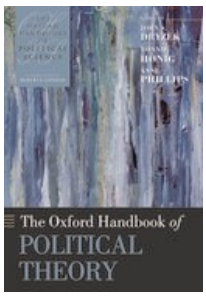

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CHAPTER

3 Power After Foucault

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Abstract

This article examines changes in the conception of political power after Michel Foucault. It suggests that while Foucault has politicized certain practices and knowledge fields that were previously insulated from inquiry into the interests shaping them, such politicization need not be conflated with political life *tout court*. It argues that Foucault's formulations of power, and especially of government and governmentality, have made this distinction extremely difficult. However, rather than giving up the distinction on the one hand, or rejecting Foucault's problematization of it on the other, political theory after Foucault is faced with the task of delineating it anew.

Keywords: political power, Michel Foucault, political life, government, political theory

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THE English noun, power, derives from the Latin, *potere*, which stresses potentiality and means "to be able." However, origins may be as disorienting as they are helpful in this case, especially in understanding how power has been reconceptualized by French critical thought in recent decades. In its emphasis on concerted agency, the Latin root obscures the significance of power's dispersion, circulation, and microphysical mechanics, its often automatic rather than intentional workings, and its detailed imbrication with knowledge, language, and thought. Moreover, the etymological origin of power suggests the importance of power as a quality (an ability) which, however important, diverts appreciation of power as a relation and one that induces effects, especially in the making of human subjects and social orders. It is from power's effects, including unintended ones, that many recent theories of power have insisted the presence of power be read, an insistence that underscores an incommensurability between what the putatively powerful desire or intend and what power does. The contemporary thesis that subjects are socially constructed by power comes hand in glove with the decoupling of power from familiar notions of agency as sovereignty: not only does
p. 66 the social construction of subjects constitute a limit ↳ on the sovereignty of subject, but when power is understood to flow along discourses and course through populations, it ceases to appear as the property of individuals or institutions. Hence the "to be able" of power's etymology does more than place important

aspects of power in the shadows; it forthrightly misleads in its conjuration of an actor behind the action of power, "a doer behind the deed" in Nietzsche's phrase (Nietzsche 1967, 45).

Many strains in contemporary cultural theory and especially in post-structuralism have contributed to the recent reconceptualizations of power suggested above. The past fifty years of Continental thought—not only in philosophy but also in structuralist and post-structuralist linguistics, anthropology, semiotics, literary theory, science studies, psychoanalysis, and historiography—have radically reconceived the operations, mechanics, logics, venues, and vehicles of power.[1] On the one hand, power has been discerned in relations among words, juxtapositions of images, discourses of scientific truth, micro-organizations of bodies and gestures, in social orchestrations of pain and pleasure, sickness, fear, health, and suffering. On the other hand, these discernments have undermined conventional formulations of power—those that equate power with rule, law, wealth, or violence. They have also undermined strong distinctions between power and knowledge, and between power and ideology: If power operates through norms, and not only through law and force, and if norms are borne by words, images, and the built environment, then popular discourses, market interpellations, and spatial organization are as much a vehicle for power as are troops, bosses, prime ministers, or police. Moreover, if power constructs human subjects and does not simply act upon them, if power brings human worlds into existence and does not simply contain or limit them, then power is above all generative and constantly exceeds itself—it is neither spatially bound nor temporally static. Power also exceeds and is distinguishable from intentions imputed to it; it is not, as convention
p. 67 would have it, simply about enactment of the will, though it may well be tactical, strategic, ↳ and logical. How to think strategy without human design? Tactics without perpetrators? Logics without aim?

