

Anderson's criticism of markets

1 Basic claims

1. There are different ways of valuing things.
2. Some of our values are best realized through the social institution of the market and others are not.
3. Permitting some things to be distributed through market mechanisms can make it impossible to value them in other ways.
4. The phenomenon noted in point 3 can reduce the freedom and autonomy of people in a society, such that the social policy most friendly to freedom might be one that limits market exchanges.

2 Definitions: freedom and autonomy

Freedom = having access to a wide range of significant options to express diverse valuations.

Autonomy = confident self-government. (pp. 140-2)

3 Definitions: market goods and market norms

Market goods are things appropriately produced, distributed, and enjoyed in ways that are: impersonal, egoistic, exclusive, want-regarding, and oriented to 'exit' rather than 'voice' (p. 145).

4 Examples

4.1 Professions

Professionals employed by profit making firms can be pressed to act according to market, rather than professional, norms. E.g. unnecessary procedures (for those who can pay) or inferior care (for those who can't) (p. 148)

4.2 Personal relations

1. Gift vs. market exchange (pp. 150–2).
2. Unpaid sex vs. legalized prostitution. Tolerance for paid sex leads to society in which “[w]omen’s sexuality is still valued as male property”, even outside of overtly commercial relationships (p. 155).
3. Contracts for division of labor within the family; these threaten to “undermine the goods of commitment and intimacy proper to marriage” (p. 157).

What’s wrong? Treats a *personal gift* value as an *impersonal* value and treats a *shared* good (coupledom) as a *divisible* one.

4.3 Political goods

Examples: public roads, public parks, public schools (pp. 160–3).

What’s wrong with privatization, reduced political control? Loss of individual freedom, loss of fraternal relations with fellow citizens *via* move from voice to exit, schools should be governed by voice because they are where future citizens are trained.