

# Industry and Empire:

## Victoria Literature On Screen



## Week One

## Welcome to *Industry and Empire*

### Week One

Regular attendees of the literary adaptation courses here at Broadway will notice that we've taken a slightly different approach this time around; rather than concentrating on a single author, we'll be considering the influence of an era's worth of storytellers on both our understanding of that era and on the medium that would develop in its wake: cinema.

The Victorian era, encompassing the reign of Queen Victoria from 1837 – 1901, was one of great social, economic, scientific and technological advancement and the novel was the popular artistic medium at the heart of it.

At the beginning of the nearly 64 year period, 100 novels were, on average, published per year. By its ends, this number had increased to 1000.

It is, therefore, from a contemporaneous storytelling perspective, an extremely well-documented period. But that's only one reason why it continues to exert such an influence on movie making and, indeed, modern novels.

Cinema was born in the tail end of the Victoria era and grew in its wake, one of the natural continuations of the influx of invention that it contained. Its visual tropes were still, in some ways, contemporary as filmmaking began. Most importantly, popular novels of the recent past were one of the first ports of call for nascent screenwriters and directors. Meaning the Victoria age is baked into cinema.

It won't all be frocks, orphans and swooning, however. Victorian literature takes in comedy, social realism, science fiction, horror, espionage and mystery.

We'll largely be looking at pairs and trios of authors, with often contrasting approaches to their art, but thankfully we are spoiled for choice in terms of those who have had their works committed to celluloid.

And we won't be restricting ourselves to Victoria's subjects at home either – the same period saw many writers overseas add their own voices to the portrait of the time.

In our first week, we'll be looking at offerings from William Makepeace Thackeray, author of *Vanity Fair*, Elizabeth Gaskell of *Cranford* fame and George Eliot, who brought us *Silas Marner* and *Middlemarch*.

#### Further Reading:

*Victoria Vogue: British Novels on Screen*

Dianne F. Sadoff

*Victorian Literature and Film Adaptation*

Abigail Burham Bloom & Mary Sanders Pollack (eds.)

*The Art of Adapting Victoria Literature 1848-1920*

Karen E. Laird

*Neo-Victorianism on Screen*

Antonija Primorac

## WEEK ONE FILMS

### George Eliot

#### Novels

*Middlemarch*

*Silas Marner*

*Adam Bede*

*Daniel Deronda*

#### TV/Films

Adam Bede (1992)

*Giles Foster*

Middlemarch (1994)

*Anthony Page*

A Simple Twist of Fate (1994)

*Gillies MacKinnon*

Georg Eliot: A Scandalous Life (2002)

*Mary Donnes*

Daniel Deronda (2002)

*Tom Hooper*

## **William Makepeace Thackeray**

### **Novels**

*The Luck of Barry Lyndon*

*Vanity Fair*

*The Rose and the Ring*

### **Films**

Barry Lyndon (1975)

*Stanley Kubrick*

The Rose and the Ring (1979)

*Lotte Reiniger*

Vanity Fair (2004)

*Mira Nair*

## **Elizabeth Gaskell**

### **Novels**

*Wives & Daughters*

*North & South*

*Cranford*

*My Lady Ludlow*

*Mr Harrison's Confessions*

## **Films**

Wives & Daughters (1999)

*Nicholas Renton*

North & South (2004)

*Brian Percival*

Cranford (2007 – 2009)

*Simon Curtis & Steve Hudson*