8 Reading on the Contrary

Cousin Marriage, *Mansfield Park*, and *Wuthering Heights*

Talia Schaffer

In 1860, when Florence Nightingale was lamenting men's and women's difficulties getting to know each other, she remarked, "in novels, it is generally cousins who marry; and now it seems the only natural thing – the only possible way of making an intimacy" (47). In a volume on queer families, it may seem odd to begin with an assertion that cousin marriage seems "the only natural thing," rather than casting it as an incestuous taboo. Yet cousin marriage pervades nineteenth-century fiction and can be found in novels by almost every major writer: Jane Austen, Charles Dickens, Charlotte Brontë, Emily Brontë, Wilkie Collins, Charlotte Yonge, Anthony Trollope, Margaret Oliphant, and Thomas Hardy. As Adam Kuper has shown, this preference for cousin marriage extended into real practice throughout the century. Among middle-class families, more than one in ten marriages involved cousins (Kuper 18), and the resulting extended family clans dominated Victorian religious, financial, and intellectual life. Critics like Kuper and Mary Jean Corbett have explained the economic benefits of cousin marriages, which kept property within the family and reinforced consanguinal loyalties with conjugal ties. However, what may be less obvious to modern readers is that cousin marriage also carried strong emotional values. We should not read it as a perverse redirection of erotic desire into the family, nor as a failure of desire itself. Rather, we need to read its pleasures in a different way, not in terms of desire but in terms of a radically different and older understanding of marriage.

In this chapter I sketch the history of marriage, noting that marrying for romantic fulfillment was a new, disruptive, and controversial notion in the early nineteenth century, and I demonstrate how two major novels set in the first half of the century grapple with this new idea, ultimately preferring an older marital ideal instead. Through readings of *Mansfield Park* (1814) and *Wuthering Heights* (1847), I trace the uses of cousin marriage to perpetuate an older idea of marriage, itself importing and reinforcing a notion of subjectivity that differs from the modern liberal subject's. Indeed, I argue it is the tradition of the marriage plot itself that formulates this idea of selfhood, an idea that would be contested by anthropology but an idea we would do well to recover because it undergirds so many of the plots we read.

As Ian Watt, Lawrence Stone, and Nancy Armstrong have argued, the marriage plot is the way the modern subject forms. In a romantic marriage, a person seeks a unique individual, reading subtle signs that indicate the potential mate's suitability. Armstrong explains, "authors began to represent an individual's value in terms of his, but more often in terms of *her*, essential qualities of mind." This, in turn, introduced "a whole new vocabulary for social relations, terms that attached precise moral value to certain qualities of mind" (4; emphasis original). The new vocabulary for writing characters gave people the tools to imagine the modern self. Further, the rise of the novel, as Watt has famously surmised, is connected with women's choice in marriage (138).

Yet this idea of the marriage plot assumes two important factors to be true: first, the suitor is an independent agent seeking to maximize his or her own happiness, and second, marriage is contracted for personal pleasure. What happens if one sees oneself as part of a larger collective, whose marital alliances must be determined by (and serve) the larger needs of the group? What might the marriage plot mean in terms of a relational idea of the self, an idea that, I argue, continued to thrive and to compete with the modern notion of the individual?

The liberal model of individualism requires "rationally competent adults who, as Locke says, are, in the state of nature, 'free, equal, and independent'" (cited in Nussbaum 104). It is thus implicitly set against the non-modern subject, someone defined by emotion instead of rationality, by subservience instead of equivalence, by affiliation instead of independence, and by a private rather than a public sphere. In other words, when the monistic agent emerges, a man in a marketplace, so does its implicit opposite, a woman in a family. "The family and state arose in conjunction with each other and ... their very structures are interdependent," writes Linda J. Nicholson (114). Nicholson explains, "as liberalism has been credited with constituting the individual, in all the senses in which we understand that term, so too must it be credited with constituting the family in the most fundamental sense in which we understand that term, specifically as a separate and distinct unit related to a more inclusive governing body" (135). To reinvent the family meant to reinvent the state and vice versa. To imagine someone as a subject of one realm meant to imagine someone else as the subject of the other, the atomized subject of modernity versus the relational subject of history.

We can trace the opposition of these two fundamental ideas through three important discourses: the history of marriage, the story told by the marriage plot in fiction, and the notion of "primitive marriage" in Victorian anthropology. While space obviously forbids anything like a thorough account of these genres in this chapter, I will take a few representative samples of each mode of thought, first giving a brief synopsis of the crisis in marital ideology in the nineteenth century, then showing how one emblematic type of pre-modern marriage, the endogamous union, develops in marriage plots and in Victorian anthropology. By reading *Mansfield Park* and *Wuthering Heights* against Victorian anthropological thought, we can see the notion of marrying a family member encodes older ideals Victorians were not ready to surrender, particularly since those older ideals often offered enhanced capacities for female activity. Anthropologists like John McLennan understood the modern subject as an aggressive, self-interested male whose relations with others consist of sex, violence, and (occasionally) trade. Cousin marriages in Austen and Brontë, however, posit a very different subject of endogamous unions, a female who exercises concern for familial harmony and social affections. This model is rooted in pre-romantic, pre-nineteenth-century marital ideologies.

INVENTING ROMANTIC MARRIAGE

Although there had always been records of lovers getting married, the late eighteenth century marked the first time love was widely accepted as a legitimate reason in itself to marry. Marriage historian Stephanie Coontz explains:

> By the end of the 1700s personal choice of partners had replaced arranged marriage as a social ideal, and individuals were encouraged to marry for love. For the first time in five thousand years, marriage came to be seen as a private relationship between two individuals rather than one link in a larger system of political and economic alliances. (145–46)

Previously, love had been seen as a kind of madness one needed to overcome in order to contract a decently prudent union; to let a wild wish determine a lifelong arrangement was clearly foolish. "Evidence of hostility to sexual desire as a basis for choice of a marriage partner can be found in every commentator of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries," Lawrence Stone asserts (281).[1]

In the seventeenth and eighteenth century, parents generally arranged the marriage, but children usually had veto power. As one woman summed it up, "[I] receiv'd the Addresses of my Lord — through the Recommendation of my Parents, and marry'd him with their Consents and my own Inclination" (Green 50). During this period, people began seeking something that would come to be called "companionate marriage." Companionate marriage means the partners specifically seek amity: "personal affection, companionship and friendship, a well-balanced and calculated assessment of the chances of long-term compatibility, based on the fullest possible knowledge of the moral, intellectual and psychological qualities of the prospective spouse, tested by a lengthy period of courtship" (Stone 271). Such a union served the interests of the extended clan. Partners fully expected to be involved in their family's interests after marriage, and that family was

a wide and flexible one, sometimes including distant connections, friends, relations of friends, neighbors, lodgers, apprentices, servants, and foster children (Tadmor). This form of marriage aimed for an affectionate, trusting partnership. One married in order to benefit one's larger network and one expected to remain in that social network after marriage as well.

