GOVERNING THE PRESENT

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Governing the Present

Administering Economic, Social and Personal Life

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This volume brings together arguments that we have been making, individually and jointly, over the last fifteen years, and which have been published in a number of specialist journals. In bringing them together in this way, editing and updating them, and introducing them with a specially written essay, our aim is to demonstrate the empirical basis, scope and enduring contribution of this approach to the analysis of the present.

The chapters in this volume are based on papers originally published in the following sources:

Chapter 2: P. Miller and N. Rose, 'Governing economic life', *Economy and Society* 19 (1) (February 1990): 1–31.

Chapter 3: N. Rose and P. Miller, 'Political power beyond the state: problematics of government', *British Journal of Sociology* 43 (2) (June 1992): 173–205.

Chapter 4: N. Rose, 'The death of the social? Refiguring the territory of government', *Economy and Society* 25 (3) (August 1996): 327–56.

Chapter 5: P. Miller and N. Rose, 'Mobilizing the consumer: assembling the subject of consumption', *Theory, Culture and Society* 14 (February 1997): 1–36.

Chapter 6: P. Miller and N. Rose, 'On therapeutic authority', *History of the Human Sciences* 7 (3) (August 1994): 29–64.

Chapter 7: P. Miller and N. Rose, 'Production, identity and democracy', *Theory and Society* (USA) 24 (3) (June 1995): 427–67.

Chapter 8: N. Rose, 'Governing "advanced" liberal democracies', in A. Barry, T. Osborne and N. Rose, eds, *Foucault and Political Reason: Liberalism, Neo-Liberalism and Rationalities of Government* (London: UCL Press, 1996).

1

Introduction

Governing Economic and Social Life

Why study ‘governmentality’? Our own path to governmentality began with a series of diverse, but loosely connected questions. How, and to what ends, did so many socially legitimated authorities seek to interfere in the lives of individuals in sites as diverse as the school, the home, the workplace, the courtroom and the dole queue? How were such wishes articulated, whether in relatively local settings such as individual organizations and firms, in the form of more systematized and articulated policy proposals or political programmes, or in the more abstract realms of political theory? What sort of knowledge base and knowledge claims underpinned such schemes for intervention, and were they drawn from the realms of psychological, sociological or economic theory, from other knowledge claims, or from ‘common sense’? What sorts of devices made such interventions possible, to what extent did they deploy existing instruments, and to what extent were they invented? What understandings of the people to be acted upon – whether explicit or implicit – underpinned these endeavours, and how did they shape or reshape the ways in which these individuals understood and acted on themselves? What has it meant to intervene in the lives of individuals in ‘liberal’ societies, that is to say, societies that proclaimed the limits of the state and respect for the

privacy of the individual? And how, in particular, could one analyse the programmes, strategies and techniques emerging in the context in which we were writing – Northern Europe and the United States in the last decades of the twentieth century? This was a time when the state was seeking to withdraw from so many spheres, and when notions of choice, the customer and the ideal of the entrepreneurial self were gaining such ascendancy. Finally, what kinds of empirical inquiries, and what kinds of conceptual tools, would enable us to understand these issues in a way that enhanced our capacity to evaluate their consequences, and perhaps even to intervene into them? We did not start from governmentality, but this was the term under which our own attempts to address these questions, empirically and conceptually, came to be grouped. In this Introduction to some of our key papers, and at the risk of over-emphasizing our own work to the exclusion of others, we try to trace this path, and to cast some light from our own perspective on the field of research that has now, for good or ill, come to be termed ‘governmentality’.

From Ideology and Consciousness to Government and Ethics

A politics and a political conjuncture had contributed to the way in which we framed these questions. The politics was formulated initially in terms of ideology. Radical thought at that time – we are talking about the 1970s – was in the grip of Marxism, but it was a Marxism trying to free itself from economic determinism. Along with others, we felt that the organization of economic life was important, perhaps crucial, in the forms of social power that had taken shape in