Enter Michel Foucault.[2] Well-known for his insistence that power is "everywhere," this insistence is not a claim that power equally and indiscriminately touches all elements of the social fabric or that power belongs equally to everyone. Rather, this formulation displaces one in which power emerges only in explicit scenes of domination or rule-giving. Instead, power is understood to construct and organize subjects in a variety of domains and discourses, including those ordinarily imagined to be free of power, for example science, sexual desire, or the arts. Attention is also shifted from questions about who holds power to questions about forms and operations of power, and Foucault is especially interested in those forms and operations that "categorize the individual, mark him by his own individuality, attach him to his own identity, impose a law of truth on him which he must recognize and which others must recognize in him ... a form of power which makes individuals subjects" (Foucault 1982, 212). In addition, this formulation displaces one in which domination is thought to inhere only in visible regimes of cruelty or injustice, emphasizing instead multi-faceted subjectification and subject production by social norms and practices.

These displacements are most easily grasped by reviewing Foucault's critique of what he takes to be three conventional models of power: the sovereignty model, the commodity model, and the repressive model. These models are not radically distinct; not only are they interwoven with one another, they address different moments of power. Sovereignty primarily refers to power's putative source, commodity refers to power's movement, while repression concerns the nature of power's action. The sovereignty model equates power with rule and law; the commodity model casts power as tangible and transferable, like wealth; and the repressive model assumes the action of power to be only negative, repressive, constraining. Foucault's alternative to these understandings requires what he calls an "analytics" of power that centers on an appreciation of power's productive, regulatory, and dispersed or capillary character—its irrigation of the social order as opposed to an imagined positioning of power as on top of, visibly stratifying, or forcibly
p. 68 containing its subject (Foucault 1980*a*, 88–107). In the ↳ following, Foucault's critique of each model of power is considered in further detail.

1 The Sovereignty Model

Although Foucault's critique of sovereignty extends from the subject to the state, the sovereign model of power is the most common *political* notion of power; it casts the problem of power in terms of ruling and being ruled, or in Lenin's formulation, "who does what to whom." Power in this view is thought to be contained in sovereign individuals or institutions and to be exercised over others by these individuals and institutions. Not only monarchical rule but representative democracy as it appears in social contract theory from Hobbes to Rawls is premised upon the sovereign model of power. Power is equated with rule, and the making and enforcement of law is taken to be its sign. We are presumed to be sovereign subjects when we are self-legislating, which is to say that we are presumed to will and hence legislate for ourselves when another is not legislating for us. Thus, social contractarian formulations of popular sovereignty rely upon the mutually reinforcing conceits of individual sovereignty and state sovereignty, each of which, paradoxically, is taken to have the power to confer sovereignty on the other.

Foucault challenges the sovereign model of power first by challenging the a priori of sovereignty itself, insisting instead that the conditions of sovereignty or imagined sovereignty are themselves suffused with power. Thus, sovereignty is revealed as an effect or emblem of power rather than its source, a move that recasts sovereignty from a universal wellspring of state formation and individuality to a historically specific expression and dissimulation of power relations. At the same time, sovereignty is exposed as a fiction, neither the origin of power nor in control of the field of power's operation to the degree that the conventional model suggests. Second, Foucault argues, sovereign power is a small rather than governing feature of modern political life and governance; modern political thought's pre-occupation with sovereign power has led it to overlook the range of subjectifying and often unavowed powers that coexist with
p. 69 legitimate forms of sovereignty (Foucault 1980*a*). Sovereignty, which defines political power as a ↳ matter of rule, blinds us to the powers that organize modern polities and modern subjects.

2 The Commodity Model

The commodity model of power is predominantly an *economic* understanding of power, although it has substantial relevance to conventional formulations of political domination. In the commodity model, power is thoroughly material and is a transferable or circulating good. Although Foucault does not resolutely hold Marx to this model (indeed, Marx's move to derive all social power from labor anticipates Foucault's insistence on the *productive* and *relational* character of power), the Marxist notion of labor power as extractable, commodifiable, and constituting the basis of capital and hence the power of capitalism, inevitably partakes of an understanding of power as a commodity. But so also does the idea of sovereignty rely on a view of power as commodifiable: The very possibility of being able to transfer sovereignty from one king to another, or to divest the king of sovereignty and distribute it to the people—the understanding of these acts *as* transfers or divestments—assumes the commodifiability of power. Thus, social contractarians draw on the commodity model of power both to theorize the legitimacy of the social contract and to articulate liberty in a liberal democratic frame. The commodity model of power also undergirds social analyses that treat some groups as having power and others as lacking it, analyses that treat powerlessness as the necessary corollary of power, or analyses that understand power as equivalent to privilege that can either be exercised or surrendered depending on the moral commitments of the subject in question.

