



Justice and Its Surroundings (Collected Papers of Anthony de Jasay)

Anthony de Jasay

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"Social philosophers, of all varieties, will find their preconceptions challenged here. Anthony de Jasay does, indeed, look at justice and its surroundings 'through a different window.' And his totally original arguments prompt urges to respond, even as frustration is anticipated. Can any of the several conventional wisdoms survive the provocative criticism that this book offers?"

—James M. Buchanan, April 2002

Author of *The State*, Anthony de Jasay, has been described as one of the few genuinely original minds in modern political philosophy. He breaks new ground with *Justice and Its Surroundings* – a new collection of trenchant essays that seek to redefine the concept of justice and to highlight the frontier between it and the surrounding issues that encroach upon it and are mistakenly associated with it.

Justice and Its Surroundings discusses rival notions which treat justice “as something else” — as fairness, equality, or moral intuition. Jasay states, “Theories of justice inspired by the idea that its function is to rectify the way of the world by redistributing the good and bad things that happen to make up people’s lots tend to be intellectually weak and vulnerable to the weapon of logic.” Jasay’s chosen mission is to promote clear reasoning rather than plead for a good cause.

This straightforward and terse book analyzes the roles of collective choice, redistribution, and socialism and the claims that would enlist justice in their service. The issue of whether state authority is necessary, convenient, or neither, and the primacy of convention and contract are among the pivotal questions Jasay poses. He concludes by analyzing notions of freedom and making a clear distinction between freedoms and rights.

Anthony de Jasay is an independent theorist living in France. Jasay “believes that philosophy should be mainly, if not exclusively, about clarifying conclusions that arise from the careless use of, or deliberate misuse of, language. There are echoes here of . . . Wittgenstein's later philosophy.” His books, translated into a half dozen languages, include *The State* and *Social Contract, Free Ride*.

[source/credit line] I. M. D. Little in *Ordered Anarchy*, 2007

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