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0521842530 - Family, Kinship, and Sympathy in Nineteenth-Century American  
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## FAMILY, KINSHIP, AND SYMPATHY IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY AMERICAN LITERATURE

In *Family, Kinship, and Sympathy in Nineteenth-Century American Literature* Cindy Weinstein radically revises our understanding of nineteenth-century sentimental literature in the United States. She argues that these novels are far more complex than critics have suggested, expanding the canon of sentimental novels to include some of the more popular, though under-examined writers, such as Mary Jane Holmes, Caroline Lee Hentz, and Mary Hayden Green Pike. Rather than confirming the power of the bourgeois family, Weinstein argues, sentimental fictions used the destruction of the biological family as an opportunity to reconfigure the family in terms of love rather than consanguinity. Their texts intervened in debates about slavery, domestic reform, and other social issues of the time. Furthermore, Weinstein shows how canonical texts, such as Melville's *Pierre* and works by Stowe and Twain, can take on new meaning when read in the context of nineteenth-century sentimental fictions. Through intensive close readings of a wide range of novels, this groundbreaking study demonstrates the aesthetic and political complexities of this important and influential genre.

CINDY WEINSTEIN is Associate Professor of English at the California Institute of Technology. She is the author of *The Literature of Labor and the Labors of Literature: Allegory in Nineteenth-Century American Fiction* (Cambridge, 1995) and the editor of *The Cambridge Companion to Harriet Beecher Stowe* (Cambridge, 2004).

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*For Jim, Sarah, and Sam*

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