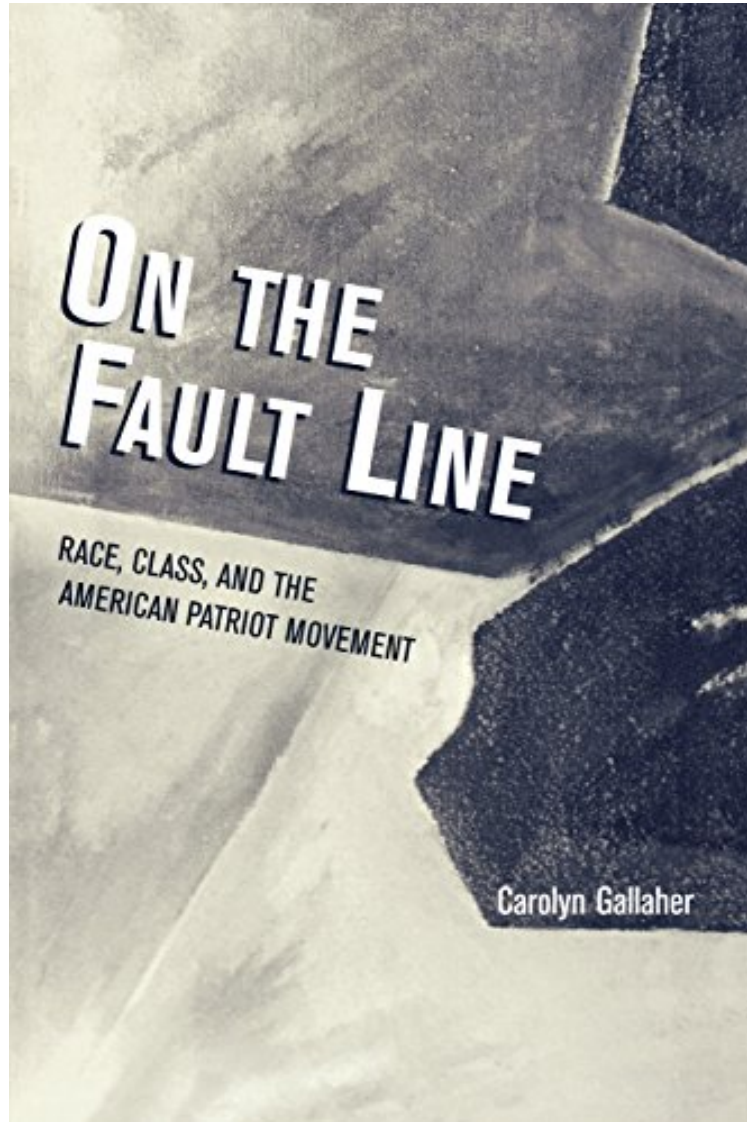


[Download ebook] On the Fault Line: Race, Class, and the American Patriot Movement

On the Fault Line: Race, Class, and the American Patriot Movement

Carolyn Gallaher

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#1957227 in Books Rowman n Littlefield Publishers 2002-12-17Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 8.94 x .64 x 5.84l, .82 #File Name: 0742519740288 pages | File size: 65.Mb

Carolyn Gallaher : On the Fault Line: Race, Class, and the American Patriot Movement before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised On the Fault Line: Race, Class, and the American Patriot Movement:

1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. On the Fault LineBy matt hortonIn an unusual and refreshing mix of investigative journalism, cultural anthropology, critical whiteness studies and traditional academia, Carol Gallaher's

