

marquis de sade 120 days of sodom

****Marquis de Sade's 120 Days of Sodom: Exploring the Controversial Masterpiece****

marquis de sade 120 days of sodom is a title that instantly evokes strong reactions—curiosity, horror, fascination, and debate. This notorious work by the infamous French nobleman and writer, the Marquis de Sade, remains one of the most controversial and provocative texts in literary history. Written in the late 18th century, it delves into themes of extreme libertinage, moral transgression, and the darkest recesses of human desire. But beyond its shock value, **120 Days of Sodom** offers a complex exploration of power, sexuality, and human nature that continues to captivate scholars, literary enthusiasts, and cultural critics alike.

In this article, we'll dive deep into the background, content, and lasting impact of the marquis de sade 120 days of sodom, shedding light on why it remains a subject of both revulsion and intellectual intrigue centuries after it was penned.

The Origins of Marquis de Sade's 120 Days of Sodom

The story behind the creation of **120 Days of Sodom** is as captivating as the book itself. Written in 1785 during one of Marquis de Sade's incarcerations in the Bastille, the manuscript was composed under extraordinary conditions. Legend has it that de Sade wrote the entire novel on a single roll of paper, which was hidden inside his cell's walls before the prison's storming in 1789. This means the original manuscript was lost for decades, only resurfacing in the early 20th century.

Sade's motivation for writing this work stemmed from his obsession with pushing boundaries and exploring the extremes of human behavior. Unlike his other works, which were more accessible, **120 Days** was deliberately designed as an unflinching, raw examination of vice and cruelty without any attempt at censorship or subtlety.

The Marquis and His Controversial Legacy

Before delving into the text itself, it's important to understand who the Marquis de Sade was. Born Donatien Alphonse François in 1740, he was a French aristocrat known for his libertine lifestyle and scandalous behavior. His name became synonymous with sadism—deriving from his graphic and often violent depictions of sexual cruelty. De Sade spent much of his life imprisoned, frequently due to accusations related to his sexual escapades and writings.

Despite his notorious reputation, the Marquis was also a prolific writer and philosopher, engaging with Enlightenment ideas about freedom, morality, and individualism. **120 Days of Sodom** can be seen as an extreme, almost nihilistic, extension of these debates about liberty and human nature.

Understanding the Content of 120 Days of Sodom

At its core, *120 Days of Sodom* is a narrative about four wealthy libertines who retreat to a remote château where they indulge in a horrifying spree of sexual violence and depravity. The book is structured as a series of stories told by victims and accomplices that highlight acts of cruelty, perversion, and power abuse.

The Structure and Narrative Style

The novel is divided into four parts, each corresponding to a month and featuring increasingly disturbing tales. The stories are narrated by four main characters—a Duke, a Bishop, a Magistrate, and a President—each representing different facets of power and corruption. The narrative unfolds through layers of storytelling, with victims forced to recount their experiences, creating a chilling atmosphere of control and manipulation.

What makes *120 Days of Sodom* unique is not just the explicit content, but the way de Sade uses narrative techniques to reflect on authority and human psychology. The relentless accumulation of horrors serves as a brutal critique of social and moral hypocrisies of the time.

Themes and Symbolism

Several key themes permeate the text:

- **Power and Domination:** The libertines' actions illustrate the extreme misuse of power, reflecting on broader social hierarchies.
- **Sexual Liberation vs. Moral Decay:** De Sade challenges conventional morality by portraying absolute sexual freedom, but this freedom is intertwined with cruelty and suffering.
- **Human Nature:** The work questions whether humans are inherently cruel or if society suppresses these impulses.
- **Hypocrisy and Corruption:** The presence of religious and political figures among the perpetrators critiques institutional corruption.

While the graphic nature of the book can be overwhelming, these themes invite readers to engage with complex philosophical questions about freedom, ethics, and society.

The Controversy and Censorship Surrounding 120 Days of Sodom

Given its explicit content, *120 Days of Sodom* has faced censorship, bans, and moral outrage throughout history. Its publication was suppressed for a long time, and even today, the book is often considered taboo.

Why Was It Banned?

The novel's detailed descriptions of sexual violence, including incest, torture, and sadomasochism, challenged not only 18th-century sensibilities but continue to provoke discomfort. Authorities considered it obscene and dangerous, fearing it could incite immorality or criminal behavior.

Additionally, the book's unflinching critique of religious and political authorities made it politically sensitive. The fact that the characters include high-ranking figures like bishops and magistrates only intensified the backlash.

