



Reading and the Victorians (Nineteenth Century)

Juliet John

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What did reading mean to the Victorians? This question is the key point of departure for *Reading and the Victorians*, an examination of the era when reading underwent a swifter and more radical transformation than at any other moment in history. With book production handed over to the machines and mass education boosting literacy to unprecedented levels, the norms of modern reading were being established. Essays examine the impact of tallow candles on Victorian reading, the reading practices encouraged by Mudie's Select Library and feminist periodicals, the relationship between author and reader as reflected in manuscript revisions and corrections, the experience of reading women's diaries, models of literacy in *Our Mutual Friend*, the implications of reading marks in Victorian texts, how computer technology has assisted the study of nineteenth-century reading practices, how Gladstone read his personal library, and what contemporary non-academic readers might owe to Victorian ideals of reading and community. *Reading* forms a genuine meeting place for historians, literary scholars, theorists, librarians, and historians of the book, and this diverse collection examines nineteenth-century reading in all its personal, historical, literary, and material contexts, while also asking fundamental questions about how we read the Victorians' reading in the present day.

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