

Justine, Philosophy in the Bedroom, and Other Writings Study Guide

Justine, Philosophy in the Bedroom, and Other Writings by Marquis de Sade

(c)2015 BookRags, Inc. All rights reserved.



Contents

Justine, Philosophy in the Bedroom, and Other Writings Study Guide.....	1
Contents.....	2
Plot Summary.....	3
Book 1, The Marquis : Chapter 1, The Marquis Himself.....	4
Book 1, The Marquis : Chapter 2, The Marquis according to Maurice Blanchot.....	5
Book 2, Personal Writings : Chapter 1, Chronology.....	7
Book 2, Personal Writings : Chapter 2, The Letters.....	9
Book 3, Philosophy in the Bedroom : Chapter 1, The Beginning.....	10
Book 3, Philosophy in the Bedroom : Chapter 2, Dialogue 3 - Part 2.....	12
Book 3, Philosophy in the Bedroom : Chapter 3, Dialogue 4.....	14
Book 4, Eugenie : Chapter 1, Eugenie.....	16
Book 4, Justine : Chapter 1, My Dear Friend.....	18
Book 4, Justine : Chapter 2, Therese & Madame de Lorsange.....	20
Book 4, Justine : Chapter 3, Upending the Virtues.....	21
Book 4, Justine : Chapter 4, Conclusion.....	23
Characters.....	24
Objects/Places.....	29
Themes.....	35
Style.....	38
Quotes.....	41
Topics for Discussion.....	42



Plot Summary

This book is a composition of three novels by the same author. The author was a French Marquis who lived from 1740-1820. His reputation has traveled with him through the centuries. He is infamous for his ideas. The succinct way to express the man's present day reputation are the words "Sadism" (the tendency to both inflict pain upon others and to enjoy doing so) and "Masochism" (a cultivated enjoyment of being hurt). Both words derive from the life and writings of the Marquis as he is the first, as far as we are aware, to present them in any context that relates to psychological theory. While these are terms displayed during these novels none of them is defined.

Translators and attendant scholars have worked with the three novels contained within this anthology. During the Publisher's Preface the scholar tells readers that family and friends of the Marquis were as apt to be upset by his creative writings as strangers. The first novel is *Philosophy in the Bedroom*. The second and third are *Eugenie de Franval* and *Justine*. This is a sordid tale entailing instruction in the unseemly subculture known as "libertinism." These writings cover a multitude of sexual and gender-related concerns as well as addressing abuse issues. Some of these he has lumped together through his definition of the movement known as "libertinism." He associates libertinism with corruption, and then shows quite graphically why this is the case. The Marquis shows how ignorance can be used to cultivate views which will lead to corruption or wrongdoings. These novels can be valuable in exploring how corruption works. He shows the need for reform but not how to achieve it.

It is doubtful that many writers of the age were covering the important issues of preventing, finding and correcting abuse of children and women in society during the Marquis' life. He has mainly brought attention to these issues through the negative, by chronicling sad and painful events for fictional characters. This edition of the book includes two novellas and one novel by the same author. Infamous as he may be, the Marquis has left a lasting impression on the literary world. The writings of the Marquis are largely pornographic. It is not difficult to see why he was offensive to people during his lifetime. Despite this, he has made several points about areas of needed reform in French society.



Book 1, The Marquis : Chapter 1, The Marquis Himself

Book 1, The Marquis : Chapter 1, The Marquis Himself Summary

Although this book is primarily a showcase for the author's work, it has also been devised so that it can serve as a textbook. The book has been assembled so that this particular Marquis de Sade can be marketed as a personality, greatly enhancing the charm available for promoting his writings. The scholars explain at the very opening of the book that the Marquis was not a popular author during his own lifetime. Of writers who are not popular during their lifetimes, most of those who became more famous after their deaths had self-published their books and pamphlets, or found some way for their works to get out.

The real reason there are 3 novels packaged together is that adjustments have been made to suit present-day conventions. Two of these are 'mere' novellas, meaning that they are not long enough to be marketed as stand alone items in the modern world of book publishing. The scholars inform readers that the reason the novel Justine has been included is because it represents the greatest public success during his life. As such, the collection displays diverse aspects of the Marquis. He offers clandestine writings and public ones. With his novel Justine, he was pushing the boundaries of what would be tolerated by the public of the day.

Book 1, The Marquis : Chapter 1, The Marquis Himself Analysis

The Marquis de Sade has asserted himself as an enigma in the contemporary mind. There is a place for his work within society in North America and in much of Europe today. Radical ideas are met with greater tolerance than in times past, at least with respect to some of the issues that posed the worst trouble for him during his lifetime.



Book 1, The Marquis : Chapter 2, The Marquis according to Maurice Blanchot

Book 1, The Marquis : Chapter 2, The Marquis according to Maurice Blanchot Summary

In this section, the commentary about the author continues. The Marquis was forcibly constrained to live "the life of the mind" due to his incarceration. It has previously been stated that due to imprisonment, he was turned into a writer. There is an important set of interrelated themes presented in this section. Blanchot begins to discuss the division of the society into hierarchical classes. Then, the relationship of behavior into categorization as "crime" or acceptable to social rank is explored. Finally, criminal behavior is also clearly examined and the hypothesis is put forth that criminal behavior is often a behavioral effort to compensate for oppression. Hence, some injustice led to injustice. All of this is investigated within the context of the movement of the libertine. This is a perfect example of why the writings of the Marquis de Sade have such importance. While he is not necessarily the only person to think along these lines, he brought forth incredibly relevant discussions of ethics, and social justice, of morality and criminality in civil society. This is work which humanity has certainly needed to do.

Modern readers will be more familiar with the notion of "the dark side," the subject of much of Blanchot's discussion of the Marquis thought at this stage of the book. The Marquis is exploring entirely self centered and selfish egoism linked directly to personal pleasure. Blanchot refers to a theoretical subject. In other modern terms, popular forms of psychology would say that the Marquis has done some work to create characters in search of the absolutely selfish truth for individuals—the will and the will to power of a person who has not been re-worked by the extensive moral training that every decent and well raised human being has been through.

Book 1, The Marquis : Chapter 2, The Marquis according to Maurice Blanchot Analysis

Those who like to think, and hope to understand how society works and what to do with it, are sure to treasure what Blanchot is preparing readers for. In this respect, the Marquis de Sade is akin to the philosopheress Ayn Rand, whose philosophy was presented primarily through fiction novels. As such, the Marquis gives theory full reign through the mental exercise of stories with events and characters. While frustrating in its limitations, such "thought experiments" are known on the whole to be quite valuable. Often conscience is cultivated by these forces as much as it might be dismantled.

Blanchot tells readers that he or the Marquis have concluded that the completely selfish individual focused upon personal pleasure is the very definition of evil. This is the case



when there is no restriction on behavior towards others in an effort to achieve personal gratification. The work of Friedrich Nietzsche with respect to the "will to power" can be clearly related to this. It is not so much that this philosopher assumed that people would want to be libertines or merciless, but that this will for the individual to prevail is the secret normal desire of each, but typically only the privilege of those at the top of the social hierarchy.



Book 2, Personal Writings : Chapter 1, Chronology

Book 2, Personal Writings : Chapter 1, Chronology Summary

In this chapter a scholar gives more information about the Marquis himself. In this case it is a set of writings. Readers might be aware of the wisdom in checking their editions. The Marquis de Sade is well known enough that there will typically be more than one publisher printing his works in English at any given time.

The author's name was a point of relevance. For whatever reason, he ended up with the first names Donatien-Alphonse-Francois, rather than Louis-Aldonse-Donatien. Strangely enough, this turned out, according to scholars, to be a more pressing matter than anyone had foreseen.

