MAKING IT WHOLE
A Victorian Circle and the Shape of Their World

By Diana Postlethwaite

The members of the Victorian circle delineated in this remarkable study in biography and intellectual history include John Stuart Mill, Auguste Comte, George Combe, Robert Chambers, Charles Bray, Harriet Martineau, George Henry Lewes, Herbert Spencer, and George Eliot. In some cases they were drawn together by friendship or love, but in all cases they were bound by a shared set of beliefs. Recurring throughout their work are the key ideologies of positivism, phrenology, the pre-Darwinian development hypothesis, necessitarianism, mesmeric “force”—components of a unifying vision of order in the universe.

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