

Foucault Studies

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Sven Opitz, Chloë Taylor & Ditte Vilstrup Holm 2010

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EDITORIAL

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We are very pleased to present *Foucault Studies 9*, which is a non-themed issue, and the second of three issues to be published in 2010. Originally we intended to publish only two issues this year, but as the journal continues to evolve and attract more and more good papers, we have decided to increase the number of publications in 2010. The special issue on Foucault and Agamben, guest edited by Jeffrey Bussolini will be published later in 2010, and shortly thereafter, in February 2011, we will publish a special issue on Foucault and Pragmatism, guest edited by Colin Koopman.

Before introducing the articles in this issue, we want to share some news with our readers. Firstly, we sadly have to bid our Copy Editor Morris Rabinowitz goodbye. Morris has served as Copy Editor for the journal since it was first launched, and has proven a highly valuable resource for us as well as our authors. It is therefore with much regret, but profound respect, that we have accepted his decision to retire from the journal following the launch of this issue. On a more positive note, we are happy to announce that Ebsco has agreed to include *Foucault Studies'* back issues in their electronic databases thereby making all issues of *Foucault Studies* available via Ebsco's databases.

The current issue, *Foucault Studies 9*, features the article "Postcolonial Studies and the Discourse of Foucault," by Robert Nichols (University of Alberta, Canada) which is the second article in a series of "State of the Disciplines" papers that review the use of Foucault within a specific field of study. In "Postcolonial Studies and the Discourse of Foucault," Robert Nichols presents a critical survey of the ways in which Foucault's work has been used, appropriated and modified within the field of postcolonial studies. He does so by organizing the field into three prevailing domains: (1) postcolonial theory—concerned with questions of textual interpretation, re-presentation and "discourse analysis;" (2) postcolonial politics—concerned with governmentality, colonization and empire, and (3) postcolonial ethics—dealing with the practices of self-transformation by which subjugated peoples modify their conduct under conditions of imperial rule in order to disclose new ways of thinking and acting. Nichols compellingly demonstrates that the preoccupation with the first concern at the expense of the latter two serves to present an often one-sided or distorted picture of Foucault, himself now an object of discursive representation within the field.

We look forward to presenting future “State of the Disciplines” articles, and we invite our readers to propose such survey pieces from within their fields of study. Indeed, we are very open to suggestions for other new features to the journal that could enhance the study of Foucault. For instance we are considering a section entitled “Toolbox” that would include commentaries, columns about ongoing research or methodological issues, reports from archives and other features that expand the knowledge of Foucault’s thinking. We are interested in knowing what our readers think of such a “Toolbox” and also encourage our readers to contribute with ideas and items for this section. In addition, we continue to invite our authors to propose books for the journal to review, new publications as well as older publications that would be of interest to our readers.

Foucault Studies 9 also includes five original articles. The paper by Tero Auvinen (PhD from University of Lapland, Finland) entitled “At the Intersection of Sovereignty and Biopolitics: The Di-Polaric Spatializations of Money” uses Foucault’s toolbox to explore the social hierarchies inherent in the logic of modern credit money and the mutual constitution of money’s sovereign and bio-political dimensions. The author argues that the monetary system constitutes a major transitory channel for the logic of financial capital to transcend the limitations of sovereign spaces and to transform itself into a biopolitical force. He then shows that the mutually constitutive whole between the sovereign and the biopolitical dimensions of money opens up more room for strategic combination of heterogeneous analytical practices in emancipatory scholarship than what some of the traditional notions of the epistemological politics of power and sovereignty might suggest.

In her essay “The Emotional Life of Governmental Power,” Elaine Campbell (Newcastle University, UK) pursues a line of inquiry that challenges the unexamined cognitivist bias of governmentality research and other topics pursued under the mantle of post-Foucauldian social science. Studies of governmentality implicitly attribute a generative effect to cognitive outlooks and calculative dispositions on the constitution of subjectivity — a tendency reflected in such signature phrases as “governmental rationalities,” “logics of government,” “strategies of rule” and so on. Campbell, on the other hand, seeks the irrational dimensions of governmentality by probing into the emotional content of governmentality processes themselves. Following a rich theorization of this line of inquiry which describes the critical balance of cognitive and affective dimensions operative in neoliberal governmentalities, she applies the Deleuzian notion of the “fold” to a study of prevailing emotional and cultural conditions in the United Kingdom. Campbell proposes that the cognitivist focus of much governmentality research expand to include what she terms “emotionalities of rule.”

