

*Writing the Self? Love and the Letter in England, c. 1660–c. 1760**

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I A Woman's 'Secret Anguish'

Between August and December 1742, Thomas Mascall, an Attorney from St Mary-le-bow, Durham, received six letters from Ursula Watson, a merchant's niece from Houghton-le-Spring in Sunderland.¹ Responding to Thomas's concern about her relationship with one Thomas Griffith, Ursula wrote to assure Mascall that she loved only him. In her letters, she expressed remorse for the sorrow she had caused Mascall and fear that her actions had lessened his regard for her. Invoking the style and form of words found in the Common Prayer Book – a common practice in courting rituals – Ursula expressed an urgent desire that their relationship would continue 'till Death us do part'.² Less than a year later, Ursula apparently had second thoughts. She denied having a relationship with Mascall, claiming that any intimations of a contract had been 'careless and unintentional'.³ Infuriated by Ursula's rejection, and the fact that Ursula was now betrothed to Griffith, Mascall appeared before the Consistory Court of Durham, and later the appeal Court of York. He testified that after a courtship lasting two years, a promise to marry had been exchanged between himself and Ursula on four occasions.⁴ If correct, Ursula could have been forced to cohabit with Mascall as his wife, for a verbal contract in the present tense was legally binding.⁵ Ursula was therefore to regret the letters she had sent, for they were exhibited as evidence against her.⁶ And despite her subsequent disavowal of the intent, though not the authorship of those letters, the 'secret anguish' they revealed seemed to support Mascall's claims.⁷ Ursula's letters are reproduced in

appendix one as they were transcribed by the court clerk. Unfortunately, the original letters do not survive.

Before we examine the socio-cultural meanings of Ursula's letters, and what they tell us about emotional experience and expression in long eighteenth-century England, we need to consider their circumstances of production. Relations between Ursula and Mascall had been deteriorating since the previous February, when Mascall first accused her of infidelity. Mascall claimed that by that time he and Ursula had embarked on a sexual relationship, Mascall having 'free access to ... Ursula Watson' on several occasions, particularly on 25 February 1742 when they 'had carnall copulation of each others bodys three times'.⁸ According to Mascall, this physical exchange was emblematic of their contract, coming after a series of verbal and material exchanges, cemented by his gift to Ursula of a wedding ring.⁹ Ursula obviously felt differently. Although she had accepted Mascall's gifts, kept company with him, and even advised on the re-decoration of his house, Ursula continued to spend time with Griffith. Time and again Mascall pressed Ursula to reject Griffith's advances, and time and again she agreed to do so, only to change her mind at a later date. Ursula's letters mark a particular point in her relationship with Mascall, for between August and December 1742, Mascall seldom visited Ursula, leaving mediators or the written word as her only channels of communication. By the following March, the situation was still unresolved. Although regular contact was re-established, Mascall was pressing Ursula to move closer to his house in Durham, so that he could keep an eye on her. Ursula agreed, but less than a month later absconded, refusing to see or receive communications from Mascall, and pledging to marry Thomas Griffith. It was at this stage that Mascall sought the assistance of ecclesiastical law.

II Love Letters in Early Modern England

Unfortunately, we know little about the personal circumstances of Ursula Watson and Thomas Mascall. Whilst ecclesiastical court records are typically rich in detail, the ages of the couple are not given. We know that Thomas worked and lived in Durham until his death in 1769, whilst Ursula divided her time between the lodgings in Durham that she rented from a Mrs Lamb and one Mark Johnson, and the home of William Watson, her uncle, in Houghton-le-Spring.¹⁰ Obviously, we know that both were literate, and that as an attorney Thomas Mascall would have been knowledgeable about the workings of matrimonial legislation. Certainly, he refers to Henry Swinburne's *Treatise of Spousals or Matrimonial Contracts*, a (still authoritative) legal tract published in 1686, for the finer points of contract law.¹¹ We cannot judge Ursula's knowledge of matrimonial law, though she claimed to be ignorant of the same.¹² Since Ursula was, like the majority of litigants in matrimonial cases, from the middling sort, we can assume that she enjoyed a

standard of living commensurate with that status.¹³ But we do not know what books she enjoyed reading, how she spent her time, or even how she felt about Thomas. What we do know, however, is that when Ursula wrote to Thomas, and when Thomas produced those letters in court, both acted according to precedent, as it was not unusual to write a letter to a loved-one during the period.¹⁴ This was the case at least from the sixteenth century, and amongst those with sufficient leisure, literacy and capital. Nor was it unusual, by the late seventeenth century, for those letters to appear in matrimonial court cases, although this was probably an innovation. Canon law had accepted letters as exhibits since the medieval period but there is little or no mention of their exchange between lovers in Martin Ingram and Ralph Houlbrooke's individual studies of the church courts in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. And Laura Gowing's study of the early seventeenth-century London courts notes only two instances.¹⁵ Yet Lawrence Stone's later study of the Court of Arches shows that letters were frequently exchanged at all social levels.

In the case of *Troope v. Henson* (1652–1664), for instance, Stone notes that letters of 'increasing warmth' were exchanged between the gentry protagonists at particular crisis points in their relationship. In 1661, George Ryder and Priscilla Jones, members of what Stone calls the 'provincial middling sort', struck up a romance through secret correspondence, and letters were passed between them when physically distant. In an example from the 'London middling sort' Jack Lingard, a law student, wrote 'several endearing letters' to Abigail Harris in a case heard between 1699 and 1701, and in an example of 'cross-class' courtship in 1746–7, a number of letters were exchanged between Arthur Collier, a civil lawyer, and Elizabeth Moseley, daughter of Sir Edward Moseley, Baronet of Rolleston, Staffordshire.¹⁶ In each of these cases, as in the case of Thomas Mascall and Ursula Watson, the sending of a love-letter helped form a relationship, and prove that a relationship had existed.

Yet despite their apparent ubiquity by the Restoration, love-letters have received little historical attention as literary artefacts, or as vehicles of emotional expression. Important exceptions include Elizabeth S. Cohen's account of the social meanings of illustrated love-letters in early modern culture (though it is primarily concerned with the relationship between orality and literacy), and the *Correspondence* collection edited by Roger Chartier *et al* on such themes as the formal structures of letters, rather than their affective content.¹⁷ This general neglect is surprising when we consider that recent historical analyses of middle and lower class courtship in early modern England have at their core behaviour that was once viewed as irrelevant, or incidental. In such work, material exchanges such as those that took place between Ursula and Thomas are recognised to have important social significance. Thus social historians are increasingly aware that the exchange of gifts, 'especially a ring or a bent or broken coin ... [were] ...

popularly believed to carry special symbolic meaning'.¹⁸ Diana O'Hara, Peter Rushton, John Gillis and Laura Gowing have all drawn on the anthropological work of Mauss and others to reconstruct the broadly political role of gifts in cementing and articulating emotional commitment.¹⁹ Whereas gifts are acknowledged to have been shrouded in social meaning, however, the historiography of letters that exists primarily concerns their status as vehicles of subjective feelings.

