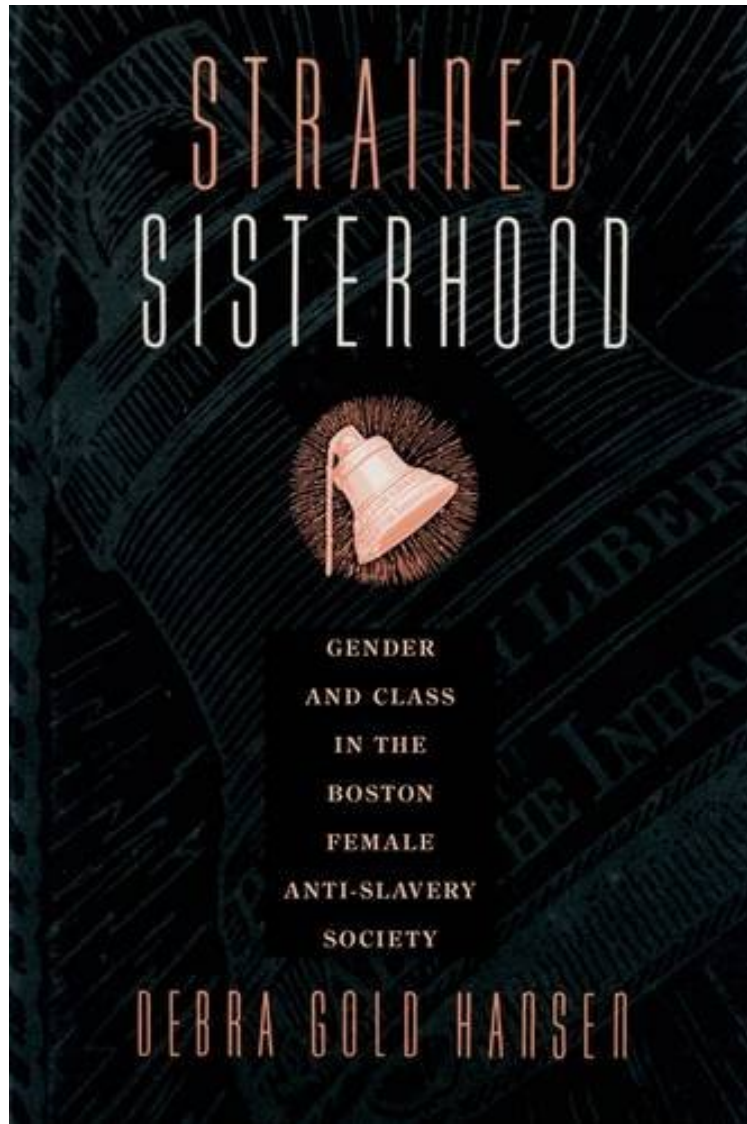


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Strained Sisterhood: Gender and Class in the Boston Female Anti-Slavery Society

Debra Gold hansen

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Debra Gold hansen : Strained Sisterhood: Gender and Class in the Boston Female Anti-Slavery Society before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Strained Sisterhood: Gender and Class in the Boston Female Anti-Slavery Society:

Why do some feminists advocate male-female equality while others remain committed to gender difference? What are the sociocultural foundations of these seemingly opposing gender constructs and why has the American feminist movement failed to articulate an ideology that encompasses both? Debra Gold Hansen explores the origins of the equality-versus-difference debate by examining the Boston Female Anti-Slavery Society, which disbanded in 1840 over this very issue. After establishing a historical framework for women's lives in early nineteenth-century Boston, Hansen analyzes the membership of the Society along the lines of race, religion, and socioeconomic status. Through her findings, she concludes that many of the issues that estranged female abolitionists in antebellum Boston continue to divide women today, testifying not to the strength of the bonds between women but to the fragility of those ties.

From *Library Journal* In this work, Hansen demonstrates that many of the class, religious, and sociocultural differences that limit female solidarity today were evident more than a century ago. Antebellum Boston is the setting for this study of the conflicted and short-lived (1833-40) Boston Female Anti-Slavery Society. This book (based on Hansen's dissertation) contributes respectably to studies of women's divergent views of their roles as women and as reformers. It examines the socioeconomic climate in which women of various classes lived at the time and takes apart the membership of the antislavery society. This book is appropriate for undergraduate/graduate history and women's studies collections. Recent related titles include Jean Fagan Yellin's *Women and Sisters* (Yale Univ. Pr., 1989) and Shirley J. Yee's *Black Women Abolitionists* (LJ 3/15/92).- Linda Carlisle, Southern Illinois Univ. at Edwardsville Copyright 1993 Reed Business Information, Inc. "A strong contribution to the literature on women abolitionists as well as to the literature on antebellum Boston, the emerging class identities of the middle and upper classes, and the different conceptions of womanhood and reform that informed the antislavery and women's rights movements. The book is thoroughly researched, clearly argued, and beautifully written."-Lori Ginzberg, Pennsylvania State University About the Author Debra Gold Hansen is a professor at the School of Library and Information Science, San Jose State University, Fullerton.