

Foucault Studies

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ISSN: 1832-5203

Foucault Studies, No 5, pp. 1-4, January 2008

EDITORIAL

A New Beginning and a Continuation...

Sverre Raffnsøe, Alan Rosenberg, and Alain Beaulieu; with Morris Rabinowitz & Kevin Turner

When the first issue of *Foucault Studies* came out in 2004, interest in work of the French thinker was already high and steadily growing. This interest has continued to rise steeply since then. According to the *Social Sciences Citation Index*, Foucault was in 2004 and the two following years the most quoted thinker to live after World War II, outranking Bourdieu, Giddens, Habermas, Latour, Beck, Derrida, and Deleuze. In the same period, he also outranked those scholars in the *Arts & Humanities Citation Index*. Interest in Michel Foucault is not just growing in academia, however, his work is also being used in innumerable other contexts, under very different circumstances and in very different ways. His influence is not just theoretical: it is also practical.

With all this activity, the need for a journal devoted specifically and directly to Foucault's work and its impact has never been greater. We need a channel – that is, an inlet and an outlet – to focus all this energy and activity that holds it to the highest academic and intellectual standards while maintaining the excitement. *Foucault Studies* is still the only international journal in English that takes on this challenge. The enormous interest among new readers, recently detectable through the great number of hits and downloads from <http://www.foucault-studies.com>, indicates that this journal is indeed necessary.

It is therefore with the greatest pleasure that we welcome you to Issue 5 of *Foucault Studies*. As some readers may be aware, the original editorial team, consisting of Stuart Elden, Clare O'Farrell, Alan Rosenberg, and Sylvain Meyet, had decided that, due to lack of institutional, financial, and administrative support, they could no longer continue running the journal. Fortunately, a new editorial team was able to secure generous and timely grants from *The Danish Social Science Research Council*¹ and *The Danish Research Council for the Humanities*.²

¹ <http://fist.dk/site/english/councils-commissions-committees/scientific-research-councils/the-danish-social-science-research-council>

² <http://fist.dk/site/english/councils-commissions-committees/scientific-research-councils/the->

The new team consists of Sverre Raffnsøe³ (Editor-in-Chief); Alan Rosenberg⁴ (Managing Editor and Book Review Editor), Alain Beaulieu⁵ (Co-Editor), Jens Erik Kristensen⁶ (Co-Editor), Frederik Tygstrup⁷ (Co-Editor) and Morris Rabinowitz⁸ (Copy Editor). With funding in place, much of the work that took up the time and energy of the original editorial team is now being done by our Editorial Assistant, Kevin Turner.

It is a new beginning but we are not without a sense of continuity. We intend to preserve the ethos of the journal established by the original editorial team as stated in the Editorial of the first issue: that it be “web-based and genuinely interdisciplinary and international.” Using the Open Journal Systems format, the journal will continue to be available online in the future. It will be accessible free of charge for anyone who wishes to use it. *Foucault Studies* will continue to be published biannually with Issue 6 scheduled to appear in November 2008.

As in the past, the new team strongly supports the desideratum to “provide a forum for discussion of Foucault which goes beyond received orthodoxies, simplifications, and uncritical appropriations.” Debate, critique and innovative use or development of Foucault’s own thinking will figure prominently in these pages. A key spur to reassessing his work is the recent ongoing publication of Foucault’s lectures, which makes it possible to keep track of the development of his thought. We will also be reviewing books that are not directly about Foucault, but think our readership should know about, as well as books about Foucault that have been passed over. *Foucault Studies* aspires to be an organ for the advancement of Foucault’s thought through a continuously revived critical reception.

The quality of the journal will continue to be secured through double blind peer-review and standard editorial and editing procedures. Such procedures will ensure that the journal remains a channel for the diffusion of high quality, rigorous scholarly work. The editorial team encourages the submission of work that deals with Foucault’s work in a detailed and qualified manner.

In this issue, we present you with two articles, two interviews, two review essays, and twelve book reviews.

In the first article, Timothy O’Leary discusses ‘Foucault, Experience, Literature.’ Here, O’Leary addresses the question of how it is possible for a literary text to have transformative effects on its reader by way of a detailed analysis of the

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notion of experience in Foucault's *œuvre*. In doing so, O'Leary draws attention to an aspect of Foucault's critical-historical thought that has received scant attention in the secondary literature, and offers some suggestive ways of developing it further. In the second article, Cecile Brich notes that much of the scholarly commentary on the work of *The Groupe d'information sur les prisons* (GIP), and Foucault's involvement with this group, has focused on the relationship between the public pronouncements of the GIP and Foucault's ideas on power and the role of intellectuals. Brich now asks whether the voice represented by this group was that of prisoners or that of Foucault's, and she does this by looking at the extent to which the methods employed by the GIP accorded with their pronouncements.

