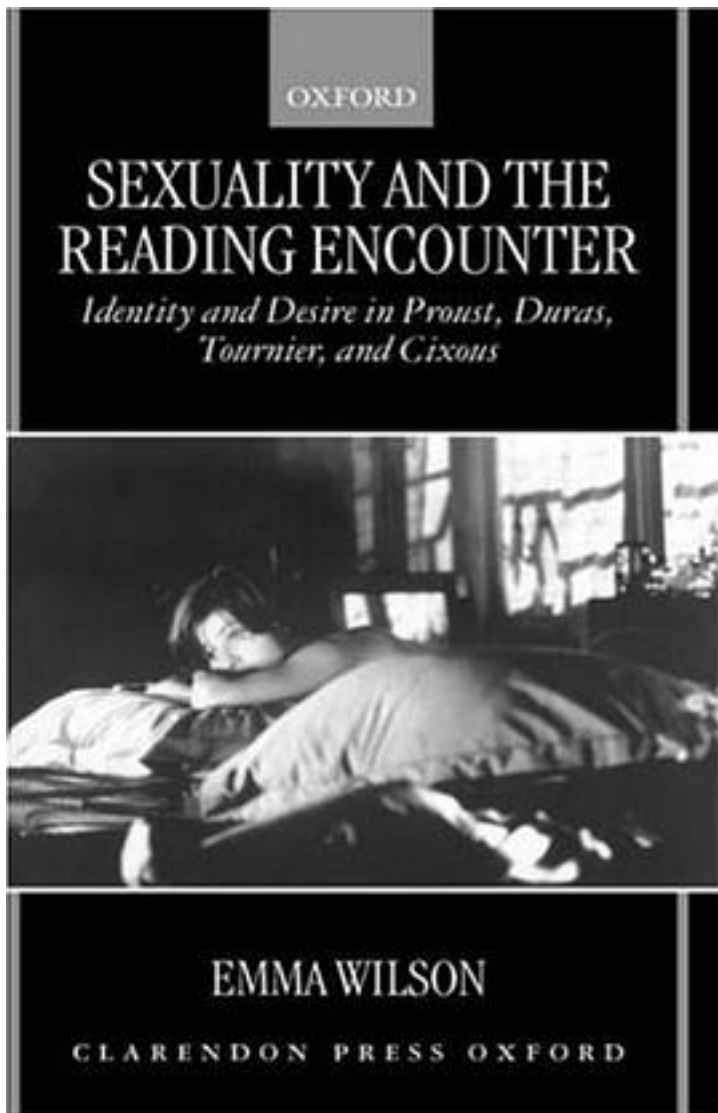


Sexuality and the Reading Encounter



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Can fictions of desire determine real pleasures? Do texts regulate the performance of our sexual identities? In *Sexuality and the Reading Encounter*, Emma Wilson offers a new account of the intimate relations between reading, identity and identification. Interweaving theoretical debate with analysis of texts by Proust, Duras, Tournier and Cixous, her study reveals the formative potential and transferential pleasures of the reading encounter. Drawing on an understanding of identity as performative, alienated and fictitious, this study argues that the fictions we read act as mirrors and decoys displaying seductive images of intelligible sexual identities. The texts chosen for discussion here draw attention to the strategies by which identity is constructed textually. They work thus to frame the reading encounter and to highlight its formative power. In analysis of these texts, this study works to cut across the axes of homosexuality and heterosexuality, offering an alternative focus on the independence of fantasy and identity.

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