

Rethinking Neoliberalism

This book is a collection of essays about neoliberalism as the governing ethic of our time. The focus is on neoliberalism's disciplinary regime that seeks to regiment subordinate populations into a market-centered society. Neoliberalism has been ascendant for some time as the default logic that prioritizes using market logic for all major decisions, in all spheres of society, at the collective level of state policymaking as well as the personal level of individual choice-making. Neoliberalism promotes a market-centered society and disciplines people to be compliant in adhering to its strictures, incentivizing market consistent behavior and punishing people when they fail to comply. The chapters in this volume were in most cases completed before Donald Trump was elected president but are likely to endure in relevance beyond his presidency. Neoliberalism remains hegemonic irrespective of what happens to Trump's corporate capitalist approach to governing. The essays use theory to interrogate neoliberalism critically and therefore can provide resources for political resistance in an age of neoliberalism.

Some of the best-known and most respected authors in the field of neoliberalism studies bring to bear a sophisticated synthesis of theoretical and empirical accounts of the rolling out of neoliberalism as a policy regime and use theory to interrogate neoliberalism as an ideology and as a practice. In developing this argument, the editors explore:

- Theoretical debates vital for understanding modern social policy
- Relationship between neoliberalism, the state and civil society
- Neoliberalism and social policy to discipline citizens
- Urban policy and how neoliberalism reshapes urban governance
- What it will take politically to get beyond neoliberalism?

Written in a clear and accessible style, *Rethinking Neoliberalism* offers a much-needed fresh perspective on neoliberalism as an ideology and as a practice.

Sanford Schram teaches at Hunter College, CUNY where he is Professor of Political Science and Faculty Associate at the Roosevelt House Public Policy Institute. He also teaches at the CUNY Graduate Center. His published books include *Words of Welfare: The Poverty of Social Science and the Social Science of Poverty* (1995) and *Disciplining the Poor: Neoliberal Paternalism and the Persistent Power of Race* (2011)—co-authored with Joe Soss and Richard Fording. Both books won the Michael Harrington Award from the American Political Science Association. His latest book is *The Return to Ordinary Capitalism: Neoliberalism, Precarity, Occupy* (Oxford University Press, 2015). Schram is the 2012 recipient of the Charles McCoy Career Achievement Award from the Caucus for a New Political Science.

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Geoforum, Europe-Asia Studies, Environment and Planning A, Cartographica, Urban Geography, and many edited volumes. She worked on international research projects with colleagues from Norway, Uganda, and Russia.

Rethinking Neoliberalism

Resisting the Disciplinary Regime

Sanford F. Schram and Marianna Pavlovskaya, Editors

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Introduction

Rethinking Neoliberalism:

Resisting the Disciplinary Regime

Sanford F. Schram and Marianna Pavlovskaya

This book is a collection of essays about neoliberalism as the governing ethic of our time. The focus is on neoliberalism's disciplinary regime that seeks to regiment subordinate populations into a market-centered society. Neoliberalism has been ascendant for some time as the default logic that prioritizes using market logic for making the critical decisions across all spheres of society, at the collective level of state policymaking as well as the personal level of individual choice-making (Schram, 2015). Neoliberalism promotes a market-centered society and disciplines people to be compliant in adhering to its strictures, incentivizing market consistent behavior and punishing people when they fail to comply. Already controversial, neoliberalism came under intense scrutiny like it had not before with the surprising election of Donald Trump as President of the United States. When Trump won, some commentators noted that he had run as an outsider against the Washington Establishment that had favored neoliberal approaches to governing, and his victory signaled a repudiation of the neoliberal orientation that had for several decades dominated national politics (Fraser, 2017; Klein, 2016; and Lynch, 2016).

To be sure, Trump's election was already controversial in other many ways. Perhaps most disturbing was the role played by racism, xenophobia and sexism that evidently helped propel his candidacy to victory. Trump's candidacy was also profoundly provocative because he cut such a controversial profile as an outsider with no real qualifications for governing the country. He lacked both governmental experience and rudimentary knowledge of policy. He seemed to be extremely temperamental and talked in over-simplified and emotional terms. He proved to be a pathological liar, especially about things that made him less great than his

constant boasting claimed. He made the controversial claim that as a successful businessman he could apply his business skills once in office to undo failed policies. He would make the U.S. a winner on the world stage in both foreign and economic policy. He would as his slogan claimed “Make America Great Again” which many of his white nationalist supporters could interpret as “Make America White Again.” His calls crack down on illegal immigration, ban Muslims from the Middle East and other xenophobic policy proposals suggested that that might have been what he actually meant. There was a lot to not like. In fact, Trump ultimately lost the popular vote to his opponent Hillary Clinton by almost 3 million votes but won the Electoral College by outpolling her ever so slightly in three Rust-Belt states of Michigan, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin where deindustrialization turned some voters against Clinton toward Trump, perhaps if only out of desperation for change in economic policy in particular.