According to Stone, letters were exchanged between couples to 'soothe [each-other's] feelings', to give expression to 'fond' feelings, or to serve as a form of 'guilty evasion' in place of verbal communication.²⁰ This view of letter-writing is also apparent in studies of husband/wife relations drawn from the personal writings of the *élite*. In *The English Family*, Houlbrooke finds in private letters a fuller 'expression of individual feelings of affection', than may be found elsewhere.²¹ Keith Wrightson, James Sharpe and Miriam Slater have similarly sought to reconstruct affective life through the study of contemporary letters. Arguing against the characterisation of early modern marriage as harsh and unloving, for example, Sharpe uses Thomas Knyvett's letters to his wife as evidence of a 'touching and real affection' between the couple.²² And Keith Wrightson argues for close familial relationships based on the 'very revealing insights' into subjective experience provided by such evidence as love-letters.²³ Alan Macfarlane similarly also finds in the love-letter 'eloquent testimonies of domestic affection' among the *élite*.²⁴ And although Amanda Vickery has noted the self-conscious crafting of love-letters – a theme explored in detail below – in her book *The Gentleman's Daughter*, she does not consider the meanings of affect that are displayed in love-letters, or the relationship between emotional experience and expression.²⁵ Crucially, moreover, Vickery relies heavily elsewhere on private letters and diaries as unproblematic mediators of inner experience. This reliance subverts her earlier concerns for literary genre, and brings us to the immediate concerns of this article.²⁶ It is clear, therefore, that despite social historians' regard for private correspondence of all kinds, and love-letters in particular as illustrations and evidence of the levels and types of feeling existing in the past, neither the meanings of romantic love as a cultural phenomenon, nor the specific properties of the love-letter have been addressed. Love-letters continue to be viewed not as fictional constructs, or as textual spaces undergoing revision in the construction of 'self-hood', but – as Felicity Nussbaum comments on autobiography – as fixed representations of subjectivity, stabilised by the underscoring of an author's name.²⁷

III Love and the Letter: Rethinking Traditional Historiography

As part of a detailed examination of emotional practices in seventeenth and eighteenth century England, therefore, this article argues against dominant historical trends in order to rethink the historiography of love-letters. In so

doing, it relies heavily on the findings of literary theorists, anthropologists and sociologists who each have, in different ways, suggested that neither emotional experience nor its forms of representation are straightforward. At the same time that emotions have become subject to scrutiny by scholars like Richard A. Shweder, R. A. Levine, Catherine Lutz, Geoffrey M. White and Rom Harre, collectively concerned with unravelling the social construction of emotions in the present, scholars of autobiographies, diaries, and other forms of ‘personal’ expression have exposed the problems in rendering the ‘self’ behind the ‘I’.²⁸ And if, as Webster argues, autobiographical writings need to be viewed less as documents of individual experience than as examples of a particular literary genre, letters in general, and love-letters in particular, need to be viewed with the same caution.²⁹ For as modes of self-expression, they must participate in a similar process of literary construction. Moreover, no less than in the present, seventeenth- and eighteenth-century men and women participated in the complex interactions between self and society in the apprehension and communication of emotions like love.

For these reasons, this article rejects the essentialization of self and emotion implicit in traditional historiographical analyses of the love-letter. It argues that though love-letters provide evidence of the ways contemporaries performed and structured affect in the context of individual relationships, their content and structure were no less crafted than church court depositions. Analyzing the form and content of Ursula’s letters alongside that of other love-letters produced as exhibits in the York courts, it therefore explores their meanings as literary and material artefacts and a form of social practice. Most profoundly, it moves beyond traditional accounts of letters as conveyers of experience by suggesting that at a time when self-representation received unprecedented attention – as in autobiography and epistolary fiction – love-letters became a highly specific way of *shaping* as well as *reflecting*, emotional experience.³⁰ This argument has methodological implications for the history of emotion, and, as will be seen, for the use of interdisciplinary techniques to examine the psychological and physical experiences of men and women in the past.

IV Writing the Self: A Matter of Convention?

In returning to the letters sent by Ursula to Thomas, we clearly cannot simply ignore or reject the emotional distress she described. Yet though she claims that ‘my heart dictated to my pen’, and that she ‘only writt my own sentiments’, the authorship of those sentiments is problematic.³¹ When Ursula assured Thomas that ‘when pleasing you, [I] most pleas myself’; ‘when I cees to love you I must cees to live’; ‘I neither can will or ever desire to be happy without you’; or ‘for God’s sake dont abandon me now, for life without you will ever be haitfull’, the emotional rhetoric she employed was paralleled in fictional writing of the time.³² Nowhere is this more apparent than in the case

of letter-writing manuals, which in seeking to initiate readers into the art of 'love-epistles', helped shape the development of a romantic epistolary 'self'.³³

From the anonymously published *The Secretaries Studie* (1652), Henry Care's *The Female Secretary* (1671), and *The Lovers' Secretary in Four Parts*, (1692), to the outpouring of eighteenth-century publications such as *Polite Epistolary Correspondence* (1751), *The Complete Letter-Writer* (1757), and *The British Letter Writer* (1765), letter-writing manuals laid out the content and style of letters appropriate for particular situations, with examples for the reader to copy out if necessary.³⁴ In the case of love-letters, the models were largely formulaic, dealing with protestations of love, the despair of the lover, the lover's betrayal and the belief that love will conquer all.³⁵ During the eighteenth century, as part of the so-called 'cult of sensibility', invocations to the suffering of the 'soul', to 'tears', and to the 'torment' or 'anguish' of lost love became part of the emotional lexicon specific to such circumstances.³⁶ In 'The seaman's sorrowful parting with his dear love', for instance, an imaginary sailor writes:

Dearer to me than Life itself, Could my faltering Tongue express the Sorrow of my bleeding Heart, that now must be compelled to leave thee, and expose myself to the Hazard of the Sea ... yet the greatest of my Fear is, lest thou that art the joy of my Heart, the Comfort of my Soul, should'st in my Absence, in any measure Miscarry ...³⁷

