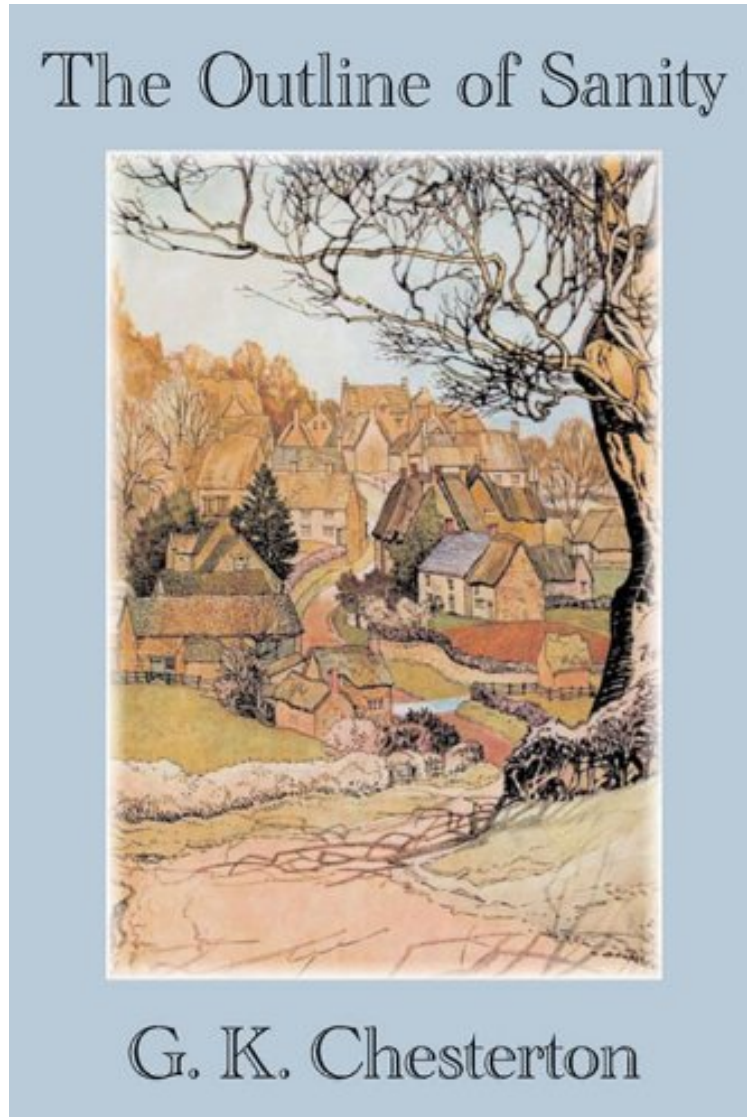


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The Outline of Sanity

G. K. Chesterton

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G. K. Chesterton : The Outline of Sanity before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Outline of Sanity:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Distributist economics as an alternative to Capitalism and SocialismBy Transcendental ThomistThis is a provocative and fascinating early 20th century argument for the forgotten economic theory of distributism. As conceived by GK Chesterton here, and by his fellow Catholic writer Hilaire Belloc in books like "The Servile State," the economic theory of distributism calls for a more widely diffused ownership of the means of production, with small ownership and corporations (similar to the medieval guild system) replacing Capitalism and Socialism in our world today. The problem with Capitalism is that it naturally tends to

