



Women and Marriage in Nineteenth-Century England

Mrs Joan Perkin, Joan Perkin

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The 'bonds of matrimony' describes with cruel precision the social and political status of married women in the nineteenth century. Women of all classes had only the most limited rights of possession in their own bodies and property yet, as this remarkable book shows, women of all classes found room to manoeuvre within the narrow limits imposed on them. Upper-class women frequently circumvented the onerous limitations of the law, while middle-class women sought through reform to change their legal status. For working-class women, such legal changes were irrelevant, but they too found ways to ameliorate their position. Joan Perkin demonstrates clearly in this outstanding book, full of human insights, that women were not content to remain inferior or subservient to men.



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