Foucault challenges this formulation of power as an object, a transferable substance external to and hence potentially alienable from the subject who is said to hold it. He argues that power is constitutive of subjects, not simply wielded by them; that it operates in the form of relations among subjects, and is never merely held by them; that it "irrigates" society and is not an object within society; and that it travels along threads

p. 70 of discourse by which we are interpellated and which we also speak, thereby confounding distinctions ↳ between subjects and objects of power, or between agents, vehicles, and targets of power (Foucault 1980*a*).

3 The Repressive Model

The repressive model of power is the most common psychological notion of power, although like the commodity model, it is also part of what the sovereign model draws upon. What Foucault names the "repressive hypothesis" in *The History of Sexuality* identifies power inherently with repression or restriction, with "saying no" (Foucault 1978). The repressive hypothesis implies that the aim of institutional and especially state power is either containment of desire *tout court* (Freud) or containment of the natural passions and lawlessness of the body politic (Hobbes).

Foucault's challenge to the repressive hypothesis is fourfold: (1) power is productive rather than simply repressive, that is, power *brings into being* meanings, subjects, and social orders—these are effects of power rather than its material or its a priori; (2) power and freedom are not opposites insofar as there is no subject, and hence no freedom, outside of power; (3) repressive models of power tacitly posit a human subject (or a human nature) untouched by power underneath power's repressive action; and (4) repression itself, far from containing desires, proliferates them (Foucault 1978, part 2). It is the critique of the repressive hypothesis that allows Foucault to develop his formulations of specifically modern varieties of power that work to one side of the state. He is especially interested in what he names biopower, which regulates life rather working through the threat of death and orders and regulates mass populations and their behaviors in a way that no repressive apparatus could rival (Foucault 1978, part 5; Foucault 1979, part 3; Foucault 2004).

Together, the conventional models of power express a conviction about power's tangible, empirical nature —its presence in a rule, an order, a person, or an institution. They also cast power as largely independent of truth and knowledge, and in that move, distinguish power from the mechanisms of its legitimation. While Foucault is careful not to equate power and knowledge, he does establish knowledge as a significant field of
p. 71 power, and truth as ↳ inherently political. "Truth is a thing of this world: it is produced only by virtue of multiple forms of constraint. And it induces regular effects of power" (Foucault 1980*b*, 131).

It is in the power/knowledge relation, and the recognition of the extent to which power operates as a field or regime of truth, that the importance of Foucault's own formulation of the concept of discourse emerges. Different from mere language or speech, for Foucault, discourse embraces a relatively bounded field of terms, categories, and beliefs expressed through statements that are commonsensical within the discourse. As an ensemble of speech practices that carry values, classifications, and meanings, discourse simultaneously constitutes a truth about subjects, and constitutes subjects in terms of this truth regime. For Foucault, discourse never merely describes but rather, creates relationships and channels of authority through the articulation of norms. Insofar as discourse simultaneously constructs, positions, and represents subjects in terms of norms and deviations posited by the discourse, representation ceases to be merely representation but is importantly constitutive of subjects and the world in which they operate. Thus representation is never innocent of power, but is rather, a crucial field of power; this in turn unsettles the possibility of a distinction between "truth" and power, and hence unsettles the possibility of truth in a modern (objectivist) idiom. Another important implication of Foucault's understanding of the truth-and subject-constituting nature of discourse is that domination or oppression can no longer be conceived in terms of total or closed systems. Rather, Foucault's depiction of the unsystematic interplay of discourses that potentially converge as well as conflict with one another means that domination is never complete, never total, never fully saturating of the social order.

