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Autore	Peace Mary (Lecturer in English studies)
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Nota di contenuto	1. A peculiarly sentimental institution -- 2. The romance of the Magdalen House : Clarissa, Lady Vane and the "original" letters of the Magdalens -- 3. Prostitute memoirs, luxury and the Fall of Rome -- 4. The rise of primitivist sentiment : Clarissa and La Nouvelle Heloise -- 5. Magdalens and the performance of virtue : Sterne and Crebillon -- 6. "Chaplain extraordinary" : the unfortunate Dr Dodd, the sisters and the limits of the moral sense.
Sommario/riassunto	This book charts the complex ideological territory of eighteenth-century sentimental discourse through the uniquely revealing lens of the London Magdalen Hospital for Penitent Prostitutes. The establishment of the London Magdalen House in 1758 is read as the cultural high watermark of sentimental confidence in the compatibility of virtue and commerce. It is the product of a whiggish, moral-sense discourse at its most ebullient and culturally authoritative. Equally visible, though, in this context, are the ideological limitations of moral-sense thinking and an anticipation of the ways in which its ideas

ultimately failed to underwrite commercial virtue. Sentimental discourse fractures in the course of the mid-century: in part it becomes increasingly divorced from the world; retreating into a primitivist, proto-Romantic virtue which claims no purchase on "things as they are." Where sentimental vocabulary persists in a worldly context, it becomes divorced from a vocabulary of moral virtue. It is overlaid with a French usage where "sentiment" and "sensibility" describe exquisite emotion rather than refined and cultivated virtue.' Changing Sentiments and the Magdalen Hospital registers the fracturing and shifting ground of sentimental discourse in the changing institutional practise of the Magdalen institution, most particularly in its increasingly embrace of evangelical religion.
