

Foucault argues that we generally read the history of sexuality since the 18th century in terms of what Foucault calls the "repressive hypothesis." The repressive hypothesis supposes that since the rise of the bourgeoisie, any expenditure of energy on purely pleasurable activities has been frowned upon.

The Will to Knowledge[edit] Part I: We "Other Victorians"[edit] In Part One, Foucault discusses the "repressive hypothesis", the widespread belief among late 20th-century westerners that sexuality, and the open discussion of sex, was socially repressed during the late 17th, 18th, 19th and early 20th centuries, a by-product of the rise of capitalism and bourgeois society, before the partial liberation of sexuality in modern times. Arguing that sexuality was never truly repressed, Foucault asks why modern westerners believe the hypothesis, noting that in portraying past sexuality as repressed, it provides a basis for the idea that in rejecting past moral systems, future sexuality can be free and uninhibited, a " We have not only witnessed a visible explosion of unorthodox sexualities; but " and this is the important point " a deployment quite different from the law, even if it is locally dependent on procedures of prohibition, has ensured, through a network of interconnecting mechanisms, the proliferation of specific pleasures and the multiplication of disparate sexualities. He argues that this desire to talk so enthusiastically about sex in the western world stems from the Counter-Reformation , when the Roman Catholic Church called for its followers to confess their sinful desires as well as their actions. As evidence for the obsession of talking about sex, he highlights the publication of the book *My Secret Life* , anonymously written in the late 19th century and detailing the sex life of a Victorian gentleman. Indeed, Foucault states that at the start of the 18th century, there was an emergence of " He notes that in that century, governments became increasingly aware that they were not merely having to manage "subjects" or "a people" but a " population ", and that as such they had to concern themselves with such issues as birth and death rates, marriage, and contraception, thereby increasing their interest and changing their discourse on sexuality. In the 18th and 19th centuries, he argues, society ceases discussing the sex lives of married couples, instead taking an increasing interest in sexualities that did not fit within this union; the "world of perversion" that includes the sexuality of children, the mentally ill, the criminal and the homosexual. He notes that this had three major effects on society. Firstly, there was increasing categorization of these "perverts"; where previously a man who engaged in same-sex activities would be labeled as an individual who succumbed to the sin of sodomy , now they would be categorised into a new "species," that of homosexual. Secondly, Foucault argues that the labeling of perverts conveyed a sense of "pleasure and power" on to both those studying sexuality and the perverts themselves. Thirdly, he argues that bourgeoisie society exhibited "blatant and fragmented perversion," readily engaging in perversity but regulating where it could take place.

Scientia Sexualis[edit] In part three, Foucault explores the development of the scientific study of sex, the attempt to unearth the "truth" of sex, a phenomenon which Foucault argues is peculiar to the West. Furthermore, he argues that this scientia sexualis has repeatedly been used for political purposes, being utilized in the name of "public hygiene" to support state racism. Returning to the influence of the Catholic confession, he looks at the relationship between the confessor and the authoritarian figure that he confesses to, arguing that as Roman Catholicism was eclipsed in much of Western and Northern Europe following the Reformation , the concept of confession survived and became more widespread, entering into the relationship between parent and child, patient and psychiatrist and student and educator. By the 19th century, he maintains, the "truth" of sexuality was being readily explored both through confession and scientific enquiry. Foucault proceeds to examine how the confession of sexuality then comes to be "constituted in scientific terms," arguing that scientists begin to trace the cause of all aspects of human psychology and society to sexual factors.

The Deployment of Sexuality[edit] In part four, Foucault explores the question as to why western society wishes to seek for the "truth" of sex. Foucault argues that we need to develop an "analytics" of power through which to understand sex. Highlighting that power controls sex by laying down rules for it to follow, he discusses how power demands obedience through domination, submission, and subjugation, and also how power masks its true intentions by disguising itself as beneficial. As an example, he highlights the manner in

