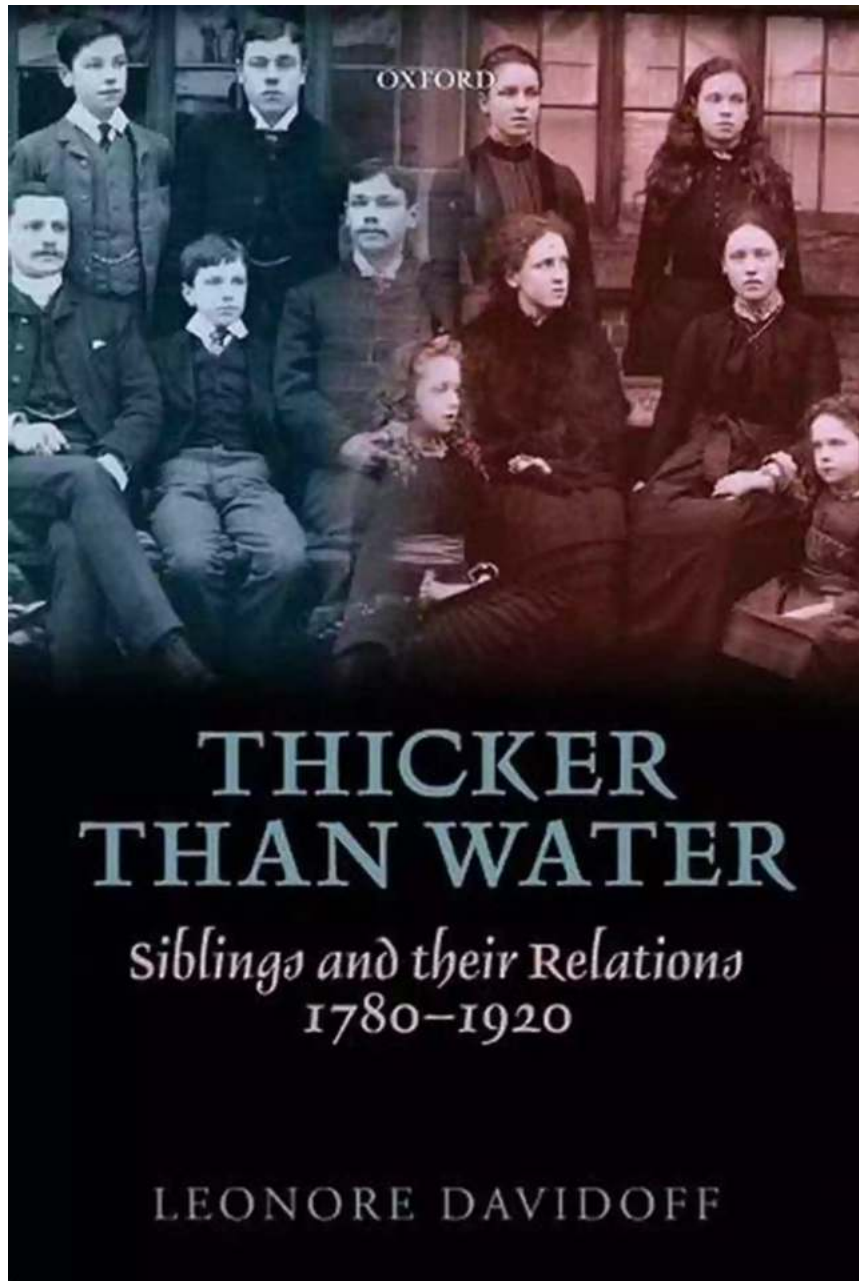


Thicker Than Water: Siblings and Their Relations 1780-1920

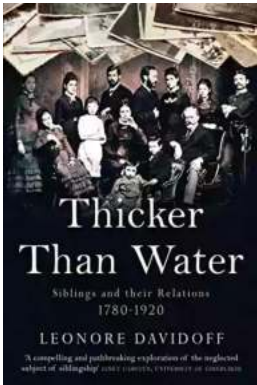


When it comes to family, one of the most important bonds we experience is that of siblings. Siblings are often said to be "thicker than water," symbolizing the unbreakable connection that exists between brothers and sisters. This article will explore the fascinating relationships of siblings during the period between 1780

and 1920, shedding light on the complexities and dynamics of family life during this time.

The Role of Siblings in Society

In the 18th and 19th centuries, siblings played a crucial role in society. As families grew larger due to higher birth rates, siblings became not only companions but also significant contributors to household chores and responsibilities. With the industrial revolution, families often lived in cramped conditions, and siblings relied on each other for emotional support, entertainment, and assistance in navigating the challenges of their time.



