tern he took from Benjamin Franklin, who was a Mason and therefore had committed himself in his youth to the recovery of prelapsarian paradise. The reader is inclined to go along with Hutchins on some of these evidentiary tightropes because the book's payoff is so considerable, but the repeated stretches can seem gratuitous in an otherwise compelling study.

In the end and overall, Hutchins is convincing that Edenic visions lay near the heart of early New England culture, and he has used those visions artfully in helping to bring nuanced coherence to the postbinary historiography of the period and the region. *Inventing Eden* is an insightful book, a welcome participant in a conversation about early New England that is all the more interesting for its creative efforts to escape the dichotomies of past debates.

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New World Courtships: Transatlantic Alternatives to Companionate Marriage

MELISSA M. ADAMS-CAMPBELL
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204 pp.

Melissa M. Adams-Campbell's *New World Courtships* is an important contribution to the scholarship on women, marriage, and families in the eighteenth-century Atlantic world, including the construction and contestation of the Anglo-American ideal of companionate marriage. The "comparative marriage plot," Adams-Campbell argues, undermined the paradigm of what could or should constitute normative social relations by focusing on cultural differences in courtship and marriage practice. By presenting alternatives to companionate marriage, the late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century novels examined in this volume explore the possibilities opened by the transatlantic encounter, destabilizing the connection between claims of anglophone women's freedom in affection-based companionate marriage and British claims of nationalist superiority.

New World Courtships is admirably comparative in framework and approach as well as subject. Ranging from genre studies of eighteenth century protoethnographic "marriage-rite" compilations to cross-cultural romance

narratives and postcolonial seduction plots, and from British Canada to revolutionary Haiti, Adams-Campbell convincingly illustrates the disruptive possibilities of the comparative "New World" marriage plot. The introductory note regarding the use of *New World* as a framework is well taken and underlines the major intervention of this work: that cross-cultural interaction in North American and Caribbean colonies opened a range of alternatives to companionate marriage in late eighteenth-century and early nineteenth-century anglophone fiction and undermined monocultural assumptions of nationalist superiority. In doing so, Adams-Campbell widens the scope of feminist literary analysis of marriage narratives in dialogue with existing feminist scholarship on the novel's use in shaping and promoting normative gender relations. Although Adams-Campbell allows that some of the novels considered in *New World Courtships* reinforce imperialist, racial, and gender hierarchies through their use of a comparative marriage plot, she convincingly shows that the comparative marriage plot opened fictional spaces in which to explore alternatives and ultimately question the normative British and American narrative of women's advancement through marriage.

In contrast to the marriage plot, with its denouement in the heroine's happy marriage or her death and its rhetorical connection to stadial advancement, the comparative marriage plot explores the possibilities raised by alternative marital relations to challenge Enlightenment-era claims that women's progress was advanced by companionate marriage. Adams-Campbell at times overstates recent historians' uncomplicated acceptance of marriage- and gender-based British claims to nationalist superiority, but nevertheless shows that comparative marriage plots unsettled the normative connection between marital and state relations. The analysis offered by *New World Courtships* also complicates our understanding of the use of the romance novel to propagate and maintain a gendered status quo, demonstrating a critical awareness of the restrictive narrative and sociopolitical options available to women in the canonical marriage plot.

Each chapter explores the comparative possibilities of a text or texts in detail, opening with a generic examination of courtship in marriage-rite compilations, stadial theory, and anglophone novels typified by the anonymous *The Female American; or, The Adventures of Unca Eliza Winkfield* (1767). The first chapter provides a solid foundation for the rest of the volume, both examining the intersections between comparative genres and

making the case for "why marriage mattered then" (21). Adams-Campbell's reading of *The Female American* makes an especially strong case for the unsettling possibilities raised by the comparative marriage plot novel, examining the biracial New England native Unca Eliza's repeated rejection of British suitors as a critique of the supposed privileges of companionate marriage. This section offers a nuanced interpretation of the novel's limitations in speaking to the lived experience of indigenous women. At the same time, it persuasively illustrates the critiques of and alternatives to companionate marriage raised in the novel, in contrast to contemporary marriage-rite compilations and stadial theory, which centered on proving the superiority of British gender roles and courtship rituals. Adams-Campbell juxtaposes Unca Eliza's Robinsonade adventures before marriage with her unhappy happy ending and continued narrative work after marriage, arguing that the comparative romance narratives offered a more flexible space to consider the ways women experience satisfaction and relationships inside and outside of marriage.