Modern Perspectives on Censorship and Artistic Freedom

In contemporary times, **120 Days of Sodom** occupies a complex position. On one hand, it is studied as an important work of transgressive literature that pushes the boundaries of artistic expression. On the other hand, its content raises ethical questions about depicting violence and exploitation.

Many literary scholars argue for reading the text within its historical context and as a philosophical exploration, rather than endorsing its acts. The debate around censorship versus freedom of expression continues to make the marquis de Sade 120 days of sodom a focal point in discussions about literature's role in society.

The Influence of 120 Days of Sodom on Culture and Arts

Despite—or perhaps because of—its notoriety, **120 Days of Sodom** has influenced a wide range of cultural works, from literature to film, music, and art.

Adaptations and Interpretations

One of the most famous adaptations is Pier Paolo Pasolini's 1975 film **Salò, or the 120 Days of Sodom**, which transposes the story to fascist Italy. The film is equally controversial, using the source material to comment on political power and human cruelty. Pasolini's work highlights how the themes of de Sade's novel continue to resonate with contemporary social issues.

The novel has also inspired numerous writers and artists exploring themes of transgression, sexuality, and power dynamics. Its influence is evident in the genre of transgressive fiction and in critical theory discussions around sadomasochism and libertinism.

Why Does It Still Matter Today?

The enduring fascination with **120 Days of Sodom** lies in its unrelenting challenge to societal norms and its raw depiction of human impulses. It forces readers to confront uncomfortable questions about morality, freedom, and the limits of tolerance.

For those interested in literary history, philosophy, or the psychology of desire, the marquis de sade 120 days of sodom remains a provocative and essential text. Whether approached as a cautionary tale, a philosophical inquiry, or a work of dark art, it continues to provoke thought and debate.

Tips for Approaching the Marquis de Sade 120 Days of Sodom

Reading *120 Days of Sodom* can be daunting due to its explicitness and complexity. Here are some tips to engage with the text thoughtfully:

- **Understand the Historical Context:** Familiarize yourself with the Enlightenment era, de Sade's life, and the political climate of 18th-century France to grasp why the work was so radical.
- **Read Critical Analyses:** Supplement your reading with scholarly interpretations to navigate the philosophical and literary layers beyond the shock factor.
- **Prepare Emotionally:** Acknowledge that the content can be disturbing; it's important to approach the text with a critical mindset rather than a voyeuristic one.
- **Discuss and Reflect:** Engage in conversations or join reading groups to explore diverse perspectives and deepen your understanding.
- **Recognize Its Artistic Role:** Remember that the novel is a piece of literature aimed at challenging norms, not a manual or endorsement of behavior.

By approaching the text with care and context, readers can uncover its significance beyond mere sensationalism.

In the end, the marquis de sade 120 days of sodom stands as a powerful testament to the extremes of human imagination and the enduring tensions between freedom and morality. Its brutal honesty and philosophical depth continue to challenge and inspire, ensuring that this infamous masterpiece remains a provocative cornerstone in the landscape of world literature.

Frequently Asked Questions

Who was the Marquis de Sade?

The Marquis de Sade was a French nobleman, revolutionary politician, philosopher, and writer known for his libertine sexuality and works that explore extreme freedom, unrestrained by morality, religion, or law.

What is 'The 120 Days of Sodom'?

'The 120 Days of Sodom' is a novel by the Marquis de Sade, written in 1785. It is infamous for its explicit and graphic depiction of sexual violence and extreme libertine philosophy.

What is the plot of 'The 120 Days of Sodom'?

The novel follows four wealthy libertines who seclude themselves in a remote castle with a group of victims, where they engage in and orchestrate a series of increasingly depraved and violent sexual acts over 120 days.

Why is 'The 120 Days of Sodom' considered controversial?

The book is highly controversial due to its explicit descriptions of sexual violence, torture, and sadism, challenging conventional morality and often considered obscene.

Was 'The 120 Days of Sodom' published during Marquis de Sade's lifetime?

No, the novel was written in 1785 but was not published until 1904, long after Marquis de Sade's death in 1814.

How was 'The 120 Days of Sodom' written?

Marquis de Sade wrote the manuscript in a coded shorthand on a scroll of paper about 12 feet long while imprisoned in the Bastille.

What themes are explored in 'The 120 Days of Sodom'?

The novel explores themes of absolute freedom, the nature of power and cruelty, the rejection of conventional morality, and the extremes of human desire and depravity.

