Finding Freedom
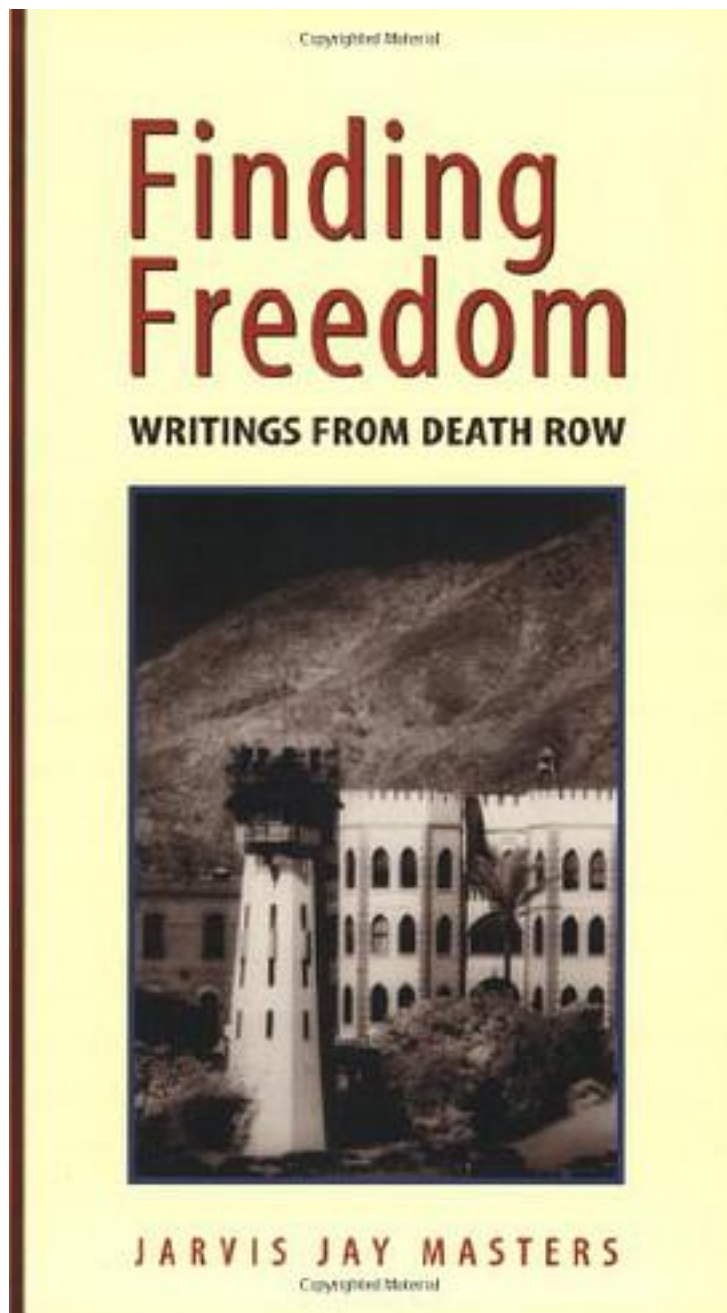

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G.W.F. Hegel is often vilified for his conservative reactionary philosophy, particularly with respect to the rights of women. Alternatively, tracing a path through G.W.F Hegel's political thought, MacDonald demonstrates that, in fact, the logic of Hegel's argument necessitates the recognition of equal political and civil rights for all human beings. Combining a thoughtful study of Hegel's political thought with close readings of two pivotal works of literature, MacDonald's book shows how the perennial tension between fulfilled, yet diverse, personal lives and stable political communities has historically developed. While Sophocles' "Antigone" highlights the tension that exists in states that deny the particular interests of their citizens, MacDonald argues that an alternative image, one that admits the freedom of all humans as the grounds for an ethical family and state and one that is consistent with Hegel's thought in both the "Phenomenology of Spirit" and "The Philosophy of Right", is offered in Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream". In an era of political cynicism and apathy, "Finding Freedom" seeks to recover the strengths of modern political life, arguing that Hegel's understanding of the true nature of human freedom, one that is based on our willing participation in rationally demonstrable goods, can be grounds for reinvigorating both the family and the political community.

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