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The Will to Be Otherwise/
The Effort of Endurance

Introduction

When colleagues asked me where this essay
was being published, I continually, incorrectly
replied, "For a volume tentatively titled, 'After Fou-
cault.'" For me this spectral title had the appropri-
ate atmosphere of abandonment, as if members
of this issue were all gathered at a wake, in slightly
uncomfortable clothing, wondering, now what?
But this standing in witness to the demise of one
form of life and wondering what would spring up
in its wake also fit nicely Michel Foucault's own
reflections about the relationship between obsti-
nate curiosity and the governance of the self and
others. "As for what motivated me? . . . It was curi-
osity—the only kind of curiosity, in any case, that
is worth acting upon with a degree of obstinacy:
not the curiosity that seeks to assimilate what it
is proper for one to know, but that which enables
one to get free of oneself."[1] In this way, no matter
his historiographical practice, Foucault's concern
was always marked by a concern for the future
already among us—a future that a kind of curi-
osity mixed with a kind of willfulness one could
pull out of the present. If we are interested in
Foucault's legacy, we should look not at what he
solved but at what remains open in his wake.

To that end, this essay examines Foucault's reflections on self-formation in the shadow of the insurrection of subjugated knowledges, or put another way, the governance of the self and others when the goal is to capacitate modes of life currently around us but without an explicit force among us. More specifically, I am interested in the relationships between willful curiosity and risk, potentiality and exhaustion. If, as Foucault argues in *The Government of Self and Others*, the conditions of the otherwise lie in the radically potential spaces of a kind of truth speaking (*dire vrai*, *parrhesia*), what political and theoretical weight will be given to the exhausting conditions of these spaces? The goal of this essay is not to solve this paradox ontologically but to face it sociologically, not to develop an ontology of potentiality but to understand the dwelling of potentiality, asking what to do when we reach the limit of critical theory. In the background of this essay are two larger questions: How do we approach the fate of alternative social projects in late liberalism? And how might reconceptualizing the humanities and humanistic social sciences as "dwelling sciences" aid in this project?[2] This particular essay proceeds by examining will, risk, and exhaustion in Foucault's late works, Giorgio Agamben's reflections on potentiality, and thoughts on will, effort, and mental habit from the American pragmatists William James and Charles Sanders Peirce.

Risk

It now goes without saying that starting with his Collège de France lectures, *"Society Must Be Defended,"* Foucault turned to a broad set of problems clustered around the question, "What is power?"[3] Together with *Security, Territory, Population* and *Birth of Biopolitics*, *"Society Must Be Defended"* would outline Foucault's changing ideas about the complex relationship between three formations of power (sovereignty, discipline, and biopolitics) and the histories of the economic present. Supposedly, this concern about power gave way to, or became a more minor chord in, an ethical turn in the last two volumes of *The History of Sexuality* (*The Use of Pleasure* and *The Care of the Self*).[4]

But *"Society Must Be Defended"* does not begin with an epistemological question, "What is power?" It begins instead with a methodological question that, as we will see, presupposes an ethical problem for Foucault. In *"Society Must Be Defended"* Foucault asks what is it that has allowed him to write his studies of psychiatry, madness, prisons, medicine, and sexuality? What techniques lie behind the collection and interpretation of the

material archives that compose these texts? In other words, what kinds of methods are archaeology and genealogy? And what is the relation between these methods and his seemingly constant zigzagging on and off course as new archives are encountered? Certainly whatever this method was, it was not one that conformed to the established sciences (*savoir*), certainly not to the established science of history.[5] His was an insurrectional method. And, insofar as it was, his method merged into the great stream of the contemporary "insurrection of subjugated knowledges"—the "immense and proliferating criticizability of things, institutions, practices and discourses."[6] Previously, these knowledges had been subjugated in two distinct ways. They had been historically "buried or masked by functional coherences and formal systematizations," or they had been explicitly disqualified as nonconceptual, incoherent, or naive from the perspective of scientific knowledge.[7]

But if subjugated knowledges were in a state of rebellion, this rebellion was linked to a history of critique predating the "contemporary." In *The Government of Self and Others*, Foucault pegs the genealogy of criticizability to Immanuel Kant, not to his great philosophical works (*Critique of Pure Reason*, *Critique of Practical Reason*, et cetera) but to a series of essays that Kant published in a variety of public journals.[8] In particular Foucault focuses on Kant's "What Is Enlightenment?" and what he sees as a break within Kant's thinking. Kant no longer asks about historical origins and completions but speaks to "the question of the present as a philosophical event to which the philosopher who speaks of it belongs."[9] That is, he treats philosophy as a kind of "threshold." According to Foucault, one need go no further than the first sentence of the essay to see what was at stake conceptually in this way of doing philosophy. Foucault translates the first sentence of the German as, "Qu'est-ce que les Lumières? La sortie de l'homme de sa Minorité dont il est lui-même responsable" ("What is Enlightenment? The exit of man from his tutelage for which he is himself responsible").[10]

Let us pause here. Self-incurred, *lui-même responsable*: if Kant commanded his readers to have the courage to think on their own (*sapere aude*!), for this command to be effective, then, someone needed to hear Kant, perhaps first of all himself. But how did a philosopher hear the philosophical at the threshold of its emergence? And even if someone did hear him—where did that person come from and how does she survive her knowledge? After all, the insurrection of knowledge depends on a certain sort of person who is either ethically otherwise and seeks to persevere in being so or who seeks to be ethically otherwise and acts on and perseveres in this desire. Both of

these sorts of persons manifest a kind of willfulness in the face of dominant formations of knowledge—the will to know what exceeds, lies alongside, or refuses the functional coherences and formal systematizations that subjugate knowledge and the will to "oppose and struggle against the coercion of a unitary, formal, and scientific theoretical discourse."[11]

In other words, there is no clean separation between the discussion of subjugated knowledges in *"Society Must Be Defended"* and the discussion of ethical practices of the self in *The Government of Self and Others* and in the second two volumes of *The History of Sexuality*. If Foucault is to exhume genealogically the practices of the ethical self, he must consider this self as having been subjugated by the established sciences of history and consider the practice of exhumation as part of the ways that he makes these new knowledges capable of opposing given systematizations.[12] Done correctly, this exhumation does not present us a mummified ethnological subject but a *concerned* ethical subject (*souci de soi*), a subject who is in a state of constant ethical reflection (*souci éthique*) and practice (*travail éthique*) in relation to her own constant ethical becoming.[13] But for this exhumation to be done correctly, the grave robber must also be engaged in an ethical practice of self-transformation—an ascesis, an exercise of oneself in the activity of thought. If archaeology and genealogy are methods, they are methods that are fundamentally ethical and that must first be applied to oneself. Foucault, as Kant, must first liberate himself from the self-incurred tutelage of the established historical sciences. Thus, in *The Use of Pleasure*, Foucault answers his own question of why he decided to diverge from the original project he outlined in the first volume of *The History of Sexuality* by citing a specific sort of curiosity—a kind of curiosity that permits one to cast off oneself (*déprendre de soi-même*) and become bewildered (*égarement*). It is a curiosity always attempting to think and see otherwise (*autrement*) than the thinker and perceiver has thought and seen previously. It is an entitlement (*c'est son droit*) "to explore what might be changed" in thought "through the practice of a knowledge that is foreign to it."[14] In short, at its threshold of emergence, philosophy becomes ethics.