capitalist societies over the last 150 years. But, again with others, we felt that contemporary forms of financial, multinational shareholder capitalism could hardly be understood through the formulae of Marx's *Capital* (Cutler et al. 1977, 1978). In any event, economic power could only maintain itself, could only reproduce itself, on the basis of a particular legal system, a set of ideas about the organization of work and the definition of profit, a set of institutional arrangements for shaping and moulding the hopes, aspirations and capacities of individuals and collectivities, and much more. At the very least, the accumulation and distribution of capital was intrinsically linked to the accumulation and distribution of persons and their capacities. We needed to find some more sophisticated ways to understand the operation of these complicated apparatuses – of law and the criminal justice system, of social security, of social work, of education, of medicine, of the family, of economic life itself. They could not, we felt, be seen as simple – or even complex – effects of economic relations of ownership or the form of the commodity, and hence bound to them, and bound to change with them. If these apparatuses and practices were to be the site of political intervention and transformation, we needed to understand what made them tick.

Marxism here had taken a particular form under the influence of a variety of structuralisms – the structural Marxism of Louis Althusser, Étienne Balibar and Nicos Poulantzas, the structuralist semiotics of Ferdinand de Saussure and all those who followed him from Bakhtin to Barthes, and even to some extent the structuralist psychoanalysis of Jacques Lacan. Structuralism was significant, as a style of thought, because it redirected our attention towards the sets of relations, not available to common sense and direct observation, which underpinned and made possible what one could see, think, understand

and even feel. This reshaped the field of ideology – which for so long, in Marxism, had been the way to approach the questions that concerned us. Despite its many and varied forms, and whatever its level of sophistication, Marxist notions of ideology designated a domain of false ideas that served the social function of masking and legitimating the dominance of a ruling class. But, from the perspective of these structuralisms, ideology could no longer be regarded as a matter of ideas, no longer critiqued as a field of falsity or disguise, and no longer explained in terms of its social function. It consisted of apparatuses that were complex assemblages with their own conditions of possibility and their own regularities. Their operation was inextricably bound up with a particular vocabulary or language that circumscribed what could be said and what could be done in ways that were meaningful. And the apparatuses were populated with human beings whose individuality or subjectivity was itself shaped to fit the expectations and demands of others. In that setting, the new task of critical analysis became to understand the formation and functioning of ideological apparatuses, and those who were constituted in and through them.[1]

Some elements from this configuration remained relatively constant in the detours that led to the analytics of governmentality. Notably the recognition that to understand what was thought, said and done meant trying to identify the tacit premises and assumptions that made these things thinkable, sayable and doable. Some elements were transformed. For example, the idea of structures as closed systems of difference gave way to a looser conception of open regimes of regularities not organized in binary oppositions of presence and absence, nature and culture, and the like. Some elements did not stand the test of analysis. Althusser’s conception of ideological state apparatuses was found wanting in many respects. For it

assumed in advance that the role of these apparatuses, from religion to schooling, was ultimately – and possibly indirectly – to satisfy economic functions, to reproduce the relations of production. It tied these apparatuses rhetorically to an idea of the state, without adequately specifying what that enigmatic term signified. It failed to unpack in any usable manner the relations between the different 'orders' into which it divided reality – 'the economic', 'the political', 'the ideological' – while the notion of 'relative autonomy' proved to be no more than gestural. Its deployment of the notion of ideology already assumed that the objects of study were falsehoods that had a function, whereas we rapidly become more interested in the question of truth, along with the means of production of truth, and the consequences of the production of truth effects in specific domains. And its gesture towards subjectivity, framed in terms of Lacanian metaphysics, was far too general, despite its initial appeal as a way of countering the *a priori* humanisms of those such as George Lukács and the Frankfurt School, which could only view power as falsifying and suppressing the essence of human subjects (Miller 1987). The notion of the subject as the bearer or support of relations of production, and reducible to the places and functions created by them, did not enable one to analyse the multiplicity and variability of modes of subject formation, and the relations to the self engendered and enjoined in specific practices.

