

## Editorial

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# FOUCAULT STUDIES

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## EDITORIAL

Sverre Raffnsøe, Alain Beaulieu, Barbara Cruikshank, Bregham Dalglish, Knut Ove Eliassen, Verena Erlenbusch, Alex Feldman, Marius Gudmand-Høyer, Thomas Götselius, Robert Harvey, Robin Holt, Leonard Richard Lawlor, Daniele Lorenzini, Edward McGushin, Hernan Camilo Pulido Martinez, Giovanni Mascaretti, Johanna Oksala, Clare O'Farrell, Rodrigo Castro Orellana, Eva Bendix Petersen, Alan Rosenberg, Annika Skoglund, Dianna Taylor, Martina Tazzioli, Andreas Dahl Jakobsen, Rachel Raffnsøe & Signe Macholm Müller.

The editorial team is pleased to publish this issue of *Foucault Studies* containing no less than three special sections, two original articles, and eight book reviews.

## **SYMPOSIUM ON SHUSTERMAN'S *ARS EROTICA: SEX AND SOMAESTHETICS***

This issue presents five contributions from the Symposium on Richard Shusterman's magnum opus, *Ars Erotica: Sex and Somaesthetics in the Classical Arts of Love*, published in 2021. The first text by Stefano Marino (University of Bologna, Italy) introduces Shusterman's comprehensive encounter with the *ars erotica* that Foucault, in his *History of Sexuality*, initially considered an exciting alternative to Western *scientia sexualis* before later admitting that, from a scholarly point of view, he knew too little about it for it to be of real use in his own project. This is where Shusterman steps in, who not only goes back in time but expands our knowledge far beyond European territory (China, Japan, India, Islamic cultures) to explore all the true thinking concerned with aesthetic pleasures and forms of understanding, sensibility, refinement, skillfulness, ethics, and self-mastery that relate to sexual activity and the body. All the contributors are concerned with important avenues in and implications of Shusterman's work. Catherine F. Botha (University of Johannesburg, South Africa) focuses on the rapport between *Ars Erotica*, Nietzsche's legacy and the understanding of *sôphrosunê*; Leonardo Distaso (University of Naples Federico II, Italy) on the relevance of and the interests vested in the project of somaesthetics; and Leszek

Koczanowicz (SWPS University, Poland) on the notion of beauty as negotiated between repression and coercion. This is followed by a substantial reply to the symposium contributions from Richard Shusterman (Florida Atlantic University, USA) himself, in which he critically contemplates the implications of discussing the rapport between sex, emancipation and aesthetics from within the cage of Eurocentric Modernity, which is not necessarily just a prison to escape but also a cage to protect oneself from external dangers and temptations. Shusterman's works make us dare to know more about these somaesthetic zones.

### **SYMPOSIUM ON INTOLERABLE: WRITINGS FROM FOUCAULT AND THE GIP**

As emphasized by Perry Zurn (American University, USA) in his introduction, the publication in 2021 of *Intolerable: Writings from Michel Foucault and the Prisons Information Group, 1970-1980*, represents a captivating archive of public announcements, manifestos, reports, pamphlets, interventions, press releases and interviews "that still has other lives to live." To celebrate the release of this groundbreaking testimony to the Prisons Information Group and Foucault's efforts to expose the problem of prisons in France in the 1970s, a book symposium took place in September 2021. We are pleased to bring a series of seven short essays written for this book launch event, including contributions from the two organizers and editors of the book, Kevin Thompson (DePaul University, USA) and Perry Zurn (American University, USA), as well as Bernard Harcourt (Columbia University, USA), Liat Ben-Moshe (University of Illinois, USA), Delio Vásquez (New York University, USA), Sarah Tyson (University of Colorado, USA), and Ren-Yo Hwang (Mount Holyoke College, USA). The symposium section also includes an interview conducted by Perry Zurn with Nicolas Drolc, a French cinematographer who created the first films on the Prisons Information Group, prison revolts in France, as well as the personal stories of the former prisoners who found their conditions to be intolerable.