Foucault's critique of conventional models of power thus challenges models that account for social *systems* of rule and replaces them with an understanding of the multiple, infinitely detailed, and above all incomplete or haphazard content of particular regimes of truth governing and constituting subjects. His insistence on the relentlessly historical nature of particular formations of power, and even particular styles or "technologies" of power, replaces an image of power governing a social totality with an image of power suffusing the present with an array of historically freighted discourses that do not harmonize or resolve in a coherent, closed system. Foucault's formulation of discourse also poses a fundamental challenge to the Marxist and neo-Marxist view of power as material and of ideology as a distorted account of that materiality.
p. 72 Rather, if ↳ discourses establish truth, and construct and position subjects in terms of that truth, then power is *inside* a discourse or truth regime rather than external to it. Discourse is not mere ideology, and ideology, if it remains a coherent concept at all (about which Foucault is dubious), is never "mere" (Foucault 1980*b*, 118). Truth is not underneath or outside representation; power is never fully tangible but, rather, is an effect of the norms issuing from particular orders of words and images, orders that are constructed as much by silences, blank spaces, and framing as by the words and images themselves.

4 Governmentality

Foucault's critique of conventional models of power and his own formulation of power as productive and dispersed rather than repressive and concentrated paves the way for a reconsideration of modern governance itself, that is, of how individuals and populations are ordered and mobilized in mass society. Foucault's particular interest pertains to what he dubs the "omnes et singulatim" (all and each) technique of modern government, its signature capacity simultaneously to gather and isolate, amass and distinguish (Foucault 1981). Modern political governance also involves a combination (but not a systemization) of micropowers and macropowers, that is, powers that operate on the body and psyche in local and often non-obvious fashion, and powers that may be more overt, centralized, and visible.

Foucault's lectures on governance in the late 1970s integrate a set of working ideas that he had been developing for some years: the critique of sovereignty (state and individual), the decentering of the state and of capital as the organizing powers of modern history (and a correspondent decentering of state theory and political economy for mapping power), the elaboration of norms, regulation, and discipline as crucial vehicles of power, the development of analyses that illuminate the production of the modern subject rather than chart its repression, the imbrication of truth and power and the importance of "regimes of truth" or rationalities, and an appreciation of the imbrication (not the identity) of power and knowledge in organizing subjects and societies. But the governance studies—and in particular the theory of
p. 73 governmentality elaborated below—do not simply integrate these ↳ concerns; rather, they are gathered into a project that moves from critiques of inadequate models and conceptualizations toward the development of a framework for apprehending the operations of modern political power and organization.

The questions of modern government, which, according to Foucault, "explode" in the sixteenth century, include "how to govern oneself, how to be governed, how to govern others, by whom the people will accept to be governed, and how to become the best possible governor" (Foucault 1991, 87). Government in this broad sense, therefore, includes but is not reducible to questions of rule, legitimacy, or state institutions; it is not only a formally political matter but is as applicable to self, family, workplace, or asylum as to public life and the state. Government involves, in Foucault's famous phrase, "the conduct of conduct," the directing and channeling of the behavior of the body individual, the body social, and the body politic by means other than force or even explicit rule (Gordon 1991, 5). Whether conducted on oneself by oneself or on a social body by a combination of political, economic, and social powers, government operates through (and molds) the capacity of the governed body to regulate its own behavior and, in this regard, paradoxically presupposes a degree of freedom on the part of the governed. At variance from exercises of domination or

force, government in Foucault's locution is perhaps best grasped as regularized orchestration, something suggested by the musical allusion in the phrase, "the conduct of conduct."

