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Communitarianism and its Critics

Daniel Bell

Clarendon Press (1993)



Abstract

Many have criticized liberalism for being too individualistic, but few have offered an alternative that goes beyond a vague affirmation of the need for community. In this entertaining book, written in dialogue form, Daniel Bell fills this gap, presenting and defending a distinctively communitarian theory against the objections of a liberal critic. Drawing on the works of such thinkers as Charles Taylor, Michael Sandel, and Alasdair MacIntyre, Bell attacks liberalism's individualistic view of the person by pointing to our social embeddedness. He develops Michael Walzer's idea that political thinking involves the interpretation of shared meanings emerging from the political life of a community, and intelligently rebuts criticism that this approach damages his case by being conservative and relativistic. *Communitarianism and Its Critics* is a provocative defense of a distinctly communitarian theory which will stimulate interest and debate among scholars and students of political theory as well as those approaching the subject for the first time.

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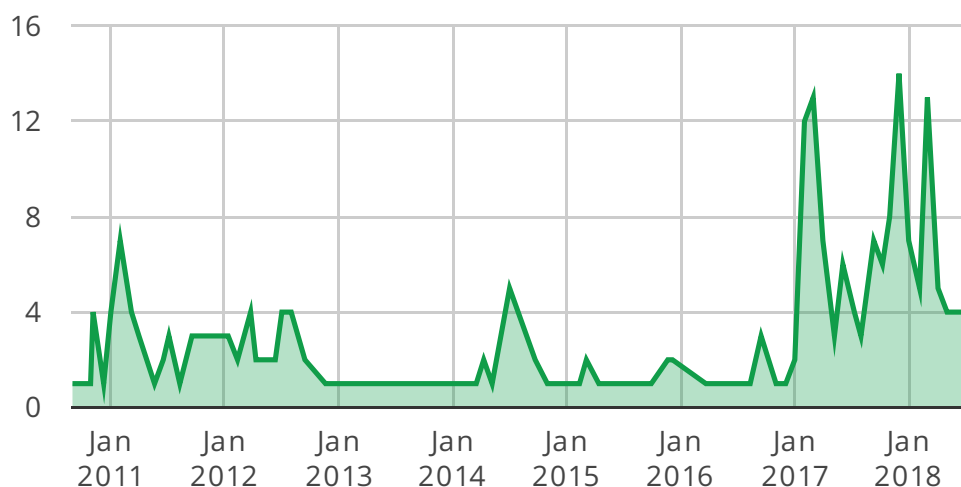
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