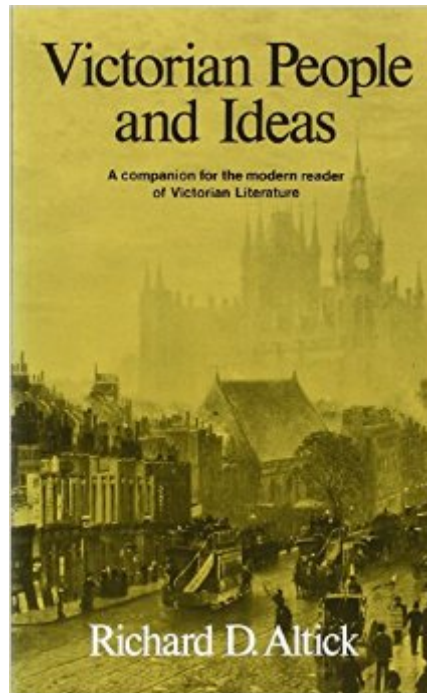


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# Victorian People And Ideas: A Companion For The Modern Reader Of Victorian Literature



## Synopsis

Life in the Victorian period, focusing on the social, religious, scientific, and artistic movements that characterized the age. The reputation of the Victorian age in England has undergone many vicissitudes, but it is now higher than ever. In this important study, Richard D. Altick moves us toward an understanding of the social, intellectual, and theological crises that Carlyle and Dickens, Tennyson and Arnold were daily struggling to solve. And the issues were many: the revolution in class structure and class attitudes; the rise of utilitarianism and the evangelical spirit; the crisis in religion, including the Oxford movement and Darwinism; the democratization of culture; the place of art and the artist in an industrial, bourgeois society; the effects of industrialism, especially on the way people live. Altick brings to the discussion of these complicated questions the lively and sensitive intelligence that his many readers have come to expect. He includes contemporary illustrations and a full reference index.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This is the book for 'arm chair' history lovers who want to get a general overview of the life and times of people in Victorian England. Richard D. Altick is a fine and readable writer with a gift for picking out the significant and the interesting in his subject. The book begins with an overview of 'The Longest Reign (1837-1901) and goes on to discuss the various parts/classes of Victorian society--the aristocracy, the gentry and middle class, the 'lower orders'; the progress of manufacturing from cottage to factories and the rise of slums to house workers; the role of and view of women in the home and in society; the growth of a reading public and the power of the press;

urbanization; the age of steam railroads and various intellectual movements such as Utilitarianism. This last-mentioned chapter contains a fine summary of the seeds of America's current 'tea party' movement, with its succinct summary of Pre-Victorian economic and social philosophies that have been studied and have held sway in the minds of Conservatives ever after. The contesting voices of Morality and Economics are presented in a highly informative and interesting manner. Further major chapters cover the rise of a middle class Evangelical spirit; an exploration of Victorian Anglicanism, including the crisis religious people felt over Darwinism and alternatives to traditional faith such as rationalism, positivism and science-based natural theology; Democracy, Industry and Culture; the Nature of Art and Its Place in Society and, finally, an overview section assessing the anti-Victorian reaction and the rebirth of interest in the era since the 1960's. The book features lots of narrative, without being excessively burdened by dates, events and 'little' facts.

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