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978-1-107-06437-9 - Victorian Literature, Energy, and the Ecological Imagination

Allen Macduffie

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VICTORIAN LITERATURE, ENERGY, AND THE ECOLOGICAL IMAGINATION

Reading Victorian literature and science in tandem, *Victorian Literature, Energy, and the Ecological Imagination* investigates how the concept of energy was fictionalized – both mystified and demystified – during the rise of a new resource-intensive industrial and economic order. The first extended study of a burgeoning area of critical interest of increasing importance to twenty-first-century scholarship, it anchors its investigation at the very roots of the energy problem, in a period that first articulated questions about sustainability, the limits to growth, and the implications of energy pollution for the entire global environment. With chapters on Charles Dickens, John Ruskin, Robert Louis Stevenson, Joseph Conrad, and H. G. Wells, Allen MacDuffie discusses the representation of urban environments in the literary imaginary, and how those texts helped reveal the gap between cultural fantasies of unbounded energy generation and the material limits imposed by nature.

ALLEN MACDUFFIE is Assistant Professor in the English Department at the University of Texas, Austin.

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