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Nota di contenuto	Frontmatter -- Series Foreword -- Contents -- CONTRIBUTORS -- Introduction -- 1. "To Serve my friends": Women and Political Patronage in Eighteenth-Century England -- 2. 1784 and All That: Aristocratic Women and Electoral Politics -- 3. British Women and Radical Politics in the Late Nonconformist Enlightenment, c. 1780-1830 -- 4. From Almack's to Willis's: Aristocratic Women and Politics, 1815-1867 -- 5. John Stuart Mill, Liberal Politics, and the Movements for Women's Suffrage, 1865-1873 -- 6. Contesting the Male Polity: The Suffragettes and the Politics of Disruption in Edwardian Britain -- 7. The Privilege of Power: Suffrage Women and the Issue of Men's Support -- 8. What Difference Did the Vote Make? -- 9. "Behind Every Great Party": Women and Conservatism in Twentieth-Century Britain -- Abbreviations -- Notes -- Index
Sommario/riassunto	This book examines the many different ways in which women achieved public standing and exercised political power in England from the middle of the eighteenth century to the present. It shows how rank, property, and inheritance could confer de facto power on privileged women, and how across the centuries the arrogance of birth and title empowered aristocratic women to overawe enfranchised men of lower social standing. The essays contribute to an ongoing "rethinking of the political," a consequence in part of the rediscovery of the work of

Jürgen Habermas by political and social historians. For Habermas, the public sphere included print media and voluntary associations, and the contributors stress the extent of female engagement in political culture broadly conceived. However, they extend this definition of the public sphere further still to include the “private” world of family connections and friendship networks, within which political ideas were debated and new social practices played out. Many of the essays are inspired by a related effort to reintegrate radical female activists within their political milieu. Although feminist hagiography has accustomed us to see female activists as heroic outsiders rising *sui generis* from a hostile environment, recent research restores them to their intellectual and familial contexts. Finally, the contributors explore the limits and possibilities of women’s citizenship both before and after winning the right to vote. Together, the essays tell a continuous and complex story, redefining political activity and reassessing the turning points of British political history.
