

That conclusion is too complacent. The danger now is that our churches will not have the safe space required to teach authoritatively their countercultural critique of the destructive excesses of our creeping libertarianism. What follows, for example, the Supreme Court's declaration of a constitutional right to same-sex marriage is the demand that the internal life of our churches and our believers must conform to the dominant view of rights-based justice. It might be good for Christians to be somewhat alienated from fashionable currents, both libertarian and progressive, in American political life, but surely not so alienated that they are viewed as operating outside the law and rational, respectable conversation. And it really has been the case, as Tocqueville observed, that most of our personal morality has always come from religion. Lockean or Rawlsian liberalism has little to nothing to say about the line between good and evil that, as Alexandr Solzhenitsyn reminded us, runs through every person's heart, or about how to subordinate the intricate trial to free will that is the seemingly unlimited progress of technology to human-worthy purposes that surely cannot be reduced to liberal justice and personal autonomy.

Avoiding that complacency is one reason why Lynerd's presentation of the crisis of our time for republican theology is, in part, with the intention of criticizing the superficiality of both evangelical theology and evangelical political thought with Christian political reflection that is more truthful and enduring. The concluding chapter on the era of the dominance and then the possible failure of evangelical free-market theology is followed by an epilogue. There, Lynerd observes that "*None* of the major Christian philosophers of the last half century has emerged as an apologist for [evangelical] republican theology," condemning, for the most part, its "selective libertarianism" (p. 200). Thinkers such as Alastair MacIntyre, Stanley Hauerwas, and Oliver O'Donovan deny the truth of the Lockean doctrines concerning natural rights and limited government; they are integrative thinkers believing that political life should be infused with "love as the central imperative of justice" (p. 201). And even Nicholas Wolterstorff, who finds a foundation for natural, inherent rights in the Christian understanding of justice, rejects republican theology's limitation of government to the protection of individual rights, with an uncharitable indifference to human needs. But surely it is more of a problem than Lynerd suggests that each of his "Christian philosophers" holds to theologian premises incompatible with the extreme Augustinianism characteristic of most evangelical theology. Evangelical thinkers who become too open to, say, Catholic thought typically abandon the evangelical theological tradition because it is not traditional enough. Not only that, surely it is not a small matter that, say, MacIntyre's political thought is also less than coherent or even judicious in its angry anti-Americanism and its curiously selective Marxism.

Still, Lynerd does not really think that the "apparent wedge between the academy and the pulpit" will be resolved on the side of the Christian philosophers (p. 16). He doubts that mainstream evangelical republican theology will move to the left in a way that, in his view, makes it less American—meaning Lockean—and more authentically, or traditionally, Christian. Americans persist in wanting to believe that each of us is a free and relational being who is a creature, a citizen, and capable of managing his and her own affairs. There are good reasons why evangelical theology is at home in America, and why the supporters of Ted Cruz, for example, are evangelical, classically liberal patriots.

So Lynerd leave us with the thought that incoherence and superficiality do not have all that much weight as practical criticisms. It might well be the case, once again, that exactly when we think the moment of republican theology "has passed, along come the political and cultural conditions for a revival" (p. 206). His deepest view seems to be that liberal reason and biblical revelation are incompatible in theory, and that is a perennial problem for American practice. But so much of the evidence he presents suggests that American liberal reason is more dependent on Augustinian premises than liberals often think, and that is why we Americans both need and can expect revivals.

Civics Beyond Critics: Character Education in a Liberal Democracy. By Ian MacMullen. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015. 275p. \$49.95.
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— James Bernard Murphy, *Dartmouth College*

In his important new book, Ian MacMullen offers a philosophically sophisticated political theory of civic education. The question of how to cultivate good citizens of a democracy who are not mere subjects has long been a concern of students of politics. According to many political philosophers, from Aristotle to Tocqueville, and according to many political scientists, from Gabriel Almond to Robert Putnam, we learn how to become good citizens mainly by participating in local social and political institutions, ranging from bowling leagues to the PTA, from serving in the army to serving on juries. In this view, being a good citizen is not primarily something we are taught, but is something we learn in the course of belonging to and leading some of the myriad small platoons that make up a complex pluralistic democracy.

Ian MacMullen, following many other contemporary political theorists, such as Amy Gutmann, Dennis Thompson, William Galston, and Stephen Macedo, argues that these informal modes of political socialization are not adequate and that, in addition, children need deliberate instruction in civic virtue if they are to become good citizens. Most advocates of deliberate civic

education look to schools, especially public schools, as vehicles for such instruction. MacMullen says that he is agnostic about the proper division of educational authority among parents, churches, voluntary associations, and schools. Yet his own conception of civic education proves so philosophically sophisticated that it is difficult to imagine implementing it anywhere but in a scholastic setting, ideally, a graduate school philosophy seminar.

