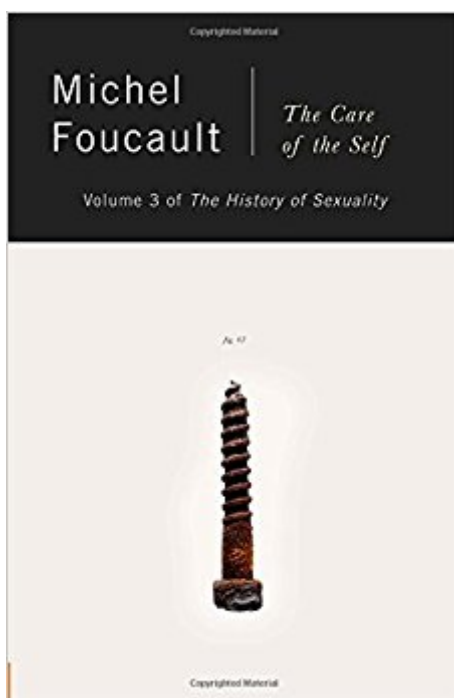


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The History Of Sexuality, Vol. 3: The Care Of The Self



Synopsis

Michel Foucault takes us into the first two centuries of our own era, into the Golden Age of Rome, to reveal a subtle but decisive break from the classical Greek vision of sexual pleasure. He skillfully explores the whole corpus of moral reflection among philosophers (Plutarch, Epictetus, Marcus Aurelius, Seneca) and physicians of the era, and uncovers an increasing mistrust of pleasure and growing anxiety over sexual activity and its consequences.

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Customer Reviews

"The Care of the Self shares with the writings on which it draws the characteristic of being carefully constructed, exquisitely reasoned and internally cogent." -- The New York Times Book Review
"Foucault is a thinker from whose writing one can infer lessons for our modern lives and dilemmas."-- Boston Globe

The Care of the Self is the third and possibly final volume of Michel Foucault's widely acclaimed examination of "the experience of sexuality in Western society." Foucault takes us into the first two centuries of our own era, into the Golden Age of Rome, to reveal a subtle but decisive break from the classical Greek vision of sexual pleasure. He skillfully explores the whole corpus of moral reflection among philosophers (Plutarch, Epictetus, Marcus Aurelius, Seneca) and physicians of the era, and uncovers an increasing mistrust of pleasure and growing anxiety over sexual activity and its consequences.

I purchased this book for a thesis dissertation on gender roles in lesbian relationships. I must say that it was very helpful. A lot of the history I needed to include in my work was found in this book. The author did a magnificent job in describing with detail the evolution of sexuality! Loved, loved, loved it!

in the 2nd volume the reader learned that 'the obligation to keep the use of pleasure within the bounds of marriage was a way of exercising self-mastery, a mastery made necessary by one's status or authority one had to exercise in the city.' in volume 3 foucault discusses the shift from the greek city states to the rise of hellenistic monarchies and the empire of rome. the prominent texts consulted by foucault were mainly written by the stoics, seneca, epictetus, and plutarch, and galen, when the body in particular is discussed. the consulted texts are of practical application, beginning, in the 2nd century, with artemidorus' the interpretation of dreams, a book of which foucault wrote, 'exemplifies a common way of thinking ... which will allow a measure of what may have been uncommon and in part new in the work of philosophical and medical reflection on pleasure and sexual conduct that was undertaken in the same period', of the second sophistic. 'the ethics inspired by stoicism, are in order to satisfy the specific requirements of the relation to oneself, not to violate one's natural and essential being, and to honor oneself as a reasonable being that one must keep one's practice of sexual pleasure within marriage and in conformity with its objectives.' however, the problematic of boys as the object of erotic desire rises again, and foucault relates the story, the affairs of the heart, attributed to lucian. theomnestus, in jest, proposes the question, which is the better love choice, boys or women. the debaters, who take the question seriously, are charicles, a lover of women, and callicratidas, a lover of boys. foucault describes 'the debate between the love of women and the love of boys' as 'the confrontation of two forms of life, of two ways of stylizing one's pleasure, and of the two philosophical discourses that accompany these choices.' callicratidas wins the debate by citing the duplicity and falsity of women who use cosmetics to hide physical flaws, whereas claiming that boys, possess a natural beauty and engage in relationships with men that can develop into true friendships. theomnestus accuses callicratidas of falsely winning the debate by linking his argument to philosophy and eliminating physical pleasure, what foucault describes as 'a fundamental objection to the very old line of argument of greek pederasty, which, in order to conceptualize, formulate, and discourse about the latter and to supply it with reasons, was obliged to evade the manifest presence of physical pleasure.' though historically, the argument for the love of women seems, for a moment, to win out, and the emphasis shifts from the man and the

woman who will care for his household and, eros, his erotic relationship with boys outside the household within the larger world marks the new erotic, to the boy and the girl who makes her entrance as the virgin of the first romances,. It's much easier to follow the history of sexuality from this point to the romances described in, among other books, denis de rougemont's love in the western world than it is to get to 'the principle of a perfect conjugal fidelity that is in the pastoral ministry,' an unconditional duty for anyone concerned with his salvation, the subject of a 4th volume foucault, unfortunately, did not live to finish.

just foucault

not to be missed

Well written, well organized, well thought out. This book is simply amazing. My only sadness is that I will never see books 4 or 5. R.I.P. Foucault.

Great!

Great Book!!! Fast shipping !!

I bought this as a gift for my cousin and he really enjoyed it. He has read the whole series and needed this to continue his collection.

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