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0521845521 - Pity and Power in Ancient Athens  
Edited by Rachel Hall Sternberg  
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## PITY AND POWER IN ANCIENT ATHENS

One way Ancient Athenians resembled modern Americans was their moral discomfort with empire. Athenians had power and used it ruthlessly, but the infliction of suffering did not mesh well with their civic self-image. Embracing the concepts of democracy and freedom, they proudly pitted themselves against tyranny and oppression, but in practice they often acted tyrannically. *Pity and Power in Ancient Athens* argues that the exercise of power in democratic Athens, especially during its brief fifth-century empire, raised troubling questions about the alleviation and infliction of suffering, and pity emerged as a topic in Athenian culture at this time. The ten chapters collectively examine the role of pity in the literature, art, and society of Classical Athens by analyzing evidence from tragedy, philosophy, historiography, epic, oratory, vase painting, sculpture, and medical writings.

Rachel Hall Sternberg is assistant professor of Classics at Case Western Reserve University.

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*Case Western Reserve University*



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CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS  
 Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore, São Paulo

Cambridge University Press  
 40 West 20th Street, New York, NY 10011-4211, USA  
[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)  
 Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9780521845526](http://www.cambridge.org/9780521845526)

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First published 2005

Printed in Hong Kong by Golden Cup

*A catalog record for this publication is available from the British Library.*

*Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data*

Pity and power in ancient Athens / edited by Rachel Hall Sternberg.  
 p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0-521-84552-1 (hardback)

1. Sympathy – Greece – Athens – History – To 1500. 2. Athens (Greece) – Civilization.

I. Sternberg, Rachel Hall. II. Title.

DF289.P56 2005

177/.7 – dc22 2005006324

ISBN-13 978-0-521-84552-6 hardback

ISBN-10 0-521-84552-1 hardback

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

HAVING BEEN FOREWARNED BY A WISE ADVISOR, IN THE BEST Herodotean fashion, that an edited volume was a fool's errand and would prove a tremendous headache, I was all the more pleased to discover the deep and genuine rewards of collaborating with the colleagues whose work is represented here.

The central concerns of this volume crystallized at Bryn Mawr College during my graduate studies and began to take shape as I wrote my dissertation under the direction of T. Corey Brennan and Richard Hamilton. Thanks are owed them both. In particular, I can never thank Corey enough for the unflagging support, logistical genius, and sheer conviviality that set the present work in motion. Next, I wish to acknowledge gratefully the Gladys Kriebel Delmas Foundation in New York, as well as The College of Wooster and Rutgers University, for the generous funding that allowed us to hold in March 2002 the conference *Pity in Ancient Athenian Life & Letters*, upon which this volume is based. David Konstan graciously promised to serve as keynote speaker, and then kept that promise at considerable inconvenience to himself. Angeliki Tzanetou furnished the linchpin of the argument. John Oakley was extraordinarily helpful with the illustrations. I am grateful, as well, to the other distinguished scholars who signed on to *Pity and Power in Ancient Athens* and whose hard work and intellectual camaraderie made the project flourish. I learned more from all of them than I could possibly have imagined. Over the past months, I have keenly appreciated the encouragement, dry wit, and perspicacity of Beatrice Rehl, our editor at Cambridge. I shall be indebted to those readers who imperturbably accept certain inconsistencies in the transliteration of Greek proper nouns. And finally, I would like to thank my family for all their patience and support.

– Rachel Hall Sternberg, *Case Western Reserve University*