

Powers of Freedom

Reframing Political Thought

Powers of Freedom offers a compelling new approach to the analysis of political power which extends Foucault's hypotheses on governmentality in new and challenging ways. Drawing upon his own empirical research and that of many others, Nikolas Rose sets out the key characteristics of this approach to political power and analyses the government of conduct in new fields and in new ways, examining the fortunes of liberalism, the birth and death of the social, the governmental impact of neo-liberalism and the invention of community. He analyses the role of expertise, the politics of numbers, technologies of economic management and the political uses of space. He illuminates the relation of this approach to contemporary theories of 'risk society' and 'the sociology of governance'. Uniquely, he argues that freedom is not the opposite of government but one of its key inventions and most significant resources. He also seeks some rapprochement between analyses of government and the concerns of critical sociology, cultural studies and Marxism, to establish a basis for the critique of power and its exercise. The book will serve as an intelligent introduction to governmentality for students, and will also challenge scholars in political theory, sociology, social policy and cultural studies.

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Chapter 1 incorporates arguments from 'Governing liberty, governing modern societies', Green College, University of British Columbia, September 1997.

Chapter 2 is a revised version of 'Towards a critical sociology of freedom', my inaugural lecture for the Chair of Sociology at Goldsmiths College, University of London, which was given in May 1992 (Rose 1992b): thanks in particular to Graham Burchell, Thomas Osborne and Peter Miller for discussion of the issues I raise here and to the participants at the Symposium in Ethics and the History of the Human Sciences, Groningen, November 1996, where this paper was discussed.

Chapter 3 develops arguments first presented in Rose (1996b), 'The death of the social?: re-figuring the territory of government', *Economy and Society* 25, 3: 327–56, and in papers delivered at a Symposium on the Displacement of Social Policies, in Jyväskylä, Finland, January 1997, and workshops on governmentality at the Stockholm Institute of Education, Stockholm, September 1996, and the University of Salzburg, December 1996.

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Chapter 6 is an extended version of Rose (1991), 'Governing by numbers: figuring out democracy', published in *Accounting, Organizations and Society* 16, 7: 673–92.

Chapter 7 draws on aspects of a number of the papers cited above, including the papers given at the University of Turku, the University of Stockholm, the University of Salzburg and the University of Jyväskylä in 1996 and 1997. It also incorporates arguments made in a paper delivered to The Future of Forensic Psychiatry, 23rd Cropwood Round Table Conference, University of Cambridge Institute of Criminology, March 1997 and an invited keynote address to Sainsbury Centre for Mental Health Summer School, Oxford University, July 1997. I developed some of these ideas further in a paper on law and control given to the research Institute for Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of Sydney in April 1998, and in discussions with Stuart Scheingold and Jonathon Simon, and the other participants in a workshop on legal pluralism at the Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies at the University of Washington in May 1998.

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