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978-0-521-44969-4 - States of Emergency in Liberal Democracies

Nomi Claire Lazar

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## States of Emergency in Liberal Democracies

In an emergency, statesmen concentrate power and suspend citizens' rights. These emergency powers are ubiquitous in the crisis government of liberal democracies, but their nature and justification are poorly understood. Based on a pluralist conception of political ethics and political power, this book shows how we can avoid the dangers and confusions inherent in the norm/exception approach that dominates both historical and contemporary debate. The book shows how liberal values need never – indeed must never – be suspended, even in times of urgency. Only then can accountability remain a live possibility. But at the same time, emergency powers can sometimes be justified with reference to extra-liberal norms that also operate in times of normalcy. By emphasizing the continuity between times of normalcy and emergency, the book illuminates the norms of crisis government, broadening our understanding of liberal democratic government and of political ethics in the process.

**Nomi Claire Lazar** is currently the Canadian Bicentennial Visiting Fellow at Yale University. From 2005 to 2008, she held the position of Collegiate Assistant Professor and Harper-Schmidt Fellow at the University of Chicago. She holds a Ph.D. in political science from Yale University and degrees in philosophy from the University of Toronto and in legal and political theory from the School of Public Policy, University College, London. Prior to returning to graduate school, she worked in the Criminal Law Policy section of the Canadian Justice Department. Her writing has appeared in the journals *Politics and Society*, *Constellations*, and *Political Theory* and will soon appear in the *University of Toronto Law Journal*.

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