But does governing require a conductor or conductors? Govermentality, Foucault's neologism that explicitly hybridizes government and rationality, is designed to capture the uniquely modern combination of governance by institutions, knowledges, and disciplinary practices, and to accent the dispersed rather than centralized or concentrated nature of modern political governance. The neologism captures both the phenomenon of governance by particular rationalities and grasps governing itself as involving a rationality. As Foucault elaborates it, governmentality has four crucial features. First, it involves the harnessing and organizing of energies in any body—individual, mass, national, or transnational—that might otherwise be anarchic, self-destructive, or simply unproductive. And not only energies but needs, capacities, and desires are corralled, harnessed, ordered, managed, and directed by governmentality. This is part of what distinguishes it from classical conceptions of rule or domination in which subjects are presumed to be bossed by power rather than fashioned, integrated, and activated by it. Second, as the conduct of conduct,
p. 74 governmentality has a vast range of points ↳ of operation and application, from individuals to mass populations, and from particular parts of the body and psyche to appetites and ethics, work or citizenship practices. Thus, for example, discourses of health, consumerism, or safety are as or more important than discourses of rights in governing the contemporary liberal democratic subject. Third, far from being restricted to rule, law, or other kinds of visible and accountable power, governmentality works through a range of invisible and non-accountable social powers. One of Foucault's best examples here is pastoral power, a form that migrates from church to state and infiltrates workplaces as well. Pastoral power orders and controls its subjects by promoting their well-being through detailed knowledge and regulation of their behavior—simultaneous individualization and massification and a high degree of moralization of crime, sin, or failure. Fourth and related, governmentality both employs *and* infiltrates a number of discourses ordinarily conceived as unrelated to political power, governance, or the state. These include scientific discourses (including medicine, criminology, pedagogy, psychology, psychiatry, and demography), religious discourses, and popular discourses. Governmentality, therefore, draws upon without unifying, centralizing, or rendering systematic or even consistent, a range of powers and knowledges dispersed across modern societies.

Within the problematic of government and governmentality, Foucault's interest in the state is largely limited to the way in which it is "governmentalized" today. Governmentalization refers to the internal reconfiguration of the state by the project of administration and its links to external knowledges, discourses, and institutions that govern outside the rubric and purview of the state. The "governmentalization" of the state connects "the constitutional, fiscal, organizational, and judicial powers of the state ... with endeavors to manage the economic life, the health and habits of the population, the civility of the masses, and so forth" (Rose 1999, 18). If governmentality in general includes the organization and deployment of space, time, intelligibility, thought, bodies, and technologies to produce governable subjects, the governmentalization of the state both incorporates these tactical concerns into state operations and articulates with them in other, non-state domains.

Foucault's decentering of the state in formulating modern governmentality corresponds to a contrast he establishes between governing and the state. While Foucault acknowledges that the state may be "no more than a composite reality and a mythicized abstraction," Foucault takes the state to signify powers of containment and negation, a signification that does not capture the more complex and diffuse ways that
p. 75 modern citizens are produced, ↳ positioned, classified, organized, and above all, mobilized by an array of governing sites and capacities (Foucault 1991, 103; Mitchell 1991). Government, as Foucault uses it, also stands in contrast to rule; with the end of monarchy and the dissolution of the homology between family and polity in modernity, rule ceases to be the dominant modality of governance. However, Foucault is not arguing that governmentality chronologically supersedes sovereignty and rule. In his own words, "we need

to see things not in terms of the replacement of a society of sovereignty by a disciplinary society and the subsequent replacement of a disciplinary society by a society of government; in reality one has a triangle, sovereignty–discipline–government, which has as its primary target the population and its essential mechanism the apparatuses of security" (Foucault 1991, 102).

