

Letters Written During a Short Residence in Sweden, Norway and Denmark By Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin was roundly criticised for these memoirs because he scandalously mentioned Wollstonecraft's lack of belief in hell and made clear that she had sexual relationships outside of the state of matrimony. This edition has footnotes and several appendixes for the amendments that Godwin made to the second edition in which he tried to soft pedal and make Wollstonecraft's life approximate the norms of Georgian Britain's polite society. Imagine Jane Austen confronted with a woman of similar social background who attempted to earn a living through running schools and translation.

It is so delightful to love our fellow-creatures and meet the honest affections as they break forth. A Short Residence in Sweden Norway & Denmark is written in the form of twenty-five letters possibly originally composed as a travel journal in places it seems that they are addressed to Gilbert Imlay who had been more or less her husband and published in 1796 Mary Wollstonecraft's intention was simply to endeavour to give a just view of the present state of the countries I have passed through as far as I could obtain information during so short a residence (p62). She dislikes the duvets too soft and the bedrooms are too warm and the children are too warmly dressed the meal times too early and they go on too long the drinking her father had been a heavy drinker and a domestic tyrant the stoves she much prefers a good old open fire inefficient as well as lovely and draughty and the smoking. She disapproves of the sugar and spice in the diet finding this to be the cause of the women's bad teeth she makes no comment on the state of the men's teeth perhaps she didn't get close enough. Taking advantage of the ongoing British blockade of France with a partner he invested in a blockade runner registered under a false name filled her with cargo and found a young Norwegian captain for her. At the same time their romantic relationship was at least as far he was concerned over and she had shortly before attempted suicide and she was to attempt suicide again after meeting with Imlay in London once she returned. Unmentioned but very much present in the background of her account of this journey into Norway are her visits to judges and influential men and the Captain of the ship who she follows to his home town Risør in south-eastern Norway it doesn't look so grim in the picture perhaps it has been much improved over the last two hundred years but then also ideas about landscapes have changed too nor was Wollstonecraft in a cheerful frame of mind; her vision could well have been coloured by her mission dramatically described after a night rowing round skerries and crags to reach the place: We were a considerable time entering amongst the islands before we saw about two hundred houses crowded together under a very high rock - still higher appearing above. A few planks formed passages from house to house which you must often scale mounting steps like a ladder to enter (p131) Flittering across the foreground of her letters however is her pain at the end of the relationship with Imlay and her bitterness towards commercial undertakings and greed which she sees as the cause of the breakdown between the two of them. Above all for me these letters arise out of the Enlightenment and Romanticism well mixed with Wollstonecraft's passionate engagement presented in delightful though wordy late eighteenth century English prose. Reading her meditations on future ages and her vision of bleak and rocky landscapes I was struck that Wollstonecraft was Mary Shelley's mother in more than simply a physical sense: The view of this wild coast as we sailed along it afforded me a continual subject for meditation. I even carried my speculations so far as to advance a million or two of years to the moment when the earth would perhaps be so perfectly cultivated and so completely peopled as to render it necessary to inhabit every spot; yes; these bleak shores. The images fastened on me and the world appeared a vast prison (p130) Although then again having a vision of the character of the landscape was very much in the Zeitgeist and not unique to the two of them. As an observer Wollstonecraft was alive to the manners of the places she travelled through and the characteristics of men and women as well as the cattle winding their weary way to cosy cottages for milking. There may be many grounds on which to criticise her account based on a brief visit to a limited number of places but the power of the book is that if ever there was a book calculated to make a man in love with its author this appears to me to be the book as William Godwin wrote in his Memoirs of the

