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Power

Time penetrates the body and with it all the meticulous controls of power.

—Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*

In this chapter I explicitly address problematic relations of power between the children and their caregivers, and present illustrative field notes. I begin with a description of the day care setting as an institution that imposes a temporal and spacial regime on the lives of infants and toddlers. As Harvey (1989) wrote, “spatial and temporal practices are never neutral in social affairs” (p. 239). Drawing primarily from Goffman, Foucault, and Polakow/Suransky, I illustrate how the caregivers’ command over children’s bodies in space and time is a fundamental, pervasive source of social power in and over the children’s everyday lives. Field notes illustrate how caregivers create problematic situations for the children as they exercise their power in the rigid management of daily routines, and the ways in which caregivers control and contain children’s play. I also describe how children’s efforts to resist the caregivers’ power are often undermined. I contrast the illustration of the caregivers’ extractive power with a discussion of developmental, transformative power. I close the chapter with further reflections on these experiences as indicative of children’s place in the world of day care.

SPATIAL REGIME

Space is fundamental in any exercise of power.

—Foucault, *The Foucault Reader*

In these day care centers, two or three caregivers share responsibility for about eight to as many as sixteen infants and/or toddlers each day. Infants and toddlers are grouped into classrooms according to state licensing standards which mandate adult-child ratios and maximum group size enrollments by age and set minimum square footage requirements accordingly, about

thirty-five to fifty-five square feet of space per child, depending upon whether sleep and play space are combined. The newer buildings usually have direct exits from the classroom to outdoor play space, but programs housed in churches often do not have easy access—for example, the largest program I visited housed the infants up one flight of stairs and had no playground. Caregivers in this center sometimes took the children to a nearby park, but the youngest infants generally were confined to one room throughout the day (as were the caregivers, but who, as employees, had scheduled short breaks when they could leave the room).

Some of these rooms were decorated quite cheerfully, with bright colors and pictures on the walls—the surface appearance is that they are happy places to be. Other rooms, generally in the church-based older programs, looked more “school-like” and even bare. In general, while some rooms had shelves of assorted toys, there was often a utilitarian aspect to the space. The arrangement of the rooms was determined by the necessity of custodial routines: cribs and high chairs bordered the walls or took up the room in rows, dominating infant rooms; toddler rooms had tables for eating and artwork, and cots stacked up until nap time.

For a major portion of their day (up to ten hours or more) all the aspects of children’s lives—sleeping, playing, and eating—are conducted in one place and according to the shared authority of the caregivers. This is the children’s lived and felt space. The confinement to and arrangement of the physical environment provides the condition of “enclosure,” a space “closed in upon itself” (Foucault, 1975/1979a, p. 141), and allows for the exercise of power first by containment and surveillance.

The two toddler rooms are divided by a movable partition, which is open in the mornings as the children arrive. After the morning snack, the younger toddlers are to stay on their half of the room. Today Gordie decided to walk over to the other side of the room. The student began to approach him, to explain why he had to return to his side of the room. Before she reached him, the caregiver loudly called from across the room “Gordon Grant, NOW!” Gordie, startled and intimidated, returned to the proper side of the room.

In these situations children’s mobility is contained and confined within certain demarcated boundaries. Space is not an *extension* into which children may flow and extend themselves, rather, space is experienced as a *restriction* (Suransky, 1977, p. 299).

Every morning and afternoon the toddlers play in the basement gym. The adults sit on chairs lined up on one side of the room and watch the children. The children are told these are “teachers’ chairs” and they are not allowed to sit on them. There are no “child chairs.” Today, Jill climbed up on an empty chair and was told to get off. “Who are these chairs for?” the adult asked Jill. “Teachers,” she replied. “OK, now go play,” directed the caregiver.

The organization of the day care space allows for the practice of discipline while at the same time discipline organizes the space (Foucault, 1975/1979a). This is illustrated in the situations below, as caregivers controlled children’s activities by the arrangement of the room and the materials made available to the children.

The toy shelves in the toddler room reach a height of about four-and-a-half feet from the floor. Children are allowed to choose from a sparse number of toys on the lower shelves, but toys on the top shelves are made available only at the caregivers’ discretion. The caregiver told the student she didn’t want “too many” toys out.

Toya (six months) likes to play with the “busy boxes” tied to the side of the infant cribs. But when she attempted to play with them at nap time, the caregiver said “NO!” because, explained the caregiver, “she should be sleeping.” When Toya woke up from her nap, she was also prohibited from this play, because “she must stay on the carpet with the other babies.” The caregivers did not bring the busy box to the carpet for Toya.

The only toys on the shelves in this room are some books, and a few Fisher-Price materials. The selection is the same everyday. There is a housekeeping corner, but children are allowed to play there only with the adult’s permission. As a special treat every day the caregivers introduce one new toy from the storage area, such as “bristle blocks” or dress-up clothes, which the entire group must share or take turns. They are able to play with these materials, while supervised, for a limited amount of time. The children are made to keep the toys in one area of the room. I asked the caregiver why manipulatives and other toys were not available everyday. She replied that they were only for special occasions.