In 1754 and 1755 the Marquis found his way into the Light Infantry. This proved to be a little more challenging than they had originally planned. It required that a geneologist discover evidence of the familial line of nobility, and then to claim rights by that in coordination with the law. The following year, he was accepted into the Light Horse Regiment.

In 1763 there is a dreadful conflict of interests. The Marquis is engaged to two women. While this seems to be madness, it is simply indicative of the rather large difference between what he wants and what his father wants. The woman he is in love with is a Countess, or daughter of a Count. His father has arranged for him to marry someone else. By this time, the Marquis has made it all the way up to Captain in rank in the cavalry.

Book 2, Personal Writings : Chapter 1, Chronology Analysis

In 1764, despite the amount of emotional distress or trouble and the perhaps negative change in him, the Marquis has made it up to the rank of Lt.-General. His sexual behavior has begun to lean towards promiscuity; given the information here, readers can rapidly conclude that as the Marquis has been deprived a real love match, this has somehow degraded his entire sense and ability regarding sex life. It is most probably most accurate to perceive his actual wife as a relatively innocent person in this, except or unless she harbored strong interest in the Marquis herself.

Soon after he has become a father, and although he has continued to pursue at least one other woman, the Marquis's behavior crosses the line from promiscuity to assault. In this case the assault itself is not sexual.



Within a few short years, the Marquis presents his first written piece. He has written a comedic play, which is then presented before the public.

While far from complete, this gives readers a much more complete sense of what the author is like and the nature of events in his life. Present day psychologists would strongly argue that being denied a love match was too much for him, and the emotional injury showed in a degradation in this aspect of his life. His career was benefitted or, in the least, not adversely affected by this same decision.



Book 2, Personal Writings : Chapter 2, The Letters

Book 2, Personal Writings : Chapter 2, The Letters Summary

Here there is a new section. One is rapidly introduced to the Marquis' 'emotionalism'. His feelings, as far as the words accurately depict them, are like strong breezes blowing in more than one direction, or like the dancing flames of a controlled blaze. The words he uses are at times cruel and at other times kind. This variance can be disruptive, and unhealthy but at the same time it also shows what it is like when rapidly changing feelings are racing through a person's mind. As a bizarre happenstance, in his work *The Art of Seduction*, that author has described this peculiar blend of hostility and kindness as useful for seducing someone. Too much is just crazy abusiveness or reactions to being forced to stick with a situation against one's will and striving to justify it or to come to peace with it. A certain amount of it just reveals how true it is that feelings change as does the weather.

Book 2, Personal Writings : Chapter 2, The Letters Analysis

Here again, parents are especially reminded of how this works: honest emotions can go from peaceful contentment to screaming and crying or quiet sulking and then back to contentment or joyful playing. It is not abnormal for all of these changes to occur at least daily and in some cases an hour or two is sufficient for events to play out that legitimately cause every one of these emotions in this type of order. As such, it is not clear whether the Marquis was suffering more from bad habits of mind or a 'mood disorder' or just natural, healthy fluctuations based upon facts.

The third letter is 'a bit rough'. He is rapidly into police men and whores and ass-kissing. He states that, "But the police are tolerant, tolerant of everything but discourtesy to whores," (p. 130). The other significant point of this entire letter is that he needs a few more things in prison. He is disappointed because he has not received them yet and there is nothing that he can do except to continue to ask or to re-work the way that he asks.

In Letter IV, the author shows readers how a well known poison can also be used as a cure: in this case arsenic. This deadly substance, given the right way, can cure 'Russian peasant women' from fevers.

At the end of the letters there are a few further documents. Each of these is short and the assemblage has been nicely tucked into this section of the book.



Book 3, Philosophy in the Bedroom : Chapter 1, The Beginning

Book 3, Philosophy in the Bedroom : Chapter 1, The Beginning Summary

This part of the book begins with a very brief set of notes, including a short letter to libertines. The novel was published in 1795, and contains a preamble by an attendant scholar. The novel is described briefly as a dialogue that was written more from perspective of Plato's Socratic dialogues than from the contemporary play right's viewpoint. What makes this comical is that all those who find themselves privately and secretly indulging in personal sexual fantasies during the course of their daily lives will find great humor in the fact that the Marquis has written the novel in this fashion where the reader has more the 'God's eye view' of knowing the whole truth of what is going on in any individual's mind at any given time. Due to this, the author's work is, according to the scholar a mixture of insightful philosophical discussion interspersed with sexual fantasies. However promiscuous the author, he also expressed strong and clear possessive jealousy towards his wife at least and quite possibly towards others as well.

The chapter summaries will be divided over this content, but not in the manner identical to that of the table of contents. Readers need to be aware of this. Approximately 50 pages will be covered. For this reason, the fifth dialogue will have two chapters devoted to it. For now, the focus is on the opening letter to libertines. There is little to this, other than the observation that those who have lived the libertine lifestyle at this point will find that they face something quite different than will those who have not already been traveling along that 'bent'.

The dialogue begins with a woman. She is a self proclaimed libertine in her twenties. She admits to this straight away. The first discussion is with another man about a third party in whom she interested. There is the discernible peculiarity that the third party is a man who is known to 'only love men'. The woman is intrigued and for some reason, this eggs her on all the more rather than being any kind of 'turn off' as it would be for so many.

Book 3, Philosophy in the Bedroom : Chapter 1, The Beginning Analysis

There is another man who is actively engaged in the conversation with this unusual woman. This fellow is the Chevalier. Some modern readers, especially those of the minority sexual orientations will love about this the fact that these people are openly discussing differences in sexual orientation right at the very beginning of the work rather than running along the line of assumptions that don't include them the whole time. The



Chevalier is actively bisexual but describes himself as really more heterosexual. He admits to having fooled around with the other man they are referring to, but that in reality he prefers women even though he will yield to some degree to another man's amorousness if he feels the man is quite attractive or exceptionally seductive. If he does, he shares, then he goes 'all out' with the other guy. Otherwise, he just doesn't.

Here, the woman openly acknowledges that she has managed to secure the permission for bring a young woman to her domain. She has a definite plot to intentionally corrupt the younger woman, to turn her into a libertine. Such a moment, following what came before, reminds those who happened to read it, of stories in the Bible about angels and carnality. There are stories where people want to include others sexually for delightful reasons, but there is at least one tale where a man's house is surrounded and the crowd gathered outside begins clamoring for him to send out his guest and if not them then his daughters so that they carnally include those he is holding in the house. While less dramatic than that, there is something about sexualized anger in contrast to similar behaviors that are motivated from love. Control of course, is another issue. Here, readers will be relieved to know that 'young girls' means a full grown woman 18-23 years of age.



Book 3, Philosophy in the Bedroom : Chapter 2, Dialogue 3 - Part 2

Book 3, Philosophy in the Bedroom : Chapter 2, Dialogue 3 - Part 2 Summary

Readers have traversed the gap from general writings deeply into sexually graphic writing during the first part of the third dialogue. For those old enough or curious enough to have delved into it, readers will see that the Marquis is now leading people through something that is more like the Rocky Horror Picture Show in its theme, but unlike that has gone further into what are called 'romance novels', and then has passed further. Are the words and images invoked by the Marquis so intense as to qualify as 'trashy pornography' or as 'classy pornography'?

The encounter is a set up. It is 'prolonged'. The older woman is delighted to include the younger and to share in pleasures of her and the man while educating her in means of pursuing pleasures of the flesh.

By the second half of the third dialogue, the 'victim' Eugenie has changed a bit. Whether these are real alterations of matters of the moment remains unclear. The good news is that has begun to enjoy herself to be able to take in what is happening.

Book 3, Philosophy in the Bedroom : Chapter 2, Dialogue 3 - Part 2 Analysis

The writer is adept at story telling. The Marquis has created a bit of a romp - adventure scenario. There is darkness associated with it. He is imagining the entire thing, probably from a secluded prison cell and cannot get to any woman at all, and probably stays 'off of' his male prison mates.

