First steps toward a history of the Mid-Victorian novel in colonial Australia

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Authors
Dolin, Tim

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Abstract
I am interested in a model of literary interpretation responsive to the spatial and temporal distances across which texts move. My approach is to use quantitative reading data to analyse the circulation of Victorian written culture in a range of Australian colonial contexts, and to construct from that analysis locally situated re-readings of well-known and lesser-known novels.

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I. Introduction

In the Mid-Victorian period in English history there were distinct class differences in its society. There were three classes in England. These were the Aristocracy, the Middle-Class (or Factory owners) and the working class. The populace seeking to better their lives, sought employment in newly-formed industries. Many of the workers which included women and children, labored through 12 hour work shifts, with poor nutrition, poor living conditions and completing tedious tasks. These factors, accompanied by various ideological precepts by Britain’s intellectual community, and those concepts imported from France, provoke a crucial social evolution. The early Victorian or first generation novelists comprised of William Thackrey, Charles Dickens, Anthony Trollope, Mrs. Gaskell etc. Although there were several more novelists of the time, only the ones mentioned here have survived the test of time and are considered representative of the early phase of the Victorian fiction in England. Characteristics. Themes. One of the prominent features, that the novel of the early Victorian era, had, was the concern with the “condition of England question”. They chose for their themes the specific contemporary problems of the Victorian society caused by