

foucault the birth of biopolitics

Foucault The Birth of Biopolitics: Understanding Power and Life in Modern Society

foucault the birth of biopolitics marks a crucial moment in the thought of Michel Foucault, one of the most influential philosophers and social theorists of the 20th century. This concept opens a compelling window into how modern states exercise power over populations, not just through laws or force but by regulating life itself. Diving into Foucault's lectures and writings on biopolitics reveals a complex interplay between government, economics, and the management of human life that continues to shape contemporary political and social thought.

What Is Biopolitics? Exploring the Basics

Before delving deeper into "Foucault the birth of biopolitics," it's essential to grasp what biopolitics means in his framework. Unlike traditional forms of political power that focus on territory and sovereignty, biopolitics concerns itself with populations as living beings. It emphasizes the administration, regulation, and optimization of life processes – birth rates, health, mortality, and productivity – across an entire population.

From Sovereignty to Biopower

Foucault contrasts biopolitics with the older model of sovereignty, where the monarch's power was often symbolized by the right to decide life and death. In the modern era, power becomes subtler and more pervasive, focusing on fostering life rather than merely controlling it. This shift is what he terms "biopower," a form of power that manages life through institutions such as public health systems, education, and economic policies.

The Birth of Biopolitics: Historical Context and Development

The phrase "Foucault the birth of biopolitics" often refers to his 1979–1980 lectures at the Collège de France, where he extensively examined the emergence of biopolitics in the context of neoliberalism and governmentality. These lectures are pivotal because Foucault moves beyond his earlier work on disciplinary power to analyze how governments shape populations through economic rationalities.

Neoliberalism and Governmentality

A significant part of Foucault's analysis in "the birth of biopolitics" is his investigation into neoliberalism, especially the German ordoliberalism and American neoliberalism schools of thought. Unlike classical liberalism, which advocates for a hands-off market, neoliberalism promotes active government intervention to create market conditions and optimize economic competition. This economic theory becomes a tool of biopolitics, where the state governs not just by laws but through economic mechanisms affecting life itself.

The Role of the Market in Biopolitics

Foucault highlights how neoliberalism reconceptualizes individuals as entrepreneurs of themselves, responsible for their own human capital. This shift ties the economic and political spheres closely, making the market a central domain for biopolitical control. In this sense, "Foucault the birth of biopolitics" unveils the intricate ways in which economic theories influence governance and the management of populations.

Implications of Biopolitics in Contemporary Society

Understanding "Foucault the birth of biopolitics" helps unpack many modern phenomena, from public health initiatives to surveillance and social welfare policies. Biopolitics shapes how governments handle crises, manage resources, and influence individual behavior on a massive scale.

Public Health and the Management of Life

One of the clearest examples of biopolitics in action is public health. Vaccination programs, sanitation efforts, and health education campaigns are not only about improving well-being but also about regulating populations to increase productivity and social stability. The COVID-19 pandemic further demonstrated biopolitical dynamics, as governments worldwide implemented strategies to control the spread of the virus, balancing individual freedoms with population health.

Surveillance and Control

Biopolitics also intersects with surveillance technologies that monitor and regulate populations. From biometric data collection to digital tracking, the

state's capacity to manage populations expands, raising questions about privacy and individual autonomy. Foucault's insights provide a critical lens to understand these developments as part of a broader biopolitical strategy.

Foucault's Legacy: Why "The Birth of Biopolitics" Still Matters

By exploring "Foucault the birth of biopolitics," scholars and activists gain tools to critique and analyze the complexities of modern governance. His work challenges us to see power not just as top-down oppression but as a diffuse set of practices embedded in everyday life, institutions, and policies.

Critical Perspectives on Power and Life

Foucault's concept encourages a reevaluation of traditional political theories by emphasizing the productive aspects of power – how it creates norms, shapes identities, and governs conduct. This approach is invaluable for fields such as sociology, political science, and public policy, providing a nuanced understanding of how life itself becomes a political object.

Biopolitics and Social Justice

Moreover, understanding biopolitics helps highlight disparities in how different populations are subjected to regulatory regimes. Issues like racial profiling, healthcare inequality, and reproductive rights can be seen through a biopolitical lens, revealing the uneven distribution of power over life and death.