On the Fault Line attempts to transcend the current superficial, liberal scholarship on the "American Patriot Movement" (a.k.a. the "Militia Movement"): providing both a critique of the conditions that created it and a proscription to engage the movement constructively. On the Fault Line is derived from years of research and interviews that developed from attending a meeting of the Citizens for a Constitutional Kentucky (CCK), an umbrella group for various Kentucky based patriot organizations. It describes a crisis in the rural United States, millions of people ripped from their land because of corporate globalization, wide discontent with the government, the emergence of a violent grass-roots uprising rooted in a history of rural radicalism, and the inability of this movement to cast aside its attachments to an ambiguous ideology that inextricably links it to the state, patriarchy and white supremacy. Gallaher writes to inform and challenge the "progressive, left," who she argues has been out organized by the "right" in the rural United States. This diametric opposition becomes confusing however, when her characterizations of the "left" inhabit an ambiguous space which fluctuates from traditional Democratic Party politicians and liberal academics to anarchist and anti-imperial activists. This ambiguity is further complicated as she attempts to address the complex and contradictory nature of the American Patriot Movement through the lens of her own struggles with intersections of identity and positionality. Because of and despite the complexity of her task and her attempts to address each of its parts at least superficially, traditional lines of separation and categorization are mixed, blurred, and reemerge in a painful reflection of the inherent contradictions in complex and artificial categories: left and right, progressive and regressive, liberal and radical, activist and academic, left and right, modern and traditional, race, class, gender and sex. One the Fault Line is certainly groundbreaking in the study and engagement of the American Patriot Movement and generally in addressing modern formations of the age old problem of the white working class, but Gallaher is unable to bring it all back together in the end with concrete strategies to move forward. Despite identifying a number of places where patriots, anarchists, Marxists, anti-globalization activists, environmentalists and the LGBTQ community can find common ground, her closing comments seem to close down and discount these possible avenues of cooperation. Her only substantive recommendation that seeks to build a constructive relationship between the patriots and the "left" is in relation in the patriot movement's "possessive investment in whiteness." Gallaher draws heavily from the emergent field of critical whiteness theory, citing authors like Noel Ignatiev, David Roediger, George Lipsitz and others, to demonstrate how the patriot movement's identification with whiteness creates a fundamental hindrance to building important class based alliances with other oppressed people. By describing the current crisis of the small farmer and industrial worker in the rural United States she clearly establishes that the "white working class" have not benefited from this investment lately. Nevertheless, Gallaher concludes that disidentification with whiteness is not a viable solution for the patriot movement, arguing that "disidentification does nothing to solve the problem of white elitism. The whites most capable of disidentifying are those who can afford to abandon their racial identity because they have their wealth, and the status they derive from it, to fall back on." In doing so, she affirms the "benefits" of whiteness as essential for the survival of the "white working class." This affirmation of whiteness is a troubling and contradictory conclusion given that her research discursively demonstrates that these people don't really have anything more to lose. This being the case, it seems that if the "white working class" is in its worst position ever, the conditions are ripe for a disidentification from whiteness. Now more than ever, these patriots have the world to gain from casting aside their supremacist identity and allying with the rest of the world. In contrast to her earlier characterizations of the term patriot as coding that "tends to buttress notions of racial and cultural superiority by creating safe, palatable codes for their expression," Gallaher proposes that the "left" meet the patriots on their own terms - to embrace their constructed identity of "patriot" as a positive, pliable "broad, umbrella" category. Building on this idea, Gallaher praises a strategy of "civic nationalism" and presents Jesse Jackson's Rainbow Coalition and their "Leave No One Behind" campaign as the best existing model for building a constructive relationship between the "left" and "white working class." While her recommendations are probably 'productive' for Democratic Party politicians and the traditional liberal elite, they provide little for activists in the trenches to work with, and certainly do not seem to provide a viable "left" with whom the patriot movement can ally. Despite this lack of answers, I would definitely recommend reading this book because of its enlightening research, its thought provoking juxtaposition of ideas and because it boldly seeks to further an emerging dialog that is essential for us to find some collective answers.

0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A Rare Glimpse Into The Militia Movement By M. Agosta

On the Fault Line is an interesting look at the American Militia movement, focusing on Kentucky, with some very surprising and cogent insights into a part of the American political underbelly that most of us never see. Professor Gallaher's prose style is remarkably breezy, compelling and readable; this isn't the typical stuffy academic monograph. On the Fault Line is a must-read for students of the libertarian far right.

Due to the economic globalization over the last twenty years, white workers have seen their racial dominance challenged and the security of their jobs assaulted, making them ripe for mobilization. On the Fault Line examines the American Patriot Movement a broad, right-wing social movement that includes militias, Second Amendment activists, tax protestors, and individuals who drop out of the system. Carolyn Gallaher uncovers how the Patriot Movement addresses the conflicting social positions of its members predominantly white, working class males. Arguing that

discourses of patriotism obscure the class-based nature of their concerns, Gallaher asserts that these patriots buttress their racial anxieties through safe, acceptable nationalistic coding. While patriots have been mobilized by the right wing, this book presents potent reasons why the left could intervene, and to better effect. For all those interested in the fluctuating systems of power within the United States, Gallaher's work proves to be a fascinating and unique analysis.

This study of the Patriot Movement (grassroots 'militias') breaks new ground and enhances understanding of this shadowy phenomenon on the American Right. Highly recommended. (CHOICE)Explores the little-studied world of the state militia movement, uncovering its fascinating links to mainstream groups on the right and tensions between hard core ideologues and more moderate members. (Kathleen M. Blee, University of Pittsburgh; author of *Inside Organized Racism: Women in the Hate Movement*)Clearly an original work dealing with a relatively new phenomenon in contemporary U.S. life the Patriot Movement. Whereas many works on social movements have tended to focus upon those of the left, this represents an analysis of one on the right. . . . A nice contribution to the literature. (Andrew Herod, University of Georgia)Gallaher's study shows real insights into a movement that too few academics have studied. It is theoretically informed and has made admirable use of observation and interviews. (Mobilization)Carolyn Gallagher's book is a refreshing and much needed antidote to the coverage of political movements that concentrates upon their violent threats and acts, their formidable arsenals of rhetoric and weaponry. Instead, *On the Fault Line* is an exercise in contextualizing the discourse of a fringe political movement with violent tendencies to illustrate why it attracts activists and how it is able to claim support in mainstream political arenas. (Colin Flint, Pennsylvania State University)This is a very original and thoughtful exploration of the Patriot Movement in America and the complex intersections of race, class, and gender that characterize the movement. *On the Fault Line* is accessible and useful for a wide variety of audiences including scholars, activists, and students. The interdisciplinary flavor of the work makes it attractive in fields such as political science, cultural studies, ethnic studies, race relations and whiteness studies, law, and rhetoric. (Mark Lawrence McPhail, Miami University Western College Program)About the AuthorCarolyn Gallagher is a geographer by training. She is currently an assistant professor at the School of International Service, American University.