The style is vivid and imaginative. The Marquis certainly proves that he can write well in this novel. Readers will not be bored that way but may find that he writes well enough that the events 'come alive' as well as they would whenever one reads a good novel. People do have some control over this.

Resistance, persuasion and yielding to pleasure are all explored through this giant mental experiment. There are elements of the truths that occur in most families. The simple reality that the older ones have a great deal more knowledge and experience such that, if they did communicate, then the younger one could quite easily come into great knowledge. In this case, however, instead of a wise older guardian woman educating her daughter or younger woman about challenges of seduction and corruption, it is the libertines who have taken the young woman.



As already mentioned, taboo topics such as bisexual and homosexual behavior are both worked extensively in this dialogue. More than once the older woman kisses the younger insisting along the lines of 'you didn't think I'd be left out, did you?'. Some would say this speaks volumes about the Madame Ange. Others will find that it serves purely within the realms of psycho-analysis. Madame de Saint-Ange has surely been named to tantalize.



Book 3, Philosophy in the Bedroom : Chapter 3, Dialogue 4

Book 3, Philosophy in the Bedroom : Chapter 3, Dialogue 4 Summary

Here the younger woman expresses her situation clearly. She cries out rightly that the others are misusing her lack of experience against her. At the same time, she has given herself over to this enough to be enjoying herself. She is having a fair amount of fun being included by these elders. In truth, the extent of pleasure to which they have suddenly introduced her is very intense, making it quite hard to dislike. In that respect, readers who have seen the movie Rocky Horror Picture Show will find that Eugenie has transformed to some degree into the condition that the lead female character Janet was rapidly led to by introduction of sexual pleasure into her life. The good news is that sexual activity is designed and intended to be an exquisite pleasure which is why it makes a great way to say "I love you" in some cases, wordlessly. The bad news is, that the pleasure can be as twisted as has been found in the cases of some of the controlled and misused substances that also make their users feel good.

The sexually explicit nature of the work shows no indication of coming to an end. By now, readers can see why authorities of the time in which it emerged labeled it pornography even though it was words rather than images conveyed through other means. The Chevalier from the beginning of the book is present in the situation. He is immediately drawn into sexual activity, but not intercourse.

Dolmance explains what in modern society is the root cause underlying 'circle jerks' and jokes about 'the Navy'. He insists on handling the other man, explaining to the women that any man understands another man's masturbation or related needs better than any woman ever should, could or would. He uses this as his justification for being the one to give assistance. Naturally, there are men who will find this disturbing, but others will find it reassuring.

Book 3, Philosophy in the Bedroom : Chapter 3, Dialogue 4 Analysis

Madame de Ange has earlier declared that she has faced 15 men on one occasion, and that she ended up being sexually penetrated 90 times in 24 hours as a consequence. While some would surely be horrified by such an account, for her it displays an approach towards mastery of the debauchery and of libertinism or simply the ability to take it and to enjoy the experience. This section of the text begins with the younger lady being pleased quite literally at the hands of her elder, the Madame.



The truth is that the Marquis really has written works potent enough to attract the attention of censors of the dawn of the twenty-first century. Some of what has occurred during the first novel is apt to have run through the minds of the sexually mature, but probably not all at once like this. Small portions of it at a time may have occurred. Readers may be faced with a difficulty just to work through the material presented herein. Some will be really offended. Others will be fine as long as they remind themselves that the author generated these complex sexual fantasies while in prison which will comfort some. There are those who will laugh- especially if they are the types who enjoy pornography in society. A strong dose of good humor is guaranteed to further relieve whatever tension remains. Many readers will find that parts of the work are palpable at least on occasion even if, taken on the whole it is 'a bit much'.

Little Eugenie, finds herself armed with a dildo which she uses to bugger one of the men up the rear end during an early moment in this dialogue. Rather than being offended, he likes this. This produces a mixed message. Now that he can take this, its value as any kind of punishment or cruelty has been ruined and he has developed another bizarre if not aberrant form of affection.



Book 4, Eugenie : Chapter 1, Eugenie

Book 4, Eugenie : Chapter 1, Eugenie Summary

Here, the young lady from the preceding novel has an entire work devoted to her. From whence came these fantasies no one can be sure. Certainly one can say that they came from the sole mind of the Marquis de Sade. This may be true, but the human mind has a self-transcendent aspect to it that while elusive as the wind and the breath is at the same time that inescapable.

In this case, due to the need for brevity of the summary and length of the collective work, the entire novella will be covered in this one section. The date on the book is 1788. Is this the father of the 'romance novel' genre? Here, he has intentionally written about another taboo subject; the topic of incest. Most known cases are forms of abuse. At the same time, many relatives have faced feelings of attraction to one or more relatives who are not available by proximity of genetic code and their familial nature. This has caused stirring in the mind's of numerous- at times fear is the root cause, in other cases it is the matter of maturing humans coping with intensifying sexual energies amongst loved ones who are rightfully off limits. Now and then, someone has a fantasy about breaking this taboo consensually.

The story begins with a Mr. Franval. He quickly brings up the reality or the anxiety that what one reads has an influence. He cites books designed and intended to corrupt others. In doing so, the Marquis de Sade has either confessed to at least one of his motives and has justified book burning and banning...right along with the accusers of Socrates who claimed he 'corrupted the young men of Athens' through his method of conversation and social intercourse. Either that, or the Marquis is wrong.

Book 4, Eugenie : Chapter 1, Eugenie Analysis

The story set up indicates something that may come as a bit of a surprise for most readers. Rather than a long, slowly developing relationship between the two, arranged marriages often meant that those actually in the marriage had not known one another long at all prior to the wedding. This is a little bizarre and sends a peculiar message. Foolish and innocent as children who have gone to a church picnic with their parents, and finding others to play with there, they are hurtled into married life.

Matters concerning the welfare of girls and women are brought up quickly here to. There are arguments in favor of and against education for girls and women. The main argument for leaving girls ignorant that is presented is that, if her future is going to rest solely upon being pleasant and attractive then nothing that might undermine this ought to be introduced- including any ideas that might make her 'difficult' or 'unpleasant' to a suitor or husband. However, by the time of the author's writings there had been at least



one piece published in Europe on behalf of the improvement of women as a group, by Mary Wollstonecraft.

Later, the idea of the young lady resisting or avoiding marriage altogether emerges. Along with it, there is suspicion of some affair, but then these feelings are written off as a tendency for people to jump to evil conclusions and it is assumed that there is nothing of the kind between the man and his daughter. After this, the mother discovers the situation. She is horrified. As time passes she learns that the incest has been enthusiastically consensual. Here the real crime is shown for what it is.



Book 4, Justine : Chapter 1, My Dear Friend

Book 4, Justine : Chapter 1, My Dear Friend Summary

This is said to have been his most important work and his most famous. This novel was the only one by the Marquis that made it into publication during his life. He managed to run into trouble about it, such that, when it did come out he did not dare to have his name attached to it in so obvious a manner as for it to bear his name directly. He conducted part of the work from prison and some of it he conducted while 'free'. Speaking of this term, one of the strangest attributes of the Marquis' reputation is that he is described by many as having been one of the freest spirits of all time despite the fact that he was incarcerated for half of his adult life. Finally, of this work, the scholars explain that he dedicated it to a woman who was a primary or prominent companion for twenty years of his life.

The story begins with the release of two girls. One is an adolescent, who may be viewed as an exceedingly young woman depending upon her development, whereas the other was even younger. The two are suddenly emancipated orphans due to the bankruptcy and death of their parents. The elder, who's mood is more jovial, expresses her opinions regarding making their way in the world. She attempts to cheer up the other who tends more towards melancholia. The latter is mildly horrified by her sister and the two part company with no intention of ever seeing one another again.

