# Poverty K

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# Link: “Poor”

**Using the word “poor” to refer to a group of people creates a dualism between the normal and abnormal – between the good and evil. This degenerates to violent hatred of the target of their 1ac.**

**Ross 91** (Thomas, Professor of Law, University of Pittsburgh, Georgetown Law Journal, “The Rhetoric of Poverty: Their Immorality, Our Helplessness,” p. 1513-1528, AD: 5/27/09) JL

The first rhetorical step, **the creation of the abstraction the "poor," is a**n easily overlooked yet **powerful part of the rhetoric of poverty.** We are so used to speaking of the poor as a distinct class that **we overlook the rhetorical significance of speaking this way**. **By focusing on** the single variable of economic **wealth and then drawing a line on the wealth continuum, we create a class of people who are them, not us.** **Creating this abstraction is,** in one sense, merely **a way of speaking**. We do this **because to speak of the world in sensible ways we must resort to categories and abstractions. There are meaningful differences between the circumstances of people below the poverty line and the circumstances of middle class people, and to ignore these real differences can lead to injustice**. n2 Thus, to speak of the "poor" is a sensible way to [\*1500] talk. In the rhetorical context, however, it is also much more.

**The creation of the category of the "poor", also makes possible the assertion of their moral weakness. To assert their moral weakness, "they" must exist as a conceptually distinct group. There is a long history of speaking of the poor as morally weak, or even degenerate**. n3 Thus, **when we hear** legal **rhetoric about the poor, we often hear an underlying message of deviance: we are normal, they are deviant.** Our feelings about their deviance range [\*1501] from empathy **to violent hatred**. Still, ***even in the most benevolent view, they are not normal*.** Their deviance is a product of a single aspect of their lives, their relative wealth position. **All other aspects of their lives are either distorted by the label of deviance or ignored.**  **By creating this class of people, we are able at once to distinguish us from them and to appropriate normalcy to our lives and circumstances.**

**The rhetorical assertion of judicial helplessness is** also **connected to widely shared and long-standing cultural assumptions about the nature of poverty.** This rhetoric depends on the assumption that poverty is somehow built into the basic structure of our society and system of law. We assume that the eradication of poverty, even if possible in theory, would require the radical transformation of our society. The causes of poverty, we assume, are a product of a complex set of factors tied to politics, culture, history, psychology, and philosophy. Thus, only in a radically different world might poverty cease to exist. And, whatever the extent of the powers of the Court, radically remaking the world is not one of them. n4

Using the rhetoric of “poor” vs not, we create a dichotomy that establishes one as right, and the other as wrong. This justifies governmental action against the “other”.

# Link: “Poverty”

**The 1AC speech act creates a system of violent knowledge production which constructs the poor “other” as an inferior, abnormal, group.**

**Clarke 98** (John, Prof of Social Policy @ UK Open University, Embodying the Social, p vvi, Google Books, AD: 5/26/09) JL

**We** can **see discourses as ways of organising knowledge. They define what the problem is; they say what is worth knowing and what can be said. They produce the ‘norms’ against which deviation or abnormality is marked (the norm of ‘not being poor’**, for example). But discourses are not just about words. **Discourses shape and become institutionalised in social policies and the organisations through which they are carried out. This is not just a matter of the big policy ideas – the pressure to ‘do something about poverty’ – but also the minute arrangements by which ‘something is done’**. Let us give some more examples about poverty and how the discourse of poverty has been institutionalised.

Poor people have to prove that they are poor. The systems of doing something about poverty – what in the nineteenth century used to be called providing ‘poor relief – have always involved various sorts of tests that poor people have to pass to prove their need. For example, there have been availability for work tests, in which the poor must prove that they are ready to help themselves by taking work if it is available. There have been means tests, assessing household income to see that it falls below the agreed line at which benefits will be paid. There have also been morality tests – mainly directed at women – which examine whether they are cohabiting and thus potentially dependent on a man's income.

