

The Impossible Community

Realizing Communitarian Anarchism, Second Edition

John P. Clark

The Impossible Community confronts a critical moment when social and ecological catastrophes loom, the Left seems unable to articulate a response, and the Right controls public debates. This book offers a fresh and highly readable reformulation of anarchist social and political theory to develop a communitarian anarchist solution.

In this stunningly original work, John P. Clark, author, lifelong activist, and one of the most fascinating anarchist luminaries of our time, skillfully argues that a free and just social order requires a radical transformation of the modes of domination exercised through social ideology, the social imaginary, the social ethos, and social institutional structures. Communitarian anarchism unites a universalist concern for social and ecological justice while recognizing the integrity and individuality of the person. *The Impossible Community* is a renewed examination of the anarchist principles of mutual aid and voluntary cooperation and provides convincingly lucid examples in various contexts, from the rebuilding of New Orleans after Katrina to social movements in South Asia.

Ambitious in scope and compelling in its strength and imagination, *The Impossible Community* offers readers an accessible theoretical framework along with concrete case studies to show how contemporary anarchist practice continues a long tradition of successfully synthesizing personal and communal liberation. This provocatively innovative work will appeal not only to students of anarchism and political theory but also to activists and anyone interested in making the world a better place.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

John P. Clark is a philosopher, activist, and educator. His books include *The Anarchist Moment*; *Anarchy, Geography, Modernity*; and *Between Earth and Empire*, and, as Max Cafard, *The Surrealist Manifesto and Other Writings*, *Surrealist Explorations*, and *Lightning Storm Mind*. He is director of La Terre Institute for Community and Ecology.

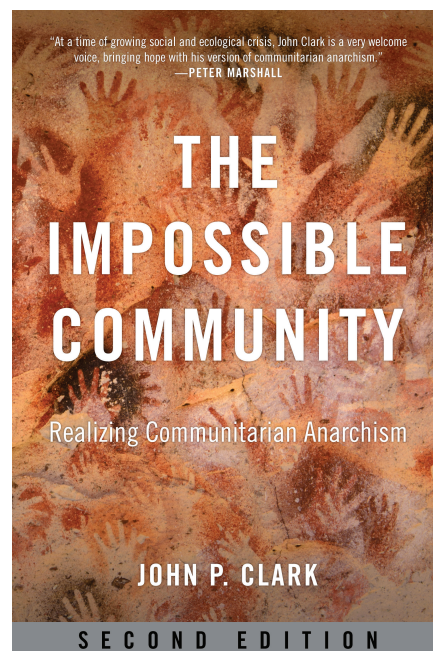
ACCOLADES

"In this often insightful and illuminating book John P. Clark sets out his vision for a radically democratic 'communitarian anarchism.' . . . Clark's deep commitment to the anarchist ethics that he advocates, and his work in putting them into effect, lend weight to the distinction between ethics as working ideals and the kind of 'abstract moralism' he criticizes. . . . This book is valuable for several important reasons. . . . Clark adeptly deploys Marx, Hegel, Aristotle, Enlightenment philosophers, Žižek, and a host of other modern and ancient thinkers, making this work erudite and rich."

—Chris Tomlinson, *Red Pepper*

"In *The Impossible Community*, John Clark proposes something that is sorely lacking in today's landscape: the prospect of going beyond our obsessions with catastrophe in all its guises—environmental, geopolitical, financial, etc.—to the exploration of new forms of social organization based on voluntary anarchist cooperation. Clark is able to bring to bear his immense erudition and experience with alternative modes of social organization, both historical and geographical, and thus can lead us, like Ariadne with her thread, out of the labyrinth of our present-day paralysis."

—Ronald Creagh, professor emeritus, Université Montpellier 3, France



SUBJECT CATEGORY

Anarchism/Philosophy

PRICE

\$24.95

ISBN

978-1-62963-714-3

PAGE COUNT

360

SIZE

6x9

FORMAT

Paperback

PUBLICATION DATE

6/14/22

US DISTRIBUTION

Publishers Group West

1-866-400-5351

www.pgw.com • ips@ingramcontent.com

CANADA DISTRIBUTION

Publishers Group Canada

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UK DISTRIBUTION

Turnaround Publisher Services Ltd

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◆ PM PRESS ◆

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