

**THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO
DEPARTMENTS OF FRENCH STUDIES AND
WOMEN'S STUDIE AND FEMINIST RESEARCH
FR 2119/FR 2212G/WS2233G**

**Sex and Seduction in the French Novel
Winter 2015**

Instructor: Chris Roulston

Lecture times: Wednesdays 10:30-12:30

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Office Hours: Wednesdays 13:00-14:00, or by appointment

Course Description:

What is the relationship between seduction and the French novel? From its beginnings, with Mme de Lafayette's *Princesse de Clèves* (1678), the French novel has developed as a narrative of seduction, with sex, either explicitly or implicitly, at its centre. Yet sex also represents a form of impossibility; it is that which is gestured towards but can never be fulfilled. While all narratives can be said to be acts of seduction, the development of the novel in France examines the different possibilities of sex and seduction: as romance, as power, as alienation, as submission. Desire is fundamentally dangerous; it threatens the social order as well as the rules of gender. In these encounters between sex, seduction and the social, "love unceasingly prepares its own disappearance, acts out its dissolution" (Gilles Deleuze). This course will examine the relations among sex, seduction and the French novel through narrative works from the seventeenth century to the present day.

Books to buy (available at the UWO Bookstore):

Mme de Lafayette, *The Princesse de Clèves* (1678)

Choderlos de Laclos, *Dangerous Liaisons* (1782)

Gustave Flaubert, *Madame Bovary* (1857)

Guy de Maupassant, *Butterball* (1880)

Virginie Despentes, *King Kong Theory* (2009)

Assignments for FR 2212G and WS 2233:

Presence and Class participation	10%
1 textual analysis (750 words)	15%
1 midterm test (1.5 hours)	15%
1 essay (1500 words)	30%
1 final exam (2 hours)	30%
Total	100%

Assignments for FR 2119

Presence and Class participation	10%
1 textual analysis (750 words)	15%
1 midterm test (1.5 hours)	15%
2 book reports (250 words each)	30%
1 final exam (2 hours)	30%
Total	100%

Course Policies

Prerequisites: There are no prerequisites for FR2212G/FR 2119/WS2233G

Participation and Attendance: Students are expected to attend both the main lecture and the tutorial class regularly and come to the tutorial prepared to discuss the week's readings. Should a student need to miss class, a courtesy explanatory email is appreciated.

E-mail Policy: Emails by the instructor will be responded to within 48 hours.

Medical Policy: Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counseling office of their home faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department. For UWO Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness see: <http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2011/pg1117.html> and <http://studentservices.uwo.ca/secure/index.cfm>.

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Assignment Submission: All assignments must be submitted in hard copy, to the instructor, in class. Assignments not submitted in class must be delivered to the Women's Studies drop-box, located outside the WSFR main office in Lawson Hall, room 3260. Assignments will NOT be accepted via email or on OWL.

Late Assignments: Late assignments will only be accepted without penalty if a prior agreement with the instructor has been made, or if a valid medical certificate is provided. In the event that a student is unable to meet a deadline, for medical or other reasons, it is the student's responsibility to negotiate an alternate deadline with the instructor, prior to the original assignment deadline. Revised deadlines will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Students who submit late assignments without making a prior agreement with the instructor will be penalized 2% for every 24-hour period after the assignment due date.

The 2% penalty also applies to students who fail to submit an assignment on the agreed upon alternate date.

Turnitin.com: All assignments for this course must be submitted to turnitin.com on or before the assignment due date. Submissions can be made via link on the course OWL page. "All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement currently between the University and Turnitin.com. (<http://www.turnitin.com>) (<http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/exam/courseoutlines.pdf>)

Scholastic Offences: "Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site: <http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2009/pg113.html>.

Plagiarism: "Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea or passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offense (see the 'Scholastic Offense Policy' in the Western Academic Calendar). Plagiarism checking: The University of Western Ontario uses software for plagiarism checking. Students may be required to submit their written work in electronic form for plagiarism checking." - U.W.O. Senate statement on plagiarism.

This course will:

- * provide an historical overview of key French texts through an analysis of gender and sexuality
- * develop an understanding of governing paradigms in French literary culture
- * help to develop critical reading practices and interpretative skills
- * provide a basic understanding of narrative theory

Sex and Seduction in the French Novel FR 2212G/FR 2119/WS 2233
Course Schedule (Winter 2015)

Week One: Wednesday 7 January

Introduction: Sex, Seduction and Narration

Week Two: Wednesday 14 January

The Seventeenth Century: Resisting Seduction and the Virtuous Subject

Madame de Lafayette, *The Princesse de Clèves* (1678): parts 1 & 2 (pp. 3-79)

Week Three: Wednesday 21 January

Madame de Lafayette, *The Princesse de Clèves*: parts 3 & 4 (pp. 80-156)

Textual analysis handed out (15%)

Week Four: Wednesday 28 January

The Eighteenth Century: Power, Seduction and the Libertine Subject

Choderlos de Laclos, *Dangerous Liaisons* (1782): parts 1 & 2 (pp. 9-188)

Week Five: Wednesday 4 February

Choderlos de Laclos, *Dangerous Liaisons*: parts 3 & 4 (pp. 189-372)

Week Six: Wednesday 11 February

FILM: Stephen Frears, *Dangerous Liaisons* (1988) (running time 119 mins)

Textual analysis due

Week Seven: 16-20 February

READING WEEK

Week Eight: Wednesday 25 February

MIDTERM TEST (15%)

Week Nine: Wednesday 4 March

The Nineteenth Century: Sex, Seduction and the Alienated Wife

Gustave Flaubert, *Madame Bovary* (1857): part 1 (pp. 3-58)

Essay topic handed out (30%)

Week Ten: Wednesday 11 March

Flaubert, *Madame Bovary*: part 2 (pp. 61-202)

Week Eleven: Wednesday 18 March

Flaubert, *Madame Bovary*: part 3 (pp. 205-311)

Week Twelve: Wednesday 25 March

The Nineteenth Century: The Bourgeois and the Prostitute 1

Guy de Maupassant, *Butterball* (1880)

Final Examination Review

Week Thirteen: Wednesday 1 April

The Twenty-First Century: The Bourgeois and the Prostitute 2

Virginie Despentes, *King Kong Theory* (2009)

Essay topic due

Week Fourteen: Wednesday 8 April

FILM: *Young and Beautiful* (2014), director François Ozon (running time)

April 2015: Final Examination (2 hours) (30%)