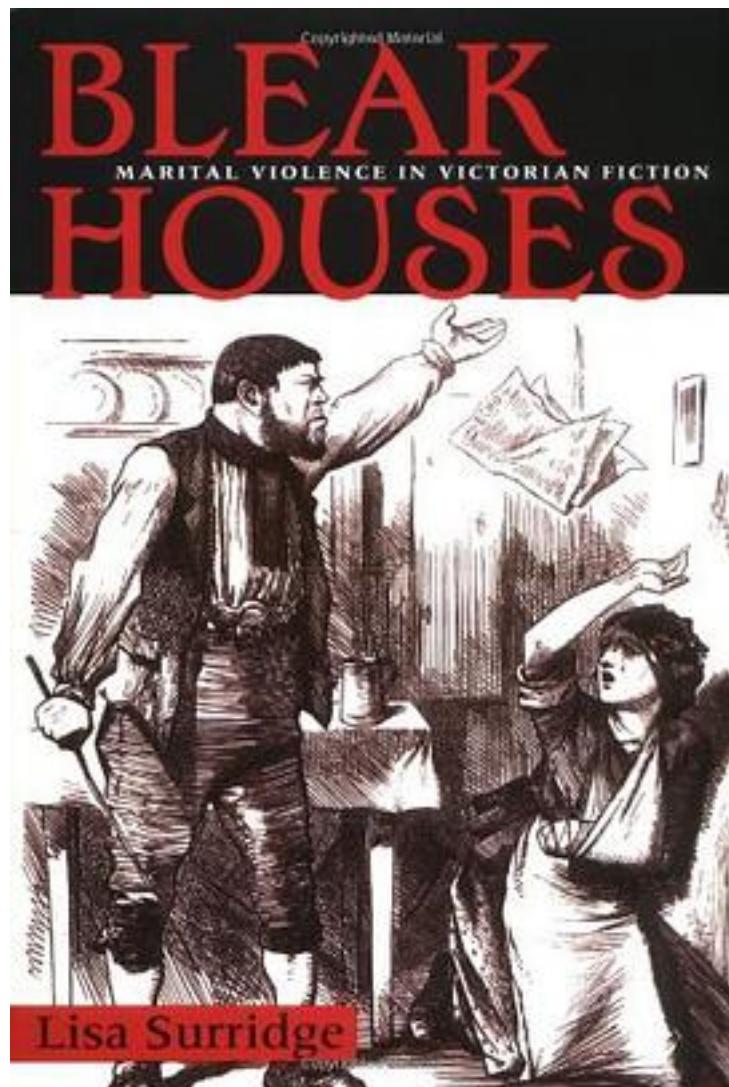


Bleak Houses



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著者:Surridge, Lisa

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"Professor Surridge exhibits a clear and persuasive historical sense as well as sensitivity to the novels and stories. I believe this study will have lasting value because of its careful historical research and corresponding interpretation of the texts," says Naomi Wood, Kansas State University The Offenses Against the Person Act of 1828 was a piece of legislation that opened magistrates' courts to abused working-class wives. Newspapers in turn reported on these proceedings and in this way the Victorian scrutiny of domestic conduct began. But how did popular fiction treat the phenomenon of "private" family violence? Bleak Houses: Marital Violence in Victorian Fiction traces novelists' engagement with the wife-assault debates in the public press between 1828 and the turn of the century. Lisa Surridge examines the early works of Charles Dickens, Dombey and Son and The Tenant of Wildfell Hall, in the context of the intense debates on wife assault and manliness in the late 1840s and early 1850s. George Eliot's Janet's Repentance is read in light of the parliamentary debates on the 1857 Divorce Act. Marital cruelty trials provide the structure for both John Sutherland's The Woman in White and Anthony Trollope's He Knew He Was Right. Locating the New Woman fiction of Mona Caird and the reassuring detective investigations of Sherlock Holmes in the context of late-Victorian feminism and the great marriage debate in the Daily Telegraph, Surridge illustrates how fin-de-siecle fiction brought male sexual violence and the viability of marriage itself under public scrutiny. Bleak Houses thus demonstrates how Victorian fiction was actively engaged with the wife-assault debates of the nineteenth century, debates which both constructed and invaded the privacy of the middle-class home.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR---Lisa Surridge is associate professor of English at the University of Victoria, Canada. She is co-editor of Mary Elizabeth Braddon's Aurora Floyd and has published on Victorian fiction in many journals including Victorian Literature and Culture, Women's Writing, Dickens Studies Annual, Victorian Newsletter, and Victorians Institute Journal.

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