Such over-blown emotional discourse was frequently satirised, one fictional character writing to his 'Charming Tyrant', 'tho' you forbid me to repeat Suns, Rocks, Mountains, Earthquakes, which are as essential to a Letter of this kind as Gilt-Chapter, yet you forgot to except against Sighs, Prayers, Vows, Tears, and the many other little Reliefs the unhappy fly to'.³⁸ Yet such expressions remained commonplace in romantic correspondence, often supported by invocations of the psychological and physiological consequences of emotional betrayal. As Ursula wrote to Thomas in her fifth letter, 'the discontent you left me in makes [me] allmost abandon my self to melancholy. I am betwixt faint hope and reall despair for I have never had one easy moment sins, when I reflect on your pain and myself the cause'.³⁹ Elsewhere she complains of sleeplessness and 'uneasyness', familiar images of suffering to readers of contemporary literature. In *The Complete Letter Writer*, an abandoned lover finds the evening a time of torment: 'all Night long, dreadful Fancies haunted me, and drove all soft and pleasing ideas from me ... I could not, durst not slumber'.⁴⁰ Similarly, in *The Ladies' Miscellany* (1738), Silvia upbraids Octavio for his treatment of her, informing him that 'I have not slept, nor once had you out of my thoughts' since their last meeting.⁴¹ In a culture that viewed romantic failure as a cause of depression, insanity and even suicide, such emotional displays were a staple of popular entertainment.⁴² And although both sexes could be affected, women were believed to be peculiarly

susceptible- their weaker nervous systems meaning that, as Mandeville put it, ‘Grief, Joy, Anger, Fear, and the rest of the Passions, made greater Impression upon them’, than upon men.⁴³ Aware that such expressions could reduce her sentiments to cliché as easily as they could induce sympathy, then, Ursula was careful to point out that her experiences are subjective and spontaneous. In her third letter she wrote: ‘[d]oan’t imagine my concern is but what is commonly tirm’d our sex’s arts; no, it proceeds from a reall uneasiness which you have but too often experienc’d’.⁴⁴

V Romantic Love and the Economics of Exchange

Ursula’s self-positioning as passively enduring yet morally victorious draws attention to the functioning of gender in romantic discourse. Women were, as Mandeville’s words suggest, archetypal victims of romantic suffering. It is not insignificant, then, that in the example cited above, the sailor who writes to his love is the one who is departing. For the task of waiting for a lover was as traditionally female as that of suffering. A standard *topos* of epistolary literature since Ovid has, in fact, been the female letter of ‘suffering and victimisation’.⁴⁵ Ballaster notes that each of Ovid’s fifteen heroines possessed a silent lover who had abandoned, seduced or betrayed them.⁴⁶ With the publication of the *Lettres Portugaises* (1669), (translated into English by Roger L’Estrange as *Five Love-Letters from a Nun to a Cavalier*), the Ovidian convention of the letter ‘as a form of complaint from the victim of seduction’ was re-established in seventeenth century prose fiction.⁴⁷ The *Five Love-Letters*, detailing the romantic betrayal and abandonment of a Portuguese nun by a French officer, was reprinted 21 times before 1690, as part of a burgeoning European interest in letter fiction.⁴⁸ Adams Day suggests that epistolary works made up 200 in every 500 published works between 1660 and 1740. Examples range from epistolary romances, like Behn’s *Love-Letters between a Noble-Man and his Sister* (1683–7), to such novels as Richardson’s *Pamela* (1740) and *Clarissa* (1747–8) and Rousseau’s *La Nouvelle Héloïse* (1761).⁴⁹ A recurring theme throughout many such works was the image depicted by Ursula Watson: the female subject, virtuous, emotionally bereft, and abandoned or betrayed by her lover.

Yet there was power in passivity. Firstly, there was an obvious liberatory potential for women in using the letter as a vehicle for self-expression.⁵⁰ Secondly, in representing that self as a suffering being, emotion became a commodity to be purchased or exchanged. This reminds us of the social nature of emotional states, and of the ways affect displays drew upon an economy of credit and loss. As Ursula informed Thomas in her fifth letter, her own grief cancelled out his own, for if ‘tears and remors will make [him] any Satisfaction [he was] amply paid for all [her] faults’.⁵¹ In a similar fashion, Sarah Turner, a widow from Chester, testified to her feelings for Thomas Tyndale, a gentleman with whom she claimed to have made a contract: ‘I must look

upon all these things, as a just judgement and reward, for my actions ... tho itt be the ruen of your ever fathfull frend, S.T.⁵² This commodification of emotion as something to be purchased, exchanged or bartered with, meant that lovers could measure their experiences by the displays of others. Thus in 1755, Dorothy Wentworth, a gentlewoman from Knaresbrough in Yorkshire's West Riding, wrote to her lover:

Beverley, November the 8th 1755

My Dear Preshous Iuele [Jewel],

...

I ad heard the malloncoley newse you wrote me word of in your letter befor and a man at Rodram that as killed his Lover that shoud have been married the day after to her, upon another man keesing her and wishing her joye, poor woman. The mans in York castle. They ad a song at Beverley on the feare day; thears pashon to a great hight carried on. I think no bodey can love moar than we do. I shud be all was hapey with you without a compliment ...

Dor. Wentworth.⁵³

Michael MacDonald and Terence Murphy have shown that seventeenth- and eighteenth-century newspaper reports of suicide 'transformed [its] hermeneutics', as men and women structured their final letters in accordance with published examples.⁵⁴ A similar process was at work in Dorothy's letter to Samuel, and in each of the letters discussed above, as lovers turned to culturally comprehensible narratives in order to make sense of experience. In turn their letters reinforced conventional understandings of the appropriate language, and effects, of romantic love. Contemporaries were not unaware of this phenomenon; in some cases it was even encouraged. Letter writing manuals stressed that regular perusal of fictional models could help the reader internalise skills of self-representation. *The Ladies' Complete Letter-Writer* (1763) for instance, advised readers that 'by frequently perusing, copying, and imprinting the Language of them on their Memories', they would 'soon learn to express themselves with Grace and Freedom upon all Manner of Subject[s]'.⁵⁵ Readers were similarly encouraged to become familiar in the rhetoric of parallel cultural models, as 'the Lubrications of the *Spectator*, *Tatler*, *Guardian*, *Rambler*, *Connoisseur* and *Adventurer* ... will ... fashion not only their Manner of Writing, but their Manner of Thinking' about love.⁵⁶ Yet it was not only the rhetoric of romance which influenced emotional expression, for the mechanics of self-representation were embedded in the material culture of the letter.

