

## Editorial

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# Foucault Studies

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## EDITORIAL

Sverre Raffnsøe, Alain Beaulieu, Sam Binkley, Patricia Clough, Sven Opitz, Jyoti Puri, Jens Erik Kristensen, Alan Rosenberg, Marius Gudmand-Høyer, Johanna Oksala, Knut Ove Eliassen & Mathias Adam Munch

It is our great pleasure to present this special issue on Foucault and Deleuze guest-edited by Nicolae Morar (Pennsylvania State University, USA), Thomas Nail (University of Oregon, USA), and Daniel W. Smith (Purdue University, USA). Most of the papers included here were originally presented at the international conference “Between Deleuze and Foucault” organized at Purdue University (November 30 – December 1, 2012) by our guest editors. The question regarding the intellectual affiliations between Foucault and Deleuze undoubtedly needs further analysis, especially as the voluminous material contained in the digital files of Deleuze's seminars on Foucault (1985–1986) has recently been made available (2011). Thanks to the Purdue conference organizers, the transcripts of these audio files were introduced to the academic world. These invaluable documents open up a variety of perspectives and explore a series of topics which were only partly recaptured in Deleuze's famous book *Foucault*, originally published in 1986 by Éditions de Minuit (English translation: University of Minnesota Press, 1988). The video recordings of the papers delivered at Purdue as well as the transcribed texts of Deleuze's 1985-1986 audio lectures on Foucault are available online: [www.cl.purdue.edu/research/deleuze/Conference](http://www.cl.purdue.edu/research/deleuze/Conference). Nicolae Morar, Thomas Nail, and Daniel W. Smith are also preparing a book on the Foucault/Deleuze connection, which will include written versions of other papers delivered at Purdue as well as contributions from invited authors. Two members of our editorial team were honored to attend this exceptional event and *Foucault Studies* is very proud to publish part of its proceedings.

In addition to the special issue, *Foucault Studies 17* includes three original articles and 11 book reviews. In the article “Reclaiming Discursive Practices as an Analytical Focus: Political Implications”, Carol Bacchi and Jennifer Bonham intervene in the current debate about a “new materialism”. They criticize the tendency to identify Foucault's concept of discourse with an epistemology of a “linguistic constructivism” to be rejected in favor of a reinvigorated notion of the real. In a close reading especially of the *Archeology of Knowledge*, the authors show how Foucault's notion of discursive practice undercuts the distinction between the ideal and the real or between meaning and matter: “discursive practices are the practices of discourses – which is why they are called *discursive* practices – rather than language in use or how people

“practise discourse”, i.e. write or speak.” This perspective not only leads Bacchi and Bonham to develop a revised understanding of “non-discursive” in Foucault. It has also motivated them to produce an illustration of discursive space as a “relationscape” of material artifacts that beautifully highlights its topological properties.

With his article “For the Love of Boys,” John M. Carvolho brings to this volume an inquiry into Foucault’s discussion of the ethical dynamism between men and boys, as related in ancient texts. Against the more general interpretation of Foucault’s statements on this topic which concentrate on an implicit movement of resistance implied in such relations, one in which, as the author puts it, “intensities of affect and the multiplication of bodies, pleasures and knowledge... are supposed to counter or resist *les prises du pouvoir* and *le dispositif de sexualité*,” Carvolho instead uncovers the broader activity of aesthetic refinement and the attitude of a generative restraint. In a discussion that ranges from the honorific conventions of Greek society regarding love between men and boys to Foucault’s own sexual practices in the later part of his life, such a program of refinement is seen to develop not just in the production of pleasures in these relations, but in the more general shaping of a life that stands as an object of aesthetic distinction and valuation within a broader community of peers. Or, as the author puts it: “[w]e counter ‘the grips of power’ when we instantiate in ourselves, make for ourselves a way of life that is outstanding among our peers, distinctive and distinguished, an *oeuvre* that can endure beyond our ephemeral existence.”

In her article “Orientalism as a form of Confession”, Andrea Teti discusses the relationship between Foucault’s and Said’s work. The article begins by discussing Said’s critique of Foucault’s thought and analytical and political differences between their approaches. Despite these differences, the article argues that Orientalist discourse, as analysed by Said, can be understood as a ‘regime of truth’ in the sense of confessional discourse, as it is outlined in the first volume of Foucault’s *History of Sexuality*. Orientalism as a form of confession claims to speak the truth, constructs a canon of normality, identifies two basically different subject positions, and marks out patterns of alterity, deviance, and redemption. It works a machinery of incitement, inspiring resistance that may serve to destabilize but also reinforce the configuration of power. By developing a confessional perspective on Orientalism, Teti problematizes an oversimplification of Foucault’s approach to discourse and power of which postcolonial theory is sometimes guilty and argues for the advantages of a rediscovery of Foucault in postcolonial studies. A confessional perspective on Orientalism could afford a broader view of the contemporary politics of truth in which Orientalism plays an important part and help explain the persistence of Orientalism despite a weighty tradition of post-Oriental scholarship.

We encourage our readers to submit articles, proposals for special issues, interviews, review essay and book reviews. On our website [www.foucault-studies.com](http://www.foucault-studies.com) we list a number of books that we would like to have reviewed, and we encourage potential reviewers to contact us, if they are interested in reviewing one of the listed books, or, any other book that would be of interest to the journal’s readers.

Finally, we are happy to welcome new members to the editorial team: Professor Knut Ove Eliassen from University of Trondheim, Norwegian University of Science and Technology, and Johanna Oksala from University of Helsinki. Knut Ove Eliassen is professor at the Department of Language and Literature at University of Trondheim, NTNU, and has conducted extensive research on 18<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>-century French philosophy, literature theory, and literature aesthetics. Johanna Oksala is Academy of Finland Research Fellow in the Department of Philosophy, History, Culture and Art Studies at the University of Helsinki. She is the author of *Foucault on Freedom* (2005); *How to Read Foucault* (2007); *Foucault, Politics, and Violence* (2012); *Political Philosophy: All That Matters* (2013), and numerous articles on Foucault, feminist philosophy, phenomenology, and political philosophy.

We are also happy to welcome our new Managing Editor, Mathias Adam Munch, who holds a master's degree in Business Administration and Philosophy at Copenhagen Business School. He has taken over from Ditte Vilstrup Holm, who has begun an Industrial PhD in collaboration with Danish Agency for Culture and Copenhagen Business School. We would like to thank Ditte for her extensive work with *Foucault Studies* over the past years, and wish her the best of luck with her future research.

We would like to thank Thomas Robinson of TD-Academics for copyediting this issue of *Foucault Studies*. The journal is sponsored by The Danish Council for Independent Research|Social Sciences and The Danish Council for Independent Research|Humanities.