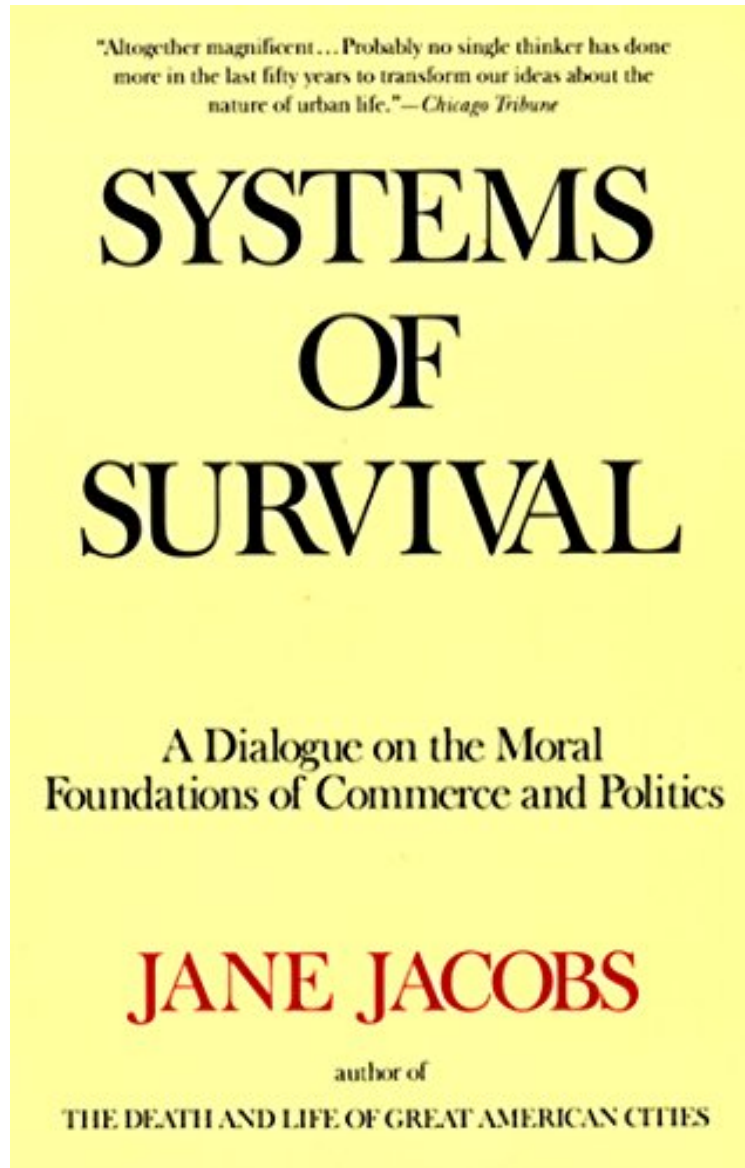


# Systems of Survival: A Dialogue on the Moral Foundations of Commerce and Politics

Jane Jacobs

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**Jane Jacobs : Systems of Survival: A Dialogue on the Moral Foundations of Commerce and Politics** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Systems of Survival: A Dialogue on the Moral Foundations of Commerce and Politics:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Insight into two different ethical systemsBy Kindle CustomerInsight into two different ethical systems and when each is appropriate and inappropriate. Also examines the problem of

admixture between them. This explains much of what both sides of the political divide like and dislike about our political leaders, past and present. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Deeply thought provoking  
By Howard L. Brady  
Jane Jacobs was one of the most original and profound thinkers of the last hundred years, with the ability to prove conventional thought wrong on many subjects. Here she analyzes the shared ideas and values in western society, and discovers a major dichotomy in these systems of thought. The primary values that guide commerce and science contrast with those most important to institutions responsible for being "guardians"-- government, courts, military, etc. This differentiation is both important and necessary, and keeping them separate is vital to effective performance within each institutional sphere. Whenever the two institutions and their values are combined in a single organization or operation, the result is corruption, often major. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. She is my hero!  
By May Bees  
Dark Age is better but this is a great book to do an audio on - I would love to see some business class do Youtubes on this with students playing each roll and then discussing it afterwards! This is the way we can keep our economy from sinking to 3rd world and how Developing nations can rise above and succeed.

With intelligence and clarity of observation, the author of *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* addresses the moral values that underpin working life. In *Systems of Survival*, Jane Jacobs identifies two distinct moral syndromes--one governing commerce, the other, politics--and explores what happens when these two syndromes collide. She looks at business fraud and criminal enterprise, government's overextended subsidies to agriculture, and transit police who abuse the system they are supposed to enforce, and asks us to consider instances in which snobbery is a virtue and industry a vice. In this work of profound insight and elegance, Jacobs gives us a new way of seeing all our public transactions and encourages us towards the best use of our natural inclinations.

From *Publishers Weekly*  
Written in the form of a Platonic dialogue between a Manhattan publisher and his party guests, Jacobs's often confusing inquiry posits that two contradictory ethical systems underpin the realms of work and politics. The "commercial syndrome," prevalent in business, trade and science, fosters honesty and cooperation, encouraging people to be industrious and thrifty and to invest for productive purposes. The "guardian syndrome," which holds sway over armies, police, government bureaucracies and commercial monopolies, instills obedience, respect for hierarchy, loyalty and fatalism. When either moral syndrome embraces functions inappropriate to it, contends Jacobs (*The Economy of Cities*), corruption ensues. She uses this simplistic schema to shed light on corporate merger manias, Pentagon waste, organized crime (a "monstrous hybrid of the two systems") and Sweden's welfare state. Urging a "guardian-commercial symbiosis" to combat force, fraud and greed, Jacobs cites pollution-cutting technologies and democratic access to business credit as provocative examples. Copyright 1992 Reed Business Information, Inc.  
From *Library Journal*  
In her latest contribution to liberal theory, Jacobs (*Cities and the Wealth of Nations*, LJ 6/15/84) argues that modern societies utilize two distinctive moral systems--one being suited to the world of commerce, the other to the world of politics. Commercial morality is unsentimental, nonpartisan, and efficacious; political morality is personalistic, expansive, and vaguely altruistic. The problem is that we don't always know which system of morality to employ in concrete situations. Furthermore, the wrong choice can have disastrous consequences. Unfortunately, Jacobs invents a rather wooden cast of characters who engage in a Socratic dialog that reproduces the author's perspective on the two fundamental types of morality. As a result, the book's credible philosophical message becomes obscured by the superficiality and hamfistedness of the characters' conversations. A few readers may find Jacobs's literary device helpful; most will find it distracting. Previewed in *Prepub Alert*, LJ 8/92.- Kent Worcester, Social Science Research Council, New York  
Copyright 1992 Reed Business Information, Inc. "Altogether magnificent... Probably no single thinker has done more in the last fifty years to transform our ideas about the nature of urban life."--Chicago Tribune  
From the Trade Paperback edition.