Author of 'The Rights of Woman'(p249). These memoirs were written shortly after Wollstonecraft's death and are striking for their careful even analytical provided for her siblings setting them up as best she could assisted her father through the morass of his financial affairs until his death was in France during the revolution and was acquainted with the Girondist leadership had an illegitimate child and so on. At the time it was subject to the King of Denmark but seems to have had considerable local autonomy and perhaps surprisingly Wollstonecraft comments that "the Norwegians appear to me to be the most free community I have ever observed. " She also mentions at several points how the laws of the Scandinavian countries were much less punitive than in other nations "...the laws here are mild and do not punish capitally for any crime but murder which seldom occurs. There's one touching sequence where Wollstonecraft ponders on mortality and comments:"I cannot bear to think of being no more - of losing myself - though existence is often but a painful consciousness of misery; nay it appears to me impossible that I should cease to exist or that this active restless spirit equally alive to joy and sorrow should only be organised dust. "Sadly she died of suspected septicaemia at the age of 38 11 days after the birth of her daughter Mary Godwin who as Mary Shelley went on to surpass her mother in literary fame. But it was the obvious choice as this was probably the Mary Wollstonecraft book that had the most enthusiastic reception at the time and it's easy to see why: it has a nice mixture of travel observations political theorising personal reflection and social comment. She'd already made one suicide attempt over his treatment of her and the trip was perhaps in part an attempt to prove her devotion to him but she was confident she could get a good book out of it too. She talks about leaving behind 'the horrors I had witnessed in France' as well as 'the tears of disappointed affection' and although she doesn't explain who her affection was for or how it was disappointed the implications are fairly clear from the fact that she is travelling alone with a thirteen-month-old child. While she considers Danes and Norwegians to be 'the least oppressed people of Europe' Sweden she sees as still in thrall to despotism and aristocracy and its inhabitants when they aren't drenching the fields in 'the putrefying herrings which they use as manure' contentedly remain rooted in the clods they so indolently cultivate. I was lucky enough to be in Sweden when I read this and I happily quoted this description to everyone around me - though of course many of them were too busy rooting in the clods to make more than a grunt in response. As might be expected Wollstonecraft is very sensitive to the gender inequities of wherever she goes judging gloomily that in general 'the men stand up for the dignity of man by oppressing the women'. I dread to unfold her mind lest it should render her unfit for the world she is to inhabit—Hapless woman! what a fate is thine!And it seems that she's already becoming aware that people associate her with this kind of thing. Still harping on the same subject you will exclaim—How can I avoid it when most of the struggles of an eventful life have been occasioned by the oppressed state of my sex: we reason deeply when we forcibly feel. Still this is a different side of Mary Wollstonecraft where the eloquent anger is tempered by a sense of real sadness and where in consequence her line in outraged polemic is interspersed with experiments in controlled sensibility and pure description. Mary Wollstonecraft 1790A hybrid of letters travel writing and commentary on society political organization women's rights nature and more this was Wollstonecraft's most popular work during her own lifetime and provided her with much-needed income during a time she was struggling with the challenges of being a single mother in late eighteenth-century England. It is worth spending some time learning more about Wollstonecraft's life and her circumstances at the time of her journey to Scandinavia and Germany for the greater appreciation it provides of the riches to be found in this interesting work of an important protofeminist. The free Librivox audiobook I listened to was a collaborative reading and I found the disparate voices of varying quality and a wide range of accents and tones to be off-putting and difficult to engage with. 9780900001512 Originally published in 1796 Mary Wollstonecraft's account of her trip to Denmark Norway and Sweden is compelling both in its picture of countries rarely visited in Regency times and insights into Mary's personal life. Her scenic descriptions and political comments about Norway and her encounters with an impoverished peasantry and Danish townsfolk greedily obsessed by commerce are no less vivid than the outbursts of melancholy in these letters written to Gilbert Imlay her unfaithful lover and

