

foucault michel discipline and punish

Foucault Michel Discipline and Punish: An In-Depth Analysis of Power, Surveillance, and Social Control

Introduction

In the realm of social theory and philosophy, Michel Foucault's *Discipline and Punish* stands as a monumental work that critically examines the evolution of punishment and the mechanisms of social control. Published in 1975, the book traces the historical development of penal systems from public executions to modern prisons, revealing how societal power operates through subtle, pervasive mechanisms rather than overt force alone. Foucault's analysis provides profound insights into how disciplinary institutions—such as prisons, schools, military barracks, and hospitals—shape individual behavior and reinforce social hierarchies. This article explores the core concepts of *Discipline and Punish*, its historical context, and its enduring relevance in understanding contemporary surveillance societies.

Background and Context

Before delving into the core ideas, it's essential to understand the context in which Foucault wrote *Discipline and Punish*. The mid-20th century was a period marked by rapid social change, the rise of disciplinary institutions, and evolving notions of justice and power. Foucault was particularly interested in how power relations shifted from overt, physical coercion to more subtle forms of control embedded within institutions and everyday life.

The book contrasts two primary modes of punishment:

- Pre-modern punishment, characterized by brutal public executions intended to demonstrate power and instill fear.
- Modern disciplinary mechanisms, which focus on surveillance, normalization, and the regulation of behavior.

Foucault's critique extends to revealing how these disciplinary techniques serve to produce obedient and 'docile' bodies that conform to societal norms, thus maintaining social order without the need for constant physical coercion.

Core Concepts of Discipline and Punish

The Shift from Sovereign Power to Disciplinary Power

Sovereign Power

Historically, sovereign power was exercised through visible acts of violence—public executions, beheadings, and other forms of spectacle designed to demonstrate the ruler's absolute authority. These acts served as a warning to subjects, reinforcing the social hierarchy through fear and spectacle.

Disciplinary Power

Foucault argues that modern society has transitioned toward disciplinary power, which operates through surveillance and normalization rather than overt violence. Disciplinary power is:

- Invisible: It functions through institutions that monitor and regulate behavior subtly.
- Pervasive: It extends into all aspects of social life.
- Internalized: Individuals become self-regulating, conforming to norms out of internalized discipline.

This shift signifies a move from “power over” to “power/knowledge,” where control is embedded within knowledge systems and practices.

The Panopticon and the Mechanism of Surveillance

The Panopticon Model

Foucault famously uses Jeremy Bentham’s concept of the panopticon, a circular prison with a central watchtower enabling guards to observe all prisoners without being seen. This design exemplifies the principle of surveillance as a means of discipline.

Implications of Panopticism

The panopticon symbolizes how surveillance induces self-discipline. Because inmates never know when they are watched, they internalize the surveillance, leading to self-regulation. Foucault extends this idea to modern society, where:

- CCTV cameras, data collection, and social media monitor individuals continuously.
- The internalization of surveillance makes overt enforcement unnecessary.

This creates a “disciplinary society” where discipline is internalized, and power is decentralized.

Discipline and the Production of Normalization

Normalization as a Technique

Disciplinary power produces “normal” behavior by establishing standards and norms. Those who conform are rewarded, while deviations are punished or marginalized.

Techniques of Discipline

Foucault identifies several techniques used to enforce normalization, including:

- Examinations: systematic assessments that classify individuals.

- Timetables and routines: structuring daily activities to instill discipline.
- Documentation: recording behavior to monitor progress and deviations.

These techniques serve to shape individuals into compliant and productive members of society.

The Carceral Society and Its Effects

The Expansion of Disciplinary Institutions

Foucault observes that disciplinary mechanisms extend beyond prisons into schools, hospitals, military institutions, and workplaces. This proliferation creates a “carceral society,” where discipline pervades all social institutions.

The Normalization of Surveillance

In this society, individuals are constantly observed and evaluated, leading to self-discipline. The effects include:

- Increased conformity
- Reduced resistance
- Internalization of social norms

This environment fosters social cohesion but also raises questions about individual autonomy and freedom.

Power, Knowledge, and Disciplinary Practices

The Relationship Between Power and Knowledge

Foucault emphasizes that power and knowledge are intertwined; disciplinary practices produce knowledge about individuals, which in turn reinforces power. For example:

- Medical examinations produce ‘truths’ about health and normality.
- Educational assessments classify students, shaping their future trajectories.