which the feudal absolute monarchies of historical Europe, themselves a form of power, disguised their intentions by claiming that they were necessary to maintain law, order, and peace. As a leftover concept from the days of feudalism, Foucault argues that westerners still view power as emanating from law, but he rejects this, proclaiming that we must "Rather, power should be understood "as the multiplicity of force relations immanent in the sphere in which they operate. Foucault criticizes Wilhelm Reich, writing that while an important "historico-political" critique of sexual repression formed around Reich, "the very possibility of its success was tied to the fact that it always unfolded within the deployment of sexuality, and not outside or against it. Right of Death and Power over Life[edit] In part five, Foucault asserts that the motivations for power over life and death have changed. As in feudal times the "right to life" was more or less a "right to death" because sovereign powers were able to decide when a person died. This has changed to a "right to live," as sovereign states are more concerned about the power of how people live. Power becomes about how to foster life. For example, a state decides to execute someone as a safe guard to society not as justified, as it once was, as vengeful justice. This new emphasis on power over life is called Biopower and comes in two forms. First, Foucault says it is "centered on the body as a machine: The Use of Pleasure[edit] In this volume, Foucault discusses "the manner in which sexual activity was problematized by philosophers and doctors in classical Greek culture of the fourth century B. Other authors whose work is discussed include Galen, Plutarch, and Pseudo-Lucian. Foucault describes the *Oneirocritica* as a "point of reference" for his work, one that exemplifies a common way of thinking. The work was a further development of the account of the interaction of knowledge and power Foucault provided in *Discipline and Punish*. The latter volume deals considerably with the ancient technological development of the hypomnema which was used to establish a permanent relationship to oneself. In his lecture series from to Foucault extended his analysis of government to its "The planned fourth volume of *The History of Sexuality* was accordingly entitled *Confessions of the Flesh* *Les aveux de la chair*, addressing Christianity. It was edited and finally published in February Scientific and academic journals[edit] The sociologist Stephen O. Murray wrote in the *Archives of Sexual Behavior* that a passage of *The History of Sexuality* in which Foucault discussed how European medical discourse of the late 19th century had classified homosexuals had "clouded the minds" of many social historical theorists and researchers, who had produced a "voluminous discourse" that ignored how homosexuals had been classified before the late 19th century or non-European cultures. He credited Foucault with inspiring "genealogical" studies "informed by the heuristic idea that not only are patterns of sexual desire and behavior socially engineered Merquior considered the second two volumes of *The History of Sexuality* to be of higher scholarly quality than the first, and found Foucault to be "original and insightful" in his discussion of the Roman Emperor Marcus Aurelius and other Stoics in *The Care of the Self*. Butler further argued that this conflict is evident within *The History of Sexuality*, noting that Foucault refers there to "bucolic" and "innocent" sexual pleasures that exist prior to the imposition of "regulative strategies". Scruton concluded, of the work in general, that it creates an impression of a "normalized" Foucault:

Chapter 2 : The History of Sexuality: An Introduction - Michel Foucault - Google Books

The History of Sexuality (French: L'Histoire de la sexualité) is a four-volume study of sexuality in the western world by the French historian and philosopher Michel Foucault, in which the author examines the emergence of "sexuality" as a discursive object and separate sphere of life and argues that the notion that every individual has a sexuality is a relatively recent development in Western.