Beyond containment and surveillance, power was more explicitly exercised in the management of children’s activities and

routines within these settings, what Foucault (1975/1979a) described as "disciplinary time" (p. 151).¹

DISCIPLINARY TIME

Time is not a line but a network of intentionalities.

—Merleau-Ponty, *The Phenomenology of Perception*

Children's daily routines in the day-care center are tightly scheduled, with one activity leading at a prearranged time into the next, the whole sequence of activities being imposed from above by a system of formal rulings. Foucault (1975/1979a) described this as the organization of "serial space" (p. 147). Infant schedules are typically organized according to "custodial" routines: eating, sleeping, and diaper changing. Infants may "play" or sit in infant swings or seats between these routines. As children get older (about fifteen months) more is added to the schedule, typically adult-directed activities, such as story time, art, or music. A schedule, or "time-table" (Foucault, 1975/1979a, p. 149), is often posted on the wall, as was this one:

<i>Toddler Daily Schedule</i>	
7:30–8:30	Arrival/Free play in the room
8:30–8:50	Group time (calendar, story, fingerplays)
8:50–9:20	Breakfast
9:20–9:30	Cleanup/Toileting
9:30–10:30	Teacher-directed activity (e.g., "art," music, etc.)
10:30–11:00	Outdoors or gym
11:00–11:20	Free play
11:20–11:30	Washing and toileting
11:30–12:00	Lunch
12:00–2:30	Nap time
2:30–3:00	Toileting
3:00–3:15	Snack
3:15–3:30	Group time
3:30–4:00	Teacher-directed activity
4:00–4:30	Outdoors or gym
4:40–5:00	Toileting
5:00–5:30	Free play

These daily activities are carried on within a shared group setting; children are always in the company of other children, all

of whom are treated alike and are required to do the same thing together. Goffman (1961) described this as "collective regimentation" (p. 6). As the schedule indicates, children, as a group, are often required to go through fifteen or more transitions, or change of activity, each day. The schedule serves to tell the day care staff what they will be doing at any given moment and implies that children, left on their own, could not initiate and organize their own actions (Denzin, 1973b). Moreover,

the seriation of successive activities makes possible a whole investment of duration by power: the possibility of a detailed control and a regular intervention . . . in each moment of time. . . . Power is articulated directly onto time; it assures its control and guarantees its use. (Foucault, 1975/1979a, p. 160)

The relationship between time and power is described in the field notes below, as schedules dictate children's experiences.

Many of the toddlers had already eaten when they arrived this morning, yet breakfast was served immediately. All the children were required to sit at the table.

The children appeared sleepy about a half hour before lunchtime, at least an hour still to go before the scheduled nap time, yet they were forced to stay awake through the lunch period.

The caregiver insisted that all the infants have an afternoon nap. Kim (six months) had only a one-half hour nap early this afternoon, but was sitting contentedly on the carpet surrounded by toys. Without any visible indication that she was sleepy or fussy, the caregivers decided Kim should take a nap. Kim's play was interrupted and she was put in her crib; she lay there quietly with her eyes wide open, sucking on a blanket. When she started whimpering about thirty minutes later, I moved to pick her up out of her crib, but was told by the caregiver, "No, she'll go to sleep eventually." Kim started crying and screaming ten minutes later. I moved again to pick her up and was told to leave Kim, that she'd go to sleep eventually. After twenty more minutes of her crying, one of the caregivers picked her up and gave her a bottle and then Kim stayed up the rest of the afternoon. Kim was in her crib for one hour total—without closing her eyes once.

As Goffman noted in his description of total institutions, the organization and management of daily routines reflect an

underlying rationale—the securing of children’s compliance for an orderly day and the supposed benefits to their development. Consider the following field notes.

When the toddlers were done eating their lunch, they were to stay seated until called to wash their hands and brush their teeth. They were called in the order they finished eating. Several children finished eating about the same time, so some of them waited a long time to be called, doing nothing but sitting. When a child got out of his chair, he had to go back and sit down for a little while before being called. Carrie, on her own initiative, got out of her seat and waited by the sink. When the caregiver refused to let her wash her hands and brush her teeth, Carrie began to cry; it was clear that she was quite upset. The caregiver told Carrie she needed to sit down until she was called. Neither caregiver tried to comfort her or help her back to her seat. After about five minutes of crying, the caregiver irritably told Carrie to go lie down on her cot, without washing or brushing.

In this situation, the concept of allowing children to initiate and carry out their own handwashing was subordinate to the adult’s prearranged schedule and implementation procedures.

Before the children (two-year-olds) were permitted to sit at the table and eat their lunches, the caregiver had them identify their names, written on large name tags she had made. All the children sat on the rug while the caregiver randomly selected and held up a name tag directly in front of the child whose name it was. That child then was to identify him or herself by saying his or her name and then was permitted to sit down at one of the tables (and wait again for lunch to be served). The other children had to remain sitting on the carpet and wait for their name tags to be shown. They were told to sit on their “bottoms.” If they stood, or began to walk over to the tables on their own initiative, they were told to sit down; their names were then called last. Today the caregiver mistakenly held out the wrong name tag in front of one little boy. He called out his own name and jumped up to sit down at the table. Another little girl said “me” when the caregiver held out her name tag.

