



## The Women's Print History Project

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### Transatlantic Trajectories (feat. Melissa J. Homestead), *The WPHP Monthly Mercury*

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Moffatt, Kate, and Kandice Sharren, hosts. "Transatlantic Trajectories (feat. Melissa J. Homestead)." *The WPHP Monthly Mercury*, Season 2, Episode 9, 16 February 2022, <https://womensprinthistoryproject.com/blog/post/96>.

PDF Edited: 22 April 2024

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This podcast draws on research supported by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada and the Digital Humanities Innovation Lab at Simon Fraser University.



Social Sciences and Humanities  
Research Council of Canada

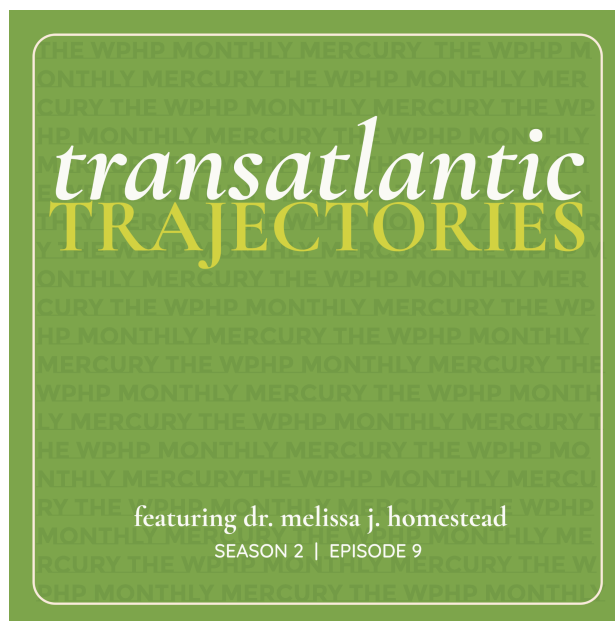
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# Transatlantic Trajectories (feat. Melissa J. Homestead)

*Kate Moffatt and Kandice Sharren*



In July 2020, project lead Michelle Levy and lead editor Kandice Sharren attended a virtual workshop hosted by Amy Tims at the American Antiquarian Society titled “Searching the AAS Catalog: Keyword & Browse.” This workshop introduced them to the many specific and useful headings of the American Antiquarian Society catalog, including some that we were particularly excited for given that we see them in resources so rarely: “women as authors” and “women as publishers and printers.” In November 2021, the WPHP used these headings to import more than 6000 title records from the American Antiquarian Society. Our thrilling plunge into titles printed in the United States is something we’ve been anticipating, and started preparing for over the last two years: we added a ‘copyright statement’ field, for example, so that we could capture the copyright information located on the verso of the title page of many American titles.

While our team of research assistants works diligently to clean up these imported records and make them available to the public, we have been starting to think about what having this data in the WPHP might tell us about the transatlantic reprinting of women’s writing during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In the process, we have had to grapple with new questions about how to best represent American titles within our data model. Thankfully, WPHP contributing scholar Dr. Melissa J. Homestead came to our rescue!

In Episode 9, “Transatlantic Trajectories,” hosts Kate Moffatt and Kandice Sharren introduce listeners to some of the joys and hiccups of the recent American import by way of a lively chat with Dr. Melissa J. Homestead about women’s American and transatlantic publishing. In it, we discuss transatlantic authors [Susanna Rowson](#) and [Catharine Maria Sedgwick](#), as well as American copyright and its intricacies during the period, how studying book history in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries can inform similar research in the twentieth, and the altar of chronology (with a

special focus on Willa Cather and Edith Lewis, too!).

## Guest

**Melissa J. Homestead** is Professor of English and Program Faculty in Women's & Gender Studies at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Having worked on authors from **Susanna Rowson** to Willa Cather, she considers her field to be American women's writing, authorship, and publishing history of the very long nineteenth century. She is the author of *American Women Authors and Literary Property, 1822-1869* (Cambridge University Press 2005) and *The Only Wonderful Things: The Creative Partnership of Willa Cather and Edith Lewis* (Oxford University Press 2021). She is Associate Editor of *The Complete Letters of Willa Cather: A Digital Edition* (ongoing), has collaborated on bibliographies of the works of Catharine Maria Sedgwick and E. D. E. N. Southworth, serves as President of the Catharine Maria Sedgwick Society, and is a member of the Board of Governors of the National Willa Cather Center. Cather expressed less than complimentary opinions in print about Southworth but, alas, she evidently never heard of Sedgwick.

## WPHP Spotlights Referenced

“The Transatlantic Publication of Phillis Wheatley’s Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral” (Amanda Law)

## WPHP Monthly Mercury Episodes Referenced

Season 2, Episode 8: “Mary Hays, Mapped”

## WPHP Records Referenced

Phillis Wheatley (person, author)

Catharine Maria Sedgwick (person, author)

Susanna Rowson (person, author)

*Charlotte. A Tale of Truth.* (title)

*Hope Leslie; or Early Times in the Massachusetts* (title)

Mathew Carey (firm, publisher)

Maria Edgeworth (person, author)

Mary Russell Mitford (person, author)

*Trials of the Human Heart* (title)

John Miller (firm, publisher)

Edward Moxon (firm, publisher)

Henry Colburn and Richard Bentley (firm, publisher)

A.K. Newman and Co. (firm, publisher)

James Fenimore Cooper (person, author)

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## Further Reading

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Gross, Robert A. and Mary Kelly, eds. *The History of the Book in America, Volume 2: Print, Culture, and Society in the New Nation, 1790–1840*. U of North Carolina P, 2010.

Homestead, Melissa J. "The Shape of Catharine Sedgwick's Career." *Cambridge History of American Women's Literature*. Ed. Dale Bauer. Cambridge UP, 2012, pp. 185–203.

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00:00:00 Melissa Homestead (guest) I love publication chronology so much and finding out when books were published. So, if they were entered into the Stationers' Register, that sometimes can be useful information, but just book advertisements. So, lining up all the evidence and saying, "Aha! It was published a week earlier in London than in New York." Right? [Kate and Kandice laugh]

00:00:24  [music playing]

00:00:33 Kandice Sharren (co-host) Hello, and welcome to *The WPHP Monthly Mercury*, the podcast for *The Women's Print History Project*. The WPHP is a bibliographical database that collects information about women and book production during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. My name is Kandice Sharren—

00:00:47 Kate Moffatt (co-host) and I'm Kate Moffatt—

00:00:49 Kandice Sharren (co-host) and we are long-time editors of the WPHP, and the hosts of this podcast. This season, we have some exciting special guests to interview, new research to share, and more stories to tell. Join us every third Wednesday of the month to learn more about the history of women's involvement in print.

00:01:06  [music playing]

00:01:15 Kate Moffatt (co-host) In the last couple of years, we have gradually begun expanding the WPHP to include titles from our period that were printed in the United States. Last November, we finally imported nearly 6,000 titles from the MARC records of the American Antiquarian Society catalogue that had women identified as authors, printers, publishers, and booksellers.

00:01:34 Kate Moffatt (co-host) And here's a little tidbit of WPHP behind-the-scenes for you. Our relationship with American titles has been complex, to say the least. Originally not part of the project scope, our early years saw us deleting any records [Kandice laughs] from our original ESTC imports that had American publication locations.

00:01:51 Kandice Sharren (co-host) Yes. We now curse those delete-happy early database days.

00:01:56 Kate Moffatt (co-host) [laughs]. And it wasn't until a couple of years ago while conceiving of what the next few years of the project might look like that we realized in order to capture women's involvement in print, the way we were hoping to, we could not continue to exclude American imprints.

