

countries and decades, Ferrone may himself revive the very Centaur that he seeks to slay. Yet any attempt to vindicate or denounce the Enlightenment in one fell swoop will inevitably (and rightly) provoke such responses. A more fruitful reading of Ferrone's book should focus on his erudite reconstruction of the unique contributions of the late Enlightenment, a period that certainly deserves greater scholarly attention.

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David Thunder: *Citizenship and the Pursuit of the Worthy Life*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014. Pp. xv, 210.)

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What should one expect from a book of this title? I anticipated something on the order of an Arendtian celebration of agonistic politics, a plea for “strong democracy” of the kind made familiar by Benjamin Barber, or a full-throated defense of what John Rawls, following Charles Taylor, has called “civic humanism.” David Thunder’s book, however, is none of the above. Indeed, despite the importance of Aristotelian political thought and virtue theory to his argument, Thunder stops well short of civic humanism as Rawls and Taylor conceive of it—that is, as “a form of Aristotelianism ... that holds that we are social, even political, beings whose essential nature is most fully achieved in a democratic society in which there is widespread and active participation in political life” (Rawls, *Justice as Fairness: A Restatement* [Belknap, 2001], 142). In fact, Thunder’s position is close to the “classical republicanism” that Rawls endorses—the conviction that constitutional democracy “requires the active participation of citizens who have the political virtues needed to sustain a constitutional regime” (*Justice as Fairness*, 144).

For Thunder as for Rawls, citizenship is an ethical as much as a legal concept, and the good citizen is one who bears an appropriate share of the responsibility for maintaining constitutional democracy. As Thunder says in a brief discussion of civic education, “If people do not have respect for the property, bodily integrity, and good name of their neighbors, if they do not care about the fate of the people around them, and if they do not submit to the rule of law—assuming the law is not grossly unjust or tyrannical—then the very possibility of a just social order hospitable to the quest for truth and goodness is put in jeopardy, as is the possibility of expressing one’s true character” (170). Elsewhere Thunder notes that the “paradigmatic case of a citizen

of a constitutional democracy” comprises eight features, including the responsibility to exercise “some oversight or rule over the affairs of the polity” and to contribute “to the peace, justice, and flourishing of the polity” (64). One may discharge the first responsibility, though, merely by being an informed voter who shares her information with others; and one may contribute to the public good “by investing one’s wealth responsibly and thus generating jobs and services in the economy” (66). Whether Thunder’s conception of citizenship “requires the active participation” that Rawls deems necessary to the classical republican position remains an open question; but there is no question that it is less demanding than civic humanism. To be sure, Thunder’s paradigmatic case of citizenship includes, as its fifth feature, a shared understanding of justice and the common good. But such an understanding does not require citizens to “share the same normative horizon in a comprehensive fashion”; for it entails only that constitutional democracy “is premised on the notion that the polity is at bottom a shared scheme of social cooperation, in which each contributes his fair share, and gains fair access to the benefits of the cooperative scheme accordingly” (67, 68). Intended or not, there is a distinct echo here of “the fundamental organizing idea” of Rawls’s theory of justice as fairness, which is the idea “of society as a fair system of social cooperation over time, from one generation to the next” (Rawls, *Political Liberalism*, rev. ed. [Columbia University Press, 2005], 15).

The reason for calling attention to these similarities between Thunder’s conception of citizenship and Rawlsian classical republicanism is twofold. First, anyone who doubts that the only worthy life is one devoted to public affairs is likely to find Thunder’s understanding of citizenship not only as appealing as Rawls’s but much more accessible. But it is also important to note that Thunder takes pains to distinguish his position from Rawls’s. His book’s “basic goal,” he states, “is to defend the thesis that citizenship can and ought to be viewed as a natural *extension* of our deepest ethical aspirations, rather than as a freestanding practice, morally and psychologically insulated from other dimensions of our lives” (85; emphasis in original). For that reason, he devotes a chapter to a “preemptive strike” against two theorists, Rawls and Reinhold Niebuhr, who “represent a serious challenge to the integrationist project” that Thunder pursues (85). I leave it to others to judge the effectiveness of his rebuttal to Niebuhr’s version of the “separationist thesis,” but Thunder’s position is once again far more similar to Rawls’s than he acknowledges.

The problem, briefly, is that Thunder either exaggerates or mistakes the extent to which Rawls’s “theory of justice provides us with an excellent example of the *detached approach*: he famously invites us to imagine ourselves in an ‘original position,’ stripped of any particular socio-economic status or conception of the good, and to select, from that standpoint, the principles of justice to govern the ‘basic structure’ of society, *including our civic roles*” (140; emphasis added). Rawls does indeed deploy the original position, with its “veil of ignorance,” to arrive at his two well-known principles of justice, but he does *not* invoke these devices to explain or envision “our

civic roles." That he does not do so is evident in part from Rawls's employment of a four-stage sequence in which the veil of ignorance is gradually lifted. The veil does severely limit the knowledge of the parties in the original position. However, by the fourth stage, which pertains to "the application of rules to particular cases by judges and administrators, and the following of rules by citizens generally," the veil is completely lifted; for at this "last stage, clearly, there are no reasons for the veil of ignorance in any form" (Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, rev. ed. [Belknap, 1999], 175, 176). In Rawls's case, then, the "detached approach" applies only to citizens who are devising constitutions or acting as legislators; and even then, they are not subject to the full veil of ignorance.

Thunder also points to Rawls's *Political Liberalism* for evidence that "Rawls's theory, by insisting that citizens reason about justice from a 'common' standpoint such as public reason or the original position, is compelling some citizens to give practical primacy in the public square to a moral standpoint that is alien to their comprehensive doctrines. That would be a clear violation of their ethical integrity," and thus contrary to Thunder's integrationist thesis (97). However, in "The Idea of Public Reason Revisited," Rawls explicitly states that the strictures of "public reason" still allow "us to introduce into political discussion at any time our comprehensive doctrine, religious or nonreligious, provided that, in due course, we give properly public reasons to support the principles and policies our comprehensive doctrine is said to support" (*Political Liberalism*, 453). Such a stance is not far removed from Thunder's attempt to show how one who cares deeply about his or her ethical values can still be capable of the compromises necessary to a constitutional democracy (187–89).

The point of these remarks is not so much to defend Rawls against Thunder's criticisms as to suggest that Thunder has identified the wrong opponent. Rather than Rawls and, I suspect, Niebuhr, the true opponents of Thunder's case for linking citizenship to ethical integrity are the so-called philosophical anarchists, such as Robert Paul Wolff, A. John Simmons, and Michael Huemer, and perhaps even Henry David Thoreau. Thunder's account of the role of citizenship in a worthy life is a broadly attractive one, and he defends it quite ably in his penultimate chapter against six important objections to his integrationist thesis. He writes, moreover, with clarity and grace. He would do better, though, to take Rawls as an ally in the battle with those who maintain that ethical integrity requires either a withdrawal from civic life or a refusal to acknowledge a moral duty to obey the law.

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