He is confusing and he is wrong--but I would like to add to the discussion a way of viewing Foucault that both clarifies his position and makes him seem more worthy of our attention. Foucault as Cynical Libertarian. Think of how many libertarians view Washington, D. Inside the Beltway, they say, the reality of America is a distant phenomenon. Washington is in fact a self-contained social world of power struggles. Power is the coin of the realm, and the coin is spent to get more power. The power struggles are a matter of who knows whom, who is cleverer than whom at reading the shifting currents of alliances and enmities, and whose spin-meisters are quickest to construct the truth of the week. Think Wag the Dog. Abstractions such as truth and rights and justice are meaningless; power is the reality of life inside D. For Foucault, what we call reality is just [this situation] writ large. Switching back to the libertarian in Washington: Such a libertarian also feels outrage that the power-players in Washington are playing their games at the expense of the average citizens in Idaho and Oklahoma. And despite all the pious talk in Washington about free speech and respecting the individual, the voices of the Oklahomans are effectively silenced and their liberties squashed. What is needed, then, is to unmask the hypocrisies and posturings to show the naked power struggles for what they are, to subvert the institutions that are oppressing individuals, to de-centralize the power that has been co-opted by Washington, and thus liberate new voices and untold energies. For Foucault, what we call modern Western civilization is just Washington writ large. For human beings, knowledge is power. And we are social animals. The form intellectual activity takes is linguistic: Subverting the power structure is necessary to liberate the individual. If we add that the social realm is intensely competitive and marked by power struggles along key social dimensions, it follows that the key power struggles are going to be conducted by words. Other individuals are going to lose the power struggles and be oppressed. Finally, if we add that liberating the individual is good, it follows that subverting the power structure is necessary to liberate the individual. From the above to Foucault requires only a few radicalizing steps. To get to Foucault we have to strip away any sense at all that we think in terms of rational, objective, and autonomous individuals. First, Foucault is more radical epistemologically. Second, in metaphysics Foucault strikes me as radical but inconsistent. He often sounds like an antirealist, holding that to speak of what reality really is is meaningless. For example, a secondary source quotes Foucault as saying: For example, in our reading Foucault defines power as follows: Because the forces are moving, the centers of power change and evolve too. Foucault is thus either an antirealist or a process ontologist. Human beings are one of the power centers that emerge out of the flow of forces. A standard example here of the social linguistic construction of human beings is religion. The child is constructed socially and linguistically and in turn contributes to the social and linguistic construction of others. Here Foucault draws on and acknowledges a Marxist social determinism. Because the distribution of forces is never perfectly equal, the discourses that are socially dominant evolve over time. Since the Enlightenment, our discourse has privileged reason, science, and technology. For example, reason and science applied to education yielded the following: When the students graduate and enter the economic world, reason and science applied to production yielded the following: It is not true or in any way superior. It is simply the one that happens to have come to dominance. And for a variety of reasons, that is the system they feel alienated from and which they wish to destroy. To all such questions, postmodernists have learned from Foucault to respond as follows. In asking whether my reading is true, you are missing the point: For Foucault, the purpose of his writing is not to say something true but to influence our conceptual framework. That Foucault and the lawyer both know that their opponents insist on reading everything they say as either true or false only adds, from their perspective, an amusing ironic element to their presentation. The Philosophical is the Personal. In addition to the above-discussed themes, The History of Sexuality also incorporates Freudian themes of unmasking

non-rational sexual energies. As postmodernist, Foucault would insist that there is no distinction between the personal and the social, that everything is political. So it is fitting that his personal life also illustrated his philosophy. In Foucault one finds that tension very markedly: Foucault is among those postmodernists who emphasize the liberation and empowering themes, but in his writings one also finds strong nihilistic themes. In speaking of humans in general, Foucault sometimes speaks almost happily of the erasure of the species. In *Words and Things*, for example, he writes: Man is a recent invention that will soon disappear, like a face drawn in the sand. The Enlightenment killed God and exalted man, but man too will be dead, Foucault hopes. In speaking more personally about his motivations for writing, Foucault speaks about his desire to erase himself. I am no doubt not the only one who writes in order to have no face. That lifestyle certainly is an expression and stylization of social relations of naked power. If so, please consider making a donation. Our digital channels garner over 1 million views per year. Your contribution will help us to achieve and maintain this impact.

Chapter 3 : SparkNotes: The History of Sexuality: An Introduction, Volume 1: Plot Overview

The history of Sexuality is a great piece of work from Foucault. It documents the history of sexuality and argues against the repression theory of sexuality. It demonstrates Foucault's pursuit of Truth and Power relations and even offers a few hints at action (Really more in The History of Sexuality II).

