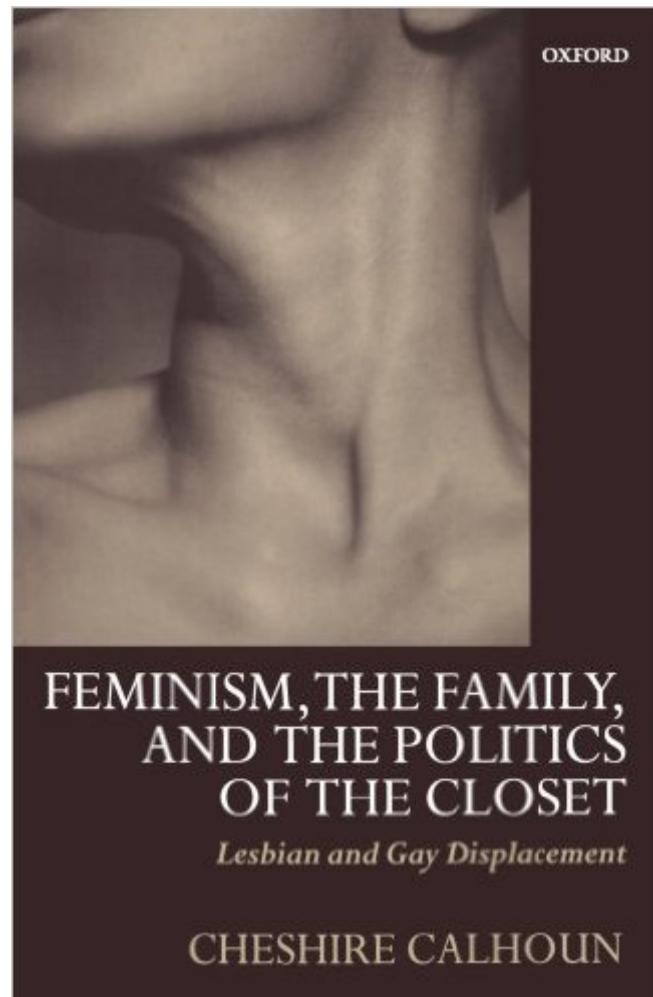


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# Feminism, The Family, And The Politics Of The Closet: Lesbian And Gay Displacement



## **Synopsis**

Has feminism failed lesbianism? What issues belong at the top of a lesbian and gay political agenda? This controversial new book answers these questions through an in-depth examination of lesbian and gay subordination. *Feminism, the Family, and the Politics of the Closet* seeks to firmly place sexual orientation politics within feminist theory and define the central political issues confronting lesbian and gay men. Cheshire Calhoun critiques the analytic frameworks employed within feminism that render invisible the differences between lesbian and heterosexual women in order to bring the study of lesbian life from the margins to the center of feminist theory. Throughout, Calhoun strives to move lesbian and gay politics away from concerns of sexual regulations and toward concerns of the displacement of gays and lesbians from both the public sphere of visible citizenship and the private sphere of romance, marriage, and family. This impassioned challenge to current feminist thought is must reading for those in the areas of political theory, gender studies, sociology, and women's studies, as well as anyone concerned about the position of gays and lesbians in today's political arena.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

As a women studies librarian, I do a fair bit of reading on both feminism and glbt rights. If you're like me, it's been a while since you've read something truly "new" in this area -- ideas that take you by surprise and that you keep turning it over and over again in your mind for the sheer pleasure of thinking new things. This book, broadly defined, examines the relationship between feminism and lesbianism. Although some have argued that the feminist movement and the movement for glbt

rights are synonymous or at least closely aligned, Calhoun reveals places where they are brought into contradiction or tension. One of Calhoun's major arguments revolves around the family -- a place that heterosexual women have traditionally needed freedom FROM but that lesbians are still fighting for freedom TO. She also argues convincingly that fitness for family life is linked to fitness for civic life, and that it is precisely our "unfitness" for family, rather than our sexuality per se, that renders gay and lesbian people second-class citizens today. As someone who has always resisted the idea that marriage and family should be queer movement priorities, I was not an easy sell on this last point, but I found her arguments clearly articulated and ultimately convincing. The book is academic, but accessible to those with some background in feminist thought. Calhoun is a philosopher, and the style of logical argument she employs may take some getting used to for those outside the discipline. As someone who generally reads social science, I found her style a joy at the beginning (how often are we treated to a feminist writer who clearly explains her assumptions in the first chapter?)

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