

**Welcome to Study Group #630, “Reading Daniel Deronda, George Eliot’s Magnificent Experiment.”** I am glad you are interested in Eliot’s last, ground-breaking novel with its challenges and occasional lapses. It is not an easy read, and it is long, but it also has brilliantly realized sections and is concerned with some profound moral and still timely questions.

I am sending you the course syllabus (below). Since our Deronda class is a large one, to help me get to know you better, I am also now sending you (separately) a brief request for some information about yourself. I would appreciate it if you would return it by email to me before our first class.

In a another and separate email, going out soon, I will send you a memo with the information you need to have before our first class’s virtual gathering on Tuesday, 20 September at 11:45 a.m. Early next week I will send you a fourth mailing, which will contain the study questions for discussion and the agenda for the 20 September class.

Get your book as soon as you can and start reading Daniel Deronda, Book I “The Spoiled Child,” Chapter 1 through Chapter 10, so you will be ready for a lively discussion during our first class. The novel is about 850 pages long, so we will be reading a little over 100 pages for each of the eight weeks of our course. The Penguin Classic version is recommended, but not required. If you use some other edition, try to get one with foot- or endnotes.

I look forward to seeing you on 20 September!

Cheers,  
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### **Olli at American University**

#### **SYLLABUS for STUDY GROUP #630**

Fall 2022

**Study Group:** “Reading Daniel Deronda, George Eliot’s Magnificent Experiment”

**Day:** Eight Tuesdays (11:45 a.m. to 1:15 p.m.)

**Dates:** Sept. 20, 27, Oct. 4, 11, 18, 25, Nov. 1, 8

**Leader:** Dr. Linda R. Freeman

**Phone:** 301-502-0904

**E-Mail:** [LFREEMAN@umd.edu](mailto:LFREEMAN@umd.edu)

**Text:** George Eliot: Daniel Deronda. New York. Penguin Classics, 1986  
ISBN: 0-14-043020-2

**Note:** This book is a paperback. There may be a more recent version of it now.

**Goals:**

We will read and discuss the last major work by what many critics feel is the greatest of the Victorian novelists. We will attempt not only to understand and enjoy this remarkable literary achievement, but also to consider its moral and psychological dimensions. We will look at author biographical material and the larger historical context of the book as well as its artistry and how it accomplishes its powerful effects.

**Format:**

Study group meetings will be a mix of informal lectures with group discussions. Active participation by group members will be essential to the success of each meeting. Because the amount of reading will be heavy, the reading assignments will run a little over 100 pages a week. This is by no means impossible for intrepid OLLI participants, but it should be planned for.

**Schedule:**

This part of the syllabus is subject to adjustment.

Sept.20—Intros, syllabus, class policies, literary genres, elements of the novel, Eliot bio; Victorian era; coinage; discussion of DD, Book One, “The Spoiled Child” Chapter 1 through Chapter 10

Sept. 27—Discussion of DD, Book Two, “Meeting Streams” Chapter 11 through Book Three “Maidens Choosing” Chapter 19; Literary Realism; Epigraphs; GE’s critical reputation

Oct. 4—Discussion of DD, Book Three “Maidens Choosing” through Chapter 27; publication practices; circulating libraries; journals

Oct. 11—Discussion of DD, Book Four “Gwendolen Gets Her Choice” Chapter 28 through Chapter 31; narration and narrators

Oct. 18—Discussion of DD, Book Four “Gwendolen Gets Her Choice” Chapter 32 through Book Five “Mordecai” Chapter 40; coincidence; Zionism

Oct. 25—Discussion of DD, Book Six “Revelations” Chapter 41 through Chapter 49; Victorian religions; Evangelicalism; German Higher Criticism; Dissenters

Nov.1—Discussion of DD, Book Seven “The Mother and The Son” Chapter 50 through Book Eight “Fruit and Seed” Chapter 59; the woman question; vocation

Nov 8—Discussion DD, Book Eight “Fruit and Seed” Chapter 60 through Chapter 70; summing up; possible future courses; evaluations, etc.