It was in this conjuncture, in the 1970s, that Michel Foucault's work entered British debates. Of course, his book on madness had been translated into English in an abridged form in the mid-1960s (Foucault 1967), and we had each worked with ideas from that and other similar analyses in our different engagement with the radical politics of psychiatry (Adlam and Rose 1981; Miller 1981; Miller and Rose 1986; Rose 1986). But the impact of that book was, at least initially, largely confined to those working in and

around the psychiatric and medical fields. The same also held for Foucault's analysis of the birth of clinical medicine, even though both books made clear the interrelations between a knowledge and expertise of the individual and the administration of populations. *The Birth of the Clinic* (Foucault 1973) showed – in a precise and direct manner – how novel ways of thinking, doing and relating to oneself emerged at a particular historical moment, linked up in all sorts of constitutive ways with the emergence of a new politics and valorization of health, which was in turn linked with new forms of production in factories, new ways of life in towns and new ways of managing populations and epidemics. It showed how a way of seeing disease and of practising medicine – the kind of clinical medicine that was beginning to mutate at the very moment he wrote – was assembled at the intersection of heterogeneous developments. These ranged from changes in the laws of assistance to a new philosophy of disease, and brought into existence new forms of subjectivity both for those who suffered and for those who treated, embodied in a set of practices from which they were inseparable. The cherished distinction between ideas and practices was not so much 'deconstructed' as by-passed in the form taken by these historical and empirical analyses. There were no gestures here to relative autonomy, the materiality of ideology or dialectics, but rather there was a precise, meticulous and scholarly tracing of the small and dispersed events that brought something new into existence, and in doing so, irreversibly reshaped human ontology and ethics.

The more or less immediate translation into English of *Discipline and Punish* (1977) – no doubt helped by its explicit concern with issues of discipline and surveillance – helped bring about a more widespread shift in ways of thinking about power. The analysis of the birth of the prison extended Foucault's prior analyses of the administration of

the self, and showed vividly how individualization was a way of exercising power. Despite its focus on the prison, discipline was no longer to be viewed as only carceral. Or, to put it differently, the engineering of conduct and the normalizing of behaviour that emerged within a carceral institution such as the prison provided a more generalized technology of social power. Such a perspective demonstrated the important normalizing role played by a vast array of petty managers of social and subjective existence, whether this occurred in the factory or the schoolroom. The concepts that Foucault used for his analysis were important, of course, but more important was the mode of analytics, the ethos of investigation that was opened up, and the focus – the who and what one should study in the critical investigation of the relations of knowledge, authority and subjectivity in our present (Miller 1987).

Our own analyses over the course of the 1980s were of this form, if more modest in scope. We followed the birth and the activities of many of these little engineers of the human soul, and their mundane knowledges, techniques and procedures – psychologists, psychiatrists, medics, accountants, social workers, factory managers, town planners and others (Miller 1980, 1981, 1986a; Miller and O'Leary 1987; Rose 1985, 1986, 1989a, 1989b). As we did so, it became clear to us that these were more than regional histories, of importance only to those interested in these specific local domains. There seemed no obvious discipline, theory or approach that addressed the range of linked questions and sites that seemed important to us. Political scientists seemed to know at the outset what was of importance – the State or the political apparatus. Political historians focused on the great figures and affairs of state. And historians of philosophy focused on the great names of the philosophical canon, even when their ideas were placed

‘in context’. But, for us at least, it became clear that the political history of our present needed to be written in terms of the activities of the minor figures that we studied, yet who were largely below the threshold of visibility for these other approaches. For it was only through their activities that states, as they were termed by those who seemed untroubled by the meaning of this term, could govern at all.

Our own work, individually and jointly, had focused on the histories of these varied and often lowly forms of expertise: the history of accounting, of management, of psychology and psychiatry, and of social work and education. And yet it seemed that these apparently diverse areas had something in common. It seemed unlikely that techniques as apparently diverse as standard costing and mental measurement shared much, but they did. They had in common a concern with the norm and deviations from it, a concern with ways in which the norm might be made operable, and a concern with all those devices that made it possible to act on the actions of individuals so as to generalize the norm yet without telling people daily how to live their lives and what decisions to take. We were working at the margins of our disciplines, apparently concerned with small, mundane problems, with the grey literature, with minor figures in history a long way away from the grand theories of world systems, modernization, globalization, and so forth. And yet, we believed increasingly, it was only because of the work of our small figures, with their own aspirations as well as those foisted on them, together with their little instruments, that rule could actually occur. It was only through these means that the ‘cold monster’ of the state could actually seek to shape the ways in which people conducted their daily lives, their interactions with themselves and others, and their relations with the various manifestations of social authority. It was these authorities, whether questioned, contested, admired or aspired to, that

made it possible for states to govern. In trying to anatomize this activity of governing, we came to focus increasingly on the three axes that had interested us from the outset – systems for the production of truth, regimes of authority and practices of subjectification.

Perhaps the first key move was ‘from why to how’. Theorists of the state addressed ‘why’-type questions. Why did something appear a problem to certain people at a particular time – a question often answered by appeal to pre-given notions of class or professional ‘interests’. Why did a new institution appear, or why did an existing one change – a question often answered by gesturing to global processes such as modernization or individualization. We asked a different question, not ‘why’ but ‘how’, thereby lightening the weight of causality, or at least multiplying it, and enabling us to abstain from the problems of ‘explaining’ such indigestible phenomena as state, class, and so on – indeed we argued that these typically went unexplained despite the claims of those theorists who wrote in these terms. Instead, why not be content to trace small histories and their intersecting trajectories? Why not study events and practices in terms of their singularity, the interrelations that define them and the conditions that make them possible (Veyne 1997)? Why not focus on the encounters, the plays of force, the obstructions, the ambitions and strategies, the devices, and the multiple surfaces on which they emerge? Why not, as Foucault put it, focus on events, on the conditions that constitute an event – ‘eventalization’: ‘making visible a *singularity* at places where there is a temptation to invoke a historical constant, an immediate anthropological trait or an obviousness that imposes itself uniformly on all. To show that things weren’t as “necessary as all that” … uncovering the procedure of causal multiplication: analysing an event according to the multiple processes that constitute it’ (Foucault 1996: 277)?[2] For, in

this way, one can begin to discern the web of relations and practices that result in particular ways of governing, particular ways of seeking to shape the conduct of individuals and groups.

A further shift was required. We were interested in subjectivity. But while others tried to write the history of subjectivity, to identify the effects of certain practices on the subjectivity of mothers, workers, children, and so forth, we found this unhelpful. For unless one posited a universal form to the human subject, unless one privileged subjectivity as moral autonomy, unless one adopted some position, psychoanalysis for example, within the contested field of the psy disciplines, that question – of the effects of certain types of experience on the mental life of the human beings caught up within them – could not be answered. That question could only be answered on the basis of some explicit or implicit assumptions about human mental processes. Yet for us, the historical forms taken by those presuppositions were exactly what we were studying. We were interested in what conceptions of the human being – whether as citizen, schoolchild, customer, worker, manager or whatever – were held at certain times and places and by whom, how such conceptions were problematized, and how interventions were devised that were appropriate to the object that was simultaneously a subject.

How, then, to proceed? Once more, it required only a slight shift in perspective. Instead of writing the history of the self or of subjectivity, we would study the history of individuals' *relations* with themselves and with others, the practices which both were their correlate and condition of possibility, and enabled these relations to be acted upon. Not who they were, but who they thought they were, what they wanted to be, the languages and norms according to which they judged themselves and were judged by others, the actions they took upon themselves and that others might take, in

the light of those understandings. These were genuinely empirical and historical questions open to study. One could ask these questions without any ‘theory of the human subject’ – since such theories were precisely the object of genealogical analysis. One could examine, not subjectivities, but technologies of subjectivity, the aims, methods, targets, techniques and criteria in play when individuals judged and evaluated themselves and their lives, sought to master, steer, control, save or improve themselves. This was the field of concerns that Foucault, in his later work, came to term ‘ethics’. And, of course, one could ask these questions where such steering was undertaken by others. Once more, Paul Veyne (1997) addresses this point. There are no universal subjects of government: those to be governed can be conceived of as children to be educated, members of a flock to be led, souls to be saved, or, we can now add, social subjects to be accorded their rights and obligations, autonomous individuals to be assisted in realizing their potential through their own free choice, or potential threats to be analysed in logics of risk and security. Not subjects, then, but subjectifications, as a mode of action on actions. Not a critique of discipline for crushing the authentic self-realizing subject of humanism, but an approach that recognizes that our own idea of the human subject as individuated, choosing, with capacities of self-reflection and a striving for autonomy, is a result of practices of subjectification, not the ahistorical basis for a critique of such practices.

