

What is neoliberalism, and why does it matter?

Philip Thomas

Chapter 1 in (eds. R. Rizq and C. Jackson) *The
Industrialisation of Care: Counselling and
Psychotherapy in a Neoliberal Age.*
Forthcoming, 2019 PCCS Books

zeitgeist^{'07}
The Google Partner Forum

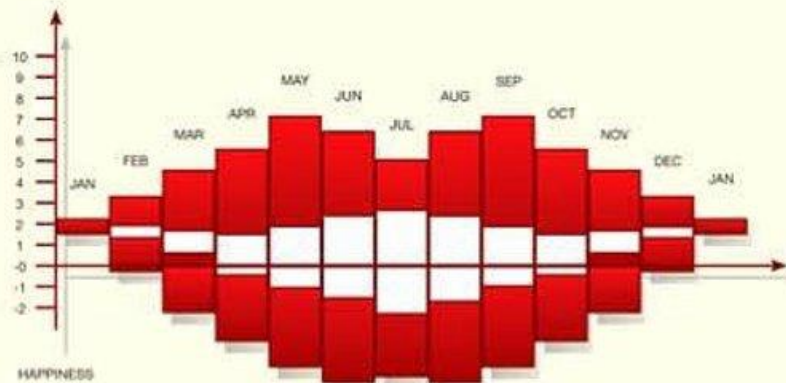


"Impressive . . . An excellent job of recounting
the collective findings of . . . this new science."

—THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

HAPPINESS

LESSONS FROM A NEW SCIENCE



RICHARD LAYARD





Beck argued that in depression

“...the individual's cognition is *distorted and out of step with his or her context...*”

(Beck, 1972: 7, emphasis added)



"... obscures the causes of inequality, divides communities with shared political interests, corrodes compassion for the poorest in society, and obviates any recognition of the need to challenge disadvantage"

(Valentine and Harris, 2014: 87)

What is Neoliberalism?

"... the theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterised by strong private property rights, free markets, and free trade."

(Harvey, 2005: 1 - 2).

How does it work?

Privatisation of public utilities and services

Opening up new markets for the private sector

Reduce public spending

State withdraws from welfare and social provision.

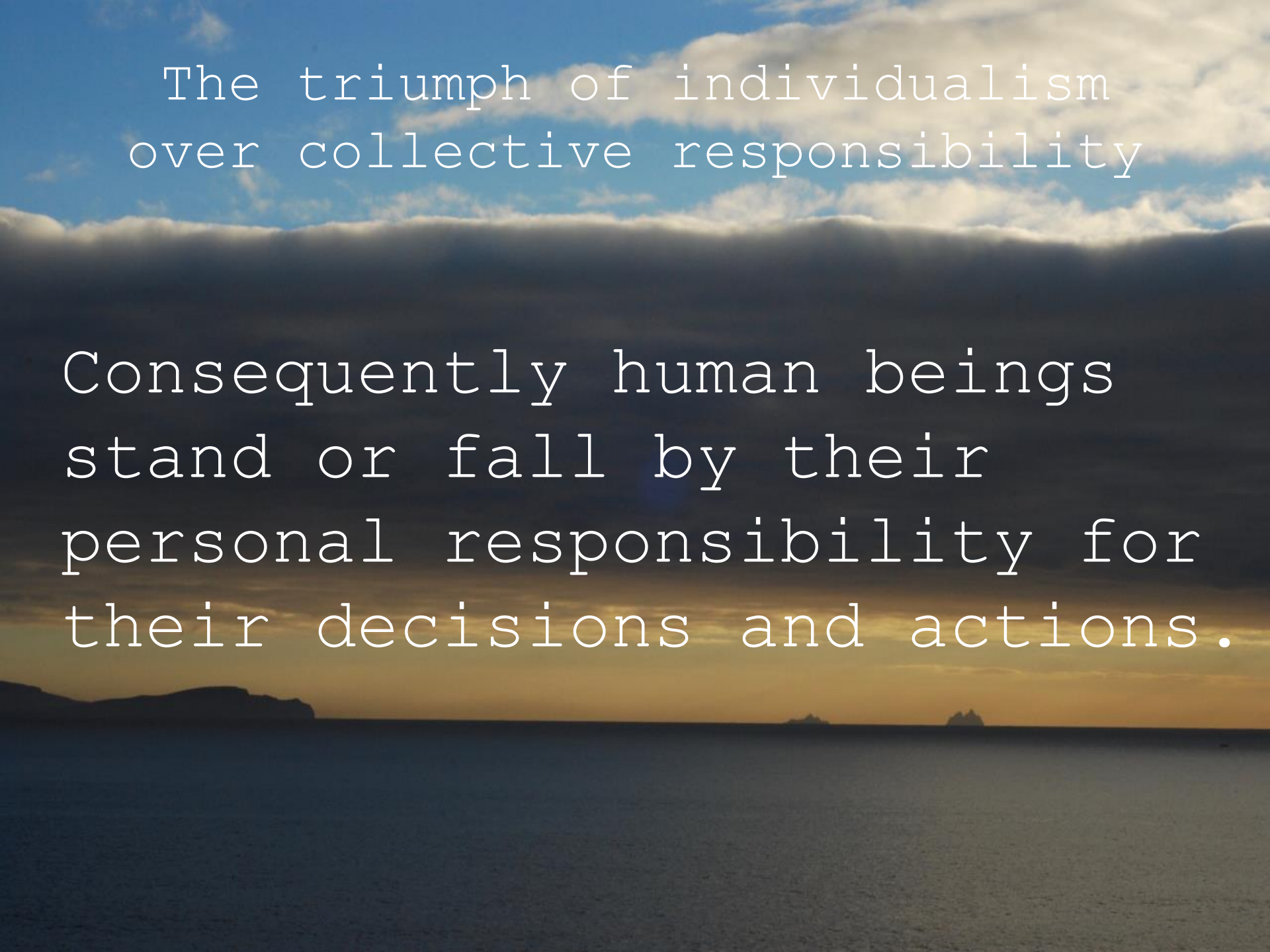
Deregulation of banks, financial markets and labour

