

dostoevsky crime and punishment

dostoevsky crime and punishment is one of the most profound and enduring works in the canon of Russian literature. Written by Fyodor Dostoevsky and first published in 1866, this novel delves deep into the psychological, philosophical, and moral dilemmas faced by its protagonist, Raskolnikov. The novel explores themes of guilt, redemption, morality, and the nature of evil, making it a timeless exploration of human consciousness and societal influence. Its complex characters, intricate plot, and philosophical depth have cemented it as a cornerstone of literary study and a powerful commentary on crime and morality.

Overview of Fyodor Dostoevsky's "Crime and Punishment"

Context and Background

Dostoevsky wrote "Crime and Punishment" during a period of intense personal and political upheaval. The novel reflects the socio-economic struggles of 19th-century Russia, a society grappling with poverty, moral decay, and the questioning of traditional values. Dostoevsky's own experiences with imprisonment, political exile, and spiritual crises profoundly influenced the novel's themes and characters.

Plot Summary

The story follows Rodion Raskolnikov, a young former student living in St. Petersburg, who believes that certain extraordinary individuals have the right to transgress moral boundaries for the greater good. Raskolnikov plans and commits the murder of a pawnbroker, believing that her death will allow him to use her money for noble purposes. However, his conscience and psychological torment soon engulf him, leading to a series of moral and existential crises. The novel traces his interactions with various characters—including the compassionate Sonia Marmeladova, the detective Porfiry Petrovich, and others—culminating in Raskolnikov's eventual confession, trial, and spiritual redemption.

Key Themes in "Crime and Punishment"

Crime, Guilt, and Moral Justification

One of the central themes of the novel is the exploration of crime and the subsequent guilt that plagues the perpetrator. Dostoevsky examines whether moral transgressions can be justified and how guilt manifests psychologically and spiritually. Raskolnikov's theory—that certain individuals have the right to commit crimes if it benefits humanity—challenging traditional moral standards, is scrutinized throughout the novel.

Redemption and Spiritual Salvation

Dostoevsky posits that true redemption comes through suffering and moral awakening. Raskolnikov's journey illustrates that acknowledgment of guilt and sincere remorse are essential steps toward spiritual salvation. The character of Sonia, a humble and compassionate prostitute, embodies the possibility of redemption through faith and love, emphasizing Dostoevsky's Christian worldview.

Alienation and Psychological Depth

The novel is renowned for its deep psychological analysis. Dostoevsky explores the inner turmoil of Raskolnikov and other characters, revealing the complex interplay between conscience, rationalization, and emotional distress. This focus on psychological realism marks "Crime and Punishment" as a pioneering work in the exploration of human consciousness.

Character Analysis

Rodion Raskolnikov

Raskolnikov is a complex character driven by intellectual arrogance, poverty, and a desire for greatness. His theory that certain extraordinary individuals can transgress moral laws to achieve higher goals is central to his justification for murder. His internal conflict and eventual moral awakening serve as the novel's emotional core.

Sonia Marmeladova

Sonia embodies unconditional love, faith, and humility. Despite her suffering, she maintains her moral integrity and becomes Raskolnikov's moral compass. Her unwavering compassion highlights Dostoevsky's belief in spiritual salvation through love and faith.

Porfiry Petrovich

The clever and perceptive detective, Porfiry, represents justice and moral insight. His psychological cat-and-mouse game with Raskolnikov drives much of the novel's tension and underscores themes of moral accountability.

Other Notable Characters

- Arkady Svidrigailov: A morally ambiguous figure whose interactions with Raskolnikov highlight themes of temptation and redemption.
- Dunya Raskolnikova: Raskolnikov's sister, whose moral strength and love for her brother add emotional depth.
- Razumikhin: Raskolnikov's loyal friend, representing reason and human warmth amidst chaos.

Philosophical and Ethical Dimensions

Theories of the "Extraordinary Man"

Raskolnikov's belief in the "extraordinary man" theory suggests that some individuals are above conventional morality. Dostoevsky challenges this notion, illustrating that such arrogance leads to spiritual destruction. The novel questions whether moral boundaries are absolute or relative and explores the consequences of dismissing universal ethics.

Christian Morality and Redemption

Throughout "Crime and Punishment," Christian themes are pervasive. The characters' struggles mirror the Christian concept of sin, repentance, and divine forgiveness. Sonia's faith and her acceptance of suffering serve as symbols of spiritual salvation, emphasizing Dostoevsky's view that redemption is possible through humility and love.