It was from this perspective that we adopted some of the terminology and concepts sketched out – no more – by Michel Foucault in his brief writings on ‘governmentality’. In the development of our approach, we preferred not to be Foucault scholars. We picked and chose, added ideas and concepts from elsewhere, made up a few of our own, and spent a great deal of time discussing specific cases with

those others who came together in the study groups that worked under the banner of the History of the Present, as well as in other locales. While some have come to refer to the ‘British School of Governmentality’, such a designation is rather misleading. What emerged in Britain, but also in Canada, Australia, and even in the United States, was an informal thought community seeking to craft some tools through which we might come to understand how our present had been assembled, and hence how it might be transformed.

Laboratories of Governmentality

We did not set out to create a general theory of governmentality, but began by working on some specific issues. We were, in fact, fortunate in our objects – the Tavistock Clinic, the history of applied psychology, the genealogy of accounting and management: each of these in its different ways made it impossible, if one was to be a good empiricist, to separate out the social, the personal and the economic dimensions, for they were inextricably intertwined. We began increasingly to realize that this interconnectedness – the fact that the making up of people might be simultaneously a matter of social authorities seeking to promote personal fulfilment, improved productivity and increased social welfare – was much of the point, even if the partitioning of academic life tended to efface the intrinsic links between these domains while publicly pleading the cause of interdisciplinarity.

We were engaged not in a speculative and experimental work of theory building, but in something more limited: to craft concepts that would enable the analysis of these laboratory sites. Our papers were published in the various

places where people interested in such matters might look – journals on sociology, on the history of the human sciences, on accounting, on management, and so forth. Even there, and in relation to some of our more book-like publications, many were perplexed while some were hostile – were these histories, sociologies, critiques, some kind of lapsed Marxism or what? And how did they interconnect? But, and this was gratifying, others, usually those at an earlier stage of their academic careers, found the approaches we were developing to be of use to them as well. An early paper on the government of subjectivity and social life, based on our work on the Tavistock Clinic and the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations, was published in the journal *Sociology* (Miller and Rose 1988). This approach slipped beneath the radar of major social theorists, but it was taken up by others working in the newly flourishing minor disciplines of the history of psychology, accounting, medicine and professional power.

Issues of power were a central concern in these localized studies, but it was not our aim to develop a *theory* of power. Or rather, what concerned us were forms of power very different from those typically analysed by political theorists, political commentators and most social scientists. This was power without a centre, or rather with multiple centres, power that was productive of meanings, of interventions, of entities, of processes, of objects, of written traces and of lives. Issues of freedom were central to these forms of power and hence to our analyses, prompted by the political context in which freedom had become a political mantra from all shades within the political spectrum. It was not our aim to critique a sham freedom in the name of a truer freedom, but to point to ways in which contemporary forms of power were built on a premise of freedom, a type of regulated freedom that encouraged or required individuals

to compare what they did, what they achieved, and what they were with what they could or should be (Rose 1991).

Here we drew on our own work on the history of the psy sciences and their role in ‘making up’ people. In this work, we argued that these sciences formed as disciplines around certain ‘surfaces of emergence’: the line of development did not work from the pure to the applied, the academy to the application, the normal to the abnormal, but the other way round. It was around problems of abnormality, difference and divergence that the psy disciplines took shape. It was because of their perceived or claimed technical capacities to administer persons rationally, in light of a knowledge of what made them tick, that they gained their social credibility. But this was not to say that they had a function of repression or social control, that they were ripe to be critiqued from the point of a humanism, or from the aspiration to liberate a true and authentic subjectivity. The very idea of a true and authentic subjectivity had a history that was intertwined with that of the psy domain. And the powers of the psy domain that had become significant across the twentieth century – in the army, the factory, the school and the family – were actually couched in terms of the identification and management of this real subjectivity, the forging of an alliance between the ambitions of those who would manage persons, and the real wishes, desires and nature of those persons themselves. In this sense, criticisms of the psy domain as individualistic had actually played a part in creating a form of expertise capable of managing persons legitimately, even therapeutically, individually and collectively, whether in terms of the idea of the group, the democratic management of the workplace, self-fulfilment or whatever.

Thus the forms of power that we were interested in operated across distances and domains. They spoke equally and conjointly to individuals and collectivities. They were as

much at home in the most personal domains – such as sexual activity or eating habits – as in the most impersonal domains – such as timetables, work plans and accounting systems. And, possibly most importantly, these forms of power operated 'beyond the state': they did not begin with the state as point of origin, nor did they end with the state as the emblem or locus of power.

Governmentality Takes Shape

Our own attempts to systematize these modes of analysis began with an analysis of the government of economic life, which caused some controversy when it appeared in a general social science journal, *Economy and Society* (Miller and Rose 1990 [reproduced as chapter 2 of this volume]). At the same time, in the late 1980s, we began work on a lengthy discussion paper entitled 'Cutting off the King's Head', which we circulated widely for comments, and which was subsequently published in 1992 in the *British Journal of Sociology* (Rose and Miller 1992 [reproduced as chapter 3 of this volume]). We began with Foucault's own scattered comments on governmentality. But our aim was to generate from them a set of conceptual tools that characterized the sort of work that we had been doing in our empirical analyses, and that would make the link more directly with the problem space of political power and its various forms. To make sense of things, we looked around for help. We borrowed concepts and approaches from many places, which we can roughly group into four.

Firstly, there were those working in the broad area of science studies, whether as sociologists, historians, philosophers or some admixture. Writers such as Michel Callon and Bruno Latour had demonstrated the benefits of focusing on very specific practices and events, while extrapolating from them some more general lessons such as

the conditions for intervening at a distance. Ian Hacking similarly linked the analysis of specific practices, such as statistics, with broader theoretical or philosophical reflections which always managed to cut through the impenetrable and often fruitless hand-wringing of those more keen to fret than to analyse. Many others contributed to this still expanding and increasingly influential set of literatures.[3] From our perspective, the most important lesson of this work was the importance of focusing on instruments and interventions, even if we felt the need to supplement this with a broader concern or a more explicit link with modes of power. We took the idea of instruments broadly, to include not only actual instruments – tools, scales, measuring devices, and so forth – but also the ways of thinking, intellectual techniques, ways of analysing oneself, and so forth, to which they were bound. And we took the idea of intervention to require us to undertake detailed analyses of how interventions were actually done, the techniques and technologies that made intervention possible.

A second set of writings addressed the 'economy'. The work of the great historians of economic thought of the mid-twentieth century had made it clear, at least to us, that 'the economy' was not a given domain with its own natural laws, but was brought into existence as a way of thinking and acting in particular historical and intellectual events, and that it was transformed as those ways of thinking and acting were themselves transformed (Polanyi 1944; Schumpeter 1954). This work highlighted the constitutive role of economic calculation, and its interrelations with changing economic forms, changing economic discourses and changing economic policies. These 'made up' the economy, for the economy was itself a zone constituted by certain ways of thinking and acting, and in turn constituting ways of thinking and acting. Economic theories, laws and concepts

such as profit and loss, marginal returns, equilibrium, and so forth, together with their associated calculative technologies, did not so much describe economic life as make it possible and manageable. This interplay between ways of calculating and ways of managing was demonstrated in a loosely connected set of writings, by those working at the margins of economics and sociology (Cutler et al. 1978; Thompson 1982; Tomlinson 1981b; Tribe 1978). Those working more specifically on accounting were making a similar point, namely that we should focus on calculative *practices*, and explore how these shape the ways in which we frame the choices open to individuals, businesses and other organizations, which in turn influences the ways in which we administer the lives of others and ourselves (Burchell et al. 1980; Hopwood, 1983). Meanwhile, others offered a broader historical perspective, which helped us understand how and why we have come to place such trust in numbers (Porter 1995; see also Hirschman 1977).[4]

A third set of writings focused on the professions and expertise. While those such as Illich had sought to debunk or discredit expertise, and those such as Freidson depicted the professions as self-serving, others such as Thomas Haskell and Harold Perkin were more concerned with the ways in which deference to experts had come to be woven into even the homeliest routines of everyday life, as well as the very structure and fabric of social life. Our focus on expertise was in large part an attempt to differentiate ourselves from the literature on the sociology of the professions, which we found too constraining empirically and unsatisfying theoretically, since it pre-empted so many of the questions that seemed to us important and narrowed the terrain of analysis. It was not that we saw the more traditional professions as unimportant, but we felt it equally important to attend to the plethora of minor and petty

expertises that emerged in the interstices of daily life. We were not primarily interested in how these groups carved out an empire for themselves, pursued their own interests, or made themselves into socio-political forces, although all those issues were significant. Nor were we concerned to critique them for their imperialism or for their professional dominance. Rather, we were interested in the ways in which such expertise had been formed, the historical emergence of the problems which seemed to call for professional 'know-how', the new domains and enclosures that began to form around such issues, and the ways in which that expertise itself made it possible to conduct conduct in new ways. We were interested in particular in those forms of expertise that based their claims to special competence on a knowledge of human beings, individually and collectively. We were interested in how these 'engineers of the human soul' contributed to the dual process of problematizing and acting on individual behaviours, how they were able to shape and manage 'personal' conduct without violating its formally private status.