MacMullen parts company with liberal civic educators over the role of moral autonomy in civic education. Most liberal civic educators want civic education to foster, above all, the development of critical thinking and independent judgment in future citizens; they understandably fear the use of state power to attempt to inculcate particular moral judgments, beyond the essential values of toleration and respect for the rights of others. *Civics Beyond Critics* is a largely persuasive effort to show that critical reasoning skills are not adequate if we seek to form citizens with the strength of character necessary for civic virtue in the face of very powerful temptations to shirk our civic duties and to free-ride on the virtue of others. MacMullen describes himself as a “value pluralist” in the tradition of Isaiah Berlin and Galston. He certainly values moral autonomy but not as an overriding value. He shows in great detail how moral autonomy can be in tension with other important civic values, which require a nonautonomous and even nonrational attachment to one’s polity and the trust to support its laws and institutions. Like the Rousseau whom he often quotes, MacMullen deploys reason to defend prejudice, and cosmopolitan values to defend parochial attachments. He also uses conservative and Burkean arguments to defend a bias in civic education in favor of existing institutions and laws. As always, he describes with great care the risks of presumptions for the status quo and the risks of critical assessment by young people of political institutions they have not fully understood. When a young person claims to be an atheist, the Solomonic MacMullen wisely says: “You don’t know enough to be an atheist!”

Where the author parts company with conservatives is his rejection of civic education aimed at patriotic love for one’s country. Unlike many theorists and advocates of patriotism, MacMullen does not define patriotism in terms of loyalty but in terms of love. He argues that patriotic love, like any form of love, blinds us to the vices of the beloved. He does not deny that some patriots have a balanced and just appraisal of their homeland. He just thinks that patriotic love too strongly biases us to see only the good; hence, in his view, it weakens our motivation to reform our own nation. MacMullen’s most innovative contribution to debates about civic virtue is his defense of civic identification instead of patriotic love. He claims that young people can be lead to identify with their polities without feeling affection for them. Such a person would feel pride when his country succeeds and shame when his

country fails, just as we might feel pride and shame about the deeds of our own family. His distinction between civic identification and patriotic love is subtle and illuminating. Yet even he concedes that civic identification can be easily biased in favor of civic pride, in which case it would suffer the same debilities as patriotic love. He insists, however, that civic identification is a motive less intrinsically biased than is love.

Ultimately, this book is more a fine-grained study of the contours of civic virtue than it is a guide for the civic education of children. MacMullen describes with great care and subtlety, for example, how a conscientious person should think about the question: Why should I obey the law? His discussion of the interplay of intrinsic moral force and claims of legal authority, his discussion of better and worse reasons for obeying the law, and his discussions of when disobeying the law is permitted or required are all very insightful and illuminating. He is especially acute in identifying the keen temptations we all feel to shirk our civic duties and the need to develop the strength of character to resist them. To read his book is to witness a mature and sophisticated citizen reflecting upon the rational and nonrational sources of his own civic commitments. For adults who seek to become better citizens, MacMullen’s analyses of civic motivations are illuminating and helpful.

Civics Beyond Critics offers principles that political theorists could use to evaluate existing practices of civic education. MacMullen clearly hopes, in addition, that his book may provide guidelines in the design of curricula, both formal and informal, for the civic education of children. This does not seem feasible to me. The strength of the older tradition of political socialization is the recognition that we learn to become good citizens as adults by reflecting upon our own civic engagements. Yes, children can acquire some kinds of civic knowledge and some rudimentary civic skills; but MacMullen’s conception of civic education assumes knowledge and skill, and it is focused upon a delicate balancing of rational and nonrational motives in the exercise of those skills. His subtle principles are clearly beyond the competence not only of students but also of most teachers; they would require considerable conceptual sophistication to be put into practice.

MacMullen accepts the current orthodoxy that robust and healthy civic life requires that we teach civic virtue to children. But he discusses virtually no empirical evidence concerning whether virtue of any kind can be taught. There is a long history of attempts to teach civic virtue in schools and a large body of research designed to assess the effectiveness of those attempts. The results are not promising, to put it mildly. MacMullen himself notes that when students become aware that a teacher is attempting to alter their values, they usually reject the attempt. So his mode of civic education would have to be

indirect and manipulative. In his conclusion, Macmullen concedes that attempts to shape students' motivations by, for example, visiting prisons or hearing about the dangers of drug use often backfire. In the end, he is much more persuasive about the nature of civic virtue than he is about whether it could be imparted to children.