I do not wish to tarry over these points but rather to use them to uncover a somewhat different, perhaps obvious, but no less important issue that arises at this moment in Foucault's work. If desubjugating knowledge depends on a certain sort of person who is either ethically otherwise and seeks to persevere in being so or who seeks to be ethically otherwise and acts on this desire, from where does this person—or this will—come? The *use* of pleasure may depend on something like the *will* to truth (Kantian)

shaped by a certain formation of power (Nietzschean). But how on earth does anyone come to embody this entitlement, this *droit*, to willfulness? If we consider where this kind of willfulness, curiosity, and concern comes as a question about emergences, then we must ask about the agency that allows a person to emerge as such and then to exit (*sortie*) her minority status *at the threshold of this knowledge*.[15] Does the feeling of entitlement emerge from the kind of society in which this person, or these persons, lives; from something about the person(s) who lives in the society; or from the relationship between the person(s) and the society? Is it a special quality of a person in particular or of human beings in general? Is it a general entitlement that only some take up? Is it a species difference? A historical moment? A sort of man? Is it a passive or active process?

Foucault approaches these questions from different angles in different lectures and books. If the first volume of *The History of Sexuality* seems to be a general history of the present, the second two volumes of *The History of Sexuality* seem to be looking at how a generally available practice of ethical formation is adopted specifically by some people but not by others. In other words, if the tension in the first volume is the potential of bodies and their pleasures in the historical shift from an *ars erotica* to a *scientia sexualis*, the tension in the second two volumes arises from the fact that the practice of ethical formation might not be practiced. Pleasure as an ethical substance is generally available to all Greek men even if not normatively available to women, young boys, and slaves. And yet, only some Greek men engage in the ethical work of pleasure. Indeed, what makes pleasure an ethical concern (*souci éthique*) rather than an ethical culture, an ethical practice rather than an ethical norm, an ethical problematization rather than an ethical normalization, is that pleasure may or may not be treated ethically by a certain sort of person. It is not enough that pleasure *is* an ethical domain—it must be an ethical concern and more, an ethical practice.

Jean Grimshaw is, therefore, not incorrect when she argues that in *The Use of Pleasure* Foucault seems primarily interested in assuming rather than engaging the bias in Greek antiquity that only elite men could be ethical subjects.[16] But at the same time as he was researching classical Greek practices of pleasure, Foucault was lecturing on *The Government of Self and Others*. While *The Use of Pleasure* certainly focused on a specific kind of man, *The Government of Self and Others* focuses on the more general problem of critique—or, if you will, the general problem of the source of the insurrection of critique as a form of knowledge. And here Foucault's purview is much broader. He locates his study at the moment when the

practice of critique and governance undergoes a transformation: from the Christian pastoral in which "each individual, whatever his age or status, from the beginning to the end of his life and in his every action, had to be governed and had to let himself be governed, that is to say directed towards his salvation, by someone to whom he was bound by a total, meticulous, detailed relationship of obedience" to the rise of self-governance as a form that knits together state, economy, and subjectivity.[17] For Foucault, a new kind of problem, a new kind of concern, arises in this transition. The concern is not to be freed from governance *entirely* but to be governed differently—in a way other than one is. The concern is how we are governed, why, and by whom. And this he claimed was the proposal that Kant addressed in and to the public.

It is not merely the content of what Kant published in the public that interests Foucault, but the public as such—as a kind of relationship between writer and addressee, as a kind of truth telling (*dire vrai*) that governs the constitution of the self and the other at the same time.[18] But if we are to say that this relationship we describe as "the public" is the space, or one of the spaces, in which a kind of ethical truth telling can occur, we immediately hit a roadblock. Man's exit (*la sortie de l'homme*) from his minority position depends on what looks like a tautology: the new state of Enlightenment depends on a sort of person who is capable of hearing, feeling addressed, and acting on the command to Enlightenment; but the sort of person who can exit (*sortie*) depends on a state that capacitates and produces this sort of person. The command, the maxim, is addressed to someone or something—to humans as a species or to a species capacity—but this someone cannot preexist the command since, if he did, he would not have to be commanded.[19] At this point we begin to understand why Foucault says that it is of decisive importance that Kant published "What Is Enlightenment?" in the public sphere of letters, with its particular relationship between a writer (and a particular kind of writer, a qualified writer, a *savant*) and a reader. Following Michael Warner, a public is exactly the kind of tautological space that would interest Foucault. For Warner, a public does not exist prior to its constitution. It comes into being within a specific kind of discursive reflexivity, circulation, and temporality and a specific kind of stranger sociality. As Warner puts it, publics, through their poetic function, are world making; they performatively constitute the subject of address and action. And it is exactly this commitment to world making, through a form of textual circulation, that Foucault thought was so critical about Kant's practice of public review.[20]

But this form of addressivity—this command and prescription; this speaking the truth (*dire vrai*, *parrhesia*)—is given to oneself at the same time that it is given to others. And insofar as only some feel addressed, desire this address, and actively respond to this address, this address divides the social field at the same time that it constitutes it. It carves the social field in a specific way in its general command. And it carves the field because while it might be issued as a general problem, until everyone hears the call—and, indeed, the call has receded so firmly into the background of everyday life that it has become banal—only a minority of people will hear it and make use of it, just as only a minority of Greeks used the work of pleasure to become ethical subjects. This means that the sort of person who exits her minority status is the sort of person who is willing to put herself in danger and at risk no matter that no one else seems willing to do so. Nor is the risk at stake simply of the carnal conditions of the truth teller's life. It is a broader risk that lies at the intersection of subject, referent, and world.

