



## Right Wing Women

*Andrea Dworkin*

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## **Right Wing Women** Andrea Dworkin

What does the Right offer to women? How does the Right mobilize women? Why is the Right succeeding in opposing women's rights? With the stark precision and forceful passion that characterize all of her work, Andrea Dworkin answers these timely questions. And by providing the first clear analysis of the impact on women of the Right's position on abortion, homosexuality, anti-Semitism, female poverty, and antifeminism, she demonstrates how the Right attempts both to exploit and to quiet women's deepest fears. — *From the reverse cover.*

## **Right Wing Women Details**

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Author : Andrea Dworkin

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## From Reader Review **Right Wing Women** for online ebook

### **Nora says**

This book helped me understand the psychology of right-wing women a little and the theories of Andrea Dworkin a lot. The writing is really, really good and persuasive even if I find Dworkin's ideas a bit... pessimistic. This is a mostly-accessible read that I would recommend to someone who wanted to read about radical feminism.

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### **Allison says**

Can I give this book 10 stars? No? Bummer...

One word sums up this book: BRUTAL.

There's a lot of discussion amongst radical feminists about "following a thought to its logical conclusion." This means not stopping when an idea steps on PC toes or becomes uncomfortable - or downright dangerous - either personally or to the sex-class system at large (which obviously BECOMES personally dangerous for individual women.) Dworkin's book is radical - "to the root" - in every single sentence, possibly every single word. I was floored - I think I underlined about 25% of the book. Also, her writing style is dense but totally readable, which I appreciate.

Here's a sample - see if you can stomach it: "...The fate of every individual woman - no matter what her politics, character, values, qualities - is tied to the fate of all women whether she likes it or not. ... Subordinate to men, sexually colonized in a sexual system of dominance and submission, denied rights on the basis of sex, historically chattel, generally considered biologically inferior, confined to sex and reproduction: this is the general description of the social environment in which all women live."

Speak it, sister.

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### **Rachel says**

Gets repetitive at the end but overall a pretty great read about conservative psychology. I know Dworkin's work has quite a reputation but don't knock it 'til you try it!

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### **Sapphire says**

There is a lot to say for Right Wing Woman. Dworkin really breaks down the internal consistency of conservative women in a way that I found really compelling.

Quickly, some points of interest:

- Her critique of the sexual revolution: "sexual freedom" as just a reframing of men getting exactly what they want, with women needing to put up with even more males, an even higher chance of disease, etc., but calling it "liberated." It's a core tenant of any radical movement, not to make your goal exactly what the ruling class wants, just glittered up with ideas of "choice" or "better conditions", and it's particularly well stated here.

- Relatedly: Abortion, sexual promiscuity, etc. as a threat to RWW's sense of safety. One man with his sexual entitlement, just one man risking her pregnancy, childbirth, childrearing. One man to threaten rape, violence, etc. One man: a husband. And, in return, he protects her from all of the other men. There is an internal consistency here: for a RWW who accepts her position, breaking down monogamous heterosexuality IS a threat to her safety. Pregnancy risk is a protection for women- it means they had a reason to say no. To RWW, liberal women are ruining the deal they've made with men--a deal they see as the best bargain possible--for a much worse proposal. Dworkin's basic premise is that women everywhere do what they do in order to survive. And this is true for RWW as well as LWW.

- The part in *Jews and Homosexuals* where she discusses Sodom and Gomorrah and what Judaism and Christianity actually say for homosexuality. "The lesson is not that the inferred homosexual assault is worse because one is homosexual and the other is heterosexual. ... The lesson is that when men are not safe from other men--a safety that can only be achieved by keeping women segregated and for sex--the city will be wiped out." And, "Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination." (Leviticus 18:22). That means simply that it is foul to do to other men what men habitually, proudly, manfully do to women: use them as inanimate, empty, concave things; fuck them into submission; subordinate them through sex." She made interesting points about homosexuality as a threat to the societally-constructed power difference between men and women. I've never heard this sort of telling of that Biblical story, and it was really interesting.

- The last chapter, where she described the way different forms of antifeminism function (separate-but-equal, woman-superior, male-dominant), and what it means for feminism to be truly feminism (i.e., radical). She makes points about the way we see women as "pure". Spiritually, with a sex-specific morality (women as pure, chaste, etc.). Secularly, with a greater sense of good: women champion the environment, peace movements, etc. Motherhood as biological proof, women are to have an intuitive moral standard. Women are a symbol, and they have two options: be pure and good (sexually available, within certain restrictions), or else, be filth (and open to sexual assault from a wide range of sources extending well beyond just one husband).

Fascinating book. I wouldn't recommend it as an introductory piece on radical feminism, but I would definitely recommend reading it to any woman.

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## Marie says

I was especially hostile to Dworkin's POV when I first read this but I've come a long way. I don't agree with some of her most controversial statements on religion, marriage and abortion. But I'm not a "right-wing" woman neither politically, nor as per this book's definition.

She has some points that are good to remember, especially as you get on the structure of the right in the United States. Her constant allusions to the far right and omissions of libertarianism were strange to witness, though I'm pretty sure she'd have classified Rand as complacent with male supremacy (after all, she was).

