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Titolo	Alternate Histories and Nineteenth-Century Literature : Untimely Meditations in Britain, France, and America / / by Ben Carver
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Nota di contenuto	Introduction: Latency and history -- Chapter 1. Napoleonic Imaginaries -- Chapter 2. Inheriting Antiquity: Political Invention in Disraeli and Renouvier -- Chapter 3. Nebulous History and the Plurality of Worlds -- Chapter 4. Lost Worlds and Alternate Histories of Gender -- Chapter 5. Earliness and Lateness: Renewing American Dreams and Nightmares -- Conclusion: Invisible Worlds.
Sommario/riassunto	‘In a stimulating text rich with “alternate facts”, Carver reminds us that history is also what failed to happen and that each historical present carries with it its fantasies of alternate realities. The counterfactual has become a banality today, but this stimulating history of plural virtualities demonstrates how poetic our prosaic 19th century was in fact, and how productively it confronted its own unrealized possibilities.’ — Fredric Jameson, Knut Schmidt-Nielsen Professor of Comparative Literature, Duke University, USA ‘Ben Carver’s lucid and insightful book reveals the spread of alternate-history speculation through a surprisingly wide range of nineteenth-century disciplines, genres, and national literatures. Alternate Histories and Nineteenth-Century Literature makes an essential contribution to our understanding of the century’s historical imagination.’ — Catherine Gallagher, Eggers Professor of English Literature, Emerita, University of

California, Berkeley, USA 'Ben Carver has produced a rich, wide-ranging and imaginative study of a neglected genre that has much to teach us about the nineteenth century and its characteristic modes of narrating the past, present and future. This is, in short, a valuable alternate history of Victorian historiography, as well as an original contribution to our understanding of the utopian imagination.' — Matthew Beaumont, Professor of English Literature, University College London, UK

This book provides the first thematic survey and analysis of nineteenth-century writing that imagined outcomes that history might have produced. Narratives of possible worlds and scenarios—referred to here as “alternate histories”—proliferated during the nineteenth century and clustered around pressing themes and emergent disciplines of knowledge. This study examines accounts of undefeated Napoleons after Waterloo, alternative genealogies of western civilization from antiquity to the (nineteenth-century) present day, the imagination of variant histories on other worlds, lost-world fictions that “discovered” improved relations between men and women, and the use of alternate history in America to reconceive the relationship between the New World and the Old. The “untimely” imagination of other histories interrogated the impact of new techniques of knowledge on the nature of history itself. This book sheds light on the history of speculative thought, and the relationship between literature and the history of ideas in the nineteenth century.
