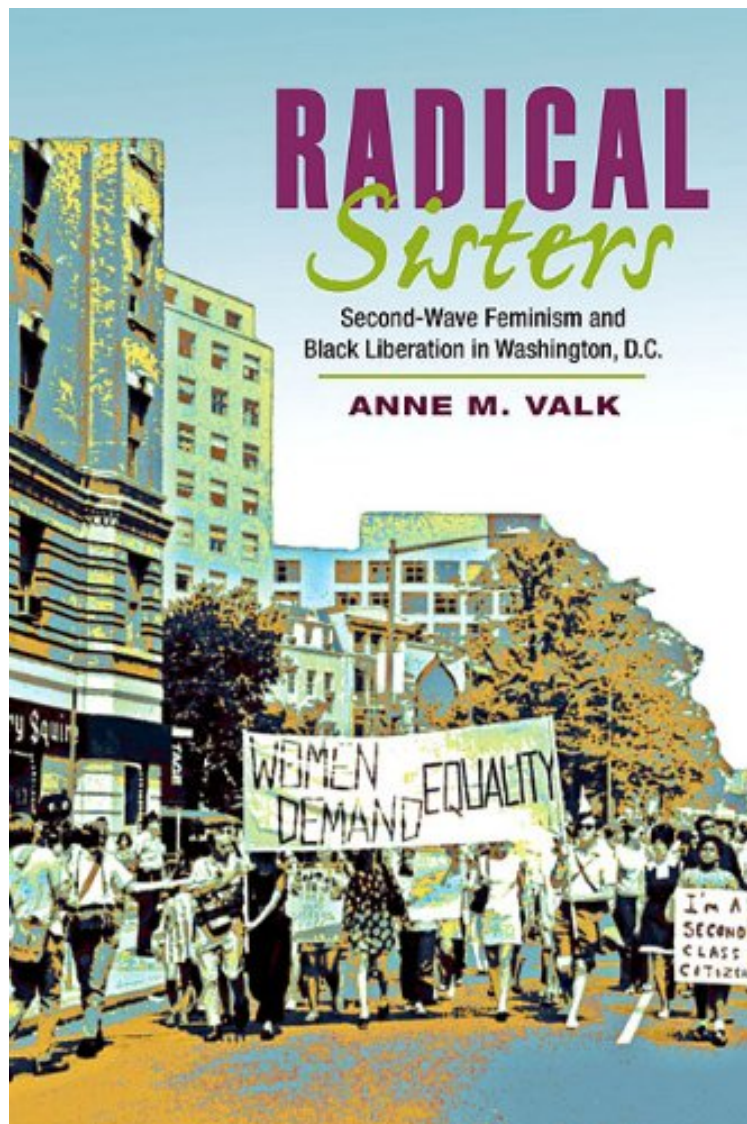


(Library ebook) Radical Sisters: Second-Wave Feminism and Black Liberation in Washington, D.C.
(Women in American History)

Radical Sisters: Second-Wave Feminism and Black Liberation in Washington, D.C. (Women in American History)

Anne M. Valk

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Anne M. Valk : Radical Sisters: Second-Wave Feminism and Black Liberation in Washington, D.C. (Women in American History) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Radical Sisters: Second-Wave Feminism and Black Liberation in Washington, D.C. (Women in American History):

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Relates complex battles artfully By Ernesto Aguilar Social

movements for at least the last few generations have tussled with concepts of equality for women and what that means in relation to the overall struggle for justice. During the 1960s, women's liberation organizing came into what became known as its Second Wave, and, with tactics like conscious raising at their disposal, women in Washington, D.C. and elsewhere began to see the distinct nature of the oppression they faced. As author Valk notes, feminism impacted and would be impacted by the diverse milieu of the time. Valk collects a vivid tapestry of stories from the period and into the 1970s. African-American progressive women, as this book makes abundantly clear, faced incredible pressures. Blasted by nationalists for hurting the status of Black men; holding accountable comrades who had professed support for women's and gay liberation yet faced difficulties in putting it to practice; and forming their own identities as feminists separate from white women, who often had not dealt with their own internalized racism, Black women carved out a space in which political ideology found a place at the table with the practical needs of family and education. It's hard not to admire their determination and sacrifice. The author imparts knowledge of groups long forgotten by the mainstream culture: the Furies, which advocated lesbianism as a step in revolutionary action; the National Black Feminist Organization, which embraced feminism and Black Power; and many others. Valk covers the successes and failures, and, in that moment, reminds us how far we need to go in understanding both race and gender.

Radical Sisters is a fresh exploration of the ways that 1960s political movements shaped local, grassroots feminism in Washington, D.C. Rejecting notions of a universal sisterhood, Anne M. Valk argues that activists periodically worked to bridge differences for the sake of improving women's plight, even while maintaining distinct political bases. Washington, D.C. is a critical site for studying the dynamics of the feminist movement, not only for its strategic location vis-a-vis the federal government but because in 1970 over seventy percent of the city's population was African American. While most historiography on the subject tends to portray the feminist movement as deeply divided over issues of race, Valk presents a more nuanced account, showing feminists of various backgrounds both coming together to promote a notion of "sisterhood" and being deeply divided along the lines of class, race, and sexuality. In exploring women's unity (or lack thereof) in the liberation movement, Valk shows how African American women activists, who were primarily focused on racial and economic justice, influenced and provided important opposition to the organizational activities of white women. Going beyond self-identified Washington feminists to include critics, outsiders, occasional supporters, and those supportive of the movement but not directly affiliated with it, Valk documents interactions between groups working against sexism, racism, and poverty. Radical Sisters uncovers the fruitful, but often divisive, connections between movements for urban change, welfare rights, reproductive control, and black liberation, while detailing their impact on the ideas, ideals, and activities embraced by modern feminism.

"Valk's in-depth analysis provides a new, more nuanced take on the era. Recommended."--Choice
"Provides a refreshing look at second-wave feminism. . . . Reveals the synergy between practice and theory that shaped feminism during this period. . . . Invites us to rethink what it means to be radical today."--Women's of Books