

Punish, was nourished by his intense involvement in prisoners' struggles, his foundation of a *Group d'Informations sur les Prisons* and his tireless involvement in a wide variety of human rights struggles.

Although he had problems with the excesses of the Marxist ultra-left following the upheavals of May 1968, Foucault worked with a variety of groups and individuals and appears to have been a highly effective organizer, frequently traveling to other countries (from Franco's Spain to the Shah's Iran) to support dissidents and to protest oppression. Just before his death from AIDS in 1984, Foucault was ready to join an expedition to the South China Sea to rescue Vietnamese boat people.

One gets the impression from Macey's study of a full and exciting life, dedicated to intellectual work, political struggle and a varied social life. Yet Macey, for all of the illuminating details he provides, ultimately fails to illuminate *why* Foucault still matters to us, why his contributions still tower over those of his contemporaries. Foucault's great contribution was to ferret out the complex connections between ideas, institutions and practices, between power and knowledge. In his own work, he relates the emergence of the modern intellectual class to the rise of prisons, mental institutions, hospitals, public schools, compulsory military service and other disciplinary institutions.

In his major works, Foucault brilliantly traced the history of modernity, challenging those who present history as a straightforward narrative of progress. Instead, Foucault offered penetrating insight into how modern institutions like prisons and mental institutions, far from being simple examples of reform, have in fact had the effects of strengthening the powers of domination by the state.

Perhaps Foucault's greatest limitation, however, was his failure to explore the role of the mass media and the institutions of the consumer society in producing a new kind of domination. Foucault constantly claimed to be engaging in a study of "the history of the present," but in a sense it was precisely the present that eluded him. There was something very old-fashioned in his conception of intellectual activity. While his major works illuminate salient features of the present, his gaze was primarily historical. And while he succeeded in mapping the genesis and trajectory of modern societies, he missed what is most novel about our present age.

Like his sometime nemesis Karl Marx, Foucault sat hours every day in a library, taking endless notes on old texts. Like Marx, he was very interested in and involved with the political struggles of the day. But, unlike Marx, he failed to articulate the structures and social relations of the capitalist system and thus was not able to chart the dramatic changes that capitalist societies have been undergoing in recent years. And so, while Foucault remains important to critical social theory and radical democratic politics today, he is of only limited help in enabling us to make sense of our media culture and of contemporary high-tech society.

—Douglas Kellner



Dual Attraction: Understanding Bisexuality

By Martin S. Weinberg, Colin J. Williams and Douglas W. Pryor
Oxford University Press
437 pp., \$27.50

For years bisexuality has been seen by homosexuals and heterosexuals alike as at best a state of confusion, at worst a kind of cynical sexual tourism. Lately, though, it's acquired a certain tenuous legitimacy—as the title of last year's "Lesbian, Gay and Bi March on Washington" attests.

In staking out their territory on a map of sexual identity, bisexuals have won a paradoxical victory, unintentionally reaffirming traditional conceptions of sexuality as a system of border lines and confines. *Dual Attraction* is as much an exploration of the tensions inherent in the very idea of sexual identity as it is a chronicle of bisexual inclinations and behavior. The authors' touchstone is the famous Kinsey scale, which abandoned the simple dualism that described everyone as either homosexual or heterosexual in favor of a more nuanced seven-point scale.

Yet Kinsey's scale was as constricting as it was expansive. *Dual Attraction*, attempting to move beyond the pseudo-scientific pretensions of such labeling, allows its subjects to categorize themselves. But this approach has its pitfalls as well. Based on a series of interviews with self-identified bisexuals living in San Francisco in the early '80s, the book falls well short of the ambitions of its subtitle, which promises readers an "understanding" of bisexuality itself. *Dual Attraction* is, rather, a chronicle of the lives of a particular group of people who quite consciously maintain an "open gender schema." The authors suggest that everyone has the potential to be attracted to those of their own sex as well as to those of the other; most simply shutter off one set of urges as they mature. Given the right environment, it is possible to "disconnect gender and sexual preference." Bisexuals love both genders, the authors conclude, mainly because they have the opportunity to do so.

This interpretation is perhaps inevitable in a study focusing on such a vocal and exploratory group of people as self-identified bisexuals living in San Francisco. With its references to anonymous partners and swing parties, *Dual Attraction* is strangely anachronistic. Most of the interviews were conducted more than a decade ago, and even a lengthy section on the impact of AIDS fails to diffuse the book's strong whiff of the swinging '70s. *Dual Attraction* nonetheless breaks new ground. In their attempt to provide a nuanced description of sexuality and sexual identity, the authors venture into regions that have for too long gone largely unexplored.

—Etelka Lehoczy

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