

Casanova Undone by Dic Edwards

Teacher's note:

Two hundred years ago after his death, everyone has their own picture of Casanova - the man who really loved women!

Though, some may have the picture of a man, who supposedly thought only with his penis, seduction was an art to him and far from choosing easy and submissive sexual partners, his lovers were often forceful, adventurous, seemingly unapproachable and charismatic women.

Persistence was the key to his success, as he himself said: “... not a woman in the world can resist the assiduous care and constant attentions of a man who wishes to make her fall in love with him”.

There is no doubt that Casanova is a fascinating and interesting man, who seized the day and chose to live life (1725 – 1798) and to follow his primal instincts.

The author, Dic Edwards, however, presents us with another view of this man. In his play he has Casanova reflecting and reminiscing on his life and times whilst living in Paris during the French Revolution and later from the safety provided by the sanctuary inside the castle walls of Count Waldstein of Bohemia. To relieve the boredom he relived the extraordinary story of his life.

“Casanova Undone” was first performed at the Citizens Theatre, Glasgow, in March 1992, and in February, 2009, it will have its Scandinavian premiere and be performed by That-Theatre Company, Copenhagen. The cast will be: Linda Elvira, Laura Bach and Ian Burns and directed by Barry McKenna who won a Reumert award last year for his production of “For A Muse of Fire”.

“Casanova Undone” is not a play you would normally choose to read in class, but when this is said, I think, the students can learn a lot about 18th century life, love, sex, fame and relationships by reading some of the excerpts from the play enclosed in this package.

Thanks for proof-reading the educational material to Allan Hilton Andersen

Hope the following material will be of use to you.

Please send an e-mail if you have any comments etc, we would be pleased to hear from you.

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Focus: Students' gather information

Task: Search the internet for biographical information about Giacomo Casanova (1725-1798). The following references/sites may be useful to you:

[That-Theatre.com - Casanova](http://That-Theatre.com)

[Giacomo Casanova – Wikipedia search](#)

Task: Search the internet for information about the life and work(s) of the author of the play you are going to read. His name is Dic Edwards. The following references may be useful to you:

[Dic Edwards – Wikipedia search](#)

[www.theatre-wales.co.uk - Dic Edwards](http://www.theatre-wales.co.uk)

Task: True or false about the author of “Casanova-Undone”? Correct the false statements:

- a. Dic Edwards is an American playwright.
- b. Edwards' first play was “At the End Of the Bay”
- c. He has also written many poems.
- d. Dic's background is upper-middle class
- e. Dic is a teacher at the University of Wales
- f. Dic says his favourite play is “Measure for Measure”

Focus: Pre-reading discussions: Casanova- love- sex- life

Task: Make a brainstorm and write down what comes to your mind when you hear the word “Casanova”. You may find it useful to draw a mind-map.

Task: The play you are going to read is called “Casanova – Undone”. Look up the words “Casanova” and the word “undone” in a dictionary. From the title of the play what do you think the play is all about?

Task: Casanova compared love to “an incurable illness and a divine monster”. Write continuously about “love” for about 2-4 minutes, preferably without lifting your pen from the paper. Write in full sentences, but do not bother about grammar or spelling. Next, discuss: What is love?

Task: What lessons, if any, does Casanova have to teach us about life? Discuss.

Task: What was Casanova's attitude to women?

“Sexual conquests to be used and thrown away”?

Or

“Lovely “creatures” that he could not live with or without”?

Discuss.

Task: Casanova lived primarily for the pleasure of the moment. What do you think a psychiatrist would say about him? That he is a sex addict? (*“Her arse gave ultimate meaning to her life. In fact, to my life too”, said by Casanova in Casanova Undone, p. 38*) or, that everybody should follow their basic instincts and live out their feelings? Discuss.

Task: In psychological literature one often speaks of having a "Casanova Complex". What does that mean? You may search the internet for help.

Task: Comment on and discuss the following statement: *"I saw that everything in the world that is famous and beautiful, if we rely on the descriptions and drawings of writers and artists, always loses when we go to see it and examine it up close"* (*Historie de ma vie/ Casanova*)

Task: Comment on the statement given by Casanova in "Casanova Undone"
"I want a woman neither to give in too easily or to resist too much", (p.37).

Task: Is there a difference between a Don Juan type and a Casanova? Discuss.

Task: Statements for discussion in class. Complete the below table indicating which controversial statements about Casanova you think are true, which are false, or if you are not certain, tick the column headed (?).

Table: True, False or (?)

1. What women wanted, Casanova discovered, was to have mere pleasure with men.
2. Casanova was NOT a Don Juan, simply adding notches on his belt.
3. Casanova said he never conquered a woman, but let himself be seduced by them.
4. Casanova had the idea of "blurring" the differences between the sexes, of not being the arrogant, cock of the walk, the dominant male strutting his masculinity for all to see, to either disapprove or approve of.
5. Casanova was a "modern" man in an 18th century environment
6. The idea of swapping identities delighted Casanova
7. Casanova tried to understand women and to really "love" and be loved by them .For this he has gone down in history.
8. Casanova was all his life a victim of his senses.
9. Casanova's fame and influence will last forever.
10. Casanova was merely a womanizer, a fornicator, a seducer of women - a person who loved and then left his lovers. ,
11. Casanova had at least eight children.
12. Casanova used condoms made out of rendered sheep gut. The English ones were collectors' items throughout Europe. He referred to them as "his English riding coats". He used them mainly with nuns, who were particularly worried about getting pregnant.
13. Casanova had eleven episodes of gonorrhoea and several of syphilis.