Book 4, Justine : Chapter 1, My Dear Friend Analysis

As before the author continues to prove that he is an able writer. The ideas come forth quite naturally within the confines of the tale that they are a part of. The language is colorful, not so much in sense of curses and foul language but is descriptive, after the manner of richly embroidered ornate garb.

One of the two went through a difficult degradation. It seemed, however, that she learned a great deal through taking these moral proverbial beatings. In the beginning she turned into a prostitute for a few years, then later she graduated into finding lovers who would provide for her- which is what 'kept woman' means.

The other sister had, what it boils down to, a separate set of trials many of which revolved around what she did and did not suffer and how this revolved around a decision that she had made. It turns out that she had different difficulties, with other results. She preserved more of her chastity and morality than the other and suffered greater economic hardship instead of steady financial boons in exchange for learning to manipulate her desires and to find and submit and perhaps dispatch increasingly powerful men. Those who subdue her mainly argue that she must face what readers will

understand to be matters of dominance and submission to which men subject one another as a matter of course, and for all the shows of mercy towards women, certain subjugations at times go along with those.



Book 4, Justine : Chapter 2, Therese & Madame de Lorsange

Book 4, Justine : Chapter 2, Therese & Madame de Lorsange Summary

This is the first of the two novels that comes off as less pornographic. There is far more plot. While there do continue to be sexually explicit scenes they do not overwhelm the story. The author, as the translator has made the work appear in English, was quite an accomplished writer. The tale moves right along, keeping the reader quite entertained and engaged.

This portion of the text does not begin with any 'cut' from the preceding. By now, two women have discovered one another. Readers have the third person view and therefore they do know that the two are sisters. Now, both have had so much time apart and so many experiences that neither is even still using the name she was given. Both have fallen on so much strife that they feel themselves to be 'frauds' part of the time at least., and hence have these alternative names. Therese has finally found some respite- an actual benefactor after a great deal of hardship and a cruel attack from a man and his dogs because she refused to participate in a murder.

Book 4, Justine : Chapter 2, Therese & Madame de Lorsange Analysis

The story at this point is fortunately outrageous. It is like every crime from a newspaper has been patched together in order to formulate a novel. In this section, Therese discovers that a man who has done something which appears to be quite noble- that is he has founded a school that accepts students of both sexes, has had a bizarre motivation. Sexuality was at the root of this case. The example doubtless serves as an argument against coeducational schooling. However, in this case, the youngest member of the household reveals that the school master has a weird fetish for hurting his students. She says it is 'libertinage'.

This section of the text is rather disturbing. The sole social value of it, is that it sheds light upon, and brings to correct through 'heightened awareness' the evils of abuse, particularly abuse of women and children in society then it may be of some benefit in some way. Other than that, it is mainly torrid and unsettling prose, dramatic but again a seemingly endless tale of sorrows and troubles, tribulations. Somehow or another, even this scandalous man indicates that he clearly harbors some semblance of conscience and sense of right and good, of good and evil. The manner in which he expresses this is, as previously described, rather pornographic in its method. Essentially, the main problem is that the result is that generally, situations have a thread of being unsafe.



Book 4, Justine : Chapter 3, Upending the Virtues

Book 4, Justine : Chapter 3, Upending the Virtues Summary

This portion of the book begins with Therese's efforts to help Rosalie in more than one way. She brings religion into the matter. Here the Marquis, through the use of his characters continues to examine morality. He is frightening in that he finds the so-called Devil's Advocate position as much as that of the good in the work. It is one of those cases where those dedicated to the Good are or may well feel not very powerful whereas the evil forces hold great sway. Americans love stories in which the good guys win. This is part due to devotion to the idea, and that such dedication can be strenuous, but it also takes place because in life the grim reality that evil seems often to triumph over good gets to people. The fear and difficulty associated with this brings out the sense of 'meekness' that Christ frequently mentioned. Many of the good are timid and easily frightened.

In addition to the aforementioned, this portion of Justine also includes discussion of notions that are often called amorality or non-morality. This notion has sometimes also been called 'nonduality in ethics'. Here, the bottom line position is 'whatever works'. This follows of the claim that regardless of any utopian interpretations the basic condition in the Garden of Eden was that those who lived there had no ethical sense whatsoever and therefore every action was an innocent one. The snake and forbidden fruit, exposed ideas of ethics to experience and that produced many of the negative emotions that are typically associated with what is commonly referred to as 'a guilty conscience'. This idea, not taken from the Christian tales is examined at length. Justine uses church and religion in some effort to get to Therese, with respect to events in her life. The girl reveals almost immediately that she has been shielded or kept ignorant of such things. Therese's interpretation of this is simply that this was done in an effort to corrupt Rosalie and for no other purpose.

Book 4, Justine : Chapter 3, Upending the Virtues Analysis

The author has been translated. There is always something lost in this process. However, Richard Seaver and Austryn Wainhouse have performed an important service when they changed the work over from French into English without destroying the French version.

During this third portion of the novel Justine, the Marquis continues to write of travails that beset women characters. Some might argue this is nothing than some kind of



perverse pornographic exploitation of women. Others can at least make the claim that the Marquis has somehow been addressing a myriad of social issues and challenges- 'women's issues', 'the female problem' in French society.

It is somewhat horrifying, but there is a limit to it. The terrors may be no worse than the worst of hardships that men face. Risking life and limb through military service and working well enough with other men to provide for more than just oneself are both easier said than done. As with all things, for some this comes more easily and fate seems to shine on one whilst casting another under a shadow.

The real question the Marquis is having asked is: What use are virtues? He delves into this challenge for a bit, and then yields once again to pure story telling.



Book 4, Justine : Chapter 4, Conclusion

Book 4, Justine : Chapter 4, Conclusion Summary

The last message of the previous section is that events have caused such extensive wearing away at healthy well-protected boundaries that a protagonist asks, 'Perhaps the error is resistance itself'. There are Biblical remarks on this topic as well: that at times, people must not resist even evil, in order to preserve themselves from being hauled off to court or to prison by their public authorities. Here, readers begin the final session of the novel Justine.

Just after the adventure begins, the character is kidnapped. In this incident men are the culprits. This is often enough the case when men are the victims. Women and men have both fallen on both sides of that line during these novels. The guards and she get along well enough that they unbind her. They are friendly enough with her that she discovers what has happened. It turns out they are taking her to what readers would view as a live-in work position. She is going to be another woman's captive maid. They assure her that this will be financially sensible. The man of the house is a philosopher.

Shortly thereafter the more pornographic nature of the writer returns. This newly met fellow inspects Therese and goes so far as to play at sucking the veins on her arms, which clearly indicates to her that he is what the Marquis consistently calls 'a libertine'. Quickly enough the situation devolves into some kind of 'ass obsession'. The young woman is exposed and abused, or in the very least embarrassed.

Book 4, Justine : Chapter 4, Conclusion Analysis

In this book just about everyone is sick. Morally ill and in some cases also mentally a bit twisted. Nevertheless, some important philosophical ideas are brought forth, including the position of women in society. The Marquis' presentation is far from the most encouraging. Readers should be warned, it that sad old story of the gentler sex being the weaker and therefore the subdominant in a world where the men rule one another through dominance and submission strategies, thereby, everything falls into order one way or another. This doesn't change the truth. The Marquis goes on at some length during the last portion of Justine about how true it is that men are designed to be dominant over females. He is oblivious to real examples where this is not the case, but again, that difference is rooted in mutual love and trust rather than in brute force. Where the latter rules, women's best course of action is to destroy the vast majority of male children; thereby nipping the problem in the bud. Those who love and respect both males and females will feel no compulsion to do this, but it is the most efficient way to eradicate 'the so-called male dominance problem' that women face.



