



# **Victorian Literature and the Anorexic Body (Cambridge Studies in Nineteenth-Century Literature and Culture)**

*Anna Krugovoy Silver*

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Anna Silver examines the ways nineteenth-century British writers used physical states of the female body--hunger, appetite, fat and slenderness--in the creation of female characters. She argues that anorexia nervosa, first diagnosed in 1873, serves as a paradigm for the cultural ideal of middle-class womanhood in Victorian Britain. Silver uses the works of a wide range of writers (including Charlotte Brontë, Christina Rossetti, Charles Dickens, Bram Stoker and Lewis Carroll) to demonstrate that mainstream models of middle-class Victorian womanhood share important qualities with the beliefs or behaviors of the anorexic female.

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