Focus: Pre-reading Casanova- Poems:

Task: Search the internet for "Casanova- lyrics". Find one and comment on it. Next, try and write your own "Casanova-poem"

Task: Comment on the content and form of the following Casanova-lyric

Casanova

*Dark sexy skin, my passions begin
You're the center of my obsession
Watching you dance in your leather pants
My eyes see a true perfection*

*And I'm hypnotized by the rhythm of your hips
It's hard to hide and I can't resist*

*It's about your kiss
It's about your lips
It's about the way you move your body
It's about your style
That drives me wild
It's the sexy thing you're doing*

*Come and dance with me tonight
Feel the rhythm deep inside
Touch me now
You can be my Casanova*

It's about

Come and dance....

*I cross the room
He smells my perfume
Mi amour, a serious danger
Temperatures rising
And I'm fantasizing
Making love to a beautiful stranger*

*My passion alive I'm feeling so high
It's not the champagne
That's driving me insane*

It's about

Come and dance ...

Source: <http://www.derrenbrown.eu/song,192552.html>

Focus: Pre- translations

Task: Translate the passage below from English into Danish.

"Casanova's room is divided into two parts. The part that is the bed and the part that isn't. The bed is a very big four-poster with drapes. These are kept closed most of the time. Behind them there is a world within a world. In this case a prurient world. Some way or other this world should contain the paraphernalia of sex and sexual experimentation and also things like a rhino's horn etc. The rest of the room contains the paraphernalia of life. In this case a small table of Sophie's chemical apparatus: a redundant chocolate urn (redundant because there is no chocolate); Casanova's dressing table with its mirror. There should be a window near this mirror. There is an exit off to the right – to another room (a bathroom) – and an exit behind the bed. This goes to a small ante-room where there is the door to the hall", (Set, Casanova-Undone)

Task: Next, turn the above passage from the present tense into the past tense.

Task: Find all the nouns in the above passage, and translate them into Danish

Task: Find all the adjectives in the above passage, and write down their synonyms

Task: Translate (a-c) from Danish into English. Next, comment on and discuss the statements.

- a. *"Casanova Undone er et af de herlige skuespil, hvor man sidder og huler af grin over det hurtige, intelligente sprog, for så at forstå, at selve temaerne er utrolig vittige, gennemtænkte og provokerende. Fordi Edwards ser virkelig seriøst på, hvordan revolution skabes; og på hele denne illusion omkring rygte. Hvad er fakta og hvad er indbildning. Der er mange, meget kødfyldte tanker som bliver præsenteret for os nærmest som slik. Jeg synes det er et skuespil med enorm genlyd og en masse skæg" (Kaleidoscope, Radio 4)*
- b. *"Denne morsomme, intelligente og uimodståelige filosofiske farce sætter spot på den degenererede libertiner, hans aftagende potens under rædselsregimentet i Paris. Hans erektion, ligesom det gamle styre er blevet slapt", (The Observer)*
- c. *"Casanova Undone er et overraskende skuespil af Dic Edwards, der veksler mellem improviseret filosofi og lækre frække passager. Helheden er en kritik af seksualitet og magt, som ultimativt forkaster modellen med sex som en slagmark, hvor de kæmpende slås for den ultimative oplevelse. Lige så underholdende som en ideologisk, solid Engelsk 1700 tals komedie", (Scotland on Sunday)*

Focus: Time and setting of the play:

Task: Comment on the time and setting of the play. *"Setting is the time and place of the story. More precisely, it may be the geographical place, the environment in which the characters live, the historical period, the season of the year or the social conditions of the character", (Box on Communicating, Flensted, p.50)*

Historical (background) information :

Focus: The Reign of Terror (revolutionary France)

Task: In "Casanova Undone" you may find many references to "the Reign of Terror":

"The Terror has issued a decree condemning to DEATH all hedonists. That's seducers, fornicators," (p.13)

"There's just the Terror and getting away from it", (p.49)

"I'm not afraid of the Terror", (p.52)

Search the internet and find information about "the Reign of Terror"

Task: Discuss the function of the role played by "the Terror" in "Casanova Undone"

Task: Discuss and try to reach agreement on a definition of "the Terror"

Possible definitions:

- a. To preserve and defend a particular moral code of ethics?
- b. To attack those who do not adhere and obey.
- c. For powers sake?

Focus: Casanova and the Revolution (the Terror):

Task: In “Casanova- Undone” “The Terror” is against Casanova .Discuss, why?

Task: Is Casanova afraid of the Terror – why? / Why not? Ought he to be afraid?

Task: Discuss. What does Casanova mean, when he says, *“I am, in myself, the new and the old. So, I’m an expression of revolution; a description of the very argument! I was an aristocrat now I’m not”, (p.14).*

Task: It seems as if Casanova leads his own bourgeois revolution and regards himself as a true revolutionary. How would you define Casanova’s “private” revolution?

