



America's Joan of Arc: The Life of Anna Elizabeth Dickinson

J. Matthew Gallman

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One of the most celebrated women of her time, a spellbinding speaker dubbed the Queen of the Lyceum and America's Joan of Arc, Anna Elizabeth Dickinson was a charismatic orator, writer, and actress, who rose to fame during the Civil War and remained in the public eye for the next three decades.

J. Matthew Gallman offers the first full-length biography of Dickinson to appear in over half a century. Gallman describes how Dickinson's passionate patriotism and fiery style, coupled with her unabashed abolitionism and biting critiques of antiwar Democrats--known as Copperheads--struck a nerve with her audiences. In barely two years, she rose from an unknown young Philadelphia radical, to a successful New England stump speaker, to a true national celebrity. At the height of her fame, Dickinson counted many of the nation's leading reformers, authors, politicians, and actors among her friends. Among the dozens of famous figures who populate the narrative are Susan B. Anthony, Whitelaw Reid, William Lloyd Garrison, Frederick Douglass, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Harriet Beecher Stowe. Gallman shows how Dickinson's life illuminates the possibilities and barriers faced by nineteenth-century women, revealing how their behavior could at once be seen as worthy, highly valued, shocking, and deviant.

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