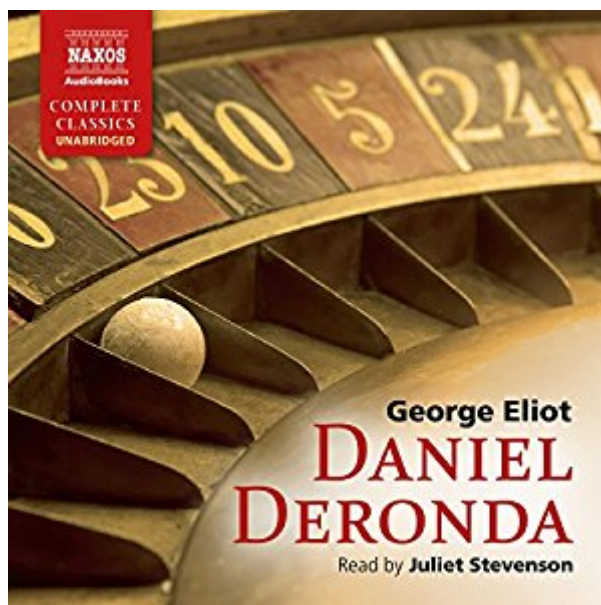


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Daniel Deronda



Synopsis

Meeting by chance at a gambling hall in Europe, the separate lives of Daniel Deronda and Gwendolen Harleth are immediately intertwined. Daniel, an Englishman of uncertain parentage, becomes Gwendolyn's redeemer as she finds herself drawn to his spiritual and altruistic nature after a loveless marriage. But Daniel's path was already set when he rescued a young Jewess from suicide. Daniel Deronda, George Eliot's final novel, is a remarkable work, encompassing themes of religion, imperialism and gender within its broad and fascinating scope.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

While I welcome a digital version of Penguin's DERONDA, with Terrence Cave's excellent notes, I'm dismayed at the lack of attention to detail. Some of the chapter epigraphs appear in miniscule type; many punctuation marks (especially periods) have gone missing; and there are outright howlers, as when "A Jew!" (an important word in this book) becomes "A few!" Is it too much to ask a major publisher to proof its digital versions? Apparently.

I chose this rating for the story because it is fascinating and historically important. The characterization of many of the protagonists is known for its brilliance, the topic remains of great interest today--the approach to Jews in English society. I would rate it far higher if the Kindle text had been better. It was extremely inaccurate. The word "title" was written as "tide" throughout. The epigraphs for almost all the chapters were rendered in a single line of letters down endless pages and were illegible in that form. They are important to the story and much was lost here. There were

many other mistakes too. I don't believe the source text was that bad and would blame the scanning process.

This book, alongside *The Mill on the Floss* (1860) (Broadview Editions) and *Middlemarch* (Oxford World's Classics), is one of "George Eliot's greatest psychological novels." (See *Rereading George Eliot: Changing Responses to Her Experiments in Life*.) While the main characters, Daniel Deronda and Gwendolen Harleth, are the most finely drawn, many of the subsidiary characters also spring to life. The plot, involving Gwendolen's horrifically bad marriage and Daniel's search for a life-purpose, is sufficiently diverting, but one reads this book more to enjoy the journey than to arrive at a specific destination. The novel begins in medias res and seems to end with many unanswered questions. The novel alludes to many historical events contemporaneous to the time in which the story is set (1864-6). Whatever resonances Eliot expected her readers to feel from these allusions are totally swamped by the modern reader's knowledge of the calamities to occur in the next century. Her belief in nationhood seems especially naive in retrospect. *Daniel Deronda* broke ground in its comparatively respectful treatment of Jews and Judaism; Eliot seems to have done a fair amount of research. One still cringes at times as old stereotypes are encountered, but, compared to Trollope, Eliot is positively enlightened. If you are new to Eliot, you may want to try the novels mentioned above first, but you will definitely want to tackle this one subsequently.

Am I the only person who really really really wished that this book had been about Catherine Arrowpoint? Don't get me wrong, I loved *Daniel Deronda*, but I struggled for a long time with the fact that I did not actually like either of the two main characters. Gwendolen is insufferable, although I take the point that Eliot was making about the options open to high-spirited women. Daniel was worse-- as mealy-mouthed and moralizing as Gwendolen thought him to be in the casino at the beginning. And don't let me get started on the mincing wincing Mirah. This isn't a very forgiving novel. There is not very much room for redemption. I guess that is why I had hoped that it could be about Catherine Arrowpoint-- she seemingly the only character in the position to make healthy choices. Miss Arrowpoint invents herself, Daniel discovers himself. Gwendolen, well, it's hard to talk about Gwendolen without giving away too much of the plot. Difficult for me to imagine that some see the book as two separable halves and prefer the Gwendolen part. There's a thread of linked themes running through the novel. It all fits together, as a single whole. A phenomenal book, really. Read it if you haven't already.

I was really taken back by the depth of this story. It has more than one plot that eventually weaves together. And, apart from the astounding portrayal of the Jewish Faith, this book is a must read. It is classic Victorian literature at it's finest. Her character development is so concise. I particularly like the women in her stories. She portrays them with brutal honesty whether they are kind or not so kind. George Eliot , I feel , like many of the female writers of her time, were born feminists, and describes with great eloquence the struggles of that era for women in marriage and relationships. Wonderful book.

George Eliot was one of the greatest writers who have ever lived. Few come close to her---maybe George Meredith and Tolstoy, but certainly not Henry James, who was her inferior in every way. Daniel Deronda is as captivating as Middlemarch, and as satisfying except for one small difference. I'll speak around the point, so as not to include a spoiler. The final love scene, in which Daniel confesses his true feelings, was not nearly as suspenseful or as heart grabbing as the final scene in Middlemarch, which had tears flowing down the cheeks of this macho reviewer. Other than that tiny flaw, this is a great novel. Enjoy!

excellent service

Excellent read.

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