- 00:02:09 Kate Moffatt (co-host) We began adding American titles in small bits and pieces largely as we encountered them, or when they became a subject of focus for us. I'm thinking of Research Assistant Amanda Law's spotlight on Phillis Wheatley.
- 00:02:20 Kandice Sharren (co-host) But now we've added all those deleted titles back in and more. [laughs]
- 00:02:25 Kate Moffatt (co-host) And you can't see most of these titles yet because, as ever, the import didn't go totally smoothly. In addition to the fact that the fields in the MARC records don't line up well with the fields in the WPHP, which means that we have to do a lot of cleaning, we also ended up with hundreds of duplicate person records, one for each woman attached to an AAS title who we already had in the WPHP.
- 00:02:47 Kandice Sharren (co-host) But at least we know that those titles exist as well as what needs to be fixed and how to do it, which is more that can be said for all those pesky post-1800 British titles that aren't novels or poetry [Kate laughs]. We love a comprehensive to-do list.
- 00:03:03 Kate Moffatt (co-host) Oh, we do [Kandice laughs]. But part of the reason that we could even contemplate including imprints from the United States in the WPHP is because the American Antiquarian Society catalogue has relatively comprehensive records for American titles up to 1840, thanks to the North American Imprints program, or NAIP, which aims to create in the words of the AAS website, a highly detailed and sophisticated machine readable catalogue of all books, pamphlets, and broadsides printed through the year 1876 in what are now the United States and Canada.
- 00:03:33 Kandice Sharren (co-host) Last summer, to get a handle on how we might be able to use this resource for the WPHP, Michelle and I participated in a fantastic virtual workshop by the ASS' catalogue initiatives librarian Amy Tims. I had the very good fortune to get a more in-depth version of this workshop when I was at the AAS for a fellowship last November. In it, we learned that the AAS has subject headings for women as authors and women in the printing and publishing trades.
- 00:04:01 Kandice Sharren (co-host) And that by searching these headings, we could download all the MARC records associated with them. Our developer, Michael Joyce, was then able to import them into the database. While the women as authors heading doesn't include women involved in secondary roles, such as translators or editors, it is far more comprehensive than our previous strategy of generating a list of women's names and comparing it to the author and imprint fields in a resource like the ESTC.

- 00:04:28 Kate Moffatt (co-host) However, finding and importing these titles into the WPHP is only part of the work that goes into making them publicly available in the database. As books produced in a different country and legal context, these titles and the metadata available in the AAS also present us with new editorial challenges.
- 00:04:44 Kate Moffatt (co-host) Why are there sometimes paragraphs of text on the verso of the title page that detail the book's copyright status [Kandice laughs], and how do you indicate that a particular edition is the third American reprinting of a title originally published in London, but its first Boston edition?
- 00:04:58 Kandice Sharren (co-host) We gave up on that last one pretty quickly. It got messy [both laugh]. To help us work through these new to us bibliographical quandaries we've luckily had some guidance from someone who is no stranger to working with the challenges of women's bibliographies: Melissa J. Homestead, who is the WPHP's Americanist contributing scholar and whose expert guidance has been essential to tackling these new challenges.
- 00:05:23 Kandice Sharren (co-host) For this month's episode, she sat down and chatted with us about women writers, bibliography and copyright. Our conversation ranged from the reprinting of Susanna Rowson's runaway hit *Charlotte Temple* in the early Republic to Willa Cather's personal and professional relationship with her editor.
- 00:05:39 Kate Moffatt (co-host) Melissa J. Homestead is Professor of English and program faculty in Women's and Gender studies at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Having worked on authors from Susanna Rowson to Willa Cather, she considers her field to be American women's writing authorship and publishing history of the very long nineteenth century. She is the author of *American Women Authors and Literary Property, 1822–1869* from Cambridge University Press in 2005, and *The Only Wonderful Things: The Creative Partnership of Willa Cather & Edith Lewis* from Oxford University Press in 2021.
- 00:06:10 Kate Moffatt (co-host) She is associate editor of the *Complete Letters of Willa Cather*, a digital edition, which is ongoing; has collaborated on bibliographies of the works of Catharine Maria Sedgwick and E. D. E. N. Southworth; serves as president of the Catharine Maria Sedgwick Society and is a member of the board of governors of The National Willa Cather Center. Cather expressed less than complimentary opinions in print about Southworth, but alas, she evidently never heard of Sedgwick.



00:06:34 Kandice Sharren (co-host) [laughs]. Thank you, Melissa, so much for joining us today. We're thrilled to have you involved in the WPHP generally and on the podcast this month. And I am especially thrilled because this interview is going to touch on some things related to transatlantic publication that I've been thinking through in my own research. And so welcome. And thank you.

00:07:06 Melissa Homestead (guest) Thank you.

00:07:07 Kate Moffatt (co-host) We're very excited to talk to you. This is actually a really well-timed conversation because we've just imported a whole whack of American records into the WPHP, most of which are not available to the public yet because there are some hiccups, we're working on them, we're cleaning them up. This import of specifically some American Antiquarian Society records cause some problems with our existing data in that we now have some duplicate person records for people who are listed in the AAS, who are also already in the WPHP.

00:07:37 Kate Moffatt (co-host) Most of these duplicates are British authors whose works were reprinted in the United States, but it has drawn our attention to two writers whose careers were truly transatlantic in nature. And it allowed us to see the complexities of their publication histories a lot more fully. And these writers are Susanna Rowson and Catharine Maria Sedgwick. Am I saying their names correctly?

00:07:57 Melissa Homestead (guest) Yeah. As far as, you know, Rowsen, Rowsen, no one's alive. Who knows? [Kate and Kandice laugh]. There's a divide between the Maria and Maria people. I go with Maria, so.

00:08:09 Kate Moffatt (co-host) Okay, beautiful. So let's start by talking about their lives and their literary productions. Please tell us, like, who was Susanna Rowson, who was Catharine Maria Sedgwick?

00:08:19 Melissa Homestead (guest) So, Susanna Rowson was born in England and when she was a small girl, her father who was a military officer was assigned to the colonies and the family moved there. And then when the revolutionary war broke out, that became a problem. And the family was actually held in, I can't remember exactly the right word, but they were basically being held prisoner in a house because they were Loyalists and they were ultimately exchanged a couple of years into the Revolution back to England.

- 00:08:52 Melissa Homestead (guest) But then in 1793, Susanna Rowson came to the United States as an actress with a theater company and she spent the rest of her life in the United States. So she is just about the most transatlantic figure that you can imagine. And she also published several novels and a book of poetry, which was also kind of dramatic criticism in England.
- 00:09:17 Melissa Homestead (guest) And then she got those books republished in the United States; at least, I argue that she was responsible for the republication. And then she also wrote more that was published in the United States that she authored when she was in the United States. So she has a very complicated and thoroughly transatlantic publication trajectory. Catharine Sedgwick was much more what we would consider to be a straight-up American author. [Kandice laughs]
- 00:09:45 Melissa Homestead (guest) So she was born in the United States. Her father was kind of a minor founding father. And she became an author when she was a younger middle-aged woman. She became a publishing author. And then she continued to publish. She had a really long career. She started publishing in the early 1820s and she published her last novel in 1857. So actually both Rowson and Sedgwick had careers. They weren't just one-offs, right?
- 00:10:17 Kate Moffatt (co-host) Yeah.
- 00:10:18 Melissa Homestead (guest) Although I think there is a tendency in literary history and the history of the book too, to think of women as just one-book wonders [Kandice laughs]. So, Charlotte Temple is Susanna Rowson and Hope Leslie is Catharine Sedgwick, but it's much more complicated than that. Catharine Sedgwick only went to Europe, including England once, but in 1839, I think she was there, but she was consistently republished in England—
- 00:10 Melissa Homestead (guest) both with her being involved in the republication and then also as cheap publishing emerged in England, she was republished. So a lot of the cheaper publications are sort of outside the chronological scope of *The Women's Print History Project*. But she was also republished quite a few times in cheap formats later.
- 00:11:11 Kate Moffatt (co-host) Interesting.