At age five, I developed an affection for my babysitter. It is unclear The History of my Sexuality: It is unclear if this is relevant. Freud would argue that it is the only thing relevant. He instructed me that it was the product of two fingers index, ring. In my later adolescence, I accustomed myself to embrace with all five. Conversely, I have a closer relationship with my father than with my mother, though both are superficial. He is two years my senior. While watching *Gone with the Wind* he unzipped his fly, supposedly for my inspection or praise. I have thought about it a number of times since. It is unclear if this is reality or a dream, or if intercourse in anyway occurred either in dreamstate or reality. Late at night we stripped and rolled about on the floor naked. Given my propensity for definitions, and perhaps gift of prophesy, I declared "this means we are gay now. My sexual imagination hinged upon the word and concept of "being enveloped. Soon thereafter I was unable to sleep because I was haunted by the negatives of these images. Unable to banish the unclothed men from my imagination I was brought to prayer, then tears, and could not fall asleep until massaged by my father. An exercise in purchasing condoms. Ruined a perfectly good carpet. Became rather obsessed with my physical image. My unilateral romance culminated in a totally disastrous trip across the European continent, and a number of abandoned short stories and poems taking place on a rainy evening beside Lake Zurich. Very kind and affectionate, attractive; mired by my own insecurities and dissimulation. His bedroom bore two large oil paintings in sepia: Played Jazz during sex. Now living with a man, Tom, his own age. Prompted by our two-week relationship I come out to my friends and sister. I send a ultimatum via text after our break-up and never hear from him again. I attach myself to his coupled gay roommates. I do not hear from them again, except for the one, Kevin, to tell me that I am an impossible candidate for true affection because of my tendency to dissimulate. He never arrives, with no communication. I am devastated and leave. I later find out from him that he rushed home because his brother attempted suicide. We meet again and kiss, but I abandon conversation with him out of disinterest. We go out a few times, he does not offer to pay for my theatre ticket, and he becomes frustrated at my disinterest in rushing along the physical aspect of our tenuous union. He abandons me for his ex-boyfriend, but uses me again the day after Thanksgiving. I hear from him intermittently in selfish bursts of desire, but we do not meet again intentionally. We hit it off, but my forwardness chafes him. Silence for four months. Ends when I hear again from David M. Once, followed by a suffocating over-attachment, and liberating estrangement. He invites me to go to the junkyard with him a disgusting allegory for our relationship , and pays for my lunch. He makes no further efforts to see me, and I finally abandon all whims and whisperings I feel in relation to him. I ask if we can cool things down, on a rainy and cold Sunday afternoon, to which he assents, but which he interprets as a total break. We are now friends, I think. Did I make a mistake? Discover that he is also friends with Matt C. I call him out for his ingenuousness. He does not respond. The friend of a friend. Hit it off, and spend the night with him, though I was too drunk to remember particulars. He tells me that he will see me again, and I am waiting. Am I in love? The other one never waits. Whatever I do, I find myself there, with nothing to do, punctual, even ahead of time. I am the one who waits.

Chapter 4 : SparkNotes: The History of Sexuality: An Introduction, Volume 1: Part One

A history of sexuality (?) Man bargaining for sex, 5th c. BCE (Greece), Wikimedia Commons, public domain How Reymont and Melusina were betrothed / And by the bishop were blessed in their bed on.