The above field notes suggest that (at least some) children may not be “reading” their names, but have merely learned the procedure. But some of the necessary dispositions for participation in this culture, that is, waiting, turn-taking, and compliance, are secured. Thus, caregivers’ adherence to, and implementation

of, the schedule stipulates normative standards for the children’s behavior. The field notes below illustrate again the nature of the caregivers’ power over children, as they are made to conform to the norms stipulated by the schedule.

During lunchtime the toddlers were tired. Today Jules (sixteen months) started to fall asleep at the table. He was roused and encouraged to eat, as the adult said, “it’s not time to sleep yet.” When this was not enough to wake Jules, the caregiver jostled his chair in an attempt to awaken him. When that didn’t work, Jules was removed from the chair and stood up in another attempt to keep him awake. Only after the lunch period was over was Jules cleaned up and permitted to nap on his cot. One day, Jules was falling asleep the minute he sat down for lunch. The caregiver tried to get him to stay awake and to eat, but he responded by crying. After only a minute of crying, he started to fall asleep again, food in his mouth. At this point, one of the caregivers tried to get him to stand up, but his legs just folded underneath him. She sat him back on his chair, and turned her attention to another child. Before anyone had time to prevent it, Jules fell out of his chair. He was definitely awake then!

It was snack time and all the children were directed to stop playing and sit at the table. Maggie (fourteen months) pushed her food away and began to cry. The caregiver said perhaps Maggie was tired and removed her from the table to change her diaper and then sat down to hold and rock her. Maggie squirmed in her arms, refusing to sit still. The caregiver let her down on the floor where she played contentedly. Observing this, the caregiver said to the other adults, “Next time Maggie must sit through snack time. She wasn’t tired, she just wanted to play.”

The caregiver in the last situation above initially appeared to demonstrate some flexibility, excusing and attempting to comfort a child she perceived to be too tired to eat a snack. When she discovered that Maggie just “wanted to play,” however, she asserted that this was not a justifiable reason to be excused from the snack table. The child’s inclinations were subordinate to a higher ruling.

In the field notes thus far, the schedules appear to be arbitrarily planned and implemented, in the absence of any observation and interpretation of the children’s experiences. Scheduled routines were given primacy over the children’s inclinations; their understandings and expressions of their own feelings of

fatigue, hunger, and energy were denied, and subordinated to adult-imposed schedules. Polakow (1992) described this as the imposition of "temporal rigidity" (p. 61). As infants are subjected to this discipline and rigidity, their lived-time world is refashioned into the metacategories of institutional time (Polakow, 1992). By enforcing the schedule above all else, and rigidly managing transitions, caregivers exercise their control and power. As the children's "time controllers" (Polakow, 1992, p. 65), they make children do what they wouldn't otherwise—sleep, eat, line up, be silent, sit, wait, be still. In Foucault's (1975/1979a) terms, the effect of the caregivers' discipline is to produce "docile bodies" (p. 138).

If a toddler doesn't go to bed "cooperatively," the caregiver will put him or her on the cot, face down, and put one arm across the back of the child's neck, and the other arm over the child's ankles, holding the child down. The caregiver remains in that position until the child falls asleep. No reasons are given to the children for why this is done. They are simply told they have to stay on their cots.

The caregiver set up a table with glue and cotton balls and precut paper squirrels, each with a child's name already written on it. She sat down and called the toddlers, who had been sitting in a group on the carpet waiting, over one at a time. Only one child at a time could do the activity; the others were to wait with the group, supervised by another caregiver leading "fingerplays." Children who were not sitting still were called to the table last. "I won't call you until you sit down!" the caregiver said to Shana, who had started to move over to the table on her own. She looked at the caregiver and sat down, and waited expectantly for her name to be called, not attending to the fingerplays. The caregiver called another child over, while Shana watched. When a turn opened up, the first caregiver turned to the second and asked if she should call "her." The caregiver, engaged in her fingerplays, glanced up and replied, "no." Two more children had their turns, and then Shana was called over.

It was "group time" before the morning snack. The caregiver was leading all ten toddlers in a movement activity. The songs and dances were complex and the children were not paying attention. The second caregiver announced that the snack was ready, at which point the first caregiver stopped in the middle of a song, directed the children to sit down, and began calling the children's names one by one to tell them they could move to the tables and sit

down for snack. Eventually she turned to Nathan and said, "Well, Nathan isn't sitting on his carpet square, so I can't call him to the table." She went on calling the names of other children who were seated. After all the other toddlers had been called, the caregiver said, "Nathan still isn't sitting on his carpet square. Nathan, I can't call you unless you're sitting down." Nathan did not move; he seemed distracted by the activity at the snack tables. The caregiver went over to him and physically manipulated him into a sitting position onto a carpet square. She then said, "Nathan, you can go sit at the table, now." Nathan complied.