- 00:11:12 Kandice Sharren (co-host) So that's also an important thing to keep in mind, is that just because we end in 1836 doesn't mean either of these authors stopped being published after that.
- 00:11:21 Melissa Homestead (guest) Well, Susanna Rowson was dead, so she stopped.
- 00:11:25 Kandice Sharren (co-host) Yeah [laughs], yes [laughs]. Although Charlotte Temple has so many editions into the later nineteenth century. [Kate and Kandice laugh]
- 00:11:32 Melissa Homestead (guest) Yes, it does. Yes, it does.
- 00:11:34 Kandice Sharren (co-host) Yeah [laughs]. So, as you've already touched on and as your work explores more generally, and as their presence in the WPHP prior to our recent import indicates, both Rowson and Sedgwick actively navigated transatlantic literary careers. So, can you talk a little bit in more detail about what a transatlantic career might have looked like for women authors in this period? How involved were they in managing their publications on both sides of the Atlantic and what are some of the concerns that they would've had to navigate?
- 00:12:07 Melissa Homestead (guest) So I think that most women—there hasn't been really enough research on the individual woman and their circumstances to be sure of what the arrangements were or weren't that they were involved in, in managing a transatlantic career. So it's hard to generalize. And in fact, I sort of went back to look at Susanna Rowson for a particular reason and got drawn into this whole story of unwinding what happened with her works,
- 00:12:34 Melissa Homestead (guest) which is not all that well-documented, but in fact, it's the bibliographic details as well as a few extant letters and some account books that overturn what everybody in the history of the book thought, based on some influential scholarship, that it was all about Mathew Carey, the pirate, right? He was a pirate publisher [Kate laughs] and she was exploited. She had no control. And that actually is not true, but it took a lot of detail work to unwind that.
- 00:13:03 Melissa Homestead (guest) I basically have followed Catharine Sedgwick to a number of different places that she went. So I followed her across the Atlantic and then also did the same work of—a lot of its bibliographic detail looking at the books. So I looked at the physical copies of books. I also had more letters in that case. There were some publisher's records. And so I was sort of following her and she took me across the

Atlantic, as it were. She's taken me a number of places I otherwise might not have gone.

- 00:13:33 Melissa Homestead (guest) But I think that the way that trade practices and informal arrangements could have allowed any author to have control, not just women, has been underestimated, that the copyright situation has been read as making it basically impossible for most authors to exercise control. But I think in this earlier period, there are lots of reasons that someone like Susanna Rowson could have exercised control. And it's pretty clear that she did.
- 00:14:06 Melissa Homestead (guest) Catharine Sedgwick, for American authors in the London trade, at that point, there was more that could be done. There was less unauthorized reprinting, but it still required some strategic thinking. It required contacts, it required some knowledge of the law and trade practices. And I'd say that in both instances, these women were, like, "okay, so you had to know the right people. You had to understand the legal situation. You had to have some idea of how the situation worked."
- 00:14:40 Melissa Homestead (guest) And even if there weren't a generalizable principle, you could work out something. And I also think that a lot of republication wasn't necessarily about earning a lot of money. It was about establishing an audience for a particular reason. So I think Susanna Rowson was looking to up her profile as an actress as well as an author when she moved to the United States—
- 00:15:05 Kate Moffatt (co-host) Interesting!
- 00:15:06 Melissa Homestead (guest) and Catharine Sedgwick wanted the prestige of having British readers, and she actually used the publication of her works to make contacts with and raise her profile with British authors. So she dedicated her first novel to Maria Edgeworth, who apparently did see the novel and get the dedication, but mentioned it in a letter to somebody, not Catharine Sedgwick, which gets very kind of complicated. [Kate and Kandice laugh]
- 00:15:31 Melissa Homestead (guest) And she used some of the transatlantic publication of her books as part of her developing an epistolary correspondence and friendship with Mary Russell Mitford. There's a lot of things going on and they were both authors who did some interesting work working their networks.

- 00:15:53 Kate Moffatt (co-host) That's so interesting, I don't think I'd thought, for some reason, and I haven't worked a lot in trans literary or transatlantic literary stuff. That's been Kandice's thing for a while. But I don't think I even realized, too, that doing that kind of transatlantic publishing, that it would potentially introduce you to, or broaden your networks with other like literary figures. It makes sense now that you say it; I'm like, "oh yeah, of course" [Kandice laughs]. But I'm having a bit of an 'aha!' moment over here. [Kandice and Kate laugh]
- 00:16:21 Kandice Sharren (co-host) So it sounds like between when Rowson was publishing in the 1780s and 90s, and when Sedgwick began publishing in the 1820s, there were some substantial shifts that meant Sedgwick could potentially have a bit more control. Can you say a little bit more about what those were?
- 00:16:39 Melissa Homestead (guest) Well, no, I don't think—those are different directions. So those different directions had consequences. I would say that in the earlier period, the U.S. Publishing industry was not very well developed and Rowson did exercise control. But also before that, you know, there's this idea that because the United States had a copyright law that said works by non-citizens and non-residents were in the public domain—every bookstore was full of triple deckers and cheap reprints. That is not the case.
- 00:17:17 Melissa Homestead (guest) They didn't have enough type and paper and printing presses to reprint triple decker novels. And so the novels they get reprinted in this early period—so people talk about Samuel Richardson's popularity in the United States, but they were condensed versions.
- 00:17:37 Kandice Sharren (co-host) Yeah.
- 00:17:38 Melissa Homestead (guest) Because they just didn't even, seriously—paper and type, and all of the capital you would need to put those books into print. And this is also before stereotype plates—
- 00:17:48 Kate Moffatt (co-host) Right.
- 00:17:49 Melissa Homestead (guest) so you'd have to keep it in the printing, you know, in the forms, or you would have to print off a lot of sheet stock and then have that sitting someplace, taking up storage space, all the paper has been invested in. So, one of the reasons I think that *Charlotte Temple* becomes so popular is that it's short.

00:18:11 Kandice Sharren (co-host) It is.

00:18:12 Melissa Homestead (guest) And so a lot of publishers in the United States can reprint it without having to have that much capital to do it. And even Mathew Carey, I think that's one of the reasons that he becomes involved in issuing an American edition of that book is that he can pull it off [Kandice laughs]. So one of her other early novels, the first novel that she wrote in the United States, although it is not set at all in the United States, is *Trials of the Human Heart*, which was originally advertised as that it was going to be a subscription publication.

00:18:46 Melissa Homestead (guest) And it was going to be four volumes and it was going to be \$4, which was an enormous amount of money. And she had a hard time getting enough subscribers and getting all the money together because it was going to be self-financed, essentially. Ultimately it was four volumes bound in two, and \$2 when it came out.

00:19:01 Melissa Homestead (guest) But there was a long stretch of time there, right? So Mathew Carey wasn't going to take that one on because it was too long and too much capital. And then, of course, once she got to the United States, even though she wasn't a citizen at that point, that book was protected by copyright, but not that it ever had a long career, it didn't really have a long career. In part, because I think it was a long book. [Kandice laughs]

00:19:27 Melissa Homestead (guest) I would say that the challenges in terms of the trade—so at this point, as you know, you get to the 1820s, you're in the era of the triple decker and British publishers are publishing in small editions at high prices and stocking the lending libraries, which is not really the model in the United States. So getting yourself into that market really was about connections. And it wasn't about making a lot of money.

00:20:03 Melissa Homestead (guest) Even if you were an author, I think it was a British author, right? [Kandice laughs]. It wasn't about making a whole lot of money. So for Catharine Sedgwick it really was about working connections and her family—they were a pretty elite genteel family in the United States and they had connections and they used them.

00:20:21 Melissa Homestead (guest) Her brothers were all trained in the law. So they helped her; I don't think because she was incompetent or retiring, which is the way she's been portrayed sometimes [Kandice laughs], but if you've got a bunch of free legal advice—

- 00:20:36 Kandice Sharren (co-host) Absolutely.
- 00:20:37 Melissa Homestead (guest) let them handle it, right?
- 00:20:38 Kate Moffatt (co-host) Right. “You take it!” [laughs]
- 00:20:40 Melissa Homestead (guest) And there’s also a man called John Miller working in London who—he puts his own imprint on some of Sedgwick’s books, but he also is a kind of pioneering agent in the transatlantic market. And he, if he doesn’t put the book out under his own imprint, he helps. And he’s also involved in James Fenimore Cooper’s publishing in England at this point. So he’s a key figure that Catharine Sedgwick somehow gets hooked in with. [Kandice laughs]
- 00:21:13 Melissa Homestead (guest) And her brothers helped a lot with that correspondence. But she moved around a lot too. Her novels are published in London by a bunch of different publishers. They’re published in this early part of her career in those triple decker formats, and they’re quite expensive. And then it’s in the 1840s that that shifts. But there’s a couple of books that were published as a result of her trip to England, which are really kind of interesting.
- 00:21:40 Melissa Homestead (guest) One is called *Letters from abroad to kindred at home*, which is published in a cheaper format, and by Edward Moxon, who is, you know, a pioneer in these modest price books. And he publishes a lot of travel books. And she gets hooked into him by Captain Basil Hall, who had first met Catharine Sedgwick in the United States, right? And then she comes to London and he squires her around, and helps her out. [Kate and Kandice laugh]
- 00:22:11 Melissa Homestead (guest) And then, there’s also one of her children’s books. So she wrote in a lot of genres—it’s clear, there’s just some fun there, that the London and the American editions are different because part of the manuscript or early proof sheets, she says ‘manuscript,’ but didn’t come over on the packet sheet ahead of her. Like, so she was there when the book was being prepared and she actually had to rewrite parts of it.
- 00:22:40 Kandice Sharren (co-host) Oh, wow!

