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# Radical Love: Introduction To Queer Theology



## Synopsis

"Patrick Cheng's *Radical Love* is an excellent introduction to queer theology. It is readable and nuanced, a marvelous teaching resource." --Carter Heyward, author of *Keep Your Courage: A Radical Christian Feminist Speaks* and Professor Emerita of Theology, Episcopal Divinity School

"Patrick Cheng's *Radical Love* is not only an excellent introduction to LGBT theology but an important contribution to the discipline of theology and the life of the church. It is a must read for anyone who cares about the health of the church and theology today." --James H. Cone, Charles A. Briggs Distinguished Professor of Systematic Theology, Union Theological Seminary, New York, NY

"Thoroughly Christian and thoroughly Queer, Cheng helps readers welcome a theology that leaves no one behind." --Chris Glaser, author of *As My Own Soul: The Blessing of Same-Gender Marriage and Coming Out as Sacrament*

"This book is a clear, accessible and exciting analysis of Queer Theology. Cheng perfectly captures both the challenge and the rootedness of Queer Theology." --Elizabeth Stuart, Pro Vice-Chancellor, University of Winchester, UK

"I would characterize Cheng's notion of 'radical love' as 'wild grace' with which mainstream theology has yet to wrestle. This is a good text for introducing queer theology to undergraduate and graduate students." --Robert Shore-Goss, Senior Pastor/Theologian, Metropolitan Community Church in the Valley, North Hollywood, CA

"Radical Love - a love so extreme that it dissolves our existing boundaries! What concept could be more liberating for a culture like ours, where lives are crucified on rigid binaries like male vs. female, us vs. them, straight vs. queer? *Radical Love* is an excellent introduction for beginners and an excellent synthesis for more advanced readers." --Virginia Ramey Mollenkott, author of *Sensuous Spirituality and Omnigender*, among many other books

"While queer theory could be highly theoretical and off-putting, Cheng's *Radical Love* summarizes the contributions of queer theology in the last fifty years in an accessible and readable way." --Kwok Pui-lan, William F. Cole Professor of Theology and Spirituality, Episcopal Divinity School

"The struggle now is perhaps to get enough courses in theological colleges and seminaries in which we can use this wonderful book." --Lisa Isherwood, Professor and Director of Theological Partnerships, University of Winchester, UK

"Cheng covers a lot of territory and does so with clarity and solid interaction with the literature in the field. I would recommend this volume to anyone wanting a quick take on the various dimensions of Queer Theology." --Jeffrey S. Siker, Professor and Chair, Department of Theological Studies, Loyola Marymount University

## Book Information

Paperback: 176 pages

Publisher: Seabury Books; 1 edition (March 1, 2011)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1596271329

ISBN-13: 978-1596271326

Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.4 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 8.8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.8 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (12 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #377,305 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #576 in [Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Social Sciences > Specific Demographics > Gay & Lesbian](#) #751 in [Books > Gay & Lesbian > Nonfiction](#) #7403 in [Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Theology](#)

## Customer Reviews

Although I was intrigued by this book when I read an article by the author some time ago, it took me awhile to convince myself to purchase it; actually, as a reviewer for the Vine program, I hoped it might be offered there. However, even though I have tried to avoid further purchases of books as I continue to re-read those already in my library, Cheng's exceptional re-thinking of theology in the modern context is one I am glad to have encountered. Let me be honest. I am in fact a person who fits the definition of "queer" that he gives. Although I have been married to a person of the opposite sex for over fifty years, and we are the parents of five children, four of which are "naturally born" and one adopted, my husband is bisexual. At the time when he came out to me, in the early 1970's, there was almost nothing available in terms of positive discussion of alternative lifestyles.

Fortunately, due to the writing of Troy Perry, John McNeill, and John Boswell, all of whom are sources cited in Patrick Cheng's amazing treatise, I began to move in the direction of understanding which this author has so wonderfully summarized. The fact is that Cheng has indeed articulated what everyone who has any interest in the reality of "God with Us", which is the fundamental premise of Christianity, needs to recognize. Although the book is a bit academic in parts, and the footnotes are completely illegible to my aging eyes, his research is impeccable. I know this because over the nearly 40 years of my own journey into understanding the truth that God not only loves, but intentionally created, a diversity that includes people of ALL sexual orientations and genders, I gladly read many of those authors.

Patrick S. Cheng provides an accessible, well-organized, yet provocative introduction to queer theology. Cheng, the Assistant Professor of Historical and Systematic Theology at Episcopal

Divinity School in Cambridge, locates queer theology in the traditional loci of systematic theology in order to illustrate how that theology works and also to provide a wealth of resources for further reading. This work is an extremely readable introduction to how, as Cheng describes, being queer is also at the heart of being Christian. Cheng's basic thesis (supported by Scripture, church history and modern philosophy) is that Christian theology is organized around radical love, a love so extreme that it dissolves our existing boundaries. Radical love lies at the heart of both Christian theology and queer theory. Cheng first defines queer as an umbrella term for all LGBTIQ (lesbian-gay-bisexual-transgender-intersex-queer-allies) persons; transgressive action; and the erasure of boundaries. Queer theology, then, is queer people talking about God; talking about God in a self-consciously transgressive manner, and talk about God that challenges and deconstructs the natural binary categories of sexual and gender identity. He also traces the evolution of queer theology from apology through liberation theology to queer theology proper. The final three chapters then examine the traditional areas of theology through queer eyes of radical love. God is radical love itself expressed in the antihierarchical community of the Trinity, with revelation as God's coming out to creation, and creation as the outpouring of that radical love.

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