Task: On page 52 in “Casanova Undone”, Costa says to Casanova: *“The Terror’s the revolution! It’s new, you’re old! It’s a metaphor for what happens to us all: death at the hand of youth”.* Discuss. What does Costa mean?

Task: Find evidence in the text that Casanova considers himself a true revolutionary. What do you think of Costa? Is she a true revolutionary? Discuss and if possible reach agreement.

Focus: The 18th century

Task: The 18th century in which Casanova lived witnessed an extraordinary explosion in the activities of self-reflection, self-representation and self-invention. Casanova was right at the centre of this process of exploration and self-discovery. Search the internet for information about the 18th century and write down essential key-words.

Task: Do you think Casanova was a “modern” man in an 18th century environment? Why? / Why not?. Discuss.

Focus: The meaning of the term/concept bourgeois in “Casanova Undone”

Task: The term “bourgeois” is mentioned several times in “Casanova-Undone”. Find the places and comment on your references.

Task: Does Casanova consider himself a bourgeois? Why/why not? What according to Casanova defines a true bourgeois?

Task: According to Casanova a bourgeois ought not to fall in love, (cif., p.29). Why is that? And what happens if a bourgeois falls in love?

Task: On page 59 Casanova states,

“...people have a predisposition for creating life out of deception. My memoirs will do them a favour! I’ve re-valued value. I’ve made Art of deception and virtue of vice and cheating. I’ve written the bourgeois blueprint”, (p.59). Try and apply Casanova’s statement to Dic Edwards’ definition of “bourgeois”, *“Here, I should say what I mean by “bourgeois”. Essentially, I am talking about a system of values in which a thing is not valued by its intrinsic worth but by an extrinsic worth (this extrinsic value is considered the standard by which we make value judgements about all things) put on it..... This perverse notion of value permeates everything especially language ...Everything is about presentation. It’s the triumph of form over content. Language loses its meaning; even the need to be spoken...”* (Said by Dic Edwards, www.theatre-wales.co.uk/critical/critical_detail.asp?criticalID=111)

Focus: Casanova's memoirs

Task: How does Casanova try to give credibility to the memoirs he is writing? And why is that important?

Task: Casanova states that: "The people have a predisposition for creating life out of deception. My memoirs will do them a favour! I've re-valued value! I've made Art of deception and virtue of vice and cheating. I've written the bourgeois blueprint. A bible of ..." (p.59)... Thus, his memoirs will "be a blueprint for the new politics, the new aesthetic AND the new sexuality!" (p.15). Comment on and discuss the statements.

Task: Search the internet about a new biography ("Casanova: The Man who Really Loved Women") written by Lydia Flem. Why does Flem's biography stand out as one of a kind?

Focus: Development of plot/the structure of the play

Task: "Casanova undone" is a play in six scenes. Give a brief summary of each of these scenes. Next, divide the scenes into separate episodes, and for each episode, decide on:

- A heading;
- What conflict the characters are acting out
- Who is the one in control of the dialogue and who is not – and how does it show?

Focus: Compositional Analysis

Task: Comment on the plot/the action of the play. What is "Casanova Undone" all about? What issues does the play deal with? (the below lines may help you to get started). Next, try and summarize the action in a few lines.

Try to complete the sentences:

- A) I believe the play deals with the rise and fall of Casanova, because I ...
- B) The play deals with the preservation of Casanova's reputation, because I ...
- C) I suppose, the play is all about fame, because ...
- D) In my opinion, the subject matter of the play has something to do with a sexual revolution, because ...
- E) I guess, the play is all about sex being sublimated to wisdom (Casanova's philosophy), because
- F) I think the play is about the re-living some of the joyous moments and adventures of his life because...

Task: Edward Bond says in his introduction to Dic Edwards' plays: "The worlds meet in Dic Edwards's plays. They create a feeling of personal responsibility and show that it is only in solving other people's problems that we have a chance to solve our own. They don't give facile, easy entertainment; instead there is a sort of athletic tension in them, the experience of mental power and emotional daring", (Introduction, Dic's plays). How can this statement be applied to the play "Casanova Undone"? Discuss.

Task: Often a dramatic play can be divided into:

- an exposition
- a conflict
- a turning point
- a climax
- a resolution

Please consider:

- if we find any exposition in “Casanova Undone”? If so, how does this show?
- if there is a conflict? If yes, do you consider the main conflict to be of a political or psychological nature or maybe something else? Please explain
- if there is a point of no return? If, yes, when does it take place?
- if there is any climax? If any, please give page reference.
- if there is any resolution? If yes, how would you explain the ending of the play?

Focus: Scene One (pp.12- 20) :

Reading Comprehension:

1. What kind of degree has “the Terror” issued?
2. Why is Casanova’s reputation so important to him?
3. On page 15 Casanova and Costa discuss the art of seduction. On what grounds do they seem to agree/ disagree?
4. Casanova and Costa are having a discussion about who is being the seducer in the sexual act. Comment on the discussion (p-15)
5. What is Casanova’s excuse for letting Costa do the sexual act? (p.20)
6. Tell each other what you remember from scene one. Write down essential key-words when talking about scene one.

