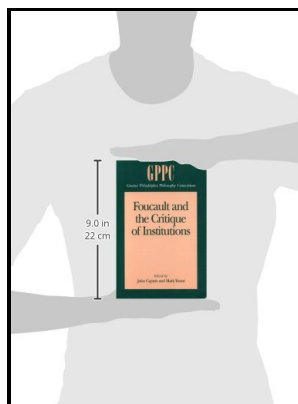


# Foucault and the critique of institutions

Pennsylvania State University Press - Can We Criticize Foucault?



Description: -

- Conduct of life
- Associations, institutions, etc
- Foucault, Michel Foucault and the critique of institutions
- Popular applications series
- Studies of the Greater Philadelphia Philosophy Consortium Foucault and the critique of institutions
- Notes: Includes bibliographical references and indexes.
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**John D. Caputo & Mark Yount (eds.), Foucault and the Critique of Institutions**

Foucault, when he charted the transformation of power from sovereign authority and formal hierarchy into diffuse localized operations overseen by credentialed technocrats, was also responding to these developments.

**Ball, S., Collet**

This unacknowledged realignment is newly evident in the Covid era.

**Foucault and the Critique of Institutions Edited by John D. Caputo and Mark Yount**

Liberty and Justice for All? Instead, Foucault tries to understand which elements of current society are oppressive and must be removed. Here one might think of how the death penalty itself, where it persists, becomes another procedure technically administered by experts with the introduction of the electric chair and lethal injection; execution becomes one component in a series of intricate judicial processes, psychiatric evaluations, and periods of imprisonment.

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Likewise, although the marginalized groups that most interested Foucault were prisoners and asylum inmates rather than more familiar categories, his ideas and approach would be widely adapted by scholars focused on race, gender, sexuality, and other modes of identity. If justice is only the expression of a power differential between two classes, then there can be no moral justification for seeking a different world. Intellectual developments are then partly determined by relations of power within the field itself.

**Foucault and Chomsky Debate Human Nature**

If the inmates are convicts, there is no danger of a plot, an attempt at collective escape, the planning of new crimes for the future, bad reciprocal influences; if they are patients, there is no danger of contagion; if they are madmen there is no risk of their committing violence upon one another; if they are schoolchildren, there is no copying, no noise, no chatter, no waste of time; if they are workers, there are no disorders, no theft, no coalitions, none of those distractions that slow down the rate of work, make it less perfect or cause accidents. And, far from twentieth-century

capitalist societies constraining creative freedom, they did more to liberate and cultivate it than any other societies at any time. Even though the elite university graduates who shape media narratives and policy discussions are highly likely to have encountered his ideas, his critical account of the politics of public health has had essentially no impact on debates around Covid-19 policy.

### **Michel Foucault on the Power Dynamics in Modern Institutions**

For Foucault disciplinary power is the type of power which can be applied over people based on their knowledge of how to fit into society. One sees nothing but vile hatred for them now. Nevertheless, it is emblematic of a curious absence.

### **Chomsky vs. Foucault, Revisited**

But the Panopticon must not be understood as a dream building: it is the diagram of a mechanism of power reduced to its ideal form; its functioning, abstracted from any obstacle, resistance or friction, must be represented as a pure architectural and optical system; it is in fact a figure of political technology that may and must be detached from any specific use. It should be said that Foucault undeniably put the spotlight on themes that were very clearly ignored, even marginalized, by the dominant intellectuals of his era.

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