

Spring 2009 / French 7410: Foucault and Biopower / Tuesday 4:40 – 7:30 / 436 Hodges
John Protevi / www.protevi.com/john / protevi@lsu.edu / 408 Hodges / Office hrs: MW 3-4:30

Michel Foucault is well-known for his work on disciplinary body practices and on sexuality, as put forth in his two books of 1975 and 1976, *Discipline and Punish*, and *The History of Sexuality, volume 1*. Recently published lectures courses from the period immediately following those books develop the notion of “biopower” and link it to the liberalism emerging in the nineteenth century. Our course will recap Foucault’s work on discipline and sexuality and then trace notions of biopower, with constant reference to contemporary issues of reproduction, health care, and the “end of life.”

This will be a seminar format course. Students will make brief presentations on the readings as the semester progresses, as well as hand in short reading response writings. We will work together on a topic for your term paper. You will also need to present a thesis, bibliography, outline, and rough draft of the term paper. As far as our readings go, we'll spend two weeks each on *Discipline and Punish* and *History of Sexuality, volume 1*, and then about three weeks each on the lecture courses "*Society Must Be Defended*"; *Security, Territory, Population*; and *Birth of Biopolitics*. Grades will be determined as follows: presentations 20%; response writings 20%; term paper 60%.

Just a few recommended secondary texts: Jeffrey Nealon, *Foucault beyond Foucault: Power and Its Intensifications since 1984* (Stanford, 2007); Melinda Cooper, *Life as Surplus: Biotechnology and Capitalism in the Neoliberal Era* (Washington, 2008); Nikolas Rose, *The Politics of Life Itself: Biomedicine, Power and Subjectivity in the Twenty-first Century* (Princeton, 2006).