Focus: Scene Two (pp.20- 29) :

Reading Comprehension:

1. At the beginning of Scene Two Costa seems disgruntled. Why is that? Find evidence in the text of her being disgruntled. Next, write down four adjectives that express the same state of feeling.
2. What is the purpose of Angelique coming to see Casanova and Costa? (p.26)
3. Why must Angelique be seduced? And who is going to seduce her? (p.27)
4. Explain in what way/ways Casanova and Costa seem to disagree on the issue of seduction?
5. At the end of Scene Two Casanova says to Costa, “You’ve lived too long with me and learned too much to be stupid.”, (p.29). Discuss. What does he mean by that?
6. Tell each other what you remember from scene two. Write down essential key-words when talking about scene two.

Focus: Scene Three (pp. 29-44) :

Reading Comprehension:

1. Why does Angelique's mistress need Casanova's help?
2. What is so special about Angelique's mistress? Find evidence in the text that supports your reading.
3. Costa speaks very highly of Casanova and his reputation. Why is that and what does she tell Angelique? Give page reference(s).
4. In what way(s) and why does Costa seem to defend Casanova?
5. Costa and Angelique talk about "duping" Casanova a little bit. Why is that? What is their plan? (p.35). How does Casanova react when he wakes up – does he believe what Angelique tells him: "O, it was good, it was you! I have your face painted on my eyes", (p.36).
6. Why does Casanova say: "So, that if I die tonight, it may carry me to heaven!", (p.37)
7. Why does Casanova have to invite Angelique for a meal?
8. What is it that Angelique discovers at the end of the scene? (p.43)
9. Tell each other what you remember from scene three. Write down essential key-words when talking about scene three.

Focus: Scene Four (pp. 44- 55):

Reading Comprehension:

1. Comment on the two monologues by Casanova at the beginning of the scene (p.45)
2. Does Casanova succeed in seducing Angelique? Why / Why not?
3. Costa tells Casanova that he has lived so far "from Reason or reality", (p.50). What does she mean?
4. What kind of dilemma has Costa been in for many years?
5. What is the real truth revealed about Casanova?
6. Why does Casanova put such a huge effort into speaking out loud the menu?
7. Tell each other what you remember from scene four. Write down essential key-words when talking about scene four.

Focus: Scene Five: (pp.55-58)

Reading Comprehension:

1. Comment on the role-playing scene between Angelique and Sophie.
2. In which way or /ways does/ do this scene stand in contrast to the other scenes?
3. What do you think was Dic Edwards' purpose for this scene? Discuss.
 - a. to parody their master / mistress?
 - b. to be more daring than their master / mistress?
 - c. or?!?
4. Tell each other what you remember from scene five. Write down essential key-words when talking about scene five.

Focus: Scene Six (pp.58-64):

Reading Comprehension:

1. How is Casanova's mental state of mind when we meet him at the beginning of Scene Six?
2. Why does Casanova torture himself by telling Sophie the story of the Jewish girl? (p.60)
3. Comment on the content and form of the letter written to Sophie.
4. Task: You sit in groups of three. First person mentions a number: 1, 2 or 3 and a letter: A, B or C. The person on his/her left finds the appropriate square and performs the task described there, then, he/she mentions a new combination, etc., until everybody has tried three different parts.
 - A.
 1. *You are Casanova: Tell the group what your memoirs will do for them.*
 2. *You are Sophie: Explain to the group why you are living together with Casanova.*
 3. *You are Casanova. Tell the story of the Jewish girl to the group.*
 - B.
 1. *You are Angelique: Repeat to the group what you have written in your letter to Sophie.*
 2. *You are Casanova: Explain to the group why you feel so depressed about your life.*
 3. *You are Sophie: Explain to the group why you will do everything to preserve Casanova's reputation*
 - C.
 1. *You are Sophie: Tell the group what you will write to Angelique after having read her letter*
 2. *You are the Jewish girl: Tell the group her version of the story.*
 3. *You are Sophie: Tell the group your version of Casanova's rise and fall*
5. Task: Underline the words which you think describe Sophie's attitude to/feelings for Angelique: *like – be in love with – be attracted to – be interested in- have a crush on- feel affection for – adore-like – worship- be fond of – be infatuated with – love- be attached to* . Next, support your choice by referring to the text. Find at least two examples.
6. Task: Which words would you use to describe Sophie's attitude to / feelings for Casanova? Give references to the text.
7. Tell each other what you remember from scene six. Write down essential key-words when talking about scene six.

Focus: Character sketches/ relationships and mood

Task: Consider the characters in “Casanova Undone”.

- their relationship to the plot: do they play a major part in the events of the development of the plot - or do they play a minor role.
- the degree to which they develop: are they dynamic characters (characters who change) - or static characters (characters who do not change)
- their growth in the course of the play: do they remain the same throughout the play - or do significant changes in their personalities take place?

Task: Comment on and discuss the following statement: *“My characters are the means by which I convey the arguments of my play.....this is how you connect the audience with the play on a moral and creative level”, (said by Dic Edwards)*

Focus: Casanova

Task: Give a characterization of Casanova.

