



The Coquette and the Boarding School (Norton Critical Editions)

Hannah Webster Foster

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Hannah Webster Foster's two major Early American works with a wealth of primary materials are now available in a Norton Critical Edition.

Published anonymously in 1797, Hannah Webster Foster's *The Coquette* grabbed American interest with its ripped-from-the-headlines story of sex and scandal. A steady best seller for decades, the seduction novel was passed down through generations; indeed, its heroine became better known than the book's author. A year later, Foster's lesser-known follow-up, *The Boarding School*, provided an equally compelling portrait of women at the turn of the nineteenth century in the same epistolary form. Both novels can now be read in conversation with each other in this new Norton Critical Edition based on the respective first edition texts; the author's original spelling, punctuation, and usage are retained while obvious printer's errors are corrected. The texts are joined with a detailed introduction to Foster's legacy and Elizabeth Whitman's life along with explanatory annotations and a note on the text.

"Sources and Contexts" unearths a wealth of original material about the environment the works were produced in and the real-life people who inspired them. The three sections, "On Coquetry," "The Life and Death of Elizabeth Whitman," and "The Nineteenth-Century Legacy," include new and corrected transcriptions of Whitman's letters to Ruth and Joel Barlow, an inventory of items found at Whitman's room at her death, popular representations of Elizabeth Whitman, and unauthorized sequels to *The Coquette*. Seven illustrations, including three of Eliza Wharton, are included to enrich the reading experience.

"Criticism" brings together nine diverse contemporary interpretations. Contributors include Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, Claire C. Pettengill, Julia A. Stern, Gillian Brown, Jeffrey H. Richards, and Gwendolyn Audrey Foster, among others.

Chronologies of the lives of Hannah Webster Foster and Elizabeth Whitman are included along with a Selected Bibliography.

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