It is true companionate married couples were supposed to feel love, but Ralph Houlbrooke explains, "the word love had a number of meanings, ranging from friendship to passionate mutual absorption. Furthermore, it was widely believed, especially among the upper classes, that mutual affection could easily develop within marriage between well-matched partners. In this view a strong prior attraction between prospective spouses was inessential" (74). Thus it made sense to marry based on a well-tested knowledge of and respect for one's partner. It was shockingly risky for a woman to pin her political, legal, and economic future on someone who might be a dangerous stranger simply because she was attracted to him. The traditional way of choosing a consensual spouse, someone known for years and vetted by one's parents, might be less exciting but was probably more secure. On the other hand, companionate unions risked forcing participants to form unions with people they disliked for their families' material benefit. Certainly it felt more attractive for a woman to find a desirable partner and imagine lifelong bliss with him. One might even say the modern novel tradition begins with this agonizing choice, as Clarissa has to face the worst sort of companionate prospect only to flee to what turns out to be the most dangerous type of romantic suitor.

Advice manuals in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century evinced great anxiety about this new trend. *The Lady's Monthly Magazine* asked in 1799 whether the individual was truly marrying "from the tenderest, from the most exalted principles of esteem and affection?" After all, one might "mistake the transient glow of passion, or the fond delirium of the imagination, for the fervours of a rational attachment, and rush presumptuously into the marriage state without reflection" (cited in Green 141). Similarly, Sir Thomas Bertram is appalled that Fanny "can and will decide for yourself, without any consideration or deference for those who have surely some right to guide you," since "the advantage or disadvantage of your family, of your parents, your brothers and sisters, never seems to have had a moment's share in your thoughts on this occasion. How *they* might be benefited, how *they* must rejoice in such an establishment for you, is nothing to *you*. You think only of yourself" (249; emphasis original). It is crucial to marry for the benefit of the larger kin network; to pursue one's personal happiness is sheer, unforgivable selfishness.

The new kind of marriage ushered in a new understanding of family. Elizabeth Gruner writes: "Definitions of the family underwent a shift from a fluid network of family relations in the early part of the nineteenth century to an increasingly naturalized nuclear unit by about the middle of the century. The negotiation between seeing the family as an affiliative network of friends, neighbors, servants and distant kin and seeing it as a privatized domestic unit was neither easy nor complete by mid-century" (428). For most of the nineteenth century, elements of the earlier ideal of family coexisted with the newer one. Both *Mansfield Park* and *Wuthering Heights* thematize this division by locating each type of family in a rival building. The Prices and the Earnshaws have open, permeable homes. Fanny notes the Portsmouth home's openness to dirt and noise, its status as a thoroughfare for the unrestricted passage of children and servants, with their return or departure (even for years) being given no special attention. Similarly, the Earnshaw home includes foster children, servants, and returning adult children; their house has no private space (when Isabella requests a private room, Joseph cannot comprehend what she means). The Bertram and Linton families, however, are self-contained nuclear families, living in houses divided into private zones, closed to outsiders, thus prefiguring the modern privatized family.

The permeable space suits a companionate marriage in which one weds in order to improve relations with a wider group, so friends, allies, and extended family are expected to circulate or cohabit after marriage as well as before. But the private, closed familial space suits two people who have chosen one another and formed a dyad, later perhaps to expand to a nuclear family. In the regime of romantic marriage, each couple forms an isolated pod, independent from others. Ruth Perry has argued this severance from the natal family was quite traumatic for women:

> Romantic love-in-marriage as an ideal developed in English culture as women were increasingly isolated from their consanguineal kin and the communities of their youth. In the fiction of the day characters wailed their dismay at their vulnerability to the absolute authority of the men they married. ... The newly privatized marriage – privatized in the sense of private ownership as well as seclusion in domestic space – detached a woman from her family of origin and from her pre-existing friendships and concerns in order to put her at the service of being a companion to her new husband. (196–97)

In focusing on the blissful immersion in a romantic dyad, we can overlook the pain of being ripped away from one's family and social circle, particularly if the romantic dyad turns out not to be so romantic. Isabella wails to Nelly, "four miles distant lay my delightful home, containing the only people I loved on earth: and there might as well be the Atlantic to part us, instead of those four miles, I could not overpass them!" (138–39). By contrast, the older marital model rejoices in the reinforcement of shared values and looks forward to a marriage in which the couple will continue to share the rich social world in which they are already living. Cousin marriage perpetuates older notions about marriage: alliance with a clan, reinforcement of kin claims, companionate trust rather than romantic passion. It allows

the woman to retain multiple identities as sister, daughter, friend, instead of becoming solely a wife in the kind of radical redefinition about which Perry writes so eloquently.

Cousin marriages generally occur in Victorian fiction when a first generation wrecks the family dynamics, with siblings attacking one another, and the second generation repairs the damage by making the representatives of each branch unite in wedlock. This marital relationship depends upon the readers seeing the cousins as familial emissaries. *Mansfield Park*, for instance, opens with the sisters' mutual alienation and ends with the Price and Bertram branches reunited through their respective children's marriage. *Wuthering Heights* fits into such a pattern; its reparative structure is a way of reading kinship networks through two generations that was both recognizable and meaningful to a Victorian readership.

FAMILY LOVE IN *MANSFIELD PARK*

Mansfield Park constructs marriage as something that ought to be founded on family feeling. Glenda Hudson explains, "in [Austen's] novels, the in-family marriages between the cousins and in-laws are successful because they do not grow out of sexual longing but are rooted in a deeper, more abiding domestic love which merges spiritual, intellectual, and physical affinities. Moreover, such unions form a new chapter in the fictional depiction of male/female relationships in that the participants are temperamentally equal. ..." (25). Fanny and Edmund do not marry in spite of being cousins, they marry because they are cousins. In the narrator's famous description, "An advantage this, a strengthener of love, in which even the conjugal tie is beneath the fraternal. Children of the same family, the same blood, with the same first associations and habits, have some means in their power, which no subsequent connection can supply, if such precious remains of the earliest attachments are ever entirely outlived" (211–12). A relation that modern readers tend to find incestuous, worrisomely queer, is in fact Austen's model of normative relations within this novel.

Mansfield Park starts with only one viable relationship, the sibling affection between Fanny and William, and the other family members must learn to remodel their relations according to that basis. As George Haggerty comments, in *Mansfield Park* "only the cozily familiar love of quasi-siblings can be depended on as sustaining and meaningful" (186). This healthy sororal love offers an alternative to the cold, formal, and embittered family relations amongst the three original sisters and the four siblings in the Bertram clan.

It is notable the novel begins, almost uniquely in Austen's oeuvre, with the previous generation.[2] When Maria and Frances Ward marry, the result is "an absolute breach between the sisters," while Mrs Norris has "no real affection for her sister" (2, 6). After mutually accusatory letters, they cease contact for eleven years. Thus the inception of this novel is a tale of

sisterliness gone awry. Estranged siblinghood is clearly the crisis that the novel must resolve.