The above episodes illustrate how discipline requires both the correct use of time and the correct use of the body (Foucault, 1975/1979a), as the child's body is manipulated according to the caregivers' authority. The rule that a child must be sitting before he can be allowed to move to another activity seems arbitrary, to exist for no other purpose than to give the caregiver a feeling of control over the children and the management of daily routines. It is doubtful that the toddlers understood why they must sit on the carpet squares, but the use of physical force does suggest to them that they must comply with the caregiver's directions or they will be made to. I asked this last caregiver if she thought Nathan understood what he was being asked and she replied, "I don't know, but he'll learn sometime."

Disciplinary norms are also communicated to children in more subtle, less physical ways. The following episode may appear unproblematic in itself but implies a normative standard for the children to follow.

The caregiver entered the darkened classroom at 2:30. The infants were just awakening from their naps; some were still asleep. The caregiver announced to the room in general, "You guys are so good!" She turned to me to explain, "They usually wake up at 1:00."

In this situation the children were considered "good" because they stayed asleep until the end of the *scheduled* nap time, a physiological state of being not under their control. In this way children construct understandings about their behavior and themselves through caregiver practices. "In discipline, punishment is only one element of a double system: gratification-punishment. And it is this system that operates in the process of training and correction" (Foucault, 1975/1979a, p. 180).

CAREGIVER POWER/ CHILDREN'S PLAY

Play is not only the child's response to life; it is his life if he is to be a vital, growing, creative individual.

—(Hartley & Goldenson, *The complete book of children's play*)

Thus far, the field notes presented illustrate how caregivers create or exacerbate problematic situations for the children as they exercise their power in the rigid management and implementation of daily (largely custodial) routines and transitions. The power exerted by caregivers is also evident in the ways in which they control and contain children's play.

The lack of flexibility that would have allowed Toya (p. 00) to play with the busy boxes on the floor or in her crib until she fell asleep is demonstrated again, this time in two different toddler rooms.

Cyril (twenty months) chose a shape sorter toy to play with—a spherical plastic ball with holes cut out to match shapes placed inside it. Cyril decided to use the toy as a bowling ball. The caregiver immediately yelled at him, "This is not a ball!" and redirected his use of the toy.

The caregiver took out some playdough for the children. As children approached her at the table she gave each some dough (they weren't allowed to help themselves). The caregiver demonstrated how to scrunch, roll, and shape the dough. Karen (seventeen months) approached the table and was given some dough. She poked at it for a few minutes and then began to walk away from the table. The caregiver stopped her and asked, "Karen, are you done?" Karen looked at her and replied, "done." The caregiver asked if she was sure and again Karen said "done." The caregiver washed Karen's hands and Karen went elsewhere to play. A few minutes later Karen walked back to the table and picked up some dough. The caregiver said, "Karen, you're done playing with the dough. You left the table and said you were finished, so go find something else to play with." Karen tentatively touched the dough again and the caregiver repeated, "No, Karen, you're done." Karen turned around and left with a disappointed and confused expression. A few minutes later she returned to the table and watched the other children. The practicum student then distracted Karen by suggesting they play together in the housekeeping corner.

In both these situations the caregivers restricted the children's initiative, intentionality, and sense of control over their own activity. The word "done" had different meanings for Karen and her caregiver, just as Cyril and his caregiver had different ideas of "ball." The caregivers had implicit rules which were unyielding.

The two-year-olds proceeded in a line from their classroom to the gym. Once there, they were directed to line up against the wall, sit on the floor, and wait. They waited, watching another group of children already at play riding bikes, running, and climbing. The caregiver walked over to talk with another adult. Daniel, eager to play, stood up. Before he could move, the caregiver yelled from across the room (about twenty feet), "I didn't tell you you could get up. Sit down!" A few minutes later, still from across the room, she called to them, "OK, you can get up now!" The toddlers jumped up and ran to play.

In this last situation the caregiver's rationale was unclear. While the children waited, she made no preparations for their play; she was not waiting for the first group to leave the area, as they remained. It appears that her control of the children was arbitrary.

Caregivers intervene in and control children's play beyond imposing prohibitions. At times they become overinvolved, in misguided attempts to direct children's actions, as in the following situation.

The caregiver had set out paper and a box of pastel markers on a table so that the children could draw pictures. Jeff (two years) was at the table drawing with a light blue marker. He put down the marker and walked over to the shelves where there were some more markers. He selected a black marker and returned to the table, where he started drawing in black. The caregiver moved quickly to the table and anxiously said, "Oh, Jeff, where did you get that?" She gestured toward the other markers on the table and said, "These are the markers we are using." She pulled the black marker out of his hand. She then handed him the light blue marker saying, "Use this one." Ignoring this, Jeff instead reached for a purple marker lying on the table. The caregiver grabbed his hand and said, "That's for someone else. The blue one is yours." The other two children at the table each had a marker in hand, and additional markers lay on the table unclaimed.

In this situation Jeff attempted to engage in purposeful, self-directed activity. But his intentionality, even as it did not in-

terfere with or create problems for the other children, created one for the caregiver. Jeff's individuality and unique creativity were secondary to the values of the adult caregiver. By dictating what color markers Jeff could use, the caregiver exerted her power over him, reducing his own power to choose, act, and create. The following field notes also demonstrate the caregivers' power as they impose upon children's play.

