



Courting Failure (Law, Politics, and Society)

Heidi Slettedahl Macpherson

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For the past twenty years, the law and literature movement has been gaining ground. More recently, a feminist perspective has enriched the field. With *Courting Failure: Women and the Law in Twentieth-Century Literature*, Heidi Slettedahl Macpherson adds a compelling voice to the discussion. *Courting Failure* critically explores the representation of women, fictional and historical, in conflict with the law. Macpherson focuses on the judicial system and the staging of women's guilt, examining both the female suspect and the female victim in a wide variety of media, including novels like Toni Morrison's *Beloved* and Margaret Atwood's *Alias Grace*, theatrical plays, movies such as *I Want to Live!* and *Legally Blonde*, and the television series *Ally McBeal*. In these texts and others, canonical or popular, Macpherson exposes the court as an arena in which women often fail, or succeed only by subverting the system. Combining feminist literary theory with the discourse of the law and literature movement, *Courting Failure* is a highly readable and analytically rigorous study of justice and gender on the page and screen.

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