

**Florida State University**  
**Department of Modern Languages and Linguistics**

**FOW3240 Literature and Sexuality**  
(with Women's Studies Program)  
**Fall 2004**

**Instructors:** Dr.Reinier Leushuis (professor) and John Woodward (Teaching Assistant)  
**Office:** Diffenbaugh 303                      **Office hours:** Tuesday and Thursday 12:15-1:30pm  
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**Course time:** TR 03:35-04:50 PM                      **Location:** Williams 121B  
**Course ref. #:** 07458                      **Section:** 01

**Objectives**

In this course, we will study the way in which modern Western fiction stages sexuality and its relationship to society. This course adopts a large definition of sexuality which includes gender, masculine/feminine/same-sex desire, eroticism, sexual difference, deviancy and transgression, etc. etc. Although this course will concentrate on the modern period (the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century), it will also cover and continually refer back to the ancient and early-modern periods. The notion of sexual identity and the way in which literary works represent the effects of the individual's sexual identity on his or her functioning within society will be a central theme in this course, involving themes such as sexuality as oppression, sexual exclusion and victimization, sexuality and Christianity, the political implications of sexual identity, etc. We will not attempt to analyze these thematics from a historical or sociological point of view, but we will study the way in which literary works, in particular the modern novel, interpret, stage, question, and criticize them. Moreover, this course will make use of a contemporary theoretical context of European and American critical writings (most notably those of the French thinker Michel Foucault), as well as of a variety of artistic representations and one or two films (time and place TBA).

**Requirements and grading**

*Preliminary remark:* this class aims at a rigorous and serious study of sexuality as represented in literature. It is therefore of the utmost importance that you approach readings and topics with an open mind and a critical and academic attitude. Please be advised that in this course you will read, view, discuss and analyze materials and themes that are sometimes of a frank and explicit sexual nature. I expect your reaction to these themes and materials to be not emotional, but mature and intellectual.

*Readings:* there are eight required books and several other primary readings made available to you on the course's blackboard page. Readings as well as other assignments and announcements for each class will be posted on blackboard as the course proceeds. It is your responsibility to check the blackboard system regularly, as you are expected to come to class having carefully read the works assigned for that particular day.

*Graded work:* there will be two five-page papers (each 25% of your final grade), one mid-term exam worth 20% of your final grade, and a final exam worth 30% of your final grade. See for due dates the below course schedule. Please know that these dates are subject to change and that

definitive information about deadlines will appear on blackboard. Papers have to be typewritten in Times New Roman size 12 font with one-inch margins all around. Failure to do so will result in a lower grade. Topics for papers will be suggested, but you have the right to develop your own topic after consultation with the instructor. Both mid-term and final exams will consist of identifications of all texts we have studied, as well as a part with essay questions. Please be forewarned that the exams will be based on ALL class materials (readings, images, films and lectures).

*Gordon Rule:* his course will fulfill the Gordon Rule requirement of at least 3334 words.

*Absence policy:* Attendance is mandatory in this class. Absences will only be excused for religious holidays, serious accident or illness (doctor's note required) and serious family circumstances. Please notify me at least a week in advance in case you know that you need to miss class. Your final grade will be reduced with 2% per absence after the fourth.

*Classroom behavior:* you are expected to contribute to a pleasant learning experience for all. This includes in particular switching off your cellphone before entering class, coming on time for class, and exiting and entering quietly in case you need the bathroom.

### **Required readings**

- 1) Theodore Fontane, Effi Briest
- 2) Thomas Mann, Death in Venice and Other Tales
- 3) Herculine Barbin, Being the Recently Discovered Memoirs of a Nineteenth Century French Hermaphrodite, introduced and commented by Michel Foucault.
- 4) Virginia Woolf, Orlando
- 5) Marguerite Duras, The Ravishing of Lol Stein
- 6) Manuel Puig, Kiss of the Spider Woman
- 7) Milan Kundera, The Unbearable Lightness of Being
- 8) Georges Bataille, My Mother, Mme Edwarda, the Dead Man
- 9) Assigned copies of primary sources accessible through Blackboard
- 10) Independent reading based on individual research interests (see further reading below).

### **Academic Honesty**

All students are expected to uphold the academic honor code (for the text of the honor code see the web site <http://www.fsu.edu/~union/honor.htm>).

### **Students with disabilities**

Students with disabilities needing academic accommodations should:

- 1) Register with and provide documentation to the Student Disability Resource Center (SDRC) in 08 Kellum Hall, telephone 644-9566;
- 2) Bring a letter to the instructor from the SDRC indicating which academic accommodations you need. This should be done within the first week of class.