Most interesting chapters were the first three and the last two. Her chapter on Jews and homosexuals has purposefully misrepresented Christianity by giving word to fundies and Mormons, which is really sad. I still don't understand how, after saying that abortion could scar a woman, she still advocated it, and more in the face of the "coming gynocide", which had too much accuracy even when she didn't exactly envision euthanasia or transgenderism: acceptance of prostitution, IVF and surrogacy, female feticide, were there.

She was fatalistic and angry, but most importantly I liked her recognition that lesbianism is not necessarily a way out, that feminism still has a lot of work to do, even for these women who find the movement morally reprehensible or misguided. This is something you rarely see in the current political climate. Maybe there are things to be learned from Dworkin.

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### **Amber says**

A stirring and compassionate analysis of Right-wing antifeminism and how little it differs from mainstream cultural and social antifeminism. Especially helpful in breaking down the superficial and ultimately irrelevant political divisions between American women.

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### **Sskessa says**

I read this book a couple years ago and it changed my life. Dworkin retains such compassion for all women, even those who fight vehemently against our own rights. Her voice is strong and courageous, and the anger she feels towards the oppression of women is inspiring.

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### **Nalim says**

An examination of women's reasons for collaborating with men for the limitation of women's freedom. - Dworkin asked, "Why do right-wing women agitate for their own subordination? How does the Right, controlled by men, enlist their participation and loyalty? And why do right-wing women truly hate the feminist struggle for equality?"

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### **Jehona says**

Brilliant! Right in every sense! Most of it is true beyond America. I just couldn't put it down.

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### **Travisalbert says**

This is not a book that I would recommend to anyone who is critical of radical feminism. There are lots of assertions that are not argued through and most of the book is written in extremes. However, this is a very

valuable book for left-wing folks. Dworkin is brutally honest about the chauvanism prevalent in the left, and why the program of the right is more appealing to oppressed women than the program (or rather hodge-podge of ill-defined ideas) of the left. Whether conscious or not, the attitude toward sex among the political left is isolating women from their movements. To sum up, I enjoyed it, but as I read, I was thinking about all of the people who I wouldn't dare recommend it to.

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### **Wildx says**

This was my first book by Dworkin. The book consists of six essays written at the the end of the 70s beginning of the 80s: *The Promise of The Ultra-Right; The Politics of Intelligence; Abortion; Jews and Homosexuals; The Coming Gynocide; Antifeminism*. Dworkin's insights can be brilliant but at the same time she can be too emotional, as if she is taking things personally, and a bit too repetitive. This makes her arguments not as clear as they could be. Also, it was noticeable for me that the book is a bit dated, although that in a way shows that some of Dworkin's ideas have been incorporated by other feminists I've read before and also into popular culture. Some essays are better than the others and my favorite was *Antifeminism*.

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### **Kate says**

So over the top, and I would have liked a bit more evidence for some of the conclusions she draws. That said, there are many parts of the book that speak to the experience of many women, which is why I think it is so highly rated. And it is refreshing to hear someone speak so frankly (read:strongly) about their own experience and the issues surrounding it.

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### **Ellen says**

Andrea Dworkin gets such a bad rap among (some) feminists and anti-feminists alike that I was slightly wary to actually go out and find one of her books. But, in an attempt to figure out what the majority of my female relatives are thinking, I picked this up. And it was damn worth it.

Firstly...did I agree with her on everything? No. I do not, for instance, consider pornography to be a base cause of anything, or even one of the biggest problems women face in society. I did, however, agree with her on a *lot* of what she said. Also, there were certainly sections of the book (the "men hate intelligence in women" chapter) which were probably far more applicable a generation or several ago than they are now, though I'm sure there are men today to whom this applies (\*coughJohnCarrollconservativescough\*).

Oh, and the writing is amazing.

Also, I read this in conjunction with Jennifer Baumgardner and Amy Richards' *Manifesta*, in which they succinctly explain that no, Dworkin did not believe all sex was rape. While I have yet to read the book which gave way to that myth (*Intercourse*), this was important to see. I've heard far too many people, feminists and antis alike, saying this. Also, the other "weird thing" about Dworkin which always gets pointed out, her relationship with John Stoltenberg...why do people care so much if she said she was queer but was in love with a (also queer) man? "She said she was a lesbian but married a *man*" is what is constantly pointed out as why she was a little "crazy," but it's not like there's a law that a person has to declare their sexual orientation

and never deviate...it's not like there's a law that people can't sometimes be attracted to *people*, not genitals. Just a thought.

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### **Jude says**

i am 64 - this book brought my mother's generation to me in compassionate and world-view-changing ways back when it first came out. Dworkin's respectful and insightful take on the innately sexual politics of conservative women has proved prescient and sadly, all too relevant still.

please click the amazon link for reviews-this book's exploration of the mind-set and politics of right-wing women is still expanding the understanding of those who truly care about all women. That's what Andrea Dworkin was - that's why she saw and named what so many others could not. The compassion at the heart of her vision is a challenge to us all.

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### **Anna says**

Both enlightening and depressing. Worth the read.

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