Irrespective of how unconventional a candidate Trump was, once in office his cabinet appointments and early policy positions suggested not the end of neoliberalism but its continuation and even perhaps its intensification. As president, Trump stayed loyal to the corporate class and hired wealthy supporters to head key agencies that often were poised to dismantle. He took a pronounced big business approach to rolling out his administration. He continued to tout the idea that businessmen like himself knew best how to govern. In his autocratic style, he claimed only he could save us. He said he would be the people’s voice. Yet his demagoguery was founded on claiming to be a man of the people while acting on behalf of the corporate class to actually intensify the neoliberal approach to governing that the people had voted against. He was proving to be a master in playing those contradictions to his political advantage. He claimed he would end policies that served the interests of what he had characterized in the campaign as a global corporate class, while now he emphasized that he would remove barriers to corporate profit-taking. His was at best a faux populism,

consistent with the right-wing demagogues in Europe who were seeking to impose autocratic rule on their countries as a way of addressing their social and economic problems (Müller, 2016).

The political context in the U.S. but across the globe had in fact made it possible for Trump to exploit people's frustrations with existing neoliberal approaches that worked largely for a privileged few. In the U.S., both major political parties had failed to stand up for ordinary Americans while global economic change was wreaking havoc for middle Americans for several decades. The frustration cut across all groups of people other than the wealthy who seemed to be the only winners in the economic shift that had been going on since the 1970s. But Trump appealed most successfully to whites who thought that the 8 years of the Presidency of Barack Obama, the country's first black president, meant their concerns were being ignored in a changing political economy that featured inclusion of women and minorities but not displaced white workers. Many of these people were not happy with the Republicans who championed integration into a global economy without social protections for those left to the wayside.

But Democratic Party was not much better. The Party looked to have betrayed white workers by focusing only on amending neoliberal policies with an identity politics that sought inclusion for out-groups, women and racial and sexual minorities but left economic change off the table as a non-issue not meriting serious discussion. Bernie Sanders' failed candidacy had tried to redress this but his failed candidacy now served only to remind people how the Democrats ended up being proponents of a "progressive neoliberalism" that simply put a smiling face of racial and gender inclusion on the economic transformation (Fraser, 2017).

People who had struggled to maintain their standard of living post the Great Recession were among those vulnerable to being seduced by Trump's bombastic lying about

what he would do to “drain the swamp” of Washington and bring back prosperity to middle America (Edsall, 2017). Some people were attracted to his bellicose approach to foreign threats whether it was illegal immigration that was allegedly taking away jobs from American citizens or the radical Islamic terrorists who periodically were killing people in the Middle East, Europe and in the U.S. Trump said he was just the vessel of a social movement, that he heard what people wanted and he promised to give it to them. But like most demagogues his understanding of “the people” was self-serving (Müller, 2016).

Trump ran hard, even violently, against Clinton, accusing her of crimes, using her gender to shame her as weak and identify her as part of the Washington Establishment (or Cartel, as one of Trump’s defeated Republican opponents for the nomination called it). Hillary was too inside-the-beltway. She was a proponent of the dreaded neoliberalism (if the “progressive” version that added multiculturalism to the mix in ways that seemed more aimed at rationalizing the elite-dominated status quo than actually producing progressive change for most people). Yet, by the time Trump got around to picking his cabinet, it was clear he was transparently telling the public one thing but was never intending to “drain the swamp,” and his policy initiatives were now all of a sudden strikingly and explicitly neoliberal on any number of fronts across the policy spectrum, from charter schools, to privatizing Social Security and Medicare, to tax cuts for the rich, to enforcing personal responsibility on the poor to be market compliant actors who overcame their adversity by being successful in the deregulated economy. Neoliberalism was not evidently ever in retreat and is now it appears to be ever ascendant.

How could it be otherwise? Trump embodied neoliberalism, he lived and breathed the idea that government should be run like a business by a businessman just like himself. He believed in blurring boundaries including and now especially between the market and the state. Trump refused to relinquish his business holdings while president, forcing the issue into

the courts, his wife hawked her jewelry line on the White House webpage the very first day of his presidency and Trump insisted on making the taxpayers pay the Trump Organization (his own personally owed company) for security for his wife and son to continue living in Trump Tower and not the White House (Honig, 2016). Trump insisted he would govern by making better business deals with other countries and international institutions and actors. In fact, he treated all government decision-making as if it were a form of business deal-making. He was marketizing the state in real time and in an iterative fashion, day by day, or even at some moments it seemed hour by hour. His initial actions as president showed he saw governing strictly through the lens of his best-selling book *The Art of the Deal*. If this is not neoliberalism, it is not clear what is.