The following box of words may help you:

a true revolutionary – a bourgeois – wise - foolish- arrogant – narrow-minded- reserved- dominating- persistent- thinks highly of himself- a non-conformist- an anarchist- a risk-taking man - a pleasure-seeking man- a clown – “God” - reactionary ethics - a high moral- a risk-taking man- woman-lover - a slave of beauty and perfection- a Don Juan - an actor- selfish- business-man- false - a magician – integrity- a valiant chevalier- charismatic – uncontrolled- wild- immoral- womanizer- promiscuous-unscrupulous-generous-mean-honest-deceptive-fawning-alooof-skeptical-gullible-superstitious-rational-religious-sensitive-generous-unpleasant-vindictive-detestable.....add more yourself

Task: Translate the following into Danish. Casanova was *“... a lawyer, clergyman, a military officer, a violinist, a con man, a pimp, a gourmand, a dancer, a businessman, a diplomat, a spy, a politician, a mathematician, a social philosopher, a cabalist, a playwright, a writer ...add more nouns yourself”*

Task: Casanova seems to live in a world of his own. Discuss. When does Casanova seem to cross the line between imagination and grim reality?

Task: Find adjectives to describe Casanova’s mood when Angelique tells him that Costa has been protecting him but now the truth is well-known, (p.51).

Task: How would you define the tone (e.g. calm, angry, menacing, hysterical, persuasive, controlled or ?) of Casanova’s voice in the following dialogue? Starting on p.50:

Casanova: “Why didn’t you tell me about this”

“You didn’t tell me! I am the vanguard of the great bourgeois revolution and YOU patronize me like that? You make ...”

Costa: “Forget it, it’s over!”

Costa: “This is the truth!” (p.51)

Task: Trace the “development” of Casanova’s character throughout the scenes. At a certain point in the play his world seems to fall apart. Discuss when that takes place..

Task: The following references (said by Casanova) are all mixed up. Place them in chronological order as if you were telling Casanova's story from beginning to the end.

Casanova about himself:

- A. *"I'm above ALL! I'm a god! Of a kind"*
- B. *"That's what it's come to? I'm a clown? But I'm wise! I've all along, all my life been wise!... Sophie, I feel so depressed! What is life? Nothing more than a good masturbation"*
- C. *"This is a revolution in sexual thought that I'm responsible for!"*
- D. *"Well, I'm nothing if not a revolutionary! I embody nothing if not the revolution"*
- E. *"Day after day, even now – at the height of the terror, duchesses, countesses, high-class ladies come to me to experience that which made me and France great!, my reputation!"*
- F. *"I'm a slave of beauty"*
- G. *"No, no! Take me with you! Don't leave me Sophie!! Please!"*
- H. *"It means I'm suffering on behalf of others. It's in my head."*
- I. *"It was said of Christ. Behold the man! His greatness was not that he paid for man's crimes but that he had to suffer as a man for being a god! It's the same with me!"*
- J. *"There's no future Sophie! I'm finished!"*
- K. *"I'm the wind ! I sweat stars! I've become what people will say about me from now until the end of time! I am the first example in history of the most basic truth about the world moulded into a philosophy: that nothing's what it seems to be"*

Focus: Costa (Sophie)

Task: Give a characterization of Costa (Sophie)

The following box of words may help you: energetic-supportive-selfish-unselfish-subservient-thoughtful-clever-intelligent-open-minded-intolerant-sexy-sensitive-sensual-pragmatic-frightened-independent-heroic-loving... add more yourself.

Task: Costa is one of the characters in the play "Casanova- Undone" who goes through a development. Describe and explain this development. State reference(s) to the text.

Task: On page 51, Costa tells us about her existential dilemma. Comment on and describe this dilemma (i.e her past and present mental state of being).

Task: Do you believe Costa when she says: *"There isn't any magic! I was just deceiving you. It's become my life...."*, (p.53). Why?/why not?

Task: What is (or becomes) Costa's motivation for maintaining the reputation of Casanova?

Focus: Angelique

Task: Consider the character of Angelique. What is your first hand impression of her?

Task: Give a characterization of Angelique.

The following box of words may help you: confident-unfriendly-argumentative-talented-inventive-creative-humorous-wise-restless-vital-shy-confrontational-understanding-extrovery-feminine-musical-trustworthy-sincere ... add more yourself

Focus: Casanova and Costa (Sophie) / the master-servant / game-playing relationships in Casanova-Undone

Task: Comment on and characterize the relationship between Casanova and Costa

Task: When talking about game-playing in “Casanova-undone” we may refer to that of master/servant game-playing. Discuss why is that the case?

Task: Trace the development of the relationship between Casanova and Costa throughout the play. Any changes/ or any progression in the master-servant relationship? Is there any evidence to be found in the text of an exchange (turn) of roles?

Task: Explain how their relationship is an example of role-playing? Find examples in the text when they go in and out of their roles. What is the effect?

Task: Consider how tension is built up in their relationship. Next, find examples where the tension in their relationship seems to come out.

Task: Do you consider Costa a loyal “servant” of her master. Why/ why not? Please, state page reference(s).

