



Mary Douglas: An Intellectual Biography

Richard Fardon

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This is the first full length account of the life and ideas of Mary Douglas, the British social anthropologist whose publications span the second half of the twentieth century.

Richard Fardon covers Douglas' family background, and the pervasive influence of her catholic faith on her writings before providing an analysis of two of her most influential works; *Purity and Danger* (1966) and *Natural Symbols* (1970). The final section deals with Douglas' more controversial writings in the fields of economics, consumption, religion and risk analysis in contemporary societies. Throughout, Fardon highlights the centrality of Douglas' role in the history of anthropology and the discipline's struggle to achieve relevance to contemporary, western societies.

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