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Active Intolerance

Michel Foucault, the Prisons Information Group, and the Future of Abolition

Edited by Perry Zurn and Andrew Dilts

Coming November 2015

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Perry Zurn is Visiting Assistant Professor of Philosophy in the School of Critical Social Inquiry at Hampshire College, USA.

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"This is a powerful and compelling set of essays exploring the context and legacy of the Prisons Information Group and how their work might be useful today. Decentering Foucault does more than rightly recognize the role of others in this group. It also helps us to understand Foucault's abiding interest in collaboration, an interest that is reflected in both his academic and activist work."

- **Stuart Elden, University of Warwick, UK, and author of *The Birth of Territory***

"Active Intolerance is an important collection, one that deepens our philosophical and pragmatic understandings of the promises and compromises of contemporary abolitionist advocacy. Read this volume for contributions that allow us to pace the floor, working on our resistance and conflicted relationships—in search of a better future."

- **Joy James, Williams College, USA, and author of *Seeking the Beloved Community***

"While we often hear about the liberal virtue of tolerance, Perry Zurn and Andrew Dilts' powerful and necessary collection makes a compelling case for the active cultivation of intolerance. Active Intolerance convinces us that we need to be intolerant of the prison and of the racist and carceral society of which mass incarceration is the extreme manifestation."

- **Chloe Taylor, University of Alberta, Canada, and author of *The Culture of Confession from Augustine to Foucault: A Genealogy of the 'Confessing Animal'***

"Active Intolerance pushes our thinking about prisons, prisoners, public intellectuals, and abolition forward. There is something here for the Foucault scholar and prison abolitionist alike. The scholarship is insightful and it deepens our understanding of the problems of mass incarceration and how to work against it. This book must be reckoned with."

- **Rashad Shabazz, University of Arizona, USA, and author of *Spatializing Blackness: Architectures of Confinement and Black Masculinity***

About the book

This book is an interdisciplinary collection of essays on *Le Groupe d'information sur les prisons* (The Prisons Information Group, the GIP). The GIP was a radical activist group, extant between 1970 and 1973, in which Michel Foucault was heavily involved. It aimed to facilitate the circulation of information about living conditions in French prisons and, over time, it catalyzed several revolts and instigated minor reforms. In Foucault's words, the GIP sought to identify what was 'intolerable' about the prison system and then to produce 'an active intolerance' of that same intolerable reality. To do this, the GIP 'gave prisoners the floor,' so as to hear from prisoners themselves what to resist and how. The essays collected here explore the GIP's resources both for Foucault studies and for prison activism today.

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