



Ordinary Vices (Belknap Press)

By Judith N. Shklar

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The seven deadly sins of Christianity represent the abysses of character, whereas Shklar's "ordinary vices"--cruelty, hypocrisy, snobbery, betrayal, and misanthropy--are merely treacherous shoals, flawing our characters with mean-spiritedness and inhumanity.

Shklar draws from a brilliant array of writers--Moliere and Dickens on hypocrisy, Jane Austen on snobbery, Shakespeare and Montesquieu on misanthropy, Hawthorne and Nietzsche on cruelty, Conrad and Faulkner on betrayal--to reveal the nature and effects of the vices. She examines their destructive effects, the ambiguities of the moral problems they pose to the liberal ethos, and their implications for government and citizens: liberalism is a difficult and challenging doctrine that demands a tolerance of contradiction, complexity, and the risks of freedom.

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Editorial Review

Review

The book is a delight to read. At every turn of the argument it spurs one to think, and gives added pleasure with each new perplexity it raises. Readers who relish thinking for its own sake will be happy to join in the sheer exuberance of it. (Ronald Beiner *Times Higher Education Supplement*)

These are civilized excursions, literate and sensitive, and I cherish the book for its effort to move us out of the metalanguage and into the heart of darkness. Once we acknowledge the ordinariness of ordinary vices, the banality of normal badness, we may find ourselves not so distant from the moral monsters of human history, who may simply be us, writ large. (A. C. Danto *Times Literary Supplement*)

A distinguished book, full of wit, humanity, and insight...It is also, and more importantly, a moral psychology for liberals. (Michael Walzer)

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From the Back Cover

Shklar looks to literature to find characters and situation that can tell us most about these vices. This analysis by storytelling draws from plays, novels, and philosophical works to reveal the nature and effects of the five vices, devoting one chapter to each and gathering evidence from a brilliant array of writers.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Ola Hellman:

Have you spare time for just a day? What do you do when you have much more or little spare time? Yep, you can choose the suitable activity intended for spend your time. Any person spent their very own spare time to take a wander, shopping, or went to the actual Mall. How about open or maybe read a book allowed Ordinary Vices (Belknap Press)? Maybe it is to become best activity for you. You realize beside you can spend your time using your favorite's book, you can more intelligent than before. Do you agree with the opinion or you have some other opinion?

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