Practical Insights: Applying Foucault's Biopolitics Today

For those interested in applying Foucault's ideas, recognizing the birth of biopolitics encourages critical engagement with current political and social issues. Here are some ways to integrate this perspective:

- **Analyze policy through a biopolitical lens:** Consider how laws and regulations shape the life conditions of populations, not just abstract rights.
- **Critique neoliberal frameworks:** Question how economic rationalities

influence governance and individual responsibilities.

- **Examine surveillance practices:** Reflect on the implications of data collection and monitoring in controlling populations.
- **Advocate for equitable health policies:** Use biopolitics to highlight and address inequalities in access to healthcare and social services.

Engaging with "Foucault the birth of biopolitics" is thus not merely an academic exercise but a way to better understand and navigate the power structures that shape our lives.

The exploration of "Foucault the birth of biopolitics" reveals how power operates in the modern world, weaving together economics, governance, and life itself. This framework continues to inspire critical thought and practical action, inviting us to question the ways societies manage, control, and sustain human populations in ever-evolving political landscapes.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is Michel Foucault's concept of biopolitics in 'The Birth of Biopolitics'?

In 'The Birth of Biopolitics,' Michel Foucault describes biopolitics as a form of power that regulates populations through an array of institutions, practices, and knowledge aimed at managing life, health, and bodies on a collective scale.

How does 'The Birth of Biopolitics' relate to neoliberalism?

Foucault's 'The Birth of Biopolitics' analyzes neoliberalism as a political rationality that transforms the role of the state and market, emphasizing individual entrepreneurship and economic governance, which reshapes biopolitical control.

What distinguishes biopolitics from traditional forms of political power according to Foucault?

Biopolitics differs from traditional sovereign power by focusing on managing life and populations rather than exercising the right to take life; it operates through regulatory controls, public health, and social welfare policies.

How does Foucault link the concept of governmentality to biopolitics in 'The Birth of Biopolitics'?

Foucault connects governmentality to biopolitics by showing how governing extends beyond the state to include various institutions and techniques aimed at optimizing life and managing populations economically and socially.

What role does the concept of 'homo economicus' play in Foucault's analysis in 'The Birth of Biopolitics'?

In 'The Birth of Biopolitics,' Foucault discusses 'homo economicus' as the economic man who acts rationally in economic terms, highlighting how neoliberalism reshapes individuals as entrepreneurial actors within biopolitical governance.

How does Foucault's 'The Birth of Biopolitics' contribute to understanding contemporary political economy?

Foucault's work offers a critical framework to understand how neoliberalism restructures power relations, governance, and economic policies, revealing how economic rationality permeates political decision-making and biopolitical control.

What methodologies does Foucault employ in 'The Birth of Biopolitics' to analyze biopolitics and neoliberalism?

Foucault utilizes genealogical and archaeological methods, tracing the historical emergence of neoliberalism and biopolitical governance through lectures and critical examination of political theories and practices.

How does 'The Birth of Biopolitics' expand on Foucault's earlier work on power and knowledge?

This work extends Foucault's analysis of power by focusing on economic rationality and market-based governance as new modalities of biopolitical control, linking knowledge, power, and economic liberalism in shaping modern societies.

Why is 'The Birth of Biopolitics' considered a

foundational text for studies in biopower and neoliberalism?

'The Birth of Biopolitics' is foundational because it critically examines the intersection of economic theory, governance, and biopolitical regulation, providing insights into how neoliberalism reconfigures power structures and population management.

Additional Resources

Foucault The Birth of Biopolitics: Exploring Power, Governance, and the Modern State

foucault the birth of biopolitics marks a pivotal moment in the understanding of power dynamics within modern societies. Michel Foucault, one of the most influential philosophers and social theorists of the 20th century, introduced the concept of biopolitics as part of his broader analysis of power relations and governance. His lectures, particularly those compiled in "The Birth of Biopolitics," delve into the intricate ways in which power operates beyond traditional political mechanisms, encompassing the administration of life, populations, and economic policies. This article undertakes a detailed examination of Foucault's notion of biopolitics, its historical context, theoretical framework, and enduring relevance in contemporary political thought.