Characters

Madame de Saint Ange

This is one of the most important characters of *Philosophy in the Bedroom*. She is the mature woman. She is the libertine representing the female aspect. She is the one who is behind the plot to corrupt the younger woman. In this regard, the Madame is very attuned to the Madame of the brothel, who has a similar relation to her younger 'girls'.

This champion of pleasure, the Madame is able to be shameless at least on some occasions which allows her to brag about some matters, particularly sexual ones, that others of a different ilk would be silenced from communicating about. The kindest way to put this is to observe that people differ from one another to some extent.

Her role is very pronounced at the beginning of the book. She is very congenial but also quite controlling on many occasions. Her prominence and perhaps dominance continues over 200 pages into the book where she figures in yet another sexually explicit scene. Here a man has discovered that he has an erection and has turned his thoughts towards sodomy. He requests a man named Augustin but also this woman Madame de Saint Ange who is used to top off Augustine and wields a cat-o-nine-tails for use in this sexual excursion.

Eugenie

This is a young woman; fortunately this means in her 20s or very late teens at the youngest. She is the victim of a plot in *Philosophy in the Bedroom*. Beyond this, she also the star of another novel. The way the process is described by the older woman in the initial stages is that the younger woman is being educated.

Much of the process of corruption that Eugenie goes through is a mixture of forces. One of these is pleasure. This involves a variety of other people, both women and men. In the first part of the earlier tale of which she is a part, Eugenie is aggressively seduced by a woman and one, even two other men.

One of the main points they attempt to get through to her is to yield and comply irrespective of her natural feelings and inclinations. This takes place to an extent that in the novel *Justine*, one of the sisters who intentionally subjects herself to such practices to enable her success in society finds that she does feel terribly degraded by the process. In her case, however, she grows increasingly successful. Meanwhile, her sister, has some better luck at holding out and not giving in, but she faces much trouble anyways.

Eugenie learns a great deal. Hers is not the only case where there is murder and mayhem mixed into the scene of their lives. Here, the Marquis shows examples of how the low life and the high life are in some cases the same. To think this is universally true,



however, is to be sorely self-deceiving. The Marquis' novels have had real life as a precedent in certain regards. In this respect it is also true that there were cases in ancient Rome where someone usurped the throne by undeniable murder. Funny, it may be to the unmilitaristic mind, that in such places the aristocrats were normally elected by nonballoted voting. Popular support was the rule rather than the exception. Usurpations of power that did not have popular support were liable to be viewed criminally. It was at times possible for such people to be successful. The benefit of corruption, it is said, is that those who have been so are well equipped to handle situations that the overly innocent could not manage.

Le Chevalier

This is a male accomplice of Madame de Saint Ange's . He figures prominently in the first parts of the re-education of Eugenie. He is used as an educator and as a pleasure device, or means in dealings with both the Madame and with Eugenie. This may make it sound far worse than it was by a 'dehumanization'. In truth the same could be said of the most beloved lover one has ever known: that he was used as a means to greater pleasure. Life is more pleasing when such an entity and relationship are transpiring.

He is noted for being able and willing to behave bisexually. He does confess to the Madame, however, that his natural sexual inclination is towards women rather than other men. He can thoroughly enjoy the latter even so, and this is viewed by both Eugenie and other characters as advantageous. The real justification is that it increases the range of what can be done.

Dolmance

This is the other main male figure who educates Eugenie during the very start of Philosophy in the Bedroom. He is part of a foursome in the early part of the first novel. During these fictional encounters he is known to be most sexually intimate with the Madame, Eugenie and other man le Chevalier, all. His work in this area, and the Marquis' is to be followed up a century later by the man with a deeply mixed reputation- Aleister Crowley.

Mademoiselle de Franval

This is one of main characters of the novella Eugenie de Franval. She grows up in a slightly peculiar manner in that she is separated from her mother for many of her earliest years. What she grows into is quite a shock. Hers is a case of consensual incest: she grows up to be her father's lover at a rather tender age. Within the novel, the author has given the third person view that the father has insisted that his daughter make this decision absolutely freely, rather than out of any form of seductive trickery. She chooses him; the two agree that when she is much older then she can marry another man if she likes. When her mother discovers, and seeks to rescue the girl from this insidious seduction, the young lady retaliates with venom, as the truth of the case,



at least as far as she perceives it, is that this was not rape or anything even vaguely like it, but that she has in fact had the good fortune that her father is willing to do double duty as her consort.

Juliette aka Madame Lorsange

This is an important figure in the novel *Justine*. She is Justine's older sister. When the two girls are released from the convent they have very different views. Juliette is just enough older than her sister for the difference in their adolescent development is pronounced. The elder girl mentally prepares herself and heads off to learn about becoming sexually active and involved with men as a way of life. The other one, who is really too young for that still, does not hold the same view.

Madame Lorsange grows up and becomes a frightfully successful woman, but not without plenty of marks to her psyche and soul by virtue of her climb to the top. By the time she has been transformed into the Madame, she has gone far beyond being a prostitute and turned into a multiply widowed murderess.

Justine

The author describes this 12 year old girl as inclined towards melancholy. She is both sensitive and pensive. She is concerned about her welfare after leaving the convent and harbors no interest at all in the horrors and frights surrounding sexual behavior for which she really is not mature enough.

This adds to the severity of the difference of opinion given between herself and her sister. She is parted from her elder sister for quite some time. They believe, when they go their separate ways that they may well never relate again. Much later in the novel, the author brings the two back together.

When they are reunited, neither uses the same name as she had at the beginning. Whether they have grown terribly false from the corruption or if they have changed so much that it makes sense to call them by another name is a matter worthy of debate. She calls herself Therese now.

Monsieur de Corville

This is one of the characters in the novel *Justine*. He can be found in the middle of it when his role is significant.



Dubourg

This is one of the first people who even considered hiring Justine when she was terribly young and needing to be taken in somewhere. He turns up approximately 100 pages into the novel.

Coeur-de-fer

This man was the head of a band of thieves that captured Justine. He was somehow, at times, kinder or far longer sighted in relation to plans. He is described as a leader and also appears numerous times in sexual graphic portions of the text.

Count Bressac

This is a man of some importance. He appears, often along with his wife, in the first hundred pages of the novel Justine. He recurs.

Rodin

This man is also a major player during a substantial portion of the novel Justine. He appears closer to the middle of the story but he continues to have a role in the tale. He is one of Justine, now Therese's, benefactors. He is both a doctor and a schoolmaster. It turns out he is also another case of a vicious libertine.

Rosalie

This is a girl who lives with Rodin. She is befriended by Therese. She is the one who exposes Rodin's active 'dark side' - his criminal libertinism. In his case this includes abusing school children. He has twisted corporeal punishment and connected it with sexual molestation of youngsters.

The result is a bit depraved, but the Marquis leaves it 'a form of libertine'. This is in the novel Justine.

Rombeau

This man is an accomplice of Rodin. He occurs in the novel Justine.

Dom Clement

This man is the steward of a house that comes into play as significant during the latter half of the novel Justine.



Madame de Farnielle

This woman is highly relevant in the arena of Eugenie de Franval, the novel. She is described as an attractive woman in her 30's. She comes up when there is a conversation about the need to make arrangements for the marriage of one of their children. This is a responsibility that modern readers may have bizarre sensations about being a matter for their parents- or is that their own responsibility after all?

Colunce

Colunce is sort of a 'dupe'. He is brought into the tale of Eugenie de Franval as a potential marital partner. This occurs during a time when the father-daughter relationship has been consolidated by far more than mere control-consent sexual involvement. In their case, that's incest. He was a 'dupe' because the father & daughter knew that it was not going to 'go through'.

