

= Andrea Dworkin =

Andrea Rita Dworkin (September 26 , 1946 ? April 9 , 2005) was an American radical feminist and writer best known for her criticism of pornography , which she argued was linked to rape and other forms of violence against women . Although a radical , she said there was a need for liberals , but was widely criticized by liberal feminists . At the same time , she maintained a dialogue with political conservatives and wrote a topically @-@ related book , Right @-@ Wing Women . After suffering abuse from her first husband , she was introduced to radical feminist literature and began writing Woman Hating . Coming to New York , she became an activist on several issues and a writer , eventually publishing 10 books on feminism .

During the late 1970s and 1980s , Dworkin became known as a spokeswoman for the feminist anti @-@ pornography movement and for her writing on pornography and sexuality , particularly Pornography : Men Possessing Women (1981) and Intercourse (1987) , which remain her two most widely known books . She wrote on pornography from a feminist perspective and in opposition to obscenity law , and she worked with Women Against Pornography and Linda Boreman . She considered the pornography industry to be based on turning women into objects for abuse by men . Dworkin and Catharine MacKinnon developed a legislative approach based on civil rights rather than obscenity to outlaw pornography and allow lawsuits against pornographers for damages , but their efforts were largely unsuccessful . She testified at a Federal commission against pornography , leading some stores to withdraw certain magazines from sale , but a court ruled the government 's efforts unconstitutional . Critics argued that no causal relationship between pornography and harm to women had been found . A Canadian court adapted parts of Dworkin and MacKinnon 's theory on sex equality , although Dworkin opposed parts of the court 's view . Some sex @-@ positive feminists criticized Dworkin 's views as censorious and as denying women 's agency or choice in sexual relationships , leading to the so @-@ called feminist sex wars .

Her book Intercourse , which addresses the role of sexual intercourse in society , has been interpreted as opposing all heterosexual intercourse , for example , by Cathy Young , but Dworkin said it does not and that what she was against was male domination by intercourse . Some critics of Dworkin accused her of supporting incest , and she sued for defamation , but a court did not forbid the criticism . She subsequently wrote much in opposition to incest . She wrote some fiction , some of which was held for a time by Canadian customs authorities before it was released , giving rise to a controversy over whether her support for antipornography law had led to the seizure of her own work . When she said she was drugged and raped in a hotel in 1999 , controversy over the truth of the allegations followed . In her later years , she suffered from severe osteoarthritis which limited her mobility . She died of acute myocarditis at the age of 58 .

= = Early life = =

Dworkin was born in Camden , New Jersey , to Harry Dworkin and Sylvia Spiegel . Her father was the grandson of a Russian Jew who fled Russia when he was 15 years old in order to escape military service and her mother was the child of Jewish emigrants from Hungary . She had one younger brother , Mark . Her father was a schoolteacher and dedicated socialist , whom she credited with inspiring her passion for social justice . Her relationship with her mother was strained , but Dworkin later wrote about how her mother 's belief in legal birth control and legal abortion , " long before these were respectable beliefs " , inspired her later activism .

Though she described her Jewish household as being in many ways dominated by the memory of the Holocaust , it nonetheless provided a happy childhood until she reached the age of nine , when an unknown man molested her in a movie theater . When Dworkin was 10 , her family moved from the city to the suburbs of Cherry Hill , New Jersey (then known as Delaware Township) , which she later wrote she " experienced as being kidnapped by aliens and taken to a penal colony " . In sixth grade , the administration at her new school punished her for refusing to sing " Silent Night " (as a Jew , she objected to being forced to sing Christian religious songs at school) . She said she " probably would have become a rabbi " if women could have while she was in high school and she "

would have liked " being a Talmudic scholar .

Dworkin began writing poetry and fiction in the sixth grade . Around that time , she was undecided about whether to become a lawyer or a writer , because of her interest then in abortion , and chose writing because she could " do it in a room alone " and " nobody could stop me " . Throughout high school , she read avidly , with encouragement from her parents . She was particularly influenced by Arthur Rimbaud , Charles Baudelaire , Henry Miller , Fyodor Dostoevsky , Che Guevara , and the Beat poets , especially Allen Ginsberg , and has included among writers she " admired most " Genet , Shelley , and Byron .