00:22:41 Kate Moffatt (co-host) What?!

00:22:42 Melissa Homestead (guest) Yeah. Yeah! But you can see, though, in her preface—at this point, the copyright situation was still for non-British subjects who were not in residence within the Queen's dominions, so the time of publication, a little complicated. But if she was there and the book came out simultaneously or early, and she was on British soil, then that copyright in Britain was very secure.

00:23:11 Kandice Sharren (co-host) Sneaky!

00:23:11 Melissa Homestead (guest) And so nobody ever actually tried to do an unauthorized reprint of that book because it was clear that it really was protected.

00:23:17 Kandice Sharren (co-host) And she had lawyer brothers. [both Kate and Kandice laugh]

00:23:20 Melissa Homestead (guest) Well, actually, it's not her lawyer brother there! At that point, George Palmer Putnam—who is an American, who is also acting as an agent and a bookseller in London at that point—he doesn't publish it under his own imprint, but he hooks her up with another publisher who does children's books. So she's got those trade connections, not just the lawyer connections, I think, that are important.

00:23:47 Melissa Homestead (guest) So there's a whole range of things that happen across her career. And some of it, like I said, is letters, but other parts of it, [Catharine] as a bibliographer, right? [Kandice laughs]. I love publication chronology so much and finding out when books were published. So, if they were entered into the Stationers' Register, that sometimes can be useful information, but just book advertisements.

00:24:13 Melissa Homestead (guest) So, lining up all the evidence and saying, "Aha! It was published a week earlier in London than in New York." Right? [Kate and Kandice laugh]. And that means that people in the trade would be like, "I'm not touching that one." They do the rules there, so that, but that kind of coordination, you couldn't do that without powerful connections.

00:24:41 Kate Moffatt (co-host) Right, without knowing people.



- 00:24:41 Melissa  
Homestead (guest) Right, right. Well, and also, you'd have to have enough clout to make it happen. Her books in the 1820s were not published earlier in London than in the United States, but there wasn't a lot of reprinting in that segment of the market going on. So it didn't really matter. But when you get later, it gets to be more pressure.
- 00:25:01 Melissa  
Homestead (guest) Right. But if you even think of the most famous instances, again, a little outside *The Women's Print History Project* boundaries, but, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* by Harriet Beecher Stowe and *The Wide, Wide World* by Susan Warner, at that point, it was clear in the early 1850s that non-subjects could claim copyright, or their book works could be protected by copyright, but they had to be published simultaneously or early in London.
- 00:26:33 Melissa  
Homestead (guest) They didn't necessarily have to be there. Well, I mean, the law is fuzzy, it moves all over the place [Kate and Kandice laugh]. But you're a first-time novelist: is a publisher going to hold back U.S. publication and work with a London publisher and do all of that if it's your first novel? They're not going to do that, right? You just don't have the clout. Right. So, that's part of the negotiation of this too.
- 00:25:59 Kandice Sharren  
(co-host) Just kind of on the subject of editions and reprintings and how it can kind of get messy. One of the things that I'm really curious about is in the *English Novel bibliography*, entry for *Clarence*, there's a reference to two London reprintings of *Clarence* in 1830, one of which survives in the British library, and one of which doesn't seem to have a surviving copy, but was advertised and maybe never existed. So the surviving one was published by Colburn and Bentley. And then the not surviving one, or the one that I can't seem to find any other record of, was A. K. Newman and Co., like a week or two later or something was being advertised.
- 00:26:45 Melissa  
Homestead (guest) Right, right.
- 00:26:47 Kandice Sharren  
(co-host) Do you know what's going on with that? [Kate and Kandice laugh]
- 00:26:48 Melissa  
Homestead (guest) In my essay on Catharine Sedgwick and British publishers and the copyright law, I say stuff about that. I mean, I think it in part had to do with some miscommunication about timing. At that point, I think John Miller was the one who put her in touch with Colburn and Bentley, but her American publisher, and that's one of the Carey firms at that point, made other arrangements.

00:27:26 Kandice Sharren (co-host) Okay.

00:27:27 Melissa Homestead (guest) I think that's probably—

00:27:29 Kate Moffatt (co-host) Too well-connected!

00:27:30 Melissa Homestead (guest) Right, right.

00:27:32 Kandice Sharren (co-host) Too much networking, you couldn't keep track! [Kate and Kandice laugh]

00:27:33 Melissa Homestead (guest) Right, right! So, because that one, actually, there was some delay because I think that John Miller maybe was going through some business troubles or Colburn and Bentley stuff was getting messy. I know that the one was advertised and no copies exist. In an essay, I think I say that maybe it really did exist and that they might have had to withdraw it or, but yeah. It's not clear.

00:28:01 Kandice Sharren (co-host) Oh, okay. Yeah, I remember you touched on it in the essay. And I was just trying to like, see if there's anything more that had come to light since that was published.

00:28:08 Melissa Homestead (guest) Yeah, no. Well, I mean, who knows? That was a while ago that I looked at all that stuff.

00:28:14 Kandice Sharren (co-host) So, alongside Lucinda Damon-Bach and Allison J. Roepsch, you've compiled a bibliography of Catharine Maria Sedgwick's publications. And as people who are in the process of compiling an enormous bibliography, which—

00:28:30 Kate Moffatt (co-host) We love bibliography. [laughs]

00:28:31 Kandice Sharren (co-host) Yeah, it involves a lot of fights about how we should do it and what makes most sense and how we can grapple with it. We're really curious about what kinds of editorial choices you had to make in compiling one, especially collaboratively. So the introduction to this particular list notes that you had a hard time verifying things like foreign editions; how did you work around that? Were there any points of contention choices you made that you wish you hadn't? [laughs]

- 00:28:59 Melissa Homestead (guest) Well, you have to remember that that bibliography was compiled more than twenty years ago. Most of the work on it was twenty and a little more. And I worked primarily on the short fiction part of it. So the starting point for that bibliography—there were two dissertations on Catharine Sedgwick from the 1960s that both had bibliographies of her works. And for, say, the British editions, they relied on the published catalogue of the British Library, which, you know, is a total mess, the old, right? So it's—
- 00:29:41 Kate Moffatt (co-host) Yes. [Kate and Kandice laugh]
- 00:29:42 Melissa Homestead (guest) Author, title, place, and date. And all of those elements except place are likely to be wrong [Kate and Kandice laugh]. And mass digitization projects had not begun yet.
- 00:00:28 Kate Moffatt (co-host) Right. Yup.
- 00:30:00 Melissa Homestead (guest) There were microfilm resources. So there's a big bibliography from the mid-twentieth century Wright's *American Fiction*, which has a corresponding microfilm set, which then became a digital resource, which still exists, which is hosted by the Indiana University Library. So that's why the foreign titles, although I wasn't involved in that part, nobody could go to the British Library and look at them.
- 00:30:27 Kate Moffatt (co-host) Right.
- 00:30:28 Melissa Homestead (guest) So if they could find American, find copies in American libraries, then some of them might be in there and there are just sort of random copies of British editions of Sedgwick's works in American libraries. Illinois Urbana-Champaign happens to have a few British editions. The American Antiquarian Society has some of course, right?
- 00:30:51 Kate Moffatt (co-host) Yes.
- 00:30:52 Melissa Homestead (guest) The big question there, though, was the gift book publications. And I knew, because I had worked with gift books, that those bibliographies that had been compiled as parts of dissertations did not understand gift book publication. So

