

### 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 well-documented 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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