= = = College and early activism = = =

In 1965 , while a student at Bennington College , Dworkin was arrested during an anti @-@ Vietnam War protest at the United States Mission to the United Nations and sent to the New York Women 's House of Detention . Dworkin testified that the doctors in the House of Detention gave her an internal examination which was so rough that she bled for days afterwards . She spoke in public and testified before a grand jury about her experience , and the media coverage of her testimony made national and international news . The grand jury declined to make an indictment in the case , but Dworkin 's testimony contributed to public outrage over the mistreatment of inmates . The prison was closed seven years later .

Soon after testifying before the grand jury , Dworkin left Bennington on the liner Castel Felice to live in Greece and to pursue her writing . She traveled from Paris to Athens on the Orient Express , and went to live and write in Crete . While in Crete , she wrote a series of poems titled (Vietnam) Variations , a collection of poems and prose poems that she printed on the island in a book called Child , and a novel in a style resembling magical realism called Notes on Burning Boyfriend ? a reference to the pacifist Norman Morrison , who had burned himself to death in protest of the Vietnam War . She also wrote several poems and dialogues which she hand @-@ printed after returning to the United States in a book called Morning Hair .

After living in Crete , Dworkin returned to Bennington for two years , where she continued to study literature and participated in campaigns against the college 's student conduct code , for contraception on campus , for the legalization of abortion , and against the Vietnam War . She graduated with a Bachelor 's degree in literature in 1968 .

= = Life in the Netherlands = =

After graduation , she moved to Amsterdam to interview Dutch anarchists in the Provo countercultural movement . While there , she became involved with , then married , one of the anarchists she met : Cornelius (Iwan) Dirk de Bruin . Soon after they were married , she said , de Bruin began to abuse her severely , punching and kicking her , burning her with cigarettes , beating her on her legs with a wooden beam , and banging her head against the floor until he knocked her unconscious .

After she left de Bruin late in 1971 , Dworkin said , her ex @-@ husband attacked , persecuted , and harassed her , beating her and threatening her whenever he found where she was hiding . She found herself desperate for money , often homeless , thousands of miles from her family , later remarking that " I often lived the life of a fugitive , except that it was the more desperate life of a battered woman who had run away for the last time , whatever the outcome " . Dworkin worked as a prostitute for a period . Ricki Abrams , a feminist and fellow expatriate , sheltered Dworkin in her home , and helped her find places to stay on houseboats , a communal farm , and deserted buildings . Dworkin tried to work up the money to return to the United States .

Abrams introduced Dworkin to early radical feminist writing from the United States , and Dworkin was notably inspired by Kate Millett 's Sexual Politics , Shulamith Firestone 's The Dialectic of Sex , and Robin Morgan 's Sisterhood is Powerful . She and Abrams began to work together on " early pieces and fragments " of a radical feminist text on the hatred of women in culture and history , including a completed draft of a chapter on the pornographic counterculture magazine Suck , which

was published by a group of fellow expatriates in the Netherlands .

Dworkin later wrote that she eventually agreed to help smuggle a briefcase of heroin through customs in return for \$ 1 @, @ 000 and an airplane ticket , thinking that if she was successful she could return home with the ticket and the money , and if caught she would at least escape her ex @-@ husband 's abuse by going to prison . The deal for the briefcase fell through , but the man who had promised Dworkin the money gave her the airline ticket anyway , and she returned to the United States in 1972 .

Before she left Amsterdam , Dworkin spoke with Abrams about her experiences in the Netherlands , the emerging feminist movement , and the book they had begun to write together . Dworkin agreed to complete the book ? which she eventually titled *Woman Hating* ? and publish it when she reached the United States . In her memoirs , Dworkin relates that during that conversation she vowed to dedicate her life to the feminist movement :

Sitting with Ricki , talking with Ricki , I made a vow to her : that I would use everything I knew , including from prostitution , to make the women 's movement stronger and better ; that I 'd give my life to the movement and for the movement . I promised to be honor @-@ bound to the well @-@ being of women , to do anything necessary for that well @-@ being . I promised to live and to die if need be for women . I made that vow some thirty years ago , and I have not betrayed it yet .