Philip Turetzky 1 The History of Sexuality: If sex is repressed, then speaking is itself revolt. Is repression an historical fact? Are prohibition, censorship and denial really the workings of power? These discourses generate links with pleasure, i. Desire rather than the act became the primary evil; the meeting line of the body and the soul had to be traced. Censoring vocabulary may only have been a device to make that vocabulary technically useful in producing discourse. Victorian reticence was only a tactic in the process of turning sex into discourse. These mechanisms were proclaimed publicly necessary even if personally disapproved. Sex had to be administered, and became a police matter not as prohibition but as regulated by a maximizing order of public discourses. He was required to talk and made a permanent object of medical confinement and scientific analysis. Our society may be the most long winded. The unity of the confessional has been scattered through a series of tensions, conflicts, and attempts at adjustment and recoding. These discourses make sex into a secret to be divulged. The interesting question is re: The pervert and sexual madness, containing a nature gone awry, separate off from libertines and seducers. The laws of marriage are separated from the order of desires. Medicine intervenes by creating a pathology of sexual practices and undertakes to manage them. Extension of sexuality via penetration: The sex of children supported multiplication, relays and effects of power relations; while the target expanded and divided. Constitution of specific individuals: Perversions become embodied and a new specification of individuals emerges: Such classifications of natures multiplied first in medicine then in law. They produce, not exclusion, but permanent realities under modes of conduct. It implies pleasure in the exercise of power, sensualized power renews the need to observe and draw closer. Power singularizes and intensifies its object, increasing and doubled by the pleasure it provokes. Multiple, fragmentary and mobile sexualities permeate and saturate the household and family relations. Educational and psychiatric institutions distribute the interplay of powers and pleasures, but are also sexually saturated areas. The power applied to the body and sex did not have the form of the law nor the effects of taboo, but multiplied sexualities. It did not restrict, but extended sexuality along lines of indefinite penetration. It did not exclude, but included sexuality in the body of individuals. It did not avoid, but attracted sexuality when pleasure and power reinforced each other. It did not set up a barrier, but produced sexual saturation. The classification and use of perversions were produced by types of power acting directly on bodies and pleasures. They serve to optimize a form of power by serving as a surface of intervention. Pleasure and power seek, overlap and reinforce each other via complex devices of excitation and stimulation. Scientia Sexualis 1 Q: Did not the science of sex serve to divert attention to perversions and create fears? But it also set itself up as dictator of hygiene and moral cleanliness, eliminator of degenerate populations, grounding racist policies in truth. Sex was a matter of truth and falsehood, a problem of truth. Evasions and misunderstandings presuppose the effort to tell the truth re: Secrecy here 6 serves its effectiveness. Esoteric teachings enhance mastery of body against death. The avowal of ones own actions and thoughts rather than the warrant given by others constitutes individuals by power. Such practices pervade western civilization p. Confessional practices reduce truth to an ever present secret to be extracted and power to silencing restriction. Truth becomes connected with freedom, and its saturation with power unnoticed. People are subjected become subjects , by the demand to confess. Transforming sex into discourse and reinforcing polymorphous sexuality are deployment in the service of confession. Now it takes place in many venues and with various forms, motivations and effects. It links the thoughts images and desires around the act. A confessional science took shape, raising problems of theory and method concerning the validity of the evidence of self consciousness. These problems focused on the fact of too much discourse. How did confessional rituals get constituted in scientific terms? So forcing confession became scientific practice. The confession became a sign which the scientist had to decipher. Confession was required for diagnosis under a classification of diseases. Apparatuses for producing true discourses about sex have been constructed in the last yrs. We demand sex speak the truth and we decipher the truth of this truth

and that sex tell us the truth about ourselves sex gives that truth about ourselves which escaped us. The interplay of these two has constituted us as subjects, ignorant of ourselves. Knowledge-power of the subject is deployed in the discourse of sex, constituted by the power in this discourse. Has scientia sexualis functioned to produce pleasures as an ars erotica? Well, at least, a new pleasure in the truth, the discourse, of pleasure. The Deployment of Sexuality 1 The west has located knowledge pleasure in sex and demanded that its truth be extracted and yet that this truth remain forever beyond its grasp. Why search for the truth of and the truth in sex? Why has it become so insistent, that to insure our subjugation we are brought, ironically, to believe our liberation is at stake? Chapter 1 Objective 1 Repression has been criticized by psychoanalysts, when they deny the simplicity of a binary opposition of a natural energy rebelling against a repressive order. Law constitutes both desire and lack, power is already present in desire. It accepts the basic premise of power-as-law that power is inescapable, always-already present? This requires abandoning the juridical-discursive representation of power that repression and the law of desire accounts share, and which leaves only the options of liberation of that we are always-already trapped. A All connections between power and sex are negative. Power can only say no. Power orders sex re: The rule of law is maintained by speech, viz. D A law of censorship links and enjoins inexpressibility, non- existence, and non-manifestation, each as principle and effect of the others. E Power over sex always works in the same way by law, taboo and censorship from top down, in the juridical form of transgression and punishment. Its effects are defined as submission and subjugation subject. Power is only tolerable, acceptable, and so can only work, in proportion that it hides its own mechanisms, insofar as it is seen as purely a limit on freedom. Though law is inadequate to describe how monarchy operated it conceived itself as working under the code of law and so covering up the real operations of power. Even 19th C criticism of legal systems as agents of class violence did so in the name of an ideal that power naturally acted via lawfulness. Overcoming juridical models will entail a circularly process: The aim is to analyze knowledge re: The condition of possibility of power is in mobile unequal force relations. Power is everywhere because it is produced at every point. Power is the complex strategical situation in a society. They are the effects and the productive conditions of asymmetries in social relations. Anonymous implicit unformulated strategies support and serve as the conditions of local explicit tactics. Often cutting across individuals, rather than being localized within them. How did they make discourses possible? How did they support and modify power relations? How and by what strategies were these power relations linked so that they appear unitary and voluntary? Sexuality is not an object of disinterested science. As a possible object of investigation it is constituted by power relations. Therefore, begin with local centers of power-knowledge. We must reconstruct the distribution of discourses across power relations. Discourse and silence, often with the same formulae, can serve many different tactical and strategic purposes. So study power by analyzing the aims, tactical efficacy, and mobile multitude of force relations and their strategies. It is a very useful point through which tactical and strategic maneuvers can be transferred. Mother as nervous woman.