Neoliberalism in fact has been variously defined but arguably it is first and foremost about the making market logic hegemonic as the touchstone for decision-making, personal and collective, in all spheres of life including the public sector and the managing of state operations (Schram, 2015). It is significantly about blurring the boundaries between the market and the state, bringing in market actors to reorganize the state along market lines, marketizing state operations to run consistent with market logic and to make those public policies and programs more specifically directed to buttress rather than countering markets by getting people as clients or citizens more generally to be more market compliant. While Keynesian liberal economics relied on the state to counter markets and mitigate their worst effects, especially on the least advantaged in society, neoliberalism saw the state as buttressing markets to enable them to become more profitable in a globalizing world (Krinsky, 2008). If that is neoliberalism, Trump embodied it like no president before.

People may have voted against Clinton for her stubborn commitment to the neoliberalism of her husband, the former President Bill Clinton, the champion of a finding a “Third Way” between Left and Right (as his friend Tony Blair in England did) to work within

the existing structure of consolidated power by being a “New Democrat.” Hillary did promise to make neoliberalism work for ordinary people even if it had failed them in the past. She epitomized though at best that limited effort of “progressive neoliberalism” (Fraser, 2017). Yet, Trump quickly turned out to be much more a neoliberal than Clinton ever imagined, especially since he ran against her progressive version of neoliberalism and its commitments to multiculturalism. She may have cravenly fallen into sticking with Clintonian neoliberalism as its own desperate if moderate, Third Way, New Democrat approach to squeezing benefits from the prevailing power structure for Middle America. But Trump more fulsomely lived and breathed a cutthroat neoliberalism, perhaps even thoughtlessly, or even somatically, as if it were the only way to act in the world.

Trump’s ascendancy is very much associated with the rise of far-right, nativistic demagogues in Europe and Asia, all seemingly reacting to neoliberal policies that promote globalization, immigration and multiculturalism while leaving native workers more economically vulnerable (Müller, 2016). His friendship with Russian President Vladimir Putin showed Trump was attracted to leaders who ruled autocratically. Some of the more demagogic leaders of these movements are more explicitly fascistic in their orientation and many take an autocratic approach to governing. Some say Trump is a fascist, but neoliberalism has strong affinities with fascism, especially in using state disciplinary power on subordinate classes so that they will be market compliant in ways that serve corporate interests (Chaudhary and Chappe, 2016). The long wave of structural change from the 1970s until Trump’s election has concentrated wealth and power at the top and elites have used that shift to re-make the state to run consistent with market principles to benefit those who dominate the market system (Schram, 2015). The autocrats might run against neoliberalism but end up ruling consistent with it.

With Trump as president, we can see now clearly that neoliberalism has not gone away and is not likely to any time soon. It remains hegemonic as the largely unstated public policy orientation of our time. While much has been written about neoliberalism as ideology and as a public policy orientation, much more remains to be said and needs to be said in an age of Trump where the president embodies that ideology and orientation without perhaps even knowing it and without ever saying its name or defending its perspective.

In fact, neoliberalism, it turns out, is more of an implicit orientation to governing than a full-blown, explicit ideology. It is more the *zeitgeist* for making decisions in a market-centered society (Schram 2015). Whereas President Richard Nixon said we are all Keynesians now, it goes without saying that today we are all neoliberals, increasingly under pressure to make key life decisions, publicly and privately, collectively as well as individually, according to market logic. It remains the case that in today's neoliberal society, people are expected to become entrepreneurs of the self who can take full responsibility for our personal choices. In this way, we enact what has come to be called "neoliberal governmentality" (Foucault, 2008). Trump is that neoliberal man-child who instinctively acts in a neoliberal fashion, now as president, performing his highly incessant and insecure market-centered approach to his own life and applying it to his public decision-making.

Trump therefore is part of something larger. Nancy Pelosi, the leader of the Democrats in the U.S. House of Representatives, affirmed that after the 2016 election when she responded to a question about doing more to appeal to disenchanted young voters: "We're capitalists and that's just the way it is" (Seipel, 2017). Neoliberalism is today's most significant manifestation of the capitalism Pelosi says reigns supreme. Therefore, this volume's important intellectual resources can have profound pertinence to the politics of our time. The essays in this volume were in most cases completed before Trump was elected and do not specifically address his policy proposals. Yet, their relevance is likely to endure

beyond a Trump presidency. Neoliberalism remains hegemonic irrespective of what happens to his incendiary approach to governing. Both parties remain focused on proposing neoliberal approaches to addressing social and economic issues at home and issues of economic development and political stability abroad.