father of her baby. This book attracted William Godwin to its author who was soon to become his wife and the mother of Mary Shelley creator of Frankenstein making this a key work for the understanding of the Godwin-Shelley circle. This new edition is enriched by a new introduction by Sylva Norman which puts Wollstonecraft's letters into their political and social context and provides enlightening information about Mary's life loves and deeply held convictions. At times it was quite sad considering who she was writing to and why she was abroad in the first place but these personal insights along with her astute appraisal of other lands made it an interesting and informative read. She was no shrinking violet when it came to dishing out her opinions and she had plenty of them! In fact at times her remarks go right past what would be considered fair commentary and carry on to what could only be termed bitching. Bitching about the teeth of the hosts the softness of the beds the way they overdressed kids smoking drinking the length of the meals and so on and etcetera until it came as no surprise to me that Imlay had already replaced her as his paramour. Here's a sampling of quotes to show that her mind was not constrained to a single line of thought: Health and idleness will always account for promiscuous amours and in some degree I term every person idle the exercise of whose mind does not bear some proportion to that of the body (P. 35) (Are you fellows down at the gym paying attention to this?) But few people have sufficient taste to discern that the art of embellishing consists in interesting not astonishing (P. 124) (Regarding landscaping) I have always been of opinion that the allowing actors to die in the presence of the audience has an immoral tendency; but trifling when compared with the ferocity acquired by viewing the reality as a show; for it seems to me that in all countries the common people go to executions to see how the poor wretch plays his part rather than to commiserate his fate much less to think of the breach of morality which has brought him to such a deplorable end. We can easily download scenic images from anywhere anytime but 18th century readers surely appreciated (this was a popular book) what we consider overdone writing on waterfalls mountains roads rock formations farms and homes. What stays with the modern reader are the all too few glimpses of the people their way of life and their customs; this prose is similarly dated but Wollstonecraft is ahead of her time in what she chooses to describe and what she says about it. These and the excerpts from his book on her have historical importance but leave me a little breathless about a man publishing the most intimate writing of his wife and the details of her heartbreak. 9780900001512 I have read *The Vindication for the Rights of Woman* several times and though as a modern feminist I cannot agree with all Wollstonecraft says I always feel very strongly when reading it and am convinced of Wollstonecraft's daring intelligence and strength. As I described it to a friend Mary Wollstonecraft suddenly turns out to be a sort of proto-Lady Catherine de Bourgh commenting on everything giving her opinion on everything (sometimes informed sometimes not so much) and most of all strongly criticising all those around her. These musings are interpolated with musings of the romantic kind writing about the many majestic sights of Scandinavia explaining what effects these have on her personally praising the sublimity of the landscapes. What makes her a somewhat annoying narrator are the constant comments on the inhabitants of Scandinavia constantly comparing them to other Europeans and of course unfavourably setting them off against the English. It does a fairly good job I imagine of sketching the political situation in the different countries and cleverly links certain outlandish practises to English customs forcing the reader to re-evaluate their own opinions. Among the general public and specifically among feminists Wollstonecraft's life has received much attention than her writing because of her unconventional and often tumultuous personal relationships. After two ill fated affairs with Henry Fuseli and Gilbert Imlay Wollstonecraft married the philosopher [William Godwin](#) one of the forefathers of the anarchist movement; they had one daughter [Mary Shelley](#) the author of Frankenstein. Among the general public and specifically among feminists Wollstonecraft's life has received much attention than her writing because of her unconventional and often tumultuous personal relationships. After two ill fated affairs with Henry Fuseli and Gilbert Imlay Wollstonecraft married the philosopher [William Godwin](#) one of the forefathers of the anarchist movement; they had one daughter [Mary Shelley](#) the author of Frankenstein. Wollstonecraft is best known for *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*

(1792) in which she argues that women are not naturally inferior to men but appear to be only because they lack education. However with the emergence of the feminist movement at the turn of the twentieth century Wollstonecraft's advocacy of women's equality and critiques of conventional femininity became increasingly important. Still my good friend I begin to think that I should not like to live continually in the country with people whose minds have such a narrow range: I feel more than a mother's fondness and anxiety when I reflect on the dependent and oppressed state of her sex. I dread lest she should be forced to sacrifice her heart to her principles or principles to her heart. 24) Marguerite and the child often fell asleep and when they were awake I might still reckon myself alone as our train of thoughts had nothing in common. Thanks for hopping on!

