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Ann Wendland Sales & Marketing Manager
University Press of Colorado
5589 Arapahoe Ave
Suite 206C
Boulder, CO 80303

The following review appeared in the September 2008 issue of CHOICE:

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Brennan, Mary C. **Wives, mothers, and the red menace: conservative women and the crusade against communism.**
University Press of Colorado, 2008. 197p bibl index afp ISBN 9780870818851, \$34.95

Few scholars have fully appreciated the pivotal role women played in the US anticommunist movement of the Cold War and the establishment of the right-wing conservative movement. Brennan (Texas State Univ.-San Marcos; *Turning Right in the Sixties*, CH, Jan'96, 33-3002) attempts to fill this gap in her second book on US conservatism in the mid-20th century. Here, Brennan argues that while the dominant image of the ideal American wife and mother was thoroughly domestic, the anticommunist movement paradoxically enabled socially conservative women who might appear to fit this ideal to become outspoken political activists. Like their counterparts in the communist movement, these women confronted complicated gendered responses from within their movement and from society at large. Although discussing the larger movement, Brennan focuses her analysis on the experiences of six influential anticommunist women. Advanced scholars may wish for more nuanced race and class analysis, precisely because Brennan explicitly focuses on white, middle-class suburban women. Overall, though, she does address the specificities of racial and class differences with regard to the anticommunist movement, and she provides a useful overview of the Cold War for a general audience. **Summing Up:** Recommended. All levels/libraries. -- *M.L.*
Brunner, University of California-Los Angeles