



Passionate Commitments: The Lives of Anna Rochester and Grace Hutchins

Julia M. Allen

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A story of two twentieth-century American women whose love for each other fueled their work to create an egalitarian world.

Developing their rhetorical skills in early-twentieth-century women's organizations, Anna Rochester and Grace Hutchins, life partners and heirs to significant wealth, aimed for revolution rather than reform. They lived frugally while devoting themselves to several organizations in succession, including the Episcopal Church and the Fellowship of Reconciliation, as they searched for a place where their efforts were welcomed and where they could address the root causes of social inequities. In 1927, they joined the Communist Party USA and helped to build the Labor Research Association. There they engaged in research and wrote books, pamphlets, and articles arguing for gender and racial equality, and economic justice.

Julia M. Allen's *Passionate Commitments* is a love story, but more than that, it is a story of two women whose love for each other sustained their political work. Allen examines the personal and public writings of Rochester and Hutchins to reveal underreported challenges to capitalism as well as little-known efforts to strengthen feminism during their time. Through an investigation of their lives and writings, this biography charts the underpinnings of American Cold War fears and the influence of sexology on political movements in mid-twentieth-century America.

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