Each chapter makes an important contribution to the growing literature on neoliberalism, especially as it relates to social policy, and most especially regarding the self-making processes enacted by neoliberalism via social policy. The volume brings together a diverse set of essays that examine both the theory and the practice of neoliberalism in this regard. The essays use theory to interrogate neoliberalism critically and therefore can provide resources for political resistance in an age of neoliberalism.

The lessons for thinking critically about neoliberalism today come from a wide range of sources. The chapters are authored by an interdisciplinary group of scholars from political science, sociology, geography, social work, and related fields. Included in this diverse group are scholars from the United States and Europe, who offer theoretical and empirical accounts of the rolling out of neoliberalism as a policy regime in different parts of the world.

The chapters range across issues of theory and practice, but have a keen focus on how neoliberalism puts in place a disciplinary regime for managing subordinate populations. The beginning chapters provide a theoretical context for thinking about neoliberalism as promoting a highly individualizing form of population management. The next set of chapters consider the ways in which neoliberalism has relied on social policy to discipline citizens as particular types of compliant subjects within subordinated populations. This is followed by a section that includes two chapters on the role of policing in disciplining individuals of these most often racialized, subordinated populations. Next are three chapters on urban policy and how neoliberalism reshapes urban governance to focus on issues of disciplining the

subordinated to be complaint, economically as well as socially and politically. The final set of chapters asks what it will take politically to get beyond neoliberalism.

The Origin

These chapters did not come to us randomly but originated in a two-year long faculty seminar on neoliberalism at Hunter College, CUNY, where we worked to bring the best people to talk about their specific research efforts on neoliberalism. The seminar was an ongoing event of significant scholarly attention at Hunter. It started in the fall of 2014 when a select group of Hunter College faculty and CUNY doctoral students began meeting to present their work on and discuss neoliberalism as the influential ideological orientation it had become in theory and practice in the U.S. and across the globe. To further this process of reflection and discussion, the faculty decided to invite additional scholars who had written on the topic to make presentations.

The seminar presentations took place from the fall of 2014 through the spring of 2016 and included scholars from a widening geographic network: Mimi Abramovitz, Leonard Feldman, Marianna Pavlovskaya, Sanford Schram, and Jillian Schwedler, from Hunter College; David Harvey, Ruthie Gilmore and Cindi Katz from the CUNY Graduate Center; Nancy Fraser, from New School for Social Research; Bernard Harcourt, Columbia University; Jodi Dean, Hobart and William Smith Colleges; Lester Spence, Johns Hopkins University; Carolyn Fraker and Joe Soss, University of Minnesota; Barbara Cruikshank, University of Massachusetts; Jamie Peck, University of British Columbia; Mitchell Dean and Kaspar Villadsen, Copenhagen Business School; Sophie Danneris, Aalborg University in Denmark; Maureen Matarese and Dorte Casewell, presenting together from Borough of Manhattan Community College and Aalborg University, Copenhagen, respectively; François Ewald, French Technological Academy and Columbia University Center for Contemporary

Critical Thought; Bettina Leibetseder, Johannes Kepler University, Linz, Austria; Katherine Gibson, Western Sydney University, Australia; and Guy Feldman, Tel Aviv University.

This volume reflects some of the best presentations of our seminar. It adds significantly to the literature on neoliberalism. While there is a burgeoning literature on neoliberalism, there is a dearth of books that bring theoretical analysis to bear on concrete social policy issues. There are fewer that provide a comparative analysis as we offer in this book with chapters on the EU, Denmark, Jordan, Russia, the U.S. and elsewhere. Our great group of seminar presenters provide the opportunity to offer this more international and comparative perspective. The essays included here also provide a good mix of theoretical and policy-related analyses of neoliberalism that are specifically focused on neoliberalism's disciplinary regime for regimenting subordinate populations into a market-centered society.

While a variety of work by prominent scholars informs the scholarship showcased here, a few jump out as most significant. The volume reflects the long shadow Michel Foucault (2008) has cast over the study of what he calls "neoliberal governmentality," where the state is marketized in order to get subordinate populations to be market compliant. Foucault is at the center of a number of chapters in this volume. A very critical, recent work that draws heavily from Foucault but also re-works and extends his thinking is that of Wendy Brown (2015). Almost as influential is Philip Mirowski (2014). Other chapters draw from a wide variety of sources including from several of the seminar participants whose work is not included in this volume but who made significant contributions to the seminar. Prominent among these are David Harvey (2007) and Bernard Harcourt (2011). Also, key contributor to the existing literature Jamie Peck (2011) has a co-authored chapter in this volume. A common theme in these writings is that neoliberalism is not mere market fundamentalism that emphasizes liberating markets from state control. Instead, neoliberalism involves centrally re-orienting the state to use its coercive power to discipline people to be market compliant in

furtherance of creating a more thorough, robust market-centered society, where market logic reigns supreme over all decision-making across all social spheres and at all levels, personal and political, individual and collective.

