggest or even hint at alternative forms of social life” but concentrates its efforts “to destablise the present.” (p. 246) To begin suggesting other ways of doing education would be to assert my discourse as more truthful or more precise than others such as the Department for Education’s (2011, 2016) narrative. Indeed, as Bojesen (2018b) states “there is no lack for proposals of alternative educational models, which rely on varying conceptions of educational and social utopias.” (p. 1) This thesis attempts to do something very different. I return to Pignatelli (1995) who stated that genealogies are “not intended as maps of the future. They are neither hopeful nor hopeless projections.” (p. 392) This thesis has sought to map and indicate the intricate workings of power within an institution but this is as far as it attempts to go.

Furthermore, this genealogy has attempted to identify what Tamboukou (2008) describes as “the noisy silences…” (p. 111), those discourses which remain unspoken or unacknowledged. Whilst this thesis attempted to bring forward some of these discourses, it is limited, due to its word count, in bringing forth other silences which may be present in the education field. In particular, this thesis does not have the remit to discuss other subjugated discourses regarding how the race, gender or ability or disability of affects their subject position both within education and within the profession of teaching. Indeed, it would be valuable to the field of genealogy and education to consider other ‘noisy silences’ which may challenge dominant discourses of education and teaching.

Notwithstanding these limitations, I have attempted to produce a valid and rigorous thesis and believe my reflexive approach to such limitations has proved sufficient in suggesting this work to be credible.

**9.5. Further research**

As stated in *9.4. Limitations*, this thesis lacks the theoretical warrant to suggest ways of bettering education and yet it is appropriate and necessary to offer some research possibilities that can arise from this thesis.

Firstly, whilst I have argued that genealogies enacted by researchers most closely located to a given network of power must be cautious not to state that their readings are any more valid or truthful than others, I suggest that much is to be gained from further genealogical work of this nature. Individuals researching from within institutions have a unique opportunity to explore and map - more contextually - the workings of power which may be functioning. That is, to explore the mechanisms and practices of power which are not so obvious to those outside the institution and which are overlooked or are buried so deeply within the institution that outsiders are unconscious of their existence.

Furthermore, I have considered the extent to which engaging in this research has increased my awareness of the various ways in which practices, mechanisms and architectures are affecting my own subjectivity. As such, further research may also consider the extent to which writing genealogies effects individual subjectivity in whatever institutions they are written. Equally, researchers could explore how individuals themselves act as auxiliary factors in the workings of power as well as becoming increasing aware of how their own subjectivity is a product of that power. In *2. Genealogy*, I acknowledged the lack of contextually-informed genealogical research and sought to contribute to the field by writing this genealogy and encourage other researchers to do the same.

To further explore the contingent nature of knowledge and the intricacies of its production, a subsequent study could be conducted into the practices and architectures that have been mentioned in this thesis. This could be done in two ways:

(1) each of the practices and architectures mentioned above could be reinvestigated, through genealogical analysis, by different individuals. That is, individuals throughout the school body might provide their own interpretation of these features and discuss the impact on the formation of their own identity and on the identity of those who surround them. I predict that each interpretation would differ based on that individual’s personal experiences as well as their position within the hierarchy of that institution. This would provide further evidence that subject positions are influenced by the works of power but also influence how mechanisms of power are represented within an institution.

(2) the exploration of these practices and architectures could be revisited at different historical periods to further understand and appreciate how these factors affect subjectivity in different ways dependent on historical, social and cultural factors in that particular place and time. Because, as I have argued, experience and interpretation is contingent and based on a variety of contingent factors, analysis of these practices and architectures would differ at different historical moments. Although some of this work has been done by those cited above, it has tended to cover large historical periods, and might benefit from far more historically focused investigations of architectures of power in different areas of educational activity.

Finally, whilst this thesis does not consider ways in which the aforementioned mechanisms and practices of power can be resisted, there is great possibility for a consideration of resisting practices. Bojesen (2018b) states in reference to his own article - ‘Education, in spite of it all’ - and others which form part of the issue in which he contributes, that their writing “neither rejects, nor offers outright alternatives to the dominant contemporary model of education, but which instead explores its margins and the possibilities they might offer…” (p. 1) He goes on to argue that his and the other contributors’ work focuses around:

locating and articulating areas of resistance, hope or re-conceptualisation which may help to begin to define fruitful areas of educational thought and practice which either work within or go beyond or against those currently dominant in education. Asking, what are the problems that educators and students face today and what are the means of challenging them, however marginally? And, how can individual educators and students recognise and create spaces of resistance within a claustrophobic system of accountability, accreditation, and social reproduction? (p. 2)

These comments provide an overview of how genealogical research might be utilised, not to suggest other ways of educating, but by making stakeholders aware of their current situation and considering ways in which they may resist the networks of power in which they work.