Psychological Realism and Moral Dilemmas

Dostoevsky's portrayal of Raskolnikov's inner conflict demonstrates the psychological complexity of moral decision-making. The novel delves into questions such as: Is murder ever justified? Can guilt be fully atoned for? These dilemmas are explored through Raskolnikov's mental anguish and eventual moral awakening.

Literary Significance and Impact

Innovations in Psychological Fiction

"Crime and Punishment" is considered a pioneer of psychological fiction, with Dostoevsky's detailed exploration of characters' inner lives influencing countless writers and psychologists. His depiction of Raskolnikov's mental state set new standards for character development and narrative depth.

Influence on Literature and Philosophy

The novel's themes have resonated across literary movements and philosophical debates. Its exploration of morality, free will, and redemption continues to influence existentialist thinkers, psychologists, and writers.

Adaptations and Cultural Impact

The story has been adapted into numerous films, plays, and operas, reflecting its lasting appeal. Its themes remain relevant today, prompting discussions about justice, morality, and human nature.

Conclusion: Why "Crime and Punishment" Remains Relevant

"Crime and Punishment" by Fyodor Dostoevsky endures as a powerful exploration of the human condition. Its nuanced portrayal of moral dilemmas, psychological depth, and spiritual themes make it a compelling read for anyone interested in understanding the complexities of human morality and the possibility of redemption. The novel challenges readers to reflect on their own notions of justice, guilt, and forgiveness, ensuring its place as a timeless classic in world literature.

If you're seeking a profound literary experience that combines philosophical inquiry with psychological insight, "Crime and Punishment" remains an essential work that continues to inspire and provoke thoughtful discussion.

Frequently Asked Questions

What are the main themes explored in Dostoevsky's 'Crime and Punishment'?

The novel explores themes such as guilt and redemption, moral conscience, the nature of crime, psychological torment, and the conflict between rationality

and faith.

How does Raskolnikov's theory about extraordinary individuals influence his actions in 'Crime and Punishment'?

Raskolnikov believes that certain 'extraordinary' people have the right to transgress moral laws for the greater good, which initially justifies his plan to commit murder, but ultimately leads to his internal moral struggle and guilt.

What role does the character of Sonya play in Raskolnikov's journey in the novel?

Sonya represents compassion, faith, and moral innocence, serving as a moral compass for Raskolnikov and inspiring his eventual path towards confession and redemption.

How does Dostoevsky use psychological depth to develop his characters in 'Crime and Punishment'?

Dostoevsky delves deeply into the inner thoughts, fears, and moral dilemmas of his characters, especially Raskolnikov, to portray their complex psychological states and the impact of guilt and conscience.

What is the significance of the title 'Crime and Punishment'?

The title reflects the novel's exploration of the relationship between criminal acts and their moral and legal consequences, emphasizing the internal punishment of guilt over external justice.

How is redemption portrayed in 'Crime and Punishment'?

Redemption is depicted as a process achievable through suffering, moral awakening, and faith, culminating in Raskolnikov's confession and acceptance of his guilt as a path to spiritual salvation.

Additional Resources

Crime and Punishment by Fyodor Dostoevsky is a profound psychological novel that delves into the depths of human morality, guilt, redemption, and the complexities of the human soul. Since its publication in 1866, this literary masterpiece has captivated readers and scholars alike, offering a richly textured exploration of one man's internal struggles set against the backdrop

of 19th-century Russian society. Its enduring relevance lies in its ability to probe universal themes that continue to resonate today, making it a cornerstone of classic literature and a vital subject for literary analysis.

An Overview of the Novel

Crime and Punishment tells the story of Rodion Raskolnikov, a former student living in St. Petersburg who is overwhelmed by poverty and intellectual turmoil. Driven by a mixture of desperation and a desire to test his own theories of morality, he commits a brutal double murder – the killing of an unscrupulous pawnbroker and her sister. What follows is a gripping narrative of psychological torment, moral questioning, and the quest for redemption. Dostoevsky's narrative style combines detailed character development with philosophical discourse, creating a layered story that challenges readers to consider the nature of crime, punishment, and moral responsibility.

Themes and Philosophical Underpinnings

The Nature of Crime

One of the central themes in Crime and Punishment is the exploration of why people commit crimes. Dostoevsky examines the idea that crime is rooted not just in external factors like poverty or social injustice but also in internal moral struggles. Raskolnikov's theory, which he articulates in his article "The Crime," suggests that certain extraordinary individuals have the right to transgress moral boundaries if their actions benefit humanity. This theory is put to the test throughout the novel, challenging readers to consider the morality of such a philosophy.