Biopower and Governmentality

Foucault extends his analysis to “biopower,” the regulation of populations through institutions and practices that manage life processes. This includes public health policies, demographic studies, and social welfare programs.

Governmentality refers to the art of governing beyond traditional state politics, encompassing a range of institutions and techniques that shape the conduct of individuals and populations.

Relevance of Discipline and Punish in Contemporary Society

Surveillance Society and Digital Technologies

Modern society exemplifies Foucault's theories through pervasive surveillance technologies:

- CCTV cameras in public spaces
- Data tracking by corporations and governments
- Social media platforms facilitating self-monitoring

These developments have transformed privacy, autonomy, and social interactions.

Education and Workplace Discipline

Educational systems and workplaces continue to utilize disciplinary techniques:

- Standardized testing
- Performance metrics
- Time management and routine routines

These mechanisms shape behavior and reinforce normative standards.

Criminal Justice and Penal Reform

The prison system's evolution reflects disciplinary ideals, emphasizing rehabilitation and normalization over punishment. However, debates persist about the effectiveness and humaneness of such systems.

Critical Perspectives and Debates

Critiques of Foucault's Theory

While influential, Foucault's work has faced criticism for:

- Underestimating resistance and agency
- Overemphasizing the pervasiveness of discipline
- Not sufficiently addressing economic factors

Contemporary Applications

Despite critiques, Discipline and Punish remains relevant, informing discussions on:

- Privacy rights
- Mass incarceration
- Data surveillance
- Social conformity and resistance

Conclusion

Michel Foucault's *Discipline and Punish* offers a compelling framework for understanding how modern societies exercise control not through overt violence but through subtle, institutionalized practices of discipline and surveillance. Its insights into the mechanisms of normalization, the panopticon as a symbol of pervasive surveillance, and the relationship between power and knowledge continue to influence social sciences, humanities, and debates on individual freedoms. As surveillance technologies and disciplinary institutions evolve, Foucault's analysis provides a critical lens to examine the balance between social order and personal autonomy in the 21st century.

Keywords: Foucault Michel *Discipline and Punish*, surveillance society, disciplinary power, panopticon, normalization, biopower, social control, institutions, social theory.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the central theme of Michel Foucault's 'Discipline and Punish'?

The central theme is the evolution of power and social control mechanisms, focusing on how disciplinary institutions like prisons, schools, and military institutions regulate behavior and produce 'docile bodies' through surveillance and normalization.

How does Foucault describe the shift from sovereign power to disciplinary power?

Foucault explains that sovereign power was exercised through overt displays of authority like public executions, whereas disciplinary power is more subtle, involving surveillance, normalization, and the constant monitoring of individuals to control and regulate behavior.

What role does surveillance play in Foucault's analysis of modern disciplinary societies?

Surveillance is central; it functions as a mechanism of control by observing and normalizing behavior, exemplified by the Panopticon, which enforces discipline through constant visibility and internalized self-regulation.

How does Foucault connect disciplinary mechanisms to modern institutions?

He argues that modern institutions like prisons, schools, and military organizations employ disciplinary techniques to produce compliant and efficient individuals, shaping societal norms and

behavior through structured routines and surveillance.

What is the significance of the 'Panopticon' in Foucault's 'Discipline and Punish'?

The Panopticon is a metaphor for modern disciplinary power, illustrating how constant surveillance leads individuals to regulate their own behavior, thus maintaining social order without the need for physical coercion.

How does Foucault critique traditional forms of punishment in 'Discipline and Punish'?

Foucault criticizes traditional punishment for focusing on spectacle and revenge, and instead highlights the shift towards disciplinary methods that aim to reform and normalize individuals, often making punishment less visible but more pervasive.

In what ways does 'Discipline and Punish' relate to contemporary issues like surveillance capitalism?

Foucault's analysis of surveillance and normalization prefigures concerns about modern surveillance capitalism, where data collection and monitoring are used to control, influence, and discipline individuals in digital spaces.

What does Foucault mean by 'biopower' in the context of disciplinary mechanisms?

Biopower refers to the regulation of populations through institutions that manage health, birth rates, and other biological aspects, complementing disciplinary power by governing life processes on a macro scale.

How has 'Discipline and Punish' influenced contemporary social theory and critiques of power?

The book has profoundly influenced social theory by highlighting how power operates through subtle mechanisms of discipline and surveillance, shaping discussions on authority, social control, and the functioning of modern institutions.

