

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910791734603321
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Titolo	The feminine public sphere [[electronic resource]] : middle-class women in civic life in Scotland, c.1870-1914 // Megan Smitley
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Manchester, : Manchester University Press, 2009
ISBN	1-78170-306-X 1-84779-346-0
Edizione	[Online-ausg.]
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (189 p.)
Collana	Gender in History Gender in history
Disciplina	305.48962209411
Soggetti	Middle class women - Scotland - Social conditions - 19th century Middle class women - Scotland - Social conditions - 20th century Citizenship - Scotland Civics, British Women - Political activity - Scotland
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Description based upon print version of record.
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references and index.
Nota di contenuto	Copyright; Contents; Acknowledgements; Abbreviations; Introduction; 1. The organisations; 2. The feminine public sphere; 3. Temperance reform and the feminine public sphere; 4. The women's movement and female temperance reform; 5. New views of the women' suffrage campaign:Liberal women and regional perspectives; Conclusion; Appendix 1; Appendix 2; Appendix 3; Appendix 4; Appendix 5; Appendix 6; Bibliography; Index
Sommario/riassunto	At a time when women were barred from clerical roles, middle-class women made use of the informal power structures of Victorian and Edwardian associationalism in order to actively participate as citizens. This investigation of women's part in civic life provides a fresh approach to the 'public sphere', illuminates women as agents of a middle-class identity and develops the notion of a 'feminine public sphere', or the web of associations, institutions and discourses used by disenfranchised middle-class women to express their citizenship. The extent of middle-class women's contribution to civic.

