

## BIOPOLITICS

### Course description

If sovereign power is the power to “take life or let live,” biopower is “the power to *foster* life or *disallow* it to the point of death.” In this course we will spend the first few weeks closely examining Foucault’s writings and lectures on the concept of biopower, which operates through both the biopolitical regulation of populations and the disciplinary institutions and discourses brought to bear on individuals. After becoming familiar with the historical and theoretical scaffolding Foucault provides, we will consider reappraisals and re-deployments of biopower in light of new techniques for disassembling the individual and convening populations. Centering feminist, anti-racist, queer post-colonial, and post-Marxist perspectives, readings in the second half of the course may cover: population racism; the commodification of reproduction on a global scale; new forms of neoliberal governance; bio-citizenship; bio-medicalization; gender, nationalism, and the policing of bodies and borders; the securitization of risk; the carceral state; and necropolitics and the refigured relation between death and politics. Students will be encouraged to apply the theoretical and empirical work on biopower to their own research interests.

### Course Requirements

#### Class participation (25%)

The class will be conducted as a seminar. All participants will be expected to have read the assigned reading very carefully and come to class with questions, comments, observations, analyses of connections and discontinuities in/between the texts at hand and readings from earlier classes. The amount of reading will vary, but it will generally be between 100-200 pages each week. At least once during the semester, each student will be responsible for presenting a text –providing a short summary followed by analysis, critique, and questions. Attendance is mandatory. Unexcused absences will result in a penalty in your participation grade.

#### Six short response papers (30%)

#### Literature Review Paper (45%)

No incompletes will be granted except in exceptional circumstances.

### Course texts

#### Required

Michel Foucault *The History of Sexuality*, Vol. I (New York, Vintage, 1990).

Michel Foucault, “*Society Must Be Defended*” – *Lectures at the Collège de France, 1975-1976* (Picador, 2003).

Michel Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population – Lectures at the Collège de France, 1977-1978* (Palgrave/Macmillan, 2007).

Thomas Lemke, *Biopolitics: An Advanced Introduction* (New York: New York University Press, 2011).

Ann Laura Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire: Foucault's History of Sexuality and the Colonial Order of Things* (Duke, 1995).

Optional:

Patricia Clough and Craig Willse, eds, *Beyond Biopolitics: Essays on the Governance of Life and Death* (Duke 2011).

Blackboard:

All other texts will be posted on Blackboard, named by the last name of the author and the title of the article/chapter. Many readings from the course bibliography--an extended list of recommended readings--will also be posted on Blackboard.

### **Tentative schedule of readings**

September 8th:

Foucault *The History of Sexuality*, Vol. I

September 15th:

Foucault, "*Society Must Be Defended*," as much of the first half of the book as possible.

Lemke, *Biopolitics: An Advanced Introduction*, chapters 1 and 2.

September 22nd:

Foucault, "*Society Must Be Defended*," as much of the second half of the book as possible.

September 29th:

Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population*, as much of the first half of the book as possible  
Lemke, *Biopolitics*, chapters 3 and 4.

October 6th:

Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population*, as much of the second half of the book as possible.

Optional:

Mariana Valverde, "Genealogies of European States: Foucauldian Reflections." *Economy and Society* 36, no. 1 (February 2007).

October 20th:

Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire: Foucault's History of Sexuality and the Colonial Order of Things*, pp.

October 27th:

Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire*, cont'd.

November 3rd:

Gilles Deleuze, "Postscript on the Societies of Control", from *\_OCTOBER\_* 59, Winter 1992, MIT Press, Cambridge, MA, pp. 3-7.

Giorgio Agamben, selections from *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998): 127-135

Achille Mbembe, "Necropolitics." *Public Culture* 15(1):11-40.

November 10<sup>th</sup>:

Catherine Waldby and Melinda Cooper, "The Biopolitics of Reproduction: Post-Fordist Biotechnology and Women's Clinical Labor," *Austrian Feminist Studies*, Vol 23, no. 55 (March 2008).

Two of the following:

Kelly E. Happe, selections from *The Material Gene: Gender, Race, and Heredity after the Human Genome Project*. New York University Press, 2013.

Margaret Lock, "Alienation of Body Parts and the Biopolitics of Immortalized Cell Lines," in M. Lock & J. Farquhar, eds., *Beyond the Body Proper* (Duke University, 2007).

Michelle Murphy, "Distributed Reproduction," in *Corpus*. 20-38.

Melinda Cooper, selections from *Life as Surplus: Biotechnology and Capitalism in the Neoliberal Era* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2008).

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The schedule of readings from this point on will depend on student interests. For potential topics, see the list in the course description.

#### **INITIAL COURSE BIBLIOGRAPHY**

*Readings for the second half of the semester may be drawn from this list. (Fear not--we won't be reading all of this together in class!)*

Agamben, Giorgio. 1998. *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*. Translated by Daniel Heller-Roazan. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Agamben, Giorgio. 2009. "What Is an Apparatus?"

Baum, Bruce and Duchess Harris, eds. 2009. *Racially Writing the Republic: Racists, Race Rebels, and Transformations of American Identity*. Duke University Press.

Bauman, Zygmunt. *Wasted Lives: Modernity and its Outcasts* (Cambridge: Polity).

Bennett, Jeffrey. 2010. *Banning Queer Blood: Rhetorics of Citizenship, Contagion, and Resistance* (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 2010), 27-54, plus notes.

Braidotti, Rosi. "The Politics of 'Life Itself,' and New Ways of Dying." In *New Materialisms: Ontology, Agency, and Politics*, eds Diana Coole and Samantha Frost. Duke 2010. 200-218.