- they had reprints as the original publications because they did not understand what the title pages and years on gift books meant in the American context.
- 00:31:21 Kate Moffatt (co-host) I was going to say, for any of our listeners who don't know what gift books are, do you want to give us just the quick low-down on what's the difference between—
- 00:31:29 Melissa Homestead (guest) Gift books, also called literary annuals, started in the United States in the 1820s. They were somewhat like the British and German examples, which started a little earlier I understand, except that generally not quite as illustrated and fancy because the technology and the capital weren't quite what the British and German publishers could do.
- 00:31:50 Kate Moffatt (co-host) Right, okay.
- 00:31:51 Melissa Homestead (guest) So they came out, in the United States at least, they were generally called, a lot of them have subtitles, 'a Christmas and New Year's gift.' So Christmas in fact was pretty new in the United States as a celebration and was still controversial [Kate and Kandice laugh]—  
the idea that you would celebrate this religious holiday in that way with secular Christmas trees and gifts. So these books will often say, 'the token for 1832' on the title page, for example, but that is really published in 1831.
- 00:32:26 Kate Moffatt (co-host) Gotcha. [laughs]
- 00:32:27 Melissa Homestead (guest) So, this is exactly the question. And often then the short stories in poems in the gift books were reprinted in magazines and newspapers, and earlier bibliographers had reversed the priority of them. So the gift books, there was, again, a big mid-twentieth century microfilm set that E. Bruce Kirkham co-compiled the bibliography and the microfilm set. And my library at the university where I was teaching then, had the microfilm set; therefore, I said, "I want to get this right." So—
- 00:33:05 Kate Moffatt (co-host) "I want to figure this out." [Kate and Kandice laugh]
- 00:33:09 Melissa Homestead (guest) Anytime there was a home football game and the library was quiet on the weekend, I'd be like, "the microfilm readers are mine!" [Kate and Kandice laugh].

- I'd be sitting there, right? And then there was the periodicals, too. We had the American periodical series microfilm and the bibliography.
- 00:33:26 Melissa Homestead (guest) So I was working mostly with microfilm and working on the short stuff. Now later, I spent time at the Bodleian and the British Library, and then also found British editions of Sedgwick's works in some American libraries. And those editions all figured into my telling the story of how she negotiated transatlantic publication, but they're not in that original published bibliography.
- 00:33:55 Melissa Homestead (guest) And as I said before, right, the British library published catalogue— actually, I had a fellowship, they have that American studies fellowship at the British library. You can, you know, get money to be there for a month.
- 00:34:07 Kate Moffatt (co-host) Yeah, yeah.
- 00:34:08 Melissa Homestead (guest) On my way out, I gave them a list of corrections to their cataloguing because [Kate and Kandice laugh]—
- 00:34:13 Kate Moffatt (co-host) “These things are wrong. You're welcome.” [Kate and Kandice laugh]
- 00:34:16 Melissa Homestead (guest) Because, oh, no, because there was a British Evangelical poet of a slightly later period who was Miss Sedgwick. And her works were attributed to Catharine Sedgwick in the catalogue. And then she also had two sisters-in-law who published not as much as she did and she was conflated with them.
- 00:34:38 Melissa Homestead (guest) And so, I presented them with corrections to their cataloguing.
- 00:34:43 Kate Moffatt (co-host) Incredible.
- 00:34:45 Melissa Homestead (guest) And at that point too, they had started to do more proper cataloguing and had the online catalogue, not just the published catalogue, but the, the online catalogue often just repurposed the old published catalogue and got all the stuff wrong.

- 00:34:58 Kate Moffatt (co-host) Right, right, right. This is, it's so funny because it's making me laugh because this is part of why we're struggling so much with these duplicate American records that we've got from the American Antiquarian Society. Because sometimes it is the same person. There are lots where we've got—and it's like, “okay, we now have two duplicate persons, but there's lots where it's just the same name.”
- 00:35:15 Kate Moffatt (co-host) And we're like, “is it the same person?” We have no idea. Her name is just Miss Smith [Kandice laughs]. How do I figure out which one is which Miss Smith? But I love that you brought up annuals and that you kind of explained the process there because that's something that—well, you account for those in the bibliography. And the WPHP has just very recently decided to include annuals.
- 00:35:38 Kate Moffatt (co-host) We don't do periodicals because it would just be too—we have to draw some boundaries [laughs] as I think we've joked in previous episodes, otherwise we'd go forever. But we have decided to include annuals because they became so important to so many women writers, like careers, in the 1820s and 30s.
- 00:35:54 Melissa Homestead (guest) And there are a couple of women who edit them as well in the United States. I think there are probably more—
- 00:35:59 Kate Moffatt (co-host) Yeah!
- 00:36:01 Melissa Homestead (guest) in England who are editors of them. Eliza Leslie edits *The Gift*, which is one of the important ones, and Lydia Sigourney, the poet, edits *The Religious Souvenir*.
- 00:36:17 Kate Moffatt (co-host) Okay. Yeah. And it's been interesting. I've been working with one of our RAs, we've been working on bringing in [the annuals that Omelia Opie was in]. And it has just been quite the eye-opening process trying to figure out [Kandice laughs]—there are so many different authors in each one and we're trying to account for that to make sure we know kind of what's going on.
- 00:36:35 Kate Moffatt (co-host) So it's really interesting to hear too, that it was, it was also a task [Kate and Kandice laugh] for you to do the same thing—because we're fairly limited to existing bibliographies or digitizations.
- 00:36:47 Melissa Homestead (guest) Right, right, right. Yeah. Bruce Kirkham's bibliography is pretty good. It's not 100% reliable. The other thing that gets weird, and I know at some point Kandice, you asked me about the Lydia Maria Child thing that you wanted to know when

it was published, and I was just like, “that book was published later.” That’s just not an American imprint from the 1830s or 20s. Just not. It’s a reprint [Kate and Kandice laugh]. Like there wouldn’t have been all that.

- 00:37:15 Melissa Homestead (guest) But, a lot. So in the early years in the 1820s it’s before stereotype plates; you get into the 1830s, you start to get into stereotype plates and some gift book publishers sell off the plates and then those same plates are repurposed and different titles put on them—so the gift becomes the rose or something. Right.
- 00:37:39 Melissa Homestead (guest) [Kate and Kandice laugh]. And it’s a different year slapped on it, but it’s really just the plates from an earlier gift book. So that’s one of the more confusing aspects, but Catharine Sedgwick stopped writing for them pretty much by then. So I’m just like, “not going there, not going there.”
- 00:37:51 Kate Moffatt (co-host) Yup, yup.
- 00:37:52 Kandice Sharren (co-host) [laughs]. Perfect.
- 00:37:53 Kate Moffatt (co-host) So another new thing that American, we’ve already started touching on this, you’ve been telling us a bit about copyright and how that can kind of change or impact, you know, transatlantic literary careers and American publishing and that sort of thing. It was at your suggestion that we added this as a new field to title records in the WPHP—
- 00:38:14 Kandice Sharren (co-host) I think because of that Lydia Maria Child problem, actually. [Kate and Kandice laugh]
- 00:38:18 Kate Moffatt (co-host) Specifically! Because we told you we wanted to start working on American titles—that’s still a very new thing for us. So this copyright statement field, we use it when a book provides information about when, where a book was registered as copyrighted to an author or a publisher. And I think you’ve mentioned, too, that in Britain, sometimes books would indicate that they were entered at Stationers’ Hall—not super often, I find we don’t see tons and tons of books with that, but it does happen.
- 00:38:43 Kate Moffatt (co-host) But they don’t have anything as involved as the American copyright statement, which can be quite long, actually [Kandice laughs]. And we’re curious to just talk a little bit about what you think this might suggest about how American authors,

publishers, or even audiences might have understood [about] the idea of literary property. What does recording this information, like we're doing in the WPHP, how might that help us understand the history of copyright?

- 00:39:12 Melissa Homestead (guest) Okay. So this is not, in the first instance, about cultural attitudes. This is about legal requirements. So the American law requires that for a work to be copyrighted, it must be authored by a citizen or resident there in the United States.
- 00:39:36 Kate Moffatt (co-host) Interesting.
- 00:39:37 Melissa Homestead (guest) There has to be a registration of the title before publication. There has to be an early newspaper notice that drops out. There has to be a notice in every single published copy, according to the statutory language *and* a certain number of copies of the work specified in the statute must be deposited. And the time period you're looking at, they have to be deposited and also registered in federal district courts. Later, that becomes—
- 00:40:15 Kate Moffatt (co-host) That's extensive. [Kate and Kandice laugh]
- 00:40:17 Melissa Homestead (guest) Right? And if any one of those requirements is not fulfilled to the letter of the law [Kandice laughs], the work falls into the public domain.
- 00:40:30 Kate Moffatt (co-host) Wow. Interesting. Wow
- 00:40:32 Kandice Sharren (co-host) So Catharine Sedgwick must have been thrilled she had lawyer brothers then. [Kate and Kandice laugh]
- 00:40:37 Melissa Homestead (guest) But most publishers, the publishers she's working with, they know their business.
- 00:40:43 Kate Moffatt (co-host) They would know. Right? Because it's how it works. Wow
- 00:40:45 Melissa Homestead (guest) They would know, right, It's how it works. It's how it works. But, but even, so this is just very, very technical administrative law, but it also then does go back to let's go back to the attitude. So the attitude behind it is that the world of print is by default public property. It can only be claimed for a limited period of time



under certain strictly regulated conditions. So, the very first copyright lawsuit, which is 1830ish *Wheaton vs. Peters*, in the end, turns on the question of how many copies were deposited.

- 00:41:25 Kate Moffatt (co-host) Interesting.
- 00:41:26 Melissa Homestead (guest) So this is all—and I was once an intellectual property paralegal—copyright continued—
- 00:41:30 Kandice Sharren (co-host) Oh, wow.
- 00:41:31 Kate Moffatt (co-host) Really!
- 00:41:32 Melissa Homestead (guest) into the late twentieth century to be very much administrative law practice. It's not so much about the substance. So people think if you file a copyright registration, that means that you were original. No, it just means that you did not copy somebody else's work. You wrote it and you are depositing, right? So you are claiming your right in the copy.
- 00:41:53 Melissa Homestead (guest) And going back to the British law, copy actually means manuscript. It's the right in copy and generally, right? [Kate and Kandice laugh]. In the British situation, of course it's only members of the stationers company who originally can claim the writing copy authors transfer the manuscript to the publishers, but in the American context, still, it's very technical, it's very administrative. But that also just goes to the idea, again, that print is public in the United States. It's all about the public interest.
- 00:42:28 Melissa Homestead (guest) And you only allow the public interest to be hemmed in for short periods of time, if you dot all of the I's and cross all of the T's. So now as far as what the information gives you though, of course, it tells you where the title was registered. And it gives you a date for that registration. And it also gives you the names of parties. So it can be the publisher. It can be the author. And in fact, the copyright registration certificates say 'author' or 'proprietor.' It can be a woman's husband in some instances.

00:43:09 Kate Moffatt (co-host) Interesting.

00:43:10 Melissa Homestead (guest) So you find some of those. So those are the circumstances. And so the information is useful. Now, the really long copyright notices that you're seeing [Kate laughs], that's before the 1830 revision to the copyright law, I think. And it's all about, I mean, the year isn't even just the year [laughs], it's the year from the American revolution, right. So the year, the Republic or whatever [Kandice laughs]. So the really early copyright stuff is very bound up in this whole kind of national question. And if you're outside of the nation—

00:43:52 Kate Moffatt (co-host) Right. This political thing that is going on, right? Yeah yeah.

00:43:56 Melissa Homestead (guest) And the law doesn't just say you have to be a citizen or resident. It says anything that's *not* registered under these provisions. Nothing shall stop anybody from reprinting it, right? It's all—

00:44:09 Kate Moffatt (co-host) You can do what you want with it.

00:44:10 Melissa Homestead (guest) You can do what you want. So, but it also ties it up with—

00:44:14 Kate Moffatt (co-host) The chaos of this! [Kate and Kandice laugh]

00:44:15 Melissa Homestead (guest) Well, it's not chaos, in fact—

00:44:17 Kandice Sharren (co-host) But also extremely organized. [laughs]

00:44:22 Kate Moffatt (co-host) I find it very interesting.

00:44:22 Melissa Homestead (guest) But it's also meant so that anyone can pick up that book and do the math and decide to republish it once it's in the public domain.

00:44:31 Kate Moffatt (co-host) Right.

00:44:31 Melissa Homestead (guest) So if you pick up the book and it says it was published—

00:44:37 Kate Moffatt (co-host) Registered at X year. Yeah.

00:44:38 Melissa Homestead (guest) And then you do your math and you say, “oh, I can print my own edition of this if I want to now” —

00:44:43 Kate Moffatt (co-host) “I can do something with this.” Well, and you even see now, I feel like it was on Twitter last year, some big book that I’m not going to be able to remember, but some big classic came out of copyright and people were thrilled because they were like, “oh, we’re going to get the adaptations. We’re going to get different things happening. It’s going to be so great.” You still kind of see that happening a bit, right?

00:44:59 Melissa Homestead (guest) *The Great Gatsby*.

00:45:00 Kate Moffatt (co-host) So that’s interesting. Oh, that’s what it was. You’re right. Yeah. Yeah.

00:45:04 Melissa Homestead (guest) And this year it was a Hemingway novel. They always celebrate the big dudes whose books go into [Kandice laughs]— the American copyright law has gotten to be less and less about the public domain and about the public interest because they keep extending the term of copyright longer and longer.

00:45:24 Kate Moffatt (co-host) Yeah, yeah.

00:45:25 Melissa Homestead (guest) It was 14 years, and 14 years renewal, then 28 and 14, then 28 and 28. Now it’s key to the life of the author, which has nothing to do with the public rights in print. So it has changed. And so it actually advocates for the public interest and for keeping copyright from expanding, who are the ones who put out those press releases every year, telling you: “yay! They’re public property now!”

00:45:52 Kate Moffatt (co-host) “Be excited about this!”

- 00:45:55 Melissa Homestead (guest) Right. And I still have people ask me questions all the time. They'll say "I'm using a digital resource here and I want to do my own edition. So do I have to worry about copyright?" I'm like, "that was published 150 years ago. No." And they say, "well, but what about the digital resource?" I'm just like—
- 00:46:14 Kate Moffatt (co-host) Right.
- 00:46:15 Melissa Homestead (guest) "No, period." [Kandice laughs]. If you're going to reproduce the image of the digital resource, you can get into fine arguments. But because somebody made a digital resource, that doesn't mean that they suddenly have taken something out of the public domain and made it into—
- 00:46:33 Kate Moffatt (co-host) It's interesting that people ask that because they've no longer got this clarified idea. They're like, "no, somebody somewhere probably bent the rules or extended that copyright, there must be rules that say I can't use it." It's interesting that we now kind of think that way. Because I definitely do.
- 00:46:48 Kandice Sharren (co-host) So, a couple final wrap-up questions. As someone whose research sits at the intersection of bibliography and the idea of literary property, what do you think the relationship is between the two? How would you conceptualize their connectedness?
- 00:47:08 Melissa Homestead (guest) Well, I think that there has been—going back to this question about the public interest—the idea that authors should be able to exploit the children of their brain forever, and you can't take their intellectual progeny away from them ever [Kate and Kandice laugh]. And there are often complaints about how some author would have made so much money.
- 00:47:35 Melissa Homestead (guest) Like how much money would Harriet Beecher Stowe have made in England if she had gotten paid for all of those pirated copies of Uncle Tom's Cabin? Well, the answer is there would not have been that many pirated copies and they wouldn't have sold so many copies [Kate and Kandice laugh] if Harriet Beecher Stowe had been paid. So I think that copyright versus literary property, I will say that copyright is a balancing of interests.
- 00:48:08 Melissa Homestead (guest) And I think that stifling reading and stifling the public interest and enjoying works of literature by thinking of literature as property in the way that when sometimes people say "literary property," that's what it brings up. I think, in the American context, I'm a firm believer in the public interest. And I think that, a lot

of women of this period, including Catharine Sedgwick, and this is an argument I make in my first book, that having modest expectations, as opposed to having magisterial expectations about total control, is better.

