

Economic Woman: Demand, Gender, and Narrative Closure in Eliot and Hardy

Deanna K. Kreisel

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The ways in which women are portrayed in Victorian novels can provide important insights into how people of the day thought about political economy, and vice versa. In Economic Woman, Deanna K. Kreisel innovatively shows how images of feminized sexuality in novels by George Eliot and Thomas Hardy reflected widespread contemporary anxieties about the growth of capitalism.

Economic Woman is the first book to address directly the links between classical political economy and gender in the novel. Examining key works by Eliot and Hardy, including The Mill on the Floss and Tess of the d'Urbervilles, Kreisel investigates the meaning of two female representations: the 'economic woman,' who embodies idealized sexual restraint and wise domestic management, and the degraded prostitute, characterized by sexual excess and economic turmoil. Kreisel effectively integrates economic thought with literary analysis to contribute to an ongoing and lively scholarly discussion.



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