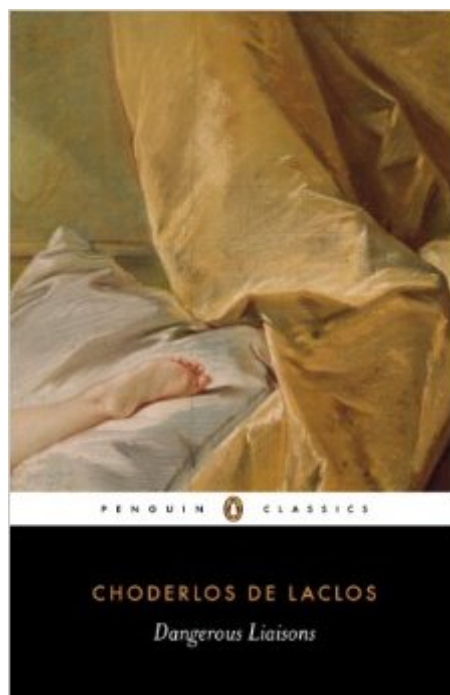


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# Dangerous Liaisons (Penguin Classics)



## Synopsis

A new translation of one of the most notorious novels of all time. Published just years before the French Revolution, Laclos's great novel of moral and emotional depravity is a disturbing and ultimately damning portrayal of a decadent society. Aristocrats and ex-lovers Marquise de Merteuil and Vicomte de Valmont embark on a sophisticated game of seduction and manipulation to bring amusement to their jaded lives. While Merteuil challenges Valmont to seduce an innocent convent girl, he is also occupied with the conquest of a virtuous married woman. Eventually their human pawns respond, and the consequences prove to be more serious--and deadly--than the players could have ever predicted. For more than seventy years, Penguin has been the leading publisher of classic literature in the English-speaking world. With more than 1,700 titles, Penguin Classics represents a global bookshelf of the best works throughout history and across genres and disciplines. Readers trust the series to provide authoritative texts enhanced by introductions and notes by distinguished scholars and contemporary authors, as well as up-to-date translations by award-winning translators.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

WARNING: Clicking on "Kindle Edition" of this book results in a Web page for a completely different version of this book. Instead of getting the contemporary translation by Helen Constantine (which is a terrific translation), is now displaying the 19th century translation by Ernest Dowson. should fix its Web site. When customers click on "Kindle Edition", they should get the exact same book, not a

different one. I am giving this book 5 stars, because it is what the Helen Constantine version deserves. Unfortunately there is no way to give different stars for Kindle versions.

I bought this for my Kindle after having seen the movie. I have to say, as much as I loved the movie, it's amazing how much is lost without the epistolary element; the way Laclos juxtaposes things -- Valmont's manipulative letters to Danceny's ardent ones, Merteuil's accusations against Prevan to what Valmont actually does to Cecile -- is something that one misses when the letters are taken out of the mix. If there is one flaw to the book it is the heavy handed way in which Valmont finally achieves his great conquest with Madame de Tourvel...after so much subtlety it seemed cheap and melodramatic to use the tactic he did. This book is certainly dense, and there are entire letters which do not move the plot forward (Danceny's and Cecile's letters to each other are like a musical number in a pre-Oklahoma! stage show: they tell us more of what we already know, but rarely give us anything new) and one gets the sense that some things get lost in translation -- I especially felt that since I'm pretty sure I ran across several sentences that were just plain ungrammatical or generally made no sense, as if they'd been babelfished. However, I would recommend this book to anyone who is interested in a juicy, lascivious classic.

BEWARE! Switching to the kindle book leaves you with the incorrect (VERY different) translation. Kind of a bummer as I need to overnight the correct version for class... the two books are different and should not be linked.

Shocking! Scandalous! An outrage to public decency! This book must have caused quite a stir when it was first printed in the late 1700's. Sexual innuendo leaps from the pages of this beautifully written epistolary novel. De Laclos certainly accomplished what he set out to do, to create a work that would last long after his death. The Marquise de Merteuil and the Vicomte de Valmont are two of the most devious minded characters I've ever had the pleasure to be disgusted by. Seriously. Still, I had to admire their dedication. They want revenge and will stop at nothing to get it. They know what they are doing and they do it well. I thoroughly savored every page of *Dangerous Liaisons*. The wit and wickedness will be on my mind for a long time to come.

Such corruption. Such ruthlessness. I love this book because I find the good guys so boring, and here we have perfectly delicious bad guys and gals doing horrible things to each other. I've recommended this book to people, and only a couple have enjoyed it, but the others tend to read

bodice rippers, and this one has sex and intrigue, but not in the typical way. If you want fun and love among the ruins of an innocent's life, this is your book.

I bought this, being familiar with the original French, to see if it was suitable for the reading group I'm a member of at the retirement community I'm currently in. It isn't. Looking at various reviews, it is probably the best available English translation, but the editorial baggage is too heavy for the purpose (on the first page there is a footnote which has a footnoted word ;-). By contrast the French, although sometimes a bit archaic, is very clear and clear.

*Dangerous Liaisons* is an epistolary novel which chronicles the rivalry between two former lovers who view sex as a game and means of manipulation. It is set in aristocratic France and must be read with this context in mind so the reader can fully appreciate why it was considered an amoral and scandalous book when it was first published. The book's epistolary format is enjoyable because the reader is privy to the characters' deepest thoughts and secrets. This is particularly true of the villains Marquise de Merteuil and Vicomte de Valmont who are so unashamedly licentious that the reader can't help but be amused by their antics. I could not help feeling that towards the end of the book the author felt compelled to conform to what would have been deemed, in those days, a fitting ending for his villains. I also felt that some parts of the book were repetitive and because of this the story dragged. However, I do think that even in our modern era the book does offer some still relevant observations about the nature of relationships between the sexes.

The rake in this book is the worst that ever lived! It is very necessary that I should have this woman, if I would save myself from the ridicule of being in love with her: for whither may not thwarted desire lead one? O delicious pleasure! I implore thee for my happiness, and above all for my repose. How lucky it is for us that women defend themselves so badly! Else we should be to them no more than timid slaves. At present I have a feeling of gratitude for yielding women. •WHAT A DOG!

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