Thicker than Water: Siblings and Their Relations, 1780–1920 by Leonore Davidoff(Kindle Edition)

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

Language	: English
File size	: 22446 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 573 pages
Lending	: Enabled



Sibling Rivalry

While siblings had a deep bond, rivalry was not uncommon during this period. With limited resources and opportunities, siblings often found themselves competing for attention, favoritism, and resources. The phenomena of sibling rivalry contributed to the development of individual personalities and character

traits. Some siblings became lifelong rivals, while others eventually resolved their conflicts and developed strong bonds.

The Influence of Gender and Birth Order

Gender and birth order played essential roles in shaping sibling relationships during this era. Society had specific expectations for male and female roles, and siblings mirrored these expectations within their family dynamics. Eldest brothers were often seen as protectors and responsible figures, while eldest sisters were expected to assist with childcare and household tasks. Younger siblings generally looked up to their older siblings for guidance and support.

Siblings and Family Legacy

Siblings were also instrumental in preserving family legacies. In an era where oral tradition was prevalent, siblings played a vital role in passing down family stories, values, and traditions to future generations. This exchange of knowledge and shared experiences helped maintain familial ties and created a sense of continuity and identity among siblings and extended family members.

The Importance of Sibling Correspondence

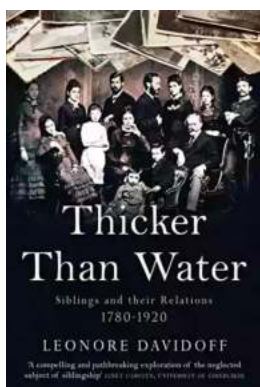
In the absence of modern communication methods, siblings relied heavily on letter writing to stay connected. Sibling correspondence provided a lifeline between family members, even if they were separated by distance. These letters reveal the depth of sibling relationships, intimate details of their lives, and the emotional support they provided one another.

Impact of Industrialization on Sibling Relationships

The rise of industrialization during the 19th century significantly impacted sibling relationships. The migration of siblings to urban areas in search of work led to physical separation, often resulting in strained relationships. However, it also

presented new opportunities for siblings to support one another financially and emotionally, as they faced the challenges of city life together.

Siblings have always held a special place in our hearts, and their relationships have played a significant role in shaping our society. During the period between 1780 and 1920, siblings navigated a rapidly changing world, facing challenges and opportunities that ultimately shaped their relationships and the course of their lives. By examining the dynamics of sibling relationships during this time, we gain a better understanding of the importance of family bonds and the enduring power of the sibling connection.



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Thicker than Water is a pioneering study of sibling relationships from the last decades of the eighteenth century to the first decades of the twentieth. The particular focus of the book is on Britain and its middle classes, who were at its core, and the role of family networks created through sibling relationships.

Leonore Davidoff examines what we know about the relationships of brothers and sisters at this time, before delving deeper, looking at their uses and meaning for

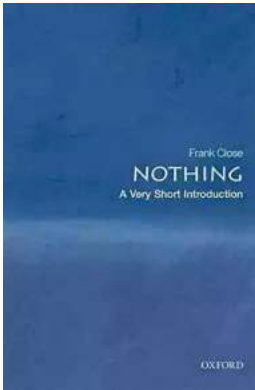
British middle class families, how they operated within the economic, social, cultural, and religious constraints of their place and time, and how they changed as families became smaller from the end of the nineteenth century onwards.

Brothers and sisters remain, for those that have them, an inextricable part of existence. In adult life they may never be in contact, but they cannot be formally divorced. They are frequently life's longest relationship. Yet until recently, historians have scarcely noted the role of siblings in society and the economy as well as in personal life.

The issues raised throughout the book are grounded in an exploration of some specific themes: sibling intimacy and incest, sibling death, case studies of famous brother-sister relationships, such as that between William, Anne, and Helen Gladstone, and a revealing account of the household and family relations of perhaps the most influential interpreter of personal and familial life in modern society, Sigmund Freud.

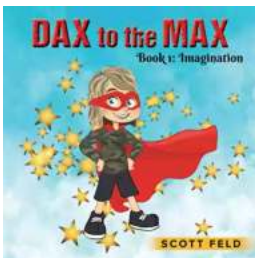
'A compelling and pathbreaking exploration of the neglected subject of siblingship. Hugely illuminating, informed by profound and broad scholarship, and also wonderfully readable, it is a work that will be of interest to historians and social scientists of all persuasions.' - Janet Carsten, University of Edinburgh

Leonore Davidoff (31 January 1932 – 19 October 2014) was a feminist historian and sociologist who pioneered new approaches to women's history and gender relations. She helped create the Feminist Library in London in 1975 and was the founding editor of the academic journal *Gender & History*. For much of her academic career, Davidoff was based at the University of Essex in the UK, and was a Professor Emerita when she died. She published a number of books, including *The Best Circles: Society, the Season and Etiquette* and *Worlds Between: Historical Perspectives on Gender and Class*.



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