



Redeeming American Political Thought

Judith N. Shklar

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Noted political philosopher Judith Shklar declined to write a book about American political thought because, she once claimed, "the subject is too hard." She finally took on this formidable task late in her career, but her untimely death left most of the work unpublished. Now *Redeeming American Political Thought* makes these essays, some published here for the first time, available to readers.

In these thirteen essays, Shklar explores two themes crucial to discussions of American democracy: first, what she terms the "fundamental social condition" of American life, the tension between expansive political equality and persistent social inequality; and second, "redeeming" American political thought for those who believe it lacks the complexity and depth of the European tradition. She covers issues ranging from the use of history in political discourse to the effect of skepticism on politics and thinkers from Hamilton and Jefferson to Melville. The strength and depth of this collection underscore Shklar's reputation as one of this century's most important liberal scholars.

Judith N. Shklar (1928-1992) was Cowles Professor of Government at Harvard University and the author of nine books in political philosophy.

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