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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.