Further, because the actual temporality of performative public world making is not quite the temporality as conceived in the philosophical account of the performative, the truth teller must be willing to put herself at risk before she is able to create a new world in which she can securely exist. The truth one speaks—the truth that divides the social field—is not the truth understood as a semantically extractible proposition to which one pledges allegiance as if to the flag. Nor is it understandable in terms of the approach that John L. Austin and Émile Benveniste took, in their different ways, to the performative utterance (*l'énoncé performatif*) insofar as the performative utterance is understood to constitute miraculously and immediately the conditions of its reference.[21] The kind of truth telling that interests Foucault is a kind of practice that opens the field of truth and in the process exposes the truth and the subject to a number of permutations whose effects the subject cannot yet know.[22] In other words, this way of producing the self does not produce a context or content already authorized— such as, when the president of the meeting opens the meeting and in so doing calls forth the social arrangement called "a meeting" and reproduces the social orders that determine that "meetings" will continue to be made more or less in the same way.[23] No. The kind of performative that interests Foucault opens the very orders that provide the conditions on which performativity as such depends, leaving subjectivity, referentiality, and world dangling.

It is this broader system of risk that Foucault sees at stake in moments of ethical concern, of the insurrection of subjugated knowledges, and of

speaking truth (*dire vrai*, *parrhesia*), and it is from this risk that the method underlying his epistemological projects emerges. And yet one is left asking, what are the conditions that produce this person? This risk taker? This truth teller?

Exhaustion

In the decisive and enigmatic last chapter of *Homo Sacer*, Giorgio Agamben turns to a "brief series of 'lives'" that he believes exemplify a decisive moment in the biopolitical relationship between *zoē* and *bíos*.[24] Into this series he casts the classical Roman priest *Flamen Diale*; the bandit, the *Friedlos*; the führer and the *Muselmann*; the biochemist Allan Wilson; and the comatose American Karen Quinlan. Agamben believes that these figures inhabit a topological location (a threshold) and embody a discursive force (an articulation) in such a way that they shed light on the conditions of the insurrection of subjugated knowledges and the emergence of a new political thought. But in restricting himself to an ontology of the space of radical potentiality, how has Agamben ethically abandoned life to an untheorized exhaustion?

As we know, Foucault's reading of race in *"Society Must Be Defended"* and the body and its pleasures in the latter sections of the first volume of *The History of Sexuality* animated Agamben's thinking about biopolitics. The purpose of *Homo Sacer* was both to challenge Foucault's historiography of biopolitics and to answer the question of where a political otherwise might emerge within the given arrangements of biopower. Agamben's primary challenge to Foucault's genealogies of biopolitics pivots on tracing the tendrils of biopolitics back into the ancient division of *bíos* and *zoē*. And tendrils they are, winding and insinuating themselves into existing formations according to what they can grasp, perhaps at first most delicately but then with a tenacity that would seem to defy their botany. Agamben argues that, at the end of the first volume of *The History of Sexuality*, Foucault too quickly minimizes the ways in which "the body" is "always already caught in a deployment of power" (*HS*, 187). A deeper genealogy shows how sovereign power creates, is created by, and adjudicates the division of *zoē* and *bíos* and so makes hay of Foucault's claims about an alternative economy of power that can be found in bodies and their pleasures. The body—for Agamben, *zoē*, understood as "the simple fact of living common to all living beings"—was already absorbed into, in its distinction from, *bíos*, understood as a form of that living proper to an individual or group. The fun-

damental activity of sovereign power is to produce bare life—the unde-cidability between *zoē* and *bíos*—an "originary political element" and as a means of constituting its difference (ibid., 181). Thus one cannot go to the presocial, precultural, or prehistoric conditions of human life in order to challenge sovereign power. This body, this radically reduced life, is already saturated by sovereign power.

Agamben proposes an equally radical rethinking of the sources of a political otherwise. If one is to locate the source of a new political thought—the sources of the kind of speaking truth (*dire vrai*) that interested Fou-cault—then one cannot choose between *zoē* and *bíos*. Instead, according to Agamben, one needs to work—to intensify—the topological space of, and spacing between, *bíos* and *zoē* in which sovereign power constitutes itself. A new political thought will never be found outside—or on one side or another of—the economy of *zoē* and *bíos* but only in an intensification of their economy (ibid., 186–88). And if we wish to know what this inten-sification looks like as a surface of emergence, then we should study this series of lives. They are conditions in which "truth" is spoken as a surface of emergence.

From one perspective, these lives seem to exemplify the two sorts of persons that interested Foucault: the person who finds herself to be ethi-cally otherwise and seeks to persevere in being so, and the person who seeks to be ethically otherwise and acts on and perseveres in this desire. We might, for the moment, distinguish between these two sorts of persons as structurally and volitionally otherwise, the passive and the active. Allan Wil-son and Hitler would seem to represent active social forces, though work-ing toward very different ends. Quinlan and the *Muselmann* would seem to be passive subjects of powers larger than, or outside, themselves. *Flamen Diale* and the *Friedlos* both seem to be outside of the law, although their sources and positions of exception are distinct. But though structurally and volitionally otherwise, all these lives seem to hear—or have been given—the right of critique. In terms of the right to critique (*c'est son droit*), Wilson is especially interesting in light of Foucault's reflection of the inseparability of subjugated knowledges and practices of the self. If he were to know what the effects of a set of biochemical maneuvers would be on a body that is not yet authorized to experience them, then he must first give himself the right to apply these maneuvers to himself.

But significant difference obtains between the lives Agamben dis-cusses and the two sorts of persons I just described—the structural and the volitional person. And this is true even if we deconstruct the difference

between the structural and volitional otherwise. After all both of these "persons" strive to persevere in being ethically otherwise, the one after finding herself to be otherwise and the other before. Many readers will quickly collapse this kind of willfulness into agency or resistance. And it is true that something like agency and resistance appears to be internal to both persons. But it is not *their* agency or resistance that provides an ontology of political potentiality (ibid., 187). The potentiality of these spaces is topologically independent of any effort of perseverance—or any kind of effort of perseverance we would recognize as subjective (subjective indwelling) agency or resistance. After all, it would be a serious conceptual stretch to say that Quinlan perseveres in being ethically or politically otherwise. Or the *Muselmann*. Or the neomort waiting for her organs to be transplanted. But it is exactly in this ontotheoretical spacing that political questions begin to emerge: How do new forms of social life maintain the force of existing in specific social spacings of life? How do they endure the effort it takes to strive to persevere?