In the next generation, all three families, the Bertrams, Crawfords, and Prices, have siblings at war with one another. The Bertrams' fraternal feeling is mainly characterized by animosity. Maria and Julia enact a toxic rivalry over Henry Crawford, and Tom and Edward, although remaining courteous, are structurally situated as rivals for the same diminishing estate.[3] The Bertram household is one of insufficient resources and greedy children; the sisters fight over the one romantic prospect, the brothers fight over the one inheritance. Their sibships are competitive rather than cooperative. The Crawfords' model derives from a different world of emotional interactions, which favors the immediate satisfaction of desire, followed by the polite release of the once-beloved. The siblings may temporarily collude for a shared goal and come together only for their mutual interest. Mary's half-jocular complaint about Henry's correspondence ("done in the fewest possible words" [53]) reveals the essential emptiness of their relation, especially when compared to William and Fanny's long letters. Meanwhile, the Price children quarrel continually over parental attention: clothing that is not prepared, meals that are not managed, souvenirs that are not protected from depredations.

Both family organizations are faulty, but the answer is not to leave the family in order to grow into a fully fledged individual. Marilyn Butler writes, "in Jane Austen it is the villain who has always in some form or other embodied self-sufficiency, a whole intellectual system of individualism or self-interest that the more social and outward-turning ethic of the novel was designed to counter" (280–81). If Watt and Armstrong assume the development of individualism is crucial to the marriage plot and the novel, Austen herself sees liberal individualism as a real threat, endorsing an alternative in the person of Fanny Price.

Fanny's alternative system is based in pre-modern sociality instead of individual self-interest, and it essentially converts these warring families. Both Henry Crawford and Edmund Bertram realize Fanny's love of her brother William provides an enviable alternative ideal. Edmund's first conversation with Fanny begins when he offers, "let us walk out in the park, and you shall tell me all about your brothers and sisters" (12). His kindness enlivens Fanny; her "countenance and a few artless words fully conveyed all their gratitude and delight, and her cousin began to find her an interesting object" (13–14). Sibling love animates her face, makes her visible in a new way to Edmund. Some years later, Henry will have the same reaction when he sees Fanny with her brother: "Fanny's attractions increased – increased two-fold – for the sensibility which beautified her complexion and illumined her countenance, was an attraction in itself. He was no longer in doubt of the capabilities of her heart. She had feeling, genuine feeling. It would be something to be loved by such a girl ..." (212). It would be easy to say both Edmund and Henry are aroused by Fanny's love for William but it is not

exactly arousal; it would be more precise to say they are stirred to emulation. They desire not so much Fanny herself but Fanny's feeling. What Henry wants to do is to provoke an equivalent of sibling love for himself. In this new sight, familial affection, the tired roué finds a better alternative than the stories of seduction, flirtation, and escape that had previously occupied him.

Yet the stranger can never be like a brother. Henry is an example of the untrustworthy, plausible romantic suitor whom young women were being urged to mistrust. As a good girl, Fanny ought to prefer a suitor whom she thoroughly knows and trusts, a union that will repair the damaged family. Hudson sums up, "Even more important for Austen is the idea that conjugal love should be patterned after fraternal love, that the perfect marriage should be like the ideal sibling relationship with its shared trust and understanding, love and esteem, high regard and loyalty, and that the partners should come not only from the same social circle but also, if possible, from the same family. ... Fraternal rather than sexual love preponderates in Austen's fiction, and, in many regards, the romantic scenes are domestic scenes" (7–8).

Austen rejects both modern liberal individualism and modern romantic marriage. One might note there are virtually no happily married exogamous couples in this novel. When we consider the Bertrams, the Grants, the Prices, the Rushworths, Admiral and Mrs Crawford, and even the Norrises, marriage in the first generation (plus Maria and Rushworth) is characterized by the partners' indifference, irritation, violence, fear, or dislike.[4] Nor do passionate romantic couples have a future: Maria's and Henry Crawford's pairing fails. Only siblinghood teaches how to love. The second generation can, at last, achieve harmonious cousinly marriage.

No wonder the end of the novel is a festival of sibling harmony. "Indeed, the breach between sisters created by the unequal alliances described at the opening of *Mansfield Park* is repaired in one branch of the next generation," explains Corbett, "as the felt need for proxy daughters ultimately enables two of the Price sisters to renew their attachment" (47). Mrs Price and Lady Bertram repair their bond; Susan and Fanny live together; and the younger set of sisters serves the elder. The real resolution of *Mansfield Park* is not the marriage between Fanny and Edmund but the restoration of appropriate family feeling based on the model of good sibling affection. The famously suspiciously hasty tone of Austen's description of Fanny's and Edmund's marriage is often read as revealing Austen's own skepticism about cousin marriage, but what I would argue it really shows is Austen's haste to get the marriage out of the way in order to get back to the family relations. Here is the real happy ending: "In *her* [Susan's] usefulness, in Fanny's excellence, in William's continued good conduct, and rising fame, and in the general well-doing and success of the other members of the family, all assisting to advance each other," Mansfield Park has finally become not an estate but a family (431; emphasis original).

Yet this harmonious convergence of familial alliances would soon meet its match in a very different kind of narrative. If Austen participates in a tradition of imagining reparative endogamous unions, Victorian anthropology would reimagine those unions as primitive remnants and construct marriage itself as a violent and divisive act. How might one write cousin marriage in the era of anthropology? How, in other words, might an author like Emily Brontë use the literary tradition instantiated by Austen, the sense of marriage as a safe harbor, when Victorian anthropologists were developing a history of marriage that centered on violence?

PRIMITIVE MARRIAGE

In the 1860s, Victorian anthropologists developed a theory of "primitive marriage," and it is this paradigm in which *Wuthering Heights*'s depiction of erotic obsession plays a formative role. Published two decades before John McLennan's *Primitive Marriage* (1865), *Wuthering Heights* nonetheless offers a vivid projection of the concerns that would shape Victorian theories of "savage" love. *Wuthering Heights* offers a sense of the discourse of primitivism out of which McLennan's work would arise, showing how the key ideas of primitive-marriage anthropology developed in those formative years, and how and why mid-Victorians began to imagine a violent, sexualized form of marriage.

We can see early stirrings of anthropological thinking in Britain in the 1840s, some of which Emily Brontë would have encountered through her practice of reading the political articles in *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* aloud to her father (Gerin 145). *Blackwood's* published "On Population" in 1840, a review that discussed savage man and pronounced "the passions of our nature are universal and inherent; the controlling principles partial and acquired; the former act most powerfully where the latter are unknown," an assertion of the elemental power of desire that may well remind us of Heathcliff's drives (818). Three years later Auguste Comte's theories of primitive theology received extensive treatment in *Blackwood's*. The last two pages of this review focus on Comte's ideas of fetishism and primitive religion, giving a sense of a savage perspective in which nature itself is animated, a notion that may have contributed to Brontë's conception of Heathcliff's non-Christian world view.