= = Return to New York and contact with the feminist movement = =

In New York , Dworkin worked again as an anti @-@ war organizer , participated in demonstrations for lesbian rights and against apartheid in South Africa . The feminist poet Muriel Rukeyser hired her as an assistant (Dworkin later said , " I was the worst assistant in the history of the world . But Muriel kept me on because she believed in me as a writer . ") Dworkin also joined a feminist consciousness raising group , and soon became involved in radical feminist organizing , focusing on campaigns against violence against women . In addition to her writing and activism , Dworkin gained notoriety as a speaker , mostly for events organized by local feminist groups . She became well known for passionate , uncompromising speeches that aroused strong feelings in both supporters and critics , and inspired her audience to action , such as her speech at the first Take Back the Night march in November 1978 , and her 1983 speech at the Midwest Regional Conference of the National Organization for Changing Men (now the National Organization for Men Against Sexism) titled " I Want a Twenty @-@ Four Hour Truce During Which There Is No Rape " .

= = Relationship with John Stoltenberg = =

In 1974 she met feminist writer and activist John Stoltenberg when they both walked out on a poetry reading in Greenwich Village over misogynist material . They became close friends and eventually came to live together . Stoltenberg wrote a series of radical feminist books and articles on masculinity . Although Dworkin publicly wrote " I love John with my heart and soul " and Stoltenberg described Dworkin as " the love of my life " , she continued to publicly identify herself as lesbian , and he as gay . Stoltenberg , recounting the perplexity that their relationship seemed to cause people in the press , summarized the relationship by saying , " So I state only the simplest facts publicly : yes , Andrea and I live together and love each other and we are each other 's life partner , and yes we are both out . "

Dworkin and Stoltenberg were married in 1998 ; after her death Stoltenberg said , " It 's why we never told anybody really that we married , because people get confused about that . They think , Oh , she 's yours . And we just did not want that nonsense . "

= = Critique of pornography = =

Andrea Dworkin is most often remembered for her role as a speaker , writer , and activist in the feminist anti @-@ pornography movement . In February 1976 , Dworkin took a leading role in organizing public pickets of Snuff in New York City and , during the fall , joined Adrienne Rich ,

Grace Paley , Gloria Steinem , Shere Hite , Lois Gould , Barbara Deming , Karla Jay , Letty Cottin Pogrebin , Robin Morgan , and Susan Brownmiller in attempts to form a radical feminist antipornography group . Members of this group would go on to found Women Against Pornography in 1979 , but by then Dworkin had begun to distance herself from the group over differences in approach . Dworkin spoke at the first Take Back the Night march in November 1978 , and joined 3 @ , @ 000 women in a march through the red @ - @ light district of San Francisco .

In 1981 , Dworkin published *Pornography : Men Possessing Women* , which analyzes (and extensively cites examples drawn from) contemporary and historical pornography as an industry of woman @ - @ hating dehumanization . Dworkin argues that it is implicated in violence against women , both in its production (through the abuse of the women used to star in it) , and in the social consequences of its consumption by encouraging men to eroticize the domination , humiliation , and abuse of women .

= = Antipornography Civil Rights Ordinance = =

In 1980 , Linda Boreman (who had appeared in the pornographic film *Deep Throat* as " Linda Lovelace ") made public statements that her ex @ - @ husband Chuck Traynor had beaten and raped her , and violently coerced her into making that and other pornographic films . Boreman made her charges public for the press corps at a press conference , with Dworkin , feminist lawyer Catharine MacKinnon , and members of Women Against Pornography . After the press conference , Dworkin , MacKinnon , Gloria Steinem , and Boreman began discussing the possibility of using federal civil rights law to seek damages from Traynor and the makers of *Deep Throat* . Boreman was interested , but backed off after Steinem discovered that the statute of limitations for a possible suit had passed .

Dworkin and MacKinnon , however , continued to discuss civil rights litigation as a possible approach to combating pornography . In the fall of 1983 , MacKinnon secured a one @ - @ semester appointment for Dworkin at the University of Minnesota , to teach a course in literature for the Women 's Studies program and co @ - @ teach (with MacKinnon) an interdepartmental course on pornography , where they hashed out details of a civil rights approach . With encouragement from community activists in south Minneapolis , the Minneapolis city government hired Dworkin and MacKinnon to draft an antipornography civil rights ordinance as an amendment to the Minneapolis city civil rights ordinance .

