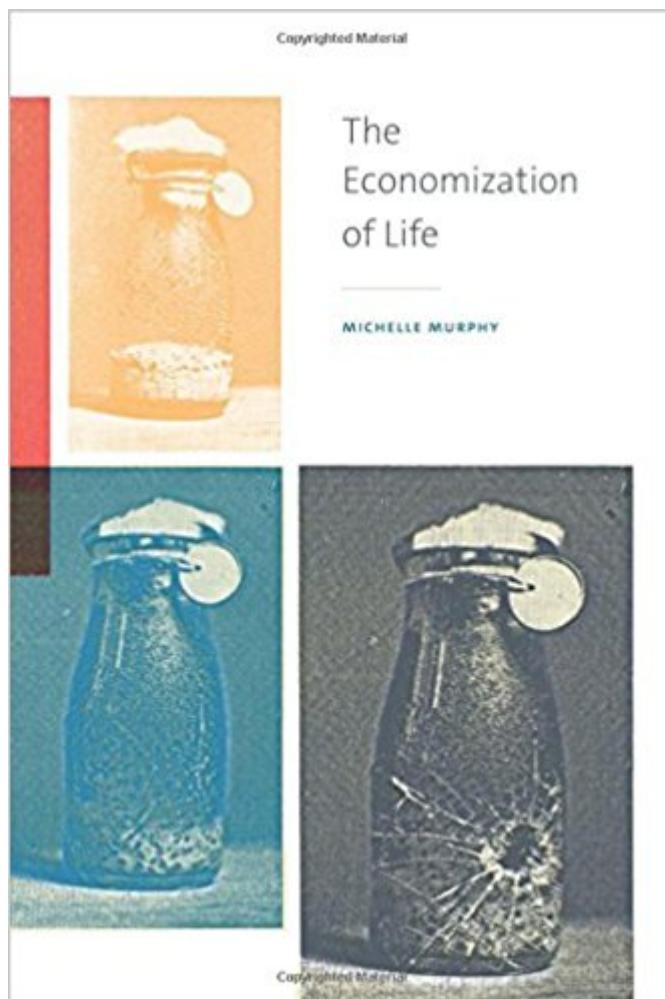


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# The Economization Of Life



## Synopsis

What is a life worth? In the wake of eugenics, new quantitative racist practices that valued life for the sake of economic futures flourished. In *The Economization of Life*, Michelle Murphy provocatively describes the twentieth-century rise of infrastructures of calculation and experiment aimed at governing population for the sake of national economy, pinpointing the spread of a potent biopolitical logic: some must not be born so that others might live more prosperously. Resituating the history of postcolonial neoliberal technique in expert circuits between the United States and Bangladesh, Murphy traces the methods and imaginaries through which family planning calculated lives not worth living, lives not worth saving, and lives not worth being born. The resulting archive of thick data transmuted into financialized "Invest in a Girl" campaigns that reframed survival as a question of human capital. The book challenges readers to reject the economy as our collective container and to refuse population as a term of reproductive justice.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"The *Economization of Life* is nothing less than a breakthrough text: it reframes the question of economy after World War II while historicizing and theorizing the emergence of neoliberalism as a global force. Readers will come to understand human capital in a new way and will consider an alternative system of value and a different geopolitics. Demonstrating a clarity of vision and synthesis of economic theory, history, and area studies, Michelle Murphy's book is an astonishing accomplishment." (Joseph Masco, author of *The Theater of Operations: National*

Security Affect from the Cold War to the War on Terror)“This luminescent analysis does nothing less than reorganize the conceptual furniture of the twentieth century. From Raymond Pearl’s fruit fly experiments, to the postcolonial history of big data, to the girl as human capital, Michelle Murphy brilliantly illuminates how population and the economy have become sutured together epistemologically, experimentally, and affectively. GDP was never so lively, nor so fraught. The Economization of Life is one of the most arresting books, short or long, I have read in a long time.” (Cori Hayden, author of *When Nature Goes Public: The Making and Unmaking of Bioprospecting in Mexico*)

Michelle Murphy is Professor of History and Women and Gender Studies at the University of Toronto and the author of *Seizing the Means of Reproduction: Entanglements of Feminism, Heath, and Technoscience and Sick Building Syndrome and the Problem of Uncertainty: Environmental Politics, Technoscience, and Women Workers*, both also published by Duke University Press.

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