Additional Resources

Discipline and Punish: Michel Foucault's Critical Examination of Power, Surveillance, and Social Control

Michel Foucault's *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (1975) stands as a seminal text in modern social theory, philosophy, and critical history. Through a meticulous analysis of the evolution of penal systems, Foucault explores broader themes of power dynamics, surveillance, and disciplinary mechanisms that shape contemporary society. This review aims to unpack the core ideas of *Discipline and Punish*, offering an in-depth understanding of Foucault's critique and its relevance across

disciplines.

Introduction: From Sovereign Power to Disciplinary Power

Foucault begins by contrasting two fundamental modes of power: sovereign power and disciplinary power.

- Sovereign Power: Historically, the power of monarchs or rulers was exercised through visible acts of violence, such as public executions. This form of power was characterized by spectacle and the assertion of authority through overt displays of dominance.
- Disciplinary Power: Emerging in the 18th and 19th centuries, disciplinary power shifts focus from spectacle to normalization, surveillance, and regulation. It seeks to produce docile bodies—individuals who internalize discipline and conform without the need for physical coercion.

Foucault's central thesis is that modern society has transitioned from the overt, centralized power of the sovereign to a diffuse, pervasive disciplinary mechanism that operates through institutions like prisons, schools, hospitals, and military organizations.

Historical Evolution of Punishment: From Torture to Surveillance

Foucault traces the evolution of punitive practices, illustrating how societal responses to deviance and crime have shifted over time.

Pre-Modern Punishment: Spectacle and Torture

- Public executions, branding, and torture served as public spectacles aimed at deterring crime.
- The focus was on inflicting visible pain, reinforcing the power of the sovereign.

The Shift: The Carceral System

- In the 18th century, there is a move toward confinement rather than physical punishment.
- The development of prisons signifies a shift toward correction and normalization rather than spectacle.

The Birth of the Panopticon

- Foucault examines Jeremy Bentham's design of the panopticon, a prison layout enabling constant surveillance.
- The panopticon becomes a metaphor for modern disciplinary societies, where individuals internalize surveillance and discipline themselves.

Disciplinary Mechanisms and Techniques

Foucault identifies various techniques and institutions that embody disciplinary power, forming a network of control that extends into everyday life.

Institutions as Disciplinary Devices

- Prisons: Focus on surveillance, normalization, and rehabilitation.
- Schools: Employ hierarchical observation, exams, and grading to instill discipline.
- Hospitals: Use classification, normalization, and continuous observation to manage health and behavior.
- Military: Enforce discipline through drills, routines, and hierarchical command.

Key Techniques of Discipline

- Hierarchical Observation: Constant supervision ensures conformity (e.g., teachers monitoring students, guards overseeing prisoners).
- Normalizing Judgment: Establishing standards against which individuals are assessed and disciplined.
- Examinations: Combining surveillance with evaluation to produce a "normal" and a "deviant."
- Temporal Discipline: Regulating time—work hours, study schedules, routines—to optimize productivity.

Foucault argues that these techniques serve not just to punish but to produce productive, obedient individuals who internalize norms and regulate themselves.

The Concept of Surveillance: The Panopticon and Beyond

Surveillance is at the heart of disciplinary power, and Foucault's analysis of the panopticon reveals its significance.

The Panopticon as a Model

- Designed as a circular building with a central watchtower, enabling a single guard to observe all inmates without being seen.
- Creates a power of visibility—individuals act as if they are always being watched, leading to self-discipline.

Modern Forms of Surveillance

- Institutional Surveillance: Schools, prisons, workplaces.
- Societal Surveillance: Media, CCTV cameras, data collection.
- Digital Surveillance: The internet, social media, and smartphones amplify surveillance capabilities.

Foucault suggests that surveillance has become internalized, transforming individuals into self-regulating subjects who conform because they believe they are constantly monitored.

Discipline and Power: A Network of Control

Foucault emphasizes that disciplinary power is diffuse and operates through a complex network rather than solely through state authority.

- Power is productive: It shapes identities, behaviors, and knowledge.
- Power is disciplinary: It disciplines bodies and minds, aligning them with societal norms.
- Power is capillary: It penetrates various social institutions and everyday interactions.

This networked control creates a disciplinary society where social conformity is maintained through internalized norms, making overt coercion less visible but more effective.

Knowledge, Power, and the Formation of the "Docile Body"

Foucault links power to knowledge, proposing the concept of power/knowledge.