These interests in savage religious and sexual behaviors developed into the full-blown theory of primitive marriage expounded by John McLennan in 1865, along with Henry Sumner Maine (*Ancient Law* [1861]) and Sir John Lubbock (*On the Origin of Civilisation* [1870]). This theory began with the notion of primitive promiscuity, the idea the primal horde was a disorganized mass of undifferentiated sexual partners, and it traced the progress of society from this barbaric state up toward civilized monogamous marriage. One step in this ascent occurred when primitive man developed marriage by

capture. In *Primitive Marriage* McLennan claimed exogamous tribes murdered their own girl children in an effort to preserve scarce resources, then kidnapped and raped their neighbors' women. Marriage was based on the original abduction of women, and social relations began with the interactions generated by the attempt to get a bride from another tribe.[5] This violence marked the beginning of international relations, and eventually, when marriage by purchase emerged as an alternative to capture, it marked the origins of private property (Coward 66). In McLennan's version, male heterosexual desire is the engine of history, propelling societies out of primitive promiscuity and toward civilization.[6]

In this story, as Gail Rubin has famously pointed out, it is the men who are active, propelled by powerful heterosexual desire to initiate the crucially formative mercantile and military relations with outsiders. For not until men leave the stagnant safety of their endogamous backwaters can they generate social interaction. This idea has two important consequences for the society that supposedly springs from primitive marriage. First, its vision of social interaction is inherently a hostile one in which men's relation to other men can initially only be enacted through an antagonistic economic or military engagement, although subsequently tribes may form alliances due to their shared bonds through women. Second, only men partake of social interaction. The woman posited by the Victorian primitive marriage story is merely an object to be circulated, by trade or violence. McLennan's follower, Sir John Lubbock, surmised women wanted to be captured, but even such minimal speculation on women's agency is absent from *Primitive Marriage* (Eller 79–83). According to Elizabeth Fee, "In McLennan's theoretical system, women seem completely passive social units of property who may be either individually or collectively owned by men, but who initiate no action of their own" (30).

It is particularly interesting that primitive marriage theory emerged in the 1860s. Kathy A. Psomiades cannily points out these were the years of the great ferment over women's agency, legal status, and property ownership in marriage, between the first Matrimonial Causes Act (1857) and the Married Women's Property Act (1870) ("Heterosexual" 93–94). I would extend Psomiades's point to add this was also a period in which exceptionally active female characters populated fiction. In 1865, the year McLennan's book appeared, recent novels included *Aurora Floyd, Wives and Daughters,* and *Our Mutual Friend*, hardly featuring passive female victims at the mercy of marauding male raiders, and readers enjoyed sensation fiction plots of strong women exulting in bigamy and often murder. It is perhaps precisely because Victorian authors and activists were reconfiguring marriage as a space of female self-assertion and exploring ways to dissolve marriage that Victorian anthropologists reacted by insisting permanent monogamy was a hallmark of civilization and marital exchange was really the foundation of the modern marketplace. "Female 'inferiority' could therefore be explained by marriage – an institution designed by men to bring women into subjection," writes Coward (66).[7] In posthumously published notes, McLennan remarked marriage was, quite simply, "the union of one man and woman in a consortship for the whole of life – an 'inseparable consuetude' of life between husband and spouse, with interests the same in all things civil and religious. That idea, despite all woman's rights movements to the contrary, is that destined to prevail in the world" ("Studies" 45). The anthropologists argued that, from an original condition of lawless promiscuity, humans moved toward civilization. To threaten existing Victorian patriarchal marriage arrangements was to revert to barbarism.

The theorist who picked up the Victorian anthropological legacy in the twentieth century was Claude Lévi-Strauss, who dedicated his *Elementary Structures of Kinship* (1949) to Lewis Henry Morgan and who brought back a theory Edward Burnet Tylor had advanced in 1889 (Wolfram 166; Michie 12). Lévi-Strauss imagines marriage as a system of sexually bonded, exclusively monogamous couples. "As soon as I am forbidden a woman, she thereby becomes available to another man," he explains, "and somewhere else a man renounces a woman who thereby becomes available to me" (51). In other words, the woman cannot be "available" to more than one person, she is "available" only to a male, and her availability must be specifically sexual, since one presumes familial or friendship affection could be widely shared. Availability, for Lévi-Strauss, is faithfully and exclusively monogamously heterosexual and, indeed, sexual, with men as sexual agents and women as sexual objects. Lévi-Strauss's assumption that women solely offer sexual services for men offers a particularly clear example of the gender ideas in the anthropological tradition to which he affiliates himself.

Yet if we turn to the history of the novel, many women were "available" to other people in multiple ways. Fanny, for instance, is "available" to Mrs Norris as a quasi-servant, to Edmund as a vulnerable relation, to Lady Bertram as a helper, to Sir Thomas as a surprisingly marketable niece, to Susan as a mentor, to William as a beloved and encouraging sister, to Maria and Julia as a rival, and to Mary as a useful friend. As an unmarried young woman, Fanny lives with the Prices, the Bertrams, and at one point even contemplates living with Mrs Norris, and in each of these non-sexual cohabiting relations she performs crucial emotional and economic services. Jane Austen imagines a more complex social scene than Lévi-Strauss. Whereas Lévi-Strauss reduces a woman to one man's exclusive sexual property, Austen writes her as an agent with multifarious affective relationships in fluid family configurations over decades.

The primitive-marriage story does not work with the marriage plot that descends from Austen and privileges a companionate rationale for marriage. Cousin marriage's advantage did not stem from sex but rather from familiarity, trust, and companionability, emotions that may not be as primal but were perhaps equally appealing to Victorian readers. Cousin marriage is orthagonal to desire. It is, rather, about social and familial repair.[8] Thus while the primitive-marriage story casts women as mute prizes stolen for

sexual use, the Victorian marriage plot centers on women as psychologically deep navigators of complex relationships while embedded in varied social scenes. The assumption that marriage is driven by (male) desire that undergirds Victorian anthropological discourse contrasts markedly with the tradition of multiple relations we see in the novel. Nowhere is the stark contrast between those two visions clearer than in *Wuthering Heights*, which pulls on both discourses to make sense of its two generations' marriages.

READING *WUTHERING HEIGHTS*

Wuthering Heights may seem an odd choice for this chapter, since it most famously depicts violently erotic possessive desire, the opposite of the feelings behind cousin marriage. Indeed it was the Brontë sisters who helped popularize romantic passion in the first place. "Their fiction produced – and continues with each act of interpretation to produce – figures of modern desire," writes Nancy Armstrong, who accuses the Brontës of turning every cultural, phenomenological, or biological element into the sign of a universal, primal, crucial desire (191, 198). It is true *Wuthering Heights* does generate a version of desire as primal, timeless, and universal but that is only in the first generation, and it is no happy situation. It generates cruelty and it ends in death. It is also ambiguous in terms of endogamy, since Heathcliff both is and is not within Catherine's family. The culminating vision of *Wuthering Heights* is the opposite: a specific product of the turn to the nineteenth century, a union that succeeds in kindliness, humor, affection, and mutual support, offering a promising future. We remember the narrative of erotic violence but it is the narrative of consanguinal harmony that triumphs.