9780900001512 I probably bought this book because of its cover not the only time I've bought a book purely on the strength of Caspar David Friedrich: She spoke none of the languages of the countries she travels through: Fortunately she wasn't a traveller she was a woman on a mission. Gilbert Imlay her common-law husband and father of her first child aspired to a mushroom fortune of his own, The gentleman absconded at the earliest opportunity with ship and cargo. This wasn't a matter that Imlay could pursue in the British or French courts however the Danes were prepared to look into it. Wollstonecraft was accredited by Imlay as his representative and travelled with a maid and her toddler with no language skills to negotiate on his behalf, Talk not of bastilles! To be born here was to be bastilled by nature - shut out from all that opens the understanding or enlarges the heart. Huddled one behind another not more than a quarter of the dwellings even had a prospect of the sea. I anticipated the future improvement of the world & observed how much man had still to do to obtain of the earth all it could yield, Imagination went still farther and pictured the state of man when the earth would no longer support him. Where was he to fly to from universal famine? Do not smile: I really became distressed for these fellow creatures yet unborn. For all her strictures about Scandinavian teeth she is struck by the kindness of the people she meets towards her and her enthusiasm for beauty and liveliness is contagious. In Godwin's account there are two important influences on Wollstonecraft's life, Her childhood the girl was the mother of the woman and the French Revolution which cracked apart her mind forg'd manacles opening up everything to question, For a person as decisive and sure of her own opinion as she was allowed the possibility of attempting to live as she wanted. However he is also open about how important an influence Wollstonecraft was on his own life and development. As a whole the brief life is as tender a memorial to a lost love as I can imagine, The distinct phraseology of Georgian literary English in its own way only adds to the sadness underlying the careful sentences: This volume is nicely presented with a thorough introduction notes and a map, 9780900001512 A series of 25 letters sent by proto-feminist Mary Wollstonecraft to her ex-lover Gilbert Imlay describing a visit to Scandinavia in 1797. Wollstonecraft made this journey to represent Imlay in a dispute he had with business contacts presumably in the hope of winning back his affections. She travelled with her maidservant and with her baby daughter Fanny Imlay: This collection contains only the letters sent by Wollstonecraft to Imlay but they were originally one side of a two-way correspondence. The Introduction explains that the letters Wollstonecraft received from Imlay were cold in tone. The gradual realisation that she was not to be reconciled with Imlay may have led to what I feel was a more negative tone as the letters go on: The journey had the rough order of Sweden-Norway-Sweden-Denmark-Germany and Wollstonecraft seems to be more critical about the last two destinations. Sheer tiredness may also have been a factor since travel was a lot more demanding in those days: I read first-hand accounts from the past largely for the insights they provide into what society was really like and there was just about enough of that to keep me interested, Of the three countries Norway was the one that impressed Wollstonecraft the most: "They are not termed slaves yet a man may strike a man with impunity because he pays him wages: " Wollstonecraft adds that "Still the men stand up for the dignity of man by oppressing the women: " The lack of a punitive approach to crime is something that is still generally true of Scandinavia today, Wollstonecraft does tend to rhapsodise about the beauty of the landscape especially in Norway. I think it was understandable that she did so but these sections of the letters are less interesting to the modern reader, Also even though as a thinker she was well

ahead of her time she inevitably retains some of the attitudes of her era. Unlike most people of her era though Mary Wollstonecraft is at least remembered, 9780900001512 This was the book Percy Shelley read to Mary Shelley when they were travelling together through France introducing her to the mother she never knew. Another generation and still waiting for Europe to be saved by radical revolution: Mary Wollstonecraft had gone to Scandinavia on business travelling as the representative of her 'husband' Gilbert Imlay (though they weren't actually married): None of this background is really spelled out here though there are constant intriguing hints of some tragic personal backstory to mirror the tragic political backstory: It gives a subjective even romantic tinge to all her reflections on the landscape: Her political convictions colour her opinions on the places she visits in ways that are often quite funny: It doesn't bode well for her little daughter Fanny: I feel more than a mother's fondness and anxiety when I reflect on the dependent and oppressed state of her sex..., As ever she is a riveting mix of incisiveness personal foibles soapboxing and sick burns held together here by concern for her baby daughter, Knowing what subsequently became of Fanny Imlay makes everything a hundred times sadder: 9780900001512 The art of travel is only a branch of the art of thinking: Letters Written During a Short Residence in Sweden Norway and Denmark I have a tricky relationship with Mary Wollstonecraft, Although I have great admiration for her work and ideas I don't actually like reading her books, I've read fiction non-fiction and now this collection of letters: This was my favourite so far as I felt we got a small glimpse of her private life and convictions in-between a lot of recounting of Scandinavian life and landscapes: 9780900001512 I read this one based on a friend's review of another edition. It is not my normal reading fare and I was quite pleased with what I found in these pages. It was obvious from the start that Wollstonecraft was a very strong and determined woman independent and intelligent to the max: The book is based on letters she wrote to her lover/common-law husband whose business interests she was pursuing during her travels in the Scandinavian countries, This trip occurred during the late eighteenth century and certainly was no easy accomplishment: In the days before railways travellers travelled by carriage over rough roads, Teams had to be changed along the way and the traveller often had to depend on the hospitality of households along the way for meals and overnight accommodations, Additionally a lot of the route was traversed by ship and rowboat: It was a long and slow journey and Mary had lots of time to marvel at the countryside through which she passed, To be fair the letters were a private communication and quite possibly she had no idea they would see anyone's eyes but Imlay's. What impressed me the most about our girl Mary is that she had an active mind and interests that covered all the points of the intellectual compass. She comments on morality capital punishment agriculture the future of mankind. a finger in every intellectual and philosophical pie so to speak, More importantly many of her observations made hundreds of years ago still hold true today. 155) (No question about where she would stand on modern TV programmes and violent video games. Mary loved commas and I believe she applied them to the page with a shotgun, I have to say that I expected to have to fight my way through this book but I enjoyed it immensely: I will be hunting down more of her work in the future, In spite of her kvetching and superior airs a fascinating woman! 9780900001512 3: 5 stars This was interesting to me A/ because of whom it was written by B/ because I was reading it relating to a group theme: It was interesting reading about life and travel more than 200 years ago. There are many digressions in the book some of more interest than others: 9780900001512 The dearth of pre-1800 travel literature for this region and the authorship of these 25 short letters (22 on topic) make them significant. In 1795 Mary Wollstonecraft learned that in her absence her "husband" (as registered in France but not fully legal) was living with an actress: Shortly after she made the trip described in these letters with their infant daughter on his behalf, Her mission to track down Gilbert Imlay's "partner" and missing cargo is not mentioned in the letters. The letters describe the scenery modes of transport and accommodation and give observations on the people their government commerce and culture: She has observations on the role of women how they dress marry work hard and are treated; but overall there is more on the poor, She notes the very low wages and how this results in groveling and dishonesty: Protective import and export policies favor the merchant class and raise the price of

