



Radical Femininity: Women's Self-Representation in the Public Sphere

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Radical Femininity: Women's Self-Representation in the Public Sphere

For women, public space has been treacherous territory. This pioneering book explores how British women, from different social groups, created radical identities and represented themselves in the public sphere between 1800 and 1940. While highlighting their ingenuity in remaking various dominant discourses, like Christianity, constitutionality and domesticity, which supposedly fixed them forever in the private sphere, the book also reveals the paradoxes involved in this subversion. Starting in the revolutionary crisis of the 1790s with missionary Hannah Kilham, chapters then move to the radical scene of the 1820s-40s with freethinker Eliza Sharples and Chartist women contesting powerful representations created by bodies like the state investigatory commissions. Then the religious and constitutional identities of mid-century feminists and social workers are highlighted, as are later tensions over femininity in the Industrial Women's Movement and visions of citizenship in the Women's Co-operative Guild.



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