The first interview in this issue is an exchange, conducted by email during 2005-6, between two central figures in Foucault scholarship: Jacques Donzelot⁹ and Colin Gordon.¹⁰ The stimulus for this exchange was two-fold: firstly the international events and publications in 2004-5 which marked the 20th anniversary of Foucault's death; and secondly, the French publication in 2005 of Foucault's 1978-9 lectures on governmentality. The specific focus of the exchange is how and why Foucault's concept of governmentality came to meet with such success in the English-speaking world while remaining relatively marginal in France. The second interview – which took place in Tampere, Finland in September 2006 – demonstrates quite clearly that studies in governmentality are no longer restricted to the English-speaking world, and exhibits the broader applications of Foucault's notion of government. In this exchange, Antti Tietäväinen, Miikka Pyykkönen, and Jani Kaisto interview William Walters (co-editor of *Global Governmentality*¹¹ and *Governing Europe*¹²) and the content of their discussion is the governmentalisation of Europe.

The first of the review essays is a review by two native French speakers, Alain Beaulieu and Réal Fillion, of the recent English translation of Foucault's *History of Madness*. In the second essay, Thomas F. Tierney's reviews the publication of the English translation of Foucault's 1978 lecture course at the Collège de France entitled *Security, Territory, Population*. Each review demonstrates, in its own way, the need for the ongoing translation of Foucault's work into English. More specifically, they make clear how such translations offer the possibility of new insights and thus new understandings of the originality, development, and continuing relevance of Foucault's *œuvre*.

⁹ Jacques Donzelot (1977). *La police des familles*. Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit; Jacques Donzelot (1984). *L'invention du social*. Paris : Librairie Arthème Fayard.

¹⁰ Colin Gordon (1972) (ed). *Power/Knowledge*. New York: Pantheon Books; Colin Gordon (1991) (ed): *The Foucault Effect*, with Graham Burchell, and Peter Miller. Chicago. London/Toronto/Sydney/Tokyo: Harvester Wheatsheaf.

¹¹ Wendy Larner and William Walters (2004). *Global Governmentality: Governing International Spaces*. London: Routledge.

¹² William Walters and Jens Henrik Haahr (2005). *Governing Europe: Discourse, Governmentality and European Integration*. London and New York: Routledge.

The twelve book reviews offered in this issue emphasize this point. Here, we are presented with a broad spectrum of the theoretical and practical application of Foucault's work in diverse disciplinary and thematic fields.

As part of the endeavour to further the development of Foucault's work, the journal will – in the years to come – publish special issues with a focus on particular areas or themes. Plans have already been made with the organizers for contributions for The Fifth Annual SOCIAL THEORY FORUM 2008 Conference *A Foucault for the 21st Century: Governmentality, Biopolitics and Discipline in the New Millennium*, to be held in Boston. Some of those papers will be published in a forthcoming special issue. Jorge Capetillo-Ponce and Samuel Binkley will be Guest Editors for this special edition. Submissions will continue to be reviewed by peers.

The journal will also host a large, international conference in Copenhagen in the not too distant future. The overall theme will be the impact of Foucault's thinking within various established forms and practices of science. In addition to sessions dealing with Foucault in general, the conference will offer sessions and workshops dealing with Foucault's impact on specific disciplines and practices such as accounting, governance, pedagogy and education, geography, management and management theory, literature and the study of literature. A call for papers will be announced via the journal and contributions from the conference will be published in one or several special issues.

As it is the intention of the journal to serve and facilitate the study and further development of Foucault's thought, the coming issues will, in addition to the usual articles, also contain announcements of new, significant Foucault publications as well as review essays about them. Furthermore, they may include interviews with significant researchers or practitioners that have been inspired by Foucault, as well as briefings on conferences and other important events. Readers are welcome to submit news of such upcoming events and publications. If you register online at the present site under "Information for readers," you will receive information about the journal regarding the publication of new issues, special issues, and announcements of special calls for papers. You will also receive news on important conferences, new publications and events of special interest. Registration is free.