Task: What does Costa mean when she says to Casanova: “... *If you're owed ANYTHING by your bourgeois revolution it's the right to be bourgeois. Even to dupe the future if it wants to be duped by you*”, (p.62).

Task: Comment on and discuss the following quote: *“It's not Casanova, of course, who is wise, but Sophie who he uses in his grand scheme, selfishly. In fact, it's in Sophie that the opposites that need to be reconciled exist. Casanova may be only a catalyst. And an ironic one at that because a manifestation of the reconciliation of the opposites produces Sophie's wisdom. The opposites in Sophie are male and female. The resolution lies in her recognising her true sexuality. The dramatic irony here becomes acute because the whole purpose of Casanova's existence in the play is to have the reputation born of his sexuality, preserved. In the outcome, while hers is revealed his is revealed as a wasteful pointless sham”*,

(Said by Dic Edwards on www.theatre-wales.co.uk)

Task: How does the game-playing end?

Focus: Casanova and Angelique

Task: Comment on and characterize the relationship between Casanova and Angelique.

The following references may help you:

“It happened, but YOU know it happened”, (p.36)

“I want her hoisted! She'll be my flag”, (p.41)

“If I may be so bold Angelique, I'd like to tell you that you're about to be fucked by the IDEA of Casanova..”, (p.46).

Task: Discuss - A possible change (turn) in their relationship?

Focus: Costa (Sophie) and Angelique

Task: Comment on and characterize the relationship between Costa and Angelique.

Task: The relationship between Costa and Angelique takes a turn in Scene Three. Why is that?

Task: Trace the development in the relationship between Costa and Angelique. Next, consider - how do their actions seem to reflect their personalities?

Task: Compare and contrast the characters of Angelique and Costa. Are they similar or are they direct opposites? Please, refer to the text in your answer.

Post-reading

Focus: A Discussion of Genre

Task: Discuss the genre of "Casanova- Undone". Explain why you think it may be called for instance a comedy or a farce.

The following definitions may help you:

- *a comedy*: in a comedy the characters amuse and entertain us. This form of theatre has its roots in ancient Greece where many of the rituals in honour of the gods involved becoming drunk, singing obscene songs and making rude comments. The Greek word for these proceedings was "komos" from which the word "comedy" derives. The comic plot is usually based on a series of mistaken identities, misunderstandings and improbable situations. The plot develops and tension grows until it becomes to a head and the underlying comic complications are revealed. At this point the characters are reconciled and order is restored.
- *a farce*: is a type of comedy designed simply to make the audience laugh. Its humour is based on highly exaggerated or caricatured characters, ludicrous situations, broad verbal humour and slapstick physical horseplay.

Focus: A Discussion of minor and major themes:

Task: Discuss. What are the issues dealt with in "Casanova- Undone"?

Task: Divide the below-mentioned themes into minor and major themes and account for your choice.

Possible themes dealt with in "Casanova- Undone":

Alienation from life

Gender roles - sexuality

Fame

Deception of self

Being wise/ unwise

The theme of Vanity

Fact (real) / fiction (unreal)

The relationship between sexual repression and political suppression (said by the author, Dic Edwards)

Fact and fiction
Truth and lies
Non-conformism / conformism
The “blurring” of differences between the sexes

Focus: The title: Why Undone?

Task: Comment on the title. Why not just “Casanova” but “Casanova **Undone**”?

Task: In which of the scenes do we get a direct reference to the title? Find the scene and comment on the lines.

Task: The sub-title to “Casanova- Undone” goes like this: “A Comedy of Errors”. Discuss the sub-title with reference to the play.

Task: Comment on the following statement by Dic Edward: “But I love comedies of errors! Because it’s not simply mistaken identities. It’s about people believing what they want to believe”, (Source: Interview with Dic Edwards)

Task: Discuss objections for and against “Casanova Undone” in general

Focus: Language and Style

Task: Reflect on the following quotation from an interview with Dic Edwards: “*Language in theatre ... serves the dramatic purpose.... I think my theatre deals a lot with appearance and reality ... and I believe that there are languages which relate to these – the language of appearance (what people **seem** to need to say) and the language of reality (what they **actually** need to say)”. Next, try to apply Dic’s theory of language to the characters in “Casanova Undone”.*

Task: Humour is the main ingredient of a comedy. It can be divided into three broad categories:

- *verbal humour: when what the characters say is funny*
- *behavioural humour: when what the characters do is funny*
- *situational humour: when the situation the characters find themselves in is funny*

Find examples of humour in “Casanova-Undone” and try to explain whether the humour is of a verbal, behavioural, situational nature or a mixture of all three.

Task: Who, if any, of the characters seem to be the carrier of humour in “Casanova-Undone”? Discuss and find evidence in the text.

Task: Casanova does not always treat Costa with respect. Find places in the text where Casanova speaks down to her, and comment on his use of language in these situations.

Task: Style refers to the way a writer says what he wants to say. It is usually analysed in terms of diction. The term diction refers to the choice of words in a literary work. A writer’s work may be described, for example, as abstract or concrete, colloquial/informal language or formal language, technical language or common language, literal or figurative etc. Discuss. How would you characterize the language and style in “Casanova Undone”.

