

Death, Dissection and the Destitute

Ruth Richardson



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In the early nineteenth century, body snatching was rife because the only corpses available for medical study were those of hanged murderers. With the Anatomy Act of 1832, however, the bodies of those who died destitute in workhouses were appropriated for dissection. At a time when such a procedure was regarded with fear and revulsion, the Anatomy Act effectively rendered dissection a punishment for poverty. Providing both historical and contemporary insights, *Death, Dissection, and the Destitute* opens rich new prospects in history and history of science. The new afterword draws important parallels between social and medical history and contemporary concerns regarding organs for transplant and human tissue for research.



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