



The Victorian Diary: Authorship and Emotional Labour (Nineteenth Century)

Anne-Marie Millim

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In her examination of neglected diaristic texts, Anne-Marie Millim expands the field of Victorian diary criticism by complicating the conventional notion of diaries as mainly private sources of biographical information. She argues that for Elizabeth Rigby Eastlake, Henry Crabb Robinson, George Eliot, George Gissing, John Ruskin, Edith Simcox and Gerard Manley Hopkins, the exposure or publication of their diaries was a real possibility that they either coveted or feared. Millim locates the diary at the intersection of the public and private spheres to show that well-known writers and public figures of both sexes exploited the diary's self-reflexive, diurnal structure in order to enhance their creativity and establish themselves as authors. Their object was to manage, rather than to indulge or repress, their emotions for the purposes of perfecting their observational and critical skills. Reading these diaries as literary works in their own right, Millim analyses their crucial role in the construction of authorship. By relating these Victorian writers' diaries to their publications and to contemporary works of cultural criticism, Millim shows the multifarious ways in which diaristic practices, emotional management and professional output corresponded to experiences of the literary marketplace and to nineteenth-century codes of propriety.

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