Guilt and Redemption

A profound aspect of the novel is its depiction of guilt, both rational and subconscious. Raskolnikov's guilt manifests physically and psychologically, leading to feverish delirium and inner torment. Dostoevsky masterfully illustrates that guilt is an inescapable consequence of moral transgression, but also that redemption is possible through suffering and moral awakening. The novel ultimately advocates for repentance and spiritual rebirth, emphasizing that true atonement comes from acknowledgment of one's sins and a genuine desire for moral renewal.

Psychological Realism

Dostoevsky's ability to portray complex psychological states is a hallmark of his writing. The novel dives deep into Raskolnikov's mind, revealing his conflicting impulses, rationalizations, and emotional turmoil. This psychological realism was pioneering at the time and has influenced countless subsequent works of literature and psychology.

Character Analysis

Rodion Raskolnikov

Raskolnikov is a quintessential antihero – intelligent, proud, and deeply conflicted. His philosophical justifications for murder are both compelling and disturbing, reflecting a mind that is at once analytical and emotionally vulnerable. His journey from guilt-ridden murderer to remorseful penitent forms the emotional core of the novel.

Pros of Raskolnikov's Character:

- Deeply complex and multi-dimensional.
- Represents the conflict between rationalism and morality.
- Embodies the human capacity for both evil and redemption.

Cons:

- His arrogance and pride can make him seem unrelatable.
- Some readers may find his philosophical debates dense or inaccessible.

Sonia Marmeladova

Sonia is a humble, compassionate woman who becomes Raskolnikov's moral compass. Her unwavering faith and love serve as a beacon of hope and spiritual salvation. She embodies humility and self-sacrifice, offering a stark contrast to Raskolnikov's intellectual arrogance.

Pros:

- Represents unconditional love and forgiveness.
- Serves as a catalyst for Raskolnikov's eventual redemption.

Cons:

- Her unwavering goodness may seem idealized or overly simplistic.

Other Notable Characters

- Dmitri Razumikhin: Raskolnikov's loyal friend who offers pragmatic support and moral grounding.
- Porfiry Petrovich: The clever detective who subtly probes Raskolnikov's conscience.
- Svidrigailov: A morally ambiguous character whose actions and motives add depth to the novel's exploration of morality.

Literary Style and Narrative Techniques

Dostoevsky employs a dense, introspective narrative style characterized by extensive monologues, dialogues, and inner thoughts. The novel's structure allows readers to intimately experience Raskolnikov's psychological states, often blurring the line between narration and character consciousness. The use of symbolism, such as the city of St. Petersburg itself representing chaos and moral decay, enriches the story's thematic layers.

The novel combines realism with philosophical discourse, often featuring lengthy dialogues that explore existential themes. Dostoevsky's skillful use of suspense and his capacity to evoke tension through internal monologue make *Crime and Punishment* a compelling psychological thriller as well as a philosophical treatise.

Impact and Significance

Crime and Punishment has had a profound influence on literature, philosophy, and psychology. Its exploration of guilt and morality prefigured modern existentialist thought, and its psychological depth has inspired countless writers and psychologists. The novel's portrayal of moral ambiguity and the possibility of redemption continues to resonate, making it a timeless work.

Features and Highlights:

- Deep psychological insight into human nature.**
- Powerful exploration of morality, legality, and justice.**
- Rich character development with complex relationships.**
- Philosophical debates woven seamlessly into the narrative.**
- Cultural commentary on 19th-century Russian society.**

Pros:

- Offers profound insights into human morality and psychology.**
- Richly layered with philosophical and existential themes.**
- Characters are vividly drawn, evoking empathy and reflection.**
- Timeless relevance across cultures and eras.**

Cons:

- Dense and challenging language for some readers.
- Lengthy philosophical dialogues may slow the narrative pace.
- Requires careful reading and reflection to fully appreciate its depth.

Conclusion: Why Read Crime and Punishment?

Crime and Punishment remains a cornerstone of world literature due to its profound exploration of the human condition. It challenges readers to reflect on their own moral beliefs and the nature of justice. Dostoevsky's portrayal of Raskolnikov's internal conflict and ultimate quest for redemption offers hope that even in our darkest moments, moral awakening and spiritual renewal are possible.