**9.6. Personal reflection**

This research project has had a profound effect on my personal and professional development, and has led to a deep appreciation of the research process. I began this doctoral programme with the intention of writing a music-based thesis which has developed into a genealogical exploration of my subjectivity. Throughout this process, I have come to question and challenge my own views and basic assumptions time and again. Moreover, I have developed a keen skepticism regarding knowledge and the conditions of its existence. A major factor in developing this critical reflexivity was engaging with the monumental thinker, Michel Foucault and I intend to take this attitude forward into the future. I finish this genealogy maintaining an optimistic outlook, which, as Bojesen (2018a) states can be “an optimism that seeks to make the individually and contextually specific ‘best’ of the situations we find ourselves in.” (p. 14)

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1. Danaher et. al. (2000) explore dialectical history as a “clash of opposite forces” before arriving at Foucault’s conceptualisation stating that it “tends to conceive of the forces of history largely in terms of the great ideological belief systems…” (p. 100). Foucault problematised dialectical history as being understood "according to a grand or totalising vision…”, that events can fit within “a pattern, according to certain laws of historical development.” (p. 100) Thus dialectical history develops certain histories and subject positions from which dialectical histories can be produced. Foucault argues for plurality which contradicts the concept of dialectical history. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Andrew Bell (1753-1832) was a Scottish born Anglican priest and educationalist who developed the Madras (Monitorial) School System, opening the first secondary school in St Andrews. He is remembered for this use of his communal teaching system through which more advanced pupils would teach other pupils. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Kay-Shuttleworth (1804-1877), a doctor, politician and, later, educationalist, established the Manchester Statistical Society before taking an intense interest in education. This led to being appointed as the first Secretary for Education by the Privy Council. He later went on to open the Battersea Normal College for training teachers in an effort to nationalize education. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. John Arthur Roebuck (1802-1879) was a British politician and a follower of the Utilitarian philosophy of Jeremy Bentham. He sat as a Member of Parliament from 1832 until 1847 for Bath and then for Sheffield from 1849. Most importantly he proposed a motion for the secularisation of education in 1843, which was subsequently rejected by Parliament. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Samuel Wilderspin (1791-1866) was a pioneering educationalist known for running an infant school in Spitalfields in London. Wilderspin wrote many texts - such as *On the Importance of Educating the Infant Poor* (1823) - and is often credited as the inventor of the playground. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Edgar Lawrence Doctorow (1931-2015) was an American professor, writer and editor who was most well-known for his creation of historical fictions: texts which place fictional characters in historical situations involving historical figures such as famous psychoanalysts Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Page’s (2015) article discusses “reforms to the performance and capability procedures for teachers introduced in September 2013.” (p. 1031) These reforms related to “teachers who are deemed not to have met the professional standards required (DfE, 2012b) [and] who can now be dismissed within a term.” (p. 1035) This had a direct impact on teachers as it was tied to factors such as pay increases and lesson observation time limits. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Tyranny, as opposed to the classic conceptualisation as a cruel or oppressive form of state rule, takes a new, modern form which has been described as the ‘tyranny of numbers’. In ‘Education, governance and the tyranny of numbers**’,** Ball (2015) states that since the 19th century, numbers have been used to regulate and control populations. Numbers are also fundamental to the modern school as they are utilised in modern examination. Numbers, in this sense come to “define our worth, measure our effectiveness and, in a myriad of other ways, work to inform or construct what we are today.” (p. 299) [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. In the UK, the school action plan is a document which is produced by the senior members of staff in a school and is a document which drives forward the improvements which are to take place in a school. This document is a public document that should be easily available for people to read. It highlights a school’s strengths and weaknesses. It is primarily used to plan the implementation of resources, such as teachers and other staff and resources, across the school effectively. It may also address key issues identified by OfSted as ways forward for the school. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Working walls and displays are terms often used interchangeably in schools but signify very different things. A working wall is a space which is used for a variety of purposes but is mainly utilised to support children’s learning and improve independence by giving children specific information around a certain subject or topic (communication, behaviour, etc.) and is often made and contributed over time by adults and children. A classroom display is mainly used to display work done by children and is designed and made by an adult. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Mettray Penal Colony, opened in 1840, was a private reformatory in which male children, adolescents and adults were imprisoned together. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. *Modus Vivendi* is a term used to express the temporal and impermanent mode of living or being in relation to political and cultural factors. In this respect, the teacher, as an expression of bureaucratic technologies and Christian spiritual practices, reached a certain stability as a hybrid personage. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Governmentality is a term used to describe Foucault’s exploration of “the techniques and procedures which are designed to govern the conduct of both individuals and populations at every level, not just the administrative or political level.” (O’Farrell, 2019) [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Here, Hunter (1994) is extending Foucault’s (1991a) argument and exploration of the carceral archipelago which Foucault described as “a whole series of institutions which, well beyond the frontiers of criminal law…” (p. 297), were utilized to proliferate new types of disciplinary power throughout the population. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Hunter (1994) refers to a technology of existence as an “historical invention…” (p. 36) which was brought about through specific historical and cultural practices of subjectification. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)