



Ideas for Action: Relevant Theory for Radical Change

Cynthia Kaufman

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From the Enron scandal to global warming, from the war on terrorism to the war on drugs, a growing number of people are unhappy with the status quo. Yet those genuinely interested in reading about the issues find that few contemporary theorists are seriously committed to accessible, clear writing. Furthermore, the mainstream media rarely represents social movements, and the theories associated with them, without distortion or bias.

Written in an engaging and accessible style, *Ideas for Action* gives activists the intellectual tools to turn discontent into a plan of action. Exploring a wide range of political traditions—including Marxism, anarchism, anti-imperialism, poststructuralism, feminism, critical race theory, and environmentalism—Cynthia Kaufman acknowledges the strengths and weaknesses of a variety of political movements and the ideologies inspired by or -generated through them. Kaufman incorporates elements of her own activist experiences, and offers a coherent analysis without pretending to offer "the final word" on complex issues. Instead, she encourages inquiry and further investigation, offering readers the information to orient a critical understanding of the social world and a glimpse of the excitement and rewards of serious intellectual engagement with political ideas. *Ideas for Action* examines the work of diverse thinkers such as Adam Smith, Paulo Freire, Stuart Hall, and Ronald Takaki. Kaufman's insights break the chains of cynicism and lay a foundation for more effective organizing.

Cynthia Kaufman lives in Oakland, CA, where she has been involved in the tenant's rights movement. She has a doctorate in Philosophy from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, and teaches Philosophy and Women's Studies at De Anza College in Cupertino.

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