

Victorian era consciousness

[History](#), [Middle Ages](#)



How would you describe the consciousness of the Victorian Age? Think about their perception of their place in the world. The consciousness of society in the Victorian age is an interesting factor that greatly changed and evolved during the time period. The era's beginning and end is marked by the birth and death of the reigning monarch of the time, Queen Victoria, ranging from 1837 to the early 1900s.

With the effects of the Industrial Revolution distinctly felt by all classes within society, it was a time of significant social reformation and drastic change in all aspects of life, and in short was a diverse and complex though tremendously exciting period for those who were living in it. As a result of such rapid growth, expansion and change, it is only natural that there was widespread excitement and perhaps apprehension at the same time.

A new world was being created away from the manual driven labour of the old, and one of steam power and coal was emerging, of urbanisation and industrialisation. This constantly transforming and thriving world to the people at the time must've been overwhelming and thrilling, as they gained a realisation that all aspects of their lives were becoming influenced in some way or other by the increasingly advanced technologies and innovation.

As a result, there was a great influx of population from the countryside to the city, with the realisation that there was a quickly approaching transition away from an agricultural-based economy towards machine-based manufacturing. However there must've been a great deal of anxiety and people may well have been wary towards the great changes that were happening around them. There would've been a growing new consciousness

as society had to perceive the world in a different way than they previously had in order to 'keep up with the times. As one tiny pebble when thrown into a pond causes consequent ripples to spread throughout the surface, the Victorian Age was like a pond where a great many pebbles were being thrown into. As a result, their way of thinking and apprehending the constantly developing world around them had to be open-minded in the sense that they had to be prepared for more surprises. They had to become receptive to things previously thought impossible or perhaps not even imagined at all which came to life- it was supposed to be a new Golden Age and indeed it was.

However, the Victorian Age also had its dark side- the side of child labour, devastating unemployment, opium and prostitution. Nothing was certain anymore and with the modernism movement arising towards the end of the 19th century, people began to question many values and concepts that had before been unarguably taken for granted and accepted within society. With the rejection of established patterns of thought, a new consciousness arose where old traditions and customs were critically examined and people realised they had more freedom of thought than ever.