Has 'The 120 Days of Sodom' influenced modern culture?

Yes, the work has influenced various fields including literature, philosophy, art, and film, often cited in discussions of censorship, sexual freedom, and the limits of representation.

Are there any notable adaptations of 'The 120 Days of Sodom'?

Yes, the most famous adaptation is Pier Paolo Pasolini's 1975 film 'Salò, or the 120 Days of Sodom,' which transposes the story to fascist Italy and is known for its disturbing imagery and themes.

Additional Resources

Marquis de Sade 120 Days of Sodom: An Unflinching Exploration of Transgression and Power

marquis de sade 120 days of sodom remains one of the most controversial and provocative works in literary history. Penned by the infamous French nobleman and writer, the Marquis de Sade, this manuscript delves into the darkest recesses of human desire, cruelty, and morality. Its notoriety stems not only from its explicit content but also from the philosophical questions it raises about freedom, authority, and the nature of evil. This article offers a comprehensive, professional review and analysis of "120 Days of Sodom," exploring its themes, historical context, and lasting impact on literature and culture.

Historical Context and Authorship

The Marquis de Sade wrote "120 Days of Sodom" in 1785 while imprisoned in the Bastille. Unlike many other works of the time, this manuscript was never completed; the original pages were hidden in a wall during the storming of the Bastille and rediscovered decades later. The text is notorious for its unfiltered depiction of extreme sexual and violent acts, which pushed the boundaries of what was acceptable in 18th-century society—and continues to challenge readers today.

De Sade's life was marked by scandal, imprisonment, and a relentless pursuit of personal freedom, often at the expense of social norms and law. His writings, particularly "120 Days of Sodom," reflect his radical views on sexuality, politics, and human nature, making the work a critical study for understanding the relationship between transgression and literature.

In-Depth Analysis of "120 Days of Sodom"

At its core, "120 Days of Sodom" chronicles the depraved activities of four libertines who seclude themselves in a remote castle to indulge in systematic acts of sexual violence and sadism on a group of victims. The narrative unfolds over four months, with each month dedicated to a specific category of vice and cruelty.

Thematic Exploration

One cannot discuss the Marquis de Sade's "120 Days of Sodom" without addressing its central themes:

- **Power and Domination:** The book is a brutal examination of power dynamics, showcasing how absolute control can corrupt and lead to monstrous behavior.
- **Freedom and Morality:** De Sade challenges traditional moral frameworks, arguing for an unrestrained freedom that disregards ethical boundaries.
- **Human Nature's Dark Side:** The narrative presents a grim portrayal of humanity, suggesting that cruelty and depravity are inherent impulses.

Despite—or because of—its explicitness, "120 Days of Sodom" serves as a philosophical treatise on the extremes of human behavior rather than mere pornography. The Marquis uses exaggerated scenarios to interrogate society's hypocrisies and the limits of tolerance.

Literary Style and Structure

The manuscript's structure is meticulous and almost clinical. The libertines systematically catalog their abuses, each day building upon the previous in escalating depravity. This organizational method contrasts starkly with the chaotic nature of the acts described, creating a disturbing tension that underlines the work's intellectual underpinnings.

De Sade's prose is dense, often employing long, elaborate sentences filled with detailed descriptions. This style demands careful reading and reflects the author's intent to immerse the reader fully into the psychological and philosophical dimensions of the narrative.

Controversies and Censorship

Given its content, "120 Days of Sodom" has been subject to intense censorship and legal battles over the centuries. Its graphic depictions of sexual violence, incest, and blasphemy have made it a target for bans and moral outrage. Critics argue that the work glorifies abuse and dehumanization, while defenders claim it exposes the darkest potentials within society and the human psyche.

The debate surrounding the Marquis de Sade's work raises important questions about artistic freedom, censorship, and the role of literature in confronting uncomfortable truths. "120 Days of Sodom" occupies a unique place in this discourse as both a literary artifact and a cultural lightning rod.

Comparisons with Other Works

When evaluating "120 Days of Sodom," it is useful to consider its place alongside other transgressive literature. While earlier erotic or philosophical works may hint at taboo subjects, de Sade's manuscript confronts them head-on without euphemism or restraint.

For example:

- **Compared to "Fanny Hill" by John Cleland:** Which is erotic but generally light-hearted, "120 Days of Sodom" is dark and relentlessly brutal.
- **Compared to later existential literature:** The novel's exploration of human freedom and morality anticipates themes found in existentialist thought but through a far more extreme lens.

