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0521020379 - Commerce, Morality and the Eighteenth-Century Novel

Liz Bellamy

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Commerce, morality and the eighteenth-century novel

British culture underwent radical change in the eighteenth century with the emergence of new literary genres and discourses of social analysis. As novelists developed the fictional form, writers of economic tracts and treatises sought a language and a conceptual framework to describe the modern commercial state. In *Commerce, Morality and the Eighteenth-Century Novel*, Liz Bellamy argues that the evolution of the novel in eighteenth-century Britain needs to be seen in the context of the discursive conflict between economics and more traditional systems of social analysis. In a series of fresh readings of a wide range of novels, Bellamy shows how the novel contributed to the debate over public and private virtues and had to negotiate between commercial and anti-commercial ethics. The resulting choices were crucial in determining the structure as well as the moral content of the novel.

LIZ BELLAMY is an associate lecturer at the Open University. She is author of *Jonathan Swift's Gulliver's Travels* (1992), with Tom Williamson *Property and Landscape: A Social History of Land Ownership and the English Countryside* (1987) and with Kate Moorse *The Changing Role of Women* (1996); and she is editor of the journal *Rural History: Economy, Society, Culture*.

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Contents

<i>Acknowledgements</i>	<i>page</i> vii
1 Introduction	I
PART I CONTEXTS	
2 The economic context	13
Early economic thought	13
David Hume	24
Adam Smith	30
3 The literary context	39
Theories of epic	39
Epic standards and novel criticism	49
Theories of fiction	54
PART II TEXTS	
4 The mid-eighteenth-century novel	69
<i>Clarissa</i>	73
<i>Tom Jones</i>	82
<i>The Female Quixote</i>	98
<i>Sir Charles Grandison</i>	107
5 The novel of circulation	119
6 The sentimental novel	129
<i>The Adventures of David Simple</i>	131
<i>The Vicar of Wakefield</i>	138
<i>The Fool of Quality</i>	144
<i>The Man of Feeling</i>	150

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Frontmatter
[More information](#)

vi

Contents

7	The jacobin novel	157
	The new feudalism, Burke and Gothic	158
	<i>Caleb Williams</i>	166
	<i>The Memoirs of Emma Courtney</i>	170
	<i>The Wrongs of Woman</i>	175
8	Conclusion	182
	<i>Notes</i>	186
	<i>Bibliography</i>	203
	<i>Index</i>	219

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[More information](#)

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