**Poor people** must **present themselves as** poor. They are ‘claimants’ – **an** **inferior and dependent social status, asking for something from society.** Many social benefits go unclaimed, partly for reasons of access to information about them, but also partly because of the stigma (the social taint) of being a claimant. **Once people place themselves within the discourse of poverty, their identity is defined in its terms.** They are positioned as ‘subjects’ within it – that is, **they are themselves subjects of the discourse and understand their own position through it.**

**Poor people have things done to them. Being poor is to be placed in a position where other people have rights over you**. Society's institutional arrangements have sometimes focused on segregating the poor – **putting them in workhouses**, for example – **to keep them away from the rest of ‘us’.** Sometimes they have been concerned to normalise the poor – giving lessons in budgetary management, good housekeeping, or parenting – with the aim of making ‘them’ more like ‘us’. **At other times the emphasis has been on maintaining surveillance** on the poor –monitoring their behaviour **to make sure that they behave ‘properly’. Although different policies on poverty aim to do different things, they are framed by the discourse of poverty in that they see poor people as the objects of policy** – people to whom things are done (often ‘in their own best interests’).

**Discourses in this sense are also about relations of power. They organize positions and places in a field of power**. So, **in relation to poverty, they empower** (give power to) **state agencies to monitor, assess or intervene in the lives of poor people. They empower some agencies** (both state and voluntary agencies**) to evaluate the ‘worth’ or ‘desert’ of poor people before benefits or services are provided.**

# Impact: Disposable Populations

**The dichotomy generated by poverty language says protection of life *requires* death-life can only be maintained in this apparatus by creating disposable populations that are not protected.**

**Murray 2008** (Stuart, Assistant Professor of Rhetoric and writing, Till death us do part: Ontology’s rhetorical and political (re)turns, paper presented at Conference on Rhetorical Theory http://www.cas.sc.edu/engl/Rhet\_Theory\_Conf/Papers/Murray.pdf)

Foucault charts the historical shift in sovereign power that has led to the current biopolitics of Western culture. This shift has resulted in “the famous gradual disqualification of death” (Foucault 2003b). In antiquity, political power was conceived under Roman law as “patria potestas”—the power of the family father who enjoyed the right to “dispose” of the lives of his children and slaves. This power is summed up in the formula: “to take life or let live.” Here it was the sovereign’s power, the sovereign’s prerogative, to revoke the lives of his subjects or to let them live. In the shift to modernity, however, the ancient decision to kill or let live is gradually replaced with a modern productive biopolitics that is twofold, that “makes live” and “lets die” (Foucault 2003b). Thus, **in modernity political power has come to conceive of itself as protecting life**, preserving it, controlling it, prolonging it, **and maximizing its productivity** and its very vitality—the power to bestow life. **The consequence,** of course, **is that others will be “allowed to die**.” **Death becomes a** consequence, a **necessary part, of living, while at the same time, death is** dismissed and **disavowed**. **The official story is that** nobody dies, and certainly nobody is killed, at least not directly, and **nobody’s hands are bloodied, at least not that we can see; the crimes called “collateral damage**” or they **are outsourced**, through “extraordinary rendition” become ordinary, **obfuscated by State bureaucracy**, and covered up by one media spectacle after another. **But biopolitical logic requires them**. **In order that “we” may live**, live well and live fully, **“they” must die**, **the distinction between the virtuous citizen and the other excluded as disposable life**. Hence, a whole class of people is born, people whose lives do not (quite) count as life: “bare life” (Agamben 1998), disposable life, the convicted criminal on death row, the refugee (Arendt 2005), the enemy combatant (Butler 2004), the Jew in the concentration camp (Agamben 1998; Arendt 2005), and countless others. **The industrialized West fundamentally relies on a politics based in the quasi-paradoxical rhetoric that life carries an innate value that is**, at once, priceless or **beyond value**. To be sure, while this value is under constant negotiation, it is from the biopolitical perspective of “making live” that value is calculated. **Those who are “made to live” better** and longer **lives** frequently **do so only at the cost of those who are “allowed to die**”—even as their deaths bear some causal relation (however distant) to the value of the lives their deaths enable. I am suggesting that we must not only be critical of the deleterious effects of biopolitics; we must also seek to understand the ways that death productively affects social, political, and ethical meaning. For instance, **we witness how the populations of** affluent **nations increasingly demand the sacrifices of people of poorer nations** who allow their bodies to be harvested for organs or used for drug testing. How, to take another example, should we understand the death of the suicide bomber? From the perspective of Western biopolitics, this death is utterly incomprehensible and deemed insane; however, within his or her own culture, the suicide bomber’s death might serve as a touchstone for social meaning, political commitment, and ethical action.