Neoliberalism – 3 key features

importance of individualism
over collective responsibility,

its implications for social
justice and democracy,

the importance it attaches to
technology and expertise.

The background of the image is a landscape featuring a body of water in the foreground, a horizon line with silhouettes of mountains or hills, and a sky filled with clouds. The lighting suggests a sunset or sunrise, with a warm, golden glow near the horizon and a darker blue sky above. The text is overlaid on this background in a white, monospaced font.

The triumph of individualism
over collective responsibility

Consequently human beings
stand or fall by their
personal responsibility for
their decisions and actions.



Ted Schrecker and Clare Bamba

"Shocking, damning and authoritative"
— Diana Gougeon



HOW POLITICS MAKES US SICK

NEOLIBERAL EPIDEMICS



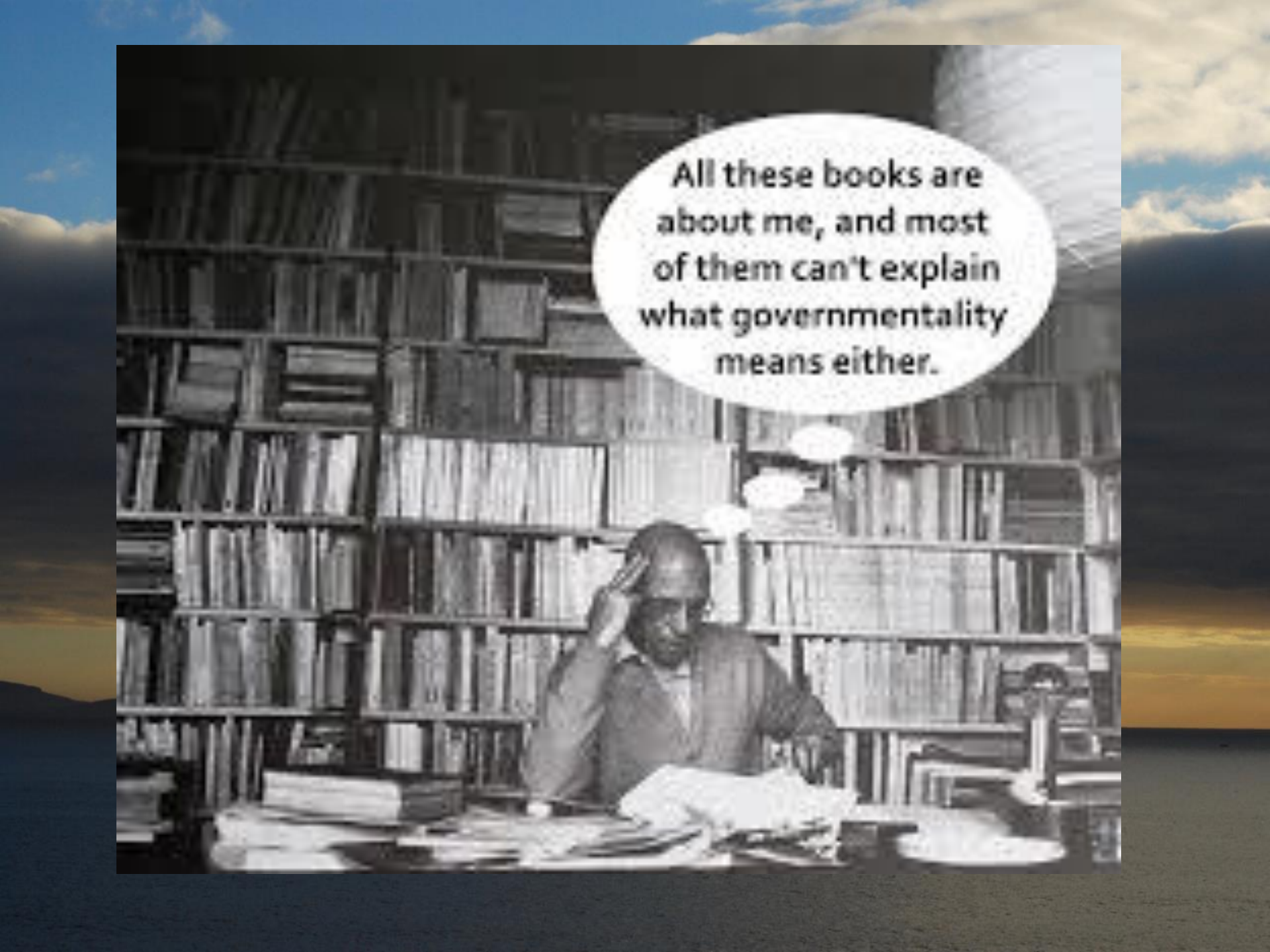




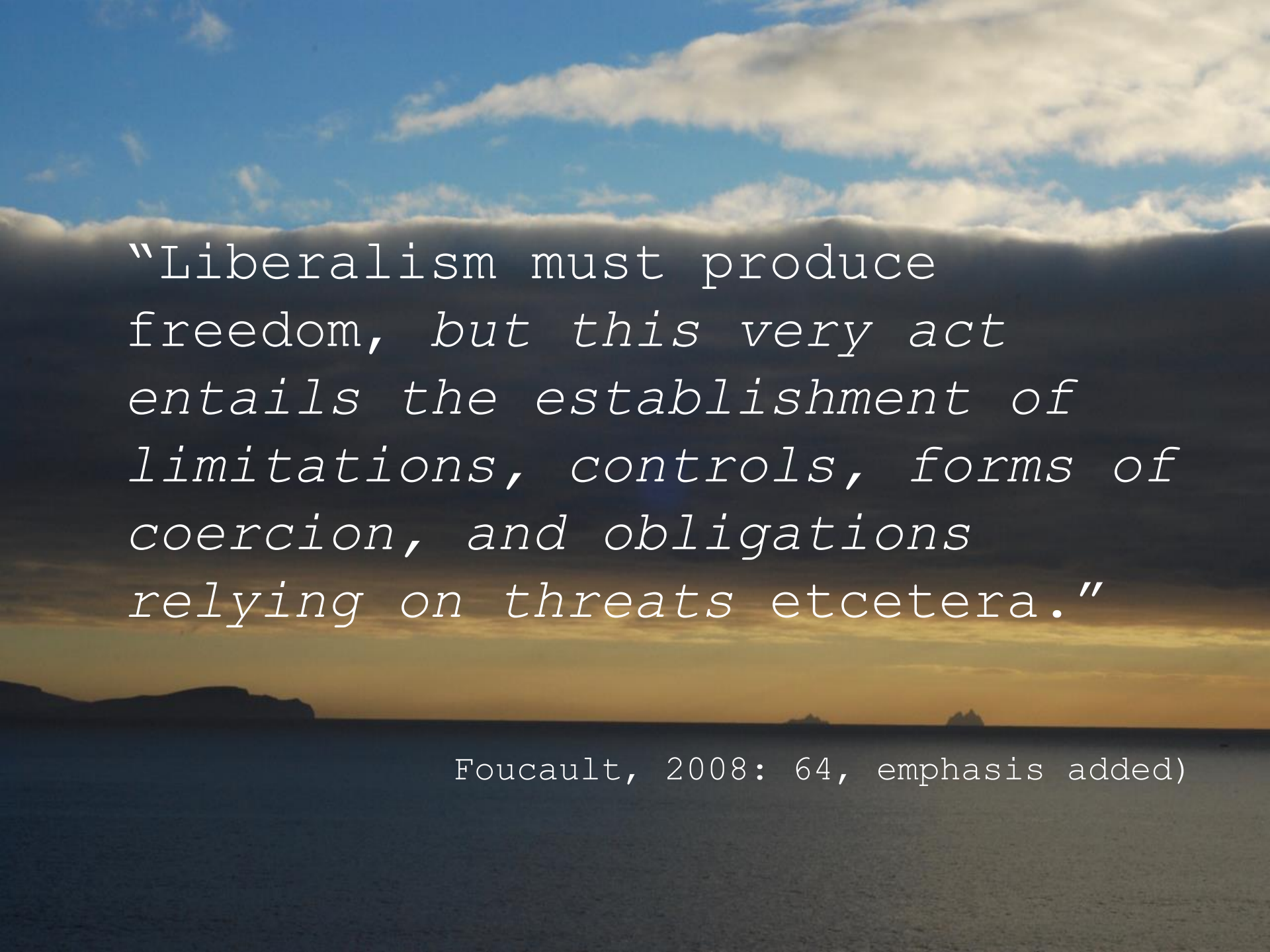








All these books are about me, and most of them can't explain what governmentality means either.



“Liberalism must produce freedom, but this very act entails the establishment of limitations, controls, forms of coercion, and obligations relying on threats etcetera.”

Foucault, 2008: 64, emphasis added)

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Malignant Individualism

imposes individualized and interiorised explanations of misery

fails to recognise the role of contexts of poverty that people are powerless to change.

threatens the ethic of care that has been at the heart of therapy and mental health practice

(Thomas & Knight, 2018)