- Power produces knowledge, and knowledge reinforces power.
- Disciplines produce "truths" about normalcy, health, behavior, and deviance.

The "docile body" concept describes individuals shaped by discipline into compliant, efficient, and controllable entities.

- This transformation occurs through training, examinations, and normalization.
- The result is a society where individuals self-regulate out of internalized discipline.

Disciplinary Power and Modern Society

Foucault's analysis reveals that disciplinary mechanisms are embedded in modern institutions and everyday practices.

Implications:

- The disciplinary society produces normal individuals who exemplify societal standards.
- Deviations are managed through correction, normalization, and surveillance.
- The system aims at total control—not through overt violence, but through subtle, continuous monitoring and normalization.

Contemporary Relevance:

- The rise of digital technologies has intensified surveillance.
- Educational and workplace disciplines mirror Foucault's techniques.
- The concept of biopower—regulation of populations—extends these ideas further into health, sexuality, and life sciences.

Critiques and Contemporary Applications

While Foucault's insights have been influential, they are not without critique.

Critiques Include:

- Overemphasis on surveillance and discipline at the expense of resistance and agency.
- Underestimation of the role of economic factors and class struggle.
- Lack of focus on non-Western societies and alternative forms of power.

Contemporary Applications:

- Analyzing mass incarceration and the prison-industrial complex.
- Understanding digital privacy and the surveillance state.
- Critiquing educational and workplace disciplinary practices.
- Exploring social control mechanisms in neoliberal societies.

Conclusion: The Enduring Significance of Discipline and Punish

Michel Foucault's *Discipline and Punish* remains a foundational text for understanding how modern societies organize power, control bodies, and produce compliant subjects. Its insights into surveillance, normalization, and disciplinary institutions continue to resonate in an era characterized

by digital surveillance and social regulation.

The book challenges readers to critically examine the seemingly invisible mechanisms that shape daily life, urging awareness of how power operates not just through overt domination but through subtle, pervasive disciplinary techniques. Foucault's work invites ongoing reflection on the balance between social order and individual freedom in contemporary society.

In summary, *Discipline and Punish* offers a profound critique of modern institutions and the pervasive influence of disciplinary power, emphasizing the importance of understanding power not merely as repression but as a productive force that shapes knowledge, identities, and social norms. Its deep analysis remains a vital resource for scholars, activists, and anyone interested in the mechanisms of social control and resistance.

Foucault Michel Discipline And Punish

foucault michel discipline and punish: Discipline and Punish Michel Foucault, 1995-04-25 A brilliant work from the most influential philosopher since Sartre. In this indispensable work, a brilliant thinker suggests that such vaunted reforms as the abolition of torture and the emergence of the modern penitentiary have merely shifted the focus of punishment from the prisoner's body to his soul.

foucault michel discipline and punish: Discipline and Punish Michel Foucault, 1979 In this brilliant study, one of the most influential philosophers alive sweeps aside centuries of sterile debate about prison reform and gives a highly provocative account of how penal institutions and the power to punish became a part of our lives. Foucault explains the alleged failures of the modern prison by showing how the very concern with rehabilitation encourages and refines criminal activity.

foucault michel discipline and punish: Discipline and Punish Michel Foucault, 2020 In the Middle Ages there were gaols and dungeons, but punishment was for the most part a spectacle. In this provocative work, Michel Foucault argues that the development of the Western system of prisons, police and legal hierarchies have merely shifted the focus of social control from our bodies to our souls.

foucault michel discipline and punish: Discipline and Punish Michel Foucault, 1977 Before the early 19th century, European ideas of crime and punishment tended to involve very public displays of the power of the monarch and the power of the state against the offending individual. Nowhere was this tendency more evident than in the spectacle of public executions. Those convicted of murder, piracy, counterfeiting, or other notable capital crimes would be taken to a public place for hanging or decapitation, and certain kinds of crimes warranted particularly gruesome punishments. In *Discipline and Punish*, social theorist Michel Foucault directly confronts and challenges a number of existing ideas surrounding the prison reforms of the late 1700s and early 1800s, and even into the twentieth century. By looking at the evolution of justice systems (focusing primarily on France), he suggests that the shift away from public executions and towards the idea of incarceration and reform within prison walls was a means of reframing the image of the power of society over the individual. Public executions often had the effect of making a criminal into a public martyr, and the ballads and broadsides printed for the common people did less to condemn the crime and more to glorify the criminal. By shifting the focus of justice into the prison and out of the public eye, authorities would have more direct control over the lives of those who had violated the norms of society.