5 Theorizing Power after Foucault

While he did not set out to do so, Foucault has transformed the political theoretical landscape of power to a degree that rivals the Marx–Nietzsche–Weber effect a century earlier. Foucault's infamous insistence that "we must cut off the king's head in political theory," the guillotine for which is provided not only by his theorization of power but by his genealogies of non-sovereign and non-juridical modes of political power, opens a fantastic range of institutions, practices, knowledges, and identities to political theoretical inquiry (Foucault 1980*b*, 121). By simultaneously considering the production, mobilization, representation, and subjectification of the modern subject, he has threaded together what are conventionally distributed across economic, sociological, and political perspectives on power, and has reconceived both the location and action of power itself. Nor is this just a matter of discerning power in new places: Foucault's genealogies of the knowledge/power relations in sexuality, punishment, and other forms of subject production have also attuned us to the *circuitries* of power and governmentality between, for example, the state and the social, the scientific and the political, or the carceral, the pedagogic, and the medical (Rose 1999; Barry, Rose, and Osborne 1996; Burchell, Gordon, and Miller 1991; Dumm 1996).

p. 76 Foucault's rich account of power carried in discourse, regimes of truth, and political rationality, and his mobilization of these accounts in his formulation of governmentality, provide a post-Marxist framework for articulating the materiality of knowledge and "truth," one that escapes the aporia of the materialism/ideology opposition in Marxism and the truth value imputed to political ideology characteristic of the liberal and Hegelian traditions. The centrality and inescapability of power in Foucault's thinking locates him in a Realist tradition of political thought that runs from Thucydides and Machiavelli to Morgenthau, but his emphasis on discourse and the critique of sovereignty significantly challenges both the materialism and the state-centrism of that tradition. Foucault's theorization of resistance, and especially of resistance as a permanent accompaniment to power, also wrests Realism away from apologists and conservatives. Foucault's rich account of power not only augments the meaning and reach of the political, it also reconfigures several of its most important components; especially important among these is the notion of freedom, which now must be thought of in terms of the specific conditions and subjects produced by power rather than as a project of emancipation from power or an expression of a (non-existent) sovereign self. Hence Foucault identifies liberty as a "practice," as "what must be exercised," rather than as an unvarying principle or something guaranteed by laws and institutions (Foucault 2000, 354–5). Freedom is but one example of the way Foucault's account of discourse as a field of power that makes meaning and produces and orders subjects changes the very nature and terrain of political theoretical inquiry. After Foucault, the fiction of perennial or universal concepts—from equality to authority to terror—gives way to an appreciation of the historical and geopolitical specificity of terms of discourse, themselves both constructs and vehicles of power.

One interesting paradox of Foucault's influence on contemporary research in political theory is that it has been strongest on topics and thematics with which Foucault himself was little engaged. Post-colonial and subaltern studies scholars, feminist theorists, critical race theorists, critical legal theorists, and theorists of political subjectivity and of international relations have made extensive use of Foucault's work on power,
p. 77 discourse, and the body; however, for the most part, these were not Foucault's own research interests.[3] ↳ Democratic theorists have employed Foucault's insights on power and governmentality, and have also followed his genealogical approach to study contemporary political topics ranging from punishment to

political reason to constitutionalism.[4] These appropriations and mobilizations of Foucault's theoretical insights also suggest the importance of Foucault's thinking in opening the border between political theory and other domains of critical inquiry, including social theory, literary and visual criticism, cultural studies, cultural anthropology, and history. (See, for example, Connolly 2002; Moore, Pandian, and Kosek 2003; Dean 2000; and Butler and Scott 1992.)

Certainly there are limitations and aporias in Foucault's theorizations of power for political theory, some consequent to certain provincialisms on his part, some consequent to the fact that he was working well outside the field of political theory. Foucault's reaction against the dominance of Marxism and psychoanalysis in mid-twentieth century French critical thought resulted in his largely eschewing both capital and the psyche in theorizing modern power and governmentality. Many of his readers have been frustrated by the thin theory of subjectivity and the absence of political economy in analyses purporting to comprehend contemporary logics of subjectification and governance.[5] Similarly, Foucault's argument that disciplinary and other microphysical operations of power have largely usurped the importance of juridical power eschews close consideration of how these work together, and of the disciplinary and regulatory effects of law itself.

