

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910961082803321
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Titolo	The limits of altruism in democratic Athens / / Matthew Christ
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Cambridge : , : Cambridge University Press, , 2012
ISBN	1-139-79439-6 1-139-88958-3 1-139-78302-5 1-139-77699-1 1-139-34257-6 1-139-78003-4 1-139-78388-2 1-283-71478-7 1-139-77851-X
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (x, 215 pages) : digital, PDF file(s)
Classificazione	HIS002000
Disciplina	320.938/5
Soggetti	Altruism - Political aspects - Greece - Athens - History - To 1500 Athens (Greece) Politics and government
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Title from publisher's bibliographic system (viewed on 05 Oct 2015).
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references and indexes.
Nota di contenuto	Introduction: the philanthropic Athenian? -- 1. Helping behavior in classical Athens -- 2. Helping and democratic citizenship -- 3. Helping and community in the Athenian law courts -- 4. "Helping others" in Athenian interstate relations -- Conclusion: helping and the Athenian experience.
Sommario/riassunto	Athenians in the classical period (508-322 BC) were drawn to an image of themselves as a compassionate and generous people who rushed to the aid of others in distress, both at home and abroad. What relation does this image bear to actual Athenian behavior? This book argues that Athenians felt little pressure as individuals to help fellow citizens whom they did not know. Democratic ideology called on citizens to refrain from harming one another rather than to engage in mutual support, and emphasized the importance of the helping relationship between citizen and city rather than among individual citizens. If the

obligation of Athenians to help fellow citizens was fairly tenuous, all the more so was their responsibility to intervene to assist the peoples of other states; a distinct pragmatism prevailed in the city's decisions concerning intervention abroad.