Drawing on these and other sources and this orientation toward understanding neoliberalism, our contributors offer a rich set of essays that can help understand the challenges for resisting the neoliberal disciplinary regime in an age of Trump. We say this in particular since Trump's neoliberalism is likely to be extremely harsh for those on the bottom of the socio-economic order. It is all the more pertinent then that a prominent unifying theme to the included essays is the relationship of neoliberalism to social welfare and related public policies that affect people's opportunities to thrive socially and economically.

The Chapters that Follow

The chapters that follow are organized into sections. The first section lays theoretical groundwork on the issue of neoliberalism to social policy. Jodi Dean provides a theoretically rich examination of how the Left has failed to come to grips with the individualization that neoliberalism enacts on public discourse today. Her chapter, entitled "Nothing Personal," takes up what she sees as neoliberalism's anti-political assault on collectivity. She looks at shifts in "commanded individuality" from the 1970s to the present, highlighting the political, economic, social and cultural challenges on the individual as she becomes "the overburdened remainder of dismantled institutions and solidarities—the survivor." Revisiting Christopher Lasch's *The Culture of Narcissism* (1996), Dean notes that it underscored incisively the ways capitalist processes simultaneously promote the individual as the primary unit of capitalism and unravel the institutions of solidaristic support on which this unit depends. She puts later sociologists in conversation with Lasch to extend the implications of Lasch's account. The chapter concludes by examining the effects of neoliberalism's individuation for the Left. Dean provides an incisive critique of the fragmentation of a collective perspective under the

weight of reasserted capitalist class power. She draws on Elias Canetti's (1984) work on crowds to introduce the power of the many as a productive response to the demands for individuality. Dean emphasizes that her chapter aims to dislodge from left thinking the individualism that serves as an impasse to left politics.

Mitchell Dean's chapter follows in direct relationship to Jodi Dean's analysis. In "The Secret Life of Neoliberal Governmentality in Foucault and Beyond," Dean addresses *both* Michel Foucault's contribution to the current debate on neoliberalism, together with its legacy in governmentality studies, *and* the intellectual-historical context of his own engagement with it in the later part of the 1970s. The chapter examines Foucault's view of liberalism and neoliberalism as sharing an orientation toward the "art of government" as manifested in post-war Europe and the United States. In particular, Dean notes how neoliberalism operated within such political movements as the French "Second Left" of the 1970s. Dean uses this historiography to critically examine the still contested legacy of Foucault in what has come to be called "governmentality studies." Dean concludes: "Foucault can seem insightful and prescient about neoliberalism because he would come to share so many of its premises: the impossibility of a science of the human that does not intensify domination, the economy – not the public, or the state – as the generator and manifestation of truth, at least for liberal or even modern governance, and the occlusion of the question of inequality. Foucault both acutely diagnosed and to some extent could be said to have participated in what amounted to a counter-revolution in public policy."

The last of the three chapters in this first theoretically-oriented section of the book is by Kaspar Villadsen: "Foucault's Three Ways of Decentering the State: Perspectives on the State, Civil Society and Neoliberalism." This chapter extends Dean's analysis to think how Foucault's evolution enables us to think about power, politics and policy in an age of neoliberalism. Villadsen explains how Foucault reached a "decentered position on the state." For Villadsen, the later Foucault reflected his evolution away from state-centered political analyses to the point that Foucault seemed to conclude that neo-liberalism would allow greater space for difference and individual self-formation. Villadsen concludes that Foucault's theorizing, while not without problems, ends up being prismatic in ways that can help study and challenge power in a neoliberal era.

Building on the theoretical investigations of the first section, the second section of the book includes chapters organized around the role of social policy in constructing individuals as compliant citizens. Chapter 4, "Reconstructing Active Subjects: The European Social Investment Perspective between Human Capital Theory and Social Citizenship," by Bettina

Leibetseder examines critically the self-making involved in the what is called the EU's "Social Investment Package." The EU's Social Investment strategy places the newer conceit of social investment on equal footing with the established idea of social protection.

Leibetseder notes that critics of the scheme argue that social investment over-invests in an economic governing rationality that threatens established understandings of social citizenship (and its welfare state protections) as grounded in solidarity as a basis for binding citizens and societies together, especially in the emerging and fragile European Community.