Whether approached as a psychological thriller, a philosophical treatise, or a social critique, Crime and Punishment offers a compelling reading experience that continues to provoke thought and inspire introspection. Its enduring relevance testifies to Dostoevsky's genius in capturing the complexities of human morality and the eternal struggle between good and evil. For anyone interested in understanding the depths of human psychology and morality, this novel remains an essential and transformative read.

Dostoevsky Crime And Punishment

dostoevsky crime and punishment: Crime and Punishment Fyodor Dostoevsky, 2012-08-08
Hailed by Washington Post Book World as "the best [translation] currently available when it was first published, this second edition of Crime and Punishment has been updated in honor of the 200th anniversary of Dostoevsky's birth. • ONE OF TIME MAGAZINE'S 100 BEST MYSTERY AND THRILLER BOOKS OF ALL TIME With the same suppleness, energy, and range of voices that won their translation of The Brothers Karamazov the PEN/Book-of-the-Month Club Prize, Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky offer a brilliant translation of Crime and Punishment, Dostoevsky's astounding psychological thriller, newly revised for his bicentennial. In Crime and Punishment, when Raskolnikov, an impoverished student living in the St. Petersburg of the tsars, commits an act of murder and theft, he sets into motion a story that is almost unequalled in world literature for its excruciating suspense, its atmospheric vividness, and its depth of characterization and vision. Dostoevsky's drama of sin, guilt, and redemption transforms the sordid story of an old woman's murder into the nineteenth century's profoundest and most compelling philosophical novel.

dostoevsky crime and punishment: Crime and Punishment Fyodor Dostoyevsky, 2008-01-01
Could an ordinary person, with no hint of malice and no motive but discovering what it feels like to do it, plot to kill and then actually murder a total stranger? What if the stranger were a thoroughly unlikable person hated by everyone who came into contact with her? One of the great novels of world literature, Crime and Punishment is a thriller of the conscience, one that wrangles with morality and its uses-or lack thereof-in the depths of poverty. Russian novelist FYODOR MIKHAILOVICH DOSTOEVSKY (1821-1881) conceived the character of his putative hero, the impoverished student Raskolnikov, while he himself was struggling under the burden of massive debt, and turned his ethical dilemmas into a literary detective story of the highest order, one in which the criminal seeks to discover his own motives for his terrible deed. Renowned for its invention of a more intimate kind of third-person narration, and featuring narrative manipulations of time and memory that anticipate the works of authors such as Henry James, Virginia Woolf, and James Joyce, this classic novel remains essential reading for all lovers of great literature. This edition presents the acclaimed 1914 translation by English writer CONSTANCE CLARA GARNETT (1861-1946), who introduced many of the great Russian novelists to the British and American public.

dostoevsky crime and punishment: Crime and Punishment Fyodor Dostoyevsky, 1968-02-01
Dostoevsky's drama of sin, guilt, and redemption transforms the sordid story of an old woman's murder into the nineteenth century's profoundest and most compelling philosophical novel. Raskolnikov, an impoverished student living in the St. Petersburg of the tsars, is determined to overreach his humanity and assert his untrammelled individual will. When he commits an act of murder and theft, he sets into motion a story that, for its excruciating suspense, its atmospheric vividness, and its depth of characterization and vision is almost unequalled in the literatures of the world. The best known of Dostoevsky's masterpieces, Crime and Punishment can bear any amount of rereading without losing a drop of its power over our imaginations. Award-winning translators Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky render this elusive and wildly innovative novel with an energy, suppleness, and range of voice that do full justice to the genius of its creator.

dostoevsky crime and punishment: Dostoevsky's "Crime and Punishment" Deborah A. Martinsen, 2022-02-22
Crime and Punishment: A Reader's Guide focuses on narrative strategy, psychology, and ideology. Martinsen demonstrates how Dostoevsky first plunges the reader into Raskolnikov's fevered brain, creating sympathy for him, and she explains why most readers root for him to get away from the scene of the crime. Dostoevsky subsequently provides outsider perspectives on Raskolnikov's thinking, effecting a conversion in reader sympathy. By examining the multiple justifications for murder Raskolnikov gives as he confesses to Sonya, Dostoevsky debunks

rationality-based theories. Finally, the question of why Raskolnikov and others, including the reader, focus on the murder of the pawnbroker and forget the unintended murder of Lizaveta reveals a narrative strategy based on shame and guilt.

