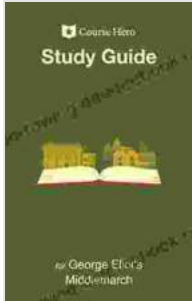


# A Comprehensive Guide to George Eliot's Middlemarch: Delving into the Complexities of Victorian Society



## Study Guide for George Eliot's Middlemarch (Course Hero Study Guides) by Diane N. Quintana

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

Language : English

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George Eliot's *Middlemarch*, published in 1871, is a sprawling and intricate novel that offers a panoramic view of Victorian society. The novel explores a wide range of themes, including love, marriage, religion, and social class, and features a cast of unforgettable characters.

This study guide will provide you with the tools you need to understand and appreciate *Middlemarch*. We will discuss the novel's characters, themes, and historical context, and we will provide close readings of some of the novel's most important scenes.

## Characters

*Middlemarch* is populated by a large and diverse cast of characters. Some of the most important characters include:

\* Dorothea Brooke: A young woman who is idealistic and passionate about social reform. \* Will Ladislaw: A young doctor who is intelligent and ambitious. \* Edward Casaubon: Dorothea's husband, a middle-aged scholar who is working on a massive work of scholarship. \* Rosamond Vincy: Dorothea's sister, a beautiful and shallow young woman. \* Tertius Lydgate: A young doctor who is struggling to establish his career. \* Mary Garth: Dorothea's cousin, a sensible and hardworking young woman.

## **Themes**

Middlemarch explores a wide range of themes, including:

\* Love and marriage: The novel explores the different types of love and marriage, and the challenges that couples face in maintaining their relationships. \* Religion: The novel explores the role of religion in Victorian society, and the different ways that people experience faith. \* Social class: The novel explores the different social classes in Victorian society, and the ways that class divisions affect people's lives. \* Education: The novel explores the importance of education, and the different ways that people can learn and grow.

## **Historical Context**

Middlemarch is set in the mid-19th century, during a period of great social and economic change in England. The novel reflects the values and beliefs of Victorian society, and it provides a glimpse into the everyday lives of people from all walks of life.

## **Close Readings**

We will now close read two of the novel's most important scenes.

## **Scene 1: Dorothea's Marriage to Casaubon**

In this scene, Dorothea marries Edward Casaubon, a middle-aged scholar who is working on a massive work of scholarship. Dorothea is idealistic and passionate about social reform, while Casaubon is aloof and self-absorbed. The marriage is a disaster, and Dorothea eventually leaves Casaubon.

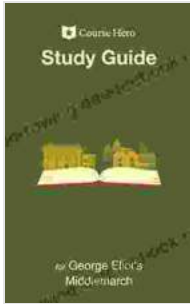
This scene is important because it introduces us to two of the novel's most important characters, and it sets up the conflict that will drive the rest of the novel.

## **Scene 2: Lydgate's Debt**

In this scene, Tertius Lydgate, a young doctor, is struggling to establish his career. He is in debt, and he is being pressured by his creditors to repay his debts. Lydgate eventually takes out a loan from Bulstrode, a wealthy banker. However, Bulstrode is a hypocrite, and he eventually forecloses on Lydgate's loan.

This scene is important because it explores the theme of social class. Lydgate is a talented doctor, but he is unable to succeed because he is from a lower social class than Bulstrode.

Middlemarch is a complex and challenging novel, but it is also a rewarding one. The novel offers a rich and nuanced portrait of Victorian society, and it explores a wide range of important themes. We hope that this study guide has helped you to understand and appreciate Middlemarch, and we encourage you to continue to explore this great novel on your own.

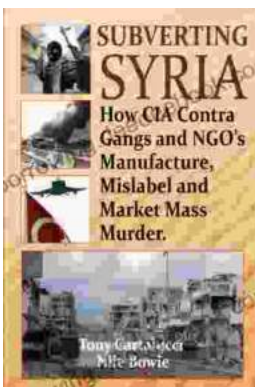


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