

## EMBODIED EXPERIENCE IN BRITISH AND FRENCH LITERATURE, 1778–1814

Combining feminist, materialist, and comparatist approaches, this study examines how French and British women writers working at a transformative time for European literature connected vibrantly to objects as diverse as statues, monuments, diamonds, and hats. In such connections, they manifested their own (often forbidden) embodiment and asserted their *élan vital*. Interweaving texts by Edgeworth, Staël, Bernardin, Wordsworth, Smith, and Burney, Jillian Heydt-Stevenson posits the concept of *belonging with*, a generative, embodied experience of the nonhuman that foregrounds the interdependence among things, women, social systems, and justice. Exploring the benefits such embodied experiences offer, this book uncovers an ethical materialism in literature and illuminates how women characters who draw on things can secure rights that laws neither stipulate nor safeguard. In doing so, they – and their texts – transcend dualistic thinking to create positive ecological, personal, and political outcomes. This title is also available as Open Access on Cambridge Core.

JILLIAN HEYDT-STEVENSON, Professor of English at the University of Colorado Boulder, is the author of *Austen's Unbecoming Conjunctions* (2005), coeditor of *Recognizing the Romantic Novel* (2008), associate editor of *The Cornell Wordsworth: Last Poems, 1821–1850* (1999), and author of a wide variety of articles and chapters on Romantic-era topics and writers.



EMBODIED EXPERIENCE IN  
BRITISH AND FRENCH  
LITERATURE, 1778–1814

*Women and Belonging*

JILLIAN HEYDT-STEVENSON

*University of Colorado Boulder*



CAMBRIDGE  
UNIVERSITY PRESS



CAMBRIDGE  
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge CB2 8EA, United Kingdom

One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA

477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia

314–321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre, New Delhi – 110025, India

103 Penang Road, #05–06/07, Visioncrest Commercial, Singapore 238467

Cambridge University Press is part of Cambridge University Press & Assessment,  
a department of the University of Cambridge.

We share the University's mission to contribute to society through the pursuit of  
education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)

Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9781009463980](http://www.cambridge.org/9781009463980)

DOI: [10.1017/9781009463966](https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009463966)

© Jillian Heydt-Stevenson 2025

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions  
of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take  
place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press & Assessment.

When citing this work, please include a reference to the DOI [10.1017/9781009463966](https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009463966)

First published 2025

*A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library.*

*Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data*

NAMES: Heydt-Stevenson, Jillian, author.

TITLE: Embodied experience in British and French literature, 1778–1814 : women and belonging /  
Jillian Heydt-Stevenson, University of Colorado Boulder.

DESCRIPTION: Cambridge, United Kingdom ; New York, NY : Cambridge University Press, 2024. |  
Includes bibliographical references and index.

IDENTIFIERS: LCCN 2024015844 (print) | LCCN 2024015845 (ebook) | ISBN 9781009463980  
(hardback) | ISBN 9781009463997 (paperback) | ISBN 9781009463966 (epub)

SUBJECTS: LCSH: Women in literature. | English literature–18th century–History and criticism. |  
French literature–18th century–History and criticism. | English literature–19th century–History  
and criticism. | French literature–19th century–History and criticism. |

Belonging (Social psychology) in literature. | LCGFT: Literary criticism.

CLASSIFICATION: LCC PR448.W63 H49 2024 (print) | LCC PR448.W63 (ebook) |

DDC 820.9/352209033–dc23/eng/20240511

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2024015844>

LC ebook record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2024015845>

ISBN 978-1-009-46398-0 Hardback

Cambridge University Press & Assessment has no responsibility for the persistence  
or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this  
publication and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will  
remain, accurate or appropriate.