Task: Comment on the use of language and style in the following quotes:

- a. *"No magic! There's no such fucking thing! There's just the Terror and the getting away from it", (p.49)*
- b. *"I have to tell you sweet that you are being shagged by a twelve inch Indian teak dildo!", (p.58)*
- c. *"Shut this bollocks up! In the end, once she's been seduced, she'll be grateful for it", (p.28)*
- d. *"I've seen enough of breasts that fall to the waist like empty sails and thighs that hang like monstrous foreskins", (p. 19).*

Task: Guess, without looking in the text, who said the above lines (A-D)?

Task: Dialogue has two main functions in drama. It contributes to the telling of the story and it reveals (creates) character(s). Dialogue is, therefore, an essential storytelling device in drama. Consider the role of dialogue, descriptive passages, and monologue in "Casanova Undone". Next, find evidence in the text that dialogue reveals (creates) character(s).

Task: Point out an essential dialogue in "Casanova Undone" e.g. between Casanova and Costa. Consider what elements in this dialogue contribute to building up pathos (i.e. passions, deep feelings, tenderness, pity, sympathetic sorrow etc.) from the reader.

Task: How does Dic Edwards manage to make the text (the play) personal? Give references to the text.

Task: The text below is an extract from a biography about Casanova. All full stops (and capital letters) and commas have been removed from the text. Insert full stops (and capital letters) and commas where you think they are needed." *In a castle in Bohemia an exiled old man spends thirteen hours a day writing the history of his life he has no possessions he has thrown away or squandered everything he once owned he has no woman no future no house no homeland he gave and received freely without calculation he has enjoyed life as few men – and even fewer women – have dared enjoy it he threw himself into life and required nothing in return except the most insolent most scandalous of rewards pleasure unreservedly he surrenders to the present moment pure present pure loss suspended between yesterday and tomorrow he gives of himself generously and devotes himself to today since he has nothing to lose everything is his", (Casanova – the Man who Really Loved Woman)*

Task: Comment on the use of figurative language in the following quotations (a-l). Next, discuss the effect of this kind of language.

- a. *"Happiness has been condemned ...", (p.12)*
- b. *"I've seen enough of breasts that fall to the waist like empty sails and thighs that hang like monstrous foreskins", (p.19)*
- c. *"...Such sublime music! Like a voice crying in the wilderness...", (p.22)*
- d. *"Even a child at his father's funeral knows instinctively that though you bury the machine of his creation you don't bury the patent", (p.22)*
- e. *"... What I do know is that the performer, the violinist will penetrate more deeply than mere technique will allow...", (p.24)*
- f. *"... because I would refuse to share my new love with the dying whims of old reactionary hags!...(p.29)*
- g. *"... She reasons that her ugliness must be a prelude to death" (p.31)*
- h. *"The night has been a thousand journeys", (p.37)*
- i. *"This is like a conquest without a flag to raise", (p.41)*
- j. *"... What is a cup of chocolate to you at this moment? An impoverishing tickle in the blossoming of your desire; a bad joke at the climax of the pantomime", (p.44)*
- k. *"A life without death would be like a dream without sleep", (p.48)*
- l. *"... you must look for a passage to heaven. Utilise sleep", (p.57)"*

Focus: Act- it- Out

Task: Practice acting out the scene between Costa and Casanova in “Casanova-Undone” on page 19. Think of intonation and voice.

The dialogue starts with Costa saying:

Costa: “She’s ready Jacques”
Casanova: “Ready? So quickly?”
Costa: “I told you. She’s old”
Costa: “She was soon ...”
Casanova: “Is there a confusion here ...”
Costa: “I don’t want to do it”
Casanova: “What?”
Costa: “I’ve seen enough of breasts that fall .”
Casanova: Prepuce I said”
Costa: “I mean it ...”
Casanova: “When the lamp It’s getting dark” (end of dialogue)

Task: If you had the chance of talking to the actors or the author of the play: Are there any lines in the play that you would like them to explain to you? Is there anything else you would like to ask them about?

Task. If you had the chance of talking to the author of the play, is there anything you would like to ask him about?

Task: Timing, stress and pitch are important in all forms of drama. Before rehearsals begin the director and actors will sit down with the script and work out issues such as stress, pace, pausing, volume and pitch. Task: Work in pairs. Choose 15-20 lines of the play you have read and make notes about the timing, stress and pitch. Next, try to perform the lines following the indications.

Task: Practice reading the below excerpt from scene one. First, in a neutral tone of voice. Next, in an angry tone of voice. And finally, in a happy (humorous) tone of voice. Think about tone of voice, as well as speed (slow or fast) and volume (loud or soft). Next, choose an excerpt yourself and practice reading that one.

Costa: “I don’t want to do it”
Casanova: “What?”
Costa: “I’ve seen enough of breasts that fall to the waist like empty sails and thighs that hang like monstrous foreskins.”
Casanova: “Prepuce I said! Ha, ha”
Costa: “I mean it Jacques! This woman is uglier than an act of violence ..”
Casanova: “Nonsense! When the lamp is taken away all women look alike; something I paraphrased from St. Augustine you will remember? Look into the street it’s getting dark”

(Excerpt, p. 19)

Focus: Creative writings

Task: Letter to the editor. “Dear Madam. My problem is that I have fallen in love with an actor who calls himself Casanova. I happen to know he is a womanizer and that he is secretly married to another woman. Nevertheless, I am so deeply in love with this man.. so much that I cannot eat nor sleep. Please, tell me. What shall I do? Love, Miranda.” Write an answer to Miranda.

