

shapers, myth busters and challengers of anti-deliberative frames in the public sphere. Bächtiger, Setälä and Grönlund's concluding chapter present a clear response to these criticisms, suggesting that mini-publics are best understood not as replacement to existing institutions of representative democracy but to complement them in counteracting the vices of partisan politics (p. 240). In other words, while the book is about mini-publics, it does not canonize these forums as the best and only articulation of deliberative practice. Mini-publics are one of many mechanisms to deepen democracy. This is a timely intervention given the range of literature that seems to equate mini-publics to deliberative democracy.

While the book provides a fair snapshot of the state of the field, it could, however, have taken a bolder route by asking bigger questions. One of these big questions relates to an assessment, or, at least a beginning of a discussion, of what, on balance, have mini-publics done to enhance the quality of actually existing democracies. What are the biggest achievements of mini-publics in promoting deliberative politics? Are citizens left with what Strandberg and Grönlund refers to as "side effects" of deliberation (e.g. enhancement of interpersonal trust, political efficacy and other-regarding attitudes) (p. 107) or can mini-publics claim bigger victories? Moreover, the book could have been more ambitious in showcasing the global reach of deliberative mini-publics. Although China and Porto Alegre were briefly referenced throughout the book, this compendium could have taken intellectual leadership in foregrounding the diverse applications of mini-publics beyond the northern hemisphere. One of the biggest and most nationally successful forays in deliberative forums, for example, is happening in Brazil's National Public Policy Conferences, where large scale mini-publics make an impact on public policy on the national level (see Thamy Pogrebinschi and David Samuels, "The Impact of Participatory Democracy: Evidence from Brazil's National Public Policy Conferences," *Comparative Politics* 46 [April 2014]: 313–332). A brief glance at Participedia also establishes the breadth of democratic innovations taking root in Africa, Asia and Latin America which deserves attention in a compendium that hopes to "offer a panoply of insights into deliberative mini-publics" (p. 3). That said, this book is useful for anyone who wishes to have an sense of what mini-publics can do, what they cannot do, and what is usually left out when discussing the subject.

Lincoln's Political Thought. By George Kateb. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015. 256p. \$24.95 cloth.
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— Terence Ball, *Arizona State University*

A specter haunts this book—the specter of the late and unlamented Bush-Cheney administration. They are

nowhere mentioned by name, but they loom like some *éminence noire* throughout. Abraham Lincoln and George W. Bush were war-time presidents and both claimed the right as commander-in-chief to bend or suspend provisions of the Constitution and Bill of Rights—Bush in the name of "national security" and Lincoln for the sake of "military necessity." This greatly concerns Kateb, as well it should. At times he seems to suggest that no matter how necessary or noble the end, it is always categorically wrong and sometimes unconstitutional—and unconscionable—to do some of the things Lincoln did:

"If wartime abridgements of rights are justifiable only on grounds of military necessity—a significant concept that Lincoln employed—the abridgements, no matter how justifiable, convert rights into privileges. Lincoln's suspension of what were claimed, no matter how mistakenly, to be rights, in time of war, set precedents for future suspensions in conditions in which rights had become true rights and hence were unjustly violated" (p. 109).

And:

"I nevertheless think that it is defensible to conclude that Lincoln, given his aim, faced genuine military necessity and that for the most part he did not overreach. . . . However, there were long-lasting costs that these policies exacted. Lincoln had to do what he did, but the damage done to constitutionalism was great, then and for the future" (p. 151).

In other words: Bush and Cheney are Lincoln's not-so-great grandchildren.

Although not using an image invoked by Jean-Paul Sartre and Michael Walzer, Kateb suggests that Lincoln had the dirtiest of "dirty hands": "Lincoln's presidency illustrates the generalization that the cost of eliminating a terrible condition is frequently staggering: evil done to prevent or remove evil and is not washed clean by a good result. His whole political life illustrates the generalization that in democratic politics, perhaps in all politics, it is nearly impossible to do the right thing for the right reasons, actually held and honestly stated" (p. xiii). This is the central tension that informs and inhabits Kateb's book, which is more a meditation on, than a systematic dissection and analysis of, Lincoln's political thought.

With the passing of Judith Shklar, Ronald Dworkin, and Richard Rorty, George Kateb is one of, if not the, greatest of our theorists of liberalism. He is more modest, calling himself "a student of political theory" (p. ix). He writes of Lincoln not as a political theorist, but certainly as a political *thinker* whose thoughts have shaped the political thinking of generations of Americans. His thoughts have been all the more influential because of Lincoln the writer and turner of memorable, indeed unforgettable, phrases and sentences. Although quite critical of Lincoln as thinker and actor, Kateb—no mean prose stylist himself—is effusive in his praise of Lincoln the writer. "Lincoln," he says, "was a great writer, though he wrote for the most part in the immediate moment for a political

audience and with a political purpose” (p. 36). And, more effusively still: “We can go to him for the beauty of his intelligence, unschooled as it was, and give him his proper place in the American renaissance, alongside Emerson, Thoreau, Whitman, Melville, and Dickinson” (p. 37). High praise indeed!

