

Summary

Recorded legacies of everyday life... On nineteenth-century illness diaries and personal painters' sketchbooks

The illness diaries and private painters' sketchbooks explored in this book offer examples of a peculiar way of recording specific events and the corresponding emotions in the lives of those who kept them. Simultaneously, they constitute important and widespread testimonies to the developments in emotive practices of representation during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Their emergence resulted from several processes that manifested themselves during that period. One is the need to document the entirety of the immediate surroundings of the authors and their loved ones, including me, you, us. The methods of recording varied in terms of both tools and media: pens, pencils, watercolours or highly *en vogue* papercuts as well as dried plants, human hair, sometimes collages and, starting in the 1840s, photographs – on loose or sewn leaves, or in special albums of various shapes and sizes. All of this is essential for understanding the two discussed forms and for reflecting on the great transformation that took place at the turn of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. During that period, both diaries and sketchbooks, along with other forms like herbariums, bear witness to the transformation that could be described, in the broadest terms, as the 'great private turn'. This turn was great, firstly, due to the sheer quantity and scope of individuals involved, no longer numbering in hundreds but possibly in thousands of chroniclers of different genders, ages, social and vocational statuses. Secondly, it was remarkable because it engaged all the senses, not just sight but also smell, touch, and at times hearing... The consequences of this transformation continue to be felt to this day.