

1. Record Nr.	UNISA996200261003316
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Titolo	The syntax of class [[electronic resource]] : writing inequality in nineteenth-century America // Amy Schrager Lang
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Princeton, N.J., : Princeton University Press, c2003
ISBN	1-282-45824-8 9786612458248 1-4008-2563-6
Edizione	[Course Book]
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (165 p.)
Disciplina	813/.309355
Soggetti	American fiction - 19th century - History and criticism Literature and society - United States - History - 19th century Race in literature Sex role in literature Social classes in literature Social conflict in literature
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Description based upon print version of record.
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references (p. [131]-147) and index.
Nota di contenuto	Frontmatter -- CONTENTS -- Acknowledgments -- Introduction: Class, Classification, and Conflict -- Chapter I. Home, in the Better Sense -- Chapter II. Orphaned in America -- Chapter III. Indexical People -- Chapter IV. Beginning Again -- EPILOGUE -- Notes -- Index
Sommario/riassunto	The Syntax of Class explores the literary expression of the crisis of social classification that occupied U.S. public discourse in the wake of the European revolutions of 1848. Lacking a native language for expressing class differences, American writers struggled to find social taxonomies able to capture--and manage--increasingly apparent inequalities of wealth and power. As new social types emerged at midcentury and, with them, new narratives of success and failure, police and reformers alarmed the public with stories of the rise and proliferation of the "dangerous classes." At the same time, novelists as different as Maria Cummins, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Frank Webb, Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, and Horatio Alger Jr. focused their attention on dense engagements across the lines of class. Turning to the middle-

class idea of "home" as a figure for social harmony and to the lexicons of race and gender in their effort to devise a syntax for the representation of class, these writers worked to solve the puzzle of inequity in their putatively classless nation. This study charts the kaleidoscopic substitution of terms through which they rendered class distinctions and follows these renderings as they circulated in and through a wider cultural discourse about the dangers of class conflict. This welcome book is a finely achieved study of the operation of class in nineteenth-century American fiction--and of its entanglements with the languages of race and gender.