But, as regards the matter instead of the manner, Kateb has severe reservations. The most momentous of these is that Lincoln “destroyed,” not once but twice, the Constitution he had sworn to uphold. He did this “first by suspension and then by a transformative amendment” (p. 64). In 1863 Lincoln suspended Habeas Corpus, issued the Emancipation Proclamation, and in 1865 initiated the Thirteenth Amendment abolishing slavery in the United States. I cannot agree with Kateb’s use of the word “destroy” here, despite its (no doubt intended) dramatic impact on the reader. The Constitution makes provision for suspending Habeas Corpus in times of national emergency: “The privilege of the writ of *habeas corpus* shall not be suspended, unless when in cases of rebellion or invasion the public safety may require it” (Article I, Section 9, clause 2). Kateb is critical of Lincoln or anyone else who, invoking military or political “necessity,” would turn “rights” into “revocable privileges:” “A right is a right only when it is universal and absolute” (p. 107). But under the Constitution habeas corpus is not a “right” but—as the document itself says—a “privilege” that can be suspended *in extremis*. The only constitutional question that arose in Lincoln’s case was *who* had the authority to do that? Since its suspension is provided for in Article I, which enumerates the powers of Congress, Lincoln arguably erred in making an executive decision (although he did defend himself by saying that the Congress could if it chose override his decision; it did not). Nor did Lincoln “destroy” the Constitution by amending it, inasmuch as that document makes provision for amending itself (Article V).

Here as elsewhere Kateb is tugged, even torn, in different directions. He is, on the one hand, a liberal perfectionist (or, more precisely, absolutist) for whom rights are absolute and, on the other, one who recognizes that there is an ineluctable tragic dimension to political life inasmuch as one too often cannot avoid dirtying one’s hands. This ambivalence extends even to the Emancipation Proclamation of 1863. Lincoln knew and acknowledged that the right to own slaves was guaranteed by the Constitution, as was the duty of citizens to return runaway slaves to their owners. In issuing the Emancipation Proclamation, however, Lincoln in effect invited slaves to escape with the guarantee—contrary to the Constitution—that they will not be returned to their masters. Lincoln reasoned, rightly, that the South’s system of slave labor was propping and promoting its war effort, to the grave detriment of the Union. Not only did President Lincoln effectively violate the “takings clause” of the Bill of Rights—“nor shall private property be taken for public use without just compensation” (Amendment V)—but he

added northern insult to southern injury by further specifying that able-bodied former male slaves were eligible to serve in the Union army and navy (Final Emancipation Proclamation, January 1, 1863, in Terence Ball, ed., *Abraham Lincoln: Political Writings and Speeches*, Cambridge University Press, 2013, pp. 167–69). By war’s end more than one in ten—some 200,000—Union soldiers and sailors were of African ancestry.

Kateb chides Lincoln for not being an avowed abolitionist even as he acknowledges that no abolitionist could be nominated, still less elected (p. 87). He can’t resist the urge to wash Lincoln’s hands, or at least gesture in that direction. But if Lincoln was so soft or moderate on slavery, why did so many southerners think his election to the presidency an unmitigated disaster deserving the extreme measure of secession? That Kateb doesn’t address this crucial question is in my view a major shortcoming of an otherwise admirable book. Lincoln had joined the new Republican Party, which opposed extending slavery into the western territories, reasoning that if the institution could not expand it would die. Kateb summarily dismisses their “containment strategy” as a “fiction” and “a substitute for a strategy. There was no constitutional way out of slavery. . .” (p. 124). Lincoln “did not spell out the process of extinction” (p. 122). But he didn’t need to, because—as we can clearly see in various southern states’ resolutions on secession—southerners knew what Lincoln knew: If and when free states outnumber slave states slavery can be abolished by constitutional amendment. “Mississippi’s ‘Resolutions on Secession’ (November 30, 1860) was typical: Northerners ‘seek by an increase of abolition states ‘to acquire two thirds of both houses [of Congress]’ for the purpose of preparing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States, abolishing slavery in the States.” According to the 1860 Census, fully 55% of Mississippi’s residents were slaves. One need not be a mathematical genius to see what advantages the three-fifths clause of the Constitution conferred on that and other southern states. Clearly, Southerners did not agree that the “containment” strategy was a “fiction”—far from it.

These and other shortcomings do little, however, to detract from Kateb’s all-too-timely meditation on Lincoln’s troubled—and still-troubling—political thoughts and actions. And as *provocateur* he succeeds wonderfully.

Arendt and America. By Richard H. King. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015. 412p.
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Richard H. King’s *Arendt and America* is a big book, the most ambitious and comprehensive study of Arendt to appear in some time. Its stated purpose is twofold: to examine “the impact of the New World on [Arendt’s] thought,” and to explore the “impact of Arendt’s thought