



# Bachelors, Manhood, and the Novel, 1850-1925

*Katherine V. Snyder*

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## **Bachelors, Manhood, and the Novel, 1850-1925** Katherine V. Snyder

Katherine Snyder's study explores the significance of the bachelor narrator, a prevalent but little-recognised figure in premodernist and modernist fiction by male authors, including Hawthorne, James, Conrad, Ford and Fitzgerald. Snyder demonstrates that bachelors functioned in cultural and literary discourse as threshold figures who, by crossing the shifting, permeable boundaries of bourgeois domesticity, highlighted the limits of conventional masculinity. The very marginality of the figure, Snyder argues, effects a critique of gendered norms of manhood, while the symbolic function of marriage as a means of plot resolution is also made more complex by the presence of the single man. Bachelor figures made, moreover, an ideal narrative device for male authors who themselves occupied vexed cultural positions. By attending to the gendered identities and relations at issue in these narratives, Snyder's study discloses the aesthetic and political underpinnings of the traditional canon of English and American male modernism.

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