Unlike the conveying of emotions through speech and gesture, letter writing provided a record of emotional experience that lasted long after the emotion had passed.⁵⁷ This reminds us of the specific textual properties of love-letters, as they could be revised and re-read time and again by the writer

and the reader respectively. Moreover, the physical act of writing partook of an elaborate social ritual that varied according to such issues as the letter's function and the social status of the recipient. In *The Complete Letter-Writer*, for instance, readers are reminded that 'when you write to a Person of Distinction or Gentleman, let it be on gilt Chapter, and without sealing the Letter itself, inclose in a Cover, which you are to Seal over it, and write the Superscription thereof'.⁵⁸ *Epistolary Correspondence* advised the reader how and where on the letter to add the date and the place of writing, how to employ margins, and even how to fold the letter.⁵⁹ In this context, the formalised discourse used by Ursula in her letters to Thomas Mascall – her use of the address, 'Dear Sir' (notably in all except the 6th exhibit), and her concluding with 'U. Watson', for example – must be seen as conforming to literary convention rather than, as Anthony Fletcher suggests from his analysis of spouses' correspondence, evidence of the narrowly patriarchal nature of early modern marriage.⁶⁰

In addition to the linguistic framing of emotions found in the love-letter, its material components – pen, paper, wax – carried a variety of meanings. All the letters discussed here were written in ink, on manuscript paper of varying sizes. As seen in Ursula's letters to Thomas, the date, the place of production, and the names of the addressee and sender were noted. It was commonplace to add a post-script, (as Ursula does in the first exhibit), particularly in the love-letter. Whilst the use of a postscript could prove offensive in a letter to a superior – having 'the Appearance of your having almost forgot them' , according to the *Complete Letter Writer* – in love-letters, it gave an impression of unwillingness to part with a lover, or of emotional expression being unable to be contained by the parameters of the text.⁶¹

As Jonathan Gibson has argued in his recent study of 'significant space' in seventeenth century manuscript letters, these apparently insignificant conventions were meaningful, for they influenced the ways in which contemporaries read the text.⁶² Since they also added to the authenticity and memorability of a letter, individual idiosyncrasies could be crucial in the determining of a case. Thus, when Dorothy Chrichley testified that Thomas Tyndale had sent Sarah Turner a contract of marriage in a letter, she recalled that the contract was 'writt on the compass or volume of a quarter of a sheet of paper ... [and that] ... the name Thomas ... Tyndale [was] subscrib'd ... in red ... in a larger character than the ... contract was writ in'.⁶³ The colour of the ink is significant here, for Thomas apparently told Sarah that 'he had writ with his own hand in his own blood'. Unfolding a dramatic scene of composition for the court, Sarah claimed that when she had doubted him, he had 'open'd his breast & told her, if shee wou'd not believe the ... contract was writt in his Blood, hee would draw blood from thence, and write it anew'.⁶⁴ Sadly, we will never be able to verify whether this was the case, for Sarah was unable to produce the letter for the court. Despite its extreme nature, this case illustrates the point in question: the material

culture of letters was embedded in the body of the writer, as well as the body of the text.

In eighteenth-century England, the physical act of letter writing was suggestive of the giving of the self. Despite their conventions, letters provided an imprint of the writer's identity; not simply by the signature, but through the 'traces of the body that produced them in inkblots, teardrops, erasures'.⁶⁵ Gibson has shown how the style of handwriting deployed in seventeenth century letters expressed social meanings. Scribal and italic/roman writings, for instance, 'signified respect for the addressee', whilst 'secretary-hand ... signified the writer's personal investment in the letter'.⁶⁶ In addition to writing styles, however, invocations of the use and movement of the hand that wrote helped convey meaning. Thus the letter sent by Dorothy Wentworth to her lover Samuel Hawkrigge, implied by its 'hasty scraole and paper', and 'a very bad penn', the hurried and psychologically fraught circumstances of its production.⁶⁷ Those circumstances could be exploited for rhetorical effect. When John Toller wrote to Elizabeth Buller's father about Elizabeth's pregnancy, he invited his reader to imagine the scene of writing, claiming that his 'hand trembl[ed] to write' what he found hard to express.⁶⁸ In a similar fashion, Ursula Watson encouraged Thomas Mascall to visualize the consequences of his actions by reference to her physical act of reading: 'I thote my uneasiness had been incapable of addition, but O Good God what did I not suffer at the reading [of] your letter'.⁶⁹

Such references to the practices of reading and writing highlight the specific symbolic properties of the letter form. We have seen how emotional representation was a commodity of exchange in the economy of emotion. The act of letter writing was a particularly appropriate articulation of this economy, for it was predicated on a dynamic of exchange. The writing or receiving of a love-letter was not a solitary act, but a social one, cementing both sender and recipient in a relationship of obligation and expectation. As Alice Chaworth wrote to her lover William Heppenstall in 1759, 'I desir you to rite to me ... prea dont feall riting to me', warning that 'I shall think one day ass long as a month till I heafe that pleasor and satisfaxon to hear from you'.⁷⁰ On several occasions, Ursula Watson urged Thomas to write to her – 'Pray let me hear from you very soon', complaining that it was 'impossible to force a line from [Thomas] without [her] writing first'.⁷¹ As time passed she became more earnest: 'let me beg let me conjour you for love for pitys sake to see or hear from you'. In a similar fashion Alice Chaworth had written to her lover William Heppenstall, 'Pray don't fail writing to me, for I shall rejoice to hear of your health and welfare'.⁷² Thomas Mascall's reply to Ursula Watson's final letter apparently signalled a resolution between them, 'Beginning my Dearest wife and Ending the fondest tenderest truest faithfulest Husband living or words to that or the like effect'.⁷³ Unfortunately, Thomas's own letters cannot be reproduced, for though Thomas had clearly kept copies, only the originals could be produced as evidence. These

Ursula refused to present, claiming on the advice of her proctor that she was ‘not by law oblig’d’ to do so.⁷⁴ It is possible that Ursula’s failure to supply Thomas’s letters to the court lost him the case: out of their context of production and exchange, Ursula’s letters were not sufficient evidence of a commitment to marry.

