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Matilda Joslyn Gage

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Matilda Joslyn Gage : Woman, Church State before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Woman, Church State:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. A TRULY "EPOCHAL," GROUNDBREAKING 19TH CENTURY WORK By Steven H Propp Matilda Electa Joslyn Gage (1826-1898) was a suffragist, a Native American activist, an abolitionist, a freethinker, and a prolific author. She wrote in the Preface to this 1893 book, "This work explains itself and is given to the world because it is needed. (I was) Tired of the obtuseness of Church and State; indignant at the injustice of both towards woman; at the wrongs inflicted upon one-half of humanity by the other half in the name of religion; finding appeal and argument alike met by the assertion that God designed the subjection of woman, and yet that her position had been higher under Christianity than ever before... Read it; examine for yourselves; accept or reject from the proof offered, but do not allow the Church or the State to govern your thought or dictate your judgment." Here are some additional quotations from the book: "...this book ... will prove that the most grievous wrong ever inflicted upon woman has been in the Christian teaching that she was not created equal with man, and the consequent denial of her rightful place in Church and State." (Pg. 7) "A form of society existed at an early age known as the Matriarchate or Mother-rule. Under the Matriarchate, except as son and inferior, man was not recognized in either of these great institutions, family, state or church. A father and husband as such, had no place either in the social, political or religious scheme; woman was ruler in each." (Pg. 8) "To the theory of 'God the Father,' shorn of the divine attribute of motherhood, is the world beholden for its most degrading beliefs, its most infamous practices." (Pg. 32) "That the Catholic Church of the present day bears the same general character it did during the middle ages is proven from much testimony. Among the latest and most important witnesses ... is Rev. Charles Chiniquy in his works, *The Priest, The Woman And The Confessional and Fifty Years in the Church of Rome.*" (Pg. 43) "We have noticed the perils to society arising from those classes of persons who, under plea of religion, evade the duties of family and social life." (Pg. 48) "When Rome became a Christian state, and the phallic cross triumphed over the gods and goddesses of old, the condition of woman under the civil law became more degraded." (Pg. 50) "Under no other system of religion has there been such absolute denial of woman's right to directly approach the divinity; under no other religious system has her debasement been greater." (Pg. 63) "Few women dared be wise, after thousands of their sex had gone to death by drowning or burning because of their knowledge... No less today than during the darkest period of its history, is the church the great opponent of woman's education, every advance step for her having found the church antagonistic." (Pg. 105) "When for 'witches' we read 'women,' we gain fuller comprehension of the cruelties inflicted by the church upon this portion of humanity." (Pg. 127) "As woman comes into new relations with the great institutions of the world, she will cease to believe herself inferior and subordinate to man. Polygamy and all kindred degradations of her sex will become things of the past, and taking her rightful place in church and state she will open a

new civilization to the world." (Pg. 190)13 of 17 people found the following review helpful. Essential to any feminist herstory collectionBy F. Orion PozoOriginally published in 1893, this book is back in print for the first time in 30 years. It is a major feminist work of the Nineteenth Century that identifies the sources of women's oppression as the church and its offspring, the state. With Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Matilda Joslyn Gage was one of the three principle U.S. suffragists. Alarmed by the conservative religious movement of the time that tried to amend the Constitution to declare the U.S. a Christian state, Gage wrote this book to articulate her views that christianity was the oppressor of women. In the first chapter called The Matriarchate, the author tells of the rights women had in pagan pre-christian times. She talks of the Mother-rule, that preceded Patriarchy. She then shows that christianity from its beginning has worked to undermine women's rights. The following seven chapters outline the oppression of women in the west and its sources in first the church, and later in the state that developed its ruling principles from canon law. These chapters deal with Celibacy, Canon Law, Marquette (a term that Gage uses for jus primae noctis, the right of lords to the sexual favors of their peasant women), Witchcraft, Wives, Polygamy, and Work. These chapters are filled with examples from history as well as the contemporary 19th century. The documented examples of women's oppression at the hands of ministers of the church and the law in this section are an impressive collection that makes this book a valuable source for feminist herstory. In the last two chapters, Gage looks at the church of her day and shows that it is still bogged down in the same dogma of women's oppression. She predicts a great revolution which will liberate women and give them equal rights with men in both religion and society. I am sure the women's movement of the 1970s with its emphasis on women's spirituality would have convinced her that she was right.7 of 7 people found the following review helpful. Wonderful history of the Christian Church's oppression of WomenBy M. JohnsonThough written over a hundred years ago, this is a great historic work by a leading suffragette. She uses history to show where some of our societies current attitudes towards women come from. Much of this book is dedicated to the middle ages. The chapter on witches in Europe and the US was especially enlightning. As a student of women's history, I was especially interested in the history of wives, our obsession with virginity and the corrupt rulers of the church. Great book for anyone that enjoys reading about women's history or has an interest in the history of the church.

Woman, Church State

"a systematic, eminently readable volume [that] should enjoy ever-increasing use as a required text..." -- Feminist Collections, Winter 2003About the AuthorMatilda Electa Gage (1826 ndash; 1898) was a suffragist, a Native American activist, an abolitionist, a freethinker, and a prolific author. Gage became involved in the women's rights movement in 1852 when she decided to speak at the National Women's Rights Convention in Syracuse, New York. She served as president of the National Woman Suffrage Association from 1875 to 1876, and served as either Chair of the Executive Committee or Vice President for over twenty years. She was considered to be more radical than either Susan B. Anthony or Elizabeth Cady Stanton. Despite her opposition to the Church, Gage was in her own way deeply religious, and she joined Stanton's Revising Committee to write The Woman's Bible. She became a Theosophist and encouraged her children and their spouses to do so, some of whom did. She was also the mother-in-law of L. Frank Baum.

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