Today the toddlers were sponge painting paper precut into tulip shapes. Zach, surveying his choice of paint colors, decided he wanted to use the brown paint. The caregiver supervising the activity asked her co-worker if she should "let" Zach use the brown paint. They decided to allow Zach to use that color, but the caregiver added to him, "Don't paint the flower too dark, otherwise it will look out of place." On the parents' bulletin board posting "news of the day" was a notice: "We chose our own colors today when we sponge-painted."

After breakfast, the babies were placed on the rug for "free play." Then, one by one, the caregiver interrupted their play, picking an infant up and taking him or her over to the table to do an "art" project. When it was his or her designated turn, the child had to go with the adult, regardless of whether he or she was already involved in play. As each child sat at the table, the caregiver dipped a brush into paint, placed the brush in each child's hand, and held the child's hand while he or she "painted." When the caregiver felt the picture had been painted enough, the picture was considered finished. In spite of the adult direction, some children showed quite a bit of interest in the painting activity, and were upset when told they had to stop. Each child was allowed to do only one painting.

RESISTANCE

Foucault (1988) posited that power is not completely controlling, that there is always the possibility of resistance in the relations of power (p. 12). Likewise, Goffman also believed that persons simultaneously embrace and resist institutional rules and expectations. But both these writers were referring to adults. What freedom does the young *child* have to project him- or herself into the organization of the day care world? The following field notes describe what may happen when children attempt to resist the caregivers' control and power.

The caregiver had gathered the children (two-year-olds) together on the carpet for a story before lunch. About halfway through the story, she stopped reading and told Caleb to go wash his hands and face. He shook his head and said "No!" The caregiver told Caleb he had to go. He protested again. She put down her book, picked Caleb up, and carried him to the bathroom. Caleb struggled throughout this process, during which I suggested to the caregiver, "Maybe he wants to hear the rest of the story." She responded, "His face is dirty. He has to wash up." The other children waited for the caregiver to return. When they returned to the group, the caregiver resumed reading the story, interrupting herself periodically to call on other children to wash up.

Corrine's fussiness suggested to the caregiver that she might be hungry for her afternoon bottle. When it was ready, the caregiver held Corrine (three months) in her lap while sitting on the floor. Corrine took the bottle readily, but after she had drunk about three ounces she began to refuse the bottle, turning away her head. The caregiver tried to get Corrine to take more, but Corrine fussed and cried. The caregiver waited a minute or so, removing the bottle, and then tried again. At one point it seemed Corrine had begun to drink again, but I noticed that she was not swallowing, as formula was running down the side of her face toward her ear. I pointed this out to the caregiver. She responded, "Oh well, I'm not stopping now." She continued to hold the bottle in Corrine's mouth. After a few more minutes the caregiver stopped; the bottle was just about empty.

In this last situation, although the caregiver initially took her cues from the infant in responding to indications of hunger, she failed to continue to follow Corrine's cues. She essentially attempted to force-feed her and Corrine's only power to resist was to let the formula run out of her mouth. As in the field notes below, "the slightest departures from correct behavior are subject to punishment" (Foucault, 1975/1979a, p. 178).

Jonah seems to be a somewhat fidgety baby who, based on previous observations, seems to prefer only certain caregivers to hold him. Today, as it was time for his bottle, the caregiver tried to sit him on her lap. But Jonah arched his back and refused to be still. The caregiver tried putting him in an infant seat, but he arched his back there, too, refusing to sit. So the caregiver laid Jonah on the carpet, but refused to give him his bottle there. She told me the rule was that babies were fed only in laps or in infant seats.

After playing in the large motor room the toddlers were allowed to get drinks of water. When a child asked for a drink but hadn't lined up "right," however, a drink was prohibited. Only the children that lined up were allowed a drink. Henry and Matt were still on bikes when the other children lined up for drinks. When they got to the fountain they were told to go into the classroom, without a drink.

Everyday after lunch the children brush their teeth. Only two children can fit at the sink at a time, so the others that are waiting are expected to sit still and be quiet until it is their turn to brush their teeth. Today (and yesterday) Scott was scolded for not sitting "nicely" until his turn came. He had been kicking the underside of the table as he sat and waited, setting off the other toddlers in imitation. Scott and his followers were called last to the sink and refused help once there.

There are times when a toddler resists sitting in his or her chair during mealtime. Several of them like to get up in the middle of snack and leave the table, so the caregivers decided to strap the toddlers to their chairs during meals and snacks. The caregivers used either a blanket or an elastic cord to wrap around the child and the back of the chair. Or, they took the child's shirt and put it over the back of the chair while still worn by the child; this put the chair between the child's skin and shirt. Within a week after they started strapping the infants in, fifteen-month-old Troy deduced that being belted to the chair didn't mean that he and the chair couldn't move, and he and his chair walked away (or scooted away) from the table. Troy and the other children thought this was really funny, and it got even harder to get the toddlers to stay at the table during snack time.

Today at nap time Emily (nineteen months) was having trouble getting settled. She often has a difficult time falling asleep, tossing and babbling. Once she is sleeping, though, she'll sleep a long time. Today, the caregiver walked over to Emily's cot, grabbed her arm and very roughly turned her on her stomach. She then rubbed Emily's back very hard, while Emily cried. When Emily tried to move, the caregiver pushed down on her back a little harder to stop Emily from moving.