A fourth set of writings, emerging from those rather more closely associated with Foucault, helped extend the range of substantive studies and also enabled us to reflect on some of the concepts we were beginning to experiment with. Jacques Donzelot addressed the 'policing' of families, Robert Castel explored developments in the 'psy' domain in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, while Giovanna Procacci examined the government of poverty in the nineteenth century (Deleuze 1988, 1989; Gordon 1991; Procacci 1993; Veyne 1997). In a distinctive mode, dating back over several decades, Georges Canguilhem had produced a remarkable series of studies of the biological sciences that delineated them as 'veridical' discourses, practices animated by the desire to formulate true propositions. Ian Hacking's work on making up persons and the looping effects of human kinds

had helped pose the question of what kinds of creatures we human beings have become. Like him, we saw our work as in part a work on historical ontology, studies of the kinds of persons we take ourselves to be, how we have come to understand ourselves under such descriptions, and with what consequences. Indeed, our own work on the history of the discourses and technologies of subjectification, in personal, social and economic life, had shown not only the impossibility of separating them, but the way that subjectivity was a stake in all three, and the very separation of them had to be seen as an historical achievement. And, amongst the welter of critiques of Foucault from a range of social scientists who judged his work and found it guilty, there were a series of astute reflective pieces on Foucault's own writings that helped us begin to make sense of this often bewildering array of concepts, objects and practices.

We had no idea that our writings on governmentality, together with Foucault's own limited comments on this theme, would provide a reference point for the development of 'governmentality studies' over the 1990s, or that many of our formulations and conceptual tools would be retrospectively attributed to Foucault. While we certainly wrote in an interdisciplinary spirit, or at least without regard to disciplinary boundaries, we could not have anticipated the range and scope of studies that subsequently were to appear across so many disciplines under the rubric of governmentality. Responding to a rather odd assessment of our work in the mid-1990s (Curtis 1995; Miller and Rose 1995b), we identified a first phase of such work, which included investigations of the following: the emergence of social insurance (Defert 1991; Donzelot 1991a; Ewald 1986); education (Hunter 1988, 1994); accounting (Hopwood and Miller 1994; Power 1994); crime control (O'Malley 1992; Stenson 1993); the regulation of unemployment (Walters 1994); poverty and insecurity

(Dean 1991; Procacci 1991, 1993): strategies of development; medicine, psychiatry and the regulation of health (Castel et al. 1982; Castel 1988; Greco 1993; Miller and Rose 1986; Osborne 1993); child abuse and sexual offences (Bell 1993); and new social strategies of empowerment (Baistow 1995; Barron 1995; Cruikshank 1994). As we said at that point, this literature certainly does not constitute a homogeneous 'school', and different authors have followed different paths and addressed different questions. We pointed to the way that such approaches have proved attractive – though not unproblematic – to researchers in a range of disciplines, including political philosophy (Hindess 1996; Tully 1989) and social history (Joyce 1994), and to the fact that these studies relate to a wider literature that, whilst not drawing explicitly on notions of governmentality, has discernible affiliations with it (Hacking 1990, 1991; Meyer 1986a; Porter 1986, 1992).

In the decade that followed, a host of other studies were published on governing children, refugees, cities, the countryside, China, colonial India and postcolonial Africa, desire, paedophilia, the workplace, shopping malls, security and insecurity, crime, madness and much more. These studies have taken place in disciplines from history to human geography, literary studies to law, economics to political science. Initially taken up in the English-speaking world – notably the UK, USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand – 'governmentality' studies now flourishes in Germany, Switzerland, the Nordic countries and even, after some years of neglect of Foucault and his legacy, in France itself.

Doing and Theorizing Governmentality