Understanding Biopolitics: Foucault's Theoretical Framework

Foucault's concept of biopolitics emerges from his broader investigation into how modern states exercise power over individuals and populations. Unlike classical sovereignty, which often centered on the right to take life or let live, biopolitics focuses on the power to "make live and let die," overseeing the biological existence of populations. This shift represents a transformation in the mechanisms of governance—where power is exercised through regulatory controls on health, reproduction, mortality, and life expectancy.

In "The Birth of Biopolitics," Foucault further develops his analysis by linking biopolitics to neoliberalism, exploring how economic rationality intersects with governmental strategies. He posits that biopolitics is not merely about controlling life but also about shaping the conditions under which life can be optimized in economic and political terms. This interdisciplinary approach highlights the convergence of political theory, economics, and social control.

The Historical Emergence of Biopolitics

Tracing the genealogy of biopolitics, Foucault situates its origins in the 18th and 19th centuries with the rise of modern states and the development of population statistics, public health measures, and welfare policies. The management of populations became a central concern for governments seeking to enhance productivity and maintain social order.

Foucault contrasts biopolitics with classical liberalism and laissez-faire economics, which advocated minimal state intervention. However, as neoliberalism emerged, the state's role transformed to facilitate market mechanisms while simultaneously managing life through various regulatory frameworks. This paradox underscores the complexity of biopolitical governance, where freedom and control coexist.

Neoliberalism and the Birth of Biopolitics

A critical component of "The Birth of Biopolitics" is Foucault's exploration of neoliberalism, particularly the German ordoliberal and American neoliberal models. He examines how neoliberalism reconfigures the relationship between the individual and the state, emphasizing economic freedom alongside the necessity for governmental frameworks that sustain market competition.

Foucault's analysis reveals that neoliberalism extends biopolitical control by promoting the idea of the "entrepreneurial self," where individuals are encouraged to govern themselves in accordance with market principles. This self-governance aligns with the state's interest in managing populations efficiently, creating a form of power that is both pervasive and diffuse.

Key Features and Implications of Biopolitics

The concept of biopolitics carries significant implications for understanding contemporary governance, public policy, and social relations. Several core features define this mode of power:

- **Regulation of Life Processes:** Biopolitics entails direct intervention in biological and social processes, such as birth rates, mortality, health, and disease control.
- **Population Management:** Power is exercised on populations rather than solely on individuals, focusing on demographic trends and collective well-being.
- **Integration with Economic Policies:** Biopolitical governance often aligns with economic objectives, optimizing labor forces and productivity.

- **Disciplinary Mechanisms:** Alongside regulatory controls, disciplinary institutions like schools, hospitals, and prisons function as sites where biopolitical power is enacted.

These features highlight how biopolitics transcends traditional notions of sovereignty and law, introducing subtler forms of control that permeate everyday life. The implications resonate in debates on public health, bioethics, immigration policies, and surveillance practices.

Comparative Perspectives: Foucault vs. Contemporary Theorists

While Foucault laid the groundwork for biopolitical theory, subsequent scholars have expanded and critiqued his ideas. Giorgio Agamben, for example, focuses on the concept of "bare life" and the state of exception, where biopolitical power can lead to exclusion and dehumanization. Roberto Esposito explores the communal dimensions of biopolitics, emphasizing immunity and collective identity.

Foucault's analysis remains distinctive for its emphasis on the interplay between economic rationality and life governance. His work provides a nuanced lens for understanding how liberalism and neoliberalism shape biopolitical regimes differently, with ongoing relevance for analyzing globalization, neoliberal reforms, and state interventions.

Contemporary Relevance of Foucault's Biopolitics

In today's world, the birth of biopolitics as conceptualized by Foucault continues to illuminate critical issues related to governance and the management of populations. The COVID-19 pandemic, for instance, has underscored biopolitical dynamics as governments implement public health measures, vaccination campaigns, and mobility restrictions, balancing individual freedoms with collective health.

Moreover, debates around data privacy, genetic engineering, and digital surveillance evoke biopolitical concerns about how states and corporations regulate life and bodies in new technological contexts. Foucault's insights encourage ongoing scrutiny of power structures that shape life at both micro and macro levels.