Nevertheless, the appeals for communication made in Ursula’s letter demonstrate the importance of reciprocity in letter writing, and the obligation placed on each of the parties. Indeed, as Chartier has noted in *Correspondence*, ‘every letter, by describing where and when it is being written and by mentioning other letters (received, expected or hoped for), takes as its main topic the pact that binds the correspondents’.⁷⁵ Thus in a contract suit brought against Thomas Haswell by Elizabeth Dodgshon in 1729, the plaintiff alleged that Haswell had ‘approved of the marriage by many signs of familiarity with ... Elizabeth Dodgshon ... by writeing kind & affectionate letters’. And failure to honour that pact could, as has been demonstrated, lead to accusations of betrayal and dishonour or direct appeals to a lover’s pity. Thus in *The Ladies Miscellany* Octavio threatens Silvia that he will commit suicide if she does not reply to his letters, whilst in Mary Davys’s *The Reform’d Coquet*, Artander writes to Berina declaring, ‘I earnestly sue for a speedy answer to every letter I write, which will greatly alleviate my present disorder’.⁷⁶

The issue of reciprocity is also important because letters are physical objects, requiring transportation and delivery. At a time when postal services were infrequent and costly, letter-writers often relied on friends and acquaintances as carriers.⁷⁷ Although the letters discussed here were made public by their production in court battles, they were initially intended to be private and typically contained details the couple preferred to keep secret – Ursula Watson desiring her faults to be ‘Buryed in eternal Oblivion’. The fear of discovery and the perils of finding a trustworthy mediator inevitably loomed large. Popular literature was full of stock-situations when the loss, discovery or interception of a letter spelt disaster for a couple.⁷⁸ In such a context, the problem of conveying a letter could shape the form and content of the letter itself.⁷⁹ In John Toller’s final letter to Elizabeth Buller, John referred to a hostile interception: ‘your mother sent me word never to write to you again’.⁸⁰

The fear of a ‘busy insinuateing false tounge’ hung over the head of Ursula Watson and Thomas Mascall, whilst Ursula’s writings reveal the broad network of obligation on which their correspondence depended. Although Mascall’s personal servant delivered his letters, Ursula’s letters came to Thomas via one Elizabeth Chapman of Houghton-le-Spring, a spinster, who gave them to the Sunderland postman to deliver to Mascall at Durham. Only the fifth letter was sent by a different route. This Ursula gave to her sister Elizabeth Watson, who passed it to William Cooper, a butcher of Houghton-le-Spring, who gave it to Thomas Mascall, presumably during a business trip to Durham. This elaborate scheme was perhaps necessary because of the

indisposition of Elizabeth Chapman, or the Sunderland postman. At any rate, communication was not easy; as Ursula wrote to Thomas in the fifth letter, 'by the method I take of sending this you may easily gess at my concern'.⁸¹ Here, as elsewhere, the concerns of the writer influenced the form and structure of the letter.

VI Love and the Letter: Form and Meaning in Emotional Expression.

Although the limited number of letters addressed here means any conclusions remain tentative, the recurrence of certain themes raises questions about historical accounts of early modern love-letters, in particular the assumption that such sources unproblematically capture and convey individual, lived experience. As has been argued, the material properties and literary conventions of the love-letter helped to construct the experience being articulated: from the choice of its components to the method of delivery, form informed meaning in the love-letter. This recognition raises doubts about the ability of love-letters to express *any* subjective emotional experience, and indeed the extent to which emotional experience can ever be recaptured. For however far we believe subjective experience exists *beyond* its forms of expression, languages of feeling are always embedded in, and structured by, available cultural archetypes. The rhetoric of love-letters was therefore paralleled in epistolary fiction, romances and letter-writing manuals. As class- and gender-based self-conscious representations of experience these drew on broader medical, literary and artistic understandings of the psychological and physiological effects of romantic love. This finding is echoed by recent explorations into 'folk-psychology', which suggests that men and women organise or frame experience in narrative form.⁸²

Moreover, this symbiotic approach to the relationship between the individual and society is a useful one given our lack of evidence about the particular mental worlds of women like Ursula Watson. For it could be argued that relatively low rates of literacy, coupled with the high costs of literary works during the period, militated against most men and women shaping their experiences in accordance with literary models. Yet we must remember that the division between oral and written culture was a tenuous one. In addition to books and periodicals, narratives of experience drew upon a wide variety of collective cultural reserves, including half-forgotten stories, myths and fables, which might bear little relation to individual reading practices.⁸³ Thus Zemon Davis found that even 'simple women' and 'poor Plowmen' used a range of narrative strategies (including popular storytelling and courtly literature) to recast their crimes into 'culturally acceptable – and therefore excusable – forms'.⁸⁴

How, then, can historians conceptualise the relationship between feeling and expression, between love-letters and the romantic attachments they describe? And how can we chart and describe the emotional capacities and

experiences of people from the past? If love-letters tell us less about interiorised experience than about the socially available paradigms used to convey feeling, they arguably tell us as much about ‘emotionology’ as they do about emotion.⁸⁵ This term, coined by Carol and Peter Stearns to describe the emotional standards of a given community, forces us to recognise a disjuncture between emotion as ‘felt’ or lived, and the language used to describe it. Because traditional historiographies of marriage and the family have taken emotionology as a barometer of actual experience, this distinction has been blurred. Thus Sharpe views parallels between early modern and modern writing as evidence that early modern people experienced ‘passionate attachment ... like the romantic love with which we are so familiar’.⁸⁶ And Stone has famously read the rise of particular literary forms, like the love-letter, as indicative of shifts in emotional life, rather than shifts in emotional lexicons, or in the mechanisms of expression.⁸⁷ Yet the increased popularity of love-letters from the late seventeenth century need not indicate a corresponding shift in sentiment, any more than the rhetoric of romantic love is evidence of emotional experience. Although the early modern ‘love-letter’ was defined in similar terms as it is by the OED, as ‘a letter written by a lover to the beloved, and expressing amatory sentiments’, the structuring of those sentiments depended on a number of conventions and beliefs about the nature of romantic love.⁸⁸ And those conventions and beliefs were historically and culturally contingent.

