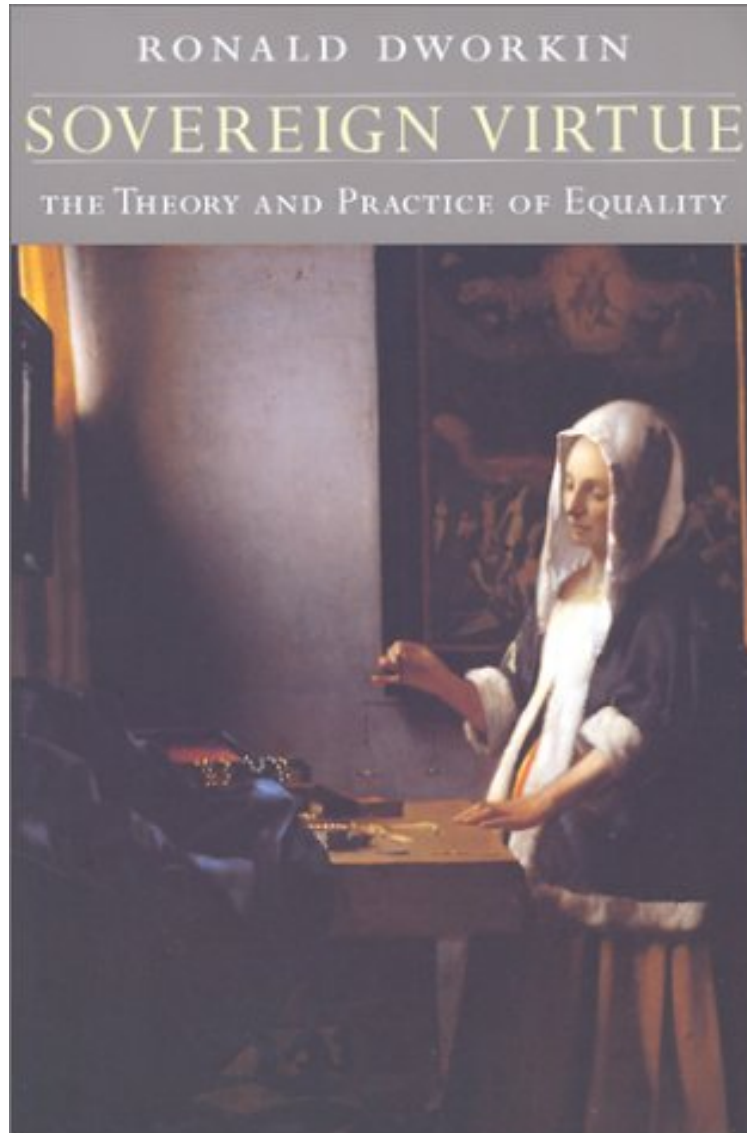


[E-BOOK] Sovereign Virtue: The Theory and Practice of Equality

## Sovereign Virtue: The Theory and Practice of Equality

*Ronald Dworkin*

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#517146 in Books Ronald Dworkin 2002-03-01 2002-01-28Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 9.24 x 1.32 x 6.14l, 1.30 #File Name: 0674008103528 pagesSovereign Virtue The Theory and Practice of Equality | File size: 57.Mb

**Ronald Dworkin : Sovereign Virtue: The Theory and Practice of Equality** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Sovereign Virtue: The Theory and Practice of Equality:

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. How to bridge socialism and (classical) liberalismBy defendant k.To libertarians out there...read this book and you will understand exactly why liberalism has changed in America. Brilliant, provocative and insightful all around. I pick it up every year or so and re-read certain sections for fun. If you

can understand his points (particularly about hypothetical insurance markets) you will be hard pressed to disagree with them. I desperately wish this book would get the credit it deserves. 2 of 3 people found the following review helpful. A Legal theory of Everything By Big H Just as physicists search for the unifying theory of particle physics and the universe, Professor Dworkin here presents a theory that unifies the sometimes conflicting aspirations of liberty and equality. As usual, his work is not only replete with insights but is frequently extremely profound - especially when he explains what should have been obvious to us but has somehow eluded our vision. Dworkin explains how liberty should not compromise equality without in turn compromising liberty itself. He gives us a new tool for evaluating the merits of changes in the law. As a lawyer and educator, I find this to be a very readable and noteworthy contribution to legal philosophy. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By moises nadal Harvard's Endowment Is Bigger Than Half the World's Economies Boston.com staff

