

Women's Activism and Social Change: Rochester, New York, 1822-1872

Nancy A. Hewitt

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In Women's Activism and Social Change, Nancy A. Hewitt challenges the popular belief that the lives of antebellum women focused on their role in the private sphere of the family. Examining intense and welldocumented reform movements in nineteenth-century Rochester, New York, Hewitt distinguishes three networks of women's activism: women from the wealthiest Rochester families who sought to ameliorate the lives of the poor; those from upwardly mobile families who, influenced by evangelical revivalism, campaigned to eradicate such social ills as slavery, vice, and intemperance; and those who combined limited economic resources with an agrarian Quaker tradition of communialism and religious democracy to advocate full racial and sexual equality.



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