# Impact: Disposable populations v2

**The end point of this knowledge production is the separation of “normal citizens” from those in poverty that must be purged to maintain our fantasy of utopia. This kill-to-save mentality is the root cause of all 20th century atrocities which will culminate in extinction.**

**Hoffmann 7**

Kasper, International Development Studies at Roskilde University, May, “Militarised Bodies and Spirits of Resistance,” http://diggy.ruc.dk:8080/bitstream/1800/2766/4/z2.pdf, p 27-29 AD: 6/1/09) JL

**In** modern forms of **government, concepts of** the norm and **normal have played a** kind mediating **role in the formulation and execution of normative projects** (Canguilhem 2005 [1966]; Ewald 1990). It is **through the systematic accumulation of knowledge about certain social problems and deviations that we come to know the** normal and the **norm** that stabilise and indicate it in social contexts (Ewald 1990: 140). **By aligning delinquent** or abnormal **subjectivities** (**through**, for instance, techniques of pedagogy, health, **economic development**, human development, spirituality etc.) **to the norm, the normal order, can be restored** allowing normative goals to be considered “**for the good**”: “[T]he good is figured in terms of adequacy – the good product is adequate to the purpose it was meant to serve. Within the normative system, values are not defined a priori, but instead through an endless process of comparison and normalization” (Ewald 1990: 152). Rose has made the point that the “very notion of normality has emerged out of a concern with types of conduct, thought, expression deemed troublesome or dangerous” (Rose 1996: 26), so that **normality can only be understood in relation to the abnormal.** Therefore, even if the norm has allowed modern biopower to transform negative restraints of power into more positive controls or normalisation, it is still producing dangerous subjectivities.

Within liberal forms of government, at least, there is a long history of people who, for one reason or another, are deemed not to possess or to display the attributes (e.g. autonomy, responsibility) required of the juridical and political subjects of rights and who are therefore subjected to all sorts of disciplinary, bio-political and even sovereign interventions. (Dean 1999: 134)

The list of those so subjected would include at various times those furnished with the status of the indigent, the degenerate, the feeble-minded, the native, the savage, the homosexual, the delinquent, the dangerous etc. Modern so-called “liberal” practices of government therefore also entail ‘illiberal’ aspects (see Hindess 2001; Dean 1999 Chapter 7). Liberalism always contains the possibility of non-liberal interventions in the lives of those who do not possess the attributes required to be a “citizen”. However, bio-politics is not confined to liberal forms of rule: liberalism just makes the articulation in a specific way. Other types of rule, such as authoritarian or totalitarian forms, also depend on the elements of a bio-politics that is concerned with the detailed administration of life. Rather than denying that non-liberal practices are indeed an integral part of all forms of liberal democratic government, we could see the will to establish the authority of liberal democracy – this will to power – as an element of sovereignty in the heart of the “democracy”.

**In** modern processes of **government, the focus is** on the **fostering** and promotion **of life**, **though** in certain circumstances this fundamental “**security” of the population** is experienced as threatened. In such circumstances **the community calls upon its fundamental right to exist as such and thus evokes its right to deny the right to life of those who are seen as a threat to the life of that same population**. This allows us to consider what might be thought of as the dark side of bio-politics (Dean 1999: 139). In Foucault’s account, bio-politics, as concrete political method of security, does not put an end to the practice of war; it provides it with renewed scope.

**This new scope allows** the actual neutralization, or even **elimination of life** at the level of entire populations, or micro populations. It intensifies the killing, **whether by “ethnic cleansing” that visits holocausts upon whole groups or by the mass slaughter of classes and groups in the name of the utopia to be achieved**. Governance is now exercised at the level of life and of the population, and wars will be waged at that level on behalf of the “security” of each and all. This brings us to the heart of Foucault’s challenging thesis about bio-politics, namely that there is an intimate connection between the exercise of a life-administering power and the commission of genocide: “**If genocide is indeed the dream of modern powers because power is located at the level of life, the species, the race, and the large-scale phenomena of population”** (Foucault 1976: 180, my translation).