Pros and Cons of Biopolitical Governance

Like any form of governance, biopolitics presents both advantages and challenges:

1. Pros:

- Enhances public health and safety through targeted interventions.
- Facilitates social welfare policies aimed at improving life expectancy and quality of life.
- Enables efficient management of economic resources linked to population dynamics.

2. Cons:

- Risk of infringing on individual freedoms and privacy.
- Potential for exclusionary practices and discrimination under the guise of population management.
- May reinforce inequalities by prioritizing economic productivity over social justice.

Acknowledging these dimensions helps policymakers and scholars critically assess the ethical and political ramifications of biopolitical strategies.

Foucault's exploration of the birth of biopolitics offers a foundational framework to understand the evolving modalities of power in the modern state. His analysis reveals how governance increasingly focuses on life itself—not merely as a biological fact but as a domain of political and economic intervention. This perspective remains vital for interrogating the complexities of contemporary governance and the subtle operations of control that define our social and political landscapes.

[Foucault The Birth Of Biopolitics](#)

foucault the birth of biopolitics: The Birth of Biopolitics M. Foucault, Arnold I. Davidson, Graham Burchell, 2008-04-17 Foucault continues on the theme of his 1978 course by focusing on the study of liberal and neo-liberal forms of government and concentrating in particular on two forms of

neo-liberalism: German post-war liberalism and the liberalism of the Chicago School.

foucault the birth of biopolitics: The Birth of Biopolitics Michel Foucault, 2010 Foucault continues on the theme of his 1978 course by focusing on the study of liberal and neo-liberal forms of government and concentrating in particular on two forms of neo-liberalism: German post-war liberalism and the liberalism of the Chicago School.

foucault the birth of biopolitics: *The Birth of Biopolitics* Michel Foucault, 2009

foucault the birth of biopolitics: *Foucault, Neoliberalism, and Beyond* Stephen W. Sawyer, Daniel Steinmetz-Jenkins, 2019-04-30 Few philosophers have garnered as much attention globally as Michel Foucault. But even within this wide reception, the consideration given to his relationship to neoliberalism has been noteworthy. However, the debate over this relationship has given rise to a great deal of polemics and confusion. This volume brings together leading figures in the field to provide a reliable guide to one of the most controversial subjects in recent continental thought. It puts across the case for Foucault's importance for post-colonial, race, queer and feminist studies, among other areas, and opens up his relationship to neoliberalism to offer a broader picture of tensions brewing within the left more generally.

foucault the birth of biopolitics: *Foucault and Neoliberalism* Daniel Zamora, Michael C. Behrent, 2016-01-06 Michel Foucault's death in 1984 coincided with the fading away of the hopes for social transformation that characterized the postwar period. In the decades following his death, neoliberalism has triumphed and attacks on social rights have become increasingly bold. If Foucault was not a direct witness of these years, his work on neoliberalism is nonetheless prescient: the question of liberalism occupies an important place in his last works. Since his death, Foucault's conceptual apparatus has acquired a central, even dominant position for a substantial segment of the world's intellectual left. However, as the contributions to this volume demonstrate, Foucault's attitude towards neoliberalism was at least equivocal. Far from leading an intellectual struggle against free market orthodoxy, Foucault seems in many ways to endorse it. How is one to understand his radical critique of the welfare state, understood as an instrument of biopower? Or his support for the pandering anti-Marxism of the so-called new philosophers? Is it possible that Foucault was seduced by neoliberalism? This question is not merely of biographical interest: it forces us to confront more generally the mutations of the left since May 1968, the disillusionment of the years that followed and the profound transformations in the French intellectual field over the past thirty years. To understand the 1980s and the neoliberal triumph is to explore the most ambiguous corners of the intellectual left through one of its most important figures.

foucault the birth of biopolitics: *Foucault's Analysis of Modern Governmentality* Thomas Lemke, 2019-02-26 Lemke offers the most comprehensive and systematic account of Michel Foucault's work on power and government from 1970 until his death in 1984. He convincingly argues, using material that has only partly been translated into English, that Foucault's concern with ethics and forms of subjectivation is always already integrated into his political concerns and his analytics of power. The book also shows how the concept of government was taken up in different lines of research in France before it gave rise to governmentality studies in the Anglophone world. *A Critique of Political Reason: Foucault's Analysis of Modern Governmentality* provides a clear and well-structured exposition that is theoretically challenging but also accessible for a wider audience. Thus, the book can be read both as an original examination of Foucault's concept of government and as a general introduction to his genealogy of power.