Valmont

This is a friend of the Franval family. This gentleman recurs in the novella Eugenie de Franval. He is attracted to his friend's wife, and at some point wins the 'permission' to pursue the woman. This has actually occurred in association with Valmont's discovery of the fact that the daughter is his friend's lover. In a brief conversation, the girl's father admits that he has genuinely completely fallen in love with her on both levels- that of the father and that of the lover. Valmont has a long role, and ends up having to orchestrate a false affair with his friend's wife because she rebukes and refuses him.

Dying Man

This is character from the short dialogue that has been included in this book prior to the novellas and novel. The dialogue has very few characters and so he occurs throughout the writing.

Priest

This is the other character found in the dialogue between the Priest and the Dying Man. He, like the other, speaks often. There is no other living mortal in their conversation.



Objects/Places

Dildo

This is a toy; it is a sexual toy. It is used to substitute for and to represent a penis. It occurs in the novella *Philosophy in the Bedroom*, where Eugenie uses it on a man in an imitation of, and perhaps in retribution for, something that Dolmance and Le Chevalier had done to one another. The men could also do these things to women.

Letters

A number of these have been compiled and used to give readers superior insight into the Marquis de Sade. They are also used as a literary device on some occasions throughout the fiction stories.

Paris

This is very famous large city in France. It was central during the time in which the Marquis de Sade lived, just as it is today. It appears in discussions about the Marquis himself and recurrently comes up during each of the novellas and novel.

House/Home

During the fiction writings, these often figure as parts of individual estates. Many of the adventures within the novellas and novel take place in homes. While this is not the case 100% of the time, the various houses hold such importance in many of scenes of the stories that they must not be overlooked as a group.

Maidenhead

This comes up early in the novel *Justine*. The elder sister, who has matured enough to be in the real throes of adolescence, makes the conscious decision to take herself to a brothel. This way, instead of just losing, giving up or getting rid of her virginity- which is what 'maidenhead' means in this context, she has the older woman help her by selling it off. Thus it is assured that the girl profits financially from becoming sexually active.

There is a double message involved: that she is being taken advantage of this way, but that if she ended up having sex without reaping a good financial yield that would only be a more severe form of exploitation.



Hymen/Hymenal

This is the special membrane in the female vagina that indicates and separates virgins from those who have had sexual intercourse. There are occasions where the hymen can be broken in another manner. Penetration by some other object would do it. Also, equestrian women are reported as having sometimes broken their hymens through horseback riding. Whether this is true, or if it is simply like telling someone that kissing will get them pregnant is not entirely clear. The rigors of riding may loosen a woman up, this is true.

Eau de cologne

This is a male oriented perfume. It was used more prodigiously in the times when bathing was a more limited opportunity and perhaps less thorough than it commonly is today. The Marquis refers to it, in a request for something he wants, during one of the first letters published in this manuscript.

Head Ribbon

In the 3rd letter, the Marquis asks to be sent one of these. His difficulty is that he is in prison and therefore cannot get it for himself.

Orange-water

This is a mixture of a cleanser and very delicate perfume. This may also alleviate some other form of tension. It occurs as one of the items requested by the Marquis de Sade in the third letter.

Voltaire's novels

The Marquis de Sade was able to obtain permission for and possession of these items while imprisoned. Those who have read Voltaire will not be surprised, as his work is high quality and extremely popular. They are mentioned during a request to his wife for obtaining further items in his efforts to make life in jail tolerable or even enjoyable.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau's Confessions

The Marquis de Sade requested a copy of the writer Jean-Jacques Rousseau's work Confessions while in prison in 1783. He beseeched his wife, whose respect seemed all the more assured if only through manipulation of the delicacy of his situation. Most husbands do not have the abnormal vulnerability of having to ask their wives in order to be granted even the littlest thing, although this may be some kind of blatant role reversal in terms of possessions.



He is denied permission. Those who do not, may not see why. Rousseau had defied public authorities in the writing and publication of his works.

Although still read, he had been labeled as the type of thinker who is also a trouble-maker. Unlike the Marquis, Rousseau was relatively low-class and therefore the implications of his behavior were not as severe as they might be coming from a noble. His punishment was less severe than the Marquis's and furthermore, to the best of public knowledge Rousseau never assaulted anyone whereas the Marquis did.

Russian peasants

These are referred to as a group in one of the letters. They only come up with reference to an ailment and a cure.

Arsenic

This poison comes up in one of the Marquis' letters to show his awareness that even such a substance as this, taken in just the right way, can serve to cure fevers instead of killing people. He uses the example that arsenic has been used as an effective cure for fevers amongst Russian peasants.

Mistress

This term is used in multiple places during the book containing the essays written about the Marquis de Sade, then some of his personal letters, followed by two novellas and a novel. The term here means any woman who is a man's sexual and/or romantic partner. The term does also apply to other positions where a woman is either 'the boss' or has authority over others. Servants normally call the woman they work for their mistress. In the context of these writings, a man also calls any woman with whom he is sexually involved his mistress. This is to be distinguished from the modern usage, which restricts it to being the woman who a married man is not married to while he is married, but is sexually and/or romantically involved with her anyways. Nowadays, only then is she typically called the mistress.

Priestess of Venus

This is something that Madame Lorsange is called in the novel Justine. It is a direct reference to the ancient Grecian pagan goddess Venus- who is the goddess of beauty who has at times doubled or crossed over into the goddess of love's territory. Her son was a little god of love. The Marquis says that this character was 'a pretty face with much misconduct' when he defines what he means by 'priestess of Venus'.



Nature

This way of viewing the natural world comes up periodically throughout the work. This to some extent to acknowledge that there are laws of nature, and that taken as a whole or as an entity Nature is an extremely powerful entity or force. Nature is referred to both to show the contrast between human or divine laws which run if not counter to nature, then, as disciplined forms of otherwise natural powers. Marriage, consent, laws, soldiers, aqueducts, irrigation systems, city sewers, toilet training...these are all modifications to Nature that the book sometimes shows as working somehow simultaneously with and against Nature as such.

The New Testament

The Christian part of The Bible is directly referred to during the introductory essays to these writings by the Marquis. The essay that discusses it, includes the observation that by the 1940's this book-of-books was the greatest best-seller of all time. The work and its influence are and were culturally widespread. Much of the Marquis' writings and the characters therein are involved with the ways in which their pursuits of pleasure and worldly success are at odds with the Christian message.

As such, there are both implied and direct references to The Bible and the messages delivered through it during the book. The Marquis both supports certain elements of it, and shows how there is much suffering caused by disagreement with other aspects of it, or with behavior which is not any problem for the person unless they have infected with or influenced by religion. In the Marquis' writings, the prevailing religion of the era and culture is Christianity.

This exemplifies the experience that: this is so true for the Marquis and the France of the place and time, that it may seem impossible, even though it is true, that in other parts of the world, Christianity is a rather closeted undercurrent or little known religion.

Convent

This is a place for girls and women that appears in the books a number of times. There is some hope of being harbored and educated in such places, though the room and board are generally not free. For some, this leads to the religious life for females. In other cases, it does not. The more this was one of very few options for women, the more likely that some of the women who staid in it were not necessarily 'cut out' to be nuns in spiritual or religious terms but they had found some location and way of making something of themselves as women, even as single women.

This location, as an institution, comes up during the works by the Marquis as a place where he hopes that his wife will go during some incredibly prolonged separation from him, and as the starting point for the girls in Justine. Their travails begin when they are



released from the convent in which they had been safe, protected, and educated for some years.

Prison

This is a location that figured largely in the Marquis de Sade's life. He was not restricted to only one of these. Somehow he was able to reach and use the rank of Captain Commander in a cavalry regiment in France in spite of the great length of his time in the civilian version of the stockade. The scholars have written that, as far as they are concerned and able to discern, the motivation for the Marquis de Sade to become such a prolific writer was that he was forcibly controlled by being locked up in a prison.