Wuthering Heights was written during the first stirrings of this interest in primitive marriage and it can be read as an anthropological document, a contact zone where the ethnographer Lockwood discovers a tribe and finds a native interpreter, Nelly, to explain its ways.[9] If the novel is a kind of ethnological report, what it records is its main male character's unmistakably savage state. Terry Eagleton writes, "Heathcliff the adult is 'natural' man in a Hobbesian sense: an appetitive exploiter to whom no tie or tradition is sacred, a callous predator violently sundering the bonds of custom and piety" (110). Indeed *Wuthering Heights* records an anthropological primitive marriage in which members of the Heights tribe and the Grange tribe swoop down to capture each other's women. "The two families exchange their daughters/sisters," notes Drew Lamonica, although neither Catherine nor Isabella (nor, in the next generation, the younger Cathy) necessarily want to be exchanged (109).[10] Catherine's and Isabella's husbands separate them from all previous ties, a grievous state of isolation from everyone they had loved, a situation that kills Catherine and nearly destroys Isabella before she can escape.

Yet it is also possible to read *Wuthering Heights* another way. Catherine, Isabella, and the younger Cathy may seem like victims of male sexual exchange but, like Fanny, each views herself as a person in a social context. Each wants to maintain relations with multiple people: parents, cousins, friends, servants. And, as we shall see, it is this wider vision that ultimately triumphs, as the younger Cathy manages, at last, a kind of marriage that differs from the violent warfare that killed her mother.

For if *Wuthering Heights* depicts the anthropological state of savagery, it also enshrines anthropology's antithesis: the idea of female character made possible in the novel. The men may see the elder Catherine as a pawn in a male sexual exchange but she views herself as a person in a social context they are inexplicably violating. Patsy Stoneman explains, "only if we regard Catherine as Edgar's 'possession' is there any logic in Heathcliff's equalizing the situation by stealing his other 'possession' – that is, Isabella." Rather, Catherine wants inclusivity, access to both men (xxix). She believes she could be "available" (to use Lévi-Strauss's term) to more than one person. She believes she could have social relations with more than one person, a goal modern readers might well regard as poignantly modest. As the carvings show in her bedchamber, she imagines she can simultaneously be Catherine Linton and Catherine Heathcliff without, moreover, losing Catherine Earnshaw. These selves coexist; "the air swarmed with Catherines" (Brontë 20). Lamonica says, "Catherine's decision to 'choose both' (and, thereby, to 'be both') is ultimately an attempt to dodge the operations of marital exchange" (106). But I would say Catherine is not trying to "dodge the operations of marital exchange," as if marital exchange were an immutable fact, but rather to stand for an alternative form of human relations that has warrant in another kind of text. She stands for the personhood the history of the marriage plot has constructed. "Marital exchange" is an anthropological construct, but sociality is a novelistic tradition.

Stoneman has identified Catherine's wish to have both Heathcliff and Edgar as a literary artifact in itself, a free-love imperative deriving from Emily Brontë's reading of Shelley's "Epipsychidion." Yet the text gives us no reason for assuming Catherine intends her relation to both men to be sexual, except for our own tendency to see erotic desire as the motivator for relationships. What she wants is not so much free love as what we might see, pitiably, as free society: the company of more than one person. Catherine wants different, and not necessarily sexual, forms of companionship from each man. She wants a familiar, mutually respectful marriage with Edgar and a romantic, passionate marriage with Heathcliff; or perhaps a friendly companionship with Edgar and an intense cohabitation with Heathcliff; or perhaps a marriage with Edgar and a close friendship with Heathcliff. The possibilities are numerous, simultaneous, and unsettled, capable of altering over time and taking in the possibility of changing future alliances like the one Catherine improbably foresees between Edgar and Heathcliff. These

individuals are not sorted into exclusive permanent dyads or stable small units or isolated nuclear-family cells.

One reason Heathcliff cannot comprehend Catherine's wishes is he has lived a life devoid of books. Heathcliff has had no experience of tracing others' feelings. In youth, Heathcliff gives up language, his hard work extinguishing "any love for books" while he enters what Nelly tartly calls "an almost idiotic excess of unsociable moroseness" (68). Exiled from reading, Heathcliff will gain his adult knowledge instead from legal and economic structures of power. He will be unable to comprehend Catherine's embrace of multiple relationships. Under his adult rule, Wuthering Heights is a place where it is almost impossible, as Isabella finds, "to preserve the common sympathies of human nature" (136). He has the greatest contempt for anyone "picturing in me a hero of romance," interestingly foreclosing the way many readers have responded to him (149). Yet the fact he is in a novel, and the fact *Wuthering Heights* is a realist novel as well as a Gothic thriller, guarantee characters will develop in ways Heathcliff lacks the capacity to predict (Pykett, Rena-Dozier). Hareton proves educable; Linton and the younger Cathy show qualities their elders do not expect. Heathcliff cannot understand his own fiction. Edgar, too, who can see Heathcliff only as a runaway servant cannot possibly offer the kind of complex reading Catherine requires (96).

For this novel enacts a much more Victorian idea of psychological depth than anything Heathcliff or Edgar can comprehend. Perhaps this is because its narrator, Nelly, points out, "I have read more than you would fancy, Mr. Lockwood. You could not open a book in this library that I have not looked into, and got something out of also" (63). Women who tell the story, steeped in books, ultimately demonstrate a different kind of narrative than the men with their narrow views of female exchange. Whether the self-taught Nelly, the Romantic literature reader Isabella, or the writer Catherine, the women inhabit a textual tradition neither Edgar nor Heathcliff share.

Significantly, the only male who wants to read is Hareton. Kate Flint remarks, "it is Cathy who teaches Hareton to read, thus giving him the key to unlock literature, the very thing which, the novel demonstrates by its own existence, has the potential to unsettle, to pose questions rather than provide answers" (177). Hareton, not Heathcliff, is thus fit to understand his own novel. For we track Hareton's tentative shame about his illiteracy, his painstaking efforts at self-education, his eagerness to offer books to Cathy, and his yearning to have Cathy read to him. Learning to read, Hareton comes to understand character in every sense; he intuits Cathy's underlying kindness in spite of the cruelty of her behavior. Cathy and Hareton share fidelity to a world of rich imagination Heathcliff never knows, a world in which one can have a finer sense of character and an expanded understanding of relations amongst characters than Heathcliff ever realizes.

Through Heathcliff and Edgar, *Wuthering Heights* rehearses the fatal limits of the anthropological understanding of marriage, demonstrating

the need for creative, loving, literate alternatives. Although ruthless sexual exchange kills Catherine, the next version of Cathy will finally be able to achieve the friendly goal of companionate marriage. In her agony Catherine cries, "I'll try to break their hearts by breaking my own" (116). But a generation later, her daughter vows, "Hareton – you are my cousin, and you shall own me," and in the reworking of that word "own," from possessive ownership to verbal acknowledgement, from violence to recognition, we have the whole work the marriage in *Wuthering Heights* is trying to do (278). Edgar and Heathcliff wanted to "own" the elder Catherine in a legal and sexual sense, and all Catherine can do in response is to insist she "own[s]" her own heart. Stuck in the language of possessiveness, forced to match violence with other violence, there is no way out. But Hareton must be coaxed to "own" the younger Cathy, to enter into relationship with her.

