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.

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Nineteenth-century British literature and culture have been rich fields for interdisciplinary studies. Since the turn of the twentieth century, scholars and critics have tracked the intersections and tensions between Victorian literature and the visual arts, politics, social organization, economic life, technical innovations, scientific thought – in short, culture in its broadest sense. In recent years, theoretical challenges and historiographical shifts have unsettled the assumptions of previous scholarly synthesis and called into question the terms of older debates. Whereas the tendency in much past literary critical interpretation was to use the metaphor of culture as “background,” feminist, Foucauldian, and other analyses have employed more dynamic models that raise questions of power and of circulation. Such developments have reanimated the field. This series aims to accommodate and promote the most interesting work being undertaken on the frontiers of the field of nineteenth-century literary studies: work which intersects fruitfully with other fields of study such as history, or literary theory, or the history of science. Comparative as well as interdisciplinary approaches are welcomed.

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ALLEN MACDUFFIE
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