The amendment defined pornography as a civil rights violation against women , and allowed women who claimed harm from pornography to sue the producers and distributors in civil court for damages . The law was passed twice by the Minneapolis city council , but vetoed both times by Mayor Don Fraser , who considered the wording of the ordinance to be too vague . Another version of the ordinance passed in Indianapolis , Indiana in 1984 , but was overturned as unconstitutional under the First Amendment by the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals in the case *American Booksellers v. Hudnut* . Dworkin continued to support the civil rights approach in her writing and activism , and supported anti @ - @ pornography feminists who organized later campaigns in Cambridge , Massachusetts (1985) and Bellingham , Washington (1988) to pass versions of the ordinance by voter initiative .

= = Right @ - @ Wing Women = =

In 1983 , Dworkin published *Right @ - @ Wing Women : The Politics of Domesticated Females* , an examination of women 's reasons for collaborating with men for the limitation of women 's freedom . In the Preface to the British edition , Dworkin stated that the New Right in the United States focused especially on preserving male authority in the family , the promotion of fundamentalist versions of orthodox religion , combating abortion , and undermining efforts to combat domestic violence , but that it also had , for the first time , " succeeded in getting women as women (women who claim to be acting in the interests of women as a group) to act effectively on behalf of male authority over women , on behalf of a hierarchy in which women are subservient to men , on behalf of women as

the rightful property of men , on behalf of religion as an expression of transcendent male supremacy " . Taking this as her problem , Dworkin asked , " Why do right @-@ wing women agitate for their own subordination ? How does the Right , controlled by men , enlist their participation and loyalty ? And why do right @-@ wing women truly hate the feminist struggle for equality ? "

= = Testimony before Attorney General 's Commission on Pornography = =

On January 22 , 1986 , Dworkin testified for half an hour before the Attorney General 's Commission on Pornography ? also known as the " Meese Commission ") in New York City , and answered questions from commissioners after completing her testimony . Dworkin 's testimony against pornography was praised and reprinted in the Commission 's final report , and Dworkin and MacKinnon marked its release by holding a joint press conference . Meese Commission subsequently successfully demanded that convenience store chains remove from shelves men 's magazines such as Playboy (Dworkin wrote that the magazine " in both text and pictures promotes both rape and child sexual abuse ") and Penthouse . The demands spread nationally and intimidated some retailers into withdrawing photography magazines , among others . The Meese Commission 's campaign was eventually quashed with a First Amendment admonishment against prior restraint by the United States District Court for the District of Columbia in *Meese v. Playboy* (639 F.Supp. 581) .

In her testimony and replies to questions from the commissioners , Dworkin denounced the use of criminal obscenity prosecutions against pornographers , stating , " We are against obscenity laws . We do not want them . I want you to understand why , whether you end up agreeing or not . " She argued that obscenity laws were largely ineffectual , that when they were effectual they only suppressed pornography from public view while allowing it to flourish out of sight , and that they suppressed the wrong material , or the right material for the wrong reasons , arguing that " Obscenity laws are also woman @-@ hating in their very construction . Their basic presumption is that it 's women 's bodies that are dirty . "

Instead she offered five recommendations for the Commission , recommending (1) that " the Justice Department instruct law @-@ enforcement agencies to keep records of the use of pornography in violent crimes " , (2) a ban on the possession and distribution of pornography in prisons , (3) that prosecutors " enforce laws against pimping and pandering against pornographers " , (4) that the administration " make it a Justice Department priority to enforce RICO (the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act) against the pornography industry " , and (5) that Congress adopt federal anti @-@ pornography civil rights legislation which would provide for civil damages for harm inflicted on women . She suggested that the Commission consider " creating a criminal conspiracy provision under the civil rights law , such that conspiring to deprive a person of their civil rights by coercing them into pornography is a crime , and that conspiring to traffic in pornography is conspiring to deprive women of our civil rights " . Dworkin compared her proposal to the Southern Poverty Law Center 's use of civil rights litigation against the Ku Klux Klan .

Dworkin also submitted into evidence a copy of Boreman 's book *Ordeal* , as an example of the abuses that she hoped to remedy , saying " The only thing atypical about Linda is that she has had the courage to make a public fight against what has happened to her . And whatever you come up with , it has to help her or it 's not going to help anyone " . Boreman had testified in person before the Commission , but the Commissioners had not yet seen her book .

= = Intercourse = =

In 1987 , Dworkin published *Intercourse* , in which she extended her analysis from pornography to sexual intercourse itself , and argued that the sort of sexual subordination depicted in pornography was central to men 's and women 's experiences of heterosexual intercourse in a male supremacist society . In the book , she argues that all heterosexual sex in our patriarchal society is coercive and degrading to women , and sexual penetration may by its very nature doom women to inferiority and submission , and " may be immune to reform " .