goods making items of clothing out of reach for the poor. Wollstonecraft observes capital punishment and notes how this kind of public display does not deter crime and sadly people enjoy the spectacle, Most accept injustice as part of life; those who try to change things are severely punished. The other is the idea that science and progress should change values from pursuit of convenience to developing the senses and taste. The publisher has included the letters Wollstonecraft wrote to Imlay while on this trip: These had been originally published by Wollstonecraft's second husband: While the text says they are favorable I found them tepid and that they demonstrated the sexism she faced. For all the value of the documents there is an absolutely horrible map, I needed a magnifying glass to read the names of the places, That the author of these letters is Wollstonecraft sets a high bar that is not met. Amid the thick prose I found too few observations to say I got much out of it. Reading this collection of letters was therefore something of a disappointment: She still displays her intelligence when it comes to political matters and general reflections on matters of state both in the countries she visits and in England. She is positively unkind concerning these people who host her and wish to show her their country which is very disappointing. Letters was Wollstonecraft's most popular text during her lifetime and it certainly has interesting moments nuggets of information that are exhilarating or thought-provoking. It is a pity Wollstonecraft barely ever stops to do exactly that herself. 9780900001512 Mary Wollstonecraft was an eighteenth century British writer philosopher and feminist. Wollstonecraft died at the age of thirty eight due to complications from childbirth leaving behind several unfinished manuscripts. During her brief career she wrote novels treatises a travel narrative a history of Mary Wollstonecraft was an eighteenth century British writer philosopher and feminist: Wollstonecraft died at the age of thirty eight due to complications from childbirth leaving behind several unfinished manuscripts. During her brief career she wrote novels treatises a travel narrative a history of the French Revolution a conduct book and a children's book, She suggests that both men and women should be treated as rational beings and imagines a social order founded on reason. After Wollstonecraft's death Godwin published a Memoir (1798) of her life revealing her unorthodox lifestyle which inadvertently destroyed her reputation for a century. Today Wollstonecraft is regarded as one of the founding feminist philosophers and feminists often cite both her life and work as important influences[1]

Tone and sense of loss. (p.15). (p. (p.86)Happiness is an 18th-century Scandinavian tour in June 2016.Wollstonecraft was not the ideal traveller. Public outcry over the memoir comes as no surprise. (The last few letters are written from north-west Germany)." In contrast the Swedish peasantry live in dire poverty. I will avoid collaborative readings in the future. I doubt that she intended that they be published. (P.)All commas in the quotes above are Ms Wollstonecraft's. Wollstonecraft had an astute eye for detail. Her broken heart is alluded to but not explained. She notes the crude life of working people. There are two recurring themes about human progress. One stated most clearly on p.71 is that "manners will introduce a finer moral feeling". There are some reviews of the material from the time. It needs an outline the country borders. Information courtesy of Wikipedia.org {site_link}

