

Call for Abstracts

Michel Foucault and Phenomenology

The Southern Journal of Philosophy Workshop March 27-28, 2025, The University of Memphis

Keynote Speakers: Philippe Sabot, Elisabetta Basso, Christophe Bouton

SJP 2025
Foucault 40 years after

How is Michel Foucault's thought related to the tradition of phenomenology? Studies addressing this question have been overshadowed by scholarship that considers Foucault's work in relation to other movements in continental philosophy such as critical theory, Marxism, structuralism, and post-structuralism. When the question has been broached, scholars have straightaway had to confront Foucault's sometimes dismissive, if not hostile, attitude towards phenomenological approaches. For instance, in a 1967 interview ("Who are you, Professor Foucault?"), Foucault describes phenomenology as a totalizing method whose universalist claims seek to account for meaning and knowledge formation through an analysis limited to the lived experience of the transcendent subject. Later, he describes his method of archaeology as aiming "to free history from the grip of phenomenology" (*The Archaeology of Knowledge* [1969]). However, the basis for well-founded replies to the question has very recently been significantly augmented by the publication of three early Foucault texts. These works represent Foucault's richest engagement with this tradition and demonstrate a remarkable depth and precision to his early study of phenomenology that were not apparent from his previously published work:

Binswanger et l'analyse existentielle (Binswanger and Existential Analysis), edited by Elisabetta Basso, Seuil/Gallimard, May 2021;

Phénoménologie et psychologie, 1953-1954 (Phenomenology and Psychology, 1953-1954), edited by Philippe Sabot, Seuil/Gallimard, November 2021;

La constitution d'un transcendantal historique dans la Phénoménologie de l'esprit de Hegel. Mémoire du diplôme d'études supérieures de philosophie (The Constitution of a Historical Transcendental in Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Graduate Degree Philosophy Thesis), edited by Christophe Bouton, Vrin, February 2024.

These texts are crucial sources for re-evaluating Foucault's relation to phenomenology. Our hope is that an event which examines these writings, with keynote addresses from the editors of these three volumes, will help to cultivate exchanges and dialogues that may have previously been stymied by the prominence of Foucault's more pointed objections to phenomenological approaches.

The Southern Journal of Philosophy workshop aims to provide a timely forum to take the measure of Foucault's thought on phenomenology, broadly speaking, and to expand and develop a dialogue between Foucault's philosophy and phenomenology that is both retrospective and prospective. We invite papers that focus on the three recent publications listed above, or on the relationship between Foucault's thought and phenomenology in general. Papers delivered at the conference will also be published in a peer-reviewed special issue of *The Southern Journal of Philosophy* (see below for details).

Workshop Directors: Daniel J. Smith, Mary Beth Mader, Caner Yildirim

Suggested themes for submissions include, but are not limited to:

- Foucault's reading of eidetic and transcendental methods in phenomenology
- Foucault on existentialist and phenomenological analyses of psychopathology
- Foucault's reading of phenomenological accounts of psychologism, temporality, intersubjectivity, language, spatiality, affectivity, flesh, lived experience, lifeworld and the world
- Historicity and the archive
- Epokhē* and problematization
- Critiques of the *cogito* in Foucault and phenomenology
- Critiques of representation in Foucault and phenomenology
- Receptions of Kant, Nietzsche and Hegel by Foucault and phenomenology
- Foucault's readings of Freud and Husserl

Author Submission Instructions

Extended deadline: Dec 15, 2024

Selection will be based on long-form abstracts. Abstracts should include a paper title and be between 750-1000 words, prepared for anonymous review. Bibliographic material may be placed at the end and does not count toward the word count. A separate document with the author's name, university affiliation, department, contact information, and paper title should be included with every submission. The document should indicate whether the author is a faculty member, post-doctoral researcher, doctoral student, or independent scholar.

Email both documents (either as doc. or pdf. files) to *The Southern Journal of Philosophy* Managing Editor, Ms. Cathy Wilhelm, at cwilhelm@memphis.edu. The subject line of this email should read, "2025 SJP Workshop Submission."

Submission indicates your intention to include the final version of your paper in the published proceedings. Acceptance to the workshop does not guarantee publication as final work must pass external review. Travel support may become available, depending on the budget. Participants will be notified as needed.

Please direct inquiries to the Editor, Mary Beth Mader, at mmader@memphis.edu