



Joyous Greetings: The First International Women's Movement, 1830-1860

Bonnie S. Anderson

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Over one hundred and fifty years ago, champions of women's rights in the United States, Britain, France, and Germany formed the world's earliest international feminist movement. *Joyous Greetings* is the first book to tell their story.

From Seneca Falls in upstate New York to the barricades of revolutionary Paris, from the Crystal Palace in London to small towns in the German Rhineland, early feminists united to fight for the cause of women. At the height of the Victorian period, they insisted their sex deserved full political equality, called for a new kind of marriage based on companionship, claimed the right to divorce and to get custody of their children, and argued that an unjust economic system forced women into poorly paid jobs. We meet Jeanne Deroin, jailed for organizing unions, who wrote inspirational tracts from her Parisian cell to women abroad; Matilda Anneke, who fought on horseback during the Revolution of 1848 and published women's newspapers in Germany and, after emigrating, in America; Ernestine Rose, a Jewish woman who sued her father for control of her dowry and became a popular public speaker; and Lucretia Mott, the Quaker minister and abolitionist, who maintained international connections and helped to found the American women's movement. These women were part of the vanguard of a feminist movement that emerged as early as the 1830s, proving that feminism transcended national boundaries and existed decades before the suffragettes.

These women rejected the traditional view that women's subordination was preordained, natural, and universal. Restoring these daring activists' achievements to history, *Joyous Greetings* passes on their inspiring and empowering message to today's new generation of feminists.

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