

**The Portrayal of Crime and Criminals in Selected Novels of Charles
Dickens: *Oliver Twist*, *Great Expectations*, *Hard Times* and *Our Mutual
Friend***

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Abstract

This dissertation explores how Charles Dickens portrays life in the Victorian era when the Industrial Revolution took place and how it affected people's lives in *Oliver Twist* (1837), *Great Expectations* (1860), *Hard Times* (1854) and *Our Mutual Friend* (1865). In these novels, Dickens presents a panoramic picture of social or moral crimes, victims, criminals and the causes of criminality. He criticizes and analyzes this problem in several of his literary works where he depicts its causes, motives and results. He presents a real picture of the world of crime and criminals by investigating various characters and different social classes to show whether crimes are related to external element as socio-economic environment, or internal elements as heredity. By analyzing these selected novels which revolve around crimes, this dissertation will focus also on showing Charles Dickens as a crime writer more than a novelist and a social reformer. He addresses the issue of criminality that has pervaded the nineteenth century and become a serious problem.