We see this idea succeeding in the scene where Cathy teaches Hareton to read the word "contrary." Its staging of opposition harmoniously surmounted offers us a scene of an alternative understanding of cousin marriage. What Cathy teaches Hareton, specifically, is to turn the word "contrary" into a harmony. "'Con-*trary*!' said a voice, as sweet as a silver bell – 'That for the third time, you dunce! I'm not going to tell you again – Recollect, or I pull your hair!' 'Contrary, then,' answered another, in deep, but softened tones. 'And now, kiss me, for minding so well'" (307). They enact the emotional ambiguity of love in *Wuthering Heights* in this scene: kisses and hair-pulling, sweetness and insults at once. They make the scene of reading into a social interaction, not a solitary communion with a book in a private, silent space.

"Contrary," in fact, is in dialogue with itself, its two pronunciations coexisting in one historical moment. For according to the *OED*, the accepted pronunciation of the word in the eighteenth century is indeed the one Hareton offers. The entry cites an eighteenth-century source saying the first syllable should be stressed but adds this preference has now been reversed.[11] Hareton's ambiguous pronunciation places him in the transitional era from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century, and in a transitional class as well. His first-syllable stress marks the fact his linguistic training from gentry speakers occurred decades ago, and he has had no subsequent contact with more modern interlocutors.

But the scene is also a microcosm of the novel as a whole. It references the "contrary" families of the Lintons and the Earnshaws learning to harmonize in their descendants, turning their violence into affectionate play. This cousin marriage is an alternative to the sterile world of sexual violence that destroyed the older generation. It is also, of course, the story of Hareton and Cathy's courtship, their opposition dissolving into affection. When Hareton mispronounces the word, stressing the first syllable, he emphasizes "con," which means "with" but also "against." By "con[ning]" his lesson, he learns opposites can chime in together.

Emily Brontë's novel describes the way the modern family becomes instituted. How do you invent a family that is a domestic haven? You work

through and kill off its unruly members – its racially and classed others, its rebellious women – and you marry the remaining cousins to one another to reinforce the newly purified version. It happens in *Mansfield Park* and it happens in *Wuthering Heights*. In other words, the goal is to fix family relations, which has little to do with desire. That is why desire is not very relevant in cousin marriages. Characters may or may not feel an erotic pull to each other, but it is subsidiary to the more central motivations for marriage. In Hareton and Cathy's cousin marriage, we see their shared care for their family estate – the repaired gate, the flowers – before we see them kiss. But as we all know, there is an unresolved residue. The ghosts of Catherine and Heathcliff still walk. The new life of endogamous harmony is haunted by the old, fierce violence, a violence that will help inform the mainstream story of marriage, just as Catherine and Heathcliff have become the dominant characters in readers' experience of the novel (and in virtually all film versions). Catherine and Heathcliff fit what we regard as the truth of romantic union, with their fierce, exclusive erotic passion; Cathy and Hareton seem disappointingly quaint, conventional, old-fashioned types. But what I have been arguing in this essay is that the system they embody had value, too, and it is a value we ought to recognize. What cousin marriage does is to join in holy matrimony those who had previously been opposed to one another and to overwrite the violent, monogamous, anthropological narrative with social harmony. Instead of female abduction, we get the cousin marriage plot; the sound of a voice like a "silver bell," a wedding bell, gets the last note in the story.

From *Mansfield Park* through *Wuthering Heights,* cousin marriage represents an older regime of marriage that stresses multiple social relations that value women's multiple capacities, instead of seeing marriage as an individual, privatized, sexual choice. Modern readers see love for a stranger as normative and love for a relation as perverse. But in the nineteenth-century marriage plot, these relations are quite frequently reversed. In the period in which *Wuthering Heights* and *Mansfield Park* are set, it is horrifyingly selfish to marry for desire and admirable to contract a marriage that consolidates and extends existing social relations under the aegis of trusting, companionable affection. If endogamous marriages seem queer today, we must remember that two hundred years ago, they seemed "the only natural thing" (Nightingale 47). What makes family queer is historically variable. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, desire for a stranger was the queerest thing of all.

NOTES

1. I use Stone because he articulates this argument most vividly without endorsing *The Family, Sex, and Marriage*'s problematically selective evidence or excessive claims for the emotional superiority of the modern family.

2. *Sense and Sensibility* is the only other Austen novel that begins a generation or two before its primary characters.
3. Edmund's future living gets sold to pay off Tom's debts. As Sir Thomas says, "I trust I may pity your feelings as a brother on the occasion. You have robbed Edmund for ten, twenty, thirty years, perhaps for life, of more than half the income which ought to be his" (Austen 20).
4. Even the relatively harmonious Grant marriage is characterized by Mrs Grant's anxieties about Mr Grant's fussiness.
5. George Stocking points out that although Victorian anthropologists differed from McLennan in specific points, they all generally accepted his view of the development of human marriage. "They all tended to view marriage in terms of the control of human sexuality" and accepted the idea of primitive promiscuity (204).
6. Other anthropologists offered variations on McLennan's story, with Maine featuring voluntary contract rather than force and Lubbock imagining what he called a "communal marriage" rather than an individual abduction. These thinkers (including Darwin and J. J. Atkinson), moreover, agreed men probably practiced polygamy but disagreed whether it was likely women ever practiced polyandry. In spite of these differences, however, what the anthropologists shared was an assumption that marriage was progressing toward civilization and the history of marriage featured sexually aggressive males and sexually recalcitrant females.
7. George Stocking has noted "that these years were also very nearly the exact period of the anthropological debate over the evolutionary priority of 'matriarchal' marriage seems scarcely a historical coincidence" (201). "Matriarchal marriage" refers to the discovery that some people organized descent, kinship, and inheritance through the maternal line rather than the paternal one, a prospect Victorian ethnographers found profoundly disturbing. Matriarchy is another version of anthropology's anxiety about female dominance in the 1860s.
8. Of course, the primitive-marriage story may work with some Victorian novels. *Dracula,* for instance, can be read as men fighting over the sexual ownership of women who are abducted from one group by a dangerous stranger (Stevenson, "Vampire"). Certainly anthropological work informs those later nineteenth-century narratives that are interested in savagery, male sexual aggression, and female sexual passivity.
9. Goetz sees *Wuthering Heights* as a perfect example of a Lévi-Straussian tribal society.
10. John Allen Stevenson points out the Grange and the Heights are set up for a perfectly symmetrical Lévi-Straussian exchange. Each family has one daughter and one son needing a wife, but Heathcliff's advent disrupts this exchange ("Heathcliff" 77).
11. A writer in 1791 remarked, "the accent is invariably placed on the first syllable by all correct speakers, and as constantly removed to the second by the illiterate and vulgar" but the *OED* editors remark that in present-day usage, "the words 'placed on' and 'removed to' should change places." It is unclear whether "the present-day usage" refers to the original 1893 edition or the revised 1933 edition but either way, it means the accent shifted during the nineteenth century.

