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| Autore | Ormrod W. Mark |
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| Nota di contenuto | 1. Women and Parliament: Debates and Sources -- 2. Queens and Noblewomen in Parliament -- 3. Women of the Gentry and Lesser Social Status -- 4. Women on Trial in Parliament -- 5. Female Institutions and Collectives as Petitioners in Parliament -- 6. Women's Issues in Parliament: Dower -- 7. Women's Issues in Parliament: Rape -- 8. Women, Parliament and the Public Sphere -- 9. Conclusion: Women Speaking Out in Medieval Parliament. |
| Sommario/riassunto | This Palgrave Pivot provides the first ever comprehensive consideration of the part played by women in the workings and business of the English Parliament in the later Middle Ages. Breaking new ground, this book considers all aspects of women's access to the highest court of |

medieval England. Women were active supplicants to the Crown in Parliament, and sometimes appeared there in person to prosecute cases or make political demands. It explores the positions of women of varying rank, from queens to peasants, vis-à-vis this male institution, where they very occasionally appeared in person but were more usually represented by written petitions. A full analysis of these petitions and of the official records of parliament reveals that there were a number of issues on which women consistently pressed for changes in the law and its administration, and where the Commons and the Crown either championed or refused to support reform. Such is the concentration of petitions on the subjects of dower and rape that these may justifiably be termed 'women's issues' in the medieval Parliament.
