

The Reading Lesson: The Threat of Mass Literacy in Nineteenth-Century British Fiction

Patrick M. Brantlinger



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"[Brantlinger's] writing is admirably lucid, his knowledge impressive and his thesis a welcome reminder of the class bias that so often accompanies denunciations of popular fiction." ?Publishers Weekly

"Brantlinger is adept at discussing both the fiction itself and the social environment in which that fiction was produced and disseminated. He brings to his study a thorough knowledge of traditional and contemporary scholarship, which results in an important scholarly book on Victorian fiction and its production." ?Choice

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Fear of mass literacy stalks the pages of Patrick Brantlinger's latest book. Its central plot involves the many ways in which novels and novel reading were viewed?especially by novelists themselves?as both causes and symptoms of rotting minds and moral decay among nineteenth-century readers.

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