Indeed, although in debt to Baruch Spinoza, Agamben seems more interested in the exhausted nature of these spaces rather than in the "striving" of things within them, using the term *versata*, translated as "exhausted," to capture the process within them.[25] What he means by a form of life being "poured into" or "reduced to" bare life and by *bíos* becoming its own *zoē* is not clear, although more than one author has characterized the persons found in these exhausted spaces as constituting a kind of living dead.[26] In the last few sentences of the book, Agamben gestures to what he *might* mean by evoking Martin Heidegger's famous argument that essence lies in existence as an explicit analogy to *bíos* and *zoē*.[27] To understand what is at stake in this analogy, we must first remember that Heidegger is famously reversing the relationship between essence and existence. Essence doesn't manifest existence; existence manifests essence. But when one reverses the relationship between the metaphysical concepts, the concepts themselves shift. Essence doesn't lie in existence as water lies in, or is poured into, a cup, the determinate metaphor for how essence was thought to shape and contain existence. This reversal does not simply reverse container and contained. To make existence a container would be to project the transcendental abstraction of essence onto existence. Existence is no more an abstraction than essence; it is a world. And thus with *zoē* and *bíos*. *Zoē* may precede *bíos*. But because the potential existences (worlds) of this *zoē* are yet to be known, the qualified subjects who may emerge and their political relations

are also yet to be known. It is out of this radically reduced (exhausted) space that the coming community will emerge as a "biopolitical body that is bare life" (*HS*, 188). And it is for this reason that in his reflections on Gilles Deleuze's "Immanence: A Life," Agamben calls for the development of a coherent ontology of potentiality (*dynamis*) that would upend the primacy of actuality (*energeia*).[28]

But the potential community that shows itself in these spaces reduplicates the problem of accounting for how anyone comes to embody the entitlement, the *droit*, to the willfulness necessary for a new political thought. After all, the potential otherwise, the new political thought, and the coming community are not outside these radical reductions of *bíos* in *zoē*. They are inside it as a kind of cascading series of potential actions that border on Zeno's paradox of motion. How does potentiality reach an actual end before all those who embody (inhabit) these exhausted spaces, Karen Quinlan, the Muselmann, and the neomort, are themselves exhausted? Agamben describes this paradox but does not address it. In "Potentiality," Agamben begins with a deceptively simple question about the meaning of the word *can* (*potere*). "What do I mean when I say: 'I can, I cannot'?"[29] Or when we say, she could or could not, might or might not, be able to act in some way. To point to what is at stake in this deceptively simple question, Agamben provides readers with another in his series of biographical vignettes. He tells the story of the Soviet poet Anna Akhmatova who, while standing in line outside the Leningrad prison hoping to hear news about her imprisoned son, is asked by another woman, "Can you speak of this?" And by this we assume this unnamed woman was asking Akhmatova whether she could poetically convey this particular line and this particular jail and her particular son in such a way that a new political thought would emerge that extinguished the condition of all these lines and jails, liberating their sons. "Akhmatova was silent for a moment and then, without knowing how or why, found an answer to the question. 'Yes,' she said, 'I can.'"[30] But if this response, "I can," marks "the hardest and bitterest experience possible," it is because another moment stands after the question, the silence, and the response. This moment, this interval, is as difficult to understand sociologically as it is philosophically. It is the difference that can yawn between the statement, "I can," and the description, "I did." In the actual world, although all might have the capacity, the capability, some people do not answer. Some say, I cannot. Some say, I can. Some do. Some don't. *It is at the moments between these that potential lies.* And we cannot say

why one person or another, one group or another, at this moment or that, makes it to the end of the arrow's aim. What might the exhausted nature of these spaces have to do with the way we answer the question?

This is hardly Agamben's problem alone. Take the Italian philosopher Roberto Esposito whose attempt to establish a positive biopolitics is increasingly well known in the English reading world.[31] Esposito argues that if Foucault too quickly excluded the body and its pleasures from the reach of the biopolitical, Agamben too quickly reduced all forms of biopower to a negative form of biopolitics. Esposito also turns to Heidegger in order to make a space between negative entanglements of the biological and the political and a potential positive biopolitics. To this end Esposito turns to Heidegger's discussion of *Dasein* (the facticity of life), comparing it to the "biocracy" of German National Socialism.[32] Esposito argues that the totality of beings can become thematized as objects of scientific investigation (Heidegger gives as examples history, nature, space, life, human being, language). The life that Heidegger conceptualized in *Being and Time* is not reducible to any specific science of knowledge.[33] To be sure, the fundamental structures of these thematized enclosures are rooted in prescientific experience and interpretation. But the most fundamental truths that emerge in these thematizations of particular domains of being are not internal to the domain but can be found in the questions that emerge about the basic constitution of these domains.[34] Foucault's critique of science (*savoir*) and his call for an insurrection of knowledge would build at the intersection between Heidegger's and Georges Canguilhem's approaches. In any case, Heidegger's life is not co-extensive with the biological view of life because whereas biology delimits particular areas of knowledge, it does not "unconceal" it.[35] Thus for Esposito, the facticity of life is irreducible to any science or politics of life, and because of this, Heidegger's approach to life was the only thought to emerge in the twentieth century "able to support the philosophical confrontation with biopolitics."[36] Rather than Heidegger's thought being indistinguishable from the Third Reich's radical project of biological extermination (biocracy) as some like Richard Wolin have argued, it is "diametrically opposed to it."[37]

As opposed to the negative biopolitics of biocracy, Esposito proposes a positive biopolitics based on "the immanent norm."[38] This immanent norm seeks "neither a fundamental norm from which all the other norms would derive as consequence can exist nor a normative criterion upon which exclusionary measures vis-à-vis those deemed abnormal be stabilized."[39] Instead, it seeks to map "the never-defined result of the compari-

son and conflict between individual norms that are measured according to the different power that keeps them alive, without ever losing the measure of their reciprocal relationship."[40] Here we can hear Spinoza, who of course we have been hearing all along. For it is Spinoza who offers the most profound reversal of the negative form of biopolitics exemplified in the biocracy of the Third Reich. While the Third Reich "measures the right to life or the obligation to die in relation to the position occupied with respect to the biological caesura constituted by the norm, Spinoza makes the norm the principle of unlimited equivalence for every single form of life."[41] All things that exist do so as a finite attribute or as modes of infinite substance (god/nature) and as such not only do they endeavor to persevere in being, they have the right (*droit*) to do so.[42]

