



The Feminine Public Sphere: Middle-class Women and Civic Life in Scotland, c. 1870-1914 (Gender in History)

Megan Smitley

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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 life is examined through their involvement in reforming and philanthropic associations as well as local government.

Making use of a range of previously untapped sources, this fascinating book will appeal in particular to those with an interest in Gender History and Scottish History.

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