

QUEERING THE ENLIGHTENMENT
*KINSHIP AND GENDER IN EIGHTEENTH
CENTURY FRENCH LITERATURE*

TRACY L. RUTLER

Contents

List of illustrations	ix
Dedication	xi
Preface	xiii
Acknowledgments	xvii
Author's note	xxi
I. Family remains	
Introduction: the specter of patriarchy	1
The regime of the father	7
The specter of patriarchy	14
Intimate networks of knowledge	25
Queering the canon	29
Chapter 1: Toward a queer politics of kinship	35
On the shores of patriarchy	42
An Oedipus for a new age	54
Loosening the reign of patriarchy	71
Toward a queer politics of kinship	78
II. Prodigal sons	
Chapter 2: Oedipus interrupted: Prévost's regime of the brother	83
Liberty, equality... fragility?	90

Specters of desire, or the impossible woman	111
The story that kills	123
The king is dead. Long live the brother!	129
Chapter 3: Wandering souls: the world of Cr��billon fils	133
<i>Le monde de Cr��billon</i>	138
Cruising in Cr��billon's world	151
A politics of encounter	164
Wandering together	174
III. Narrative spinsters	
Chapter 4: Origin stories: maternal enlightenment in Marivaux	177
Shared subjectivities	186
Abject origins	194
A school of the mothers	205
Maternal enlightenment	220
Chapter 5: Knotty relations: Graffigny's regime of the sister	225
Writing, revising, and rehearsing	230
In defense of ignorance	243
Building a woman's world, in Zilia's words	250
Sisterhood, or something like it	260
A new legacy	267
Conclusion: queering the Enlightenment, today	271
Bibliography	273
Index	285

List of illustrations

Figure 1: Jean-Baptiste Greuze (1725–1805). *Le Fils ingrat, la malédiction paternelle* (*The Ungrateful son, the paternal curse*), 1777. Oil on canvas, 130 × 162 cm. Photo: Michel Urtado.

© RMN-Grand Palais / Art Resource, NY.

2

Figure 2: Jean-Baptiste Greuze (1725–1805). *Le Fils puni, la malédiction paternelle* (*The Son punished, the paternal curse*), 1778. Oil on canvas, 130 × 163 cm. Photo: Michel Urtado.

© RMN-Grand Palais / Art Resource, NY.

2