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Narrative Mourning

Death and Its Relics in the Eighteenth-Century British Novel

by Kathleen M. Oliver

DESCRIPTION

Narrative Mourning explores death and its relics as they appear within the confines of the eighteenth-century British novel. It argues that the cultural disappearance of the dead/dying body and the introduction of consciousness as humanity's newfound soul found expression in fictional representations of the relic (object) or relict (person). In the six novels examined in this monograph—Samuel Richardson's *Clarissa* and *Sir Charles Grandison*; Sarah Fielding's *David Simple* and *Volume the Last*; Henry Mackenzie's *The Man of Feeling*; and Ann Radcliffe's *The Mysteries of Udolpho*—the appearance of the relic/relict signals narrative mourning and expresses (often obliquely) changing cultural attitudes toward the dead.

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KATHLEEN M. OLIVER is the author of *Samuel Richardson, Dress, and Discourse*, and her essays on Daniel Defoe, Sarah Fielding, Samuel Richardson, Frances Sheridan, Charlotte Smith, and William Wycherley have appeared in peer-reviewed journals and scholarly collections. In 2002, she received the Emilie du Châtelet Award for Independent Scholarship, bestowed by the Women's Caucus of the American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies.

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