foucault the birth of biopolitics: *The Quiet Violence of Empire* Wesley Attewell, 2023-04-11 How the U.S. empire-state transformed post-1945 Afghanistan into a key site for reimagining development Established in 1961 by President Kennedy, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) is often viewed as an extension of the security state, playing a constant role on the ground in Afghanistan since the early sixties. *The Quiet Violence of Empire* traces USAID's long and bloody history of development work in the region, revealing an empirically rich account of the transnational entanglements of imperialism and racial capitalism. Wesley Attewell carefully analyzes three chronological moments of development as counterinsurgency in

action: the Helmand Valley Project, the Soviet-Afghan conflict, and the post-9/11 occupation in Afghanistan. These case studies expose how USAID's very public commitment to bringing seemingly inclusionary forms of self-help, technical assistance, and market development to Afghanistan has been undergirded by longer-standing infrastructures of race war and racial management. Attewell exposes how one of the net effects of USAID's development mission to Afghanistan has been to constrain the life chances of Afghan beneficiaries while simultaneously diverting development capital back to U.S. contractors, deftly underscoring the notion of development as a form of slow violence. *The Quiet Violence of Empire* asks the critical question: how might we refuse the ruse of USAID and its endlessly deferred promise of development? Thinking relationally across the fields of human geography, global studies, and critical ethnic studies, it uncovers the explicitly racial underpinnings of international development theory and praxis.

foucault the birth of biopolitics: A History of Modern Political Thought Gary K. Browning, 2016 How are we to understand past political thinkers? Is it a matter simply of reading their texts again and again? Do we have to relate past texts of political thought to the contexts in which ideas were composed and in which the aims of past thinkers were formulated? Or should past political theories be deconstructed so as to uncover not what their authors maintain, but what the texts reveal? In this book, theories of interpreting past political thinkers are examined and the interpretive methods of a range of theories are reviewed, including those of Hegel, Marx, Oakeshott, Collingwood, the Cambridge School, Foucault, Derrida and Gadamer. The application of these theories of interpretation to notable modern political theorists, Machiavelli, Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Kant, Hegel, Marx, Bentham, Mill, Nietzsche and Beauvoir is then used as a way of understanding modern political thought and of assessing interpretive theories of past political thought. The result is a book which sees the history of modern political thought as more than a procession of political theories but rather as a reflection on the meaning of past political thought and its interpretation. It provides a way of reading the history of modern political thought, in which the question of interpretation matters both for understanding how we interpret the past but also for considering what it means to undertake political thinking.

foucault the birth of biopolitics: Theatrical Topographies Sarah M. Misemer, 2017-06-05 The economic crisis in Argentina in 2001-2002 that spilled over into Uruguay causing fiscal and political problems is the starting point for my research on space and theater, and it demonstrates why we must look at the River Plate in both global and local ways. Connections among monetary policies, industries, and legal, social, and political movements mean that national spaces like Uruguay's are fraught with tensions that come from both within and outside of borders. Recent economic crises like the one that is occurring in Greece, further demonstrate how nation states and trade blocks must constantly negotiate power as they toggle between national and international pressures. Nation states are being prompted to reconceive perspectives on governance that fall away from the parameters of Westphalian autonomy and reconcile their views with trends that instead require thinking about power as a network with shifting centers. The introduction launches the study by addressing these political and economic trends, the spatial turn in theater and performance studies, the rise of multiculturalism, and also examines the Uruguayan historical context of the post-dictatorship and impunity laws that pit national sovereignty against international human rights laws. These crises are enacted on the Uruguayan stage and contextualized through networks and spatial topographies, intertextualities on the page, explorations of history and memory, and ultimately notions of identity in four areas: the postdramatic and economic realm (chapter one: Peveroni), cultural geography and psychogeography (chapter two: Morena), midrash and questions of human rights and growing fascist trends (chapter three: Sanguinetti), and finally in mapmaking on the stage through mise-en-perf/performise and "wayfinding" through sites of contested power (chapter four: Calderón). The concluding chapter (Blanco) looks at the reinterpretation of Greek tragedy as a commentary on the messy process of democratization. Here, access to the polis and power are problematized through the lens of international sex trafficking and gendered roles that exclude portions of the populace from participation in the process of self-governance.