This uniqueness ensures that the Marquis de Sade's "120 Days of Sodom" remains a critical subject of

study for scholars interested in the boundaries of literature and philosophy.

Legacy and Influence

Despite—or perhaps because of—its infamy, "120 Days of Sodom" has influenced a wide range of artistic fields. From literature and film to psychology and political theory, de Sade's work challenges creators and thinkers to examine the uncomfortable intersections of desire, cruelty, and authority.

The manuscript inspired various adaptations and reinterpretations, including Pier Paolo Pasolini's 1975 film "Salò, or the 120 Days of Sodom," which transposed the narrative to a dystopian fascist regime, highlighting themes of political oppression alongside sexual violence.

In academic circles, the Marquis de Sade's work is analyzed not only for its content but also for its contribution to discussions about human rights, the psychology of violence, and the ethics of representation.

Pros and Cons of Engaging with the Text

Engaging with "120 Days of Sodom" demands careful consideration:

1. **Pros:** Offers deep insights into power dynamics, freedom, and moral philosophy; challenges readers to confront uncomfortable realities; significant for historical and literary scholarship.
2. **Cons:** Extremely graphic content may be disturbing or triggering; can be misinterpreted as glorifying violence; limits accessibility due to its complexity and explicitness.

For those studying literature, philosophy, or human psychology, the work remains a powerful, if challenging, resource.

The Marquis de Sade's "120 Days of Sodom" endures as a stark, uncompromising examination of human depravity and the limits of freedom. It forces readers and scholars alike to grapple with troubling questions about authority, morality, and the human condition—issues that remain as relevant today as they were in the 18th century. The manuscript's complexity and controversy ensure its place not only in the annals of forbidden literature but also in the ongoing dialogue about the boundaries of artistic expression and the nature of evil.

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marquis de sade 120 days of sodom: The 120 Days of Sodom The Marquis de Sade, 2016-09-29 WINNER OF THE 2017 SCOTT MONCRIEFF PRIZE A new translation of Sade's most notorious, shocking and influential novel. This disturbing but hugely important text has influenced countless individuals throughout history: Flaubert and Baudelaire both read Sade; the surrealists were obsessed with him; film-makers like Pasolini saw parallels with twentieth-century history in his writings; and feminists such as Andrea Dworkin and Angela Carter clashed over him. This new translation brings Sade's provocative novel into Penguin Classics for the first time, and will reignite the debate around this most controversial of writers.

marquis de sade 120 days of sodom: 120 Days Of Sodom Marquis de Sade, 2021-05-09 120 Days Of Sodom, or the School of Libertinism is a novel by the French writer and nobleman Donatien Alphonse François, Marquis de Sade. Described as both pornographic and erotic, it was written in 1785. It tells the story of four wealthy male libertines who resolve to experience the ultimate sexual gratification in orgies. To do this, they seal themselves away for four months in an inaccessible castle in Saint-Martin-de-Belleville, France, with a harem of 46 victims, mostly young male and female teenagers, and engage four female brothel keepers to tell the stories of their lives and adventures.

marquis de sade 120 days of sodom: Schockästhetik: Von der Ecole du mal über die letteratura pulp bis Michel Houellebecq Lena Schönwälder, 2018-07-16 Die vorliegende Studie erforscht am Beispiel skandalöser Texte des 19., 20. und 21. Jahrhunderts systematisch literarische Schreibweisen, die beim Rezipienten einen Schockeffekt produzieren. Die untersuchten Werke (der Autoren G. Flaubert, O. Mirbeau, Sade und P. P. Pasolini, A. Nove und N. Ammaniti sowie Michel Houellebecq) werden nicht allein in Hinblick auf ihre formale Beschaffenheit befragt, sondern auch

auf etwaige ethische Implikationen. Wirkungsmechanismen literarischer Provokation werden damit aufgezeigt und die Funktion einer Schockästhetik im gesellschaftlichen Diskurs offengelegt.