WORKS CITED

Armstrong, Nancy. *Desire and Domestic Fiction: A Political History of the Novel.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1987.

Atkinson, James Jasper and Andrew Lang. *Social Origins: Primal Law.* New York: Longmans, Green, and Co, 1903.

Austen, Jane. *Mansfield Park.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1990.

Brontë, Emily. *Wuthering Heights.* New York: Penguin Classics, 1995.

Butler, Marilyn. *Jane Austen and the War of Ideas.* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975.

"Comte." *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* 53:329 (March 1843), 397–414.

"Contrary." *Oxford English Dictionary.* 1933.

Coontz, Stephanie. *Marriage, A History: How Love Conquered Marriage.* New York: Penguin, 2006.

Corbett, Mary Jean. *Family Likeness: Sex, Marriage, and Incest from Jane Austen to Virginia Woolf.* Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008.

Coward, Rosalind. *Patriarchal Precedents: Sexuality and Social Relations.* London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1983.

Eagleton, Terry. *Myths of Power: A Marxist Study of the Brontës.* London: Macmillan Press, 1975.

Eller, Cynthia. *Gentlemen and Amazons: The Myth of Matriarchal Prehistory, 1861–1900.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011.

Elizabeth Fee. "The Sexual Politics of Victorian Social Anthropology," *Feminist Studies* 1 (1973): 23–39.

Gerin, Winifred. *Emily Brontë.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1971.

Goetz, William R. "Genealogy and Incest in *Wuthering Heights.*" *Studies in the Novel* 14:4 (1982): 359–76.

Green, Katherine Sobba. *The Courtship Novel 1740-1820: A Feminized Genre.* Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1991.

Gruner, Elizabeth Rose. "Born and Made: Sisters, Brothers, and the Deceased Wife's Sister Bill." *Signs* 24:2 (1999): 423–47.

Haggerty, George. "Fanny Price: Is she solemn? – Is she queer? – Is she prudish?" *Eighteenth Century: Theory and Interpretation* 53:2 (2012): 175–88.

Houlbrooke, Ralph A. *The English Family 1450-1700.* London: Longman, 1984.

Hudson, Glenda A. *Sibling Love and Incest in Jane Austen's Fiction.* New York: St Martin's Press, 1992.

Kuper, Adam. *Incest and Influence: The Private Life of Bourgeois England.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009.

Lamonica, Drew. *"We Are Three Sisters": Self and Family in the Writing of the Brontës.* Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri Press, 2003.

Lévi-Strauss, Claude. *The Elementary Structures of Kinship.* Trans. James Harle Bell and John Richard von Sturmer. Ed. Rodney Needham. Oston: Beacon Press, 1969.

Maine, Henry Sumner. *Ancient Law: Its Connection With the Early History of Society, and its Relation to Modern Ideas.* New York: Charles Scribner, 1864.

McLennan, John. *Primitive Marriage: An Inquiry Into the Origin of the Form of Capture in Marriage Ceremonies.* Edinburgh: Adam and Charles Black, 1865.

———. *Studies in Ancient History, Second Series.* London: Macmillan, 1896.

Morgan, Lewis Henry. *Ancient Society.* Ed. Eleanor Burke Leacock. Gloucester: P. Smith, 1977.

Nicholson, Linda J. *Gender and History: The Limits of Social Theory in the Age of the Family.* New York: Columbia University Press, 1986.

Nightingale, Florence. "Cassandra." *Florence Nightingale's Cassandra.* New York: Feminist Press, 1979.

"On Population." *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* 48 (December 1840): 808–24.

Perry, Ruth. *Novel Relations: The Transformation of Kinship in English Literature and Culture, 1748–1818.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

Psomiades, Kathy A. "He Knew He Was Right: the Sensational Tyranny of the Sexual Contract and the Problem of Liberal Politics." *The Politics of Gender in Anthony Trollope's Novels.* Eds. H. M. Marwick, Deborah Morse and Regenia Gagnier. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2009, 31–44.

———. "Heterosexual Exchange and Other Victorian Fictions: *The Eustace Diamonds and Victorian Anthropology.*" *Novel* 33.1 (1999): 93–118.

———. "The Marriage Plot in Theory," *Novel* 43:1 (2010): 53–59.

Pykett, Lyn. *Emily Brontë.* New York: Barnes & Noble Books, 1989.

Rena-Dozier, Emily. "Gothic Criticisms: Wuthering Heights and Nineteenth-Century Literary Criticism." *ELH* 77:3 (2010): 757–75.

Rubin, Gayle. "The Traffic in Women: Notes on the 'Political Economy' of Sex." *Feminist Anthropology: A Reader.* Ed. Ellen Lewin. Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, 2006, 87–106.

Stevenson, John Allen. "'Heathcliff is Me!': Wuthering Heights and the Question of Likeness." *Nineteenth-Century Literature* 43:1 (1988): 60–81.

———. "A Vampire in the Mirror: The Sexuality of Dracula." *PMLA* 103:2 (1988): 139–49.

Stocking, George. *Victorian Anthropology.* New York: Free Press, 1987.

Stone, Lawrence. *The Family, Sex, and Marriage in England, 1500–1800.* New York: Harper & Row, 1977.

Stoneman, Patsy. "Introduction." *Wuthering Heights.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1995.

———. "Catherine Earnshaw's Journey to Her Home Among the Dead: Fresh Thoughts on *Wuthering Heights* and 'Epipsychidion.'" *The Review of English Studies* 47:188 (1996): 52–33.

Watt, Ian. *The Rise of the Novel: Studies in Defoe, Richardson and Fielding.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1957.

Wolfram, Sybil. *In-Laws and Out-Laws: Kinship and Marriage in England.* London: Croom Helm, 1987.

Routledge Studies in Nineteenth-Century Literature

1 Nineteenth-Century Narratives of Contagion
'Our Feverish Contact'
Allan Conrad Christensen

2 Victorian Servants, Class, and the Politics of Literacy
Jean Fernandez

3 Christian and Lyric Tradition in Victorian Women's Poetry
F. Elizabeth Gray

4 Class, Culture and Suburban Anxieties in the Victorian Era
Lara Baker Whelan

5 Antebellum American Women Writers and the Road
American Mobilities
Susan L. Roberson

6 Domesticity and Design in American Women's Lives and Literature
Stowe, Alcott, Cather, and Wharton Writing Home
Caroline Hellman

7 The Textual Condition of Nineteenth-Century Literature
Josephine Guy and Ian Small

8 Narrative Hospitality in Late Victorian Fiction
Novel Ethics
Rachel Hollander

9 Science and Religion in Neo-Victorian Novels
Eye of the Ichthyosaur
John Glendening

10 Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Aging in Nineteenth-Century Culture
Edited by Katharina Boehm, Anna Farkas, and Anne-Julia Zwierlein

