



# Victorian Women Writers and the Classics: The Feminine of Homer (Classical Presences)

*Isobel Hurst*

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Isobel Hurst examines the role of women writers in the Victorian reception of ancient Greece and Rome, showing that they had a greater imaginative engagement with classical literature than has previously been acknowledged. The restrictions which applied to women's access to classical learning liberated them from the repressive and sometimes alienating effects of a traditional classical education. Women writers' reworkings of classical texts serve a variety of purposes: to validate women's claims to authorship, to demand access to education, to highlight feminist issues through the heroines of ancient tragedy, to repudiate the warrior ethos of ancient epic.

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