
Access rights
Worldwide access
Access changed 11-14-11.

Date
2009-08-26

Author
Salvey, Courtney.

Abstract
While Victorian responses to the machine varied greatly, a distinct literary strain emerged with Carlyle and ran through Ruskin and Dickens which understood the machine as a threat to human agency. In their fear, they focused on machinery itself as sublime or horrible. Samuel Smiles's series of engineering biographies, entitled Lives of the Engineers, argues against this position by highlighting the engineer, the human element, who creates and controls the machine. Interacting with concepts from Carlyle, Smiles's biographies show engineers as Captains of Industry, dynamic men who shape themselves and lead others. By combining a narrative of these self-made men with a narrative of technological history, Smiles shows that machines are products of human agency rather than threats to it. This presentation facilitates the inclusion of engineers in subsequent works by Elizabeth Gaskell, Charles Kingsley, George Eliot, and Rudyard Kipling.

URI
http://hdl.handle.net/2104/5421

Collections
Electronic Theses and Dissertations

Related items

Through the lens of the land: changing identity in the novels of Bernard MacLaverty.
Gibson, Jordan Leigh. (2008-11-10)
Many critics, like Oona Frawley, believe the land of Ireland has the unique power to connect the collective Irish conscience to the past and is often a rallying cry to garner support for the freedom of Ireland. MacLaverty ...

Iris Murdoch's genealogy of the modern self : retrieving consciousness beyond the linguistic turn.
In this dissertation I argue that Murdoch's philosophical-ethical project is best understood as an anti-Enlightenment genealogical narrative. I maintain that her work consistently displays four fundamental features that ...

Who is like God? : divine versus demonic authority in the works of Dostoevsky and Flannery O'Connor.
Hooten, Jessica Lynice. (2009-08-24)
This dissertation explores issues of authority in the works of Fyodor Dostoevsky and Flannery O'Connor, using René Girard's theory of mimesis. O'Connor and Dostoevsky recognize the rejection of divine authority as the ...
Originally published in 1859, Self-Help became an instant bestseller and made the author famous overnight. Samuel Smiles (1812-1904) continued to revise his book over the years and the 1897 edition may have been one of the last versions published, though it continued to be in print throughout his life. This work is in the Public Domain worldwide. Add Chapters II-XIII. Fix footnotes as they are numbered by original page number, and not linked (also, they are actually endnotes). In thus vitalizing their machines and mechanizing the mental and emotional life of human beings, Victorians created what Ketabgian calls the "industrial imaginary." This imaginary of the living machine and of the mechanical mind, she convincingly argues, pervades and structures Victorian social criticism, science, and literary expression. Likewise, Ketabgian contends, the conundrums in "The Book of the Machines" in Samuel Butler's Erewhon suggest that within a prosthetic system, the human being is not extricable from the machine. Quite nicely drawing on the notion of the machine as augmentation, Ketabgian shows how the Victorian belief in the value of mechanization enhanced the power of women.