Citing from both pornography and literature ? including *The Kreutzer Sonata* , *Madame Bovary* , and *Dracula* ? Dworkin argued that depictions of intercourse in mainstream art and culture consistently emphasized heterosexual intercourse as the only kind of " real " sex , portrayed intercourse in violent or invasive terms , portrayed the violence or invasiveness as central to its eroticism , and often united it with male contempt for , revulsion towards , or even murder of , the " carnal " woman . She argued that this kind of depiction enforced a male @-@ centric and coercive view of sexuality , and that , when the cultural attitudes combine with the material conditions of women 's lives in a sexist society , the experience of heterosexual intercourse itself becomes a central part of men 's subordination of women , experienced as a form of " occupation " that is nevertheless expected to be pleasurable for women and to define their very status as women .

Such descriptions are often cited by Dworkin 's critics , interpreting the book as claiming " all " heterosexual intercourse is rape , or more generally that the anatomical mechanics of sexual intercourse make it intrinsically harmful to women 's equality . For instance , Cathy Young says that statements such as , " Intercourse is the pure , sterile , formal expression of men 's contempt for women , " are reasonably summarized as " All sex is rape " .

Dworkin rejected that interpretation of her argument , stating in a later interview that " I think both intercourse and sexual pleasure can and will survive equality " and suggesting that the misunderstanding came about because of the very sexual ideology she was criticizing : " Since the paradigm for sex has been one of conquest , possession , and violation , I think many men believe they need an unfair advantage , which at its extreme would be called rape . I do not think they need it . "

= = Butler decision in Canada = =

In 1992 , the Supreme Court of Canada made a ruling in *R. v. Butler* which incorporated some elements of Dworkin and MacKinnon 's legal work on pornography into the existing Canadian obscenity law . In *Butler* the Court held that Canadian obscenity law violated Canadian citizens ' rights to free speech under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms if enforced on grounds of morality or community standards of decency ; but that obscenity law could be enforced constitutionally against some pornography on the basis of the Charter 's guarantees of sex equality . The Court 's decision cited extensively from briefs prepared by the Women 's Legal Education and Action Fund (LEAF) , with the support and participation of Catharine MacKinnon .

Andrea Dworkin opposed LEAF 's position , arguing that feminists should not support or attempt to reform criminal obscenity law . In 1993 , copies of Dworkin 's book *Pornography* were held for inspection by Canada Customs agents , fostering an urban legend that Dworkin 's own books had been banned from Canada under a law that she herself had promoted . However , the *Butler* decision did not adopt Dworkin and MacKinnon 's ordinance ; Dworkin did not support the decision ; and her books (which were released shortly after they were inspected) were held temporarily as part of a standard procedural measure , unrelated to the *Butler* decision .

= = Fiction = =

Dworkin published three fictional works after achieving notability as a feminist author and activist . She published a collection of short stories , *The New Woman 's Broken Heart* in 1980 . Her first published novel , *Ice and Fire* , was published in the United Kingdom in 1986 . It is a first @-@ person narrative , rife with violence and abuse ; Susie Bright has claimed that it amounts to a modern feminist rewriting of one of the Marquis de Sade 's most famous works , *Juliette* . However , Dworkin aimed to depict men 's harm to women as normalized political harm , not as eccentric eroticism . Dworkin 's second novel , *Mercy* , was published in the United Kingdom in 1990 . According to *The Telegraph* , the novels " were not popular " .

Dworkin 's short fiction and novels often incorporated elements from her life and themes from her nonfiction writing , sometimes related by a first @-@ person narrator . Critics have sometimes quoted passages spoken by characters in *Ice and Fire* as representations of Dworkin 's own views.

cf . Dworkin , however , wrote " My fiction is not autobiography . I am not an exhibitionist . I do not show myself . I am not asking for forgiveness . I do not want to confess . But I have used everything I know ? my life ? to show what I believe must be shown so that it can be faced . The imperative at the heart of my writing ? what must be done ? comes directly from my life . But I do not show my life directly , in full view ; nor even look at it while others watch . "

= = Life and Death = =

In 1997 , Dworkin published a collection of her speeches and articles from the 1990s in *Life and Death : Unapologetic Writings on the Continuing War on Women* , including a long autobiographical essay on her life as a writer , and articles on violence against women , pornography , prostitution , Nicole Brown Simpson , the use of rape during the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina , the Montreal massacre , Israel , and the gender politics of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum .

Reviewing *Life and Death* in *The New Republic* , philosopher Martha Nussbaum criticizes voices in contemporary feminism for denouncing Catharine MacKinnon and Dworkin as " man @-@ haters " , and argues that First Amendment critiques of Dworkin 's civil ordinance proposal against pornography " are not saying anything intellectually respectable " , for the First Amendment " has never covered all speech : bribery , threats , extortionate offers , misleading advertising , perjury , and unlicensed medical advice are all unprotected " . Nussbaum adds that Dworkin has focused attention on the proper moral target by making harm associated with subordination , not obscenity , civilly actionable .

Nevertheless , Nussbaum opposes the adoption of Dworkin 's pornography ordinance because it (1) fails to distinguish between moral and legal violations , (2) fails to demonstrate a causal relationship between pornography and specific harm , (3) holds author of printed images or words responsible for others ' behavior , (4) grants censorial power to the judiciary (which may be directed against feminist scholarship) , and (5) erases the contextual considerations within which sex takes place . More broadly , Nussbaum faults Dworkin for (1) occluding economic injustice through an " obsessive focus on sexual subordination " , (2) reproducing objectification in reducing her interlocutors to their abuse , and (3) refusing reconciliation in favor of " violent extralegal resistance against male violence " .

= = Later life = =

In the same year , *The New York Times Book Review* published a lengthy letter of hers in which she describes the origins of her deeply felt hatred of prostitution and pornography (" mass @-@ produced , technologized prostitution ") as her history of being violently inspected by prison doctors and battered by her first husband and numerous other men .

Dworkin was a strong opponent of President Bill Clinton during the Lewinsky scandal . She also expressed support for Paula Jones and Juanita Broaddrick .

Dworkin " was demonised not only by pornographers but by many liberals , whom she held in almost equal contempt " , and " while she was irritated by liberal feminists such as Naomi Wolf , she accepted that her views were not palatable to everyone . ' I have a really strong belief that any movement needs both radicals and liberals , ' she explained . ' You always need women who can walk into the room in the right way , talk in the right tone of voice , who have access to power . But you also need a bottom line . ' "

In 2000 , she published *Scapegoat : The Jews , Israel , and Women 's Liberation* , in which she compared the oppression of women to the persecution of Jews , discussed the sexual politics of Jewish identity and antisemitism , and called for the establishment of a women 's homeland as a response to the oppression of women .

In June 2000 , Dworkin published controversial articles in the *New Statesman* and in the *Guardian* , stating that one or more men had raped her in her hotel room in Paris the previous year , putting GHB in her drink to disable her . Her articles ignited public controversy when writers such as Catherine Bennett and Julia Gracen published doubts about her account , polarizing opinion

between skeptics and supporters such as Catharine MacKinnon , Katharine Viner , and Gloria Steinem . Her reference to the incident was later described by Charlotte Raven as a " widely disbelieved claim " , better seen as " a kind of artistic housekeeping " . Emotionally fragile and in failing health , Dworkin mostly withdrew from public life for two years following the articles .

In 2002 , Dworkin published her autobiography , *Heartbreak : The Political Memoir of a Feminist Militant* . She soon began to speak and write again , and in an interview with Julie Bindel in 2004 said , " I thought I was finished , but I feel a new vitality . I want to continue to help women . " She published three more articles in the *Guardian* and began work on a new book , *Writing America : How Novelists Invented and Gendered a Nation* , on the role of novelists such as Ernest Hemingway and William Faulkner in the development of American political and cultural identity , which was left unfinished when she died .

= = Illness and death = =

During her final years , Dworkin suffered fragile health , and she revealed in her last column for the *Guardian* that she had been weakened and nearly crippled for the past several years by severe osteoarthritis in the knees . Shortly after returning from Paris in 1999 , she had been hospitalized with a high fever and blood clots in her legs . A few months after being released from the hospital , she became increasingly unable to bend her knees , and underwent surgery to replace her knees with titanium and plastic prosthetics . She wrote , " The doctor who knows me best says that osteoarthritis begins long before it cripples ? in my case , possibly from homelessness , or sexual abuse , or beatings on my legs , or my weight . John , my partner , blames *Scapegoat* , a study of Jewish identity and women 's liberation that took me nine years to write ; it is , he says , the book that stole my health . I blame the drug @-@ rape that I experienced in 1999 in Paris . "

When a newspaper interviewer asked her how she would like to be remembered , she said , " In a museum , when male supremacy is dead . I 'd like my work to be an anthropological artifact from an extinct , primitive society " . She died in her sleep on the morning of April 9 , 2005 , at her home in Washington , D.C. The cause of death was later determined to be acute myocarditis . She was 58 years old .

