



# Potestatemology: " The Study of Power "

*Edited by Paul F. Kisak*

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# Potestatemology: " The Study of Power "

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## **Potestatemology: " The Study of Power "** Edited by Paul F. Kisak

In social science and politics, power is the ability to influence or control the behavior of people. The term "authority" is often used for power perceived as legitimate by the social structure. Power can be seen as evil or unjust, but the exercise of power is accepted as endemic to humans as social beings. In business, power is often expressed as being "upward" or "downward". With downward power, a company's superior influences subordinates. When a company exerts upward power, it is the subordinates who influence the decisions of their leader or leaders. The use of power need not involve force or the threat of force (coercion). At one extreme, it more closely resembles what English speaking people might term "influence", although some authors distinguish "influence" as a means by which power is used. Much of the recent sociological debate about power revolves around the issue of its means to enable—in other words, power as a means to make social actions possible as much as it may constrain or prevent them. The philosopher Michel Foucault saw power as a structural expression of "a complex strategic situation in a given social setting" that requires both constraint and enablement. Potestatemology is the study of all the categories that influence power such as ideology, politics and the psychology of power. This book is about the study of power.

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