Equality is the endangered species of political ideals. Even left-of-center politicians reject equality as an ideal: government must combat poverty, they say, but need not strive that its citizens be equal in any dimension. In his new book Ronald Dworkin insists, to the contrary, that equality is the indispensable virtue of democratic sovereignty. A legitimate government must treat all its citizens as equals, that is, with equal respect and concern, and, since the economic distribution that any society achieves is mainly the consequence of its system of law and policy, that requirement imposes serious egalitarian constraints on that distribution. What distribution of a nation's wealth is demanded by equal concern for all? Dworkin draws upon two fundamental humanist principles--first, it is of equal objective importance that all human lives flourish, and second, each person is responsible for defining and achieving the flourishing of his or her own life--to ground his well-known thesis that true equality means equality in the value of the resources that each person commands, not in the success he or she achieves. Equality, freedom, and individual responsibility are therefore not in conflict, but flow from and into one another as facets of the same humanist conception of life and politics. Since no abstract political theory can be understood except in the context of actual and complex political issues, Dworkin develops his thesis by applying it to heated contemporary controversies about the distribution of health care, unemployment benefits, campaign finance reform, affirmative action, assisted suicide, and genetic engineering.

From Publishers Weekly In this ambitious investigation into the very bedrock of a democratic society, Dworkin, one of our leading legal thinkers (he teaches at NYU), explores the "popular but mysterious political ideal" of equality, looking into its theoretical underpinnings and then showing how a proper conception of equality informs hot-button issues such as campaign finance reform, affirmative action and antisodomy laws. Dworkin (Freedom's Law) advocates a fundamental "equality of resources," arguing that government must provide a form of material equality for everyone. In probing this proposition, he rejects conservative and paternalistic notions of democracy, advocating an "ethical individualism" that makes it government's obligation to treat the life of each person as having great and equal importance. Many of the questions Dworkin raises are of grave concern for America as it faces a new century: What form of democracy is most appropriate to an egalitarian society? How much should a nation like ours spend on its citizens' health? What are the ethical implications of genetic engineering? While in places his abstract discussions of liberty and democracy can be slow going, Dworkin also offers refreshingly pointed commentary on the 1996 Welfare Reform Act ("a plain defeat for social justice"), America's lack of national health-care coverage (a "national disgrace") and other important issues. Two chapters on affirmative action, in which Dworkin argues that sketchy factual evidence about race-based admissions has distorted the debate, are especially insightful. Whatever one's political convictions, it is difficult not to be moved by this book's final, forceful imperative that human lives be successful rather than wasted. (June) Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Library Journal Drawing from his expertise as a philosopher and legal theorist, Dworkin (law and philosophy, NYU) discusses the ethical foundations of conflicting political ideologies and strives for a consensus that explains human behavior. Central to this notion is the Aristotelian concept of akrasia (literally, "lack of self-control," this term has come to mean, among other things, "acting against one's considered judgment"), which he explicates thoroughly as he relates it to issues confronting contemporary politicians. As Dworkin sees it, the magnanimity of virtue imbues the political mind with an enlightened form of self-interest that has the potential to override immediate or corporeal self-interests of time, money, and labor. Dworkin frames this dichotomy in terms of a struggle between critical and volitional interests in which people actually spurn self-enhancing political concepts (such as a tax cut) in favor of more altruistic objectives. He concludes by noting that as human beings suppress their individual volitional interests, society will witness an increasing level of attention to the critical interests of humankind as a whole. Highly recommended for academic libraries. D Philip Y. Blue, New York State Supreme Court Criminal Branch Law Lib., New York Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Booklist Everywhere, egalitarians are in retreat--California and Texas have struck down affirmative action, even as federal and state officials scale back welfare benefits. But why should Americans worry so long as democratic majorities approve of the new policies? One of the country's most distinguished legal theorists, Dworkin here defends equality as a political ideal even more important to the nation's long-term political health than majority rule. But how

should legislators and judges translate equality of concern into law and jurisprudence? In a tightly reasoned foray, Dworkin argues for the equality of available resources--tightly linking this equality to personal responsibility for the use of those resources. For the contemporary implications of egalitarian theory, readers can turn to the second half of the book, where Dworkin applies--and extends--his doctrines, laying out carefully detailed justifications for affirmative action, the prereform welfare system, and homosexual rights. Lawmakers and interested general readers will want to scour these pages for insights, even if they disagree with Dworkin's conclusions. Bryce Christensen Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved