Abstract

"Happy families are all alike. Each unhappy family is unhappy in its own way." These famous opening sentences of Leo Tolstoy's masterpiece novel *Anna Karenina* serve as an axis around which the rest of the novel's plot, characters, and motifs all revolve. The book delves into themes of adultery, society, art, philosophy, and even agriculture, but all these subordinate conversations circle back to the questions posited by the novel's first lines: what are happy families and unhappy families, and how do these families relate to each other? My thesis, part creative project and part analytical project, seeks to speak back against Tolstoy’s idea of the monolithic happy family by offering a queer, postmodern retelling of *Anna Karenina* where environmental degradation affects families’ fertility and where Anna and Vronsky are two women who must navigate their way through the complex and often painful societal expectations of rural Indiana.

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