- 00:48:49 Melissa Homestead (guest) That's what developed a U.S. national literature. That's what would have made women authors, in a lot of ways, often more productive and more popular than a lot of men. I mean, James Fenimore Cooper, his whole own thing—we don't have to talk about him! [Kate and Kandice laugh]
- 00:49:06 Kandice Sharren (co-host) We don't have to talk to him.
- 00:49:07 Melissa Homestead (guest) We don't have to talk about him but it's hard to avoid him. It's hard to avoid him. [Kate and Kandice laugh]
- 00:49:12 Kate Moffatt (co-host) I think he's come up in episodes before, and we're weren't even doing American stuff.
- 00:49:17 Melissa Homestead (guest) Yeah, yeah, yeah. So, thinking in a little more balanced way, not thinking of claiming property as something that no one could ever take away from you is particularly helpful. It's not particularly helpful.
- 00:49:36 Kate Moffatt (co-host) Right. That's so interesting. Sorry, just to jump back a little bit to what you were talking about before with the whole issue of why certain books got printed over others, and that kind of thing. And the fact that practicality comes into that so strongly, that if it's a shorter piece of work, it's easier to publish. I think that that's really interesting that thinking about it as property, as business, does kind of play into that.
- 00:50:02 Kate Moffatt (co-host) And I don't know if that's where our brain necessarily always goes. Thinking about book publishing in the states, I think it's a business, right? [Kandice laughs] But it's interesting because you said "oh yeah, it was shorter. So it got published more." And I think that that's why, because it's just so much easier. There's less capital that needs to be invested. My brain exploded!
- 00:50:26 Kandice Sharren (co-host) They didn't have to pay the author!
- 00:50:30 Kate Moffatt (co-host) But it makes sense. And it does shape that in such interesting ways, having those ways you come to it.

00:50:38 Melissa Homestead (guest) But I think when you say, though, that it's property, it's a business, I think that the language of property, as opposed to business, that— you are selling printed iterations of something, you are not transferring property in the same way that the property language—

00:50:57 Kate Moffatt (co-host) Yeah, yeah, yeah.

00:50:58 Melissa Homestead (guest) And there's also still this way that the interests of publishers, not authors, are supported by talking about poor authors being deprived of their properties by the expiration of copyright.

00:51:14 Kate Moffatt (co-host) Right, right, right.

00:51:15 Melissa Homestead (guest) So the extension of the copyright term in the nineteenth century and into the twentieth century, it's all about widows and orphans being deprived of their rights.

00:51:23 Kate Moffatt (co-host) Right.

00:51:24 Melissa Homestead (guest) Because the patriarch has died. And it's generally about corporate interests being supported by that. And I think it was the same in the nineteenth century. So it is a business transaction and there are rights and there are limits, but thinking of property because you know, the copy—

00:51:47 Kate Moffatt (co-host) To not conflate them.

00:51:48 Melissa Homestead (guest) Right. The copy of the book is separate from the legal right—

00:51:53 Kate Moffatt (co-host) Property.

00:51:53 Melissa Homestead (guest) Right. You know, one controls the other potentially, but it's not like you sell a house.

00:51:58 Kate Moffatt (co-host) Right. It's interesting that I conflated them in my head in the first place. [laughs]

00:52:04 Melissa Homestead (guest) But there is that language though, I mean, and that language is everywhere.

00:52:07 Kate Moffatt (co-host) Yeah. Yeah. I think it is the language. Which is interesting too.

00:52:10 Melissa Homestead (guest) Right. And the idea of literary property and debate, it's always coming back to that, but I think it's really kind of a fundamental mistake.

00:52:19 Kate Moffatt (co-host) Yeah. No, absolutely.

00:52:20 Kandice Sharren (co-host) All right. Well, you have very graciously dug back into research that is twenty years old [Kate laughs]. So we want to give you a chance to talk about some of your more recent work as well, which has moved forward in time pretty dramatically.

00:52:36 Melissa Homestead (guest) Well, actually, actually there's two things. One is working on E. D. E. N. Southworth, Emma Dorothy Eliza Southworth, she's from the mid-nineteenth century through the end into the early twentieth century, actually. I was a bibliographer of E. D. E. N. Southworth, and therein lies insanity, actually. [Kate and Kandice laugh]

00:53:00 Melissa Homestead (guest) Because she published in cheap literary weeklies called story papers, which are very much like the penny weeklies in London. And she was insanely productive. She published about fifty novels. And I'm actually engaged in something right now that—please God, someone will publish it—which is about her being republished in the British penny press in the 1850s and 60s. A little later. She's in my first book and then I became a bibliographer of her.

00:53:35 Melissa Homestead (guest) And it's not just two books, but if you're looking at serialized weekly versions of novels and trying to figure out whether or not they were authorized. And the answer is actually more than you would think, they were authorized, although it's insanely hard to figure out. Just a bibliography actually won't answer your questions there because chronology is not the whole answer. And there are letters and then there's actually a lawsuit that she moved to England for a few years and there is an actual Chancery case file, which is insanely interesting [Kate laughs]. So there we go—

- 00:54:22 Kandice Sharren Bibliography therein lies insanity. [laughs]  
(co-host)
- 00:54:24 Melissa I know, but also bibliography didn't answer that question. When I was a  
Homestead (guest) bibliographer and looked just at the chronology, but then looking at the other  
evidence, it turned out to be more complicated if you know what was going on  
behind the scenes. Total insanity there [Kate and Kandice laugh]. But then my  
more recent work—I'm also a scholar of Willa Cather. Although really not of the  
twentieth century except Willa Cather. [Kate and Kandice laugh]
- 00:54:52 Kandice Sharren It happens. [laughs]  
(co-host)
- 00:54:54 Melissa And so my book, *The Only Wonderful Things: The Creative Partnership of Willa  
Homestead (guest) Cather and Edith Lewis*, came out by Oxford University Press, April of last year.
- 00:55:04 Kandice Sharren Congratulations!  
(co-host)
- 00:55:06 Melissa Thank you! It's about a lot of things. It's about lesbian history and biography. It's  
Homestead (guest) about thinking about authorship and publishing history, too, because I wrote it.  
Edith Lewis was a magazine editor and then an advertising copywriter and she  
edited Cather's work. Her handwriting is all over these surviving edited typed  
scripts. And thinking about authorship and how people—the part after, when  
they were trying to get things published, that sort of took me back into the  
process before publication.
- 00:55:44 Melissa And there's a lot more that I'm interested in thinking about still. I thought there  
Homestead (guest) was going to be an entire chapter on Edith Lewis acting as Willa Cather's literary  
executor. And I could have written a whole book about that, in fact [Kate and  
Kandice laugh], but that's not the book.
- 00:56:03 Kate Moffatt That's going to be a whole another project!  
(co-host)
- 00:56:05 Melissa Right! That's not the book that anybody wants to acquire, but I could have done  
Homestead (guest) that because it's just really interesting that it actually has a lot to do with  
copyright. And there's interesting legal disputes that involve obscure things about  
copyrights. And when I was reading a lot of that correspondence a long time ago,  
I was just like, “oh my God, this is so fabulous!”



00:56:32 Kate Moffatt (co-host) I love that feeling!

00:56:36 Melissa Homestead (guest) Mid-twentieth- century lawyers corresponding about copyright disputes, yay! [Kate and Kandice laugh]. But I didn't actually get to write about that part so much. [laughs]

00:56:46 Kate Moffatt (co-host) That sounds like it's going to have to be a whole other project. I want to read that.

00:56:50 Melissa Homestead (guest) Yeah. Yeah. But mostly, really, it was about the creative collaboration. And then also about how having a partner who writes advertising copy and works with Edward Steichen who was doing celebrity and advertising photography then, how you can help to stage your partner, in the way that she appears as an author in the market.

00:57:13 Kate Moffatt (co-host) Oh, interesting.

00:57:15 Melissa Homestead (guest) Very interesting to me too.

00:57:18 Kandice Sharren (co-host) So how has your work on nineteenth- century women writers and book history informed thinking through that?

00:57:25 Melissa Homestead (guest) I would say that it doesn't appear on the surface in the book. There were some earlier essays where I really did the technical part in the essay so that I could drop it into a footnote in something that was more narrated.

00:57:44 Kate Moffatt (co-host) [laughs]. You did the work you wanted to cite.

