Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Vol. 1*

Problem with understanding this book: you need to know about Freudo-Marxism - as the major way of viewing the history of sexuality - this is what Foucault wants to revise

I. **We Other Victorians**

essential thing: p.7 “the existence in our era of a discourse in which sex, the revelation of truth, the overturning of global laws, the proclamation of a new day to come..., are linked together.”

present volume - intro and overview p. 8 - the question: Why do we say... that we are repressed?

doubts on the “repressive hypothesis” p.10
1. is sexual repression truly an established historical fact?
2. Do the workings of power really belong to the category of repression?
3. did the critical discourse against repression act as a roadblock to the power mechanism or is it not part of the same historical network as the thing it denounces by calling it repression?

wants not to doubt the repressive hypothesis but put it in the framework of discourses on sex in modern societies

central issue is to account for the fact that sex is spoken about

*NB p. 12 I do not claim that sex has not been prohibited or barred - but to search for instances of discursive production & the production of power*

II. **The Repressive Hypothesis**

1. **The Incitement to Discourse**

the confession - description of the act - changes from the transgression of the act to the stirrings of desire - first time of injunction to tell all - 17th century sex into discourse - imperative to transform desire into discourse - thru De Sade to My Secret Life - the purpose of the telling is the effects of intensification, displacement, modification of desire

population - first time a society affirmed the importance of “the manner in which each individual made use of his sex~~

children’s sex - rise of “innumerable devices and discursive strategies” p 30 - in the schools, sex is a preoccupation -

also medicine produces discourse on sex, psychiatry, criminology this immense verbosity is unique -p. 33 list of discourses

2. **The Perverse Implantation**

3 codes on sex: canon law, pastoral, civil law - all center on matrimonial relations - p.38 - then, discursive explosive explosion - 2 changes -
1. toward heterosexual monogamy as a norm
2. sexuality of children, the mad and criminals comes under scrutiny

p. 40 *** see how tentative, workshop oriented - "What does the appearance of all these..., Is it.. Or... In terms of repression things are unclear..."

functions of power:
1. surveillance of children
2. incorporation of perversions and individualization
3. examination and insistent observation
4. devices of sexual saturation

results in the growth of perversions - which are an "instrument-effect" p. 48

III. Scientia Sexualis

19th century science of sex: attitude of refusal toward what it brought to light -and sex is constituted as a problem of truth -

Historically 2 procedures for producing it:
1. ars erotica - truth from pleasure
2. scientia sexualis - confessional form disseminated widely Greeks - truth and sex linked in pedagogy

in confession agency of domination lies not in one who speaks but in one who listens and takes effect not in the one who receives it but in the one from whom it is wrested - p. 62 -confessional remains the standard of the true discourse on sex - spread to interrogations, consultations, autobiographical narratives, letters - widened domain

p. 65 wants to find not a list of errors but the procedures thru which knowledge of sex changed confession to function within norms of scientific regularity -
1. clinical codification of the inducement to speak
2. postulate of general causality
3. principle of sexual latency
4. a method of interpretation
5. medicalization of the effects of confession

p. 68 ff history of confessional working hypothesis: 19th century didn’t confront sex with a refusal of recognition but put into operation a machinery for producing true discourses about it this ends in a knowledge of the subject p.70 and creates a pleasure in this knowledge

IV. The Deployment of Sexuality

general propositions on the objective, the method, the domain, the
periodizations

1. **Objective**
analytics of power not a theory of power

2. **Method**
question: p. 97 in a specific exhortation of truth about sex, what were the most immediate, local power relations at work?
rules to follow:
1. immanence
2. continual variations
3. double conditioning
4. tactical polyvalence of discourses

why study this: not theoretical preference but because one of the essential traits of Western societies is that force relationships became invested in the order of political power p. 102

3. **Domain**
sexuality is not a drive - but transfer point of power relations
4 strategic unities
1. hysterization of women’s bodies
2. pedagogization of children’s sex
3. socialization of procreative behavior
4. psychiatrization of perverse pleasure

these “produce” sexuality p. 105 **** as a historical construct
- very mobile and contingent techniques of power
- related to the economy
-- hypothesis counter to repression
- p.107 sexuality is tied to power; expanding; not governed by reproduction; linked to intensification of the body
family anchors sexuality, its the interchange of sexuality and alliance -incest is central, and as Oedipus, is solicited and refused
family asked for help from doctors, educators, psychiatrists, priests, all the experts- not like Lash -
psychoanalysis - rediscovered law of alliance, sexuality is constituted thru that law - its role is to prop up the old deployment of alliance
the domain is “the deployment of sexuality” p. 114

4. **Periodization**
2 ruptures - 1st in 17th century; 2nd in 20th century
1. chronology of techniques - confession - p. 119 - this does not confirm the
repressive hypothesis - but a perpetual inventiveness
2. history of their spread and application - 1st to dominant and privileged classes -
first to problematize children’s sex and medicalize women’s - working classes escape for
a long time - sexuality is bourgeois p.127
role of psychoanalysis - express incestuous desire in discourse

V. Right of Death and Power over Life
sovereign’s right of death becomes societies right to maintain life
power over life - 1 - body as machine 2- species body or bio-power
2nd is indispensable to capitalism p. 141 - consequence of bio-power is p.
144 a normalizing society
p. 155 it is thru sex that one must pass in order to have access to his own intelligibility
*** means?
politics - aim for a tactical reversal of the various mechanisms of sexuality - to counter
the grips of power with the claims of bodies, pleasures, knowledges... rallying point is
“bodies and pleasures~~
p. 159 one day perhaps - “a different economy of bodies and pleasures”