Penelope Frederica Fitzgerald (1820/21-1900)

James E Crimmins
George Hamzo
Further Reading

Samantha Brennon
The University of Western Ontario

See also BENTHAM, JEREMY; BIOETICS; CLAPPERTON, JANE HUMPH; MILL, HARRIET TAYLOR; MILL, JOHN STUART.

FITZGERALD, PENLOPE FREDERICA
(1820-1910)

Penelope Frederica Fitzgerald (née Collard) was born on an unknown date either in 1820 or 1821. She was self-educated and her writings display an eclectic blend of intuitionism, mysticism, idealism, and evolutionary theory. She abandoned secularism and atomism, and sought to demonstrate that knowledge of an Absolute Being provided the basis for morality. Her major publications included An Essay on the Philosophy of Self-Consciousness (1882) and The Treatise on the Principles of Sufficient Reason (1887), the latter a rebuttal of the social evolutionary accounts of morality proposed by G. H. Lewes and T. H. Huxley. Fitzgerald's specific concern with utilitarianism is related to the communitarian sentiments expressed in Principle of Sufficient Reason, in which she argued for a strengthening of the communal bonds of sympathy and cooperation in the face of the corrosive effects of urban and industrial life. Ultimately, her philosophy was underpinned by a mystical belief in the Absolute and its divine benevolence. However, this did not prevent her from embracing the egalitarian components of utilitarianism: "I hold that in reflective introspective reasoning the love of God is the natural outcome and synecdochic conclusion of self-love and social" (Fitzgerald, p. 203).

BIBLIOGRAPHY
Fitzgerald, Penelope Frederica. A Treatise on the Principle of Sufficient Reason: A Psychological Theory of Reasoning, Shewing the Relativity of Thought to the Thinner, of Recognition to Cognition, the Identity of Presentation and Representation, of Perception and Apperception (London, 1887).

George Hamau and James E. Commonis
Hans University College
The University of Western Ontario

FOUCAULT, MICHEL (1923-84)

Paul-Michel Foucault was born on 15 October 1926 in Poitiers, France, and educated at the Jesuit Collège Saint-Sulpice and the École Normale Supérieure. His father was a medical doctor and surgeon, but it was expected that he too would have a career in medicine. Much of Foucault's work is indeed about a connection with medicine, but it adopted the perspective of the patient and the critic, not the practitioner. One of his first publications was Maladie mentale et médical (1954), that is, Mental Illness and Medicine, and one of his first major books was Naissance de la clínique: Une archéologie du regard médical (1963), translated into English as The Birth of the Clinic: An Archaeology of Medical Perception (1973). Foucault's lifelong sympathy with the mad, the sick, the imprisoned, the marginalized and the repressed might plausibly be seen at least in part as reflections of the distress he suffered as a young homosexual student at the École Normale Supérieure, which led to acute depression, suicide attempts, and treatment by a psychiatrist. Foucault's first "licence" or university degree (1949) was in psychology. After obtaining a diploma in psycho-pathology (1952) and working for a time in a mental hospital, he wrote Folie et dérangement (1961) which appeared in English as Madness and Civilization: A History in the Age of Reason (1963). In Les mots et les choses (1966), translated as The Order of Things (1973), Foucault broke with both the French phenomenologist school of philosophy and Marxism. He did not, however, distance himself from the German "nihilist" philosopher Nietzsche. Foucault always maintained emphatically that he was a "Nietzschean." The novel, critical approach he brought to the study of the history of ideas and practice, which he referred to as "archaeologi-cal" and later "genealogical," was a study, like Nietzsche's own Genealogy of Morals (1887), of the ceaseless power struggles that generated dominant configurations of truth and knowledge in successive human communities. The first volume of Foucault's projected six-volume History of Sexuality, a project left incomplete at his death in 1984, was published in 1976 as Les volontés de savoir, or "the will to knowledge," and an indication of the unique amalgamation of power and knowledge that would characterize Foucault's later work on politics and society. "Discursive constructs," Foucault would argue, form "regimes" or power structures, which