One way beyond the current *impasse* presented by conventional historiography – divided between viewing individual emotional expression as readily available through the historical record or as inherently inaccessible, representing only the emotionology of social and cultural convention – is to rethink the meanings of emotions themselves. To this end, this article has moved away from the view of emotions as bounded, individual sentiments by demonstrating their socially constituted nature. Drawing from research in social psychology, it has explored the ways Ursula Watson and others ordered their subjective experiences according to available cultural paradigms and posited the existence of a dialectical relationship between self and society, emotional experience and representation. In this approach, the historical value of love-letters lay not in any alleged ability to allow access into inner experience, but in their positioning. Placed at the intersection of the subjective and the collective, love-letters provide evidence of the ways contemporaries adopted, rejected and transformed existing cultural archetypes in order to make sense of experience. They may therefore be analysed not as transparent conduits of ‘raw’ or felt emotion, but active participants in the production and articulation of romantic love. As Michelle Z. Rosaldo has written in another context, emotions are not simply ‘substances in our blood but social practices organized by stories we both enact and tell [and] ... structured by our forms of understanding’.⁸⁹ Like physical gestures and spoken expressions of feeling, therefore, love-letters were and are performative in nature: they are not merely indicators of feelings, but the means by which those feelings are explored and realised.

The argument put forward here does not detract from the importance of lived emotions in the past, nor from the centrality of sources like letters in exploring past mentalities and experiences, but rather the reverse. Exploring the languages used to describe the psychological and physiological effects of feelings, and the various literary and pictorial forms in which otherwise temporary and elusive affective states were structured and recorded (from love-letters and diaries to paintings and court trials) we can refine our understanding of the depth and complexity of emotions in history, and (potentially) the history of emotions. For whilst the latter remains in its infancy, recognizing the constructions of experience and expression in love-letters, or in any other historical source, alerts us to the fact that emotions are not just somatic ‘happenings’ or speech-acts but socio-political events, shaping and positioning individuals, creating and sustaining identities and relationships of power.⁹⁰ And the opportunities for interdisciplinary research this awareness brings have important implications, not just in improving historical understanding of the relationships between feeling and communication, but in helping to unravel broader constructions of identities of class, gender and difference in the past, and in the present.

Appendix 1 The letters of Ursula Watson

To Mr Thomas Mascall, Attorney att Law at Durham. No.1

Dr Sir, by my troubleing you with this you may easeally suppose the uneasyness I have felt since I parted from you, lest any busey insinuateing false tounge should make you so; but depend uppon [it,]my futer conduct shall be allways to pleas you, and when pleasing you [I] most pleas my self. For the height of all my hopes and happiness in this life depends on your love []I could say ten thousand things more, but will conclude with my Dearest in the most affectionate manner. Yours till Death do us part Ursula Watson. Houghton August 29th 1742 Pray let me hear from you very soon.

To Mr Thomas Mascall, Attorney at Law at Durham. No.2

Dr Sir, as I fiend it is impossible to force a line from you without my writing first, so [I] cou’d have no longer patience when I had the means in my power of hearing from you, for be assured when abcent from my seight, you are always in my thotes. You perhaps will laugh at my folly for making so frank a declaration, but as my heart dictated to my pen you may the easier excuse it, from My Dearest yours U Watson Houghton October 5 1742

To Mr Thomas Mascall, Attorney at Law at Durham. No.3

Dr Sir, the favour of your obliging letter I receiv’d, for which I return a great many thanks, but cannot help telling you I spent the neight I parted from you in reflections on your sevar letter. For I do assure you, sleep was a stranger to my Eyes till Morning,. Doan’t imagine my concern is but what is commonly tirm’d our sex’s arts;

no, it proceeds from a real uneasyness which you have but too often experienc'd. Sometimes I could almost have suspected your Love for quarrelling [with] me on every frivolous pretence, but then I cou'd not accuse you for being the cause, but traitress and such like are hard names to one who must ever be Yours U. Watson Houghton November 30 1742

To Mr Thomas Mascall, Attorney at Law at Durham. No. 4

Dr Sir, it gave me no small satisfaction to hear you got saif home, but should have receiv'd infinitely more to have heard you were well. You return'd me thanks for the Justice I did you; believe me, I was far from accuseing you. I only writt my own sentiments, which if they had the good fortune to correspond with yours, [it] would give me more pleasuer than I can possibly express but as there are few or none who pass their whole lives without some unguarded moments, impute not my fault then to infidelity, but indiscretion. I shall say no more but could wish with your self to have it Buryed in eternall Oblivion, and [you] may depend upon the last promise of Yours, U. Watson Houghton December 7th 1742

To Mr Thomas Mascall, Attorney at Law at Durham. No. 5

Houghton December 18 1742 Dr Sir, the discontent you left me in makes [me] almost abandon my self to melancholy. I am betwixt faint hope and reall despair, for I have never had one easy moment sins, when I reflect on your pain and my self the cause. Think what a situation of mind I was in to see you go from me in such a Condission. If you doubt my sincerity, I will Testifye it by any way you shall desire. As for my leaveing the room, I must confess it was highly blameable, but if Tears and remors will make you any Satisfaction, you are amply paid for all my faults. Let me beg let me conjour you, for love, for pity's sake, to see or hear from you till I know you are better. My own uneasyness [is] incapable of receiving addition when I beg'd to see or hear from you [and] you gave me no answer. Think then what secret anguish I endewer'd; be assured I can love onely you, and when I cees to love you, I must cees to live. If I fail in my request, I shall not blame you but my own hard fait. But remember I shall be for your sake the greatly wretched U. Watson. By the method I take of sending this, you may easily gess at my concern.

To Mr Thomas Mascall, Attorney at Law at Durham. No.6

Oh Dearest, I dare not call you my Dearest, for I'm afraid I have lost you. I thote my uneasiness had been incapable of addision, but O Good God what did I not suffer at the reading [of] your letter. You bid me be easy, but know I neither can, will, or ever desire to be happy without you. I call my God to witness for me that I have not a secret wish but in your love to throw my self at your feet to testify it by all the marks of a sincar, affectionate, and tender wife. Reflect on that name and think what I endewer; my heart has been long accustomed to love you, and my tounge to tell you so. If ever you loved me, for God[']s sake dont abandon me now, for life without you will for ever be haitfull to U. Watson. Houghton Dec 18 1742.

Notes

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1 The two places are approximately 12 miles apart. See Borthwick Institute (hereafter BI) Trans C/P 1744/5 (1744) Thomas Mascall c. Ursula Watson.

2 Exhibit no.1, in Trans C/P 1744/5 Mascall c. Watson.

3 Testimony of Ursula Watson, in Trans C/P 1744/5 Mascall c. Watson.

4 Trans C/P 1744/5 Mascall c. Watson.

5 For an introduction to canon law on marriage, see Lawrence Stone, *Road to Divorce: England 1530–1987* (Oxford, 1992), General Introduction and Part II.

