Dorri Beam presents an important contribution to nineteenth-century fiction by examining how and why a florid and sensuous style came to be adopted by so many authors. Discussing a diverse range of authors, including Margaret Fuller and Pauline Hopkins, Beam traces this style through a variety of literary endeavors and reconstructs the political rationale behind the writers’ commitments to this form of prose. Beam provides both close readings of a number of familiar and unfamiliar works and an overarching account of the importance of this form of writing, suggesting new ways of looking at style as a medium through which gender can be signified and reshaped. *Style, Gender, and Fantasy in Nineteenth-Century American Women’s Writing* redefines our understanding of women’s relation to aesthetics and their contribution to both American literary romanticism and feminist reform. This illuminating account provides valuable new insights for scholars of American literature and women’s writing.

**Dorri Beam** is Assistant Professor of English at the University of California, Berkeley.
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DORRI BEAM

University of California, Berkeley
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