



Victorian gender roles and Dickens's image of women as represented in the female characters in "Great Expectations"

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The following work is an analysis of the female characters in Charles Dickens's Great Expectations especially with regard to Victorian gender constructions and Dickens's image of women. Dickens's biography and the depiction of very diverse female characters in his novels stimulated the idea of a closer analysis.

First of all, a short summary of Great Expectations is provided. Then, the Victorian construction of gender will be discussed. As will be shown, a very strict ideology regarding gender roles existed during the Victorian age. Obviously, Dickens must have been influenced by the ideas of his contemporaries which should then be presented in the novel.

Another focus will be on how his relationships to women influenced his image of women and also, consequently, the depiction of his female characters in Great Expectations.

Finally the female characters, with reference to Victorian gender roles and Dickens's image of women, will be analyzed in greater detail. The focus is on four women who I believe to be the most important female characters in the novel and powerful representatives of the author's image of women and Victorian gender construction.

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