



# Robert Nozick: Property, Justice, and the Minimal State (Key Contemporary Thinkers)

Jonathan Wolff

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Robert Nozick's *Anarchy, State, and Utopia* is one of the works which dominate contemporary debate in political philosophy. Drawing on traditional assumptions associated with individualism and libertarianism, Nozick mounts a powerful argument for a minimal "night-watchman" state and challenges the views of many contemporary philosophers, most notably John Rawls.

This book is the first full-length study of Nozick's work and of the debates to which it has given rise. Wolff situates Nozick's work in the context of current debates and examines the traditions which have influenced his thought. He then critically reconstructs the key arguments of *Anarchy, State, and Utopia*, focusing on Nozick's doctrine of rights, his derivation of the minimal state, and his Entitlement Theory of Justice. Wolff subjects Nozick's reasoning to rigorous scrutiny and argues that, despite the seductive simplicity of Nozick's libertarianism, it is, in the end, neither plausible nor wholly coherent. The book concludes by assessing Nozick's place in contemporary political philosophy.



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