Effort

It was exactly this kind of problem that focused the thinking of the American pragmatists William James and Charles Sanders Peirce. In their work, mind was not a cognitive phenomenon based on a set of principles that could be abstracted out of its experiential history, nor was it best understood through a set of propositionally grounded moral or natural rules and principles. Minds qua minds, as well as particular minds and their mental contents, were the result of an embodied history of effort and exhaustion, striving and succeeding, striving and failing, and doing so in a socially differentiated world. These mental histories took place in what James liked to call the "unfinished world," which "*has* a future, and is yet uncompleted."[43] Human history is an ongoing moral experiment in which the moral philosopher participates but cannot surmount and cannot even necessarily best represent or understand. In other words, the mind is not merely radically empirical and plural, so is the world—mind and world coemerge in their mutual unfinished potentiality and thus also do new and subjugated knowledge-truths. As a result mind, world, and truth are radically open questions whose answer takes us back into the world. If one wishes to know from where dominant and subjugated knowledge and truth emerge, one must turn away from "abstraction and insufficiency, from verbal solutions, from bad a priori reasons, from fixed principles, closed systems, and pretended absolutes and origins" and turn toward "concreteness and adequacy, towards facts, towards action, and towards power."[44] Thus rather than doctrine, propositional truth, or certainty, Williams endlessly *tried things out*. Some seemed to make a difference in the world, such as the emergence of

Alcoholics Anonymous from his metapsychology; some did not, such as spirit mediumship, at least not yet.[45]

While, for both James and Peirce, mind was an effect of a history of effort in energizing and enervating environments, their approaches differed. James read Spinoza in 1888 as he was in the final push to finish his massive *The Principles of Psychology*. In the condensed 1892 version, *Psychology (Briefer Course)*, James published a chapter, "Will," in which he outlined the relationship between mind and effort.[46] He notes in the first sentence that desire, wish, and will are usually considered *states* of mind. Mind is usually seen as a kind of substance that can be qualified with attributes, states, and qualities. To counter this dominant view, James zeroes in on will, noting that the end of willful intention seems to be action—a movement of the body or thought. And this for James is key: willful action, as opposed to automatic and reflex action, is the outcome of intentional thought. But if willful action is the outcome of intentional thought, thought (ideas) is the outcome of will understood as an "effort of attention."[47] By effort of attention, he means the struggle to stay focused, to keep one idea at the front and center in a commodious field of actual and immanent ideas. It is through an effort of attention that thoughts emerge and come to be lodged stably in the mind. Indeed, effort and will become, for James, the preconditions of all mental phenomena and concepts. James hopes that what might appear to be a tautology will do something in our ways of thinking and thus our being in the world. Sergio Franzese, who carried on the long Italian interest in James's pragmatism, argued that to understand James, to move beyond apology for his inconsistencies and summary dismissals of his project, one must understand that at the heart of his project lay a philosophy of force as "the very texture of life."[48] As Franzese puts it, James seeks an ethics *of* energy by which he means "an ethics that organizes energy, as well as an ethics that stems out of energy." This ethics of energy is the basis for the achievement of personal and aesthetic ideals.[49] What wonder that an American reviewer of Franzese's work notes the resonances between James's thinking about effort and energy and Foucault's about ascesis.[50]

When mind is understood as an effect of an effort of attention, fundamental terms change their meaning (including the meaning of meaning), and some hoary distinctions become difficult to maintain. Even the distinction between intentional and unintentional thought loses its grip, as *intention* is itself an effect of a series of efforts of attention to cultivate a thought that will provide the background of thought and action. In other words, effort is the precondition of ideas, action, and subjectivity (mind, practice,

and personhood) and thus provides the conditions for reflexive and instinctual action. And because mind and world are never finalized, this will/effort is a life work, a *travail éthique* in Foucault's terms. James concludes "Will" with a section on the ethics of effort. There he juxtaposes the standards of strength, intelligence, and wealth that seem to be "but externals which we *carry*" to "the sense of the amount of effort which we can put forth," which "seems to belong to an altogether different realm, as if it were the substantive thing which we *are*."[51] James is at his most dramatic here: "Some of the tests we meet by actions that are easy, and some of the questions we answer in articulated words. But the deepest question that is ever asked admits of no reply but the dumb turning of the will and tightening of our heartstrings as we say, '*Yes, I will even have it so!*'"[52] James's command, like Kant's and Akhmatova's, was politically formulated and addressed to a public. He lectured to and wrote for a variety of publics, foregrounding his deep political opposition to American imperialism and commitment to economic justice. For James, there was no separation between his philosophical psychology and these political and economic concerns. What wonder that the first essay in *Pragmatism* culminates with an account of the corrosive effects of structural poverty on actually living human beings? The way in which these actually existing worlds exist makes a mockery of "a whole host of guileless thoroughfed thinkers" who are busy explaining away "evil and pain"; the socially organized enervating condition of millions of American workers *is* reality.[53]

Although his way of thinking is lodged in a more systematic, one might say obsessive, semiotics, Peirce would likewise counterintuitively coordinate what he saw as the highest form of mental activity, intellectual concepts, with what could be perceived as the most brutal aspect of human being, habit. Lest readers become lost in the Peircean maze, let me briefly mention only his late essay, "Pragmatism," written in 1907 and rejected by the *Nation* and the *Atlantic Monthly* in the same year that James published *Pragmatism*. Peirce begins "Pragmatism" by differentiating his approach from James's. Peirce claims to limit himself to describing "a method of ascertaining the meanings, not of all ideas" but only "intellectual concepts"—ideas structured in such a way that "arguments concerning objective fact" might "hinge."[54] With this limitation in place, Peirce walks readers through his general semiotics, specifically his understanding of the triadic nature of the sign; the components of the sign, the object, the sign, and the interpretant; and the three kinds of interpretant, the emotional, energetic, and logical interpretant. Briefly, for Peirce a sign is some-

