

Module Title: Schools for Scandal: Sexual Fictions from Venus in the Cloister to Venus in Furs

Module Code: COM606

Credit Value: 15

Level: 6

Pre-requisite modules:

Content Description

This module explores a range of erotic, libertine and pornographic texts from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries. It includes so-called 'whore dialogues' (*The School of Venus* and *Venus in the Cloister*), best-selling novels (*Fanny Hill*, and *Thérèse the philosopher*), and well-known works by the Marquis de Sade and Sacher-Masoch. It will examine the ways in which sex, gender, and sexuality are represented within these and other texts from the period, and explore past and present constructions of pornography and literature. Warning: this module contains sexually explicit material.

Module Aims

Academic Content

Upon completion of the course students will have gained:

- awareness of the changing literary, social and cultural contexts within which modern pornography developed and circulated in Europe;
- the ability to analyse and contextualize fictional representations of sex, gender, and sexuality;
- understanding of concerns past and present regarding pornography and its place in our culture;
- awareness of the ethical issues raised by the production and reception of pornographic material;
- knowledge of the complex relationship between pornography, literature, and sexology in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries

DISCIPLINARY SKILLS

Upon completion of the course students will be able to:

- demonstrate critical skills in the close reading, description, and analysis of primary and secondary texts and discourses. the ability to analyse and contextualize fictional representations of sex, gender, and sexuality;
- demonstrate knowledge of, and make theoretically informed connections between, texts and discourses of different periods, literatures and cultures.;
- demonstrate command of a broad range of vocabulary and an appropriate critical terminology.
- demonstrate the ability to conduct independent research.
- demonstrate understanding of how cultural norms and assumptions influence questions of judgement.
- demonstrate rhetorical skills of effective communication and argument, both oral and written.