6 Allegation of Thomas Mascall, in Trans C/P 1744/5 Mascall c. Watson.

7 Exhibit no.5, in Trans C/P 1744/5 Mascall, c. Watson.

8 Testimony of Thomas Mascall in Trans C/P 1744/5 Mascall c. Watson.

9 Trans C/P 1744/5 Mascall c. Watson. See Stone, *Road to Divorce*, Part II.

10 Burial entry for 'Thomas Mascall, Attorney at Law' on May 9 1769, in *The Registers of Mary-le-Bow in the City of Durham*, ed. Herbert Maxwell Wood, (Newcastle, 1912), p. 155.

11 Testimony of Thomas Mascall, in Trans C/P 1744/5 Mascall c. Watson. Henry Swinburne, *Treatise of Spousals or Matrimonial Contracts* (London, 1686).

12 Testimony of Ursula Watson, in Trans C/P 1744/5 Mascall c. Watson.

13 The total bill in this case was £5.2.6d, though there may have been other expenses not detailed, in Trans C/P 1744/5 Mascall c. Watson.

14 Although structural and motivational differences clearly existed between amatory letters exchanged in the case of courtship and those which resulted from adulterous liaisons, the term 'love-letter' is used in this article to refer to both.

15 Martin Ingram, *Church Courts, Sex and Marriage in England, 1570–1640* (Cambridge, 1987) and Ralph Houlbrooke, *Church Courts and the People during the English Reformation, 1520–70* (Oxford, 1979). See also Laura Gowing, *Domestic Dangers: Women, Words and Sex in Early Modern London* (Oxford, 1996), p. 74. For an introduction to canon law, see R. H. Helmholz, *Canon Law and the Law of England* (London, 1987), p. 335.

16 Lawrence Stone, *Uncertain Unions and Broken Lives: Marriage and Divorce in England, 1660–1857* (Oxford, 1995), pp. 58, 64–66, 68, 89–90, 100.

17 Elizabeth S. Cohen, 'Between Oral and Written Culture: The Social Meanings of an Illustrated Love-Letter' in B. B. Diefendorf & V. Hesse (eds), *Culture and Identity in Early Modern Europe, 1500–1800: Essays in Honour of Natalie Zemon Davis* (Michigan, 1997), p. 181, and Roger Chartier *et al.* (eds), *Correspondence: Models of Letter-Writing from the Middle Ages to the Nineteenth-Century* trans. Christopher Woodall (London, 1997).

18 Stone, *Uncertain Unions*, p. 13.

19 Diana O'Hara, 'Ruled by my Friends: Aspects of Marriage in the Diocese of Canterbury, 1540–70', *Continuity and Change*, 6 (1991), 9–41 *Idem.*, 'The Language of Tokens and the Making of Marriage', *Rural History*, 3 (1992), 1–40, Peter Rushon, 'The Testament of Gifts: Marriage Tokens and Disputed Contracts in North-East England, 1560–1630', *Folklife*, 24 (1985–86), John R. Gillis, 'From Ritual to Romance: Toward an Alternative History of Love', in Carol Z. and Peter N. Stearns (eds.) *Emotion and Social Change: Toward a New Psychohistory* (London, 1988), Gowing, *Domestic Dangers*, pp. 159–64.

- 20 Stone, *Uncertain Unions* pp. 61, 64, 81.
- 21 Houlbrooke, *English Family*, p. 32.
- 22 J. A. Sharpe, *Early Modern England: A Social History, 1550–1760* (London, 1993), p. 55. See also Keith Wrightson, *English Society, 1580–1680* (London, 1990), Chapter 4 and Miriam Slater, 'The Weightiest Business: Marriage in an Upper Gentry Family in Seventeenth-Century England', *Past and Present*, 72 (1976), pp. 25–54.
- 23 Wrightson, *English Society*, p. 94.
- 24 Alan Macfarlane, *Marriage and Love in England, 1300–1840* (Oxford, 1987), pp. 301–2, 193, 189.
- (25 Amanda Vickery, *The Gentleman's Daughter: Women's Lives in Georgian England* (London, 1998), Chapter 2.
- 26 See, for instance, Vickery's analysis of Ellen Weeton's letter-books in *The Gentleman's Daughter*, p. 77.
- 27 Felicity Nussbaum, *The Autobiographical Subject: Gender and Ideology in Eighteenth-Century England* (London, 1989), p. 18.
- 28 See Richard A. Shweder and R. A. LeVine (eds), *Culture Theory: Essays on Mind, Self and Emotion* (Cambridge, 1984); Catherine Lutz and Geoffrey M. White, 'The Anthropology of Emotions', *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 15 (1986), 405–36; Rom Harre (ed.), *The Social Construction of Emotions* (Oxford, 1986).
- 29 Tom Webster, 'Writing to Redundancy: Approaches to Spiritual Journals and Early Modern Spirituality', *The Historical Journal*, 39 (1996), pp. 33–56.
- 30 On the rise of autobiographical forms see Nussbaum, *Autobiographical Subject* and Patricia Spacks, *Imagining a Self: Autobiography and the Novel in Eighteenth-Century England* (Harvard, 1976).
- 31 Exhibits 2 and 4, in Trans C/P 1744/5 Mascall c. Watson.
- 32 Exhibits 5 and 6, in Trans C/P 1744/5 Mascall c. Watson.
- 33 See Ruth Perry, *Women, Letters and the Novel* (New York, 1980).
- 34 For an introduction to the epistolary form, see Godfrey Frank Singer, *The Epistolary Novel: Its Origin, Development, Decline and Residual Influence* (New York, 1963).
- 35 Singer, *The Epistolary Novel*, Chapters 2–3.
- 36 On the eighteenth-century lexicon of suffering see G. J. Barker-Benfield, *Culture of Sensibility: Sex and Society in Eighteenth-century Britain* (London, 1996), Introduction.
- 37 'The Seaman's Sorrowful Parting With his Dear Love' in Anon., *A New Academy of Compliments* (London, 1748). Further examples may be found in Anon., *The British Letter Writer* (London, 1765), esp. Part III.
- 38 Anon., *The Complete Letter Writer* (London, 1757), p. 132.
- 39 Exhibit 5, in Trans C/P 1744/5 Mascall c. Watson.
- 40 Anon., *Complete Letter Writer*, p. 132.
- 41 Anon., *The Ladies' Miscellany* (London, 1738), p. 13.
- 42 See Michael MacDonald and Terence Murphy, *Sleepless Souls: Suicide in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 1990), Chapters 1–2.
- 43 Bernard Mandeville, *A Treatise of the Hypochondriack and Hysterick Diseases* (1711), cited in Barker-Benfield, *Culture of Sensibility*, p. 27.
- 44 Exhibit 3, in Trans C/P 1744/5 Mascall c. Watson.
- 45 Elizabeth V. Goldsmith (ed.), *Writing the Female Voice: Essays on Epistolary Literature* (Boston, 1989). For an example of this, see Martha Fowke, *Clio and Strephon: Being the Second and Last Pair of the Platonic Lovers* (London, 1732).
- 46 R. Ballaster, *Seductive Forms: Women's Amatory Fiction from 1684 to 1740* (Oxford, 1992), p. 60.

