MODERNISM, ROMANCE
AND THE FIN DE SI`CLE

Popular Fiction and
British Culture

In this book Nicholas Daly explores the popular fiction of the ‘romance revival’ of the late Victorian and Edwardian years, focusing on the work of such authors as Bram Stoker, H. Rider Haggard and Arthur Conan Doyle. Rather than treating these stories as Victorian Gothic, Daly locates them as part of a ‘popular modernism’. Drawing on recent work in cultural studies, this book shows how the vampires, mummies and treasures hunts of these adventure narratives provided a form of narrative theory of cultural change, at a time when Britain was trying to accommodate the ‘new imperialism’, the rise of professionalism and the expansion of consumerist culture. Daly argues that the presence of a genre such as romance within modernism should force a questioning of the usual distinction between high and popular culture.

Nicholas Daly lectures in the Department of English, Trinity College, Dublin. He has published essays on popular fiction in such journals as Novel, Literature and History, Texas Studies in Literature and Language and ELH.
MODERNISM, ROMANCE
AND THE FIN DE SIÈCLE

Popular Fiction and British Culture

NICHOLAS DALY
To the Dalys
and
Nicole Goldstein
Contents

Acknowledgements viii

Introduction 1

1 Incorporated bodies: Dracula and professionalism 30

2 The imperial treasure hunt: The Snake’s Pass and the limits of romance 53

3 ‘Mummie is become merchandise’: the mummy story as commodity theory 84

4 Across the great divide: modernism, popular fiction and the primitive 117

Afterword: the long goodbye 149

Notes 170

Index 211
Acknowledgements

In writing even such a slim volume as this I appear to have incurred too many debts to detail here. Among my principal creditors are those who supervised the doctoral dissertation on which this book is based: Nancy Armstrong, Neil Lazarus, Perry Curtis and Bill Krach. Less official support was lent in the same period by the Victorian Readers Group at Brown University, and by Jen Fleissner, Carolin and Hildegund Hahnemann, Eric Slade, Garrett Sullivan, Len Tennenhouse, Cynthia Tolentino and Kristen Whissel. More recently, Claire Connolly, Ian Duncan, David Glover, Talia Schaffter and my colleagues at Trinity, especially Aileen Douglas, Nicholas Grene, Darryl Jones, Stuart Murray, and John Nash deserve thanks. I would like to thank Ray Ryan at Cambridge University Press for his help, and the press’s anonymous readers for many helpful suggestions. Anne Fogarty, Pat Coughlan and Roger Henkle, who all made popular Victorian fiction seem like something worth studying, deserve a special mention, as do John Marx and Bob Scholes for some last-minute assistance. And for their unstinting support I would like to thank my family and Nicole Goldstein.

I am grateful to the Arts and Social Sciences Benefactions Fund at Trinity for enabling me to do additional research at the British Library.