Foucault's formulation of governmentality is also problematically inflected by some of his relatively local and temporally-bound theoretical skirmishes with French structuralists and Marxists. Governmentality
p. 78 stands to state ↳ theory as genealogy stands to dialectical critique and as discourse stands to structuralist accounts of ideology; in each case, the former is not only an alternative to but a critique of what Foucault takes to be the false premises of the latter. However, each opposition is also overdrawn. If, for example, the state today is a minor apparatus of governmentality, and is itself governmentalized in a manner that makes it sharply discontinuous with its absolutist or classical modern predecessor, the state nonetheless retains a measure of sovereignty, expressed in its capacity to wage war, terrorize, detain, and police. The state also remains an important site of political legitimacy in late modernity. Both of these points are developed briefly below.

With regard to the issue of sovereignty and the diminished overall significance of the state in governmentality, it is telling that Foucault's consideration of the state is largely limited to the matter of domestic rule. It does not encompass what Locke denoted as the prerogative power of the liberal state, its right and capacity to act *as* a state without regard to the legislative power of the people or their representatives (Locke 1960). Nor does it consider the state in terms of what Deleuze has theorized as the security society, what Schmitt has theorized as the state of exception, and what Agamben has theorized as the state of emergency (Deleuze 1995; Schmitt 1985; Agamben 1998, 2005).

As for political legitimacy, it was not a matter in which Foucault was much interested. Indeed, with the exception of his discussions of neoliberalism, legitimacy is largely excluded from Foucault's formulation of governmentality, in part because he understands political rationalities to be self-legitimating (Foucault 2004). Thus, while governmentality usefully expresses both the amorphousness of the state and the insufficiency of the state as a signifier of how modern societies are governed, it does not capture the extent to which the state remains a unique and uniquely vulnerable object of political accountability. Moreover, if the state's legitimacy needs determine at least some portion of political life, this is a fact with which a theory of the imperatives conditioning and organizing governance needs to reckon and which Foucault's theory does not. For example, the liberal state, whether libertarian or social democratic, is required to represent itself as universalist, that is, as the collective representative of a nation's people. Transnational populations and powers, especially those associated with globalization, have complicated this representation in new ways by revealing states' investments in and privileging of certain populations and norms, for example Christian, heterosexual, or native-born. The ideology of civic multiculturalism responds
p. 79 to this crisis of ↳ universality without resolving it. Within it, most liberal democratic states struggle to mediate between hegemonic norms and the challenges posed to them by, for example, Islamic religious

requirements or gay marriage and parenting. Foucault's restriction of theoretical concern with the state to a sovereign model of power does not facilitate apprehension of this troubling of state universality and the conundrums of policy and legitimacy it poses.

Modern political power does not only manage populations and produce certain sorts of subjects, it also reproduces and enlarges itself. This reproduction and enlargement is at times even among political power's primary objects and thus cannot be treated independently of the project of governing populations and individuals. A full account of governmentality, then, would attend not only to the production, organization, and mobilization of subjects by a variety of powers, but to the problem of legitimizing these operations by the singularly accountable object in the field of political power: the state. These two functions may be analytically separable, and may even be at cross purposes at times. But they do not occur separately in practice and both must therefore be captured in a formulation of contemporary governance. It is not that the state is the only source of governance, or even always the most important one; but where it is involved (and this includes privatization schemes in which the state's connection with the enterprises to which it turns over certain functions is still visible), the question of legitimacy is immediately at issue (Wolin 1989).

