

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910822400303321
Autore	Pitts Yvonne
Titolo	Family, law, and inheritance in America : a social and legal history of nineteenth-century Kentucky / / Yvonne Pitts, Purdue University [[electronic resource]]
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Cambridge : , : Cambridge University Press, , 2013
ISBN	1-107-24176-6 1-139-88973-7 1-107-25127-3 1-139-56499-4 1-107-24795-0 1-107-25044-7 1-107-24878-7 1-107-24961-9
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (xiii, 203 pages) : digital, PDF file(s)
Collana	Cambridge historical studies in American law and society
Classificazione	HIS036040
Disciplina	346.76905/209034
Soggetti	Inheritance and succession - Kentucky - 19th century Wills - Kentucky - 19th century
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Title from publisher's bibliographic system (viewed on 05 Oct 2015).
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references (p. 185-200) and index.
Nota di contenuto	1. 'Parental justice': inheritance and obligation in families -- 2. 'My black family': manumissions and freedom in inheritance disputes -- 3. Arbiters of sanity: medical experts and jurists -- 4. Physical impairments and degenerate minds: the body as evidence -- 5. A special power: women's testamentary capacity.
Sommario/riassunto	Yvonne Pitts explores inheritance practices by focusing on nineteenth-century testamentary capacity trials in Kentucky in which disinherited family members challenged relatives' wills. These disappointed heirs claimed that their departed relative lacked the capacity required to write a valid will. These inheritance disputes criss-crossed a variety of legal and cultural terrains, including ordinary people's understandings of what constituted insanity and justice, medical experts' attempts to infuse law with science, and the independence claims of women. Pitts

uncovers the contradictions in the body of law that explicitly protected free will while simultaneously reinforcing the primacy of blood in mediating claims to inherited property. By anchoring the study in local communities and the texts of elite jurists, Pitts demonstrates that 'capacity' was a term laden with legal meaning and competing communal values about family, race relations and rationality. These concepts evolved as Kentucky transitioned from a conflicted border state with slaves to a developing free-labor, industrializing economy.

---