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Front Matter -- Contents -- Tables -- Acknowledgments -- Introduction -- Legal Doctrine, Legal Mobilization, and LEAF -- The Path to Substantive Equality -- Gaining Ground -- Family Matters: Breakdowns and Benefits -- A Difficult Dialogue -- Making a Difference: The Policy Consequences of Legal Mobilization -- Conclusion -- Notes -- Bibliography -- Cases Cited -- Index

Sommario/riassunto

Since 1980, the Canadian women's movement has been an active participant in constitutional politics and Charter litigation. This book, through its focus on the Women's Legal Education and Action Fund (LEAF), presents a compelling examination of how Canadian feminists became key actors in developing the constitutional doctrine of equality, and how they mobilized that doctrine to support the movement's policy agenda. The case of LEAF, an organization that had as its goal the use of Charter litigation to influence legal rules and public policy, provides rich ground for Manfredi's keen analysis of legal mobilization. In a multitude of areas such as abortion, pornography, sexual assault, family law, and gay and lesbian rights, LEAF has intervened before the Supreme Court to bring its understanding of equality to bear on legal policy development. This study offers a deft examination of LEAF's arguments and seeks to understand how they affected the Court's consideration of the issues. Perhaps most importantly, it also contemplates the longterm effects of the mobilization, and considers the social impact of the legal doctrine that has emerged from LEAF cases. A major contribution to law and society studies, Feminist Activism in the Supreme Court is unparalleled in its analysis of legal mobilization as an effective strategy for social movements. It will be widely read and welcomed by legal scholars, political scientists, lawyers, feminists, and activists.