### **CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE FOUCAULT CIRCLE**

As indicated by Edward McGushin (Stonehill College, USA) in his introduction, we are happy to challenge the tough conditions the coronavirus outbreak has set for the annual Foucault Circle meetings these past couple of years. In this special section, we present two papers given at previous meetings that have been reworked for the present issue of *Foucault Studies*. In his paper on "Genopower," originally presented in 2019, Joel Michael Reynolds (Georgetown University, USA) argues for the emergence of a new form of biopower which has, as its basic function, the capacity of genomics to provide new distinctions between disabilities and impairments, while its basic effect is to promote individualistic solutions to social issues using these distinctions. Originally presented at the annual meeting of 2017, Martin Bernales' (Universidad Alberto Hurtado, Chile) paper analyzes the articulation and legacy of the Spanish version of the Catholic doctrine of charity in the eighteenth century and how this experience was transformed into a new problematization of poverty and the poor without which the rise of the modern Spanish State institutions is not fully comprehensible.

## ORIGINAL ARTICLES

Both original articles in this issue deal with Foucault and friendships: one is new and unfamiliar but reaches far back into his work, the other is well-known but treated in an entirely new way.

In the first article, “Foucault’s Outside: Contingency, May-Being, and Revolt,” Luke Martin (University of Minnesota, Twin Cities, USA) thus establishes a positive rapport between Michel Foucault’s ongoing encounter with the Outside and Quentin Meillassoux’s recent work on speculative materialism and anti-correlationist thinking. Analysing a wide selection of his texts, including those on Maurice Blanchot and Velázquez’s “Las Meninas”, Martin shows how Foucault’s ongoing experimentation on the subject’s relation and possible access to the *dehors* shares something central with a contemporary philosophical critique which challenges the deep-rooted notion that thought cannot think outside itself but only re-reflect upon the correlation between thought and being. At the same time, reading this critique concerned with may-being and absolute contingency in light of Foucault’s concepts of thought and force allows Martin to point out a hitherto undeveloped but encouraging political dimension incipient in contemporary explorations into the Outside.

In the second original article, “Faux Amis, Vrais Amis? Amis,” Jonas Oßwald (University of Vienna, Austria) discusses anew the relationship between Foucault and Gilles Deleuze by challenging the assumptions upon which the different stages of their friendship is usually understood. Exchanging a presupposed notion of the friend-as-familiar with the kind of friendship we would have if the ambivalent relation and various exchanges between Deleuze and Foucault was its model, Oßwald is not only able to discuss the development of their connection and the dissimilar philosophical concepts of friendship presented in their works. The analytical strategy also contributes originally to the understanding of distinctions and affinities between central and related notions in Deleuze and Foucault’s thinking, including desire in relation to pleasure and assemblages (*agencements*) in relation to dispositives (*dispositifs*). Oßwald’s analysis shows us the force of a solidarity in thought without a common cause.

## REVIEW SECTION

The present issue contains eight book reviews:

- Dianna Taylor, *Sexual Violence and Humiliation: A Foucauldian-Feminist Perspective (Interdisciplinary Research in Gender)*. London and New York: Routledge, 2020. Reviewed by Sara Cohen Shabot (University of Haifa, Israel).
- Pierre Hadot, *The Selected Writings of Pierre Hadot: Philosophy as Practice*. London: Bloomsbury, 2020. Reviewed by Émile Levesque-Jalbert (Harvard University, USA).
- Mona Lilja, *Constructive Resistance: Repetitions, Emotions, and Time*. London: Rowman & Littlefield, 2021. Reviewed by Marco Checchi (Northumbria University, UK).
- Robert Mitchell, *Infectious Liberty. Biopolitics between Romanticism and Liberalism*. New York: Fordham University Press, 2021. Reviewed by Antonia Karaisl (Rescribe Ltd, UK).

- Marco Checchi, *The Primacy of Resistance: Power, Opposition and Becoming*. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2021. Reviewed by Tomas Pewton (Sofia University, Bulgaria).
- Mitchell Dean and Daniel Zamora, *The Last Man Takes LSD: Foucault and the End of Revolution*. London: Verso, 2021. Reviewed by Jasper Friedrich (University of Oxford, UK).
- Lynne Huffer, *Foucault's Strange Eros*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2020. Reviewed by Theo Manton (Harvard University, USA).
- David Macey, *The Lives of Foucault. A Biography*. London: Verso, [1993] 2019. Reviewed by Mike Gane (Loughborough University, UK).

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