= = Legacy and controversy = =

Dworkin authored ten books of radical feminist theory and numerous speeches and articles , each designed to assert the presence of and denounce institutionalized and normalized harm against women . She became one of the most influential writers and spokeswomen of American radical feminism during the late 1970s and the 1980s . She characterized pornography as an industry of damaging objectification and abuse , not merely a fantasy realm . She discussed prostitution as a system of exploitation , and intercourse as a key site of subordination in patriarchy . Her analysis and writing influenced and inspired the work of contemporary feminists , such as Catharine MacKinnon , Gloria Steinem , John Stoltenberg , Nikki Craft , Susan Cole , and Amy Elman .

Dworkin 's uncompromising positions and forceful style of writing and speaking , described by Robert Campbell as " apocalyptic " , earned her frequent comparisons to other speakers such as Malcolm X (by Robin Morgan , Susie Bright , and others) . Gloria Steinem repeatedly compared her style to that of the Old Testament prophets ; Susan Brownmiller recalls her *Take Back the Night* speech in 1978 :

Saturday evening culminated in a candlelit " *Take Back the Night* " march (the first of its kind) through the porn district , kicked off by an exhortation by Andrea Dworkin . I 'd seen Andrea in my living room , but this was the first time I 'd seen Andrea in action . On the spot I dubbed her *Rolling Thunder* . Perspiring in her trademark denim coveralls , she employed the rhetorical cadences that would make her both a cult idol and an object of ridicule a few years later . Dworkin 's dramatized martyrdom and revival @-@ tent theatrics never sat well with me , but I retained my respect for her courage long after I absented myself from the pornography wars . Her call to action accomplished , three thousand demonstrators took to the streets

Many of Dworkin 's early speeches are reprinted in her second book , Our Blood (1976) . Later selections of speeches were reprinted ten and twenty years later , in Letters from a War Zone (1988) and Life and Death (1997) .

She maintained some political communication with the political right wing . She authored the book Right @-@ Wing Women , reviewed as premised on agreement between feminists and right @-@ wing women on the existence of domination by men in sex and class and disagreement on strategy . She testified at a Meese Commission hearing on pornography , while Attorney General Edwin Meese was serving socially conservative President Reagan . She had a political discourse with National Review writer David Frum and their spouses arranged by Christopher Hitchens .

Her attitude and language often sharply polarized debate , and made Dworkin herself a figure of intense controversy . After her death , the conservative gay writer Andrew Sullivan claimed that " Many on the social right liked Andrea Dworkin . Like Dworkin , their essential impulse when they see human beings living freely is to try and control or stop them ? for their own good . Like Dworkin , they are horrified by male sexuality , and see men as such as a problem to be tamed . Like Dworkin , they believe in the power of the state to censor and coerce sexual freedoms . Like Dworkin , they view the enormous new freedom that women and gay people have acquired since the 1960s as a terrible development for human culture . " Libertarian / conservative journalist Cathy Young complained of a " whitewash " in feminist obituaries for Dworkin , argued that Dworkin 's positions were manifestly misandrist , stated that Dworkin was in fact insane , criticized what she called Dworkin 's " destructive legacy " , and described Dworkin as a " sad ghost " that feminism needs to exorcise .

Other feminists , however , published sympathetic or celebratory memorials online and in print . Catharine MacKinnon , Dworkin 's longtime friend and collaborator , published a column in the New York Times , celebrating what she described as Dworkin 's " incandescent literary and political career " , suggested that Dworkin deserved a nomination for the Nobel Prize in Literature , and complained that " lies about her views on sexuality (that she believed intercourse was rape) and her political alliances (that she was in bed with the right) were published and republished without attempts at verification , corrective letters almost always refused . Where the physical appearance of male writers is regarded as irrelevant or cherished as a charming eccentricity , Andrea 's was reviled and mocked and turned into pornography . When she sued for libel , courts trivialized the pornographic lies as fantasy and dignified them as satire " .