foucault michel discipline and punish: *An Analysis of Michel Foucault's Discipline and Punish* Meghan Kallman, Rachele Dini, 2017-07-05 Michel Foucault is famous as one of the 20th-century's most innovative thinkers – and his work on *Discipline and Punish* was so original and offered models so useful to other scholars that the book now ranks among the most influential academic works ever published. Foucault's aim is to trace the way in which incarceration was transformed between the seventeenth and twentieth centuries. What started as a spectacle, in which ritual punishments were focused on the prisoner's body, eventually became a matter of the private disciplining of a delinquent soul. Foucault's work is renowned for its original insights, and *Discipline and Punish* contains several of his most compelling observations. Much of the focus of the book is on making new connections between knowledge and power, leading Foucault to sketch out a new interpretation of the relationship between *voir*, *savoir* and *pouvoir* – or, 'to see is to know is to have power.' Foucault also dwells in fascinating detail on the true implications of a uniquely creative solution to the problems generated by incarcerating large numbers of criminals in a confined space – Jeremy Bentham's 'panopticon,' a prison constructed around a central tower from which hidden guards might – or might not – be monitoring any given prisoner at any given time. As Foucault points out, the panopticon creates a prison in which inmates will discipline themselves, for fear of punishment, even when there are no guards present. He goes on to apply this insight to the manner in which all of us behave in the outside world – a world in which CCTV and speed cameras are explicitly designed to modify our behavior. Foucault's highly original vision of prisons also ties them to broader structures of power, allowing him to argue that all previous conceptions of prison are misleading, even wrong. For Foucault, the ultimate purpose of incarceration is neither to punish inmates, nor to reduce crime. It is to produce delinquency as a way of enabling the state to control and of structure crime.

foucault michel discipline and punish: *How to Read Foucault's Discipline and Punish* Anne Schwan, Stephen Shapiro, 2011-07-08 Michel Foucault's *Discipline and Punish* is one of the best-selling works of critical theory and a key text on many undergraduate courses. However, it is a long, difficult text which makes Anne Schwan and Stephen Shapiro's excellent step-by-step reading guide a welcome addition to the *How to Read Theory* series. Undergraduates across a wide range of disciplines are expected to have a solid understanding of Foucault's key terms, which have become commonplace in critical thinking today. While there are many texts that survey Foucault's thought, these are often more general overviews or biographical *précis* that give little in the way of robust explanation and discussion. In contrast, Schwan and Shapiro take a plain-speaking, yet detailed, approach, specifically designed to give students a thorough understanding of one of the most influential texts in contemporary cultural theory.

foucault michel discipline and punish: Quicklet on Michel Foucault's Discipline & Punish: The Birth of the Prison (CliffNotes-like Summary) Brett Davidson, 2012-02-29 ABOUT THE BOOK To read and understand Foucault is to know that you are not a free man, but in fact a prisoner/guard in a penitentiary named Western Society. *Discipline and Punish* changed the way the humanities and social sciences understood power and the way that I understood my place in the world. It answers questions like why non-conformists dress like all the other non-conformists and why we all try to hide the fact that we are singing to ourselves in our cars while simultaneously watching other people to see if they are singing to themselves. We all participate in maintaining the norms and rules of our society. In the Rebellious sixties, young people were attacking the establishment but they did not realize how deeply entrenched the power was and how it flowed, not from the top down, but out of all levels of society as a ubiquitous force. MEET THE AUTHOR Davidson received his BA from the University of Windsor and his MA from Carleton University. He teaches history at Eldercollege in Windsor, Ontario and has published a biography of Charles G.D. Roberts. You can follow his blog at www.hubpages.com/bkeithdavidson. EXCERPT FROM THE BOOK Part one "Torture" begins with the gruesome execution of convicted regicide Robert-Francois Damiens who had attempted to murder Louis XIV and had his sins cleansed by making Amene Honorable. The rest of the book then has to explain how we have moved in only two hundred years