Braun, Bruce. 2007. "Biopolitics and the Molecularization of Life." *Cultural Geographies* 14:6-28.

Briggs, Laura. *Reproducing Empire: Race, Sex, Science, and U.S. Imperialism in Puerto Rico* (2002)

Brown, Wendy. 2006. "Tolerance as Governmentality: Faltering Universalism, State Legitimacy, and State Violence," in *Regulating Aversion* (Princeton University).

Brown, Wendy. 2003. "Neo-liberalism and the end of liberal democracy." *Theory & Event* 7 (1).

Butler, Judith and Gayatri Spivak, *Who Sings the Nation State?*

- Cacho, Lisa Marie. 2012. *Social Death: Racialized Rightlessness and the Criminalization of the Unprotected*. New York: NYU Press.
- Caplan, Jane. 2001. "'This or That Particular Person': Protocols of Identification in Nineteenth Century Europe." In *Documenting Individual Identity*, edited by Jane Caplana and John Torpey. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001, pp. 49-66.
- Carbado, Devon W. 2005. "Racial Naturalization," *American Quarterly* 57.3, 633-658.
- Casper, Monica and Lisa Jean Moore. *Missing Bodies: The Politics of Visibility*. New York: New York University Press, 2009.
- Cheah, Pheng. 2007. "Biopower and the New International Division of Labor," *boundary 2* 2007 34(1):79-113.
- Chen, Mel Y. *Animacies: Biopolitics, Racial Mattering and Queer Affect*, Duke 2012.
- Clough, Patricia Tinineto and Craig Willse. "Human Security/National Security: Gender Branding and Population Racism." In *Beyond Biopolitics*, pp. 46-64, edited by Patricia Ticento Clough and Craig Willse. Durham, NC: Duke.
- Clough, Patrica Tinento and Craig Willse. "Human Security/National Security: Gender Branding and Population Racism." In *Beyond Biopolitics*, pp. 46-64, edited by Patricia Ticento Clough and Craig Willse. Durham, NC: Duke.
- Cooper, Melinda, Anna Munster, Andrew Goffey. 2005. "Biopolitics, For Now," *CultureMachine* 7 <http://www.culturemachine.net/index.php/cm/article/view/24/31>
- Currah, Paisley and Lisa Jean Moore. "'We Won't Know Who You Are': Contesting Sex Designation on New York City Birth Certificates," *Hypatia* 24:3 (Summer 2009): 113-135.
- Currah, Paisley Currah and Tara Mulqueen. 2011. "Securitizing Gender: Identity, Biometrics, and Transgender Bodies at the Airport," *Social Research* 78(2), 2011.
- Cooper, Melinda. 2008. *Life as Surplus: Biotechnology & Capitalism in the Neoliberal Era*. University of Washington.
- Davis, Lennard J. "Constructing Normalcy: The Bell Curve, the Novel, and the Invention of the Disabled Body in the Nineteenth Century." In *The Disability Studies Reader*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, edited by Lennard J. Davis, pp. 3-16. New York: Routledge, 2006.
- Gilles Deleuze, "Postscript on the Societies of Control," 2006.
- Fassin, Didier, 2011. "The Trace: Violence, Truth, and the Politics of the Body." *Social Research* Vol 78, No 2:281-301.
- Fassin, Didier. 2009. "Another Politics of Life is Possible." *Theory, Culture & Society*. Vol. 26, No. 4: 44-60.
- Fassin, Didier and Estelle D'Halluin. 2005. "The Truth from the Body: Medical Certificates as Ultimate Evidence for Asylum Seekers." *American Anthropologist* 107(4): 597-608
- Fassin, Didier. "The biopolitics of otherness: Undocumented foreigners and racial discrimination in French public debate," *Anthropology Today* 17 (1): 3-7

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- Esposito, Roberto. 2008. *Bios: Biopolitics and Philosophy.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
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- Franklin, Sarah. 2007. *Dolly Mixtures: The Remaking of Genealogy.* Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Gilmore, Ruth Wilson. 2007. *Golden Gulag: Prisons, Surplus, Crisis, and Opposition in Globalizing California.* Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Giroux, Henry A. 2006. "Reading Hurricane Katrina: Race, Class, and the Biopolitics of Disposability." *College Literature* 33(3):171-196.
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- Haraway, Donna. 1990. "The Biopolitics of Postmodern Bodies" in *Simians, cyborgs and women: the reinvention of nature.* New York: Routledge.
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- Harcourt, Bernard E. 2011. *The Illusion of Free Markets.* Harvard.
- Hardt, Michael and Antonio Negri. 2001. *Empire.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Hussain, Nasser. "Beyond Norm and Exception: Guantanamo," *Critical Inquiry* 33 (Summer 2007).
- Inda, Jonathan. 2011. "Materializing Hope: Racial Pharmaceuticals, Suffering Bodies, and Biological Citizenship." In *Corpus: An Interdisciplinary Reader on Bodies and Knowledge,* edited by Monica Casper and Paisley Currah. New York: Palgrave, 2011
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- Ishiguro, Kazuo. *Never Let Me Go.*

- Kerber, Linda. 2005. "Toward a History of Statelessness in America," *American Quarterly*, 57.3 (2005) 727-749.
- Lauro, Sara Juliet and Karen Embry, "A Zombie Manifesto: The Nonhuman Condition in an Era of Advanced Capitalism," *boundary 2* 35:1 (2008).
- Lemke, Thomas. 2011. *Biopolitics*. New York: New York University Press.
- Lock, Margaret. 2007. "Alienation of Body Parts and the Biopolitics of Immortalized Cell Lines," in M. Lock & J. Farquhar, eds., *Beyond the Body Proper*. Duke.
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