Chapter 5 : The History of Sexuality, Volume 1 Quotes by Michel Foucault

The History of Sexuality, Vol. 1 Questions and Answers. The Question and Answer section for The History of Sexuality, Vol. 1 is a great resource to ask questions, find answers, and discuss the novel.

Table of Contents Plot Overview Our thinking about sexuality is largely informed by the "repressive hypothesis," which claims that the history of sexuality over the past three hundred years has been a history of repression. Sex, except for the purposes of reproduction is taboo. The only way to liberate ourselves from this repression, according to this hypothesis, is to be more open about our sexuality, to talk about sex, and to enjoy it. Foucault disagrees with the claim that sex has been repressed and silenced. He argues that Discourse about sex has only intensified and proliferated since the eighteenth century. Priests expected confessions to divulge the smallest temptation or desire, and sexual behavior became an important object of study for demographic and statistical analysis. With this intensification and proliferation of discourse, the emphasis moved from married couples to cases of sexual "perversion": Increasingly, sex became an object of knowledge. Other cultures have treated sex as an object of knowledge, as an *ars erotica*: Our culture is distinct, however, in treating sex as a *scientia sexualis*: Scientific discourse mixed with the form of confession has shaped our discourse on sex. Subjects were expected to confess, to divulge their darkest secrets, and these confessions were codified into a quasi-scientific form. Foucault asks how it is that we have come to see sex as the key to explaining us, as holding the truth about us. The answer has to do with the relationship sex has with power and knowledge. Foucault criticizes the "juridico- discursive" conception of power as something that simply represses and restricts, always taking a law-like form. He suggests instead that power is as productive as it is repressive, that it is multi-faceted and omnipresent. Power is everywhere and working in all directions. Foucault identifies four major focus points: This deployment took place with the rise of the bourgeoisie, who saw sexual deviance as hereditary and dangerous to the continued survival of their class. The controls they placed on sex were thus primarily intended to ensure their own health and longevity. The "right of death" of the age of absolutism has been replaced with a "power over life. Tight normalizing controls have been placed on the discipline of the body and the regulation of population. Sex and the deployment of sexuality have been essential to this power over life, as we have accorded ourselves with these controls in the interests of a "healthy" sexuality. We think of sexuality as our essence, as the thing that makes us what we are, when in fact, it is just a social construct that makes us easier to control.

Chapter 6 : The History of Sexuality - Wikipedia

Foucault argues that sexuality is shaped by social conditions, and is not merely innate or purely instinctual. He argues against the "repressive hypothesis" that power, whether in the form of law or of middle-class norms, represses sexuality.

Chapter 7 : Michel Foucault, The History of Sexuality

Our thinking about sexuality is largely informed by the "repressive hypothesis," which claims that the history of sexuality over the past three hundred years has been a history of repression. Sex, except for the purposes of reproduction is taboo.

Chapter 8 : File:Foucault Michel The History of Sexuality 1 An www.nxgvision.com - Monoskop

The History of Sexuality, Michel Foucault - KoÅ§ Hastanesi.

Chapter 9 : The History of Sexuality, Volume 1: An Introduction by Michel Foucault

The History of Sexuality is a three-volume series of books written between and by French philosopher and historian

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Michel Foucault. The first volume of the book is titled An Introduction while the second volume is titled The Use of Pleasure, and the third volume is titled The Care of the Self.