

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910807837803321
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Titolo	Scandal : the sexual politics of the British constitution / / Anna Clark
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Princeton : , : Princeton University Press, , [2004] ©2004
ISBN	0-691-11501-X 1-4008-4954-3
Edizione	[Course Book]
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (328 p.)
Classificazione	320.94109 CLA
Disciplina	328
Soggetti	Sex - Political aspects - Great Britain - History - 18th century Sex - Political aspects - Great Britain - History - 19th century Political corruption - Great Britain - History - 18th century Political corruption - Great Britain - History - 19th century Scandals - Great Britain - History - 18th century Scandals - Great Britain - History - 19th century Great Britain Politics and government 18th century Great Britain Politics and government 19th century
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	Frontmatter -- Contents -- Illustration -- Acknowledgments -- Abbreviations -- CHAPTER ONE. Introduction -- CHAPTER TWO. Wilkes, Sexuality, and Liberty: How Scandal Transforms Politics -- CHAPTER THREE. Influence or Independence: Women and Elections, 1777-1788 -- CHAPTER FOUR. Edmund Burke and the Begums of Oudh: Gender, Empire, and Public Opinion -- CHAPTER FIVE. Scandal in an Age of Revolution -- CHAPTER SIX. From Petticoat Influence to Women's Rights? -- CHAPTER SEVEN. The Mary Anne Clarke Affair and the System of Corruption -- CHAPTER EIGHT. Queen Caroline and the Sexual Politics of the British Constitution -- CHAPTER NINE. Sexual Scandals and Politics, Past and Present -- Notes -- Index
Sommario/riassunto	Are sex scandals simply trivial distractions from serious issues or can they help democratize politics? In 1820, George IV's "royal gambols" with his mistresses endangered the Old Oak of the constitution. When

he tried to divorce Queen Caroline for adultery, the resulting scandal enabled activists to overcome state censorship and revitalize reform. Looking at six major British scandals between 1763 and 1820, this book demonstrates that scandals brought people into politics because they evoked familiar stories of sex and betrayal. In vibrant prose woven with vivid character sketches and illustrations, Anna Clark explains that activists used these stories to illustrate constitutional issues concerning the Crown, Parliament, and public opinion. Clark argues that sex scandals grew out of the tension between aristocratic patronage and efficiency in government. For instance, in 1809 Mary Ann Clarke testified that she took bribes to persuade her royal lover, the army's commander-in-chief, to promote officers, buy government offices, and sway votes. Could women overcome scandals to participate in politics? This book also explains the real reason why the glamorous Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire, became so controversial for campaigning in a 1784 election. Sex scandal also discredited Mary Wollstonecraft, one of the first feminists, after her death. Why do some scandals change politics while others fizzle? Edmund Burke tried to stir up scandal about the British empire in India, but his lurid, sexual language led many to think he was insane. A unique blend of the history of sexuality and women's history with political and constitutional history, *Scandal* opens a revealing new window onto some of the greatest sex scandals of the past. In doing so, it allows us to more fully appreciate the sometimes shocking ways democracy has become what it is today.
