and seemingly "autarkic" system that technologically governs every aspect of our lives—as it reduces our planet to a resource, human beings to labor power for exploitation, democracy to a caricature of choice of the lesser evil once every four years, and the law to the means of suppression of social anomalies—has grown into a Weberian iron cage and a Kafkaesque total system that mystifies anyone who seeks to identify its source of power. That is the true "danger" in the sense that Heidegger used the term. Whether Vattimo's proceduralism will lead to the "saving power" remains to be seen, although one may express disbelief if one is able to conceive of the magnitude and pervasiveness of this planetary but headless monster. But having said this, would risk not be an inseparable part of dwelling in epochal possibilities?

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**Feminism and the Final Foucault**
DIANNA TAYLOR and KAREN VINTGES, Editors

*Feminism and the Final Foucault* is an anthology of articles, many by prominent feminist Foucaultians such as Judith Butler, Ladelle McWhorter, and Jana Sawicki, which brings together feminist interpretations of the last writings of Michel Foucault. In their Introduction to the work, "Engaging the Present," editors Dianna Taylor and Karen Vintges situate Foucault's final writings within the context of post-World War II Europe, claiming that his work responds to the need to criticize and reflect creatively upon the present while developing new forms of meaning-making and emancipatory modes of existence. Although Foucault's decision to delve into the details of elite ancient Greek and Roman practices of the self in his final writings has been taken by some readers to be esoteric and apolitical, the editors of this volume argue that in these works Foucault was successfully seeking resources for theorizing politics without universal Truths, for thinking about an ethics that neither dispenses with nor reasserts normativity, and for developing a notion of politics as ethics. Taylor and Vintges argue that Foucault's final work formulates new ways of theorizing and enacting personal and political responsibility in the contemporary context which can, moreover, engage fruitfully in a dialogue with feminist theory in thinking about practices, identities, and political commitment. While more or less critical of the potential usefulness of Foucault's final work to feminist political practice, all the articles in this volume share "the belief that feminism and the final
Foucault do have something to say to each other" (4). The chapters of *Feminism and the Final Foucault* are divided into three parts; not having space to review each of the fourteen chapters in depth, I will discuss one chapter from each section.

Part One of this volume is entitled "Women's Self-Practices as Ethos: Historical Practices." Each of the three chapters in this section explores a case study of a woman whose personal and writing practices can be interpreted as what Foucault called "arts of existence." While Foucault exclusively considers male examples of cares of the self in antiquity, noting that these practices were not made available to women in the ancient political context with which he is concerned, Part One of *Feminism and the Final Foucault* "shows that women in both historical and contemporary contexts have developed ethical self-techniques and therefore suggests that it is possible to trace a line in history of women's 'arts of existence'" (4).

The chapter that I will consider in detail from Part One is Jeannette Bloem's "The Shaping of a 'Beautiful' Soul: The Critical Life of Anna Maria van Schurman." In this article Bloem examines the manners in which the early modern Dutch scholar Anna Maria van Schurman came to theorize and enact practices of caring for her soul which challenged the theological and gendered technologies of discipline of her time. Bloem shows that van Schurman felt that through individual spiritual practices which she developed and made into a way of life, she could transform her soul. For the Foucault of *Discipline and Punish*, the soul is a product of discipline, while in the final Foucault this soul can also simultaneously be produced through technologies of self-governance. Van Schurman saw herself as devoting her life to transforming her disciplined soul into the kind of soul that she would wish to have based on theological views that she developed and for which she offered philosophical arguments. Like Foucault, van Schurman explicitly saw this cultivation of her soul through practice as an "art." These choices and practices significantly went against the grain of early modern Christian theology and gender roles, and included van Schurman's joining a separatist and expelled religious community in which she lived in the same house as men, and writing scholarly works in Latin in which she developed her views on theology, ethics, metaphysics, and physics. In contrast to contemporary female devotees, van Schurman abandoned the "modesty topos" (19) and based her religious writings on philosophical arguments rather than dreams and revelations. Unlike most female mystics, she thus refrained from presenting her ideas as passive vehicles for God, and instead claimed as her own arguments that were viewed as heretical, refuting church dogma and accepted moral philosophy, even while leading a lifestyle which flouted Christian ideals of feminine virtue. In her *Eucleria*, a work
that Bloem argues can be read as an instance of non-confessional self-writing comparable to those explored by Foucault in “L’écriture de soi,” van Schurman argues that her rejection of more traditional female roles was for her own betterment, a means for her to govern her spiritual life and improve her soul in manners which she rationally chose rather than consented to through discipline. Bloem’s article convincingly establishes that van Schurman’s life and writings functioned as practices of the self which at least partially undid the work of discipline and remade the subject’s soul. In “E. G.: Emma Goldman, for Example,” and “Exit Woolf,” Kathy E. Ferguson and Stephen M. Barber make similarly convincing cases for the practice of technologies of the self in the lives and writings of Emma Goldman and Virginia Woolf.

