



The Rise of Supernatural Fiction, 1762-1800 (Cambridge Studies in Romanticism)

By E. J. Clery

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A genre of supernatural fiction was among the more improbable products of the Age of Enlightenment. This book questions the historical reasons for its growing popularity in the late eighteenth century. Beginning with the notorious case of the Cock Lane ghost, a performing poltergeist who became a major attraction in London in 1762, and with Garrick's spellbinding and paradigmatic performance as the ghost-seeing Hamlet, it moves on to look at the Gothic novels of Horace Walpole, Ann Radcliffe, M. G. Lewis, and others, in unexpected new lights, drawing out the connection between fictions of the supernatural and the growth of consumerism.

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Review

"A careful, detailed study of the transformation and persistence of the supernatural across the period into an age of skepticism and empiricism....Clery draws a great deal of evidence, from the theater, from drama criticism, and from contemporary accounts of Mary Toft and the Cock Lane ghost, evidence that is carefully marshaled and thoroughly interpreted." *Studies in English Literature*

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