thing that stands to somebody (interpreter) in some respect or capacity to something (object). In other words, the object and interpretant are merely two correlates of the sign, "the one being antecedent, the other consequent of the sign" ("Pragmatism," 410). But objects and interpretants are themselves bundles of signs. Specific bundlings are the result of a phenomenologically specific history whereby signs and interpretants are associated (correlative) with objects. But we must be careful here. To be sure, Peirce remains committed to something like what Sandra Harding, elaborating the work of Donna Haraway, has called "strong objectivity."[55] And so he differentiates between the immediate object, "the idea which the sign is built upon," and the real object, "that real thing or circumstance upon which that idea is founded, as on bedrock" ("Pragmatism," 407). But this real thing, as if bedrock, is hardly real in a way most people would understand. For it is enough to know that Peirce thought the thingness of things as well as the attributes of a thing have histories—they are like object-effects—and these histories affect and are affected by the kinds of signs available in a person's mind (interpretants) at any given time. And while all sign activity does something, the logical interpretant (which Peirce makes equivalent to the intellectual concept) modifies consciousness (ibid., 411). This modification of consciousness is critical for Peirce and James. Thought does something; it does not merely represent something. As James concludes, quoting an early essay of Peirce's, the meaning of a thought is what difference it would make in the world (ibid., 18).[56] Paul de Man would subsequently make this a center of his approach to deconstruction as building, noting, "The interpretation of the sign is not, for Peirce, a meaning but another sign; it is a reading, not a decodage, and this reading has, in its turn, to be interpreted into another sign, and so on *ad infinitum*."[57] But these figural orders are not built outside the histories of reading that precede them. And here is the impossible heart of Peirce's reading of the logical interpretant—the intellectual concept, truth telling, and truth knowing.

Peirce's semiotic architecture seems to be going swimmingly until he begins stitching together the components of the sign he has just taken apart, in other words, when he tries to recombine the sign, object, and interpretant. Because Peirce believes that the sign coordinates object and interpretant—a semiotic hinge between the world and the mind, with the world and mind composed of a history of previous hinges—he believes that each kind of interpretant should have a corresponding object ("each to the other"; "Pragmatism," 410). And he does in fact find a correspondence between the "immediate object and emotional interpretant" insofar

as both are "apprehensions, or are 'subjective'" and both "appertain to all signs without exception." He then finds that the "real object and the energetic interpretant also correspond, both being real facts and things." But to Peirce's great surprise, he finds "the logical interpretant does not correspond with any kind of object" (ibid.). What to make of this? How to solve such a glaring inconsistency of thought? Peirce writes, "This defect of correspondence between object and interpretant must be rooted in the essential difference there is between the nature of an object and that of an interpretant; which difference is that the former antecedes, while the latter succeeds the sign. The logical interpretant must therefore be in a relatively future tense" (ibid.). Our highest intellectual thoughts lie in the future. But they are not in a future that is outside the world as it is. Nor are they in a future already defined. They are not a future that is somewhere or sometime else, nor a future that has already happened. Intellectual concepts and the truths they support are a habit of mind—a tendency of the mind. Habits are a "tendency" to behave in a similar way under similar conditions produced by the combination of muscular and nonmuscular effort on the fancies and the percepts not merely now but as an orientation—a kind of future making unless serious effort is made to reorient the fancies and the percepts (ibid., 413). The object corresponding to the logical interpretant is the "would-acts" of "habitual behavior."[58] As linguistic anthropologist Michael Silverstein would argue, habitual behavior becomes the metafigural force that stipulates and entails the direction of the figural unfolding noted by de Man.[59] And these habitual behaviors are not limited to human understanding. Peirce saw matter itself—such fundamental laws of nature like gravity—to be the result of a sort of conceptual habit he was describing. Brian Massumi calls them "habits of mass."[60]

In short, all concepts, all truths, and all acts of truth telling are radically immanent and radically material habits governed by the figural and metafigural formations at hand at any given time. But like James, Peirce saw the material world—human and otherwise—as unfinished. If the highest form of human thought has as its ground and object habitual behavior, this habitual behavior can be modified under the right conditions. What are these conditions? Well, something that sounds much like James's effort of attention ("Pragmatism," 413). In a masterful explosion of hope, Peirce claims, "if each reiteration be accompanied by a peculiar strong effort," habits can be changed much like "issuing a command to one's future self" (ibid.). We see at the heart of one of Peirce's most difficult essays a political project that sounds much like Foucault's obstinate curiosity. The habits of

truth and the domination of conceptual space by the given orders of sys-
tematized scientific knowledge can be changed by persons who find them-
selves speaking to their future selves and persevere in doing so, and who
seek to speak to their future selves and persevere in trying. Put differently,
Peirce, like James, saw the dislodging of a specific coordination between
specific logical interpretants and specific habits as demanding a new kind
of focused effort that all persons might be capable of but very few actually
engaged.[61] It was true in general that an effort of attention might bend the
very material fabric of the world, but it was equally true that very few people
were willing to do so. Instead most persons demanding a new self (*sapere
aude*!) through a specific kind of speaking truth (*dire vrai*) either find them-
selves different and will to become the same, or never confront the effort
it takes to recoordinate the habits of mind. Or they find it too exhaust-
ing. Or they read their difference as a *sign* that they are behaving, believ-
ing, and desiring wrongly. And lest we think James believed only philoso-
phers like he and Peirce had the intellectual qualifications to be otherwise,
James notes, "It is the personal experience of those most qualified in all our
circle of knowledge to *have* experience, to tell us *what is*."[62] These persons
were not philosophers but those who lived in the kinds of exhausted con-
ditions Agamben describes. And no wonder: James and Peirce also remind
us of the risk that Foucault saw in this kind of truth telling—the kind that
seeks to dislodge, to fortify doubt, to refuse given systematizations of logi-
cal interpretants (*savoir*). Everything is at stake—one should not change
the tendencies of gravity and expect to remain the same. And if you wish to
remain as an object affected by gravity, then what?

So what accounts for this differential between individuals who "may
be equally capable of performing a task without being equally able to per-
form it"?[63] James and Peirce were deeply influenced by post-Darwinian
ideas about the diversification of life and so would believe that humans
were by nature diverse in their capabilities and abilities. If some persons
are strong willed and others are not, the conditions of this differential must
come from the world of experience and the worlds as differentially struc-
tured experiences. But these differential capabilities and abilities do not
reside in people as essences. They lie within them as potentials that the
actual world can assess and treat in different ways. And so James, in par-
ticular, continually referred back to the world as it was materially organized
and distributed as energizing and enervating specific social projects, social
thoughts, and social experiments. The reason why many have the capability
for obstinate curiosity, and yet the "few may be called to bear its burdens"

and fewer able to bear them, is that many people are crushed by the mere task of surviving given organizations of power.[64] They can or cannot hear and bear the burden, not because they have acquired the proper ontology of potentiality, but because they have somehow solved the difference between being in the space of radical potential where the actual and possible reach exhaustion and the practices of surviving the exhaustion of these spaces.[65] Some do. Some don't. James had many examples of each in his family. And yet, rather than trying to provide the final answer to why this particular person did or did not, James insists that thought has a profound limit in accounting for that world in its specificity. Why one person kills himself, his wife, and his children but another person starts a movement for social justice cannot be accounted for in the specific, even though James claims this specificity is all most people really care about or really want a political theory to account for. Why her, him, me, us? Why his specific world as it appears to me? One cannot answer this question; one can only do something about it.