Task: Transform the story of Casanova into a journalistic account (non-fiction). That is, rewrite the story of “Casanova- Undone” to be printed in a local newspaper.

Task: Turn the play into a poem about the rise and fall of Casanova.

Task: Comment on the message, if any, of the play (2 min creative writing).

Task: Argue for your point of view. Find three interesting sentences in "Casanova Undone". Next, write your immediate response to each sentence and argue for your choice.

Task: Try to put yourself in Costa's shoes. Write a letter to Casanova telling him that you are sick and tired of being his servant. Your first line has been given: *Dear Casanova, it is not easy for me to leave you, but the fact is that recently I have begun to feel that you do not*

Task: Write a summary of the play. Use as many words as possible from the box: *Casanova- reputation- memory- love- love affairs- ageing – impotence- revolutionary ideas- sexual definitions – traditional/ non-traditional gender roles - SEX.*

Task: Write a speech where you either defend or approve of Casanova's life-style. Think of how you build up your arguments. Present your speech in class.

Task: Rewrite the dialogue on page 19 between Costa and Casanova changing Costa's attitude towards Casanova. The dialogue starts with Costa saying: *"She's ready Jacques"*.

Task: Imagine you are Casanova. Write a page in his diary. Your focus of concern has been given: My dinner with Angelique.

Task: Write a continuation of the play, considering the lives of Costa and Angelique.

Task: Write an essay about "Casanova Undone". In your essay you must include the following points:

- a characterization of Casanova
- the relationship between Casanova and Costa
- the title of the play
- the message of the play

Task: The passage below is taken from a biography about Casanova, called *"Casanova – the Man who really Loved Women"*, by Lydia Flem. Divide the passage below into three paragraphs and formulate a question for each of the three paragraphs.

"Casanova's mother, Giovanna Maria Farussi, known as Zanetta, was a perfect beauty. She kept her looks for a long time; then suddenly her beauty faded. She was born in August 1708, probably in Burano, her father's island, and as a reminder of this origin, she was nicknamed La Buranella. We know nothing about her youth, except her beauty and her willingness to be abducted by the actor living in the house across the way, which brought on her father's death. Her mother forgave her misalliance, after she pledged never to go on the stage, a promise she did not keep. Her husband, on the other hand, soon quit the theatre for optics. Zanetta left the task of bringing up her children to her mother, so she could devote herself to the commedia dell'arte. She began by putting the firstborn in her mother's care so she could leave for London, where, two years later, she gave birth to a second son. Rumour had it that this child's real father was the Prince of Wales, the future King George II. Francesco Casanova became a painter of battle pictures. A member of the Royal Academy of Painting and Sculpture in Paris, then a protégé of Prince Kaunitz in Vienna. At the end of 1728, Zanetta and Gaetano returned to Venice and performed at the Teatro San Samuele. Giacomo was three years old", (p.28).

Task: Write an essay in which you discuss Casanova's attitude to love and women. Please, include linkers in your discussion. Box of useful linkers: on one hand, on another hand, however, nonetheless, in contrast to, therefore, as I see it, in conclusion, in brief, consequently, moreover, finally, etc.)

Task: Write a comment for a blog in which you argue either for or against reading "Casanova Undone" in the classroom.

Task: Create (write) a text-message (SMS) in English about "Casanova-Undone" which you then send on your mobile to another person in class. He/she reads the message and replies and so on. After this you both have to compare and discuss the rules you used or invented when you created your text-messages.

Task: Rewrite "Casanova Undone" in a new genre – e.g. a poem or short story. You may keep Dic's title or give your version a new title.

Task: You are a literary journalist. Write a blurb in English directed at a Danish audience, your primary concern should be how to sell the play in Denmark? Before you begin write down three points you would like to include in your blurb and find arguments for including the points.

Useful vocabulary: To begin with secondly ... another reason is ... the main thing is ... the most important aspect ... oddly/surprisingly/strangely enough ... as a rule on the whole .. the point is ... in my opinion ... from my point of view ... well, personally... what I am more concerned with ... what I find particularly the play conveys ... in the opening scenes ... what fascinates me ... I will/will not recommend this play to ...

Task: Write a biography of Dic Edwards using at least three sources on the internet. The biography should include an outline of his life (birth and death), education, writing career (not just a list of titles) and an evaluation of the importance of his work (based on the opinion of others). The biography should be no longer than 350 words. It must include a list of your source material. Next, compare your biography with that of another student in your class. In what ways are your biographies similar? – And in what ways are they different?

Task: Write a two-minute speech on the subject "what women want from a man !?!". Use at least two words from the box below and make sure your audience (class-mates) will remember them after you have given the speech.

Erotic fantasy – attention – love – children - sexual satisfaction – sensuality – pleasure - joy-passion - submission-house - money.....

References: