



## **Beyond Sense and Sensibility: Moral Formation and the Literary Imagination from Johnson to Wordsworth (Transits: Literature, Thought & Culture, 1650-1850)**

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During the last half of the eighteenth century, sensibility and its less celebrated corollary sense were subject to constant variation, critique, and contestation in ways that raise profound questions about the formation of moral identities and communities. *Beyond Sense and Sensibility* addresses those questions. What authority does reason retain as a moral faculty in an age of sensibility? How reliable or desirable is feeling as a moral guide or a test of character? How does such a focus contribute to moral isolation and elitism or, conversely, social connectedness and inclusion? How can we distinguish between that connectedness and a disciplinary socialization? How do insensible processes contribute to our moral formation and action? What alternatives lie beyond the anthropomorphism implied by sense and sensibility?

Drawing extensively on philosophical thought from the eighteenth century as well as conceptual frameworks developed in the twenty-first century, this volume of essays examines moral formation represented in or implicitly produced by a range of texts, including Boswell's literary criticism, Fergusson's poetry, Burney's novels, Doddridge's biography, Smollett's novels, Charlotte Smith's children's books, Johnson's essays, Gibbon's history, and Wordsworth's poetry. The distinctive conceptual and textual breadth of *Beyond Sense and Sensibility* yields a rich reassessment and augmentation of the two perspectives summarized by the terms sense and sensibility in later eighteenth-century Britain.

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