Conclusion

I began this essay reflecting on the deep conversation that exists between Foucault's reflections on power and those on ethics. At the crux of his reflections on power and on ethics is a set of simple if stubborn questions. What are the sources for speaking truth (*dire vrai, parrhesia*)? Given that this form of truth telling is generally available, why do only some take it up? And how, given that this form of truth telling is a threshold experience, do those who speak the truth—or are, structurally, the truth—endure the systemic risk of subjectivity, referentiality, and worldliness that characterizes this threshold? These questions are intensified when we move through contemporary thought on biopolitics and biopower and classical thought in American pragmatism. Agamben might critique Foucault for locating the source of a truth telling in pleasure, arguing that pleasure and the body are already within the divisions of *bíos* and *zoē* on which biopolitics pivots. But he leaves dangerously unexplored the problem of the persistence—of the effort of endurance—of those who speak truth (or topologically figure the location of this kind of truth). And whereas the American pragmatists James and Peirce foreground the problem of the effort of the otherwise, James in particular puts a clear limit on how we might answer the question: why does this person strive to remain otherwise—to speak truth at the threshold of being? Why did Akhmatova write—not why was she capable of

writing, but why did *she*, as opposed to others who also were capable, move from the possible to the actual? All our political thought rests on answering this question, and yet James says it is the question we cannot answer.

Rather than despair, we might give ourselves over to the curious symmetry between Foucault and James as they ponder not what this new thought represents but what it *does*. For James and Foucault, acknowledging the limits of what a kind of thinking can account for opens our thought to something broader than *accounting*. It breaks the clerical hold of thought and refashions it as an experiment on the self in the world. It sees thought as an experiment in and against power, a method of *trying things out* as a manner of capacitating thresholds.

Notes

1   Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, vol. 2, *The Use of Pleasure*, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Vintage, 1990), 8.

2   For a more robust discussion of late liberalism, see Elizabeth A. Povinelli, *The Economies of Abandonment: Social Belonging and Endurance in Late Liberalism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011).

3   Michel Foucault, *"Society Must Be Defended": Lectures at the Collège de France, 1975–1976*, ed. Mauro Bertani and Alessandro Fontana, trans. David Macey (New York: Picador, 2003), 13.

4   Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*; and Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, vol. 3, *The Care of the Self*, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Vintage, 1990). See, for instance, Paul Veyne, "The Final Foucault and His Ethics," trans. Catherine Porter and Arnold J. Davidson, *Critical Inquiry* 20, no. 1 (1993): 1–9.

5   See also Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge and the Discourse on Language*, trans. A. M. Sheridan Smith (New York: Pantheon, 1972), especially, 3–17.

6   Foucault, *"Society Must Be Defended,"* 6–7.

7   Ibid., 8.

8   Returning to his earlier thinking about Kant's anthropology, see Michel Foucault, *Introduction to Kant's Anthropology* (New York: Semiotext(e), 2008).

9   Michel Foucault, *The Government of Self and Others: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1982–1983*, trans. Graham Burchell (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 12.

10 Michel Foucault, *Le gouvernement de soi et des autres: Cours au Collège de France, 1982–1983* (Paris: Gallimard Seuil, 2008), 25.

11 Foucault, *"Society Must Be Defended,"* 10.

12 Ibid.

13 *Souci de soi* is usually translated as "care of the self," but given the contemporary spatification of *care*, *concern* seems more appropriate. Michel Foucault, introduction to *Histoire de la sexualité II, L'usage des plaisirs* (Paris: Gallimard Seuil, 1984).

14 Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, 9. French terms from Foucault, introduction to *Histoire de la sexualité II*.

15   The French reads, "Qu'est-ce que c'est que cet homme, qu'est-ce que cet agent de la sortie qu'est l'homme? s'agit-il bien d'un agent de la sortie?" Foucault, *Le gouvernement de soi et des autres*, 27.

16   Jean Grimshaw, "Practices of Freedom," in *Up against Foucault*, ed. Caroline Ramaza-noglu (New York: Routledge, 1993), 51–72.

17   Michel Foucault, "What Is Critique?" in *The Politics of Truth*, ed. Sylvère Lotringer (New York: Semiotext(e), 2007), 41–82, 43. See also Judith Butler, "What Is Critique? An Essay on Foucault's Virtue," in *The Judith Butler Reader*, ed. Sara Salih (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2004), 302–22.

18   Foucault's interest in this kind of speaking would be an interesting place to rethink the debate between Foucault and Habermas. See Jürgen Habermas, "Taking Aim at the Heart of the Present," in *Foucault: A Critical Reader*, ed. David Hoy (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986), 103–8; and Samantha Ashenden and David Owen, "Introduction: Foucault, Habermas and the Politics of Critique," in *Foucault contra Habermas: Recasting the Dialogue between Genealogy and Critical Theory*, ed. Samantha Ashenden and David Owen (London: Sage, 1999), 1–20.

19   Foucault, *Le gouvernement de soi*, 27.

20   Ibid., 9–10. See also Michael Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics* (New York: Zone, 2005).

21   See also Foucault, *Archaeology of Knowledge*.

22   Foucault, *Le gouvernement de soi*, 60.

23   In a series of essays, linguistic anthropologist Michael Silverstein has differentiated between two irreconcilable forces in what is typically called *performativity*, namely, presupposition and entailment. The difference between these two opens all speech acts to the risk of failure. See Michael Silverstein, "Shifters, Linguistic Categories, and Cultural Description," in *Meaning in Anthropology*, ed. K. Basso and H. A. Selby (Albuquerque: School of American Research, University of New Mexico Press, 1976), 11–55; and Michael Silverstein, "Metapragmatic Discourse and Metapragmatic Function," in *Reflexive Language: Reported Speech and Metapragmatics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 33–58. See also Elizabeth A. Povinelli, "Sexuality at Risk: Psychoanalysis (Meta)pragmatically," in *Homosexuality and Psychoanalysis*, ed. Tim Dean and Christopher Lane (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 387–411.

24   Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998), 186 and 181; hereafter cited parenthetically by page number as *HS*.