Thus, there seems to be a kind of inescapable connection between the power to foster life and the power to disqualify life which is characteristic of bio-power. The emergence of a bio-political racism in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries can be approached as a trajectory in which the demand for a homogenous social space articulated by the norm appears to turn into a life necessity. Through the establishment of the norm, abnormality is inscribed upon individual “other” bodies, casting certain deviations as both internal dangers to the body politic and as inheritable legacies that threatens the well-being of race:

On behalf of the existence of everyone **entire populations are mobilized for the purpose of wholesale slaughter in the name of the life** necessity: **massacres have become vital. It is as managers of life and survival**, of bodies and the race, **that so many regimes have been able to wage so many wars**, causing so many men to be killed…**at stake is the biological existence of a population**. (Foucault 1976: 180, my translation, emphasis)

**Bio-politics presides over the processes of birth, death, production and illness. It acts on the human species. Within this bio-political practice the sovereign right to kill appears in a new form; as an “excess” of biopower that does away with life in the name of securing it, and in its most radical form it is a means of introducing a fundamental distinction between those who must live and those who must die. It fragments the biological field and establishes a break within the biological continuum of human beings by defining a hierarchy of races, a set of subdivisions in which certain races are classified as “good”, fit and superior (Stoler 1995: 84). It therefore establishes a positive relation between the right to kill and the assurance of life. It posits that, the more you kill and let die, the more you will live. Thus, in modern biopolitical practice, war does more than reinforce one’s own kind by eliminating a racial adversary: it “regenerates” one’s own race (Stoler 1995: 56). It is essential to note that racism as a bio-political practice does not draw on a particular theory of race – it does not need to. Instead racism designates a much more general practice which introduces a rift in the biological continuum that is the human species between those who are worthy of citizenship and those who** are not. **Internal threats to the health and wellbeing of a social body come from those who were deemed to lack an ethics of “how to live” and thus the ability to govern themselves. It is worth remembering that the Nazi concentration camps housed not only Jews, but also Gypsies, homosexuals, Bolsheviks and other inassimilable elements.**

# Alt: Deconstruct

**To combat poverty, we must deconstruct the discourse of poverty and understand “root causes” do not exist. It’s the first step toward the production of knowledge that can solve.**

**Pacchioli 96** (David, Researcher at Penn State, “Deconstructing Poverty,” June, http://www.rps.psu.edu/jun96/poverty.html, AD: 5/28/09) JL

**In order to combat poverty** realistically, Yapa suggests, **academics must submit** the rest of the current **discourse to a** similarly **close inspection. Once** this work of **deconstruction is done**, he says, we **will see that poverty occurs "within a nexus of interrelationships," social, political, and economic, that cannot be separated out. To speak of a poverty sector is to fail to see this essential interconnectedness.**

In other words, Yapa contends, "**Poverty has no root causes." Rather, material deprivation is created by choices made at many different "sites": nutrition, food production, healthcare, housing, transportation, etc. But if the question of scarcity is far more complex than we have generally acknowledged**, he adds, this is not reason for despair. **A willingness to look at the true complexity is the first step to solving the problem.**

# Alt: Individual Rejection

**Individual rejection is key – power is everywhere and the individual is a key locus of resistances to the dominant paradigms that bind us to a world where oppression continues unquestioned**

**Yapa 96**

(Lakshman, Prof of Geography @ Pennsylvania State, “What Causes Poverty? A Post-Modern View,” Annals of the Association of American Geographers, Vol. 86, No. 4 (Dec., 1996), pp. 707-728, AD: 6/17/09) JL

Foucault argued that this mainstream view of power can be characterized as one of sover­eignty/obedience. In Foucault's words (1990: 85), **"[it does not matter] whether the individ­ual in question is the subject opposite the mon­arch, the citizen opposite the state, the child opposite the parent, or the disciple opposite the master. A legislative power on one side, and an obedient subject on the other." The characteristics of the sovereign view of power have their roots in liberal politics that arose in opposition to the power of the monarch in the eighteenth century; this is a "juridical" concep­tion of political power because it emphasizes law and rights** (Foucault 1980:88). Foucault argued in behalf of a richer, more complex view of power than that contained in the construct of juridical sovereignty. He advocated (1980:120) a nonsovereign view of power: "**What we need . . . is a political philosophy that isn't erected around the problem of sov­ereignty, nor therefore around the problem of law and prohibition. We need to cut off the King's head: in political theory that has still to be done."**

