1. Record Nr. UNINA9910467770003321 Autore Ifill Helena **Titolo** Creating character: Theories of nature and nurture in Victorian sensation fiction / / Helena Ifill Pubbl/distr/stampa Manchester, [England]:,: Manchester University Press,, 2018 ©2018 **ISBN** 1-5261-3627-9 1-5261-2658-3 Descrizione fisica 1 online resource (232 pages) Collana Interventions: Rethinking the Nineteenth Century 823.8 Disciplina Soggetti Personality in literature **English fiction** Characters and characteristics in literature Sensationsroman Literatur Identitatsfindung **Englisch** English fiction - 19th century - History and criticism Criticism, interpretation, etc. Electronic books. Lingua di pubblicazione Inglese **Formato** Materiale a stampa Livello bibliografico Monografia Previously issued in print: 2018. Note generali Includes bibliographical references and index. Nota di bibliografia Introduction -- Part I: Self-control, willpower and monomania -- 1. Nota di contenuto Basil and No Name -- 2. John Marchmont's Legacy -- Part II: Heredity and degeneration -- 3. The Lady Lisle -- 4. Armadale -- Part III: Education, environment and circumstance -- 5. Man and Wife -- 6. Lost for Love -- Conclusion -- Index Sommario/riassunto This book explores the ways in which the two leading sensation authors of the 1860s, Mary Elizabeth Braddon and Wilkie Collins, engaged with nineteenth-century ideas about personality formation and the extent to which it can be influenced either by the subject or by others. Innovative readings of seven sensation novels explore how they

employ and challenge Victorian theories of heredity, degeneration,

inherent constitution, education, upbringing and social circumstance. Far from presenting a reductive depiction of 'nature' versus 'nurture', Braddon and Collins show the creation of character to be a complex interplay of internal and external factors. Drawing on material ranging from medical textbooks, to sociological treatises, to popular periodicals, Creating character shows how sensation authors situated themselves at the intersections of established and developing, conservative and radical, learned and sensationalist thought about how identity could be made and modified.