from burning hot pincers removing the flesh from your bones to sitting in prison with three meals a day. The societal pressure for the move towards lenience began only decades after the grizzly death of Damians and came from all levels of society. This period saw the focus of judicial punishment shift from the body to the soul. To use Foucault's phrase, "The soul is the prison of the body." The theatrical displays that accompanied the earlier forms of punishment are now reserved for the court room. The second part "Punishment" starts with a discussion of the reform movement of the late eighteenth century that forced sovereigns and governments in general distance themselves from the violent act of killing. Judgement was put on display and punishment was hidden away. While capital punishment still exists, it is now done clinically and behind closed doors. Society itself was changing. There was a shift away from violent crimes into property related crimes. It is important to note that while many of the middle class philosophers were writing about this problem the demand for change came from all levels of the society. The lower classes were becoming more sympathetic to the plight of the condemned and even tried to help them at times. "Discipline" is the third part of the book and it deals with the training of the soul so that the society can exert power over it. This section deals with taking the human in any form and moulding it into the desired form. Foucault uses the example of the soldier and how this used to be a position that a man had to fit before he could join an army. Foucault saw a shift in the eighteenth century whereby armies started to believe that they could make soldiers out of any man no matter his condition. This philosophy extends into the society as school, hospital, and prison all have their methods, tests, and drills designed to create the model citizen. This section also explores how these institutions use the "political technology of the body" to control the space and time of the individual to create proper behaviour. Schedules and time tables are used to control the mind and organize the body. Buy a copy to keep reading!

foucault michel discipline and punish: Summary of Michel Foucault's Discipline and Punish Everest Media,, 2022-04-03T22:59:00Z Please note: This is a companion version & not the original book. Sample Book Insights: #1 The execution of Damians the regicide was recorded by Bouton, an officer of the watch. He was quartered, which meant his flesh was torn apart by red-hot pincers, his right hand holding the knife with which he had committed the parricide. #2 The executioner, Samson, told the court that there was no hope of succeeding. He asked their lordships if they wanted him to have the prisoner cut into pieces. The clerk of the court, Monsieur Le Breton, asked them again, and again the patient said no. The four limbs were then pulled away, and the trunk and the rest were covered with logs and faggots and fire was put to them. #3 The French prison system was based on the Léon Faucher rules, which were written in 1833. The prisoners' day began at six in the morning in winter and five in summer. They worked for nine hours a day, two hours a day was devoted to instruction, and work ended at nine o'clock in winter and eight in summer. #4 The prison time-table of 1786 defines a certain penal style. It was a time when Europe and the United States re-organized their economy of punishment. They eliminated torture as a public spectacle, and replaced it with less physical forms of punishment.

foucault michel discipline and punish: Discipline and Punish (SparkNotes Philosophy Guide) SparkNotes, 2014-08-12 Discipline and Punish (SparkNotes Philosophy Guide) Making the reading experience fun! SparkNotes Philosophy Guides are one-stop guides to the great works of philosophy-masterpieces that stand at the foundations of Western thought. Inside each Philosophy Guide you'll find insightful overviews of great philosophical works of the Western world.

foucault michel discipline and punish: Between Auschwitz and Tradition James R. Watson, 1994 Argues that the Holocaust has caused a mutation of the world. Our new world is Planet Auschwitz, an unworld with satellites separate and incommunicable. In this new world, the forces of nihilism are at work - e.g. terrorism, mass murder. Face-to-face with this destruction process, its administrators, and its survivors, we mutations must rewrite everything that has been projectively written about us in the old world. The tendency to repression keeps us from thinking, binding us to cynicism and nostalgia. The response to this new world condition must be to remember the Holocaust - repression leads to indifference and destruction.

foucault michel discipline and punish: Foucault's Discipline John S. Ransom, 1997 In

Foucault's Discipline, John S. Ransom extracts a distinctive vision of the political world—and oppositional possibilities within it—from the welter of disparate topics and projects Michel Foucault pursued over his lifetime. Uniquely, Ransom presents Foucault as a political theorist in the tradition of Weber and Nietzsche, and specifically examines Foucault's work in relation to the political tradition of liberalism and the Frankfurt School. By concentrating primarily on Discipline and Punish and the later Foucauldian texts, Ransom provides a fresh interpretation of this controversial philosopher's perspectives on concepts such as freedom, right, truth, and power. Foucault's Discipline demonstrates how Foucault's valorization of descriptive critique over prescriptive plans of action can be applied to the decisively altered political landscape of the end of this millennium. By reconstructing the philosopher's arguments concerning the significance of disciplinary institutions, biopower, subjectivity, and forms of resistance in modern society, Ransom shows how Foucault has provided a different way of looking at and responding to contemporary models of government—in short, a new depiction of the political world.