The repression of children's efforts at resistance, critical to the development of their autonomy, leaves them in a kind of "culture of silence" (Freire, 1985, p. 72) where the oppressed are mute, prohibited from "naming" and transforming their world (Freire, 1970, p. 76).² This silence is a "failure of understanding" (Silvers, 1983, p. 96); these caregivers stand outside the circle of

interpretation and understanding which would allow them to perceive and respond to the children's experiences of the imposed regime. Insofar as children's expressions of their physical and emotional needs and inclinations are subordinate to the adult-imposed schedule, they are silenced. Indeed, the physical management of children is violent when the adults tie them to their chairs and use force to obtain compliance. "In the inner temporality of violence all that is sought is the physical imposing of one's will on the will and body of another" (Denzin, 1984, p. 182). The control of time and children's bodies in time and space amounts to "a systematic negation of self-affirmation and an education toward conformity and docility" (Suransky, 1977, p. 136).

EXTRACTIVE VERSUS DEVELOPMENTAL POWER

I do not deny that child rearing involves coercion. Child-centered as he was, Rousseau's (1762/1979) benevolent manipulation of Emile was a coercive strategy, as his wants and actions were shaped by his "tutor."³ As Suransky (1977) noted, "the social reality of child care is such that it is the adults who are imbued with the use and abuse of power in the world of the child" (p. 251). As Guttentag (1987) also pointed out,

Clearly, parents and other caretakers impose experiences upon children and demand behaviors of children that children find adverse, and equally often experiences that are withheld that children would prefer. . . . However, these actions on the part of caretakers are taken with the reasonable belief that the actions are important for the children's long-term well-being. (p. 21)

It is helpful here to consider Janet Smith's (1983) distinction between "developmental" and "extractive power" (p. 200). Developmental power supports a child's ability to develop his or her own capacities. Likewise, Kuykendall (1983) describes "transformative power" (pp. 264-65) as primarily nurturing, healing, and creative, and I would add, empowering. This includes the possibility of imposing appropriate constraints, which can be empowering. Developmental, transformative power emphasizes interdependence and recognition of individuality, and potential reciprocity, as children are regarded as developing persons. The caregivers' authority does not have to be conceptualized in opposition to the children's developing autonomy.⁴ Extractive power,

on the other hand, treats children as property or things to be managed, directed, dominated, and controlled. So it is not the exercise of power per se to which I object, but the arbitrary, harsh, and unfeeling exercise of power that I find disturbing.

The management of these child "inmates" (Goffman, 1961, p. 91) might be rationalized in terms of child-rearing aims—that is, helping children learn to live in society—in which case their compliance may be viewed as an indication of developmental progress. In the situations I've described, however, it is extractive, not developmental, power that is exercised, as control appears to have become the operative and primary goal for caregivers, rather than a means to achieving developmental goals, such as health, safety, and competence. Indeed, the field notes illustrate how the exercise of control often operates to the children's detriment, as they are denied drinking water in punishment and repressed in the expression and development of their personal autonomy. The absence of nurturance and compassion characterizes the caregivers' power as destructive.

In the following pages I present a picture for the reader of one child's daily experiences, a succession of epiphanic moments, as she is subjected to the caregivers' power. I go on to discuss the implications of such problematic daily experiences for the children in care.

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A TODDLER

Arrival

Callie (fifteen months) was new to the center. When her mother brought her into the classroom, Callie, clinging tightly to her mother, had to be pried off of her; her mother left as soon as this was done. Callie was held and comforted for a few minutes and then left alone on the floor where she lay down and cried. When the practicum student attempted to attend to Callie, she was told not to pay "special attention" to her; that would "spoil her and other children will get jealous."

"Free Play"

All the toddlers were directed to the carpet as they finished getting their drinks of water at the fountain. The caregiver reached for

two bins of toys that were on some high shelves and emptied them onto the carpet. "Let's play with popbeads," she said, grabbing several pieces and assembling them. "Can you make a chain?" she asked, as she held hers up for the children to see. The ten toddlers were to share the beads; play with the other toys was prohibited. Meanwhile, Callie and another toddler rose from the carpet and moved toward the housekeeping area. The caregiver, seeing this, pulled them by their arms back to the group, "Come on over to the rug, why don't you?" The children complied and did nothing for several seconds. Then they both stood up again and moved towards the housekeeping area. The caregiver again redirected them to the popbeads. She pulled them down as she twice said, "Can you sit down?" At this moment another child, who had not been playing with the popbeads, but watching, got up to play inside the housekeeping area. He was yanked away by the arm, and then all the children were directed to clean up the beads. Brandon, however, continued to play with some beads. The caregiver turned to him and loudly yelled, "Now!" Callie, upon hearing the caregiver, echoed her, "Now!" imitating her tone.

Transition

The transition from play time to snack time was managed by gathering the toddlers together in a group for a story. The children were dismissed one by one, as the story reader called each toddler by name and excused him or her to the snack table. As they waited, the children's faces looked puzzled, perhaps wondering who could go next. Callie, in anticipation, stood up twice to move to the tables, but was directed to sit down until her name was called.