Part Two of Feminism and the Final Foucault is entitled “Feminism as Ethos.” Two chapters in this section consider the ways in which Foucault’s late philosophy can be used to theorize the possibility of social change. Jana Sawicki, in “Foucault’s Pleasures,” approaches this question with respect to queer politics, while in “Bodies and Power Revisited” Judith Butler considers the difficult question of how subjects can resist the very discourses to which they owe their existence. Each of the other four chapters of Part Two considers a particular set of feminist practices in terms of their relation to Foucaultian technologies of the self, or explores the extent to which feminism itself can be considered an ethos. In “Experience and Truth Telling in a Post-Humanist World,” Mariana Valverde considers various truth-telling practices used within the feminist movement, for instance, consciousness raising, self-help groups, and feminist autobiography. In “An Ethics of the Self,” Helen O’Grady makes the case that despite Foucault’s “challenge to forms of knowledge that have constructed categories of illness [and] pathology” (92), certain forms of therapy used in counseling women with low self-esteem and excessive concern for the care of others can function as and help women cultivate technologies of self-care which undo the harmful effects of gendered discipline. In “Inventing Images, Constructing Standpoints: Feminist Strategies of the Technology of the Self,” Sylvia Pritsch considers image-making as a third feminist practice which can be understood as a technology of the self, even while exploring the limitations of a Foucaultian approach to feminist practice and how these are remedied by feminist scholars such as Donna Haraway, Teresa de Lauretis, and Eispeth Probyn. Finally, in the chapter that I would like to explore in greater depth, Ladelle McWhorter considers what she calls “woman-affirming practices.”

McWhorter begins her wonderfully written chapter, “Practicing Practicing,” by explaining her reasons for agreeing with Foucault that philosophy is a practice of the self and should thus be about transforming
one’s life, a part of all of one’s activities. As McWhorter observes, this notion of philosophy is difficult to reconcile with the obligations of the academic profession, including the task of writing the very chapter under discussion. Unlike the experience of philosophy within the confines of academic institutions, however, McWhorter describes the ways in which feminist “woman-affirming practices” have functioned as transformative of her self and can be seen as ways of working upon the self in order to transform the gendered, disciplined soul into a soul that is self-fashioned and in a positive process of becoming. Initially, reading feminist texts enabled McWhorter to realize that the kind of embodied subject that she had been socialized to be was abjected for political and economic reasons, not because it was in any way inherently abject. By learning about the contingency of the way that she and other women experience their bodies, McWhorter describes being able to come to experience her body in more empowering ways. Feminism thus functioned as a form of joyful self-transformation, or as a Foucaultian care of the self.

McWhorter goes on to explain how her feminist practice developed into eco-feminism, and how this continued to be a transformation of her way of experiencing herself, her body, and her relation to the world, in the way that technologies of the self should be ongoing processes. But as McWhorter notes, it was soon not simply a matter of “inventing ourselves,” but of establishing new feminist norms of what woman should be, and a very quick collapsing of these normative claims into new feminist ontologies. Woman-affirming feminist practices quickly cease to be technologies of the self as Foucault describes them. Ultimately, for McWhorter, woman-affirmation practices and feminism in general come to be conservative processes of self-recovery rather than being processes of self-creation, becoming, or differing. McWhorter is deeply suspicious of this move to self-recovery, and moreover does not recognize herself in or feel empowered by the self that aims to be recovered. For McWhorter, woman-affirming ceases to be self-affirming at this point, and this brings her to contrast rather than compare feminist practices and Foucaultian technologies of the self.

Having initially described feminism as a practice of joyful self-fashioning, McWhorter thus comes to the conclusion which she herself acknowledges is “painful,” since she is indebted to the self-transformations which feminism equipped her to make, which is that ultimately feminism, or what it has become, is incompatible with her ongoing philosophical practice. McWhorter concludes by considering whether feminism could abandon the ontological and normative category of woman, or understand woman not as a category but as a “site of volatility,” without losing its ability to engage in politically effective ways for the sake of women as they now exist, without becoming a “mere verbal
contortion" or “esoteric exercise in theory production” (157). McWhorter expresses her hope that it can do so, or that we can “make it so. That is, to live it so” (159).

Part Three is entitled “Feminist Ethos as Politics,” each chapter of which considers Foucault’s late work in terms of the political “tools” that it provides for contemporary feminism. For lack of space, I will not discuss the excellent chapters by Susan Hekman, Margaret A. McLaren, Amy Allen, and Dianna Taylor, but will concentrate on the final chapter of this volume, Karen Vintges’s “Endorsing Practices of Freedom: Feminism in a Global Perspective.” In this essay, Vintges engages with the problem that a somewhat reductive reading of postmodernism seems to pose for feminism, and indeed for ethical and political philosophy in general: in the wake of postmodern critiques of universals, “grand narratives,” the Enlightenment, and “Western modernity’s claim of progress through reason” (275), feminists have felt unable to make normative claims condemning specific violations of human rights and of women in particular without being charged with imposing their own particular, modern, secular, and Western vantage points on other cultures as universally true. Consequently, feminists in the wake of postmodernism have not felt theoretically equipped to condemn practices such as female genital mutilation, forced marriage, punishing women for being raped, polygamy, and so forth, as these practices occur in non-Western cultures. As a result, Vintges argues that postmodern thought, to which she is philosophically committed, has been “devastating” for feminism (275).

One result of this devastation has been that feminists have begun to reject postmodernism and argue once more for the universality and truth of Western, liberal, secular values. Suzan Moller Okin, for instance, argues that “feminists should no longer hesitate to accept Western liberalism’s ‘fundamentals’ as the universal norm of a cross-cultural feminism” (276). Similarly, Seyla Benhabib borrows from Habermas in arguing that the rational decision making of Western modernity and of the democratic liberal state should be applied to a cross-cultural dialogue. The values of the modern West are thus taken as universally true by these feminists, and to be applied across cultures. Vintges agrees that we need a pluralistic ethical universalism, but argues that the positions of Okin and Benhabib are not sufficiently cross-cultural. While Foucault’s philosophy is often charged by both feminist philosophers and defenders of liberal values with lacking any normative content, Vintges feels that it is Foucault’s work that can provide feminists with an ethical universalism which remains pluralistic and cross-cultural, or a way of thinking normatively that does not impose any particular cultural truth. Indeed, Foucault objected to being labeled “postmodern” and considered himself
a modern philosopher, while his genealogical works oppose the crippling workings of domination and the disciplining of subjects into docile bodies, thus implying a normative set of values. Nevertheless, many have wondered how Foucault could ground such implicitly normative claims within his philosophy of social construction, or how, having rejected notions of objective truth and a transhistorical subject, Foucault could make such claims at all. Vintges argues, however, that Foucault’s tacit anti-domination or pro-freedom stance in the genealogical works, which nevertheless do not theorize the grounds of possibility for this freedom, is provided with an explicit formulation in the final writings while in no way resorting to Truth claims.

In his last writings Foucault condemns forms of domination that result in subjects who cannot enact practices of freedom, such as the women and slaves of ancient Greece. Nevertheless, these practices of freedom of which he approves and would have made universally available are, in Foucault’s words, “not something invented by the individual himself. They are models that he finds in his culture and are proposed, suggested, imposed upon him by his culture, his society, and his social group” (cited 280). Foucault is describing something like a compatibilist notion of freedom, not inconsistent with his genealogical works. Importantly, practices of freedom or of the self do not need to have particular content specific to the West or to liberalism, but are given to subjects by their particular cultures, and not only by Western cultures. Condemning domination which denies freedom practices to individuals and preferring political practices that enable subjects to cultivate the arts of existence of that particular society is thus a normative and universalizable stance taken by Foucault’s philosophy which nevertheless does not advocate any specific Western, liberal, humanistic, or other norms as objectively or rationally True. Vintges calls this “freedom practices for all” and “Foucault’s ethical universalism without Truth,” and explores the manner in which “this perspective relates to non-Western cultures” (287), for instance to non-secular thought. Vintges argues that for Foucault, spirituality involves personal, ethical transformations of the subject, and that spiritual practices can be understood as “freedom practices within religion.” Foucault considered such practices both in terms of the Shi’ism he encountered in Iran and in terms of the ascetic practices of medieval Christianity. Vintges herself explores Sufi mysticism as a form of freedom practice available to both men and women in Islam. Vintges thus argues that a Foucaultian feminist can oppose domination and advocate the cultivation of freedom practices, in this way taking a normative and universal stance, without imposing Western, liberal, secular values on another culture, and without resorting to notions of objective Truth.

While many of the chapters of *Feminism and the Final Foucault*
consider what freedom practices exist and have existed for women in the West, Vintges's chapter argues for "A cross-cultural feminism ... [that] can be coined as a shared ethos—or commitment without Truth—that wants to endorse and foster freedom practices for all women in all cultures..." (293). Vintges's chapter provides convincing responses to many persistent arguments with which Foucaultians are confronted—particularly questions of normativity and agency—as well as a resolution to the question of how postmodern feminism can make normative claims within a multicultural context. As a concluding chapter to an important work on feminism and Foucault, Vintges's chapter provides satisfying solutions to nagging questions in both Foucaultian and feminist thought.

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Franco Basaglia. Portrait d'un psychiatre intempestif

MARIO COLUCCI et PIERANGELO DI VITTORIO

Les politiques de désinstitutionnalisation (ou déréglementation) des services de soins psychiatriques se sont multipliées dans les pays occidentaux principalement depuis les années 1980. Concrètement, cela implique la fermeture de lits dans les hôpitaux psychiatriques et le retour massif dans la communauté des personnes aux prises avec des problèmes de santé mentale. Plusieurs facteurs ont motivé leur édition. Parmi ceux-ci, il faut citer la mondialisation qui appelle une réingénierie de l'État, les recommandations de l'Organisation mondiale de la santé (OMS) qui reconnaît maintenant le rapport entre bien-être et intégration sociale, ainsi que la découverte des neuroleptiques. À ces facteurs économiques, socio-sanitaires et pharmacologiques, il faut ajouter les critiques plus fondamentales de la ségrégation asilaire réalisées au cours des années 1960 et 1970. On pense ici aux travaux de Michel Foucault, aux analyses par Erwing Goffman de la vie dans les « institutions totales », ainsi qu'à la perspective antipsychiatrique élaborée par Ronald Laing et David Cooper. Franco Basaglia (1924-1980) constitue l'autre figure marquante de la critique sociale de la médecine psychia- trique.

Le livre de Mario Colucci (psychiatre) et Pierangelo Di Vittorio (philosophe) présente la vie et l'œuvre de ce personnage influent qui est à l'origine de l'une des expériences les plus révolutionnaires et avantgardistes en psychiatrie contemporaine. Son engagement et ses écrits