Strange, but true: these writings come from someone who really exemplified how to be noble, brave, free-spirited, and yet at the same time, he was a low life. Those who would argue that this is always the case are mistaken, but the point is both taken and granted.

Bandits

This a group of thieves that appear in the novel Justine. They are of a mixed sort in terms of relating. They are oppressive and act as such. However, they also take Justine, who is also known as Therese, in, along with a lady surnamed Dubois. They give protection, companionship. They are very sexually desirous of the females and there is a great deal of drama, fear, and abuses related both to inclusion and restraint that is involved with that.

inheritance

This is a sum of wealth that is delivered to descendants. It is normally not given until after the elders have deceased but it actually can be given prior to this at any time, should the elders have outgrown their need for it. It could also be given earlier if were considered that the future well being of the family, intergenerationally might best be served by this. For example: if a son, daughter or grandchild shows ability to grow wealth, then the parents would do well to release the funds in order to grow the family fortune. To withhold the funding under such conditions would be for one generation to wrongly undermine the next. Many might not see it as 'wrong' but it would still reduce the amount of ground gained that could be made if the family had a stronger sense of unity and cooperation.

A woman's dowry is a type of inheritance.

The Marquis's Last Will provides information about how to share what he will leave behind as an inheritance.

The two girls in Justine receive an inheritance at the beginning of the novel.



This item comes up now and then during the tales.

Holland

This is a nation on the Northern portion of Continental Europe. It comes up during a preamble to the novel *Justine*. The reason for this is that the Marquis de Sade was able to have the novel published in that country when he 'dare not try that in France'.

Associated Booksellers

This is the name of a company that would publish the Marquis de Sade's taboo laden, sometimes pornographic literature. When one thinks of some despicable, trashy work of which one strongly disapproves in current real life, one is quick to see why it would be easy to disparage this.

God

God, in this case refers to the Father of the Judaic tradition, the Father of Jesus the Christ who was also the son a woman named Mary and who's constant step-father's name was Joseph 'of Aramaia'. This entity is, or is purported to be the creator, maintainer, and destroyer of all that exists on every 'level' inclusive of everything humanity could ever do, and far beyond the doings of humanity. This being is prior to, during, and after mankind. Here the horse is before the cart: the reality of this entity precedes any kind of invention by mankind but may have been misinterpreted by humanity due to lack of information or limited ability to understand.

This being comes up with respect to Christian religion during the essays at the beginning of the works in this compilation. It is also true that this being is most frequently mentioned when a character is making an exclamatory statement, as in, "Oh God!" or "Oh my God!"



Themes

Virtue

This is a theme that runs throughout the works. The way that it does, is a bit strange. In many ways, the virtues are probed in relation to their negation, and through concerted efforts to do away with them. At the same time, they are shown as models for what the opposition is really up against. It is also true that the Marquis has written in a way that does include some limits on behavior, even as he often mocks so many rules there are at least a few which he upholds very strongly.

The question of what the good is and how it is produced or guarded is discovered throughout the novella and novel. It is shown against its opposite or reverse. The main types of good that the Marquis advocates is a state of consensuality with respect to sexual matters and pleasure. While pleasure can 'fall' on both sides of the proverbial fence, it serves both good and bad, for acts of love are normally associated with pleasure. Yet, as those who were intent on corrupting others during the same books show: pleasure can also be used for degradation and to ply away morality. The only level on which this rule does not apply by implication is the spiritual.

The Marquis seems to be arguing for a condition that has grown rather common throughout North America and Europe but perhaps it has been a hard won victory. This is a general positive attitude towards pleasure and tolerance for freedoms. A certain limited sense of indulgence for sexual desires and promiscuity for both men and women, risks thereof notwithstanding pervades the culture, or at the very least is a most prominent attribute of a powerful subculture. These are circumstances that present day readers and the Marquis are going to tend to agree upon.

Taboo

The author writes extensively about taboo subjects. Any taboo means something forbidden. This may not be permitted for a good reason or for a bad one. The Marquis shocks readers easily enough by tearing through taboos with the most vivid writing. His images are clear, all too much so, for those not interested in this sort of thing. The descriptions are at least as intense as some found on the most troubling parts of a newspaper where the worst of crimes are often not accompanied by a photo because of just how disturbing it really is.

The Marquis de Sade also pursues writings about taboos from the other side. He characterizes both perpetrators and victims but more so than not, the author writes his characters as the victims. The bad news is that those depicted are repeatedly victimized. The good news is that compassion for them is cultivated as their stories are heard. This response is meaningful as good, as a healthy symptom of goodness and sanity despite the sorry conditions into which the characters have fallen.



This same author also approaches the other side of taboo. In this case he refers mainly to those energies that people might experience that make them long to break some taboo or another. In this context he does not mean to do so against the will of another, but those circumstances when an individual wishes to break a taboo. Throughout the fiction works written here he covers anal sex, male homosexual behavior, some more limited female bisexual activity, male bisexuality, he also covers the use of violence; the Marquis covers the taking of pleasure from causing another pain; he further explores the incest taboo. He does also cover the taboo surrounding consent, but readers will be grateful to acknowledge that the Marquis de Sade comes down strongly on the side of consent- the right to choose, with respect to sexual behavior.

Women's Situation

Conditions for women are explored by the Marquis. During the course of the entire set of books many aspects of women's circumstances are covered. The perspective is rather sad. It is from the view of women as an oppressed and inferior class. If these people are truly inferior then they are not being oppressed when treated accordingly. However, if they are equal- which, interestingly enough the Marquis advocates- the Marquis advocates natural equality of all as a primal and primary condition- or if their potential is being stifled, then there is oppression occurring.

The first of this matter is brought up by those scholars who describe the life of the author. Then, the characters display numerous ideas that fall along more than one aspect of this matter. Early on, the matter of education for girls comes up. It is shown to have some bearing on ideas about what they are apt to do once full grown. There are ideas and arguments in favor of educating the females and for not doing so. Main arguments against it, are that it will effectively waste their time and only lead them towards trouble but upsetting men and bring danger upon themselves through becoming a threat.

The situation for women with respect to having an attitude towards men that they are protectors is thrown into a dubious light during the fiction stories. While this is occasionally, women's fears are rather fed as the characters experience that often enough the supposed guardians are also apt to be oppressive and at times abusive. This is, although often not in a precisely identical form, rather true for men even in the present day. Women's anxieties are certainly fueled by the kinds of images that the Marquis has produced. The extent to which this is true varies, but there is a degree to which women have a great deal of work to do with respect to development and progress as a gender. This is due to struggles with respect to how to make headway, obstacles created by an activity which is also very helpful to women- motherhood and sometimes marriage.

Whether the Madame Saint-Ange, or Justine, or Therese, the ladies in the novellas and novel give many expressions to the feminine and to women's conditions and predilection both virtuous and base. In this respect, the Marquis has done women and men a service by creating diverse images of women, however frequently sorry. The

point taken here is that at the end the Marquis has shed light on numerous difficulties that women face in society, while having included some that pertain to men as well.



Style

Point of View

The novellas and the novel are written from a somewhat flexible point of view. Each is written from two main perspectives. One is a form of third person, omniscient. This is always a fantastic viewpoint as one can see what's going on both inside the mind of an individual as well as what is taking place with the body.

Insights are also provided by extensive work done from an alternate first person viewpoint. In this regard, the Marquis may be said to have helped womankind through the use of some of his characters. They say things that 'nice girls don't necessarily say.' He shows sides of women and girls that may have been hidden in mainstream culture. His characters speak for 'disenfranchised girls and women' - at least, that's what we'd call it today.

