

SEXUALITY, GENDER AND IDENTITY: CONTEMPORARY DISCOURSES

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Professor McClain

Intro: painting, “The Sheer Weight of History” by Eric Fischl
music,” Let’s Go Away for a While,” Brian Wilson *Pet Sounds*

I: Michel Foucault (1926-1984)

A critique of contemporary (20th century) philosophy

A critique of the social sciences (human sciences)

A critique of the discourse of modern sexuality

II: Eric Fischl (1948-)

Portraying the American suburban landscape and *the sexual landscape*

III: Lina Wertmüller (1926-)

Pleasure, power, and sadism: transcending gender and gender roles.....

CONCLUSIONS.....????????????????????????????

Music: *Wouldn’t It Be Nice*, Brian Wilson

Quotes:

1. *“There was a great period of contemporary philosophy, that of Sartre and Merleau-Ponty... One has the impression that this kind of philosophy is now obsolete ... [For]... perhaps one could say this philosophy from Hegel to Sartre has essentially been a totalizing enterprise...”* (**Foucault Live**, 1989, pp. 35 & 38)
2. *“...it’s the normalizing society, with its institutional and private wheels, that it is necessary to study and criticize.”* (p. 111)
3. *“Sexuality must not be thought of as a kind of natural given.... It is the name that can be given to a historical construct.”* (**History of Sexuality, vol. 1, an introduction**, p. 105).
4. *“Moreover, we need to consider the possibility that one day ... people will no longer quite understand how the ruses of sexuality ... were able to subject us... so that we became dedicated to the endless task of forcing its secret, of exacting the truest of confessions from a shadow.”* (**p. 159**)
5. *“I would say that narrative is a large part of the sexual domain insofar as it has as components an object, an audience, and a motive and the search for satisfaction, the completion of desire, requires tactics – strategies for dominance, strategies for submission, for attraction, and for fulfillment. Desire is your cue that Mystery has entered the room.”* (**Eric Fischl** from *Eric Fischl, Paintings and Drawings 1979-2001*, Hatje Cantz Publishers, p. 46)
6. *“We are the culture of promise and of the future and are the culture of the individual. Life is expressed meaningfully by representation of the intimate and the personal. The upside is the brassiness of our irreverence. The downside is our loneliness.”* (**Ibid**)
7. *“I’m going to confess something to you. I don’t make a distinction between man and woman... My characters are symbols for me of certain things having to do with human beings, quite independently of their sex. I don’t believe in the distinction of the sexes”* (**The Parables of Lina Wertmuller**, Ernest Ferlita and John R. May, p. 81)