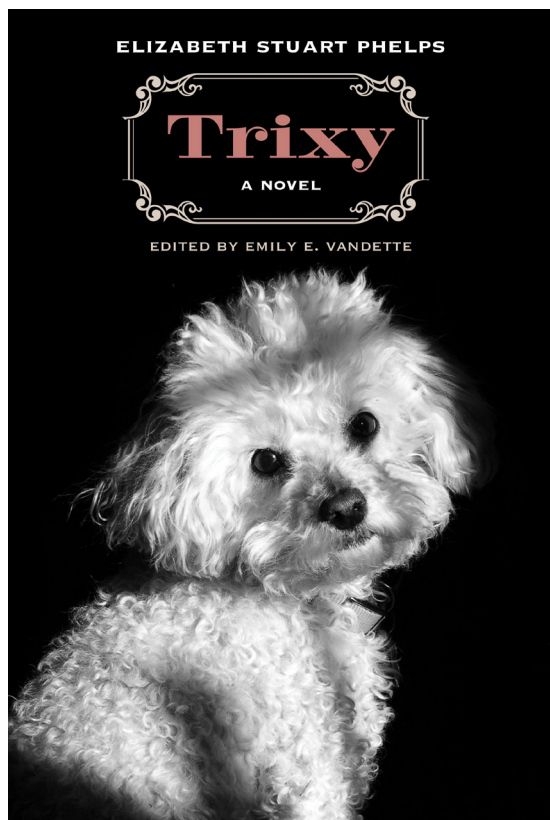


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“Phelps’s efforts on behalf of temperance, dress reform, suffrage, prison reform, and education for girls were part of growing social movements, but her opposition to vivisection never found the wide audience she was used to. As Emily VanDette notes in her introduction, Phelps was far ahead of her time in the fiction, essays, and addresses she wrote against this cruel and often unnecessary practice.”

—Roxanne Harde, coeditor of *The Embodied Child: Readings in Children’s Literature and Culture?*

Trixy

A Novel

Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, Edited and with an introduction by Emily E. VanDette

Trixy is a 1904 novel by the best-selling but largely forgotten American author and women’s rights activist Elizabeth Stuart Phelps. The book decries the then-common practice of vivisection, or scientific experiments on live animals.

Though not well known today, Phelps’s 1868 spiritualist novel, *The Gates Ajar*, which offered a comforting view of the afterlife to readers traumatized by the Civil War, was the century’s second best-selling American novel, surpassed only by *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*. Recently scholars and readers have begun to reexamine Phelps’s significance. In *Trixy*, contemporary readers can trace the roots of the early animal rights movement in Phelps’s influential campaign to introduce legislation to regulate or end vivisection. Phelps not only presents a narrative polemic against the cruelty of vivisection but argues that training young doctors in vivisection makes them bad physicians.

Emily E. VanDette’s introduction illuminates that Phelps’s protest writing, which included fiction, pamphlets, essays, and speeches, was well ahead of its time. As contemporary authors like Peter Singer, Jonathan Safran Foer, Donna Haraway, Gary Francione, and Carol J. Adams have extended her vision, they have also created new audiences for her work.

ELIZABETH STUART PHELPS (1844–1911) wrote more than fifty works of fiction, poetry, and nonfiction. Throughout her entire career Phelps’s writings were infused with her social consciousness. Phelps was best known for challenging traditional gender roles, including her advocacy for women’s clothing reform and against vivisection.

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