The Neo-liberal State. By Raymond Plant. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012. 283p. \$95 cloth, \$40 paper.
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— Christopher W. Morris, *University of Maryland*

In this book Raymond Plant tries to accomplish two large goals: “The first is to give a faithful account of the major aspects of the neo-liberal theory of the state and its relation to the economy and the wider society. . . . The second aim is to provide the basis for a critique of these doctrines” (p. 1). He succeeds in both aims, though that is not to say that the critique ultimately succeeds or, more interestingly, that it fully engages with the doctrines he wishes to understand and to challenge.

One of the most impressive features of *The Neo-liberal State* is the seriousness with which Plant takes his adversaries. There are many works that seek to expose and destroy political adversaries, but most do not first try to understand them. Plant devotes slightly more than two-thirds of his book to describing and analyzing the views of Friedrich von Hayek, James Buchanan, Robert Nozick, and other political thinkers who have offered challenges to the social democracy that he wishes to defend. He has spent a lot of time with his opponents and takes them very seriously.

Even if most of the thinkers Plant examines are American or have spent much of their lives in the United States, the book is, not surprisingly, quite British in its concerns and understanding. In the United States, these thinkers are routinely labeled “conservative” or, better, “libertarian,” the term ‘liberal’ having been captured by the Left or Center Left. More importantly, the author fully understands how radical and anticonservative these thinkers are: “The idea of the rule of law lies at the heart of the neo-liberal view of the nature of and role of the state. . . . On the neo-liberal view social democracy and socialism are outside the rule of law” (p. 5). The conception of neoliberalism as privileging the value of the rule of law is central to his account of this influential tradition, as well as to his critique of it. And Hayek is in many respects the best exemplar of the kind of position.

Plant's critique of the neoliberalism is “immanent”; he tries “to present the strongest case for the neo-liberal theory that [he] can, and then [tries] to point out the serious defects which emerge within that theory” (p. 1). To a great extent, I think he is right in concluding that social democracy is not as incompatible with neoliberalism as he

characterizes it—it does not seem necessarily to be incompatible with the rule of law. But I think he does not take up all of the important challenges of neoliberalism, which may not rely very much on the value of the rule of law.

As many readers of Hayek have noted, his neoliberalism is not as systematically antagonistic to welfare-state programs as is that of many other neoliberal or libertarian thinkers. Hayek is not opposed to state programs to help the poor and destitute, and he recognizes a state role for the provision of public goods (in the technical sense of indivisible and nonexcludable goods). He is an enemy of old-fashioned socialism, dependent on central planning, but contemporary welfare states are not committed to this kind of view. But Hayek is wedded to his criticisms of “social justice,” and a defect of this book is not providing a clearer analysis of this thing. Social justice is a species of justice (references in the index are rightly found under “justice” and not under “social”). Many if not most of the neoliberal thinkers discussed in this book would acknowledge that we have duties to rescue others, at least in emergency situations (e.g., people shipwrecked on the high seas or stranded in the desert). Such duties are “positive,” and so their acknowledgment would block the doctrine that the duties (and rights) of justice are exclusively negative. They seem, I should note, to be duties of justice: If one fails to rescue people clinging to a life raft and they drown as a consequence, one has *wronged them*. But are those committed to social justice arguing only that we have some positive duties? I do not think so. Many supporters of social justice seem to have “patterned” conceptions of justice, to deploy Nozick's concept. A patterned conception of justice would have justice in distribution determined by a pattern, to each according to his or her _____. (See Robert Nozick, *Anarchy, State, and Utopia*, 1974, pp. 155–60.) Many social democrats clearly think of justice as patterned in this sense, and I am not sure that Plant fully appreciates the criticisms that Nozick and, in effect, Hayek make against such conceptions.

In some respects, Nozick presents a sharper and possibly more serious challenge to social democracy than does Hayek. Nozick's argument in *Anarchy* relies on a conception of natural rights, supposedly “Lockean.” Plant thinks that these rights are understood to be “absolute”; I think this interpretation mistaken (see Plant's references to “moral catastrophes” on p. 247), but this misunderstanding is not crucial. Merely assume that people have defeasible rights to order their lives and possessions as they wish, and that there are a number of things one may not do to them without their agreement. The question then arises: By what right may the state restrict the behavior of their subjects as they do? It is one thing to forbid people from doing things that are unjust independently of the law; it is another to say that they must obey the law because it is the law (of a legitimate and