25   "Occorrerà, piuttosto, fare dello stesso corpo biopolitico, della nuda vita stessa il luogo in cui si costituisce e s'insedia una forma di vita tutta versata nella nuda vita, un *bíos* che è solo la sua *zoē*" is translated as "The biopolitical body that is bare life must itself . . . be transformed into the site for the constitution and installation of a form of life that is wholly exhausted in bare life and a *bíos* that is only its own *zoē*" (*HS*, 188). Translation into Italian provided by Michele Spano.

26   Andrew Norris, "Giorgio Agamben and the Politics of the Living Dead," *Diacritics* 30, no. 4 (2000): 38–58.

27   "Today *bíos* lies in *zoē* exactly as essence, in the Heideggerian definition of Dasein, lies (*liegt*) in existence" (*HS*, 188).

28   Giorgio Agamben, "Absolute Immanence," in *Potentialities: Collected Essays in Philosophy*, ed. and trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2000), 220–39.

29   Giorgio Agamben, "Potentiality," in *Potentialities*, 177–84, 177.

30   Ibid.

31   See Roberto Esposito, *Bios, Biopolitics and Philosophy*, trans. Timothy Campbell (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 2008).

32   Ibid., 113.

33   Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. Joan Stambaugh (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996), 7–10.

34   Ibid., 7–8.

35   For the concept of unconcealment in Heidegger's work, see Mark A. Wrathall, *Heidegger and Unconcealment: Truth, Language, and History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

36   Esposito, *Bios*, 152.

37   Ibid., 153; and Richard Wolin, *Heidegger's Children: Hannah Arendt, Karl Löwith, Hans Jonas, and Herbert Marcuse* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001).

38   Timothy Campbell, "Bios, Immunity, Life: The Thought of Roberto Esposito," *Diacritics* 36, no. 2 (2006): 2–22.

39   Esposito, *Bios*, 187.

40   Ibid.

41   Ibid., 186. See also Baruch Spinoza, *Ethics*, ed. and trans. G. H. R. Parkinson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 94.

42   Spinoza, *Ethics*, 171.

43   William James, *Pragmatism* (New York: Dover, 1995), 39.

44   Ibid., 20.

45   Robert Richardson, *William James: In the Maelstrom of American Modernism* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2006).

46   Ibid., 287, 288.

47   William James, "Will," in *The Writings of William James: A Comprehensive Edition*, ed. John J. McDermott (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), 684–716, 709.

48   Sergio Franzese, *The Ethics of Energy: William James's Moral Philosophy in Focus* (Piscataway, NJ: Transaction Books, 2008), 5.

49   Ibid., 4.

50   Kenneth W. Stikkers, "The Ethics of Energy: William James's Moral Philosophy in Focus," *Notre Dame Philosophical Reviews*, May 3, 2009, n.p. See also Brian Massumi, *Parables of the Virtual: Movement, Affect, Sensation* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002); and Povinelli, "Sexuality at Risk."

51   James, "Will," 715.

52   Ibid.

53   William James, "The Present Dilemma in Philosophy," in *Writings 1902–1910* (New York: Penguin, 1987), 499.

54   Charles Sanders Peirce, "Pragmatism," in *The Essential Peirce*, vol. 2, *Selected Philosophical Writings, 1893–1913*, ed. Peirce Edition Project (Indianapolis: University of Indiana Press, 1998), 398–433, 401; hereafter cited parenthetically by page number as "Pragmatism."

55 "Research is socially situated, and it can be more objectively conducted without aiming for or claiming to be value-free. The requirements for achieving strong objectivity permit one to abandon notions of perfect, mirrorlike representations of the world, the self as a defended fortress, and the 'truly scientific' as disinterested with regard to morals and politics, yet still apply rational standards to sorting less from more partial and distorted belief. Indeed, my argument is that these standards are more rational and more effective at producing maximally objective results than the ones associated with what I have called weak objectivity." Sandra Harding, *Whose Science? Whose Knowledge?* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991), 159.

56 James is referring to Charles Sanders Peirce, "How to Make Our Ideas Clear," in *The Essential Peirce*, vol. 1, *Selected Philosophical Writings, 1867–1893*, ed. Peirce Edition Project (Indianapolis: University of Indiana Press, 1992), 124–41.

57 Paul de Man, "Semiology and Rhetoric," in *Allegories of Reading: Figural Language in Rousseau, Nietzsche, Rilke, and Proust* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1982), 3–19, 9.

58 "The total meaning of the predication of an intellectual concept consists in affirming that, under all conceivable circumstances of a given kind, the subject of the predication would (or would not) behave in such a certain way. . . . More simply stated, the whole meaning of an intellectual predicate is that certain kinds of events would happen, once in so often, in the course of experience, under certain kinds of existential circumstances" ("Pragmatism," 402).

59 Michael Silverstein, "Indexical Order and the Dialectics of Sociolinguistic Life," *Language and Communication* 23, nos. 3–4 (2003): 193–229.

60 In "Design and Chance," Peirce famously argues that only those systems and compounds with "good habits" survive while those with bad or no habits are quickly destroyed. He then asks why "heavenly bodies tend to attract one another" and answers "because in the long run bodies that repel or do not attract will get thrown out of the region of space leaving only the mutually attracting bodies" and it is in this way that habits are formed and are stabilized as truths. Charles Sanders Peirce, "Design and Chance," in *The Essential Peirce*, 1:215–24. See Brian Massumi, "Event Horizon," in *The Art of the Accident*, ed. by Joke Brouwer and Arjen Mulder (Rotterdam: Dutch Architecture Institute/V2, 1999), 154–68. James came within a hair's breadth of seeing light and eyes as mutually determining each other—eyes did not simply evolve to take in light but light to take in eyes. James, *Pragmatism*, 43.

61 "In this sense, James's proviso is: the highest ethical life is the infringement of rules, 'however few may be called to bear its burdens.'" Stikkers, "The Ethics of Energy," 44.

62 James, *Pragmatism*, 13.

63 "Individuals may be equally capable of performing a task without being equally able to perform it. So, for instance, two individuals might, by virtue of their constitutions, in principle be equally capable of high pole vaulting; but they would be unlikely to be reliably equally able to perform high pole jumps unless they both had an appropriate diet, regimen, training and motivation." Amélie Oksenberg Rorty, "Descartes and Spinoza on Epistemological Egalitarianism," *History of Philosophy Quarterly* 13, no. 1 (1996): 35–53, 36.

64 Stikkers, "The Ethics of Energy," 44.

65 James, *Pragmatism*, 11.