



# Love and Politics : Radical Feminist and Lesbian Theories

*Carol Anne Douglas*

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## **Love and Politics : Radical Feminist and Lesbian Theories** Carol Anne Douglas

Critical survey of radical and lesbian feminist ideas from the 1960s through the 1980s. Carol Anne Douglas examines diverse theories on the roots of male domination; love and sexuality; lesbianism and friendship between women; lesbian separatism; sadomasochism; strategy and tactics for women's liberation -- and more.

Douglas probes the divergent roots of radical feminist theory. She then glides her analytic lens to examine diverse currents in radical feminist practice. While some radical feminists emphasize confronting the enemy (patriarchy and/or capitalism), others emphasize building alternative women's communities to achieve radical feminist goals in the here and now. "In the early and mid 1970s," Douglas observes, "there was a turn by radical and lesbian feminists not only from working for legislated reforms but also from any sort of demonstrations or direct confrontation with the male power structure... Creating independent projects -- whether these were publications, bookstores, restaurants, record companies, credit unions or rape crisis centers -- was seen by many as a more productive way of opposing the system. Creating an alternative system was seen as more radical than directly confronting the power structure. The alternative strategy is derived from the 1960s counterculture, but also ultimately from anarchist and utopian socialist principles.

"Some radical feminists saw the turn to establishing alternatives as a diversion from radicalism and as triumph for liberals. However, even these feminists saw the need for an alternative press..." Douglas draws on her vast knowledge of radical feminist writings and practical experience in women's movements to bring clarity to the radical feminist currents and cross-currents since the 1970s.

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