dostoevsky crime and punishment: Crime and Punishment Fyodor Dostoyevsky, Fedor Mikhaelovich Dostoyevsky, 2003-01

dostoevsky crime and punishment: Crime and Punishment Fyodor Dostoevsky, 1993-05-25 A masterpiece of guilt and redemption that transforms the sordid story of an old woman's murder into the nineteenth century's profoundest and most compelling philosophical novel. • ONE OF TIME MAGAZINE'S 100 BEST MYSTERY AND THRILLER BOOKS OF ALL TIME Raskolnikov, an impoverished student living in the St. Petersburg of the tsars, is determined to overreach his humanity and assert his untrammelled individual will. When he commits an act of murder and theft, he sets into motion a story that, for its excruciating suspense, its atmospheric vividness, and its depth of characterization and vision is almost unequalled in the literatures of the world. The best known of Dostoevsky's masterpieces, Crime and Punishment can bear any amount of rereading without losing a drop of its power over our imaginations. Award-winning translators Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky render this elusive and wildly innovative novel with an energy, suppleness, and range of voice that do full justice to the genius of its creator. Everyman's Library pursues the highest production standards, printing on acid-free cream-colored paper, with full-cloth cases with two-color foil stamping, decorative endpapers, silk ribbon markers, European-style half-round spines, and a full-color illustrated jacket. Everyman's Library Classics include an introduction, a select bibliography, and a chronology of the author's life and times.

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dostoevsky crime and punishment: Crime and Punishment - Fyodor Dostoyevsky Fyodor Dostoyevsky, 2021-05-21 Crime and Punishment (pre-reform Russian; post-reform Russian: is a novel by the Russian author Fyodor Dostoevsky. It was first published in the literary journal The Russian Messenger in twelve monthly installments during 1866. It was later published in a single volume. It is the second of Dostoevsky's full-length novels following his return from ten years of exile in Siberia. Crime and Punishment is considered the first great novel of his mature period of writing. The novel is often cited as one of the supreme achievements in literature. Crime and Punishment focuses on the mental anguish and moral dilemmas of Rodion Raskolnikov, an impoverished ex-student in Saint Petersburg who formulates a plan to kill an unscrupulous pawnbroker for her

money. Before the killing, Raskolnikov believes that with the money he could liberate himself from poverty and go on to perform great deeds. However, once it is done he finds himself racked with confusion, paranoia, and disgust for his actions. His justifications disintegrate completely as he struggles with guilt and horror and confronts the real-world consequences of his deed.

dostoevsky crime and punishment: Fyodor Dostoevsky's Crime and Punishment Richard Arthur Peace, 2006 This collection of interpretations of 'Crime and Punishment' reflects both classical and more recent critical opinion. The novel is examined from various perspectives and includes two essays by Russian scholars that discuss post-Soviet attitudes towards Dostoevsky.

dostoevsky crime and punishment: Crime and Punishment Annotated Fyodor Dostoevsky, 2021-04-17 Crime and Punishment is a novel by the Russian author Fyodor Dostoevsky. Crime and Punishment is considered the first great novel of his mature period of writing. Crime and Punishment focuses on the mental anguish and moral dilemmas of Rodion Raskolnikov, an impoverished ex student in Saint Petersburg who formulates a plan to kill an unscrupulous pawnbroker for her money. Before the killing, Raskolnikov believes that with the money he could liberate himself from poverty and go on to perform great deeds. However, once it is done he finds himself racked with confusion, paranoia, and disgust for what he has done. His ethical justifications disintegrate completely as he struggles with guilt and horror and confronts the real-world moral consequences of his deed.

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the consequences of his crime and seeks absolution for his sins, you'll find yourself pondering the nature of forgiveness and the possibility of redemption. The overall tone and mood of *Crime and Punishment* are imbued with a sense of darkness and despair, as Dostoevsky's evocative prose and vivid descriptions transport you to the gritty streets and dimly lit alleys of St. Petersburg. From the bustling markets to the squalid tenements, you'll experience the full spectrum of human emotion and experience. Critically acclaimed for its psychological depth, philosophical insight, and masterful storytelling, *Crime and Punishment* has earned its place as a classic of world literature. Its enduring relevance and universal themes continue to resonate with readers of all ages, inspiring them to confront their own inner demons and seek redemption in the face of adversity. Whether you're a fan of classic literature, a student of human nature, or simply someone looking for a compelling story that will stay with you long after you've turned the final page, *Crime and Punishment* promises to captivate and inspire. Its timeless exploration of guilt, morality, and the human condition will leave you pondering the mysteries of existence and the nature of redemption. Don't miss your chance to experience the power of *Crime and Punishment* by Fyodor Dostoevsky. Secure your copy now and discover why this timeless masterpiece continues to captivate readers around the world.