Snack

The toddlers sat at the tables. The caregiver stood over them with a basket of graham crackers. She handed each child one cracker; children were not allowed to help themselves. Callie started to eat hers. The caregiver told her, "wait until everyone has one before you eat yours." The children waited, watching the caregiver. Once the children were served she said, "OK, you can eat now." As they nibbled their crackers she poured them each some milk into paper cups. Callie lifted her cup for a drink, but her grasp crushed the paper and the milk spilled over. The caregiver said, "No more milk for

those who spill it." Callie looked at her with an unhappy expression, but said nothing.

Transition

The children were just getting up from ten minutes of "quiet time." The caregiver instructed the children to put their pillows away. She told them that they were going for a walk. Callie asked the caregiver "why?" the class was going for a walk. The caregiver responded, "Because we want to."

Teacher-Directed Activity

The children were making squirrels to decorate the room. The caregiver had cut out the shapes two days earlier. Yesterday each child had painted one squirrel brown. Today they were to glue cotton balls to their tails. It was now Callie's turn. She stood next to the caregiver as the caregiver applied some glue to the paper tail. The caregiver then reached into the bag of cotton balls and took out five, which she handed to Callie, who had been standing by. Callie took one ball and tried several times to stick it to the unglued part of the squirrel. "Here, Callie," the caregiver directed as she placed one of the cotton balls on the tail. She took Callie's hand in hers to pat the cotton down. She then placed another cotton ball into Callie's hand, who repeated her earlier "mistake." The caregiver repeated her direction, again, physically manipulating Callie's hand, until all five cotton balls were on the tail. "You're finished!" the caregiver exclaimed, "Go and play." She then called for Loren, who came eagerly over. By the time she arrived, the caregiver was busily gluing her squirrel's tail. Loren reached for the glue stick. The caregiver pulled it away from her and said, "It's not your turn." Loren waited. When it was time for her to stick on the cotton, she followed the same pattern as Callie. After a few minutes she asked, "Why are we making this?" The caregiver responded, "It's fun because you get to glue cotton balls on."

Lunchtime

Callie was sitting at the table between the student and the caregiver. She kept closing her eyes and her head was nodding back and forth; she was obviously very tired. The student asked her, "Callie, do you want to go to sleep?" She opened her eyes, looked at the student, and said, "yeah." The caregiver intervened, saying, "No,

not until after fruit." Then she tried to put a spoonful of tuna casserole in Callie's mouth while saying, "Eat some more tuna, Callie." Callie turned her head away. Then the caregiver said, "Callie, if you don't eat any tuna, you won't get any fruit." Callie did not respond, she looked straight ahead with a blank expression. The caregiver rose from the table to serve fruit to the other children, except Callie, saying to her, "no fruit for you, Callie." Again, Callie did not respond, as she was falling asleep again. After the caregiver finished eating her own fruit, she cleaned up Callie and told her "Go lay down, now."

Nap

Callie woke up from her nap after about one hour; the other children were still sleeping. She sat up, rubbed her eyes, and looked about her. From across the room, the caregiver called, "Lie down! Nap is not over yet!" Callie complied, occasionally sitting up and looking about her.

Snack

Children were called to the snack tables one by one. They waited, as the caregiver stood over them, dropping in front of each child a handful of Cheerios cereal. The adults did not sit down and join the children at the table, but hovered over the children while they ate. Children were not allowed their glasses of milk until they were done with the dry cereal.

Toileting

The children were finishing their snack. The caregiver announced it was "potty time." Four potty-chairs were placed in the classroom, outside the bathroom where there is only one toilet. Children were called over to sit on the chairs. "Callie, I need you to go potty." Callie, still sitting at the table, ignored the caregiver's command. "Callie, NOW!" said the caregiver as she approached Callie and led her to the toilet.

Afternoon Teacher-Directed Activity

It was time to implement a planned activity—messing about with shaving cream. The caregiver called three toddlers at a time over to the table. She observed aloud that there was one child in the

class who did not like to get her hands dirty, but she could not remember exactly who it was. After a while it was Callie's turn to come up to the table. The caregiver looked at me and said she thought it was Callie. She proceeded to put a smock on Callie and spray some shaving cream down in front of her on the table. For a minute or so Callie just looked at it and did not touch it. No one said anything to her. After a minute, the caregiver, without asking, took Callie's hands and put them into the shaving cream, saying, "Go like this, Callie." She then walked away. Callie turned to the practicum student and said that she was "done." The student said, "okay," and suggested she go ahead and get cleaned up. The caregiver, returning to the scene, intercepted Callie and said, "Well, Callie isn't finished. Come on, Callie, make a picture." The student told her that she had said it was okay for Callie to go and wash up. The caregiver looked at her for a minute, without replying, and then told Callie to come with her back to the table. Callie complied, with a confused and distressed expression on her face as she looked back at the student.

