

Call For Papers: Conduct and Counter-Conduct: Critical Concepts for Old and New Times?

A special issue of *Foucault Studies*,
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Recently, Arnold Davidson* distinguished Michel Foucault's conceptions of conduct and counter-conduct as the most notable contribution of Foucault's 1978 lectures. "It is astonishing," he wrote, "and of profound significance, that the autonomous sphere of conduct has been more or less invisible in the history of modern (as opposed to ancient) moral and political philosophy." Following Davidson's lead, we invite contributions for a special issue of *Foucault Studies* on the theme of counter-conduct. We invite submissions, in particular, to take up the historical, conceptual, and political significance of conduct and counter-conduct either separately or in combination. These might include theoretical inquiries, empirical studies, comparative historical works, interpretive cultural studies or any other mode of intellectual engagement that addresses the theme of counter-conduct.

Questions and topics we aim to address in this volume include:

- Given the immanent relation between conduct and counter-conduct, what is the critical difference between them? How can we distinguish between an instance of conduct and one of counter-conduct?
- How should we understand the concepts of conduct and counter-conduct, articulated by Foucault in 1978, in relation to his previous and subsequent published works? Or, do these concepts stand apart in relation to a particular problematization?
- Are these categories we can use across time, place, religions, institutions? If so, what forms do conduct and counter-conduct take today? If not, what demarcates their usage?
- How can contemporary political movements, governmentalities, or moral and political philosophies be engaged through the concepts of conduct and counter-conduct?
- Does counter-conduct help us understand new subjectivities and identities shaped by race, class, gender, sexuality, ability or other categories at the margins?
- What value does the concept of counter-conduct hold for historical studies?
- How is counter-conduct distinguishable from *reform* and *reformation* of the self, institutions, or of society? Foucault struggled in his lecture to distinguish counter-conduct as a category from resistance, revolt, and dissent, among other categories. Why does Foucault need to invent a new concept rather than use the vocabularies of pastoral struggles themselves?
- What contribution can the concept of counter-conduct make to contemporary scholarship on governmentality?
- What is the significance of counter-conduct in the context of contemporary neoliberalism or other formations of global capital, and to the many oppositional social movements that have emerged in their wake?
- How can counter-conduct be understood alongside other theorizations of resistance, revolt, and transgression derived from Marxism, post-colonial theory, feminism, cultural studies or queer theory?
- What is the relationship of counter-conduct to religion, spirituality and mysticism, either historically or in contemporary manifestations?
- How does counter-conduct enable a bridge between the politics and ethics, either in Foucault's researches or in other contexts?

This special issue of *Foucault Studies* will appear in Spring 2016. At this time the editors welcome abstracts for submission by October 1, 2014. Final essays will be due April 1, 2015. Please direct all questions and correspondence to both editors: Samuel_binkley@emerson.edu, and cruiksha@polsci.umass.edu.

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* Arnold I. Davidson, "In Praise of Counter-Conduct", *History of the Human Sciences* October 2011 vol. 24 no. 4 25-41