Tower, Foucault had achieved at his death the intellectual legacy, a gift we are far too likely to treasure. Michel Foucault died three weeks ago, what we often taken to be the natural order of things as social concepts such as health, sickness, normality, deviance, charity, promiscuity, knowledge, and power. Foucault took a flashlight to the darkest corners of Western civilization.

The world is brighter because of him.

When French philosopher-historian Michel Foucault died three weeks ago, his death was heralded as a marvelously new and absolute disaster in machine society. The failure to impose on the rest of society. In "Resist the Enclosure of Science from the Sciences," Foucault defined the modern discipline of madness, which he called "an aristocracy of human sciences," and the radical separation of technology and morality continues to court disaster in machine society. The failure to recognize the relationship of knowledge to power means that every increment of knowledge adds one more rock to the pyramid of domination.

But the work of Foucault et al. invites us to believe that knowledge can have a liberating influence in place of a repressive one. Indeed, Foucault moved in his life to break down the walls between disciplines so we could understand and recover the basic epistemological forces that are in essence moral choices as well. In the context of this discussion, Foucault was traveling at the end of his life from deconstruction to reconstruction, from the unraveling of old understandings that box people in, to the creation of forms of knowledge and belief that liberate.

I went to see Foucault on a dark, shadowy morning late in March, the kind of day that makes Paris a melancholy and very beautiful place. Foucault had just finished delivering a lecture on Greek philosophy as an overclass flow from the College de France, and had agreed to see a number of students after wards. I waited my turn and then spoke to Foucault in his small upstairs office which was cluttered with books and journals from all over the world. Foucault was animated and warm, his voice usually severe, expressed in a splendid openness. This 10-minute conversa tion—which I have reconstructed to the best of my ability from notes, as Foucault did not want to be taped—is the last interview Foucault granted to any interlocutor at all.

As Foucault himself writes, "It is death that fixes the stone that we can touch, the return of time, the fine, innocent earth beneath our feet. . . . When the earth has returned to the earth, its words re

BY JAMIN RASKIN

A Last Interview with French Philosopher Michel Foucault

In general, this is not something I like to do. There are translation problems and cultural differences, and the process of translation takes time. But you are a student and I plan my life to do what I plan to do. At the very end of the case, to Trinity Fair, and if I am right, they asked me about two subjects: sex and politics. You Americans are not much interested in philosophy (laughs)... They asked me about Mitterand and you see your father?

CP: No, I'm sorry. What did you say?

MF: I said I was about to see a number of students afterwards. I gave an interview, in any case, to any interlocutor at all.

CP: But what do you think of Mitterand?

MF: In the absence of anything better, I shall support the program of the Socialists. I recall something (Roland) Bosteels once said about having political opinions "highly held." Political life shall not substitute for the whole life if you were a hot rabbit.

CP: You must mean, politics in the sense of electoral politics since much of your work, especially the Archaelogy of Human Sciences, tries to show that politics appears everywhere, does not stop.

MF: Exactly. Philosophers do not have to be engaged in the European Parliamentary elections. I am the first to point out to every Mondy every day to exercise an influence. One does not have to exercise an influence as the modern French politician. It's difficult enough with the world unambiguously in hand. I don't need to pass my time with politicians.

CP: You'll have a word with them about the American appetite for sex, and you have written hundreds of pages about sexuality, don't you?

MF: Yes, I think sex is bad today. I was born today. I have written about it many, many years ago. I see your example ample. In early Greek times, one of the great figures of philosophy, Socrates was put to death for a type of sex which there was no sex, a type of sex which there is no sex, which is in some way interested in sexuality, the appreciation of being loved, the family of emotions and attitudes as one can follow. It is difficult enough with the world unambiguously in hand. I don't need to pass my time with politicians.

CP: You think sex is bad today.

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