Foucault's thoughts on sovereign power are scattered over a wide span of his writing; the brief summary that follows is drawn mainly from his volume, The History of Sexuality (1990:80-92): **Nonsovereign power is not ex­clusively possessed by a dominant class, or the state; there is no great divide between rulers and ruled**. **Power** is not always imposed from above because it **can come from below**. In fact, **the state draws its power from below—from production, from families, from groups, from institutions—in a capillary fashion**. Power rela­tions are not secondary to other types of rela­tionships such as economic processes, knowl­edge relations, and sexual relations; power re­lations are constituted from and immanent in the latter. **Power is employed and exercised through a netlike organization; individuals are not only the consenting targets of power, but they are also the elements of its articulation. Power is in play in small individual parts and it is exercised in concrete actions from innumer­able points.** Hence **there are creative produc­tive points of resistance everywhere in the power network. There is "no single locus of great Refusal," no soul of revolt, no grand proj­ect that is global or revolutionary.**

In this paper **I have argued for a substantive approach to the question of the poverty prob­lem. This approach maintains that agents of change act not through a general exercise of power, but by exerting their will in a "netlike organization" in** particular substantive issues of food, nutrition, housing, **education**, transport, **culture**, geographical **location**, and so on (Fig­ure 5). Thus **there are as many points of resis­tance as there are points of power; it is not helpful therefore to reduce that plurality** (both in numbers and in substance) **to a single ab­stract struggle against the state**. Moreover, **each** of these substantive issues is informed by powerful **discourse**s (e.g., "good nutrition," "scientific agriculture," and "suburban living")that **shape the social construction of scarcity. Power to resolve the poverty problem must have the capacity to counter the power of scarcity-constructing discourses that circulate through­out society**. Clearly, juridical or sovereign no­tions of power do not serve that end. Fou­cault's concept of nonsovereign power reach­ing into every crevice of the micro-sociology of society is thus identical to the concept of power implicit in the substantive approach to poverty advocated in this paper (Figure 5).

# FW: Discourse Shapes Reality

Discourse shapes one’s conception of reality.

Mustin and Marecek Write…

Hare-Mustin and Marecek. Gender and the Meaning of Difference. Making a Difference: Psychology and the construction of Gender Yale University, 1990. p. 22-64. Web

The connection between meaning and power has been a focus of **postmodernist thinkers** (Foucault, 1973; Jameson, 1981). Their **inquiry into meaning focuses** especially **on language as the medium of cognitive life and communication**. **Language is seen not simply as a mirror of reality** or a neutral tool (Taggart, 198 5, Wittgenstein, 1960; 1 967). As Bruner (1986) points out, l**anguage "imposes a point of view** not only **about the world to which it refers** but **toward the use of the mind in respect to this world"** (11 I). **Language highlights** certain features of the objects it represents, certain **meanings of the situations it describes**. "The word—no matter how experimental or tentative or metaphoric—tends to replace the things being described" (Spence, 1987, 3). **Once designations in language become accepted, one is constrained by them** not only in communicating ideas to others, but **in the generation of ideas** as well (Bloom, 1981). **Language** inevitably **structures one's** own **experience of reality as well as the experience of those to whom one communicates**. Just as in any interaction we cannot "not communicate," so at some level we are always influencing one another and ourselves through language. **Meaning-making and control over language are important resources held by those in power**. Like other valuable resources, **they are not distributed equitably across the social hierarchy**. Indeed, Barthes (1972) has called language a sign system used by values. For constructivists, values and attitudes determine what are taken to be facts (Howard, r 98 5 ). It is not that formal laws and theories in psychology are wrong or useless ; rather, as Kuhn (1962) asserted, they are explanations based on a set of agreed-on social conventions. Whereas positivism asks what are the facts, constructivism asks what are the assumptions ; whereas positivism asks what are the answers, constructivism asks what are the questions. The positivist tradition holds that science is the exemplar of the right use of reason, neutral in its methods, socially beneficial in its results (Flax, 1987). Historically the scientific movement challenged the canons of traditional belief and the authority of church and state. Science was a reform movement that struggled to supplant faith as the sole source of knowledge by insisting on the unity of experience and knowing. For Western society today, science has largely displaced church and state authority so that scientific has itself become a euphemism for proper.

You evaluate this impact first and foremost because this is a REAL WORLD IMPACT. My opponent’s language based on poverty will construct the way they interpret reality, and shape the reality they experience. You use the ballot as tool to

1. Punish them for their use of rhetoric
2. Educate them in order for them to change their interpretation of reality.