Finally, despite the fecundity of Foucault's thinking for political theory, especially that concerned with the nature of power, governance, freedom, and truth, it is significant that Foucault did not conceive of himself as a political theorist and did not confine his scholarly inquiry to matters of political life. (One need only remember his early work on knowledge and epistemology in *The Order of Things* (1970) and *The Archeology of Knowledge* (1972) or his turn to ethics and arts of the self in the second and third volumes of *The History of Sexuality* (1978–86).) It thus makes little sense to allow Foucault's work fully to set the agenda for or articulate the boundaries of contemporary political theory. Moreover, Foucault's thinking about power is useful to political theory only to the extent that power is not equated with the political. If the political does not have referents that exceed the mere presence of power, then every human action, activity, and relation becomes political and the political ceases to be a meaningful category of analysis. This is not to say that Foucault was wrong in his discernment of the ubiquity of power nor in his discernment of it in places—
p. 80 knowledge, sexuality, confession, self-care, pedagogy— ↳ conventionally considered immune from it. Rather, it is to give political theory the task of apprehending what ground, activities, identities, negotiations, and actions might comprise and define the political. If Foucault's work has importantly *politicized* certain practices and knowledge fields heretofore imagined relatively insulated from inquiry into the interests shaping them, the opponents they vanquish, the aims they serve, and the contingent effects they produce, such politicization need not be conflated with political life *tout court* (for a more extended discussion, see Brown 2002, 115–17). Foucault's formulations of power, and especially of government and governmentality, have made this distinction extremely difficult. However, rather than giving up the distinction on the one hand, or rejecting Foucault's problematization of it on the other, political theory after Foucault is faced with the task of delineating it anew.

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Notes

1 Some of the thinkers associated with this reconceptualization include Giorgio Agamben (1998, 1999, 2005), Talal Asad (1993), Roland Barthes (1972, 1977), Judith Butler (1997, 2004), Gilles Deleuze (1988, 1995), Paul De Man (1983, 1986), Jacques Derrida (1976, 1978), Jacques Donzelot (1997), Michel Foucault (2000), Stuart Hall (1991, 1997), Stuart Hall and Paul Du Gay (1996), Donna Haraway (1990, 1991), Jacques Lacan (2002), Bruno Latour (1993), Bruno Latour and Michel Serres (1995), Jean-François Lyotard (1984), Paul Rabinow (1997), Edward Said (1978), Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (1987, 1988), Gianni Vattimo (1988), and Hayden White (1987).

2 For a more extended discussion of this point see “Power,”co-authored by Wendy Brown and Joan W. Scott, in *Critical Terms of Gender Theory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, forthcoming).

3 Although he did not incorporate this work into a publication, Foucault presented his research on the construction and mobilization of race in modern Europe in his 1975–6 lectures at the Collège de France (Foucault 2003, chs. 3–5 and 11). Examples of theorists working in these areas include Nicholas Dirks (1992, 2001), Edward Said (1978, 1993), Ann Laura Stoler (1995, 2002), and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (1987, 1999) in post-colonial theory; Sandra Bartky (1990), Wendy

Brown (1995), Judith Butler (1997, 2004), Barbara Cruikshank (1998), Kathy Ferguson (1993), Elizabeth Grosz (1994, 1995), Meaghan Morris (1988), and Jana Sawicki (1991) in feminist theory; Katherine Franke (1997, 1998), Janet Halley (2002), and Kimberlee Crenshaw et al. (1996) in critical legal theory and critical race theory; Michael Dillon (1996, 2004), R. B. J. Walker (1993), James der Derian (1995), and William Connolly (1995, 2002) in international relations theory.

4 Examples include the work of William Connolly (1991), Tom Dumm (1994, 1996), David Owen (1997, 1999), James Tully (1995), Michael Shapiro (2001), Barry Hindess (1996), Jeremy Moss (1998), Meaghan Morris and Paul Patton (1979), Nikolas Rose (1999), and Barry Smart (2002, 2003).

5 Thinkers who have largely rejected Foucault for not making capital central range from various Marxists to Richard Rorty. But there are also political theorists, and scholars of geography and cultural studies, who have striven to incorporate Foucaultian insights into thinking about political economy. See, for example, Gibson-Graham, Resnick, and Wolff (2000). The same is true of Foucault's rejection of psychoanalysis. Across a number of her works, Judith Butler has attempted to intertwine the insights of Foucault and psychoanalysis, especially on questions of the production and regulation of subjects. See, in particular, Butler (1997).