

Ideas for Action

Relevant Theory for Radical Change, 2nd Ed.

Cynthia Kaufman

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, postmodernism, 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 helps orient a critical understanding of the social world and a glimpse of the excitement and rewards of serious intellectual engagement with political ideas.

Fully updated to confront pressing issues of today—from mass incarceration to climate change, from the war on terror to the national security state, from rising inequality to a global shortage of care, *Ideas for Action* also examines the work of diverse thinkers such as Adam Smith, Paulo Freire, Grace Lee Boggs, and Stuart Hall. Kaufman’s insights break the chains of cynicism and lay a foundation for more effective organizing.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Cynthia Kaufman is the director of the Vasconcellos Institute for Democracy in Action, where she also teaches community organizing and philosophy. She is also the author of *Getting Past Capitalism: History, Vision, Hope* (Lexington Books, 2012). She is a lifelong social change activist, having worked on issues such as tenants’ rights, police abuse, union organizing, international politics, and most recently climate change.

ACCOLADES

“There’s a long-running conversation about what’s wrong with our world and how to fix it. *Ideas for Action* fills in the ‘backstory’ that can help you to join that conversation.”

—Jeremy Brecher, author of *Strike!*

“Having cut her teeth in the 1980s Central American solidarity movement and continuing today as a local tenants’ rights activist, Cynthia Kaufman weaves her story into a brilliant and seamless theoretical work on radical activism in the United States. Although Kaufman holds a doctorate in philosophy, and her deep and extensive knowledge of political theory from Karl Marx to Stuart Hall is clearly presented, this book is no academic monograph, rather a manual for organizers and for the people. Kaufman’s modest yet sure voice is that of the best of feminist and social justice writing today.”

—Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, author of *Outlaw Woman*

“What is remarkable about Cynthia Kaufman’s book, *Ideas for Action*, is how it steps back from our day-to-day struggles to gain historical and theoretical perspective, and then moves forward again to use these perspectives for the solution of specific, immediate problems. The book ranges broadly over many contemporary problems, and manages to be both theoretical and practical in the analysis of these problems.”

—Howard Zinn, author of *A People’s History of the United States*



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RELEVANT THEORY FOR RADICAL CHANGE

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