



Jane Austen's Families

June Sturrock

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“Jane Austen’s Families” provides insight into family dynamics in Jane Austen’s six novels, focusing particularly on interaction between parents and children.

‘Sturrock reads the novels through the lens of ethical criticism, and explores how the heroines differ from their parents in terms of morality. [...] Sturrock’s contribution lies in her exploration of the various intrafamilial relations: those between sisters, between mothers and daughters, and between fathers and daughters. [...] Exhaustively researched and well written, “Jane Austen’s Families” is a pleasure to read.’ –‘Forum for Modern Language Studies’

‘Sturrock [...] has researched, written, and published extensively in the field of 19th-century women’s writing, a fact that is very apparent from the well-researched and knowledgeable tone of this book. [...] The author focuses primarily on the role of parents in influencing how children act, think, and feel, both in how they regard one another and in how they deal with society as a whole. She also discusses sibling relationships in great depth. [...] Sturrock is clearly conversant with the scholarship in the field of family relationships in Austen and in other novels of the time period. She includes detailed notes and an exhaustive bibliography; despite some dense prose, Sturrock’s style is still engaging and easy to follow. Summing Up: Recommended.’ –R. Stone, ‘Choice’

“Jane Austen’s Families” focuses on family dynamics in Jane Austen’s six novels. After a general introduction, which places its approach in the context of ethical criticism, it divides into two sections. The first, “Family Dynamics,” consists of three chapters – “The Function of the Dysfunctional Family,” “Spoilt Children” and “Usefulness and Exertion.” The three chapters of section two, “Fathers and Daughters,” look at father–daughter relationships in “Mansfield Park,” “Emma” and “Persuasion.”

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