

Acknowledgments

The help of colleagues and friends has brought to the privacy of thinking about blushing the sociability that is so often attendant on blushing itself. I thank the following for offering attentive readings, spontaneous encouragements, well-placed words, good stories, and happy distractions: in earliest days, John Bishop, Carol Clover, Deborah Dyson, Ralph Rader, Kerry Walk; more recently, Nancy Armstrong, Joseph Litvak, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, and the always smart and consistently generous readers for Duke University Press; more locally, Harriette Andreadis, Margaret Ezell, Samuel Gladden, Melanie Hawthorne, Howard Marchitello, Pamela Matthews, Krista May, J. Lawrence Mitchell, Robert Newman, Larry Reynolds, James Rosenheim, and Lynne Vallone; Gillian Brown, Ian Crump, Helen Emmitt, Howard Horwitz, Judith Remmes, Carol Siegel, Lynn Wardley; Gwendolen Albert, Jay Baer, Maureen and Mike Bellotti, Jack Bodden, Sean Chadwell, Maggie Landis, Deshae Lott, John Loughlin, Patricia Loughlin, Gabriel McWhirter, Joshua McWhirter, Amy McWilliams, Margaret O'Farrell, Nancy Tubbs; and Ken Wissoker, who, as editor, has struck the perfect balance between supportive patience and the polite suggestion that I might put the damn thing in the mail. Time and stimulation provided by the Interdisciplinary Group for Historical Literary Study at Texas A&M University have facilitated the completion of this work. A version of Chapter 1, "Austen's Blush," appeared in *Novel* 27 (1994): 125–39. I thank the editors for permission to reprint it here.

Audrey Jaffe and Leland Monk have long been best companions in novelistic pleasures; Jeffrey Cox has been the most generous of colleagues and friends. D. A. Miller recognizes himself, I know, in those parts of this text that are engagements with him, and I trust he knows, too, that I would not have written without him. David McWhirter's Sunday dinners, along with his mastery of the transition, have been only the most obviously material forms of his support, which—as intelligence and conversation and company—is sustenance made into buoyancy. First thanks and last are offered to my parents.