concentrate ownership in the hands of a few private individuals, turning most of the population into wage earners rather than consumers. Socialism does the same thing, but concentrates ownership in the hands of governments rather than individuals, while people are still wage slaves. This theory is worth learning in today's unjust world economic order where the poor keep getting poorer. 14 of 15 people found the following review helpful. An Economics Appraisal that Considered Men More Cogs in a Machine By James E. Ego G.K. Chesterton (1874-1937) wrote THE OUTLINE OF SANITY as a possible alternative to Big Capitalism and Big Communism. Chesterton offered an economic solution that was both "idealistic" and practical. Basically, Chesterton argued that, "Smaller is better." Chesterton knew that the economic arrangements in Great Britain and these United States had serious flaws that undermined small farmers, small shop owners, and industrial workers. He suggested that men should gradually attempt to reverse the trends that were taking place by restoring men as owners of small shops and small land holdings in place of large farms and monopolistic owned factories which ruined so many people. Chesterton was clear that Big Communism an evil system which offered so actual solution. Chesterton described Big Capitalism as a system whereby monopolists used a corrupt parliament and a corrupt legal system to condemn land and property to control economic activities and concentrate vast wealth in the hands of a few plutocrats. He described Big Capitalism as a system where the very wealth concentrated wealth in the pockets of a few while economic despoiling most people. He described Big Communism as a system where no one could have pockets because a politically powerful oligarchy of party hacks would run the economy and use and abuse the mass of people. Chesterton also criticized the Machine Age, but he did not criticize machines or technology. Chesterton noted that unfair and corrupt legislation resulted in Big Capitalism having access to factories and machines. He also noticed that the economic situation in Great Britain resulted in idle machines since so many men were unemployed. In other words, what good were machines without men to work them. Chesterton appreciated machines, but he was against worshipping machines. Chesterton also criticized monopolists who wanted to make money (profits), but they wanted to lower wages and salaries. Chesterton wryly asked how could men buy what the monopolists produced with lower incomes. Part of Chesterton's solution was for people to boycott the Big Shops (Box Stores?) and patronize the Small Shops. Chesterton noticed that the Big Shops had poor service and inferior quality. However, the Small Shops had a "personal touch" and better made goods. Another problem that Chesterton noticed was that Big Capitalists and Big Communists bitterly resented clear thinking, independent men. Both Capitalists and Communists wanted a standardized society whereby conformity and hypocrisy were substituted for honesty and independence. Big Capitalism ruined men by corrupting politicians and jurists. Big Communism ruined men by concentration camps and mass murder. Chesterton showed concern that Big Capitalism and Big Communism dehumanized men. The monopolists wanted an utopia of stock brokers, and the communists wanted an utopia of utopian comrades, and neither of these existed or could exist. Chesterton wanted a practical society of men who had a personal stake in their farms or shops and who had time to reflect on cultural attainments whether they be religion (for Chesterton the Catholic Faith) literature, song, dance, etc. Chesterton cited an example whereby Henry Ford, a Big Capitalist, did not know who Benedict Arnold was. For someone who touted "The American Way" and not know U.S. History was considered a sad state of affairs as far as Chesterton was concerned. Chesterton suggested a modified guild system where the rules were known by all men and where the plutocrats could not corrupt political representatives and jurists could restore a better economy and social order. Chesterton was clear that he respected free enterprise but not private enterprise. The latter abused the political legal systems to the disadvantage of everyone else. While some writers argued that men should become gods or icons, Chesterton wanted men to be normal and free. Chesterton observed that while men had the vote, they had little else. Big Capitalists and Big Communists did not want men to have their own wives, children, or land. Both imposed legal restrictions on parents' raising children and providing them with values and learning which functions were increasingly dominated by bureaucrats in the name of progressivism or socialism. One of the weaknesses of Chesterton's book is that he was not specific enough. Chesterton could have cited laws that literally robbed men of their land and wealth by having private property condemned in favor of Big Capitalists. Chesterton could have specified Acts of Parliament or the U.S. Congress that were designed to ruin small property owners such as recent U.S. Supreme Court decision that allowed a corporation to take private property which is beyond belief here in the U.S. Yet, Chesterton's book THE OUTLINE OF SANITY is a hopeful antidote to Big Capitalism and its corrupting influences or Big Communism with its unworkable system and use of concentration camp brutality to gain compliance. While Chesterton died in 1937, this book is prophetic and useful. If men destroy their civilization in favor of unworkable systems, Chesterton's book is there for the record. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. The material is Chesterton at his best. The printing was smudged on every other page. By A Reader The material is Chesterton at his best. The printing was smudged on every other page. I believe this was a 'print on demand' edition - the printer seems to have had an issue. It was almost bad enough to make the book worthless. Buy a different edition.

As an advocate of Distributism, an early 20th-century school of social thought developed by the author and his colleagues, Chesterton addresses the topics of concentration of wealth, poverty, work, agriculture, machinery, and capital in this famous work. He favored distribution of wealth while being antisocialist; he advocated ownership of

private property while being anticapitalist. He argues that the economic order is bound by moral law and that man should be served by the economy rather than serving it.