Dworkin 's reports of violence suffered at the hands of men sometimes aroused skepticism , the most famous example being the public controversy over her allegations of being drugged and raped in Paris . In 1989 , Dworkin wrote an article about her life as a battered wife in the Netherlands , " What Battery Really Is " , in response to fellow radical feminist Susan Brownmiller , who had argued that Hedda Nussbaum , a battered woman , should have been indicted for her failure to stop Joel Steinberg from murdering their adoptive daughter . Newsweek initially accepted " What Battery Really Is " for publication , but then declined to publish the account at the request of their attorney , according to Dworkin , arguing that she needed either to publish anonymously " to protect the identity of the batterer " and remove references to specific injuries , or to provide " medical records , police records , a written statement from a doctor who had seen the injuries " . Instead , Dworkin submitted the article to the Los Angeles Times , which published it on March 12 , 1989 .

= = = Incest = = =

Some critics , such as Larry Flynt 's magazine Hustler and Gene Healy , allege that Dworkin endorsed incest . In the closing chapter of Woman Hating (1974) , Dworkin wrote that " The parent @-@ child relationship is primarily erotic because all human relationships are primarily erotic " , and that " The incest taboo , because it denies us essential fulfillment with the parents whom we love with our primary energy , forces us to internalize those parents and constantly seek them . The incest taboo does the worst work of the culture ... The destruction of the incest taboo is essential to the development of cooperative human community based on the free @-@ flow of natural androgynous eroticism " . Dworkin , however , does not explain if " fulfillment " is supposed to

involve actual sexual intimacy , and one page earlier characterized what she meant by " erotic relationships " as relationships whose " substance is nonverbal communication and touch " , which she explicitly distinguished from what she referred to as " fucking " .

Dworkin 's work from the early 1980s onward contained frequent condemnations of incest and pedophilia as one of the chief forms of violence against women , arguing once that " incest is terrifically important in understanding the condition of women . It is a crime committed against someone , a crime from which many victims never recover " . In the early 1980s she had a public row with her former friend Allen Ginsberg over his support for child pornography and pedophilia , in which Ginsberg said , " The right wants to put me in jail , " and Dworkin responded , " Yes , they 're very sentimental ; I 'd kill you . " When Hustler published in 1985 the claim that Dworkin advocated incest , Dworkin sued them for defamatory libel ; the court dismissed Dworkin 's complaint on the grounds that regardless of whether Hustler 's interpretations of her reflections on incest were valid , even a faulty interpretation of a work placed into the " marketplace of ideas " could not amount to defamation in the legal sense .

= = = Pornography = = =

Other critics , especially women who identify as feminists but sharply differ with Dworkin 's style or positions , have offered nuanced views , suggesting that Dworkin called attention to real and important problems , but that her legacy as a whole had been destructive to the women 's movement . Her work and activism on pornography ? especially in the form of the Antipornography Civil Rights Ordinance ? drew heavy criticism from groups such as the Feminist Anti @-@ Censorship Task Force (FACT) and even some fellow anti @-@ pornography feminists , who criticized the Dworkin @-@ McKinnon legal approach as undermining civil rights .

Dworkin also attracted criticism from sex @-@ positive feminists , in what became known as the feminist sex wars of the late 1970s and 1980s . The sex wars were a series of heated debates which polarized feminist thought on a number of issues relating to sex and sexuality . Sex @-@ positive feminist critics criticized Dworkin 's legal activism as censorious , and argued that her work on pornography and sexuality promoted an essentialist , conservative , or repressive view of sexuality , which they often characterized as " anti @-@ sex " or " sex @-@ negative " . Her criticisms of common heterosexual sexual expression , pornography , prostitution and sadomasochism were frequently claimed to disregard women 's own agency in sex or to deny women 's sexual choices . Dworkin countered that her critics often misrepresented her views , and that under the heading of " choice " and " sex @-@ positivity " her feminist critics were failing to question the often violent political structures that confined women 's choices and shaped the meaning of sex acts .

= = Publications = =

In addition to books , articles , and speeches listed here , she wrote for anthologies and wrote additional articles , and some of her works were translated into other languages . She also published in Gay Community News .

= = = Non @-@ fiction = = =

= = = = Books = = = =

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She was a member of The American Heritage Dictionary 's Usage Panel .