Also in this issue, Robert J. Topinka (University of Kansas, US) focuses on the notion of heterotopias in his article “Foucault, Borges, Heterotopia: Producing Knowledge in Other Spaces.” Although Foucault offers only a few descriptions of heterotopia in his oeuvre, the term has recently achieved widespread prominence in cultural geography. Nevertheless, conceptual elaborations still remain rare. In order to expand our understanding of the category, Topinka aims to overcome the distinction between textual heterotopias (Borges’ Chinese Encyclopaedia

in *The Order of Things*) and physical heterotopias (described in "Of Other Spaces"). He convincingly argues that heterotopias are "spatial organs of knowledge production." They function as sites, in which epistemes collide; they are a spatial rendering of the battle over knowledge production.

Foucauldian approaches to Critical Animal Studies are beginning to emerge, and an exciting example of this burgeoning field is Stephen Thierman's (University of Toronto, Canada) article for this issue, "Apparatuses of Animality: Foucault Goes to a Slaughterhouse." While acknowledging that "Foucault's own concerns were decidedly anthropocentric," Thierman's paper demonstrates that Foucault's tools can be useful for thinking about our relations with nonhuman animals in novel ways. Thierman begins his paper by taking up Foucault's (and Agamben's) notion of an apparatus in order to describe what he calls apparatuses of animality. Thierman considers how Foucault's explorations of power relations between humans can be mobilized to analyze relations between humans and nonhuman animals and pursues the example of a particular technology of power that implicates both human and nonhuman animals: the slaughterhouse. Bringing Ralph Acampora's work into dialogue with Foucault, Thierman analyzes the slaughterhouse as both an ethical and political space.

Finally, in her article "Foucault and the Ethics of Eating," Chloë Taylor (University of Alberta, Canada) argues that the manner in which we in the modern West regulate our food consumption has been revived as a means of ethical and aesthetic self-constitution. This claim counters Foucault's suggestion that the ancient Greek preoccupation with food has been replaced by a contemporary obsession with sex. Intertwined with sexual choices, dietics continue to play a major role as practices of self-constitution. This is evident if one turns to members of subcultures such as ethical vegetarianism and Animal Liberation Movement; but Taylor argues that we all constitute our identities through what we eat. Consequently, diet can be pursued as matter of ethics in the broad sense indicated by Foucault. Exceeding mere moral strategy, diet can function as an aesthetic or self-transformatory practice, in which one would be able to take account not only of one's own pleasure, but also the pleasure of the other. Foucault shows that we are simultaneously disciplined and self-fashioning selves; Taylor argues that our alimentary choices are a manifestation of this.

In addition to these five original articles, *Foucault Studies 9* features an exchange between Colin McQuillan (Emory University, US) and Colin Koopman (University of Oregon, US) with reference to Colin Koopman's article "Historical Critique or Transcendental Critique in Foucault: Two Kantian Lineages," that was published in *Foucault Studies 8* earlier this year. The focus of the discussion is Koopman's interpretation of Foucault as a Kantian philosopher who appropriates Kant's project of critique and makes use of it for non-transcendental purposes of historical critique. *Foucault Studies* is happy to provide a forum for this type of discussion, in response to published articles or other issues of relevance to the study of Foucault's thinking, and we encourage all authors to submit comments and letters to the editors that foster discussion and debate.

The current issue also includes a critical review essay by Chloë Taylor and Robert Nichols

(both from University of Alberta, Canada) of Ladelle McWhorter's new book, *Racism and Sexual Oppression in Anglo-America: A Genealogy*. This essay draws thoughtful parallels and points out some challenging differences between McWhorter's genealogy of race and Foucault's own genealogy. It also raises some relevant questions regarding Foucault's conception of racism as "racism against the abnormal" and it discusses McWhorter's transposition of racism within the context of colonial North America.

The issue ends with 10 book reviews. Enjoy!

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