In the case of the dialogues, of which there are several. Dialogue between a Priest and a Dying Man, is followed by Philosophy in the Bedroom which is written primarily using the dialogue. This is the next best thing to a real conversation: to clearly observe more than one component of any theory or set of beliefs. This way contesting views can be shown.

There is a narrative aspect to the work, but there is no clearly defined 'narrator role' in these novellas and novel.

Setting

The stories are all set right there in France. The majority of the plot does not require location to be emphasized. In fact, with but a few small changes, Philosophy in the Bedroom, Justine and Eugenie de Franval could take place in many other locations. The contents are actually strongly connected to the culture and time from which they emerged. They are not wholly 'timeless' nor 'time bound', but are really a strong mixture of both.

The greater portion of these tales take place in country homes, estates in many instances. However, there is some movement between the countryside and the city. Paris is one of the places that receives a lot of attention.

Most of the homes featured here in the stories have a great many rooms, hallways and doors. The ability of participants to go to and fro with discretion and yet ready access is built into the way that the drama unfolds.



Language and Meaning

There is a certain sense of the unknown with respect to the words in this case, specifically because it is a work that has been translated from the French into English. There is a great deal of colorful language throughout these works. The Marquis uses foul and beautiful words. He is adept at creating imagery in his writing.

Emotional expression and clarity of ideas are both vital necessities in these writings. The Marquis de Sade is clearly very gifted in this regard. The translator must be either as good, or simply has mastered his own such that the Marquis' great ability with language has not been sullied by the changed medium.

Structure

The entire work is divided up into individual pieces. Those created by the Marquis de Sade himself are the set of letters which he wrote. This is the only part of the greater book that was not created to function as one piece of work. After those there are two novellas and then a novel. The first novella is entitled *Philosophy in the Bedroom*. It is a story that explores libertinism and is so sexually explicit that it might be accurate to call it written pornography. Here, the Marquis shows that he may indeed be the father or grandfather of the literary form 'the romance novel'.

Each of the novellas, *Philosophy in the Bedroom* and *Eugenie de Franval* are short. They are called novellas precisely because they are too long to be short stories and too short to be an entire novel. These are placed so that the main character of the second is named as a main protagonist from the first. In this case, the similarity is that her role is that of the younger female who is corrupted into or led into an immoral or amoral situation. In both cases it is done intentionally as a plot. In the first case, an older woman sets up a younger one to be inundated with every manner of sexual pleasures in order, mainly to make her 'easier to work with'. In the second case, a baby girl is born. Her father undertakes a rather methodical approach to raise her in such a way that she grows into the role of being his lover, and in doing so supplants the mother. The main punishment that the father faces in this story is that he falls in love with his daughter in both ways: that of the adoring father, and as the ardent lover. The main feature of the father's seduction is that he prevents her from receiving instruction that incest is somehow wrong. As such, when she becomes sexually mature, and he has the good fortune of being attractive to her, she rejoices in her ability to become her father's lover instead of being dead set against it.

The final book in the group is the novel *Justine*. This is far longer. It is a dramatic work about two young girls who are forced in the direction of premature independence. This is the complex tale of what can happen to people who are not given proper guidance, including when they go out into the world. The emphasis is on the need for truly beneficial mentors. Perhaps this was the Marquis' only way of complaining against the ill doings of his own father with respect to his own marriage and how corrupted by this he was. Then again, maybe it was just meant to be extremely wild stories. Either way, they

have value in terms of fiction, but also as mental exercises that show the plight of women and the vulnerabilities of the young and how much those that exploit people of that sort give full justification to those who better guard them- the right and the need to be protective.



Quotes

"The fourth approached me; It was the captain. 'Lovely Therese,' said he, 'I hope you will not deny me at least the pleasure of spending the night with you,' (p.486). [Justine]

"Because, Therese, we have got you, and because the stronger is always the better reason," (p. 487). [Justine]

"Finally, I absolutely forbid that my body be opened upon any pretext whatsoever," (p. 157). [Marquis de Sade's Last Will & Testament]

"Done at Charenton-Saint-Maurice in a state of reason and good health this thirtieth day of January in the year one thousand eight hundred six. D.A.F. Sade," (p. 157) [final words of the Marquis' Last Will & Testament]

"Madame de Saint-Ange: A pretty bosom! -...A rose only now reaching full bloom," (p. 198) [Philosophy in the Bedroom]

"Eugenie: Great Heavens! You terrify me...What then would you do to me, Monsieur? / Dolmance, stammering, and kissing Eugenie on the mouth- Punishments...corrections...I might very well hold this pretty little ass accountable for mistakes made by the head. / He strikes the former through the gauze dressing gown..." (p. 199) [Philosophy in the Bedroom]

"Madame de Saint-Ange: I engaged 15 men, alone; in twenty-four hours I was ninety times fucked, as much before as behind," (p. 233) [Philosophy in the Bedroom]

"But if they were to be made in my cunt, should that purging not be a crime?" (p. 248) [Philosophy in the Bedroom]

"Eugenie: Oh, dearest friend, what a monstrous member!...I can scarcely get my hand around it! ...Dear God! Are they all as big as this?" (p. 261) [Philosophy in the Bedroom]

"Delicious preference, child of Nature and of pleasure, thou must be everywhere men are to be found, and wherever thou shalt be known, there shall they erect altars to thee!," (p. 277) [Philosophy in the Bedroom]

"Behold, my love, behold all that I simultaneously do: scandal, seduction, bad example, incest, adultery, sodomy! Oh, Satan! one and unique god of my soul, inspire thou in me something yet more, present further perversions to my smoking heart, and then shalt thou see how I plunge myself into them all," (p. 272) [Philosophy in the Bedroom].

"Destruction, hence, like creation, is one of Nature's mandates," (p. 275) [Philosophy in the Bedroom].



Topics for Discussion

After reading these novels, do you feel that their contents provide justification for imprisoning the Marquis de Sade?

Provide a definition of libertinism within the context of the Marquis' work.

Is the Marquis de Sade's description of libertinism accurate? In other words, when he wrote about libertines, did he even really know what they are and what they stand for, or his fiction a wild exaggeration of their actual behavior and written from an erroneous definition.

Which of these three novels is the best? Defend your answer.

Is the Marquis' discussion of ethics of any relevance to the world today? Please explain this.

Do you think it does any service to humanity, that the Marquis has given accounts of abuse, albeit it fictional, which may draw attention for the need for reforms which may reduce such problems? Why or why not?

Do you think that the Marquis puts forth strong arguments against virtue? Explain your answer.

Do you feel that the ideas contained in this book are 'dangerous' enough to warrant censorship, banning or burning? Give some account of why you think so, or think not.

Compile a table of values: distinguish between those of the more traditional Christian approach [it also exists elsewhere] that any sacrifice during the life at the expense of one's personal values is the right spiritual behavior and the only correct way to live. There is the mitigating circumstance in Christianity that the values delivered through Christ's teachings are to prevail within a person even if there is an internal value conflict for any given individual. Compare this to the alternative principle that life is the ultimate value with success in the material realm the only true measure of it. Make the table to clarify the difference in relation to virtue and vice and how this is influenced by each of these 'root values'.

Develop and put forth a personal opinion about the amount of time that the Marquis de Sade spent in prison during his life.

Give an opinion about the effect of preventing the Marquis de Sade of marrying out of pure mutual affection.

Do you believe that people should marry in the romantic, prevalent modern idea of the 'love match'? Does this depend upon your social &/or economic class?



Give some concise opinion regarding the fact that the Marquis proved to be an excellent military officer despite his difficulties and tendencies to be imprisoned. Do you believe that he deserved his rank despite his shortcomings or that his rank was artificially produced through 'connections'?

Who is your favorite character in these stories? Do you know why?