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BOOK NOTE

LIBERALISM AND THE LIMITS OF JUSTICE. By Michael J. Sandel. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982. \$21.95 hardcover, and \$9.95 paperback.

THE MODERN LIBERAL THEORY OF MAN. By Gerald Gaus. Croom Helm Ltd., 1983. \$27.50 hardcover.

Most modern legal thought is built on the foundations of democratic liberalism. The tendency is to assume its validity rather than constantly evaluate its soundness of depth. The crucial and formative link between legal and political theory is to be found in the works of Rawls, Dworkin, Nozick and Ackerman. Both Gaus' and Sandel's books examine the notion of human nature and personality that underpin this liberal tradition. Gerald Gaus argues that, in seeking to reconcile individuality and sociability, modern liberalism draws on a coherent and desirable theory of human personality which effectively harmonizes this tension; "our individualized personality is both valuable to, and a limit on, our emersion into the community" (at 109). On the other hand, Michael Sandel concludes that modern liberalism is grounded on an impoverished and implausible view of the individual as a "disembodied agent." For him, liberalism is locked into an individualistic vision of society which severely curtails the quality of any truly communal life. Both books make an impressive contribution to the literature and advance the enquiry into the basal premises of liberal political and, therefore, legal theory.

