HENRY JAMES, WOMEN AND REALISM

Women were hugely important to Henry James, both in his vividly drawn female characters and in his relationships with female relatives and friends. Combining biography with literary criticism and theoretical inquiry, Victoria Coulson explores James’s relationships with three of the most important women in his life: his friends the novelists Constance Fenimore Woolson and Edith Wharton, and his sister Alice James, who composed a significant diary in the last years of her life. These writers shared not only their attitudes to gender and sexuality, but also their affinity for a certain form of literary representation, which Coulson defines as ‘ambivalent realism’. The book draws on a diverse range of sources from fiction, autobiography, theatre reviews, travel writing, private journals and correspondence. Coulson argues, compellingly, that the personal lives and literary works of these four writers manifest a widespread cultural ambivalence about gender identity at the end of the nineteenth century.

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Abbreviations

Full details of all works cited are given in the Bibliography. The following abbreviations are used throughout the book:

CFW  Constance Fenimore Woolson, *Constance Fenimore Woolson*, arr. and ed. Clare Benedict (London: Ellis, 1932)
EA  Constance Fenimore Woolson, *East Angels* (London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle, & Rivington, 1886)
List of abbreviations

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<th>Abbreviation</th>
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<tr>
<td>RK</td>
<td>Constance Fenimore Woolson, <em>Rodman the Keeper: Southern Sketches</em> (New York: Appleton, 1880)</td>
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<td>SP</td>
<td>Henry James, <em>The Spoils of Poynton</em> (1897) (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1971)</td>
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<td>STP</td>
<td>Henry James, <em>The Sense of the Past</em> (New York: Scribners, 1917)</td>
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<tr>
<td>TA</td>
<td>Henry James, <em>The American</em> (New York: Scribners, 1907)</td>
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