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Harry Joseph Bondy (December 2012): “Outside the Wire: *Foucault’s Ethics and the Canadian Military*”

1. Source:

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2. Short Layout:

1. Foucault’s Contradiction and Military Ethics

1.1 Terminology

1.2 Methodology

1.3 The current state of research

2. Moral development and military expeditions: ethical substance and discourse

2.1 Foucault, Kant, Epictetus, and Epicurus

2.2 Modern statism and bureaucracy

2.3 Statism and the Canadian Military

2.4 Summary and conclusion

2.5 Selected texts from the media on statism and bureaucracy

3. Obligations, myths, monuments, and management: mode of subjection as *moral codes and knowledge*

3.1 Foucault and moral codes

3.2 Military moral codes

3.3 Knowledge

3.4 Summary and conclusion

3.5 Selected texts from the media on military moral codes and knowledge

4. How it works and what it does: self-forming activity and actual behaviour through *Power-Knowledge*

- 4.1 Foucault, Kant, Epictetus, and Epicurus
- 4.2 The Military
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- 5. Does It Exist? Free Will: *Between Behaviour and Ethics*
 - 5.1 Foucault, Kant, Epictetus, and Epicurus
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 - 5.4 Selected texts from the media on free will

- 6. What is their Goal? *Telos: Ethics and Ethos*
 - 6.1 Foucault
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 - 6.5 Selected texts from the media on *Telos: Ethics and Ethos*

- 7. Conclusions and application
 - 7.1 Conclusions
 - 7.2 Applications to Foucault's ethics
 - 7.3 Application to the Military Case Study
 - 7.4 Future research questions

3. **Summary:**

Foucault believed an ethical person developed through “self forming activity” and the exercise of free will. Foucault’s theories on ethics and power-knowledge, however, can be viewed as a contradiction. The problem, say his critics, is that self-forming activity should not be possible in an environment dominated by power-knowledge. Foucault did not address this apparent contradiction in the few years he had remaining. He did briefly

comment that they were compatible and had always been throughout his work; he had just not been aware of it. The dissertation also discusses the matter of free will necessary for ethical “self forming activity”. Again, Foucault was largely silent on that issue but it is possible to deduce his standpoint. To argue these points, it is necessary to answer the common criticisms that Foucault was caught in a discourse that inhibited objectivity, that his personal ethics coloured his theory, and that he provided nothing new to Western philosophy. In an attempt to resolve these issues, the author combines Foucault’s theories on ethics and power-knowledge by pairing them for practical application. The model is applied to the Canadian Forces, which has a well-developed ethics program and obvious power-knowledge network. The synthesis of Foucault’s theories, however, reveals a contradicting ethic of statism and a parallel power-knowledge system of bureaucracy and dysfunctional, executive officer personality type.