foucault the birth of biopolitics: *Biopolitical Screens* Pasi Väliaho, 2023-08-15 An investigation of the aesthetics and politics of new visual media under twenty-first-century capitalism, from console games to virtual reality to video installation art. In *Biopolitical Screens*, Pasi Väliaho charts and conceptualizes the imagery that composes our affective and conceptual reality under twenty-first-century capitalism. Väliaho investigates the role screen media play in the networks that today harness human minds and bodies—the ways that images animated on console game platforms, virtual reality technologies, and computer screens capture human potential by plugging it into arrangements of finance, war, and the consumption of entertainment. Drawing on current neuroscience and political and economic thought, Väliaho argues that these images work to shape the atomistic individuals who populate the neoliberal world of accumulation and war. Väliaho bases his argument on a broad notion of the image as something both visible and sayable, detectable in various screen platforms but also in scientific perception and theoretical ideas. After laying out the conceptual foundations of the book, Väliaho offers focused and detailed investigations of the current visual economy. He considers the imagery of first-person shooter video games as tools of “neuropower”; explores the design and construction of virtual reality technologies to treat post-traumatic stress disorder in veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan; and examines three instances of video installation art that have the power to disrupt the dominant regime of sensibility rather than reinforce it.

foucault the birth of biopolitics: *Foucault and the Modern International* Philippe Bonditti, Didier Bigo, Frédéric Gros, 2017-02-07 This book addresses the possibilities of analyzing the modern international through the thought of Michel Foucault. The broad range of authors brought together in this volume question four of the most self-evident characteristics of our contemporary world—'international', 'neoliberal', 'biopolitical' and 'global'—and thus fill significant gaps in both international and Foucault studies. The chapters discuss what a Foucauldian perspective does or does not offer for understanding international phenomena while also questioning many appropriations of Foucault's work. This transdisciplinary volume will serve as a reference for both scholars and students of international relations, international political sociology, international political economy, political theory/philosophy and critical theory more generally.

foucault the birth of biopolitics: *Religion in the Neoliberal Age* François Gauthier, 2016-04-08 This book, together with a complementary volume 'Religion in Consumer Society', focuses on religion, neoliberalism and consumer society; offering an overview of an emerging field of research in the study of contemporary religion. Claiming that we are entering a new phase of state-religion relations, the editors examine how this is historically anchored in modernity but affected by neoliberalization and globalization of society and social life. Seemingly distant developments, such as marketization and commoditization of religion as well as legalization and securitization of social conflicts, are transforming historical expressions of 'religion' and 'religiosity' yet these changes are seldom if ever understood as forming a coherent, structured and systemic ensemble. 'Religion in the Neoliberal Age' includes an extensive introduction framing the research area, and linking it to existing scholarship, before looking at four key issues: 1. How changes in state structures have empowered new modes of religious activity in welfare production and the delivery of a range of state services; 2. How are religion-state relations transforming under the pressures of globalization and neoliberalism; 3. How historical churches and their administrations are undergoing change due to structural changes in society, and what new forms of religious body are emerging; 4. How have law and security become new areas for solving religious conflicts. Outlining changes in both the political-institutional and cultural spheres, the contributors offer an international overview of developments in different countries and state of the art representation of religion in the new global political economy.

foucault the birth of biopolitics: *The Bloomsbury Handbook of Literary and Cultural Theory* Jeffrey R. Di Leo, 2018-11-15 The Bloomsbury Handbook of Literary and Cultural Theory is the most comprehensive available survey of the state of theory in the 21st century. With chapters written by the world's leading scholars in their field, this book explores the latest thinking in traditional schools

such as feminist, Marxist, historicist, psychoanalytic, and postcolonial criticism and new areas of research in ecocriticism, biopolitics, affect studies, posthumanism, materialism, and many other fields. In addition, the book includes a substantial A-to-Z compendium of key words and important thinkers in contemporary theory, making this an essential resource for scholars of literary and cultural theory at all levels.