Theoretically, the social investment perspective could actually help perpetuate commitments to social citizenship, even as it endorses a human capital approach and redistributive aims concomitantly. Leibetseder argues that this remains possible due to the EU's "polysemic" notion of social investment; however, it may instead advance neoliberal approaches to social welfare that would limit redistribution to the poor. Analyzing EU policy documents, Leibetseder finds four types of subject formation variously affected by the EU's social investment approach. Not only do the unemployed face an activation regime, but also the young and old, sick and healthy, are targeted as well in neoliberalizing individuating ways. Leibetseder concludes that the European Commission's Social Investment Package moves human capital theory into mainstream European social policy and with less than positive implications for sustaining a commitment to an inclusionary, solidaristic social citizenship.

The issue of targeting populations is extended in Chapter 5, "Ontologies of Poverty in the Post-Soviet Russia and Duplicities of Neoliberalism," by Marianna Pavlovskaya. For Foucault, neoliberal governmentality centrally involved the state creating populations and then getting people to populate those populations as compliant members of particular groupings, all in service of stabilizing the social order. Pavlovskaya notes that in contrast to the Soviet past, when differences in material wealth were relatively limited, the post-Soviet transformation has produced a dramatically polarized society with a large impoverished

population including working poor. Consequently, Russia has to develop from scratch new metrics and policies to deal with this emerging population that is a result of regime change at the state level. This chapter examines how these metrics of poverty have evolved in ways that both normalize and obscure the extent of poverty produced by the twenty-five years of the arduous transition from state socialism to free-market capitalism and in the end reinforce this large population. During this transformation, the Soviet system of universal welfare, arguably the most complete and comprehensive in the world, was radically transformed as well, through regulations largely guided by neoliberal ideologies adopted by the Russian state. The authorities implemented a shift to means-tested and targeted welfare provisioning following Western societies who built their welfare systems under capitalism over decades. The chapter concludes by comparing unemployment benefits in Russia with those in the United States (a common reference point for Russians) in order to highlight the deleterious effects of neoliberal reform creating and normalizing the poor as a distinct population. Pavlovskaya suggests that, given its growing influence on the world stage, Russian neoliberal regime that the state has rapidly and successfully built, and continues to support with an increasingly consolidated authority, may indeed set the development path for the rest of the world unless we learn to resist and divert this trajectory.

Chapter 6, “Neoliberalism Viewed from the Bottom Up: A Qualitative Longitudinal Study of Benefit Claimants’ Experiences of the Unemployment System,” by Sophie Danneris, drills down more concretely into the neoliberalizing effects of the unemployment system in Denmark. Arguing that it is pivotal to look at neoliberal policy from the bottom up, this chapter explores the lived experiences of program participants. Through a qualitative longitudinal study on the effects of recent welfare reforms in Denmark, Danneris explores how neoliberalism is experienced from the viewpoint of the people subject to it on a daily basis. She focuses on vulnerable long-term unemployed benefit claimants. Through an in-

depth analysis of clients' interviews, Danneris highlights how clients are coping by adjusting to the new rules, and in the last instance working as best they can to make the system work for them personally in each instance. Thus, by looking at policy through the eyes of the people who are directly affected by the new regime, the chapter offers an "everyday world" perspective to the analysis of how active labor market reforms involve self-making and re-making. In the process, the study reveals a multitude of hidden dimensions to the way neoliberalism manifest itself in the daily life of the unemployed.

Chapter 7 "Neoliberal Talk: The Routinized Structures of Document-Focused Social Worker-Client Discourse," by Maureen Matarese and Dorte Caswell drills down even further to examine how the interactions between social workers and clients involve issues of self-making. This chapter uses conversation analysis to examine this issue. Analyzing naturally occurring data from social work interactions in a homeless shelter, the authors argue that combining a bottom-up, street level bureaucracy perspective with a conversation analytical approach enables us to discover new aspects of form related interaction. The analysis shows how standardization, routinization, time, and documentation function in concert to accomplish social work goals that end up consciously or not having good as well as bad implications for client self-understandings.

The third section brings together two chapters that examine issues of governance via population management when the subordinated are constructed as a deviant, racialized other. In Chapter 8 "Criminal Justice Predation and Neoliberal Governance" Joshua Page and Joe Soss examine how the racialized U.S. state system systematically operates not just to discipline but also to exploit. They focus on the predatory practices associated with the carceral regime today that end up making subordinated blacks vulnerable to becoming indentured citizens. Here the state is the flip side of the social citizenship state that accords people social protections. Instead, for those who do not meet the threshold conditions for

