

ANNA CLARK. *Alternative Histories of the Self: A Cultural History of Sexuality and Secrets, 1762–1917*. New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2017. Pp. 224. \$102.60 (cloth).  
doi: 10.1017/jbr.2018.124

In a 1996 article in the *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, Anna Clark put forward a methodology for analyzing the identity of Anne Lister, an early nineteenth-century Yorkshire landowner, diarist, and self-professed lover of only her own sex. Widely appreciated for its approach to writing a history of same-sex desire before the late nineteenth-century development of modern homosexual identity, the analysis was also open to criticism for being too focused on finding the roots of lesbian identity (3–4).

Clark continued to develop that methodology in subsequent work, with this volume representing the culmination of that process, addressing the issue of queer genealogy by grounding the analysis in the idea of the self. Two influential ways of conceiving the self had their origins in the later eighteenth century, the unique self, as elaborated by Rousseau, in which truth of the self is revealed through individual feelings, and the fragmented self, as found in the work of Adam Smith and others, in which individuals are understood as an assemblage of different passions and sensations that must be disciplined by self-control. In five case studies, spanning the late eighteenth to the early twentieth centuries, individuals such as the Chevalier d'Eon, the French diplomat who changed gender identity expression mid-life, are analyzed in relation to their public roles and their representations of themselves in more private texts. "Rather than asking whether the Chevalier/e d'Eon and Anne Lister fit into the categories of transgender or lesbian," Clark states, "I will argue that they queered the notion of the unique individual to justify their own feelings" (4).

All of the case studies address the themes of internal desires, cultural texts, social roles and networks, sexuality, religion, and the effect of individual behavior on others, but in each instance a different theme predominates. In the first two case studies the unique self is explored, first through d'Eon's negotiation between opposing ideas of masculine power, one based on patronage and the other on individual merit, and next through Lister's assemblage of cultural texts to explain her internal desires. The individuals in each case "reveal an alternative history of the self, not simply following the intellectual trends of their time, but twisting and transforming discourses as they explored their own lives" (29).

The next two case studies address the fragmented self, with a greater focus on the subjects' impact on others. Of Richard Johnson, a minor official in the East India Company, Clark asks to what degree he was a hybrid subject who allowed his private criticisms of the British Empire, recorded in a secret diary, to influence how he implemented company policies. Throughout the chapter, Clark amasses evidence supporting the claim that Smith's understanding of the fragmented self can be seen in Johnson, who was torn between his intellectual principles and the need to support his patrons. Ultimately, Clark concludes, Johnson's sense of self allowed him to compartmentalize, implementing policies he disagreed with and expressing no regard for the mothers of his Indian children. Clark concludes the chapter on Johnson with the idea that men like Johnson "set a precedent for a new kind of self, the faceless scientific legislator" (97).

The more negative consequences of the fragmented self also seem apparent in the following chapter on James Hinton, a devout Christian and physician known in his own day for advocating self-sacrifice in the name of service to the poor. Hinton is shown in the chapter twisting and transforming dominant Evangelical and Darwinian discourses to develop his philosophy of public engagement, but his desire to abandon the self, and his stance "against the notion of the unitary, indivisible self," was combined with a personality that often turned personal problems into abstractions and led him to neglect and even disparage his wife and family (106).

Although the public and private implications of understandings of the self are discussed in each case study, public roles receive greater emphasis in the chapters on d'Eon and Johnson,

and private actions in the chapters on Lister and Hinton, thus mixing the case studies, creating interconnections in unexpected places, and preventing them from becoming reducible to simple dichotomies.

Clark's exploration culminates in the final chapter on Edith Lees Ellis, who, like no other figure in the book, combined a strong sense of individuality, resonant with the Rousseauian unique self, with the determination to shape social systems, inherent in political economy as explored through Johnson, and religion as explored through Hinton. Ellis engaged with the larger questions of spirituality and political economy while applying the same standard of ethics to herself and others. This led Ellis to confrontations with her colleagues in the Fellowship of the New Life, many of whom were willing to allow their experiment in communal living to be sustained by the labor of servants. Clark demonstrates the continuities between Ellis's choices about her sexuality, her interpersonal relationships, and her work for social justice. This is why, for Clark, Ellis is "more interesting in the way she helped to articulate a socialist and feminist vision of individuality," than for the fact that she had a lesbian identity (145).

By ending the book with Ellis, Clark implicitly makes the argument for the value of her methodology for the period after the development of the cultural category of the homosexual, as well as for the period before. She has also made the argument that the treatment of others cannot be separated from an exploration of the self, and for historians of sexuality to address the transgressions of the privileged, as well as the marginal. By addressing a criticism of earlier work, Clark has taken what was already one of the best methodologies for understanding identity and sexuality before the late nineteenth century and made it far better. The field should be exploring the implications of her methodology for years to come.

Charles Upchurch  
*Florida State University*  
[cupchurch@fsu.edu](mailto:cupchurch@fsu.edu)

RUMA CHOPRA. *Almost Home: Maroons between Slavery and Freedom in Jamaica, Nova Scotia, and Sierra Leone*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2018. Pp. 336. \$35.00 (cloth).  
 doi: 10.1017/jbr.2018.125

In this lean, elegant, and lively narrative history of the exile of the Trelawney Town Maroons of Jamaica, and their travels from Nova Scotia to Sierra Leone, Ruma Chopra argues that "loyalism" is crucial to understanding the Maroons' place within both the racial hierarchies of British colonial slavery and the politics of the wider British Empire. Marronage was a feature of virtually every slave society in the Americas, but a series of unusual and fragile formal agreements between the colonial assembly and Maroon leaders have made the Jamaican Maroons the object of particular attention for historians. Chopra argues that most of these histories have focused on the complicated relationships between Maroons, enslaved people, free people of color and slave owners in Jamaica. In contrast, Chopra suggests, by following the Trelawney exiles, the Maroons can be placed into a wider British world during a tumultuous era of imperial expansion and burgeoning antislavery activism. Crucially, Chopra places Britain's wars with France in the foreground, showing how Maroon leaders, antislavery activists and slave owners invoked plans for conquest and colonial defense to persuade imperial officials of their positions.

The Jamaican Maroons, descendants of enslaved people who escaped to freedom from Spanish plantations before and during the English conquest of Jamaica in 1655, preserved their independence in the 1730s by making an agreement with slave owners. In exchange