foucault the birth of biopolitics: *The Ethics of Resistance* Drew M. Dalton, 2018-08-23 Opening a new debate on ethical reasoning after Kant, Drew Dalton addresses the problem of the absolute in ethical and political thought. Attacking the foundation of European philosophical morality, he critiques the idea that in order for ethical judgement to have any real power, it must attempt to discover and affirm some conception of the absolute good. Without rejecting the essential role the absolute plays within ethical reasoning, Dalton interrogates the assumed value of the absolute. Dalton brings some of the most influential contemporary philosophical traditions into dialogue with each other: speculative realists like Badiou and Meillassoux; phenomenologists, including Husserl, Heidegger, and Levinas; German Idealists, especially Kant and Schelling; psychoanalysts Freud and Lacan; and finally, post-structuralists, specifically Foucault, Deleuze, and Ranciere. The relevance of these thinkers to concrete socio-political problems is shown through reflections on the Holocaust, suicide bombings, the rise of neo-liberalism and neo-nationalism, as well as rampant consumerism and racism. This book re-defines ethical reasoning as that which refuses absolutes and resists what Milton's devil in *Paradise Lost* called the "tyranny of heaven." Against traditional ethical reasoning, Dalton sees evil not as a moral failure, but as the result of an all too easy assent to the absolute; an assent which can only be countered through active resistance. For Dalton, resistance to the absolute is the sole channel through which the good can be defined.

foucault the birth of biopolitics: *Science and Christian Ethics* Paul Scherz, 2019-05-09 There is a growing crisis in scientific research characterized by failures to reproduce experimental results, fraud, lack of innovation, and burn-out. In *Science and Christian Ethics*, Paul Scherz traces these problems to the drive by governments and business to make scientists into competitive entrepreneurs who use their research results to stimulate economic growth. The result is a competitive environment aimed at commodifying the world. In order to confront this problem of character, Scherz examines the alternative Aristotelian and Stoic models of reforming character, found in the works of Alasdair MacIntyre and Michel Foucault. Against many prominent virtue ethicists, he argues that what individual scientists need is a regime of spiritual exercises, such as those found in Stoicism as it was adopted by Christianity, in order to refocus on the good of truth in the face of institutional pressure. His book illuminates pressing issues in research ethics, moral education, and anthropology.

foucault the birth of biopolitics: *Undoing the Demos* Wendy Brown, 2015-02-06 This is a book for the age of resistance, for the occupiers of the squares, for the generation of Occupy Wall Street. The premier radical political philosopher of our time offers a devastating critique of the way neoliberalism has hollowed out democracy.

foucault the birth of biopolitics: *Contagious* Priscilla Wald, 2008-01-09 Shows how narratives of contagion structure communities of belonging and how the lessons of these narratives are incorporated into sociological theories of cultural transmission and community formation.

foucault the birth of biopolitics: *The Ascendancy of Finance* Joseph Vogl, 2017-09-05 The global financial crisis of 2008 ushered in a system of informal decision-making in the grey zone between economics and politics. Legitimized by a rhetoric of emergency, ad hoc bodies have usurped democratically elected governments. In line with the neoliberal credo, the recent crisis has been used to realize the politically impossible and to re-align executive power with the interests of the finance industry. In this important book, Joseph Vogl offers a much longer perspective on these developments, showing how the dynamics of modern finance capitalism have always rested on a complex and constantly evolving relationship between private creditors and the state. Combining historical and theoretical analysis, Vogl argues that over the last three centuries, finance has become a fourth estate, marked by the systematic interconnection of treasury and finance, of

political and private economic interests. Against this historical background, Vogl explores the latest phase in the financialization of government, namely the dramatic transfer of power from states to markets in the latter half of the 20th century. From the liberalization of credit and capital markets to the privatization of social security, he shows how policy has actively enabled a restructuring of the economy around the financial sector. Political systems are imprisoned by the regime of finance, while the corporate model suffuses society, enclosing populations in the production of financial capital. The Ascendancy of Finance provides valuable and unsettling insight into the genesis of modern power and where it truly resides.

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