

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910457365803321
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Titolo	The afterlife of character, 1726-1825 [[electronic resource] /] / David A. Brewer
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Philadelphia [Pa.], : University of Pennsylvania Press, c2005
ISBN	1-283-21150-5 9786613211507 0-8122-0143-4
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (273 p.)
Collana	Material texts
Disciplina	820.9/27/09033
Soggetti	English literature - 18th century - History and criticism Characters and characteristics in literature Intellectual property - Great Britain - History - 18th century Intellectual property - Great Britain - History - 19th century Authors and readers - Great Britain - History - 18th century Authors and readers - Great Britain - History - 19th century English literature - 19th century - History and criticism Influence (Literary, artistic, etc.) - History - 19th century Influence (Literary, artistic, etc.) - History - 18th century Sequels (Literature) Electronic books.
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Bibliographic Level Mode of Issuance: Monograph
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references (p. [235]-251) and index.
Nota di contenuto	Frontmatter -- Contents -- Cottagers upon the Textual Commons, an Introduction -- Chapter 1. The Invention of the Fictional Archive -- Chapter 2. Visualization, Theatricality, Fame -- Chapter 3. Character Migration, Detachability, Old Friends -- Chapter 4. Lewd Engraftments and the Richardsonian Coterie Public -- Chapter 5. Shandyism and the Club of True Feelers -- Scott's Parental Interest, an Afterword -- Notes -- Bibliography -- Index -- Acknowledgments
Sommario/riassunto	The Afterlife of Character, 1726-1825 reconstructs how eighteenth-century British readers invented further adventures for beloved characters, including Gulliver, Falstaff, Pamela, and Tristram Shandy.

Far from being close-ended and self-contained, the novels and plays in which these characters first appeared were treated by many as merely a starting point, a collective reference perpetually inviting augmentation through an astonishing wealth of unauthorized sequels. Characters became an inexhaustible form of common property, despite their patent authorship. Readers endowed them with value, knowing all the while that others were doing the same and so were collectively forging a new mode of virtual community. By tracing these practices, David A. Brewer shows how the literary canon emerged as much "from below" as out of any of the institutions that have been credited with their invention. Indeed, he reveals the astonishing degree to which authors had to cajole readers into granting them authority over their own creations, authority that seems self-evident to a modern audience. In its innovative methodology and its unprecedented attention to the productive interplay between the audience, the book as a material artifact, and the text as an immaterial entity, *The Afterlife of Character, 1726-1825* offers a compelling new approach to eighteenth-century studies, the history of the book, and the very idea of character itself.

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