



# **Literary Bric-à-Brac and the Victorians: From Commodities to Oddities (The Nineteenth Century Series)**

*Jen Harrison*

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What are we to make of the Victorians' fascination with collecting? What effect did their encounters with the curious, exotic and downright odd have on Victorian writers and their works? The essays in this collection take up these questions by examining the phenomenon of bric-à-brac in Victorian literature. The contributors to *Literary Bric-à-Brac and the Victorians: From Commodities to Oddities* explore sites of unusual concurrence (including museums, the home, art galleries, private collections) and the way in which bric-à-brac brought the alien into everyday settings, the past into the present and the wild into the domestic. Focusing on the representation of material culture in Victorian literature, the essays in this volume seek out miscellaneous and incongruous objects that take readers beyond the commonplace paradigms associated with commodity culture. Individual chapters analyse the work of writers as different as Edward Lear and John Henry Newman, Robert Browning and George Eliot, Charles Dickens and Lewis Carroll. In so doing they shed light on a dizzying array of topics and objects that include class and capitalism, the occult and the sacraments, Darwinism and dandyism, umbrellas, textiles, the Philosopher's Stone and even the household nail.

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