





meaning 'as occurring in nature', normality has taken on significant cultural gravitas and this book recognizes and explores that fact. The essays engage with the concepts of the normal and the abnormal from the perspectives of a variety of academic disciplines – ranging from art history to social history of medicine, literature, and science studies to sociology and cultural anthropology. The contributors use as their conceptual anchors the works of moral and political philosophers such as Canguilhem, Foucault and Hacking, as well as the ideas put forward by sociologists including Durkheim and Illich. With contributions from a range of scholars across differing disciplines, this book will have a broad appeal to students in many areas of history. Nineteenth-century Britain led the world in technological innovation and urbanization, and unprecedented population growth contributed as well to the "rash assault," to quote Wordsworth, on Victorian countrysides. Yet James Winter finds that the British environment was generally spared widespread ecological damage. Drawing from a remarkable variety of sources and disciplines, Winter focuses on human intervention as it not only destroyed but also preserved the physical environment. Industrial blight could be contained, he says, because of Britain's capacity to import resources from elsewhere, the conservative effect of the estate system, and certain intrinsic limitations of steam engines. The rash assault was further blunted by traditional agricultural practices, preservation of forests, and a growing recreation industry that favored beloved landscapes. Winter's illumination of Victorian attitudes toward the exploitation of natural resources offers a valuable preamble to ongoing discussions of human intervention in the environment.

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