ABSTRACT

Whilst the earlier work of Michel Foucault (1972, 1977) has influenced explanatory frameworks for understanding health and medical research, what has not been delineated sufficiently is Foucault’s (1988) later work which focuses more on subjectivity: ‘technologies of self’. This paper unravels some of the conceptual and theoretical insights of Foucault’s later work in order to understand ‘bio-ethics’ as applied to a contemporary understanding of bio-technologies which impinge upon the social re-construction of aging. The paper attempts to show how Foucault’s insights allow social scientists to provide both a critical and positive appraisal of aging identity. The paper also reviews the relationship between aging and self-knowing in contexts specific to bio-ethics and bio-technologies of health management; use of counselling; and bodily enhancement.

Keywords: Michel Foucault, Self-Management, Health And Illness.