marquis de sade 120 days of sodom: The Wild Girl, Natural Man, and the Monster Julia V. Douthwaite, 2002-06-15 This study looks at the lives of the most famous wild children of eighteenth-century Europe, showing how they open a window onto European ideas about the potential and perfectibility of mankind. Julia V. Douthwaite recounts reports of feral children such as the wild girl of Champagne (captured in 1731 and baptized as Marie-Angélique Leblanc), offering a fascinating glimpse into beliefs about the difference between man and beast and the means once used to civilize the uncivilized. A variety of educational experiments failed to tame these feral children by the standards of the day. After telling their stories, Douthwaite turns to literature that reflects on similar experiments to perfect human subjects. Her examples range from utopian schemes for progressive childrearing to philosophical tales of animated statues, from revolutionary theories of regenerated men to Gothic tales of scientists run amok. Encompassing thinkers such as Rousseau, Sade, Defoe, and Mary Shelley, Douthwaite shows how the Enlightenment conceived of mankind as an infinitely malleable entity, first with optimism, then with apprehension. Exposing the darker side of eighteenth-century thought, she demonstrates how advances in science gave rise to troubling ethical concerns, as parents, scientists, and politicians tried to perfect mankind with disastrous results.

marquis de sade 120 days of sodom: The Autonomy of Pleasure James A. Steintrager, 2016-02-16 What would happen if pleasure were made the organizing principle for social relations and sexual pleasure ruled over all? Radical French libertines experimented clandestinely with this idea during the Enlightenment. In explicit novels, dialogues, poems, and engravings, they wrenched pleasure free from religion and morality, from politics, aesthetics, anatomy, and finally reason itself, and imagined how such a world would be desirable, legitimate, rapturous—and potentially horrific. Laying out the logic and willful illogic of radical libertinage, this book ties the Enlightenment engagement with sexual license to the expansion of print, empiricism, the revival of skepticism, the fashionable arts and lifestyles of the Ancien Régime, and the rise and decline of absolutism. It examines the consequences of imagining sexual pleasure as sovereign power and a law unto itself across a range of topics, including sodomy, the science of sexual difference, political philosophy, aesthetics, and race. It also analyzes the roots of radical claims for pleasure in earlier licentious satire and their echoes in appeals for sexual liberation in the 1960s and beyond.

marquis de sade 120 days of sodom: A Philosophical History of Love Wayne Cristaudo, 2017-07-28 A Philosophical History of Love explores the importance and development of love in the Western world. Wayne Cristaudo argues that love is a materializing force, a force consisting of various distinctive qualities or spirits. He argues that we cannot understand Western civilization unless we realize that, within its philosophical and religious heritage, there is a deep and profound recognition of love's creative and redemptive power. Cristaudo explores philosophical love (the love of wisdom) and the love of God and neighbor. The history of the West is equally a history of phantasmic versions of love and the thwarting of love. Thus, the history of our hells may be seen as the history of love's distortions and the repeated pseudo-victories of our preferences for the phantasms of love. Cristaudo argues that the catastrophes from our phantasmic loves threaten to extinguish us, forcing us repeatedly to open ourselves to new possibilities of love, to new spirits. Fusing philosophy, literature, theology, psychology, and anthropology, the volume reviews major thinkers in the field, from Plato and Freud, to Pierce, Shakespeare, and Flaubert. Cristaudo explores the major themes of love of the Church, romantic love and the return of the feminine, the conflict between familial and romantic love, love in a meaningless world and the love of evil, and the evolutionary idea of love. With Cristaudo, the reader embarks on a journey not just through time, but also through the different kinds, origins, and spirits of love.

marquis de sade 120 days of sodom: Vita Sexualis Ralph M. Leck, 2016-03-30 Karl Ulrichs's studies of sexual diversity galvanized the burgeoning field of sexual science in the nineteenth century. But in the years since, his groundbreaking activism has overshadowed his scholarly

achievements. Ulrichs publicly defied Prussian law to agitate for gay equality and marriage, and founded the world's first organization dedicated to the legal and social emancipation of homosexuals. Ralph M. Leck returns Ulrichs to his place as the inventor of the science of sexual heterogeneity. Leck's analysis situates sexual science in a context that includes politics, aesthetics, the languages of science, and the ethics of gender. Although he was the greatest nineteenth-century scholar of sexual heterogeneity, Ulrichs retained certain traditional conjectures about gender. Leck recognizes these subtleties and employs the analytical concepts of modernist *vita sexualis* and traditional *psychopathia sexualis* to articulate philosophical and cultural differences among sexologists. Original and audacious, *Vita Sexualis* uses a bedrock figure's scientific and political innovations to open new insights into the history of sexual science, legal systems, and Western amatory codes.

marquis de sade 120 days of sodom: *The Avant-Garde Feature Film* William E.B. Verrone, 2011-11-08 Here is a critical and historical overview of unconventional and aesthetically challenging films, all of feature length. The author focuses on the particular forms of contemporary avant-garde films, which often rely on characteristics associated with historical films of the same genre. Included are works by such visionary filmmakers as David Lynch, Luis Bunuel, Jean Cocteau, Jean-Luc Godard, Guy Maddin and Derek Jarman. The first of the two appendices contains a filmography of key avant-garde feature films, from *Haxan: Witchcraft Through the Ages* (1922) to *Maximum Shame* (2010). The second appendix offers a brief list of directors who have made significant contributions to films that take alternative approaches to cinematic practice, establishing new grounds for analysis and evaluation.

