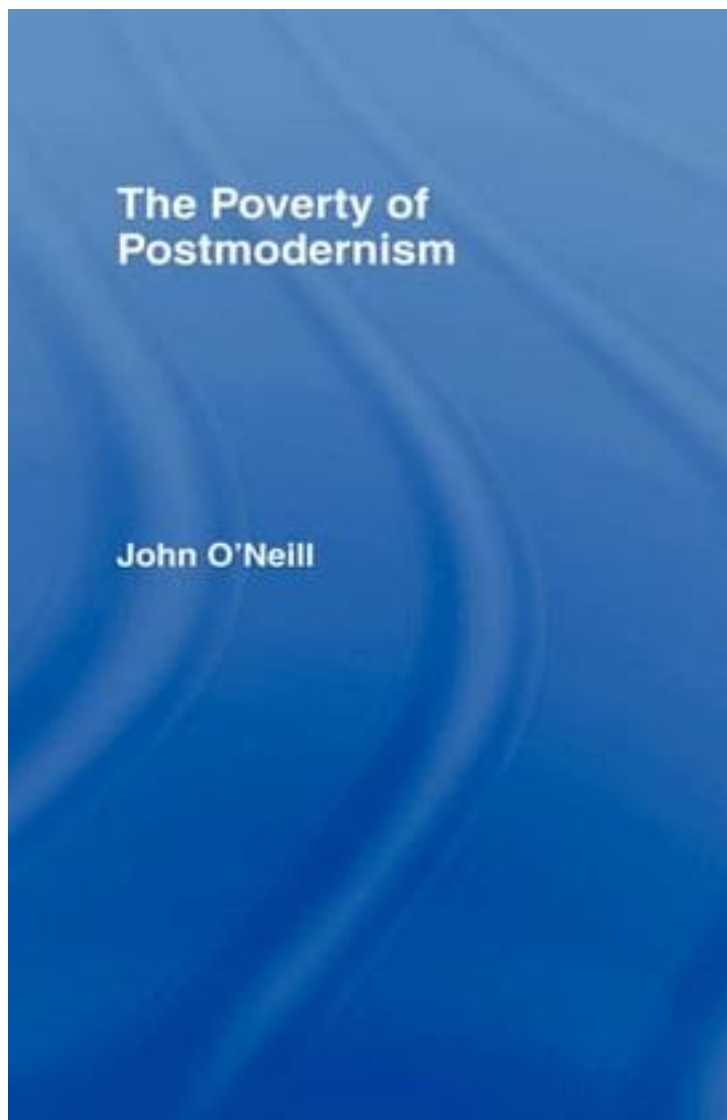


The Poverty of Postmodernism



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The Poverty of Postmodernism rejects the current celebration of knowledge and value relativism. This is on the grounds that it renders critical reason and commonsense incapable of resisting the superficial ideologies of minoritarianism that leave the hard core of global capitalism unanalyzed. In this book John O'Neill examines the postmodern turn in the social sciences. From a phenomenological standpoint (Husserl, Merleau Ponty, Schutz, Winch), he challenges Lyotard's post-rationalist reading of Wittgenstein and Habermas in order to defend commonsense reason and values that are constitutive of the everyday life-world. In addition he argues from the standpoint of Vico and Marx on the civil history of embodied mind that the post-rationalist celebration of the arts of superficiality undermines the recognition of the cultural debt each generation owes to past and post-generations. In a positive way O'Neill develops an account of the historical vocation of reason and of the charitable accountability of science to commonsense that is necessary to sustain the basic institutions of civic democracy.

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