00:57:46 Melissa Homestead (guest) Right, right. So, yes, I did. I did. [Kate laughs]

00:57:51 Melissa Homestead (guest) So, looking at things like the publishing history of these three short stories that were collected at a volume obscured destinies because there were all these typed scripts. But just sort of embedding that whole process in which Edith Lewis was very involved, and the complicated chronology, and the negotiation with magazines or republication, and then the book. I had to spend a lot of time

- figuring that all out so I could tell the story where that would actually kind of drop to the bottom.
- 00:58:25 Melissa Homestead (guest) So I've spent a lot of time with magazines in my work on nineteenth century women. And so there were the magazines, Edith Lewis edited a magazine, and I spent an insane amount of time looking for her correspondence with authors. And I found two really interesting groups of letters, but it's hard because magazine editors are so anonymous.
- 00:58:55 Melissa Homestead (guest) But then again, that was exactly some of the sorts of things that I had thought about in relation to. I think anonymity in the nineteenth century is way overplayed as far as thinking about women in the United States and probably in Britain too. People always think of pseudonyms, too. They had to use a man's name, like the Brontë's—
- 00:59:18 Kate Moffatt (co-host) They had to do these things! It was impossible for them to publish their own names! No. [laughs]
- 00:59:21 Melissa Homestead (guest) Right, right, right, right. But—
- 00:59:23 Kandice Sharren (co-host) No woman has ever published a book before! [laughs]
- 00:59:28 Melissa Homestead (guest) Right. I know! I know! [Kate laughs]. But magazine editing really was largely anonymous and archives aren't structured to find that evidence.
- 00:59:38 Kate Moffatt (co-host) It's why we don't do periodicals, man. That's part of why we don't touch them [Kate and Kandice laugh]. We are like, "oh my gosh, everything is—it's so hard to figure out contributors and stuff." Not least, because like you say, the resources themselves that we have to go to, like, they're just not structured to give us that kind of information without such extensive digging.
- 00:59:55 Melissa Homestead (guest) Right. And even what editors did in the early nineteenth century, it's hard to document. These are the sorts of things that I came predisposed to understanding the dynamics of all of that and had an insane propensity to just keep jumping into rabbit holes and going down, down, down. This one archive where I found a whole bunch of Edith Lewis letters, this guy, Phillip Curtis, who was like a prolific magazinist, and nobody cares about him anymore. [Kate and Kandice laugh]

- 01:00:30 Melissa Homestead (guest) And I can't believe that the Beinecke at Yale actually accepted his collection. Why would they even take his stuff? [Kandice laughs]. And it was largely unprocessed. And I knew from some other author's letters that Edith Lewis had started this short story program. And then there were letters from authors published in the magazine saying, "oh, we love this new short, short story program."
- 01:00:55 Melissa Homestead (guest) And he was one of them and I'm like, "wait, he's got papers at the Beinecke." And then when I opened it up, it was like the world's most fascinating archive of rejection letters [Kate and Kandice laugh]. Later in his career he's good but early in his career—if you wanted to do a study of magazine rejection letters [Kate and Kandice laugh]— even, what was really fascinating—
- 01:01:17 Kate Moffatt (co-host) I love archives. [laughs]
- 01:01:20 Melissa Homestead (guest) Yeah! What was really fascinating, and this is really, really kind of dorky [Kandice laughs] is, like, I am the world's expert on Edith Lewis's handwriting and somebody has to be, right?
- 01:01:30 Kate Moffatt (co-host) As one does. Yeah. [laughs]
- 01:01:30 Melissa Homestead (guest) Right. So, she worked at McClure's magazine before she worked at this cheap magazine every week—and it would often be signed 'editor of McClure's magazine', an actual editor's name would not be there, but somebody would sign it 'editorial rooms.' And I would be, like, "that is Edith Lewis's signature!" [Kate and Kandice laugh]. And then in a later letter, she actually says, "oh, Mr. Curtis, I was on McClure's when your princes and plumbers appeared. And I'm like, "yep, you would, you signed that letter!" [all laugh]
- 01:02:01 Kandice Sharren (co-host) I love that kind of narrative closure.
- 01:02:08 Kate Moffatt (co-host) So good. So good.
- 01:02:10 Melissa Homestead (guest) Yeah. You're hearing the kind of—you don't actually get that level of dorkiness in the sort of narrative about—it's like a whole story, but there's all the book history little details running underneath it all.

01:02:27 Kate Moffatt (co-host) Yeah, and it does remind me of what you were saying about trying to untangle when you were doing the Sedgwick bibliography, right? Having to do all of that untangling to try and figure out what the story actually is, right? It's something that—

01:02:38 Melissa Homestead (guest) In its chronology, right?

01:02:41 Kate Moffatt (co-host) Yeah. Yeah. Having to really dig that through—especially because publication years on books and imprints, that's not as specific down to the week, right? That kind of thing as well. So it sounds like you really have just engaged in this detangling project over and over again.

01:02:57 Melissa Homestead (guest) Yep. Yep. Yep. That's what I do. Chronology chronology is my God. And I shall have no other God before her. [all laugh]

01:03:07 Kate Moffatt (co-host) Well, I think that is a beautiful spot to end the interview [all laugh]. I did want to ask if there was anything else that you wanted to chat about that we didn't get a chance to touch on today.

01:03:15 Melissa Homestead (guest) I have so much to say, but I think I've said enough for now, now that we have lit a candle at the altar of chronology, we can end. [Kandice laughs]

01:03:24 Kate Moffatt (co-host) Yes! yep. Well, and as choreographers ourselves, we love it. We love to see it. Thank you so much for joining us today. This has been absolutely incredible.

01:03:33 Kandice Sharren (co-host) Yes, Thank you.

01:03:35 Melissa Homestead (guest) All right. Thank you very much!

01:03:43  [music playing]

01:03:44 Kandice Sharren (co-host) Has every episode lately been about the limits of bibliography and bibliographical networking?

01:03:52 Kate Moffatt (co-host) I think so. And I love it [Kandice laughs]. This conversation reminded me in so many ways of our interview with Timothy Whelan for the January episode, his walking through London to understand Mary Hays' geographical proximity to libraries, and the ways in which the various publishing and book selling networks were located around their parishes and churches.

- 01:04:09 Kate Moffatt (co-host) And it was only through his mapping that he was able to see that. We can't underestimate what tracking down these networks can tell us. Both Rowson and Sedgwick's transatlantic reprint seem to have been the product of actively sought professional and personal connections. So whether people are physically traveling from one country to another, or sending their physical books to contacts and foreign locales, there are movements there that aren't fully captured by bibliography alone. Networks are this key supplement.
- 01:04:37 Kandice Sharren (co-host) And as a project that sits at the intersection of enumerative and descriptive bibliography, the WPHP focuses on the traces that are communicated by the books themselves. So the information on the title page, the pagination, the copyright statement.
- 01:04:52 Kandice Sharren (co-host) However, as Melissa Homestead's work on copyright reminds us yet again, the information that these books provide is really *only* the material traces of these wider, personal, legal and social circumstances that influence and result in the production and circulation of books in the first place. So understanding the points of contact between the books themselves and the wider context that shape them layers further meaning onto the metadata we collect and create.
- 01:05:24  [music playing]
- 01:05:35 Kate Moffatt (co-host) This has been the ninth episode of Season 2 of *The WPHP Monthly Mercury*. If you're interested in learning more about what we discussed today, we've compiled a list of suggestions for further reading and links to some relevant entries in the WPHP in a blog post that you can find at [womensprinthistoryproject.com](http://womensprinthistoryproject.com). You can also find us @TheWPHP on Twitter and on Instagram @womensprinthistoryproject.
- 01:05:59  [music playing]
- 01:05:35 Kate Moffatt (co-host) [outtakes, part 1] My fan is still going, but I think I'm going to just—I think I'm just going to go ahead anyway.
- 01:06:13 Kandice Sharren (co-host) [laughs]. Okay.
- 01:06:16 Kate Moffatt (co-host) It's just going to be like a low hum until it turns off. Sorry to Alex, our mastering master [Kandice laughs]. I was going to say if I didn't swear that would've been

like a good blooper. That can be the blooper, that would be a good blooper!  
[laughs]

01:06:32 Kate Moffatt [outtakes, part 2] Bam! That was insane. [both laugh]  
(co-host)

01:06:35 Kandice Sharren I can't believe we did that. [laughs]  
(co-host)