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marquis de sade 120 days of sodom: **120 Days of Sodom - Sade** Marquis de Sade, 2024-05-10 In addition to being shocking and controversial, Marquis de Sade's novel *The 120 Days of Sodom* was the first attempt by a writer to portray, in an absolutely raw way, many of the phantasies that can emerge from a human being. It tells the story of four rich libertine men who decide to experience ultimate sexual gratification in orgies. To do this, they lock themselves up for four months in an inaccessible castle with a harem of forty-six victims, most of them teenagers of both

sexes, and recruit four pimps to tell the story of their lives and adventures. The women's narrative becomes inspiration for sexual abuse and torture of the victims, which gradually escalates in intensity and ends in a surprising way. Right at the beginning of *The 120 Days of Sodom* the author Marquis de Sade warns: I advise the excessively modest reader to immediately put my book aside, so as not to be scandalized, as it is already evident that there is not much chaste in our plan, and we dare to guarantee that there will be even less of it in the execution... And now, dear reader, prepare your heart and your mind for the most impure narrative ever written since our world began, a book without parallels among the ancients, or among us, moderns...

marquis de sade 120 days of sodom: The Monk Matthew Lewis, 2016-01-14 'He was deaf to the murmurs of conscience, and resolved to satisfy his desires at any price.' *The Monk* (1796) is a sensational story of temptation and depravity, a masterpiece of Gothic fiction and the first horror novel in English literature. The respected monk Ambrosio, the Abbot of a Capuchin monastery in Madrid, is overwhelmed with desire for a young girl; once having abandoned his monastic vows he begins a terrible descent into immorality and violence. His appalling fall from grace embraces blasphemy, black magic, torture, rape, and murder, and places his very soul in jeopardy. Lewis's extraordinary tale drew on folklore, legendary ghost stories, and contemporary dread inspired by the terrors of the French Revolution. Its excesses shocked the reading public and it was condemned as obscene. The novel continues to beguile and shock readers today with its gruesome catalogue of iniquities, while at the same time giving a profound insight into the deep anxieties experienced by British citizens during one of the most turbulent periods in the nation's history. ABOUT THE SERIES: For over 100 years Oxford World's Classics has made available the widest range of literature from around the globe. Each affordable volume reflects Oxford's commitment to scholarship, providing the most accurate text plus a wealth of other valuable features, including expert introductions by leading authorities, helpful notes to clarify the text, up-to-date bibliographies for further study, and much more.

marquis de sade 120 days of sodom: Sade und... Michel Delon, Sabine Kleine, 2016-12-13 Horst Albert Glaser, Professor für Allgemeine und Vergleichende Literaturwissenschaft an der Universität Essen, beschäftigt sich seit mehr als dreißig Jahren mit der Person und dem Werk des Marquis de Sade.

marquis de sade 120 days of sodom: Tainted Love Darren Kerr, Donna Peberdy, 2017-06-30 This is the first critical anthology to offer extended analysis of the representation of sexual perversion on screen. Interrogating the recent shift towards the mainstream in the cinematic representation of previously marginalised sexual practices, *Tainted Love* challenges the discourses and debates around sexual taboo, moral panics, degeneracy, deviance and disease, which present those who enact such sexualities as modern folk devils. This timely collection brings together leading scholars who draw on a variety of critical approaches including adaptation, performance, cultural studies, queer theory, feminism and philosophy to examine screen representations of controversial sexualities from the weird and wonderful to the debased and debauched. Chapters explore provocative performances of hysteria and sexual obsession, 'everyday' perversion in neoliberal culture, the radical potential of sadomasochism, adolescent sexuality in the films of Larry Clark, intergenerational sex and incestuous relations in French cinema, sexual obsession in gay cinema, the straightness of necrophilia, the presentation of the paedophile, Swedish Erotica's 'good sex' and re-imagining the Marquis de Sade from film to slash fiction. In order to move past binary distinctions of good and bad, normal and abnormal, moral and immoral, *Tainted Love* seeks to critically interrogate perverse sexualities and sexual perversion on screen.

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