inclusion in the social citizenship state, often because they are poor, non-white and sequestered in marginal neighborhoods, the state is more Janus-faced and operates to discipline more than to uplift. But it goes further to exploit their subordination to serve the state's need to sustain itself financially. We see this most especially through the operations of the criminal justice system (though it is by no means limited to that). Page and Soss note that this was forcefully brought before the American public in 2015, when the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) concluded in a detailed report in response to the shooting of Michael Brown by police officer Darren Wilson that the city of Ferguson, Missouri had been operating a “predatory system of government.” Police officers were acting as street-level enforcers for a program—aggressively promoted by city officials—in which fines and fees were used to extract resources from poor communities of color and deliver them to municipal coffers. Page and Soss argue that what the DOJ discovered in Ferguson should not be seen as anomalous, either in relation to U.S. history or governance in contemporary America. They highlight how the predatory state relies on “targeted mechanisms of resource extraction, organized by race, class, and gender,” and deployed in specific communities, relying at times on private actors. They argue that “the neoliberal era of governance has been marked by a resurgence and transformation of state predation on poor communities of color.” They conclude that neoliberalism will be misunderstood if we fail to develop a theoretical and empirical account of its distinctive predatory forms and the new model of the resulting form of “indentured citizenship” it is constructing.

In Chapter 9, “Neoliberalism and Police Reform,” Leonard Feldman pursues the issues of neoliberal criminal justice further by examining how quantitative performance measurement and surveillance combine to be redeployed in the service of police reform. Relying on Bernard Harcourt (2011) and others, Feldman describes how neoliberalism as a political form involves the development of particular technologies of measurement and

observation. He considers two specific reforms: (1) Department of Justice investigations of police departments establish evidence of unconstitutional, illegal conduct; and (2) policy-violating uses of force through a CompStat-like approach to quantitative performance measurement. He turns to the debate about how police body cameras redeploy contemporary surveillance technologies in the service of making state actors accountable. In arguing that neoliberal governance technologies play a role in police reform efforts, Feldman recognizes the well-documented role of neoliberal policies in facilitating or producing the intensified policing of urban space and the refocusing of punitive and carceral mechanisms on subjects who fail to self-regulate according to market norms. But he supplements that picture with an account of how neoliberal governance logics can become attached to different political projects. In conclusion, he considers the limitations of such redeployed neoliberal technologies, by arguing that, even as they promise to restrict excess police violence, they “enframe” it in an administrative logic that prevents consideration of broader questions of the legitimacy of police use of force.

The fourth section of the book turns to the urban scene as the site for the most intensified forms of neoliberal disciplining of the subordinated. In ways reminiscent of David Harvey’s analysis of New York City (2007), in Chapter 10, “Neoliberalizing Detroit,” Jamie Peck and Heather Whiteside provide a critical study of Detroit as a test case for a domesticated form of neoliberal structural adjustment in the United States. They note that Detroit was one of the first cities to “entrepreneurialize” after the early 1970s, as a largely defensive response to economic decline, white flight, and state withdrawal. Detroit has since experienced its own version of corporate failure, having declared the largest municipal bankruptcy in U.S. history. The authors diagnose that the city has been subjected to a “politically steered and racially targeted process of financialized restructuring,” based on a neoliberal model of technocratic governance, and involving court-administered municipal

downsizing and public asset stripping. They explain that Detroit is now being repurposed, in leaner form, for new markets. “In the wake of the Wall Street crash of 2008, Detroit has become a strategic target in an evolving regime of austerity urbanism, with important implications for cities near and far, as well as for emergent modalities of market rule.”

In Chapter 11 “Neoliberalizing Half of a City: The Consequences for Political Protest in Amman, Jordan,” Jillian Schwedler turns the analysis of neoliberalism toward the regulation of street protest (which became a staple of resisting Trump’s policies). Schwedler notes that in the case of the city of Amman, its dramatic expansion over the past thirty years led to its population more than doubling through growth of the indigenous population being supplemented by an influx of two new waves of refugees (from Iran and now Syria). King Abdullah II, who gained the throne in 1999, has sought to address the growing economic disparities of the city with neoliberal reforms, notably developing a foreign real estate market, attracting foreign finance services, and implementing incremental austerity programs. The result has been a dramatic altering of the locations and repurposing of public space, with attendant effects on the ability to mobilize politically, especially for public demonstrations and street protests. Schwedler notes that with the shifting of the city’s built environment in the course of advancing neoliberal projects, the visibility and availability of public spaces in which citizens can protest has been significantly reduced. In other words, this chapter examines the changing geography of the city through the lens of political protests. It utilizes original field research to illustrate how the neoliberalization of the city—or, what turns out to be half of the city, to be precise—has a profound depoliticizing effect, rendering some protests invisible as it eliminates the spaces previously available for enacting protest.

