



Literature and Inequality

Nine Perspectives from the Napoleonic Era through the First Gilded Age

By *Daniel Shaviro*

Pub Date: 31 March 2020

Binding: Hardback

Price: £29.99 / \$39.99

ISBN: 9781785273667

Extent: 250 pages

Size: 153 x 229 mm /
6 x 9 inches

BISAC CATEGORY: SOCIAL SCIENCE / Social Classes & Economic Disparity HISTORY / Social History, LITERARY CRITICISM / Subjects & Themes / Historical Events

BISAC CODE: SOC050000

BIC CODE: JFC

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Understanding high-end inequality through great works of literature

The consequences of high-end inequality seep into almost every aspect of human life: it is not just a question for economists. In this highly accessible new work, Professor Shaviro takes an interdisciplinary approach to explore how great works of literature have provided some of the most incisive accounts of inequality and its social and cultural ramifications over the last two centuries. Through perceptive close readings of Jane Austen, Charles Dickens, and Edith Wharton, among others, he not only demonstrates how these accounts are still relevant today, but how they can illuminate our understanding of our current situation and broaden our own perspective beyond the merely economic.

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Introduction; PART ONE: ENGLAND AND FRANCE DURING THE AGE OF REVOLUTION; Why Aren't Things Better Than This? Class Relations Within the Top One Percent in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*; A Rising Tide Rocks All Boats: The Threat of Rising Prosperity in Stendhal's *Le Rouge et le Noir*; Arrivistes, Rentiers, Mandarins, and Flunkies in Honoré de Balzac's *Le Père Goriot*; PART TWO: ENGLAND FROM THE 1840S THROUGH THE START OF WORLD WAR I; Why Do "Scrooge Truthers" Hate Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*?; Not to Blame? Plutocrats, Capitalism, and Foreigners in Anthony Trollope's *The Way We Live Now*; Unconnected: Rentier Intellectuals Uber Alles in E.M. Forster's *Howards End*; PART THREE: GILDED AGE AMERICA; Anti-Success Manual? Mark Twain's and Charles Dudley Warner's *The Gilded Age*; No Success Like Failure? Edith Wharton's *The House of Mirth*; Superhero or Bungler? Frank Cowperwood / Charles Yerkes in Theodore Dreiser's *The Financier* and *The Titan*; Conclusion; Index.

About the Author

Daniel Shaviro is the Wayne Perry Professor of Taxation at New York University Law School, where his research focuses on tax policy and distributive justice. He is also the author of the satirical novel *Getting It*.

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