foucault michel discipline and punish: The Gothic Other Ruth Bienstock Anolik, Douglas L. Howard, 2014-09-26 Literary use of the Gothic is marked by an anxious encounter with otherness, with the dark and mysterious unknown. From its earliest manifestations in the turbulent eighteenth century, this seemingly escapist mode has provided for authors a useful ground upon which to safely confront very real fears and horrors. The essays here examine texts in which Gothic fear is relocated onto the figure of the racial and social Other, the Other who replaces the supernatural ghost or grotesque monster as the code for mystery and danger, ultimately becoming as horrifying, threatening and unknowable as the typical Gothic manifestation. The range of essays reveals that writers from many canons and cultures are attracted to the Gothic as a ready medium for expression of racial and social anxieties. The essays are grouped into sections that focus on such topics as race, religion, class, and centers of power.

foucault michel discipline and punish: Punishment and Power in the Making of Modern Japan Daniel V. Botsman, 2013-10-24 The kinds of punishment used in a society have long been considered an important criterion in judging whether a society is civilized or barbaric, advanced or backward, modern or premodern. Focusing on Japan, and the dramatic revolution in punishments that occurred after the Meiji Restoration, Daniel Botsman asks how such distinctions have affected our understanding of the past and contributed, in turn, to the proliferation of new kinds of barbarity in the modern world. While there is no denying the ferocity of many of the penal practices in use during the Tokugawa period (1600-1868), this book begins by showing that these formed part of a sophisticated system of order that did have its limits. Botsman then demonstrates that although significant innovations occurred later in the period, they did not fit smoothly into the modernization process. Instead, he argues, the Western powers forced a break with the past by using the specter of Oriental barbarism to justify their own aggressive expansion into East Asia. The ensuing changes were not simply imposed from outside, however. The Meiji regime soon realized that the modern prison could serve not only as a symbol of Japan's international progress but also as a powerful domestic tool. The first English-language study of the history of punishment in Japan, the book concludes by examining how modern ideas about progress and civilization shaped penal practices in Japan's own colonial empire.

foucault michel discipline and punish: Criminalization, Representation, Regulation Deborah Brock, Amanda Glasbeek, Carmela Murdocca, 2014-01-01 This book draws on Foucault's concept of governmentality as a lens to analyze and critique how crime is understood, reproduced, and challenged.

foucault michel discipline and punish: Corporal Punishment Patrick Lenta, 2017-09-14 The aim of this book is to assess the moral permissibility of corporal punishment and to enquire into whether or not it ought to be legally prohibited. Against the widespread view that corporal punishment is morally legitimate and should be legally permitted provided it falls short of abuse, Patrick Lenta argues that all corporal punishment, even parental spanking, is morally impermissible and ought to be legally proscribed. The advantages claimed for corporal punishment over alternative

disciplinary techniques, he contends, are slight or speculative and are far outweighed by its disadvantages. He presents, in addition, a rights-based case against corporal punishment, arguing that children possess certain fundamental rights that all corporal punishment of them violates, namely the right to security of the person and the right not to be subjected to degrading punishment. Lenta's approach is unique in that it engages with empirical literature in the social sciences in order to fully examine the emotional and psychological effects of corporal punishment on children. *Corporal Punishment: A Philosophical Assessment* is a philosophically rigorous and engaging treatment of a hitherto neglected topic in applied ethics and social philosophy.

foucault michel discipline and punish: Foucault and Nietzsche Joseph Westfall, Alan Rosenberg, 2018-02-22 Foucault's intellectual indebtedness to Nietzsche is apparent in his writing, yet the precise nature, extent, and nuances of that debt are seldom explored. Foucault himself seems sometimes to claim that his approach is essentially Nietzschean, and sometimes to insist that he amounts to a radical break with Nietzsche. This volume is the first of its kind, presenting the relationship between these two thinkers on elements of contemporary culture that they shared interests in, including the nature of life in the modern world, philosophy as a way of life, and the ways in which we ought to read and write about other philosophers. The contributing authors are leading figures in Foucault and Nietzsche studies, and their contributions reflect the diversity of approaches possible in coming to terms with the Foucault-Nietzsche relationship. Specific points of comparison include Foucault and Nietzsche's differing understandings of the Death of God; art and aesthetics; power; writing and authorship; politics and society; the history of ideas; genealogy and archaeology; and the evolution of knowledge.

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