The final section of the book includes two chapters about responding to the challenges of neoliberalism. Both offer heterodox responses that transgress the convention of Left-Right

continuum. In Chapter 12, “The Knight’s Move: Social Change in an Age of Consolidated Power,” Sanford Schram discusses the challenges for getting meaningful social policy change in an age of neoliberalism where power is increasingly concentrated among market actors in highly unequal ways and only incremental policy change is likely. Using the neoliberalization of social welfare policy in the U.S. as his main example, Schram goes on to suggest that the key to progressive policy change is trying to figure out how to make incremental changes that lay the basis for more dramatic transformation which helps us get beyond the limitations of existing power relationships. This is not a “progressive neoliberalism” that seeks to rationalize the existing neoliberal policy regime (Fraser, 2017). Instead, it is a “radical incrementalism” that looks to identify which incremental changes have radical potential to lay the basis for eventually getting beyond the neoliberal disciplinary regime. The chapter suggests how we can build on such incremental changes to rework power relationships and begin the process of creating more inclusive, solidaristic and equitable policies that address fundamental problems rather than papering over them and rationalizing them. The contentious example of Obamacare is put forward as a site for thinking about radical incrementalism even as it faces its greatest threat of repeal in the first moments of the Trump administration.

The last chapter in the book, Chapter 13, “Neoliberalism: Towards a Critical Counter-Conduct” is by Barbara Cruikshank. It extends the consideration of how to respond to neoliberalism as hegemonic and does so by returning to the insights of Michel Foucault. Cruikshank asks, as did Foucault, why we tend to only focus on neoliberalism as always an instrument of subjection. Cruikshank argues that that sort of critical conduct—activist and academic alike—too often remains under the spell of what Foucault called the “repressive hypothesis” and the questionable presumption that freedom and knowledge—in this case movements against and critical studies of neoliberalism—are external to power. Cruikshank

thoughtfully suggests such a presumption mistakenly unifies neoliberalism as an object of resistance and essentializes it as self-evidently real, stable, and bad, thereby closing off the door to contingent forces of change. For these reasons, Cruikshank says, critical conduct under the spell of a neoliberal repressive hypothesis has become an obstacle to the kind of critical thought and action much needed in the current era. This kind of intransigent stance leads to the devaluation and disparagement of ongoing struggles that are deemed insufficiently critical of neoliberalism. Cruikshank uses examples of current movements challenging neoliberalism from within as models for a more politically effective “critical” counter-conduct.

Cruikshank’s analysis is profoundly protean in a number of ways that make for a fitting last chapter of this book. For instance, it opens the door to considering other voices to move beyond the so-called “capitalocentrism,” i.e., the tendency to examine capitalism as a homogeneous economy while disregarding the significance of the ongoing non-capitalist economic practices that over time could prove to be critical to constructing “post-capitalist” politics (Gibson-Graham 2006; Roelvink et al. 2015).

In conclusion, these chapters reflect a diverse set of voices, examining issues both theoretical and empirical. They share a focus on neoliberalism, especially as manifested in social policy and how those policies work to target subordinated populations for discipline. They provide resources for countering neoliberalism in the current era. While we may have thought the age of neoliberalism was fading away, it seems ever more ascendant, making these essays profoundly politically pertinent.

The current political climate is undoubtedly challenging and those seeking to resist the perpetuation of a neoliberal system of subordination need all the help they can get. But it is important to keep in mind that opportunities for political resistance are still available. It is important to remember, for instance, that Trump’s victory does not mean that the American

society as a whole has endorsed his faux populism and cutthroat neoliberalism. The speed at which protests greeted his ascendancy has indicated otherwise. The opposition comes from a variety of sources, opposing his racism, sexism and class politics that reinforce some of the most oppressive dimensions of how neoliberalism gets enacted through state policy today. Even without Trump, neoliberalism's grip on policy is not likely to be loosened without ongoing active resistance the disciplinary regime. Critical analyses of neoliberalism, therefore, will continue to be relevant to the ongoing struggles. Our hope is that readers will find important political insights in these essays especially for combating neoliberalism as the defining way to govern still today.

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Part 1

Theorizing Neoliberalism:

The Individual, the Subject and the Power of the State

Chapter 1

Nothing Personal

Jodi Dean

The era of communicative capitalism is an era of commanded individuality. The command circulates in varying modes. Each is told, repeatedly, that she is unique and encouraged to cultivate this uniqueness. We learn to insist on and enjoy our difference, intensifying processes of self-individuation. No one else is like us (like me). The “do-it-yourself” injunction is so unceasing that “taking care of oneself” appears as politically significant instead of as a symptom of collective failure—we let the social safety net unravel—and economic contraction—in a viciously competitive job market we have no choice but to work on ourselves, constantly, just to keep up. Required to find out, decide, and express it all ourselves, we construe political collectivity as nostalgia for the impossible solidarities of a different era. The second-wave feminist idea that the “personal is political” has become twisted into the presumption that the political is personal: how does this affect *me*?

Individualism has not always been so intense and unmitigated. As Jefferson Cowie (2010) details in his history of the United States in the 1970s, “reformed and diversified individualisms”