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The Intimacy of Influence. Narrative and Theoretical fictions in the works of George Eliot, Virginia Woolf and Jeanette Winterson

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One generation after Harold Bloom's *The Anxiety of Influence* (1973), the present study explores literary influences between the major works of the British novelists George Eliot (1819-1880), Virginia Woolf (1882-1941) and Jeanette Winterson (1959-). Rather than anxiety, this book examines lines of "intimacy." In *A Room of One's Own* (1929), Virginia Woolf foretold the coming of "Shakespeare's sister." She is the hypothetical writer whose works incarnate into the future what history repressed: the tradition of texts by women writers. *The Intimacy of Influence* argues that Shakespeare's sister figures not a single individual, but rather the ongoing transformation of the literary tradition. Woolf conceives of fiction as a web. When its tissues discover new shapes and limits, pioneering works emerge. The evolving texts catalyse the literary medium and release its neglected treasures.

Catherine Lord is a reader in literature, critical theory, gender and cultural studies at the Belle van Zuylen Institute of the University of Amsterdam. She is a member of the Amsterdam School of Cultural Analysis. She is a writer and performer.