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Justice: A Reader



Synopsis

Justice brings together in one indispensable volume essential readings on justice and moral reasoning. With readings from major thinkers from the classical era up to the present, the collection provides a thematic overview of the concept of justice. Moreover, Sandel's organization of the readings and his own commentaries allow readers to engage with a variety of pressing contemporary issues. Looking at a host of ethical dilemmas, including affirmative action, conscription, income distribution, and gay rights, from a variety of angles--morally, legally, politically--the collection engages with the core concerns of political philosophy: individual rights and the claims of community, equality and inequality, morality and law, and ultimately, justice. With concise section introductions that put the readings in context, this anthology is an invaluable tool for students, teachers, and anyone who wishes to engage in the great moral debates that have animated politics from classical times to our own.

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Customer Reviews

"Michael Sandel is one of the most popular and influential college professors in America. For more than twenty years, hundreds of students at a time have packed into a Harvard University lecture hall to hear his discourses on justice; and hundreds have streamed out feeling a surprisingly personal connection with their gifted teacher. This book reveals Sandel's secret recipe for enthralling students with timeless questions of law, justice, and morality in a decidedly contemporary context."--Anita L. Allen, Professor of Philosophy and Professor of Law, University of Pennsylvania

Law School" This thoughtful, stimulating, and convenient collection brings a range of classic moral and political philosophers--from Aristotle to John Stuart Mill--to bear on a range of contemporary controversies about justice. It invites readers to discover how their views on contemporary questions might be clarified, deepened and challenged by an encounter with enduring debates in moral and political philosophy."--Russell Muirhead, Associate Professor of Democracy and Politics, Dartmouth College "This outstanding collection successfully blends historical and contemporary thought, on issues of theoretical and practical importance, to illuminate the main problems of justice. It is accessible to undergraduates in philosophy, with breadth and depth enough to engage the experienced philosophical reader hoping to rethink some central debates."--Michele Moody-Adams, Director and Professor of Ethics and Public Life, Cornell University

Michael J. Sandel is the Anne T. and Robert M. Bass Professor of Government at Harvard University, where he has taught political philosophy since 1980. He is the author of numerous books, including *Liberalism and the Limits of Justice*, *Democracy's Discontent*, *Public Philosophy* and most recently, *The Case against Perfection: Ethics in the Age of Genetic Engineering*.

I bought this book for Prof. Michael Sandel's online Justice course. This book includes all the materials required to complete the online course and some more. It is 412 pages long with 14 chapters. Chapter 1. Introduction: Doing the Right Thing (The Queen v. Dudley and Stephen); Chapter 2. Utilitarianism (Principles of Moral and Legislation by Jeremy Bentham, and Utilitarianism by John Stuart Mill); Chapter 3. Libertarianism (Free to Choose by Milton and Rose Friedman, Anarchy, State and Utopia by Robert Nozick, and The Constitution of Liberty by Friedrich A. Hayek); Chapter 4. Locke: Property Rights (Second Treatise of Government by John Locke); Chapter 5. Markets and Morals: Surrogate Motherhood, Military Service (Tragic Choices by Guido Calabresi and Philip Bobbit, Battle Cry of Freedom by James M. McPherson, All Go Down Together by James Thaub, In the Matter of Baby M, Is Women's Labor a Commodity? by Elizabeth S. Anderson); Chapter 6. Kant: Freedom as Autonomy (Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals and On the Supposed Right to Lie by Immanuel Kant); Chapter 7. Rawls: Justice as Fairness (A Theory of Justice by John Rawls); Chapter 8. Distributive Justice: Equality, Entitlement, and Merit (A Theory of Justice by John Rawls and Anarchy, State and Utopia by Robert Nozick); Chapter 9. Affirmative Action: Reverse Discrimination? (Racial Discrimination or Righting Wrongs? by Richard Bernstein, Hopwood v. State of Texas, Grutter v. Bollinger, Bakke's Case: Are Quotas Unfair? by Ronald Dworkin, Double Reverse Discrimination by Jefferson Morley, and Proxy Wars: Liberals Denounce

Racial Profiling Conservatives Denounce Affirmative Action. What's the Difference? by Michael Brus); Chapter 10. Aristotle: Justice and Virtue (The Politics and Nichomachean Ethics by Aristotle); Chapter 11. Ability, Disability, and Discrimination: Cheerleaders and Golf Carts (A safety Blitz: Texas Cheerleaders Loses Status by Sue Anne Pressley, Honor and Resentment by Michael J. Sandel, Sorry, Free Rides Not Rights by Bob Ryan, Keep the PGA on Foot by Tom Kite, and PGA Tour v. Casey Martin); Chapter 12. Justice, Community and Membership (After Virtue by Alasdair MacIntyre, Democracy's Discontent by Michael J. Sandel, and Spheres of Justice by Michael Walzer); Chapter 13. Moral Argument and Liberal Toleration (Political Liberalism by John Rawls and Political Liberalism by Michael J. Sandel); Chapter 14. Morality and Law: Same-Sex Marriage, For and Against (Goodridge v. Dept. of Public Health, Abolish Marriage by Michael Kinsley, Law. Morality and Sexual Orientation by John M. Finnis, Homosexuality and the Conservative Mind by Stephen Macedo, and Universalism, Liberal Theory, and the Problem of Gay Marriage by Robin West). Each chapter includes a short introduction that guides the reader on the critical issues. Anyone who is interested in reading moral philosophy can read this as a stand alone book. Those who has enrolled or planning to enroll in Professor Michael Sandel's class will find this book very useful. Some of the important reading materials for the course are actually not included in the online course because of copyright issues. If you do not have this book, you will need to either borrow the actual literature from a public library or buy it. The online course is very intensive and, if you have this book, I recommend that you just follow the order of the materials but read a chapter ahead of the course.

Michael Sandel's book is a solid rendering of the on-line PBS course. A superb alternate experience is the audio-book, which captures the warmth and humor and interactive intelligence of Professor Sandel's class. On-line college instructors could gain much from watching the series, imagining the potential for video portrayals in addition to the usual textual discourse seen in on-line instruction. Likewise, listening to the exchanges between professor and student in the audio-book format provides an excellent introduction to Sandel's dialogic style. Top quality, truly worthwhile.

Excellent discussion of the effort to come up with societal ethics. Good to read a chapter, and then go to Sandel's Harvard website and watch a corresponding lecture video. It's good, too, because Sandel takes the reader through all the consequences of a given way of approaching ethics (for instance, a lot of people think Libertarianism is good because they imagine that it gives them more personal freedom, but Sandel points out just how selfish freedom without responsibility turns out to

be.

While I agree with another reviewer who thinks that classical philosophy has trouble dealing with certain modern issues, I still believe it is worth understanding classical viewpoints, if only to learn their limits. This book is a collection of essays and selected writings by various classical and modern writers that deals with specific issues such as surrogate motherhood and same-sex marriage. I would not recommend reading this straight through (unless you have a lot of free time) rather it should serve as a starting point for research into one of the issues dealt with. Reading it straight through gives the reader a shallow understanding of sundry issues and may be more confusing than enlightening.

Excellent book. I bought this for a class on legal philosophy, and this was concise and clear enough for me to understand it. While my professor pointed out stuff he thought were flaws, he on the whole thoroughly recommended this as a reference for the future. Would buy again if absolutely necessary.

Used this book for a political theory class and it was very interesting. It brought up a lot of controversial points and challenged both old and new ways of critical thinking.

GREAT deal!!

Recommended book for Coursera course with Dr. Sandel! Interested in the philosophical background of justice, get this book! Not an easy read but good. Makes you think!

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