- 47 *Ibid.*, p. 63.
- 48 K. A. Jenson, 'Male Models of Feminine Epistolarity: Or, How to Write Like a Woman in Seventeenth-century France', in Goldsmith (ed.), *Writing the Female Voice*, p. 26.
- 49 Robert Adams Day, *Told in Letters: Epistolary Fiction before Richardson* (Ann Arbor, 1966), p. 2. See also Perry, *Women, Letters and the Novel*, Chapter 3.
- 50 On women as writers see E. Graham *et al.* (eds), *Her Own Life: Autobiographical Writings by Seventeenth-century English Women* (London, 1989), Introduction.
- 51 Exhibit 5, in Trans C/P 1744/5 Mascall c. Watson.
- 52 Exhibit in BI Trans C/P 1700/2 Sara Tyndall als Turner c. Thomas Tyndall.
- 53 BI CPI 1376 (1756) Godfrey Wentworth c. Dorothy Wentworth.
- 54 See MacDonald and Murphy, *Sleepless Souls*, p. 301.
- 55 Anon., *The Ladies' Complete Letter Writer* (London, 1763), pp. 2–3.
- 56 *Ibid.*, p. 3.
- 57 See the discussion in Fay Bound, *Emotion in Early Modern England: Performativity and Practice at the Church Courts of York, 1660–1760* (D.Phil. York, 2000).
- 58 Anon., *Complete Letter Writer*, p. 61. See also Antoine de Courtin, *The Rules of Civility* (London, 1703) and John Shebbeare, *A Love-Epistle in Verse* (London, 1756).
- 59 John Gignoux, *Epistolary Correspondence made Pleasant and Familiar* (London, 1759), pp. ii–iv.
- 60 Anthony Fletcher, *Gender, Sex and Subordination in England, 1500–1800* (London, 1995), p. 155.
- 61 Anon., *Complete Letter Writer*, p. 61.
- 62 Johnathon Gibson, 'Significant Space in Manuscript Letters', *Seventeenth Century*, 12 (1995), 155.
- 63 Testimony of Dorothy Crichley, in Trans C/P 1700/2 Tyndall als Turner c. Tyndall.
- 64 *Ibid.*
- 65 Elizabeth Heckendorn Cook, *Epistolary Bodies: Gender and Genre in the Eighteenth-century Republic of Letters* (Stanford, 1996), p. 2.
- 66 Gibson, 'Significant Space', p. 7, f/n 4.
- 67 CPI 1376 Wentworth c. Wentworth.
- 68 Exhibit in BI CPI 240 (1714) Elizabeth Buller c. John Toller.
- 69 Exhibit 6 Trans C/P 1744/5 Mascall c. Watson.
- 70 BI, CPI 1414 (1760) William Chaworth c. Elizabeth Chaworth.
- 71 Exhibits 1 and 2, in Trans C/P 1744/5 Mascall c. Watson.
- 72 Exhibit 5, in Trans C/P 1744/5 Mascall c. Watson and Exhibit in CPI 1414 Chaworth c. Chaworth.
- 73 For details of Thomas Mascall's letters, see Thomas's own testimony, in Trans C/P 1744/5 Mascall c. Watson.
- 74 Testimony of Ursula Watson, in Trans C/P 1744/5 Mascall c. Watson.
- 75 Chartier *et al.* (eds) *Correspondence*, p. 23.
- 76 BI Trans C/P 1729/10 Elizabeth Dodgshon c. Thomas Haswell and Anon., *Ladies' Miscellany*, p. 16 and Mary Davys, *The Reform'd Coquet*, (1724, repr. London, 1970), p. 266.
- 77 From 1660 when the Post Office was established, only 3 posts a week were generally available. The cost of delivering a letter outside London has been estimated at 6 shillings, and the cost would be borne by the recipient. With the Stamp Act of 1711 the price of letters was pushed up by increased paper costs. See Perry, *Women, Letters and the Novel*, p. 63 and Kenneth Ellis, *The Post Office in the Eighteenth*

Century: A Study in Administrative History (London, 1958).

78 See for instance Elizabeth Haywood, *The Mercenary Lover* (1725, repr. London, 1970) and Anon., *Ladies' Miscellany*, p. 20.

79 See J. G. Altman, *Epistolarity: Approaches to a Form* (Ohio, 1982), p. 4.

80 Exhibit, in CPI 240 Buller c. Toller.

81 Exhibit 5 and testimony of Thomas Mascall, in Trans C/P 1744/5 Mascall c. Watson.

82 See Jerome Bruner, *Acts of Meaning* (London, 1994), p. 55.

83 See Michael MacDonald, 'The "Fearefull Estate" of Francis Spira: Narrative, Identity and Emotion in Early Modern England', *Journal of British Studies*, 31 (1992), 32–62, esp. pp. 36–7.

84 See Diefendorf and Hesse (eds.), *Culture and Identity*, pp. 111, 7, and Natalie Zemon Davis, *Fiction in the Archives: Pardon Tales and their Tellers in Sixteenth-century France* (Stanford, 1987).

85 Peter N. Stearns and Carol Z. Stearns, 'Emotionology: Clarifying the History of Emotions and Emotional Standards', *American Historical Review*, 90 (1985), pp. 813–36.

86 Sharpe, *Early Modern England*, p. 62.

87 Lawrence Stone, *Family, Sex and Marriage in England, 1500–1800* (London, 1977), esp. p. 227. Many of the conclusions reached about affective relations in this text were of course repeated in Stone's later work, including *Road to Divorce* and *Uncertain Unions*.

88 The Oxford English Dictionary notes the first recorded usage of the term as 1240 AD.

89 Michelle Z. Rosaldo, 'Toward an Anthropology of Self and Feeling', in Shweder and LeVine (eds.), *Culture Theory* p. 143.

90 For a detailed review of the historiography of emotion see Bound, 'Emotion in Early Modern England', Chapter 1.

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