The concept of masculinity as a cultural historical construction cannot be seen as monolithic but rather as a synthesis of various, often contradictory, aspects. Victorian masculinity is often identified with certain formations of the masculine, for example, muscular Christianity or bourgeois paternalism, which have contributed to the understanding of the concept of the Victorian gentleman. Such stereotypes dominated by Thomas Carlyle's ascetic heroism as the epitome of Victorian manhood are associated with a rather limited set of images. Yet the discussion of Victorian manhood only in terms of rigorous self-discipline, self-restraint and simple dignity...
might lead us to sweeping generalizations about the notion itself. The complexity of the "Condition of Manliness question" in the nineteenth century suggests a multifaceted entity of Victorian masculinity, which is particularly noticeable when analysed in the context of its Regency legacy. At the beginning of the Victorian age the Regency dandy, the prevailing standard of manhood in the first decades of the century, was not just replaced by its antithesis, the earnest Victorian gentleman, but continued to shape the new ideal throughout the century. How Victorians perceived their masculinity reflects the influence of the Regency in many ways and what dandyism bestowed upon the concept of Victorian manhood should thus in no way be overlooked. The present article attempts to elucidate this issue in the light of the novels Bleak House and A Tale of Two Cities by Charles Dickens, who, as a disciple of Carlyle, addressed the most compelling concerns of the time, including the condition of manliness question.

744 quotes from A Tale of Two Cities: ‘A wonderful fact to reflect upon, that every human creature is constituted to be that profound secret and mystery ... A solemn consideration, when I enter a great city by night, that every one of those darkly clustered houses encloses its own secret; that every room in every one of them encloses its own secret; that every beating heart in the hundreds of thousands of breasts there, is, in some of its imaginings, a secret to the heart nearest it! Something of the awfulness, even of Death itself, is referable to this. No more can I turn the leaves of this dear book that I loved, and vainly hope in time to read it all. Welcome to the LitCharts study guide on Charles Dickens’s A Tale of Two Cities. Created by the original team behind SparkNotes, LitCharts are the world's best literature guides. A Tale of Two Cities: Introduction. A concise biography of Charles Dickens plus historical and literary context for A Tale of Two Cities. A Tale of Two Cities: Plot Summary. Historical Context of A Tale of Two Cities. Like the American Revolution, the French Revolution was launched in the spirit of rational thought and political liberty. But these ideals of the 18th-century Enlightenment period were soon compromised when the French Revolution devolved into the "Terror"—a violent period of beheadings by the very citizens who overthrew the tyrannous French monarchy. A Tale of Two Cities moves between England and France, during that turbulent period of French history, the years leading up to and immediately following, the French Revolution of July 1789. The timeline of the novel takes readers from 1757 to 1793/4. It is useful to see how Dickens uses the historical facts of the period as background. The Victorians were haunted by the memory and example of the French Revolution of 1789, which had happened only seventy years before Dickens wrote A Tale of Two Cities.
and only twenty-three years before he was born. Childhood years in Portsmouth and Chatham wou