The second chapter, on Frances Brooke's *The History of Emily Montague* (1769), argues that the comparative marriage plot unsettles the accepted superiority of British women's advanced status through comparison with Wendat and Mohawk (Iroquois) women's supposed drudgery in arranged marriages. To do so, Adams-Campbell integrates deconstruction of Brooke's likely protoethnographic sources (the familiar *Jesuit Relations* of Lafitau and Charlevoix) and her own oral history interviews conducted at the Akwasasne Mohawk Reservation. Adams-Campbell historicizes her decolonial use of these interviews well, providing the necessary context for a reader unfamiliar with the time line of Iroquois history to understand the importance of including indigenous critique of the settler colonial archive and the major change over time separating fictionalized Mohawk marriage practices in *Emily Montague* and in oral history conducted in the present. Brooke's comparative marriage plot in *Emily Montague* juxtaposes Mohawk women's political rights with their lack of romantic rights vis-à-vis communally arranged marriage to celebrate British women's advancement in romantic, individually chosen marriage. Adams-Campbell juxtaposes this fictional depiction with oral history to contextualize Mohawk marriage practice and read against the grain of Brooke's imperialist intent, illustrating the discursive space opened even by this dismissal of indigenous women's agency in alternative marriage structures.

Subsequent chapters on Leonora Sansay's *Secret History* (1808), her *Laura* (1809), and the anonymously published *The Woman of Colour: A Tale* (1808) demonstrate the fruitful possibilities of comparative geography, juxtaposing Haiti, Philadelphia, Jamaica, and England. Adams-Campell shows that these novels complicate the denouement of the marriage plot by "writing back" and rejecting the marriage plot's standard conclusion of death or marriage. Adams-Campbell demonstrates how Sansay, by comparing the romantic experience of many different classes and races of women in revolutionary Haiti and later early Republic Philadelphia, envisions a homosocial alternative for single women outside the canonical marriage plot. Sansay's epistolary *Secret History*, based on her own firsthand experience of the Haitian Revolution, catalogues the marital and nonmarital relationships of Saint-Domingue through the letters of two American narrators, sisters Mary and Clara. The novel's focus on romance in a time of economic, political, and racial upheaval provides the basis of a larger critique of anglophone marriage customs and the limitations placed on women inside and outside the bounds of marriage. Adams-Campbell's analysis of Sansay's later novel *Laura* shows that Sansay's narrative return to the United States limited the range of possible alternatives while nevertheless still rejecting the canonical marriage plot.

The comparative framework and approach of *New World Courtships* is at its best in these chapters juxtaposing geography and romance as Adams-Campbell demonstrates the ways possibilities open and close as characters move between Canada and England, Haiti and the United States, and most clearly in *The Woman of Colour*. Adams-Campbell argues that the titular character, Olivia Fairfield, a biracial daughter of a black enslaved woman and an English master, forces a critique when the happy ending of the canonical marriage plot is unfairly taken from her. When Olivia is denied her marriage in England through the return of her intended husband's presumed-dead first wife, she rejects the alternative fates of death or dishonor offered by the canonical marriage and seduction plots. Adams-Campbell argues that this rejection and Olivia's return to Jamaica as a professed widow who serves as patroness to others in need refigured the Caribbean as a legitimate domestic space on the model of the domestic novel.

The final chapter, on Yankee bundling (or premarital bed sharing) in a range of texts from "Yankee Doodle" to the picaresque novel *The Life and Adventures of Obadiah Benjamin Franklin Bloomfield, M.D.* (1818),

offers a reading of the new American nation as itself inherently comparative and diverse in its range of romantic practice and discourse. Although *Obadiah* is a satirical piece, Adams-Campbell demonstrates how it articulates an early national definition of place through romantic practice and discourse, skewering the Yankee practice of bundling and meandering through the wildly diverse range of American romantic practice. The titular Obadiah's ribald travels play on the comparative genres surveyed earlier in *New World Courtships*, and Adams-Campbell argues that the novel celebrates the intersection of local, regional, multicultural, and transatlantic romantic practice in the early Republic. By turns vulgar and sentimental, Obadiah's own fascination with the variety of American romantic practices satirizes contemporary attempts to describe a national character via the marriage plot.

The epilogue highlights the important timeliness of the topic; sent to print in early 2015, *New World Courtships* was published nearly simultaneously with the US Supreme Court's historic June 2015 ruling on same-sex marriage. Adams-Campbell's epilogue neatly connects the variety of alternatives to companionate marriage in early America to the contemporary triumph of the companionate marriage ideal in everything from popular culture to legal rulings with a nuanced and thoughtful discussion of the alternative household and family structures excluded from the legal benefits of marriage even as the right to marry expands. The epilogue raises the question of why the alternatives explored in eighteenth-century comparative marriage plots closed by the nineteenth century, but this is an opportunity for future research rather than a shortcoming.

New World Courtships is an engaging, insightful analysis of the possibilities raised in transatlantic texts by cross-cultural interaction and a model of the scholarly potential for comparative methodology. The answer to the volume's framing questions of *why marriage mattered then* and *why marriage matters now* is threaded throughout: like any social institution, companionate marriage is one among many systems for structuring sex, social ties, families, and relationships to the state. The transatlantic alternatives and comparative possibilities examined in New World Courtships are an important illustration of the long-standing diversity of marital practice and discourse.

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