dostoevsky crime and punishment: *Crime and Punishment* Fyodor Dostoevsky, Constance Garnett, 2017-05-04 THIS IS ONLY VOLUME 1. *Crime and Punishment* is a novel by the Russian author Fyodor Dostoyevsky. It was first published in the literary journal *The Russian Messenger* in twelve monthly installments during 1866. Later, it was published in a single volume. It is the second of Dostoyevsky's full-length novels following his return from 10 years of exile in Siberia. *Crime and Punishment* is considered the first great novel of his mature period of writing. *Crime and Punishment* focuses on the mental anguish and moral dilemmas of Rodion Raskolnikov, an impoverished ex-student in Saint Petersburg who formulates and executes a plan to kill an unscrupulous pawnbroker for her cash. Raskolnikov, in an attempt to defend his actions, argues that with the pawnbroker's money he can perform good deeds to counterbalance the crime, while ridding the world of a vermin. He also commits the murder to test a theory of his that dictates some people are naturally capable of such actions, and even have the right to perform them. Several times throughout the novel, Raskolnikov compares himself with Napoleon Bonaparte and shares his belief that murder is permissible in pursuit of a higher purpose.

dostoevsky crime and punishment: *Crime and Punishment* Fyodor Dostoevsky, 2017-12-28 The poverty-stricken Raskolnikov, believing he is exempt from moral law, murders a man only to face the consequences not only from society but from his conscience, in this seminal story of justice, morality, and redemption from one of Russia's greatest novelists.

dostoevsky crime and punishment: *Crime and Punishment* by Fyodor Dostoevsky Fyodor Dostoevsky, 2020-01-05 *Crime and Punishment* is a novel by the Russian author Fyodor Dostoevsky. *Crime and Punishment* focuses on the mental anguish and moral dilemmas of Rodion Raskolnikov, an impoverished ex-student in Saint Petersburg who formulates a plan to kill an unscrupulous pawnbroker for her money. Before the killing, Raskolnikov believes that with the money he could liberate himself from poverty and go on to perform great deeds. However, once it is done he finds himself racked with confusion, paranoia, and disgust for what he has done. His ethical justifications disintegrate completely as he struggles with guilt and horror and confronts the real-world moral consequences of his deed.

dostoevsky crime and punishment: *Crime and Punishment* Fyodor Dostoevsky, 2017-09-20 *Crime and Punishment* is a novel by the Russian author Fyodor Dostoyevsky. It was first published in the literary journal *The Russian Messenger* in twelve monthly installments during 1866.[1] Later, it was published in a single volume. It is the second of Dostoyevsky's full-length novels following his return from 5 years of exile in Siberia. *Crime and Punishment* is considered the first great novel of his mature period of writing. *Crime and Punishment* focuses on the mental anguish and moral dilemmas of Rodion Raskolnikov, an impoverished ex-student in Saint Petersburg who formulates and executes a plan to kill an unscrupulous pawnbroker for her cash. Raskolnikov, in an attempt to

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Although the remaining parts of the novel had still to be written, an anonymous reviewer wrote that the novel promises to be one of the most important works of the author of *The House of the Dead*. In his memoirs, the conservative belletrist Nikolay Strakhov recalled that in Russia *Crime and Punishment* was the literary sensation of 1866. The novel soon attracted the criticism of the liberal and radical critics. G.Z. Yeliseyev sprang to the defense of the Russian student corporations, and wondered, Has there ever been a case of a student committing murder for the sake of robbery? Pisarev, aware of the novel's artistic value attempted in 1867 another approach: he argued that Raskolnikov was a product of his environment, and explained that the main theme of the work was poverty and its results. He measured the novel's excellence by the accuracy and understanding with which Dostoyevsky portrayed the contemporary social reality, and focused on what he regarded as inconsistencies in the novel's plot. Strakhov rejected Pisarev's contention that the theme of environmental determinism was essential to the novel, and pointed out that Dostoyevsky's attitude towards his hero was sympathetic: This is not mockery of the younger generation, neither a reproach nor an accusation-it is a lament over it.

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