11 A Female Poetics of Empire
From Eliot to Woolf
Julia Kuehn

12 Neo-Victorian Literature and Culture
Immersions and Revisitations
Edited by Nadine Boehm-Schnitker and Susanne Gruss

13 Dickens' Novels as Poetry
Allegory and Literature of the City
Jeremy Tambling

14 Pets and Domesticity in Victorian Literature and Culture
Animality, Queer Relations, and the Victorian Family
Monica Flegel

15 Queer Victorian Families
Curious Relations in Literature
Edited by Duc Dau and Shale Preston

Queer Victorian Families

Curious Relations in Literature

Edited by Duc Dau and Shale Preston

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group
NEW YORK AND LONDON

First published 2015
by Routledge
711 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017

and by Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data

Queer Victorian families : curious relations in literature / edited by
Duc Dau and Shale Preston.
pages cm. — (Routledge studies in nineteenth century literature ; 15)
Includes index.
1. English literature—19th century—History and criticism.
2. Families in literature. I. Dau, Duc, editor.
II. Preston, Shale, 1965- editor.
PR468.F34Q44 2015
820.9'355—dc23 2014036278

ISBN: 978-1-138-79245-6(hbk)
ISBN: 978-1-315-76206-7(ebk)

Typeset in Sabon
by codeMantra

Printed and bound in the United States of America by Publishers Graphics, LLC on sustainably sourced paper.

Contents

Acknowledgments

We thank Claudia Nelson and Talia Schaffer for their sage advice, warm encouragement, and for being such a joy to work with. We are also delighted with the exciting contributions made by the authors to this collection.

We are pleased that this collection has found a publisher in Routledge. We extend our thanks in particular to editors Nancy Chen, Joshua Wells, and Emily Ross. We would also like to acknowledge the cogent and helpful input of the four anonymous reviewers of the original book proposal.

Duc would like to thank Shale Preston for conceiving the idea of the collection and for sharing in the first-time joys and pangs of bringing a collection into the world. She is grateful to colleagues with whom she has discussed this project, in particular, David Barrie, Rob Cover, Louise D'Arcens, Kieran Dolin, Jo Hawkins, Deborah Lutz, Lesley O'Brien, Frederick Roden, Hila Shachar, Alecia Simmonds, Mandy Treagus, Viv Westbrook, and Tess Williams. Special thanks are reserved for Zoë Hyde. Duc also acknowledges the efforts of her hard-working research assistant, Marina Gerzic. Duc's contribution was supported by an ARC Discovery Early Career Researcher Award and the UWA ECR Fellowship Support Program.

Shale would like to thank Duc Dau for her wonderfully open and adventurous mind, erudition, tenacity and uncompromising brand of excellence. She acknowledges with gratitude the kind assistance of the Document Supply staff at Macquarie University's library and the ongoing support of the University's English Department. Special thanks also go to her beautiful dog and "animal child," Emily, who provided her unconditional love and peerless companionship over the course of the project.

Finally, we would like to acknowledge all of the marvellous queer theoretical scholarship that has inspired our journey along the various and often all too curious arms of the Victorian family tree.

Charles Dickens, and Thomas Hardy. Her current research focuses on remarriage and stepfamilies in Victorian literature and culture.

Sarah E. Kersh is a Visiting Assistant Professor at Dickinson College, Carlisle, Pennsylvania. Her book project, *Naked Novels: Victorian Amatory Sonnet Sequences and the Problem of Marriage*, argues for the political worth of the amatory sonnet sequence as a resistance to the legal and social institution of Victorian marriage. In addition, she is exploring a second project centered on the construction of authorship and the role of social networks in the writings of fin-de-siècle author Michael Field.

Alec Magnet is a doctoral candidate in English at the Graduate Center, City University of New York CUNY. His dissertation examines queer aesthetics and echoes of the Gothic in nineteenth-century British and American literature. An adjunct lecturer at The City College of New York, he has designed and taught classes on literature and queer history, as well as on gender and the family in nineteenth-century literature.

Claudia Nelson is a Professor of English at Texas A&M University. Her work focuses primarily on childhood and family studies in the nineteenth century. She has co-edited four collections of critical essays and is the author of five monographs, most recently *Family Ties in Victorian England* (2007) and *Precocious Children and Childish Adults: Age Inversion in Victorian England* (2012).

Tracy Olverson is a Lecturer in Literary Studies in the School of Humanities and Communication Arts at the University of Western Sydney. Her primary area of research is on nineteenth-century women's appropriation of classical literature and culture and the intersections between politics and culture. She has published on a variety of Victorian women writers, including Amy Levy, Michael Field, and Emily Pfeiffer, all of whom feature in her recent monograph *Women Writers and the Dark Side of Late-Victorian Hellenism* (2010).

Shale Preston is an Honorary Research Fellow in the Department of English at Macquarie University. She is the author of *Dickens and the Despised Mother: A Critical Reading of Three Autobiographical Novels* (2013) and has published a range of articles and book chapters on the representation of gender and sexuality in Dickens's fiction and the relationship between Dickens's oeuvre and contemporary philosophy.

Talia Schaffer is a Professor of English at Queens College CUNY and the Graduate Center CUNY. She is the author of *Novel Craft: Victorian Domestic Handicraft and Nineteenth-Century Fiction* (2011); *The Forgotten Female Aesthetes: Literary Culture in Late-Victorian England* (2001); co-editor with Kathy A. Psomiades of *Women and British Aestheticism* (1999); editor of Lucas Malet's 1901 novel *The History of Sir Richard Calmady* (2003); and editor of *Literature and Culture at the Fin de Siècle* (2006). She has published widely on non-canonical women writers, material culture, popular fiction, aestheticism, and late-Victorian texts. She is currently working on a book on "familiar marriage," a rival to romantic unions in Victorian marriage plots.

Michael Shaw is an AHRC-funded PhD candidate at the University of Glasgow. His doctoral research explores fin-de-siècle culture in Scotland, examining the reactions to aestheticism and decadence in Scotland and how these discussions were influenced by the resurgence of nationalism, internationalism, and the resistance to Enlightenment stadialism in the period. He is currently compiling a bibliography of criticism on William Sharp, one of the most prolific Neo-Pagans in Scotland, to be published as part of the University of London's The William Sharp/Fiona Macleod Archive, and has contributed to the British Library's *Catalogue of Photographically Illustrated Books, 1839–1914*.

Clare Walker Gore is a PhD student at Selwyn College, Cambridge. Her AHRC-funded PhD research is on representations of the disabled body in nineteenth-century fiction, with a particular focus on Charles Dickens, Wilkie Collins, Charlotte M. Yonge, and Dinah Mulock Craik. She has published work in *Nineteenth-Century Gender Studies* and *Nineteenth-Century Contexts*, and is currently working on a new edition of Dinah Mulock Craik's *A Noble Life*.

Laura White is the John E. Weaver Professor of English at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. She is the author of *Romance, Language, and Education in Jane Austen's Novels* (1988) and *Jane Austen's Anglicanism* (2011) as well as the editor of *Critical Essays on Jane Austen* (1998). She has published widely on Austen and on interdisciplinary approaches to Victorian literature. Her current book project on Lewis Carroll is titled *Alice and the Victorian Culture Wars*.