Departure

It was about 5:15 P.M. The room was cleaned up and the toys put away. The few toddlers still here stood at the windows and doors and gazed out. The caregiver watched them silently. Both the caregiver and the children appeared tired and eager to go home. They awaited the arrival of the parents. The caregiver saw through the window Callie's mom pulling into the parking lot. She quickly dressed Callie in her coat and got her ready to go.

CHILDREN'S PLACE IN THE SOCIAL WORLD OF DAY CARE

The parameters allowing children their own activity and intentionality are severely constrained in these child care centers. The infants and toddlers described here are individual in their development and personality, yet their individual differences and preferences often have no influence in the caregivers' management of routines and the exercise of power. Each child, in his or her management, seems interchangeable with any other. As Foucault (1975/1979a) wrote, "in discipline, the elements are interchangeable, since each is defined by the place it occupies in

a series . . ." (p. 145). Indeed, changes in classroom grouping are typically made according to quantitative (not individual, or even developmental) criteria such as maximum group size and children's chronological ages. Every six or twelve months children move on to the next (older) age group and assume the routines of those children previously there. "It is a perpetual movement in which individuals replace one another in a space marked off by aligned intervals" (Foucault, 1975/ 1979a, p. 147). The structure remains unchanged by the particular children present.

Over time it seemed that problems with control and disciplinary power emerged more frequently and more intensely as infants grew into toddlerhood and beyond. It is as if the *fact* of the toddlers' emerging and increasing mobility, as well as their initiative, intentionality, and autonomy, *necessitated* the caregivers' control. As Polakow (1992) observed, "the spontaneous, moving, energetic playing being of the child presents a threat" (p. 176) to the disciplinary structure of the program and hence needs to be contained. Spontaneity, emotionality, and playfulness are "anti-norms detrimental to the imposed spatial and temporal structure" (Polakow, 1992, p. 176).

As caregivers face the constant, unpredictable, and demanding needs of the children, they may feel a sense of diminishing control and the loss of their own individual autonomy. They may be driven to exert control where they can—on powerless children. The caregivers' inflexibility, then, may stem partly from their own needs for control and predictability. Recall how, in the field notes on page 29, the caregiver didn't want "too many" toys out, as if that would contribute to a more chaotic situation. The field notes below suggest that caregivers may feel that to give up control is to be out of control, so they relentlessly pursue it to control their own anxiety.

Before the children arrived the caregivers had filled a shallow tray with cornmeal and placed scoops in it. They covered the tray with a small blanket and placed it on the floor underneath the storage shelves. They planned to introduce this activity after snack time. Later, during the morning play time, Sandy and several other children discovered the tray, unnoticed by the caregivers, and began scooping cornmeal out of it into other containers on the floor. After some time, the caregiver became aware of this activity and exclaimed, "Look what you've done! You're making a mess!" The second caregiver then added, "Jackie had that all set up for after snack and now

you've gone and ruined it! Sandy, do you have to ruin everything?" The first caregiver picked Sandy up off the floor and started brushing the cornmeal off of him, all the while telling him that he had ruined the activity planned for later.

Caregivers' implementation of the daily schedule is intended to make the day easier, more manageable, and efficient for *them*, as well as the children. They may be doing the best they can, given the situations within which they find themselves, unprepared, and from which they can find no way out (Mills, 1959). They fail to see how their strictly enforced routinization works against them, pitting them in struggles with the children, which they respond to, in turn, with more rules and disciplinary punishment. The caregivers themselves undoubtedly experienced the same "discipline" as grade school children (the only model for group care they may have to draw upon).⁵ It is "a machine in which everyone is caught, those who exercise power just as much as those over whom it is exercised" (Foucault, 1980, p. 156). In Mills' (1959) words, caregivers are "caught in the limited milieux of their everyday lives . . . without any ideas of the ends they serve" (p. 168).

In the situations described throughout this chapter, the experience of childhood is not, as conventionally perceived, "a time of carefree disorganized bliss" (Denzin, 1977, p. 182). As these infants and toddlers were expected to master physiological, behavioral, and emotional control, "time is not experienced as a spontaneous part of the lived-world but rather as an external force" (Polakow, 1992, p. 65). The field notes show how caregivers and children are not in "concert time" or "temporal togetherness" (Sharron, 1982, pp. 69, 72) despite the amount of time and space they share. Very early, then, children experience power as "an inherent feature of social relations" as power operates to constrain or otherwise direct their actions (Philp, 1985, pp. 74–75). The children's jobs, as they learn to comply to caregiver directives, are

to be docile and accepting of the teachers' position, playful when play is demanded, sleepy when it is time to go to bed, hungry when meals are served. . . . *Not to get it right* at an early age is to place oneself in an untenable position—in a position where whether you want to or not, you must get it right. (Denzin, 1973a, p. 17)

This is how these day care centers teach children how to be children as well as their place in the social world.

SUMMARY

In this chapter I have presented field notes that describe the caregivers' exercise of power over the children in space and time, particularly in the management of daily routines and control of their play. I conclude that caregivers' need for control and their incessant, intrusive, and extractive practice of discipline suppresses the children's emerging autonomy and empowerment. In the following chapter I go on to suggest that these children's emotional understandings are also severely affected by the relations of power.